The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: A critical analysis of its impact on a sample of teachers and curricula within and beyond Europe

A thesis submitted in fulfilment

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Applied Linguistics

at

The University of Waikato

by

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THE UNIVERSITY OF

WAIKATO

Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

2011

Abstract

The situation facing European countries after World War II provided the social and political context in which the Council of Europe began its deliberations on language and culture, deliberations that eventually led (in 2001) to the release of the current version of *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment* (CEFR). Since then, the influence of the CEFR has increased steadily both within and outside of Europe.

Following an introduction to the research and the rationale for it (Chapter 1), an outline of the CEFR and the political and social context out of which it emerged (Chapter 2) and a critical review of selected critiques of the CEFR (Chapter 3), this thesis reports on a questionnaire-based survey of responses to the CEFR of a sample of language teachers (Chapter 4) and an analysis of the impact of the CEFR in the area of curriculum design in two different contexts (Chapters 5 and 6), ending with and an overview of the research findings (Chapter 7).

Of the 164 participants (from France, the UK, Taiwan, Hong Kong, New Zealand and Australia) who were involved in the questionnaire-based survey, only just over 20% claimed to have read the CEFR (26% in the case of those working in Europe). Over half claimed never to have heard of it (34%), to know of it by name only (5%) or to have only a vague idea of its content (19%). Of those with a view on the subject, only 31 agreed that it is becoming impossible to avoid the CEFR in the field of language teaching/learning (as opposed to 42 who did not). Asked to evaluate the overall impact of the CEFR in the countries where they worked on a six point scale (from 1 (very positive) to 6 (very negative)), 105 participants responded, with 57 (54%) selecting 'I don't know'. Among the remaining 47, the average rating was 3.23. Asked to evaluate the usefulness of the CEFR in the countries where they worked in a number of areas (on a six point scale - from 1 (very useful) to 6 (not useful at all)), just over 100 participants responded in each case, with just under half selecting 'I don't know'. For the remainder, the overall average rating was 3. These findings suggest there is little interest in, or enthusiasm for the CEFR among those frontline professionals who will ultimately

determine whether it has any real impact on the teaching and learning of languages.

Curriculum design was rated second in terms of usefulness in the survey (with a rating of 3.08). In order to determine how useful the CEFR actually is in this area, two different CEFR-influenced national, school-based language curriculum projects were analysed (one within Europe; the other outside of Europe). That analysis revealed a number of significant problems, particularly in relation to the articulation of achievement objectives and the association between achievement objectives and language-specific realizations. It was therefore concluded that the CEFR promises considerably more in the area of language curriculum design than it is capable of delivering.

Keywords: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR); Europe; Council of Europe; framework; reference; language teaching; language teacher cognition; language learning; language policies; curriculum design; textbook design; language assessment; levels; benchmarks; scales; proficiency; competences; action-oriented approach; standardization; globalization.

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Chapter 1

Introduction to the Research

1.1   Background to the research: A personal perspective

As a teacher of French in Taiwan, I do not have access to a national curriculum for French or, indeed, to any curriculum document for French that is widely accepted.[1] Furthermore, within Taiwan, that heavy reliance on the explicit teaching of grammatical rules and grammar-based testing which have long characterized language teaching have proved very resistant to change. In spite of this, there is within Taiwan, and also in many other countries in Asia, a growing interest in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (*CEFR*) (Council of Europe, 2001), and, in particular, in its potential to underpin communicatively-oriented curriculum planning, teaching and testing and assessment. Thus, for example, in 2005, the Ministry of Education in Taiwan decided that the CEFR Common Reference Levels should underpin all of the assessment and certification systems for English. It is these things, taken together, that led to my interest in the research reported here.

1.2   Motivation for the research

I trained as a teacher of French as a foreign language in France from 1998 to 2000. At that time, a 'communicative approach' to language teaching was recommended and documents such as the *Threshold Level* (van Ek 1977; van Ek & Trim, 1991a) were widely discussed. Furthermore, a draft version of the CEFR was already being trialled and we were aware that an official version would be published in the near future.

When I started teaching French in Taiwan in 2000, I became aware that tertiary-level institutions generally lacked an overall language curriculum and any clear proficiency benchmarking for different educational stages. Course outlines

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[1] The Ministry of Education plans, however, to produce one in the future.

(generally expressed in a few lines which may, or may not, include reference to specific objectives) often bore little or no relationship to one another. Indeed, the same course, taught by different members of staff, could be very different indeed, although one common factor appeared often to be, particularly in the early stages of language learning, a focus on the explicit teaching of vocabulary lists and of grammar (generally taught in a deductive way), and a heavy reliance on tests and exercises (generally including decontextualized sentences). Throughout courses, students were usually 'judged' largely in terms of their performance on these tests and exercises. At the end of three years of study, during which time students may have been involved in courses in French for between 8 and 9 hours each week, many were still unable to take part in a simple conversation in French and some were still unable even to respond to simple greetings. Even so, so far as the institution in which I taught was concerned, most of them had sufficient grammatical knowledge after five years of study to obtain what was considered to be an adequate score in the 'command of language structures' component of the *Test de connaissance du français* (TCF),[2] something that was required for graduation.

Discussion with language teachers in the tertiary education sector in a number of other countries suggested that the situation I encountered in Taiwan was far from unique. Although some teachers, some of whom had been trained in Europe, rejected an approach which emphasised explicit knowledge of grammatical rules and rote learning of vocabulary, others did not, particularly as such an approach was often seen by students as having more relevance to the battery of exercises and tests to which they were so frequently subjected.

The situation I have described motivated me to consider whether the CEFR might provide a useful basis for a reconsideration of all aspects of the teaching and learning of French in Taiwan. Of particular interest to me was the possibility of

[2] Students were required to obtain an average of 300 points on the test, with 300 to 399 points corresponding to Level 3, said to be equivalent to level B1 of the CEFR. Although their listening comprehension was often below that score (level 2), and their reading comprehension was generally 'average', it was common for them to achieve 350 to 400 points or more in the component of the test relating to the command of language structures. Two other components of the TCF ('oral expression' and 'written expression') were optional and, as they involved additional fees and further preparation, most students elected not to take them.

introducing a more clearly defined concept of progression, of specifying achievement objectives in a more transparent way and, more generally, of providing more interesting and effective approaches to teaching, learning and assessment. However, as a language teacher working outside of the European Union, I believed that it was important to begin not only by considering the aims of the CEFR itself but also how it had been received by governments (especially Ministries of Education) and language professionals outside of Europe.

1.3 The Common European Framework of Reference: A brief introduction

The CEFR was officially launched by the Council of Europe in 2001. This was the result of ten years of work following a 1991 symposium in Rüschlikon, Switzerland, where it was decided that there was a need to (Trim, 2007b, p. 38):

- promote and facilitate co-operation among educational institutions in different countries [within the European Union];

- provide a sound basis for the mutual recognition of language qualifications;

- assist learners, teachers, course designers, examining bodies and educational administrators to situate and co-ordinate their efforts.

The intention was that the CEFR would become a common reference within Europe for language teaching and learning, syllabus and curriculum design, textbook design and assessment, and would, therefore, play a central role in meeting the aims of the Council of Europe's language policy (Council of Europe, 2001, pp. 1-3). Since its publication, the member states of the Council of Europe have been encouraged to adopt the CEFR as a reference for their national language curricula, the intention being that their national degrees and certifications should be aligned to its Common Reference Levels (CRLs).[3] It was argued that this would allow for professionals working in the language area to

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[3] Although this is an over-simplification of the objectives of the CEFR (for details, see Chapter 1), it is, nevertheless, an accurate representation of the objectives of the Rüschlikon symposium, whose primary concern was the lack of comparability between certifications and degrees offered by different educational authorities in Europe.

communicate more easily, for learners' proficiency achievements to be identified and acknowledged more readily, and for degrees and certifications throughout the European Union to be compared meaningfully. This, in turn, was seen as facilitating international mobility (see Chapter 2).

1.4 The Common European Framework of Reference: Some examples of responses to it from outside of the European Union

Since its publication, the CEFR has become, for many, a point of reference within the European Union. However, a number of countries outside of Europe have also taken an interest in it. In his Report of the Council of Europe Intergovernmental Language Policy Forum held in February 2007 in Strasbourg, Francis Goullier[4] (February 2007, p. 6) notes that:

> . . . the presence of delegations from Canada, China, the United States and Japan,[5] not forgetting the participation of the Australian representative of an international association of language teachers, show the huge level of interest in the issues raised by the CEFR . . . beyond Europe's borders.

For some, this is not a problem in that "there is nothing much European about the CEF except the fact that it was developed under the aegis of the Council of Europe" (De Jong, 20 October 2006, ¶ 1 and 2). In fact, Lazaruk[6] (20 June 2007, p. 4) has argued that the main barrier to the CEFR being used even more widely internationally is the fact that it is perceived as being European and, therefore, that an international version should be developed through consultation with appropriate organizations around the world.[7]

Some indication of the extent of the influence of the CEFR can be gained from consideration of the following examples from a range of non-European countries.

In 2003, the Canadian government adopted an Action Plan for Official Languages (Government of Canada, 2003), one of its objectives being (p. 27) to "double the

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[4] Francis Goullier, Chief Inspector of Education for Modern Languages in France, is also the French National Representative to the Language Policy Division of the CoE.

[5] Canada, Japan and the United States have observer status with the Council of Europe.

[6] Walter Lazaruk is a Canadian specialist of second language education, with experience as a teacher, consultant and administrator at local and provincial levels.

[7] This was said at a presentation at the symposium of the Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Français (FIPF), the International Federation of Teachers of French, in Sèvres.

proportion of secondary school graduates with a functional knowledge of their second official language" by the year 2013.[8] Among the problems associated with this are the fact that Canada has no official definition of 'connaissance fonctionnelle' (functional knowledge), no common second language curriculum, no framework for describing and measuring language proficiency and no tools to track progress towards its goal (Lazaruk, 20 June 2007, p. 1). It has therefore used its Council of Europe observer status to track progress on the CEFR and European Language Portfolio (ELP) (Rehorick & Lafargue, 2005, pp. 1-2). In May 2006, the federal Ministry of Canadian Heritage published a report recommending that "the provinces and territories explore the feasibility to adopt the Common European Framework as a framework of reference for languages in Canada" (Vandergrift, 2006, p. 31).

In 2003, the first of three groups of US representatives of the National Council of State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL) went to a Goethe-Institut seminar in Germany to learn more about the new European language policies. Following that seminar, the NCSSFL created an American version of the ELP, the LinguaFolio. The first version was developed in Kentucky, with other versions being developed later in Nebraska, Virginia and Indiana (Bott Van Houten, February 2007, p. 7).[9] There are also several other CEFR-related projects in progress in the US. Thus, for example, the German Studies Department at Cornell University has adapted its undergraduate curriculum to the CEFR and *Profile Deutsch* (the German reference levels descriptions);[10] Missouri State University, the University of North Carolina at Ashville, and several universities in Kentucky are using the CEFR within their departments and/or training in-service teachers to use it with LinguaFolio; and the University of Dayton is undertaking an empirical

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[8] See also Munroe, 2003, ¶ 4. In 2007, only18% of Canadians were proficient in both official languages (English and French), an increase of only six percentage points in thirty years (MacDonald & Vandergrift, February 2007, slide 2).
[9] Bott Van Houten (February 2007, pp. 8 & 9) indicates that two pilot studies are under way, a 5-state pilot study (Georgia, Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina) and a longitudinal study directed by Ali Moeller at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. She also refers to the fact that Concordia Language Village, a language and cultural immersion programme of Concordia College (Minnesota), is working on their own version for their language camps. Furthermore, STARTALK grants, jointly funded by the Director of National Intelligence and the Department of Defence, "will be requiring their participants to use LinguaFolio". Brigham Young University uses the European Language Portfolio for all its German courses and Missouri State University is using aspects of the ELP and LinguaFolio.
[10] It now offers a certificate corresponding to level B2.2 of the CEFR and *Profile Deutsch*.

investigation relating to equivalences in proficiency ratings between the CEFR and the ACTFL[11] Oral Proficiency guidelines (Bott Van Houten, February 2007, p. 8).

In the context of discussion of a symposium on the CEFR held at the Osaka Foreign Languages University in March 2006,[12] Neil Jones (18 October 2006) has observed that "there is clearly . . . interest . . . in the potential of the CEFR" in Japan. Indeed, a Japanese project team (the AJE-CEF Project Team[13]) has been working since 2005 on a CEFR project (Tanaka et al., 2005, p. 7), and Kakazu (February 2007, p.13) has recommended that Japan should, on the basis of the model provided by *Profile Deutsch* and *Un référentiel pour le français*,[14] "take the initiative in providing reliable, empirically validated descriptors of the Japanese language, make a transparent and comparable framework of levels, and provide tools to use them, such as check lists and examinations". He has also observed that "efforts are under way for the development of international standards for Japanese-language education", and that, in the case of both the standards and proficiency testing, 'can-do' statements will be developed that "keep in mind the mutual complementarities between 'task-accomplishment competences' and the 'communicative competences' required for such" (p.6). Furthermore, a number of Japanese institutions, such as the Osaka University of Foreign Studies and the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, have already adapted their offerings to the CEFR.[15]

In 2000, the Hong Kong government launched a Workplace English Campaign (WEC), co-ordinated by the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR).[16] Among the developments was a series of Hong Kong Workplace English Benchmarks (HKWEB) which are divided into 5 bands, with

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[11] The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) is "the only national organization dedicated to the improvement and expansion of the teaching and learning of all languages at all levels of instruction throughout the U.S." (Bott Van Houten, February 2007, p. 5).
[12] This symposium was supported by the Japanese Ministry of Education.
[13] AJE: Association of Japanese Teachers in Europe.
[14] These two documents provide language-specific descriptions (respectively for German and French) for the CEFR's reference levels, (see Chapter 2, 2.6.1).
[15] The Osaka University of Foreign Studies, for instance, with the support of the Ministry of Education, "uses the CEFR for curriculum design and assessment on a class and language department level for all 25 languages studied there" (O'Dwyer, 31 July 2008).
[16] This body was established in 1996 to advise the Government on language education issues (see http://cd1.edb.hkedcity.net/cd/scolar/html/ iscolar_en.htm).

five levels that correspond to Common Reference Levels from A1 to lower C2.[17] The WEC has specified a list of (currently 23) international English examinations that can be used to assess proficiency in English "and hence the relative level of attainment in the Hong Kong Workplace English Benchmarks" (WEC, 2005, 'Specified English Examinations'). All of the international business English tests accepted by the WEC are said to be either linked to the CEFR or to the ALTE scale (itself mapped on the CEFR) (SCOLAR, 2003, p. 20). Furthermore, the WEC website provides tables indicating correspondences between the HKWEB and major international business English examination and/or the supposed alignment with ALTE and CEFR scales.[18]

SCOLAR's interest in the CEFR extends beyond workplace-related specifications for English. With reference to both English and Putonghua [Mandarin Chinese], it has insisted on the need to specify "a clear and realistic set of expected language competences" (SCOLAR, 2003, p.5), observing (p.7) that overseas bodies such as the Council of Europe and the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) "have adopted a unified scale of language proficiency to describe what persons at different proficiency levels are able to do in listening, speaking, reading and writing, with a collection of 'can do' statements serving as descriptors". Also noted is the fact that different European agencies have developed language learning programmes and tests based on these scales. In their final recommendations (p. 9), they make the following statement:

> The Curriculum Development Council should make reference to English proficiency scales used internationally, such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages or the ALTE (Association of Language Testers in Europe) scale, in developing the basic competences for English.

In Taiwan, the Elementary and Junior High School Curriculum Panel prepared an initial outline for a new *Grade 1~9 Integrated Coordinated Curriculum* in 1997

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[17] Levels Pre-1, 1, 2, 3 and 4 are said to correspond respectively to the following CRLs: A1 to lower A2; A2 to lower B1; B1 to lower B2; B2 to lower C1; C1 to lower C2 (see WEC, 2005: Hong Kong Workplace English Benchmarks: http://www.english.gov.hk/eng/html/wec_hkweb_mean.htm).

[18] http://www.english.gov.hk/eng/html/wec_overview.htm

and 1998. The new nine-year curriculum for primary and lower secondary education was launched in 2001. That curriculum includes ten curriculum goals, the following three of which (see Her, 2007, p. 9),[19] are reminiscent of Chapter 2 of the CEFR:

- to promote abilities related to career planning and lifelong learning;

- to further cultural learning and international understanding;

- to develop abilities related to independent thinking and problem solving.

Also reminiscent of the CEFR is the fact that the curriculum signals a move away from rote learning, promotes the concept of 'communicative competence' and includes "a range of core competences associated with each of . . . seven learning areas" (Her, 2007, Chapter 4). Even so, although the *Grade 1~9 Integrated Coordinated Curriculum* appears to have been influenced in some ways by the CEFR, that influence is by no means thoroughgoing. In a number of other areas, however, particularly in the area of English language assessment, the influence of the CEFR is unavoidable. Thus, for example, among Taiwan's Keynote Education Policies was a four year (2004 – 2008) Ministry of Education strategy relating to use of the CEFR, the aims of which (see Keynote Education Policies, June 2006, p. 3; September 2007, p. 3) were to ensure that:

> in setting language requirements, and in deciding for themselves which test they wished to use, organisations, schools and the general public made reference to the CEFR in evaluating language competence, in setting language requirements, and in deciding for themselves which test they wished to use;
>
> every organisation in charge of administering tests established correspondences with the CEFR and publicise them.

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[19] Her (2007) provides, in an appendix, the original version of the curriculum (pp. 308-330) along with her personal translation (pp. 331-364). These are the documents to which I refer.

Added to this was a decision to encourage public and private universities to adopt graduation benchmarks linked to the CEFR.[20, 21]

In 2005, the Taiwanese government decided to use the CEFR levels as the official standards for English proficiency tests. In an article published in the United Daily News (9 March 2005, p. 3), Hsing-Wei Wang (general manager of the ETS representative office in Taiwan) commented:

教育部在面臨台灣多元化英檢考試工具情況下採用歐盟語言能力分級架構的確實明知之舉

[In the face of the multiplication of English assessment tools, the adoption by the Ministry of Education of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages is, indeed, a wise decision].[22]

Wang ends by noting the advantages that this would have for companies, organisations, schools and human resource managers who need to define the proficiency standards they require. What is particularly interesting about this

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[20] As Her (2007, p. 229) observes: "According to Keynote of Education Policies (Action plan 1.1.1 (assessment)) the goal [was] that 50% of graduating students at Bachelors degree level (whatever their major subject) should achieve the equivalent of B1 (Threshold level) of the Common Reference Levels in 2007 (Ministry of Education (Taiwan), 2005b, 2006, September). However, this goal was to be reached gradually, the expectation being that only 20% of graduating students would achieve that level in 2004, 30% in 2005 and 40% in 2006. The reality is, however, that 3.56% of graduating students reached the equivalent of B1 in 2004 and 6.6% did so in 2005. For this reason, the target for 2006 was reduced to 15%."

[21] Objectives were also set for teachers at the end of their training. The intention was that by 2007, 45% of future teachers of English in primary and lower secondary schools would have reached level B2, while 30% of future teachers of other subjects would have reached level B1. In view of the problems associated with aligning tests to the Framework (see *Chapter 3*), a critical issue is how success rates were determined.

[22] In that article, Hsing-Wei Wang gives some idea of the existing difficulties, noting, for example, that the Research Institute (environmental sciences) of Cheng Kung University requires that its first degree students should, in order to graduate, score 173 in the TOEFL CBT; or level 500 in the TOEFL ITP; or level 520 in the TOEIC; or High-Intermediate level in the GEPT. Wang adds that IELTS is another widely used proficiency test and that other benchmarks have been set for other languages. He notes (ibid.):

要將這些不同的語言檢定測驗分數互相作對照實在不是一件容易的事。此時如果能夠採用 CEF 作為所有語言檢定的統一標準，只要在簡章上註明英語能力要求為 CEF B2 標準，就可以省去比對分數的繁雜手續，無論考生選擇參加何種語言檢定測驗，分數結果都有了統一的依據.

[Comparing the scores of these different language tests is not, in fact, an easy thing. But if we can adopt the CEF as a common standard for all language tests, we just have to specify on the brochure that the level required in English proficiency is CEF B2 and the complex procedure of comparing scores can be avoided. Whatever language tests students will choose to sit, score results will have a common reference.]

perspective is the apparent assumption that the process of correlating language proficiency test instruments with the CEFR is a relatively simple and straightforward one. [23, 24, 25]

In Australia, there was government interest in introducing the CEFR in relation to the ELICOS [26] industry, "as a means of a securing a 'market advantage' for the sector", of bringing "harmony to a very disparate group of providers" and of "[improving] quality across the board" (Elder, 29 May 2007, ¶ 1). Elder and O'Loughlin (University of Melbourne) were commissioned to conduct a feasibility study whose aim was to "[explore] whether a common language levels framework, such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), might serve to monitor English proficiency at entry and exit from ELICOS courses and articulate pathways within and between institutions" (Australian Education International, 2007, ¶ 1). In the event, aligning local curriculum and assessment practices with the CEFR was considered to be too problematic and it was reported that some course providers "worried that conformity with a common set of levels would cut across what was special about their particular courses (hence reducing their ability to cater for niche markets)" (Elder, 29 May 2007, ¶ 2). Moreover, it was said that most providers "lacked the commitment and/or resources to do what it would take to amplify and interpret the CEFR levels in ways which would give them local meaning" (¶ 2). Elder adds (¶ 2):

> Our conclusion was that while the CEFR was probably here to stay, and worth knowing about for that reason (just as we need to know about who holds the reins of government), *it was unlikely to produce the desired*

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[23] Fanchiang (10 June 2005, ¶ 10) quotes a spokesman for the Social Education Department of the Ministry of Education as saying: "It is hoped that the implementation of the framework will help guide the existing score-oriented tests, which have lost sight of the need to genuinely represent language ability".

[24] The Taiwan Language Training & Testing Center (LTTC) was asked to link the GEPT to the European framework. In the event, the results suggested that LTTC had treated the examinations they administer differently from others and the LTTC was fined for violating the Fair Trade Law by using their dominant position in the market to affect the choice of English proficiency test (see Her, 2007, p. 227).

[25] Both local and international examination providers are now required to provide information explaining test scores in terms of the CEFR levels. Bearing in mind the difficulties associated with doing so (see *Chapter 3*), it seems likely that this is often a cosmetic exercise.

[26] ELICOS: (Australia's) English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students

harmony within the sector. Indeed we questioned . . . whether this harmony was indeed desirable [emphasis added].

The authors of the study suggested that the providers who wished to engage with the CEFR "should be encouraged to do so seriously (rather than tokenistically)" but warned that the outcome would be:

> "Nothing more than a better elaborated set of goals, teaching and assessment plans, pathways and outcome statements within the relevant institution (always a good thing), *with no guarantee that any instantiation of the framework developed by one institution would be equivalent to other instantiations* [emphasis added] (Elder, 29 May 2007, ¶ 2).

Consideration of examples such as those outlined above led me to believe that there was a possibility that the CEFR could have some relevance to my own situation and to that of other language professionals working outside of Europe. However, they also alerted me to the fact that there could be serious consequences should it prove to be the case that there were significant problems associated with the CEFR. In particular, I was interested in the fact that only in the case of the Australian example was there a clear indication that those consulted by the government had drawn attention to the complexity of the issues involved and expressed reservations about the usefulness of the measures proposed. It was with all of that in mind that I set out to consider how my overall aim and research questions should be formulated.

1.5   Overall aim of the research

The overall aim of the research project reported here is to examine the CEFR and its potential usefulness, in relation, in particular, to the design of national curricula for modern languages (not only within the European Union but also in other countries, including countries outside of Europe) and to explore knowledge of, and attitudes towards the CEFR of a sample of language teachers within and outside of Europe.

1.6   Research questions and research methodologies

Underlying the research reported in this thesis are three core research questions which arise out of a perceived gap in the literature reported in Chapter 3:

1. What do a sample of frontline professionals from a range of countries (language teachers working mainly in the tertiary educational context) know and believe about the CEFR?

2. In what ways have two countries (one from within the European Union; one from outside) made use of the CEFR in designing national-level language curricula, do these examples follow the suggestions for language curriculum design at a national level in the CEFR, and to what extent, if at all, do they support the claims made in the CEFR in relation to the advantages of using the Framework in the context of curriculum design?

1.7   The organization of the thesis

Chapter 2 provides necessary background to the research in the form of an exploration of the content of the CEFR and a range of related documents (including user guides and the European Language Portfolio) in relation to the historical and social context in which they were created.

Chapter 3 is a critical review of selected commentary on, and critique of the CEFR, its implementation and its impact, by writers who have significant expertise in the area of the teaching and learning of languages. As indicated in that chapter, there has been very little research that explores the ways in which practicing language teachers respond to the CEFR or that relates directly to the impact of the CEFR on language curriculum design in spite of the fact that the CEFR, if it is to have any genuine impact on language learners, will need to be mediated directly through teachers or indirectly through curricula.

Chapter 4, which represents a response to the first research question outlined in *section 1.6* above, reports on a questionnaire-based survey of a sample of 164 frontline professionals (language teachers in the tertiary educational context) working in six different contexts (France and the United Kingdom [Europe], Taiwan and Hong Kong [Asia], and New Zealand and Australia [Oceania]). That

survey explores the extent of the participants' knowledge of the CEFR, their opinions about it and their views on the extent of its influence in the context in which they were working. Language teacher cognition research has demonstrated that teachers tend to respond to questions that probe their professional practice in ways that reflect what they think they are expected to know or do rather than what they do actually know or are actually doing (Borg, 2006; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999; Spada & Massey, 1992). The questionnaires were therefore carefully constructed in order to cross-check responses by asking for the same type of information in different ways and in different places in the questionnaire. Teachers from three different continents (Europe, Asia and Oceania) and six different polities are among the participants in the survey. It was, of course, critical that there should be participants from European countries since the CEFR is a document produced by the Council of Europe and intended for use in European countries. Within Europe, the decision to focus on France and Great Britain was dictated by the fact that both of these countries played a central role in the production of the CEFR and also by the fact that I am a speaker of both French and English and could, therefore, produce versions of the questionnaire in both languages. Given the current extent of the influence of the CEFR outside of Europe, I believed that it was important to include participants from other continents. As a teacher of French in Taiwan and a postgraduate student in New Zealand, I had a particular interest in the impact of the CEFR in these countries and therefore decided to include participants from both. This meant, however, that there would be participants from two European polities but only one Asian and one Oceanian polity. I therefore decided also to include participants from Hong Kong and Australia. In each case, the choice was partly dictated by the dominant languages of these countries. Adding Hong Kong and Australia meant that questionnaires needed to be produced in only three languages – English, French and Chinese.

Chapters 5 and 6, in responding to the second research question outlined in *section 1.6* above, provide a detailed examination of two examples of national-level language curricula that have drawn upon the CEFR in order to determine how the CEFR has been used and interpreted within the context of curriculum design. The decision to focus on curriculum documents from France and New

Zealand was dictated, in part, by a desire to include examples from within and outside of Europe and, in part, by the fact that all of the documents were written in either French or English and were, therefore, directly available to me without being mediated by translation. Within Europe, France was also an obvious choice for a number of other reasons. First, France was the first country to associate curriculum levels with the CEFR Common Reference Levels by statute (2005); secondly, the Socle Commun de Connaissances et de Compétences (Common Foundation of Knowledge and Competences, MEN, 11 July 2006) has made the CEFR the fundamental reference for the teaching, learning and assessment of modern (foreign) languages; thirdly, France has already attempted to apply the CEFR in a thoroughgoing way. Outside of Europe, New Zealand was also an obvious choice for a number of reasons. First, in its overarching statement on languages, New Zealand has committed itself to the CEFR Common Reference Levels; secondly, while many non-European countries that appear to have used the CEFR in curriculum design have done so only in relation to English (e.g. Taiwan and Japan), this is not the case in New Zealand; thirdly, I knew who the principal writers of the New Zealand curriculum documents were, and I also knew that they had written a number of articles on the design of these documents that were likely to prove useful.

In *Chapter 7*, the findings of the research reported in *Chapters 2 – 6* are summarized and discussed, the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the research project as a whole are outlined, and recommendations are made for future research.

Chapter 2

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Origins, Content and Development

2.1   Introduction

The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) was officially launched in 2001 but the concept dates back to the 1970s. In this chapter, I discuss the origins of the CEFR and refer briefly to its content. I begin by looking at the context of post-war Europe and how it led to the construction of the Council of Europe and to the will of its members to co-operate at the level of language and culture (2.2). I then present the different stages of the European language policy and how they led to the creation of the CEFR (2.3). Following that, I briefly outline the contents of the CEFR (2.4[27]). In the next section (2.5), I introduce other documents and tools associated with the CEFR, such as the European Language Portfolio and user guides. I conclude by considering more recent developments, including work on Reference Level Descriptions and the project for a framework for languages of school education (2.6).

2.2   The context of post-war Europe and its influence on European cooperation

This section deals with the situation in Europe after the Second World War and demonstrates how that situation impacted on the views of Europeans and led European nations to seek unity and how this, in turn, led to the establishment of a range of organisations and treaties, such as the Council of Europe and the European Cultural Convention, whose aim was, whilst accepting and celebrating difference and diversity, to establish and/or reinforce a sense of cultural and political unity in a wide range of areas. It is in this context that the importance of

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[27] I do not, however, refer to it in detail here, preferring to do so in the context of the critical literature review that follows in Chapter 3.

the Council of Europe and that of the European Cultural Convention in relation to the focus on unity in diversity can best be understood.

2.2.1 The European historical and political context

At the end of the Second World War, Europe was in shambles. The war had broken off normal international relations, setting European nations against one another. The full scale of the disaster to which extreme nationalism had led was revealed only at the end of the war. The economy was in ruins. A period of rationing and financial restrictions was accompanied by introversion. Later, the Cold War split Europe in two, with citizens of the Soviet Bloc enduring restriction of their freedom to travel and to establish contact with foreigners. As John Trim (Trim, 2005, p. 13) observed in a lecture delivered for the 10th anniversary of the European Centre for Modern Languages in 2005: "Under such conditions, language teachers became quite out of touch with the up-to-date realities of the languages and cultures they were teaching and concentrated their attention on puristic formal correctness and the heritage of national literature".

All of the events to which reference has been made had a profound impact on European ways of thinking. Post-war Europeans began to believe that the only way to prevent a recurrence of the horrors of the war was to unite. Moreover, following the difficult period of reconstruction, and in the context of competition from the United States, Japan and, more recently, emerging powers such as China, India and Brazil, Europeans also began to appreciate the advantages of getting together to create a stronger entity which could better defend Europe's position on the international scene. Such an entity would, it was believed, be in a better position to address the increasing challenges of globalisation and new technologies and, associated with them, greater international mobility and a higher level of outsourcing than was previously the case. However, equally important, perhaps more so, however, was the perception that there was a need for Europeans to adhere to a range of important characteristics and values, notable among which were cultural and linguistic diversity along with tolerance and mutual understanding.

2.2.2   The Council of Europe and the European Cultural Convention

The characteristics and values referred to above were included in the objectives of the Council of Europe, created in May 1949, and are echoed in the CEFR. Thus, it is noted in the first chapter that the CEFR "serves the overall aim of the Council of Europe as defined in Recommendations R (82) 18 and R (98) 6 of the Committee of Ministers:[28] 'to achieve greater unity among its members', and to pursue this aim 'by the adoption of common action in the cultural field'" (Council of Europe [CoE], 2001, p. 2). In the preamble to Recommendation R (82) 18, adopted in 1982, it is observed that although "the rich heritage of diverse languages and cultures in Europe is a valuable common resource to be protected and developed . . . a major educational effort is needed to convert that diversity from a barrier to communication into a source of mutual enrichment and understanding". It is also asserted that "it is only through a better knowledge of European modern languages that it will be possible to facilitate communication and interaction among Europeans of different mother tongues in order to promote European mobility, mutual understanding and co-operation, and overcome prejudice and discrimination". European governments were therefore encouraged to adopt or develop national policies in the fields of modern language learning and teaching and cultural development which promote greater convergence "by means of appropriate arrangements for ongoing co-operation and co-ordination".

Recommendation R (98) 6 (1998) acknowledges the progress made by the member states since 1982, progress that reflects "[awareness] of the dangers that might result from marginalisation of those who lack the skills necessary to communicate in an interactive Europe". Recognizing that communication across linguistic and cultural differences requires a lifelong effort, it asserts "the growing need to equip all Europeans for the challenges of intensified international mobility

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[28] Council of Europe [CoE], Committee of Ministers, 1982 and 1998. It must be noted that the Council of Europe, the oldest political organisation of the continent, is distinct from the European Union (or other anterior organization such as the European Economic Community), although "no country has ever joined the Union without first belonging to the Council of Europe (see http://www.coe.int/aboutCoe/index.asp?page=nepasconfondre&l=en). The Committee of Ministers is composed of Foreign Ministers of the member states or their deputies in Strasbourg (ambassadors/permanent representatives) and is the Council's decision-making body. European conventions or treaties are legally binding and many are also open to non-member states. Recommendations give governments policy guidelines on different matters including culture, education, etc.

and closer co-operation not only in education, culture and science but also in trade and industry".

At the end of 1954, the member states of the Council of Europe signed the European Cultural Convention, "designed to foster among the nationals of all members, and of such other European States as may accede thereto, the study of the languages, history and civilisation of the others and of the civilisation which is common to them all" (CoE, 1954, European Cultural Convention). The European Cultural Convention is a starting point for the work of the Council of Europe in the field of modern languages, and for cultural co-operation in Europe in general which, to that point, had taken place on a very sporadic and one-off basis.[29] In its article 2, the Convention (CoE, 1954) calls each contracting party to:

a) encourage the study by its own nationals of the language, history and civilisation of the other Contracting Parties and grant facilities to those Parties to promote such studies in its territory; and

b) endeavour to promote the study of its language or languages, history and civilisation in the territory of the other Contracting Parties and grant facilities to the nationals of those Parties to pursue such studies in its territory.

In 1957, at the First intergovernmental conference on European co-operation in language teaching, following a suggestion by France, a Committee of Experts was set up to plan the development of modern language teaching in Europe (Trim, 26 September 2001, p.2). In December 1961, the Council for Cultural Co-operation was created by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, with four committees in charge of education, higher education, culture, and cultural

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[29] See Grosjean (1998), Chap. I, *Introduction*: "[La coopération culturelle européenne] restera cependant très ponctuelle et conjoncturelle jusqu'au moment où, le 19 décembre 1954, est solennellement ouverte à la signature la Convention culturelle européenne qui, depuis 40 ans, constitue le cadre et le fondement d'une action qui n'a cessé de se développer." ([European cultural co-operation], however, remained on a very sporadic and one-off basis until the moment when, on December 19, 1954, the European Cultural Convention, which for 40 years has been the framework and the foundation of an action that never ceased to develop, was solemnly open for signature.)

heritage, to replace the Committee of Cultural Experts that had been provided for by the Cultural Convention.[30]

2.3 The European language policy

This section outlines the different stages of the European language policy up to the creation of the CEFR. These stages took place in the context of a growing body of research on political cohesion in Europe (encompassing the domains of language and culture) and evolving ideas and theories in the area of language teaching and learning.

2.3.1 Le Français Fondamental: A first stage

In 1961, at the first Intergovernmental Symposium (held in Paris under the auspices of the Council for Cultural Co-operation), France presented *Le Français Fondamental*, the specification of a basic vocabulary and grammar for the French language. This was a pioneering work in many respects. Accompanying it was the launch of the first audio-visual course for adult learners of French language: *Voix et images de France*, which Trim (1997a, p. 48) has described as "the fountainhead of all our subsequent work over 35 years". This was by no means the first attempt to simplify the learning of a language so as to facilitate its wider use. At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, attempts to create and promote artificial languages which were often based on Indo-European word roots (e.g. Volapük, Esperanto and Ido) were superseded by the idea of promoting, through limitation and simplification, an already existing language.[31] The principles used to select the vocabulary of *Le Français Fondamental* (presented below) were, however, totally different.

Research whose aim was to establish a fundamental, or basic, French started in 1947, following a recommendation by the United Nations Educational, Scientific

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[30] It is designated by its French acronym CDCC (Conseil de la Coopération Culturelle). In 2001, the CDCC and its specialised committees were transformed into four Steering Committees, designated by their French acronyms (see CoE, Committee of Ministers, 12 november 2001): the Steering Committee for Education (CDED: Comité Directeur de l'Education), the Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research (CDESR: Comité Directeur de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche), the Steering Committee for Culture (CDCULT: Comité Directeur de la Culture) and the Steering Committee for Cultural Heritage (CDPAT: Comité Directeur du Patrimoine Culturel).

[31] Thus, for example, Ogden's *Basic English* was released in 1930.

and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) that approaches to language diffusion should be investigated in order to facilitate mass education in developing countries. Thus, the French government sought to facilitate the diffusion of French within and beyond the countries of the French Union (l'Union Française). [32] The government asked specialists to establish a lexical and grammatical gradation from a corpus of oral texts. [33] Under the supervision of Georges Gougenheim, research underpinning what was then named *Français Elémentaire*[34] was undertaken by the Centre d'étude du français élémentaire. [35] The aim of that research was to determine, within the context of reflection on the teaching and learning of French as a foreign language, precisely what language should be taught. A series of surveys was conducted in the 1950s and 1960s [36] to establish a list of basic words and grammatical structures that were considered to be necessary in order to communicate in the language. From a total of 312,135 words collected, [37] 1000 words were selected in relation to a frequency of occurrence criterion *(fréquence)*.[38] Among these were 270 grammatical words, 380 substantives, 200 verbs, 100 adjectives and 50 other words (Laborie, n.d.).[39] Notable by its absence, however, was vocabulary relating to health, arts and technology and a number of clearly useful words (e.g. *fourchette* [fork], *veste* [jacket], *nationalité* [nationality], *chèque* [cheque]).

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[32] This was the name given to what was at that time the French colonial empire.

[33] Gradation (or grading) is "the arrangement of the content of a language course or a textbook so that it is presented in a helpful way" (Richards, Platt & Platt, 1992, p. 160). This implies deciding on the order in which elements of the language are introduced, taking account of factors like their complexity, their frequency in the language, their importance for the learner, etc.

[34] On those early works, see Gougenheim, Michea, Rivenc and Sauvageot (1956). (A new revised and augmented edition was published in 1964 under the title *L'élaboration du français fondamental: étude sur l'établissement d'un vocabulaire et d'une grammaire de base.*)

[35] In 1959, this centre, located in the Ecole Normale Supérieure of Saint-Cloud, was to become the CREDIF : Centre de Recherche et d'Etudes pour la Diffusion du Français, with G. Gougenheim and P. Rivenc respectively as director and vice-director.

[36] The first edition of the *Dictionnaire du Français Fondamental de la langue française* (Gougenheim), with 3500 words, was published in 1958 (a second updated and augmented edition was published by the same editor in 1977).

[37] These were collected on the basis of the first surveys which involved the recording of 275 conversations.

[38] It was observed that there was but a small number of words which repeatedly occurred in oral and written communication whatever the context. It was also observed that only a few grammatical words were truly indispensable for communication.

[39] In a synchronic approach borrowed from structural linguistics, only the most widely used forms of standard oral language were taken into account.

A second criterion was then applied, that of availability *(disponibilité)*,[40] and a second survey was undertaken, with, at its core, 16 centres of interest, including food and drink, parts of the body and furniture. Although less frequent, the words identified in this way were clearly of communicative significance.[41] On the basis of this survey, a second series of 1500 words (constituting fundamental available vocabulary) was added to the first series of words. The total set, now referred to as *Français fondamental*, was divided into two stages: the first *(Français Fondamental: 1ᵉʳ degré[42])* was limited to fewer than 1500 words, the second *(Français fondamental: 2ᵉ degré [43])* included approximately 1700 words. Following further refinement by a commission of teaching specialists and grammarians, final lists were established. These included some words that had been absent (e.g. words relating to hygiene, health, values and religion) and omitted some either considered too sensitive (e.g. *mosquée, temple*) or too colloquial *(bouquin, machin, truc)*.

Le Français Fondamental was, according to Blache, Guénot & Portes (2005, p. 1), a pioneering work:

> L'élaboration du français fondamental a été un travail précurseur non seulement du point de vue de ses objectifs et ses applications, mais également par la méthode employée. Il s'est agit en effet d'interpréter une analyse statistique sur un corpus de français parlé, avant que la linguistique de corpus n'apparaisse avec ses outils.
>
> [The elaboration of *Le Français Fondamental* was a pioneering work not only from the point of view of its objectives and its applications, but also in terms of the method used, which involved the type of statistical analysis of a corpus of spoken French before the appearance of corpus linguistics with its tools.[44]]

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[40] This availability criterion foreshadowed the context setting of utterances, which would come into favour in connection with what is often referred to as 'the Communicative Approach'.

[41] This vocabulary was then refined in relation to the sex, profession, region of origin, etc. of those polled.

[42] Ministère de l'éducation nationale (France), 1954.

[43] Ministère de l'éducation nationale (France), n.d.

[44] My translation

It must not be forgotten, however, that in the 1970s *Le Français Fondamental* became the centre of a heated debate among academics, politicians and the public. On the political level, it was criticized by both the left and the right. The Communist party, for example, expressed the view that it promoted the teaching of a kind of *sous-français* (sub-French) which was regarded as an adequate substitute for genuine linguistic and cultural education in the case of immigrants. So far as some right wing commentators were concerned, it encouraged laziness and involved a form of linguistic degeneration which could lead to a type of pidgin French.

From the perspective of linguistics and language learning and teaching, there are a number of flaws associated with *Le Français Fondamental*, and the processes leading to its construction. Among these are the ways in which the surveys were constructed, the ways in which the resulting lists were manipulated and the artificiality of some of the language based on the final lists. Nevertheless, *Le Français Fondamental* represents an important move away from the traditional grammar translation methodology and provides a solid basis for subsequent developments in the area of language teaching and learning. Thus, for example, in the 60s, the selection and grading of linguistic elements associated with audio-visual methodology was based on its frequency lists and, as indicated later (2.3.3), it also had an influence on the Threshold level model in the early1970s. Indeed, the idea of a limited, simple vocabulary to facilitate understanding still exists, as can be seen in news bulletins in French on Radio France Internationale (RFI, *le Journal en français facile*), which uses a basis of 300 simple terms (RFI, n.d.). This is similar to the approach adopted by *The Voice of America* since 1959, its *Special English* programmes making use of a list of approximately 1500 terms.[45] Furthermore, it is now a well-established tradition to write and/or rewrite texts in simple language for language learners.

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[45]See Voice of America (n.d.), *The Roots of Special English*: "On October 19, 1959, the Voice of America broadcast the first Special English programme. It was an experiment. The goal was to communicate by radio in clear and simple English with people whose native language was not English. Special English programmes quickly became some of the most popular on VOA."

2.3.2   The Major Project in modern languages (1963-1972)

This project was launched in response to the French desire to create a European Institute of Applied Linguistics on the model of the Centre for Applied Linguistics in the United States. Although the member states rejected that proposal on the grounds of cost (Saville, 2005, pp. 275; 278), they did decide to launch a Major Project in Modern Languages (1963-1972). This involved all educational committees of the Council for Cultural Co-operation, promoted interaction between university-based language research and the language teaching profession, and led to the introduction into European universities of applied linguistics as a recognised academic discipline and to the establishment of AILA (International Association of Applied Linguistics) which held its first congress in 1964 in the French city of Nancy. The Major Project also encouraged international co-operation in the area of the development and use of audio-visual methodology in language teaching (Trim, 26 September 2001, p. 3).

In the 1970s, two phenomena led to a rethinking of language teaching methodology. First, increasing numbers of people who were not language specialists were seeking ways of accessing the information in documents written in languages in which they lacked an advanced level of proficiency. Secondly, increasing numbers of adult migrants needed to develop the language skills required for day-to-day communication in their host countries. New approaches to the specification of objectives, content and methodology were required (Saville, 2005, pp. 275, 278). Consequently, in the 1970s, a new approach was developed, one that represented a reaction against audiolingual and audio-visual methodologies as well as the situational method that had been developed in Great Britain.

2.3.3   The unit-credit scheme (1971-1977) and the Threshold Level

In 1971, a Symposium on Languages in adult education was organised by the Eurocentres foundation at Rüschlikon in Switzerland. A small working group (including Jan van Ek, René Richterich, John Trim and David Wilkins) was set up to examine the feasibility of a unit-credit system for language learning in adult education, a system originating in Nancy (in France) in which the Council of

Europe was interested. Although Marchl and Kingsbury, for Eurocentres, were in favour of a "situation-based approach" (Saville, 2005, p. 276), the Council, in line with the Major Project, was pushing for an 'audio-visual approach'.[46] Whereas the situational method (or 'oral approach' as it was also called) in favour in Great Britain was influenced by behaviourism, audiovisual methods, based on the joint use of image and sound[47] and developed in France in the 1950s, distanced themselves from American structuralism, rejecting behaviourism along with the type of structural exercises proposed by Skinner.[48] In terms of linguistic content and progress, audio-visual approaches were influenced by *Le Français Fondamental*; in terms of psychological theory, they were influenced by Guberina's structuro-global approach,[49] in which the use of the word 'global' signalled the fact that account was taken of factors involved in oral communication (such as the situation, emotional meaning, non verbal aspects of communication, interactional factors, and the participants' state of mind) (Puren, 1988, p. 345).[50]

John Trim began to list speech act function types. These were taken up by David Wilkins and first published in 1973 and later in 1980 in a paper entitled "The Linguistic and Situational Content of the Common Core in a Unit/Credit System" which appeared in the collection *Systems Developments in Adult Language Learning* (see Saville, 2005, p. 276). Meanwhile, René Richterich was working in

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[46] This does not mean that the audiovisual methodology is not situational, or that any situation-based approach was rejected. What John Trim seems to be referring to in this interview with Nick Saville (2005, p. 276) is the British situational method as opposed to the audiovisual method (Méthodologie Structuro-Globale Audio-Visuelle [SGAV], or, more simply, Méthodologie Audio-Visuelle [MAV]) elaborated in France by a team of the Ecole Normale Supérieure de Saint-Cloud (under the supervision of Paul Rivenc) with the major contribution of Petar Guberina and his team of the Phonetics Institute of the Faculty of Arts in Zagreb (hence its initial name of 'méthode de Saint-Cloud – Zagreb'). But John Trim adds (ibid.): "The idea of 'situation' wasn't really any better developed than a dialogue which was learnt off by heart and anatomized and so on".

[47] Audio tapes and images, and later, with technical progress, video tapes. Image and sound are used simultaneously, with the image helping learners to understand what they perceive aurally. Methods using them separately are not, properly speaking, audiovisual in nature.

[48] These exercises were based on automatisms, without the conscious and intelligent participation of the learner, and leaving aside any subjective data to have him/her answer indifferently, in a mechanical way: "I am tall, I am short, I am French, I am Greek, etc." (see Puren, 1988, pp. 288-386).

[49] Although in the first generation of audiovisual courses, there was a division between those who were influenced by behaviourism and those who adhered to structuro-globalism.

[50] Puren, here (1988, p. 345), quotes the factors presented by Guberina (1984, p. 96): "la situation (réelle ou dans la pensée), la signification intellectuelle et affective, tous les moyens sonores, les moyens lexicologiques, l'état psychologique des intervenants et leur co-action réciproque, leur perception et leur production satisfaisante de la parole".

the area of needs analysis and Jan van Ek was attempting to apply to German what had been done for French with *Le Français Fondamental*. Van Ek's work in this area had a powerful influence on his first papers on the *Threshold Level*.

The working group laid down the principles on which a language teaching policy should be based if it were to serve the fundamental political objectives of the Council of Europe. These principles served as the foundation of all subsequent work (Trim, 26 September 2001, p.3):

- languages for all;

- languages are learnt for use;

- language learning is a life-long activity;

- language teaching should specify worthwhile, appropriate and realistic objectives based on a proper assessment of the needs, characteristics and resources of learners;

- language teaching should be planned as a coherent whole, covering the specification of objectives, the use of teaching methods and materials, the assessment of learner achievement and the effectiveness of the system, providing feedback to all concerned;

- effective language teaching involves the co-ordinated efforts of educational administrators and planners, textbook and materials producers, testers and examiners, school inspectors, teacher trainers, teachers and learners, who need to share the same aims, objectives and criteria of assessment.

A 'functional-notional' model was elaborated for specifying objectives in operational terms, describing "1) functions performed by acts of speech in communication (e.g. explaining, questioning, apologising, offering, congratulating, etc.); 2) general concepts (e.g. place, time, causality, etc.); 3) concrete, situation-specific concepts … (e.g. house, train, score, grill, etc.)" (Trim, 26 September 2001, p. 4). This model was intended to define the abilities that specific groups of learners, such as migrants, business people or tourists, needed

in order to reach a communication 'threshold' in the foreign language, that is, what a learner should be able to do to be an independent user of a particular language in a country where it is used as a common medium of communication. This led to the publication of the *Threshold Level* (van Ek, 1975), followed one year later by the French version, *Un Niveau Seuil* (Coste et al., 1976).

2.3.4 Project 4 for modern languages (1977-1981)

Threshold Level and *Un Niveau Seuil* were both presented, along with the framework for a unit-credit system, to an intergovernmental symposium in Ludvigshaven (Germany) in 1977. This represented the launching of Project 4, entitled 'Modern Languages: improving and intensifying language learning as factors making for European understanding, co-operation and mobility' (1977-1981). In this project, "the principles developed by the unit-credit group were applied in projects across the different sectors of general secondary, vocational and adult education, as well as in migrant education" (Trim, 26 September 2001, p. 4). Versions of the *Threshold Level* in different languages started to be elaborated, involving application of the original concept to those languages while taking into account their linguistic and cultural context.[51] An intermediate level, *Waystage* (van Ek & Alexander, 1977), was developed for English,[52] the aim being to define the minimum linguistic knowledge necessary for a learner to be able to communicate with native speakers of the foreign language in casual contacts and everyday situations. This level corresponds to the acquisition of basic and general competences in a foreign language. The passage from the Waystage to the Threshold level is gradual, both specifications sharing the same model and components (more rudimentary in the case of Waystage), both referring to a 'Common Core', and both using the terminology popularized by Wilkins (1976).

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[51] For instance, although the English version is only concerned with spoken language, the French version, *Un Niveau Seuil*, includes written language.

[52] Trim (26 September 2001, p. 4) explains: "An intermediate objective *Waystage* (van Ek & Alexander 1977) was developed as the objective for the hugely successful Anglo-German multi-media production *Follow Me*, subsequently followed on TV by over 500 million viewers worldwide."

2.3.5 Project 12: Learning and teaching modern languages for communication (1981-1988)

The findings of the works launched at the symposium in Rüschlikon were presented in 1982 at the First Strasbourg Conference, where they were approved and incorporated into Recommendation R (82) 18 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. Project 12 (1981-1988) was set up to help member states to implement this recommendation, which played a major role in the 1980s, leading to changes to national language policies and curricula and to an overall emphasis on the need to teach and learn languages for communicative purposes. A schools' interaction network that had already been set up as part of Project 4 was extended in order to help member states to share their experience and expertise. Teacher trainers, who played a major role in bringing new methods and materials to the classroom, were seen as key agents for modernization. For them, and for others perceived as primary change agents, a first series of 36 international workshops on specific priority themes was held between 1984 and 1987, involving 226 presenters and 1500 participants. Many of these workshops focused on aspects of what had come to be known as 'the communicative approach' to language teaching, including possible ways of incorporating it into language programmes and language teacher training. This series of workshops had a deep impact on language teaching. Indeed, it has been claimed that it helped to create a "broad consensus on the aims and methods of language teaching across member states and in fact much more widely" (Trim, 26 September 2001, p. 4).

2.3.6 Language learning for European citizenship (1989-1997)

In 1988, at a second Strasbourg conference, reference was made to the positive impact of projects 4 and 12 and to Resolution R (82) 18 on national curricula, especially at lower secondary level. Following the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 and political changes in Central and Eastern Europe, the Council of Europe expanded from 23 members to 40 between 1989 and 1996. Resolution R (82) 18 "provided important guidelines for the reform and re-orientation of language teaching in those new member states" (Trim, 26 September 2001, p. 4).

A new project, *Language learning for European citizenship* (1989-1997), was set up, with a series of 'new style' twinned workshops extending to new sectors and including new themes, such as information and communication technologies, bilingual education, educational links and exchanges, learner autonomy and enriched models for specifying objectives (Trim, 26 September 2001, p. 5 and CoE, 2006, p. 8). These twinned workshops were organized in the following way. A first workshop was organized in a member state to launch a two-year programme of development. Co-ordinators then oversaw the work of teams in different countries. After two years, a second workshop was held in another member state, the aim being to synthesize the results, plan their diffusion and draw up recommendations for language policies. This led, at the final conference held in Strasbourg in 1997, to Recommendation R (98) 6, which stresses the role of intercultural communication and of plurilingualism, promotes the provision of concrete measures for different sectors of education[53] (including the initial and in-service training of teachers) and encourages international co-operation and the sharing of experiences and competences through exchanges.

2.3.7 The Rüschlikon symposium: The birth of the European Framework of Reference for Languages and of the European Language Portfolio

On the initiative of the Swiss federal government and several Swiss organisations, an Intergovernmental Symposium entitled *Transparency and Coherence in Language Learning in Europe: Objectives, Evaluation, Certification* was held in Rüschlikon in November 1991. The first objective of the Symposium was originally to relate language programmes and examinations in Europe by the means of a common framework of reference (North, 2005, p. 5). This idea was not new: Trim had already "put forward the draft of a system in 1977 and . . . tried to get a unit developed to establish and administer it", but at that time the political will was not there and there was a strong suspicion of European centralism, particularly in Scandinavia (Saville, 2005, p. 278). Switzerland, although not a member of the Council of Europe, brought the concept back in 1991, mainly for internal reasons: education in that country was the prerogative of the cantons, not

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[53] See CoE: Committee of Ministers (1998), *Appendix to recommendation No. R (98) 6.* Measures grouped under the titles B to F respectively concern *Early language learning* (language learning before secondary education); *Secondary education; Vocational-oriented language learning; Adult education; Bilingual education in bilingual or multilingual areas.*

of the federal government (which has no Ministry of Education) and so Switzerland was confronted with the same problems of internal mobility as was Europe (though on a smaller scale) and, therefore, with the same need for a common basis for evaluating qualifications (Saville, p. 279). Switzerland stressed that "the degree of educational and vocational mobility means that people are always having to evaluate qualifications which they don't know anything about" (ibid.). Hence the perception that there was a need for a greater degree of transparency and coherence.

From 1989 to 1990, a group of representatives from Eurocentres language schools and a working party from the CILA (Commission Interuniversitaire de Linguistique Appliquée[54]) had worked on the problem of determining the linguistic competences attested by exams, diplomas and other forms of certification and had examined the possibility of establishing a common reference system and a model for the transparent description of exams, diplomas and certifications. In a meeting in London in autumn 1990, they had also concretized the idea of a Language Portfolio (CERLE, 2003, ¶ 2) (see section 2.5.1). This clearly had an impact on the way in which the aims of the development of a Common European Framework, as outlined at the Rüschlikon Symposium, were formulated. These aims were (Trim, 2005, p. 14):

- to promote and facilitate co-operation among educational institutions in different countries;

- to provide a sound basis for the mutual recognition of language qualifications;

- to assist learners, teachers, course designers, examining bodies and educational administrators to situate and co-ordinate their efforts.

The Council of Europe entrusted a small working group, consisting of John Trim (Project Director), Daniel Coste (CREDIF, France), Brian North (Eurocentres, Switzerland) and Joe Sheils (Council of Europe Secretariat), with the task of producing the text of the Framework. The task took a decade, with a first draft

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[54] The Inter-university Commission for Applied Linguistics, in Switzerland.

being published in 1995. The draft Framework was submitted for consultation (1996), with 1000 copies being sent out to institutions and individuals. Over 200 evaluation questionnaires were returned and analysed (Saville, 2005, p. 279). A second draft was then published in 1997 and presented in Strasbourg at the Final Conference of the *Language Learning for European citizenship* project, which recommended the testing of the Common European Framework. Recommendation R (98) 6, in a section on the Specification of objectives and assessment in its Appendix, "encourage(s) institutions to use the Council of Europe's Common Framework of Reference to plan or review language teaching in a coherent and transparent manner in the interests of better international co-ordination and more diversified language teaching".

The second draft of the Framework was distributed in 1998 for pilot experimentation, along with a General Guide and 10 User Guides. Then, following revisions, a final edition was published in English and in French and presented (with the European Portfolio) under the title of *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (hereafter CEFR) in 2001 as part of the activities organized for the European Year of Languages (jointly organised by the Council of Europe and the European Union).

2.3.8 Development of the Threshold level series

In parallel with the drawing up of the CEFR, the original versions of *Threshold Level* and *Waystage* were developed and extended in 1990 (van Ek and Trim, 1991a and 1991b) in the light of developments in the field, with the addition of sections dealing with discourse analysis, the sociocultural component, compensatory strategies in interaction, communicative competences and life-long learning (Viña Rouco, 2005, p. 99). A third, higher level specification, *Vantage Level* (van Ek and Trim, 2001), was prepared, first for English (1996), then for some other languages, such as German and Greek. The *Threshold Level* had an immense impact on language policies, language programmes and textbook design. Saville (2005, p. 281) has claimed that:

One thing which the Threshold level did was to bring together, with a common recognized objective, the independent agents who are working independently of each other but having to feed into the same system — the textbook writers, the teacher trainers, examining authorities, and so on. They could all refer to it although what they could do in respect to it would be entirely different.

The impact of the *Threshold Level* was reinforced by the appearance of the *Waystage* and *Vantage* levels, the three together underpinning notions of competencies that impacted strongly on the Common Reference Levels of the CEFR, a scale of six levels (elaborated between 1993 and 1996) in which *Waystage, Threshold and Vantage* levels correspond to the levels A2, B1 and B2 respectively.

2.4   The contents of the CEFR: An outline

The CEFR begins with a prefatory note (CEFR, p. ix), notes for the user (CEFR, xi – xiv) and a synopsis (xv – xv). The first chapter (pp. 1-8) defines the aims and objectives of the CEFR and outlines how it is intended to function in relation to the Council of Europe's language policy. In the context of what are referred to as 'plurilingualism' and 'pluriculturalism', there is a discussion of why the CEFR is perceived as being needed, and the criteria (comprehensiveness, transparency and coherence) it should meet. The second chapter (CEFR, pp. 9-20) outlines the underlying approach, one that is defined as being 'action-oriented', and makes reference to some key concepts, including 'general competences' (knowledge [*savoir*]; 'skills and know-how' [*savoir-faire*]; 'existential competence' [*savoir-être*]; 'ability to learn' [*savoir-apprendre*]); and 'communicative language competence' [comprising linguistic [55], sociolinguistic [56] and pragmatic

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[55] Linguistic competences (5.2.1) include lexical, grammatical, semantic, phonological, orthographic and orthoepic (the accurate pronunciation of sounds and words) competences. A table providing scaling for general linguistic range is followed by five scales relating to vocabulary range and vocabulary control, grammatical accuracy, phonological control and orthographic control.

[56] Sociolinguistic competence (5.2.2) deals with linguistic markers of social relations, politeness conventions, expressions of folk wisdom, register differences and dialect and accent. A table relating to the scaling of sociolinguistic appropriateness is included.

competences[57]). Also referred to are language activities (involving reception, production, interaction or mediation), domains, (public or private, occupational, educational) and tasks, strategies and texts. What are referred to as 'common reference levels of language proficiency' are introduced and there are, finally, sections dealing with language learning and teaching and language assessment.

The third chapter (CEFR, pp. 21-42) is devoted to a discussion of the common reference levels. The fourth chapter (CEFR, pp. 43-100) introduces a series of categories intended to help those involved in language teaching and learning to reflect upon and state clearly what learners can be expected to know and be able to do with language in order to communicate.[58] Chapter 5 (CEFR, pp. 101-130) explores competences that users / learners are said to require in order to deal with communicative situations.

The sixth chapter (CEFR, pp. 131-156) focuses on language teaching and learning and concerns what learners have to learn or acquire, the processes of language learning and what users of the Framework can do to facilitate learning. Some methodological options are provided and there is a discussion of errors and mistakes. The focus of the seventh chapter (CEFR, pp. 157-167) is tasks and their role in language learning and teaching.[59] The eighth chapter (CEFR, pp. 168-176) deals with linguistic diversification and the curriculum. The ninth, and final chapter (CEFR, pp. 177-196), is concerned with assessment, which is differentiated from programme evaluation and defined, in the context of the

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[57] Pragmatic competence is said to include discourse competence and functional competence. Discourse competence is defined as "the ability of a user/learner to arrange sentences in sequence so as to produce coherent stretches of language" (p. 123). Functional competence is said to be concerned with "the use of spoken discourse and written texts in communication for particular functional purposes" (p. 125) and includes the categories: microfunctions, macrofunctions and interaction schemata.

[58] Here, the 'context of language use' is outlined in terms of domains, situations, conditions and constraints, the user/learner's mental context and the mental context of the interlocutor(s). This is followed by a discussion of communication theme (and sub-themes), communicative tasks and purposes, communicative language activities and strategies, communicative language processes, and texts.

[59] It is noted that "[classroom] tasks, whether reflecting 'real-life' or essentially 'pedagogic' in nature are communicative to the extent that they require learners to comprehend, negotiate and express meaning in order to achieve a communicative goal" (p. 158).

CEFR, as relating to "the proficiency of the language user" and discussed in terms of validity,[60] reliability[61] and feasibility (CEFR, p. 177).

There are four appendices to the CEFR. The first (CEFR, pp. 205-216) deals with the development of proficiency descriptors and details the requirements for their formulation. The second appendix (CEFR, pp. 217-225) describes the Swiss research project which led to the development of the illustrative scales of descriptors presented in the Framework, outlining the methodology used to develop them. The third appendix (CEFR, pp. 226-243) presents the DIALANG online assessment system (available at the time in fourteen European languages) which is aimed at adults who wish to assess their level of proficiency and receive feedback. It is noted that although the self-assessment statements included in a number of tables are "mostly taken from the CEF", they have been "adapted where necessary to fit the specific needs of the system" (p. 226). The fourth appendix (CEFR, pp. 244-257) outlines the nature, purpose and development of 'can do' statements developed by the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE).[62]

2.5   Documents complementing the CEFR: The European Language Portfolio and the guides and manuals developed for the CEFR

Several documents have been elaborated in relation to the CEFR. The first presented is the European Language Portfolio, a self-assessment tool intended not only to help learners to assess their own progress but also to motivate them, to help them better understand the learning process and to facilitate international mobility. Its development was parallel to that of the CEFR and both were officially launched at the same time. The other documents are guides and manuals

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[60] A test or assessment is said to be valid if "what is actually assessed (the construct) is what, in the context concerned, *should* be assessed" and if "the information gained is an accurate representation of the proficiency of the candidate(s) concerned" (CEFR, p. 177).

[61] Reliability is defined as "the extent to which the same rank order of candidates is replicated in two separate (real or simulated) administrations of the same assessment" (CEFR, p. 177). It is noted, however, that "what is . . . more important than reliability is the accuracy of decisions made in relation to a standard" (ibid.), such as the decision to fail or pass a candidate, this accuracy depending on the validity of the particular standard (e.g. a particular level) for the context.

[62] These statements, anchored to the 1996 version of the CEFR (see p. 248), are presented in seven tables, four of which involve skill level summaries (document D1), social and tourist statement summaries (D2), work statements summaries (D4) and study statement summaries (D6). In each table, descriptors for listening/speaking, reading, and writing are scaled according to the six ALTE levels corresponding to the levels of the CEFR.

which have been designed to help users to better understand and implement the CEFR. The first one, *A Guide for Users,* has replaced the eleven guides accompanying the 1996 version of the CEFR.[63] The second one, of which the final version was published in 2009 (CoE, 2009a), is a manual for relating language examinations to the CEFR. It is complemented by a series of reference materials, CD-ROMs, videos and DVDs that provide samples of calibrated performances (intended to help examination providers to co-ordinate their judgements), and a *Reference Supplement* (2009b) containing additional information.[64]

2.5.1   The European Language Portfolio

The European Language Portfolio (ELP) is a tool for self-assessment in which learners can record their results, qualifications and competences in the learning of various languages as well as intercultural experiences of all kinds, at any level, all life long, whether at school or outside of school.

It has already been noted that the idea of establishing an ELP was presented at the 1991 Symposium in Rüschlikon where the Swiss delegation launched the idea of a research project to develop a system of description of language competences which would serve as a basis for the first prototypes of a Portfolio (see CERLE, 2003). A working group was set up to elaborate descriptors of strategic and intercultural competences and language proficiency benchmarking descriptors. Language competency descriptors were elaborated between 1993 and 1996 by Günther Schneider, Brian North and René Richterich.[65,66] After a period of experimentation and some modifications in 1995 and 1996, the Council of Europe decided, in April 1997,[67] to pursue work on the development of the CEFR and to

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[63] The version sent for trial in 1996 was actually published in 1995.

[64] The *Reference Supplement* contains three main components: quantitative and qualitative considerations in relating certificates and diplomas to the CEF and different approaches in standard setting (see http://www.coe.int/T/DG4/Linguistic/Manuel1_EN.asp#P19_2121).

[65] *Evaluation und Selbstevaluation der Fremdsprachenkompetenz an Schnittstellen des schweizerischen Bildungssystems (Evaluation et auto-évaluation de la compétence en langues étrangères aux points d'intersection du système d'enseignement en Suisse).* For more details, see also the section on chapter 3 of the CEFR, and for a full account B. North (2002), in C. Alderson (Ed.), pp. 87-105.

[66] These descriptors were included in the CEFR to describe the Common Reference Levels (CoE, 2001, p. 217, Appendix B: *The illustrative scales of descriptors*).

[67] The decision was made at the final conference of the Project referred to as *Language learning for European citizenship.*

develop different versions of a European Language Portfolio.[68] In October 2000, following a pilot phase between 1998 and 2000, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education of the Council of Europe (at their 20th Session in Poland) adopted a resolution in which they recommended the "implementation and wide use of the ELP" in the member states (*Resolution on the ELP*, 2000, recommendation 1). In an attempt to ensure that common standards and quality are respected, the Council of Europe created, in the same year, the *Validation Committee*, a committee of national delegates and experts for the accreditation of all new versions of the Language Portfolio. The European Language Portfolio was officially launched, together with the CEFR, in 2001. The overall goal was to raise motivation and support for the study of languages by providing learners with a means to "document their progress towards plurilingual competence by recording learning experiences of all kinds over a wide range of languages" (CoE, 2001, p. 20).

The Portfolio consists of three parts: a Language Passport, a Language Biography and a Dossier. The Language Passport provides "an overview of the individual's proficiency in different languages at a given point in time" (CoE, Language Policy Division, n.d. a, ¶ 1)[69]. The *Passport* can be regularly updated and records formal qualifications and diplomas, as well as self-assessments and intercultural experiences of all kinds. The *Language Biography* is a record of the language learning history of learners in which they record their experiences of language learning as well as their intercultural experiences, in formal or informal educational contexts. [70] It is intended to encourage individuals to involve themselves in the learning process, including planning their progress and evaluating their achievements, by helping them to reflect upon it. Learners can select for inclusion in the *Dossier* work that illustrates their skills, achievements

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[68] Recommendation R (98) 6 (CoE: Committee of Ministers, 1998, p. 5) "encourage(s) the development and use by learners in all educational sectors of a personal document (European language portfolio) in which they can record their qualifications and other significant linguistic and cultural experiences in an internationally transparent manner, thus motivating learners and acknowledging their efforts to extend and diversify their language learning at all levels in a lifelong perspective".

[69] It gives the 'linguistic identity' of an individual by providing a summary overview of his or her competences in each language he or she has learnt, "[the] overview [being] defined in terms of skills and the common reference levels in the Common European Framework" (CoE, Language Policy Division, n.d., ¶ 1).

[70] This includes courses taken, school exchanges and work experience.

and experiences in the field of foreign languages. The dossier can be updated as the learning progresses and as the individual grows older .[71] A critical aspect of the Portfolio is that it can reflect the learning processes involved in several languages at the same time and is not confined to recording qualifications gained in formal educational contexts. Also critical is the fact that, although many different types of portfolio can be designed in relation to age and local (national, regional) contexts, the same standards, as approved by the Council of Europe's Validation Committee, apply so that, in order to ensure coherence, all of them share a Common Core with the CEFR. One hundred and thirteen models of Portfolios had been validated by the end of December 2010. However, the Validation Committee ceased to exist at that date, and the validating process came to an end.[72] A series of documents have also been developed to help teachers, teacher trainers and portfolio developers,[73] and an electronic version of the Language Passport for adults, the *Europass Language Passport*,[74] has been developed by the Council of Europe and the European Union (in 2004) and can be completed online or downloaded. Moreover, the first electronic European Language Portfolio, developed by EAQUALS and ALTE, has been accredited (see EAQUALS-ALTE, n.d.).

2.5.2 Guides to facilitate the use of the CEFR

A series of eleven guides, including a *General Guide for Users* (CC-LANG (98) 1) (Trim, 1997b) and ten specialised guides (CC-LANG (96) 9-18) complemented the 1996 version of the CEFR. For the final version of the CEFR, they were replaced (in April 2002) by a single *Guide for Users* (Trim [Ed.], 2001), which included the information contained in the previous guides along with new developments. This 232 page-document consists of four sections giving advice to different categories of user. The first section concerns all users; the second deals with those directly engaged in the learning / teaching process; the third section is intended for those involved in the planning, organisation, delivery and quality

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[71] CoE, Language Policy Division (n.d., ¶ 1) and also Trim (26 September 2001), Council of Europe (2006), Rehorick (2005).
[72] It has been replaced, since April 2011, by an "online registration based on the principle of self-declaration" (CoE, Language Policy Division, n.d. b).
[73] See http://www.coe.int/T/DG4/Portfolio/?L=E&M=/main_pages/documents.html
[74] See http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu

assessment of language education;[75] the fourth is intended for textbook and materials writers.

These guides represent one response to those who criticized the Framework on the grounds of its complexity. However, as John Trim noted in an interview with Nick Saville (2005, p. 283), "in general, they haven't been very influential, partly because many people did not know about them, and also perhaps, because some of the guides themselves didn't build in the user dimension adequately".

2.5.3   The Manual for Relating Language Examinations to the CEFR

Figueras (2008, p. 28) notes that one of the areas in which the CEFR has been most subject to criticism is that of assessment. Rapid adoption of the CEFR's Common Reference Levels by examination institutions (elaborating and commercializing language tests) has not always been backed up by validation studies. This criticism, according to Figueras (ibid.), was at its height at a seminar organised in Helsinki by the Finnish Ministry of Education in July 2002. Following that seminar, the Council of Europe organised a working group to design a manual for those wishing to relate examinations to the levels of the CEFR. That manual, *Relating Language Examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (hereafter the Manual, CoE, 2009a) represents a continuation of earlier work of the Council of Europe in the field of language policy, and particularly the Threshold Level and the CEFR.[76,77] However, the authors also wished to take into account more recent developments on levels and objectives which had been elaborated on the basis of the CEFR and which included a series of content specifications for different languages (see subsection 2.6.1 below). In relation to these, it was claimed that this manual is a 'logical complement' (Manual, p. 4).

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[75] It is concerned with curriculum design, revision and updating, organisation and delivery of the curriculum, and quality assurance and quality control.

[76] In fact, an earlier guide was prepared under the direction of M. Milanovic on behalf of ALTE, *Language examining and test development* (CoE, 2002).

[77] The Manual, is intended to help providers of examinations to link assessments and certifications to the CEFR in a transparent way, providing reference materials, tools and procedures, so that examinations can be situated in relation to the CEFR and be comparable among themselves, thus answering the question raised by Charles Alderson: "How do I know that my Level B1 is your Level B1?" (Manual, Preface, p. ix).

The Manual recommends following four sets of procedures (Chapters 3-6): *familiarisation* with the CEFR; *specification* of examinations in terms of objectives, content and tasks profiled in relation to the levels of the CEFR and the categories presented in Chapters 4 and 5; *standardisation* to achieve and implement "a common understanding of the meaning of the CEF levels" (Manual, p. 7) and *empirical validation* through the collection and analysis of test data. The last chapter (Chapter 7) provides guidelines for reporting on the content of examinations and the procedures followed in order to link it to the CEFR levels.

The Manual is complemented by a Reference Supplement (CoE, 2009b) which "discusses approaches to standard setting, classical test theory, qualitative methods in test validation, generalisability theory, factor analysis, and item response theory" (Little, 2006, p. 184).[78] It is also supported by a series of reference materials for different languages in CD-ROM format which provide calibrated samples of performances in writing, listening and reading. There are also videos / DVDs which provide samples of spoken performances by learners from different countries (not necessarily European countries)[79] at different levels. It has been claimed that these illustrations should "make it possible for testers and examiners to co-ordinate their judgements, and for classroom teachers to have a clearer picture of what to expect from students at different levels" (Trim, 2005, p. 17).[80]

2.6   Moving towards language-specific descriptions and a framework for languages of school education

Two recent developments are outlined here. The first involves the development of Reference Level Descriptions for national and regional languages; the second is a project involving the design of a Common European Framework of Reference for Languages of School Education (which necessarily involves mother tongue education).

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[78] These elements correspond to the different sections of the Reference Supplement (CoE, 2004).
[79] These materials provide samples of learners of different countries, European or not, and some of these learners come from countries speaking non Indo-European languages, such as China, Korea, Japan, the United Arab Emirates, etc.
[80] Examples of these illustrative materials can be found on the site of the Council of Europe, at the following address: http://www.coe.int/T/DG4/Portfolio/?L=E&M=/main_pages/illustrationse.html

2.6.1 Reference Level Descriptions for national and regional languages

One of the most recent projects involves the development of Reference Level Descriptions (RLDs) for national and regional languages and would appear to represent a response to those who have argued that the specifications of the CEFR are too broad to be very helpful (CoE, n.d. a, ¶ 7):[81]

> The descriptors [of the CEFR] specify progressive mastery of each skill, which is graded on a six-level scale (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2). However, for operators, textbook authors and teachers, the specification set out in the CEFR may appear excessively broad. Work began on drafting CEFR specifications language by language.

More specific descriptions, related to CEFR levels, were first developed for the German language. On the initiative of the Goethe Institut, a team of representatives from Germany, Austria and Switzerland drew up *Profile Deutsch* (Glaboniat, Müller, Schmitz, Rusch & Wertenschlag, 2002).[82,83] The motivation for this has been discussed by Trim (2007a, ¶ 10).[84] Other sets of descriptions followed or are currently being developed for other languages (see for example, *Un référentiel pour le français* for French, *Plan curricular del Instituto Cervantes for Spanish, English Profile* for English, etc.).[85]

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[81] Figueras (2008, p. 31) has noted that this includes assessment professionals, who have noted the necessity of developing detailed descriptions for different languages.

[82] The 2002 edition covered levels A1-B2, then the *Profile Deutsch A1-C2 (Version 2.0)* published in 2005 by the same authors covered all six levels of the CEFR.

[83] The fact that they immediately adapted their Threshold level to the CEFR, incorporating its main features (Trim, 2007a, ¶ 11) explains why the Germans, the Swiss and the Austrians were able to produce RLD for German as early as 2002 (2005 for the six Common Reference Levels).

[84] Trim (2007a, ¶ 10) notes that: "The appearance of CEFR, published simultaneously in French and English, prompted the Goethe-Institut and others concerned with the teaching of German as a foreign language, to revise and recast Kontaktschwelle [the German Threshold level] as a multilevel survey of resources for the learning of German, distributing the functions, general and specific notions of Kontaktschwelle and their lexical and structural exponents, over the four levels A1–B2, supplemented as was felt necessary. This survey would then provide a concrete basis for each learner, or provider, to extract what was relevant to their needs, motivations, characteristics and resources and to construct individual learning profiles. A project was set up, entitled *Profile Deutsch* (Profiles for German)".

[85] According to the information available on the CoE's website (see http://www.coe.int/t/ dg4/linguistic/dnr_EN.asp), it seems that only German and Spanish languages have RLD for all of the six levels of the CEFR. For French, RLD exist for levels A1, A2, B2 and A1.1 (for the first acquisition in French), and B1 should be published next. No RLD seem to have been published yet for English but the project for an *English Profile* is under way.

According to Beacco, Bouquet and Porquier, the authors of the French RLDs for level B2 (2004, p. 8), the major aim in producing these language-specific descriptions is to facilitate the development of piloting tools for language policies, language curricula and certifications. Thus, these descriptions (CoE, 2005a, p. 4) "are meant to serve as a starting point for the preparation of teaching programmes for the language concerned". Interestingly, in the online presentation of the *English Profile* (*What is the English Profile?* [n.d.], ¶ 1), the ambitions of the project are defined in the following terms: "It is intended that the project will lead to the production of a *core curriculum* [italics added] and a tool kit for English as a foreign or additional language, linked to the general principles and approaches of the CEFR".

The function of the RLDs is to transpose the descriptors of each level of the CEFR into linguistic terms that are language-specific, something that is considered necessary if the competences described in the CEFR are to be implemented. Thus, it has been argued that the RLDs should provide "inventories of the linguistic realisations of general notions, acts of discourse and specific notions / lexical elements and morpho-syntactic elements considered characteristic of [the level concerned]" (CoE, 2005a, p. 5). However, although the descriptions will necessarily differ according to the languages concerned, they need, according to Beacco, et al. (2004, p. 10), to share certain features if they are to contribute to the convergence of education systems made possible by the development and diffusion of the CEFR. With that in mind, the Council of Europe has published a *Guide for the Production of RLD* (CoE, 2005a) which outlines common general principles, identifies the features that these descriptions should share and specifies the methodology that should be used to create the inventories "in order to give these reference level descriptions for individual languages a degree of scientific status and a social audience compatible with their aim" (CoE, 2005a, p. 6).

All of this is, according to Beacco, et al. (2004, p. 9), predicated on the hypothesis that it is possible to identify linguistic forms for particular languages which would, on the whole, correspond to the competences which are described in the CEFR independently of the languages concerned, thus moving from general reference descriptions common to different languages to reference descriptions

specific to French (and other) language(s). Thus, the RLDs' function is to "décrire, sous forme d'inventaires de "mots", des contenus possible d'enseignement" [describe, in the form of inventories of 'words', the possible teaching contents] (Beacco, et al., p. 7 – my translation).

The inventories associated with these descriptions can be adjusted with time, as the language changes, and are, it has been asserted, "one of the anchor points proposed by the Council of Europe's Language Policy Division for the development of programmes that are consistent with one another, from one language to another and also with the common tools which already exist" (CoE, 2005a, p. 3).

2.6.2   Project for a framework for languages of school education

The Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe, "concerned with the development of effective skills in the language(s) of instruction" (CoE, n.d. b, ¶ 1) has launched a project to draw up, on the model of the CEFR, a Common European Framework of Reference for Languages of School Education, that is, the languages through which school curricula are delivered, which, in most cases, will be pupils' first (mother) language. A preliminary survey was launched in April 2005, its aim being to secure a general overview of the curricula used to teach the language of instruction in member states at national or regional level, a primary focus being on identifying similarities and differences as well as any major problems that would need to be addressed.

At the time of writing, the feasibility of designing a framework of the kind to which reference has been made is still being considered. However, its potential significance can be considered in the context of the fact a number of problems have been identified in relation to the teaching of the languages of academic instruction (Beacco and Byram, 2006, p. 3).[86]

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[86] These include: a lack of efficiency in teaching/learning reading or writing skills; the failure to eliminate disparities in linguistic skills and experience among children of different backgrounds; the difficulties of teaching migrant children (language problems, cultural problems, and the fact that some of them have received little or no schooling in the country they come from); emphasis in some cases on grammatical knowledge at the expense of communication skills; an approach to the teaching of literature that tends to centre on the transmission of knowledge rather than on reading and analytical skills; and vague definition of objectives to be achieved.

David Little (2006, p. 187) has claimed that although the notion of plurilingualism is central to the Council of Europe, "neither the CEFR, nor the ELP does full justice to the concept". The CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001, 1.3, p. 4) recognizes that "an individual person's experience of language in its cultural contexts expands, from the language of the home to that of society at large and then to the languages of other people (whether learnt at school or by direct experience)". This represents acknowledgement of the essential role of the mother tongue in the construction of plurilingual competence. Even so, "the CEFR offers an apparatus for describing second and foreign language proficiency, and the ELP is explicitly concerned with learning languages other than the mother tongue" (Little, ibid.). The project on Languages of School Education is intended to address this issue. Thus, in the online presentation of the project on the Council of Europe site (CoE, n.d. b), it is noted that the project includes a focus on language as a school subject, language as a medium of teaching and learning across the curriculum and "possible convergences between the language(s) of school education and modern (foreign) languages" in the context of "a global or holistic approach to language education policy aimed at promoting coherence in the development of the learner's plurilingual repertoire".

What appears to be being proposed here is a common language policy for first, second and foreign languages. It has been claimed that if this project were to succeed, it would "have important consequences not only for the CEFR but also for the ELP and the elaboration of language curricula" (Little, 2006, p. 187). As Byram (CoE & Jagiellonian University, 2006, p. 17) observes, there are a range of critical issues that need to be addressed in this context: "[It is] important to discuss the differences between concepts such as Mother Tongue Education, Standard Language Education, Key Language, Language of Instruction, First Language Education, Home Language, National Language, State Language Education, etc.". Furthermore, he notes (ibid.):

> [There] is a trend to specialisation, with the result that there is a lack of contact between for example those dealing with foreign / second language education and those specialising in mother / first / official / national language –

as well as between those specialising in teaching literature and those interested in teaching language itself.

