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THE CEFR AND TEACHING JAPANESE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

1 INTRODUCTION

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) was developed in a European context, but it has had some direct and indirect influences on teaching Japanese in Japan and worldwide.

The first part of this article reviews the reception and applications of the CEFR by Japanese linguists, language-education specialists, and institutions[1]. In the 1990s, and at the beginning of the twenty-first century, as the CEFR was being developed and implemented in Europe, standards and guidelines for teaching and testing Japanese as a second language underwent extensive revisions, that were partly influenced by the CEFR.

The second part of the article analyses the present state of teaching Japanese in Slovenia, in relation to CEFR. This analysis reveals some specific characteristics of Japanese as a language and Japanese education in Europe, which partly confirm the critical stance introduced in the previous section.

2 INFLUENCE OF THE CEFR ON TEACHING JAPANESE

Learners of Japanese in Europe are a minority, compared to those in other areas of the world. According to statistics from the Japan Foundation, altogether there were 979,820 learners of Japanese in the world in 2006, and fewer than 10% of them (about 95,000) resided in Europe[2].

Since its publication in 2001, and even during its preparation some years earlier, the CEFR attracted much attention, not only within Europe, but also worldwide, and it has been applied to various languages, in different educational settings. This section briefly

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1 We would like to thank an anonymous Japanese specialist with much experience currently in Japan, who provided us with much information on the topic, especially concerning the first half of this article.

2 15th July 2014. http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/singi/jinzai/jitsumu/dai5/siryou2_1.pdf.

presents the active involvement of teachers of Japanese in Europe, a reconsideration of concepts and standards for teaching and learning Japanese as a foreign language, and the revision of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test, all in relation to the CEFR.

2.1 The Role of the Association of Japanese Language Teachers in Europe (AJE)

The Association of Japanese Language Teachers in Europe (AJE) was established in 1995, and re-established as the AJE e.V. in 2009[3]. It seeks to enhance and promote the teaching and learning of the Japanese language and culture in Europe. The association consists of over 300 members from around thirty countries, and their activities reflect the needs of Japanese learners in Europe. They also play an active role in interpreting and applying the concepts offered by the CEFR to Japanese language education. Soon after the publication of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Language: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (CEFR) in 2001, the AJE, entrusted by the Japan Foundation[4], started the AJE-CEFR project. In 2005, the results of the project were published in *Learning and Teaching Japanese Language in Europe and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (AJE and JF 2005). In this publication, the AJE briefly presents the history of language policies in Europe, and the activities of the Council of Europe, and gives a brief account of the Bologna Process, the CEFR, and the European Language Portfolio (ELP). In order to examine the current tendencies and future directions of Japanese language teaching and learning in Europe, the AJE carried out a survey of eight European countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Based on this survey, the prospects for learning and teaching Japanese are presented in detail. The AJE points out issues and problems to be tackled in teaching Japanese; for example, the increasing number of learners, a growing interest by younger learners and by learners outside the academic sphere, and the low status of Japanese teachers at European institutions. The report also touches on other aspects of learning and teaching Japanese in Europe, including LLL (lifelong learning), e-learning and IT literacy, CLIL (content and language integrated learning), and possible solutions for teacher training.

Overall, the report concludes that Japanese teachers have much to learn from the CEFR, based on the following four reasons listed in the "Executive Summary" of the publication:

- There must be a firm and clear notion of language, language teaching, and language learning;
- Economic and political needs must be taken into account;
- The CEFR was initiated by the Council of Europe, but many countries took leading roles in coordinating its implementation;

3 *AJE*. 15th July 2014. http://www.eaje.eu/en.html.

4 *The Japan Foundation*. 15th July 2014. http://www.jpf.go.jp/e/index.html. The Japan Foundation (JF) specializes in international cultural exchange in Japan. Members of the Japanese studies program at the Department of Asian and African Studies regularly attend symposia and workshops organized by the AJE and/or JF.

