EALTA
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THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Language Culture Pedagogy

EALTA 2014
Conference Programme

The CEFR and Language Testing and Assessment
Where are we now?

29 May – 1 June 2014

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Dear Colleagues,

Almost a year has passed since the memorable and successful 10th annual EALTA conference in Istanbul, focusing on issues of impact of language testing and assessment.

As always, we owe our conference organisers and their teams a great many thanks for all their hard work, Peter Holt last year and Claudia Harsch in 2014. We are also very grateful for generous contributions from our sponsors.

We are now about to hold our 11th conference, at the University of Warwick in the UK, this time with the theme of "The CEFR and Language Testing and Assessment – Where are we now?" As before, we received a large number of proposals that were anonymously evaluated by three reviewers each. Due to careful planning of the programme, we have been able to accommodate roughly forty of them, in the form of papers, work in progress presentations and posters. In addition, there will be two keynotes and to conclude the conference, for the first time, a Round Table Discussion related to the conference theme.

For this year's conference, we made a Call for Proposals also for pre-conference workshops and this proved to be very successful in terms of the number and variety of workshops we are able to offer. For the first time, four workshops will be held, like before with themes that have been suggested in previous conference feedback questionnaires. In addition, there will be meetings of three of our Special Interest Groups on Thursday afternoon on May 29, preceding the opening ceremony.

The past year – like previous years – has been very active for EALTA, with a constantly growing membership and a number of positive activities. We will report more on all this during the Annual General Meeting, which we hope that many of you will attend on Saturday afternoon May 31. Let me just highlight three things:

- Three new Special Interest Groups have been formed, focusing on Signed Language Assessment, Assessing Speaking, and the CEFR;

- A section on linkage to the CEFR has been added to The EALTA Guidelines for Good Practice. Due to generous contributions from many colleagues, translations of the full document are now available in almost all of the 35 existing language versions, and the rest are in preparation.

- A third EALTA Summer School will be held during the last week of July, this time in Siena, Italy.

EALTA has developed into a very large association with a uniquely wide membership and a constant expansion of activities. Like in all organizations, structures and routines need to be analysed and gradually updated. For this reason, the Executive Committee has initiated a discussion of a possible modification to the rules for the Presidency, introducing a new position of Upcoming President. We have asked for input on this issue ahead of the conference, and we also want to discuss it during the AGM. Another question that we will bring up concerns the rules for voting. We will suggest a special group looking into practical as well as legal aspects of this issue. Last but not least, during the AGM we will also elect the new Chair of the Membership Committee.

When I was elected EALTA's fourth President at the AGM in Istanbul last year, I said that I consider EALTA a fantastic association, with its wide membership, its goals and collegial philosophy. If possible, this feeling is even stronger now after my first year in office, with positive communication and cooperation both with a large number of members, and with the Executive Committee.

I look forward to seeing many of you during the conference and to staying in touch with even more of you during the year to come.

Very best wishes,
Gudrun Erickson
President of EALTA
April 30, 2014

Conference Programme

Tuesday, 27th May – Thursday, 29th May				
Pre-Conference Workshops Ramphal Building				
	Workshop 1 R0.14	Workshop 2 R1.15	Workshop 3 R1.13	Workshop 4 R1.03
Tues 14.00-Thu 12.15	Using automated programmes & approaches for test development or assessing productive skills *Scott Crossley, Danielle McNamara*	Test Item Analysis for Teachers: Applying Classical Test Theory using Excel *Chihiro Inoue, Sathena Chan, Carolyn Westbrook*	Assessment of Intercultural Communicative Competencies *Claudia Borghetti, Jan Van Maele*	Good Practice in Assessing Speaking *Carol Spoettl, Nivja De Jong, Jayanti Banerjee*

Thursday, 29th May			
12.30-1.30	Early registration Scarman Foyer		
	SIG meetings Ramphal building		
13.30-17.30	Ramphal R0.14 Classroom-based Assessment *Dina Tsagari*	Ramphal R1.15 Assessing Speaking *Carol Spoettl, Nivja De Jong, Jayanti Banerjee*	Ramphal R1.03 Academic Purposes/Assessing Writing *Peter Holt, Claudia Harsch*
17.00-20.00	Registration Scarman Foyer		
19.00-21.00	Social Event: Opening Reception at Scarman		

