STUDY ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE EVALUATION STANDARDS

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Abstract
There are several evaluation standards to assess English levels. Through this article, we consider the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) as an important tool. We aimed to reveal the evaluation standards used in universities and English language training courses in our country and to clarify how the standard tolerates internationally accepted English language evaluation standards. Within the scope of this goal, 27 teachers who teach English in universities and colleges in Mongolia, 22 teachers of English language training centers (general informants), and 656 students who study English in 21 universities and colleges in Mongolia (casual informants) were randomly selected and a survey with 3 groups of 24 questions was conducted over 2 months using Google Form, and the collected results were processed and compared using SPSS program.96.3% of the teachers of universities and colleges evaluate the English course on a 100-point scale. 55.5% of them agreed that the future use of CEFR assessment standards would provide a more objective assessment of students' language levels. According to the responses of training center teachers, 68.2% of the participating training center teachers evaluate the student's language level according to the CEFR standard, which shows that they use an internationally recognized evaluation method. In this regard, 42.7% of the 656 students who participated in the study agreed that the CEFR assessment standard, rather than the 100-point scale, could fully reflect their language level internationally in the future, which was in line with the researchers' hypothesis.

Keywords: 100-point scale, CEFR standards, comparison of evaluation standards, English language evaluation method

Introduction
The English language proficiency of the people of any country is one of the internationally recognized criteria of that country, so the question of how to objectively assess the level of English proficiency of students has been raised (Hulstijn, 2007; North, 2010). Evaluation is crucial to students' effective learning, and its improvement and refinement are critical issues. Therefore, in connection with the necessity of learning the English language academically, it is unavoidable to determine the appropriate evaluation system for the English language level internationally. In this regard, the government of our country has issued policy documents such as the National Program for Improving the Quality of English

Language Education 2001 and 2008, the National Program for English Language Education I-III, and Measures to Support Universal English Learning 2021 (Poszytek, 2012).

Since the CEFR standard is a commonly used international system, most of the tests at MSU are developed by the evaluation method of this standard, and the objectives of the English language courses are aligned with the 6 levels of the standard (Komorowska, 2014; Orosoo & Jamiyansuren, 2021). Instructors Orosoo.M, Batbaatar. J from MSUE wrote and published research papers on the topics of "English language testing and assessment of E-learning in Mongolia, Language in Education planning: Evaluation policy in Mongolia". In these studies, the language policy of Mongolia, students' English language acquisition, and how to evaluate language learning in an e-learning environment were mainly presented. The importance of our study is that it addressed the appropriateness of the CEFR, the 100-point system, and the most commonly used evaluation standards for English language learning.

Method

Three contents of 24 questions were formulated based on reading and studying the research works related to the topic about which of the evaluation methods (100-point system, CEFR standard) are used to evaluate students' English language proficiency in our country's universities and training centers and how it conforms to internationally recognized evaluation standards (Alderson, 2007). Data were collected from 656 students studying English, 27 teachers of universities, and 22 teachers of language training courses using Google form, and the results were processed by the SPSS program (frequency, crosstab). The scope of the study was limited to universities and English language training courses under the assumption that "the evaluation method used in the English language training courses will be more in line with international evaluation standards." The survey was conducted over 7 months from March to October 2022.

Literature review
Common European Framework Reference (CEFR)

One of the assessment methods used in English language teaching is the Common European Framework Reference (CEFR), which describes the process of language learning, teaching, and assessment (Europe, 2001; North, 2004). This standard is a major work initiated and implemented by the European Union to improve communication between European countries, supporting language learning and multilingual education (Van Ek, 1990). In the framework of this work, starting from the task of determining the language level and threshold level, the need to determine the next level has arisen (Trim, 2012). However, Vantage (fairly high level) and Waystage (low to middle level) levels were introduced as part of the CEFR standards in 2001 to increase communication and opportunities for language learning (Hung, 2013).