- The CEFR/ELP is open, like most documents on the Internet, and can be freely downloaded (AJE and the Japan Foundation 2005: 12).

In June 2011, the AJE launched the "AJE-CEFR Project from 2011". In order to promote Japanese as a foreign language in Europe and to develop its teaching, the AJE recognizes the need to share the concept and basic achievements of the CEFR: currently, there are three study groups within this project, analysing research, teacher training, and evaluation standards[5].

2.2 The Japan Foundation Standard for Japanese Language Education

The JF Standard for Japanese Language Education was developed by the Japan Foundation (JF), partially in response to the CEFR. The planning of the standard began in 2005, and the results were published in 2010[6]. According to the publication, *The JF Standard for Japanese Language Education 2010* (Japan Foundation 2010), the standard offers tools that can be used to consider how to teach and learn Japanese, and to evaluate the results of learning Japanese. It includes the following sections, which are all considered necessary in order to effectively apply the *JF Standard* to language learning: a) the tree of the *JF Standard*[7], b) six levels of learning, c) can-do statements, and d) a portfolio. The tree is a schema presenting the relationship between language abilities and language activities, summarising the theoretical part of the standard. The six levels, can-do statements, and portfolio are adaptations of those offered by the CEFR for European languages.

As Länsisalmi (2012: 104) points out, the can-do statements of the *JF Standard*[8], especially in reading and writing, are more fine-grained. Japanese language ability cannot be assessed in the same way as in European languages: Japanese is a non-Indo-European and non-Latin alphabet language (Länsisalmi 2012: 100–106), demanding much more energy and time for learners to become familiar with the script, because it includes two sets of syllabic phonetic scripts and logographic Chinese characters. In the standard script, as many as 2,136 characters (termed *jôyô kanji*) are used.

The JF encourages institutions and teachers of Japanese to use this standard for individual planning, and for developing language courses and textbooks, teaching materials, tests, and exams. To this end, the JF created the site "Can-do for everyone (*Minna no Can-do saito*)"[9], a database of can-do statements for learning Japanese. Institutions and individual teachers can use the site to create their own list of can-do statements for planning classes and creating questionnaires for students, and students can also use this site to self-assess their language ability. The database includes very detailed and specific descriptions of activities, depending on the type of learners and their purpose.

5 15th July 2014. http://www.eaje.eu/cefrproject.html.

6 15th July 2014. http://jfstandard.jp/top/ja/render.do.

7 15th July 2014.http://jfstandard.jp/pdf/jfs2010_tree_3e.pdf .

8 *JF Can-Do list*. 15th July 2014. http://jfstandard.jp/pdf/JF_Cando_Category_list.pdf.

9 *Can-Do for Everyone (Minna no Can-do saito)*. 15th July 2014. http://jfstandard.jp/cando/top/ja/render.do.

Two possible reasons for the *JF Standard*'s detail, when compared with the CEFR, are the complexity of the Japanese writing system and the very rich politeness strategies of Japanese, which demand different sets of expressions to express the same meaning in different social settings, occupations, and activities.

In 2010, the JF launched the development of a series of textbooks based on the concept of the *JF Standard*. The textbooks are intended for adult learners and are called *Marugoto: Nihon no Kotoba to Bunka* (Altogether: Japanese Language and Culture). The *Marugoto* textbook series is to cover levels A1 to B2. One set of textbooks for level A1 (*Introduction*) was published in September 2013, and a set for A2 (*Beginners*) was published in June 2014; the textbooks for levels B1 and B2 are still being compiled. Each set consists of two textbooks, one for understanding (*Rikai-hen)* and the other for activities (*Katsudô-hen*), reflecting the tree of the *JF Standard*. The *Rikai* textbook includes learning items such as vocabulary, the *hiragana* and *katakana* syllabic scripts, Chinese characters, and grammar and sentence patterns, and the *Katsudô* textbook includes text- and picture-based exercises, to practice communicative activities described in the can-do statement list.