Friday, 30th May	
8.00-8.45	Registration Scarman Foyer
8.45-9.00	Welcome Arts Centre, Woods-Scawen Room
9.00-10.00	Plenary 1: *David Little* Learning, teaching, assessment: an exploration of their interdependence in the CEFR
Papers (Presentation: 20 minutes, Questions: 10 minutes)	
10.00-10.30	The CEFR illustrative descriptors: past, present and future *Brian North*
10.30-11.00	Standard setting in Europe and Asia: Linking listening tests to the CEFR *Tineke Brunfaut & Luke Harding*
11.00-11.30	Coffee Break
11.30-12.00	Local needs vs global standards: Incommensurable demands? *Emma Bruce, Liz Hamp-Lyons & Roxanne Wong*
12.00-12.30	Using the CEFR in diagnosing writing in a second or foreign language *Ari Huhta*
12.30-13.00	Poster Mini-Presentations (2-3 minutes each)
13.00-14.30	Lunch Break Poster Presentation Foyer at Arts Centre Registration Scarman Conference Centre

Parallel Papers (Presentation: 20 minutes, Questions: 5 minutes) Scarman Conference Centre			
	Room 8	Room 9	Room 10
14.30-14.55	Empirical evidence on effects of peer feedback on second language oral performance *Rong-Xuan Chu*	Setting multiple CEFR cut scores for assessments intended for young learners *Patricia Baron*	How useful is the CEFR?—Assessing the learning outcomes of the Finnish 9th graders *Marita Härmälä, Raili Hildén*
15.00-15.25	Target language descriptors for language teachers *Alexey Korenev*	Use of the CEFR in the development of an academic speaking test *Daniel Joyce*	Linking Examinations to the CEFR: Implications for English Language Assessments *Craig Davies*
15.30-15.55	Academic Writing in English: a corpus-based inquiry into the linguistic characteristics of levels B1-C2 *Rebecca Present-Thomas*	The challenge of relating national grading in examinations to the CEFR *Taina Juurakko-Paavola*	CEFR and Language Testing: Recommendations from the field *Mathea Simons*
15.55-16.30	Coffee Break		
Parallel Work-in-Progress Sessions (Presentation: 15 minutes, Questions: 5 minutes)			
	Room 8	Room 9	Room 10
16.30-16.50	MERLIN—A multifunctional trilingual learner corpus related to the CEFR *Katrin Wisniewski*	Assessing Writing at the CEFR A1 Level *Gulay Yigit*	Is my B2 your B2? Standard setting in broad European context *Margreet van Aken, Evelyn Reichard, Rob Verheijen, Alma van Til*
16.55-17.15	Arabic Profile: CEFR for Arabic—a learner corpus approach *Bjorn Norrbom*	Looking beyond scores—A study of raters and ratings of Speaking *Linda Borger*	Implementing CEFR in an Intensive English Program at an American University *Eddy White*
17.20-17.40	Intercultural competence: to what extent is this integral to test validity *Kathryn Brennan*	Common European Framework impact on English language speaking test rater standardization *Vita Kalnberzina*	The washback effect of Cambridge English examinations in German secondary school contexts *Gillian Horton-Krueger*
19.30 - open end	Social Event: Dinner at Scarman Restaurant (please book in advance)		

Saturday, 31th May			
Arts Centre, Woods-Scawen Room			
9.00-10.00	Plenary 2: *Dorry Kenyon* From Test Development to Test Use Consequences: What Roles does the CEFR Play in a Validity Argument?		
Papers (Presentation: 20 minutes, Questions: 10 minutes)			
10.00-10.30	Complementing the CEFR: Developing objective criteria to assess interlingual mediation competence *Maria Stathopoulou*		
10.30-11.00	Extending and complementing the CEFR *John de Jong & Veronica Benigno*		
11.00-11.30	Coffee Break		
11.30-12.00	Reading Comprehension Text Complexity & the CEFR: implications for text selection *Trisevgeni Liontou*		
12.00-12.30	Language descriptors for mathematics and history/civics *Eli Moe, Marita Härmälä, Jose Pascoal*		
12.30-13.00	How not to use the CEFR: Forced alignment is not equation *Lukácsi Zoltán*		
13.00-14.30	Lunch Break Poster Presentation at Foyer Arts Centre		
Parallel Papers and Work-in-Progress Presentations (Paper Presentation: 20 minutes, Questions: 5 minutes; WIP Presentation: 15 minutes, Questions: 5 minutes) Scarman Conference Centre			
	Room 8	Room 9	Room 10
14.30-14.55 Paper	Using CEFR-scales for assessing young learners' oral interactional FL-skills in different settings *Astrid Jurecka*	CEFR as a framework for combining classroom and external assessment data *Neil Jones,* *Angeliki Salamoura*	Research Dating; Finding Your EALTA Study Partners *Jonathan Rees* This session aims to facilitate finding research partners with similar research interests, with a special focus on the projects and works in progress presented at the EALTA conference. We will introduce the session and its format at the beginning of the conference.
15.00-15.20 WIP	The CEFR and testing children's reading *Angela Hasselgreen, Hildegunn Helness*	CEFR-linked test development in academic context: teachers' perspective *Blanka Pojslova*	
15.20-15.45	Coffee Break		
15.45-17.00	Annual General Meeting (Scarman, Room 8)		
18.00-23.30	Social Event: Conference Dinner at the Coventry St Mary's Guildhall (please book in advance), pick-up at 18.00 from Scarman, return pick-up at 23.30 in town		