Several intergovernmental conferences have already taken place to discuss this project (Krakow, April 2006; Strasbourg, October 2006; Prague, November 2007). In his report of the conference held in Prague, Fleming (2007, p. 11) outlined several themes that emerged. One of these is "the importance that language plays in ensuring that disadvantaged learners[87] have full access to the curriculum and derive full benefit from it" (ibid.).[88] In relation to the Framework itself, participants made a number of potentially significant points. First, because the education world is always changing, a "more fluid set of theoretical perspectives, examples of policy and practical support" is preferable to a "single static document evolved through many years of deliberation and research" (ibid.). Secondly, the complexity of the project means that a single publication would be too expansive and/or too difficult to access and navigate. Third, there is a need to consider at an early stage the need for support mechanisms for teacher education and development. Fleming also noted that the suggestion of having an electronic format, first made at the intergovernmental conference in Strasbourg in 2006, had become clearer and more convincing in Prague. Finally, Fleming claimed (ibid.) that "the Framework document does not need a common core or centre to provide the necessary stability, coherence and direction". On the basis of Fleming's observations, it appears that what is being contemplated is a framework for languages of education that is presented from the outset in a number of documents (rather than a single one) that are more flexible and more user-friendly than the CEFR. If this is the case, it will be interesting to see what impact this will have on CEFR developments to date in that it is a project that appears to have the potential to lead to a reworking of everything that has preceded it.

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[87] This term may include native speakers, indigenous minorities or migrant children.
[88] Fleming (2007, p. 11) adds that "[it] is important to recognise the degree to which the language of schooling may serve as a barrier which inhibits rather than promotes learning".

Chapter 3

Critical Review of Selected Commentary on the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* and its Uses

3.1 Introduction

The CEFR has been translated into more than thirty languages.[89] It has been enthusiastically welcomed by some and severely criticized, or largely ignored by others. In this chapter, I provide a review of selected commentary on, and critique of the CEFR, referring to a range of sources, including Internet-based discussion forums.[90] The first section below (3.2) deals with the CEFR itself, moving from a consideration of general issues relating to its purposes (or intended functions) (3.2.1) and its accessibility (3.2.2), to more specific ones relating to competencies (3.2.3) and levels, scales and descriptors (3.2.4). The next section (3.3) deals with issues associated with its uses and users, specifically certifications and their providers and users (3.3.1), textbooks and textbook writers and publishers (3.3.2), curricula and curriculum designers (3.3.3) and classrooms and classroom teachers (3.3.4). The third section (3.4) explores some issues associated with the concept of plurilingualism, focusing on the situation of migrants (3.4.1) and on developments relating to mother tongues and the language of school education (3.4.2). The chapter ends with a final note (3.5).

3.2 Issues directly associated with the CEFR itself

In this section, the focus is on issues relating to the CEFR itself, general issues concerning its purposes and its accessibility, and more specific issues concerning

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[89] According to the CoE's website, besides the two original versions in English and in French, there are 36 language versions of the CEFR (two other translations are under way), including Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Georgian and Ukrainian versions (http://www.coe.int/ t/dg4/linguistic/CADRE_EN.asp).

[90] Two discussion forums that have proved to be particularly useful are the Language Testing Research and Practice discussion group (LTEST-L) and the European Association for Language Testing and Assessment (EALTA) discussion group. Archives for the first of these (LTEST-L) are available at: http://lists.psu.edu/archives/ltest-l.html (to which quotations are referenced). As EALTA discussions are not archived, they are referred to as personal communications (as is the custom).

its approach to competencies and the specification of levels, scales and descriptors.

3.2.1   The purposes of the CEFR: Shifting sands?

The purposes of the CEFR (p. 1) are outlined in the first chapter:

> The Common European Framework provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe. It *describes in a comprehensive way* what language learners have to learn to do in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they have to develop so as to be able to act effectively. The description also covers the cultural context in which language is set. The Framework also defines levels of proficiency which allow learners' progress to be measured at each stage of learning and on a life-long basis [emphasis added].

It is also noted that it is intended to help "overcome the barriers to communication among professionals working in the field of modern languages arising from the different educational systems in Europe" and to "facilitate European mobility through the mutual recognition of qualifications" (p.1).

Several of these intended purposes will be discussed in detail in later sections. My primary aim in this section is draw attention to some issues that have arisen in connection with the nature of the initial statement of purpose.

Several years after the publication of the CEFR, John Trim (2005, pp. 17-18), one of its authors, wrote:

> We have never wanted teachers to feel themselves reduced to mere retailers of decisions made at a higher level, unthinkingly accepting curricula, materials and methods and imposing them on learners in a mechanical fashion. . . . For me, the primary objective of CEFR is to set out, clearly and comprehensively, what a competent language user knows and does. Of course, the CEFR is *not a manual, but a framework, a catalogue rather than a description*. But it does focus attention on the many *parameters of*

language use and language competences, inviting the reader to reflect on the relevance of each for his or her own work [emphasis added].

The final sentence of the extract above can be related directly to an observation by Brian North (2004), also one of the authors of the CEFR. He notes that the function of the CEFR is to "stimulate reflection and discussion" (¶ 4), to "empower and to facilitate, not to prescribe or control" (¶ 3), adding (¶ 4) that:

> It doesn't try to define what should be taught (content specifications), let alone state how it should be taught (methodology) . . . [Content] specifications differ according to the target language and the context of the learning; methodology varies with pedagogic culture . . . only the professionals concerned can take the decisions.

Although it is said in the CEFR (p.1) itself that it "*describes* . . . what language learners have to learn to do", Trim refers to it later as a catalogue rather than a description. This would appear to involve rather more than a shift in emphasis, especially when read in the context of its presentation as an invitation to readers to reflect on the relevance of aspects of it for their own work. A similar point can be made with reference to North's later observations. It is self-evidently true that the CEFR does not provide language-specific content specifications. Why then does North find it necessary to state that it does not do so? The reason may be that what he claims next (that the CEFR does not try to specify what should be taught and how teaching should be conducted) is more likely to be accepted if it is linked to a statement that is undeniably true. The reality is, however, that although the CEFR does not specify in a language-specific way what is to be taught or precisely how teaching is to be conducted, it certainly *does* appear to do so in a more general sense. After all, Trim (2005) observes that "Educational authorities can *and should* use it for long-term strategic planning of language learning aims and objectives" (p. 26) [emphasis added], and notes that it aims to set out, clearly and comprehensively, "what a competent language user *knows and does*" (p. 18) [emphasis added]. Aims and objectives have implications in relation to content. Approaches to language teaching, such as what is often referred to as 'the communicative approach', have implications for methodology — and there can be little doubt that the CEFR favours certain approaches over others. Furthermore,

there can be no doubt that the development of RLDs is moving the CEFR project closer to prescription, as witnessed by the following extract from the online presentation of English Profile (What is the English Profile? [n.d.], ¶ 1):

> It is intended that the project will lead to the production of a *core curriculum* [italics added] and a tool kit for English as a foreign or additional language, linked to the general principles and approaches of the CEFR.

Why has there been uncertainty about the intended functions of the CEFR? Perhaps partly because, as Alderson (2007, p. 661) observes, "[it] . . . is in essence something of an encyclopaedia of language learning and use", one which is "all too frequently couched in language that is not easy to understand, often vague, undefined, and imprecise". The use of the word 'encyclopaedia' here is telling. Undeniably, the CEFR is multi-faceted. It does not follow from this, however, that it is comprehensive in the sense that it includes all that is necessary to provide "a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe" (CEFR, p.1).[91] This is certainly not intended as a comment on the academic competence of the authors of the CEFR. After all, it would be quite impossible to express in a single volume the specialist knowledge available in any one of the areas covered in the CEFR. What it *is* intended to do, however, is to draw attention to the fact that some of the claims made in the CEFR itself in relation to its purposes are, at best, optimistic. They are also problematic when considered in relation to growing unease about what Canagarajah (2005, p. xiv) describes as the "one-sided imposition of homogeneous discourses and intellectual traditions by a few dominant communities".

Reference has been made to the statement of purpose in the introduction to the CEFR. Reference has also been made to the fact that both North (2004) and Trim (2005) later claimed that it should be regarded only as a guide to reflection. Trim (2005, p. 18) has said that he can "state categorically that CEFR gives no instructions or even recommendations to its users as to what they should or should

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[91] It may, however, appear to do so to those whose familiarity with disciplines relevant to its content is itself less than comprehensive.

not do". We need to bear in mind, however, that language teachers are by no means the only intended users of the CEFR, and that Trim has also said that educational authorities "can and should use it for long-term strategic planning of language learning aims and objectives" (p. 26). In connection with this, it is relevant to note that in an interview on Radio France International (RFI, 2004, first question), Beacco made the following observation: ". . . 'le Cadre' est un référentiel, c'est-à-dire un outil commun qui définit des *normes* et des *standards*" [the Framework is a referential work, in other words a common tool *that defines norms* and *standards*] [emphasis added]. Notwithstanding that observation, Beacco (2004, ¶ 1) wrote in the same year that the CEFR is "ni norme, ni modèle" [neither a norm, nor a model] but a work that "décrit une 'philosophie pratique' partagée pour l'élaboration des programmes et des parcours d'enseignement et d'apprentissage des langues dites étrangères" [describes a shared 'practical philosophy' for the elaboration of curricula and teaching programmes].

In view of these apparently contradictory statements about the CEFR by those directly involved in its development, the following observation made by Trim (interviewed by Saville, 2005, p. 281) seems, at best to be disingenuous: "[There] is no intention of prescription on the part of the authors. But among the users there will be many who might well have a very strong intention of prescription". It is certainly true, as Fulcher (2004, ¶ 7) notes, that in the CEFR documentation itself (even in the first consultation draft of 1996), the following statement occurs: "The construction of a comprehensive, transparent and coherent Framework . . . does not imply the imposition of one single system". However, prescription need not operate at the level of systems as a whole: it can be system-internal. Furthermore, if some aspects of prescription were not intended, it is difficult to see how the CEFR could achieve the objective of "[facilitating] European mobility through the mutual recognition of qualifications" (CEFR, p.1). It may simply be that, at the time of its initial development, the authors of the CEFR did not reflect fully on all of the implications of some of the statements made in it. If this is the case, it is hardly surprising. Even so, acknowledgement of the fact that there are genuine issues relating to some of the claims made in CEFR itself that need to be addressed would be helpful.

Fulcher (2004, ¶1) has observed that the CEFR "is rapidly becoming the standard reference for teaching and testing languages in Europe" (rather than one reference among many). Its actual impact in some areas may, however, be more apparent than real. Furthermore, there is a difference between a standard reference and a norm. As Van Avermaet and Depauw (2004, slide 9) have observed, it is "difficult to conceive" how we could actually use "an encyclopaedic document" as a "normative instrument". Even so, Alderson (2007, p.662) notes that:

> Politicians and civil servants . . . have been eager to use the CEFR *to define standards* [emphasis added]. Claims that such or such level must be attained at the end of such or such educational stage (as is the case in France, for instance), or for migrants (NL, Denmark) are made without giving thought to whether these levels are achievable or justified.

One wonders whether, if it could be ascertained that the levels to which reference is made above were achievable and could be justified, it would then be acceptable to Alderson for the CEFR to be used to define standards. Certainly, it would appear that there are circumstances in which others would consider this to be acceptable. Trim, in his interview by Saville (2004, p. 282), makes the following observation:

> There will always be people who are trying to use it [the CEFR] as an instrument of power, but I don't think that the Council of Europe can or should take on that role. Unless, of course, the member states themselves decide that a common structure is needed and request the Secretariat to prepare a convention. That seems to me to be quite problematic, *but not, of course, impossible if the conditions are right* [emphasis added].

It is certainly true (as discussed more fully below) that it would be difficult to use the CEFR in any genuine sense to define standards. However, even using it as *the standard reference* (rather than a reference among many) is problematic. In the words of McNamara (29 May 2007):

> The CEFR is a given - the only given - in language education in Europe (and its power extends to the US, Chile, Australia, and Hong Kong at least, as previous discussions have shown). Its existence as a political fact makes

it impossible to question the adequacy of its construct. In that sense it is like the ILR scale too, apparently impervious to serious intellectual question because of the overwhelming fact of its use in practice. [92] But unlike the ILR, whose sphere of influence was relatively limited, it is the instrument of a staggering degree of centralized thinking, global in reach. That surely is what we should also be talking about.

3.2.2   Accessibility

The second draft version of the CEFR (CoE, 1997) was distributed in 1998 for pilot experimentation, along with a series of user guides comprising a *General User Guide* and ten specialized guides. These guides have now been replaced by a new *Guide for users* (Trim, 2001). These guides are relevant to a discussion of accessibility.

One major criticism of the CEFR concerns its accessibility. As early as 1998, Debyser (p. 5), referring to the second draft version (CoE, 1997), commented as follows:

> Dans l'esprit de ses concepteurs, [le CECR] devait être 'à usages multiples', 'souple', 'dynamique', 'convivial', 'non dogmatique', 'suffisamment exhaustif', 'transparent', 'cohérent'. Un au moins de ces buts est loin d'être atteint, celui de la 'convivialité', terme d'ailleurs bien médiocre pour indiquer que ce document devait être lisible, clair et facile à consulter pour tous les utilisateurs.

> [In the mind of its authors, [the CEFR] was meant to be 'multi-purpose', 'flexible', 'dynamic', 'user-friendly', 'non-dogmatic', 'sufficiently exhaustive', 'transparent' and 'coherent'. One of these objectives, at least, is far from being reached, that of being user-friendly, quite a mediocre term, by the way, to indicate that the CEFR should be readable, clear and easy to consult for all users.]

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[92] The Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) scale developed by the United States Foreign Service Institute (FSI) to assess the language proficiency of government employees (see http://www.govtilr.org/Skills/IRL%20Scale%20History.htm).

Debyser has also observed that although some of the user guides were of an acceptable quality, others were not, and would consequently represent a considerable challenge for those decision-makers for whose use they were intended (ibid).

In 2005 and 2006, the Council of Europe conducted two questionnaire-based surveys. The first of these (CoE, 2005b) generated 111 responses from language teaching professionals representing 37 different institutions in European States, Egypt and Mexico.[93] In the summary of findings, it is noted that: "The first, most frequently raised [issue] is the complexity of the CEFR" – both the text itself, which was found to be very difficult to read, and the way the new approach is presented (p.4). The comments include: "very difficult to read straight through", "not very accessible" and requiring "intensive study". Most of the respondents called for a shorter, simpler, more user-friendly version. Some also called for examples of how the CEFR could be applied. One respondent noted the "need for material that illustrates specific can-do statements, tasks and performances, rather than samples that illustrate general levels of language performance or proficiency" (p. 8).

In the executive summary of results of the second survey (Martyniuk and Noijons, 2007), which concerned the use of the CEFR at a national level in the member states of the Council of Europe,[94] reference is made to similar observations. It is also noted that:

> [Respondents] stress the need for general clarification (such as comments
> on theoretical concepts, examples and good illustrations, sets of tasks for
> use in specific contexts, a bilingual terminology glossary for each

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[93] The results are said (p. 3) to represent the views of the following types of institutions: Higher education (39 institutions); Central authority (29); Teacher training centre (18); Teacher education or Teacher college (18); Examination provider (16); Language schools or centres (14); Adult education (12) and Other (28) such as further education, publisher, primary or secondary school, cultural agency or centre. These figures are not very precise though, since they seem to take account of the number of institutions included in the survey (adding up to 174) and not the actual number of responses (111). Moreover, in the case of "other", the figure does not tell how many institutions of each type were concerned. Yet we can see that the majority of these institutions are higher education institutions and central authorities, along with teacher training institutions.

[94] In this survey, conducted in 2006, one short questionnaire was to be filled in by each of the 46 member states of the Council of Europe. Consequently, answers reflect official views about the situation at a national level, and not individual views or the views of institutions or organizations of any particular group of users.

country), as well as the need to familiarise more teachers with the document by organising national and international events, exchanging good practice, etc.

The following is an extract from the end of the summary (Martyniuk and Noijons, 2007, p. 8):

> While the potential of the CEFR appears to be quite widely acknowledged and appreciated, there seems to be a considerable and quite urgent need to develop user-friendly sets of materials for mediating the CEFR to the different stakeholder groups: policy makers, curriculum developers, textbook developers, publishers, teachers, testers, parents of learners, employers. There is also a strongly felt need for national and international co-operation in interpreting and using the CEFR.

Respondents to that survey generally viewed the impact of the CEFR at that point as being "quite modest", observing that "it does not yet play an important role for the teaching profession at the school level", a major factor in this being its perceived complexity and lack of clarity (p. 8). John Trim (2005, p.15) has indicated that the Framework is designed "to be accessible to all concerned with language learning, teaching and assessment, *particularly classroom teachers and students"* [emphasis added]. This being the case, the perception that the document lacks clarity must be regarded as a critical issue, particularly as criticism of this type has persisted, with Alderson (2007, p. 661) making the following observation six years after the initial criticism by Debyser (referred to at the beginning of this section):

> [The] bulk of the CEFR, which is in essence something of an encyclopaedia of language learning and use . . . is all too frequently couched in language that is not easy to understand, often vague, undefined, and imprecise.[95]

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[95] It is worth noting that the complexity of the document, according to all the comments we have seen and to Alderson's words, is not due to the high level of linguistics or contents of the document, but rather to the confusion created by the text itself.

Has this problem been addressed? Thus far, the 2001 version of the CEFR has not been modified, nor have bilingual glossaries been produced, although the need for them that was indicated in the findings of the two surveys and has been reinforced by Martyniuk and Noijons (2007, p. 8). However, Trim (Saville, 2005, p. 283) has acknowledged that some of the guides initially produced were not very influential, "partly . . . perhaps, because some of [them] didn't build in the user dimension adequately", and they have been replaced by a single *Guide for Users* (Trim, 2001). This is a 232 page document, comparable in size to the CEFR itself. Even so, the proliferation of documents continues. In 2003, a manual for relating examinations to the CEFR was produced (CoE, 2003a). One year later, a supplement (CoE, 2004[96]), whose function was to explain the manual, was released. Even so, Alderson l (2007, p. 661) later observed that the existence of the CEFR assessment scales "has not provided users with all the information they [need] to use the CEFR", adding that "[it] is unfortunate that even all these materials are not considered sufficient, and that demand is high for more exemplifications of levels". The CEFR has not only led to a proliferation of material produced by the Council of Europe itself, but also to a proliferation of explanatory material produced by others in a number of different languages (often designed for teachers by Ministries of Education). Thus, for example, the French *Ministère de l'Éducation nationale* (2006), on its Éduscol site, provides an explanatory guide to the principles of the CEFR with a link to the document itself.

3.2.3   Competencies

As has been indicated (section 2.4.5), competencies are divided in the CEFR into 'general competences' and 'communicative language competence' (CEFR, 2001, pp. 101-130). General competences include knowledge *(savoir),* skills and know-how *(savoir-faire)*, existential competence *(savoir-être)* and ability to learn *(savoir-apprendre).* Communicative language compet*ences are made up of linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences.*[97]

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[96] The final versions of the manual and the supplement have been published recently (CoE, 2009a and 2009b).
[97] One of the respondents to the first survey reported above, made the following suggestion (CoE, 2005b, p. 7): "Un tableau avec des critères précis et différenciés pour l'évaluation des compétences dans le domaine de l'interculturel serait très utile." [A table with precise and

Sometimes, communicative competences are treated as coming under general competences; sometimes they are not:[98]

> Language use, embracing language learning, comprises the actions performed by persons who as individuals and as social agents develop a range of competences, both general and in particular communicative language competences (Trim, 2001b, p. 169).

> All human competences contribute in one way or another to the language user's ability to communicate and may be regarded as aspects of communicative competence (CEFR, Chapter 5, p. 101).

Vincent (2004) criticizes the way in which competences are dealt with in the CEFR generally, observing that the contribution of cognitive sciences in the area of communicative competencies in the last two decades has been ignored. He notes that although the separation of general competences and communicative language competences was justified by the authors of the CEFR on the grounds that the former are acquired before the learning of foreign languages, this justification is flawed, taking no account of the fact that all knowledge is language-related and that communicative knowledge and competences are in fact acquired prior to the learning of a foreign language (p. 43, note 2). He also claims that there is a lack of coherence in consideration of the relationships between the two types of competency (p.44). Perhaps most significantly, he notes that the authors of the CEFR confuse knowledge, competency and aptitude (p.48), presenting a 'cumulatif' (cumulative), essentially behaviourist model (rather than a dynamic one), precisely the type of model that has been challenged by constructivists (p.47).

In addition to his general criticism of the treatment of competencies in the CEFR, Vincent specifically criticizes the way in which the authors treat culture, noting that they struggle "à donner une image cohérente de la notion de compétence culturelle pourtant consacrée par la littérature spécialisée" [to provide a coherent image of the concept of cultural competence although it is well established in

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differentiated criteria for the assessment of competences in the intercultural field would be very useful].

[98] See Vincent, 2004, p. 44.

specialized literature], and observing that it is split between general competences (comprising different types of cultural knowledge, know-how and existential competences) and communicative language competences. With reference to this comment, it is relevant to note that what are referred to in the CEFR as 'sociolinguistic competencies' are described in the following way:

> ***Sociolinguistic competences*** refer to the sociocultural conditions of language use. Through its sensitivity to social conventions (rules of politeness, norms governing relations between generations, sexes, classes and social groups, linguistic codification of certain fundamental rituals in the functioning of a community), the sociolinguistic component strictly affects all language communication between representatives of different cultures, even though participants may often be unaware of its influence (CEFR, 2.1.2, p. 13).

In connection with this type of definition (which is slightly different in draft versions of the Framework), Vincent notes (2004, p. 46):

> Il est frappant de retrouver ici certains des savoirs à caractère culturel déjà invoqués plus haut dans les compétences générales: normes sociales, règles d'adresse et de politesse, rituels de société, aspect interculturel, etc.

> [It is striking to find here [in the definition of sociolinguistic competence] some knowledge of a cultural nature already evoked earlier under the general competences: social norms, rules of address and politeness, social rituals, intercultural aspects, etc.]

For Debyser (1998, p.5), a critical issue is that:

> Force est de constater que la compétence culturelle dans le cadre de référence est plutôt un parent pauvre même si on tente de l'habiller en compétence interculturelle.

> [We are forced to notice that cultural competence in the reference framework is rather a poor relation, despite the attempt to adorn it as an intercultural competence.]

3.2.4 Levels, scales and descriptors

In the introduction to Chapter 9 of the CEFR (CoE, 2001, p. 178), the authors claim that the Framework can be used for:

1. the specification of the content of tests and examinations:

   what is assessed

2. stating the criteria to determine the attainment of a learning objective:

   how performance is interpreted

3. describing the levels of proficiency in existing texts and examinations thus enabling comparisons to be made across different systems of qualifications:

   how comparison can be made

The CEFR "posits six levels of proficiency and defines these largely in relation to empirically derived difficulty estimates based on the stakeholder perceptions of what language functions expressed by 'Can-do' statements can be successfully performed at each level" (Weir, 2005, p. 281).[99,100] North (15 April, 2004) notes that:

> The levels have emerged in a gradual, collective recognition of what the late Peter Hargreaves of Cambridge ESOL described as 'natural levels'. This process has resulted in a set of levels shared by COE specifications (Waystage, Threshold, Vantage), the Cambridge ESOL suite, the main ELT publishers and many language schools.

It is noted in the CEFR (CoE, 2001, pp. 22-23) that:

> There does appear to be a wide*, though by no means universal*, consensus on the nature of levels appropriate to the organisation of language learning and the public recognition of achievement. It seems that an outline framework of

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[99] It is, however, also stated in the CEFR (CoE, 2001, p. 17) that "[no] two users of a language, whether native speakers or foreign learners, have exactly the same competences or develop them in the same way. Any attempt to establish 'levels' of proficiency is to some extent arbitrary, as it is in any area of knowledge or skill".

[100] Glenn Fulcher (18 March, 2004, ¶ 6) has observed that that it could be said that "the CEF is nothing more than a set of scaled descriptors that reflects what groups of teachers drawn from around Europe could agree represented 'more' and 'less' proficient".

six broad levels gives an adequate coverage of the learning space relevant to European language learners for these purposes [emphasis added].

North (15 April, 2004, ¶ 6) has claimed that "ELT [English Language Teaching] professionals will find few surprises in the six levels (A1; A2; B1; B2; C1 and C2) since they correspond closely to the levels that they have already established themselves in ELT". However, at the beginning of the levels development project, a Swiss research team produced a nine-level scale (CEFR, p. 31). In this connection, it is relevant to note that in the 2006 survey (see above), the "need for defining additional sub-levels" was one of the "most acute problems" identified by a majority of countries in relation to the use of the common reference levels. As a solution to this problem, the countries created sub-levels (Matyniuk & Noijons, 2007, p. 6), something that inevitably has a negative impact on international comparability.[101]

The additional three levels identified in the Swiss project actually seem to make an appearance in most CEFR scales[102] (as intermediate levels A2+, B1+ and B2+), suggesting that a six level scale was found to be inadequate in some cases. To complicate matters further, while some tables include one or more sub-levels, others have fewer than six levels, and some are accompanied by an indicator that no descriptor is available (see, for example, CoE, 2001, pp. 59-60, 62, 64…).[103] Furthermore, in the case of some tables, the descriptor for two levels is the same (see pp. 64, 66-72).[104] Hamp-Lyons (31 May, 2007, ¶ 2) says:

I'd like to read close discussion of what it means to be 'aligned' when levels of different tests are half-step apart, or one has more levels than another—or both. These are not trite or trivial questions but ways of handling data, interpreting results and talking about implications that are of considerable

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[101] Also identified as an acute problem was the "repetitiveness and lack of details of some descriptors" (p. 6). Reference was also made to the "lack of descriptors for mediation and translation skills", and the absence of fine-tuning the descriptions of certain CEFR levels and to make them more age-specific" (Matyniuk & Noijons, 2007, p.7).

[102] 41 of the 53 scales have between one and three intermediate levels.

[103] 33 tables out of 53 do not have the whole range of levels (A1 to C2); out of the 20 remaining tables, 17 have from one to three intermediate levels (A2+, B1+ or B2+), leaving only 3 tables that have the 6 levels (A1 to C2) without "plus levels".

[104] In the case of the planning of productive strategies, there is no descriptor available for level A1. B1 is divided into two sub-levels (B1 and B1+) and the descriptors for C1 and C2 are *"as B2"* (CoE, 2001, p. 64).

significance in positioning the kinds of credibility one wants to establish and therefore the kind of 'capital' one must expend to achieve the [the] return.

Further difficulties relate to wording.[105] Weir (2005, p. 282) notes that the wording of some descriptors is "not consistent or not transparent enough in places for the development of tests", and Alderson et al. (2006, p. 12) object that many of the terms used in the CEFR are not defined: "For example, *simple* is frequently used in the scales, but how is one to decide what is *simple* compared to what is *less simple* and, especially, what is *very simple* is not clear" (ibid).[106]

There have been persistent calls for examples of the type of language that might typically be associated with levels and descriptors. Responses that simply note that CEFR is not intended to be language-specific and that proficiency cannot be directly related to any particular linguistic repertoire (see, for example, Huhta *et al.*, 2002, p. 131) offer "little comfort to the test writer who has to select texts or activities uncertain as to the lexical breadth or knowledge required at a particular level within the CEFR" (Weir, 2005, p. 293). This is, no doubt, one of the reasons for the development of Reference Level Descriptions (RLDs)[107] such as *English Profile* for English, *Profile Deutsch* for German, *Un référentiel pour le français* for French (Beacco, 2004, ¶ 4). Useful though these may be in a general sense, it is important to bear in mind that the language associated with a particular level and descriptor will vary, depending on, for example, learners' mother tongues and the other languages they have been exposed to.[108] In addition, Alderson (2007, p. 660) has claimed that:

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[105] Yet other problems relate to the fact that "[the] descriptors frequently under-represent the construct, or do not seem to be in hierarchical sequence (29 May, 2007, ¶ 2).

[106] Apart from the term *simple* in this quote, they also mention (ibid.) definitional problems with expressions such as *the most common, everyday, familiar, concrete, predictable, straightforward, factual, complex, short, long, specialized, highly colloquial,* etc.

[107] Reference Level Descriptions (RLDs) for national and regional languages. See CoE (n.d. a, ¶ 4). "This new generation of reference descriptions (in groups of six) is based on the CEFR level descriptors: it is a case of identifying the forms of a given language (words, grammar, etc), mastery of which corresponds to the communicational, socio-linguistic, formal and other competences defined by the CEFR.

[108] Westhoff (2007, p. 678) considers that "there are few, if any, indications, either from the CEFR or from SLA theory, that would justify linking discrete grammar points to specific CEFR levels as is proposed, for example, by Glaboniat, Müller, Schmitz, Rusch, and Wertenschlag (2002 [Profile Deutsch]), and as is claimed by most German textbook publishers".

[The] methodologies being used [to develop reference-level descriptions for the major European languages] are unclear or suspect. It is far from clear how much attention has been paid, for example, to empirical findings from 30 years of second language acquisition (SLA; admittedly largely for English).

So far as the RLDs for English (*English Profile*) is concerned, Alderson (2007, p. 660) asserts that "it is already clear that this project is flawed because it draws almost entirely from the Cambridge Learner Corpus, which is a collection of performances on Cambridge examinations".[109]

North (15 April 2004, ¶ 11) claims that "the scaling of the descriptors has been confirmed in studies from Finland, Switzerland, Cambridge Esol and Dialang" (¶ 9) and asserts that this, together with the fact that "self-assessments with the descriptors relate systematically to examination results", suggests that an empirical objectivity has been achieved in assigning the descriptors to levels"). He adds (ibid):

> *Nevertheless one should not confuse a distillation of shared subjective expertise with 'scientific truth'.* The CEF has been conceived as an open-ended, dynamic tool to fuel development. The descriptors form an 'item bank' that can be supplemented and revised as and when research provides new insights [emphasis added].

Even so, Buck (31 May, 2007a, ¶ 6), referring to attempts to align the ECCE and ECPE tests[110] with the CEFR at the University of Michigan, has noted: "[We] all feel very uncomfortable with the C2 descriptors, and wonder how exactly they should be interpreted -- we have highly educated native speakers who question whether they meet the C2 level descriptors". Clearly, as De Jong (31 May 2007 a,

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[109] He does, however, acknowledge that these performances are based on many different tasks across the Cambridge main suite, tasks that change from administration to administration, and from year to year, and that are radically revised over time.

[110] ECCCE (Examination for the Certificate of Competency in English) and ECPE (Examination for the Certificate of Proficiency in English) are two tests that pre-dated the introduction of the CEFR (see Buck, May 31, 2007a, ¶ 3). ECCE is now claimed to be aligned on level B2 of the CEFR and ECPE aims at level C2 (but the linking of ECPE was still under way at the time of the quoted message).

¶ 4) has pointed out, the CEFR is not about reaching native speaker ability.[111] Even so, at the University of Michigan, the "C2 descriptors [seemed] to some assessment professionals to be describing levels of attainment that are normally associated with native ability" (Buck, 31 May 2007 b, ¶ 4). In response, Huhta (30 May, 2007, ¶ 2) notes that "[there] is emerging / in-progress research in Europe on deepening our understanding of how the CEFR levels and language learning / acquisition match", adding that "the meaningful use of the CEFR would be easier if we knew more about the linguistic development from one level to the next and about which linguistic features / combinations of features characterise each level", a response that appears to presuppose a linear model of progression.

McNamara (31 May, 2007) reminds us of the difficulty of locating a learner on a single vertical scale:

> Jim Lantolf gave a plenary recently at a conference in Auckland that argues against a linear view of proficiency . . . arguing that different communicative contexts will bring out different dimensions of performance from the same student to such an extent that it is no longer possible to think of the person as being locatable on a single vertical scale.

While noting that there is a vertical dimension "which [is] extremely useful for certain purposes if used appropriately and cautiously", McNamara (31 May, 2007) wonders whether "the idea that it does not make sense in certain important ways [is] compatible with the approach in scales such as the CEFR and others". Buck (30 May 2007, ¶2[112]) responds, claiming that "[there] are some cases where the assumption of a vertical scale such as the CEFR or ILR makes sense, if only because they are better than using terms like beginner, false beginner, intermediate and advanced. . . . But once we start using them for more rigorous assessment purposes -- test design, validation, or concordance between different instruments, for example -- they soon prove quite inadequate".

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[111] "[The aim] is no longer seen as simply to achieve 'mastery' of one or two, or even three languages, each taken in isolation, with the 'ideal native speaker' as the ultimate model. Instead, the aim is to develop a linguistic repertory, in which all linguistic abilities have a place (CoE, 2001, p. 5).

[112] This message by Gary Buck, in answer to McNamara's message of May 31, is however dated May 30, because messages on the list give the local date at which the authors sent their messages. Since Buck's message indicates the time zone GMT -0400 and McNamara's GMT +1000, Buck's message actually came after McNamara's message.

According to Figueiras (2007, p. 673), it was "[the] quick pairing of test levels and school exit levels with the CEFR scales by testing agencies and ministries, and the absence of evidence for such links [that] triggered numerous demands for transparency from the testing profession". It was partly in response to these demands that a meeting was held in Helsinki which led to the publication of a preliminary pilot version of a Manual for relating examinations to the CEFR. However, as Little (2007, p. 648-649) notes, "the existence of this Manual . . . does not guarantee that a test claiming to be at a certain level is really at that level, nor that a test at a certain level for one language is assessing the same thing as another test at the same level for another language". Fulcher (28 May 2007) goes further, stating that:

> The existence of a 'how to' manual produced by the Council of Europe *doesn't constitute evidence that linkage is possible* [emphasis added]. . . . Deafening silence, or claims without evidence in the public domain that we cannot evaluate, would strengthen the view that . . . linkage to an encyclopaedic model is primarily one of aspiration for the purpose of recognition.

Alderson (30 May, 2007, ¶ 3) insists, however, that the CEFR is "having a very useful impact at the grass roots of assessment in Europe", adding that the fact that it can be improved "does not mean that we should ignore it or reinvent wheels". With reference to the need for improvement, he refers to "an article that several of us published last year in LAQ"[113] and to an article by Weir "in the Special Issue of LT"[114] that he guest-edited. In that article, Weir (2005, p. 1) made the following observation:

> Though . . . containing much valuable information on language proficiency and advice for practitioners, *in its present form the CEFR is not sufficiently comprehensive, coherent or transparent for uncritical use in language testing*. First, the descriptor scales take insufficient account of how variation in terms of contextual parameters may affect performances by raising or lowering the actual difficulty level of carrying out the target 'Can-do'

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[113] LAQ: *Language Assessment Quarterly*. See Alderson et al. (2006).
[114] LT: *Language Testing*. See Weir, C. J. (2005).

statement. In addition, a test's theory-based validity – a function of the processing involved in carrying out these 'Can-do' statements – must also be addressed by any specification on which a test is based. *Failure to explicate such context and theory-based validity parameters – i.e., to comprehensively define the construct to be tested – vitiates current attempts to use the CEFR as the basis for developing comparable test forms within and across languages and levels* [emphasis added], and hampers attempts to link separate assessments, particularly through social moderation.

In this context, it is not surprising that Little (2007, p. 649) has stated that: "*When it comes to specifying test content, the CEFR can serve only as a starting point* [emphasis added], as a number of critics have pointed out and as the so-called Dutch CEF Construct Project has shown in detail". After adding that this limitation is to be expected in that the CEFR is not language-specific, he claims that the DIALANG project[115] (see the third appendix of the CEFR [CoE, 2001, pp. 226-243]) "demonstrates that language tests can be developed on the basis of the CEFR's levels and proficiency descriptors". However, as Alderson et al. (2006, p. 6) observe, the DIALANG project concluded that "additional specifications needed to be developed before the CEFR could be used as the basis for test development". Thus, for example, it was necessary "to devise our own reporting scales for structure and vocabulary for all 14 languages, including the most widely researched language, English, because the CEFR has no such scales" (Alderson, 2007, p. 661). Furthermore, the Dutch CEFR Construct Project, which "investigated the usefulness of the CEFR for the construction of tests of reading and listening", identified some serious problems in relation to the scales: "Many terms lacked definitions, there were overlaps, ambiguities and inconsistencies in the use of terminology, as well as important gaps in the CEFR scales" (Alderson, 2007, p. 661).

Fulcher (29 May, 2007, ¶ 1) has indicated that although he has reservations about the usefulness of an encyclopaedic model "because by definition every test will be related to it in some way", he nevertheless believes that "once a purpose for

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[115] DIALANG is an online assessment system available in fourteen European languages and which is aimed at adults who wish to assess their level of proficiency and receive feedback (see Chapter 2, 2.4 and www.dialang.org).

testing has been carefully defined, the CEFR may be . . . useful *as a source of ideas*" [emphasis added]. After making reference to some 'thorny issues' associated with the alignment of teaching and assessment to the CEFR, Fulcher (¶ 2) notes that "as a source of ideas for tests, the CEFR fairs much better", adding, however, that "*in this sense, it is no different in status to any other similar system* [emphasis added], such as the Canadian Language Benchmarks (http://www.language.ca/). Apart from the political imperatives behind its wholesale adoption".

As both Hulstijn (2007, p. 664) and North & Schneider (1998, p. 242) stress, there were no fully developed or properly tested theories of language proficiency at the time the CEFR was initially conceived and it has been the subject of increasing criticism in terms of the perceived lack of empirical evidence to confirm the validity of its levels, scales and descriptors. It is, according to Alderson (2007, p. 660) "precisely [the] lack of empirical research to underpin the CEFR that is giving rise to increasing misgivings about the applicability of the Framework in its current form". Not only is there "no independent estimate of the learners' proficiency levels according to the CEFR", but there is also an urgent need for "fundamental research . . . into how proficiency in the main European languages (and not only English) develops over time" (pp. 660 - 611). Furthermore, while acknowledging that the CEFR does not explicitly make the claim that the scales are unidimensional,[116] Hulstjin (2007, p. 666) states that in distinguishing six levels on each scale and in using the same symbols (A1 etc.) to refer to each level, it strongly suggests that this is the case, adding that "there is . . . no, or at least insufficient, evidence for unidimensionality of the notion of language proficiency when it comes to empirical studies conducted with L2 learners".[117]

North (2007, p. 657) agrees that "the formulations used in the descriptors are not based upon second language acquisition (SLA) research", noting that their basis is

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[116] Unidimensionality refers to the concept of a single continuum (North & Schneider, 1998, p. 238).

[117] Hulstijn (2007, p. 666) notes specifically that there is no empirical evidence that (a) L2 learners reach some functional level (other than A1) by passing the level immediately below it; (b) all L2 learners at a given level beyond level A1 are able to perform all of the tasks associated with lower levels (excluding some occasional lapses (which should be the case if the CEFR scales are genuinely implicational and unidimensional); and (c) (ibid.). a learner at a given level of the overall scale "necessarily possesses the same quality in terms of the *linguistic* scales at the same level".

teachers' perceptions of language proficiency. He also acknowledges that many of the descriptors for spoken production were derived from writing scales and that some of the descriptors do, in fact, lack an empirical basis, these being (a) many of those for C2 (especially for communicative language activities), (b) the scale for phonological control (where there were significant differences of interpretation in the case of teachers speaking or teaching different languages), (c) the scale for orthographic control (included for completeness), and (d) half of the descriptors for the subscale sociolinguistic appropriacy (added for the 2001 edition). In addition, Little (2007, p. 648) has observed that (a) "Table 3 of the CEFR (pp. 28–29) conceptualizes fluency in terms of hesitation although "native speakers (NSs) may hesitate frequently in the production of what remains undeniably fluent speech", and (b) the scale for phonological control (p. 117) indicates a progression "that assumes a gradual approximation to NS norms', and although "[this] progression may well reflect the realities of language learning by immersion", it remains the case that "any experienced language teacher knows the importance of focusing on phonological accuracy from the very beginning when the target language is being learnt at a distance from NS populations". Even so, he insists that "the descriptors form an item bank of empirically calibrated descriptors with mathematical values on a common scale and known statistical properties".

Some of those who have expressed reservations about the descriptors have clearly done so on fundamental grounds. However, North (2007, p. 657) observes that complaints relating to the descriptors generally centre on (1) the absence of descriptors for sociocultural aspects and reading literature (both tried, but unsuccessfully) and mediation (not attempted); (2) the fact that they relate to 'general language',[118] noting, however, that there are some descriptors for making presentations, attending formal meetings, negotiating, etc.; and (3) the fact that they are written in complicated language and are aimed at learners aged 16 years and older.

The first of the three common areas of complaint referred to by North (2007) relates to omissions. Alderson et al. (2006, p. 12-13), working on tests of reading and listening in relation to the CEFR, have also identified several gaps relating to

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[118] He notes here that there are, however, some descriptors for making presentations, attending formal meetings, negotiating, etc.

features referred to in general terms somewhere in the CEFR that are either not included in any of the six descriptor levels or not specified at one of the levels (including, for example, context).[119] In particular, they note that although an entire chapter of the CEFR is devoted to tasks, "at no point is there a discussion of how tasks might be distinguished by level" (p.13). They add that there is a major gap relating to (a) the description of the operations that comprehension consists of, (b) a theory of how comprehension develops and (c) the specification of comprehension microskills or subskills (e.g. *skimming*).[120] They conclude (p. 13):

> In short, we find no principled way in which such illustrative scales have been created, and the dimension of purpose – why one is reading or listening to any given text in any particular setting – is not addressed systematically at all. This gap is a serious problem for test writers and item bank builders.

All of this would seem to seriously undermine the credibility of the CEFR. Although the circumstances in which it was developed partially explain the problems that have been identified in relation to levels and descriptors, there is now clearly an urgent need for review. As (Hulstijn, 2007, p. 666) observes:

> Theories of language proficiency must be developed and tested. . . . Research on developmental routes in second language acquisition (SLA) must be linked with language assessment research. Furthermore, there is a great need for corpus research. . . . It is high time that researchers of SLA, researchers of language assessment, and corpus linguists paid attention to each other's work and engaged in collaborative research, testing the linguistic, psycholinguistic, and sociolinguistic assumptions on which the CEFR rests.

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[119] Areas identified as being omitted from the descriptors by Alderson et al. (2006, pp. 12 – 23) are : competence, general competence, and communicative competence (pp. 9, 13, 108ff.); activities, processes, domains, strategy, and task (pp. 10, 14, 15, 16); context (pp. 48-49, Table 5); ludic and aesthetic uses of language (pp. 55-56); text-to-text activities (p. 100); sociocultural knowledge (pp. 102-103); study skills (pp. 107-108); tasks, including description, performance (conditions, competencies, linguistic factors), strategies, and difficulty (pp. 157-166).
[120] They also note the absence of: *distinguish relevant from irrelevant details* and *discriminate between fact and opinion.*

3.3   Issues associated with uses and users

In this section, the focus is on users of the CEFR, particularly those who provide certifications through widely recognized examinations, textbook writers and publishers, curriculum designers, and classroom teachers.

3.3.1   Certifications, their providers and their users

Trim (2005, p. 17) notes that:

> The scales and descriptors have been of special interest to authorities who want to situate their language qualifications relative to those of others, and to the 'users' of qualifications gained in other systems, such as employers in deciding who to appoint to jobs involving language use to a greater or lesser extent and educational authorities in establishing entry requirements for courses at different levels.

Takala[121] (29 May, 2007, ¶ 2) has stated that the CEFR makes ordinary language exams and ordinary school reports "more transparent and hopefully more easily recognized in many contexts", adding that the CEFR is "seen as a novel and useful tool for co-operation" in the case of those who "wish to have their national exams / school reports recognized as reasonably good evidence of language proficiency at a certain level (as 'valid currency')". According to Alderson (30 May, 2007, ¶ 2), the CEFR has led to some improvement in comparison with former practices in the field of assessment and (referring to CEFR levels) "is much better than using those traditional terms beginner, false beginner, intermediate and advanced, which are so prevalent in our field as well as in SLA, but hopelessly unspecified". He adds that he believes that "the CEFR levels are more meaningful than terms like x score on MTELP, TOEFL or even IELTS" (ibid). However, Figueiras (2007, p. 673) has observed that "[as] early as 2001, de Jong's unpublished presentation at the Barcelona Conference of the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) Conference [sic] listed the dangers of rash

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[121] Sauli Takala, emeritus professor in applied linguistics at the university of Jyväskylä (Finland) and now president of the European Association for Language Testing and Assessment (EALTA) has worked on several projects related to the CEFR, in particular the Manual for relating examinations to the CEFR (CoE, 2003), the DIALANG project, the "Dutch CEF grid" and the supervision of EBAFLS (European Bank of Anchor Items for Foreign Language Skills).

and unreliable claims of linkage of examination levels to the CEFR levels". Nevertheless, by 2007, there were "countless bodies purporting to deliver certificates or diplomas based on the CEFR levels or to guarantee that such and such an examination or qualification demonstrates linguistic competence at a specific CEFR level" (Bonnet, 2007, p. 671).

In the 2005 survey (CoE, 2005b, p. 3-4) to which reference has already been made above, the CEFR was perceived as being most useful "in the domains of testing/assessment/certification (2,70 [2.70] on a 0-3 scale)". In the 2006 national level survey (Martyniuk & Noijons, 2007), the CEFR was perceived as being most useful in the area of the development of curricula and syllabi, with the development of testing/assessment/certification coming a close second (with 26 out of 30 state representatives (87%) rating it in this area as *very useful* or *rather useful*). Even so, the second most commonly raised problem in the 2005 survey was "the . . . potential risk of (mis)using the CEFR as a tool for assessment only . . . and adopting the labels A1 to C2 without sufficient calibration effort or evidence".

Even before the second survey was conducted, Fulcher (18 March 2004, ¶ 10) noted that "linking tests to the CEFR is . . . not simple", and that such linking "is mostly intuitive".[122] Responding to Fulcher, North (15 April 2004, ¶ 10), insisted that it is legitimate for there to be different degrees of rigour in the way assessments are related to the CEFR, with a greater degree of rigour being expected from an examination provider than from a language school. It is, however, not only local providers whose attempts to link assessment to the CEFR lack rigour. As Trim (2005) has observed, it was the fact that many *authorities* rapidly moved to claiming the alignment of their qualifications with the CEFR that "attracted the critical attention of the language testing professionals, who drew attention to the wide differences possible in the interpretation of words and phrases like, simple, basic, familiar, everyday, main ideas, without too much effort reasonably accurate, etc". He adds that "[transparency] is needed . . . on test procedures and standards of marking" [emphasis added].

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[122] Fulcher (18 March 2004, ¶ 10) also claimed that "the CEFR has no underlying theory" and that "many tests that are now claimed to be linked to the CEFR do not themselves have a theoretical basis".

In considering the ETS[123] (which reportedly followed the process described in the manual for relating examinations to the CEFR [CoE, 2003a]), De Jong (31 May 2007 b) notes that there is a lack of "empirical evidence for a linkage", adding that, likewise, although "the Cambridge people have an entry in the Case studies book . . . in which they report on some interesting steps . . . they fail to provide convincing evidence". In the case of IELTS, he observes that "it seems much of the reporting remains internal and suggestion of linkage is indirect".[124] In connection with this, it is relevant to note the following observation by McNamara (21 October 2006):

> In requiring that the outcomes of learning will be reported in a particular format (e.g. the levels on this scale), a large degree of effective control of an educational system is achieved. . . . Even an organization as independent and powerful as ETS knew that in order for TOEFL scores to be usable in Europe at all, they needed to be interpretable in terms of levels on the scale.

This is a point also made by Papageorgiou (20 October 2006):

> I . . . feel it is not just a political mandate issue here: it is a marketing one as well. . . . [If] you are 'CEFR-aligned' you are probably going to survive, and this is why there is a false interpretation that a 'CEFR-aligned' test is a good test.

In spite of all of the problems associated with attempts to link examinations for certification to the CEFR, no validation committee has yet been established to deal with such attempts. As Alderson (2007, p. 661) notes:

> The Council of Europe set up a so-called Validation Committee to vet (or rubber-stamp) the large number of European Language Portfolios (ELPs) that were developed in the late 1990s and early 21st century. Unfortunately, despite the greater influence of examinations on the curriculum—and on lives—the Council of Europe has refused to set up an equivalent mechanism

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[123] Educational Testing Services (ETS) is the institution that has developed and administers tests such as the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) and the TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication).

[124] This is not surprising in view of the fact that "IELTS is not a level-based test (like FCE or CPE) but is designed to stretch across a much broader proficiency continuum" (International English Language Testing System, n.d., ¶ 4).

to validate or even inspect the claims made by examination providers or textbook developers.

Alderson (2007, p. 662) considers the European Association of Language Testing and Assessment (EALTA) to be the only organization that is sufficiently independent to monitor these types of claim.

3.3.2 Textbooks and textbook writers and publishers

Issues associated with textbooks in relation to CEFR alignment are similar in many ways to those associated with assessment. Alderson (30 May 2007) has noted that there are "some *worrisome claims* by many textbook publishers and examination providers that their products are 'linked' to the CEFR" [emphasis added]. However, as McNamara (21 October 2006) has observed: "Publishers . . . know that in order to sell their books they need to conform to the framework's reporting structure." This is a point that has also been made by Papageorgiou (20 October 2006):

> It is not only an exam provider that should make reference to the CEFR in order to survive in the market; recently a paper by a Lancaster colleague at the EALTA conference showed how EFL textbooks claim linkage to the CEFR without really explaining what they mean and how they have built such a claim. So if you are 'CEFR-aligned' you are probably going to survive . . .

Tsagari (2006, slides 31-38) has indicated, with reference to English textbooks, just how pervasive references to the CEFR are: *Smash* (Macmillan) lists "CEF link-up" as one of its key features; *Upstream* (Express Publishing) notes that "its syllabus reflects the guidelines of the Common European Framework of Reference for languages". Reference to particular CEFR levels is found in *Pass FCE* [Andrew Betsis ELT, Greece] and *What If ...?* [Hillside Press]). In some cases, these references are part of the title: *Destination B1* (and *B2, C1* and *C2) Grammar and Vocabulary (or B2, or C1 and C2)* (Macmillan). Indeed, the following claim is made in *Total English Intermediate* (Longman): "Total English Intermediate is correlated to the Common European Framework. It takes students

from B1 to B2 levels. Each lesson guides students to a 'Can do' goal in line with the Council of Europe's Can do' statements".

A similar situation obtains in the case of French textbooks. Since 2001, such textbooks have commonly made reference to the most well known examinations for French as a foreign language, examinations that themselves claim alignment with the CEFR (generally the DELF/DALF or the TCF, sometimes the TEF or the CEFP) .[125] Thus, for example, *Alter ego* (Hachette) claims to be "le reflet des trois approches du CECR: apprendre, enseigner, évaluer" [the reflection of the three approaches of the CEFR: learning, teaching and assessment]. Furthermore, so far as assessment is concerned, the different levels of *Alter ego* are associated with different levels of competence that are said to be reflected in diplomas, tests and certifications. *Reflets* (Hachette) refers to the DELF; *Taxi!* (Hachette), *Le Nouveau Taxi* (Hachette) and *Festival* (CLE International) refer to both the European Framework and the DELF.

It would appear that there is no agreement on precisely how textbooks can, or should, reflect the CEFR. Beacco (2004, ¶ 12) objects that "textbooks do not seem to share the same linear distribution (progression)". Westhoff (2007, p. 676), on the other hand, observes that whereas "FL teaching . . . as reflected in the most commonly used textbooks in Europe, is perceived as a linear process", the scales of the CEFR show "a concentric development of proficiency" which is "based on intuitive judgments of practitioners . . . [and] fits in well with recent insights from Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and cognitive psychology research".

Notwithstanding the fact that both Trim and North have repeatedly claimed that it is for teachers to decide what will happen in their classrooms (see 3.2 above), something that will presumably be reflected in their selection of textbooks (if they use them), Westhoff's approach (2007, p. 676) is clearly prescriptive. Referring to a preferred emphasis on "the expansion of the lexical repertoire" in the early

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[125] DELF (Diplôme d'Etudes en Langue Française) and DALF (Diplôme Approfondi de Langue Française) are aligned on the CEFR since 2005, and their levels have been renamed according to the CEFR levels they cover (DELF A1 to DELF B2, DALF C1 and DALF C2). The TCF (Test de Connaissance du Français) and the TEF (Test d'Evaluation du Français, conceived by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Paris) both cover the six levels of the CEFR. The CEFP (Certificat d'Etudes de Français Pratique) is a certificate delivered by the Alliance Française of Paris, aligned on level A2 of the CEFR.

stages of learning in the CEFR, he insists that "[this] *should be* reflected in textbooks" and "would also *have to be* reflected in teacher education" where "greater attention *should* be paid to teaching skills like "task management, classroom management, communicative language methodology, and giving corrective feedback, that is, to managing a task-based, content-oriented FL classroom" [emphasis added].

In connection with Westhoff's observations (above), it is relevant to note that Beacco (2004, ¶ 13) observes that "even though no one intends to bring textbook and curriculum designers to heel, the present 'laissez-faire' is no longer compatible with exit certifications and competence levels which have been internationally adjusted and are calibrated onto the CEFR and the Reference Level Descriptors for each language", adding, however, that "the calibration of certifications is in itself a difficult procedure and . . . claims of linkage to the CEFR are . . . not always substantiated". In spite of Beacco's assertion that no one intends to bring textbook designers to heel, there is clearly considerable pressure on them to attempt to conform. Precisely how they are to achieve this is far from clear in view of the problems relating to the CEFR to which reference has been made.

3.3.3   Curricula and curriculum designers

The second survey conducted by the Council of Europe (Martyniuk & Noijons, 2007, p. 6) revealed that the CEFR had influenced the development and planning of a number of curricula for primary, secondary, upper secondary schools or adult and higher education but that the extent of that influence varied "from partial to global". So far as global influence is concerned, Little (2006, p.178) has observed that "to date . . . in . . . teacher education, curriculum and course design, and reflective pedagogy – projects have mostly been on a limited and local scale", adding:

> [There] are few examples of curricula that have been (re)constructed from the bottom up using the descriptive apparatus of the CEFR to specify learning targets at different levels of proficiency. Two instances that have

been documented are the Swiss IEF Project and the curriculum for English as a second language that has been developed for use in Irish primary schools.

A number of European countries now make explicit reference to the Common Reference Levels in national language curricula. However, as Beacco (2004, ¶ 3) points out:

> Si cet instrument du Conseil de l'Europe est cité ou mentionné dans bien des programmes nationaux ou régionaux d'enseignement des langues, cela ne signifie pas pour autant que la typologie des compétences qu'il propose et que les descripteurs de compétences qui spécifient chacune d'entre elles, à chacun des six niveaux de maîtrise établis, constituent la structure profonde de ces programmes: on peut se borner à s'y référer comme à un ensemble de principes. On peut aussi s'en prévaloir, en tant que garant d'une certaine forme de qualité, comme ces manuels de français, toujours plus nombreux qui se décernent le label Conseil de l'Europe, sans que quiconque ne songe à vérifier le bien-fondé d'une telle auto certification, qui vaut argument de vente. Invoquer le Cadre dans les préfaces des manuels ou dans les préambules des programmes officiels ne signifie pas pour autant en utiliser effectivement les potentialités.

> [Although this tool of the Council of Europe is cited or mentioned in a good many national or regional curricula, this does not mean that the typology of competences it proposes and the descriptors specifying each of them, for each of the six levels of mastery established, constitute the deep structure of these curricula: one can limit oneself to referring to these in the same way as one does to a set of principles. One can also take advantage of them, as the guarantee of a certain quality, just like those French language textbooks, too many to mention, that in increasing numbers award themselves the Council of Europe's label, without anyone thinking of checking the validity of such a self-granted certification, which is a selling point. Referring to the *Framework* in the preface to these textbooks or in the preamble to official curricula does not mean effectively using its potential.]

France is the first European country to have given statutory status to the Common Reference Levels. A Ministry of Education decree (No. 2005-1011) (see Décret n° 2005-1001) includes national objectives framed in terms of the CEFR Common Reference Levels: A1 at the end of elementary (primary) school, B1 for the first foreign language and A2 for the second foreign language at the end of compulsory education,[126] and, at the end of secondary education, B2 for the first foreign language and B1 for the second foreign language. In connection with this, it is, however, relevant to bear in mind, as Beacco (2004), ¶3) has noted, that:

> La réalité sociale de la connaissance des langues montre plutôt que les locuteurs ne possèdent pas toutes les compétences et que celles qu'ils possèdent ne le sont pas au même degré. *Le locuteur A2 ou B2 est donc virtuel et le niveau A2 ou B2 ne constitue pas nécessairement à lui seul, de manière compacte, un objectif de formation* [emphasis added].

> [The social reality of language knowledge rather shows that speakers do not possess all competences and that those they possess are not at the same level. A level A2 or B2 speaker is, thus, virtual and level A2 or B2 does not necessarily constitute in itself, in a compact way, an educational objective.]

Beacco (ibid) adds:

> La conception des programmes d'enseignement des langues aurait avantage à tirer parti de la diversité des compétences à enseigner et des degrés de maîtrise à faire atteindre dans celles-ci, de manière à organiser des parcours d'apprentissage des langues assez diversifiés pour permettre une éducation plurilingue : pour telle langue enseignée, les objectifs pourraient être, par exemple A2 dans toutes les compétences, pour une seconde A1 et B2 (dans deux compétences) ou même, pour une troisième : B2, pour une seule (une compétence de réception par exemple). *C'est dans ce domaine que l'influence majeure du Cadre est attendue* [emphasis added].

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[126] In France, education is compulsory till the age of 16, which corresponds more or less to the end of the 'collège' (junior high school) or the beginning of .'lycée' (senior high school).

[The design of Language curricula would benefit from using the diversity of the competences to be taught and of the degrees of mastery to be reached in these, so as to organize language learning paths diverse enough to allow plurilingual education: for a specific language taught, the objectives could be, for instance, A2 in all of the competences, for a second language, A1 and B2 (in two competences) and even, for a third language: B2, for one competence only (for instance a reception competence). It is in this area that the major influence of the CEFR is expected.]

Some account appears to have been taken of one aspect of Beacco's recommendation in the formulation of decree 2005-1011. However, the core of that recommendation has clearly had no impact. Levels are stated in an overall sense, without reference to particular competencies. Nor has the fact that the CEFR was never meant to be used with young learners (Figueiras, 2007, p. 674; North, 2007, p. 657) had any impact on the formulation of decree 2005-1011.

In the CEFR "the question of whether a certain level requires mastery of certain grammar items is left open" (Westhoff, 2007, p. 207). In designing national curricula, Ministries/Departments of Education also now increasingly leave open the issue of what language (in terms of vocabulary, lexical chunks, syntax, discourse features, etc.) might be used in the realization of the achievement objectives that are listed in association with different educational stages.[127] It remains the case, however, that whatever approach to teaching and learning is adopted, decisions of this type necessarily have to be made at some point. They are generally made, directly or indirectly, not only by classroom teachers but also by textbook writers and examination bodies. We have already seen some responses to the decisions made by textbook writers/publishers in linking, or attempting to link their materials to the CEFR (see 3.3.2 above). For textbook publishers, claiming links to the CEFR may be critical for sales and therefore for survival (McNamara, 21 October 2006; Papageorgiou, 20 October 2006). For those classroom teachers who are expected to relate their teaching to a curriculum

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[127] Exceptions to this are the New Zealand Ministry of Education curriculum guidelines for French and German in schools in which outcomes (the same in both cases) take account of, but are not constrained by, CEFR 'can do' statements, and in which exemplifications based on learner observations are provided. However, the New Zealand Ministry of Education guidelines for Māori in schools (produced later) do not provide exemplifications.

that is, or claims to be, related to the CEFR, questions about what they should do are equally pressing.

National or regional authorities generally have responsibility for designing curricula for primary / elementary and secondary schools and some have made use of the CEFR to a greater or lesser extent in exercising that responsibility. However, higher educational institutions are generally free to establish their own curricula. In these institutions, there appears in most cases to be no common or overarching curriculum statement (either for individual languages or for groups of languages). Achievement objectives, if stated at all, are often expressed in terms that bear no relation to the CEFR. This situation may, however, be changing. In France, in 2000, the Certificat de Compétences en Langues de l'Enseignement Supérieur (CLES, Higher Education Language Proficiency Certificate), which claims alignment to the CEFR, was officially launched by decree. After two experimental phases, in 2001-2002 and 2002-2003, the CLES is now being used by several French universities. The CLES comprises three levels, which are said to correspond to the CEFR levels B1, B2 and C2. This certificate initially covered six languages, including one which is non-European in origin (English, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and Arabic), but was later extended to cover Polish and Modern Greek. The competences to which it refers are, in conformity with the CEFR, oral and written reception, aural and written (visual) production, and oral (spoken) interaction.[128] Although the CLES (accredited by the French Ministry of Education) is not a compulsory examination, it has inevitably had some impact on university curricula since language departments in the universities associated with it are expected to prepare students for the certification.[129] Some universities have also created their own certificates, aligned to the CEFR. Examples are the CLUE for Paris Centre Universités[130] and the CLUB for the universities of Bordeaux. These certificates might also be expected to have an impact on curricula.

Tsagari (2006, slide 40) has proposed that a Manual for linking curricula and language teaching materials to the CEFR levels be designed on the basis of the

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[128] The terms in brackets refer to the labels used in the CEFR.
[129] This certification only concerns languages in which the candidates are not specializing. A student majoring in English cannot sit for a CLES in English.
[130] Paris Centre Universités regroups the universities of Paris 1 (Panthéon-Sorbonne), Paris 5 (Paris Descartes) and Paris 7 (Paris Diderot).

existing model for relating examinations to the CEFR. In view of the problems that exist in relation to the CEFR levels themselves, and in view of the problems that have been associated with attempts to align examinations to these levels (see 3.5 above), this is not likely to be a proposal that is met with uniform enthusiasm. Providing greater clarity need not entail the creation of another manual (with all of the expectations associated with the production of such a manual).

3.3.4 Classrooms and classroom teachers

With reference to the 2005 Council of Europe survey, Little (CoE, 2005b) has observed that the fact that there were only 111 responses "[tended] to confirm that knowledge and use of the CEFR [was] confined to a minority of specialists" (p. 167). Two years later, Little (2007, p. 648) noted that "to date, its impact on language testing far outweighs its impact on curriculum design and pedagogy", and North (2007, p. 659) observed that "many people equate the action-oriented approach with just using *can-do* descriptors for self-assessment and roleplays".

Westhoff (2007, p. 676) has observed that "the authors of the CEFR were not very explicit about its implication for classroom teaching", adding that although the descriptors "tell us a lot about what learners at a certain level can do, very little is stated about what they should know in order to carry out these language tasks". In particular, "the question of whether a certain level requires mastery of certain grammar items is left open" (op cit). In view of Westhoff's observation, it is, perhaps, not surprising that Trim (2005, p. 15) has asserted that "[teachers] may . . . feel that the Framework is of concern only for those planning examination syllabus and teaching procedures at a higher level", adding (pp. 22-23):

> I can imagine some hard-pressed classroom teacher saying: 'Look! With the hours I've got with a class, the amount I'm supposed to cover in the syllabus and the kind of children in my class, I've got my work cut out to just get enough vocabulary and grammar into them to pass the exams they need to get a job. The rest of it is just frills, irrelevant to me.

In this context, what *is* surprising, however, is Trim's (2005, p. 15) claim that "the Framework is designed to be accessible to all concerned with language learning,

teaching and assessment, *particularly classroom teachers and students*"
[emphasis added], and that, so far as teachers are concerned, its function is to help
them "to think through their teaching situation and their response to it more
critically and in greater depth" (p. 23). Given the difficulties that those who are
involved in "planning examination syllabus and teaching procedures at a higher
level" (Trim, 2005, p. 15) have experienced in interpreting the CEFR
(notwithstanding the existence of a manual (CoE, 2003a) and supplement to that
manual (CoE, 2004) intended to assist those involved in attempting to link
examinations to the CEFR), it is interesting to note that Trim (2005, p. 23)
believes that, in the case of teachers, the CEFR is intended "to open [their] eyes to
the questions that [they] ought to be asking, *not to answer them for* [them]"
[emphasis added].

Whatever questions Trim (2005, p. 23) believes teachers "*ought to be asking*"
[emphasis added], many of the ones they are actually asking relate, as Fulcher (29
May 2007, ¶ 2) observes, to issues of considerable complexity:

> On a practical note, when working with UK teachers who have been told to
> align their teaching and assessment to the CEFR in workshops, we keep
> coming up against really thorny issues. One example: should we design
> tasks at particular levels, or can one have a task per scale on which ability
> varies?

Trim has asserted that it is not the purpose of the CEFR to answer teachers'
questions. Ministries / Departments of Education generally appear also to believe
that it is not their role to answer such questions (see 3.3.3). In fact, however, most
teachers are probably well aware of the importance of responsiveness to the needs
of their learners and, therefore of the fact that there can be no precise
specifications that apply equally in all contexts. It does not follow from this that
they (together with textbook writers and publishers, teacher educators, etc.) have
no right to expect those who designed the CEFR to be clear about what they
consider to be the implications of its 'can do' statements for the type of language
that is introduced in language classrooms at different stages. Teachers would then
be in a better position to make decisions for themselves in implementing curricula
(and to support or defend these decisions as necessary).

It is not only in relation to interpretation of aspects of the CEFR that teachers are asking thorny questions. There is also, among teachers, some concern about the issue of self-assessment and the European Language Portfolio. Alderson (2007, p. 661) has observed that "[the] Council of Europe set up a so-called Validation Committee to vet (or rubber-stamp) the large number of European Language Portfolios (ELPs) that were developed in the late 1990s and early 21st century". By 2007, that committee had validated more than 90 ELPs developed in 26 countries and by 4 non-governmental organisations (2007, p. 650). However, although Little (2007) has concluded that "the ELP has been a success in terms of the number of models developed and validated"[131] he has acknowledged that "it is impossible to say how widely it is actually used (as opposed to distributed)" (p. 652). He has also acknowledged that "there is a wealth of anecdotal evidence to suggest that because most models have been developed independently of curricula, teachers and learners see the ELP as an optional extra whose use will involve them in extra work" (p. 652). Interestingly, while he notes that "the ELP's emphasis on learner self-assessment easily arouses scepticism among teachers", he implies that this scepticism is unjustified when he adds that it is particularly in evidence in the case of those "who are unfamiliar with pedagogical approaches calculated to develop learner autonomy" (p. 650). It may well be that another, perhaps more significant reason for teachers' scepticism is the fact that although CEFR descriptors are not intended for use with young learners, there have been attempts by 'professionals' to "[develop] descriptors for ELPs for learners in different school age groups" (Figueiras, 2007, p. 674).

3.4   Plurilingualism and its implications

Central to the CEFR are the concepts of plurilingualism and pluriculturalism. As noted in the CEFR (CoE, 2001, pp. 168):

> A given individual does not have a collection of distinct and separate competences to communicate depending on the language he/she knows, but rather a plurilingual and pluricultural competence encompassing the full range of the languages available to him/her.

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[131] Little (2007, p. 262) added that a small number of empirical evaluation projects had shown that the ELP "can have a positive impact on teaching and learning".

So far as the Council of Europe is concerned, plurilingualism and pluriculturalism are central to the CEFR agenda. As Beacco (RFI, 2004, Question 9) notes:

> Notre hypothèse au Conseil de l'Europe, c'est que la conscience de l'être plurilingue est l'un des fondements de l'acceptation de la différence. L'éducation plurilingue pourrait alors être un vecteur de tolérance démocratique.
>
> [Our assumption at the Council of Europe, is that the consciousness of the plurilingual being is one of the bases for the acceptance of difference. Plurilingual education could then be a conveyor of democratic tolerance.]

3.4.1 The situation of migrants

In spite of the fact that the CEFR is intended to promote tolerance, harmony and acceptance, Hornberger (2002, p. 47) notes the 'linguistic paradox' associated with the fact that European countries spend so much time and money to develop multilingualism, and . . . neglect the plurilingual resources of the migrants in their midst.

Krum (2007, p. 668) has noted that a number of European countries, including Austria, Germany, and the Netherlands, have passed laws concerning the status of migrants that include several language-related obligations, generally including "a requirement for language instruction and a language test", achievement of a specified CEFR level often being required in order to obtain a residence permit or gain citizenship.[132] He adds, however that:

> There is good reason to doubt whether a test loaded with such heavy sanctions (e.g., losing the right of residence in a country) is a good basis for successful language learning . . . because in this case language no longer acts as a means for understanding and integration but as a wedge for segregation, demotivating the very group that is to benefit from undertaking such a risk (ibid.).

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[132] In Austria, migrants need to attend a 300-hour language course and pass a test at Level A2 of the CEFR; in Germany, it is a 600-hour language course and the level required ranges from A2 to B1. Costs of the courses are generally borne by the migrants. (Krumm, 2007, p. 668.)

Krumm (2007, pp. 668-669) draws attention to several problems associated with making use of the CEFR in this way. First, "the very heterogeneous groups of migrants are totally different from the learners originally targeted by the CEFR" and "most of the descriptors are far removed from their social and cultural contexts" (p.668). Migrants generally need to use the language in vocational and administrative contexts, contexts that are not currently the focus of the CEFR.[133] Furthermore, although reference is made in the CEFR to plurilingual competence (section 6.1.3.2 of the CEFR), its descriptors take no real account of it. It is therefore unsurprising that "the CEFR is applied in a monolingual manner", with "curricula and examinations derived from it [concentrating] on one language" (p. 669). As Krumm observes with particular reference to migrants, although the CEFR is not intended to be applied uniformly to everybody, in some cases it is applied in just such a fashion" (p. 667). Furthermore, if migrants are assessed in only one language, "their communicative capabilities are made to appear very limited, although they can communicate in many more and many different situations than monolingual speakers are able to do" (p. 669).

3.4.2   Mother tongues and the language of school education

It is noted in the CEFR (CoE, 2001, p. 168) that the learning of a foreign language is no longer to be considered "as the addition, in a compartmentalised way, of a competence to communicate in a foreign language to the competence to communicate in the mother tongue":

> A given individual does not have a collection of distinct and separate competences to communicate depending on the language he / she knows, but rather a plurilingual and pluricultural competence encompassing the full range of the languages available to him / her (ibid).

The overarching principle guiding the Language Policy Division is described by Beacco (RFI, 2004, Question 9) as follows:

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[133] Little, Lazenby Simpson, and O'Connor (2002, p. 64), in a case study of refugees in Ireland, refer to "the difficulty that learners encounter in using the CEFR to maintain on-going reflective self-assessment" as suggesting "a need for more detailed descriptions of proficiency relevant to particular domains of language learning".

La Division des politiques linguistiques part du principe que nous sommes tous potentiellement ou effectivement plurilingues : le plurilinguisme est l'état naturel de l'homme. Dans cette mesure, il revient à la puissance publique qui a pris en charge l'éducation de développer la compétence plurilingue des enfants et des adultes tout comme elle développe leurs compétences intellectuelle, cognitive, physique et créative. Nous pensons que cela fait partie de la responsabilité de toute institution éducative.

[The Language Policy Division works on the principle that we are all potentially or effectively (or is it actually?) plurilingual: plurilingualism is the natural state of man. To this extent, it is for the public authorities who have taken charge of education to develop the plurilingual competence of children and adults in the same way they develop their intellectual, cognitive, physical and creative competences. We believe this is part of the responsibilities of any educational institution.]

Even so, the CEFR descriptors do not accommodate first languages. Hence, the perceived need for a different Framework, one which focuses on content and language integrated learning (CLIL). The Council of Europe's project, a Common European Framework of Reference for the Languages of School Education, is seen by Little (2007, p. 651) as one way of addressing issues associated with the fact that "the common reference levels define L2 proficiency, whereas Council of Europe language education policy is increasingly focused on plurilingualism which is rooted in L1". So far as Little is concerned, there is no reason why the two frameworks should not share the same descriptive scheme because "many of the *can-do* descriptors developed to define L2 proficiency will be applied to L1 proficiency, though they will need to be underpinned by descriptors of NS [native speaker] rather than L2-learner linguistic competence" (ibid). However, North (2007, p. 658) has drawn attention to three areas of potential divergence. First, whereas the CEFR descriptors "deliberately define behavioural outcomes (result of learning)", a framework for the language of schooling "should be interested in describing emerging abilities and competences and in relating their development to the kind of educational scaffolding that encourages it". Secondly, "modern language learners transfer to the new language the competences they have already

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acquired in relation to the language of schooling". Finally, because the language of schooling "would need to situate the development of language competence within the overall cognitive and social development of the children concerned", most of the descriptive scales could prove to be unsuitable.

Although Alderson (2007, p. 662) agrees with Little that "in its present form, the CEFR is not suitable for young learners, for the teaching of language for specific purposes or for CLIL [Content & Language Integrated Learning]", he believes that the proposed extension of the CEFR to mother tongues and the language of schooling is being promoted in the absence of any indication that the research necessary to ensure "validity in such different contexts" will be conducted. This is something that he regards as being particularly regrettable in view of the fact that "the CEFR . . . is to date based only on the perceptions of language teachers, not even of trained assessors or of expert applied linguists from a range of disciplines". He notes the problems associated with the specification of the current *can-do* descriptors for levels C1 and C2 in purely linguistic terms (rather than in terms of educational and cognitive development), and asserts that if descriptors for mother tongues and the language of schooling could be developed, they would be "highly controversial, if only because not all accept the notion of the native speaker, and because defining native-speaker competence will prove hugely problematic". Nevertheless, he doubts that appropriate research, development and validation will precede implementation and prevent further misuse of the CEFR.

3.5   A final note

Almost every aspect of the CEFR is vulnerable to serious criticism and yet, bearing in mind the extent of its reach, those language professionals who have criticized it in writing are relatively few in number. In the words of McNamara (October 18, 2006), "the relentless march of the CEFR juggernaut has been met pretty much with a deafening silence so far". This may be partly because, so far as some language professionals are concerned, it has little genuine academic interest. It may also be partly because some of those who are opposed to it, or to aspects of it, or even simply wish to raise issues about it which could be interpreted as potentially undermining, choose not to comment because they believe that there is little point. After all, so much time and money have now been invested by so

many individuals and so many countries in attempts to accommodate their language policies and practices to the CEFR that it has become entrenched. It is increasingly, irrespective of the major problems associated with it, being treated as *the* standard point of reference.

As is evident in the literature review, the emphasis of those who have critiqued the CEFR thus far has largely been (a) its lack of clarity and accessibility, (b) its modest impact on language teaching and learning thus far, (c) is potential for misuse, and (d) problems associated with attempting to use it in the context of assessment. In spite of the fact that Martyniuk & Noijons (2007, p. 8) have highlighted the importance of teacher response to the CEFR, there has, to date, been no research that has focused on the CEFR in the context of language teacher cognition, that is, in the context of "what language teachers think, know and believe – and its relationship to teachers' classroom practices" (Borg, 2006, p. 1). Furthermore, in conducting a search for literature on the CEFR, I was unable to find any detailed critiques of attempts to base the development of language curricula on the CEFR. In view of the fact that a document such as the CEFR needs to be mediated, either indirectly, by curricula, or directly, by language teachers, these are significant omissions. I therefore decided to focus in my own research on language teacher cognition as it relates to the CEFR and on the analysis of language curriculum documents that have been influenced by the CEFR. Because the CEFR, as indicated in the literature review, is now having a impact beyond Europe as well as within Europe, I decided to include participants from both within Europe (France and Great Britain) and outside of Europe (Taiwan,, Hong Kong, New Zealand and Australia) in the questionnaire-based survey reported in *Chapter 4*. I also decided to include in the analysis of curricula influenced by the CEFR both curricula designed within Europe (France) and curricula designed outside of Europe (New Zealand).

Chapter 4

Reporting on responses to a questionnaire relating to the CEFR designed for language teachers

4.1 Introduction: Motivation for the survey

Talking to language teachers informally at a symposium on the CEFR held in 2007[134] alerted me to the fact that there was considerable unease about the CEFR, unease that rarely surfaced during sessions but was evident in discussions among language teachers themselves. Many of those to whom I spoke, including some who had worked hard to keep up with the documentation, reported some degree of confusion and uncertainty. In general, they appeared to feel personally responsible for this, regarding it as the outcome of some failure on their part rather than as an indication that the CEFR might itself be problematic. This may be a reflection of the way in which the CEFR has been presented to teachers. There appears to be a widespread assumption that language teachers are not capable of reading the CEFR for themselves (should they choose to do so) and making up their own minds about its content, and this assumption appears to have had a negative impact on teachers' confidence. Thus, for example, as indicated in Chapter 3, Martyniuk and Noijons (2007), in the executive summary of the second of the two surveys conducted by the Council of Europe, noted that there was a need "to familiarise more teachers with the document by organising national and international events, exchanging good practice, etc.", the implication being that there is necessarily some connection between familiarity with the CEFR and 'good practice'. Furthermore, in the introduction to a book based on a special issue of the *ELT Journal* devoted to the CEFR, Morrow (2004, p. 1), notes that the intention is "to encourage more practitioners to engage in a principled way with the Framework, *so that they are able to contribute to its further development*" [emphasis added].

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[134] The International Symposium of the Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Français (FIPF) held in Sèvres (France) in June 2007 on the theme: Le cadre européen, une référence mondiale ? [The European Framework, a global reference?].

As reported in Chapter 3, the Council of Europe conducted two surveys about the CEFR in 2005 and 2006 (Council of Europe, 2005; Martyniuk & Noijons, 2007). The first of these surveys gathered information at an institutional or organizational level; the second at a national level. In each case, those involved were expected to respond as representatives of organizations, nations etc. rather than as individuals. The survey reported in this chapter is different in that it sought the views of individual language teachers (largely language teachers working in tertiary education settings within and outside of Europe) on aspects of the CEFR and was conducted by a language teacher rather than by some official organization. I hoped that this, together with an assurance of anonymity, might provide participants with a context in which they felt able to express themselves more freely than might otherwise be the case.

In designing and distributing this survey, careful consideration was paid to the advice provided by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000, pp. 169-180 & 245 – 266) in relation to each of the following:

- determination of primary and subsidiary aims of the survey;
- determination of the survey approach to be adopted;
- determination of the target population;
- determination of the approach to recording and analyzing response data;
- consideration of ethical protocols;
- production of a draft;
- trialling of the draft;
- revision of the draft;
- conduct of the survey;
- analysis of the responses.

4.2   Language teacher cognition and survey construction

Borg (2006, p. 1) points out the importance of knowing what language teachers think, know and believe, and of its relationship to teachers' classroom practices, noting that "understanding teacher cognition is central to the process of understanding teaching". Research on teacher cognition has developed intensively in the past twenty years or so, and it has shown how difficult it was to

conceptualise knowledge (see, for instance, Munby, Russel and Martin, 2001, p. 878) and that what is referred to as 'knowledge' would in fact often be more appropriately termed 'belief' when it cannot be justified with reference to evidence. Language teacher cognition research provides evidence for the contention that teachers – in common, no doubt, with other professionals – tend to respond to questions that relate to their professional practice in ways that reflect what they think they are expected to know and do (see, for example, Karavas-Doukas [1996], Sato and Kleinsasser [1999 and 2004] and Wang [2008; 2010]). This indicates the potential value of conducting follow-up interviews and/or of paying careful attention, in the design of questionnaires, to the possibility of responses being affected by participants' beliefs about what they *ought* to think or do and what the researcher's expectations are. In his case, it was not possible to conduct follow-up interviews with questionnaire respondents because these respondents were guaranteed anonymity. Without violating this guarantee, it was not possible to determine who had participated in the questionnaire-based survey. Furthermore, contacting those who had elected not to respond to the questionnaire would have violated the University of Waikato's ethical guidelines which require that potential research participants should not be subjected to anything that is, or may be interpreted as, pressure to participate. However, the questionnaire was constructed in a way that was intended to facilitate the detection of responses that were unlikely to be an accurate reflection of what respondents actually thought and did. Thus, different questions using different angles but revolving around the same topic were asked, sometimes in different places in the questionnaire. For instance, in the second part of the questionnaire, the first question asks respondents to indicate how familiar they are with the CEFR. This is followed by a range of other questions asking them how they knew about it, in which contexts they have encountered references to it, whether they have read the document itself, and so on. Another question, asking them to state what seem to them to be the three main points of the CEFR (beyond the reference levels) aims to check their real knowledge and understanding of the document. Similarly, a question asking whether the CEFR had been translated into one of the languages of the country in which participants taught was included not in order to gain information about the number of languages into which the CEFR had been translated, but in order to determine whether participants were aware that the CEFR was, in fact,

available in their language. In Part 3 of the questionnaire, several questions that ask participants to estimate the usefulness of the CEFR in a number of areas are followed by several questions that ask them to indicate whether they have themselves used the CEFR in these areas. Finally, a number of open-ended questions (13) are included in order to provide participants with an opportunity to comment and, therefore, to provide the researcher with some qualitative data.

4.3   Aims and objectives of the survey

The primary aims of the survey were to determine (a) what a sample of language teachers in a range of countries or areas in Europe, Asia and Oceania know about the CEFR, (b) the extent to which they believe it has had an influence in the countries and organizations where they work, and (c) how they perceive the CEFR. More specifically, the primary aims were to determine:

- what the participants know about the CEFR and what the sources of their knowledge are;
- what participants believe about the extent of knowledge of the CEFR of other language teachers in the countries where they teach;
- what participants' personal opinions about the CEFR are;
- whether, and if so how, participants believe that the CEFR is used in the country and/or the institution where they teach;
- whether participants believe that the impact of the CEFR in the country and/or institution where they teach (if any) is generally positive or negative;
- whether participants believe the CEFR to be useful and, if so, in what particular domains.