Marugoto tries to include not only Japanese language *per se*, but also cultural information, in order to offer Japanese education for cross-cultural understanding between peoples, including language and culture, from the very beginning. According to Kijima et al. (2012), Japanese textbooks for beginners used to be centred around sentence patterns, but now more importance is given to communication topics that are introduced with simple language patterns at the beginner level, and then reintroduced and reinforced at the intermediate or advanced level, with more variations and complex expression patterns. The *Marugoto* series aims to follow this new tendency in Japanese language education (Kijima et al. 2012: 114) that is common to many language-learning settings today, and is also the direction taken by the CEFR. The *Marugoto* textbook series also embraces the principle of autonomous learning—a principle particularly emphasised by the CEFR—by offering a wide range of additional materials and activities on its companion website.

Another Japanese textbook project was launched under the influence of the CEFR in Hungary, where a series of textbooks named *Dekiru* (Can Do) is being developed by the Japan Foundation, Budapest, and the local Japanese teachers association. Targeting high school students, university students, and adult learners, *Dekiru 1* was published in 2011 and *Dekiru 2* in 2012. The textbooks use Hungarian for explanations, and are based on the CEFR scale of language proficiency levels.

2.3 The Japanese Language Proficiency Test

The Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) has been offered by the Japan Foundation and Japan Educational Exchanges and Services (formerly the Association of International Education, Japan) since 1984, as a means of evaluating and certifying the Japanese proficiency of non-native speakers. In 2011, there were as many as 610,000 examinees, making the JLPT the largest-scale Japanese test in the world. Over time, test applicants have become more diverse, and the use of JLPT results has ex-

panded from skill measurement to include employment screening and evaluation for promotions at work, and as a form of qualification. To ensure the continuing relevancy and accuracy of the JLPT, the Japan Foundation and Japan Educational Exchanges and Services introduced a revised version of the test in 2010. The new version offers five levels of proficiency[10].

When revising the proficiency levels and their descriptions, the JLPT shifted from assessing "language knowledge" to "language ability in use", following a global trend. As can be seen in the document "Comparison of the old and new JLPT"[11], the criteria of the old test typically included numbers: how many words and Chinese characters the learner should learn, and how many hours the learner has spent in the language class. For the new test, these criteria were dropped and five levels (one level was added to the former four) are presented: "Linguistic Competence Required for Each Level" is now formulated for reading and listening in statements starting with "One is able to…", more similar to the descriptors of the Common Reference Levels of the CEFR.

Although the new JLPT does not explicitly mention the CEFR, it is clear that the new version of the JLPT proficiency levels was indirectly influenced by the concept of the CEFR, being an ability-oriented assessment of language proficiency. However, due to the very large number of examinees in numerous locations around the world, the test does not include oral interviews, essay tasks, or other productive tasks.

3 JAPANESE EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA

The authors of this article, all staff members of the Department of Asian and African Studies at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana (UL), analysed the current structure of Japanese courses at UL, in relation to the CEFR assessment levels.

3.1 Content and Goals of Japanese Courses at UL

Japanese courses have been offered at UL ever since the department was established in 1995, but without expressly referring to the CEFR standard. However, other standards and widely-used teaching methods and materials for learning Japanese as a foreign language have been taken into account, because we cooperate with other institutions in Japan and Europe. More than half of our students spend their third year of study at collaborating universities in Japan, and the aim of our Japanese courses is to equip them to be able to function in an academic environment using Japanese.

The department offers the following Japanese courses (see Table 1). Although the CEFR was not expressly applied to planning Japanese courses at UL, when UL reformed all courses to comply with the Bologna process in 2008, course descriptions were rewritten in a format that includes descriptions of course goals similar to the CEFR can-do statements.

10 15th July 2014. http://www.jlpt.jp/e/about/purpose.html.