Sunday, 1st June	
Papers (Presentation: 20 minutes, Questions: 10 minutes) Arts Centre, Woods-Scawen Room	
9.30-10.00	Balancing statistical evidence with expert judgement when aligning tests to the CEFR *Anthony Green*
10.00-10.30	Investigating the relationship between empirical task difficulty, textual features, and CEFR levels *Jamie Dunlea*
10.30-11.00	Influence from afar: The CEFR and a New Zealand tertiary-level qualification *John Read*
11.00-11.30	Coffee Break
11.30-13.00	Round Table Discussion: The CEFR and Language Testing and Assessment – Where are we now? Chair: *Neus Figueras* Discussants: *Brian North, David Little, Dorry Kenyon, Claudia Harsch*
Conference Close	
14.30-17.30	Social Event: Trip to Stratford (please book in advance)

Posters Friday and Saturday during coffee and lunch breaks, Foyer Arts Centre
Assessing functional competence in writing: a corpus-based approach *Franz Holzknecht, Michael Maurer and Antonia Bechtold*
Assessment literacy of national examination interviewers / raters - Experience with the CEFR *Ene Alas and Suliko Liiv*
Help, I'm Lost!: Mapping EAP descriptors to the CEFR *Lucy Davies and Jon Lishman*
Implementing CEFR in a tertiary context: compromises and balance *Radmila Doupovcová and Eva Složilová*
Item exposure control in FFL large scale assessment *Sebastien Georges*
Linking EFL textbooks to the CEFR *Dina Tsagari*
The PTE Academic score profile, proficiency descriptors and Student Performance at University *Roy Wilson*

Friday, 30th May

08:00 – 08:45	REGISTRATION (Scarman Foyer)
08:45 – 09:00	OPENING REMARKS (Arts Centre, Woods-Scawen Room)
09:00 – 10:00	PLENARY 1
Arts Centre, Woods-Scawen Room	**Learning, teaching, assessment: an exploration of their interdependence in the CEFR** *David Little* The order of the three nouns in the second part of the CEFR's title reflects the development of the Council of Europe's involvement in L2 education. Its earliest modern languages projects were implemented under the aegis of the Committee for Out-of-School Education, which was strongly committed to the autonomy of adult learners, in favour of self-assessment, and opposed to formal tests (a specimen test for *Threshold Level* English was developed but never published). When the work was taken over by the committee responsible for the school sector, the focus shifted to teaching and language teacher development. Assessment was added to the Council's explicit agenda only in 1991, at the Rüschlikon Symposium, which recommended the development of the CEFR. To date the CEFR's greatest impact by far has been on language testing. L2 curricula often refer to one or more of its reference levels as a way of indicating the proficiency learners are expected to achieve, but its descriptive apparatus has rarely been applied to the detail of curriculum development. The European Language Portfolio was conceived as a means of mediating the CEFR's action-oriented approach to language learners, but after a few years of enthusiastic development it has failed to establish itself in most Council of Europe member states. In some national education systems language teachers are expected to "implement the CEFR" in their classrooms, but it is unclear what exactly this should entail. My presentation will start from the assumption that the CEFR will bring the greatest benefit to L2 education if it is used as an instrument of "constructive alignment", emphasising the interdependence of learning, teaching and assessment. I shall begin by exploring the CEFR's view of language learning as a variety of language use in which the learner's agency plays an essential role. In doing so I shall pay particular attention to the role of monitoring, which the CEFR identifies as the engine that drives learning, and its implications for teaching and assessment. I shall then turn to a consideration of self-assessment based on checklists of "I can" descriptors, one of the defining features of the European Language Portfolio, and discuss some of the problems it presents and its relation to other forms of assessment. Finally, I shall discuss the trajectory of learning described by the CEFR's successive proficiency levels and the challenges that it poses for teaching and assessment. **David Little** retired in 2008 as Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics and Head of the School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences at Trinity College Dublin. His principal research interests are the theory and practice of learner autonomy in second language education, the exploitation of linguistic diversity in schools and classrooms, and the use of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* to support the design of second language curricula, teaching and assessment. Starting in 1998, he played a leading role in the development and implementation of the European Language Portfolio, and he remains a member of several Council of Europe expert groups.