Because I wished to determine whether particular responses or response patterns could be related to the backgrounds of participants, I also needed to collect some data relating to the personal and professional background of respondents (age range, nationality, qualifications and countries where they had been obtained, language(s) taught, experience in language teaching, country and type of institution where the respondents were teaching).

4.4 Determination of the survey approach to be adopted

My intention was to survey a sample of language teachers from different institutions in different parts of the world. For this reason, interviews would have been both too time-consuming and too expensive to conduct. I therefore decided to construct a self-completion questionnaire. This had a number of advantages in addition to cost and completion time. First, I could pilot the survey from New Zealand. Secondly, I could prepare different versions of the questionnaire in different languages rather than attempting to deal with the linguistic complexities, inequalities and potential misunderstandings that would be likely to result if I conducted interviews in French (my first language) or in English or Chinese (the other languages in which I have a reasonably high level of proficiency). A second reason for my choice of self-completion questionnaires was that I believed that respondents would be less likely to feel intimated, particularly as they were guaranteed anonymity in the reporting process. Although it would have been interesting and potentially very valuable to conduct a small number follow-up interviews using electronic media, this was not possible because of the ethical considerations outlined in the previous section.

4.5 Determination of the target population

Since the aim of the survey was to gather facts and opinions from language teachers regarding the impact of the CEFR inside and outside Europe (see 4.3 above), the first task was to select the countries where the survey would be conducted and then determine how potential participants would be selected.

4.5.1 Countries / areas involved in the survey

Although I am myself European (French), I normally live and work in Asia (Taiwan). However, this research project was conducted while I was living in Oceania (New Zealand) and was enrolled in a university there. I therefore had a particular interest in the impact of the CEFR in Europe, Asia and Oceania and, specifically, in France, Taiwan and New Zealand. In particular, as a teacher of French in Taiwan, I was personally aware of the fact that the CEFR is increasingly used as a point of reference there in relation to assessment and certification. In order to broaden the potential interest of the survey findings, I

decided also to include three other areas, one in Europe, one in Asia and one in Oceania. I selected the United Kingdom (Europe), Australia (Oceania) and Hong Kong (Asia). In making this selection, I took into account the need to focus on areas where language teachers were likely to be able to cope with questionnaires in English, French or Chinese (the three languages in which I was most confident of my capacity to interpret responses). I included the UK largely because UK academics have had a major impact on the design of the CEFR and on European language policy generally (the Bologna process, for example[135]). The selection of Hong Kong related to its long association with the UK which might have led to a different approach to the CEFR from that of Taiwan which is historically more closely related to the USA. In the case of Australia, my selection was related to two considerations. First, I was interested in the fact that Australia had considered, but finally rejected, use of the CEFR (see Chapter 1). Secondly, I had found that a number of interesting criticisms of the CEFR that were included in discussion lists originated in Australia.

All language teachers were sent an English version of the questionnaire. Language teachers who were resident in France were also sent a French version. In addition to the English version, language teachers who were resident in Taiwan were sent a Chinese version if they were Taiwanese and a French version if they were teachers of French.[136] Those who received two versions were advised that they could select which to complete. All participants were advised that they could respond in English, French or Chinese.

4.5.2 Participants

My intention was to sample as wide a range of language teachers as possible. However, it is very difficult to identify individual language teachers in secondary education and to collect their contact details, impossible in cases where certain types of privacy legislation are in place. However, sending questionnaires to the

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[135] The Bologna process lead to the alignment of higher education systems on a common model, largely inspired by the Anglo-Saxon model (see INSA Lyon, 2009; Streickeisen, 2003, ¶ 3; Phillips, 15 December 2008, ¶ 10), with two cycles, undergraduate and postgraduate, the first cycle leading to a Bachelor degree in three years, and the second cycle leading to a Masters degree (two more years) and, beyond, to a Doctorate.

[136] A Taiwanese teacher of French thus received three versions (English, Chinese and French) and could choose the language he/she preferred.

Principals or HODs of languages departments of secondary schools and hoping that they would distribute them was unlikely, it seemed to me, to be productive.[137] Contacting language teaching associations with a request that they distribute questionnaires to members electronically was another possibility. However, with one exception, my efforts in this direction met with zero response.[138] I therefore decided to focus on tertiary educational institutions because teaching staff details are generally widely available (in educational calendars, on internet sites etc.). I therefore sent questionnaires to those I was able to identify from tertiary institution internet sites, requesting that they also forward them to colleagues they thought might be interested in responding.[139] Therefore, the vast majority of the respondents to my survey are teaching at tertiary level, with some of them also teaching in other contexts such as lower and higher secondary schools, language schools or institutes, private teaching, adult training establishments, etc., where, in some cases, they had been provided with copies of the questionnaire by colleagues.

The fact that the survey would involve participants in Europe, Asia and Oceania meant that sending the questionnaires by post would be very costly and time consuming. I therefore decided to send the questionnaires by electronic mail (e-mail), taking into account the following considerations:

- most language teachers in the areas involved were likely to be familiar with that communication medium;

- e-mail is fast, convenient and inexpensive and facilitates multiple contact;

- sending the questionnaire as an attachment that could be completed electronically made the process simpler for respondents.

There were, however, potential disadvantages. First, although anonymity in the reporting process could be guaranteed, respondents could not return completed questionnaires anonymously. Secondly, some potential respondents might object to being sent unsolicited emails or might fail to open them in view of the

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[137] In fact, I did trial this approach in France and there were no returns at all.
[138] The one exception was the Association des Professeurs de Français de Taiwan (APFT)[138] whose president voluntarily transmitted the questionnaire to all members.
[139] This explains why I received one response from Belgium and one from Germany.

widespread fear of computer viruses. As many e-mail users use a preview function, I believed that it might nevertheless be possible to persuade some to proceed so long as the request for participation in the survey was appropriately worded. Sample e-mail requests are attached (see Appendix A). In order to attempt to ensure a reasonable response rate, I contacted as many potential respondents as possible in each area. The questionnaires were sent to a total of 3,667 teachers in 54 institutions of tertiary education (mainly universities) in the six areas of the world indicated previously (see Appendix B[140]). The institutions were selected from different regions in each area in an attempt to reflect the national situation more faithfully. The number of language teachers and the range of languages taught varied from one institution to the other. The teachers contacted belonged, in the vast majority of cases, to language departments or language centres, but some were attached to a department of linguistics or applied linguistics, particularly in universities which offer courses in the teaching of English to non-native speakers (English as a Second or Other Language [ESOL], English for Academic Purposes [EAP], etc.). In a few cases, language teachers were attached to translation departments rather than language departments as such.

4.6 Determination of the approach to recording and analyzing response data

I decided to code, record and analyse the questionnaire responses using *Microsoft Excel*, a commercial package that offers all of the functions I would require in view of the fact that most of the questions were closed ones.[141]

4.7 Ethical protocols

At each stage of the process (particularly at the initial planning stage where permission from the appropriate Ethics Committee of the University of Waikato would be required), [142] ethical considerations were taken into account (see Appendix C for Ethics Committee approval). Respondents were given a clear

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[140] Appendix B provides the list of institutions and number of teachers contacted, as well as the number of those who accepted to participate in the survey.
[141] For an outline of the questionnaire, see subsection 4.10.2.
[142] In this case, the appropriate committee was the Human Research Ethics Committee of the School of Māori and Pacific Development of the University of Waikato.

outline of the aims of the research. They were also informed that they need not respond to the questionnaire and that, if they chose to do so, they need not complete all of the questions. It was explained that if they returned a fully or partially completed questionnaire, it would be assumed that this represented agreement that their responses could be used in any presentations or publications relating to the research. They were assured, however, that the data collected would be reported in a summary format only and in such a way that neither respondents nor any institution to which they were attached would be identified or identifiable.

4.8   The draft questionnaire

The draft questionnaire was produced in A4 format in English and translated into French and Mandarin Chinese, particular attention being paid to the translation of terminology associated with the teaching and learning of languages. I prepared the English version first, checking the terminology used against CEFR-related literature in English. That version was then checked for linguistic accuracy by one of my research supervisors. As a native speaker of French with training and experience in English to French translation, I felt confident about translating the English questionnaire into French, checking the terminology used against French language versions of CEFR-related literature. The translation into Mandarin Chinese was prepared by a Taiwanese teacher of English working at the same institution in Taiwan as I do. At that time, she was also engaged in doctoral research in New Zealand, and as a speaker of Mandarin myself, I was able to collaborate with her during the translation process, attempting to ensure that the Mandarin Chinese version was as close as possible to the French and English versions. In translating the questionnaire, a great deal of attention was paid to maintaining consistency among the different versions. Any change made to the text in one language could impact on the texts in the other two languages. The whole process thus required a considerable amount of time. Regarding the Mandarin Chinese version, there were particular issues associated with the use of terminology, critical issues being consistency with the terminology used in other relevant documents in Mandarin Chinese and the need to seek to ensure that any terminology used would be understood by potential respondents. In this connection, reference was made to official documents prepared by the Taiwanese

Ministry of Education and to conference papers and other documentation available from Taiwan that related to the CEFR and European language policies generally. The translator was able to identify some problems that language teachers from Taiwan might have in understanding the questions. She also suggested adapting some of the questions relating to the education system (Questions 1.10; 2.16 and 2.19 — see 4.9 below) so that they more adequately reflected the Taiwanese system, which is modelled on the North American system. These adaptations needed to be reflected in the French and English versions of the questionnaire prepared for teachers in Taiwan, but not in the versions for Europe and Oceania. This also meant that careful attention would need to be paid to the coding of responses.

The draft questionnaire consisted of three parts, with a total of 41 questions: 14 in the first part (background information), 18 in the second part (relating to the CEFR itself); 9 in the third part (relating to the impact of the CEFR). The numbering of these questions started from 1 at the beginning of each section so as to reduce the potential negative impact of what was necessarily (in order to gain information of genuine value) a fairly long document.

The questionnaire consisted mainly of closed questions. Where respondents were asked to make judgements using rating scales, there were an even number of points on the scales so as to avoid centre-clustering of responses. The number of open questions (13) was limited to reduce the complexity of analysis.[143]

Attention was paid to the language used, which was kept as simple as possible, and to the layout, which had to be clear and consistent. Adequate space was provided for responses. A final question inviting respondents to add any comments they wished was followed by a blank page. Attached at the beginning of the questionnaire was a letter of introduction which outlined the aims of the research and the ethical protocols and provided the researcher's contact details. At the end of the questionnaire, a reproduction of the Global Scale of the CEFR was attached as an appendix to assist respondents to answer some questions about proficiency levels (Part 2).

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[143] See section 4.10.

4.9   Trialling the questionnaire

The next stage consisted in trialling the different language versions of the questionnaire to determine whether there were likely to be problems for potential respondents. The English version was trialled by two native speakers of English, both teachers of English as a second or other language in a New Zealand university. The French version was trialled by three native speakers, one teacher of English in France and two teachers of French as a second language in Taiwan (all teaching at both secondary and tertiary levels). The Mandarin version was trialled by two teachers of English from Taiwan, both native speakers of Chinese and both studying in New Zealand at the time. A third Taiwanese colleague also provided her general opinion about the questionnaire. Those involved in the trial were asked:

- to attempt to answer the questions and report any difficulty experienced in doing so (for instance if a question was felt to be unclear or ambiguous or not well formulated);

- to report the length of time they needed to complete the questionnaire;

- to make any further comments or give any advice they considered useful.

All of those involved in the trialling estimated that 15 to 20 minutes was enough time to complete the questionnaire, although they thought that it could take longer if respondents wished to think carefully before answering, particularly if the version they used was not in their first language. However, they agreed that, although the questionnaire might seem long, answering the questions was relatively straightforward as it mainly involved ticking boxes. Only a few questions required writing and, in most cases, this was limited to a few words or a short sentence. In spite of that, they found the tables associated with questions 16 and 18 in Part 1 to be complex and confusing, particularly in the Mandarin version. The Taiwanese teachers also found that many questions in that initial Mandarin version were too wordy compared to the English version (which they asked to view). They also agreed with the suggestion to adapt the content of the questions relating to educational stages so as to make them more appropriate to the Taiwanese context (see section 4.8 above). They pointed out that the situation

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of Taiwanese teachers was likely to be very different from that of teachers in the other countries surveyed in that it was felt that they were less likely to be familiar with the CEFR. It was evident therefore that effort was needed to make the questions clearer, more straightforward and accessible to all, and, in particular, to redesign questions 16 to 18 (Part 2) so as to reduce the level of complexity.

As regards the French version, no serious problems were identified. However, one of the teachers noted that the fact that question numbering started from 1 in each section could create problems of reference and suggested a different numbering system (A1, A2, B1, B2 etc.). He also mentioned that the appendix reproducing the CEFR's Global Scale was not easy to read as it was oriented vertically with a font that was not very clear. He suggested changing the font and positioning the text in the table horizontally to ensure consistency with the remainder of the questionnaire. This teacher responded using his computer by typing an 'x' next to the tick boxes, which made the responses difficult to identify quickly. This made me realise that a better system had to be found for respondents who would decide to answer on their computer rather than print the questionnaire and tick it by hand. Moreover, I was trying at the same time to find a way to protect the document against modifications while still allowing respondents to insert their responses. For the paper-based version, the solution was simple: the questionnaires would be attached as a PDF form which could not be modified. Respondents could then print it and insert their responses. The problem for computer-based versions was to protect the text of the questionnaire from adaptation while still allowing participants to respond.

One of the teachers who trialled the English version commented that the questions seemed acceptable and that the question pattern was easy to follow. However, she mentioned several problems with the rating scales in the third part. She believed that apart from the first question (asking 'how well' the respondents thought the CEFR was known in their country), there was a need to provide the possibility of responding with 'I don't know' or 'not sure' (although there was the possibility in one case of adding a comment). She also found the design of question 4 in the third part of the questionnaire to be confusing because respondents were first asked to tick areas where they found the CEFR useful in their teaching practice,

then to rate this usefulness on a rating scale. It was not clear how participants who had not consciously implemented the CEFR should respond. In relation to questions 5 and 6 (asking whether participants thought there was any problem in relation to the CEFR in the institution(s)/country where they taught), she pointed out that the response would depend on whether the institution (or country, in the case of question 6) was actually using the CEFR. However, this was not considered to be a significant problem because participants could select 'no' and then add a comment (in the comments section) relating to their particular situation.

4.10   Modification of the questionnaire and final version

The questionnaires were modified, taking account of the comments and recommendations made during the trials. The revised versions of the questionnaire are attached as Appendix D.

4.10.1 Modifications

All questions were renumbered (1-1, 1-2, 2-1 etc.). Where problems had been encountered in the wording of the Mandarin version, the questions were reworded and resubmitted to those involved in the trials and to the translator until they were satisfied with the wording. Questions 16 to 18 (Part 2) of the initial questionnaire were redesigned. Question 16 was divided into two questions (questions 2-16 and 2-17 in the revised version). Question 17 was renumbered 2-18, but its content remained unchanged. Question 18, (now numbered 2-19), was simplified. The appendix was modified: the font was changed and the text was adapted so that it could be read horizontally (without having to turn the document). The rating scales in Part 3 were modified and an 'I don't know' response was added in the case of questions 3-2 to 3-4). Question 4 was modified in the following way: instead of first ticking the areas where they found the CEFR useful, then circling a number on the rating scale, respondents would directly circle a number on the scale or tick the newly provided 'I have not used the CEFR in this area' answer if applicable. Questions 5 and 6 were also modified to include an 'I don't know' choice.

An important modification related to the computer-based version intended for respondents who wished to fill in the questionnaires on their computer and send

them back as an electronic mail attachment. As indicated in 4.9 above, it was imperative to find a solution that allowed respondents to tick boxes or write their answers without risking altering the rest of the document. The solution found was to use the form toolbar in Microsoft Word to insert tick boxes and answering areas, and even some drop down lists in the case of a few questions with a limited number of answers (such as 1-2 relating to age range). The document was then protected by a password, preventing respondents from altering it but still allowing them to tick boxes, select answers in a drop down list or write their answers in the spaces provided. All the fields inserted using the form toolbar appeared with grey shading on the document. Although the software allows for the removal of shading, it was decided to retain it so as to facilitate the location of answering fields, particularly as regards the 'text form fields' (areas where respondents can type their answer). In the paper-based questionnaire, empty lines clearly indicate where to answer; in the electronic version, text form fields were designed to expand as the respondents typed. Without the grey shading, they would appear as a blank space, making it difficult to know where to type responses. The space provided for the answer was also underlined, giving an appearance similar to the traditional response areas in paper-based questionnaires. The grey shading had the additional advantage of making the computer-based version look different from the paper-version, making confusion impossible.

Particular care was taken to provide clear explanations of how to answer the questions. These explanations were added at the beginning of the questionnaire, immediately below the title, in a style as simple as possible and avoiding technical language. As regards the appendix, it was considered that putting it at the end of the computer-based document would create difficulties for respondents. The Global Scale was intended to help in answering questions 2-16 to 2-19 and so jumping from this section of the questionnaire to the appendix would not be convenient. Consequently, in the computer-based version, the Global Scale was put after question 2-19.

Finally, all language versions were modified to ensure that they remained consistent with each other.

4.10.2 The final version

All versions were prepared in a paper-based form (PDF file) and a computer-based form (Microsoft Word document, password-protected). These documents would be attached to e-mails inviting potential respondents to participate in the survey. The English version would always be provided along with other language versions, so that respondents could choose to use this version if they preferred.

As indicated in 4.8, the questionnaire was divided into three parts: *Background information*; *The Common European Framework of reference for Languages (CEFR)*; and *The impact of the CEFR*. The first part, consisting of 14 questions, was designed to collect background information on the respondents: personal information (nationality, age range); professional information (language(s) they teach, experience in language teaching, qualifications), teaching context (country, educational level at which they teach, position and employment status). The two final questions aimed at determining their experience in curriculum design.

The second part, with 19 questions, was the longest. Its purpose was to determine the extent to which respondents knew the CEFR and in which context they had learnt about it, as well as their perception of the influence the CEFR was having (if any) in their country or institution. Of particular interest here were questions 2-16 to 2-19 regarding levels that had been recommended (if any) by the respondent's country or institution and the ones they would themselves recommend.

The third part concerned the impact of the CEFR in the country or institution where the respondents worked as well as their personal opinion about that impact (if any) and about the CEFR itself. There were only 9 questions in this section. However, questions 3-3 and 3-4 were subdivided into several areas and question 3-7 was divided into 17 components. Questions 3-1 to 3-4 included rating scales: they concerned the extent to which the respondents believed the CEFR was known by language teachers in the country where they were teaching; the impact of the CEFR on this country (positive or not); the usefulness of the CEFR in different domains in their country of teaching and in different areas of their teaching practice. Questions 3-5 and 3-6 (asking whether respondents believed

there were any problems in relation to the CEFR in the institution(s) and the country where they were working) included a section where comments could be made. Question 3-7 provided 17 statements about the CEFR, asking respondents if they believed these to be true or false, with the possibility of answering 'I don't know'. Question 3-8 asked respondents to identify the main purpose(s) of the CEFR (selecting from four possible choices). Finally, question 3-9 provided an opportunity for respondents to make any comment they wished about the CEFR, the questionnaire itself, their own situation or anything else they might want to add.

From a total of 42 questions, seven sought the respondents' comments. In Part 1, several questions relating to background information were open-ended (1-1 on nationality; 1-3 on the language(s) taught; 1-4 on the number of years of experience in language teaching; 1-6 and 1-8 on respondents' qualifications; 1-11 on respondents' teaching positions). For most of these, the range of possible answers would be relatively limited. In part 2, questions 2-6, 2-13, 2-16, 2-17 and 2-19 were also open-ended. However, 2-13 and 2-17 only required an answer if respondents had answered 'yes' to 2-12 or had filled in the table in 2-16, and the range of possible answers to 2-19 was limited. Finally, a few closed multiple choice questions also included an "other" option asking respondents to define their situation. All of the remaining questions were closed questions of various kinds: dichotomous (1-5; 1-7; 1-13; 1-14); multiple choice with one option (2-1; 2-7 to 2-14; 3-5 to 3-6) or with several options (1-9; 1-10; 2-2 to 2-5; 2-15; 3-8); and rating scales (3-1 to 3-4). Answering several questions (1-6; 1-8; 2-8; 2-10; 2-12; 2-16 to 2-18) was conditional on answers provided in preceding questions. Question 2-1 'How well do you know the CEFR?' was intended to be decisive in determining whether respondents would respond to the remainder of the questionnaire.

4.11 Questionnaire responses: Introduction and participation rate

In this section, I will first analyse the data gathered from all respondents in Part 1 (4.11.1 to 4.11.4), Part 2 (4.11.5 to 4.11.6) and Part 3 (4.11.7 to 4.11.11) of the questionnaire, question by question or by group of questions when they constitute a logical set, providing an overview of general trends. I will then examine some of

the data in relation to specific countries and regions (4.11.12). Following that, I will give a general account of respondents' comments (4.11.13).

A total of 164 responses was received: 162 were computer-based versions of the questionnaire sent back via electronic mail, only two were paper-based versions, one received by post, the other one by fax. *Figure 4.1* below shows the number and percentage of respondents by country. The category 'Other' refers to two teachers from Germany and Belgium, countries that were not targeted by the survey.

Figure 4.1: *Number and percentage of respondents by country/area*
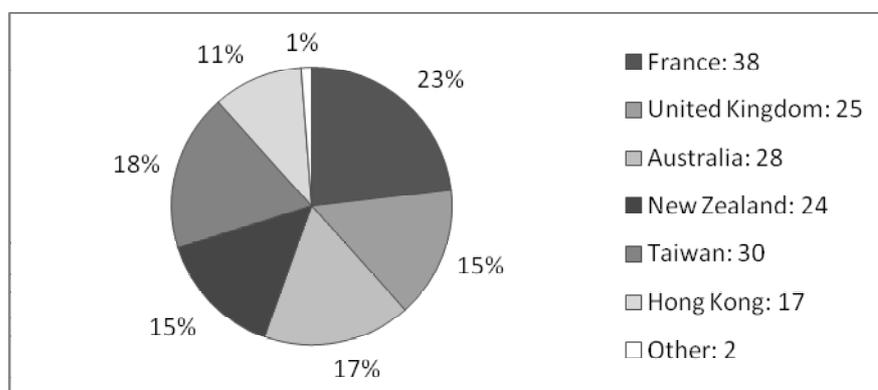
The global participation rate, calculated by comparing the number of responses with the number of people contacted was 4.47% (164 respondents): 2.6% (25 respondents) for the United Kingdom, 3.94% (17) for Hong Kong, 4.41% (38) for France, 4.92% (28) for Australia, 5.49% (24) for New Zealand and 7.35% (30) for Taiwan. It is important to note that it has been difficult in some cases to determine whether respondents are language teachers or teachers of related areas, such as literature, civilisation, economics or politics. This was particularly so in the case of the United Kingdom and also, but to a lesser extent, in the case of countries influenced by the British academic tradition, such as Australia and New Zealand. In several cases, literature or civilisation teachers were located in language departments (Department of French, of Spanish, etc.), while modern language teachers were grouped in a language centre. A French literature teacher in a British university (personal communication) explained that they expected their students to already have studied the language before entering the department, where they would then specialise in the study of French civilisation (literature,

culture, economics, etc.). Those wanting to specialise in the French language would probably therefore be found in the language centre, or in a translation department. In other countries however, teachers of literature or civilisation were often teaching language classes too and/or felt they had enough experience in language teaching to be able to participate in the survey. It is worth pointing out, too, that although the CEFR is also concerned with cultural aspects, some teachers specialising in the teaching of literature or civilisation did not feel it had anything to do with their specialty (as several explained in their answer to the contact e-mail) and did not take part in the survey. All of this goes some way to explaining why the response rate seems rather low, as a number of teachers contacted did not feel that the survey was relevant to them and, in some cases, would not have been targeted had it been possible to identify their area of specialisation. Another explanation is the fact that in some of the countries targeted, the CEFR was not well known, as revealed in some of the actual responses. Consequently, many teachers probably felt they did not know enough to take part in the survey.

4.11.1 Personal data

Respondents belong to a wide range of nationalities. *Figure 4.2* below shows the main nationalities, indicating the number of respondents as well as the percentage represented by each nationality.

Figure 4.2: Respondents' nationalities
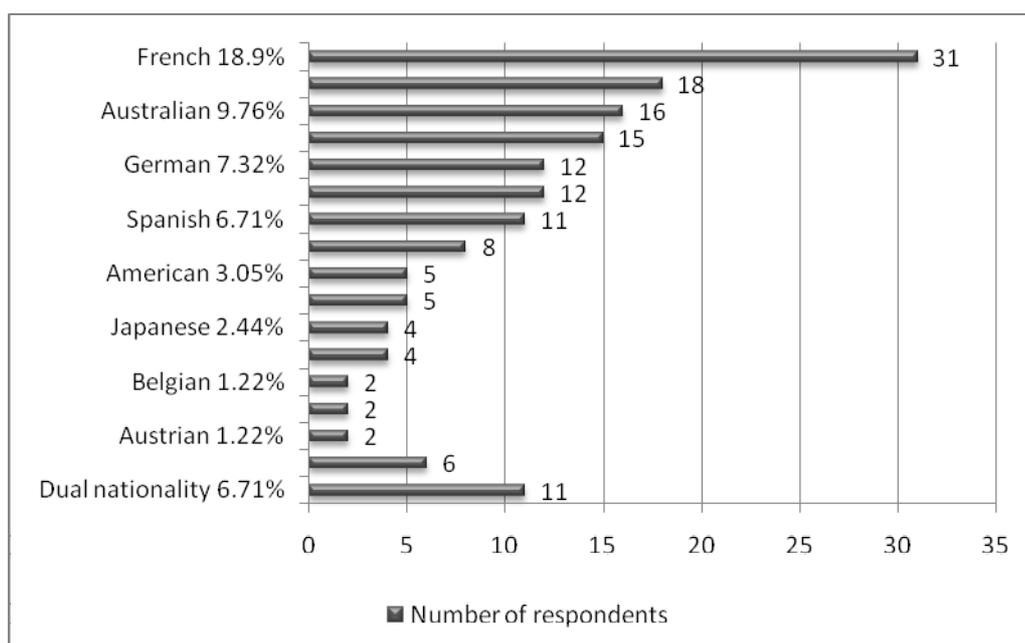
The category 'Other' in *Figure 4.2* groups the following nationalities together, each represented by only one respondent: Canadian, Greek, Luxembourgian, Polish, Romanian and Singaporean. Eleven respondents indicated two nationalities. Two respondents had dual New Zealand/French nationality, the nine others had the following dual nationalities: New Zealand/American; New Zealand/British; New Zealand/Canadian; Australian/French; Australian/German; French/British; French/Canadian; Italian/Canadian and Canadian/Dutch.

In Question 1-2, respondents were asked to indicate to which age range they belonged. Four categories were provided: 21 to 30; 31 to 40; 41 to 50 and 51 or more years of age. *Figure 4.3* below indicates the responses to this question.

Figure 4.3: Respondents' age ranges, all countries/areas
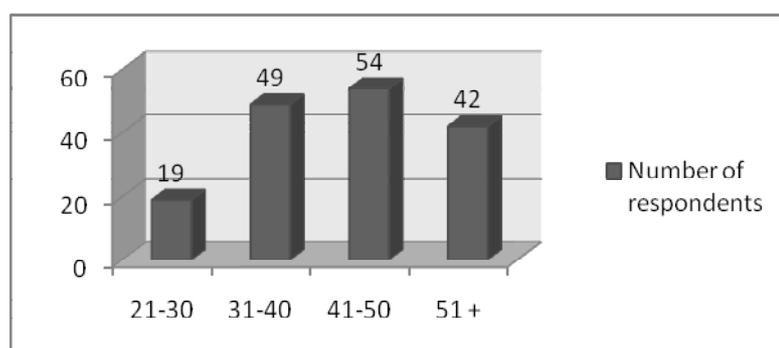
The vast majority (88.41%) were over 30 at the time when they completed the questionnaire, with most of the respondents (62.8%) being aged between 31 and 50, and just over a quarter (25.61%) being 51 years or older.

4.11.2 Professional experience and qualifications

A total of 19 languages were taught by the 164 respondents (question 1-3), as shown in *Figure 4.4.* Nine teachers were teaching two modern languages: German and French (three respondents); German and English (two respondents); Chinese and English (2 respondents); English and Spanish (1 respondent) and French and English (1 respondent). One German teacher in the United Kingdom was teaching 3 modern languages — German, Spanish and English. One German teacher in Hong Kong was teaching German and Latin. However, as Latin is not a modern language, it has not been included in the figure below. In a majority of cases,

respondents teaching more than one language were teaching English as one of these languages. Two teachers indicated having previously taught another language: a British teacher teaching English in France had previously taught French (without indicating in which country) and a French respondent teaching German in France had previously taught French in Germany.

Figure 4.4: Modern languages taught by the respondents
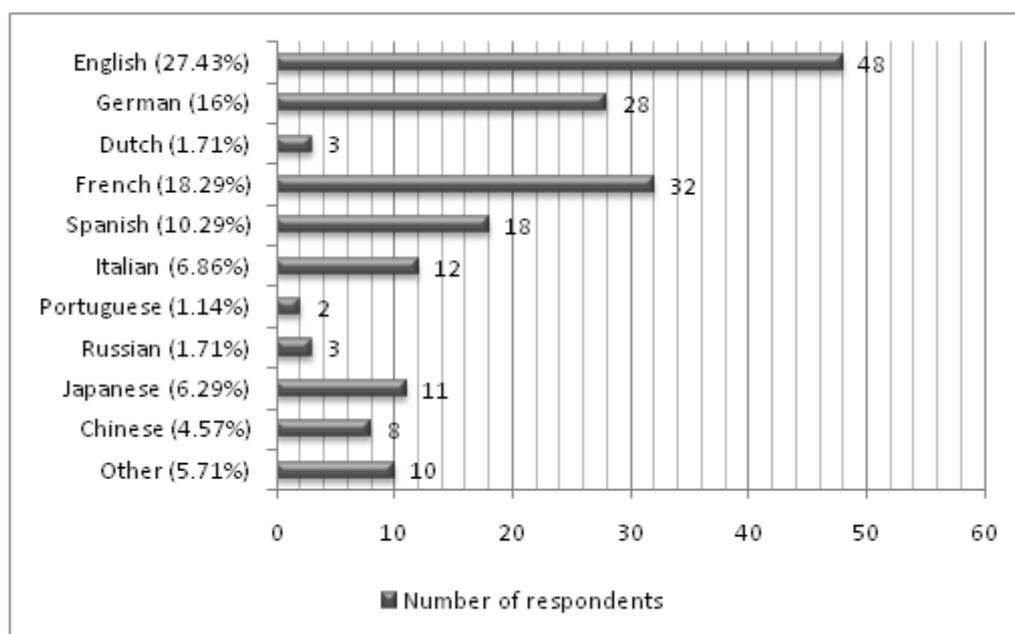
The category 'Other' represents a variety of languages taught by only one respondent. These languages were as follows (in alphabetical order): Catalan, Czech, Greek, Icelandic and Romanian for Indo-European languages and Indonesian, Korean, Māori and Turkish for non-Indo-European languages. Finally, included in the 'Other' category is one respondent from New Zealand who was not teaching a language but was involved in training teachers of English.

As regards language families, 141 teachers (86%) were teaching Indo-European languages, 21 (13%) were teaching other languages and 2 (1%) were teaching two languages belonging to different language families: an Australian (in Australia) and a Canadian (in Hong Kong) were both teaching English and Chinese. All of the others who indicated that they were teaching more than one language were teaching languages from the same (Indo-European) family. Among the non-Indo-European languages, Japanese and Chinese were the most commonly mentioned

(see *Figure 4.4*). Since the CEFR was developed largely with European languages in mind, it would be interesting to see how much teachers of non-Indo-European languages knew about it and what they thought about it.

Question 1-4 asked respondents to indicate for how long they had been teaching a language. The average number of years was 18, the minimum was 1 and the maximum was 40. A majority of respondents (94/57%) had over 10 years of experience in language teaching, 35 (21%) had between 6 and 10 years and the same number had 5 years or fewer of language teaching experience.

The two following questions concerned teachers' qualifications in the languages they taught. Question 1-5 asked whether respondents had any degree or certificate in the language(s) they were teaching. If their answer was in the affirmative, question 1-6 asked them to give the name of these degrees or certifications, the year they were obtained and the countries where they were obtained. One potential problem was that the questions did not provide native speakers (considered competent in their own language) with a way of indicating their situation. I have grouped responses here into three categories: languages taught with qualifications in the language; languages taught without declared qualifications in the language; languages taught by native speakers.[144] Since the case of teachers teaching more than one language is more complex, I analysed them separately.

Of the 155 respondents who reported teaching one language only, 78 (50.32%) were identified as native speakers. Of these, 53 (67.95%) indicated that they had qualifications in the language they taught.[145] Seventy four (47.74%) who were not identified as native speakers of the language they taught indicated that they had a

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[144] I identified as many of those who were teaching their native language as possible by comparing respondents' nationalities with the language(s) they taught. However, nationality is an imperfect indicator: some respondents might have migrated and adopted a new nationality, some others might have indicated one nationality while being able to speak two (or perhaps more) languages as native speakers, due to their origins. The names of respondents provided additional help in tentatively identifying these cases. I believe that, in the end, the margin of error for identifying native speakers was quite small.

[145] Most of these were higher education qualifications, from Bachelor's level up to Doctorate with a majority of Master's (24) and Doctorate (13) level degrees. As for those who did not indicate qualifications, this does not mean they did not have any. Some native speakers might have considered degrees or certifications obtained in their home country, but in an area other than the language itself, as irrelevant.

qualification in that language. Only 2 of the 155 respondents (1.29%) did not claim to have a degree or certificate in the language they taught (see *Figure 4.5*).

Figure 4.5: *Degree or certification in the (1) language taught: Yes / No*
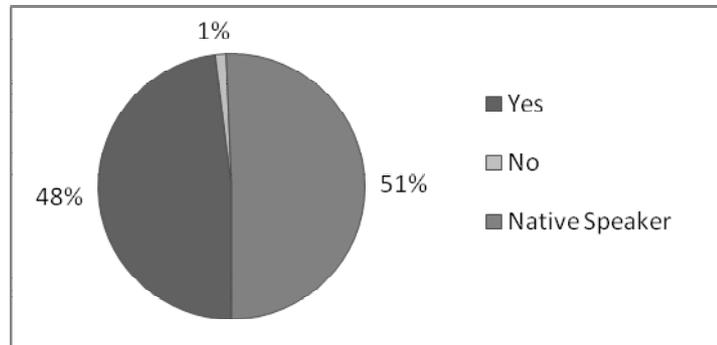
Ten respondents reported teaching more than one language. Eight were native speakers of one of the languages they taught and had a qualification in the other language they taught (or in one of the other languages taught in the case of one respondent from the United Kingdom). Three teachers did not indicate any qualification relating to the second language taught.

In conclusion, as shown in *Figure 4.6* below, of a total of 175 languages taught by participants in the survey, half (87/49.71%) were taught by native speakers, 83 (47.43%) were taught by teachers qualified in the language and only 5 (3%) were taught by teachers who were neither native speakers nor had declared any qualification in the language. A list of the qualifications to which reference is made by respondents is provided in Appendix E.

Figure 4.6: *Qualification in the language taught*[146]

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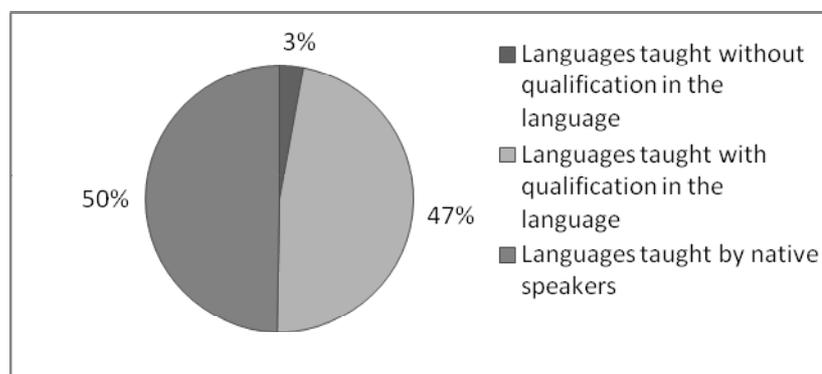
[146] All languages taken together, regardless of the number of languages taught by respondents.

Questions 1-7 and 1-8 concerned respondents' qualification in the teaching of a second or foreign language. As shown in *Figure 4.7*, nearly 59% of respondents reported that they had a qualification in language teaching.[147] The levels of qualifications listed by respondents are included in Appendix F. The relation between these qualifications and respondents' knowledge of the CEFR is discussed later (see 4.11.12).

Figure 4.7: Qualification in the teaching of a second / foreign language (numbers and percentages)
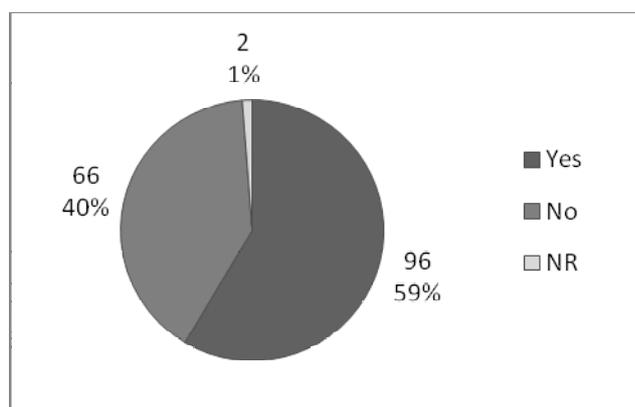
4.11.3 Employment data

Questions 1-9 to 1-12 asked for information about respondents' employment details: the country where they were teaching (see *Figure 4.1*);[148] the level(s) of education at which they were teaching (see *Figure 4.8*); their position (e.g. lecturer, assistant professor) (see Appendix G)[149] and their employment status (e.g. full-time, part-time) (see *Figure 4.9* below).

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[147] Among those who declared having qualifications, 25 (26.04%) indicated qualifications which did not specifically mention language teaching.

[148] Responses to question 1-9 regarding the country where respondents were teaching were as indicated in 4.10.1 and *Figure 4.1*.

[149] Respondents' position (question 1-11), titles and rankings are so different from one education system to another that it was quite difficult to provide a synthesis. However, results are given in Appendix G.

Figure 4.8: *Levels at which respondents were teaching (number of respondents and percentage of the total)* [150]
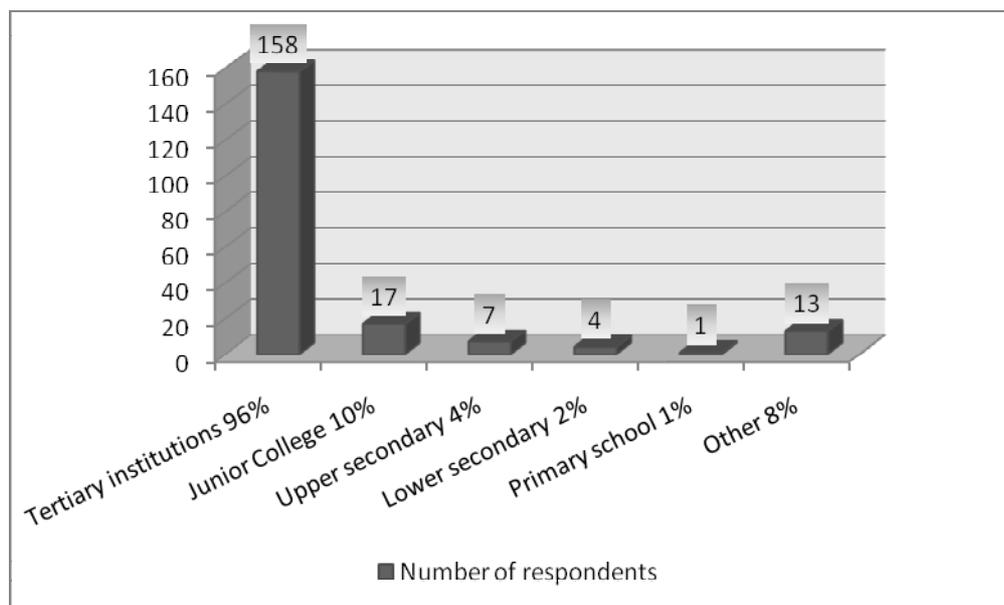
N.B.: The total is more than 100% since some respondents taught at several levels of education[151].

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[150] In Taiwan, 5-year junior colleges (五年制專科學校 or, in short, 五專) provide five years of vocational training covering the three years of upper secondary and 2 years of higher education. Students enter after graduating from junior high school (國民中學, or 國中) and passing a national exam; they graduate with the equivalent of an associate degree. They can then directly join the work force or pursue their studies by entering a 2-year technical college (二年制技術校院 or 二技) or transferring to a university. Thus, the 5-year junior college is astride secondary and higher education and has been treated separately even though this affected only respondents from Taiwan.

[151] 158 respondents (96%) were working in tertiary institutions. Among them, 17 (all from Taiwan) were also teaching in 5-year junior colleges, 8 were teaching at secondary level (three in upper secondary, 2 in lower secondary and two in both), one in primary school and nine in other contexts (two of whom were among those also teaching at secondary level). These other contexts consisted of language schools or centres (including institutions such as the Goethe Institute or the Alliance Française), adult training, and one respondent teaching in a music institute, one at pre-university level and one at post-graduate level (the latter seemed to consider this to be distinct from university level but did not give other details such as the type of institution). Among the six respondents not teaching in tertiary institutions, two were secondary teachers (one at upper secondary, one at both upper and lower secondary levels) and four were working in other contexts: one in a language centre, one in adult education, one at pre-university level, one was not teaching at the time of the survey (the respondent from Belgium was engaged in doctoral studies and was not teaching at the time of the survey, but had 15 years' experience in language teaching).
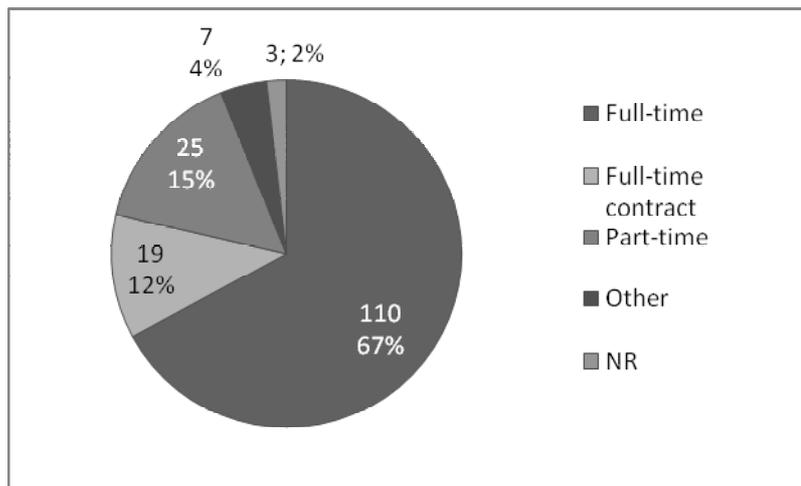
4.11.4 Experience in curriculum design

Question 1-13 asked respondents if they had any experience in the design of a language curriculum involving more than their own classes, such as a language curriculum for all the students in a particular school or university. Question 1-14 asked if they had been centrally involved (i.e. as one of the authors) in a national curriculum for one or more languages. *Figure 4.10* below summarises their answers.

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[152] In the 'Other' category, one teachers was undergoing training at the time (but had nine years of experience in language teaching); the respondent from Belgium was preparing a PhD; one respondent was a senior research fellow; three were contract teachers (but not full-time) and one did not specify his/her situation.

Figure 4.10: Experience in curriculum design
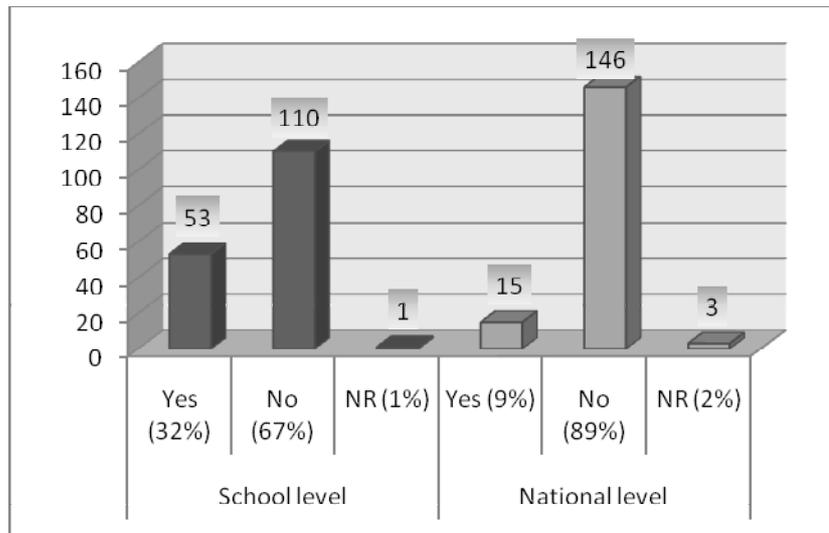
4.11.5 Knowledge of the CEFR

Questions 2-1 to 2-6 relate to the knowledge participants had of the CEFR and the circumstances (contexts, documents**)** in which they were introduced to it. Number and percentage of responses are indicated in *Table 4.1* below:

Table 4.1: Respondents' degree of familiarity with the CEFR by continent

How well do you know the CEFR?	Total responses (all areas)		Europe (UK, France & others*)		Oceania (Australia & New Zealand)		Asia (Taiwan & Hong Kong)	
Answers:	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. I am familiar or very familiar with it	34	20.73%	18	27.69%	9	17.31%	7	14.89%
2. I know the main ideas	35	21.34%	16	24.62%	12	23.08%	7	14.89%
3. I only have a vague idea	31	18.90%	12	18.46%	5	9.62%	14	29.79%
4. I just know the name, not the contents	8	4.88%	1	1.54%	2	3.85%	5	10.64%
5. I have never heard of it[153]	56	34.15%	18	27.69%	24	46.15%	14	29.79%

* *'Others' refers to the two respondents from Germany and Belgium.*

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[153] Respondents who declared never having heard of the CEFR did not have to fill the remainder of the questionnaire because they could not have answered the questions. Consequently, the data analysed from question 2-2 on only concern the 108 respondents who went on with the survey.

Respondents can be grouped into two categories according to their answer to question 2-1: those who claim to have a reasonable level of familiarity with the CEFR (answers 1 and 2 above) and those who do not (answers 3 to 5). The results are shown in *Table 4.2* below.

Table 4.2: Respondents' knowledge of the CEFR by continent

	Total responses (all areas)		Europe (UK, France & others*)		Oceania (Australia & New Zealand)		Asia (Taiwan & Hong Kong)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Have a reasonable level of familiarity with the CEFR (answers 1 & 2)	69	42.07%	34	52.31%	21	40.38%	14	29.79%
Do not have a reasonable level of familiarity with the CEFR (answers 3 to 5)	95	57.93%	31	47.69%	31	59.62%	33	70.21%

What those two tables reveal is that a majority of respondents have little knowledge of the CEFR. Although those who have a reasonable level of familiarity with it are more numerous among respondents from Europe, the difference is smaller than might have been expected. The specificities per continent and country will be presented in subsection 4.11.12.[154]

If these results are compared with the languages taught by respondents, what can be observed is that the teachers of European languages[155] knew the CEFR better — even though 49 (35.5%) were non-European[156] — than teachers of other languages. As shown in *Table 4.3* below, the teachers of German had a better knowledge of the CEFR than others. A majority of the 77 teachers of English had little or no knowledge of the CEFR, a finding that may have been influenced by

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[154] Correlation of data from question 2-1 with respondents' nationalities and teaching qualifications will be presented in 4.11.12.
[155] Only English, French, German, Spanish and Italian have been taken into account, other European languages being taught by too small a number of respondents, most often only one. For the same reasons, only Japanese and Chinese have been considered for non-European languages.
[156] This was particularly the case for English language, where 60.41% of the 48 teachers were from outside Europe. In the cases of German, French (22 teachers each) and Spanish, non-European teachers were a minority (respectively 31.25%, 21.42% and 16.66%). In the case of Italian, only one of the 11 respondents was not European.

the high proportion of non-European teachers (48/60.42%) among them. As regards teachers of Asian languages (19 teachers only), the majority of whom (16/ 84.21%) were non-European[157], most had never heard of the CEFR.

Table 4.3: *Degree of knowledge of the CEFR and languages taught*

Languages taught (question 1-3)	Degree of knowledge of the CEFR (question 2-1)									
	Familiar/very familiar with it		Know its main ideas		Only have a vague idea		Just know the name, not the contents		Have never heard of it	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
English	7	14.58%	10	20.83%	14	29.17%	2	4.17%	15	31.25%
French	7	21.88%	7	21.88%	6	18.75%	4	12.5%	8	25%
German	12	42.86%	9	32.14%	0	-	0	-	7	25%
Spanish	2	11.11%	7	38.89%	2	11.11%	2	11.11%	5	27.78%
Italian	4	33.33%	3	25%	2	16.67%	0	-	3	27.78%
Japanese	0	-	1	9.09%	0	-	1	9.09%	9	81.82%
Chinese	2	25%	0	-	0	-	0	-	6	75%

Questions 2-2 to 2-5 related to the ways in which respondents came to know about the CEFR. Answers to question 2-2 are shown in *Table 4.4* below.[158]

Table 4.4: *How respondents got to know the CEFR*

Question 2-2. How did you get to know the CEFR?		
Answers	Number	%
1. Colleagues	45	41.67%
2. Readings	58	53.7%
3. Other [159]	37	34.26%

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[157] Six Chinese teachers out of eight (75%) and ten Japanese teachers (91%) out of eleven.

[158] In questions 2-2 to 2-5, respondents could tick several answers, which explains why the total number of answers is higher than the total number of respondents.

[159] In the category 'other', most of the contexts given by respondents (in-service or pre-service training, seminars, conferences, etc.) were covered by the following questions and will not be detailed here. Apart from these, 5 respondents indicated having known the CEFR through other persons in their professional life (supervisor, school inspector) or institutions (Goethe Institut, French Ministry of Education), or through friends (one respondent). One respondent explained that

The aim of question 2-3 was to find out what kind of documents the participants had read that related to the CEFR and whether they had read the CEFR itself. The results are shown in *Table 4.5*.

Table 4.5: Documents respondents read about the CEFR

Question 2-3. Have you read the CEFR or documents about the CEFR?		
Answers:	**Number**	**%**
1. I have read the CEFR	33	30.56%
2. I have read documents related to the CEFR (e.g. European Portfolio (ELP), user guides…)	47	43.52%
3. I have read documents presenting the CEFR in a summarized way	52	48.15%
4. I have read documents where the CEFR was mentioned but not really presented	28	25.93%
5. I haven't read anything where the CEFR was mentioned	10	9.26%

When we compare these results with the respondents' degree of knowledge of the CEFR (question 2-1 above), we can see a direct correlation, as shown in *Table 4.6* below which indicates, for each degree of knowledge of the CEFR, the number and proportion of respondents who have read the different types of documents mentioned in question 2-3.

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knowing the CEFR was compulsory in his working context, another one noted that it was compulsory in his country of origin (Italy) since it is a European country. Five respondents were introduced to the CEFR in the context of their work: development of a certification; elaboration of a language curriculum at the French Ministry of Education; work in an institute of didactics; scale developing for a website and research. Finally one respondent mentioned electronic mail and another one the Internet as the source of their knowledge of the CEFR.

Table 4.6: *Relationship between the degree of knowledge of the CEFR and the documents read*

Documents read by respondents that related to the CEFR ↓	Degree of knowledge of the CEFR (question 2-1)			
	Familiar/very familiar with the CEFR 34 respondents	Know its main ideas 35 respondents	Only have a vague idea 31 respondents	Just know the name, not the contents 8 respondents
Respondents have read he CEFR	**24/ 70.59%** [160]	8/22.86%	1/3.23%	0
Respondents have read documents related to the CEFR (ELP, User guides)	**27/79.41%**	**15/42.86%**	5/16.13%	0
Respondents have read documents presenting the CEFR in a summarized way	15/44.12%	**27/77.14%**	**9/29.03%**	1/12.5%
Respondents have read documents where the CEFR was mentioned but not presented	5/14.71%	8/22.86%	**12/38.71%**	**3/37.5%**
Respondents have not read anything where the CEFR was mentioned	0	0	6/19.35%	**4/50%**

Question 2-14 asked respondents in which context they had been introduced to the CEFR. Results are indicated in *Figure 4.11* below, which shows that 'conferences, seminars, etc.' was the most common answer. Taken together, pre- and in-service training are in second position (31/28.7%). The 17 respondents who indicated 'other contexts' were introduced to the CEFR through curriculum design (4 respondents), development of certifications (2 respondents[161]), research (2 respondents), then a variety of other situations.[162]

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[160] Percentages of the total number of respondents who have the same degree of knowledge of the CEFR. Read: 70.59% of those who are familiar/very familiar with the CEFR have read the CEFR
[161] One of them was involved in the design of subjects for the French CLES, the higher education certificate for language competencies which is said to be aligned to the CEFR levels.
[162] These situations were as follows (one respondent each): pre-service training in examination with OCR (Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations which is part of the Cambridge Assessment group); personal training; mission at the French Ministry of Education; working at the French Institute in the UK; starting to teach at a university in France; in meetings of the French department in a Taiwanese university; in organized workshops; through the French Attaché for University Co-operation in Australia.

Figure 4.11: *Contexts in which respondents were introduced to the CEFR (number of respondents and percentage of all [108] respondents)*
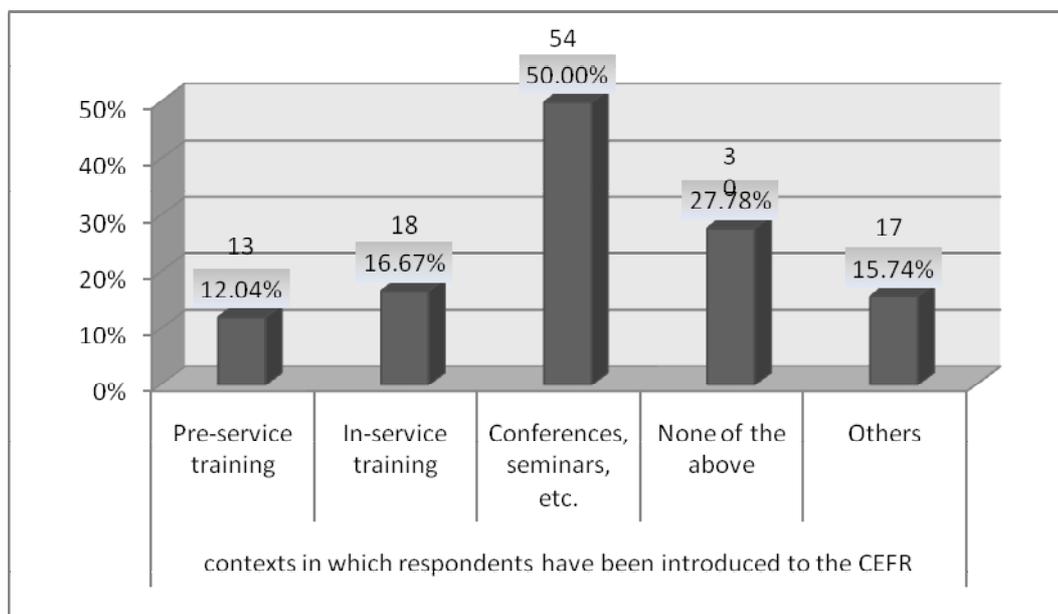
The purpose of the next question (2-5) was to discover in which of a number of possible document types the participants had encountered references to the CEFR. The results are shown in *Figure 4.12*.

Figure 4.12: *Documents in which respondents have seen specific reference to the CEFR*
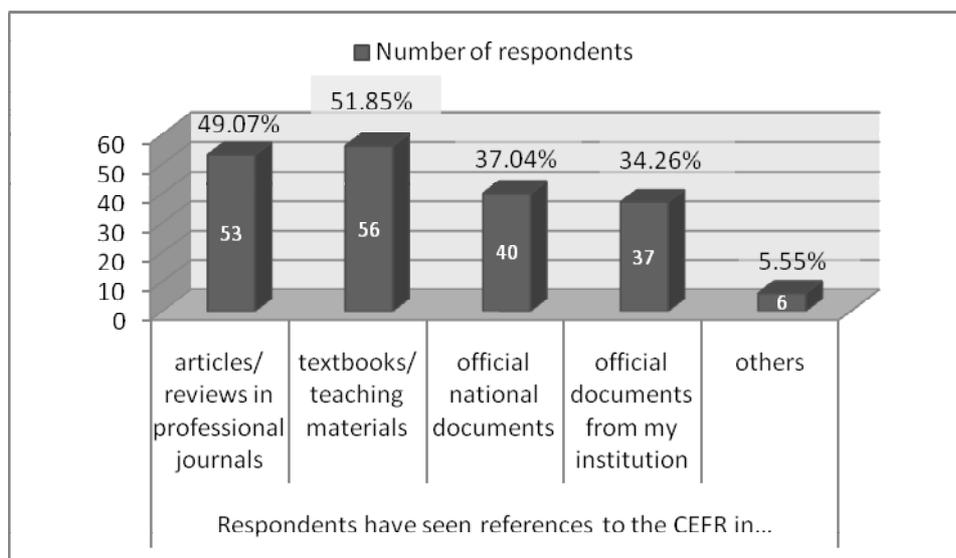
Question 2-6 asked respondents to list what seemed to them to be the three most important aspects of the CEFR, apart from the reference levels. A total of 67

respondents answered; [163] their answers have been grouped into theme-based categories: [164]

Table 4.7: Main ideas of the CEFR (outside the reference levels)

Categories	Number of responses[165]	% of the 160 responses[166]
1. A common international standard	45 responses	28.13%
2. Language description (competences, skills)	30 responses	18.75%
3. Language teaching, curriculum, syllabus and textbook design	27 responses	16.88%
4. Assessment	13 responses	8.12%
5. Contribution to positive language learning experiences	13 responses	8.12%
6. Clarity and reliability of the document	11 responses	6.37%
7. Approach (communicative/action-oriented approach)	8 responses	6.88%
8. Political relevance	7 responses	4.37%
9. International mobility and professional integration	5 responses	3.13%
10. Others	5 responses	3.13%

More detail about the responses under each of these headings is provided in Appendix H.

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[163] Among the respondents, 47 gave three answers as expected, 5 gave two and 15 gave only one answer. Of this total of 166 answers, 4 have been eliminated because they were too unclear to interpret in a meaningful way. In one case, three answers from the same respondent which were variations of the same answer have been regrouped into one answer. A total of 160 responses were retained.

[164] Responses which were identical or very close have been grouped together, even though their content might be a little different in some cases, so as to reveal which were the main aspects of the CEFR in the respondents' view. Several responses from the same participant in the same category if their content justifies it.

[165] The number of answers is merely indicative and must not be taken too rigidly, as some answers could have been placed in different categories according to interpretation. The numbers are not so important as knowing the main aspects of the CEFR according to respondents in terms of general trends.

[166] A few answers have been put in two categories, as indicated above, which explains why the total of this column is more than 100%.

With reference to the responses referred to above, it is relevant to note that although only 33 participants claimed to have read the CEFR, 67 were prepared to make judgments in relation to aspects of it.

4.11.6 Use of the CEFR or its content in the countries and institutions where respondents work

Questions 2-7 and 2-8 asked whether respondents knew if the CEFR had been translated into the/an official language of the country where they were teaching, and if not, whether there were plans to do so.[167] The CEFR is written in English and French, so respondents from all countries, except Taiwan, should have answered yes.[168] The results are shown in *Table 4.8* below.

Table 4.8: *Translation of the CEFR in the / an official language of the country of teaching*

	Yes	No	I don't know	NR
2-7 Has the CEFR been translated into the/an official language of the country where you teach?	65/ 60.18%	4/ 3.7%	36/ 33.33%	3/ 2.77%
2.8 If not, are there plans to do so? (number and % of negative answers)	-	3/75%	1/25%	-

Question 2-9 asked whether the country where participants were teaching was using the CEFR or a document derived from it. The following question asked those who responded in the negative to question 2-9 whether there was any plan to do so (Question 2-10). Answers are provided in *Table 4.9* below.

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[167] This question was poorly worded. A more appropriately worded question would have asked whether the CEFR is available in the/an official language of the country where they were teaching.
[168] English is one of the official languages of Hong Kong. The other one is Chinese, in its Cantonese and its Mandarin varieties.

Table 4.9: *Use of the CEFR or a document derived from the CEFR in the country of teaching*

	Yes	No	I don't know	NR
2-9 Does the country where you teach use the CEFR or a document derived from the CEFR?	39 / 36.11%	26 / 24.07%	38 / 35.19%	5 / 4.63%
2.10 If not, are there plans to do so? (number and % of negative answers)	1 / 3.85%	13 / 50%	12 / 46.15%	-

Question 2-11 asked whether the respondents' institution was using the CEFR or a document that incorporates its basic content (see *Table 24.9 below*). Question 2-12 asked those who responded in the negative to question 2-11 whether there were any plans to do so (see *Table 4.10* below).

Table 4.10: *Use of the CEFR or a document derived from the CEFR in respondents' institutions*

	Yes	No	I don't know	NR
2-11 Does your institution use the CEFR or a document that incorporate the basic content of the CEFR?	33 / 30.56%	47 / 43.52%	23 / 21.30%	5 / 4.63%
2.12 If not, are there plans to do so? (number and % of negative answers)	6 / 12.77%	24 / 51.06%	17 / 36.17%	-

The remainder of Part 2 of the questionnaire concerned assessment. Questions 2-13 and 2-14 asked respondents whether the country where they were teaching was using any test or examination, local or foreign, linked to the levels of the CEFR (Common Reference Levels) and, if yes, which one (see *Table 4.11*). The examinations mentioned by the 65 participants who responded are shown in *Table 4.12*.

Table 4.11: *Use of examinations or tests linked to the Reference Levels of the CEFR in the country of teaching*

	Yes	No	I don't know	NR
2-13 Does the country where you teach use (local or foreign) examinations or tests linked to the reference levels of the CEFR?	42 / 38.89%	24 / 22.22%	38 / 35.19%	4 / 3.70%

Table 4.12: *Tests and examinations linked to the CEFR mentioned by respondents*

Tests/examinations mentioned by the 65 respondents	Number of respondents
French language	
CLES (national)	7
CLUE (universities of Paris Centre[169])	2
CLUB (universities of Bordeaux)	1
DCL – Diplôme de Compétence en Langue (professional) [170]	1
DELF/DALF (Alliance Française)	6
TCF [171]	2
English language:	
Asset Language examinations	1
Cambridge exams	1
Cambridge ESOL suite	1
Cambridge QPT - Quick Placement Test[172]	1
Spanish language:	
Tests of the Instituto Cervantes	1
DELE - Diploma de Español como Lengua Extranjera[173]	1
Italian language:	
CILS - Certificazione di Italiano come Lingua Straniera[174]	1
CELI - Certificato di conoscenza della Lingua Italiana	1
Italian certificazione (CILS or CELI?)	1

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[169] Paris Centre Universités regroups the universities of Paris 1 (Panthéon-Sorbonne), Paris 5 (Paris Descartes) and Paris 7 (Paris Diderot).

[170] The DCL (Diploma of Language Competency) certifies an operational competence in a foreign language. It was created in response to the need expressed by the business sector to find a reliable tool to assess an operational competence at a given level in a foreign language for a professional use. For the CLES, see 3.3.3.

[171] The DELF (A1 to B2) and DALF (C1 and C2) are delivered by the Alliance Française. The TCF (Test de Connaissance du Français) (A1 to C2) is often used to assess the level of for3eign students applying to French universities. Both DELF/DALF and TCF are official diplomas in French language delivered by the French Ministry of Education to foreigners.

[172] The Cambridge QPT (Quick Placement test), used for placement of students in courses and classes, is aligned on the five levels of the ALTE scale corresponding to levels A2 to C2 (see, for example, Geranpayeh, 2003). The Cambridge ESOL suite (KET, PET, FCE, CAE, CPE) is also aligned on the same five levels. Cambridge ESOL was involved in the development of the standards of the CEFR (See University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations).

[173] The DELE, Diploma in Spanish as a Foreign Language, is a series of diplomas delivered by the Instituto Cervantes assessing different levels of competences in Spanish language: DELE A1 (starter level), DELE B1 (Inicial/Beginner level), DELE B2 (Intermedio/Intermediate level) and DELE C2 (Superior/Proficiency level). For reference, see http://diplomas.cervantes.es/index.jsp, particularly the 'description' section.

[174] The CILS, Certification of Italian as a Foreign Language, is organized by the Siena University for Foreigners (Università per Stranieri di Siena) and, abroad, by other institutions. The CELI (Certificate of Knowledge of the Italian Language) is organized by the university for foreigners of Perugia (Università per Stranieri di Perugia)

Tests/examinations mentioned by the 65 respondents	Number of respondents

German language:
Tests of the Goethe Institut[175]
    StartDeutsch 1 & 2
    Zertifikat Deutsch
    Kleines Deutsches Sprachdiplom
    TestDaF
Zertifikat Deutsch für den Beruf (professional)
	2
	4
	4
	1
	2
	1

Not specific to a language / not specified: France: Diplôme National du brevet (lower secondary school leaving diploma) France: secondary education (undetermined) Hong Kong: university level (unspecified) Dutch diplomas (unspecified)	2 1 1 1

Question 2-14 asked if there were any guidelines, in the countries surveyed, on relating the levels, examinations or tests used to the Common Reference Levels of the CEFR. The answers are shown in *Table 4.13* below.

Table 4.13: *Are there guidelines in the country of teaching on relating the levels, examinations and tests to the CEFR*

2-14 Are there any national guidelines in the country where you teach on relating the levels, examinations and tests to the CEFR?	**Yes**	**No**	**I don't know**	**NR**
	18 / 16.67%	30 / 27.78%	57 / 52.78%	3 / 2.78%

The following group of questions (2-15 to 2-19) concerned the CEFR levels, with the first question asking whether any particular level had been recommended, by the government or respondents' institutions, for any key educational stage in the country where respondents taught. Where the answer was 'no' or the respondent did not know, they were advised to proceed directly proceed to Part 3. The findings relating to question 2-15 are indicated below in *Figure 4.13*. If we combine answers that indicate that either the government or the institution, or

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[175] Two respondents simply mentioned the tests or exams of the Goethe Institut. The others were more specific: they cited the Start Deutsch 1 and 2 (respectively levels A1 and A2 of the CEFR) and the Zertifikat Deutsch (level B1). The respondent from New Zealand added the Kleines Deutsch Sprachdiplom (level C2). The TesDaF (Test Deutsch als Fremdsprache, or Test of German as a foreign language, levels B2 to C1) was mentioned by one respondent from Taiwan and one from Hong Kong. Another respondent from Taiwan also mentioned the Zertifikat Deutsch für den Beruf (certificate of professional German, level B2).

both, have recommended some levels to reach at key educational stages, we reach a total of 38 (35.19%) affirmative responses.

Figure 4.13: *Has the government or Institution where the respondent teaches recommended any level to reach at the end of key educational stages?*
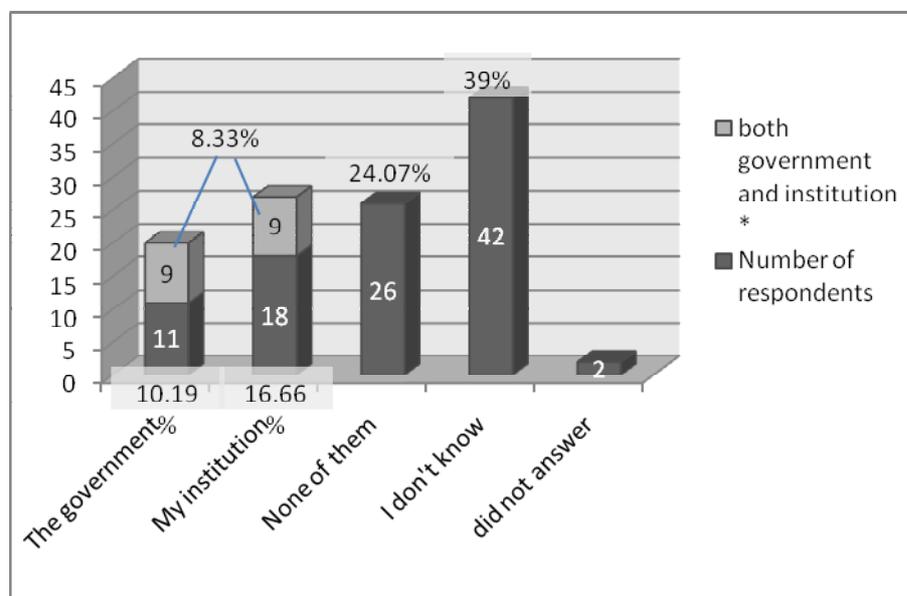
* The nine respondents who indicated both government and institution have been added to both categories ('The government' and 'My institution') since they belong to both. Hence they have been counted twice and their numbers should not be cumulated.

Question 2-16 asked respondents to identify the levels recommended by their government or their institution (if any). If these levels were not aligned to the Common Reference Levels (levels A1 to C2), respondents were asked (question 2-17) to give the equivalent CEFR levels.[176] The results are indicated below in *Table 4.14*.

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[176] They could refer to the reproduction of the Global Scale of the CEFR for a description of the six levels.

Table 4.14: Levels recommended by the government / institution according to respondents

Countries where respondents answered[177]	Levels recommended (according to respondents) at the end of the following key educational stages (with number of respondents in brackets)					
	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Five-year junior college (Taiwan only)	Bachelor not majoring in a foreign language	Bachelor majoring in a foreign language	Other
France	A2 (4)	B2 (3) A2~B2 (1)[178]	-	B1 (4) B2 (2) B2-C1 (1) C2? (1)[179]	B1 (2) B2 (2) C1 (1)	Master B2 (1)
Australia	-	B1 (1)	-	B2-C1 (1) B1~C1 (1)[180]	C1 (1) B1~C1 (1)[181]	-
Taiwan	-	-	A2-B1 (1) B1 (6)	A1 (1) A2 (2) B1 (1)	B1 (5) B1-B2 (1)	-
Hong Kong	-	B1-B2 (1)	-	-	-	Graduating English teacher C1-C2 (HK)
Total	A2 (4)	B1 (1) B1-B2 (1) B2 (4) A2~B2 (1)[182]	A2-B1 (1) B1 (6)	A1 (1) A2 (2) B1 (5) B2 (2) B1~C1 (1)[182]	B1 (7) B1-2 (1) B2 (2) C1 (2) B1~C1 (1)[183]	- Master B2 - Graduating English teacher C1-C2 (HK)

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[177] New Zealand, where no respondent answered the question, is not represented. In the UK, one respondent answered his university was using its own degree but could not give any CEFR level recommended, only guessing it should be the highest (C2).

[178] A2~B2: B2 for the first foreign language; B1 for the second; A2 for the third. These are actually the official recommendations in France (see *Chapter 5*).

[179] This respondent was not sure of the level required. Other respondents indicated here levels between B1 and C1. Two respondents, from universities using the CLES certification, gave B1 and B2/C1. C2, which is the highest level of the CEFR, would be surprising. A2 is the level expected at the end of lower secondary for the second foreign language (B1 for the first one), while B2 is expected for the first foreign language at the end of upper secondary (see *Chapter 5*). This respondent seems to have a confused idea of the levels required.

[180] Depending on learners' entry level: B1 for learners who started the study of the language at the university, B2 for those who have studied it at secondary level and C1 for those who have a near native level.

[181] Depending on learners' entry level: B1 for learners who started the study of the language at the university, B2 for those who have studied it at secondary level and C1 for those who have a near native level.

[182] Depending on learners' entry level: B1 for learners who started the study of the language at the university, B2 for those who have studied it at secondary level and C1 for those who have a near native level.

[183] Depending on learners' entry level: B1 for learners who started the study of the language at the university, B2 for those who have studied it at secondary level and C1 for those who have a near native level.

Only 25 participants answered question 2-18 which asked whether they found the levels reported as being recommended in question 2-16 realistic or not.[184] The results (including only those who found some levels unrealistic) are indicated in *Table 4.15* below.

Table 4.15: *Levels found unrealistic and levels recommended instead by respondents*

respondents	Levels found unrealistic (first line) and levels recommended instead (second line when applicable)					
	End of lower secondary	End of upper secondary	End of five-year junior college (Taiwan)	Bachelor not majoring in a foreign language	Bachelor majoring in a foreign language	Other
Respondent 1 (France)	A2 -	B2 -		C2 -		
Respondent 2 (France)					C1 -	
Respondent 3 (France)		B2[185] → B1			B2 → B1	
Respondent 4 (France)		B2 → B1+				
Respondent 5 (Taiwan)					B1 → C1	
Respondent 6 (Taiwan)			B1 → B2		B1 → B2/C1	

The levels recommended by the respondents from Taiwan are comparable with (even slightly higher than) the levels officially recommended in France (see Chapter 5), despite the distance between learners' native language (non-Indo

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[184] Ten respondents from France, nine from Taiwan, three from Australia and one each from the UK, New Zealand, Hong Kong and Germany.
[185] This respondent was teaching Chinese and found B2 too high.

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European) and the target languages.[186]

Question 2-19 asked respondents to provide the levels they believed were more appropriate at the different key educational stages mentioned so far.[187] *Table 4.16* below shows the general results and indicates with which educational stages each of the CEFR levels was associated.

Table 4.16: Levels recommended by respondents (in number of respondents)

Educational stages:	Levels of the CEFR (with number of respondents)								
	A1 (8)	A2 (14)	B1 (24)	B1-B2 (7)	B2 (19)	B2-C1 (7)	C1 (11)	C1-C2 (1)	C2 (6)
End of Lower Secondary	3 37.5%	7 50%	4 16.7%						
End of Upper Secondary	4 50%	5 35.7%	8 33.3%	2 28.6%	2 10.5%				
End of five-year Junior College (Taiwan only)			4 16.7%	1 14.3%	3 15.8%	1 14.3%			
Bachelor not majoring in a foreign language	1 12.5%	2 14.3%	6 25%	2 28.6%	7 36.8%	1 14.3%	3 27.3%		
Bachelor majoring in a foreign language			1 4.2%	2 28.6%	5 26.3%	5 71.4%	6 54.5%	1 100%	4 66.7%
Other			1[192] 4.2%		2[188,189] 10.5%		2[192,190] 18.2%		2[194,191] 33.3%

Percentages indicate the proportion of respondents who attributed a level to a particular educational stage. (e.g. level A1 has been attributed to the end of Upper Secondary stage by 50% of the 8 respondents who mentioned this level.)

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[186] Both teachers from Taiwan were teaching an indo-European language: English for respondent 5 and German for respondent 6. The first teacher was Taiwanese, the second was German. The fact that the study of English is compulsory in Taiwan, and now starts in primary school, might explain the high level expected at the end of a bachelor majoring in a foreign language (if the respondent was only thinking of the language she was teaching).

[187] End of lower secondary education; end of upper secondary education; on completion of a Bachelor's degree not majoring in a foreign language; on completion of a Bachelor's degree majoring in a foreign language; and other. For Taiwan, the end of lower secondary was removed, and junior college was added.

[188] For one respondent, the level on completion of a bachelor (majoring or not in a foreign language) depends on the entry level: B1 for learners who started the study of the language at the university, B2 for those who have studied it at secondary level and C1 for those who have a near native level.

[189] A respondent recommended B2 at the end of a master's degree.

[190] A respondent recommended C1 and C2 at 400 level (postgraduate level, honours or master 1).

[191] A respondent chose level C2 for Masters degree students majoring in a foreign language.

Figure 4.14 below translates these results into a graphic representation, which brings out the Common Reference Level most commonly associated with each educational stage and also shows the proportion of respondents who attached a particular level to each educational stage.

Figure 4.14: *Levels recommended by respondents for each educational stage*[192]
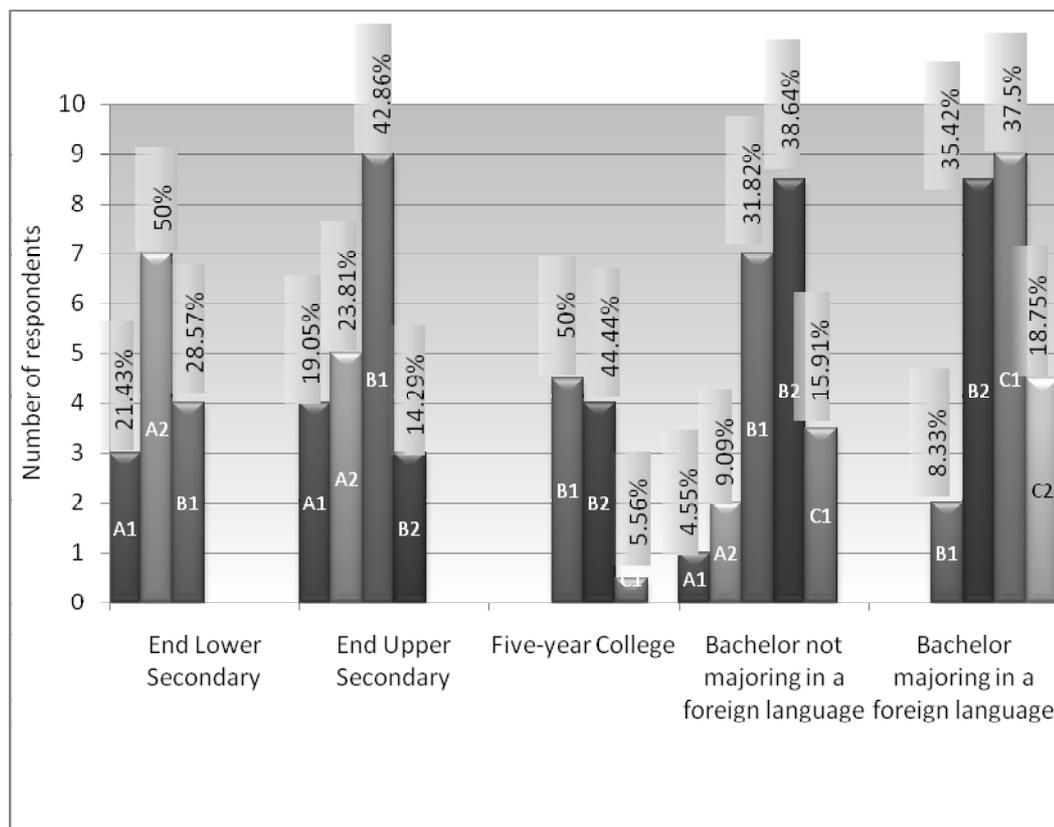
Percentages indicate the proportion of respondents who, for each educational stage, selected the level concerned. (e.g. 21.43% of the 14 respondents who gave levels for lower secondary recommended level A1, 50% recommended A2, etc.)

These results show how difficult it is to attribute levels to the different stages of education as this depends on many factors such as the entry level,[193] the language taught, the distance between the language taught and learners' first language(s),

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[192] The number of respondents is the same as indicated in *Table 4.15* and has not been repeated so as not to overload the graph to the detriment of clarity. To give a clearer representation, intermediate levels such as B1-B2 or C1-C2 have been removed. The numbers of respondents who chose them was equally distributed between the closest lower and higher levels. The category 'Other' has not been represented as it refers to different stages/levels. Two respondents recommended levels in this category for Masters degree students: level B2 for one, level C2 for the other (for a master majoring in a foreign language) (see *Table 4.15*).

[193] Moreover, the entry level does not just depend on the number of years (or hours) of study. Learners who have studied a language for the same period of time often have different 'levels'.

other languages studied by the learners, the country of teaching[194] and whether opportunities to hear or practice the language are available, etc.[195] This accounts, to some extent at least, for the discrepancies that can be observed, although *Figure 4.14* clearly shows the dominant answers.

4.11.7 Respondents' opinions about the knowledge and impact of the CEFR in the country where they are teaching

The third part of the questionnaire concerned the impact of the CEFR in the different countries surveyed. Questions 3-1 to 3-4 requested respondents to answer using six-point rating scales.

The first question asked respondents their opinion about the degree of knowledge of the CEFR among language teachers in the country where they were teaching. On a scale from 1 (very well [known]) to 6 (not [known] at all), the results show an average of 4.22, with a majority (41 respondents / 38%) selecting 5 (see *Figure 4.15*).