Language levels such as Threshold (B1), Vantage (B2), and Waystage (A2) developed by linguists have been enriched with new definitions, explanations, and other innovative levels that have been integrated into a common assessment model (Deygers, 2019). The basic (A1, A2), independent (B1, B2), and advanced (C1, C2) levels of the CEFR standard are considered to have contributed to language

teaching and language ability assessment (Figueras, 2012) (Barni, 2015) not only in Europe but also in the world (Byram, 2012). Thus, the CEFR, or Common European Framework Reference, has become the world's most widely recognized standard for language-level assessment (Coste, 2007; Fulcher, 2004; Nguyen & Hamid, 2015). The 2018 CEFR standard focuses on a new framework for assessing language processes that were not included in the 2001 standard, as well as new definitions for multilingual, young learners, and sign language learners (Krumm, 2007). Also, to facilitate the organization of lessons and to determine success, according to the CEFR language mapping scheme for users/learners, 6 levels of language are issued (Green, 2012), and for more specific evaluation, they are called (pre-) or "previous", (upper-) or "advanced". level concepts have been added.

The advantages of using CEFR standards are:
-It will serve as a basis for language curriculum development.
-Language skills are clearly expressed in a manner consistent with international standards.
-In addition to everyday communication, it is possible to engage in communication on a professional level, using professional language.
-Due to the strict evaluation system, transparency of rules, and a wide selection of materials, it will be a bridge for teachers and students to learn and develop independently.

Table 1. CEFR proficiency level classification

CEFR Proficiency level			Can-Do descriptor
Basic user	A1	Beginner	Skill to recognize simple words needed to communicate information relevant to family and self, to respond and understand simple, clear, and slow speech
	A2	Elementary	Skill to recognize and use compound words and simple sentence structures in communication, feedback, daily activities, and personal information
Independent user	B1	Intermediate	Skill to understand the main topic of a conversation about a familiar topic and express the ideas you want to imply by the type and scope of the topic
	B2	Upper-intermediate	Skill to understand the gist of complicated conversations on real and abstract topics in professional communication.
Proficient user	C1	Advanced	Skill to understand a wide range of topics and express oneself fluently by extracting hidden meanings and using language effectively at social, academic, and professional levels
	C2	Proficiency	Skill to easily understand all kinds of conversations broadcasted live, on television, radio, and other sources, to express one's ideas fully and freely, and to write coherent texts

Citation: CEFR 2018 standard

100-point scale
The first numerical grading was used at Harvard in 1830, using a scale of 20. In 1837, professors of mathematics and philosophy began using the 100-point scale, and by the 1940s, the 100-point scale had become the dominant grading system, and over time, it began to be used along with two different systems: 4.0 scale and "A-F" letter grading (Schneider & Hutt, 2014). In this way, letter grades are tied to a 100-point scale, and "A" is 90-100, "B" is 80-89, etc., and it has been widely used in many countries.

A = 90-100%
B = 80-89%
C = 70-79%
D = 60-69%
F = 0-59%

Details of each evaluation indicator:
A- An assessment that indicates the highest level of mastery of the learning content expected of the learner
B- An assessment that indicates the content of the course has been mastered above the average level, and the evaluation indicates that there is sufficient preparation for the next level of learning
C- An assessment that indicates the average level of knowledge and ability of the course content and reflects the possibility of further study in a related field using the knowledge acquired by studying the majority of the content of the program
D- An assessment that indicates the minimum level of knowledge required to meet the requirements for skills that would be appropriate for learning content
F- An assessment that indicates that the skills required by the course content have not been met

Criticism of the assessment system is widespread, saying that it is outdated and that it is difficult to assess the level of language proficiency in particular (Schneider & Hutt, 2014).

Findings
        A total of 49 teachers participated in our study, 27 of them work in public and private universities operating in Mongolia, and 22 work in training centers. As shown in the following table /Table 1/, about 30% of all teachers have 1-5 years of experience, and 32.1% have 6-10 years of experience, 24.3% are teachers with 11-15 years of teaching experience.