PAPERS
Arts Centre, Woods-Scawen Room

10.00 – 10.30

The CEFR illustrative descriptors: past, present and future
Brian North, EAQUALS/Eurocentres

The CEFR descriptor scales set a new standard for the development of language proficiency descriptors by taking account of strategies and of qualitative aspects in performance as well as "Can Do" tasks, by providing an extensive number of subscales to facilitate profiling and, above all, because the vast majority had been validated across languages and educational sectors. Several follow-up projects since have re-calibrated CEFR descriptors or used a selection of them as anchors" to calibrate new descriptors, achieving correlations of between 0.92 to 0.97 to the scale values originally reported. The Council of Europe's Language Policy Unit has therefore decided to supplement the 2001 publication with a 2015 Extended Set of Illustrative Descriptors. The aim is firstly to plug gaps on the existing scales, define (pre) A1 and the C levels in more detail and then secondly to make another attempt to tackle areas that proved difficult to scale in the original research because they entailed aspects other than language proficiency itself (e.g. socio-cultural competence, mediation, reading literature), plus suggest versions for younger learners. The presentation will give an overview of plans and methods, a report on progress so far and an opportunity for discussion.

10.30 – 11.00

Standard setting in Europe and Asia: Linking listening tests to the CEFR
Tineke Brunfaut, Luke Harding, Lancaster University

This presentation will look into methodological aspects of standard setting of English second language listening tests. More specifically, it will report on a study relating a listening exam suite developed in an Asian context to the CEFR. The research design followed the four-stage design which has been recommended in the Council of Europe manual for relating language examinations to the CEFR (2009). It also relied on experiences of earlier linking studies (see e.g. Martyniuk, 2010).
A key feature of the study is that it involved a "twin" panels approach, i.e. two judging panels took part in the familiarization and standardization stages. One panel was based at the investigators' institution in Europe and included language assessment specialists and applied linguists with prior experience of CEFR linking projects. The other panel was based at the test development centre, located in Asia. This panel consisted of judges who have intimate knowledge of the exam suite, as test developers, researchers or teachers. This ensured that the overall judgment panel comprised a broad range of expertise, and that the decisions of each individual panel could be cross-validated.
The remote "consensus seeking" approach adopted in this study is a unique innovation in the area of standard setting for language testing. The presenters' evaluation of the feasibility of an international "twin-panel" approach will contribute to current understandings of standard setting and inform standard setting practice. The presenters will also discuss their experience with different linking procedures for standard setting of listening tests.

11.00 – 11.30 **Coffee Break**

11.30 – 12.00	**Local needs vs. global standards: Incommensurable demands?** *Emma Bruce, City University of Hong Kong, Liz Hamp-Lyons, University of Bedfordshire Roxanne Wong, City University of Hong Kong* This presentation explores "broader concerns about how the CEFR can be employed responsibly in testing and assessment" with particular relevance to "the influences the CEFR has exerted in Europe and beyond" in the context of the development and benchmarking of a scoring instrument for EAP writing assessment at a Hong Kong university The project had two goals and two audiences: upward reporting/accountability to senior university management; and the provision of valid diagnostic information for class teachers and programme leaders to use in counselling students and shaping curriculum. An extremely detailed rubric was developed through constant interaction with teachers and with students' texts, and through several phases of piloting. Responding to the upward-reporting mandate, attempts were made to align the instrument with IELTS and the CEFR, external measures which are much touted in Hong Kong. At least for the short term, it proved impossible to meet both goals. The development team ultimately decided to focus on the diagnostic function, and transformed the instrument into a simpler, more teacher-friendly rubric, postponing attempts at alignment to a later stage. This presentation focusses on: (1) the opposing tensions of local (HKDSE) and international (CEFR and IELTS) standards; (2) the impact of alignment on the reported performance of students; (3) the effects of delinking the scale. We will discuss the benefits of a specific, locally-designed, fit-for-purpose tool over one aligned with universal standards, in particular the positive impact on validity and reliability when the scale is based on real samples of test-takers' performance (Kim: 2006).
12.00 – 12.30	**Using the CEFR in diagnosing writing in a second or foreign language** *Ari Huhta, Riikka Ullakonoja, Lea Nieminen, University of Jyväskylä; J. Charles Alderson, Lancaster University* This presentation reports on how the CEFR has been utilized in a research project on diagnosing writing in a second or foreign language (SFL). The project was an international 4-year (2010-2013) study into the diagnosis of SFL writing (and reading). It sought to deepen our understanding of SFL development and of the factors that affect it by identifying cognitive, affective and linguistic features that predict learners' strengths and weaknesses in those areas by studying several hundred learners cross-sectionally and longitudinally. The project brought together scholars from different theoretical orientations: language testing, applied linguistics, and L1 learning problems. We first describe how the CEFR influenced the design of the study and how CEFR-related scales were used for rating writing performances. We then focus on the key findings of the studies, namely a range of regression models obtained via structural equation modelling that show how the results from the cognitive, linguistic and motivational tasks predicted writing in a foreign language (three age groups) and in a second language context (two age groups). We discuss the content and predictive power of the models, whether the same (or similar) models could be identified for the different language and age groups, and whether the models changed with learners' age and proficiency level. Finally, we discuss the implications of the findings for a theory of the diagnosis of SFL writing and for efforts to link CEFR levels with not only linguistic features of performance but also with learners' cognitive and motivational characteristics.
12.30 – 13.00	Poster Mini-Presentations
13.00 – 14.30	**Lunch Break** Poster Presentation at Foyer **Arts Centre** Registration at **Scarman Conference Centre**