Figure 4.15: Respondents' perception of the extent of knowledge of the CEFR among language teachers in their country / area of teaching
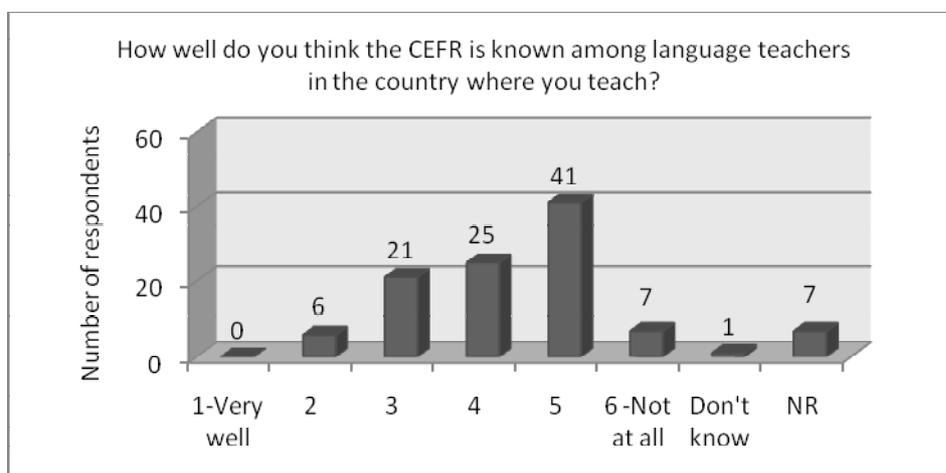
Question 3-2 asked respondents to rate the impact of the CEFR in the country where they were teaching on a scale from 1 (very positive) to 6 (very negative). As shown in *Figure 4.16* below, a majority (57 / 52.77%) answered 'I don't

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[194] The responses to this question by country are presented in 4.11.12.
[195] It is impossible, in reality, to take account of all those factors and a selection has to be made.

know'. The average of all responses is 3.2, which means that the influence of the CEFR was perceived as slightly positive.

Figure 4.16: *Assessment of the impact of the CEFR – positive or negative – in the country / area where respondents were teaching*
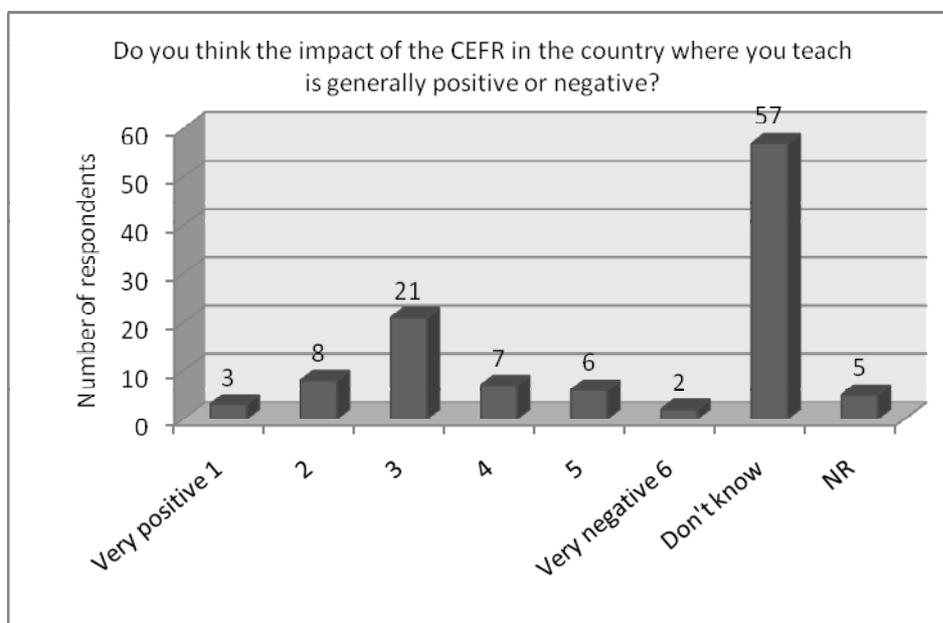
Still using a six-point scale (where 1 indicated that the CEFR had had 'very useful' effects and 6 that it had not been useful at all), question 3-3 asked respondents to rate the usefulness of the CEFR in four domains:

- curriculum / syllabus planning;

- assessment;

- teacher training (pre- or in-service);

- textbooks used or published in the country where respondents were teaching.

The results for each domain are shown in the charts below (*Figures 4.17* to *4.20*).

Figure 4.17: *Perceived general usefulness of the CEFR in the planning of curriculum / syllabus*
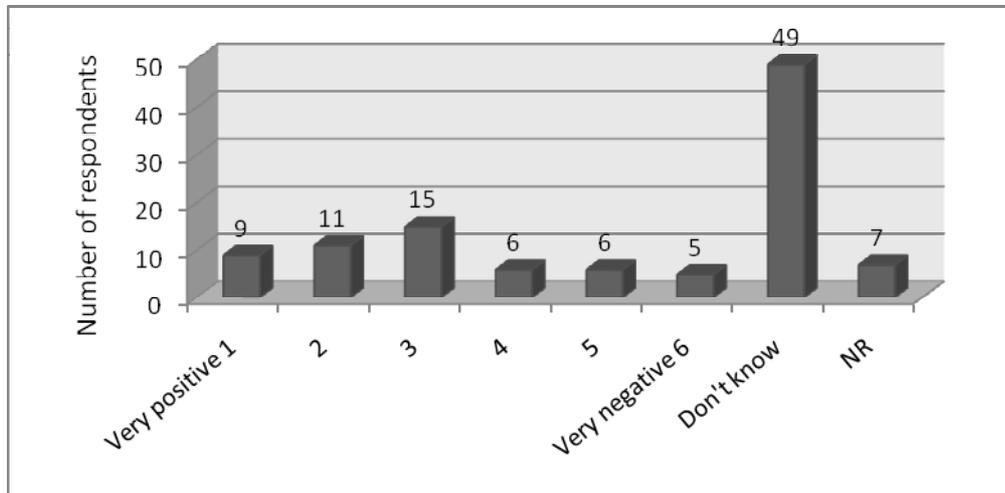
Figure 4.18: *Perceived general usefulness of the CEFR in assessment*
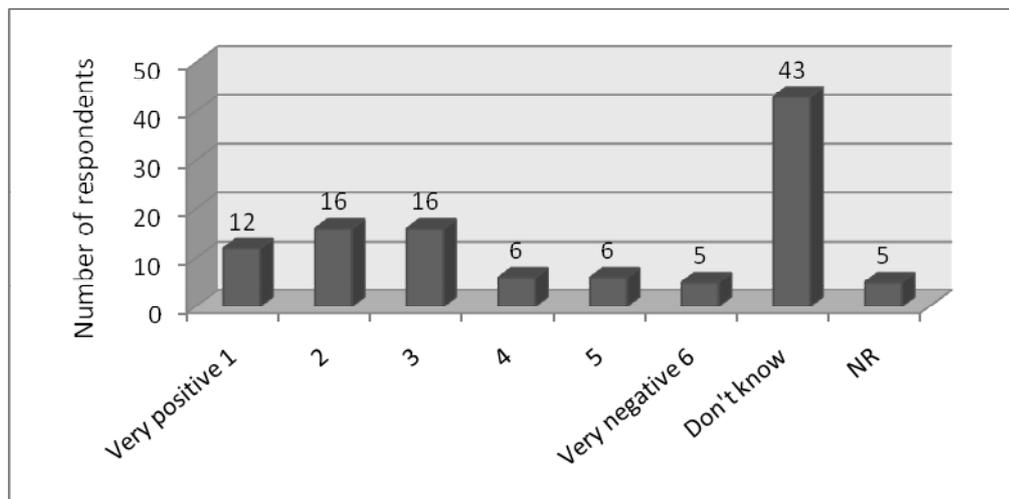
Figure 4.19: *Perceived general usefulness of the CEFR in teacher training (pre-
or in-service)*
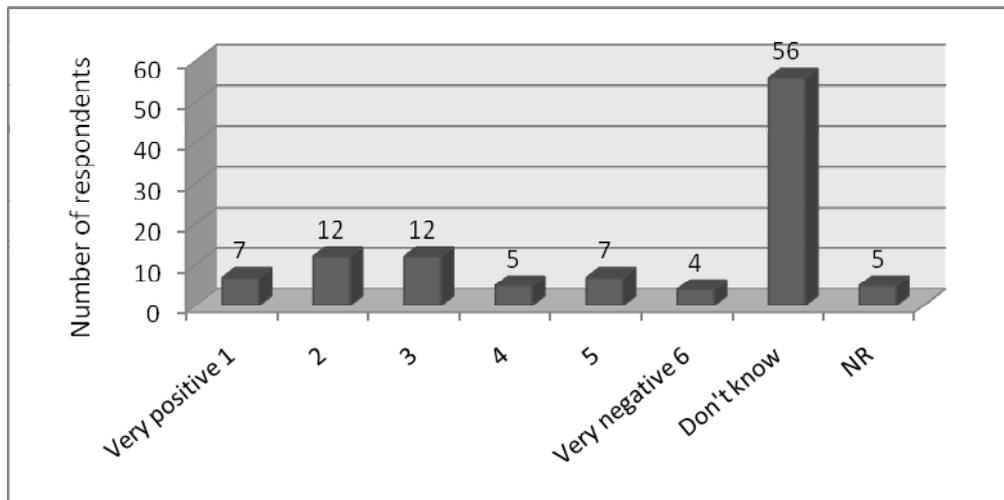
Figure 4.20: *Perceived general usefulness of the CEFR in relation to textbooks
used or published in the country*
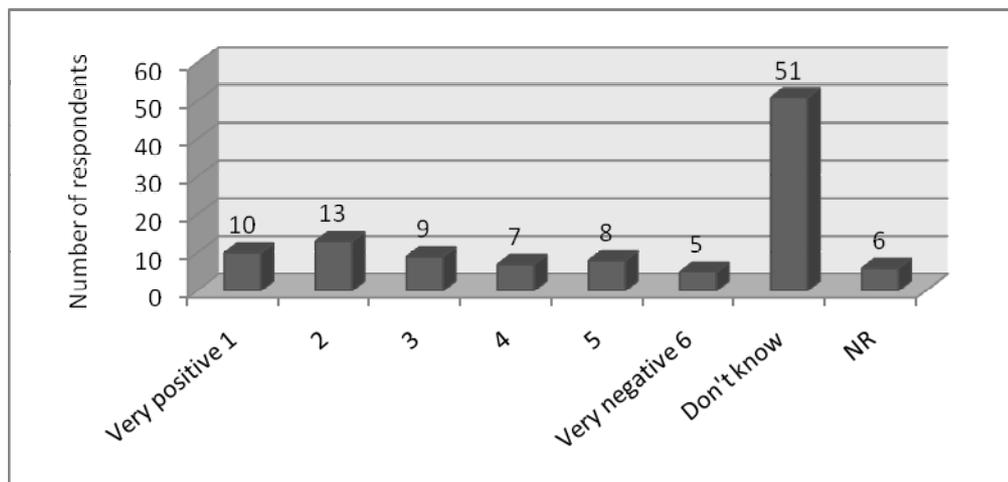
As indicated in *Figure 4.21* below, the averages for these four domains, on the
six-point scale (where 1 means 'very positive' and 6 'very negative'), reveal that
the CEFR was found most useful in assessment (2.88). The differences are,
however, small. Overall, those who had an opinion considered the CEFR to be
moderately useful in these four areas.

Figure 4.21: *Averages relating to the perceived general usefulness of the CEFR in four domains*
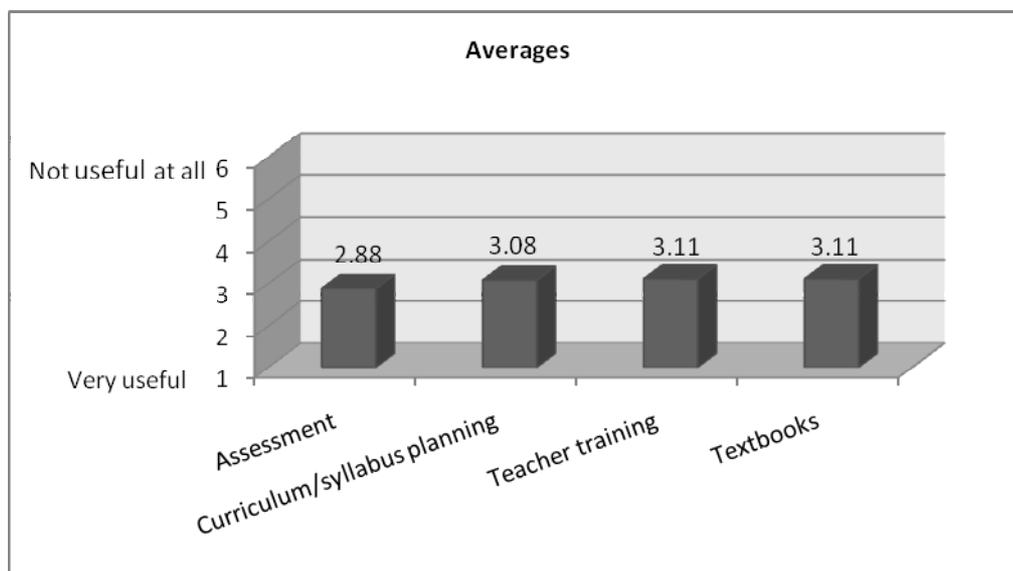
Question 3-4 concerned the perceived usefulness of the CEFR in relation to respondents' teaching practice, and was divided into five different areas:

- the planning of courses and syllabuses;

- teaching style and methods;

- testing and assessment;

- communication with students about teaching and learning;

- communication with students about testing and assessment.

Respondents were asked to respond using six-point rating scales or tick a box saying 'I have not used the CEFR in this area'. The results for each domain are illustrated below (*Figures 4.22* to *4.26*).[196]

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[196] Each table shows the different choices available, with the number of respondents (and the percentage of the total number of respondents) who chose them.

Figure 4.22: *Usefulness of the CEFR in the planning of courses, syllabuses by respondents*
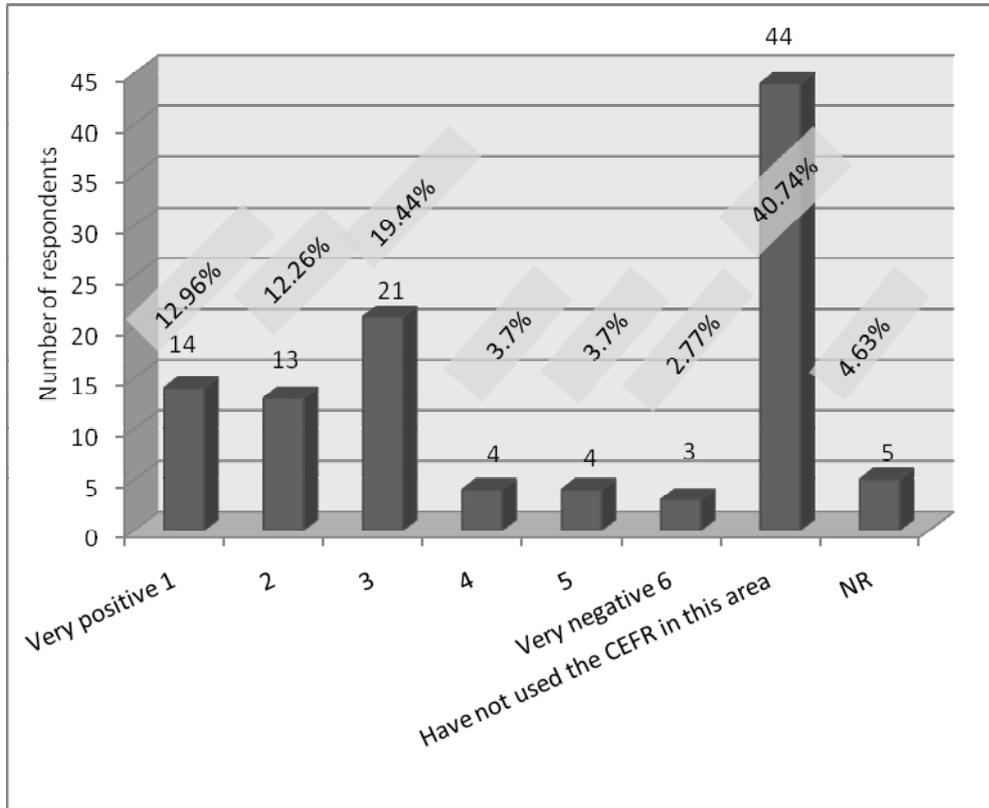
Figure 4.23: *Usefulness of the CEFR in relation to respondents' teaching style and methods*
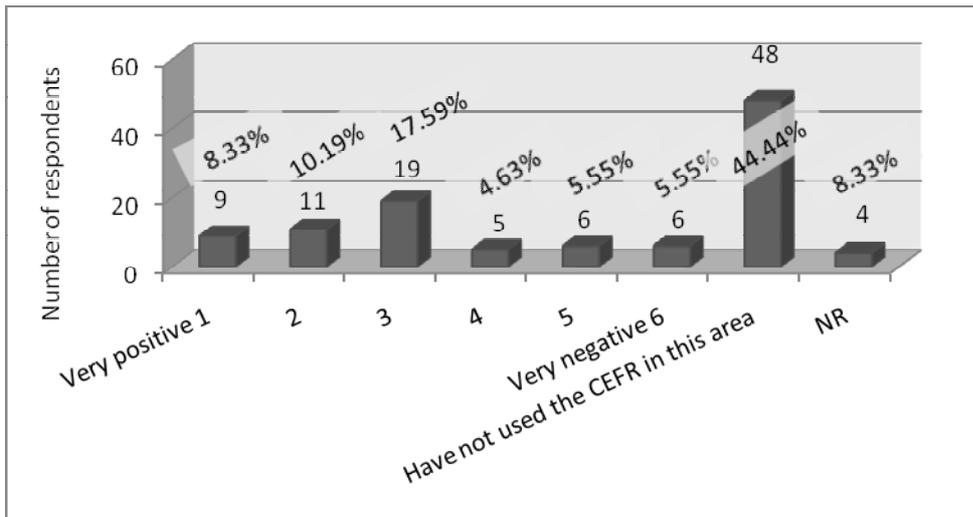
Figure 4.24: *Usefulness of the CEFR in respondents' testing and assessment activities*
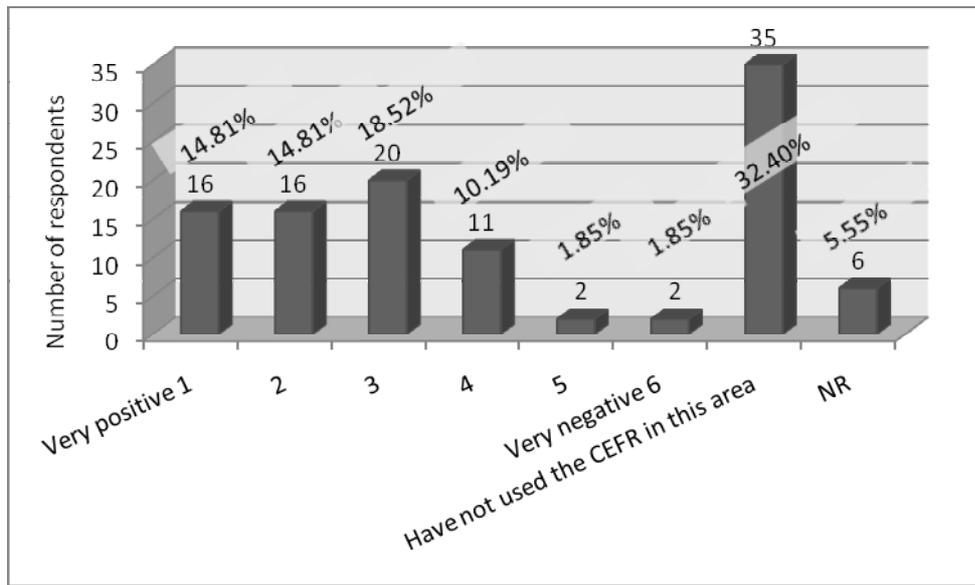
Figure 4.25: *Usefulness of the CEFR in respondents' communications with students about teaching and learning*
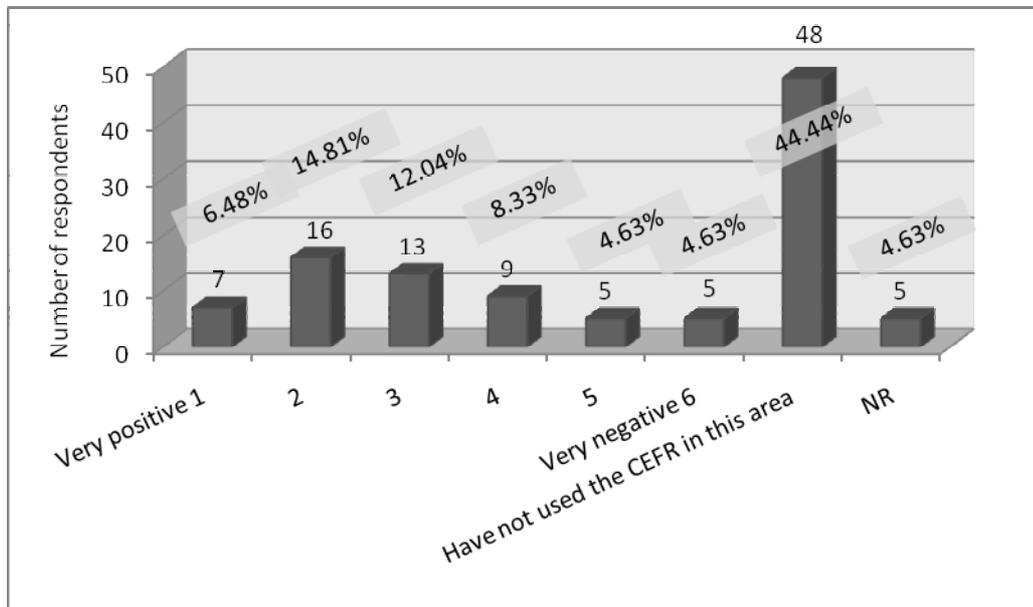
Figure 4.26: *Usefulness of the CEFR in respondents' communications with students about testing and assessment*
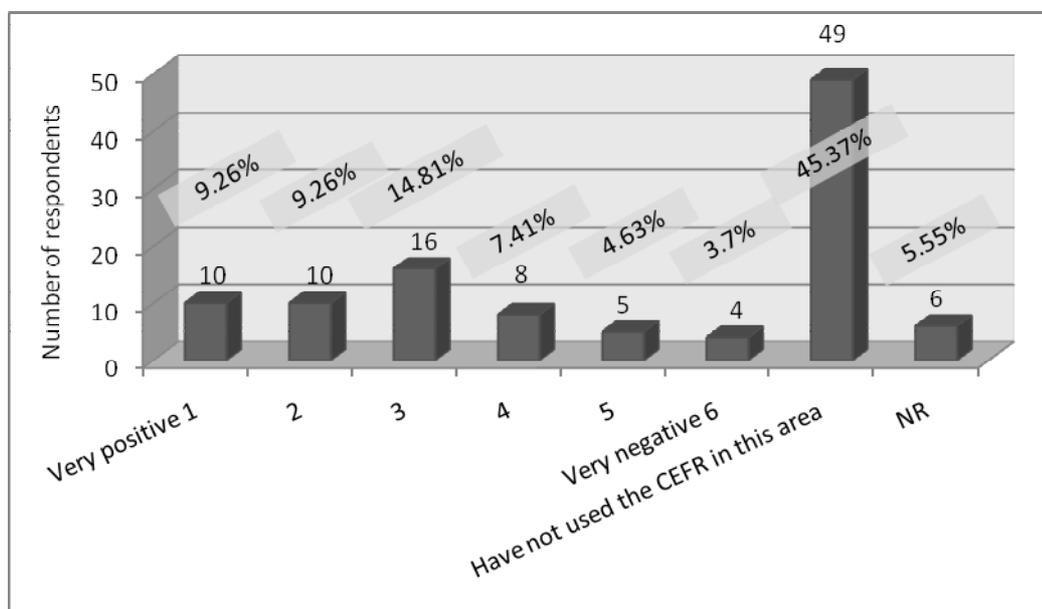
For all domains, the predominant answer was 'I have not used the CEFR in this area', with the number of respondents in this category going from 35 (32.41%) for 'testing and assessment' to 49 (45.37%) for 'communication with students about testing and assessment'.[197] *Figure 4.27* shows the ranking of the different domains according to the perceived usefulness of the CEFR.

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[197] The number of respondents who had not used the CEFR in other areas was 44 / 40.74% for 'the planning of courses, syllabuses'; 48 / 44.44% for 'teaching style and methods'; the same for 'communication with the students about teaching and learning'.

4.11.8 Perceived problems relating to the CEFR in the respondents' institution and country of teaching

Question 3-5 asked respondent if they believed there to be any problems in relation to the CEFR in their institution(s). A majority of 45 respondents (41.67%) did not know[198] and eight (7.41%) did not answer, twenty (18.52%) responded 'No' and 35 (32.4%) indicated that they believed there were problems. These are detailed in subsection 4.11.13.

Question 3-6 asked if there were any problems in relation to the CEFR at a national level in the countries of teaching: 62 respondents (57.41%) reported that they did not know, 16 (14.81%) responded 'No' and 23 respondents (21.30%) said 'Yes'. Seven (6.48%) did not answer. Details are presented in 4.11.13 below.

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[198] France was the only country where those who answered yes (14 respondents, 48.28%) were more numerous than those who did not know (9 respondents, 31.03%).

4.11.9 Opinions on statements relating to the CEFR

Question 3-7 included a series of 17 statements (from *a* to *q*) relating to the CEFR. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed or not by ticking 'True', 'False' or 'I don't know'. The results are presented in *Tables 4.17 to 4.33.* In considering these responses, readers should bear in mind that only 34 participants claimed to have read the CEFR or to be very familiar with it.

Table 4.17: *Extent of agreement with the statement that the CEFR is helpful*

	True	False	Don't know	NR
	74.07% 80 resp. [199]	3.7% 4 resp.	17.59% 19 resp.	4.63% 5 resp.
Have read the CEFR	30	1	2	0

Table 4.18: *Extent of agreement with the statement that the CEFR is user-friendly*

	True	False	Don't know	NR
	41.67% 45 resp.	17.59% 19 resp.	36.11% 39 resp.	4.63% 5 resp.
Have read the CEFR	21	7	5	0

However, of those who reported finding the CEFR user-friendly, 24 (53.33%) had not actually read the document. In the same way, 12 (63.16%) of those who disagreed with the statement had not read the CEFR.[200]

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[199] 18 of these 80 respondents (22.5%) claimed not to know the CEFR well. In question 2-1, these respondents had declared having a vague idea of the CEFR or only knowing it by name.

[200] In the UK and in Australia, the statement was considered true by a clear majority of, respectively, 56.25% and 64.29%, followed by those who did not know (37.5% and 28.57%). No respondent found the statement false in the UK and only one did in Australia. In France, however, a small majority of 37.93% found the CEFR user-friendly, 34.48% did not know and 27.59% disagreed. The respondent in Belgium also disagreed with this statement. In New Zealand and Taiwan, there was an equal proportion of respondents who found the statement true and who did not know; in Hong Kong, a majority of 38.46% did not know, followed by 30.77% who did not agree with the statement, only 23.08% finding the CEFR user-friendly.

Table 4.19: *Extent of agreement with the statement that the CEFR provides a basis to compare standards of proficiency achieved in different countries*

	True	False	Don't know	NR
	65.74% 71 resp.	8.33% 9 resp.	22.22% 24 resp.	3.7% 4 resp.
Have read the CEFR	23	6	4	0

Table 4.20: *Extent of agreement with the statement that the CEFR provides a good basis for Ministries of Education to determine how well their country is doing in language teaching and learning*

	True	False	Don't know	NR
	61.11% 66 resp.	6.48% 7 resp.	26.85% 29 resp.	5.56% 6 resp.
Have read the CEFR	26	3	4	0

Table 4.21: *Extent of agreement with the statement that the CEFR has too little to say about curriculum design*

	True	False	Don't know	NR
	25% 27 resp.	20.37% 22 resp.	49.07% 53 resp.	5.56% 6 resp.
Have read the CEFR	7	16	9	1

Table 4.22: *Extent of agreement with the statement that the reference levels are the most well known part of the CEFR*

	True	False	Don't know	NR
	73.15% 79 resp.	3.7% 4 resp.	18.25% 20 resp.	4.63% 5 resp.
Have read the CEFR	28	3	2	0

Table 4.23: *Extent of agreement with the statement that the CEFR focuses too much on assessment*

	True	False	Don't know	NR
	15.74% 17 resp.	25% 27 resp.	54.63% 59 resp.	4.63% 5 resp.
Have read the CEFR	6	17	10	0

Table 4.24: *Extent of agreement with the statement that the CEFR does not explain how to link teaching and assessment*

	True	False	Don't know	NR
	31.48% 34 resp.	13.89% 15 resp.	48.15% 52 resp.	6.48% 7 resp.
Have read the CEFR	14	12	6	1

Table 4.25: *Extent of agreement with the statement that the theories behind the approach in the CEFR are not clearly presented or explained*

	True	False	Don't know	NR
	28.70% 31 resp.	14.81% 16 resp.	51.85% 56 resp.	4.63% 5 resp.
Have read the CEFR	14	10	9	0

Table 4.26: *Extent of agreement with the statement that the CEFR does not take into account recent developments in linguistics / the linguistic theories in the CEFR are outdated*

	True	False	Don't know	NR
	12.96% 14 resp.	22.22% 24 resp.	60.19% 65 resp.	4.63% 5 resp.
Have read the CEFR	4	18	11	0

Table 4.27: *Extent of agreement with the statement that the number of different aspects of 'communicative competence' in the CEFR is more confusing than helpful*

	True	False	Don't know	NR
	10.19% 11 resp.	43.52% 47 resp.	41.67% 45 resp.	4.63% 5 resp.
Have read the CEFR	3	24	6	0

Table 4.28: *Extent of agreement with the statement that it is not clear how to apply the CEFR in the classroom*

	True	False	Don't know	NR
	30.56% 33 resp.	21.3% 23 resp.	43.52% 47 resp.	4.63% 5 resp.
Have read the CEFR	11	16	6	0

Table 4.29: *Extent of agreement with the statement that the large variety of scales in the CEFR is more confusing than helpful*

	True	False	Don't know	NR
	10.19% 11 resp.	44.44% 48 resp.	38.89% 42 resp.	6.48% 7 resp.
Have read the CEFR	4	21	8	0

Table 4.30: *Extent of agreement with the statement that the CEFR should provide more practical examples of how it can be used*

	True	False	Don't know	NR
	50.93% 55 resp.	8.33% 9 resp.	36.11% 39 resp.	4.63% 5 resp.
Have read the CEFR	21	6	5	1

Table 4.31: *Extent of agreement with the statement that the CEFR is becoming impossible to avoid in the field of language teaching / learning*

True	False	Don't know	NR
28.7%	38.89%	28.7%	3.7%
31 resp.	42 resp.	31 resp.	4 resp.

Table 4.32: *Extent of agreement with the statement that the CEFR is largely irrelevant outside Europe*

	True	False	Don't know	NR
	19.44%	29.63%	47.22%	3.7%
	21 resp.	32 resp.	51 resp.	4 resp.
Have read the CEFR	11	10	12	0

Table 4.33: *Extent of agreement with the statement that description of the common reference levels in the CEFR should be language specific*

	True	False	Don't know	NR
	28.70%	43.52%	24.07%	3.7%
	31 resp.	47 resp.	26 resp.	4 resp.
Have read the document	10	20	3	0

4.11.10   Main purposes of the CEFR

In question 3-8, respondents were asked to indicate what they believed the main purposes of the CEFR were. There were four possibilities:

- to establish common proficiency standards or benchmarks nationally and internationally;

- to indicate what aspects of language and language use should be included in teaching programmes;

- to provide a basis for comparison of the levels of language proficiency of people who wished to study or work abroad;

- to promote Europe as the main source of information about professional approaches to language education.

More than one selection could be made by each respondent. It is interesting to note that, although 75 of the 108 participants who responded to this question had indicated earlier that they had not read the CEFR, only five (4.63%) did not answer this question. The results are presented in *Table 4.34* below.

Table 4.34: Main purposes of the CEFR

Responses	Chosen by (number of respondents)	% of those who responded
To establish common proficiency standards or benchmarks nationally and internationally	88	85.44%
To indicate what aspects of language and language use should be included in teaching programmes	37	35.92%
To provide a basis for comparison of the levels of language proficiency of people who wished to study or work abroad	79	76.70%
To promote Europe as the main source of information about professional approaches to language education	16	15.53%

4.11.11   Final comments by respondents

In question 3-9, respondents were asked to add any comments they wished. Sixteen (14.81%) made comments regarding the CEFR. Those comments are presented in 4.11.13, along with comments made in response to other questions.

4.11.12   Responses specific to continents and countries / areas

In the preceding subsections, the overall findings were presented, all countries combined. Here, responses relating to specific continents or countries are indicated in cases where these are judged to be of importance or value in interpreting the findings.

In Part 1 of the questionnaire (respondents' backgrounds), some potentially relevant traits emerged. Answers to question 1-1 on nationality reveal that although respondents of the local nationality were predominant in most

countries,[201] this was not the case in the UK (7/28%) and in HK (5/29.41%) where respondents of foreign nationalities outnumbered them. As regards age, respondents from Europe were generally younger than those from Asia and Oceania: 39 (61.9%) were below 40 years of age, while in Asia, the majority (39/ 82.98%) were between 31 and 50. In Oceania, most (40/76.92%) were between 41 and 50. However, age does not appear to have had any impact on the degree of knowledge of the CEFR, as shown in *Table 4.35* below.

Table 4.35: Age range and extent of knowledge of the CEFR

Age range	Familiar/very familiar with the CEFR	Know its main ideas	Only have a vague idea	Only know it by name	Never heard of it
21-30	15.79%	31.58%	15.79%	0.00%	36.54%
31-40	20.41%	24.49%	22.45%	4.08%	28.57%
41-50	18.52%	22.22%	18.52%	7.41%	33.33%
51 and above	28.57%	11.90%	14.29%	4.76%	40.48%

Answers to question 1-3 show that the proportion of non-Indo-European languages taught was quite small in general (from 3.7% in the UK to 7.5% in France), but significantly higher in Australia (8/25.81%), Hong Kong (4/ 22.22%) and New Zealand (5/19.23%). This is likely to have had an impact on the comments made by respondents from these countries (see 4.11.13), particularly as regards the relevance of the CEFR outside Europe.

In answers to question 1-5 on language qualifications, the proportion of teachers who were native speakers of the languages they taught was above 50% in the UK (16 respondents / 59.26%), New Zealand (16 / 61.54%) and Hong Kong (13 / 72.22%). It was below 50%, but still above 35% in France, Australia and Taiwan. [202] As regards teaching qualifications (question 1-7), in Europe, 35

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[201] Local teachers were as follows: 15 (53.57%) in Australia (17 / 60.71% if we count bi-nationals); 14 (58.33%) in New Zealand (19 / 79.16% with bi-nationals); 21 (55.26%) in France and 18 (60%) in Taiwan.
[202] 14 / 45.16% in Australia; 16 / 41.03% in France and 11 / 35.48% in Taiwan.

teachers (53.85%) indicated that they had no teaching qualification, compared to 17 (32.69%) in Oceania and 14 (29.79%) in Asia.[203]

Part 2 of the questionnaire concerned respondents' knowledge of the CEFR and the use of the Framework in their country and institution. As we saw in 4.11.5, the majority of respondents (95 / 57.93%) had little or no knowledge of the CEFR, but in Europe, those who had more knowledge of it were more numerous (34 / 52.31%).[204] However, the results by country (see *Table 4.36* below) show that although 21 (55.26%) of the respondents in France had some knowledge of the CEFR, in the UK, a majority (14 / 56%) had little or no knowledge of it.

Table 4.36: Degree of knowledge of the CEFR by country / area

Country (No of respondents)	Familiar/very familiar with the CEFR	Know its main ideas	Only have a vague idea	Only know it by name	Never heard of it
France (38)	12/31.58%	9/23.68%	8/21.05%	0	9/23.68%
	21/55.26%		**17/44.74%**		
U.K. (25)	4/16%	7/28%	4/16%	1/4%	9/36%
	11/44%		**14/56%**		
Australia (28)	6/21.43%	8/28.57%	0	0	14/50%
	14/50%		**14/50%**		
New Zealand (24)	3/12.5%	4/16.67%	5/20.83%	2/8.33%	10/41.66%
	7/29.17%		**17/70.83%**		
Taiwan (30)	5/16.67%	3/10%	8/26.67%	4/13.33%	10/33.33%
	8/26.67%		**22/73.33%**		
Hong Kong (17)	2/11.76%	4/23.53%	6/35.29%	1/5.88%	4/23.53%
	6/35.29%		**11/64.71%**		

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[203] The maximum was reached in the UK where 14 respondents (56%) had no teaching qualifications.
[204] Those who declared being familiar/very familiar with it or knowing its main ideas are considered to have some knowledge of the CEFR as opposed to those who only had a vague idea of the CEFR, only knew it by name or had never heard of it, who were classed as having very little or no knowledge of it.

If we compare respondents' reported extent of knowledge of the CEFR with their continent of origin, we can see that European respondents[205] generally reported knowing the CEFR better than those from other continents, with 46 respondents (56.1%) who reported knowing the CEFR (categories 1 & 2) and 36 (43.9%) who reported having little or no knowledge of it (see *Table 4.37* below).[206] Most Asian respondents reported knowing little about the CEFR. Respondents of North-American nationality reported knowing nothing of the CEFR, with one exception.

Table 4.37: Degree of reported familiarity with the CEFR and respondents' continent of origin

Nationalities (question 1-1)	Degree of knowledge of the CEFR (question 2-1)									
	Familiar/very familiar with it		Know its main ideas		Only have a vague idea		Just know the name, not the contents		Have never heard of it	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Europeans (82)	24	29.27%	22	26.83%	15	18.29%	1	1.22%	20	24.39%
Oceanians (31)	4	12.9%	7	22.58%	5	16.13%	2	6.45%	13	41.94%
Asians (27)	1	3.7%	3	11.11%	6	22.22%	5	18.52%	12	44.44%
Americans (12)	0	-	1	8.33%	0	-	0	-	11	91.67%

If we now consider respondents' nationalities, we can observe that in Europe, the proportion of British teachers who knew little or nothing about the CEFR (8 / 61.54%) was higher than that of other European nationalities (around 45%), and was close to the results obtained from respondents of Oceanian nationalities. German nationals had more knowledge of the CEFR than other Europeans (10 / 76.92% knew the CEFR) (see *Table 4.38* below).

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[205] The European nationalities that have been taken into account are the following: French (36 respondents, British (13), German (13), Spanish (11) and Italian (9). Nationalities with only one respondent were not taken into account.
[206] Those figures were respectively 11 / 35.48% and 20 / 64.52% for Oceanian nationalities and 4 / 14.81% and 23 / 85.18% for Asian nationalities.

Table 4.38: *Degree of reported familiarity with the CEFR and respondents'*
nationalities[207]

Nationalities (question 1-1)	Degree of knowledge of the CEFR (question 2-1)									
	Familiar/very familiar with it		Know its main ideas		Only have a vague idea		Just know the name, not the contents		Have never heard of it	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
French (36)	**9**	**25%**	**11**	**30.56%**	6	16.67%	1	2.78%	**9**	**25%**
British (13)	**4**	**30.77%**	1	7.69%	3	23.08%	0	-	**5**	**38.46%**
German (13)	**8**	**61.54%**	2	15.38%	0	-	0	-	3	23.08%
Spanish (11)	1	9.09%	**5**	**45.45%**	3	27.27%	0	-	2	18.18%
Italian (9)	2	22.22%	**3**	**33.33%**	**3**	**33.33%**	0	-	1	11.11%
Australian (16)	2	12.5%	4	25%	0	-	0	-	**10**	**62.5%**
New Zealander (11)	2	13.33%	3	20%	**5**	**33.33%**	2	13.33%	3	**20%**
American (6)	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	**6**	**100%**
Canadian (6)	0	-	1	16.67%	0	-	0	-	**5**	**83.33%**
Taiwanese	0	-	2	11.11%	**5**	**27.78%**	4	22.22%	7	**38.89%**
Chinese (5)	2	25%	0	-	0	-	0	-	**6**	**75%**
Japanese (4)	1	20%	0	-	1	20%	0	-	**3**	**60%**

The bold frames and figures indicate the highest figures for each nationality.

Comparison of respondents' teaching qualifications with their degree of familiarity with the CEFR shows that the majority of those who had little knowledge of the CEFR were those who had no teaching qualifications (see *Table 4.39* below). This was particularly the case in Europe (21 / 67.74%).

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[207] In the case of double nationalities, the nationality given by respondents in the first position (question 1-1) was considered as the main one: thus, a Canadian and Dutch respondent would be considered as primarily Canadian, while a New Zealander and Canadian would be considered as primarily New-Zealander.

Table 4.39: Degree of reported familiarity with the CEFR and teaching qualifications

Continents	Teaching qualifications (question 1-5)	Degree of knowledge of the CEFR (question 2-1)				
		Familiar/very familiar with it	Know its main ideas	Only have a vague idea	Just know the name, not the contents	Have never heard of it
Europe	Number of respondents	18	16	12	1	18
	Without teaching qualification	5/27.78%	2/12.50%	9/75.00%	0	12/66.67%
	Knowledge of the CEFR	Know the CEFR: 34		Don't know the CEFR: 31		
	Without teaching qualification	7/20.59%		21/67.74%		
Oceania	Number of respondents	9	12	5	2	24
	Without teaching qualification	3/33.33%	3/25.00%	1/20.00%	1/50.00%	9/37.50%
	Knowledge of the CEFR	Know the CEFR: 34		Don't know the CEFR: 31		
	Without teaching qualification	6/28.58%		11/35.48%		
Asia	Number of respondents	8	7	13	5	14
	Without teaching qualification	2/25.00%	1/14.29%	2/15.38%	1/20.00%	6/42.86%
	Knowledge of the CEFR	Know the CEFR: 34		Don't know the CEFR: 31		
	Without teaching qualification	3/20%		9/28.12%		
Total (all continents)	Number of respondents	35	35	30	8	56
	Without teaching qualification	10/28.57%	6/17.14%	12/40.00%	2/25.00%	27/48.21%
	Knowledge of the CEFR	Know the CEFR: 34		Don't know the CEFR: 31		
	Without teaching qualification	16/22.86%		41/43.62%		

In responses to question 2-5 concerning the documents where respondents had encountered references to the CEFR, the major difference was between European countries, where most respondents were more likely to select 'official national documents' and 'textbooks', and non-European nations, where 'in articles or

reviews in professional journals' and 'textbooks' were the top two selections. 'Official national documents' came first in France, whereas 'textbooks' was the most selected answer in the UK (see *Table 4.40*).

Table 4.40: Documents where respondents reported having seen reference to the CEFR, by country / area

2-5 Have you seen specific reference to the CEFR in any of the following documents?	France	UK	Others	Australia	New Zealand	Taiwan	Hong Kong
In articles or reviews in professional journals	11/ 37.93%	4/ 25%	1/50%	10/ 71.43%	6/ 42.86%	11/ 55%	10/ 76.92%
In textbooks and/or teaching materials	15/ 51.72%	9/ 56.25%	1/50%	10/ 71.43%	6/ 42.86%	10/ 50%	5/ 38.46%
In official national documents	18/ 62.07%	6/ 37.5%	1/50%	6/ 42.86%	1/ 7.14%	7/35%	2/ 15.38%
In official documents issued by your institution	13/ 44.83%	5/ 31.25%	0	6/ 42.86%	5/ 35.71%	6/30%	2/ 15.38%
Others	1/ 3.45%	2/ 12.5%	0	0	0	2/10%	1/ 7.69%

To question 2-9 asking whether the country where respondents were teaching was using the CEFR or a document derived from it, a majority of respondents in France (25/86.21%) answered 'yes' while in the UK, most of the respondents (9/ 56.25%) did not know (see *Table 4.41* below).[208]

Table 4.41: Use of the CEFR or a document derived from it at a national level according to respondents in France and the UK

2-9 Does the country where you teach use the CEFR or a document derived from the CEFR?				
	Yes	No	I don't know	NR
France	25/86.21%	0	2/6.9%	2/6.9%
UK	5/6.25%	1[209]/6.25%	9/56.25%	1 /6.25%

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[208] In other countries, 'no' and 'I don't know' were the most common answers.
[209] This respondent then answered 'yes' to question 2-10 asking if there were any plans to do so.

Question 2-11 asked respondents whether their institution was using the CEFR or a document incorporating its basic content. France was the only country where a majority of teachers answered 'yes' (16/55.17%). In other countries, including in the UK (6/37.5%), the main answer was 'no'.

Question 2-13, asking whether the country in which respondents were teaching was using examinations or tests linked to the CEFR, shows the same contrast between France — where a strong majority answered 'yes' — and other countries, including the UK (see *Table 4.42* below), where the main answer was 'I don't know' or 'no'.[210]

Table 4.42: *Use of examinations / tests linked to the CEFR at a national level according to respondents*

	Yes	No	I don't know	NR
France	20/68.97%	0	9/31.03%	0
UK	5/31.25%	2/12.5%	8/50%	1/6.25%
Australia	3/21.43%	6/42.86%	4/28.57%	1/7.14%
New Zealand	4/28.57%	5/35.71%	5/35.71%	0
Taiwan	5/25%	5/25%	9/45%	1/5%
Hong Kong	4/30.77%	5/38.46%	3/23.08%	1/7.69%

In the case of question 2-14, asking whether there were national guidelines in the country of teaching on relating examinations and tests to CEFR proficiency levels, a majority of respondents in France (16/55.17%) and the UK (14/87.5%) answered 'I don't know'. In France, however, 12 respondents (41.38%) answered 'yes'.

Question 2-15 asked respondents whether the institution or government of the country in which they were teaching had recommended any particular level that students should reach at the end of key educational stages. Answers from the UK and France reveal a lack of knowledge of the situation (see *Table 4.43* below).

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[210] In the case of New Zealand and Hong Kong though, the number of respondents who chose 'yes', 'no' or 'I don't know' were very close.

Table 4.43: *Has the government or institution in which they teach recommended any particular level (according to respondents in France and the UK)*

Levels have been recommended by:	France		United Kingdom	
	Number of respondents	%	Number of respondents	%
Government	7	24.14%	0	-
Institution	5	17.24%	1	6.25%
Both	3	10.34%	0	-
None	4	13.79%	3	18.75%
I don't know	10	34.48%	11	68.75%
NR	0	-	1	6.25%
Total	29	100%	16	100%

In the UK, a vast majority (11/68.75%) selected 'I don't know'. In France, 19 respondents (65.52%) were not aware that the government had recommended levels for secondary schools (see Chapter 5).[211]

When asked which levels were recommended (questions 2-16/2-17), only 11 respondents from France (37.93%) and one from the UK (6.25%) provided an answer (see *table 4.13*). The respondent from the UK said their institution (university) had recommended a level, but was unable to say which, estimating that it should be the highest (C2). In France, only four respondents (13.79%) were able to identify the levels recommended at the end of lower secondary. The same number were able to identify those recommended at the end of upper secondary education.[212] When asked whether they found these levels realistic or not (question 2-18), one respondent out of four (25%) found level A2 unrealistic at the end of lower secondary education, but three out of four (75%) found B2 unrealistic at the end of upper secondary education.

In tertiary education, no particular CEFR level was said to have been recommended by the government.[213] So far as universities are concerned, the

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[211] All those who did not select the first or the third answer were grouped together.

[212] Four respondents said level A2 was recommended at the end of lower secondary education, three respondents gave level B2 at the end of upper secondary education and a fourth one gave a more detailed answer: level B2 for the first foreign language; B1 for the second one and A2 for the third one. The levels given by respondents did correspond to those required in the language curricula published by the French Ministry of Education (see Chapter 5).

[213] Except in Taiwan for English language (see Chapter 1).

situation as reported is variable. Eight teachers (27.59%) provided only levels associated with the end of a Bachelor's degree in which students were not majoring in a foreign language), five (17.24%) provided levels associated with the end of a Bachelor's degree in which students were majoring in a foreign language (see *Table 4.13*). Two teachers found unrealistic the levels recommended at the end of a Bachelor's degree majoring in a foreign language:[214] a teacher of Chinese found level B2 too high and proposed B1 instead; a teacher of Italian found C1 unrealistic but did not propose any other level (see also *Table 4.14* and comments).

Only 11 respondents from France (37.93%) and 3 from the UK (18.75%) answered question 2-19 (which asked which CEFR levels respondents thought would be appropriate at each educational stage). The results are indicated in *Table 4.44* below.[215]

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[214] One teacher found it to be unrealistic to ask students to reach level C2 at the end of a Bachelor's degree not majoring in a foreign language. However, since he did not know the levels recommended by his university and was only guessing that C2 might be required, it is likely that this was not the case.

[215] To compare with levels given by respondents from all countries, see *Table 4.15*.

Table 4.44: *Levels recommended by respondents from France and the UK*

Educational stages:	Country	Number of respondents by level							
		A1 (8)	A2 (14)	B1 (24)	B1-B2 (7)	B2 (19)	B2-C1 (7)	C1 (11)	C2 (6)
End of Lower Secondary	France	2	2	3					
	UK	1	1						
End of Upper Secondary	France		1	2	1	2			
	UK		1	1					
Bachelor not majoring in a foreign language	France			2	1	3		2	
	UK			2	1				
Bachelor majoring in a foreign language	France			1		1	2		
	UK						1	1	1
Other	France					1*			
	UK								

Level recommended at the end of a masters degree.

The answers reveal a lack of consensus and, as far as respondents from France are concerned, some disagreement with the levels recommended by the French MOE for secondary education.

In part 3 of the questionnaire, question 3-1 asked respondents to rate the degree of knowledge of the CEFR among language teachers in the country where they were teaching (on a scale from 1 [very well known] to 6 [not known at all]). Respondents from France and the UK provided a higher estimation than did respondents from other countries, with an average of, respectively, 3.61 and 3.79.[216] A majority of respondents in France (12 respondents／41.38%) selected 2 and 3 (9／31.03%) on the six-point scale while most of those in the UK (7／43.75%) selected 4. No-one selected 'I don't know' and only one respondent from France and two from the UK did not answer. However, in response to question 3-2 (asking respondents to rate the impact of the CEFR in the country where they were teaching on a scale from 1 [very positive] to 6 [very negative]), 9 of those

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[216] The average for all countries was 4.22 on the six-point scale (4.5 in Australia, 4.69 in New Zealand; 4.47 in Taiwan and 5 in Hong Kong).

respondents who were working in France (9/31.03%) answered 'I don't know'. In the UK, a majority of 11 respondents (68.75%) answered 'I don't know'.[217] The average was 3.16 in France and 2.75 in the UK.[218]

Question 3-3 asked respondent to rate the usefulness of the CEFR in four domains: curriculum/syllabus planning; assessment; teacher training and textbooks. The overall results (see 4.11.7) indicated that the area where the CEFR was considered to be most useful was assessment, then curriculum/syllabus planning, teacher training and textbooks. The results by country are as shown in *Table 4.45* below.

Table 4.45: *Ranking of the CEFR's perceived usefulness in the following domains in each country / area* [219]

Countries & continents / Domains	France	U.K.	Others*	Australia	New Zealand	Taiwan	Hong Kong
Curriculum/syllabus planning	2nd	4th	2nd	4th	2nd	2nd	2nd
Assessment	3rd	1st	2nd	1st	1st	1st	1st
Teacher training	1st	2nd	3rd	2nd	4th	3rd	3rd
Textbooks	4th	3rd	1st	3rd	3rd	3rd	4th

* Indicates the responses of respondents from Germany and Belgium (2 respondents only)

The rankings in the UK and Australia are similar, whereas those of New Zealand are very close to the rankings in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Assessment came first in all countries but France, where teacher training came first, followed by curriculum/syllabus planning which came last in the UK. This once again

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[217] That percentage is comparable to that in other non-European countries such as Australia (9/64.29%) or Hong Kong (8/61.54%). In New Zealand, 12 of the 14 respondents (85.71%) answered 'I don't know' while in Taiwan, the number was closer to that from France (7/35%).

[218] In France, on the six-point scale, eight respondents (27.59%) selected 3, four (13.79%) selected 2 and 5, and three (10.34%) selected 4. The impact of the CEFR is rated higher in the UK, but only four respondents (25%) gave a rating, one selected 1 (6.25%) on the six-point scale and three (18.75%) selected 3.

[219] These rankings have been established by comparing the average results obtained by each question in each country.

indicates a difference between France and the UK in relation to knowledge of the CEFR and perceptions of its usefulness.

In all countries, including France and the UK, many teachers responded 'I don't know' (see *Table 4.46* below). That number was slightly lower in France than in other countries except Taiwan, but it was the highest in the UK.

Table 4.46: Number of respondents who selected 'I don't know' in question 3-3

Countries & continents / Domains	France	U.K.	Others*	Australia	New Zealand	Taiwan	Hong Kong
Curriculum/syllabus planning	9/ 31.03%	11/ 68.75%	0	7/50%	9/ 62.29%	6/30%	7/ 53.85%
Assessment	5/ 17.24%	10/ 62.5%	0	6/ 42.86%	10/ 71.43%	5/25%	7/ 53.85%
Teacher training	12/ 41.38%	11/ 68.75%	1/50%	8/ 57.14%	11/ 78.57%	5/25%	8/ 61.54%
Textbooks	13/ 44.83%	10/ 62.5%	1/50%	5/ 35.71%	8/ 57.14%	6/30%	8/ 61.54%

* Indicates the responses of respondent from Germany and Belgium (2 respondents only)

Question 3-4 concerned perceptions of the usefulness of the CEFR in five areas of respondents' teaching practice. It is interesting to note that the response pattern in this case (relating to respondents' own practice) was different to that recorded in connection with question 3-3 (relating to perceived usefulness in general). *Table 4.47* shows the rankings by country.

Table 4.47: *Ranking of the CEFR's usefulness in the following areas of respondents' teaching practice, by country / area*

Domains \ Countries & continents	France	U.K.	Others*	Australia	New Zealand	Taiwan	Hong Kong
Course/syllabus planning	3rd	2nd	1st	1st	3rd	2nd	1st
Teaching style & methods	2nd	4th	2nd	4th	5th	5th	5th
Testing and assessment	1st	1st	1st	2nd	4th	1st	2nd
Communication with students about teaching/learning	4th	3rd	2nd	3rd	2nd	4th	4th
Communication with students about testing/assessment	5th	3rd	1st	2nd	1st	3rd	3rd

* Indicates the responses of respondents from Germany and Belgium (2 respondents only)

Here, too, some participants were unable to respond because they had not used the CEFR in these areas (see *Table 4.48* below).

Table 4.48: *Number and percentage of respondents who did not use the CEFR in the areas mentioned in question 3-4*

Domains \ Countries & continents	France	U.K.	Others*	Australia	New Zealand	Taiwan	Hong Kong
Course/syllabus planning	12/ 41.38%	8/50%	0	2/ 14.29%	7/50%	8/40%	7/ 53.85%
Teaching style & methods	11/ 37.93%	8/50%	0	2/ 14.29%	10/ 71.43%	10/ 50%	7/ 53.85%
Testing and assessment	9/ 31.03%	7/ 43.75%	0	0	7/50%	7/35%	5/ 38.46%
Communication with students about teaching/learning	10/ 34.48%	9/ 56.25%	0	3/ 21.43%	10/ 71.43%	9/45%	7/ 53.85%
Communication with students about testing/assessment	12/ 41.38%	9/ 56.25%	0	3/ 21.43%	11/ 78.57%	9/45%	5/ 38.46%

* Indicates the responses of respondents from Germany and Belgium (2 respondents only)

As regards the domains that figure in questions 3-3 and 3-4, the comparison of averages (see *Figure 4.28*) shows that respondents generally found the CEFR more useful for courses/syllabus planning in their own practice than for curriculum/syllabus planning in general, with the exception of France.[220]

Figure 4.28: *Comparison of respondents' perception of the usefulness of the CEFR in the planning of curriculum / syllabus in the country/area where they are teaching and in the planning of courses / syllabuses in their personal practice*
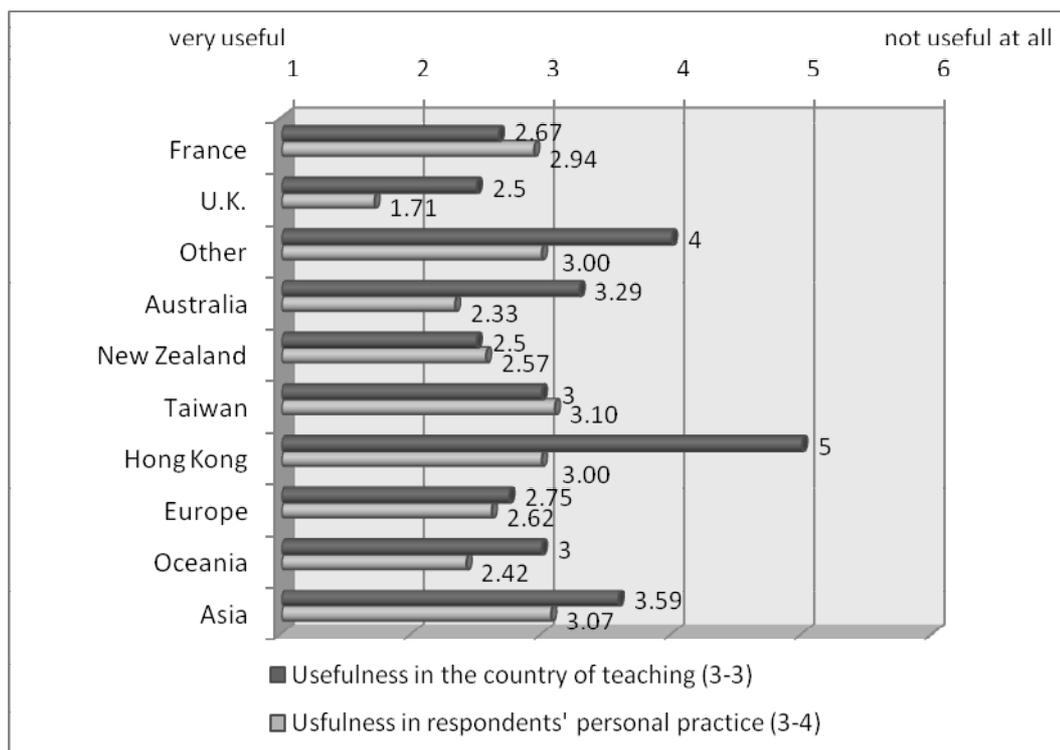
Respondents also indicated that they found the CEFR to be more useful for assessment in their own practice than in general, with the exception, this time, of New Zealand (see *Figure 4.29* below).

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[220] These rankings were established by comparing the average results obtained for this question in each country (on a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 equals 'very useful' and 6 'not useful at all').

Figure 4.29: *Comparison of respondents' perception of the usefulness of the CEFR in relation to assessment in the country / area where they are teaching and in relation to their personal practice*
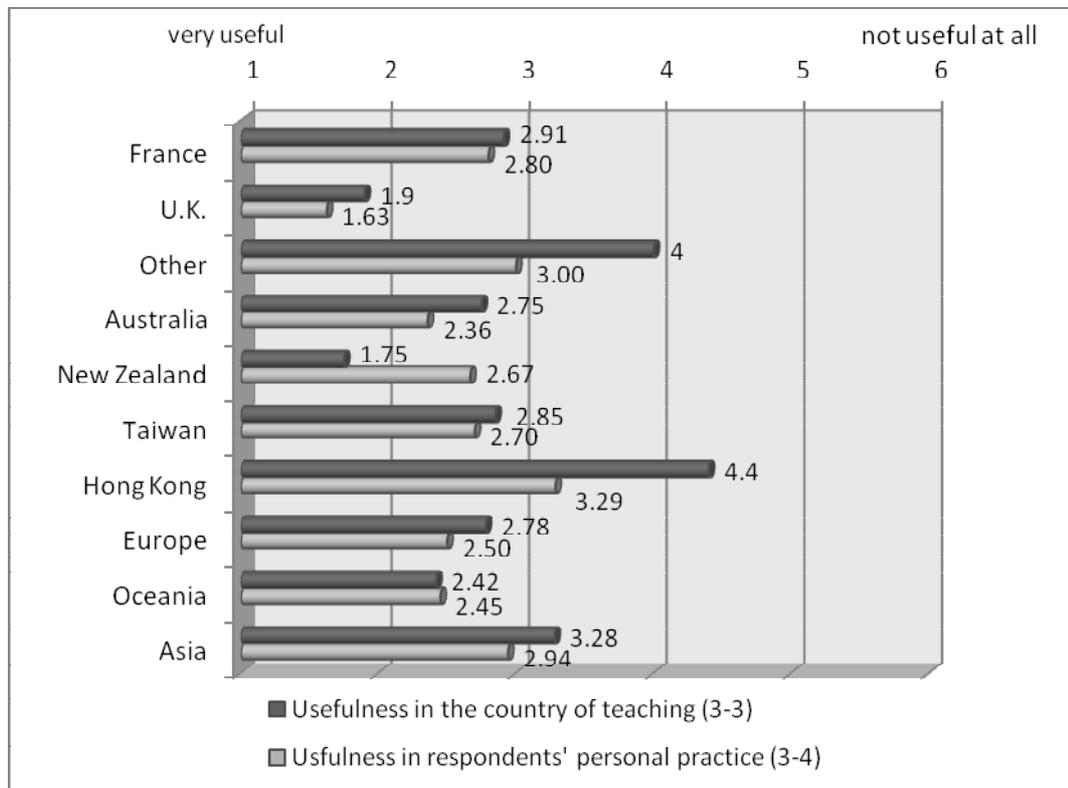
Question 3-7 consisted of 17 statements (*a* to *q*), of which respondents had to indicate whether they believed them to be true or false, the number of respondents from France and the UK who answered 'I don't know' is indicated in *Table 4.49* below.

Table 4.49: *Number and percentage of respondents from France and the UK who answered 'I don't know' in relation to the perceived truth or falsity of different statements*

Statements of question 3-7	Respondents from:	
	France	the UK
a. The CEFR is helpful	3/10.34%	3/18.75%
b. The CEFR is user-friendly (easy to understand and easy to use)	10/34.48%	6/37.5%
c. The CEFR provides a workable basis for comparing the standards of proficiency achieved in different countries	7/24.14%	4/25%
d. The CEFR provides a good basis for ministries of education in different countries to determine how well their country is doing in the area of language teaching and learning	7/24.14%	5/31.25%
e. The CEFR has too little to say about curriculum and syllabus design	11/37.93%	10/62.5%
f. The reference levels are the most well known part of the CEFR	4/13.79%	3/18.75%
g. The CEFR focuses too much on assessment	14/48.28%	11/68.75%
h. The CEFR does not explain how to link teaching and assessment	11/37.93%	11/68.75%
i. The theories behind the approach in the CEFR are not clearly presented or explained	13/44.83%	12/75%
j. The CEFR does not take into account recent developments in linguistics / The linguistic theories in the CEFR are outdated	17/58.62%	13/81.25%
k. The enormous number of different aspects of 'communicative competence' included in the CEFR is more confusing than helpful	13/44.83%	9/56.25%
l. It is not clear how to apply the CEFR in the classroom	9/31.03%	8/50%
m. The large variety of scales in the CEFR is more confusing than helpful	10/34.48%	8/50%
n. The CEFR should provide more practical examples of how it can be used	10/34.48%	8/50%
o. It is becoming impossible to avoid the CEFR in the field of language teaching and learning	8/27.59%	6/37.5%
p. The CEFR is largely irrelevant outside of Europe	16/55.17%	13/81.25%
q. The description of the common reference levels in the CEFR should be language- specific	9/31.03%	3/18.75%

4.11.13   Respondents' comments

Here, comments made by respondents in Part 3 (questions 3-3, 3-5 and 3-6) are considered together with respondents' final comments.

Three respondents from France estimated that it was still too early to judge the effects of the CEFR since its implementation had been recommended only recently (in 2005) (see Chapter 5).

Twenty-one respondents observed that the CEFR was not well known or not widely used for a variety of reasons.[221] Some of these are indicated below:

- Insufficient information available (4 responses);

- Little done to promote the CEFR (1 response);[222]

- Lack of relevant training (two responses);[223]

- Lack of knowledge about how to relate teaching to the CEFR (1 response);[224]

- Reluctance to make the effort involved in coming to terms with the CEFR (4 responses);[225]

- Dogmatism of decision-makers (1 response);

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[221] Among them were eight respondents from Europe (six from France and two from the UK).

[222] This respondent (currently teaching in France; previously teaching in the UK), noted that little was done in either France or the UK to promote the CEFR, adding that in a recent submission to a publisher in the UK she had been asked to "remove references to the CEFR as the teachers didn't understand".

[223] A respondent in France noted that the training she had undergone about the CEFR seemed necessary, while two other respondents (one in France; one in Taiwan) complained precisely about the lack of training. In relation to question 3-6 on problems related to the CEFR at a national level, the teacher from France was referring to a lack of training at a national level in relation to the CEFR, while the teacher from Taiwan considered that "teachers [in Taiwan] are not trained well enough (methodology, didactics and information about the CEFR) to integrate the ideas of the CEFR into their classes".

[224] A respondent from Taiwan claimed that teachers there do not know how to relate their teaching to the CEFR. This respondent also mentioned a lack of co-operation between teachers.

[225] A respondent in the UK made the following comment: "In order to apply [the CEFR], you have to invest time and probably change your system]". One respondent in France claimed that teachers were wearied by the frequent reforms of school and education. One respondent claimed that his colleagues were not much interested in pedagogy, another claimed that teachers were reluctant to rethink their teaching and assessment practices.

- Not relevant to teacher needs (1 response);[226]

- Disdain for the CEFR (1 respondent);[227]

- Distrust of Europeanization (1 response).[228]

Seven respondents made comments about the use of the CEFR in relation to teaching and the design of curricula or syllabuses:

- The CEFR has a positive influence (3 responses);[229]

- Curricula should not be designed in function of a certification process (1 response);[230]

- Discrepancy between objectives and the reality of language teaching (1 response);

- Lack of clear national syllabuses for foreign language teaching (1 response);

- The CEFR is not really used to create a strict learning progress (1 response).[231]

Nine respondents commented on some aspects of the document itself, such as the band descriptors, competences and the theoretical bases of the Framework:

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[226] The respondent from Belgium observed that "[teachers] do not want to use something that does not correspond to their needs".

[227] In Australia, a teacher commented: "At universities, academics who work in language departments, but don't actually teach languages (and aren't qualified as teachers as such) don't value the CEFR. They consider it below university standard. In fact, these academics haven't read or understood the CEFR".

[228] In New Zealand, a respondent mentioned "a distrust of 'Europeanization'" in a context where most of her (ESOL) students are Asian.

[229] These three respondents were teaching in France. The first one noted that, at university level, the use of the CLES certificate (see 4.11.6 above) had brought cohesion among teachers of a same school, or even different schools; the second one considered that the CEFR provided a "relatively clear common grid" (my translation); for the third one, the CEFR compels teachers to rethink curricula and exchange their views on teaching practice. However, the second respondent doubted the quality of teaching would be improved and the third one said that results were, however, not always satisfying.

[230] This respondent from France urged "not to put the cart before the horse, not to design curricula in function of a certification process" adding: "Certification must never become an end in itself, and unfortunately, a tendency towards that perversion is emerging" (my translation).

[231] This response came from a teacher in Taiwan.

- Band descriptors too broad, not precise enough (4 responses);

- Theoretical bases relatively old (1 response);[232]

- Gives more importance to oral competences and communication (4 responses).[233]

Five respondents said that textbooks produced in Europe contained references to the CEFR, whereas those produced outside Europe did not.[234] One teacher in France added that textbooks designed for the secondary mentioned the reference levels generally in the form of simplified tables at the beginning of the teachers' or the students' textbooks.

Four respondents made comments relating to assessment:

- Proficiency testing can be detrimental to cultural awareness (1 response);

- Doubts about entry criteria based simply on language proficiency (1 response);[235]

- Lack of national testing (1 response);[236]

- Assessment already accurate without resorting to the CEFR (1 response).[237]

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[232] This teacher of German linguistics said she had a rather critical view of the CEFR, in particular in relation to its theoretical bases which she found relatively old. She considered however that it had proved useful for the teaching of languages to non-specialists.

[233] Among these four respondents, all from France, one was glad that oral exams finally made it possible to assess the capacity of (university) students not specialising in the study of a language to practice a modern language. Another teacher, however, regretted that this was not extended to students specialising in a language. The third respondent considered that that the CEFR was favouring communication situation to the detriment of "real learning situations" (my translation). Finally, one respondent considered that, as long as language will not be used to communicate, for example for teaching other subjects, there will still be a high failure rate.

[234] One respondent was from France, the four others from outside Europe: two from Australia, one in New Zealand and one in Taiwan. These teachers referred to textbooks of the language they were teaching: Italian, German, French and English.

[235] This respondent, teaching in New Zealand, expressed doubts about (university) entry criteria "based simply on language proficiency rather than understanding of (or at least introduction to) the specific and challenging discourses of the university". To the question about levels recommended by the country or institution (questions 2-16, 2-17), this respondent had given entry levels (IELTS) rather than levels recommended at the end of an educational stage, which explains his concern for entry criteria.

[236] This comment was made by a teacher in France and concerns the situation in this country.

Six teachers made comments relating to standardization, generally negative ones:

- Standardization of language learning/teaching is unacceptable (2 responses);[238]

- This new norm that remains a vague thing for most teachers (1 response);[239]

- There is an issue of the flexibility in relation to the the Framework (2 responses);[240]

- Technocratic mania to set norms and criteria (1 response).[241]

The last respondent approved of the CEFR in a general sense but considered that the attempt to indicate that all learners, even the weakest, know something is a political tool. He observed:

That's all very nice from a humane point of view, but also very useful for a government whose coffers are empty, and who wants to save on education, but who does not want to face parents who blame it because their son/ daughter is hopeless in a language after learning it for 5 or 7 years. With the CEFR, it is now possible to retort, no, he/she's not worthless, he knows something, why would you want smaller classes or television sets in the classrooms? (my translation.)

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[237] This teacher from New Zealand considered there was "a national belief that we are already fairly accurate in assessment". He added: "However, many of us are aware that our accepted national understandings of what an "Intermediate" student can do, for example, seem not to be the same as in the European setting.

[238] One teacher in France reported believing that the CEFR endangered teaching freedom; a second one reported believing that it led to the standardisation of learning at an institutional level.

[239] A French teacher in Taiwan pointed out that the CEFR was becoming "The Norm" in the teaching of French as a foreign language and that it was now necessary to work with this new norm which remained, for many teachers, "a vague thing that exists in the introductory pages of the new textbooks and which is mentioned in certain proficiency tests and degrees in French as a Foreign Language" (my translation).

[240] A teacher from Hong Kong reported believing that the CEFR was "flexible enough to allow different individual teaching and learning groups to use to their benefit" adding that it should certainly not be used as part of a compulsory system. However, another teacher in France considered that, on the contrary, the rigidity of the Framework made implementation based on the specific needs of learners impossible.

[241] This respondent from France said he disagreed with this 'Soviet-style' planning and this monomania of the new teaching fashion, adding that the CEFR "[came] out of the modern technocratic mania to set norms and criteria, to benchmark and assess everything to feed the Moloch of PISA-style statistics (PISA, the Programme for International Student Assessment of the OECD, is a survey of 15-year-old students) and other European and international comparisons".

Eleven respondents considered that the CEFR was not relevant in some contexts. These are detailed below:

- Not relevant for all languages (6 responses);[242]

- Not relevant outside Europe (3 responses);[243]

- Not relevant for the teaching of indigenous or official languages (1 response);[244]

- Not adapted to the goals of university teaching (1 response).

Finally, six respondents made comments suggesting that the CEFR was not indispensable, for various reasons.

- It is not very useful (3 responses);[245]

- It is useful but we could do without it (3 responses).[246]

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[242] Two teachers noted that the CEFR did not differentiate between languages with different structures, which pose different difficulties in relation to teaching. One of them added that "trying to put all languages under the same evaluation/guiding/assessment (or whatever) scheme cannot work". Another respondent considered that it is not possible to apply the CEFR equally to all languages, because the levels expected from one language to another cannot be the same, the learning speed will differ. Two respondents reported believing that the CEFR was not relevant for Asian languages and a third one proposed the creation of a special CEFR for Asia by virtue of the fact that there was a lack of transparency between learners' mother tongue and European languages.

[243] All responses came from Oceania. One respondent from Australia considered that the CEFR was "not really realistic for a non-European country". The second one was among those who found the CEFR not relevant for Asian languages and concluded that, consequently, it was not relevant for language teaching in Australia. A respondent from New Zealand expressed deep suspicion of what he called 'Eurocentric initiatives'.

[244] This respondent from New Zealand considered that the relevance of the CEFR depended on the context: (1) the teaching of indigenous and official languages, for which the CEFR is largely irrelevant, being "confounded by many other factors"; (2) the teaching of English to emergent bilinguals (mostly recent migrants), for which the "CEFR is relevant but local issues are more important"; (3) the teaching of foreign languages to New Zealanders and to overseas students and visitors (including EFL), for which the CEFR is relevant.

[245] All these respondents were teaching in France. One of them had the feeling that the CEFR was one more gadget, a detailed description of what has actually existed for years. Another one believed that it did not change much as, in the end, it was still about giving marks. The only interest, he added, would be "if students read the descriptions of levels (which they rarely do)" and could then see the description of competences and would understand what it is that they are supposed to learn.

[246] A French teacher in Taiwan considered that the CEFR was a very complete tool that could be very useful, but noted that we could also do without it. In the UK, a respondent said that his institution was covering its own language programmes, with probably the same results. Finally, in Hong Kong, a teacher considered that "if the language teaching community was rock solid in

4.12   Highlighting some aspects of the questionnaire responses

The responses to this survey seem to me to be particularly interesting in a number of respects.

A majority of survey participants (58%) indicated that they had only a vague idea of the content of the CEFR (19%), just knew the name (5%) or had never heard of it (34%). Although the percentage in these three categories (combined) was slightly greater in the case of respondents working in Asia (approximately 70% of respondents in Asia) and Oceania (approximately 60% of respondents in Oceania), it was nevertheless still over half (58%) in the case of respondents working in Europe. The UK was centrally involved in the production of the CEFR and it has been promoted extensively there. Nevertheless, of the 25 UK-based participants, 14 (56% of UK participants) claimed to have little or no knowledge of the CEFR, 9 (36%) indicated that they did not know whether the CEFR or a document derived from it was in use in the UK, and 8 (32%) indicated that they did not know whether examinations or tests linked to the CEFR were being used in the UK. In view of the fact that most respondents (96%) were working in tertiary educational institutions (where teaching staff are generally expected to keep up to date with developments of relevance to their academic field) and had actually chosen to respond to a questionnaire about the CEFR (suggesting at least some level of interest), it may be that the number of those who come into these categories is even higher among language teachers generally. That this is likely to be the case is also suggested by the fact that, when participants were asked to estimate on a scale from 1 (very well known) to 6 (not known at all), the extent of knowledge of the CEFR of language teachers generally in the country where they were teaching, the average response was 4.22.[247]

Only 39 (36%) participants overall reported believing that the CEFR or a document derived from it was used in the country where they taught. Although France and the UK were both centrally involved in the creation of the CEFR, and although a majority of respondents who were working in France (25/86%)

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having an excellent set of syllabi etc., then the effect would either be minimal or strongly correlate as the CEFR would follow this body of applied knowledge".

[247] The average was 3.61 in the case of respondents teaching in France and 3.79 in the case of respondents teaching in Europe.

reported believing that the CEFR was being used at a national level, a majority of respondents who were working in the UK reported that they did not know whether it was (9/56%) or believed that it was not (1/6%). Similarly, although 20 (68%) respondents working in France reported believing that examinations/tests linked to the CEFR were being used at a national level, a majority of respondents working in the UK reported that they did not know whether this was the case (8/50%) or that they believed it was not (2/12.5%). The number of respondents based in France and the UK was small, nevertheless the survey findings reported here and in the previous paragraph suggest that the number of language teachers in both countries, particularly the UK, who know little or nothing of the CEFR and/or of developments associated with it may be high.

The survey findings suggest that opinions about the CEFR among language teachers may be more prevalent than is knowledge of it. Only 33 (20%) of the 164 participants indicated that they had read the CEFR — 10 (34%) of those working in France; 3 (19%) of those working in the UK. Nevertheless, 108 (66% of the total cohort) were prepared to record views on various aspects of the CEFR. Thus, for example, 80 reported believing that it is helpful and only 3 that it is not; 45 that it is user-friendly and 19 that it is not; 27 that it has too little to say about curriculum design and 22 that it does not; 17 that it focuses too much on assessment and 27 that it does not; 34 that it does not explain how to link teaching and assessment and 15 that it does; 31 that it does not clearly present or explain the theories behind the approach and 16 that it does; 14 that it does not take account of recent developments in linguistics and 16 that it does; 11 that the number of aspects of communicative competence that it presents are more confusing than helpful and 47 that they are not. Of these 424 judgments of the CEFR, the majority (63%) were positive. So far as the participants in this survey are concerned, it would appear that many of the opinions held (and expressed) about the CEFR are not based on any genuine knowledge of it and should, therefore, be approached with considerable caution. Bearing this in mind, the fact that well over half of the views expressed about the CEFR were positive may be as much a reflection of what these teachers believe they should feel about the CEFR as of any genuine response to it.

Although (as indicated above) some respondents appear to have been prepared to express views on the CEFR without having actually read it, in many cases, the number of responses in the 'I don't know' category was very high. Thus, for example, of the 108 participants who continued with the questionnaire after indicating the extent to which they were familiar with it, over half responded with 'I don't know' or did not respond at all to questions relating to the usefulness of the CEFR in various areas and to a question about whether the overall impact of the CEFR in the country where they taught was generally positive or negative.

It is interesting to note not only that almost as many survey participants working outside of Europe were familiar with the CEFR as were those working within Europe, but also that, of those with a view on the subject, only 21 respondents reported believing that the CEFR was irrelevant outside of Europe (as opposed to 32 who reported believing that it was not).

Finally, of those with a view on the subject, only 31 agreed that it is becoming impossible to avoid the CEFR in the field of language teaching/learning (as opposed to 42 who did not).

The fact that responses reveal that teachers have generally not read the CEFR but are happy to make comments on it, or that they think it is useful but do not use it in their own practice is particularly important. This is by no means necessarily a criticism of teachers. What it suggests, however, is that the CEFR is likely to have less impact on language teaching and learning directly through the mediation of teachers than those who believe that teachers are generally knowledgeable about it and interested in it may think is likely to be the case. It also indicates that there is a real need to look carefully at language curricula that have been influenced by the CEFR (Chapters 5 and 6) because, where it is not being mediated directly by teachers, it may be being mediated through curricula to teachers, and, hence, to learners.

Chapter 5

The impact of the CEFR on language curriculum design at a national level: the French curriculum for languages in schools

5.1   Introduction

This chapter and the following one explore the impact of the CEFR on examples of language curriculum design at a national level. Here, the focus is on the national curriculum for languages in schools in a European country (France). In the next chapter, it is on the national curriculum for three languages in schools in a non-European country (New Zealand).

There are several reasons supporting the choice of these two particular countries. France was an obvious choice in Europe because it is the first country to have officially associated curriculum levels with the CEFR Common Reference Levels by statute in 2005. The CEFR has, therefore, become the fundamental reference for the teaching, learning and assessment of foreign languages (see 5.4). Furthermore, France has already rewritten its language curriculum documents in relation to the CEFR and so it is possible not only to an analyze the relationship of each of them to that framework but also to attempt to track the relationships among the various curriculum documents. Naturally, as a native speaker, the fact that I had easy access to the documents to be analysed was an important factor also. New Zealand appeared to be an obvious choice outside of Europe because it has adopted the CEFR levels at a national level as a reference in its overarching statement on learning languages. Besides, in contrast with other non-European countries (such as Taiwan, Hong Kong) which seem to have used the CEFR in curriculum design only in relation to English, this was not the case in New Zealand. Furthermore, I knew who the principal writers of these curriculum documents were and was aware that they had written a number of very useful articles on the design of these documents. Finally, the fact that documentation was written in a language in which I am fluent was a favourable factor.

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Here, the question relating to national curriculum design in Chapter 1 (which is relevant to the material in this chapter and in Chapter 6) is divided into three parts:

- *How have these two countries made use of the CEFR in designing national level language curricula?*

- *To what extent, if at all, do these examples follow the suggestions for language curriculum design at a national level in the CEFR?*

- *To what extent, if at all, do these examples support the claims made in the CEFR in relation to the advantages of using the Framework in the context of curriculum design?*

In attempting to answer these questions, it is necessary not only to examine the curricula in question, but also to:

- review some of the underlying principles of the CEFR and explore their implications for language curriculum design;

- consider some of the statements made in the CEFR about language curriculum design, particularly about differences between curricula intended for schools and those intended for adults; and
- revisit some of the claims made in the CEFR about the advantages of making use of it, with particular reference to the area of language curriculum design.

5.2   Curriculum theory and curriculum evaluation

The four dimensions of curriculum theory are aims or objectives, content or subject matter, methods or procedures, and evaluation or assessment (Curriculum Theory, October 2010, ¶ 1). These four dimensions require curriculum designers to make choices. These choices should be based on learning theories and, in the case of language curricula, on theories of second language acquisition.

Curriculum evaluation mainly relates to product evaluation and programme evaluation. Product evaluation concerns curriculum products, such as textbooks, while programme evaluation refers to the complex interactions between a curriculum and its settings, focusing on the relevance of the curriculum in terms, for instance, of the age or ethnicity of the learners for whom it is intended. Here again, the positioning of the curriculum in terms of underlying learning theory should also be evaluated. In practice, however, this positioning seems to be

accepted as a given and is generally not interrogated. For instance, Brophy and Alleman (1991) provide a constructivist framework for the evaluation of instructional activities without interrogating the actual theoretical underpinnings of the curriculum itself which, in the case of a curriculum designed for learners of an additional language, would need to be based on second language acquisition theory.