Table 1. Experience of teachers teaching English

Years of experience	Teachers of universities and colleges		Teachers of training centers	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
1-5 years	5	18.5	9	40.9
6-10 years	10	37.0	6	27.3
11-15 years	7	25.9	5	22.7
16 or more years	5	18.5	2	9.1
Total	27	100.0	22	100.0

Table 2. The standard used in the final evaluation of English language courses
in universities and training centers

Evaluation standard	Teachers of universities and colleges		Teachers of training centers	
	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
100 -point scale (1-100%, A-F)	26	96.3	7	31.8
Common European Framework Reference (A1-C2)	1	3.7	15	68.2
Total	27	100.0	22	100.0

When the teachers who participated in the study were asked what standard they use for the final or diploma and certificate evaluation, 96.3 percent of the university teachers use the 100-point scale, while 68.2 percent of the training center teachers gave different answers that they use the common European evaluation standard. It can be seen that our country does not use established standards for language ability assessment.
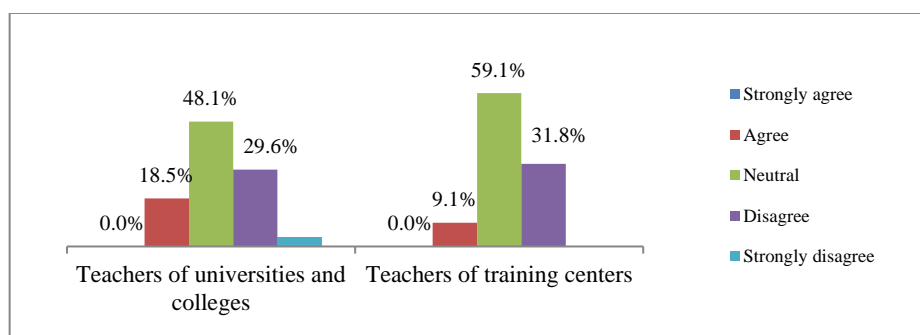

Figure 1. Compatibility of the "100-point scale" used in English language education in our country with the international evaluation method

In Figure 1, only a minority of all respondents, 18.5% of university teachers and 9.1% of training center teachers, agree that the 100-point scale is a methodology consistent with the international level.
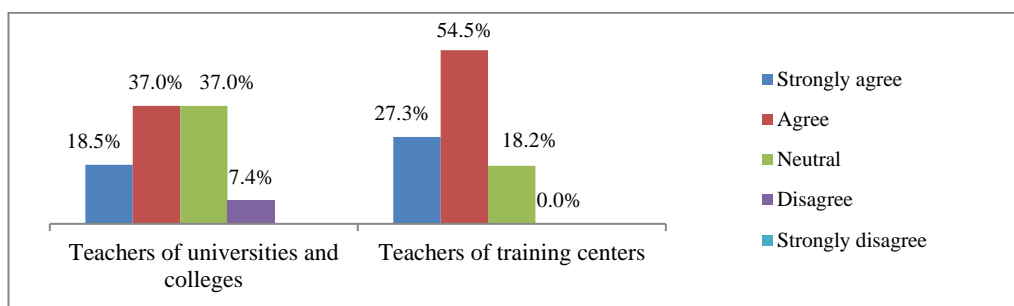

Figure 2. CEFR assessment methodology, as an accurate standard to assess the language level of learners internationally

In Figure 2, about 69% of all teachers agreed that the use of Common European Framework Reference will make students' language level more accurate

when they study and work in foreign countries, and in Figure 3, it is necessary to further evaluate students' language skills by international reference standards. 96.5 percent of all teachers said that it is appropriate to use international standards in the final evaluation of language teaching.
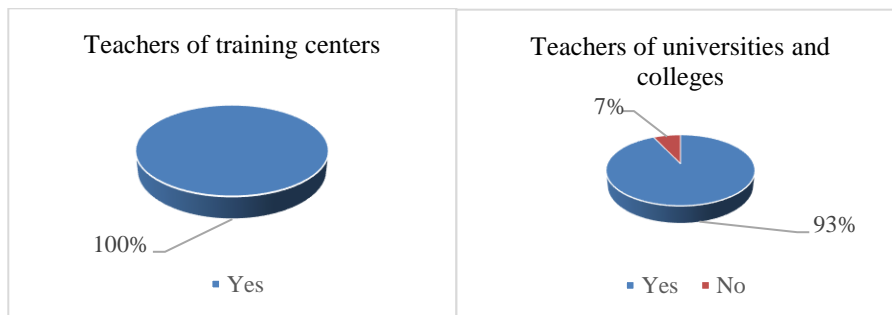