14:30 - 14:55

Room 8

Empirical evidence on effects of peer feedback on second language oral performance
Rong-Xuan Chu, National Taipei University of Education

The study examined the applicability of the CEFR for developing English-speaking tests and self-evaluation checklists. In addition, the study explored the value of peer feedback as a supplement to teacher feedback as well as its effectiveness for enhancing EFL learners' (*N* = 69) speaking performance. A mixed-methods quasi-experiment was conducted in two secondary level classrooms for 12 weeks. Based on CEFR level A1 descriptor, pre- and post-English-speaking tests as well as pre- and post- self-evaluation checklists, were designed to investigate any changes relating to the learners' speaking development after the quasi-experiment. Follow-up interviews with the learners were used to explore learners' views on peer feedback and their perception of the applicability of the pre- and post-measures. Results showed that the learners' English-speaking performance improved significantly in the post-test Task One (an interactive task) but not in the post-test Task Two (a descriptive picture-based task). Interestingly, the post-checklist showed that the learners' self-evaluation of their own interactive English-speaking skills remained unchanged but that of their own descriptive English-speaking skills increased significantly. The interview data revealed the learners' mixed opinions on their experience of receiving or providing peer feedback as well as on the practical application of the CEFR for designing tests. The findings yield a deepened understanding of impacts of peer feedback on L2 development and allow us to explore the implications of the CEFR for developing tests and self-assessment devices in the EFL context.

Room 9

Setting multiple CEFR cut scores for assessments intended for young learners
Patricia Baron, Spiros Papageorgiou, Educational Testing Service

Mapping language test scores to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) typically aims to help score users interpret students' level of language proficiency. However, the CEFR has been found to have some limitations when it comes to developing language tests (Weir, 2005), in particular tests for young learners (Hasselgreen, 2005). Given these considerations, this paper focuses on the mapping of test scores on the CEFR for an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) assessment intended for young learners at two different levels. The current study approached the mapping process using two unique components: the first component included modified CEFR descriptors, developed and confirmed by two teams of subject matter experts, to better reflect the young learners' context. The second component included the creation of a pool of items representative of the range of difficulty and complexity across the two tests to allow for their simultaneous alignment to the CEFR levels, rather than mapping each test separately. Eighteen educators from 15 countries participated in the study.
The paper describes the mapping processes, including the standard error of the panelists' judgments (SEJ), a comparison of these SEJs to other CEFR mapping studies where no modified CEFR descriptors were developed, and analysis of the recorded discussions by the panelists during use of the modified CEFR descriptors. The results of the study suggest that use of the item pool across two tests, and the application of the modified CEFR descriptors have utility when multiple performance levels are reported for young learner tests.

How useful is the CEFR?—Assessing the learning outcomes of the Finnish 9th graders
Marita Härmälä , Raili Hildén, The Finnish National Board of Education

Room 10

In 2013, the Finnish National Board of Education conducted a nationwide assessment of learning outcomes in foreign languages at the final phase of basic education. In total 10 900 learners from 580 schools participated in the sample-based tests, which included both receptive and productive skills in English, Swedish, French, German and Russian. The target levels set by the Finnish application of the CEFR scales range from A1.1 in short syllabuses to B1.1 in long syllabus English. The same scales were to be used both in designing the tasks and in reporting the final results.
In our paper, the principal research question to be addressed is to investigate to what extent the item writers' initial perceptions of the tasks' CEFR levels coincided with the empirical test taker data. For receptive skills, in particular, predicting the difficulty level of the items is acknowledged to be challenging (e.g CEFR Manual 2009). To define the cut-scores between proficiency levels, the Bookmark method was applied. In addition, a range of other procedural options to place individual test takers on proficiency levels are discussed to evaluate the reliability and validity of the decisions. Examples from different languages serve to illustrate the choices made.
The study has implications both for promoting the use of the CEFR in the national language education systems as well as for further applications of the CEFR in test design and result reporting.