This has implications for curricula that are based on the CEFR. After all, the authors of that document (CoE, 2001, p. 139) stress that it is not based on any particular learning theory of second language learning. Also relevant here is the fact that the CEFR, in effectively attempting to reduce the complexity of human language to a particular taxonomy, inevitably creates complex issues that need to be addressed by curriculum designers.

5.3 The CEFR: Some issues associated with curriculum design

5.3.1 Some basic principles of the CEFR and their implications for curriculum designers

Three fundamental aspects of the CEFR inevitably have implications for curriculum design. These are (a) its taxonomic nature, (b) its action-orientation approach, and (c) its invitation to users to "use the scaling system and associated descriptors *critically*" [emphasis added] (CEFR, p. xiii).

The taxonomic nature of the Framework "inevitably means trying to handle the great complexity of human language by breaking language competence down into separate components", something that "confronts us with psychological and pedagogical problems of some depth" (CEFR, p. 1). From this perspective, it is relevant to note here that although the CEFR is described as being comprehensive ("you should find in it all you need to describe your objectives, methods and products" (CEFR, p.xii), it is not described as being exhaustive ("[neither] the categories nor the examples are exhaustive" (CEFR, p. iii). However, although readers are advised that those who "wish to exploit the descriptor bank, . . . will need to take a view on the question of what to do about gaps in the descriptors provided" (CEFR, p. 37), they are also advised that users of the Framework "must be selective" and that that selectivity "may well involve the use of a simpler

operational scheme, which collapses categories separated in the Framework" (CEFR, p. 178). So far as curriculum designers are concerned, selectivity will inevitably be a central issue.

The CEFR's action-oriented approach is described as being one that "views users and learners of a language primarily as 'social agents', i.e. members of society who have tasks (not exclusively language-related) to accomplish *in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action*" [emphasis added] (CEFR, p. 9). Widdowson (1983, p. 18) makes a distinction between 'language education' and 'language training':

> Whereas . . . one might reasonably think of training as the imparting of *skills*, education is essentially a matter of developing *abilities*, understood as cognitive constructs which allow for the individual's adjustment to changing circumstances. Thus, abilities provide for further learning through creative endeavour.

Whilst acknowledging that any action inevitably takes place in a specific context, curriculum designers whose focus is on language education will inevitably need to give careful consideration to how language learners can best be prepared to use the target language in a range of contexts.

Bearing in mind the fact that the CEFR is intended to "facilitate European mobility through the mutual recognition of qualifications" (CEFR, p.1), curriculum designers, particularly those operating within a European context, will need to give careful consideration to the implications of acceptance of the invitation to use the Framework as a guide to reflection on current practices (CEFR, p. xiv), "[using] the scaling system and associated descriptors critically" (p. xiii).

5.3.2 The CEFR: Issues associated with objectives in the context of curriculum design in different settings

Reference has already been made to the action-oriented approach underpinning the CEFR and it has been suggested that this is not necessarily an approach that

prioritizes language education (as distinct from language training). This is something that appears to be, in part at least, acknowledged in the CEFR (p. 168):

> It is generally the case that language teaching in schools has to a large extent tended to stress objectives concerned with either the individual's *general competence* (especially at primary school level) or *communicative language competence* (particularly for those aged between 11 and 16), while courses for adults (students or people already working) formulate objectives in terms of specific *language activities* or functional ability in a particular *domain*. This emphasis, in the cases of the former on the construction and development of competences, and in the latter case on optimal preparation for activities concerned with functioning in a specific context, corresponds no doubt to the distinct roles of general initial education on the one hand, and specialised and continuing education on the other.

One could take issue with the fact that 'adults' is glossed by "students or people already working" and with the lack of acknowledgement of the fact that language courses for adults can, in fact, be very varied in orientation. However, as Morrow (2004b, p.5) points out, "[the] focus on teaching languages to adults was characteristic of much of the early work of the Council", "[this] . . . work . . . led to the development of notion-functional syllabuses, the Threshold Level, and the birth of the communicative approach" and was motivated by "the development of a 'unit-credit' system which would enable learners to study 'units' of work (in specific notional-functional areas) and gain 'credit' for these", areas of study being intended to have "immediate 'surrender value" and "the language learnt [being] of practical application in the world outside the classroom" (p. 5). The most critical issue that arises here is, therefore, the extent to which the CEFR, in its present form, is relevant to situations (involving young learners or older ones) in which the formulation of objectives does not necessarily reflect functional ability in a particular domain. The authors of the CEFR clearly believe that it is. They observe (CEFR, p. 168) that "rather than treating these as opposites, the common framework of reference can help to relate these different practices to one another and show that they should in fact be complementary". They also observe

that "when charting the progress of students through the earlier stages of their general education, at a time when their future career needs cannot be foreseen, or indeed when an overall assessment has to be made of a learner's language proficiency, it may be most helpful and practical to combine a number of . . . categories into a single summary characterization of language ability, as, for instance, in Table 1 presented in Chapter 3" (p.131).[248] They also observe that "the appropriate objectives for a particular learner, or class of learner at a particular age, cannot necessarily be derived by a straightforward across-the-board reading of the scales proposed for each parameter" (p. 132), and that "[each] of the major components of the model may provide a focus for learn objectives and become a specific entry point for use of the Framework" (p.135).

In this context, we need to consider what the CEFR has to say about objectives setting generally. It is noted, for example, in the CEFR (p. 179), with reference to assessment, that "[the] objective may be a broad level of general language proficiency, expressed as a Common Reference Level (e.g. B1)" or "*a specific constellation of* activities, skills and competences" and "[such] a *modular objective* might be profiled on a grid of categories by levels (e.g. Table 2)" [emphasis added] . It is also noted that "[tasks] are normally focused within a given domain and considered as objectives to be achieved in relation to that domain" (p. 137).[249] We can see, therefore, that objectives are conceptualized as being task-based and as involving either general proficiency specifications, groups of activities, skills and competences, or a combination of both. This would, presumably, by implication, rule out objectives which are not oriented towards general proficiency and/or are not domain-specific. As I shall argue later, this has significant implications for objectives setting in the context of national curricula.

5.3.3 The CEFR and the principles of curriculum design

Three principles of curriculum design are outlined in the CEFR (p.169). These are:

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[248] Note that Table 1 provides a global scale outline of the Common Reference Levels,

[249] Also noted (CEFR, p. 137) is the fact that "there are cases where the learning objective is limited to the more or less stereotyped carrying out of certain tasks that may involve limited linguistic elements in one or more foreign languages: an often quoted example is that of a switchboard operator where the 'plurilingual' performance expected . . . is limited to the production of a few fixed formulations relating to routine operations".

- discussion in curricula should be in line with the overall objective of promoting plurilingualism and linguistic diversity;

- the cost and efficiency of the system should be considered so as to avoid unnecessary repetition and to promote economies of scale and the transfer of skills which linguistic diversity facilitates;[250]

- curricula for different languages should not be considered in isolation from one another or from language education as a whole.[251]

The overall approach is described (CEFR, pp. 175 - 176) as being 'multidimensional and modular'; multidimensionality and modularity are presented as being "key concepts in developing a sound basis for linguistic diversification in the curriculum and assessment", and reference is made to the desirability in some contexts of establishing 'translanguage modules' which "encompass the various learning approaches and resources, ways of using the out-of-school environment, and dealing with misunderstandings in intercultural relations".

5.3.4 The CEFR and the role of 'authorities' involved in curriculum design

The CEFR outlines roles and responsibilities that may be associated with different types of language education professionals. The following observation is made with reference to 'authorities' involved in curriculum and / or syllabus design CEFR, p. 141):

> Authorities, when drawing up curricular guidelines or formulating syllabuses, *may concentrate on the specification of learning objectives*. In doing so, *they may specify only higher-level objectives in terms of tasks, themes, competence, etc. They are not obliged, though they may wish to do so, to specify in detail the vocabulary, grammar and functional / notional repertoires which will enable learners to perform the tasks and treat the themes. They are not obliged, but may wish, to lay down guidelines or make suggestions as to the classroom methods to be employed and the stages through which learners are expected to progress* [emphasis added].

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[250] It is noted (CEFR, p. 169) that where, for example, pupils learn two foreign languages, the objectives or kinds of progression need not be the same in each case.

[251] It is noted (CEFR, p, 171) that "in a language curriculum accommodating several languages, the objectives and syllabuses of the different languages may either be similar or different".

An important point relating to the national level curricula discussed in the next section emerges here. It is that 'authorities' involved in 'drawing up curricular guidelines or formulating syllabuses' need do nothing more than 'specify higher-level objectives in terms of tasks, themes, competence etc.'. Whose responsibility, then, is it 'to specify in detail the vocabulary, grammar and functional/notional repertoires which will enable learners to perform . . . tasks and treat . . . themes'? According to the writers of the CEFR, this is the responsibility of textbook writers and course designers (CEFR, p. 141):

> Textbook writers and course designers are not obliged, though they may well wish to do so, to formulate their objectives in terms of the tasks they wish to equip learners to perform or the competence and strategies they are to develop. *They are obliged to make concrete, detailed decisions on the selection and ordering of texts, activities, vocabulary and grammar to be presented to the learner. They are expected to provide detailed instructions for the classroom and/or individual tasks and activities to be undertaken by learners in response to the material presented.* Their products greatly influence the learning/teaching process and must inevitably be based on strong assumptions (rarely stated and often unexamined, even unconscious) as to the nature of the learning process.

In connection with the extract above, we need to bear in mind that textbook designers and course designers may, or may not be classroom teachers, and that although there are cases in which course designers are classroom teachers who are judged to have a particularly high level of experience and/or expertise, there are many cases (perhaps the majority) in which classroom teachers are expected to design their own courses with reference to curricula prepared by 'authorities'. That, in such cases, they may simply resort to selecting what they consider to be a suitable textbook (which they may, or may not, supplement) is implicitly recognised in the CEFR (p. 141):

> Teachers are generally called upon to respect any official guidelines, use textbooks and course materials (which they may or may not be in a position to analyse, evaluate, select and supplement), devise and

administer tests and prepare pupils and students for qualifying examinations.

Reference is made in the extract above to the role of teachers in preparing pupils and students for qualifying examinations. Clearly, therefore, the role of examining bodies is an important one. As indicated in the CEFR (p. 140):

> Those concerned with examinations and qualifications will have to consider which learning parameters are relevant to the qualifications concerned, and the level required. They will have to make concrete decisions on which particular tasks and activities to include, which themes to handle, which formulae, idioms and lexical items to require candidates to recognize or recall, what sociocultural knowledge and skills to test, etc.

In cases where representatives of 'authorities' elect to specify only higher-level objectives, the assumption must be that there is some consistency between these objectives, the 'concrete decisions' made by relevant examining bodies (which may, for example, include national qualifications authorities), and the 'concrete detailed decisions' made by course designers and textbook writers. It must also be assumed that classroom teachers (whether or not they are also course designers) can make sense of the inter-relationships among the products of 'authorities' responsible for curriculum design, textbook writers, and course designers and situate their own efforts in relation to all of these. Clearly, this is a very demanding task. Even so, in the context of a volume that seeks to bridge the gap "between 'the theory' as represented by the Common European Framework and 'the practice' when language teaching professionals attempt to understand this theory and apply it in their work" (Morrow, 2004, p.1), Morrow (ibid.) notes that the Framework "is much talked about . . . but little understood" and observes that many readers find it "completely baffling" (p.7). He also indicates, however, that "the Framework specifically invites users to pick and choose the bits of it they want to make use of" (p.7). It is interesting to speculate on how, in this context, teachers could possibly be expected to perform the task to which reference is made earlier in this paragraph.

5.3.5 The CEFR and communicative competences: Some implications for curriculum design

Communicative language competences are defined in the CEFR (p. 9) as "those which empower a person to act using specifically linguistic means". As indicated above, it is acknowledged in the CEFR (p. 168) that "language teaching in schools has . . . tended to stress objectives concerned with either the individual's *general competence . . .* or *communicative language competence*". This being the case, and bearing in mind that the two curriculum examples discussed in the next section are schooling-based, it is relevant to note here some of the points made about communicative language competence in the CEFR.

It is noted in the CEFR that "[the] development of the learner's linguistic competences is a central, indispensable aspect of language learning" (p. 149). It is also noted that "[the] Council of Europe specifications for different levels (Waystage, Threshold Level, Vantage Level) offer in addition appropriate detail on target language knowledge in the languages for which they are available" (p. 187). Nevertheless, since 'authorities' involved in drawing up curricular guidelines or formulating syllabuses "may specify only higher-level objectives" (CEFR, p. 141), they will not necessarily consult these sources. If they do, they will encounter the impact of early work on notional syllabuses associated with the Council of Europe (such as, for example, Wilkins, 1973; 1976) in a more direct form than they do in the CEFR itself, where they will encounter the following observation (p. 116):

> The functional/notional approach adopted in the Council of Europe publications *Waystage 1990, Threshold Level 1990* and *Vantage Level* offers an alternative to the treatment of linguistic competence in Section 5.2.1-3. Instead of starting from language forms and their meanings, it starts from a systematic classification of communicative functions and of notions . . . and secondarily deals with forms, lexical and grammatical, as their exponents.

This statement appears not to take full account of some of the criticisms of the approach to which reference is being made. Thus, for example, Crombie (1988, p.

285) has observed that it makes little sense to attempt to list functions[252] and then associate them with what are referred to above as 'their exponents' since, with some formulaic exceptions, "[almost] any utterance can have almost any illocutionary force depending on the context in which it is used". Although this may not be a major problem in a context where the focus is on "optimal preparation for activities concerned with functioning in a specific context" (CEFR, p.168), it is likely to present major difficulties in other contexts. This is something that is likely to be relevant to any consideration of curriculum documents such as those discussed below.

Also relevant to such a discussion is the way in which descriptors are formulated in the CEFR and the implications that this has for the specification of communicative competences. It is noted in the CEFR (p.37) that "checklists or scales of descriptors . . . work best when the descriptors say not only what the learners can do but also how well they can do it". Some might regard this as something of an under-statement, particularly when applied to communicative language competences. In connection with this, it is relevant to note that it is noted in the CEFR (p. 37) with reference to descriptors that "entries at each level describe selectively what is salient or new at that level". In fact, however, it is perfectly possible to conceive of the same descriptor as having relevance at several levels (possibly at all levels), the critical difference being the language with which it is associated. Consider this point with reference, for example, to part of one of the descriptors included in the CEFR, the A1 global scale descriptor (CEFR, p. 14).

> . . . can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/ she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has.

This is something that will be discussed further below with reference to the New Zealand curriculum documents introduced in 6.4.

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[252] She is referring here to what are called 'microfunctions' in the CEFR.

5.4 The national curriculum documents for foreign languages in schools in France

In 2005, France made reference to the CEFR Common Reference Levels in statutory texts, becoming the first country to do so (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale [MEN], 20 October 2005, pp. 1-2). By decree,[253] the following Common Reference Levels were associated, as over-arching objectives, with particular educational stages:

A1: associated at the end of primary schooling with the one foreign language that is compulsory;[254]

B1: associated with the first foreign language at the end of lower secondary schooling (i.e. at the end of compulsory education);

A2: associated with the second foreign language at the end of lower secondary schooling;

B2: associated with the first foreign language at the end of higher secondary schooling;

B1: associated with the second foreign language at the end of higher secondary schooling.

The intention was that language curricula should be designed in relation to these national proficiency objectives. With reference to foreign languages, The Common Foundation of Knowledge and Competences (Socle Commun de Connaissances et de Compétences, MEN, 11 July 2006),[255] which defines the common foundation of teaching and learning in terms of knowledge and competences at the end of compulsory education, states that the CEFR "constitue la référence fondamentale pour l'enseignement des langues vivantes, les apprentissages et l'évaluation des acquis" [shall constitute the fundamental

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[253] See Décret nº 2005-1001 du 22 août 2005 (2005).

[254] It is to be noted that these levels, and language education in general, also concern regional languages, but I will concentrate on the study of foreign language curriculum documents. The observations that apply to foreign language curricula also apply to regional language curricula.

[255] The Common Foundation of Knowledge and Competences is organised around seven main competences: mastery of French language; practice of a foreign language; the principal elements of mathematics and scientific and technological culture; mastery of common information and communication techniques; humanistic culture; social and civic competences; and autonomy and initiative.

reference for the teaching and learning of modern (foreign) languages, and the assessment of acquired knowledge].[256]

Although the curriculum documents relating to higher secondary education appeared first (2002-2004), followed by those relating to lower secondary education (2005-2007), and, finally, primary education (2007), with those appearing last being more clearly related to the CEFR, I will consider them in reverse order so that the intended progression is more evident. Because the documentation relating to higher secondary education, produced first and before CEFR Common Reference were associated with the French national languages curricula for schools, has considerably less to say about the CEFR than the others, I will confine myself to making a few comments about the curriculum documentation at that level.

Separate language curriculum documents for higher secondary, lower secondary, and primary education are each organised around a common preamble which intended to cover all foreign languages offered at that level.[257] These preambles make reference to the fundamental principles upon which each curriculum document for a specific language (at the appropriate educational stage) is intended to be based. The preambles and language-specific curriculum documents are all available online (see following sections).

5.4.1 The primary (elementary) school curriculum

5.4.1.1 The common preamble

In common with many other countries, France now requires that the teaching and learning of foreign languages should begin in primary school. In recent material, published in 2008 (MEN, "cycle des apprentissages fondamentaux"), it is noted that at CP level (the first grade of primary school), the emphasis will be on oral sensitisation to a foreign language, with the connection between oral and written

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[256] It adds that "La maîtrise du niveau A2 (niveau de l'utilisateur élémentaire) correspond au niveau requis pour le socle commun" [Mastery of Level A2. . . is the requirement for the common foundation].

[257] Called *Cadre commun* [common framework] in the curriculum for the second grade of upper secondary education (MEN, 28 August 2003, p. 4) and *Cadre général* [general framework] in the curriculum for third grade (MEN, 9 September 2004, p. 25).

language (with an emphasis on the latter) being introduced at CE1 level (the second grade).

In the common preamble to the curriculum documents for foreign languages in primary school (MEN, 30 August 2007 [258]), there are three 'objectifs prioritaires' (primary aims) as follows:[259]

- to develop in students the attitudes and behaviours which are indispensable for the learning of modern languages (curiosity, attentiveness, memorization, confidence in their ability to use another language) and thus facilitate the mastery of language;
- to develop sensitivity to the melodic and accentual realities of a new language;
- to help them to acquire knowledge and skills in that language, particularly oral ones.

Reference is made to the Common Reference Levels and it is noted that:

> At the beginning of language learning, oral interaction is particularly important since it is not only a natural process but one which, in the constant coming and going between comprehension and production involved in dialogue, contributes, little by little, to the development of a basic communicative competence.

In the CEFR, under the heading 'communicative language competences' and the sub-heading 'linguistic competences', reference is made to lexical, grammatical, phonological, orthographic, semantic, and orthoepic competences and tables are provided for the first four. Under the heading of *Connaissances* [Knowledge] in the preamble to the French foreign language curricula for primary schooling, there are three sub-headings (Culture and vocabulary; Grammar; Phonology), with each of which is associated a descriptor. As indicated in *Table 5.1* [260] below (in which the CEFR A1 level global scale descriptor is included for comparative purposes),

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[258] Available online at: http://www.education.gouv.fr/bo/2007/hs8/default.htm
[259] Here, and elsewhere in this chapter, I have translated the original French into English.
[260] In all cases, I have in this chapter translated the original French into English.

these descriptors appear to bear a particular relation to four of the CEFR A1 level descriptors.

Table 5.1: *Descriptors associated with Connaissances [Knowledge] in the French foreign language primary curriculum and some descriptors appearing in the CEFR (A1)*

Foreign language curriculum for primary school: **Knowledge** (Culture and vocabulary; Grammar; Phonology)	CEFR : Linguistic competences (General linguistic range, Lexical competence; Grammatical competence; Phonological control): A1	CEFR: Common Reference Levels – global scale (A1)
Culture and vocabulary (pupils will be able to) possess: - a very basic choice of isolated words and simple sentences for [giving] information on him-/herself, on everyday needs, on his/her environment - some cultural elements	**General linguistic range** (p. 110) Has a very basic range of simple expressions about personal details and needs of a concrete type **Vocabulary range** (p. 112) Has a basic vocabulary repertoire of isolated words and phrases related to particular concrete situations	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.
Grammar (pupils will be able to) - Have a limited control of a few simple sentence patterns and grammatical structures in a memorized repertoire - Recognise some facts of language	**Grammatical accuracy** (p. 114) Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a learnt repertoire	
Phonology (pupils will be able to) Recognise and reproduce in an intelligible way the sounds, accentuation (stress), rhythms and intonation patterns appropriate to each language	**Phonological control** (p. 117) Pronunciation of a very limited repertoire of learnt words and phrases can be understood with some effort by native speakers used to dealing with speakers of his/her language group.	

In both cases (the CEFR and the French primary school foreign language curriculum preamble), the descriptors:

- are expressed in largely negative terms (something that appears to run counter to the emphasis on positive acknowledgment of what learners are able to do that pervades the CEFR);

- rely heavily on words such as 'basic', 'simple', 'isolated', 'limited' and 'few'.

Exception may be taken to the CEFR descriptor relating to 'phonological control' that is reproduced in the table above by teachers who:

- from the earliest stages of learning, attempt to contextualize the language to which students are introduced;

- recognise that some of the language that is characteristically introduced in the early stages may be presented in a formulaic way but is not necessarily 'simple' (whatever definition of 'simple' is applied),;

- prefer to avoid unnaturally slow delivery in order to encourage students to recognise and attempt to use the natural rhythms of the target language from the beginning.

For such teachers, the emphasis on 'words and phrases' (rather than, for example, words, phrases and sentences in context') in the CEFR 'phonological control' descriptor may be puzzling in the context of communicative approaches to language teaching. However, in that it could apply to any level, the descriptor that appears under the heading of 'phonology' in the common preamble to the French curriculum documents for primary schooling is unlikely to be regarded as a useful alternative.

There are no descriptors relating to culture in the CEFR. In the preamble to the French foreign language primary curriculum, culture and vocabulary are grouped together, the only specific reference to culture being 'some cultural elements'. Finally, although there is no reference to speed of delivery in the French preamble under the heading of 'connaissances' [knowledge], we shall see that there *is* such a reference under the general heading of 'capacités' [abilities].

A number of entries are included in the preamble to the French curriculum documents for primary schooling under the heading of *Capacité* [Abilities] and the following sub-headings:

> *Understand, react and speak in oral interaction*; *Listening comprehension*; *Sustained speech*; *Reading*; *Writing*.

Relationships between descriptors occurring under these sub-headings and descriptors that appear in the CEFR (some tentative) are indicated in *Tables 5.2 – 5.6* below, after each of which there is a brief discussion.

Table 5.2: *Descriptors associated with spoken interaction (general) in the French foreign language primary curriculum and some descriptors appearing in the CEFR (A1)*

Descriptors in the French language curriculum: Understand, react and speak in spoken interaction	Corresponding CEFR descriptors in 4.4.3.1 Spoken interaction (pp. 73-82)
If terms are simple and phrases elementary, the pupil will be able to: - Communicate, if necessary with pauses to search for words, if the interlocutor repeats or rephrases his/her sentences slowly and helps him/her to express what he/she is trying to say: • introduce oneself; introduce someone; ask how people are and react using most elementary forms of politeness: greetings and leave-taking • answer and ask questions (familiar topics or immediate needs.) • spell familiar words	**Overall spoken interaction** (p. 74)**:** A1: Can interact in a simple way but communication is totally dependent on repetition at a slower rate of speech, rephrasing and repair. Can ask and answer simple questions, initiate and respond to simple statements in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics. **Conversation** (p. 76)**:** A1: Can make an introduction and use basic greetings and leave-taking expressions. Can ask how people are and react to news. Can understand everyday expressions aimed at the satisfaction of simple needs of a concrete type, delivered directly to him/her in clear, slow and repeated speech by a sympathetic speaker. **Orthographic competence (p. 118)** A1: Can copy familiar words and short phrases e.g. simple signs or instructions, names of everyday objects, names of shops and set phrases used regularly. Can spell his/her address, nationality and other personal details.

There are aspects of the descriptors in the table above that appear in the CEFR that could be of concern to some language teachers. These include:

- the inclusion of the words 'basic' and 'simple';[261]

- reference to 'immediate needs';[262]

- reference to 'familiar topics';[263]

- reference to 'everyday expressions';[264] and

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[261] These words are difficult to interpret in any meaningful way in this context
[262] The concept of 'immediate needs' is one which may have little relevance to young learners in the context of schooling and, in any case, some immediate needs may be generally associated with very different linguistic exponents than others.
[263] It is not familiarity with particular topics *as such* that is critical at this level but familiarity with language that can be associated with particular topics.

- reference to 'slow and repeated speech' and, in particular, to communication being "*totally* dependent on repetition at a *slower* rate of speech, rephrasing and repair [emphasis added]".

However, the wording of the descriptors in the French curriculum preamble (left-hand column of *Table 5.2* above) does nothing to address concerns such as these.

Table 5.3: Descriptors associated with listening comprehension in the French foreign language primary curriculum and some descriptors appearing in the CEFR (A1)

Descriptors in the French language curriculum: Listening comprehension	Corresponding CEFR descriptors for listening comprehension
If terms are simple and phrases elementary, the pupil will be able to: - understand classroom instructions - understand familiar words and very common sentences relating to him-/herself, his/her family, his/her concrete and immediate environment, when people speak slowly and clearly. - follow short and simple instructions - follow the thread of a story using appropriate aids	4.4.3.1 Spoken interaction: Understanding a native speaker interlocutor (p. 75): A1: Can understand everyday expressions aimed at the satisfaction of simple needs of a concrete type, delivered directly to him/her in clear, slow and repeated speech by a sympathetic speaker. [265] Can understand questions and instructions addressed carefully and slowly to him/her and follow short, simple directions. Goal-oriented co-operation (p. 79): A1: Can understand questions and instructions addressed carefully and slowly to him/her and follow short, simple directions.[266] Can ask people for things, and give people things. Aural reception (listening): Overall listening comprehension (p. 66) A1: Can follow speech which is very slow and carefully articulated, with long pauses for him/her to assimilate things. Listening to announcement and instructions (p. 67) A1: Can understand instructions addressed carefully and slowly to him/her and follow short, simple directions.

Examination of *Tables 5.2* and *5.3* together begins to reveal the extent of repetition in the CEFR descriptors. Thus, the A1 descriptor relating to 'understanding a native speaker interlocutor' (Table 5.2) is a repetition of the A1 descriptor relating to 'conversation' (Table 5.3); one entry under the A1 descriptor headed "Understanding a native speaker interlocutor' is the same as one entry under the A1 descriptor headed 'goal-oriented co-operation'.

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[264] A glance at *Threshold 1990* confirms that some of the language to which reference is made, useful though it may be, certainly could not be described as 'everyday language'.
[265] This is a repetition of a descriptor listed under 'conversation' in the CEFR (p. 76) and included in *Table 5.2* above.
[266] This is a repetition of part of the descriptor listed in the CEFR under the heading of 'understanding a native speaker interlocutor' (p.75) which also appears in *Table 5.3*.

Other aspects of the CEFR descriptors included in Table 5.3 above that are problematic are:

- heavy reliance, once again, on words such as 'simple' and 'slow' ('very slow'; 'slowly'), supplemented here by 'short' and 'carefully';

- reference to 'long pauses';

- 'give people things'.[267]

In the preamble to the French curricula for primary schooling, there is no specific reference to 'directions' (which are included in the CEFR A1 descriptors). The reference to *following the thread of a story using appropriate aids* appears not to be motivated by any level 1 descriptors appearing in the CEFR (and raises issues that will be discussed later with reference to other descriptors). In at least one respect, however, that is, the reference to 'classroom instructions' (which acknowledges the importance of establishing a repertoire of classroom language), the French descriptors are likely to be more useful to teachers than the CEFR ones.

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[267] What is critical is not that learners can 'give people things' but that they can accompany the transmission with appropriate language and gesture.

Table 5.4: *Descriptors* associated with sustained speech in the French foreign language primary curriculum and some descriptors appearing in the CEFR (A1)

Descriptors in the French language curriculum: Sustained speech	Corresponding CEFR descriptors for sustained monologue
If terms are simple and phrases elementary, the pupil will be able to: - reproduce an oral model - use phrases and sentences that are close to the models they came across during learning, in order to describe him-/herself, describe activities or familiar topics, using basic connectors. - read aloud and in an expressive way a short rehearsed text - tell a short and stereotyped story	**Oral production (speaking):** **Overall oral production** (p. 58) A1: Can produce simple mainly isolated phrases about people and places *(but in the French version, p. 49, the table refers to people and things).* **Sustained monologue: Describing experience** (p. 59) A1: Can describe him/herself, what he/she does and where he/she lives. **Addressing audiences** (p. 60) A1: Can read a very short, rehearsed statement – e.g. to introduce a speaker, propose a toast.

In the table above, CEFR descriptors relating to three areas of oral production are included. Other scales in the CEFR that relate to oral production do not have descriptors for level A1. However, the reference to using basic connectors in the French curriculum echoes a reference to linking words or groups of words with "very basic linear connectors like 'and' or 'then'" in the CEFR A1 descriptor for 'coherence' that appears in Table 3 (headed 'qualitative aspects of spoken language use') (CEFR, pp. 28 – 29). The reference in the French curriculum to *telling a short and stereotyped story* appears to relate (although indirectly) to the CEFR A2 descriptor for 'thematic development' (which appears in the CEFR under the heading of 'pragmatic competences'): "Can tell a story or describe something in a simple list of points" (CEFR, p. 125). This is the second reference to storytelling.[268]

Once again, the word 'simple' appears in the CEFR descriptors. This time, however, it is not repeated in the French curriculum descriptors. Nor does 'mainly isolated phrases' appear in them. However, the French curriculum descriptors *do* include reference to *reproduction of an oral model* (which is difficult, if not

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[268] In connection with these references, it is relevant to note the likely tense requirements. In the French primary school curriculum for English, there is an example that includes verbs (regular and irregular) in the past simple tense, a tense that is not listed in the grammar section at the end of that curriculum.

impossible to interpret in a meaningful way), and add to the reading of a rehearsed texts *in an expressive way* (which may, or may not, be indicative of expectations relating to speech rhythms).[269] Determining what might be regarded as fulfilling any expectations associated with *telling a short stereotyped story* (French curriculum) at this level would be, at best, challenging. Furthermore, the reference to *basic connectors* in the French curriculum is as potentially confusing as is the reference to "basic liner connectors" in the CEFR, particularly as it makes little sense to refer to 'connectors' themselves as being simple or complex, although the uses to which they may be put vary in complexity.

There are some indications here of an attempt to adapt the CEFR to the context of schooling (e.g. the removal of references to introducing a speaker, proposing a toast and describing what one does).

Table 5.5: *Descriptors associated with reading in the French foreign language primary curriculum and some descriptors appearing in the CEFR (A1)*

Descriptors in the French language curriculum: Reading	Corresponding CEFR descriptors for reading
If terms are simple and phrases elementary, the pupil will be able to: - understand short and simple texts, utilizing known elements (indications, information) - get an idea of the content of a simple informational text, which can be accompanied by a visual document	**Visual reception (reading)** (pp. 68-71)**:** **Overall reading comprehension** (p. 69) A1: Can understand very short, simple texts a single phrase at a time, picking up familiar names, words and basic phrases and rereading as required. **Reading for information and argument** (p. 70) A1: Can get an idea of the content of simpler informational material and short simple descriptions, especially if there is visual support.

The words 'short' (short'; 'very short') and 'simple' (x2) appear in the CEFR descriptors recorded in the table above, and both also appear in the French curriculum descriptors. The conditional ("if there is visual support") in one of the CEFR descriptors becomes optional ("which can be accompanied by a visual document") in the French curriculum. None of the content of the following CEFR A1 descriptors (listed under the general heading of 'reading') appears in the French curriculum:

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[269] It might also be interpreted as referring to tone of voice/voice range.

Reading for orientation (CEFR, p. 70)

A1: Can recognise familiar names, words and very basic phrases on simple notices in the most common everyday situation.

Reading correspondence (CEFR, p. 69)

A1: Can understand short, simple messages on postcards.

Reading instructions (CEFR, p. 71)

A1: Can follow short, simple written directions (e.g. from X to Y).

Neither the CEFR nor the French descriptors listed in *Table 5.5* above seems to reflect the CEFR's insistence on objectives being specific and transparent.[270]

Table 5.6: Descriptors associated with writing in the French foreign language primary curriculum and some descriptors appearing in the CEFR (A1)

Writing	Corresponding CEFR descriptors for writing:
If terms are simple and phrases elementary, the pupil will be able to: - copy isolated words and short texts - write a simple electronic message or a short postcard referring to models - fill in a form - produce in an autonomous way a few sentences about him-/herself, real or imaginary characters - write known phrases under dictation	**Written production (writing):** **Overall written production** (p. 61) A1: Can write simple isolated phrases and sentences. **Creative writing** (p. 62) A1: Can write simple phrases and sentences about themselves and imaginary people, where they live and what they do. **Written interaction:** **Overall written interaction** (p. 83) A1: Can ask for or pass on personal details in written form. **Correspondence** (p. 83) A1: Can write a short simple postcard. **Notes, messages & forms** (p. 84) A1: Can write numbers and dates, own name, nationality, address, age, date of birth or arrival in the country, etc. such as on a hotel registration form.

As indicated in *Table 5.6* above, the words 'simple' and 'short' occur both in the CEFR descriptors relating to writing and in the French curriculum descriptors relating to writing. References to "phrases and sentences" (once to "simple

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[270] It might, for example, have been appropriate at this point to make reference to learners being able to read much of what they have learned to say.

isolated phrases and sentences" in the CEFR descriptors are replaced in the French curriculum by a reference to *isolated words and short texts*, references to *copying and under dictation* are added, and a reference to writing a postcard', although not deleted, is replaced by a reference to writing *a simple electronic message or a short postcard*. The specific example of a hotel registration form that appears in one of the CEFR descriptors is replaced by a general reference to form filling in the French curriculum; specific reference to the type of information that might be written (e.g. numbers and dates) appears in one of the CEFR descriptors but not in the French curriculum descriptors that appear in the common preamble. There is no reference to spelling or punctuation in the French curriculum descriptors.

Overall, the descriptors that appear in the preamble to the French curriculum for foreign languages in primary schooling are often similar in many ways (including heavy reliance on words such as 'simple' and 'basic') to some of those that appear in the CEFR although the descriptors in the French curriculum are often less detailed. In both cases, there are frequent problems relating to the interpretation of descriptors (e.g. a reference to giving people things in the French curriculum), and in some cases the underlying approach to teaching that is presupposed appears to be rather dated and potentially problematic (e.g. references to slow delivery and isolated words). Although there are some concessions in the formulation of descriptors in the case of the French curriculum to the fact that the learners will be very different from those generally envisaged in the case of the CEFR (e.g. a reference to classroom instructions in the French curriculum), echoes of the original adult (specific purposes) orientation remain (e.g. the retention of a specific reference to postcards).

5.4.1.2 Language-specific curricula

There are eight language-specific curricula relating to primary schooling: German, English, Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese and Russian (MEN, 30 August 2007, pp. 8-99[271]) Each has essentially the same global organizational structure: an introductory section, and then a series of tables, each of which is headed by one of the general categories listed under the heading of *Capacités*

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[271] Available online at: http://www.education.gouv.fr/bo/2007/hs8/default.htm

[Abilities] in the common preamble (i.e., Understand, react and speak in oral interaction; Listening comprehension; Sustained speech; Reading; Writing). Within each table, there is series of sub-categories made up of a curious inter-mingling of:

micro-functions of various kinds - interactive (e.g. ask and answer questions) and general (e.g. introduce oneself; instructions), sometimes accompanied by content indicators (e.g. about immediate needs);

domain-specific language references (classroom language);

macro-functions / cognitive genres (stories / narrative);

text-types / social genres (e.g. shopping lists; maps; questionnaires);

media (e.g. *electronic* messages);

macro-skills (e.g. understand; speak, write)

micro-skills (e.g. spell; get the gist . . .)

notions (family; environment);

The complete list of headings and sub-headings in the English curriculum document (which will be the primary focus of attention here) is:

Understand, react and speak in oral interaction (5 entries)

introduce oneself; introduce someone else; ask someone for information and respond using the most basic indicators of politeness; give excuses / reasons; ask and answer questions (about familiar subjects; about immediate needs); spell familiar words

Listening comprehension (4 entries)

understand classroom language; if people speak slowly and carefully, understand very common familiar words and expressions about concrete and immediate things that relate to oneself, one's family, one's

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environment; follow short simple instructions; with appropriate aid / assistance, follow the thread of a story.

Sustained speech (3 entries)

copy an oral model; use phrases and expressions close to the models encountered (to represent; to represent activities or familiar subjects, using basic connectors); after repetition, read a short text clearly and expressively; recount a short stereotypical story

Reading (Cycle 3 only)[272] (2 entries)

understand simple short texts, making use of known information and signals (applied to letters, postcards, electronic messages, guides, web pages, questionnaires, counting rhymes, songs, recipes); get the gist of a text, which may be accompanied by visuals (menus; course lists; inquiries; ambiguous pictures, maps and plans)

Writing (5 entries)

copy isolated words and short texts (greetings, wishes, shopping lists, counting rhymes, poems); write, with reference to models, a simple electronic message, a short postcard, magical expressions); give information in questionnaire format; produce autonomously some phrases about yourself and real or imaginary people; write known expressions from dictation (pupils write only what is represented in bold print).

Associated with each of the sub-headings are columns headed 'formulations' (wording) and 'connaissances' (knowledge). Different wordings are associated with the second and third curriculum cycles. *Knowledge* is further sub-divided into columns headed *culture and vocabulary, grammar* and *phonology*.

To indicate the general layout / presentation, a small section of the English curriculum (from the column headed 'comprendre, réagir et parler au interaction orale') is included in *Table 5.7* below.

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[272] Cycle 2 covers the last grade of kindergarten and the two first grades of primary school (CP and CE1); cycle 3 concerns grades 3 to 5 of primary school (CE2, CM1, CM2).

Table 5.7: *A section from the French curriculum for English in primary schools*

Capacités	Formulations		Connaissances		
	Cycle 1	**Cycle 2**	**Culture et lexique**	**Grammaire**	**Phonologie** (ces remarques s'appliquent à l'ensemble du tableau)
Se présenter ou se présenter dans le cadre d'un jeu de rôle	-Good morning/afternoon (children)! -Hello! Good morning/afternoon Miss/ Sir -What's your name/Who are you? -Cinderella/ I'm Cinderella. -How old are you? -Seven/I'm seven. -Where do you live? -In… / I live in…	Good evening/ good night My name's . . . I'm ten (years old)/I'm ten and a half.	Les différentes manières de se saluer en fonction de l'interlocuteur de du moment de la journée L'âge *I live* (bloc lexicalisé)	Pluriel irrégulier (children) WHAT?/WHO?/BE (1ère personne du singulier) HOW OLD? Nombres cardinaux WHERE? Prépositions de lieu : IN	Schémas intonatifs Rythme Bonne réalisation de la longueur et de la qualité des sons vocaliques (ex: /u/, /u:/, /i/, /i:/)
		When is your birthday? In December/ It's in December/on December 10th. What's your mobile/ phone number? 01234567. . . Where do you come from? From . . . / I'm from . . .	L'anniversaire Les moins Moyens de communication	WHEN? Prépositions : IN + mois/ ON + date Prépositions du FROM	Bonne réalisation des diphtongues (ex: /ei/ name, eight… ; /əu/ old, phone, hello

Some of the problems associated with the language-specific curricula are evident from the extract from the curriculum for English in the table above. Thus, for example:

- Although *se présenter* may be interpreted by readers familiar with the CEFR as a micro-function, it is evident from the entries in the column headed 'formulations' that it is being treated as a topic.

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- The rationale for the inter-mingling of vocabulary and culture in a single column is unclear and, indeed, there are few cultural references throughout.

- The column headed 'grammaire' picks out, in an apparently random fashion, grammatical aspects of the 'formulations'. Thus, although the interrogative word 'what' is included in column 5 above, there is no reference to the use of the auxiliary DO.

- The overall impression gained from reading down the 'formulations' column is of a stilted, unnatural dialogue (inappropriate to young learners) in which information is exchanged for purposes that are exclusively pedagogic.

Under the heading 'formulations' (wordings), there are some very curious examples that seem wholly inauthentic / inappropriate in the context of young learners and frequently indicate an odd perception of what is culturally relevant. For example:

> *Here's Robin Hood. He lived a long time ago, in Sherwood Forest. And this is Maid Marion. She was Robin's girlfriend . . .*

> *Once upon a time, there was a little girl named Little Red Riding Hood. One day, she put on her red coat, took a basket full of biscuits and walked across the forest to her grandmother's . . .*

> *Icy Wincy Spider climbed up the water spout . . .*

> *Mix flour, a pinch of salt and 75g of sugar. Beat 3 eggs. Add milk. Fry the pancake, toss the pancake . . .*

> *Remember, remember, the fifth of November.*

> *Waiter, please! / Yes, Sir . . .*

In a few cases, the wording of examples appears to be selected in order to indicate the types of activity that learners might be involved in. Thus, for example (bold print added):

I'm from Cardiff. I live in a flat with my parents. I've got a brother, Luke; he's seven. I can play cricket. **Circle my photo**.

Hands up / down! Nod your head! Clap your hands! Shake your arms!

Following the tables to which reference has been made, there is a text with the following (translated) headings: *phonology, cultural contents and lexical domains,* and *syntax and morphosyntax.* Under each of these headings, there is a brief indication of curriculum content which, once again, raises issues of concern. Thus, for example, in the English curriculum document under the heading of syntax and morphosyntax, we find:

- no reference to past simple tense (although there are references to storytelling in the preceding tables and there are examples in the preceding tables that include past simple tense (regular and irregular forms), e.g. *This is Hilda the giraffe. On Monday, she went to the market and she bought an apple. On Tuesday . . .* ; *We visited the Tower, had a picnic in St James' Park and fed the pigeons in Trafalgar Square. . . .*);

- a reference only to regular plurals (although reference is made to irregular plurals under the heading of 'grammar' in the preceding tables);

- an absence of reference to the quantifier 'any' (although it is included in an example in the preceding tables);

- no reference to adverbs (although 'already' is included in an example in the preceding tables);

- no reference to sentence initial adjuncts although 'so', as a sentence initial adjunct, occurs in one of the examples in the preceding tables);

- no reference to substitution (although 'so' as a substitute is included in one of the examples).

The relationships between the language-specific curricula are also problematic. Thus, for example, comparison of the organization of the entries in the first column under the heading *understand, react and speak in oral interaction* in four

different language-specific curricula (see *Table 5.8* below) reveals some inconsistency of interpretation of an objective .

Table 5.8: *Entries appearing under the heading 'introduce oneself' in five different French language-specific curricula for primary schooling*

English curriculum (p. 21)	German curriculum (p. 9-10)	Italian curriculum (p. 66)	Portuguese curriculum (p. 80)
Introduce oneself *or introduce oneself in the context of a role-playing game	**Introduce oneself** - greet each other - take leave - thank people - apologize - express wishes -congratulate people - talk about one's likes and dislikes	**Introduce oneself** - greet - give one's name - tell one's age - one's nationality, one's origins - one's date of birth - one's address - one's phone number - give information about one's family	**Introduce oneself** - name - age - place of birth - place of residence - where we come from, nationality - family - phone number

In all cases, 'introduce oneself' is treated as a topic rather than a micro-function. In the case of the German and Italian curricula, the lists that appear under this heading include micro-functions (e.g. greet, thank, apologize); in the case of the Portuguese curriculum, they do not. In the case of the English curriculum, the 'formulations' (wordings) column includes greetings and questions and answers relating to name, age, place of residence, phone number, birthday and place of origin.

Even for those who are familiar with the CEFR and, therefore, with the origin of some of its content, the French curriculum for foreign languages in primary schools may appear as a confused (and confusing) jumble of categories that provides little indication of the relationship, if any, among the sub-categories listed under each main category heading. The introduction of five overall categories (e.g. *parler en continu*) and the consequent separation of listening and speaking and reading and writing leads to a considerable amount of repetition. Some of the entries bear little relationship to the type of task-based objectives ("tasks . . . *in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action*" (CEFR, p. 9)) recommended in the CEFR. Indeed, to

the extent that they are task-based at all, some are too broadly-based to be meaningful (e.g. *follow the thread of a story* (Any story?); *get the gist of a text* (Any text?)). Although there is an insistence on the importance of contextualization and authenticity (see, for example, the English curriculum, p. 20), the decontextualized examples in the columns headed 'wordings', and the nature of these examples in many cases, do not indicate that that insistence has been heeded.

5.4.2 The lower secondary school curriculum

At the beginning of *collège* (junior high school / lower secondary school), students may (a) continue studying a language to which they were introduced in primary school, or (b) begin studying a new one. In third grade (*quatrième*[273]), another foreign language is introduced.[274] At the end of lower secondary school (the end of compulsory education), learners are, according to the Common Foundation of Knowledge and Competences (MEN, 11 July 2006), required to reach level A2 in one foreign language to graduate. However, the aim is that they should reach level A2 in their second foreign language and level B1 in their first foreign language.

Language education in lower secondary school is divided into two successive stages: *level 1* (*palier* 1), at the end of which students should reach level A2 in the language they started studying in primary school, and A1 in a second language, which they will start studying in secondary school, and level *2* (*palier* 2), which sets the levels to reach at the end of lower secondary education: B1 in the first foreign language and A2 in the second foreign language. There are different curriculum documents for each of these levels. The curricula for *level 1* (MEN, 25 August 2005 [275]) was published in the 2006 school year; the curriculum for *level 2* (MEN, 26 April 2007 [276]) was published almost one year later.[277]

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[273] The four grades of lower secondary education *(collège)* are labeled as follows, in a count-down way: sixième (sixth year, counting from the terminal year of senior high school, which ends with the diploma of the baccaluréat), cinquième (fifth), quatrième (fourth) and troisième (third).
[274] This language may, on an experimental basis, be introduced one year earlier.
[275] Available at: http://www.education.gouv.fr/bo/2005/hs6/default.htm
[276] Available at: http://www.education.gouv.fr/bo/2007/hs7/default.htm

5.4.2.1 The common preambles

It is stated in the level 1 common preamble that modern languages education in lower secondary school represents a continuation of modern languages education at primary school, taking account of what has been learnt and developing, strengthening and enriching students' abilities and acquired knowledge, whether the language learnt is the same as in primary school or a new one. Although it is noted in the common preambles for lower secondary schooling that students who start the study of a second language in junior high school should reach level A1 (MEN, August 25, 2005, p. 4), these preambles include objectives for A2 and B1 only, noting that the language-specific curricula will deal with A1 competences in the context of lower secondary schooling. The fact is, however, that they do not do so. If the intention is that reference should be made to the primary school curriculum in the case of students who begin a new language at junior secondary school, this remains unstated.

Both preambles outline the action-oriented approach promoted by the CEFR and explain the division into levels 1 and 2. The level 2 common preamble sets out the objectives for levels 1 (corresponding to CEFR A2) and 2 (corresponding to CEFR B1) in terms of *reception* (oral and writing); *production* (oral and writing) and *interaction* (oral) (see *Table 5.9).*

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[277] This publication also included a slightly modified version of the common preamble for *palier 1* and the Japanese curriculum document for *level 1. The* Japanese curriculum document for *level 2* (MEN, 13 September 2007, pp. 1920-1937. was published separately five months later.

Table 5.9: *Objectives for A2 and B1 (from the common preamble, level 2)*

RECEPTION		
	A2	**B1**
ORAL	understand a brief speech if it is clear and simple	understand the essential points in a speech delivered in clear standard language
WRITING	understand short simple texts	understand texts that are mainly in everyday language on concrete or abstract subjects related to in familiar domains
PRODUCTION		
ORAL	produce simple terms/ statements about people and things	express oneself in a simple way on a variety of subjects
WRITING	write short simple statements	write an articulate and coherent text on concrete or abstract subjects in familiar domains
INTERACTION		
ORAL	interact in a simple way with an adapted delivery speed and rephrasing	deal with various situations with relative ease

These descriptors are considerably less detailed than, for example, those in the self-assessment grid of the CEFR that relate to levels A2 and B1 (CoE, 2001, pp. 26-27) and rather different from the CEFR global descriptors at Levels A2 and B1 (p. 24).

The level 1 and level 2 objectives (and comparison of them) highlight a number of problems. Thus, for example, it is impossible to distinguish meaningfully in terms of progression between the A2 and B1 descriptors for reception (oral language), the main difference being the inclusion of the words *brief* and *simple* in the first of these. A similar point could be made with reference to all of the other descriptors. Words such as *brief, simple, short* (A2) and *relative* (*relative ease*) (B2) convey very little of any real substance. At first sight, it appears that reference to *abstract subjects* in two of the B1 descriptors is more helpful. However, it is possible that what is actually intended is 'abstract vocabulary' (i.e. terms that have no physical referents, such as 'good' or 'love' or 'beauty') and the reality is that some of these words are typically introduced in the very early stages of language learning. Similarly, the reference to *various subjects* in the B1 interaction (oral) objective is largely unhelpful in that it is clear that learners at A2 level are also likely to be able to discuss various subjects. Whether they could also be said do so with

relative ease depends entirely on one's interpretation of *relative*. All of these problems reflect problems that are also present in CEFR descriptors.

In the common preamble to level 1, there are three main categories and four sub-categories as follows:

Aural comprehension   **Oral production**   **The place of writing**

Sustained   **Spoken**   **Reading**   **Written**
speech   **interaction**   **comprehension**   **production**
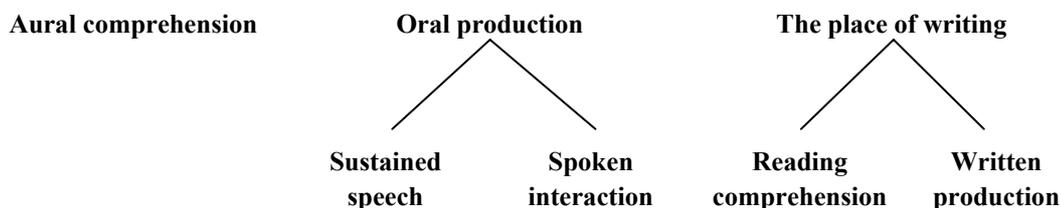
The objectives for each of these for levels 1 and 2 are provided in *Table 5.10* below:

Table 5.10: *French curriculum objectives for foreign languages at lower secondary school (levels 1 and 2)*

Reception		
	A2	B1
ORAL (AURAL COMPREHENSION)	understand a speech if it is short and simple	understand the main points in a speech enunciated in a clear and standard language
WRITTEN (READING COMPREHENSION)	understand short and simple texts	understand the main points in a speech enunciated in a clear and standard language
Production		
	A2	B1
ORAL (SUSTAINED SPEECH)	produce simple presentations about people and things	express oneself in a simple way on various topics
WRITTEN (WRITTEN PRODUCTION)	write simple and short statements	write an articulate and coherent text on concrete or abstract topics related to familiar domains
Interaction		
	A2	B1
ORAL (SPOKEN INTERACTION)	interact in a simple way with an adapted delivery speed and rephrasing	deal with various situations with relative ease

As indicated in the extracts included in the table above, it is extremely difficult to determine what the differences are intended to be between the descriptors associated in this part of the French curriculum with CEFR levels A2 and B1.

In relation to each of these, there is a table divided into three columns: (a) Examples (of speeches, statements, interactions, texts); (b) Examples (of aids, documents, situations); (c) Strategies.

Two examples are provided in *Tables 5.11* and *5.12* below, each of which is followed by a brief discussion.

Table 5.11: *Lower secondary, level 1- Aural comprehension*

Aural comprehension Be able to understand a brief speech if it is clear and simple		
Examples of speeches	**Examples (support/ documents/ situations)**	**Strategies**
- instructions - familiar everyday expressions - presentations - sentences/texts containing numbers - stories	- classroom situations - audio-visual recordings of less than one minute (conversations, information bulletins, advertisements, fictions) - tales, anecdotes, selected proverbs, songs, poems, nursery rhymes	Pupils should develop the habit of: - using extralinguistic signalling (visual and sound); - using situational cues (who is speaking, where, when?) - using intonation[278] to deduct feelings; - using significant elements to construct sense (according to the languages, sentence stress, word stress, word order, keywords . . .) - making use of cultural indicators

It is clear from the example in the table above that the inter-mingling of categories of various types in the columns (e.g. familiar everyday expressions and presentations) can be more confusing than helpful.

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[278] Actually feelings are guessed from the tone of voice (le ton de la voix), not intonation (intonation). Maybe what is meant is what we find in the curriculum for level 2 (see *Table 5.15* below): identify the expressive value of an intonation.

Table 5.12: *Lower secondary, level 1- Reading comprehension*

Reading comprehension Be able to understand short simple texts		
Examples of texts	**Examples: aids/documents/situations**	**Strategies**
- instructions - correspondence - informative texts or texts of fiction - children's literature	- exercise instructions, recipes -postcards, electronic messages, letters - timetables, maps, plans, city signs - leaflets, television schedules, menus - extracts from tales, poems	Pupils will develop the habit of:-relying on paratextual clues to identify the nature of the document and formulate hypotheses about its content - spotting significant elements (graphic, syntactic, morphological, lexical and cultural) that help them to reconstruct the meaning of the text - deducing the meaning of what is unknown from what he/she understands

Comparison of *Tables 5.11* and *5.12* demonstrates that there is rather more clarity of presentation in the case of reading comprehension. As in the case of aural comprehension, the items in the first two columns (e.g. instructions, menus) are clearly intended to be indicative of the type of language that is likely to be in focus. However, the problem in relation to the interpretation of the objective remains.

In the common preamble for level 2, *forms of discourse* ("les formes du discours") are introduced and labelled *narration; description; explanation* and *argumentation*.[279] Associated with each of these are expectations. Thus, for example, in relation to narration, students are expected at the end of level 2 to "be able to recount in detail real or fictitious events, *further structuring* their discourse and expressing their feelings" [emphasis added] (MEN, 26 April 2007, p. 27). This descriptor seems to be set above the CEFR B2 level.[280,281]

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[279] These are included in the CEFR in a list of what is referred to as 'macrofunctions' (listed under the heading of *'functional competences'(rather than discourse competences) (CEFR, p. 125-126)*
[280] The descriptors for *thematic development* at level B1 in the CEFR (p. 125), for example, state: "Can reasonably fluently relate a straightforward narrative or description as a linear sequence of points", and for *coherence and cohesion* (ibid.): "Can link a series of shorter, discrete simple elements into a connected, linear sequence of points".
[281] "Further structuring" in the French curriculum has to be interpreted in relation to what was expected at level A2. However, there is nothing to which this can be specifically related in the curriculum for level 1. Furthermore, there is no indication of how this objective might be achieved.

At the end of the common preamble (level 1), there are a few paragraphs about (a) cultural competence, (b) linguistic competences, and (c) using information technologies. At the end of the common preamble (level 2), there is a note indicating that the initial emphasis should be on reception. This is followed by a section on "European and oriental languages specialised classes" (Sections Européennes et de Langues Orientales) in which it is noted that in these classes, the intensive study of languages involves, from the third year of study onwards, study of an academic subject through the medium of the language being learned. Reference is also made here to the importance of discourse strategies (in relation to the development of autonomy) and partnerships with foreign countries. Finally, there is a section on assessment that stresses that assessment should be activity-based, positive, coherent, focused on the main language activities in the section studied and based on selected criteria.

5.4.2.2 Language-specific curricula

Language-specific curricula are organized in the same way as are those for primary school and concern the same languages (German, English, Arabic, Chinese, Italian, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish), with the addition of Modern Hebrew and Japanese. Although there are some differences in terms of organisation and of the numbering and labelling of the different parts, each has the following elements:

> a general introduction to the teaching of the specific language (generally limited to one paragraph, but longer in the curricula for Chinese, Japanese, Arabic and Hebrew);
>
> a section labelled *"L'activité de communication langagière"* (Language communication activity), with tables;
>
> a section dealing with cultural and lexical competences (sometimes called cultural contents and lexical fields); and

a section dealing with grammar and phonology.[282,283]

The section devoted to language activities, containing tables with descriptors for each language activity, is by far the most developed area. The first column of these tables lists different types of achievement objectives under the following headings:

> *examples of speeches* ("exemples d'interventions" [284]) for aural comprehension;
>
> *examples of statements* ("exemples d'énoncés") for sustained speech;
>
> *examples of interactions* ("exemples d'interactions") for oral interaction;
>
> *examples of texts* ("exemples de textes") for written comprehension and written production.

Each of these can, in turn, be divided into smaller, partial objectives, with some differences from one curriculum to another. These 'mini-objectives' are expressed in different ways from one curriculum document to another: some take the form of verb phrases or noun phrases (the English and Chinese curricula); some include can-do statements for some objectives but not for others (the Japanese, Hebrew, Spanish, Portuguese and Russian curricula); some (the Spanish, Portuguese and Russian curricula) use an implicit form of can-do statement using infinitive verbs;[285] the curricula for German and Italian are the only ones to use can-do statements consistently, including them for each of the main topics. A comparison that relates to the area of written comprehension is included in *Table 5.13* below.

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[282] Except for the curriculum for Arabic where this part, called grammatical competence, is devoted to grammar, with the mere addition of a few lines on phonology in the end.

[283] In the English curriculum, there are two parts, one on syntax and morphosyntax, one on phonology.

[284] *Intervention* can mean many things in French and is not easy to translate. In general it refers to the act of taking the floor, making a speech, or just speaking. In view of the elements included in this column, it is not sure that this term in French has been well chosen: "Instructions and orders"; "Colloquial everyday life expressions"; "Introduction" (i.e. introduce oneself and others); "Numbers" (*indications chiffrées:* indications containing figures); and "Stories (tales, anecdotes, chosen proverbs, songs, poems, nursery rhymes)".

[285] For instance, instead of stating "L'élève sera capable de comprendre un message écrit simple et bref sur un sujet familier" [Students will be able to understand a simple and short written message on a familiar topic] (German curriculum, MEN, 25 August, 2005, p. 17), the Spanish curriculum omits the first part to state "Comprendre un message écrit simple et bref sur un sujet familier" [Understand a simple and short written message on a familiar topic] (MEN, 25 August, 2005, p. 62), which is the same, except that the 'can-do' (or 'will be able to') part is implied.

Table 5.13: A comparison of some achievement objectives for written comprehension in different lower secondary school language curricula

Written comprehension: Example of texts			
English curriculum (p. 30)	**Russian curriculum (p. 129)**	**German curriculum (p. 17)**	**Spanish curriculum (p. 62)**
Instructions - exercise instructions - Recipes	**Instructions** Understand what is written in order to perform a task: (exercises, moving from one point to the other…)	**Instructions** The student will be able to understand what is written in order to perform a task: - school tasks - game rules - DIY activities - questionnaires (stats / quiz) - cooking recipes	**Instructions** - Exercises - Recipes - Moving from one point to the other
Information boards - timetables - maps and plans - city signage	Find a specific and predictable piece of information in simple, ordinary documents (brochures, menus, television programmes, phonebooks, classified advertisement…)	**Information boards and documents:** The student will be able to find a specific and predictable piece of information in simple, ordinary documents: - brochures - menus - television programmes - phonebooks - advertising slogans	**Find a specific and predictable piece of information in simple, ordinary documents** -Menus - brochures -Television programmes -Phonebooks, timetables and guidebooks -Instruction manual
	Information boards. Understand ordinary signs, on the street, at the station, at school…	The student will be able to understand signs and posters to find his/her bearings: \ - at school - on the street - at the station - on the road or motorway	**Information boards** Understand ordinary signs on the street, at the station, at school…
Informative texts - brochures and advertisements - classified advertisement - television programmes - menus	Informative texts Pick out and collect the information required in a simple written text: (brochures, short newspaper articles…)	**Informative texts** The student will be able to pick out and collect the information required in a simple text: - titles - short newspaper articles - classified advertisements	**Informative texts** Pick out and collect information in a simple written text - brochures - short newspaper articles

The second column provides examples of *formulations* (wordings), that is examples of encodings in the target language that can be associated with the achievement objectives. The last two columns are labelled *Cultural and lexical competences ("Compétences culturelle et lexicale")* and *Grammatical competence ("Compétence grammaticale")*. In the case of the English, German, Italian, Portuguese and Russian curricula only, an additional column has been added for phonological competence in all tables on oral language activities.[286] In the case of the English curriculum, there is, in the case of reading and writing activities, a column dealing with links between speaking and writing.

The column labelled *Cultural and lexical competences* groups together vocabulary *(lexique)* and cultural themes. The section on cultural competence in the *Common preamble* (MEN August 25, 2005, p. 7) stresses the importance given to cultural elements in language-specific curricula.[287] However, as in the case of the CEFR, there are no descriptors for cultural competence. The curricula simply provide a list of topics and sociocultural elements (see *Table 5.14* below for an example).[288]

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[286] Except in the Russian document, where it only concerns oral comprehension and continuous speech.

[287] The different language curricula, each in its own way, remind the readers that the cultural themes introduced in the curriculum are not to be taught exhaustively and that culture will not be taught in isolation, but is a part of the learning of a foreign language. In the curriculum for Italian (MEN, 25 August 2005, p. 105), the section on cultural and lexical competence explains that there is no specific teaching of vocabulary or culture and students will discover and acquire them through activities of language practice mixing linguistic and cultural objectives.

[288] The topics listed relate to phrases and expressions presented in the wordings *("formulations")* column.

Table 5.14: *Cultural and lexical competences: some examples from language-specific curricula*

Curriculum for English - Oral comprehension (p. 25)	
Achievement objectives	**Cultural and lexical competences**
Introductions - identity - tastes	Family members The alphabet Occupations Historical and fictitious characters Community life, small jobs, leisure, common music instruments, food, fashion, school subjects, animals, TV programmes
Curriculum for Chinese - Oral comprehension (p. 48)	
Achievement objectives	**Cultural and lexical competences**
Introductions - identity - someone's identity and family - his/her tastes - his/her needs, general condition	Country names and the transcription of foreign names (by giving Chinese names to each student). Members of a Chinese family: younger brother, older sister… Leisure Well-being
Curriculum for German - Oral comprehension (p. 11)	
Achievement objectives	**Cultural and lexical competences**
Introductions The student will be able to understand questions and information relating to: - identity - someone's identity and family - his/her tastes - his/her physical condition - his/her feelings	New technologies **Customary language of phone conversations** Family members **German-speaking countries** Leisure, common music instruments Parts of the body

As indicated in the table above, the German curriculum appears to mark the difference between cultural topics (in bold letters) and vocabulary (in regular letters). The curricula for Spanish, Italian and Russian do the same. However, there are clearly difficulties associated with the attempt to do so. The reality is that culture permeates all aspects of language. Thus, it is stated in the common preamble (MEN August 25, 2005, p. 7) that:

On prend en compte les différentes composantes de la dimension culturelle, qu'il s'agisse des domaines linguistique (sonorités, lexique), pragmatique (codes socioculturels, gestualité, adéquation entre acte de parole et contexte) ou encore des usages, modes de vie, traditions et de l'expression artistique.

[The different components of the cultural dimension are taken into account, whatever the domain, linguistic (sounds, vocabulary), pragmatic (sociocultural codes, gestures, adequacy between speech acts and context) or of customs, ways of life, traditions and artistic expression.]

This difficulty is reflected in the lack of tables relating to cultural competence in the CEFR.[289]

Once again, it is in the tables that relate to each of the general objectives that the real nature of the curriculum and the problems associated with it become evident. For example, in the French curriculum for English (lower secondary, level 2) there is a series of tables associated with each general objective. The tables have the sub-headings: *examples of interventions; wordings; cultural and lexical competences; grammatical competence* and *phonological competence*. Under the heading *oral comprehension ("comprehension de l'oral") - students will be able to understand the main points of a speech delivered in clear standard language –* the examples of interventions include: *instructions and announcements* (in the computer room; in class; on a school trip; at home; *information* (media); *conversations in pairs* (in school or outside of school; in a more formal situation; in a homestay family); *short accounts/histories*; and *narratives* (documentaries; newspaper reports). An extract from the first section of that table is included in *Table 5.15* below.

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[289] See Chapter 3, in particular what Vincent says (3.2.3).

Table 5.15: *Extract from a section of the French curriculum for English (level 2)*

Oral Comprehension *Students will be able to understand the main points of a speech delivered in clear standard language*				
Examples of interventions	**Wordings**	**Cultural and lexical competences**	**Grammatical competence**	**Phonological competence**
Detailed instructions In computer class	Turn on your computer screen. To open the file, you must enter your password. It may take a few seconds. You may have to wait. Click on the button. Don't forget to turn off the printer. Put it in italics/ in bold.	Language of information technology	Imperative MAY + BE HAVE TO + BV Quantifiers	Pick out meaning segments Pick out the intonation pattern Identify the expressive value of an intonation (surprise, indignation, happiness, anger, etc.) Pick out the sentence tonic stress Pick out stressed words
In class	Stop shouting, will you? Will you stop that noise/ talking? Let's do that, shall we? / Let's . . . / Shall we . . .? You are not to use a dictionary. Make sure you write your name on the sheet. You are expected to do this exercise in 10 minutes. Any questions so far? Time is up! Cut out this picture and stick it in/into your copybooks. Try to take notes while listening. Write that down in your rough books. I asked you to do some research for me. I want you to tell me what you found	Class life, school material and activities	WILL Modal value of BE (NOT) TO + BV WHILE + BV + ing Indirect interro-gatives Infinitives clauses	

As indicated in *Table 5.15* above, what we effectively have here is simply a list of examples of language that could be associated with some very general situational categories, some very general indications of the types of lexical fields involved (and, by implication, some indicators of areas that could be covered under the general heading of culture), and some (apparently randomly selected) indication of grammatical and phonological aspects of the language examples.

The language-specific curricula, in common with the language-specific curricula at other levels, end with sections dealing with lexical and cultural content, syntax

and morphosyntax and phonology. The second and third of these sections provides what is essentially a fairly standard structural syllabus, one, however, that is not related in any way to meaning. Thus, for example, although some structural syllabuses associate different constructions with different structure-related meanings at different stages (e.g. simple present tense may be associated in an English curriculum with, for example, regular or habitual activities or the reporting of past events in newspaper headlines), no such association occurs here.

5.4.3   The upper secondary school curriculum

There are two main types of course of study in higher education: general and technological *(enseignement général et technologique)* and vocational *(enseignement professionnel)*. In vocational education, the learning of one foreign language is compulsory; a second foreign language, associated with some specialisations in the service sector, is optional.

My focus here is on the curricula associated with general and technological education. In this area, all students receive the same education in the first cycle / grade of upper secondary education (*seconde),* with three hours of language teaching for their first foreign language (FL1), and two and a half hours for their second (FL2). In the final cycle *(cycle terminal),* covering the two years leading up to the *baccalauréat,*[290] students are separated according to area of specialism - *economic and social* (ES), *literary* (L), *scientific* (S), *industrial sciences and technologies* (SRI), and *medico-social sciences* (SMS).

5.4.3.1 The common preambles

There is one common preamble for *seconde* (the first grade) and one that covers both second and third grades (*classes de première; classe terminale*). The first of these, published one year after the CEFR,[291] does not contain any reference to the Framework or its levels. It outlines objectives for the end of upper secondary schooling for first and second foreign languages (repeated in the common preamble for second and third grades) as follows:

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[290] The French school leaving diploma
[291] Available at: http://www.education.gouv.fr/bo/2002/hs7/default.htm

- take part in a dialogue situation, between two or more people

  [participer à une situation de dialogue à deux ou plusieurs personnes];

- understand the essence of sophisticated spoken messages (in particular: debates, talks, radio or television programmes, fiction movies or documentaries) and written messages, in a modern language

  [comprendre l'essentiel de messages oraux élaborés (notamment : débats, exposés, émissions radiophoniques ou télévisées, films de fiction ou documentaires) et écrits, dans une langue contemporaine];

- carry out an interpretative work which, beyond what is explicit, will aim at the comprehension of what is implicit

  [effectuer un travail interprétatif qui, au-delà de l'explicite, visera une compréhension de l'implicite];

- present, rephrase, explain or comment on, in an organized way, in writing or orally, opinions and points of view, written or oral documents containing information

  [présenter, reformuler, expliquer ou commenter, de façon construite, par écrit ou par oral, des opinions et points de vue, des documents écrits ou oraux comportant une information ou un ensemble d'informations];

- defend different points of view and opinions, lead an argument

  [défendre différents points de vue et opinions, conduire une argumentation].

These descriptors are rather different from those of the CEFR. In addition, the first is so general that it could apply at any level;[292] the third sufficiently general to apply at any level from B2 upward. The second descriptor bears some relation to the CEFR descriptors for listening and reading at levels B1 and B2. The fourth and fifth could be related, but by no means directly, to descriptors included in the CEFR at levels B1 and B2 for *Sustained monologue: putting a case* (CEFR, pp. 58 & 59) and at level B2 for *Reports and essays* (CEFR, p. 62).

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[292] If we compare this descriptor to the descriptors for spoken interaction in Table 2 of the CEFR (Self-assessment grid, p. 26-27), it is quite impossible to decide the level in which this descriptor would fit.

The common preamble outlines five areas of communicative competence: *aural comprehension; oral production; reading comprehension; written production*; and *cultural competence*. It ends by noting that students who choose the option of pursuing a third foreign language (FL3) are not to be considered to be absolute beginners in that they have already acquired some knowledge on the functioning of languages, learning strategies and working methods.[293]

The common preamble relating to second and third grades[294] includes a table expressing expected proficiency levels at each stage in relation to the Common Reference Levels. These expectations are different in the case of Chinese and Modern Hebrew (see Table 5.16 below).

Table 5.16: *Proficiency levels expressed as CEFR Common Reference Levels for first, second and third foreign languages at the end of upper secondary schooling*

Compulsory or optional course Specialisation	FL1 [295]	FL2	FL3
Listening comprehension	**B2** (Specialisation B2/C1[296]) *(Chinese A2/B1; Hebrew B1/B2)*	**B1/B2** (Specialisation B2) *(Chinese A2; Hebrew B1/B2)*	**A2/B1** *(Chinese A1/A2)*
Oral interaction	**B1/B2** (Specialisation B2) *(Chinese B1)*	**B1** (Specialisation B1) *(Chinese A2)*	**A2**
Oral production	**B2** (Specialisation C1) *(Chinese B1; Hebrew B1/B2)*	**B1/B2** (Specialisation B2) *(Chinese A2; Hebrew B1/B2)*	**A2/B1** *(Chinese A2)*
Reading	**B2** (Specialisation C1) *(Chinese A2)*	**B1/B2** (Specialisation B2) *(Chinese A1/A2)*	**A2/B1** *(Ch A1)*
Writing	**B2** (Specialisation B2) *(Chinese B1; Hebrew B1/B2)*	**B1/B2** (Specialisation B2) *(Chinese A2; Hebrew B1/B2)*	**A2/B1** *(Chinese A1; Hebrew A2)*

Thus, we can see that although the proficiency benchmarks for higher secondary education are expressed in terms of CEFR common reference levels, the overall objectives bear only a very loose relationship with descriptors included in the

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[293] This is in line with the CEFR approach to plurilingualism.
[294] Available at: http://www.education.gouv.fr/bo/2003/hs7/default.htm for second grade, and at: ftp://trf.education.gouv.fr/pub/edutel/bo/2004/hs5/lv_terminale.pdf (MEN, 9 September 2004) for third grade (the content of both documents being the same).
[295] FL1 = first foreign language; FL2 = second foreign language; FL3 = third foreign language.
[296] For courses of study specialising in languages, higher levels are generally required for FL1 and FL2.

CEFR and, in particular, with the descriptors included in Table 1 of the CEFR (global scale descriptors (CEFR, p. 24).

5.4.3.2 Language-specific curricula

At higher secondary level (first grade), curricula published in 2002 concern German, English, Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, Modern Hebrew, Italian, Portuguese, and Russian.[297] In most cases, there are separate sections relating to first, second and third foreign languages (FL1, FL2 & FL3). In most cases, objectives are listed in relation to the competency areas outlined in the common preamble. However, the Arabic and Italian curricula do not relate proficiency objectives to competency areas at all, and the Chinese curriculum expresses objectives in terms of writing and speaking:

> *Written Chinese:* students can identify the great majority of graphic components in the programme and reach a number of around 200 to 250 active characters and be able to recognise around 300 to 350 characters; they can write messages of a very basic level.

> *Spoken Chinese:* students can understand sentences in relation with themes and vocabulary they have learnt so far. With additional vocabulary on the theme of the city, they will be able to react spontaneously to questions. They will have some fluency in common situations relating to school, family, leisure activities and consumption. However, they will need some guidance, since they do not know yet how to really make use of their knowledge.

At higher secondary level (second grade), the language-specific curricula are all presented in different ways.[298] However, except in the case of the curriculum for Arabic, they all have a section dealing with cultural content that is expressed in terms of power relations and subdivided into four areas: *domination; influence; revolt; opposition.*[299] *Table 5.17* below (in which words in italics are in English in

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[297] Curricula for other languages were published earlier: Danish (1989), Modern Greek (1987), Japanese (1987), Dutch (1972), Polish (1987), and Turkish (1996).
[298] They are available at: http://www.education.gouv.fr/bo/2003/hs7/default.htm
[299] In the case of the Spanish curriculum, approximately 80% of the document (constituting a total of three pages as a whole) is devoted to culture.

the original) indicates the content of one of these subsections in the case of the English curriculum.

Table 5.17: Cultural content: The subject of domination in the English curriculum

Themes	Examples
The forming of the United Kingdom	Anglo-Saxons and Normans / incorporation of Wales / conquest of Ireland / union with Scotland
The British Empire	Colonial expansion: North America / India / Africa / Australasia, etc.
The United States: creation of the Union	Conquest: Mexican territories / (American) Indian nations
The United States: a superpower	Colonial expansion / world supremacy
Political structures	Absolute monarchy: the Tudor and Stuart dynasties. The two-party system: *Labour / Conservative, Republican / Democrat*
Social structures	- GB: *class system / public schools (old school-tie) / Oxbridge / R.P. / Establishment.* - US: *white supremacy /* slavery / Ku-Klux-Klan / WASP. - India: the caste system. The family: the Victorian model.
Economic and cultural power	Anglo-American multinational companies. The movie industry English language
Religion	The Witch Hunt in the 17th century (Salem). The catholic church in Ireland. The Protestant fundamentalism in the United States. Sects in GB and the US.
Arts and literature	*Uncle Tom's Cabin; Little Big Man; Dances with the Wolves; 1984.* *Henry James; James Baldwin; Ralph Ellison.*

Some of the language specific curricula include suggested vocabulary, phrases and / or structures (e.g. English, Arabic, Hebrew, Chinese); others do not (e.g. Spanish and Portuguese). Some of them include a separate section dealing with phonetics and / or phonology; some treat phonetics / phonology under the heading of grammar (e.g. Portuguese); some include nothing at all in this area.

At higher secondary level (third grade), the language-specific curricula (MEN, 9 September 2004), published one year after those for the second grade and three years after the publication of the CEFR, are more unified. Common to each of them is:

- length (from two to four pages only);

- a section dealing with FL1 and FL2, including (a) linguistic content, and (b) cultural content;

- a section dealing with FL3, generally including separate sections on (a) linguistic content and (b) cultural content.

Even so, there are some major differences relating, in particular, to the content of sections that are similarly labelled. Some curricula include only general objectives in each area; some include details relating to each competency area; some include sub-sections dealing with vocabulary and grammar (the latter sometimes making reference to phonology).

So far as the English curriculum is concerned, more specific objectives are listed under four headings: *aural comprehension; oral production; reading comprehension*; and *written production*. Associated with the objectives listed under each of these headings are examples of contexts and support. Thus, for example, under the heading of reading comprehension (first grade of upper secondary schooling), the entry is as indicated in *Table 5.18:*

Table 5.18: *Reading comprehension in the English curriculum for the first grade of upper secondary schooling*

Competences	Students will be able to:	Examples of contexts and supports
Reading comprehension	- understand simple authentic documents about everyday activities; - understand texts written in everyday language; - understand narrative texts, discursive or poetic, of a maximum length of 300 words; - practice 'extensive' reading of long texts.	- advertisements, leaflets, tourist information…; - letters, *e-mails*: description of events, expression of feelings…; - newspaper articles, web pages, excerpts from tales, short stories, novels, poems…; - full short stories, press dossiers, excerpts from theatre plays, scripts from audio or video documents…

As indicated in the table above, the more specific objectives (see the middle column) are still very general and the examples of contexts and supports (see final column) is simply a list of text types (with or without an indication of media).

At the end of the English curriculum, there are sections headed *linguistic knowledge* (vocabulary; grammar; phonology) and *culture*. The emphasis in the

linguistic knowledge section is on reinforcement and systematization although there are a few specific indicators of focus points (e.g. the choice of determiners: *zero, a, the, much/many, (a) little / (a) few, every, some, any, no,* negative and interrogative constructions).

5.5   The CEFR and the national curriculum documents for foreign languages in schools in France: Addressing the research questions

This chapter began with three research questions that will now be addressed with reference to the French national curricula for languages in schools.

5.5.1   How has France made use of the CEFR in designing its national curricula for languages in schools?

It is noted in the CEFR that users of the Framework must be selective, that selectivity possibly involving "the use of a simpler operational scheme, which collapses categories separated in the Framework" (CEFR, p. 178). In the case of the French curricula for foreign languages in schools, the writers have clearly made a decision to be selective. Indeed, given the nature of the Framework, they could not have decided otherwise. I believe that there are problems associated with that selectivity, that these problems would not have been resolved had different selections been made, and that this serves to highlight some of the problems associated with the CEFR itself.

The French curriculum for foreign languages in schools is made up of a large number of curriculum documents, including several common preambles. An alternative approach, one that would almost certainly have reduced the overall complexity and highlighted similarities and differences between different levels and stages, would have been to design a single preamble and a single language-specific curriculum document for each of the languages offered. This would have been consistent with the overall aim of creating coherent, consistent and transparent pathways. As it is, comparing and contrasting the content of the large number of language curriculum documents is a major task, and one that must, in some ways, reflect the difficult task that must have confronted curriculum designers themselves at each stage in the process.

A decision has been made in France to include proficiency benchmarking in relation to the CEFR Common Reference Levels, that benchmarking relating to (a) the stage of schooling, and (b) whether students are engaged in the study of a first, second or third foreign language. This calls for general (proficiency) objectives / descriptors. How are these articulated? It is claimed in the CEFR that "[it] is generally the case that language teaching in schools has to a large extent tended to stress objectives concerned with either the individual's *general competence* (especially at primary school level) or *communicative language competence* (particularly for those aged between 11 and 16)". In the case of the general (proficiency) descriptors relating to the primary school curriculum (intended to reflect Common Reference Level A1), the emphasis is on communicative language competence. Although the descriptors are headed *grammar, phonology* and *culture and vocabulary*, the only reference to culture (*some cultural elements*) is essentially meaningless in the context of descriptors that are intended to allow for discrimination among levels. The entries relating to vocabulary and grammar draw closely upon CEFR A1 level descriptors relating to *general linguistic range, vocabulary range* and *grammatical accuracy* (CEFR, pp. 110, 112 & 114) and, in common with these CEFR descriptors, rely heavily on words such as 'basic', 'few, 'simple' and 'isolated' (the last of which is suggestive of an approach to the teaching and learning of languages that some would consider dated). Under the heading of *grammar*, the words 'recognise some facts of language' (essentially meaningless as a discriminator and appearing to be related to 'knowledge about language' rather than proficiency) have been added. The CEFR A1 global descriptor includes: *Can introduce him / herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he / she lives, people he / she knows and things he / she has.* This does not appear in the French descriptors. However, under the heading of *culture and vocabulary*, there is a more general reference to giving information about him- / herself and his / her environment. CEFR references to slow delivery, the provision of help and to the effort required by native speakers if they are to understand (which appear in the CEFR global A1 descriptor and / or the CEFR A1 phonological control descriptor) do not appear in the French curriculum descriptors (possibly because it is likely that they would be unacceptable to some language teachers). Instead, there is a general statement under the heading of *phonology* that could apply to

almost any proficiency level. So far as the lower secondary school curricula are concerned, the general (proficiency) objectives, again largely related to communicative language competence, also rely heavily on the supposed discriminating qualities of words such as 'brief', 'short' and 'simple'. In most cases, it would be impossible, referring to these descriptors, to differentiate between levels A2 and B1. In the case of the upper secondary school curricula, the general (proficiency) objectives (of which there are 5), are, apparently, intended to relate to *both* B1 and B2. One of them is so general that it could apply to any level; the remaining four could (possibly) apply to any level from B1 or B2 upward. It is, however, reasonable to point out that the upper secondary school curriculum documents appeared shortly after the CEFR. Overall, the French general (proficiency) descriptors relating to primary schooling do little more than indicate that the expectation is that learners at this level are likely to have limited control of a largely memorized repertoire of words, phrases and sentences relating to themselves, their environment and their immediate needs (each of which is open to a wide range of possible interpretations). The general (proficiency) descriptors associated with lower and upper secondary schooling are even less satisfactory as discriminators. So far, then, as overall proficiency descriptors are concerned, the impact of the CEFR on the French national curricula for modern foreign languages in schools cannot be said to have been an entirely positive one although, bearing in mind repeated references to the CEFR in these documents and France's statutory commitment (since 2005) to reflecting the CEFR Common Reference Levels in school curricula, the assumption must be that those who designed these curricula were considered to be among those most able to interpret the CEFR.