11 15th July 2014. http://www.jlpt.jp/e/about/pdf/comparison01.pdf

Code	Course	Content and goals, teaching materials	Students, contact hours
Tutorial 1	Japanese tutorial 1 (Unit 1)	Basic sentence patterns, ca. 1,000 words, *hiragana* and *katakana* script, and ca. 250 Chinese characters. Textbook: *Japonščina za začetnike 1, 2* (Hmeljak Sangawa et al. 2012a, 2012b).	Non-track undergraduates, 1st year 120 hours/year
Tutorial 2	Japanese tutorial 2 (Unit 2)	Complex sentence patterns, basic vocabulary (ca. 1,000 words and 250 Chinese characters). Textbook: *Minna no nihongo shokyû II* (3A Network 1998)	Non-track undergraduates, 2nd year 120 hours/year
BA1	Modern Japanese 1	Basic and complex sentence patterns, ca. 2,000 words, *hiragana, katakana*, and ca. 500 Chinese characters. Textbooks: *Japonščina za začetnike 1, 2, Uvod v japonsko pisavo* (Hmeljak Sangawa et al. 2003, 2012a, 2012b), *Minna no nihongo shokyû II* (3A Network 1998)	Undergraduates in the Japanese studies track, 1st year 300 hours/year
BA2	Modern Japanese 2	Reading and writing longer texts, conversation in different politeness levels, honorific language, intermediate vocabulary (ca. 4,000 words), ca. 800 Chinese characters. Textbooks: *Minna no nihongo chûkyû* (3A Network 2008), *Tobira* (Oka et al. 2009, chapters 1–5), *Kanji, goi ga yowai anata e* (Adachi et al. 2002).	Undergraduates in the Japanese studies track, 2nd year 270 hours/year
BA3	Modern Japanese 3	Reading and writing research reports, advanced conversation in different styles of formality, ca. 6,000 words, 1,500 Chinese characters. Textbook: *Tobira* (Oka et al. 2009, continuation of Modern Japanese 2) and additional supplementary materials.	Undergraduates in the Japanese studies track, 3rd year 240 hours/year
MA1	Analysis and translation of Japanese media texts, Analysis and translation of Japanese scholarly texts I	Through reading, analysis, summarizing, lexical analysis, etc., students build up their knowledge of Japanese grammar, vocabulary, and style, practice translation and composition in Japanese, formal speech on chosen topics, etc. Teaching materials: news articles and videos, short scholarly articles.	Master's students in Japanese studies, 1st year 60 + 60 hours/ year

Code	Course	Content and goals, teaching materials	Students, contact hours
MA2	Analysis and translation of Japanese scholarly texts II	Students build on previous knowledge and compose scholarly texts on chosen topics, are also aware of basic translation problems and can independently look for solutions. Teaching materials: scholarly articles.	Master's students in Japanese studies, 2nd year 60 hours/year

Table 1: Japanese courses at UL (as of August 2014)

3.2 Japanese Courses at UL Compared to CEFR levels

The authors (two native speakers and two non-native speakers of Japanese with more than ten years of experience in Japanese education in Slovenia) answered the following two general questions, strictly without referring to the other's opinions.

1. Look at the table of the CEFR Common Reference Levels self-assessment grid (CEFR 2001: 26–27). Where do you think our students will stand in the table, when they complete our courses at the end of the academic year?
2. If there are any items in our Japanese education that cannot be evaluated, or are difficult to assess according to the CEFR framework, what are they?

The answers to the first question are summarised in Table 2. Each checkmark in the grid stands for one answer by one teacher. Because not all teachers teach all levels of students, each teacher gave answers only for the levels she is familiar with. Checkmarks within brackets indicate that students who complete the course given in the leftmost column only partly reach the CEFR level marked with a bracketed checkmark. Detailed explanations of these partial matches are given in the comments after the table.