15:00 – 15:25

Target language descriptors for language teachers
Alexey Korenev, Faculty of Foreign Languages and Area Studies, Lomonosov Moscow State University

Room 8

The CEFR defines key functions of language use for all learners of English, including future university and school language teachers. It is still widely discussed what the target level of a university graduate in ELT should be: B2+, C1, C1+, some curricula even aim at C2. In order to understand and prove what CEFR level is needed, it is necessary to define the functions of the language teacher's ESP, compare them to the CEFR and make conclusions based on it.
The rationale for carrying out this research project lies in the fact that there is limited evidence of empirical data analysis to support claims for the importance of different functions in the specific context of language teaching. Without such analysis, it is difficult to define the minimal sufficient proficiency level of a potential language teacher according to the CEFR.
Our needs analysis includes videorecording and transcribing lessons at all levels of the CEFR from A1 to C1+ in different settings (school, university, vocational education centre), quantitative and qualitative analysis of the teacher's speech and interaction in terms of frequency and importance of the elicited functions, questionnaires and interviews with teachers, analysis of assessments for teachers (TKT, CELTA etc.) to define the key functions in terms of writing and reading,
The aim is to specify the descriptors of the teachers language use at different CEFR-levels, which may allow to define the test construct of a test of English for English language teachers.

Use of the CEFR in the development of an academic speaking test
Daniel Joyce, Eiken Foundation of Japan; Fumiyo Nakatsuhara, University of Bedfordshire

Room 9

This paper will describe the role played by the CEFR in the development of the speaking component of an innovative test intended for university entrance purposes in Japan.
One intention of the new test is to make a positive contribution to English-language learning and teaching in Japan by providing useful feedback to test takers beyond the usual pass/fail decisions associated with Japanese university entrance exams. It was felt that use of the CEFR would facilitate stakeholders' understanding of test scores and task requirements, and provide scores that indicate test takers' approximate level in terms of a well-known external criterion. Consequently, the different levels targeted by the speaking test tasks were designed to operationalize key concepts in the criterial features of each CEFR ability level, and CEFR descriptors from the most relevant scales were used as the criterion benchmarks from which the rating-scale descriptors were developed.
To inform test design and validation, two a-priori validation studies were carried out that drew on Weir's socio-cognitive framework (Weir, 2005; Taylor, 2011). Study 1 was a small-scale trial test to examine how well draft test materials and rating scales operationalised the test construct in terms of certain aspects of context and scoring validity, and the information obtained guided modifications to test specifications. Study 2 was a large-scale pilot test focusing on scoring validity to confirm that changes made after Study 1 were functioning as intended.
The process described here demonstrates one way in which the CEFR can become a useful tool in test development.

Linking Examinations to the CEFR: Implications for English Language Assessments
Craig Davies, Kaplan International Colleges

Room 10

Through the process of linking language assessments and curricula to the Common European Framework it is hoped that outcomes from exams will be both more meaningful and comparable. However, as the validity of the linking claim is gauged, in the main part, through the quality of the linking process carried out, the status of 'CEFR-linked' is often questionable.
This paper sets out to highlight the implications of the linking process advocated in the Council of Europe's **Manual* on a range of English language proficiency exams developed for a pathway course provider in the United Arab Emirates, and for building a strong validity claim for the link between the exams and the CEFR. The paper illustrates how the suggested linking methodology was put into practice and evaluates its impact on the outcomes of the process.
The author(s) find(s) that the linking process brought undisputable benefits to the set of examinations in question, in particular in terms of their validity, reliability and meaningfulness; the process is therefore recommended. However, numerous challenges presented themselves along the way which threatened to compromise validity of the linking claim. These included certain shortcomings of the CEFR framework itself, as well as practical challenges in the implementation of the linking methodology.
It is hoped that by sharing our experiences language teaching, assessment professionals and departments will have the confidence to link their own examinations and publish their reports. In turn this will lead to a more standardised, valid and reliable process of linking examinations to the CEFR.