Figure 3. The necessity to evaluate students' English language skills according to international standards

Research findings on students

656 respondents of 1st-4th year students from 21 public and private universities participated in the survey and expressed their opinions on 7 questionnaires about English language evaluation. Out of 656 students, 42 were freshmen, 130 were sophomores, 399 were juniors, 84 were seniors, 16.3 percent them has studied English for 1-3 years, 20.2 percent studied for 3-5 years, 36.6 percent studied for 5-8 years, 19.5 percent for 8-10 years, 7.3 percent studied more than 10 years.

Table 1. Students' English proficiency level (100-point scale)

Evaluation	Frequency	Valid Percent	
Less than 59	60	9.1	
60-69	118	18.0	
70-79	*231*	*35.2*	
80-89	*154*	*23.5*	
90-100	43	6.6	
No idea	48	7.3	
Total	654	99.7	
Missing	2	.3	
Total	656	100.0	
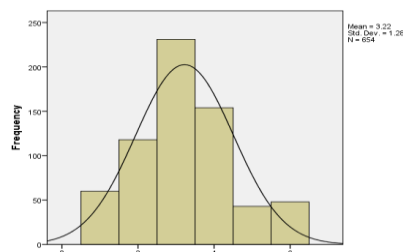
Two students of the 656 students who participated in the survey, did not answer the question. 35.2 percent of the total participants or 231 students rated their English language level at 70-79 percent, while 23.5 percent, or 154 students said that they studied at 80-89 percent. But 7.3 percent or 48 students answered that they cannot assess their language level by themselves. This figure shows an average value of 3.22, which indicates a learning rate of 70-89 percent.

Table 2. Students' English proficiency level (CEFR standard)

Evaluation	Frequency	Valid Percent
A1	35	5.3
A2	*125*	*19.1*
B1	*211*	*32.2*
B2	*128*	*19.5*
C1	74	11.3
C2	82	12.5
Total	655	99.8
System	1	.2
Total	656	100.0
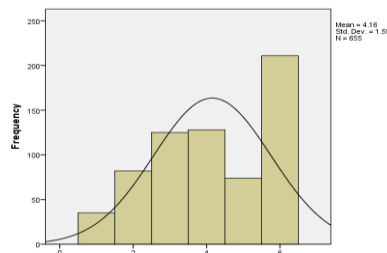
As shown in the table and graph above, the majority of students, 32.5 percent, rated themselves as intermediate level, 19.5 percent as advanced-intermediate level, and 19.1 percent as basic knowledge. This is consistent with the data in Table 1 and shows that students can assess their language level objectively and have some knowledge about language level evaluation.

Table 3. Evaluation standards for assessing students' language skills in accordance with international standards

Evaluation	Frequency	Valid Percent
100-point scale	123	18.8
CEFR standard	*280*	*42.7*
No idea	252	38.4
Total	655	99.8
System	1	.2
Total	656	100.0

From the table, it is clear that the CEFR standard is the preferred English language evaluation of students, with 42.7 percent of all participants. This indicates that students are willing to have their language skills assessed using an evaluation system that meets international standards.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the final evaluation of student's English language ability, university teachers primarily use the 100-point scale, and most of the teachers at training centers use the CEFR. All the teachers agreed that evaluating the students' language level with a 100-point scale would make it difficult for them to study and work at the international level in terms of clarity of assessment, and they believed that the Common European Framework Reference would be a more objective assessment of the student's English language level. On the other hand, 42.7 percent of the students who participated in the study expressed their desire to have their English language skills evaluated by the CEFR, and 38.4 percent answered that they did not know which standard to evaluate. In summary, different evaluation methods are used in the English courses of universities and training centers in our country. It is likely to confuse teachers and students, leading to the conclusion that it is appropriate to use a unified assessment system in line with international standards in the future.

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