CEFR levels →	**A1**					**A2**					**B1**					**B2**					**C1**					**C2**				
UL course levels↓	L	R	SI	SP	W	L	R	SI	SP	W	L	R	SI	SP	W	L	R	SI	SP	W	L	R	SI	SP	W	L	R	SI	SP	W
Tutorial 1	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓																				
Tutorial 2						✓		✓	✓		(✓)	✓	✓	✓	✓															
BA 1						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	(✓) ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ (✓)	✓ ✓															
BA 2											✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	(✓) (✓)	(✓)	(✓) ✓	(✓)	(✓)										
BA 3																✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓										
MA 1																✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ (✓)	✓ (✓)	✓ (✓)	✓ (✓)	✓ (✓)					
MA 2																					(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)					

Table 2: Comparison of UL language courses with CEFR levels

Abbreviations: L = Listening; R = Reading; SI = Spoken Interactions; SP = Spoken Production; W = Writing

As can be seen in Table 2, in most cases we could not assign each course in its entirety to a single CEFR level. Overall, the two native speakers of Japanese judged the level reached by students at the end of each course to be lower on the CEFR scale than the level assigned by the two non-native teachers. For example, the two native speakers judged that students reach level B2 at the end of their third year of undergraduate study, whereas the two non-native speakers feel that students already reach the same level at the end of their second year of study. Similarly, students who complete the first-year undergraduate course for those in the Japanese studies track were assessed to be at level A2 by one of the native speakers, but at level B1 (with two exceptions) by the two non-native speakers.

In many cases, we also assessed that students reach different CEFR levels of proficiency in different areas at the end of each course. For example, one of the raters assessed that students at the end of Tutorial 1 (for non-track students studying Japanese) reach level A1 in listening and speaking, but not reading and writing, because this tutorial focuses on spoken interaction. Similarly, the two non-native teachers assessed that students at the end of BA1 are capable of all activities described in column B1 of the CEFR self-assessment grid, with two exceptions: with regard to listening, they can "understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters", but not "radio or TV programs on current affairs", if these relate to Japan, because this would require additional vocabulary and background knowledge. With regard to spoken production, they can "describe experiences and events" but not "narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe their reactions", because they do not practice such activities in the BA1 course.

The greatest disparity can be seen in the B2 column: whereas one of the native speakers considered that students reach level B2 only at the end of their fourth year of study (MA1), the other native speaker and one of the non-native speakers assessed that students overall reach this level at the end of their third year of study (BA3), and the other non-native speaker assessed that they partially reach level B2 already at the end of their second year (BA2), with some provisions. With regard to listening, she assessed that they do not yet understand "complex lines of arguments" and "TV news and current affairs", and some genres of film. With regard to spoken interaction, she noted that they "can take part in discussion in familiar contexts" but not "sustain their views" in a debate. With regard to spoken production, she considered that they cannot yet "explain a viewpoint on a topical issue, giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options" and mentioned that their writing would not be always understandable to Japanese speakers who are not familiar with language learners. The other non-native speaker also considered students who complete BA2 to be partly able to write at level B2, but not "on a wide range of subjects", due to a lack of vocabulary.

The native speaker who ranked third-year undergraduates (BA3) at level B2 also noted that they would be weaker in listening, especially listening to "TV news and current affairs programs" and "films", and in reading "contemporary literary prose", due to lack of vocabulary and script. The other native speaker (who ranked MA1 students somewhere between levels B2 and C1) commented that, overall, most students at UL

tend to reach a higher level of proficiency in understanding (listening and reading) than in speaking and writing, because they do not have as many opportunities to practice active linguistic output outside the classroom, but students who are very interested in Japanese popular culture, and actively participate in Japanese Internet communities, tend to be more proficient at speaking and writing than their fellow classmates, who do not actively practice these skills outside the classroom.

Finally, we all agreed that level C1 should be the goal at the end of our master's courses, but we have too few results at present to confirm this.