15:30 – 15:55

Room 8

Academic Writing in English: a corpus-based inquiry into the linguistic characteristics of levels B1-C2

Rebecca Present-Thomas, Vu University, Amsterdam

This study aims to propose specific linguistic (lexical, syntactic, and cohesion/coherency) features characteristic of written academic English text at the higher CEF levels.
A corpus of essays written by bachelor students of English from a Dutch university was collected over a period of 3 years; each essay being rated on the CEF by a trained rater and the corpus being split accordingly into sub-corpora representing levels B1, B2, and C1. In order to better represent the highest level of the CEF, a supplemental corpus of published academic texts (assumed level C2) was compiled from the section J ("learned") sub-corpora of the ICAME written corpora. For each of the four CEF level-based (sub-)corpora, the lexical makeup, syntactic complexity, and coherence/cohesion are being investigated, and the findings compared to existing functional, language-independent reference level descriptors. Initial findings suggest that more proficient writers rely less on the most frequently used English words and more on words from the Academic Word List (Coxhead, 2000). They also use longer clauses, more coordination, and more complex nominals. The published texts show an even further developmental stage. They are clearly distinct from the learner texts, both confirming these patterns, and highlighting previously insignificant trends in the student data: longer sentences, fewer clauses per sentence, and less subordination being characteristic of more proficient texts.
A brief overview of the analyses conducted and their results will be presented followed by a discussion of the relevance of these findings to academic English writing proficiency assessment.

Room 9

The challenge of relating national grading in examinations to the CEFR

Taina Juurakko-Paavola, HAMK University of Applied Sciences

The presentation reports on a study in which a standard setting method, developed and successfully used by Kaftandjieva (2010), was used to set cut scores on Finnish Matriculation Exam language tests. In addition, the CEFR-levels were compared to the indigenous grading system. The presentation will cover only English. The research questions were: 1) What is the level of the tasks in the test? 2) Which levels do the students achieve? 3) What implications do the results have for the development of the test?
Procedures recommended in the CoE Manual (2009) were applied. Nine experienced panelists (raters and item writers) took part in the standard setting. Evidence collected indicated that internal and procedural validity were good and thus enhance the validity claim concerning the cut scores. Examinee-centred external validation provided further validity evidence.
The results indicate that (1) the English test was estimated to be somewhat easier than the target level (B2.1). (2) About 60% reached the level B2.1 and about 10% performed better. Comparison between the CEFR-levels and indigenous grading (based on the normal curve) suggested that the grading was too strict at the lower end and too lenient at the upper end. Failure in the test corresponds to A2 or below. (3) More attention must be paid in the test construction phase that the tasks cover levels B1.2 and B2.2 better. It is envisaged that if further validity evidence is forthcoming, the Matriculation Certificate may soon start reporting the results using both the indigenous grade and the corresponding CEFR-level.

CEFR and Language Testing: Recommendations from the field
Mathea Simons, Jozef Colpaert, Margret Oberhofer, University of Antwerp

Room 10

This presentation will answer the following research questions:
- How and when is the CEFR being used for language testing? (RQ1)
- How practical, applicable and operational is the CEFR in concrete language testing situations? (RQ2)
- Which aspects of the CEFR are amenable to improvement? (RQ3)
In order to come up with an answer to the first two research questions a survey was administered online.
A first group of respondents consisted of participants of the conference 'Language testing in Europe. Time for a new framework?' at the University of Antwerp in May 2013. This conference brought together 188 researchers, practitioners and policy makers from more than 26 countries. A second survey- with the same content – was launched on line. 235 people filled in the survey by this means.
The third research question was exclusively answered by the conference participants (n= 188). After attending the keynote presentations and parallel sessions, they took part in group discussions in order to establish which aspects of the CEFR are amenable to improvement and should be modified. This post-reflection led to more than 150 statements, which were summarized into 10 recommendations for the future European policy on language teaching and testing. These recommendations from the field include suggestions regarding the critical awareness of stakeholders, the clarity of the descriptors, a platform for exchanging good practices and the need for more examples for course designers and teachers.

15:55 – 16:30 **Coffee Break**

Parallel Work-in-Progress Sessions
Scarman Conference Centre

16:30 – 16:50

MERLIN—A multifunctional trilingual learner corpus related to the CEFR
Katrin Wisniewski, Technical University in Dresden