In addition to objectives which make reference to a broad level of general language proficiency, the CEFR refers to objectives which involve "a specific constellation of activities, skills and competences", which "might be profiled on a grid of categories by level" (CEFR, p. 179) and which involve "[tasks that] are normally focused within a given domain" (CEFR, p. 137). One would expect objectives such as these to meet one of the primary aims of the CEFR, that is, to encourage users to "state in concrete terms . . . what . . . learners [are expected] . . . to be able to do with . . . language" (CEFR, p.43).

Presumably, this involves thinking carefully about (among other things) situations, themes, topics, text-types, functions (micro-functions and macro-functions), notions (those that relate largely to lexical fields and those that relate largely to grammatical meanings) and skills. Do the French national curricula for foreign languages in schools include objectives that are specified in the way indicated here and, if so, how useful are these objectives?

Looking first at the common preamble relating to curricula for primary schooling, we find that an attempt appears to have been made to include objectives that are more specific than those associated with general proficiency levels. These are listed (18 of them in total) under the general headings: *understand, react and speak in oral interaction*; *listening comprehension*; *sustained speech*; *reading*; *and writing*. If there were any guiding principles that determined the selection of these objectives, they are difficult to detect. Thus, for example:

- three of them make reference to micro-functions (i.e. *introduce oneself; introduce someone; ask how people are and react using most elementary forms of politeness: greetings and leave-taking; follow short simple instructions; understand classroom instructions*), including aspects of the CEFR A1 global proficiency descriptor that were omitted from the French A1 proficiency descriptors;

- one of them combines a reference to an interactive function (question) with a general reference to topics (familiar ones) and needs (immediate ones) (i.e. *ask and answer questions (familiar topics and immediate needs)*, doing little more than repeat in a slightly different way part of one of the French A1 proficiency descriptors;

- two of them make indirect reference to a macro-function (narration) by way of reference to a text-type (story) in a way that is (a) very general and (b) appears to involve a level of proficiency that is beyond that suggested by the CEFR A1 descriptors (i.e. *tell a short and stereotyped story; follow the thread of a story using appropriate aids*);

- two of them make direct reference to text-types (i.e. *write a simple electronic message or a short postcard referring to models; fill in a form*)

The remaining ten do little more than repeat/rephrase (sometimes with some additions) aspects of the proficiency descriptors (e.g. *use phrases and sentences that are close to the models they came across during learning, in order to describe him-/herself, describe activities or familiar topics, using basic connectors*) and/or are more confusing than enlightening (e.g. *reproduce an oral model*). None of them could genuinely be said to move far beyond the types of descriptor that are often associated with general proficiency. Certainly, it would be difficult to interpret them, in more than a very general sense, as involving "[tasks] . . . focused within a given domain" (CEFR, p. 137). In the case of the common preambles for curricula associated with lower secondary schooling, some attempt has been made to include skills-based objectives albeit very general ones (e.g. *deducing the meaning of what is unknown from what he/she understands*). Otherwise, what we have are lists of examples of what are referred to as *aids, documents and situations* (e.g. anecdotes, songs, classroom situations, recipes, menus) and of *speeches, statements, interactions and texts* (e.g. familiar everyday expressions, presentations, instructions, correspondence). It is impossible to detect a clear rationale for the composition of each of these lists. It is equally impossible to interpret them as action-oriented objectives. In the case of the common preambles for curricula associated with upper secondary schooling, a number of 'can do' statements are included under a variety of headings (e.g. *reading comprehension*). However, these are very general.

So far, then, as the common preambles are concerned, it cannot be said that they, by way of 'can do' objectives statements, indicate "in concrete terms . . . what . . . learners [are expected] . . . to be able to do with . . . language" (CEFR, p.43).

What, then, of the language-specific curricula? In the case of those associated with primary and lower secondary schooling, they include a series of tables.[300] These tables begin by making reference to some aspect of the descriptors included in the common preambles (e.g. introductions or greetings) and then, in the following two columns (examples of wordings) include a curious mixture of phrases/sentences etc. that might occur in a particular context. Thus, for example,

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[300] I am not including discussion of the language-specific syllabuses at upper secondary level because they are very different from those associated with lower levels of schooling and focus largely on culture.

associated with instructions (in class) in the lower secondary school curriculum for English (level 2) is each of the following:

> *Stop shouting, will you? / Will you stop that noise/talking? / Let's do that, shall we? / Let's . . . / Shall we . . .? / You are not to use a dictionary. / Make sure you write your name on the sheet. / You are expected to do this exercise in 10 minutes. / Any questions so far?/ Time is up!/ Cut out this picture and stick it in/into your copybooks. / Try to take notes while listening. / Write that down in your rough books. / I asked you to do some research for me. I want you to tell me what you found.*

This is reminiscent of a situational syllabus. On the other hand, the language-specific syllabuses end with sections that suggest a different type of syllabus. These sections deal with: *phonology, cultural contents and lexical domains,* and *syntax and morphosyntax.* Leaving aside cultural content, what we have here are decontextualized lists that are reminiscent of unordered structural syllabuses. However, whereas structural syllabuses often include / included an indication of structure-related meanings (e.g. present simple for the expression of regular or habitual activities), these are entirely absent. We certainly do not find here any reflection of the claim made in the CEFR that "many practitioners find it more advantageous to go from meaning to form rather than the more traditional practice of organizing progression in purely formal terms" (CEFR, p. 116). What, in the end, we appear to have is not a curriculum driven by meaning and expressed in terms of clearly articulated 'can do' learning objectives but an unordered structural syllabus (reflected in the final sections of the language-specific curriculum documents) that is situationalized and associated with phrasebook-like exemplars (reflected in the tables that occur in the language-specific curriculum documents).

5.5.2 To what extent, if at all, do the French national curricula for languages in schools follow the suggestions for language curriculum design at a national level in the CEFR?

Underpinning the design of language curricula that are intended to reflect the CEFR are three principles (CEFR, p. 169):

- discussion in curricula should be in line with the overall objective of promoting plurilingualism and linguistic diversity;

- the cost and efficiency of the system should be considered so as to avoid unnecessary repetition and to promote economies of scale and the transfer of skills which linguistic diversity facilitates;[301]

- curricula for different languages should not be considered in isolation from one another or from language education as a whole.

In connection with the last of these, it is noted (CEFR, p. 171) that "in a language curriculum accommodating several languages, the objectives and syllabuses of the different languages may either be similar or different".

So far as the French curricula for modern foreign languages in schools are concerned, the first and third of these principles appear to have been adhered to. However, little direct attention appears to have been paid to the second of these principles. This may be, in part, because the primary emphasis is on communicative language competences rather than on general competences, the assumption perhaps being that the latter come within the domain of what can be assumed.

So far as national curricula are concerned, the following statement, outlining the task of 'authorities' (CEFR, p. 141) is relevant:

> Authorities, when drawing up curricular guidelines or formulating syllabuses, *may concentrate on the specification of learning objectives. In doing so, they may specify only higher-level objectives in terms of tasks, themes, competence etc. They are not obliged, although they may wish to do so, to specify, in detail the vocabulary, grammar and function/notional repertoires which will enable learners to perform the tasks and treat the themes. They are not obliged, but may wish, to lay down guidelines or make suggestions as to the classroom methods to be employed and the stages through which learners are expected to progress* [emphasis added].

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[301] It is noted (CEFR, p. 169) that where, for example, pupils learn two foreign languages, the objectives or kinds of progression need not be the same in each case.

It is not entirely clear what decisions were made in this regard by those responsible for the French national curricula for modern foreign languages in schools. Although many of the learning objectives included in the common preambles could be described as being 'higher level ones' (if by 'higher level' is meant general proficiency-related), this is not true of all of them. Equally, although the language-specific curricula provide some indication of the vocabulary and grammar that might be associated with different curriculum stages, there is an absence of detail in these areas. To the extent to which functional repertoires are indicated at all, this is confined to a few indicators of micro-functions and even fewer of macro-functions in the descriptors. So far as notions are concerned, it is difficult to detect anything that could be interpreted as including a reference to them.

5.5.3   To what extent, if at all, do the French national curricula for languages in schools support the claims made in the CEFR in relation to the advantages of using the Framework in the context of curriculum design?

France is clearly committed to the principles outlined in the CEFR and to using the Framework to underpin its national curricula for modern foreign languages in schools. The expectation must therefore have been that these curricula would indicate a possible way forward for others, modelling good practice in curriculum design at a national level. The reality is, however, that they are fraught with problems, some of which can be related to the content of the CEFR itself, others to the difficulties associated with attempts to interpret it. It could, of course, be argued that these problems would be less evident in the case of adult language learners with immediate language needs. For such learners, it might be appropriate to design curricula tailored to meet these needs as quickly and as directly as possible and in a way that allows for the awarding of credit for specific units of work that clearly specify what they are able to do, using the target language, in very specific contexts. This, of course, itself raises issues about the extent to which the concept of general proficiency (which is not tied to specific exponents or exemplars) would be appropriate in such cases, that is, in cases where generalizability (or cross-situational applicability) cannot necessarily be assumed. However, even if we set these issues aside, it remains the case that the

authors of the CEFR have claimed that it is, in its current form, relevant in the context of schooling.

As indicated in Chapter 3, the Council of Europe is now engaged on the production of a Common European Framework of Reference for the Languages of School Education. Little (2007, p. 651) has indicated that that Framework is intended to address issues associated with the fact that "the common reference levels define L2 proficiency, whereas Council of Europe language education policy is increasingly focused on plurilingualism which is rooted in L1" (Little, 2007, p. 651). He has, however, also observed that there is no reason why the two frameworks should not share the same descriptive scheme because "many of the *can-do* descriptors developed to define L2 proficiency will be applied to L1 proficiency, though they will need to be underpinned by descriptors of NS [native speaker] rather than L2-learner linguistic competence" (ibid). It would therefore appear that the new Framework is unlikely to be effective in relation to the resolution of some of the problems identified here. One would have to agree with the authors of the CEFR that the taxonomic nature of the Framework "inevitably means trying to handle the great complexity of human language by breaking language competence down into separate components" which is something that "confronts us with . . . pedagogical problems of some depth" (CEFR, p.1).

The designers of the French curriculum have used the CEFR as a *framework* and, in doing so, have clearly ran into problems that they could not solve with reference to second language acquisition theory. This is because the CEFR is not itself underpinned by a coherent theory of second language acquisition. Indeed, the authors of the CEFR observe that "there is at present no sufficiently strong research-based consensus on how learners learn for the Framework to base itself on any one learning theory" (CoE, 2001, p. 139). However, the CEFR also has little to say about its positioning in relation to learning theory more generally. It follows, therefore, that curriculum designers who rely on the CEFR in constructing their curricula cannot justify any decisions they make with reference either to the second language acquisition theory or to the more general learning theory that underlie the CEFR. What this means is that those who attempt to evaluate these curricula must do so in what is effectively a theoretical vacuum -

and yet a fundamental principle of curriculum design is that each of the four dimensions of a curriculum (aims or objectives, content or subject matter, methods or procedures, and evaluation or assessment) should be theoretically grounded.

There is no genuine comparability among all of the curriculum documents that make up the French second language curriculum as a whole and so these documents, taken together, will inevitably be difficult to compare in any truly meaningful way with curriculum documents based on the CEFR framework that emerge out of other educational systems.

In view of the absence of theoretical grounding of the French curriculum as a whole (an inevitable consequence of attempting to apply an essentially atomistic framework that is not itself theoretically grounded) and in view also of the fact that some of the language curricula that make up the French curriculum as a whole differ from one another in some fundamental ways, there seems little point in attempting to explore the individual curriculum documents from the point of view of programme evaluation (the interactions between the documents themselves and their settings in terms of the age of the learners for whom it is intended etc.) or of product evaluation (i.e. curriculum products such as textbooks and language examinations), particularly in view of the fact that, as indicated in the literature review (see *Chapter 3*), a number of fundamental problems relating to attempts to make use the CEFR itself in relation to textbook design and the design of assessment instruments have been identified.

What all of this indicates is that attention needs to be paid, in evaluating curriculum documents, to the theoretical underpinning of these curriculum documents themselves, and, where they are part of a wider system, to the relationships among them, before any attempt is made to evaluate these curricula in terms of other factors. Unless this is done, there will be no genuine alignment between curriculum theory and curriculum evaluation.

Chapter 6

The impact of the CEFR on language curriculum design at a national level: a sample of New Zealand curriculum documents

6.1   Introduction

In Chapter 5, I explored the impact of the CEFR on national curriculum documents for languages in schools in a European country (France). Here, the focus is on national curriculum documents relating to languages in a non-European country (New Zealand), the primary emphasis being on (a) three curriculum guidelines documents (French; German; Māori) and (b) the 2007 revisions to the New Zealand Curriculum Framework as they affect the teaching and learning of languages. The critical questions underpinning this investigation are slightly adapted versions of those that underpinned the investigation of the French national curriculum documents reported in Chapter 5. They are:

- *How has New Zealand made use of the CEFR in the design of the French, German and Māori curriculum documents for schools and in the 'learning languages' section of the revised New Zealand Curriculum Framework (2007)?*

- *To what extent, if at all, are the suggestions for language curriculum design at a national level in the CEFR followed?*

- *To what extent, if at all, does the evidence from the New Zealand national curriculum projects discussed here support the claims made in the CEFR in relation to the advantages of using the Framework in the context of curriculum design?*

As I have already (a) reviewed some of the underlying principles of the CEFR and explored their implications for language curriculum design; (b) considered some of the statements made in the CEFR about language curriculum design, particularly about differences between curricula intended for schools and those intended for adults; and (c) revisited some of the claims made in the CEFR

about the advantages of making use of it, with particular reference to the area of language curriculum design (see Chapter 5), I will concentrate here on:

- providing some background information about the New Zealand school system (6.2);

- outlining the situation regarding language curriculum documents for schools prior to the development of the French, German and Māori curriculum documents discussed here (6.3);

- exploring the content of the French, German and Māori curriculum documents (6.4);

- reviewing documentation relating to the 2007 revision of the New Zealand Curriculum Framework as it impacts on the teaching and learning of additional languages (i.e. languages other than the language of instruction) (6.5);

- addressing the research questions directly (6.6)

6.2   An introduction to the New Zealand school system and the New Zealand Curriculum Framework

Education in New Zealand is free and secular from age 5-19 and compulsory from age 6-16. The majority of children begin primary (elementary) school at age 5 although they need not do so until age 6. There are three main agencies (each reporting independently to the Minister of Education) which have primary responsibility for different aspects of schooling: the *Ministry of Education* (MoE); the *New Zealand Qualifications Authority* (NZQA) and the *Education Review Office* (ERO). ERO is responsible for reporting on the quality of education in schools (including evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching and learning); NZQA is responsible for developing policy and procedures relating to national educational assessment, tests and examinations; MoE is responsible for oversight of the development and delivery of the national curriculum. The National Curriculum Framework (Ministry of Education (New Zealand), produced in 1993

and revised in 2007),[302] outlines the official policy for teaching, learning and assessment in New Zealand schools. Prior to the introduction of the revised Curriculum Framework in 2007, there were seven curriculum areas, with 'language and languages' covering both the languages of instruction (generally English but Māori in some cases) and additional languages. Since 2007, 'language and languages' has been split into two areas, one ('learning languages') being devoted to languages which are additional to the language of instruction. From a curriculum perspective, Māori is treated differently depending on whether it is the language of instruction or a subject offered in an essentially English-medium school context.

A critical aspect of the New Zealand school curriculum is the fact that primary and secondary education comprises eight levels for all subjects. These eight levels do not necessarily correspond to particular years of the school system. It is acknowledged that the length of time needed to reach each level depends on a number of factors, including the stage at which a particular subject is introduced and the length of exposure to that subject. Level 1 is the entry level. The following extract from the French curriculum guidelines document (Ministry of Education (New Zealand), 2002a, p. 20) clarifies the situation:

> The [eight curriculum] levels described in these curriculum guidelines do not coincide with traditional year levels or with students' years of schooling. The age at which students begin learning a language will be one factor in determining what level or levels a class might work within in the course of one year. For example, many students in a year 7 class might work towards level 1 objectives only, but many students beginning to learn French in year 9 might be able to meet the achievement objectives for levels 1 and 2 within one year.

The last three levels (levels 6 to 8) are associated with levels 1 to 3 of the National Qualifications Framework.[303] The implication, so far as additional languages are concerned, is that students who have completed level 8, whatever the language

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[302] Ministry of Education (New Zealand) 1993, and 2007a.
[303] In general, level 8 corresponds to the last year of secondary education (13th grade of the New-Zealand system).

studied, should have achieved roughly the same level of overall proficiency (see Johnson, 2004, p. 9). This implies that proficiency bands must be wide enough to allow for differences in levels of difficulty, differences that cannot simply be predicated on the assumption that learners of additional languages are speakers of English as a first language as New Zealand now has a comparatively high level of immigration.

It is important to note here that the New Zealand Ministry of Education contracts out the writing of curriculum guidelines documents. The contractors are the principal writers. However, they are required to engage in extensive consultation processes and there is no guarantee that the vision that the contractors have will necessarily survive the process of consultation. Nor is there any guarantee that a conceptualization that has driven the production of one curriculum guidelines document, or one group of curriculum guidelines documents, will necessarily have any impact on curriculum guidelines documents that are prepared subsequently and involve different contractors.

6.3 The situation prior to the development of the French, German and Māori curricula

In 1999, the New Zealand Ministry of Education started work on the development of curriculum guidelines documents for both *German in the New Zealand Curriculum* and *French in the New Zealand Curriculum.* At that time, there were, for some languages (those that had been reviewed most recently) what were referred to as 'curriculum documents'; for other languages (including French and German), there were what were referred to as 'syllabus documents'. In the case of Māori, there was no document that was intended to span all years of schooling. Instead, there was a syllabus – *Tihē Mauri Ora!* (Ministry of Education (New Zealand), 1990) – which was intended for use with students in the New Zealand education system from Junior classes (age 5+) through to Form 2 (age 12+). The writers of that document had been faced with a peculiarly difficult situation (Crombie, Johnson and Te Kanawa, 2001, p. 2):

> First, there are no specific minimum requirements in relation to the teaching of Māori language and culture in mainstream schools in New

Zealand. Secondly, the background of children in relation to knowledge and understanding of Māori language and culture differs considerably as does that of their teachers. Finally, the educational contexts in which children are introduced to Maori language and culture vary widely: from mainstream classes in which the predominant language is English, through bilingual (Māori and English) classes to, more recently, Māori immersion educational settings. In each of these settings, the cultural and linguistic expectations are very different.

The same group of principal writers was involved in both the French and the German curriculum development exercise. At the beginning of the process, they were asked to review approaches to language curriculum design in New Zealand and in other countries with a view to proposing an approach that would eventually bring all of the curricula for additional languages in New Zealand schools into line with one another. The curriculum guidelines documents for French and German would then be the first in a series of curriculum guidelines documents that would realize that approach.[304] One of the tasks undertaken by one of the principal writers (see Johnson, 2000, 2004) was to review existing New Zealand curriculum and syllabus documents. That review included documents relating to Spanish, Chinese, Japanese and Korean, which had been redesigned a few years earlier (1995 for the Spanish and Chinese documents, 1998 for the two others[305]). What Johnson observed was a lack of coherence and harmony among these documents. Some included proficiency targets (referred to as 'language development descriptors'); others did not. The proficiency targets were labelled *Emergent Communication*, *Survival Skills, Social Competence* and *Personal Independence* (Johnson, 2004, pp. 6-7). However, their distribution over the eight curriculum levels varied widely, except in the case of Spanish and Chinese whose principal writers had worked closely together during the production of the documents. *Table 6.1* below, adapted from Johnson (2000, p. 140), is indicative of the situation.

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[304] Winifred Crombie, personal communication, 12th September, 2008
[305] The French and German curriculum documents being revised had been published, respectively, in 1987 (draft 1981) and 1988 (see Johnson, 2000, pp. 202-203; 210). As for the Korean curriculum document, a new version has since been published in 2002.

Proficiency targets / Language curricula	Emergent Communi-cation	Emergent Communi-cation / Survival Skills	Survival Skills	Survival Skills / Social Compe-tence	Social Compe-tence	Personal Indepen-dence
Spanish	Levels 1 & 2		Levels 3 & 4		Levels 5 & 6	Levels 7 & 8
Chinese	Levels 1 & 2		Levels 3 & 4		Levels 5 & 6	Levels 7 & 8
Japanese	Levels 1, 2, 3	Level 4	Levels 5 & 6	Level 7	Level 8	
Korean	Levels 1, 2, 3, 4		Levels 5, 6, 7, 8			

As indicated in *Table 6.1*, in the Korean curriculum document, four levels are devoted to the first proficiency target – Emergent Communication – and the remaining four to the second proficiency target – Social Skills. In the Japanese curriculum document, the first three levels correspond to the first proficiency target, the fourth level corresponds to an intermediate stage between the first and second proficiency target, the fifth and sixth curriculum levels are associated with the second proficiency target, the seventh level corresponds to an intermediate stage between the second and third proficiency targets and, finally, the eighth level is associated with the third proficiency target.

If we organize the table in a different way (see *Table 6.2* below), it becomes clear that quite different proficiency targets apply at level 8 in the case of Japanese and Korean as compared with Spanish and Chinese.

Table 6.2: *Proficiency targets in relation to curriculum levels in the case of the New Zealand Spanish, Chinese, Japanese and Korean curricula*

Levels Languages	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Spanish	Emergent Communication		Survival Skills		Social Competence		Personal Independence	
Chinese	Emergent Communication		Survival Skills		Social Competence		Personal Independence	
Japanese	Emergent Communication			Emergent Communication / Survival Skills	Survival Skills		Survival Skills / Social Competence	Social Competence
Korean	Emergent Communication				Survival Skills			

Johnson (2004, p. 9) observes that it is noted in the Japanese curriculum document that "New Zealanders learning Japanese as a second or subsequent language are unlikely to reach the stage of personal independence at secondary school levels". This statement, whether or not it is accurate, appears to be based on the assumption that New Zealanders learning Japanese will necessarily be speakers of English as a first language, an assumption that is no longer valid. Secondly, as Johnson (p. 9) observes:

> [The] fact that there is such a marked difference between the Japanese and Korean curriculum documents in terms of the relationship between curriculum levels and language development descriptors raises a critical question for those involved in discussions about the Overarching Framework for Languages in the New Zealand Curriculum: *Is it possible to produce overarching proficiency descriptors at eight levels that are appropriate in the case of all of the second languages that are – or are likely to be – taught in New Zealand schools?*

As Johnson (2004, p. 9) notes, this is problematic in the case of the New Zealand Curriculum Framework, where levels 6 to 8 are intended to be associated with levels 1 to 3 of the National Qualification Framework and where, therefore, the

assumption is that there will be a high level of correspondence in terms of overall proficiency achievements at these levels.

Another issue of some significance identified by Johnson relates to the Achievement Objectives (AOs). Each of the curriculum documents has approximately thirty AOs (covering all eight curriculum levels). However, there is no consistency in the ways in which these AOs are articulated. Some of them are very specific; others very general. As Johnson (2000, pp. 304-305) observes:

> An objective that is too specific is one that prescribes, or comes close to prescribing, a specific utterance, such as *invite people to come in* or *say goodbye* (Ministry of Education, 1998a, p. 26 [306]). Testing such an objective would involve testing for a specific utterance or, at best, for one or more of a restricted set of utterances. An example of an objective that is too general can be seen in the statement *recognise and respond to descriptions of activities and events* or *talk about people* (Ministry of Education, 1998b, p. 50; [307] Ministry of Education, 1998a, p. 47). Objectives of this type can be interpreted in a variety of ways in a variety of contexts. It is, therefore, difficult to see how such objectives could be realistically incorporated into language examinations.

Bruce and Whaanga (2002) provide a summary of Johnson's findings. Comparing the curriculum documents for Spanish and for Chinese, they note (p. 6):

> [F]our of the nine achievement objectives occurring at *level 5* in the Spanish curriculum statement also occur at *level 5* in the Chinese curriculum statement. In one further case, an objective is very similar. However, three of the *level 5* achievement objectives in the Spanish curriculum statement appear to have no equivalent in the Chinese curriculum statement. In the remaining case, an achievement objective that occurs at *level 5* in the Spanish curriculum statement occurs at *level 4* in the Chinese curriculum statement. Overall, roughly half of the achievement objectives at *level 5* of the Spanish curriculum statement do not occur at *level 5* in the Chinese curriculum statement.

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[306] This refers to the Korean curriculum document.
[307] This refers to the Japanese curriculum document.

In the same way, comparison of the Spanish curriculum document with the Japanese curriculum document (Bruce & Whaanga, 2002, pp. 6-7) reveals that:

> Of the nine achievement objectives occurring at *level 5* of the Spanish curriculum statement, five occur in the same or similar form at *earlier* levels in the Japanese curriculum statement. In three cases, there appears to be no equivalent in the Japanese curriculum statement of objectives that occur at *level 5* in the Spanish curriculum statement. In only one case does an achievement objective that occurs in the Spanish curriculum statement at *level 5* appear at a *higher* level (*level 6*) in the Japanese curriculum statement.

Overall, then, a review of those New Zealand Ministry of Education language curriculum documents in existence in 1999 revealed a lack of coherence, consistency and transparency. In view of this, the principal writers of the French and German curriculum guidelines (and, later, the principal writers of the curriculum document for Māori in mainstream (English-medium) school settings),[308] decided to investigate whether the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* had anything useful to offer, whether it might even provide a basis for the establishment of common criteria and levels, making it possible to compare language objectives and certification in New Zealand with those of other countries (Crombie, 2010). With reference to the need for a new curriculum for te reo Māori (the Māori language, on which work began in 2003), Bruce and Whaanga (2002, p. 12) have made the following observation:

> So far as te reo Māori is concerned, there is a very real need to develop a cross-credit system so that learners who move around the country can continue their learning of the language without disruption. In order for this to happen, providers need to know what these learners have already covered and, thus, where best to place them. If institutions were to follow a common curriculum, this type of transfer would be facilitated. . . . However, any such development would need to emerge out of a *Framework* that had been

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[308] One of the principal writers of the French and German curriculum documents (Winifred Crombie) was also a principal writer of the curriculum document for Māori in mainstream school settings.

constructed with credit transfer in mind, one that was firmly rooted in theoretical and applied research.

6.4   The French, German and Māori curriculum documents

All three curriculum documents (Ministry of Education (New Zealand), 2002a & b; 2009) have several things in common. Each of them includes an introductory section that recommends an approach consistent with 'communicative language teaching' (CLT) and that outlines what is meant by CLT in this context (see, for example, Ministry of Education (New Zealand), 2002a, pp. 16-18). Each of the documents includes the same four proficiency target statements (language development descriptors), each one covering two curriculum levels. Each of them also has almost exactly the same Achievement Objectives (AOs) at each level.[309] In each case, the AOs (which are intended to be repeatedly recycled at higher levels once they have been introduced at a particular level) are oriented in terms of communicative outcomes, focusing on micro-functions, macro-functions, notions or modal meanings. One example of each is provided below:

AO with micro-functional focus:

Give and follow directions.

AO with macro-functional focus:

Develop an argument or point of view, with reasons.

AO with notional focus:

Communicate about the quality, quantity and cost of things.

AO with modal focus:

Communicate about certainty and uncertainty, possibility and probability.

With reference to the commonality of AOs, Bruce and Whaanga (2002, pp. 10 – 11) make the following point:

> [There] is no reason in principle why [achievement objectives] should not be the same for all languages irrespective of similarities and differences in

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[309] Some slight differences in the case of the Māori curriculum document were the result of changes that took place during processes of consultation.

relation to, for example, structures and script. Thus, all students can aim to perform similar types of communicative task at the same stage of learning whatever their target language. Of course, they will not do so in the same ways.

In addition to proficiency target statements and AOs, each of the curriculum documents has a section headed 'strands'. In the case of French and German, *speaking, writing, listening* and *reading* are included; in the case of Māori, *viewing* and *presenting* are added. In all cases, the strands include suggested *socio-cultural aspects, topics* and *text types*.

In the case of the French and German curriculum documents, suggested language focus points and examples of the type of language that might be associated with each of the AOs at the point at which it is introduced are provided (see example in *Table 6.3*).

Table 6.3: *Achievement objective 1.5 – suggested language and examples in the German and French curriculum documents*

AO: Recognise, express and enquire about location	**German: Suggested language**	**German: Examples**
	Location e.g. hier, dort, da	Wo ist das Buch? Hier.
	French: Suggested language	**French: Examples**
	Simple locational prepositions (e.g. *sur, sous, devant, derrière, dans, entre*)	*Le livre est sur la table.*

At the end of each curriculum level, the French and German curriculum documents also include a language summary (suggested language focus and suggested vocabulary), followed by lists of suggested learning and assessment activities associated with each AO. Thus, for example, one of the learning and assessment activities associated with the AO *communicate about obligations and responsibilities* (level 4) is:

> Students could be learning through asking friends what they are obliged to do at home, listing these obligations, and preparing for a short radio broadcast in which they interview their friends about these expectations (Ministry of Education (New Zealand), 2002a, p. 54).

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The final version of the Māori curriculum document does not provide any guidelines on the language that might be associated with the AOs. Nor is there a language summary at the end of each level.

6.4.1 Proficiency descriptors

One of the principal writers of the French and German curriculum documents, Johnson (2004, p. 3), observes that:

> It was decided that the Common Reference Levels (CRLs) were the most appropriate [of the different proficiency benchmarking systems examined] for a number of reasons. The most important of these was that the CRLs are embedded within a wider framework of reference which could provide useful guidance in the articulation of other aspects of the curriculum document.

In designing the curricula for French and German, the authors attempted, in consultation with language teachers, to discover whether it was possible to establish a relationship between the four proficiency targets associated with New Zealand curricula (one for each two levels of the framework) and the six Common Reference Levels of the CEFR. After working together with a panel of teachers of both languages, it was agreed that the highest of the eight levels of the New Zealand curriculum (Personal Independence) would globally correspond to level B1 (Threshold level) of the CEFR, the first level of the Independent User band. Other levels were distributed as shown in *Table 6.4* below (adapted from Johnson, 2004, p. 7, Table 1):

Table 6.4: *Correspondence between the Common reference levels of the CEFR and the proficiency levels in the New Zealand curricula for French, German and Māori*

Common Reference Levels (CEFR)	A1	A2		B1	B2	C1	C2
Proficiency targets	Emergent Communication	Survival Skills	Social Competence	Personal Independence	-	-	-
Curriculum levels	**1 & 2**	**3 & 4**	**5 & 6**	**7& 8**	-	-	-

It was decided that the two new curriculum documents would include the same proficiency targets and achievement objectives at the same curriculum levels. However, although the proficiency targets are influenced by the Common Reference Levels (CRLs) in the CEFR, they are distinct from them. Johnson (2004), talking about levels 7 & 8 of the New Zealand curriculum documents for French and German (which were considered to be roughly equivalent to level B1 of the CRLs), explains (p.7):

> The proficiency descriptors covering levels 7 & 8 of these [German and French] curriculum documents were intended to be *consistent with* the proficiency descriptor at level B1 (Threshold) of the CRL. This does not mean, of course, that there are no differences between the overarching descriptor at level B1 of the CRL and the descriptor at levels 7 & 8 of the New Zealand curriculum documents.

In *Table 6.5* below, the proficiency statement for levels 1 and 2 of the French and German curriculum guidelines (Ministry of Education (New Zealand, 2002a & b, p. 29) and the corresponding Common Reference Level (level A1; global scale) of the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 24) are printed side-by-side:

Table 6.5*: Comparison of the proficiency statement corresponding to levels 1 and 2 of French and German in the New Zealand Curriculum and the CRL A1 (global scale) of the CEFR*

French and German in the New Zealand curriculum: Levels 1 & 2 Proficiency Statement	Level A1 as described in the global scale of the CEFR
By the end of level 2, learners can understand language that contains well rehearsed sentence patterns and familiar vocabulary, and they can interact in predictable exchanges. They can read and write straightforward versions of what they have learned to say. They are aware of and understand some of the typical cultural conventions that operate in interpersonal communication. Learners are developing an awareness of the language learning process.	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

The principal writers of the French and German curriculum guidelines did not include terms such as "very basic" or "in a simple way". Nor did they include any reference to speed of delivery or assistance. Furthermore, no reference was made to micro-functions (e.g. introduction) or the content of communication (e.g. personal information). These are referred to in the AOs themselves. As Johnson (2004, pp. 4-5) argues:

> One difficulty associated with making reference to micro-functions in proficiency descriptors is that some micro-functions, particularly those most often associated with the lower levels of language learning (e.g. *greetings*), are formulaic or semi-formulaic (that is, they are always, or usually, associated with particular words, phrases or sentences) (Crombie, 1988, p. 285). Including micro-functions of this type is, therefore, not very different from including specific linguistic expressions, something that is generally considered inappropriate in relation to statements that are intended to discriminate in terms of general competences (rather than the specific details of a learner's linguistic repertoire).

Reference is, however (atypically), made in proficiency descriptors to cultural competences, the processes of language learning (which are included at all critical points in New Zealand Ministry of Education curriculum documents) and also, sometimes, attitude.

The principal writers of the Māori curriculum guidelines document were aware that proficiency expectations might be very different in the case of Māori, precisely because it is an official language of New Zealand. However, the teachers consulted believed that the proficiency targets that applied in the case of French and German were also appropriate in the case of Māori because the bands were sufficiently broad (Crombie and Whaanga, 2006, p. 54)

6.4.2   Achievement objectives

A straightforward comparison of the proficiency statements included in *Table 6.5* reveals considerable differences between them. However, a review of the AOs at levels 1 & 2 highlights what is, in reality, fairly close alignment with the CEFR Common Reference Level 1 global scale statement. In common with the CEFR,

the Achievement Objectives (AOs) in the French, German and Māori curriculum documents express what learners are expected to be able to achieve in terms of communicative outcomes, rather than indicating specific content for each language. The AOs for level 1 (Ministry of Education (New Zealand), 2002a & b, p. 30) are listed below:[310]

Students should be able to:

1.1 greet, farewell, and thank people and respond to greetings and thanks;

1.2 introduce themselves and others and respond to introductions;

1.3 communicate using days of the week, months, and dates;

1.4 communicate about personal information, such as name, age, nationality, and home;

1.5 communicate about location;

1.6 understand and use a range of politeness conventions (for example, ways of thanking people, apologising, excusing themselves, complimenting people);

1.7 use and respond to simple classroom language (including asking for the word to express something in French/in German).

In spite of the potential problems involved in having the same AOs at the same levels for different languages (recycled at higher levels once they have been introduced), the principal writers for the French, German, and, later, the Māori curriculum documents, opted for this approach. As Johnson (2004, p. 10) explains:

This is possible because achievement objectives refer not to language specifics but to communicative outcomes and these outcomes can generally (except in the case of formulaic functions such as *greetings*) be expressed in a range of different ways involving different levels and types of complexity.

The point that Johnson is making in relation to some micro-functions (see also Crombie, 1988, p. 285), could usefully be elaborated upon. Thus, for example, although the CEFR claims that proficiency descriptors are not language-specific, the descriptor for level A1 in the table for 'Exchanging Information' (CEFR, p.

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[310] Three of these are expressed in a slightly different way in the case of the Māori curriculum.

81) reads as follows: "Can indicate time *by such phrases as next week, last Friday, in November, three o'clock*" [emphasis added]).

In the French, German and Māori curriculum documents, AOs introduced at any particular level are intended to be recycled at higher levels in association with more complex language (Ministry of Education (New Zealand), 2002a & b p. 21):

> At each curriculum level, a range of new achievement objectives is introduced. They represent core expectations for that level. However, the achievement objectives are not intended to be associated only with the curriculum level at which they are first introduced. Each achievement objective should be revisited from time to time as learners progress through the curriculum levels. In this way, learners can be introduced gradually to a range of ways of achieving the same objective.

In connection with this, it is relevant to bear in mind that it is stated in the CEFR not only that "entries at each level describe selectively what is salient or new at that level", but also that "checklists or scales of descriptors . . . work best when the descriptors say not only what the learners can do but also how well they can do it" (CEFR, p.37). As indicated in Chapter 5, it is perfectly possible to conceive of the same descriptor (AO in this case) as having relevance at several levels (possibly at all levels), the critical difference being the language with which it is associated. This illustrates not only the difficulty of dissociating proficiency descriptors wholly from linguistic content but also the difficulties that can be associated with linking each Achievement Objective to only one curriculum level. The concept of recycling was introduced into the French, German and Māori curriculum documents in an attempt to overcome the second of these problems. Thus, for example, when it is first introduced at level 1 in the French curriculum, the AO *Recognise, express and enquire about location* might be associated with prepositions such as 'sur', 'dans' and 'entre'. In the case of German, however, locative prepositions are necessarily associated with case. For this reason, the AO associated with location might be realised through the use of 'hier', 'dort' and 'da' initially, with locative prepositions being introduced when the objective is recycled at a higher level (Bruce and Whaanga, 2002, pp. 11 - 12). As can be seen, the concept of recycling implies attention to the specifics of language

content, something that proved problematic in terms of evolving New Zealand Ministry of Education policy. Early versions of the French and German curriculum documents included examples of the type of language that might be associated with AOs when they were recycled at higher levels. These did not appear in the final version of the documents. In the case of the Māori curriculum document, all of the language specifics (examples, suggested language focus etc.) were removed before the final version was produced. What this clearly indicates is a progressive move away from including any syllabus-type specifications in language curriculum documentation, a move which culminates in the 2007 revision of the Curriculum Framework as it relates to additional languages (discussed below).

A further point that should be made in relation to the AOs in the New Zealand Ministry of Education curricula being discussed here is the fact that those that are first introduced at any particular curriculum level can be treated in any order and can be combined with AOs from the same level or from other levels, generally, but not exclusively, lower ones (Ministry of Education (New Zealand), 2002a & b, p. 21).

6.4.3 Strands

In addition to proficiency target statements and AOs, each of the curriculum documents includes 'strands', *receptive skills* (listening and reading), and *productive skills* (speaking and writing),[311] and suggestions for *socio-cultural aspects, topics* and *text types*.

So far as receptive skills and productive skills strands are concerned, the intention is clearly that they should be consistent with the proficiency descriptor statements. *Table 6.6* includes the proficiency target statement for levels 1 and 2 alongside the entry for writing at level 2 in the French curriculum document (Ministry of Education (New Zealand), 2002a, pp. 29 & 37).

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[311] In the case of the Māori curriculum document, the receptive strand includes 'viewing' and the productive strand includes 'presenting'.

Table 6.6: *Comparing entries relating to proficiency targets and receptive and productive skills in the French curriculum document*

Proficiency Descriptor (levels 1 & 2)	**By the end of level 2,** learners can understand language that contains well rehearsed sentence patterns and familiar vocabulary, and they can interact in predictable exchanges. They can read and write straightforward versions of what they have learned to say. They are aware of and understand some of the typical cultural conventions that operate in interpersonal communication. Learners are developing an awareness of the language learning process.
Receptive / Productive strand (writing)	Students will: • reproduce letter combinations, accents and punctuation for words, phrases and sentences in familiar contexts; • write simple familiar words, phrases and sentences using accents and punctuation conventions.

So far as *socio-cultural aspects, text types* and *topics* are concerned, it is important to stress that these are suggestions only, users being entirely free to select different topics etc. in line with their students' interests. Two of the principal writers of the Māori curriculum document have made reference to the ways in which they drew on the CEFR in this area, noting, for example, the relevance of the section of the CEFR that deals with the context of language use (Crombie and Whaanga, 2006, p. 53). *Table 6.7* below indicates the content of these sections with specific reference to level 3 of the French curriculum document (Ministry of Education (New Zealand), 2002a, p. 45).

Table 6.7: *The French curriculum - Suggested socio-cultural aspects, topics and text types at level 3*

Suggested Socio-cultural Aspects	Suggested Topics	Suggested Text Types
Sport and leisure in France and French-speaking countries Transport systems in France and French-speaking countries Monuments, cathedrals, and other significant landmarks in France and French-speaking countries	Daily life Leisure time activities Sports Getting around a town or city School day	Informal and semi-formal conversational exchanges Simplified newspaper and magazine entertainment guides Maps and plans Posters and flyers Simple personal letters Simple email messages Timetables

Comparing the content of *Table 6.7* above with that of *Table 6.8* below indicates that no attempt has been made to carry over the concept of commonality into the area of text-types, topics and socio-cultural aspects.

Table 6.8: *The Māori curriculum - Suggested socio-cultural aspects, topics and text types at level 3*

Suggested Socio-cultural Aspects	Suggested Topics	Suggested Text Types
Te marae (the marae) Te whare tupuna/ te wharenui (ancestral house/ meeting hall) Te wharekai (dining room) Manaakitanga (extending hospitality, honoring others, empathy) Pōwhiri (routines and procedures associated with formal welcome) Tohu (directions, symbols, signs)	The marae: Routines and procedures Modes of transport Sport and leisure gatherings Planning leisure time activities	Karakia (prayers) Kīwaha (idioms) Kōrero pūrākau Pepeha (iwi-specific sayings)[312] Waiata Māori (Māori songs) Informal and semi-formal conversational exchanges Maps and plans Posters, pamphlets, flyers Simple email and text messages Simple personal letters Class timetables Personal diaries

6.4.4   Suggested learning and assessment activities

As an indication of the types of learning and assessment activities that are included in the curriculum documents under review, some examples, associated with one of the AOs at level 3 of the French curriculum (Ministry of Education (New Zealand), 2002a, p. 48), which are very similar to those included in the German curriculum, are provided in *Table 6.9.*

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[312] Some of these are not, strictly speaking, text types. However, there was considerable pressure to include them (Hēmi Whaanga, personal communication, 28th November, 2009).

Table 6.9: *Suggested learning and assessment activities associated with one of the AOs in the French curriculum*

	Suggested Learning and Assessment Activities The following code indicates the context in which each activity is likely to be most useful: (C) = class activity; (G) = group activity; (P) = pair work; (I) = individuals work independently.
Achievement Objective 3.1: communicate, including comparing and contrasting, about habits and routines	*Students could be learning through:* •asking and answering questions about the habits or routines of well-known people, in the context of simulated interviews (P); •asking and answering questions about the school timetables of their friends (e.g., *Qu'est-ce que tu as mardi matin?*) and completing prepared timetable sheets on the basis of the responses (G); • interviewing two classmates about their habits or routines and writing down the main similarities and differences between the two (G); •listening to descriptions of, or reading about, the habits and routines of school students in New Zealand and French speaking countries (or of well-known people or friends) and filling in checklists appropriately (C, G); •writing a list of some of their regular activities and answering a partner's questions about why they do them (P); •writing to a penfriend who is planning to visit New Zealand for a few weeks, describing their usual routines (I); • carrying out listening activities. For example, the students could listen to a dialogue about habits and routines and then listen to it a second time, with some sections deleted. They could mime the deleted actions from memory before, finally, working in pairs, with one miming and the other providing the commentary (P).

6.4.5 Indicators of language content

The two tables below provide examples of the types of language content indicators that are included in the French and German curriculum documents. Both relate to level 3 of the French curriculum document (Ministry of Education (New Zealand), 2002a, pp. 46 & 47).

Table 6.10: *Achievement objectives with examples (level 3 of the French curriculum)*

Achievement Objectives	Examples
Students should be able to: 3.1 communicate, including comparing and contrasting, about habits and routines	*Qu'est-ce que tu fais pendant les vacances?* *D'habitude, je vais à la plage.* *Qu'est-ce que tu fais après l'école?* *Je travaille au supermarché, mais le vendredi, je vais souvent au cinéma.* *Je me lève tous les jours à 7h 25.*
3.2 communicate about events and where they take place	*Vincent regarde la télé dans le salon.* *Mélanie et Sandrine nagent à la piscine.* *Sébastien achète de la viande chez le boucher.*
3.3 give and follow directions	*S'il vous plaît, pour aller à la poste?* *Tournez à gauche après le supermarché.*
3.4 communicate, including comparing and contrasting, about how people travel	*Comment vas-tu à l'école?* *En bus.* *Je vais à l'école en vélo, mais Marie va à pied.*

Table 6.11: *Suggested language focus and suggested vocabulary (level 3 of the French curriculum)*

Suggested Language Focus	Suggested Vocabulary
Adjectives including simple comparative/ superlative, relating specially to transport	*le/la (moins/plus) confortable, lent(e), pratique, rapide*

Adverbs and adverbials
  frequency
  sequence
  quantity
  time
	
	d'habitude, souvent, toujours, tous les jours
	après (ça), d'abord, enfin, ensuite, puis
	assez, moins, plus
	quand

Articles
  partitive
  à + definite
	
	du, de la, de l', des
	à l', à la, au, aux

Connectives
  result
  time
	
	alors
	quand, après, ensuite, puis

Formulaic expression asking for help	 *Excusez-moi?*
Negation	 *ne ... jamais, ne ... rien*

Table 6.11 (continued): *Suggested language focus and suggested vocabulary*
(level 3 of the French curriculum)

Suggested Language Focus	Suggested Vocabulary
Nouns	
accommodation, rooms	*la chambre, la salle de bains, la cuisine*
city buildings and landmarks	*la poste, la place, la banque*
eating places	*le café, le restaurant, la cantine*
entertainment	*le cinéma, le centre commercial, le bowling*
meals	*le petit déjeuner, le déjeuner, le dîner*
shops	*la boulangerie, la charcuterie, le supermarché*
sport and leisure	*le rugby, le tennis, la planche à voile, la musique*
transport	*le train, le bus, le métro*
Prepositions	
direction	*à gauche, à droite, tout droit, le long de ..., vers*
location	*à côté de ..., au bout de ..., en face de ..., près de ...*
Pronouns	
subject (indefinite)	*on*
Question forms	
	A quelle heure ...?
	Quand ...?
	Où se trouve ...?
	Pour aller à ...?
Verbs	
er forms – present tense	*jouer (à/de), manger, aller*
irregular verbs	*mettre, prendre, faire (de) dormir, sortir, partir*
imperatives for directions	*Tournez ..., Prenez ..., Traversez ...*
reflexives	*se réveiller, se lever, se laver, se coucher*
Other	
ordinal numbers	*premier/première, deuxième ...*

In the case of the Māori curriculum document, the situation is different. All language indicators were removed before the curriculum document was released in its final form. As Takarua and Whaanga (2009, p. 24) observe:

> The fact that AOs are introduced and then recycled means that decisions need to be made about the type of language the AOs will be associated with at different curriculum levels. There is a range of critical issues associated with who should make these decisions (decisions about *what* to teach). . . . Leaving such decisions to individual teachers may be consistent with their need to be responsive to the needs of particular learners and groups of learners. However, making decisions of this type is a complex matter. Furthermore, unless there is some consistency in the decision-making, learners who, for example, move from one school to another will be likely to experience difficulties. In addition, the decisions that teachers make at lower levels will inevitably have an impact at higher levels when

students take national examinations, examinations that are necessarily predicated on general expectations about proficiency achievements and more specific expectations about the types of language with which students will be familiar. . . . In attempting to address issues such as these, the curriculum writers included in early drafts of the curriculum guidelines a range of suggestions in the form of examples and language notes (associated with the AOs) and language focus summaries (associated with each of the eight curriculum levels). These were omitted from the final version of the document.

Teachers were, however, later provided with an online 'grammar progression' in relation to which their feedback has been invited (available at: http://www.tki.org.nz/r/Māori_mainstream/teacher_resources/grammar_progressi on/index_e.php). With reference to that grammar progression and the commentary accompanying it, Takurua and Whaanga (2009, p. 14-31) make a number of points, which can be summed up as follows:

- There is, in some cases, no clear relationship between the language recommended and the curriculum levels;

- The resources to which reference is made are largely form-oriented;

- There is a clear indication in some places that teachers are expected to provide higher-level learners with *explicit* grammatical rules;

- In indicating that the grammar progression may not be appropriate for younger learners *because they may progress more slowly through the levels*, the writers would appear to have misunderstood the philosophy that underpins the eight-level New Zealand curriculum framework.

What all of this appears to indicate is the difficulty of adhering to a set of common principles where different aspects of curricula are dealt with by different contractors. As Takurua and Whaanga (2009, p. 29) conclude:

The certainties that accompanied the teaching of modern languages in the heyday of linguistic structuralism are long gone. In the context of the uncertainty and disagreement that have characterized much that has been written about the teaching and learning of languages over the past few decades, it is extremely difficult to provide effective guidance at a national

level. This difficulty is compounded by the need to ensure that any guidelines that are provided are open to similar types of interpretation by examination authorities, course designers, materials writers, teachers, and those who provide supplementary resources of various kinds. These problems are unlikely to be resolved in the absence of *specific agreement* about how decisions are to be made about the language content associated with different curriculum levels and about how these decisions can best be articulated so as to make them directly relevant to the pedagogic contexts in which teachers are operating. In the context of the teaching and learning of languages, decisions about *what* to teach cannot be divorced from decisions about *how* to teach. It is the *integration* of Achievement Objectives, language content, topics, texts types, modes, socio-cultural themes, and learning and assessment activities that breathes life into a language programme.

6.4.6 The French, German and Māori curriculum documents: Some concluding remarks

The principal writers of the French, German and Māori curriculum documents appear to have aimed to make use of the CEFR without sticking slavishly to it. In other words, they appear to have taken seriously the invitation to "use the scaling system and associated descriptors critically" (CEFR, p. xiii). There are two aspects of the curriculum documents they produced that are, I believe, of fundamental importance. The first relates to those Achievement Objectives that are not stated in terms of overall proficiency; the second to the way in which topics, text-types and socio-cultural themes are specified.

A distinction is made between two types of Achievement Objectives:

- **Proficiency Objectives:** oriented towards general (overall) proficiency;

- **Communicative Objectives:** outlining specific types of communicative involvement (e.g. communicating about possibilities and probabilities).

In line with the general focus of courses designed for schools, the Achievement Objectives are not domain-specific. Nor do they represent a direct reflection of the types of descriptor found in the CEFR under the heading of 'communicative

language competences', such as those found in the tables relating to 'general linguistic range', 'vocabulary range', 'vocabulary control' and 'grammatical accuracy' where, for example, we find descriptors such as the following: *Uses some simple structures correctly, but still systematically makes mistakes – for example tends to mix up tenses and forget to mark agreement; nevertheless, it is usually clear what he/she is trying to say* (Grammatical Accuracy – A2) (CEFR, p. 114). Instead, and critically, they employ *directly* in the specification of Achievement Objectives aspects of the type of meaning-oriented descriptive system (micro-functional [including modal] and notional) that has come to be associated with the work of the Council of Europe since the late 1960s.[313] So far as micro-functions are concerned, they are largely confined to AO specificating the lower levels and to formulaic realizations (where they may be combined with other micro-functions).[314] As Bruce and Whaanga (2002, p. 8) explain:

> The micro-functional objectives are particularly associated with the lower levels of learning where the formulaic (stereotypical) language associated with certain types of social interaction is useful in giving students confidence: memory and formulaic language can play an important role in the early stages of tutored language learning (Skehan, 1998).

Macro-functions and notions are generally expressed in Achievement Objectives at a high level of generality (e.g. reference to location rather than to, for example, specific aspects of location). This allows for simplicity and economy in terms of the overall number of Achievement Objectives but it does rely on the concept of recycling, that is, of reintroducing Achievement Objectives at higher levels in association with more complex linguistic realizations. This, in turn, relies on a close association between curriculum and syllabus. One of the advantages of this is that it potentially accommodates the notion of degrees of competence, something that the authors of the CEFR acknowledge the need for when they observe that "checklists or scales of descriptors . . . work best when the descriptors say not only what the learners can do but also how well they can do it"

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[313] This meaning-oriented descriptive system is found in parts of *Threshold Level 1990* (Van Ek and Trim, 1991a), *Waystage* 1990 (Van Ek and Tim, 1991b) and *Vantage* (Van Ek and Trim, 2001) where, however, it is embedded within a more broadly-based descriptive system and is organized in a very different way.

[314] An example is: *Greet, farewell and thank people and respond to greetings and thanks*.

(CEFR, p. 37). However, as we have seen, although recycling is referred to in a general sense in all three curriculum documents, specific examples of recycling that were included in drafts of the documents were removed from the French and German curriculum documents and all language indicators were removed before the Māori curriculum document was produced in its final form.

Because the Achievement Objectives in the French, German and Māori curriculum documents are not domain-specific, topics, text-types and socio-cultural themes (which all take the form of suggestions) are not included as part of the Achievement Objectives. Rather, they provide possible contexts in which the Achievement Objectives are realized in practice.[315]

The overall approach of the principal writers of the French, German and Māori curriculum is summarized in *Figure 6.1*.

Figure 6.1: *The overall approach adopted by the principal writers of the French, German and Māori curriculum documents*

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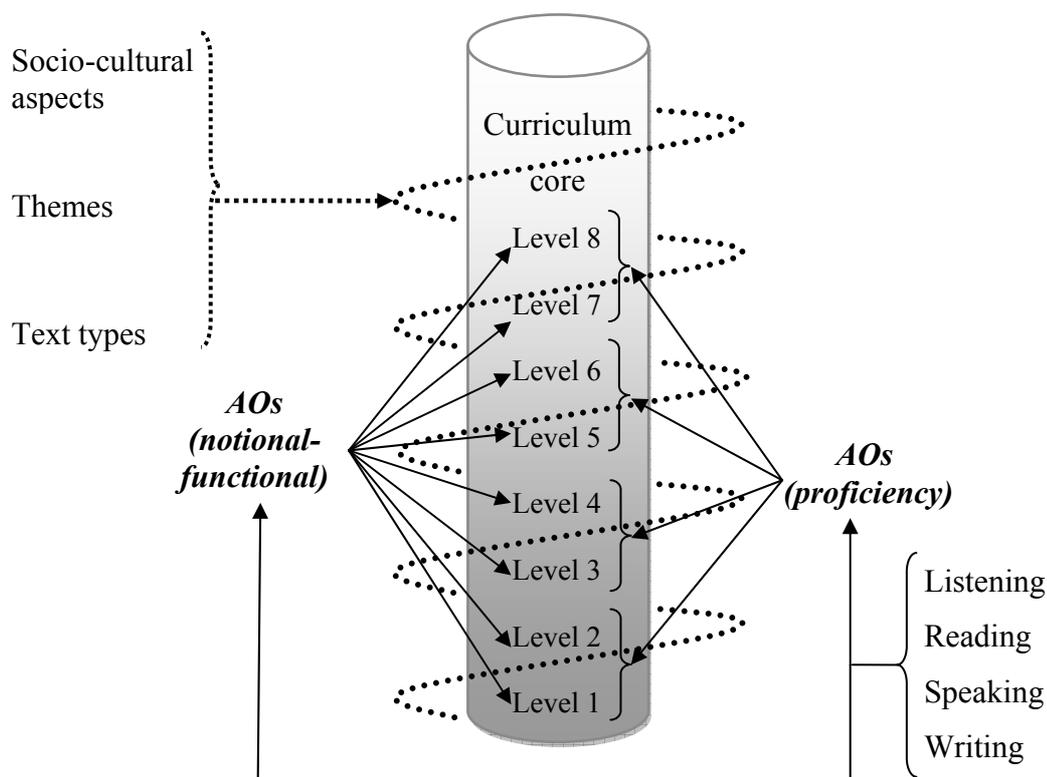
[315] It is the Achievement Objectives themselves that are intended to provide a basis for assessment, other aspects of the curriculum being assessed only indirectly through their contribution to the Achievement Objectives.

6.5 The 2007 revision of the New Zealand Curriculum Framework as it impacts on the teaching and learning of additional languages

In 2007, a revised version of the New Zealand Curriculum Framework was released. In that version, 'language and languages' was split into two distinct learning areas, one of which, referred to as 'learning languages' relates to the teaching and learning of languages that are additional to the primary language of instruction (generally English). In the revised Curriculum Framework (the only document whose content is mandated), there are Achievement Objectives at 8 levels which are intended to apply to all additional languages (Ministry of Education [New Zealand], 2007b, p.18; 2007c, pp. 50-51).

For each level, there are three Achievement Objectives – one relating to each of three 'strands', the strands being referred to as 'communication', 'language knowledge' and 'cultural knowledge'. It is noted that:

> The achievement objectives in the Communication strand provide the basis for assessment. The two supporting strands, Language knowledge and Cultural knowledge, are only assessed indirectly through their contribution to the Communication strand.

The Achievement Objectives associated with the 'communication strand' are described as 'proficiency descriptors' and are said to be adapted from the CEFR global scale. There are four of these, each associated with two curriculum levels.

> *Levels 1 & 2*: Students can understand and use familiar expressions and everyday vocabulary. Students can interact in a simple way in supported situations. (Adapted from *Common European Framework for Languages*, Global Scale Level A1: Basic User; Council of Europe, 2001.)

> *Levels 3 & 4*: Students can understand and construct simple texts using their knowledge of the target language. Students can describe aspects of their own background and immediate environment. (Adapted from *Common European Framework for Languages*, Global Scale Level A1: Basic User; Council of Europe, 2001.)

Levels 5 & 6: Students can understand and produce more complex language. They can communicate beyond the immediate context, for example, about past and future events. Students can understand and produce a variety of text types. (Adapted from *Common European Framework for Languages*, Global Scale Level A2: Strong Waystage Performance; Council of Europe, 2001.)

Levels 7 & 8: Students can use language variably and effectively to express and justify their own ideas and opinions and support or challenge those of others. They are able to use and identify the linguistic and cultural forms that guide interpretation and enable them to respond critically to texts. (Adapted from *Common European Framework for Languages*, Global Scale Level B1: Independent User; Council of Europe, 2001.)

In each case, these 'proficiency descriptors' are followed (still within the 'communication' strand) by statements relating to (a) selecting and using language, symbols, and texts to communicate; (b) managing self and relating to others; and (c) participating and contributing in communities. Thus, for example, the full Achievement Objective for 'communication' at levels 1 and 2 reads as follows:

Students can understand and use familiar expressions and everyday vocabulary. Students can interact in a simple way in supported situations. (Adapted from *Common European Framework for Languages*, Global Scale Level A1: Basic User; Council of Europe, 2001.)

In selected linguistic and sociocultural contexts, students will:

Selecting and using language, symbols, and texts to communicate
- Receive and produce information.

Managing self and relating to others
- Produce and respond to questions and requests.

Participating and contributing in communities
- Show social awareness when interacting with others.

At levels 3 & 4, 5 & 6 and 7 & 8, the additions to the 'proficiency descriptors are as follows:

Levels 3 & 4:

In selected linguistic and sociocultural contexts, students will:

Selecting and using language, symbols, and texts to communicate

- Understand and produce information and ideas.

Managing self and relating to others

- Express and respond to personal needs and interests.

Participating and contributing in communities

- Use cultural knowledge to communicate appropriately.

Levels 5 & 6:

In selected linguistic and sociocultural contexts, students will:

Selecting and using language, symbols, and texts to communicate

- Communicate information, ideas, and opinions through different text types.

Managing self and relating to others

- Express and respond to personal ideas and opinions.

Participating and contributing in communities

- Communicate appropriately in different situations.

Levels 7 & 8:

In selected linguistic and sociocultural contexts, students will:

Selecting and using language, symbols, and texts to communicate

- Communicate information, ideas, and opinions through increasingly complex and varied texts.

Managing self and relating to others

- Explore the views of others, developing and sharing personal perspectives.

Participating and contributing in communities

- Engage in sustained interaction and produce extended text.

Table 6.12 below compares the alignment between the Common Reference Levels (CRLs) and (a) proficiency levels in the French, German and Māori curriculum documents, and (b) proficiency levels in the 2007 revised Curriculum Framework.

Table 6.12: *Comparison of the alignment between CRLs and (a) the French, German and Māori curriculum documents and (b) 'learning languages' in the 2007 revised Curriculum Framework*

	Common Reference Levels (CEF)	A1	A2		B1	B2	C1	C2
The French, German and Māori curriculum documents	Proficiency targets	Emergent Communi-cation	Survival Skills	Social Compe-tence	Personal Indepen-dence	-	-	-
	Curriculum levels	**1 & 2**	**3 & 4**	**5 & 6**	**7& 8**	-	-	-
The 2007 Curriculum Framework	Curriculum levels	**1, 2, 3 & 4**	**5 & 6**		**7 & 8**			

There is no direct reference in the French, German or Māori curriculum documents to *Common Reference Levels* or, indeed, *to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. Even so, the first stage in the process of production of the French and German documents was a written report on language curriculum developments in New Zealand and elsewhere that relied heavily on the doctoral thesis of one of the principal writers (Johnson, 2000), a thesis that makes extensive reference to the CEFR. There are, furthermore, a number of academic articles that outline the thinking behind the French, German and Māori curriculum documents, articles that clearly indicate the ways in which the principal writers drew upon the CEFR. It was therefore clear that there was intended to be a specific type of alignment between the proficiency targets included in these documents and the Common Reference Levels. Why, then, did the New Zealand Ministry of Education endorse a particular type of alignment with the CRLs in the case of these documents (one of which was not produced in final form until 2009) and a different one in the case of 'learning languages' in the revised Curriculum Framework (published in 2007)? In the absence of any documented rationale, the assumption must be that members of the panel (or, at least, the majority of members of the panel) involved in the production of the 2007 document simply had a different perception of the alignment.

What, then, is the actual relationship between the descriptors relating to the communication strand of 'learning languages' and the Common Reference Levels (global descriptors) of the CEFR? They are compared in *Table 6.13*.

Table 6.13: *Comparison of CRL global descriptors and descriptors in 'learning languages' in the 2007 revised Curriculum Framework*

CRL (A1 global scale)	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.
Curriculum Framework (Levels 1 – 4: Communication)	**1 & 2**: Students can understand and use familiar expressions and everyday vocabulary. Students can interact in a simple way in supported situations. *In selected linguistic and sociocultural contexts, students will:* • Receive, understand and produce information. • Produce and respond to questions and requests/ Express and respond to personal needs and interests • Show social awareness when interacting with others./ Use cultural knowledge to communicate appropriately.
CRL (A2 global scale)	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions relating to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
Curriculum Framework (Levels 5 & 6: Communication)	Students can understand and produce more complex language. They can communicate beyond the immediate context, for example, about past and future events. Students can understand and produce a variety of text types. *In selected linguistic and sociocultural contexts, students will:* • Communicate information, ideas, and opinions through different text types. • Express and respond to personal ideas and opinions. • Communicate appropriately in different situations.
CRL (B1 global scale)	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Curriculum Framework (Levels 7 & 8: Communication)	Students can use language variably and effectively to express and justify their own ideas and opinions and support or challenge those of others. They are able to use and identify the linguistic and cultural forms that guide interpretation and enable them to respond critically to texts. *In selected linguistic and sociocultural contexts, students will:* • Communicate information, ideas, and opinions through increasingly complex and varied texts. • Explore the views of others, developing and sharing personal perspectives. • Engage in sustained interaction and produce extended text.

A review of the content of *Table 6.13* reveals that although there appears to be some relationship between the A1 CRL global scale descriptor and the 2007 Framework descriptor for levels 1 – 4, it is difficult to detect any relationship between either (a) the A2 CRL global scale descriptor and the 2007 Framework descriptor for levels 5 & 6, or (b) the B1 CRL global scale descriptor and the Framework descriptor for levels 7 & 8. Why, then, was it considered necessary / appropriate to refer to the CEFR? There is no really satisfactory answer to that question. It may be that references to the CEFR were considered to be an important aspect of credibility in that they suggest alignment with what is now often seen as an international movement in the direction of comparability of qualifications. Whatever the reason, there is a further related question that seems to require an answer. Why does the final version of the Māori curriculum (which was published in 2009) include 'proficiency target statements' that directly reflect those in the French and German curricula (published in 2002) rather than those included in the communication strand of the revised version of the New Zealand Curriculum Framework (released in 2007)? In relation to this question, a series of further questions arise. Given that the 'learning languages' section of the 2007 revised Framework outlines targets that are intended to be of relevance to the teaching and learning of all additional languages in New Zealand schools, and given that it currently does not align directly with any of the documents relating to particular languages, is the intention to review all of these documents? If so, will they continue to include Achievement Objectives of the type some of them currently contain (that is, notional-functional ones in the case of the French, German and Māori curricula)? Will the references to communicative language teaching that occur in the French, German, and Māori curriculum documents feature in them? It may be that someone in the New Zealand Ministry of Education could answer all of these questions. Even if that is the case, it seems reasonable to speculate, in view of some of the observations made in this chapter, that these answers may be subject to change over time. There is, after all, nothing in the CEFR that represents a guarantee of consistency of interpretation.

6.6   Addressing the research questions

The three research questions that were included at the beginning of this chapter have already been answered indirectly. My aim here is to provide an overview that focuses directly on responses to these questions.

The first question relates to the ways in which New Zealand has made use of the CEFR in the projects discussed. So far as the French, German and Māori curriculum documents are concerned, although there are no direct references to the CEFR in the documents themselves, there is a considerable body of literature that clearly indicates the ways in which the principal writers drew upon the CEFR and their intentions in doing so. All of the documents include specific recommendations relating to communicative language teaching. All of them include proficiency descriptors. The intended relationship between the eight levels of the New Zealand school curriculum and The CEFR's Common Reference Levels is clearly outlined in a series of articles that relate to the design of these curriculum documents. The more specific Achievement Objectives in these documents are not domain-specific. They are, however, influenced by the CEFR and other Council of Europe documents in that they are meaning-oriented, drawing (except in the case of the formulaic micro-functions that are included at lower levels) on high-level notional, macro-functional and modal specifications and relying on the concept of objectives recycling to accommodate the notion of degrees of competence. All of the Achievement Objectives focus on communicative language competence. There are, for example, no Achievement Objectives that focus solely on culture. Instead, socio-cultural aspects, topics and text-types (always suggested rather than required) spiral around the core, providing contexts for the realization of the Achievement Objectives in different teaching / learning contexts. Finally, the suggested learning and assessment tasks (often involving pair work and group work) reflect the action-orientation of the CEFR. Overall, then, it could be said that these curriculum documents draw upon the CEFR and related Council of Europe documents without adhering rigidly to all of the recommendations included in them.

The Achievement Objectives associated with the 'communication strand' of the 'learning languages' section of the 2007 revised New Zealand Curriculum

Framework are described as 'proficiency descriptors' and are said to be adapted from the CEFR's global scale descriptors. However, although there appears to be some relationship between the descriptors for levels 1 – 4 and the A1 global scale descriptor in the CEFR, it is difficult to detect any relationship between the descriptors for levels 5 – 8 and global descriptors in the CEFR. This, combined with the fact that there is no evidence of any specific studies relating to the descriptors included in the revised Curriculum Framework, suggests that any alignment with the CEFR's Common Reference Levels is more rhetorical than real.

The second question concerns the extent to which suggestions for language curriculum design at a national level in the CEFR are followed.

The first principle outlined in the CEFR is that discussion in curricula should be in line with the overall objective of promoting plurilingualism and linguistic diversity. Although the CEFR has a specific spin on what it refers to as 'plurilingualism', one that is not directly reflected in the documents discussed here, there can be no doubt that they promote linguistic diversity, something that is unavoidable in the case of curricula for additional languages.

The second principle outlined in the CEFR is that the cost and efficiency of the system should be considered so as to avoid unnecessary repetition and so as to promote economies of scale and the transfer of skills which linguistic diversity facilitates. From one perspective, it could be argued that both the French, German and Māori curriculum documents and 'learning languages' in the revised version of the New Zealand Curriculum Framework (2007) conform to this principle. In both cases, the overall aim is to provide a common framework to which the teaching and learning of all languages offered can be related. What we do not find, however, is the assumption that some of the Achievement Objectives can be omitted in the case of learners who have already advanced in the study of one or more languages when they begin the study of another language (because the skills gained can be transferred). This is because all of the Achievement Objectives focus on communicative language competence and therefore need to be realized in direct relation to the particular language being studied.

The third principle outlined in the CEFR is that curricula for different languages should not be considered in isolation from one another or from language education as a whole. Clearly, this principle has been adhered to in the case of both of the projects discussed here.

The third question concerns the extent to which evidence from the New Zealand national curriculum projects discussed here supports the claims made in the CEFR in relation to the advantages of using the Framework in the context of curriculum design.

In the case of the 'learning languages' section of the revised New Zealand Curriculum Framework, it is difficult to answer this question unequivocally. Certainly, the CEFR may have been the motivating force behind the New Zealand Ministry of Education's decision to produce a single statement that is intended to specify the overall Achievement Objectives for all of the languages offered in the New Zealand school system. It may also have provided the inspiration for the concept of expressing the central Achievement Objectives (the ones that relate to communication) in terms of proficiency. However, except for the general principle of having a single document that can be related to all languages, there is, in reality, very little relationship between that document and the CEFR. Furthermore, the very high level of generality involved in the articulation of the Achievement Objectives included in the relevant section of the revised Curriculum Framework raises issues about the extent to which it can serve any genuinely useful purpose.

In the case of the French, German and Māori curriculum documents, the situation is rather different. I believe these documents demonstrate that there can be very definite advantages in using the CEFR in the context of curriculum design. However, the principal writers of these documents have not simply used the CEFR in its current form. They have, effectively, in the process of drawing upon its resources (and those of other Council of Europe documents), indicated ways in which some of its content could be redesigned so as to make it more manageable and more appropriate for general educational contexts, that is, for contexts in which the primary focus is on abilities that are transferrable, rather than on

performing tasks "in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action" (CEFR, p. 9).

The CFR is described in the title as 'a framework of reference'. There is, however, a fundamental difference between a *framework* and a *reference*. In the case of the French curriculum designers, the CEFR was used as a framework and, therefore, an attempt was made to stick very closely to it. In the case of the New Zealand curriculum designers, the CEFR was used as a reference only and, therefore, the negative impact of its lack of theoretical underpinning is much less in evidence, the designers being free to approach each aspect of the curriculum, including, for example, the articulation of achievement objectives, in ways that are theoretically grounded. The result is that, unlike the French curriculum documents, the New Zealand ones are internally coherent, making it possible to make genuine comparisons among them. However, because the New Zealand curriculum designers use the CEFR *as a reference only* (rather than as a framework), it would not be possible to make meaningful comparisons between the New Zealand curriculum documents and curriculum documents designed for use in other educational systems unless the decisions made by those who designed curriculum documents when they encountered problems that could not be resolved by direct reference to the CEFR in the context of other educational systems echoed those made by the New Zealand curriculum designers. Certainly, no meaningful comparison can be made between the French curriculum documents and the New Zealand ones.

All of this, combined with a range of issues raised in *Chapter 5*, is of considerable importance in relation to language curriculum theory and language curriculum evaluation.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

7.1   Introduction

My aim in this chapter is to summarize and comment on the research reported in this thesis (7.2) and to give some consideration to its limitations (7.3) and its contribution (7.4) and to possible directions for future research (7.5). The chapter ends with a final note in which I highlight the ways in which my own thinking about the CEFR has changed over the course of the research project.

7.2   Revisiting the research questions

In this section, I summarize and comment on the research reported in this thesis, focusing in 7.2.2 and 7.2.3 below on the two core research questions outlined in Chapter 1 but beginning in 7.2.1 below with an overview of the content of Chapters 2 and 3.

7.2.1   The CEFR: Background, content and commentary

As indicated in *Chapter 2,* work on the production of a *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* was launched at a symposium in 1991. Ten years later, in 2001, the current version of the CEFR was officially released, the stated aim being to "provide a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examination, textbooks, etc. across Europe" (CEFR, p. 1). Central to the CEFR is an attempt to define six levels of proficiency and to describe what a language learner needs to know and be able to do (Trim, 2005, pp. 17-18). The CEFR recommends what are commonly referred to as 'communicative approaches' (sometimes 'the communicative approach') to language teaching and, within that context, makes repeated references to the importance of language learning tasks. Over time, a series of documents relating to the CEFR (e.g. the European Language Portfolio and a series of guides and manuals) has been released and a number of projects (including language-specific

competency descriptions and a framework for the languages of school education) are under way.

As indicated in the literature review (Chapter 3), a number of critics of the CEFR have drawn attention to problems associated with its approach to the concept of competencies (Debyser, 1998; Vincent, 2004) and to the fact that it is neither transparent nor user-friendly (Alderson, 2007, p. 661) noting, in particular, that the wording of its descriptors is often both imprecise and inconsistent (Weir, 2005, p. 282; Alderson, 2006, pp. 12 - 13), the descriptors themselves, and the proficiency levels proposed, lacking empirical foundation (Alderson, 2007, p. 662). All of this inevitably has a negative impact on the CEFR's claims in relation to comparability (Martyniuk & Noijons, 2007, p. 6; Hulstijn, 2007, p. 666) and makes attempt to link proficiency-based examinations to the CEFR premature at best. It has also been argued however, that the existence of the CEFR as a political fact makes it difficult to question the adequacy of its construct (McNamara, 29 May 2007). At the same time, because failure to at least appear to align textbooks and proficiency test instruments to the CEFR can have a negative impact on sales in Europe (Beacco, 2003, ¶ 3 & 4; McNamara, 21 October 2006), providers feel obliged to claim alignment even where there is no evidence to support such a claim (Alderson, 2007; Figueiras, 2007; Fulcher, 18 March 2004, Trim, 2005). So far as the uses to which the CEFR has been put, of equal, or even greater concern is its widespread use in the high stakes monolingual testing of the language proficiency of migrants and guest workers, something that is in direct conflict with the CEFR's stated aim of support for plurilingualism (Krumm, 2007).

The CEFR has much to say about language curricula and about language teachers and language teaching. However, although there is a considerable body of literature that aims to explain the CEFR to practicing language teachers (see, for example, Morrow, 2004a), there appears, to date, to have been little attempt to determine what these teachers actually think about the CEFR and whether, and, if so, how and to what extent they actually make use of it. What *has* been noted, however, is that the implications of the CEFR so far as classroom teaching is concerned are far from clear (Westhoff, 2007, p. 676). So far as language curricula that claim to be related to the CEFR are concerned, there appears, once

again, to have been, to date, no detailed examination of them although it *has* been claimed that although regional curricula frequently claim alignment with the CEFR, this is not necessarily reflected in the actual nature of their composition (Beacco, 2003, ¶ 3 & 4). In the case of curricula that relate to the teaching and learning of particular languages, and in the case of the actual teaching of these languages, although the CEFR necessarily does not itself do so, it is impossible to avoid making reference to language specifics. This inevitably raises issues associated with the development of Reference Level Descriptions (RLDs). However, it has been observed that "the methodologies used in their development are unclear and/or suspect" (Alderson, 2007, p. 660) and that "there are few, if any, indications, either from the CEFR or from SLA theory, that would justify linking discrete grammar points to specific CEFR levels" (Westhoff, 2007, p.678). Clearly, therefore, there is a need for the type of research reported in his thesis.

7.2.2 Reporting on a survey of a sample of tertiary teachers

The third research question is outlined below:

- What do a sample of frontline professionals from a range of countries (language teachers working mainly in the tertiary educational context) know and believe about the CEFR?

In seeking to address this question, I conducted a questionnaire-based survey of language teaching professionals that was intended to attract responses from a sample of language teachers in tertiary level institutions in six different areas of three continents. In the event, two respondents (who received copies of the questionnaire from colleagues) were not located in the areas in focus. One was from Germany; the other from Belgium. The other 162 respondents were from France (38), the UK (25), New Zealand (24), Australia (28), Taiwan (30) and Hong Kong (17).

Although all of those involved were aware of the nature of the survey before agreeing to participate, more than half (58%) claimed to have little or no knowledge of the CEFR, including just under half (47.7%) of those working in Europe (56% of those located in the UK; 45% of those located in France). Of the

34 respondents who claimed to be familiar or very familiar with the CEFR, 28.5% (N = 18) were based in Europe and 16% (N = 16) were based outside of Europe.

Of those (108) who continued with the survey after indicating the extent of their own familiarity with the CEFR, less than one third (33 / 30.6%) claimed to have actually read it (including 3 [19%] UK-based respondents and 10 [34%] respondents based in France). Overall, only 23% of the 65 participants located in Europe who continued with the questionnaire claimed to have read the CEFR. Furthermore, when asked to estimate the extent of their colleagues' familiarity with the CEFR on a 6 point scale from 1 (very familiar) to 6 (not familiar at all), the majority of all respondents selected the lower half of the scale, the mean being 4.2.

The percentage of non-responses to a variety of questions about the impact of the CEFR on various aspects of language teaching varied from just under one third (32.4%) to over half (52.8%), the non-response rate being similar in the case of participants from Europe, Asia and Oceania.

Thus, in terms of self-reporting, the extent of familiarity with the CEFR of the participants in this survey appears to be low even among those working in Europe. Bearing in mind the fact that all of the survey participants had opted to become involved in a survey they knew to be about the CEFR and that the majority of them were teaching in tertiary level institutions (and might therefore be expected to be more familiar with source literature than those teaching in schools), it seems unlikely (though, of course, possible) that a more broadly-based survey would reveal a significantly higher level of familiarity with the CEFR.

In view of the fact that less than one third of the 108 respondents who completed the survey claimed to have read the CEFR, a surprisingly high number expressed views about aspects of its content. Thus, for example, 76% (of the 108) were prepared to comment on the usefulness of the CEFR (with 80 reporting that they believed it was helpful and 3 reporting that they did not); 58% on the extent of its user-friendliness (with 45 reporting that it is user-friendly and 19 that it is not); 53% on whether the number of aspects of communicative competence that it presents is more confusing than helpful (with 11 reporting that they are and 47

that they are not); 45% on whether or not it has too little to say about curriculum design (with 27 reporting that it has and 22 that it has not); 43.5% on whether or not it presents or explains theories clearly (with 16 reporting that it does and 31 that it does not); and 41% on whether it focuses too much on assessment (with 17 reporting that it does and 27 that it does not).

It has already been noted that survey participants based outside of Europe were almost as likely to report that they were familiar or very familiar with the CEFR as those based in Europe (16% in the case of the former; 28.5% in the case of the latter). In addition, just over 60% of the 54 participants who responded to a question about the relevance (or otherwise) of the CEFR outside of Europe reported that they believed that it is relevant outside of Europe, with over half (57.5%) of the 73 participants who responded to a question about whether it was any longer possible to avoid the CEFR in the field of language / teaching learning reporting that they believed that it was.

The survey reported here was a small scale one, one that was confined largely to language teachers operating in a tertiary educational context. It is therefore impossible to draw any firm conclusions about language teachers as a whole on the basis of this survey. Nevertheless, what it suggests is that knowledge of the CEFR among language teachers (even those operating within Europe) is limited, that many of the opinions held (and expressed) about the CEFR by language teachers may not be based on any genuine familiarity with it, and that, although the influence of the CEFR is extending beyond Europe, many language teachers continue to believe that it can safely be ignored. If the findings of this survey were to be confirmed by a more extensive survey of a similar kind, then it would be reasonable to argue that the CEFR is unlikely, in general, to have an impact on language learners through the direct mediation of language teachers. It is therefore important to determine whether it is any more likely or, indeed, whether it is possible that it should have an impact on language learners through the indirect mediation of language curricula, that is, through the impact of language curricula on language teaching and, hence, on language learners.

7.2.3   Overview and discussion of the use made of the CEFR in two examples of national-level school-based curriculum design

The overall research question (divided here into three parts) that is relevant to the next section of this thesis is:

- In what ways have two countries (one from within Europe; one from outside Europe) made use of the CEFR in designing national-level language curricula?
- To what extent, if at all, do these examples follow the suggestions for language curriculum design at a national level in the CEFR?
- To what extent, if at all, do these examples support the claims made in the CEFR in relation to the advantages of using the Framework in the context of curriculum design?

In commenting here on the findings of that section of the thesis that focused on the analysis of national-level school-based curricula for languages that have been influenced by the CEFR, I focus here primarily on two issues – the nature of the achievement objectives and language-specific considerations – referring to other issues in a more peripheral way.

7.2.3.1 The French curricula

As indicated in Chapter 5, the French school curriculum for foreign languages is made up of a series of common preambles (five) and language-specific documents. On the assumption that anything that is common to all of the languages should appear in the common preambles, a reasonable expectation might be that they would contain both proficiency objectives (overall proficiency targets) and other more specific objectives statements, that is, statements of expected achievement outcomes. This raises two critical questions. First, what sort of rationale should underpin decisions about the nature of the more detailed (more specific) objectives and how should they be formulated? Secondly, how should decisions be made about the content of the language-specific documents and how should they be linked to the content of the common preambles?

In relation to the second of these questions, the CEFR is largely silent except for the observation that "[an] analysis of the functions, notions, grammar and vocabulary necessary to perform the communicative tasks described on the scales *could* be part of the process of developing new sets of language specifications" [emphasis added] (CERF p. 33). In relation to the first of these questions, it is noted in the CEFR that the Framework "offers a structure of parameters and categories which should enable all those involved in language learning, teaching and assessment to . . . state in concrete terms . . . what they expect . . . learners . . . to be able to do with a language, and what they should know in order to act" (CEFR, p. 43). It is also noted that "[tasks] are normally focused within a given domain" (CEFR, p. 137). Does it follow from this that the specification of domains is (normally) to be included in achievement objectives (as opposed to providing part of the context in which achievement objectives are operationalised in practice)? Finally, it is observed that objectives may involve "a specific constellation of activities, skills and competences" which "might be profiled on a grid of categories by level" (CEFR, p. 179). It has already been noted that (a) there are no culture-related descriptors in the CEFR, (b) there are significant gaps in the categorization of some other types of descriptor, and (c) many of the descriptors that do appear are vague and imprecise. Even if this were not the case, it is not clear how curriculum designers are expected to make use of a multiplicity of descriptors in the creation of meaningful objectives that represent "a specific constellation of activities, skills and competences".