3.3 Difficulties in Using the CEFR framework

Answers to the second question (items in our Japanese language education that cannot be evaluated or are difficult to assess according to the CEFR framework) centre around three points: script, politeness, and background knowledge.

a) Script

As has been pointed out before (Länsisalmi 2012), learning to read and write a few thousand different characters is a formidable task, that requires a considerably greater effort than learning to write in a different alphabet. Learners of Japanese who know the pronunciation and meaning of a word are able to read and understand it in phonetic script, but being able to read the same word when it is written in standard script, using Chinese characters, requires an additional level of knowledge. Learners with a good grasp of vocabulary (acquired by listening) but poor knowledge of Chinese characters, might be able to read a text if provided with phonetic guides (*furigana*), but not be able to understand the same text if it is written in standard script without guides.

By contrast, learners who know the Chinese script (because they read extensively or because they know written Chinese) might be able to infer the meaning of a written word, but not be able to pronounce it. These students can understand TV programs, for example, if provided with subtitles, but not without written support.

Due to the complex relationship between spoken and written Japanese, descriptors used in the CEFR self-assessment grid are, thus, difficult to apply, because the assessment of one's ability also depends on the form in which the same linguistic content is presented.

b) Politeness and pragmatic strategies

The CEFR descriptors for "speaking interaction" in the self-assessment grid do mention "fluency and spontaneity" (B2), using language "flexibly and effectively" and "skilfully" (C1), and conveying "finer shades of meaning" (C2), but only at the intermediate or advanced stages of language learning, whereas "sociolinguistic appropriateness" is not emphasised as much as other skills at levels A1 and A2. However, distinguishing between formal and informal modes of expression is one of the first distinctions that learners of Japanese need to master, even at the beginner level, in order to be able to form coherent and acceptable utterances. Being able to interact in Japanese with socially-acceptable modes of expression requires a considerable amount of knowledge of so-

cial and cultural norms, linked to specific linguistic patterns, and is generally expected of any fluent speaker. Such ability, however, is not particularly emphasised in the CEFR self-assessment grid. Nevertheless, learners of Japanese need to spend a considerable amount of time and effort to master this ability.

c) Current affairs and background knowledge

Understanding written and spoken text is very closely connected not only with language proficiency, but also having a background in the history and culture linked with the topic being discussed. Learners of Japanese living outside Japan often lack such knowledge and might, therefore, be able to understand spoken or written news reports only about topics that are current in their own country, but not those specific to Japan.

4 CONCLUSION

A major influence of the CEFR on learning Japanese is the idea of can-do statements, which can be observed in the new textbooks, based on the concepts of the CEFR and the *JF Standard*. The fact that language ability can be broken down into specific and objective descriptors, and that these statements can be shared by teachers, students, and others involved in the process of learning any language, is fascinating. However, as seen in the second and third sections of this article, the scales from A1 to C2, each with can-do descriptors for categories of language use, do not simply match with existing course levels of learning Japanese, due to both the specificity of each course, and also because of some specific aspects of Japanese, as compared to Indo-European languages. This is, of course, to be expected, because the CEFR was developed in and for Europe and European languages.

Not surprisingly, the CEFR levels could thus not be unambiguously mapped onto the course structure at our university. Each course has its own specific aims, and these do not necessarily coincide with the CEFR grid, which is a very general and comprehensive framework aimed at assessing language use in the widest array of settings, whereas UL courses for students in the Japanese language track primarily focus on preparing students for academic settings.

A second point to be noted is that even experienced language teachers did not reach the same conclusions, when assessing student proficiency according to the CEFR scale. This is also not surprising, because the CEFR descriptors of language competence are not as easily applied to testing as the numerical scales used previously, on which students are judged according to the number of words, characters, and sentence patterns they understand and are able to use, and unambiguous assessment results can be obtained almost mechanically. Applying the CEFR framework to planning and assessing language courses in existing educational settings thus requires some effort, but also offers new points of view, and a rich framework for reconsidering existing courses. Conversely, comparing the CEFR with existing traditions of teaching and learning non-European languages, such as Japanese, can also offer new perspectives on the complexity of language use, and on what learning a language entails.