The fact that those who designed the French language curriculum for schools had difficulty in attempting to resolve these issues is evident from a close reading of the documents. The common preambles are divided into objectives-related sections. Thus, for example, the common preamble relating to primary schooling is divided into *Connaissances* [Knowledge] (culture and vocabulary; grammar; phonology) and *Capacité* [Abilities] (understand, react and speak in oral interaction; listening comprehension; sustained speech; reading; writing). Taken together, the entries under the heading of *Connaissances* are very similar to the CEFR A1 global scale descriptor (and to a range of other descriptors in the CEFR that do little more than echo aspects of the global descriptor). There are, however, two entries (*quelques éléments culturels*; *reconnaître quelques faits de langue*)

that (a) do not occur anywhere in the CEFR, and (b) are so general as to be essentially meaning-free in this context. The entries under the heading of *Capacité* essentially repeat (but under a range of different headings) what has already appeared under the heading of *Connaissances* but with a few additions which relate, either directly or indirectly, to descriptors labelled A1 in various sections of the CEFR. In some cases (e.g. references to instructions), these additions relate to things that one might have expected to find (but do not) in the relevant global descriptor. In others (e.g. *raconter une histoire courte et stéréotypée*), they appear to presuppose a 'level' and 'type' of language that seems to be beyond that indicated in the global descriptor. If there is a satisfactory solution to the problem of specifying achievement objectives that are more specific than wholly proficiency-based ones and represent "a specific constellation of activities, skills and competences", the writers of the French curricula appear not to have discovered it.

So far as the language-specific curricula are concerned, the critical issues are how their content should be specified and how that specification should relate to the achievement objectives. As the language-specific curriculum documents relating to upper secondary level (which focus primarily on history and culture) were written before the Ministry of Education committed to aligning with the CEFR, they are not discussed here. The language-specific curriculum documents at primary and lower secondary level essentially restate the achievement objectives in the common preambles (but organized in a rather different way) and then link them to 'formulations' (wordings) and 'connaissances' (knowledge). The first category is made up of what appear to be examples of the language with which they may be associated (e.g. Good morning/afternoon (children)!). The second category is sub-divided into 'culture et lexique', 'grammaire' and 'phonologie'. The overall impression gained from reading down the 'formulations' column is of a stilted, unnatural dialogue (often inappropriate to young learners) in which information is exchanged for purposes that are exclusively pedagogic. The content of the other columns appears to relate to the specific 'formulations' (essentially realization examples) listed rather than being driven by some more general principles relating to the achievement objectives themselves. Thus, for example, the columns headed 'grammaire' and 'phonologie' pick out, in an apparently

random fashion, grammatical and pholological aspects of the 'formulations'. The rationale for the inter-mingling of vocabulary and culture in a single column is unclear and, indeed, there are few cultural references throughout. In a few cases, the 'formulations' appear to be selected in order to indicate the types of activity that learners might be involved in (e.g. *I'm from Cardiff. I live in a flat with my parents. I've got a brother, Luke; he's seven. I can play cricket.* **Circle my photo**.). Each of the documents ends with a section dealing with lexical and cultural content, syntax and morphosyntax and phology. The second and third of these sections provides what is essentially a fairly standard structural syllabus, one, however, that is not related in any way to meaning. Thus, for example, although some structural syllabuses associate different constructions with different structure-related meanings at different stages (e.g. simple present tense may be associated in an English curriculum with, for example, regular or habitual activities or the reporting of past events in newspaper headlines), no such association occurs here.

The CEFR makes reference to three principles that should guide the design of those language curricula that are intended to reflect the CRFR. These relate to (a) promotion of efficiency through skills transfer and avoidance of unnecessary repetition, (b) acknowledgment of the significance plurilingualism and linguistic diversity, and (c) the integrated treatment of curricula for different languages. There is no evidence that any particular attention has been paid to skills transfer or to what is referred to as 'plurilingualism' in the CEFR (except to the extent that the common preambles explicitly acknowledge that prior exposure to the learning of one or more languages will necessarily impact on the learning of others). The first principle has been adhered to closely in that the common preambles include achievement objectives that are intended to be linked to all of the language-specific curricula. However, it does not necessarily follow form this that the articulation of the achievement objectives or the way in which they are linked to the language-specific curricula can be regarded as satisfactory.

In attempting to draw upon the CEFR and to adhere closely to its recommendations, representatives of the French Ministry of Education would inevitably have had to grapple with a range of issues, including (a) the absence of

clear and specific guidelines concerning the way or ways in which curriculum designers might make use of the framework, (b) a lack of clarity about precisely how specific achievement objectives might be articulated, (c) the absence from the CEFR of descriptors in some areas and/or the nature of some of those descriptors that appear in others, and (d) a lack of clarity about how language-specific indicators might be articulated and related to achievement objectives. In the event, achievement objectives specification in the French curriculum is repetitive and characterized by vagueness and lack of transparency and the link between these achievement objectives and (a) 'formulations' and 'connaissances', and (b) the specifications with which each language-specific curriculum ends appear often to be to be largely arbitrary. Furthermore, while a few of the entries under the heading of 'formulations' appear to be selected in order to indicate the types of activity in which learners might be involved in the process of learning, many of them are reminiscent of the types of entry that commonly appear in phrase books.

7.2.3.2 The New Zealand curricula

There is no explicit reference to the CEFR in the New Zealand school-based curricula for French, German and Māori in schools. However, a series of articles by the principal writers make it clear they were intended to be informed by the CEFR. In drawing on the CEFR, they make a range of decisions that result in very different curricula from the French national school-based curriculum.

There are a number of areas in which the impact of the CEFR, and related literature, is evident in the French, German and Māori curricula. This influence is particularly evident in relation to the attempt to link the curricula together through very similar preambles (in which an overall 'communicative approach' to teaching (as recommended in the CEFR) is endorsed) and through a set of shared achievement objectives.

There are eight levels (not necessarily associated with year of schooling) in the New Zealand curriculum. With each two of these levels, the French, German and Māori curriculum documents associate proficiency-style benchmarks/targets/descriptors (essentially the same in all three curricula) that are expressed both in

general terms and, more specifically, in terms of reading, writing, listening and speaking (and, in the case of the Māori curriculum, also viewing and presenting). These proficiency-style targets were determined in consultation with language teachers and are reminiscent of CEFR Common Reference Level descriptors without adhering rigidly to them. Thus, the statements at curriculum levels 1 & 2 are similar to those occurring at CEFR level A1; those spanning curriculum levels 3 – 6 (separate statements for levels 3 & 4 and levels 5 & 6) are similar to those occurring at CEFR level A2; those occurring at curriculum levels 7 & 8 are similar to those occurring at CEFR level B1. However, although the descriptors are reminiscent of descriptors in the CEFR, they are different in a number of respects, including the fact that some of the more problematic aspects of the CEFR descriptors have been excised. There is, for example, no reference to 'very basic phrases' or to an interlocutor '[talking] slowly and clearly and [being] prepared to help' in the descriptor associated with curriculum levels 1 & 2. Furthermore, because these descriptors include references to things that are not normally associated with proficiency (e.g. references to awareness of the language learning process), I refer to them as 'proficiency-style descriptors' rather that 'proficiency descriptors'.

The French, German and Māori curricula also include more specific achievement objectives. In general, these more specific achievement objectives do not repeat or restate aspects of the proficiency-style objectives although they are clearly intended to be consistent with them. Thus, for example, unlike the A1 CEFR global descriptor (which includes 'introduce him/herself and others), the proficiency-style descriptor covering curriculum levels 1 and 2 in the French, German and Māori curricula does not make reference to particular microfunctions. However, two of the more specific achievement objectives do so (*greet, farewell and thank people and respond to greetings and thanks; introduce themselves and others and respond to introductions*). In that the microfunctions to which reference is made are often expressed formulaically, these achievement objectives are consistent with the following section of the relevant proficiency-style descriptor: *By the end of level 2, learners can understand language that contains well rehearsed sentence patterns and familiar vocabulary, and they can interact in predictable exchanges.*

The principal writers of the French, German and Māori curriculum documents have not attempted to draw directly upon the descriptors included in the CEFR in an attempt to create achievement objectives that represent "a specific constellation of activities, skills and competences" which "might be profiled on a grid of categories by level" (CEFR, p. 179). Instead, they have taken a very different approach, one that draws, *in a selective way*, upon the notional/functional approach that was developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s, an approach that is described in the CEFR (p.116) as "[starting] from a systematic classification of communicative functions and of notions" and "[dealing] with forms, lexical and grammatical, as their exponents". Some of the more specific achievement objectives focus on those microfunctions that are often formulaically expressed (see above); others focus on 'notions' (e.g. *communicate about the quality, quantity and cost of things*), including modality (e.g. *communicate about certainty and uncertainty, possibility and probability)*; yet others focus on what are referred to in the CEFR as 'macrofunctions' (e.g. *develop an argument or point of view, with reasons*). Each of the more specific achievement objectives is introduced at a particular curriculum level. However, once an achievement objective has been introduced, it is intended to be 'recycled' at higher levels, being progressively associated with a wider range of exponents. It is in this way that the authors of the French, German and Māori curriculum documents have sought to create an alignment between the non-language specific articulation of achievement objectives and language-specific aspects of the curriculum documents. However, although the French and German curriculum documents (which appeared first) include suggestions in relation to the language that might be associated with the achievement objectives at different levels, similar suggestions were removed from the Māori curriculum document by the New Zealand Ministry of Education before it was produced in its final form, thus leaving the overall curriculum cycle incomplete.

As indicated in Chapter 6, text-types and socio-cultural aspects / themes (which all take the form of suggestions) are not included as part of the achievement objectives in the French, German and Māori curricula. Rather, they provide contexts in which the achievement objectives are realized in practice. So far as the activity-focus of the CEFR is concerned, it too provides part of the context for the

realization of the achievement objectives rather than being built into them. Thus, associated with each achievement objective is a range of suggested learning and assessment activities.

So far as the three principles for curriculum designers outlined in the CEFR are concerned, the French, German and Māori curricula conform to the extent that the same overall approach is adopted in each curriculum document and there is a single set of achievement objectives covering all of them. However, as in the case of the French curriculum, the concept of skills transfer has no direct impact on the composition of the curricula. Furthermore, no reference is made to 'plurilingualism'.

Whereas the French, German and Māori curriculum documents make no direct reference (internally) to the CEFR, the 'learning languages' section of the revised version of the New Zealand Curriculum Framework that was released in 2007 does do so. It may be that the CEFR provided the motivation for the decision to produce a single statement that is intended to specify the overall Achievement Objectives for all of the languages offered in the New Zealand school system. However, except for the general principle of having a single document that can be related to all languages, there is, in reality, very little relationship between that document and the CEFR. Thus, although the Achievement Objectives associated with the 'communication strand' are described as 'proficiency descriptors' and are said to be adapted from the CEFR global scale, there is, as indicated in Chapter 6, very little detectable relationship between them and that global scale. Furthermore, although it is noted in the CEFR (p. 141) that "[authorities], when drawing up curricular guidelines . . . may specify only higher-level objectives", the very high level of generality involved in the articulation of the Achievement Objectives included in the relevant section of the revised Curriculum Framework raises issues about the extent to which it can serve any genuinely useful purpose.

7.2.3.3 The French and New Zealand curricula: Some concluding observations

Overall, while the French, German and Maori curriculum documents draw ideas from the CEFR and other Council of Europe publications, its authors have not

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attempted to adhere closely to the CEFR in the way that the writers of French curriculum have done. I believe that this has resulted in documents that are, particularly in the case of the French and German documents, clearer, easier to follow (particularly so far as the relationship between generic and language-specific aspects is concerned) and more helpful (particularly in relation to suggested language indicators and suggested learning and assessment activities) than is the French curriculum documents. I also believe that they provide a useful basis for system-internal comparisons. From a language teaching perspective, all of these things are important, especially as, according to the authors of the CEFR (p.141), teachers are "generally called upon to respect . . . official guidelines" and to "devise and administer tests and prepare pupils and students for qualifying examinations". Overall, then, my conclusion is that although the curriculum examples discussed, particularly the New Zealand school-based curricula for French and German, would support the contention that there is potential for the CEFR to usefully *inform* some of the decisions made by language curriculum designers, more rigid adherence to the CEFR itself, as in the case of the French school-based national curriculum, has not been shown to "provide a . . . basis for the elaboration of . . . curriculum guidelines" (CEFR, p. 1) that is "comprehensive, transparent and coherent" (p. 21).

The fact that curriculum designers in France attempted to use the CEFR as a *framework* while those in New Zealand used it as a *reference*, highlights a problem that runs throughout the CEFR and is evident even in the title: is the CEFR intended to be used as a framework (in which case curriculum designers might be expected to frame their curricula directly in relation to it) or as a reference (in which case they might be expected to draw on it without necessarily frame their curricula directly on its content)? Clearly, neither group found in the CEFR "all that they need[ed] to describe their objectives (CoE, 2001, p. xii). In each case, the curriculum designers were obliged to attempt to deal with a range of problems arising out of various aspects of the CEFR. In seeking to resolve these problems, they could not make reference to the theory of second language acquisition that underlies the CEFR because there is none. In the New Zealand case, although it *is* possible to compare the different language curricula *within the system* in a meaningful way, this has little to do with the CEFR itself.

Furthermore, it would *not* be possible to make a meaningful comparison between the New Zealand curriculum documents and curriculum documents developed in the context of other educational systems on the basis of anything in the CEFR in that, as indicated above, the CEFR was used as a reference only. In the French case, even though the CEFR was used as a *framework*, it is difficult to compare the various language curricula *within the same system* in any truly meaningful way because of the lack of any clear relationship between the common preambles and the language-specific documentation. What this indicates is that the CEFR, whether used as a framework or a reference, does not necessarily help to overcome barriers to communication within the same educational system, let alone among different educational systems.

7.3   Limitations of the research

There are a number of limitations associated with the language teacher survey that was conducted as part of this research project. I had hoped, having sent out thousands of questionnaires and having carefully followed recommended survey procedures, to attract a higher number of participants than the 164 who responded. This would have made it possible to make more meaningful comparisons among groups of different nationalities and groups operating in different areas within and outside of Europe. I had also hoped to target language teachers in schools as well as those working in the tertiary education sector. However, the privacy legislation operating in a number of countries of particular interest to me made it impossible to identify language teachers in schools and obtain their email addresses. I would also have liked to target a wider range of countries and to have conducted follow-up semi-structured interviews with some of those involved in the survey, focusing, in particular, on the extent to which those who indicated that they had read the CEFR were actually familiar with its content and, in the case of those who indicated that they had not read the CEFR, how they had reached various conclusions about its content. The fact is, however, that the time and resources available for PhD research are limited, privacy legislation has been put in place for good reasons, and language teachers around the world, who are generally very busy, cannot be expected to respond positively to every research-related request

they receive, particularly in cases where they believe that they are unlikely to benefit in any direct way from the research.

Similar limitations are associated with the curriculum-based component of the research project. It would have been interesting to examine a wider range of curricula that have been influenced by the CEFR, including curricula that are not school-based and to have conducted semi-structured interviews with some of the textbook writers, course designers, language teachers and examination providers who are expected to reflect these curricula in their work. In this case, the critical issue was simply the limited time available.

7.4 The research contribution

This research project has been conducted from the perspective of a practicing language teacher, one of those who, in the words of the authors of the CEFR, are "generally called upon to respect . . . official guidelines", "devise and administer tests and prepare pupils and students for qualifying examinations" and "use textbooks and materials" although, apparently, "they may or may not be in a position to analyse, evaluate, select and supplement [these materials]" (CEFR, p. 141). Although it is language learners and language teachers whose day-to-day lives and futures are most likely to be affected by the impact of the CEFR, they are generally the recipients of information about it and instruction in its use rather than equal partners in the decisions that are made about it. I therefore believe that this thesis will have made a significant contribution if it does nothing more than remind other language professionals that it is, in fact, language teachers who will ultimately determine the fate of the CEFR. They may do so by positively accepting or by rejecting it. Equally, they may do so by choosing to pay nothing more than lip service to it or by ignoring it altogether.

In spite of the limitations of particular aspects of this research project (to which reference is made above), I believe that it makes a genuine contribution to knowledge and understanding of the CEFR and its impact in a number of areas.

First, it provides an overview of the influence that the CEFR has had in several non-European countries, one that is intended to highlight the way in which the

CEFR is gaining ground outside of Europe. This, I believe, calls for a more global perspective than is often provided in literature about the CEFR.

Secondly, in bringing together, and adding to commentary on a range of different aspects of the CEFR, this thesis highlights the fact that problems in one area will inevitably impact on other areas, something that is not always apparent in the case of commentaries that focus on particular problems associated with specific aspects of the CEFR.

Thirdly, so far as I have been able to determine, there have been no prior attempts by a person or organization not directly associated with the CEFR to survey front line language professionals (language teachers) both within and outside of Europe in order to determine what they know and believe about the CEFR and its impact on them and their colleagues. In spite of the fact that the survey was relatively small in scale, the findings have raised issues (e.g. the willingness of some of those who claim not to have read the CEFR to make judgments about aspects of its content) that could usefully be followed up.

Although a considerable amount of effort has been devoted to highlighting problems associated with the Common Reference Levels and attempts to relate language tests and examinations to them, the impact of the CEFR on language curriculum design has not been subjected to the same level of scrutiny. If my attempt to highlight the importance of this type of critique through examination of two examples of school-based national curriculum developments (one within Europe; the other outside of Europe) did nothing more than draw attention to the need for further studies of this type, it would have made a contribution. I believe, however, that it does more than that, particularly in so far as it highlights the difficulties involves in attempting to use the CEFR, either as a reference or as a framework, in the context of language curriculum design.

Finally, I believe that this thesis also makes a contribution that relates both directly and indirectly to theory and research methodology.

Whatever other aspects it has, one might expect any *curriculum theory* to include a specification that all four major dimensions (objectives, content or subject matter, methods or procedures, and evaluation or assessment) should be firmly

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grounded in learning theory generally and, more specifically, in the case of language curricula, in language acquisition theory. One might also expect that curriculum evaluators, in exploring a particular curriculum in terms of the interaction between its content and the contexts in which it is intended to operate and/or the products (e.g. textbooks) that emerge out if it, would give careful consideration to the interaction between these and its positioning in terms of language acquisition theory. However, the CEFR claims not to adopt any particular theoretical positioning in relation to second language learning. Indeed, it is difficult to see how any framework that attempts to reduce the complexity of human language behaviour to a particular taxonomy could do so. The absence of theoretical positioning of this type means that those who attempt to use the CEFR as a framework in the context of language curriculum design have no theoretical basis for any of the decisions they make, whether or not these decisions relate directly to the content of the CEFR or are made in response to areas in which there are omissions from the CEFR, or where it is unclear or ambiguous. This, in turn, creates problems in relation to *curriculum evaluation* in that it is not possible to adequately evaluate a curriculum in terms of the interaction between its content and the settings in which it is intended to operate or in terms of the products that arise out of it (such as textbooks) without, in the process of doing so, interrogating its theoretical underpinnings. Since it is not only language curricula that attempt to use the CEFR as a framework that lack adequate theoretical underpinnings, I believe that the curriculum analysis included in this thesis has implications for language curriculum evaluation as a whole.

It is now widely contended by those involved in research in the area of *language teacher cognition* that teachers, in common with other professionals, have a tendency to respond to questions about their professional practice in ways that reflect what they believe they should know and do and/or in terms of what they believe researchers expect them to know and do. The language teacher cognition component of this research project not only provides further evidence for this contention but also demonstrates the importance of constructing research instruments in a way that is designed to highlight any inconsistencies in responses and to detect areas in which responses may be influenced by factors other than those things that respondents genuinely believe or actually do.

7.5   Recommendations for future research

The recommendations included here relate, in part, to the limitations of the present study and, in part, to some of its findings.

First, I believe that there is an urgent need for more research on the knowledge of and attitudes towards the CEFR of language teachers (including primary and secondary school teachers) both within and outside of Europe. It seems to me, however, that any such survey, if it were to make a genuine impact on decision-makers, would need to be conducted by some official organization (not connected with the Council of Europe) that had available to it considerable resources (in terms of both finance and personnel) and was sufficiently influential to persuade Ministries of Education to contact school teachers on its behalf.

Secondly, I believe it would be useful to examine in detail the impact of the CEFR in more non-European countries than the few targeted in this research project. Of particular interest would be the extent to which national and regional organizations outside of Europe have sought to impose benchmarks related to the Common Reference Levels along with indicators of the extent to which (if at all) they are aware of the limitations of the CEFR in this area.

Thirdly, I believe that it is important to track the evolution of CEFR-related projects as they proceed (to the extent that this is possible) rather than simply analyzing them after the fact. I also believe that it is important to maintain careful records of responses of those centrally involved in the CEFR to criticisms of aspects of it.

Finally, I believe that efforts should be made to provide language teachers with access to information about the CEFR that is not mediated only by those with a vested interest in it.

7.6   A final note

At the beginning of this research project, I was very enthusiastic about the potential of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. I felt that language teachers in Europe were very fortunate to be working in an environment in which the CEFR was being actively promoted. As a French

national who was living and working in Taiwan, I felt cut off from what I saw as an exciting development. Thus, when the Ministry of Education in Taiwan began to take an interest in the CEFR and, in particular, in establishing graduation benchmarks based on its Common Reference Levels, I believed that we were on the edge of an important breakthrough. However, in common, I believe, with most language teachers, my knowledge of the CEFR, and of developments associated with it, was limited, as was my understanding of the rationale for a number of developments in the teaching and learning of languages that seemed, either directly or indirectly, to be associated with the CEFR. Thus, when an opportunity to do PhD research was made available to me, I decided to focus on the CEFR and, in particular, on its potential outside of Europe. I believed that, as a classroom teacher, I could approach the CEFR from a rather different perspective from that of those whose professional lives are not spent largely in interaction with students. It seemed to me that this perspective might be one that would strike a chord with other classroom teachers, particularly those who felt, as I did, that the views of classroom teachers are often neglected or even discounted. As the research proceeded, I began to feel increasingly uncomfortable about many aspects of the CEFR. Towards the end of the research project, that discomfort had turned into something more concrete. I now believed that my task was not to encourage other classroom teachers to take more interest in the CEFR with a view to benefiting from it. Rather, it was to encourage them to have the confidence to make up their own minds about it from an informed perspective rather than simply succumbing to the rhetoric of those whose interests might be served by its promotion. After all, Trim has observed that "[we] have never wanted teachers to feel themselves reduced to mere retailers of decisions made at a higher level".

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Appendix A: Samples of e-mail requests

Appendix A.1: **Sample of e-mail requests in English**

Object: Questionnaire for language teaching professionals

Request for completion of a questionnaire on the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR)

Dear colleague,

My name is Philippe Valax. I am a lecturer in the Department of French at *Wenzao Ursuline College of Languages* in Taiwan. I am currently doing a PhD (*University of Waikato*, New Zealand) on the impact of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages** (CEFR) inside and outside Europe. I have designed a questionnaire for language teachers in a number of countries, including the country where you are presently teaching.

I would be very grateful if you would complete the questionnaire (attached). This should take approximately 15 to 20 minutes. Most of the answers simply involve ticking a box; some questions require writing a short answer. There are no right or wrong answers, so ticking "I don't know" where it applies is fine. The data collected will be reported in a summary format with no reference to any individual or institution. The identity of participants in the survey will not be revealed to anyone.

For those who decide not to complete the questionnaire
Thank you very much for taking the time to read this message.

For those who decide to complete the questionnaire
Two versions of the questionnaire are attached (choose the one you prefer). One version is 'computer-based'. Using that version, you can answer questions by ticking boxes and writing your answers directly on the screen of your computer, saving the document and then sending it to me as an email attachment to pv22@waikato.ac.nz (or, alternatively, to ph.valax@gmail.com). The other

version is a PDF file that you can print, then complete and send back to me through normal mail at the address provided in the questionnaire.

Thank you for taking the time to respond to the questionnaire. I really appreciate it. If you know of any other language teachers (including high school teachers) who might also be prepared to complete it, please send them a copy of this message and the files attached.

Regards,

Philippe Valax

P.S. The questionnaire has also been translated into French. If you prefer using the French version, ask me and I will be pleased to send it to you.

* Common European Framework of Reference / Cadre Européen Commun de Référence / Gemeinsamer europäischer Referenzrahmen für Sprachen / Marco Común Europeo de Referencia / Quadro Comune Europeo di Riferimento per le Lingue / 欧洲语言共同参考架构 /歐洲語言共同參考架構 / ヨーロッパ言語共通参照枠組み

Appendix A.2: **Sample of e-mail requests in French**

Sujet: Questionnaire pour les professionnels de l'enseignement des langues

Chère (cher) collègue,

Je m'appelle Philippe Valax. Je suis maître de conférences au département de Français de *l'Institut Wenzao de Langues Étrangères* (à Taiwan). Je prépare actuellement un doctorat (*Université de Waikato,* Nouvelle-Zélande) sur l'impact du *Cadre Européen Commun de Référence pour les Langues* (CECR)* en Europe et hors Europe. J'ai élaboré un questionnaire pour les enseignants de langues étrangères de plusieurs pays, dont celui où vous enseignez actuellement.

Je vous serais reconnaissant si vous vouliez bien compléter le questionnaire (ci-joint). Cela ne devrait prendre que 15 à 20 minutes. Dans la plupart des cas, il suffit de cocher des cases pour répondre aux questions ; certaines questions demandent d'écrire quelques mots. Il n'y a pas de bonne ou mauvaise réponse, aussi n'hésitez pas à cocher « Je ne sais pas » lorsque cela s'applique. Les données recueillies seront synthétisées sans faire référence à un individu ou à une institution quelconque. L'identité des participants à ce questionnaire ne sera révélée à personne.

Si vous décidez de ne pas compléter ce questionnaire :
Merci d'avoir pris le temps de lire ce message.

Si vous acceptez de remplir ce questionnaire :
Vous trouverez en pièce jointe deux versions du questionnaire (choisissez celle que vous préférez). La première est la version « ordinateur » : elle vous permet de répondre en cochant les cases et en écrivant vos réponses directement sur l'écran de votre ordinateur. Il ne vous reste plus qu'à sauvegarder vos réponses et à me renvoyer le questionnaire complété en pièce jointe par courriel (e-mail) à l'adresse suivante : pv22@waikato.ac.nz (ou, autre adresse possible, à ph.valax@gmail.com). La deuxième est la version « papier » (PDF) : vous pouvez l'imprimer, la compléter puis l'envoyer par courrier normal à l'adresse indiquée en tête du questionnaire (n'oubliez pas de mentionner 'PhD student' après mon nom, comme indiqué).

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Le questionnaire vous est envoyé en français et en anglais, tant pour la version ordinateur que pour la version papier. Vous pouvez répondre dans la langue que vous préférez (choisissez-en une seulement).

Merci beaucoup de prendre le temps de répondre à ce questionnaire. Si vous connaissez d'autres enseignants de langues (y compris dans les lycées) qui seraient prêts à le remplir également, merci de bien vouloir leur transmettre une copie de ce message et des fichiers joints.

Veuillez agréer, chère (cher) collègue, mes sentiments les plus respectueux.

Philippe Valax

* Cadre Européen Commun de Référence / Common European Framework of Reference / Gemeinsamer europäischer Referenzrahmen für Sprachen / Marco Común Europeo de Referencia / Quadro Comune Europeo di Riferimento per le Lingue / 欧 洲 语 言 共 同 参 考 架 构 / 歐 洲 語 言 共 同 參 考 架 構 / ヨ ー ロ ッ パ 言 語 共 通 参 照 枠 組 み

Appendix A.3: **Sample of e-mail requests in Chinese**

Object 主旨　：語言教師問卷調查- Questionnaire for language teaching professionals

語言教師問卷調查－歐洲語言學習、教學、評量共同參考架構(CEFR)

親愛的老師您好:

我是服務於文藻外語學院法文系教師 Philippe Valax (華駿川)，目前在紐西蘭懷卡多大學(University of Waikato)攻讀博士學位。為研究**歐洲語言學習、教學、評量共同參考架構**(簡稱 CEFR) 對歐洲及其他國家所形成的影響，我設計這份問卷調查廣徵不同國家(包括您目前任職的國家)的語言教師之意見和看法。

　　我誠懇地邀請您參與本問卷調查活動(詳見附件)。作答時間約 15~20 分鐘。問卷題型大多是勾選或簡答(填寫扼要文字)。題目沒有對或錯的答案。您可按個人狀況勾選【不知道】，也可以。本問卷調查採無記名方式完成。所有參與教師或學校名字皆列為機密資料，絕不外洩。

　　如果您不克填寫問卷，

　　我要謝謝您耐心地看完本信。

　　如果您願意填寫問卷，

　　我很感激您的耐心與幫忙，並請您打開隨函之附件。問卷調查有兩種方式，請自選其中一種。**方式一為電腦式問卷** (computer-based version)：直接點選答案或輸入文字即可。完成之後，請存檔並回寄給我: pv22@waikato.ac.nz (或 ph.valax@gmail.com 也可以)。

　　方式二為紙筆式問卷 (paper-based version)：請您打開檔案(pdf)、列印、作答，完成之後，請以郵寄方式寄到我的地址: Philippe Valax (PhD student), School of Maori and Pacific Development, The University of Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton, New Zealand。

　　附件本問卷調查分別為中文、法文版本，且各提供電腦式及紙筆式問卷，共四種版本。請選擇適合您的(語言及方式)版本做答。

　　再次感謝您抽空協助填寫本問卷。如果您知道還有其他教師同仁可以協助參與本活動，竭誠盼望收到您的推薦名單及電郵資料，或請將此信轉寄出去。

　　敬祝

　　　　　　教安

　　華駿川　(Philippe Valax)

Appendix B: List of institutions and number of teachers contacted for the survey

The following tables give, for each country / area, the names of institutions contacted, the number of persons contacted in each institution and the number of responses obtained. The last column indicates how many of the respondents declared never having heard of the CEFR and consequently could not go beyond Part 1 of the questionnaire. In the first column, the category 'others' indicates respondents who were not directly contacted by me but received the questionnaire through a colleague and participated in the survey.

Table B.1: Institutions and teachers contacted in France

Institutions contacted:	Number of persons contacted	Number of responses	Respondents who had never heard of the CEFR
Université de Provence (Aix-Marseille I)	135	10	0
Université Paris 1 - Panthéon-Sorbonne	61	5	0
Université Paris 4 – La Sorbonne	154	5	0
Université Paris 5 – Descartes	8	1	0
Université Lumière (Lyon 2)	38	1	0
Université de Nantes	92	2	1
Université Charles-de-Gaulle (Lille 3)	282	5	1
Université Marc Bloch (Strasbourg 2)	91	7	2
Others (respondents not contacted)	-	2	0
Total	**861**	**38**	**9**
Participation rate: 4.41%			

Table B.2: Institutions and teachers contacted in the United Kingdom

Institutions contacted:	Number of persons contacted	Number of responses	Respondents who had never heard of the CEFR
University of Cambridge	162	6	3
University of Oxford	97	2	2
Imperial College – London	32	0	0
University of Edinburgh	56	1	0
Lancaster University	18	3	0
University of Bath	26	0	0
Newcastle University	46	2	0
King's College (U. of London)	63	2	0
University of Bristol	119	4	1
University of Warwick	46	0	0
University of Bedfordshire	21	0	0
University of St Andrews	47	1	0
University College London	115	2	2
University of Aberdeen	28	0	0
University of Birmingham	84	1	1
Others (respondents not contacted)	-	1	0
Total	**960**	**25**	**9**
Participation rate: 2.6%			

Table B.3: Institutions and teachers contacted in Australia

Institutions contacted:	Number of persons contacted	Number of responses	Respondents who had never heard of the CEFR
University of Melbourne	84	4	2
La Trobe University	27	3	0
Australian National University (AUT)	57	4	3
University of Sydney	70	4	1
University of Queensland (Brisbane)	38	2	0
University of New South Wales (Sydney)	30	0	0
University of Adelaide	15	0	0
Monash University	84	3	2
University of Western Australia (Perth)	31	2	1
Macquarie University (Sydney)	133	4	4
Other (respondents not contacted)	-	2	1
Total	**569**	**28**	**14**
Participation rate: 5.13%			

Table B.4: Institutions and teachers contacted in New Zealand

Institutions contacted:	Number of persons contacted	Number of responses	Respondents who had never heard of the CEFR
University of Auckland	92	3	2
Massey University (Palmerston North & Wellington)	25	3	1
University of Waikato (Hamilton)	12	2	1
Victoria University (Wellington)	68	4	0
University of Canterbury (Christchurch)	27	2	1
University of Otago (Dunedin)	35	2	1
Unitec (Auckland)	66	4	0
Auckland University of Technology (AUT)	48	3	2
Wellington Institute of Technology: ESOL centre	12	0	0
Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology (CPIT)	52	1	0
Total	**437**	**24**	**10**
Participation rate: 5.49%			

Table B.5: Institutions and teachers contacted in Taiwan

Institutions contacted:	Number of persons contacted	Number of responses	Respondents who had never heard of the CEFR
Wenzao Ursuline College of Languages	171	18	6
Tamkang University	139	2	1
Tunghai University	42	5	1
Fu-Jen University	56	1	0
Other (respondents not contacted)	-	4	1
Total	**408**	**30**	**10**
Participation rate: 7.35%			

Table B.6: *Institutions and teachers contacted in Hong Kong*

Institutions contacted:	Number of persons contacted	Number of responses	Respondents who had never heard of the CEFR
Chinese University of Hong Kong	155	5	0
Hong Kong Polytechnic University	51	0	0
HK University of Science & Technology	16	0	0
HK Institute of Education	80	5	3
The University of Hong Kong	54	3	0
The City University of Hong Kong	19	1	0
Hong Kong Baptist University	57	3	1
Total	**432**	**17**	**4**
Participation rate: 3.94%			

Table B.7: *Total number of respondents contacted and of responses received*

Country / area	Number of persons contacted	Number of responses	Respondents who had never heard of the CEFR	Participation rates
France	861	38	9	4.41%
United Kingdom	960	25	9	2.6%
Australia	569	28	14	5.13%
New Zealand	437	24	10	5.49%
Taiwan	408	30	10	7.35%
Hong Kong	432	17	4	3.94%
Total :	**3667**	**164**	**56**	**4.47%**

Appendix C: Ethics Committee Approval

Te Pua Wānanga Ki Te Ao
(School of Maori and Pacific Development)

Application for
Human Research Ethics Committee Approval 2005

Before applying for approval applicants must familiarise themselves with the **Human Research Ethics Regulations 2000 in the University Calendar.**

This form is to be completed by staff and students doing research **prior to** the collection of any data. If no people are involved in the research as participants, completing this form is unnecessary. Applications should also be made for research which re-analyses individual data which was collected for another purpose.

Upon completion of this form please forward to the Reception at SMPD. Occasionally further information will be requested. Upon approval of this research project, a signed copy will be returned to you for your records. If the research method is amended in any way from that which has been approved, the Application for Ethical Approval from the Human Research Committee must be resubmitted, noting the change.

The SMPD Human Research Ethics Committee is establishing procedures for reviewing the ethical appropriateness of proposed research particularly as it affects Māori and indigenous peoples. The Codes of Ethics of a number of academic groups have been used for guidance.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Name of Applicant: Philippe VALAX

Address: School of Māori and Pacific Development, The University of Waikato, Private Bag 3105, HAMITON

Please notify the Convenor of any changes of address.

Alternative Contact details: c/o Winifred Crombie, 11 Casey Avenue, Hamilton

Ph: _____   Email/fax: pv22@waikato.ac.nx

Ethnicity:European   **Male**

ACADEMIC DETAILS

Degree: PhD

Course:

Department: Dean's Office

Lecturer / supervisor: Winifred   Crombie

Proposed start date of field research: 1 / 2 /   2007

Proposed completion date of field research: 31 / 7 / 2007

CHECKLIST

** __Only__ submit this application form when the checklist is complete (insert additional pages if required). All forms __must__ be delivered to or posted to SMPD Reception with the following details: SMPD HREC

School of Māori and Pacific Development
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton

Personal details	√	Academic Details	√
Participant Consent Form	√	Signatures (where required)	√
Research Information Sheet	√		

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE PARTICIPANT CONSENT INFORMATION AND THE RESEARCH INFORMATION CONSTITUTE THE FIRST PAGE OF THE ATTACHED QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE ALSO NOTE THAT THE ATTACHED QUESTIONNAIRE ACCURATELY REPORTS THE QUESTIONS THAT WILL BE ASKED BUT THE ACTUAL FORMAT WILL BE DIFFERENT (WITH UofW LOGO ETC) AND QUESTIONNAIRE WILL BE IN ENGLISH, MANDARIN AND FRENCH (PARTICIPANTS CAN CHOOSE WHICH VERSION TO USE AND MAY REPLY IN ANY OF THE THREE LANGUAGES.

SMPD Application for HREC Approval 2005   -2-

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Briefly outline the research topic:

.... The objectives of the research project are:

- to critically review the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* and earlier landmark publications produced under the auspices of the Council of Europe with particular reference to curriculum and syllabus design;
- to determine the effect of publications produced under the auspices of the Council of Europe (with particular reference to speech arts) on second and foreign language curriculum and textbook design in Europe, Asia and Oceania;
- to determine the effect (with particular reference to speech arts) of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* on national languages curriculum design in Europe, Asia and Oceania.

Brief outline of Research Methods for Ethical Review:
... **Questionnaire-based survey**
- design a questionnaire relating to the work of the Council of Europe and focusing, in particular, on responses to its treatment of speech arts
- distribute questionnaire to a representative sample of (a) those involved in the design of national curricula for foreign languages in the UK, France, Australia, New Zealand, Taiwan and Singapore;
- record and analyse questionnaire responses

The following questions address specific aspects of the research method related to ethical considerations.

Part 1. Refers specifically to the criteria for participation

1. Who will be the participants? Lecturers, teachers and Ministry of Education personnel involved in curriculum and syllabus design for foreign languages

2. How many participants will there be? Between 10 and 20 in each of 6 countries (minimum of 60; maximum of 120)

3. How will the participants be

(a) Selected
In terms of their known expertise in, and involvement in, foreign language curriculum design.

(b) Recruited

(c) BY direct mail following a telephone call or email

4. Will participants be selected on the basis of their ethnicity, culture, gender, sexuality and/or in other ways which will exclude some people. YES / NO

NO

If **YES**, explain how the selection process ensures that no person or group will feel offended by either their inclusion in or their exclusion from the research.

_____

5. Will any participants differ from the researcher in any significant way relevant to the research? e.g. culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, etc?
   YES / NO

_____

If **YES**, what procedures will be used to ensure that involvement in the research is culturally safe and non-offensive for the participants?

_____

6. Will the research make comparisons between groups of participants on the basis of their culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion or ethical belief? YES/ NO

NO

If **YES**
(a) How will the individuals be categorised into specific groups?

_____

(b) What has been done to ensure that the participants will regard the categories as suitable and appropriate?

_____

(c) What steps have been taken to ensure that neither the conduct of the research, nor its outcomes, will unfairly affect the participants?

7. How will participants give their consent?

Completion of the questionnaire signals that consent is given (as indicated on the front cover of the questionnaire)

(a) When will this consent be given?

At the time of completion of the questionnaire

8. How will the participants be informed of:

(a) the right to withdraw from the research at any stage?

There is only one stage in which human research participants are involved – completion of a questionnaire. They can either complete it or not. There is no option to withdraw after completion as they are not asked to supply their names so there would be no way of knowing which questionnaires to withdraw.

(b) the conditions for withdrawal?

9. If the participants are unable to give consent on their own behalf what provisions are being made to obtain consent?

Part 2. Refers to the research methodology

10. Where will the research be carried out?

Postal questionnaire – so wherever the participants happen to be.

11. What procedures will be carried out?
(Please attach interview, questionnaire or survey items. These may be in draft form).

Questionnaire attached.

12. Are there any potential risks or discomforts to participants?

NO

13. What steps have been taken to preserve confidentiality?

Names not requested. Completed questionnaires will be numbered once they are received for ease of reference.

14. Who else will see any information provided by the participants which is linked to the participants' names?

_____

15. Are you associated with the participants in any way that might influence the ethical appropriateness of your conducting this research (e.g. employer/employee, supervisor/worker, personal relationship etc) YES / NO

NO

16. Will participants receive material benefits from the research, such as payment of any kind for taking part, or reimbursement of expenses? Please specify. (NOTE: Researchers in the SMPD are encouraged to consider 'koha' to participants.)

NO.

17. What provision is there to provide participants information about the outcome of the research?

They are given an email address to contact (included on last page of the questionnaire) if they wish to receive a summary of the research findings

18. What will happen to the data after the completion of the research?

Retained indefinitely by the University of Waikato

19. What has been done to ensure that the research procedures are not likely to be insensitive or cause offence (e.g. to specific ethnic, gender or age groups) or as not to waste the time of the participants?

The participants are mature adults who can decide if they wish to participate when they have viewed the questionnaire. There are no issues relating ti ethnicity, gender or age. The only possible question is whether they might consider completing the questionnaire a waste of time. Acceptance of my research proposal by the Postgraduate Studies Committee should indicate that it is not in any general sense a waste of research participants' time.

Part 3. Refers to concealment of information

20. Does the research involve any concealment of information or deception. YES / NO

NO

If **YES**, please answer the following:

(a) What is the justification for the use of such procedures? Include an explanation of why other, non-deceptive procedures could not be used.

_____

(b) How will you obtain consent from participants to waive their right to prior information on the nature and purpose of the study?

_____

(c) How will you ensure that all participants are given full explanation of information withheld and the reasons it was withheld as soon as practicable?

_____

(d) How will participants be debriefed about the deception?

Applicant's Signature: _____ Date: o2 / o5 / 2006

Supervisor's/Lecturer's Approval
Staff members carry full responsibility at all times for the ethical appropriateness of all graduate and undergraduate research under their supervision, even when this research has been submitted for ethical review.

I have read the ethical review, and in my opinion, this research is ethically sound. I consider that this student has the necessary background and experience to carry out this research ethically under my supervision.

Supervisor's/Lecturer's Name: _WINIFRED CROMBIE_

Supervisor's/Lecturer's Signature: _Winifred Crombie_

Department: _Dean's Office_ Date: _01 / 05 / 06_

Name: _Pania Melbourne_

Signature: _Pania Melbourne_

Department: _Tikanga_ Date: 2 / 5 / 06.

Name: _NGAHUIA TE AWEKOTUKU_

Signature: _Ngahuia Te-Awekotuku_

Department: _SMPD Rangahau_ Date: 2 / 5 / 06

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Department: _____ Date: / /

Appendix D: **Questionnaire for Language teaching professionals**

Appendix D.1: **English paper-based version of the questionnaire for language teaching professionals**

Questionnaire for teachers of foreign language

Information for the respondents:

This questionnaire is part of a Doctoral research project conducted under the auspices of the University of Waikato in New Zealand by Philippe Valax.

The overall aims of this part of the research project are to:

- Determine the extent of the influence of the Council of Europe's *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (hereafter CEFR) in parts of Europe, Asia and Oceania;

- Determine how the influence of the CEFR is perceived.

If you return a completed or partially completed questionnaire, it will be assumed that you agree that your responses can be used as part of the research findings and reported in my thesis and in any publications or presentations that relate to it. However, y**ou are not asked to supply your name.** Completed questionnaires will be given a number and will be referred to by that number in the reporting of the research. The data collected will be reported in summary format and in such a manner that no individual participant or institution can be identified.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions or would like any further information, please contact Philippe Valax:

Email: pv22@waikato.ac.nz

Address: Philippe Valax (PhD student),
             School of Māori and Pacific Development
             The University of Waikato,
             Private Bag 3105,
             Hamilton, New Zealand

Questionnaire for teachers of foreign language

Please tick ☑ the answers that best fit your situation and provide a written response where necessary.

-- ৪০৪ **I** ৫৩৫ --

Part 1: Background information

1-1. What is your nationality? _____

1-2. Age ❑ 21 ~ 30
         ❑ 31 ~ 40
         ❑ 41 ~ 50
         ❑ 51 or above

1-3. What language(s) are you teaching? _____

1-4. For how long have you been teaching a language or languages?

_____

1-5. Do you have any degree(s) or certificate(s) in the language (or languages) you teach (e.g. you are teaching French, you have a degree in French)?   ❑ Yes   ❑ No

1-6. If you answered **'yes'** to question 1-5 above, please provide details as indicated below:

Name of the degree(s) or certification(s)	Country (countries) which delivered those degree(s) or certification(s)	Year obtained
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

1-7. Do you have any degree(s) or certification(s) in the **teaching** of second/foreign languages?

❑ Yes   ❑ No

1-8. If you answered **'yes'**, what degree(s) or certification(s) do you have, in what year and in what country did you obtain it/them?

Degree/Certificate in teaching a language	Year obtained	Country

1-9. Please indicate in which country (countries) you are presently teaching:

❑ Australia   ❑ New Zealand

❑ France   ❑ Taiwan

❑ Great Britain   ❑ Other: _____

❑ Japan

1-10. At what level(s) are you teaching? (you can tick several answers)

❑ Primary school

❑ Lower secondary

❑ Upper secondary

❑ University

❑ Other: _____

1-11. What is your position (e.g. lecturer, assistant professor, etc.)?

_____

_____

1-12. What is your employment status?

❑ Full-time tenured position

❑ Full-time contract teacher

❑ Part-time teacher

❑ Other: _____

1-13. Have you ever designed a language curriculum involving more than your own classes (e.g. the French or Japanese curriculum for all of the students in a particular high school or university)?

❑ Yes   ❑ No

1-14. Have you ever been centrally involved (i.e., as one of the authors) in a national curriculum for one or more language(s)?

❑ Yes   ❑ No

Part 2: The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

2-1. How well do you know the CEFR?

❑ I am familiar or very familiar with it

❑ I know the main ideas

❑ I only have a vague idea

❑ I just know the name, not the contents

❑ I have never heard of it.

❖ *If you ticked the last box in the question above, there is no need for you to respond to the remainder of this questionnaire.*

2-2. How did you get to know about the CEFR (colleagues, readings, other)?

❑ Colleagues

❑ Readings (books, articles, newspaper…)

❑ Other: _____

2-3. Have you read the CEFR or documents about the CEFR? (You can tick more than one category.)

❑ I have read the CEFR

❑ I have read documents related to the CEFR (e.g. European Language Portfolio (ELP), user guides…)

❑ I have read documents presenting the CEFR in a summarized way

❑ I have read documents where the CEFR was mentioned but not really presented

❑ I haven't read anything where the CEFR was mentioned

2-4. As a second / foreign language teacher, have you been introduced to the CEFR in any of the following contexts?

❑ During my pre-service teacher training

❑ During my in-service teacher training

❑ At conferences, seminars, etc.

❏ None of the above

❏ Others: _____

2-5. Have you seen specific reference to the CEFR in any of the following documents? (You can tick more than one category.)

❏ In articles or reviews in professional journals

❏ In textbooks and/or teaching materials

❏ In official national documents (e.g., ministerial decrees, national curricula, examination guidelines)

❏ In official documents issued by your institution (e.g., instructions, curricula, syllabuses, examination guidelines)

❏ Others: _____

2-6. List what seem to you to be the three most important aspects of the CEFR, **apart from the reference levels**.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

2-7. Has the CEFR been translated into the/an official language of the country where you teach?

❏ Yes (go to question 9) ❏ No ❏ I don't know

2-8. If not, are there any plans to do so?

❏ Yes ❏ No, not for the moment ❏ I don't know

2-9. Does the country where you teach use the CEFR or a document derived from the CEFR?

❏ Yes (go to question 11) ❏ No ❏ I don't know

2-10. If not, are there any plans to do so?

❏ Yes ❏ No, not for the moment ❏ I don't know

2-11. Does your institution use the CEFR or a document that incorporates the basic content of the CEFR?

❏ Yes (go to question 2-13) ❏ No ❏ I don't know

2-12. If not, are there any plans to do so?

❏ Yes ❏ No, not for the moment ❏ I don't know

2-13. Does the country where you teach use (local or foreign) examinations or tests linked to the reference levels of the CEFR?

❏ Yes ❏ No ❏ I don't know

If the answer is **'yes'** could you say which examinations/tests?

_____

_____

_____

2-14. Are there any national guidelines in the country where you teach on relating the levels, examinations and tests to CEFR proficiency levels?

❏ Yes ❏ No ❏ I don't know

2-15. In the country where you teach, has the government or your institution recommended any particular level that students should reach at the end of key educational stages (see Question 2-16)?

❏ Yes, the government has recommended a/some level(s)

❏ Yes, my institution has recommended a/some level(s)

❏ No (go to Part 3)

❏ I don't know (go to Part 3)

2-16. If you answered **'yes'** to Question 2-15, could you say which level(s) is/are recommended for which educational stage(s)? Please provide the name of the test or certificate and the level or number of points required (example: CEFR A2; TOEFL 200 points; GEPT intermediate; TCF 300 points, etc.).

Key educational stages	Name of the test/certificate required	Level or number of points required *
End of lower secondary education		
End of upper secondary education		
On completion of a bachelor degree NOT majoring in a foreign language		
On completion of a bachelor degree majoring in a foreign language		
Other: _____		

* Some tests/certificates correspond to a specific level (ex. Key English Test [KET], Certificado Inicial de Español [CIE]). In those conditions, there is no level or number of points to be reported in the third column.

2-17. In Question 2-16 above, **if the levels recommended are not the levels of the CEFR***, could you say to which level of the CEFR they correspond?

* The 6 CEFR levels are labelled A1 to C2: see the Common Reference Levels of the CEFR in the **appendix** *at the end of this questionnaire.*

❑ I don't know

End of lower secondary education: _____

End of upper secondary education: _____

On completion of a bachelor degree NOT majoring in a foreign language: _____

On completion of a bachelor degree majoring in a foreign language: _____

Other: _____

2-18. In your response to Question 2-16 or 2-17, if you indicated any relationship between educational stages and CEFR levels or any other levels, do you think they are realistic?

Key educational stages	Realistic	Not realistic
End of lower secondary education	❑	❑
End of upper secondary education	❑	❑
On completion of a bachelor degree NOT majoring in a foreign language	❑	❑
On completion of a Bachelor degree majoring in a foreign language	❑	❑
Other: _____	❑	❑

* Some tests/certificates correspond to a specific level (ex. Key English Test [KET], Certificado Inicial de Español [CIE]). In those conditions, there is no level or number of points to be reported in the third column.

2-19. For each of the educational stages below, which level of the CEFR do you believe would be an appropriate target? *(See the description of the Common Reference Levels of the CEFR in the **appendix** at the end of this questionnaire.)*

Key educational stages	Levels of the CEFR (A1 to C2) you would recommend as an objective for each level
End of lower secondary education	
End of upper secondary education	
On completion of a bachelor degree NOT majoring in a foreign language	
On completion of a bachelor degree majoring in a foreign language	
Other (if you indicated another level in the preceding tables): _____	

Part 3: The impact of the CEFR

3-1. How well do you think the CEFR is known among language teachers in the country where you teach? (Circle one number on the scale below.)

Very well ◄ 1   2   3   4   5   6   ➤ Not at all   ❑ I don't know

3-2. Do you think that the impact of the CEFR in the country where you teach is generally positive? (Circle one number on the scale below.)

Very positive ◄ 1   2   3   4   5   6   ➤ Very negative   ❑ I don't know

3-3. Has the CEFR had any useful effect in the country in which you teach in any of the following domains? (Circle one number on each scale below.)

A. The planning of curriculum/syllabus in any sector of education:

Very useful ◄ 1   2   3   4   5   6   ➤ Not useful at all   ❑ I don't know

Add a comment if you wish: _____

_____

_____

B. Assessment:

Very useful ◄ 1   2   3   4   5   6   ➤ Not useful at all   ❑ I don't know

Add a comment if you wish: _____

_____

_____

C. Teacher training (pre- or in-service):

Very useful ◄ 1   2   3   4   5   6   ➤ Not useful at all   ❑ I don't know

Add a comment if you wish: _____

_____

_____

D. Textbooks used or published in the country:

Very useful ◄ 1 2 3 4 5 6 ➤ Not useful at all   ❑ I don't know

Add a comment if you wish:_____

_____

_____

3-4. In your personal teaching practice, to what extent have you found the CEFR useful in any of the following areas? (Circle one number on the scale OR tick the box on the right if you have not implemented the CEFR in a category and cannot answer.)

A. The planning of courses, syllabuses

Very useful ◄ 1 2 3 4 5 6 ➤ Not useful at all
❑ I have not used the CEFR in this area

B. Teaching style and methods

Very useful ◄ 1 2 3 4 5 6 ➤ Not useful at all
❑ I have not used the CEFR in this area

C. Testing and assessment

Very useful ◄ 1 2 3 4 5 6 ➤ Not useful at all
❑ I have not used the CEFR in this area

D. Communication with students about teaching and learning

Very useful ◄ 1 2 3 4 5 6 ➤ Not useful at all
❑ I have not used the CEFR in this area

E. Communication with students about testing and assessment

Very useful ◄ 1 2 3 4 5 6 ➤ Not useful at all
❑ I have not used the CEFR in this area

3-5. Do you believe that there are any problems in relation to the CEFR in the institution(s) where you teach?   ❑ Yes   ❑ No   ❑ I don't know

Please comment:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3-6. Do you believe that there are any problems in relation to the CEFR at a national level in the country in which you work?　❑ Yes　　　❑ No　　　❑ I don't know

Please comment:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3-7. Do you believe that any of the following statements about the CEFR are TRUE or FALSE?

a. The CEFR is helpful:　❑ True　　❑ False　　❑ I don't know

b. The CEFR is user-friendly (easy to understand and easy to use) :

　❑ True　　❑ False　　❑ I don't know

c. The CEFR provides a workable basis for comparing the standards of proficiency achieved in different countries:

　❑ True　　❑ False　　❑ I don't know

d. The CEFR provides a good basis for ministries of education in different countries to determine how well their country is doing in the area of language teaching and learning:

　❑ True　　❑ False　　❑ I don't know

e. The CEFR has too little to say about curriculum and syllabus design:

　❑ True　　❑ False　　❑ I don't know

f. The reference levels are the most well known part of the CEFR:

　❑ True　　❑ False　　❑ I don't know

g. The CEFR focuses too much on assessment:

　❑ True　　❑ False　　❑ I don't know

h. The CEFR does not explain how to link teaching and assessment:

　❑ True　　❑ False　　❑ I don't know

i. The theories behind the approach in the CEFR are not clearly presented or explained:

　❑ True　　❑ False　　❑ I don't know

j. The CEFR does not take into account recent developments in linguistics / The linguistic theories in the CEFR are outdated:

❑ True   ❑ False   ❑ I don't know

k. The enormous number of different aspects of 'communicative competence' included in the CEFR is more confusing than helpful:

❑ True   ❑ False   ❑ I don't know

l. It is not clear how to apply the CEFR in the classroom:

❑ True   ❑ False   ❑ I don't know

m. The large variety of scales in the CEFR is more confusing than helpful:

❑ True   ❑ False   ❑ I don't know

n. The CEFR should provide more practical examples of how it can be used:

❑ True   ❑ False   ❑ I don't know

o. It is becoming impossible to avoid the CEFR in the field of language teaching and learning:

❑ True   ❑ False   ❑ I don't know

p. The CEFR is largely irrelevant outside of Europe:

❑ True   ❑ False   ❑ I don't know

q. The description of the common reference levels in the CEFR should be language- specific:

❑ True   ❑ False   ❑ I don't know

3-8. What do you believe the main purpose or purposes of the CEFR are? (You can tick more than one answer.)

❑ To establish common proficiency standards or benchmarks nationally and internationally

❑ To indicate what aspects of language and language use should be included in teaching programs

❑ To provide a basis for comparison about the levels of language proficiency of people who wish to study or work abroad

❑ To promote Europe as the main source of information about professional approaches to language education

3-9. Are there any comments you would like to add? (You can attach an additional page if necessary.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you very much for your participation.

Appendix - Common Reference Levels: global scale

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, 2001) p. 24, Table 1: Common Reference Levels, global scale.

C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options
B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Appendix D.2: **English computer-based version of the questionnaire for language teaching professionals**

Questionnaire for teachers of foreign language

Information for the respondents:

This questionnaire is part of a Doctoral research project conducted under the auspices of the University of Waikato in New Zealand by Philippe Valax.

The overall aims of this part of the research project are to:

- Determine the extent of the influence of the Council of Europe's *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (hereafter CEFR) in parts of Europe, Asia and Oceania;

- Determine how the influence of the CEFR is perceived.

If you return a completed or partially completed questionnaire, it will be assumed that you agree that your responses can be used as part of the research findings and reported in my thesis and in any publications or presentations that relate to it. However, y**ou are not asked to supply your name.** Completed questionnaires will be given a number and will be referred to by that number in the reporting of the research. The data collected will be reported in summary format and in such a manner that no individual participant or institution can be identified.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions or would like any further information, please contact Philippe Valax:

Email: pv22@waikato.ac.nz

Address: Philippe Valax (PhD student),
                School of Māori and Pacific Development
                The University of Waikato,
                Private Bag 3105,
                Hamilton, New Zealand

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Instructions: Select the answers that best fit your situation by clicking on the grey boxes (☐) (note that a cross ☒ will appear, not a tick sign). Click on the drop down lists (indicated by a blue arrow ⬇) and select the appropriate answer by clicking on it. Each time a written answer is required, please write directly in the underlined grey boxes (_____): their size will automatically adapt to the length of your text. <u>Don't forget to save your answers</u>. Thank you for your participation.

-- ৯৩ **I** ୫୦୧ --

Part 1: Background information

1-1. What is your nationality? _____

1-2. What is your age? --click here-- ⬇

1-3. What language(s) are you teaching? _____

1-4. For how long have you been teaching a language or languages? _____

1-5. Do you have any degree(s) or certificate(s) in the language (or languages) you teach (e.g. you are teaching French, you have a degree in French)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

1-6. If you answered '**yes**' to question 5 above, please provide details as indicated below:

Name of the degree(s) or certification(s)	Countries which delivered these degree(s) or certification(s)	Year obtained
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

1-7. Do you have any degree(s) or certification(s) in the **teaching** of second/foreign languages? ☐ Yes ☐ No

1-8. If you answered **'yes'**, what degree(s) or certification(s) do you have, in what year and in what country did you obtain it/them?

Degree/Certificate in teaching a language	Year obtained	Country
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

1-9. Please indicate in which country (countries) you are presently teaching:

☐ Australia   ☐ New Zealand
☐ France   ☐ Taiwan
☐ Great Britain   ☐ Other(s): _____
☐ Hong Kong

1-10. At what level(s) are you teaching? (you can tick several answers)

☐ Primary school   ☐ University
☐ Lower secondary   ☐ Other: _____
☐ Upper secondary

1-11. What is your position (e.g. lecturer, assistant professor, etc.)? _____

1-12. What is your employment status?
-- click here and select an answer--⬇
☐ Other: _____

1-13. Have you ever designed a language curriculum involving more than your own classes (e.g. the French or Japanese curriculum for all of the students in a particular high school or university)? ☐ Yes   ☐ No

1-14. Have you ever been centrally involved (i.e., as one of the authors) in a national curriculum for one or more language(s)?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

-- ৰুৡ **II** ৡৰ --

Part 2: The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

2-1. How well do you know the CEFR?

☐ I am familiar or very familiar with it

☐ I know the main ideas

☐ I only have a vague idea

☐ I just know the name, not the contents

☐ I have never heard of it.

❖ *If you ticked the last box in the question above, there is no need for you to respond to the remainder of this questionnaire.*

2-2. How did you get to know about the CEFR (colleagues, readings, other)?

☐ Colleagues

☐ Readings (books, articles, newspaper…)

☐ Other: _____

2-3. Have you read the CEFR or documents about the CEFR? (You can tick more than one category.)

☐ I have read the CEFR

☐ I have read documents related to the CEFR (e.g. European Language Portfolio (ELP), user guides…)

☐ I have read documents presenting the CEFR in a summarized way

☐ I have read documents where the CEFR was mentioned but not really presented

☐ I haven't read anything where the CEFR was mentioned

2-4. As a second / foreign language teacher, have you been introduced to the CEFR in any of the following contexts?

☐ During my pre-service teacher training

☐ During my in-service teacher training

☐ At conferences, seminars, etc.

☐ None of the above

☐ Others: _____

2-5. Have you seen specific reference to the CEFR in any of the following documents? (You can tick more than one category.)

☐ In articles or reviews in professional journals

☐ In textbooks and/or teaching materials

☐ In official national documents (e.g., ministerial decrees, national curricula, examination guidelines)

☐ In official documents issued by your institution (e.g., instructions, curricula, syllabuses, examination guidelines)

☐ Others: _____

2-6. List what seem to you to be the three most important aspects of the CEFR, **apart from the reference levels**.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

2-7. Has the CEFR been translated into the/an official language of the country where you teach?

☐ Yes (go to question 2-9) ☐ No ☐ I don't know

2-8. If not, are there any plans to do so?

☐ Yes ☐ No, not for the moment ☐ I don't know

2-9. Does the country where you teach use the CEFR or a document derived from the CEFR?

☐ Yes (go to question 2-11) ☐ No ☐ I don't know

2-10. If not, are there any plans to do so?

☐ Yes ☐ No, not for the moment ☐ I don't know

2-11. Does your institution use the CEFR or a document that incorporates the basic content of the CEFR?

☐ Yes (go to question 2-13) ☐ No ☐ I don't know

2-12. If not, are there any plans to do so?

☐ Yes ☐ No, not for the moment ☐ I don't know

2-13. Does the country where you teach use (local or foreign) examinations or tests linked to the reference levels of the CEFR?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

If the answer is **'yes'** could you say which examinations/tests?

_____

2-14. Are there any national guidelines in the country where you teach on relating the levels, examinations and tests to CEFR proficiency levels?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

2-15. In the country where you teach, has the government or your institution recommended any particular level that students should reach at the end of key educational stages (see Question 2-16)?

☐ Yes, the government has recommended a/some level(s)

☐ Yes, my institution has recommended a/some level(s)

☐ No (go to Part 3)

☐ I don't know (go to Part 3)

2-16. If you answered **'yes'** to question 2-15, could you say which level(s) is/are recommended for which educational stage(s)? Please provide the name of the tests or certificates and the level or number of points required (example: CEFR A2; TOEFL 200 points; IELTS 6.5; GEPT intermediate; TCF 300 points, etc.).

Key educational stages	Name of the test/certificate required	Level or number of points required *
End of lower secondary education	_____	_____
End of upper secondary education	_____	_____
On completion of a bachelor degree NOT majoring in a foreign language	_____	_____
On completion of a bachelor degree majoring in a foreign language	_____	_____
Other: _____	_____	_____

* Some tests/certificates correspond to a specific level (ex. Key English Test [KET], Certificado Inicial de Español [CIE]). In those conditions, there is no level or number of points to be reported in the third column.

2-17. In question 2-16 above, **if the levels recommended are not the levels of the CEFR**, could you say to which level of the CEFR* they correspond?

** CEFR levels are labelled A1 to C2: see the Common Reference Levels of the CEFR in **Table 1,** on page 9 of this questionnaire (following question 2-19).*

☐ I don't know

End of lower secondary education: _____

End of upper secondary education: _____

On completion of a bachelor degree NOT majoring in a foreign language: _____

On completion of a bachelor degree majoring in a foreign language: _____

Other: _____

2-18. In questions 2-16 and 2-17, if you indicated any recommended level for any educational stages, do you think they are realistic?

Key educational stages	Realistic	Not realistic
End of lower secondary education	☐	☐
End of upper secondary education	☐	☐
On completion of a bachelor degree NOT majoring in a foreign language	☐	☐
On completion of a Bachelor degree majoring in a foreign language	☐	☐
Other: _____	☐	☐

2-19. For each of the educational stages below, which level of the CEFR do you believe would be an appropriate target? *(Please refer to the description of the Common Reference Levels of the CEFR in* **Table 1** *on the following page.)*

Key educational stages	Levels of the CEFR (A1 to C2) you would recommend as an objective for each level
End of lower secondary education	_____
End of upper secondary education	_____
On completion of a bachelor degree NOT majoring in a foreign language	_____
On completion of a bachelor degree majoring in a foreign language	_____
Other (if you indicated another level in the preceding tables): _____	_____

Table 1 - Common Reference Levels: global scale

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, 2001) p. 24, Table 1: Common Reference Levels, global scale.

N.B.: After answering question 2-19, please proceed to Part 3 on the following page.

C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options
B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Please proceed to the following page to answer the remainder of the questionnaire (Part 3).

Part 3: The impact of the CEFR

3-1. How well do you think the CEFR is known among language teachers in the country where you teach? (Tick the box under the appropriate number on the scale below.)

Very well ≺ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ≻ Not at all
☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

3-2. Do you think that the impact of the CEFR in the country where you teach is generally positive? (Tick the box under the appropriate number on the scale below.)

Very positive ≺ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ≻ Very negative   ☐ I don't know
☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

3-3. Has the CEFR had any useful effect in the country in which you teach in any of the following domains? (Tick the box under the appropriate number on each of the scales below.)

A. The planning of curriculum/syllabus in any sector of education:

Very useful ≺ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ≻ Not useful at all ☐ I don't know
☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

Add a comment if you wish: _____

B. Assessment:

Very useful ≺ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ≻ Not useful at all ☐ I don't know
☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

Add a comment if you wish: _____

C. Teacher training (pre- or in-service):

Very useful ≺ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ≻ Not useful at all ☐ I don't know
☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

Add a comment if you wish: _____

D. Textbooks used or published in the country:

Very useful ≺ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ≻ Not useful at all ☐ I don't know
☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

Add a comment if you wish: _____

3-4. In your personal teaching practice, have you found the CEFR useful in any of the following areas? (Tick the box under the appropriate number on each of the scales below OR the box on the right if you have not implemented the CEFR in a category and cannot answer.)

A. The planning of courses, syllabuses

Very useful ◄ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ➤ Not useful at all ☐ I have not used the
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ CEFR in this area

B. Teaching style and methods

Very useful ◄ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ➤ Not useful at all ☐ I have not used the
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ CEFR in this area

C. Testing and assessment

Very useful ◄ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ➤ Not useful at all ☐ I have not used the
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ CEFR in this area

D. Communication with students about teaching and learning

Very useful ◄ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ➤ Not useful at all ☐ I have not used the
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ CEFR in this area

E. Communication with students about testing and assessment

Very useful ◄ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ➤ Not useful at all ☐ I have not used the
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ CEFR in this area

3-5. Do you believe that there are any problems in relation to the CEFR in the institution(s)
where you teach? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know
Please comment: _____

3-6. Do you believe that there are any problems in relation to the CEFR at a national level in the
country in which you work? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know
Please comment: _____

3-7. Do you believe that any of the following statements about the CEFR are TRUE or FALSE?

a. The CEFR is helpful: ☐ True ☐ False ☐ I don't know

b. The CEFR is user-friendly (easy to understand and easy to use):

☐ True ☐ False ☐ I don't know

c. The CEFR provides a workable basis for comparing the standards of proficiency achieved in different countries:

☐ True   ☐ False   ☐ I don't know

d. The CEFR provides a good basis for ministries of education in different countries to determine how well their country is doing in the area of language teaching and learning:

☐ True   ☐ False   ☐ I don't know

e. The CEFR has too little to say about curriculum and syllabus design:

☐ True   ☐ False   ☐ I don't know

f. The reference levels are the most well known part of the CEFR:

☐ True   ☐ False   ☐ I don't know

g. The CEFR focuses too much on assessment:

☐ True   ☐ False   ☐ I don't know

h. The CEFR does not explain how to link teaching and assessment:

☐ True   ☐ False   ☐ I don't know

i. The theories behind the approach in the CEFR are not clearly presented or explained:

☐ True   ☐ False   ☐ I don't know

j. The CEFR does not take into account recent developments in linguistics / The linguistic theories in the CEFR are outdated:

☐ True   ☐ False   ☐ I don't know

k. The enormous number of different aspects of 'communicative competence' included in the CEFR is more confusing than helpful:

☐ True   ☐ False   ☐ I don't know

l. It is not clear how to apply the CEFR in the classroom:

☐ True   ☐ False   ☐ I don't know

m. The large variety of scales in the CEFR is more confusing than helpful:

☐ True   ☐ False   ☐ I don't know

n. The CEFR should provide more practical examples of how it can be used:

☐ True   ☐ False   ☐ I don't know

o. It is becoming impossible to avoid the CEFR in the field of language teaching and learning:

☐ True ☐ False ☐ I don't know

p. The CEFR is largely irrelevant outside of Europe:

☐ True ☐ False ☐ I don't know

q. The description of the common reference levels in the CEFR should be language- specific:

☐ True ☐ False ☐ I don't know

3-8. What do you believe the main purpose or purposes of the CEFR are? (You can tick more than one answer.)

☐ To establish common proficiency standards or benchmarks nationally and internationally

☐ To indicate what aspects of language and language use should be included in teaching programs

☐ To provide a basis for comparison about the levels of language proficiency of people who wish to study or work abroad

☐ To promote Europe as the main source of information about professional approaches to language education

3-9. Are there any comments you would like to add?

Thank you very much for your participation.

Don't forget to save your answers and to send back the completed questionnaire to the following address: pv22@waikato.ac.nz

Appendix D.3: **French paper-based version of the questionnaire for language teaching professionals**

Questionnaire pour les enseignants de langues étrangères

Informations pour les répondants :

Ce questionnaire fait partie d'un projet de recherches doctorales conduit sous les auspices de l'Université de Waikato (Nouvelle-Zélande) par Philippe Valax.

Les objectifs généraux de cette partie des recherches sont :

- De déterminer l'étendue de l'influence du *Cadre Européen Commun de Référence pour les Langues* (ci-après CECR), publié par le Conseil de l'Europe, dans des parties de l'Europe, de l'Asie et de l'Océanie ;
- De déterminer comment cette influence a été perçue.

En renvoyant un questionnaire entièrement ou partiellement rempli, vous acceptez que vos réponses puissent être utilisées dans les résultats de ces recherches et rapportées dans ma thèse ou dans toute publication ou présentation liée à ma thèse. Cependant, vous n'avez pas à donner votre nom. Un numéro sera attribué aux questionnaires remplis. Les questionnaires seront mentionnés dans le compte-rendu des recherches par ce numéro. Les données recueillies seront résumées et rapportées de manière à ce qu'on ne puisse pas identifier les individus ou les institutions ayant participé à ce questionnaire.

Votre coopération est grandement appréciée. Si vous avez des questions ou désirez de plus amples informations, veuillez contacter Philippe Valax :

Courriel :   pv22@waikato.ac.nz

Addresse :   Philippe Valax (PhD student),
School of Māori and Pacific Development
The University of Waikato,
Private Bag 3105,
Hamilton, New Zealand

Questionnaire pour les enseignants de langues étrangères

Veuillez cocher ☑ les réponses qui correspondent le mieux à votre situation et fournir une réponse écrite lorsque c'est nécessaire.

--- ৪০৪ **I** ୯୪୯ ---

1ᵉ Partie: Informations générales

1-1. Quelle est votre nationalité ? _____

1-2. Age ❑ 21 ~ 30 ans

❑ 31 ~ 40 ans

❑ 41 ~ 50 ans

❑ 51 ans ou plus

1-3. Quelle(s) langue(s) enseignez-vous ? _____

1-4. Pendant combien de temps avez-vous enseigné une/des langue(s) vivante(s) ?

_____

1-5. Avez-vous un (ou plusieurs) diplôme(s) ou certificat(s) dans l'étude de la/des langue(s) que vous enseignez (ex. un diplôme/certificat d'anglais si vous enseignez l'anglais) ?

❑ Oui   ❑ Non

1-6. Si vous avez répondu **"oui"** à la Question 1-5, veuillez fournir les détails demandés ci-dessous :

Nom du/des diplôme(s) ou certificat(s)	Pays ayant délivré ce(s) diplôme(s) ou certificat (s)	Année d'obtention
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

1-7. Avez-vous un/des diplôme(s) ou certificat(s) pour **l'enseignement** d'une (ou plusieurs) langue(s) seconde(s) ou étrangère(s) ?   ❑ Oui   ❑ Non

1-8. Si vous avez répondu **"oui"**, le(s)quel(s), en quelle année et dans quel pays l'avez-vous (les avez-vous) obtenu(s) ?

Diplôme/Certificat dans l'enseignement d'une langue	Année d'obtention	Pays

1-9. Veuillez indiquer le(s) pays dans le(s)quel(s) vous enseignez à l'heure actuelle :   ❑ Nouvelle-Zélande

❑ Australie   ❑ Taiwan

❑ France   ❑ Japon

❑ Grande-bretagne   ❑ Autre : _____

1-10. A quel(s) niveau(x) enseignez-vous ? (vous pouvez cocher plusieurs réponses)

❑ Primaire

❑ Secondaire 1e cycle (collège…)

❑ Secondaire 2e cycle (lycée…)

❑ Enseignement supérieur

❑ Autre : _____

1-11. Quel est votre titre ? (par ex. professeur certifié, agrégé, professeur de lycée professionnel, maître de conférence, professeur, etc.)

_____

_____

1-12. Quelle est votre situation d'emploi ?

❑ Enseignant titulaire à temps complet

❑ Enseignant contractuel à temps complet

❑ Enseignant à temps partiel

❑ Autre : _____

1-13. Avez-vous déjà conçu un programme d'étude de langue vivante ne concernant pas seulement vos classes (par exemple, le programme d'enseignement de l'allemand, ou du japonais, pour tous les élèves d'un établissement secondaire ou les étudiants d'une université)?

❑ Oui   ❑ Non

1-14. Avez-vous été impliqué de manière centrale (c'est-à-dire comme l'un des auteurs) dans l'élaboration d'un programme national d'étude d'une ou plusieurs langue(s) vivante(s) ?

❑ Oui   ❑ Non

2ème Partie: Le Cadre Européen Commun de Référence pour les Langues (CECR)

2-1. Quelle connaissance avez-vous du CECR?

❑ Je le connais bien ou très bien

❑ J'en connais les idées principales

❑ Je n'en ai qu'une vague idée

❑ J'en connais seulement le nom, pas le contenu

❑ Je n'en ai jamais entendu parler

❖ *Si vous avez coché la dernière case ci-dessus, il n'est pas nécessaire que vous répondiez à la suite de ce questionnaire.*

2-2. Comment avez-vous connu le CECR (collègues, lectures, autre)?

❑ Par des collègues

❑ A travers des lectures (livres, articles, journaux..)

❑ Autre : _____

2-3. Avez-vous lu le CECR ou des documents sur le CECR ? (Vous pouvez cocher plusieurs réponses.)

❑ J'ai lu le CECR

❑ J'ai lu des documents liés au CECR (ex. le Portfolio Européen des langues (PEL), les guides des utilisateurs…)

❑ J'ai lu des documents présentant le CECR d'une manière simplifiée

❑ J'ai lu des documents mentionnant le CECR, mais sans le présenter réellement

❑ Je n'ai rien lu mentionnant le CECR

2-4. En tant qu'enseignant de langue seconde/étrangère, avez-vous connu le CECR dans l'un des contextes suivants ?

❑ Au cours de ma formation initiale

❑ Au cours de ma formation continue

❑ Dans des conférences, des séminaires, etc.

❑ Dans aucun de ces contextes

❑ Autres : _____

2-5. Avez-vous vu des références spécifiques au CECR dans un des types de documents suivants ? (Vous pouvez cocher plusieurs réponses.)

❑ Dans des articles ou des rapports dans les revues spécialisées

❑ Dans les manuels d'enseignement ou le matériel pédagogique

❑ Dans des documents officiels nationaux (ex. décrets ministériels, programmes scolaires nationaux, directives d'examens)

❑ Dans des documents officiels publiés par mon établissement (ex. instructions, programmes d'études ou de cours, directives d'examens)

❑ Autres : _____

2-6. Donnez les trois aspects du CECR qui vous semblent les plus importants, **en dehors des niveaux de référence**.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

2-7. Le CECR a-t-il été traduit dans la/une langue officielle du pays où vous enseignez ?

❑ Oui (passez à la question 2-9)   ❑ Non   ❑ Je ne sais pas

2-8. Si non, y a-t-il des projets pour le faire ?

❑ Oui   ❑ Non, pas pour le moment   ❑ Je ne sais pas

2-9. Le pays où vous enseignez utilise-t-il le CECR ou un document dérivé du CECR ?

❑ Oui (passez à la question 2-11)   ❑ Non   ❑ Je ne sais pas

2-10. Si non, y a-t-il des projets pour le faire ?

❑ Oui   ❑ Non, pas pour le moment   ❑ Je ne sais pas

2-11. Votre établissement utilise-t-il le CECR ou un document incorporant les éléments de base du CECR ?

❑ Oui (passez à la question 2-13)   ❑ Non   ❑ Je ne sais pas

2-12. Si non, y a-t-il des projets pour le faire ?

❑ Oui   ❑ Non, pas pour le moment   ❑ Je ne sais pas

2-13. Le pays où vous enseignez utilise-t-il des examens ou des tests (locaux ou étrangers) liés aux niveaux de référence du CECR ?

❑ Oui   ❑ Non   ❑ Je ne sais pas

Si la réponse est **"oui"** pourriez-vous dire quels examens / tests ?

_____

_____

_____

2-14. Dans le pays où vous enseignez, y a-t-il des directives nationales pour relier les niveaux, les examens et les tests aux niveaux de compétence du CECR ?

❑ Oui   ❑ Non   ❑ Je ne sais pas

2-15. Dans le pays où vous enseignez, le gouvernement ou votre établissement ont-ils recommandé un niveau particulier que les étudiants devraient atteindre à la fin des différents cycles éducatifs (voir Question 2-16) ?

❑ Oui, le gouvernement a recommandé un/des niveau(x)

❑ Oui, mon établissement a recommandé un/des niveau(x)

❑ Non (passez à la 3ᵉ Partie)

❑ Je ne sais pas (passez à la 3ᵉ Partie)

2-16. Si vous avez répondu **"Oui"** à la question 2-15, pourriez-vous dire quel(s) niveau(x) est/sont recommandé(s) pour quel cycle éducatif ? Veuillez donner le nom des tests / certificats demandés et le niveau ou le nombre de points requis (exemple : CECR A2, TCF 300 points, GEPT intermédiaire, IELTS 6.5, TOEFL 200 points, etc.).

Cycles éducatifs	Nom du test ou certificat requis	Niveau ou nombre de points requis *
Fin du 1e cycle du secondaire		
Fin du 2e cycle du secondaire		
À la fin d'une licence NON spécialisée en langue étrangère		
À la fin d'une licence spécialisée en langue étrangère		
Autre : _____		

* Certains tests/certificats correspondent déjà à un niveau précis (ex. Key English Test [KET], Certificado Inicial de Español [CIE]). Dans ce cas, il n'y a pas de niveau ou nombre de points à reporter dans la 3e colonne.

2-17. Dans la question 2-16 ci-dessus, **si les niveaux recommandés ne sont pas les niveaux du CECR**, Pouvez-vous dire à quels niveaux du CECR* ils correspondent ?

** Les niveaux du Cadre Européen (CECR) s'échelonnent de A1 à C2 : voir l'**appendice** à la fin de ce questionnaire.*

❑ Je ne sais pas

Fin du 1e cycle du secondaire : _____

Fin du 2e cycle du secondaire : _____

À la fin d'une licence NON spécialisée en langue étrangère : _____

À la fin d'une licence spécialisée en langue étrangère : _____

Autre : _____

2-18. Dans votre réponse aux questions 2-16 et 2-17, si vous avez indiqué un lien entre un/des cycle(s) éducatif(s) et les niveaux du CECR, pensez-vous qu'ils sont réalistes ?

Cycles éducatifs	Réaliste	Irréaliste
Fin du 1e cycle du secondaire	❑	❑
Fin du 2e cycle du secondaire	❑	❑
À la fin d'une licence NON spécialisée en langue étrangère	❑	❑
À la fin d'une licence spécialisée en langue étrangère	❑	❑
Autre : _____	❑	❑

2-19. À votre avis, pour chacun des cycles éducatifs ci-dessous, quel niveau du Cadre Européen (CECR) constituerait un objectif approprié ? *(Aidez-vous de la description des Niveaux communs de référence du CECR en* **appendice***, à la fin de ce questionnaire.)*

Cycles éducatifs	Niveau du CECR (A1 to C2) que vous **recommanderiez** comme objectif pour chaque niveau
Fin du 1e cycle du secondaire	
Fin du 2e cycle du secondaire	
À la fin d'une licence NON spécialisée en langue étrangère	
À la fin d'une licence spécialisée en langue étrangère	
Autre (si vous avez indiqué un autre niveau précédemment) : _____	

3ème Partie: L'impact du CECR

3-1. Selon vous, à quel point le CECR est-il connu chez les enseignants de langues du pays où vous enseignez ? (Entourez un chiffre sur l'échelle ci-dessous.)

Très bien connu ◄ 1 2 3 4 5 6 ➤ Pas connu du tout

3-2. Pensez-vous que l'impact du CECR dans le pays où vous enseignez est globalement positif ? (Entourez un chiffre sur l'échelle ci-dessous.)

Très positif ◄ 1 2 3 4 5 6 ➤ Très négatif   ❑ Je ne sais pas

3-3. Le CECR a-t-il eu des effets utiles dans l'un des domaines suivants ? (Entourez un chiffre sur chacune des échelles ci-dessous.)