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Abstract
THE CEFR AND TEACHING JAPANESE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Soon after the publication of the CEFR in 2001, the Association of Japanese Language Teachers in Europe (AJE) started a research project on the history of language teaching in Europe, carried out a survey of language policies in various European countries, and presented prospects for learning and teaching Japanese as a foreign language in Europe. The association recognizes the need to share the concepts and achievements of the CEFR.

The Japan Foundation (JF), partially influenced by the CEFR, set up the JF Standard for Japanese Language Education in 2010. This standard offers tools that teachers and students can use to plan their teaching/learning through self-assessment of their language ability levels. The JF is also publishing new types of textbooks for Japanese education, emphasizing cross-cultural understanding between peoples.

The Japanese Language Proficiency Test was revised in 2010 and is now ability-oriented; it is indirectly influenced by the CEFR.

The authors analyzed Japanese education at the University of Ljubljana in relation to the CEFR assessment levels. At the end of their undergraduate study, students reach approximately level B1/B2 of the CEFR, and at the end of the master's course level C1. There are difficulties in assessing the current Japanese courses using the CEFR framework due to the specific character of Japanese, particularly in relation to the script, politeness and pragmatic strategies, and students' familiarity with current events in Japan and background knowledge of Japanese society. Nevertheless, the CEFR framework offers concrete ideas and new points of view for planning language courses, even for non-European languages.

Keywords: Japanese, foreign-language teaching, JF Standard, self-assessment, Japanese Language Proficiency Test.

Povzetek
SEJO IN POUČEVANJE JAPONŠČINE KOT TUJEGA JEZIKA

Takoj po objavi SEJO leta 2001 je začelo Združenje učiteljev japonskega jezika v Evropi (AJE) z raziskovalnim projektom o zgodovini jezikovnega pouka v Evropi, proučilo jezikovne politike več različnih evropskih držav in predstavilo možnosti za učenje in poučevanje japonščine kot tujega jezika v Evropi. Združenje meni, da so načela in dosežki okvira SEJO pomembni, in bi jih rado delilo pri svojih aktivnostih.

Japonska fundacija je, delno pod vplivom SEJO, leta 2010 sestavila »Merilo JF za poučevanje japonščine«. Merilo JF ponuja orodja, ki jih lahko uporabljajo učitelji in učenci za načrtovanje svojega poučevanja oz. učenja s samoocenjevanjem jezikovne sposobnosti. Japonska fundacija izdaja tudi novo vrsto učbenikov za učenje japonščine s poudarkom na medkulturnem razumevanju med različnimi narodi.

Test za preverjanje znanja japonščine so pregledali leta 2010 in njegova nova verzija pod posrednim vplivom SEJO namenja večjo pozornost dejavnostim oz. aktivnemu delovanju posameznika v jezikovnem okolju.

Avtorice članka smo analizirale poučevanje japonskega jezika na Univerzi v Ljubljani z ozirom na nivoje jezikovne sposobnosti v okviru SEJO. Študenti na koncu dodiplomskega študija približno dosežejo nivo B1/B2, na koncu druge stopnje študija pa nivo C1. Obstajajo pa težave pri presojanju nivojev obstoječih jezikovnih predmetov glede na okvir SEJO: te se nanašajo na specifičnosti japonščine, zlasti v zvezi s sistemom pisave, vljudnostnimi in pragmatičnimi strategijami ter učenčevim poznavanjem trenutnih dogodkov in ozadja japonske družbe. Kljub temu lahko trdimo, da SEJO ponuja konkretne ideje in nov pogled na načrtovanje jezikovnega pouka tudi za pouk neevropskih jezikov.

Ključne besede: japonščina, pouk tujega jezika, merilo JF za učenje japonščine, samoocenjevanje, test preverjanja znanja japonščine.