A. La planification des programmes dans un/plusieurs secteur(s) de l'éducation:

Très utile ◄ 1 2 3 4 5 6 ➤ Pas du tout utile   ❑ Je ne sais pas

Commentez si vous le souhaitez : _____

_____

_____

B. L'évaluation :

Très utile ◄ 1 2 3 4 5 6 ➤ Pas du tout utile   ❑ Je ne sais pas

Commentez si vous le souhaitez : _____

_____

_____

C. La formation des enseignants (initiale ou continue) :

Très utile ◄ 1 2 3 4 5 6 ➤ Pas du tout utile   ❑ Je ne sais pas

Commentez si vous le souhaitez : _____

_____

_____

D. Les manuels utilisés ou publiés dans le pays :

Très utile ◄ 1 2 3 4 5 6 ► Pas du tout utile ❑ Je ne sais pas

Commentez si vous le souhaitez :

3-4. Dans votre pratique personnelle de l'enseignement, avez-vous trouvé le CECR utile dans les catégories suivantes ? (Entourez le chiffre qui convient sur chacune des échelles ci-dessous OU cochez la case à droite si vous n'avez pas mis le CECR en pratique dans une catégorie et que vous ne pouvez pas répondre.)

A. La planification des cours, les plans de cours (syllabus)

Très utile ◄ 1 2 3 4 5 6 ► Pas du tout utile ❑ Je n'ai pas utilisé le CECR dans ce domaine

B. Le style et les méthodes pédagogiques

Très utile ◄ 1 2 3 4 5 6 ► Pas du tout utile ❑ Je n'ai pas utilisé le CECR dans ce domaine

C. Les examens et l'évaluation

Très utile ◄ 1 2 3 4 5 6 ► Pas du tout utile ❑ Je n'ai pas utilisé le CECR dans ce domaine

D. La Communication avec les apprenants au sujet de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage

❑ Je n'ai pas utilisé le CECR dans ce domaine

Très utile ◄ 1 2 3 4 5 6 ► Pas du tout utile

E. La Communication avec les apprenants au sujet des examens et de l'évaluation

Très utile ◄ 1 2 3 4 5 6 ► Pas du tout utile ❑ Je n'ai pas utilisé le CECR dans ce domaine

3-5. Pensez-vous qu'il y ait des problèmes liés au CECR dans le ou les établissement(s) où vous enseignez ?   ❑ Oui   ❑ Non   ❑ Je ne sais pas

Veuillez préciser :

3-6. Pensez-vous qu'il y ait des problèmes liés au CECR au niveau national dans le pays où vous enseignez ? ❑ Oui ❑ Non ❑ Je ne sais pas

Veuillez préciser :

_____

_____

_____

_____

3-7. Pensez-vous que les déclarations suivantes, au sujet du CECR, sont VRAIES ou FAUSSES ?

a. Le CECR est utile : ❑ Vrai ❑ Faux ❑ Je ne sais pas

b. Le CECR est convivial (facile à comprendre et à utiliser) :

❑ Vrai ❑ Faux ❑ Je ne sais pas

c. Le CECR fournit une base utile pour comparer les critères de compétences établis dans différents pays : ❑ Vrai ❑ Faux ❑ Je ne sais pas

d. Le CECR fournit une bonne base aux ministères de l'éducation des différents pays pour déterminer la qualité de leur action dans le domaine de l'enseignement / apprentissage des langues : ❑ Vrai ❑ Faux ❑ Je ne sais pas

e. Le CECR parle trop peu de la conception des programmes d'étude et des syllabus de cours : ❑ Vrai ❑ Faux ❑ Je ne sais pas

f. Les niveaux de référence sont la partie la mieux connue du CECR : ❑ Vrai ❑ Faux ❑ Je ne sais pas

g. Le CECR est trop centré sur l'évaluation : ❑ Vrai ❑ Faux ❑ Je ne sais pas

h. Le CECR n'explique pas comment relier l'enseignement et l'évaluation : ❑ Vrai ❑ Faux ❑ Je ne sais pas

i. Les théories soutenant l'approche du CECR ne sont pas clairement présentées ni expliquées : ❑ Vrai ❑ Faux ❑ Je ne sais pas

j. Le CECR ne prend pas en compte les développements récents de la linguistique / Les théories linguistiques du CECR sont dépassées :

❑ Vrai   ❑ Faux   ❑ Je ne sais pas

k. En incluant quasiment tout ce qui pouvait être dit sur une langue, le CECR fixe des buts impossibles aux enseignants et aux apprenants :

❑ Vrai   ❑ Faux   ❑ Je ne sais pas

l. La manière dont il faut appliquer le CECR dans la classe n'est pas claire :

❑ Vrai   ❑ Faux   ❑ Je ne sais pas

m. La grande variété d'échelles de compétences dans le CECR apporte plus de confusion que d'aide :

❑ Vrai   ❑ Faux   ❑ Je ne sais pas

n. Le CECR devrait fournir plus d'exemples pratiques montrant comment l'utiliser :

❑ Vrai   ❑ Faux   ❑ Je ne sais pas

o. Il devient impossible de contourner le CECR dans le domaine de l'enseignement / apprentissage des langues :

❑ Vrai   ❑ Faux   ❑ Je ne sais pas

p. Le CECR n'est pas pertinent en-dehors de l'Europe :

❑ Vrai   ❑ Faux   ❑ Je ne sais pas

q. La description des niveaux communs de référence dans le CECR devrait être adaptées en fonction des langues :

❑ Vrai   ❑ Faux   ❑ Je ne sais pas

3-8. Selon vous, quel est l'objectif principal ou quels sont les objectifs principaux du CECR ? (Vous pouvez cocher plusieurs réponses.)

❑ D'établir des critères communs de compétence aux niveaux national et international ;

❑ D'indiquer quels aspects de la langue et de son usage doivent être inclus dans les programmes d'enseignement ;

❑ De fournir une base de comparaison pour les niveaux de compétence en langue de ceux qui veulent étudier ou travailler à l'étranger ;

❑ De promouvoir l'Europe comme la principale source d'information sur les approches professionnelles de l'éducation en langues.

3-9. Souhaitez-vous ajouter d'autres commentaires ? (vous pouvez ajouter une page supplémentaire si nécessaire.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Merci beaucoup de votre participation.

Appendice – Les Niveaux communs de référence : Echelle globale

Cadre Européen Commun de Référence pour les Langues (CECR, 2001), p. 25 - Tableau 1 : Niveaux communs de compétences, Échelle globale.

C2	Peut comprendre sans effort pratiquement tout ce qu'il/elle entend. Peut restituer faits et arguments de diverses sources écrites et orales en les résumant de façon cohérente. Peut s'exprimer spontanément, très couramment et de façon précise et peut rendre distinctes de fines nuances de sens en rapport avec des sujets complexes.
C1	Peut comprendre une grande gamme de textes longs et exigeants, ainsi que saisir des significations implicites. Peut s'exprimer spontanément et couramment sans trop apparemment devoir chercher ses mots. Peut utiliser la langue de façon efficace et souple dans sa vie sociale, professionnelle ou académique. Peut s'exprimer sur des sujets complexes de façon claire et bien structurée et manifester son contrôle des outils d'organisation, d'articulation et de cohésion du discours.
B2	Peut comprendre le contenu essentiel de sujets concrets ou abstraits dans un texte complexe, y compris une discussion technique dans sa spécialité. Peut communiquer avec un degré de spontanéité et d'aisance tel qu'une conversation avec un locuteur natif ne comportant de tension ni pour l'un ni pour l'autre. Peut s'exprimer de façon claire et détaillée sur une grande gamme de sujets, émettre un avis sur un sujet d'actualité et exposer les avantages et les inconvénients de différentes possibilités.
B1	Peut comprendre les points essentiels quand un langage clair et standard est utilisé et s'il s'agit de choses familières dans le travail, à l'école, dans les loisirs, etc. Peut se débrouiller dans la plupart des situations rencontrées en voyage dans une région où la langue cible est parlée. Peut produire un discours simple et cohérent sur des sujets familiers et dans ses domaines d'intérêt. Peut raconter un événement, une expérience ou un rêve, décrire un espoir ou un but et exposer brièvement des raisons ou explications pour un projet ou une idée.
A2	Peut comprendre des phrases isolées et des expressions fréquemment utilisées en relation avec des domaines immédiats de priorité (par exemple, informations personnelles et familiales simples, achats, environnement proche, travail). Peut communiquer lors de taches simples et habituelles ne demandant qu'un échange d'informations simple et direct sur des sujets familiers et habituels. Peut décrire avec des moyens simples sa formation, son environnement immédiat et évoquer des sujets qui correspondent à des besoins immédiats.
A1	Peut comprendre et utiliser des expressions familières et quotidiennes ainsi que des énoncés très simples qui visent à satisfaire des besoins concrets. Peut se présenter ou présenter quelqu'un et poser à une personne des questions la concernant – par exemple, sur son lieu d'habitation, ses relations, ce qui lui appartient, etc. – et peut répondre au même type de questions. Peut communiquer de façon simple si l'interlocuteur parle lentement et distinctement et se montre coopératif.

Appendix D.4: **French computer-based version of the questionnaire for language teaching professionals**

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Questionnaire pour les enseignants de langues étrangères

Informations pour les répondants :

Ce questionnaire fait partie d'un projet de recherches doctorales conduit sous les auspices de l'Université de Waikato (Nouvelle-Zélande) par Philippe Valax.

Les objectifs généraux de cette partie des recherches sont :

- De déterminer l'étendue de l'influence du *Cadre Européen Commun de Référence pour les Langues* (ci-après CECR), publié par le Conseil de l'Europe, dans des parties de l'Europe, de l'Asie et de l'Océanie ;

- De déterminer comment cette influence a été perçue.

En renvoyant un questionnaire entièrement ou partiellement rempli, vous acceptez que vos réponses puissent être utilisées dans les résultats de ces recherches et rapportées dans ma thèse ou dans toute publication ou présentation liée. Cependant, vous n'avez pas à donner votre nom. Un numéro sera attribué aux questionnaires remplis. Les questionnaires seront mentionnés dans le compte-rendu des recherches par ce numéro. Les données recueillies seront résumées et rapportées de manière à ce qu'on ne puisse pas identifier les individus ou les institutions ayant participé à ce questionnaire.

Votre coopération est grandement appréciée. Si vous avez des questions ou désirez de plus amples informations, veuillez contacter Philippe Valax :

Courriel :   pv22@waikato.ac.nz

Addresse :   Philippe Valax (PhD student),
              School of Māori and Pacific Development
              The University of Waikato,
              Private Bag 3105,
              Hamilton, New Zealand

Instructions : Veuillez cocher ⊠ les réponses qui correspondent le mieux à votre situation en cliquant sur les cases grisées (☐). Cliquez sur les listes déroulantes (indiquées par une flèche bleue ⬇) et choisissez la réponse qui vous convient en cliquant dessus. Lorsqu'une réponse écrite est demandée (_____), veuillez écrire directement dans la case grisée soulignée qui s'adaptera automatiquement à la longueur de votre texte. N'oubliez pas de sauvegarder vos réponses. Merci de votre participation.

-- ෨෨ I ෮෮ --
1ᵉ Partie: Informations générales

1-1. Quelle est votre nationalité ? _____

1-2. Age --cliquez ici--⬇

1-3. Quelle(s) langue(s) enseignez-vous ? _____

1-4. Pendant combien de temps avez-vous enseigné une (des) langue(s) vivante(s) ? _____

1-5. Avez-vous un/des diplôme(s) ou certificat(s) dans l'étude de la/des langue(s) que vous enseignez (ex. un diplôme/certificat d'anglais si vous enseignez l'anglais) ?

☐ Oui   ☐ Non

1-6. Si vous avez répondu **"oui"** à la question 1-5, veuillez fournir les détails demandés ci-dessous :

Nom du/des diplôme(s) ou certificat(s)	Pays ayant délivré ce(s) diplôme(s) ou certificat (s)	Année d'obtention
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

1-7. Avez-vous un/des diplôme(s) ou certificat(s) pour **l'enseignement** d'une (ou plusieurs) langue(s) seconde(s) ou étrangère(s) ?　☐ Oui　　　☐ Non

1-8. Si vous avez répondu **"oui"**, le(s)quel(s), en quelle année et dans quel pays l'avez-vous (les avez-vous) obtenu(s) ?

Diplôme/Certificat pour l'enseignement d'une langue seconde/étrangère	Année d'obtention	Pays
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

1-9. Veuillez indiquer le(s) pays dans le(s)quel(s) vous enseignez à l'heure actuelle :

☐ Australie　　　　　　　　☐ Nouvelle-Zélande

☐ France　　　　　　　　　☐ Taïwan

☐ Grande-Bretagne　　　　　☐ autre(s) : _____

☐ Japon

1-10. A quel(s) niveau(x) enseignez-vous ? (vous pouvez cocher plusieurs réponses)

☐ "Junior College" (en 5 ans : 五專)　　　☐ Université (一般大學)

☐ Collège universitaire en 2 ans
　(Two-year College: 二技)　　　　　　☐ Université de Sciences et Technologies
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(科技大學)

☐ Collège universitaire en 4 ans　　　　　☐ Autre : _____
　(Four-year College: 四技)

N.B. Certains noms sont donnés en anglais car il est difficile de trouver un équivalent en français dans un système basé sur le modèle américain. De plus, la plupart des francophones à Taiwan utilisent les noms anglais (ou chinois), de même que les sites officiels français tels que France Diplomatie *(Ministère des Affaires étrangères).*

1-11. Quel est votre titre (par ex. professeur certifié, agrégé, professeur de lycée professionnel, maître de conférence, etc.) ? _____

1-12. Quelle est votre situation d'emploi ?

--cliquez ici et choisissez une réponse--⬇

☐ Autre : _____

1-13. Avez-vous déjà conçu un programme d'étude de langue vivante ne concernant pas seulement vos classes (par exemple, le programme d'enseignement de l'allemand, ou du japonais, pour tous les élèves d'un établissement secondaire ou les étudiants d'une université)? ☐ Oui ☐ Non

1-14. Avez-vous été impliqué de manière centrale (c'est-à-dire comme l'un des auteurs) dans l'élaboration d'un programme national d'étude d'une ou plusieurs langue(s) vivante(s) ?

☐ Oui ☐ Non

-- ⚜ **II** ⚜ --

2ème Partie: Le Cadre Européen Commun de Référence pour les Langues (CECR)

2-1. Quelle connaissance avez-vous du CECR?

☐ Je le connais bien ou très bien

☐ J'en connais les idées principales

☐ Je n'en ai qu'une vague idée

☐ J'en connais seulement le nom, pas le contenu

☐ Je n'en ai jamais entendu parler

❖ *Si vous avez coché la dernière case ci-dessus, il n'est pas nécessaire que vous répondiez à la suite de ce questionnaire.*

2-2. Comment avez-vous connu le CECR (collègues, lectures, autre)?

☐ Par des collègues

☐ A travers des lectures (livres, articles, journaux..)

☐ Autre : _____

2-3. Avez-vous lu le CECR ou des documents sur le CECR ? (Vous pouvez cocher plusieurs réponses.)

☐ J'ai lu le CECR

☐ J'ai lu des documents liés au CECR (ex. le Portfolio Européen des langues (PEL), les guides des utilisateurs…)

☐ J'ai lu des documents présentant le CECR d'une manière simplifiée

☐ J'ai lu des documents mentionnant le CECR, mais sans le présenter réellement

☐ Je n'ai rien lu mentionnant le CECR

2-4. En tant qu'enseignant de langue seconde/étrangère, avez-vous connu le CECR dans l'un des contextes suivants ?

☐ Au cours de ma formation initiale

☐ Au cours de ma formation continue

☐ Dans des conférences, des séminaires, etc.

☐ Dans aucun de ces contextes

☐ Autres : _____

2-5. Avez-vous vu des références spécifiques au CECR dans un des types de documents ci-après ? (Vous pouvez cocher plusieurs réponses.)

☐ Dans des articles ou des rapports dans les revues spécialisées

☐ Dans les manuels d'enseignement ou le matériel pédagogique

☐ Dans des documents officiels nationaux (ex. décrets ministériels, programmes scolaires nationaux, directives d'examens)

☐ Dans des documents officiels publiés par mon établissement (ex. instructions, programmes d'études ou de cours, directives d'examens)

☐ Autres : _____

2-6. Donnez les trois aspects du CECR qui vous semblent les plus importants, **en dehors des niveaux de référence**.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

2-7. Le CECR a-t-il été traduit dans la/une des langue(s) officielle(s) du pays où vous enseignez ?

☐ Oui (passez à la question 2-9)   ☐ Non   ☐ Je ne sais pas

2-8. Si non, y a-t-il des projets pour le faire ?

☐ Oui   ☐ Non, pas pour le moment   ☐ Je ne sais pas

2-9. Le pays où vous enseignez utilise-t-il le CECR ou un document dérivé du CECR ?

☐ Oui (passez à la question 2-11)   ☐ Non   ☐ Je ne sais pas

2-10. Si non, y a-t-il des projets pour le faire ?

☐ Oui   ☐ Non, pas pour le moment   ☐ Je ne sais pas

2-11. Votre établissement utilise-t-il le CECR ou un document incorporant les éléments de base du CECR ?

☐ Oui (passez à la question 2-13)   ☐ Non   ☐ Je ne sais pas

2-12. Si non, y a-t-il des projets pour le faire ?

☐ Oui   ☐ Non, pas pour le moment   ☐ Je ne sais pas

2-13. Le pays où vous enseignez utilise-t-il des examens ou des tests (locaux ou étrangers) liés aux niveaux de référence du CECR ?

☐ Oui   ☐ Non   ☐ Je ne sais pas

Si la réponse est **"oui"** pourriez-vous dire quels examens/tests ?

_____

2-14. Dans le pays où vous enseignez, y a-t-il des directives nationales pour relier les niveaux, les examens et les tests aux niveaux de compétence du CECR ?

☐ Oui   ☐ Non   ☐ Je ne sais pas

2-15. Dans le pays où vous enseignez, le gouvernement ou votre établissement ont-ils recommandé un niveau particulier que les étudiants devraient atteindre à la fin des différents cycles éducatifs (voir question 2-16) ?

☐ Oui, le gouvernement a recommandé un/des niveau(x)

☐ Oui, mon établissement a recommandé un/des niveau(x)

☐ Non (passez à la 3ᵉ Partie)

☐ Je ne sais pas (passez à la 3ᵉ Partie)

2-16. Si vous avez répondu **"Oui"** à la question 15, pourriez-vous dire quel(s) niveau(x) est/sont recommandé(s) pour quel cycle éducatif ? Veuillez donner le nom des tests / certificats demandés et le niveau ou le nombre de points requis (exemple : CECR A2, TCF 300 points, GEPT intermédiaire, IELTS 6.5, TOEFL 200 points, etc.).

Cycles éducatifs	Nom du test ou certificat requis	Niveau ou nombre de points requis *
Fin du lycée (enseignement général 高中)	_____	_____
Fin du lycée professionnel (高職)	_____	_____
Fin du "Junior College" en 5 ans (五專)	_____	_____
À la fin d'une licence NON spécialisée en langue étrangère (universités, 'colleges')	_____	_____
À la fin d'une licence spécialisée en langue étrangère (universités, 'colleges')	_____	_____
Autre : _____	_____	_____

* Certains tests/certificats correspondent déjà à un niveau précis (ex. Key English Test [KET], Certificado Inicial de Español [CIE]). Dans ce cas, il n'y a pas de niveau ou nombre de points à reporter dans la 3e colonne.

2-17. Dans la question 2-16 ci-dessus, **si les niveaux recommandés ne sont pas les niveaux du CECR**, Pouvez-vous dire à quels niveaux du CECR* ils correspondent ?

* *Les niveaux du Cadre européen (CECR) s'échelonnent de A1 à C2 : voir le* **Tableau 1** *page 9 de ce questionnaire (après la question 2-19).*

☐ Je ne sais pas

Fin du lycée (enseignement général 高中) : _____

Fin du lycée professionnel (高職) : _____

Fin du "Junior College" en 5 ans (五專) : _____

À la fin d'une licence NON spécialisée en langue étrangère : _____

À la fin d'une licence spécialisée en langue étrangère : _____

Autre : _____

2-18. Dans votre réponse aux questions 2-16 et 2-17, si vous avez indiqué un lien entre un/des cycle(s) éducatif(s) et les niveaux du CECR, pensez-vous qu'ils sont réalistes ?

Cycles éducatifs	Réaliste	Irréaliste
Fin du lycée (enseignement général 高中)	☐	☐
Fin du lycée professionnel (高職)	☐	☐
Fin du "Junior College" en 5 ans (五專)	☐	☐
À la fin d'une licence NON spécialisée en langue étrangère (universités, 'colleges')	☐	☐
À la fin d'une licence spécialisée en langue étrangère (universités, 'colleges')	☐	☐
Autre : _____	☐	☐

2-19. À votre avis, pour chacun des cycles éducatifs ci-dessous, quel niveau du Cadre Européen (CECR) constituerait un objectif approprié ? *(Aidez-vous de la description des Niveaux communs de référence du CECR du* **Tableau 1**, *page suivante.)*

Cycles éducatifs	Niveau du CECR (A1 to C2) que vous **recommanderiez** comme objectif pour chaque niveau
Fin du lycée (enseignement général 高中)	_____
Fin du lycée professionnel (高職)	_____
Fin du "Junior College" en 5 ans (五專)	_____
À la fin d'une licence NON spécialisée en langue étrangère (universités, 'colleges')	_____
À la fin d'une licence spécialisée en langue étrangère (universités, 'colleges')	_____
Autre : _____	_____

Consultez, page suivante, le Tableau 1 (Les Niveaux communs de référence : Echelle globale)

Tableau 1 – Les Niveaux communs de référence : Echelle globale

Cadre Européen Commun de Référence pour les Langues (CECR, 2001), p. 25 - Tableau 1 : Niveaux communs de compétences, Échelle globale.

N.B. : Le questionnaire continue après ce tableau.

C2	Peut comprendre sans effort pratiquement tout ce qu'il/elle entend. Peut restituer faits et arguments de diverses sources écrites et orales en les résumant de façon cohérente. Peut s'exprimer spontanément, très couramment et de façon précise et peut rendre distinctes de fines nuances de sens en rapport avec des sujets complexes.
C1	Peut comprendre une grande gamme de textes longs et exigeants, ainsi que saisir des significations implicites. Peut s'exprimer spontanément et couramment sans trop apparemment devoir chercher ses mots. Peut utiliser la langue de façon efficace et souple dans sa vie sociale, professionnelle ou académique. Peut s'exprimer sur des sujets complexes de façon claire et bien structurée et manifester son contrôle des outils d'organisation, d'articulation et de cohésion du discours.
B2	Peut comprendre le contenu essentiel de sujets concrets ou abstraits dans un texte complexe, y compris une discussion technique dans sa spécialité. Peut communiquer avec un degré de spontanéité et d'aisance tel qu'une conversation avec un locuteur natif ne comportant de tension ni pour l'un ni pour l'autre. Peut s'exprimer de façon claire et détaillée sur une grande gamme de sujets, émettre un avis sur un sujet d'actualité et exposer les avantages et les inconvénients de différentes possibilités.
B1	Peut comprendre les points essentiels quand un langage clair et standard est utilisé et s'il s'agit de choses familières dans le travail, à l'école, dans les loisirs, etc. Peut se débrouiller dans la plupart des situations rencontrées en voyage dans une région où la langue cible est parlée. Peut produire un discours simple et cohérent sur des sujets familiers et dans ses domaines d'intérêt. Peut raconter un événement, une expérience ou un rêve, décrire un espoir ou un but et exposer brièvement des raisons ou explications pour un projet ou une idée.
A2	Peut comprendre des phrases isolées et des expressions fréquemment utilisées en relation avec des domaines immédiats de priorité (par exemple, informations personnelles et familiales simples, achats, environnement proche, travail). Peut communiquer lors de taches simples et habituelles ne demandant qu'un échange d'informations simple et direct sur des sujets familiers et habituels. Peut décrire avec des moyens simples sa formation, son environnement immédiat et évoquer des sujets qui correspondent à des besoins immédiats.
A1	Peut comprendre et utiliser des expressions familières et quotidiennes ainsi que des énoncés très simples qui visent à satisfaire des besoins concrets. Peut se présenter ou présenter quelqu'un et poser à une personne des questions la concernant – par exemple, sur son lieu d'habitation, ses relations, ce qui lui appartient, etc. – et peut répondre au même type de questions. Peut communiquer de façon simple si l'interlocuteur parle lentement et distinctement et se montre coopératif.

Suite du questionnaire (3ème Partie) page suivante.

3ᵉᵐᵉ Partie: L'impact du CECR

3-1. Selon vous, à quel point le CECR est-il connu chez les enseignants de langues du pays où vous enseignez ? (cochez la case sous le chiffre qui convient sur l'échelle ci-dessous.)

Très bien connu ⪻ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ⪼ Pas connu du tout
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

3-2. Pensez-vous que l'impact du CECR dans le pays où vous enseignez est globalement positif ? (cochez la case sous le chiffre qui convient sur l'échelle ci-dessous.)

Très positif ⪻ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ⪼ Très négatif ☐ je ne sais pas
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

3-3. Le CECR a-t-il eu des effets utiles dans l'un des domaines suivants ? (cochez la case sous le chiffre qui convient sur chacune des échelles ci-dessous.)

A. La planification des programmes dans un/plusieurs secteur(s) de l'éducation:

Très utile ⪻ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ⪼ Pas du tout utile ☐ je ne sais pas
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Commentez si vous le souhaitez : _____

B. L'évaluation :

Très utile ⪻ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ⪼ Pas du tout utile ☐ je ne sais pas
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Commentez si vous le souhaitez : _____

C. La formation des enseignants (initiale ou continue) :

Très utile ⪻ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ⪼ Pas du tout utile ☐ je ne sais pas
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Commentez si vous le souhaitez : _____

D. Les manuels utilisés ou publiés dans le pays :

Très utile ⪻ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ⪼ Pas du tout utile ☐ je ne sais pas
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Commentez si vous le souhaitez : _____

3-4. Dans votre pratique personnelle de l'enseignement, avez-vous trouvé le CECR utile dans les catégories suivantes ? (Cochez la case sous le chiffre qui convient sur chacune des échelles ci-dessous OU cochez la case à droite si vous n'avez pas mis le CECR en pratique dans une catégorie et que vous ne pouvez pas répondre.)

☐ La planification des cours, les plans de cours (syllabus)

Très utile ⋖ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ⋗ Pas du tout utile ☐ Je n'ai pas utilisé le CECR
          ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐   dans ce domaine

☐ Le style et les méthodes pédagogiques

Très utile ⋖ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ⋗ Pas du tout utile ☐ Je n'ai pas utilisé le CECR
          ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐   dans ce domaine

☐ Les examens et l'évaluation

Très utile ⋖ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ⋗ Pas du tout utile ☐ Je n'ai pas utilisé le CECR
          ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐   dans ce domaine

☐ La Communication avec les apprenants au sujet de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage

Très utile ⋖ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ⋗ Pas du tout utile ☐ Je n'ai pas utilisé le CECR
          ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐   dans ce domaine

☐ La Communication avec les apprenants au sujet des examens et de l'évaluation

Très utile ⋖ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ⋗ Pas du tout utile ☐ Je n'ai pas utilisé le CECR
          ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐   dans ce domaine

3-5. Pensez-vous qu'il y ait des problèmes liés au CECR dans le ou les établissement(s) où vous enseignez ?   ☐ Oui   ☐ Non   ☐ Je ne sais pas

Veuillez préciser : _____

3-6. Pensez-vous qu'il y ait des problèmes liés au CECR au niveau national dans le pays où vous enseignez ?   ☐ Oui   ☐ Non   ☐ Je ne sais pas

Veuillez préciser : _____

3-7. Pensez-vous que les déclarations suivantes, au sujet du CECR, sont VRAIES ou FAUSSES ?

    a. Le CECR est utile :   ☐ Vrai   ☐ Faux   ☐ Je ne sais pas

    b. Le CECR est convivial (facile à comprendre et à utiliser) :

    ☐ Vrai   ☐ Faux   ☐ Je ne sais pas

c. Le CECR fournit une base utile pour comparer les critères de compétences établis dans différents pays :

☐ Vrai ☐ Faux ☐ Je ne sais pas

d. Le CECR fournit une bonne base aux ministères de l'éducation des différents pays pour déterminer la qualité de leur action dans le domaine de l'enseignement/apprentissage des langues

☐ Vrai ☐ Faux ☐ Je ne sais pas

e. Le CECR parle trop peu de la conception des programmes d'étude et des syllabus de cours :

☐ Vrai ☐ Faux ☐ Je ne sais pas

f. Les niveaux de référence sont la partie la mieux connue du CECR :

☐ Vrai ☐ Faux ☐ Je ne sais pas

g. Le CECR est trop centré sur l'évaluation :

☐ Vrai ☐ Faux ☐ Je ne sais pas

h. Le CECR n'explique pas comment relier l'enseignement et l'évaluation :

☐ Vrai ☐ Faux ☐ Je ne sais pas

i. Les théories soutenant l'approche du CECR ne sont pas clairement présentées ni expliquées :

☐ Vrai ☐ Faux ☐ Je ne sais pas

j. Le CECR ne prend pas en compte les développements récents de la linguistique / Les théories linguistiques du CECR sont dépassées :

☐ Vrai ☐ Faux ☐ Je ne sais pas

k. En incluant quasiment tout ce qui pouvait être dit sur une langue, le CECR fixe des buts impossibles aux enseignants et aux apprenants :

☐ Vrai ☐ Faux ☐ Je ne sais pas

l. La manière dont il faut appliquer le CECR dans la classe n'est pas claire :

☐ Vrai ☐ Faux ☐ Je ne sais pas

m. La grande variété d'échelles de compétences dans le CECR apporte plus de confusion que d'aide :

☐ Vrai ☐ Faux ☐ Je ne sais pas

n. Le CECR devrait fournir plus d'exemples pratiques montrant comment l'utiliser :

☐ Vrai ☐ Faux ☐ Je ne sais pas

o. Il devient impossible de contourner le CECR dans le domaine de l'enseignement / apprentissage des langues :

☐ Vrai ☐ Faux ☐ Je ne sais pas

p. Le CECR n'est pas pertinent en-dehors de l'Europe :

☐ Vrai ☐ Faux ☐ Je ne sais pas

q. La description des niveaux communs de référence dans le CECR devrait être adaptées en fonction des langues :

☐ Vrai ☐ Faux ☐ Je ne sais pas

3-8. Selon vous, quel est l'objectif principal ou quels sont les objectifs principaux du CECR ? (Vous pouvez cocher plusieurs réponses.)

☐ D'établir des critères communs de compétence aux niveaux national et international ;

☐ D'indiquer quels aspects de la langue et de son usage doivent être inclus dans les programmes d'enseignement ;

☐ De fournir une base de comparaison pour les niveaux de compétence en langue de ceux qui veulent étudier ou travailler à l'étranger ;

☐ De promouvoir l'Europe comme la principale source d'information sur les approches professionnelles de l'éducation en langues.

3-9. Souhaitez-vous ajouter d'autres commentaires ?

    ─────

Merci beaucoup de votre participation.

N'oubliez pas de sauvegarder vos réponses et de renvoyer ce questionnaire à l'adresse suivante : pv22@waikato.ac.nz

Appendix D.5: **Chinese paper-based version of the questionnaire for language teaching professionals**

外語教師問卷調查

致參與問卷調查教師 ：

　　本問卷調查為本人 Philippe Valax 在紐西蘭懷卡多大學攻讀博士學位的論文內容之一。

　　本問卷為探討（一）歐洲語言學習 、教學 、評量共同參考架構（英文簡稱 CEFR）在歐洲 、亞洲及大洋洲某些國家所造成的影響為何 ，（二） 這些國家對 CEFR 影響的看法為何。

在您完成問卷繳回的同時 ，不論您是否全程回答所有題目 ，該做答內容均視為您授權本人進行與本研究主題相關之報告 ，並且同意本人將結果以書面出版或採口頭報告方式呈現。填寫本問卷調查採無記名方式完成 ，填卷者勿需留下姓名 ，但是每份問卷會給予編號以利研究分析。在進行研究報告時絕對不會提及教師個人姓名或學校名稱。

　　在此先感謝您撥冗協助填寫問卷及對本研究的貢獻。如果您對本問卷調查有任何問題 ，敬請不吝賜教。聯絡地址如下。

電郵： 　　pv22@waikato.ac.nz

地址： 　　Philippe Valax (PhD student)
　　　　　School of Maori and Pacific Development
　　　　　The University of Waikato
　　　　　Private Bag 3105
　　　　　Hamilton, New Zealand

外語教師問卷調查

請勾選 ☑ 最適合您個人狀況的答案或回答問題。

-- ೮೪ Ⅰ ೕೞ --

第一部分：個人背景

1-1. 您的國籍是＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

1-2. 您的年齡 ❑ 21 ~ 30

❑ 31 ~ 40

❑ 41 ~ 50

❑ 51 以上

1-3. 您任教的外語是 ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

1-4. 您的外語教學年資：＿＿＿＿＿＿＿年

1-5. 您是否擁有教授該外語的外語學位或證書（例如：您是英語教師，您擁有英語碩士學位，學士學位或其他相關的英語證書）？　　❑ 是　　　❑ 否

1-6. 如您在第 1-5 題勾選 '是'，請詳答下列表格：

學位或證書之名稱	頒與學位或證書之國家	何年取得

1-7. 您是否擁有第二語言／外語**教學**的學位或證書？　　❑是　　　　❑否

1-8. 如您勾選 '是'，您擁有的第二語言／外語**教學**的學位或證書之名稱為何？是在何年何國取得？

學位或證書之名稱	何年取得	何國

1-9. 請勾選目前任教的國家（可複選）：

❑ 紐西蘭　　　　❑ 台灣

❑ 澳洲　　　　　❑ 日本

❑ 法國　　　　　❑ 其他：＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

❑ 英國

1-10. 您目前任教的學制（可複選）

❑ 五專　　　　　❑ 一般大學

❑ 二技　　　　　❑ 科技大學

❑ 四技　　　　　❑ 其他＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

1-11. 您目前的職稱（例如講師、助理教授）：＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

1-12. 您目前的任教狀況是

❑ 專任教師　　　　　　❑ 兼任教師

❑ 專案教師　　　　　　❑其他＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

1-13. 除了您任教的班級之外，是否參與過語言課程設計（例如為某一特定高中或大學設計該校的法文或日文課程）？

❑ 是　　❑ 否

1-14. 您是否曾受聘加入全國性的語言或多國語言之課程規劃委員會？

❑ 是　　❑ 否

第二部分： 歐洲語言學習、教學、評量共同參考架構（CEFR）

2-1. 您對 CEFR 的認識為何？

❑ 我熟悉或相當熟悉 CEFR

❑ 我知道其大綱

❑ 我只有模糊的概念

❑ 我只知道名稱但不曉得內容

❑ 我沒聽過

❖ *如您在本題勾選"我沒聽過"，請勿續答，問卷到此為止。*

2-2. 您是如何知道 CEFR（同事、閱讀、其他）？

❑ 同事

❑ 閱讀（書籍、文章、報紙）

❑ 其他：_____

2-3. 您讀過有關 CEFR 的文件嗎？（可複選）

❑ 我讀過整個 CEFR 的文件

❑ 我讀過有關 CEFR 的文件（例歐語言檔案 (ELP)，使用需須知）

❑ 我讀過其他的文件以摘要方式提及 CEFR

❑ 我讀過其他的文件提及 CEFR 但未詳加敘述

❑ 我還沒讀過有關 CEFR 的文件

2-4. 身為第二語言／外語教師您曾在那種場合聽過 CEFR 的介紹？

❑ 教師職前訓練

❑ 教師在職訓練

❑ 研討會、工作坊等

❑其他（請說明）：_____

2-5. 您曾在以下何種文件中看到有關 CEFR 的文獻引用？（可複選）

❏ 專業學報或書評（評論）

❏ 教科書或教材

❏ 全國性的官方文件（如教育部文獻、課程規劃、測驗方針）

❏ 校方出版之文件（如教學指導、課程綱要、教學綱要、測驗方針）

❏ 其他（請說明）：＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

2-6. 請列舉三項您認有關 CEFR 最重要的部份（**語言能力分級除外**）：

一 ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

二 ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

三 ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

2-7. 您目前任教的國家是否已將 CEFR 翻譯為該國文字？

❏ 是（請續答第 2-9 題）　　　❏ 否　　　❏ 我不知道

2-8. 若答'否'，該國是否計畫這麼做？

❏ 是　　　❏目前沒有　　　❏ 我不知道

2-9. 您目前任教的國家是否已使用 CEFR 或擷取 CEFR 內容創造適宜當地情況的文件？

❏ 是（請續答第 2-11 題）　　　❏ 否　　　❏ 我不知道

2-10. 若答'否'，該國是否計畫這麼做？

❏ 是　　　❏目前沒有　　　❏ 我不知道

2-11. 您目前任教的學校是否使用 CEFR 或引用源自 CEFR 內容的文件？

❏ 是（請續答第 2-13 題）　　　❏ 否　　　❏ 我不知道

2-12. 若答'否'，貴校是否計畫這麼做？

❏ 是　　　❏目前沒有　　　❏ 我不知道

2-13. 您目前任教的國家所採用的（本地或國外）測驗或考試是否參照 CEFR 所規劃之語言能力分級？

❑ 是 ❑ 否 ❑ 我不知道

若答 '是'，請說明是那些測驗或考試。

_____

_____

_____

2-14. 您目前任教的國家是否有提供全國性之指導方針以因應 CEFR 語言能力分級測驗？

❑ 是 ❑ 否 ❑ 我不知道

2-15. 您目前任教的國家，政府或學校是否建議學生在完成不同教育階段前需達到的語文能力（即所謂的畢業門檻：請參看 2-16 題）？

❑ 是，政府建議須達到某一（些）語言能力
❑ 是，學校建議須達到某一（些）語言能力
❑ 否（請跳答第三部份）
❑ 我不知道（請跳答第三部份）

2-16. 若第 2-15 題答 '是'，請說明在哪個學習階段須達到何種程度的能力並提供測驗名稱及成績或層級 (例：CEFR A2，TOEFL iBT / CBT / PBT xx 分，IELTS 6.5，GEPT 中級，TCF 300 分，等)。

教育學習階段	測驗名稱	成績或層級 *
高中畢業		
高職畢業		
五專畢業		
大學、二技、四技畢業（非外語主修的學士）		
大學、二技、四技畢業（主修外語的學士）		
其他：＿＿＿＿＿＿＿		

若測試名稱代表某一語文程度而無分數或層級的區分，那麼第三欄可以免填 (例如 Cambridge ESOL 所用的 KET, PET, FCE 等 或西班牙的 Certificado Inicial de Español [CIE], 等)。

2-17. 按第 2-16 題之作答，若須達到的語文能力分級不屬於 CEFR 的範圍內，那麼該級數是相當於 CEFR 的哪一級？

註：CEFR 所用的正式分級為 A1、A2、B1、B2、C1、C2。請參照本問卷調查附錄之 CEFR 語文能力分級說明。

❑ 我不知道

高中畢業：＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

高職畢業：＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

五專畢業：＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

大學、二技、四技畢業（非外語主修的學士）：＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

大學、二技、四技畢業（主修外語的學士）：＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

其他：＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

2-18. 按第 2-16 及 2-17，若您在任何教育學習階段提到相關測試之成績或層級，您認為這樣的標準合理嗎？

教育學習階段	合理	不合理
高中畢業	❏	❏
高職畢業	❏	❏
五專畢業	❏	❏
大學、二技、四技畢業 （非外語主修的學士）	❏	❏
大學、二技、四技畢業 （主修外語的學士）	❏	❏
其他：＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿		

2-19. 您認為在完成以下的教育學習階段時，學生該達到哪一階段的 CEFR 語文能力分級？(請參考**附錄** 的 CEFR 語文能力分級對照表)

教育學習階段	您建議學生達到的 CEFR 語文能力分級
高中畢業	
高職畢業	
五專畢業	
大學、二技、四技畢業 （非外語主修的學士）	
大學、二技、四技畢業 （主修外語的學士）	
其他：＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿	

第三部份 CEFR 的影響

3-1.在您任教的國家，您認為一般語言老師們對 CEFR 的認識是……（請圈選量表中號碼）

非常熟悉 ≺ 1　　2　　3　　4　　5　　6 ≻ 一無所知

3-2. 在您任教的國家，您認為 CEFR 在該國的影響是比較正面的嗎？（請圈選量表中號碼）

非常正面 ≺ 1　　2　　3　　4　　5　　6 ≻ 非常負面　　❏ 我不知道

3-3. 在您任教的國家，CEFR 是否在下列主題已造成有用的影響？（請圈選量表中號碼）

A. 任一教育階段的教育課程/教學綱要計畫

非常有用 ≺ 1　　2　　3　　4　　5　　6 ≻ 沒有用　　❏ 我不知道

若有意見，請說明：_____

_____

_____

B. 評量

非常有用 ≺ 1　　2　　3　　4　　5　　6 ≻ 沒有用　　❏ 我不知道

若有意見，請說明：_____

_____

_____

C. 教師訓練（職前或在職）：

非常有用 ≺ 1　　2　　3　　4　　5　　6 ≻ 沒有用　　❏ 我不知道

若有意見，請說明：_____

_____

_____

D. 該國使用或出版的教科書：

非常有用 ≺ 1　　2　　3　　4　　5　　6 ➢ 沒有用　　　❑ 我不知道

若有意見，請說明：＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

3-4. 以您個人的教學經驗，CEFR 在下列單元的有用程度為何？（請圈選量表中的號碼或勾選右邊的答案）

A. 課程及教學綱要計畫

非常有用 ≺ 1　　2　　3　　4　　5　　6 ➢ 沒有用　　❑ 我不知道, 我在這個項目沒用過 CEFR

B. 教學風格及教學法

非常有用 ≺ 1　　2　　3　　4　　5　　6 ➢ 沒有用　　❑ 我不知道, 我在這個項目沒用過 CEFR

C. 測驗與評量

非常有用 ≺ 1　　2　　3　　4　　5　　6 ➢ 沒有用　　❑ 我不知道, 我在這個項目沒用過 CEFR

D. 與學生溝通討論教與學

非常有用 ≺ 1　　2　　3　　4　　5　　6 ➢ 沒有用　　❑ 我不知道, 我在這個項目沒用過 CEFR

E. 與學生溝通討論測驗與評量

非常有用 ≺ 1　　2　　3　　4　　5　　6 ➢ 沒有用　　❑ 我不知道, 我在這個項目沒用過 CEFR

3-5. 在您目前任教的學校，您認為採用 CEFR 會有困難嗎？

❑ 會　　　　　❑ 不會　　　　❑ 我不知道

請說明：

＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

3-6. 在您目前任教的國家，您認為採用 CEFR 會有困難嗎？

 ❏ 會 ❏ 不會 ❏ 我不知道

請說明：

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3-7. 您認同下列有關 CEFR 的說法嗎？請勾選正確、不正確、我不知道。

 a. CEFR 是有益的。

 ❏ 正確 ❏ 不正確 ❏ 我不知道

 b. CEFR 是容易使用的。

 ❏ 正確 ❏ 不正確 ❏ 我不知道

 c. CEFR 提供一套實用的基本準則，作為不同國家**語言能力**的參照標準。

 ❏ 正確 ❏ 不正確 ❏ 我不知道

 d. CEFR 提供不同國家的**教育部**一套良好的準則，以確定該國語言**教學成效**。

 ❏ 正確 ❏ 不正確 ❏ 我不知道

 e. CEFR 並未深入探討課程規劃和教學綱要之設計。

 ❏ 正確 ❏ 不正確 ❏ 我不知道

 f. CEFR 最廣為人知的就是語言能力分級。

 ❏ 正確 ❏ 不正確 ❏ 我不知道

 g. CEFR 過於強調評量。

 ❏ 正確 ❏ 不正確 ❏ 我不知道

 h. CEFR 並無解說該如何將教學與評量結合。

 ❏ 正確 ❏ 不正確 ❏ 我不知道

 i. CEFR 並未詳述或解說其所依據的理論基礎。

 ❏ 正確 ❏ 不正確 ❏ 我不知道

j. CEFR 並未考慮到近年來的語言學發展（也就是說內容過於老舊不合時宜）。

❏ 正確　　　❏ 不正確　　　❏ 我不知道

k. CEFR 中所提及的溝通能力，含蓋太多範圍，似乎沒多大用處，反而令人困惑。

❏ 正確　　　❏ 不正確　　　❏ 我不知道

l. 未清楚交代如何在課堂上運用 CEFR。

❏ 正確　　　❏ 不正確　　　❏ 我不知道

m. CEFR 包含很多不同能力項目的分級表，幫助有限，反而令人困惑。

❏ 正確　　　❏ 不正確　　　❏ 我不知道

n. CEFR 應該提供更多如何使用的實例。

❏ 正確　　　❏ 不正確　　　❏ 我不知道

o. 在當今的教學領域裏 CEFR 已漸漸變成不可或缺的趨勢。

❏ 正確　　　❏ 不正確　　　❏ 我不知道

p. CEFR 在歐洲以外的國家並不適用。

❏ 正確　　　❏ 不正確　　　❏ 我不知道

q. CEFR 所包含的不同能力項目應該適用於不同語言的狀況。

❏ 正確　　　　❏ 不正確　　　❏ 我不知道

3-8. 您認為 CEFR 的主要目的為何？（可複選）

❏ 建立全國性及國際性的共同語言能力標準或指標。

❏ 禪明教學課程內要涵概那些語言及語言運用項目。

❏ 提供有意到外國留學或工作者一套語言能力分級標準的根據，以供比較。

❏ 宣揚歐洲是主要的專業語言教育資訊來源。

3-9. 若您還有其他意見，請說明：

感謝您的參與及協助。

附件：CEFR 語文能力分級中英對照表

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, 2001) p. 24, Table 1: Common Reference Levels, global scale (整體能力分級中英對照表).

精通使用者 Proficient User	C2	能輕鬆地瞭解幾乎所有聽到或讀到的信息。能將不同的口頭及書面信息作摘要，並可以連貫地重做論述及說明。甚至能於更複雜的情況下，非常流利又精準地暢所欲言，而且可以區別更細微的含意。 Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	能瞭解廣泛領域且高難度的長篇章，而且可以認出隱藏其中的意義。能流利自然地自我表達，而且不會太明顯地露出尋找措辭的樣子。針對社交、學術及專業的目的，能彈性且有效地運用語文工具。能針對複雜的主題創作清晰、良好結構、及詳細的篇章，呈現運用體裁、連接詞、和統整性構詞的能力。 Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
獨立使用者 Independent User	B2	針對具體及抽象議題的複雜文字，能瞭解其重點，這些議題涵蓋個人專業領域的技術討論。能與母語人士經常作互動，有一定的流暢度，且不會讓任一方感到緊張。能針對相當多的主題，創作清晰詳細的篇章，並可針對各議題來解釋其觀點，並提出各種選擇的優缺點。 Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

		針對一般職場、學校、休閒等場合常遇到的熟悉事物，能瞭解清晰且標準信息的重點。在目標語言地區旅遊時，能應付大部分可能會出現的狀況。針對熟悉或私人感興趣的主題，能創作簡單有連貫的篇章。能敘述經驗、事件、夢想、希望及抱負，而且對意見及計畫能簡短地提出理由和說明。 Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
	B1	
初級使用者 Basic User	**A2**	能了解最切身相關領域的句子及常用辭(例如：非常基本的個人及家族資訊、購物、當地地理環境、和工作)。能夠針對單純例行性任務進行溝通，這些任務需要對熟悉例行性的事務作簡單直接的信息交換。能以簡單的詞彙敘述個人背景、週遭環境、及切身需求的事務等方面。 Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	能了解並使用熟悉的日常用語和詞彙，滿足具體的需求。能介紹自己及他人，並能針對個人細節，例如住在哪裡、認識何人以及擁有什麼事物等問題作出問答。能在對方說話緩慢而且清晰，並隨時準備提供協助的前提下，作簡單的互動。 Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Appendix D.6: **Chinese computer-based version of the questionnaire for language teaching professionals**

外語教師問卷調查

致參與問卷調查教師 ：

　　本問卷調查為本人 Philippe Valax 在紐西蘭懷卡多大學攻讀博士學位的論文內容之一。

　　本問卷為探討（一）歐洲語言學習 、教學 、評量共同參考架構（英文簡稱 CEFR）在歐洲 、亞洲及大洋洲某些國家所造成的影響為何，（二） 這些國家對 CEFR 影響的看法為何。

在您完成問卷繳回的同時，不論您是否全程回答所有題目，該做答內容均視為您授權本人進行與本研究主題相關之報告，並且同意本人將結果以書面出版或採口頭報告方式呈現。填寫本問卷調查採無記名方式完成，填卷者勿需留下姓名，但是每份問卷會給予編號以利研究分析。在進行研究報告時絕對不會提及教師個人姓名或學校名稱。

　　在此先感謝您撥冗協助填寫問卷及對本研究的貢獻。如果您對本問卷調查有任何問題，敬請不吝賜教。聯絡地址如下。

電郵： pv22@waikato.ac.nz
地址： Philippe Valax (PhD student)
School of Maori and Pacific Development
The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton, New Zealand

外語教師問卷調查

說明：❶ 框格 □：作答時，請按灰色框各，選擇最適合您個人狀況的答案（註：框內出現 ⊠ 即表示作答成功）。❷下拉列表 abcdef⬇：題目中有藍色箭頭時，請按左邊的灰色框格，顯示下拉列表，再點選最合適的答案。❸ 填充 _____：若需書寫文字，請直接在題目中的灰色空欄上作答（註：欄位會隨文字多寡自動延長了）。

--- ଯ**Ⅰ**ଓ ---

第一部分：個人背景

1-1. 您的國籍是 _____

1-2. 您的年齡　　　----請按此點選----⬇

1-3. 您任教的外語是 _____

1-4. 您的外語教學年資： _____ 年

1-5. 您是否擁有教授該外語的外語學位或證書（例如：您是英語教師，您擁有英語碩士學位，學士學位或其他相關的英語證書）？　　　□ 是　　　　　□ 否

1-6. 如您在第 1-5 題勾選 '是'，請詳答下列表格：

學位或證書之名稱	頒與學位或證書之國家	何年取得
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

1-7. 您是否擁有第二語言／外語**教學**的學位或證書？ □ 是　　　 □ 否

1-8. 如您勾選 '是' ，您擁有的第二語言／外語**教學**的學位或證書之名稱為何？是在何年何國取得？

學位或證書之名稱	何年取得	何國
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

1-9. 您目前任教的國家（可複選）：

☐ 台灣　　　　　　　　　　　　☐ 法國
☐ 日本　　　　　　　　　　　　☐ 英國
☐ 澳洲　　　　　　　　　　　　☐ 其他：_____
☐ 紐西蘭

1-10. 您目前任教的學制（可複選）

☐ 五專
☐ 二技
☐ 四技
☐ 一般大學
☐ 科技大學
☐ 其他：_____

1-11. 您目前的職稱（例如講師、助理教授）：

_____

1-12. 您目前的任教狀況是：

----請按此點選---- ⬇　　　　　　☐ 其他：_____

1-13. 除了您任教的班級之外，是否參與過語言課程設計 （例如為某一特定高中或大學設計該校的法文或日文課程）？

☐ 是　　☐ 否

1-14. 您是否曾受聘加入全國性的語言或多國語言之課程規劃委員會？　　☐ 是　　☐ 否

第二部分：歐洲語言學習、教學、評量共同參考架構（**CEFR**）

2-1. 您對 CEFR 的認識為何？

- ☐ 我熟悉或相當熟悉 CEFR
- ☐ 我知道其大綱
- ☐ 我只有模糊的概念
- ☐ 我只知道名稱但不曉得內容
- ☐ 我沒聽過

❖ *如您在本題勾選"我沒聽過"，請勿續答，問卷到此為止。*

2-2. 您是如何知道 CEFR（同事、閱讀、其他）？

- ☐ 同事
- ☐ 閱讀（書籍、文章、報紙）
- ☐ 其他：＿＿＿＿

2-3. 您讀過有關 CEFR 的文件嗎？（可複選）

- ☐ 我讀過整個 CEFR 的文件
- ☐ 我讀過有關 CEFR 的文件（例歐語言檔案 (ELP)，使用需須知）
- ☐ 我讀過其他的文件以摘要方式提及 CEFR
- ☐ 我讀過其他的文件提及 CEFR 但未詳加敘述
- ☐ 我還沒讀過有關 CEFR 的文件

2-4. 身為第二語言／外語教師您曾在那種場合聽過 CEFR 的介紹？

- ☐ 教師職前訓練
- ☐ 教師在職訓練
- ☐ 研討會、工作坊等
- ☐ 其他（請說明）：＿＿＿＿

2-5. 您曾在以下何種文件中看到有關 CEFR 的文獻引用？（可複選）

- ☐ 專業學報或書評（評論）
- ☐ 教科書或教材
- ☐ 全國性的官方文件（如教育部文獻、課程規劃、測驗方針）
- ☐ 校方出版之文件（如教學指導、課程綱要、教學綱要、測驗方針）
- ☐ 其他（請說明）：＿＿＿＿

2-6. 請列舉三項您認有關 CEFR 最重要的部份（**語言能力分級除外**）：

一 ＿＿＿＿

二 ＿＿＿＿

三 ＿＿＿＿

2-7. 您目前任教的國家是否已將 CEFR 翻譯為該國文字？

☐ 是（請續答第 2-9 題）　　☐ 否　　　　　☐ 我不知道

2-8. 若答'否'，該國是否計畫這麼做？

☐ 是　　　　　　　　☐ 目前沒有　　☐ 我不知道

2-9. 您目前任教的國家是否已使用 CEFR 或擷取 CEFR 內容創造適宜當地情況的文件？

☐ 是（請續答第 2-11 題）　☐ 否　　　　　☐ 我不知道

2-10. 若答'否'，該國是否計畫這麼做？

☐ 是　　　　　　　　☐ 目前沒有　　☐ 我不知道

2-11. 您目前任教的學校是否使用 CEFR 或引用源自 CEFR 內容的文件？

☐ 是（請續答第 2-13 題）　☐ 否　　　　　☐ 我不知道

2-12. 若答'否'，貴校是否計畫這麼做？

☐ 是　　　　　　　　☐ 目前沒有　　☐ 我不知道

2-13. 您目前任教的國家所採用的（本地或國外）測驗或考試是否參照 CEFR 所規劃之語言能力分級？

☐ 是　　　　　　　　☐ 否　　　　　☐ 我不知道

若答'是'，請說明是那些測驗或考試：

＿＿＿＿

2-14. 您目前任教的國家是否有提供全國性之指導方針以因應 CEFR 語言能力分級測驗？

☐ 是　　　　　　　　☐ 否　　　　　☐ 我不知道

2-15. 您目前任教的國家，政府或學校是否建議學生在完成不同教育階段前需達到的語文能力（即所謂的畢業門檻：請參看 2-16 題）？

☐ 是，政府建議須達到某一（些）語言能力

☐ 是，學校建議須達到某一（些）語言能力

☐ 否 （請跳答第三部份）

☐ 我不知道（請跳答第三部份）

2-16. 若第 2-15 題答'是'，請說明在哪個學習階段須達到何種程度的能力並提供測驗名稱及成績或層級 (例：CEFR A2，TOEFL iBT / CBT / PBT xx 分，IELTS 6.5，GEPT 中級，TCF 300 分，等)。

教育學習階段	測驗名稱	成績或層級 *
高中畢業	＿＿＿＿	＿＿＿＿
高職畢業	＿＿＿＿	＿＿＿＿
五專畢業	＿＿＿＿	＿＿＿＿
大學、二技、四技畢業（非外語主修的學士）	＿＿＿＿	＿＿＿＿
大學、二技、四技畢業（主修外語的學士）	＿＿＿＿	＿＿＿＿
其他：＿＿＿＿	＿＿＿＿	＿＿＿＿

若測試名稱代表某一語文程度而無分數或層級的區分，那麼第三欄可以免填 (例如 Cambridge ESOL 所用的 KET, PET, FCE 等或西班牙的 Certificado Inicial de Español [CIE], 等)。

2-17. 按第 2-16 題之作答，若須達到的語文能力分級不屬於 CEFR 的範圍內，那麼該級數是相當於 CEFR 的哪一級？

註：CEFR 所用的正式分級為 A1 、A2 、B1 、B2 、C1 、C2。請參照本問卷第 9 頁 (2-19題之後) 表1 的 CEFR 語文能力分級說明。

☐ 我不知道

高中畢業：＿＿＿＿

高職畢業：＿＿＿＿

五專畢業：＿＿＿＿

大學、二技、四技畢業（非外語主修的學士）：＿＿＿＿

大學、二技、四技畢業（主修外語的學士）：＿＿＿＿

其他：＿＿＿＿

2-18. 按第 2-16 及 2-17 題之作答，若您在任何教育學習階段提到相關測試之成績或層級，您認為這樣的標準合理嗎？

教育學習階段	合理	不合理
高中畢業	☐	☐
高職畢業	☐	☐
五專畢業	☐	☐
大學、二技、四技畢業 （非外語主修的學士）	☐	☐
大學、二技、四技畢業 （主修外語的學士）	☐	☐
其他：＿＿＿	☐	☐

2-19. 您認為在完成以下的教育學習階段時，學生該達到哪一階段的 CEFR 語文能力分級？（請參考下頁表 1 的 CEFR 語文能力分級對照表）

教育學習階段	您建議學生達到的 CEFR 語文能力分級
高中畢業	＿＿＿
高職畢業	＿＿＿
五專畢業	＿＿＿
大學、二技、四技畢業 （非外語主修的學士）	＿＿＿
大學、二技、四技畢業 （主修外語的學士）	＿＿＿
其他：＿＿＿	＿＿＿

表 1：CEFR 語文能力分級中英對照表

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, 2001) p. 24, Table 1: Common Reference Levels, global scale (整體能力分級中英對照表).

❖ 注: 在本表之後,請繼續做答。

精通使用者 Proficient User	**C2**	能輕鬆地瞭解幾乎所有聽到或讀到的信息。能將不同的口頭及書面信息作摘要，並可以連貫地重做論述及說明。甚至能於更複雜的情況下，非常流利又精準地暢所欲言，而且可以區別更細微的含意。 Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	能瞭解廣泛領域且高難度的長篇章，而且可以認出隱藏其中的意義。能流利自然地自我表達，而且不會太明顯地露出尋找措辭的樣子。針對社交、學術及專業的目的，能彈性且有效地運用語文工具。能針對複雜的主題創作清晰、良好結構、及詳細的篇章，呈現運用體裁、連接詞、和統整性構詞的能力。 Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
獨立使用者 Independent User	**B2**	針對具體及抽象議題的複雜文字，能瞭解其重點，這些議題涵蓋個人專業領域的技術討論。能與母語人士經常作互動，有一定的流暢度，且不會讓任一方感到緊張。能針對相當多的主題，創作清晰詳細的篇章，並可針對各議題來解釋其觀點，並提出各種選擇的優缺點。 Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options

	B1	針對一般職場、學校、休閒等場合常遇到的熟悉事物，能瞭解清晰且標準信息的重點。在目標語言地區旅遊時，能應付大部分可能會出現的狀況。針對熟悉或私人感興趣的主題，能創作簡單有連貫的篇章。能敘述經驗、事件、夢想、希望及抱負，而且對意見及計畫能簡短地提出理由和說明。 Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
初級使用者 Basic Use	**A2**	能了解最切身相關領域的句子及常用辭(例如：非常基本的個人及家族資訊、購物、當地地理環境、和工作)。能夠針對單純例行性任務進行溝通，這些任務需要對熟悉例行性的事務作簡單直接的信息交換。能以簡單的詞彙敘述個人背景、週遭環境、及切身需求的事務等方面。 Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	能了解並使用熟悉的日常用語和詞彙，滿足具體的需求。能介紹自己及他人，並能針對個人細節，例如住在哪裡、認識何人以及擁有什麼事物等問題作出問答。能在對方說話緩慢而且清晰，並隨時準備提供協助的前提下，作簡單的互動。 Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

中譯補助單位: 教育部 (www.edu.tw)；中譯單位: 多媒體英語學會 (www.rocmelia.org.tw)中譯授權單位: Council of Europe 歐洲理事會 (www.coe.int)

❖ 本問卷下頁繼續 (第三部分)

第三部份 **CEFR** 的影響

3-1. 在您任教的國家，您認為一般語言老師們對 CEFR 的認識是⋯⋯（請點選量表中的框格）

非常熟悉　◅　❶　　❷　　❸　　❹　　❺　　❻　▻　一無所知
　　　　　　　□　　□　　□　　□　　□　　□

3-2. 在您任教的國家，您認為 CEFR 在該國的影響是比較正面的嗎？（請點選量表中的框格）

非常正面　◅　❶　　❷　　❸　　❹　　❺　　❻　▻　非常負面　　□ 我不知道
　　　　　　　□　　□　　□　　□　　□　　□

3-3. 在您任教的國家，CEFR 是否在下列主題已造成有用的影響？（請點選量表中的框格）

A. 任一教育階段的課程/教學綱要計畫
非常有用　◅　❶　　❷　　❸　　❹　　❺　　❻　▻　沒有用　　□ 我不知道
　　　　　　　□　　□　　□　　□　　□　　□

　若有意見，請說明：＿＿＿＿＿

B. 評量
非常有用　◅　❶　　❷　　❸　　❹　　❺　　❻　▻　沒有用　　□ 我不知道
　　　　　　　□　　□　　□　　□　　□　　□

　若有意見，請說明：＿＿＿＿＿

C. 教師訓練（職前或在職）：
非常有用　◅　❶　　❷　　❸　　❹　　❺　　❻　▻　沒有用　　□ 我不知道
　　　　　　　□　　□　　□　　□　　□　　□

　若有意見，請說明：＿＿＿＿＿

D. 該國使用或出版的教科書：
非常有用　◅　❶　　❷　　❸　　❹　　❺　　❻　▻　沒有用　　□ 我不知道
　　　　　　　□　　□　　□　　□　　□　　□

　若有意見，請說明：＿＿＿＿＿

3-4. 以您個人的教學經驗，CEFR 在下列單元的有用程度為何？（請點選量表中的框格）

A. 課程及教學綱要計畫
非常有用　◅　❶　　❷　　❸　　❹　　❺　　❻　▻　沒有用　　□ 我不知道,我在這個
　　　　　　　□　　□　　□　　□　　□　　□　　　　　　　項目沒用過 CEFR

B. 教學風格及教學法
非常有用　◅　❶　　❷　　❸　　❹　　❺　　❻　▻　沒有用　　□ 我不知道,我在這個
　　　　　　　□　　□　　□　　□　　□　　□　　　　　　　項目沒用過 CEFR

Appendix E: **Respondents' qualifications in the languages taught**

The following tables indicate, for each country / area, the highest qualifications respondents' claimed to have in the language(s) they were teaching at the moment of the survey. These can be either a qualification in the study of the language considered or, in certain cases, a qualification obtained in a country where the language considered is the official language for their studies. The column 'native speakers' refers to those who were identified as native speakers of the language (or one of the languages) they taught. Although some have also indicated a degree or certification in the language taught, the fact that they were native speakers was considered to be their highest qualification. Due to the fact that a few teachers were teaching several languages, the total number of respondents in the first column can be higher than the total number of respondents from a country.

Table E.1: *Qualifications in the language(s) taught by respondents in France*

Languages taught (number of respondents)	Native speaker	Qualifications				
		Doctorate (PhD)	Agrégation[1]	Masters or equivalent	BA or equivalent	None reported
English (13)	4	3	2	2	2	
German (8)	2	3	3			
Italian (4)	4					
Dutch (3)	3					
Spanish (2)		2				
Portuguese (2)	2					
Chinese (2)		2				
French (1)						1
Romanian (1)	1					
Russian (1)		1				
Czech (1)			1			
Turkish (1)		1				
Total (39)	**16**	**12**	**6**	**2**	**2**	**1**

[1] *'Agrégation' is a qualification for teaching in upper secondary schools in France. Teachers with such a qualification can also be assigned to universities*

Table E.2: *Qualifications in the language(s) taught by respondents in the United Kingdom*

Languages taught (number of respondents)	Native speaker	Qualifications			
		Doctorate (PhD)	Masters or equivalent	BA or equivalent	None reported
French (7)	4		3		
German (5)	4		1		
Spanish (5)	3	1	1		
Italian (4)	3		1		
English (1)			1		
Russian (1)		1			
Japanese (1)		1			
Greek (1)	1				
Catalan (1)	1				
Icelandic (1)					1
Total (26)	**16**	**3**	**7**	**-**	**1**

Table E.3: *Qualifications in the language(s) taught by respondents from two other countries in Europe (Belgium, Germany)*

Languages taught (number of respondents)	Native speaker	Qualifications			
		Doctorate (PhD)	Masters or equivalent	BA or equivalent	None reported
French (1)			1? [1]		
German (1)	1				
English (1)			1		

[1]*This respondent, native speaker of German, declared having the Staatsexam (equivalent to a Masters degree), but did not say if it was in French language*

Table E.4: *Qualifications in the language(s) taught by respondents in Australia*

Languages taught (number of respondents)	Native speaker	Qualifications				
		Doctorate (PhD)	Masters or equivalent	BA or equivalent	None reported	Other
German (6)	4	1		1		
English (5)	3	1	1			
French (5)	2	2	1			
Spanish (4)	3	1				
Japanese (4)	1	1		1[1]		1[3]
Italian (3)		1	1	1[2]		
Chinese (2)	1	1				
Korean (1)			1			
Indonesian (1)					1	
Total (31)	**14**	**8**	**4**	**3**	**1**	**1**

[1]*This respondent also has a NAATI (National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters) translator certification*
[2]*This respondent also had a certificate for teaching Italian as a foreign language delivered in Italy.*
[3]*This respondent had a Japanese language proficiency certification from Japan*

Table E.5: *Qualifications in the language(s) taught by respondents in New Zealand*

Languages taught (number of respondents)	Native speaker	Qualifications				
		Doctorate (PhD)	Masters or equivalent	BA or equivalent	None reported	NR
English (9)[1]	9					
French (5)	3	2				
German (3)	1	1	1			
Spanish (3)		2				1
Japanese (3)	2		1			
Chinese (1)		1				
Māori (1)	(1)[2]		(1)[2]			
Italian (1)	1					
Total (26)	**16 (17)**	**6**	**2 (3)**	**-**	**-**	**1**

[1] *Including one respondent training teachers of English as a foreign language*
[2] *It was not sure whether this respondent was a native speaker, but he/she also declared having a MA in the language taught*

Table E.6: *Qualifications in the language(s) taught by respondents in Taiwan*

Languages taught (number of respondents)	Native speaker	Qualifications			
		Doctorate (PhD)	Masters or equivalent	BA or equivalent	None reported
English (12)	3	4	4		
French (11)	4	2	5		
German (3)	2		1		
Japanese (2)		1	1		
Spanish (2)	2				
Russian (1)		1			
Total (31)	**11**	**8**	**11**	**-**	**-**

Table E.7: *Qualifications in the language(s) taught by respondents in Hong Kong*

Languages taught (number of respondents)	Native speaker	Qualifications			
		Doctorate (PhD)	Masters or equivalent	BA or equivalent	None reported
English (8)	4 [1]	1	2	1	
Chinese (3)	3 [1]				
French (2)	2				
German (2)	1			1	
Spanish (2)	2				
Japanese (1)	1				
Total (18)	**13**	**1**	**2**	**2**	**-**

[1]*One respondent was a Canadian Chinese, with a Masters degree from China and a PhD from Canada. It was logical to guess that he/she was a person of Chinese origins who migrated to Canada and obtained the Canadian nationality. Hence, he/she would be a native speaker of Chinese with a PhD from Canada. However, this respondent could also be a native speaker of both languages, or even of English with a Masters from China.*

Appendix F: **Respondents' qualifications in the teaching of a second or foreign language**

The following tables show, for each country / area, the qualifications respondents provided in relation to the teaching of a second or foreign language. In the few cases where respondents indicated having no such qualification, but had indicated one in their response to the preceding question on language qualifications, corrections were made so as to include these qualifications in the following tables. In many cases, the qualifications given did not explicitly refer to the teaching of a second or foreign language. For instance, many respondents simply indicated having a masters degree (or equivalent) or a doctorate, degrees that do not necessarily provide teacher training (in comparison, for instance, with a Masters of Education, a degree in the teaching a specific language as a foreign language, etc.). However, all these qualifications were included on the ground that respondents would have clearly read and understood the question and answered correctly. I simply indicated, in a comment following the tables, the number of cases that did not explicitly refer to language teaching.

Table F.1: *Qualifications in the teaching of a second / foreign language as indicated by respondents from France*

Qualifications	Agrégation[1]	CAPES[2]	Doctorate	Masters or equivalent	None
Number of respondents	14	3	2	6	13

[1] *'Agrégation' is a qualification for teaching in upper secondary schools in France. Teachers with such a qualification can also be assigned to universities*
[2] *The CAPES (Certificat d'aptitude au professorat de l'enseignement du second degré) is the French secondary teaching certificate*

One of the respondents who had a doctorate and five of those who had a Masters degrees did not specifically indicated that these qualifications were related to language teaching.

Table F.2: *Qualifications in the teaching of a second / foreign language as indicated by respondents from the United Kingdom*

Qualifications	Masters or equivalent	Postgraduate qualifications	PGCE	Other teaching certifications	Others	None
Number of respondents	3	1[1]	2	5	1	13

[1] *Postgraduate course on Didactics and Methodology of Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language*
[2] *This respondent indicated "English Philology", without providing any further detail*

Among the five respondents who had a teaching certification, two had the German Staatsexamen II (Certificate in education); one had the Spanish CAP (Certificado de aptitude pedagógica), a postgraduate certificate in education; one had the 'Professorat de l'Alliance Française', a degree for teachers of French as a foreign language; and one had the Italian DITALS, a certification for teachers of Italian as a foreign language.

As regards the two other respondents from Europe, one (in Germany) had no teaching qualification while the other (in Belgium) mentioned "Teaching English as a second language" (delivered in the United States), without providing other details, such as the level of that qualification.

Table F.3: *Qualifications in the teaching of a second / foreign language as indicated by respondents from Australia*

Qualifications	Masters or equivalent	Postgraduate qualifications	Bachelors' degrees	Other teaching certifications	Others	None
Number of respondents	8	5	1	5	1[1]	8

[1] *This respondent indicated "International House, Salamanca", which is the name of an institution, not of a qualification*

The Bachelor's degree and two of the Masters degrees did not contain any specific reference to a teacher training qualification. The five 'Other teaching

certifications' included a postgraduate qualification in teaching Spanish as a foreign language (Spain), an Italian 'abilitazione' (teaching certificate), a German state qualification for teaching in secondary schools (Staatsexamen), a certification in TESOL and a PGCert (postgraduate certification) TESOL.

Table F.4: Qualifications in the teaching of a second / foreign language as indicated by respondents from New Zealand

Qualifications	Masters or equivalent	Postgraduate qualifications	Diplomas	Other teaching certifications	Other	None
Number of respondents	5	2	4	3	1[1]	9

[1] *This respondent indicated "Italian language and literature for second language learners", without indicating the level of the qualification (Masters degree or other)*

One of the Masters degrees did not contain any specific reference to a teacher training qualification. The four 'Other teaching certifications' included a Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA), a Goethe Institute training certification for the teaching of German as a foreign language and a Japanese Language Teaching Competency Test from Japan.

Table F.5: Qualifications in the teaching of a second / foreign language as indicated by respondents from Taiwan

Qualifications	Doctorate	Masters or equivalent	Post-graduate qualifications	Bachelors' degrees	Other teaching certifications	None
Number of respondents	5	11	1	1[1]	2	10

[1] *This respondent also had a German teacher trainer certificate*

Four of the PhDs and two of the Masters degrees did not contain any specific reference to a teacher training qualification. The two 'Other teaching certifications' refer to a Teachers of English as a Second Language (TESL) Certificate and a certificate in French language teaching from France.

Table F.6: *Qualifications in the teaching of a second / foreign language as indicated by respondents from Hong Kong*

Qualifications	PhD	Masters	Post-graduate qualifications	Bachelors' degrees	Diplomas	Other teaching certifications	None
Number of respondents	1	5	2	1	4	1	1

The PhD, one of the Masters degrees, the postgraduate diploma and the Bachelors' degree did not contain any specific reference to a teacher training qualification. The two 'Other teaching certifications' refer to a Certificate in Secondary Education (English) and a German certification for teaching German as a foreign language.

Appendix G: **Respondents' position**

Table G.1: *Respondents' position in France*

Position	University professor	Lecturer (Maître de conferences)	Professeur agrégé [1]	ATER	Maître de langue	Lector (lecteur)	Secondary teacher
Number of respondents	6	12	10	1	1	6	2[1]

[1]One of them was a lower secondary teacher with a CAPES (see below); the second one was an assistant teacher

In France, 'Professeur des universités' (university professor) are teachers with an accreditation to supervise research (Habilitation à diriger des recherches [HDR], a post-doctoral degree). 'Maîtres de conférences' are the equivalent of lecturers, they all have a doctoral degree. 'Professeurs agrégés' are teachers with an 'agrégation', a qualification for teaching in upper secondary schools. They can also be assigned to universities, contrarily to teachers with a CAPES (Certificat d'aptitude au professorat de l'enseignement du second degré), a teaching certificate for lower and upper secondary schools. ATER (Attachés temporaries d'enseignement et de recherche) are contract teachers-ressearchers and seem to correspond to Postgraduate Teaching Assistants. 'Maîtres de langue' are contracted for one year (renewable once), like 'lecteur' (lector), but have successfully achieved one year of doctoral studies.

Table G2: Respondents' position in the UK

Position	Professor	Senior research fellow	Lecturer	Postgraduate Teaching Assistant	Lectors, assistants…	Teacher	Other	NR
Number of respondents	1	1	10[1]	1	7	2[2]	1[3]	2

[1]Including 2 Affiliated Lecturers

[2]Both teaching at university level

[3]Language coordinator

The category 'Lectors, assistants' in the table above includes different titles as follows: 3 Foreign Language Assistants, 3 Lectors and 1 Language Tutor.

As regards the two other respondents from Europe, the respondent from Germany is a professor and the respondent from Belgium was not teaching at the moment of the survey.

Table G.3: Respondents' position in Australia

Position	Professor	Senior Lecturer	Lecturer / Associate Lecturer	Tutor	Teacher	Other	NR
Number of respondents	3[1]	4	13[2]	2	2	1[3]	1

[1]*Including 2 Associate Professors*
[2]*Including 2 Associate Lecturers*
[3]*Visiting academic*

Among those who simply used the term 'teacher' to indicate their position, one was teaching at upper secondary level, another one at pre-university level. The two others were teaching at university level.

Table G.4: Respondents' position in New Zealand

Position	Professor	Senior Lecturer	Lecturer	Teaching fellow	Tutor / Lector
Number of respondents	1	9	11	1[1]	2

[1]*Including 1 Italian government lector*

Table G.5: Respondents' position in Taiwan

Position	Professor			Lecturer
	Professor	Associate professor	Assistant professor	
Number of respondents	1	3	7	19

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Table G.6: *Respondents' position in Hong Kong*

Position	Professor	Senior Lecturer	Lecturer	Teaching consultant	Senior instructor	Instructor	Tutor	Other
Number of respondents	4	1	4	1	1	4	1	1[1]

[1]*This respondent indicated 'PL', which is not clear.*

The ranking system in Hong Kong, traditionally following the British system, is now getting influenced by the North American system. The ranks of *Instructor* and *Senior Instructor* on the one hand and of *Lecturer* and *Senior Lecturer* on the other hand have been separated, although it seems they might be equivalent.

Appendix H: Respondents' views on the most important aspects of the CEFR, outside the Common Reference Levels

In question 2-6 of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to list what seemed to them to be the three most important aspects of the CEFR, apart from the reference levels. Their answers, grouped into theme-based categories, are shown in *Table 4.7*. The present appendix presents the details respondents provided in their answers, using the same theme-based categories as in *Table 4.7*. It is important to remember that, among the 67 (out of 108) who responded to this question, only half (33) had claimed to have read the CEFR.

***Common international standards* (45 responses)**: The CEFR provides international standards (4 respondents) and its use is widespread (1). Three respondents insist on the word 'common' and a fourth asserts that it provides one norm only for everything and for everyone.[316] It is a European document (2 respondents),[317] and it has been adopted in all European countries (3)[318]. Its assessment grid (2) and criteria (1) are recognized everywhere in Europe (and maybe even beyond [1]), as are language certificates delivered in Europe (1). The CEFR makes international comparison possible (3), be it the comparison of tests (2) or of levels achieved (3). The CEFR can be used for different languages (8) (for *all* languages, maintains one respondent from Taiwan). However, for one respondent, the CEFR should take into account the difference between the learners' country of origin and their knowledge of other languages to establish levels. Standardization was mentioned in many ways, not necessarily negative (13 respondents);[319] a respondent in Hong Kong said that the CEFR could be used to develop similar frameworks elsewhere. Four respondents mentioned the

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[316] "Une seule normalisation pour tout et pour tous", says this French respondent from Taiwan.
[317] One (from the UK) observes that it provides "a European focus on language acquisition".
[318] Those three respondents were all from outside Europe (one from Taiwan, two from Hong Kong) and of non-European nationalities (a Taiwanese, a Singaporean and a New Zealander).
[319] Respondents used the words 'standardization '(3 respondents); 'uniformity' (3); 'normalisation' (2);' unification' (of practices in all European countries) (1); and 'universal standard' (1).

standardization of teaching practices,[320] and one from New Zealand said that the CEFR was a "response to the desire of standardisation with [sic] the EU context".

Language description (competences, skills) **(30 responses):** Responses mainly referred to the description of language learning and teaching, language functions, skills and subskills, language competences, etc. One respondent mentioned the can-do statements. Another one observed that they appreciated the fact that it is skill-based rather than knowledge-based. Four respondents mentioned the importance of oral competences,[321] one added reading comprehension. One respondent noted that the CEFR took account of situations and contexts in the use of foreign languages. As regards cultural competences, two teachers mentioned intercultural competences,[322] another one (in France) regretted that the CEFR insists on language to the detriment of cultural contents. A respondent in Australia simply said "it is not transcultural", without further details.

Language teaching, curriculum, syllabus and textbook design **(27 responses)**: The CEFR provides a guideline for language acquisition (1), a basis for curriculum design (4); it helps establish benchmarks for language courses at different levels (3), programme goals and course objectives (6). It helps developments that share the same progression (2), but can lead to a standardization of teaching practices (4).[323] The CEFR is also a reference for textbook design (4), and (according to a German teacher) "a generation of new German course books". One respondent asserted that "the document should serve as a guideline for teachers and people involved in the educational area".

Assessment **(13 responses)**: The CEFR can be used as a basis (or as norms) to develop assessment. It helps in evaluating language competences (2 respondents), including partial competences (1); it gives a clear assessment grid (1); its

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[320] They were all French, although teaching in different countries, and used a variety of words such as *uniformiser*; *normativité*; *critérisation*; *uniformité* and *unification*, which cannot be properly translated into English but which, beyond standardization, convey the ideas of uniformity (rather negative in general), normalization, criteria, norms, etc.

[321] They mentioned the importance of listening comprehension, oral production and the 'oral descriptors' (descriptors for oral competences).

[322] One respondent in Taiwan mentioned "intercultural understanding among countries".

[323] The same four respondents already mentioned when talking of standardization in the first point on common international standards.

descriptors and its scales are useful to assess proficiency levels (3). The placement of students (1) and self-assessment (1) were also mentioned.

Language learners and learning **(13 responses)**: The CEFR is useful for all students (1 respondent), it provides guidelines for language acquisition (1) and gives more motivation to learners (2). Eight respondents referred to the promotion of learners' autonomy. [324] Thus, for example, one respondent noted the importance of 'learning to learn' and another claimed: "Students know their own standards, especially when they use textbooks on their own". Learning strategies and life-long learning were also mentioned.

Clarity and reliability of the document **(11 responses)**: Eleven respondents associated the following qualities with the CEFR: it is clear (4), easy (1), concrete (2) and practical (1). It is useful for non-linguists (1). It is well researched (1), displays academic rigour (1), objectivity (1) and flexibility (1).

Approach **(8 responses)**: Seven respondents referred to the communicative approach associated with the CEFR,[325] two (from France) mentioning its action-based approach *(approche actionnelle)*. The teacher from Germany noted the abandonment of a 'perfectionist' approach.

Political relevance **(7 responses)**: Several respondents referred to European harmonisation (4 respondents), noting the political stakes involved (2). Two respondents also mentioned the promotion of plurilingualism.

International mobility and professional integration **(5 responses)**: Three respondents noted the CEFR's usefulness in terms of learners' mobility and two made reference to professional integration. One said it provided "norms for the selection of personnel".

Others **(5 responses)**: A respondent (from New Zealand) wrote: "I assume this is the development of the old threshold work by van Ek and others"; another saw the CEFR as a way of "developing knowledge, attitude [sic] and skills through the

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[324] Autonomy, self-assessment, self-access, self-dependent learning.
[325] In relation to what he/she called the 'communicational approach' *(approche communicationnelle)*, a respondent from France expressed the view that the reference levels lead to a type of course which has a direct practical application.

learning of languages". A Taiwanese teacher of French viewed the CEFR as a way of promoting French language. One respondent mentioned written criteria as one of the CEFR's main advantages, another (in Hong Kong) observed that the CEFR promoted the "use of electronic media".