Room 8

In spite of the success of the CEFR, very little evidence in support of the empirical validity of its scales has been collected (Hulstijn 2007), and not much authentic learner data to illustrate rated CEFR levels is available for languages other than English.
This work-in-progress contribution presents the MERLIN project (*Multilingual Platform for the European Reference Levels – Exploring Interlanguage in Context*, funded by the European Union 2012-2014) which compiles a trilingual learner corpus for Czech, German, and Italian. MERLIN contains 2.500 written learner texts from standardized language tests. The texts were re-rated by trained raters who directly linked them to CEFR levels with the help of an analytic rating grid. Reliability was controlled in a Multi-Facet-Rasch analysis.
The complex in-depth annotations of the transcribed texts are based on multiple perspectives that include user needs, inductive text analyses, SLA and language testing research, and operationalized CEFR scales. MERLIN involves innovative computational linguistic analyses for automatic annotation and state of the art information retrieval. The resources & tools created in the project will be freely available under an open source license, and all MERLIN data will be freely available online.
MERLIN will offer sophisticated search opportunities and be of help to practitioners in need of empirically based illustration of the CEFR levels. Furthermore, as it includes operationalized level descriptions of chapter 5 scales (grammar, vocabulary, orthography, sociolinguistic appropriateness, coherence/cohesion), MERLIN contributes to validity research regarding the empirical basis of CEFR scales.

Room 9

Assessing Writing at the CEFR A1 Level
Gulay Yigit, Bilkent University

This study aims to provide insight into the question how writing tasks and rating scales in relation to *The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR; Council of Europe, 2001)* A1 level expectations can be designed and developed. Much work has been done on assessing writing via tasks spanning most levels of proficiency and using different rating scales. Nevertheless, designing writing tests at A1 level remains a challenge as the CEFR writing descriptors at A1 level are not specified enough to be used for the development of writing tasks and rating scales. This has also been a challenge at a university English language school in a private Turkish institution where new university entrants placed at the Elementary level are required to be at the CEFR A1 level after 100 hours of instruction. These students are assessed through high stakes, institutional tests whose purpose is to sample students' performance in four skills with a view to determining whether their average performance corresponds to the CEFR A1. In these tests, a variety of writing tasks are used and the written responses of students are assessed using level-specific rating instruments. This presentation will first describe how tests of writing and rating criteria in relation to A1 level expectations have been developed and then examine the specific limitations of the CEFR in the process of test design and development. Finally, based on the impacts observed so far, ideas for further development of writing descriptors, tasks and rating scales in relation to the CEFR A1 level will be touched upon.

Room 10

Is my B2 your B2? Standard setting in broad European context
Margreet van Aken, Evelyn Reichard, Rob Verheijen, Alma van Til, Cito Netherlands

In September 2013 Cito (the Dutch National Institute of Educational Measurement) organised an international conference, commissioned by the Dutch Ministry of Education, with the aim to standard set the English, French and German national final exams of Dutch secondary education in both reading and listening comprehension. The 5-day event followed the first standard setting conference held in 2006, which was attended by Dutch test experts.
This time a group of around 60 European test experts gathered in The Hague. The participants represented 20 different European countries. Their backgrounds ranged from test or curriculum developers, to assessment methodologists, university lecturers and educational advisors with a thorough knowledge of CEFR . Together they standard set exams of the five different levels within the Dutch education system, ranging from vocational to pre-university level.
The test-centered method used was specifically designed by Cito's psychometric department, using elements of the Bookmark, Angoff and Direct Consensus methods.
Experts were sent the materials before the start of the conference in order to familiarise themselves with the contents. Prior to every session a CEFR-based performance standard was set for a particular exam. Experts then individually rated clusters of items to determine the number of items students needed to answer correctly in order to demonstrate the chosen CEFR performance standard. This procedure was carried out twice, with discussions among experts between rounds one and two.
We would like to share our findings and demonstrate the significance for standard setting conferences of this nature for the assessment of CEFR levels in secondary education throughout Europe.

16:55 – 17:15

Room 8

Arabic Profile: CEFR for Arabic—a learner corpus approach
Bjorn Norrbom, National Center for Assessment in Higher Education, Saudi Arabia

The CEFR has reached beyond Europe and European languages. The Arabic translation of the CEFR was published in 2008 and the Framework is now gaining ground in the Arab world, particularly in the Gulf countries.
The present paper describes the development of a validated learner–based corpus tool for relating L2 Arabic vocabulary, grammar, and functions to CEFR levels A1-B2, similar to *English Profile* where criterial, differentiating features are given priority over comprehensiveness. It will be used to inform Arabic language testing and learning. There is a strong element of diglossia in the Arab world and the profiles aim at covering Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), colloquial forms, as well as Quranic Arabic.
The learner profiles are developed by: (1) creating provisional, intuitively based Reference Level Descriptors (RLDs); (2) constructing CEFR related tests for all three levels covering all four communicative skills and the Use of Arabic, utilizing the provisional RLDs; and (3) forming a corpus with validated learner profiles set to levels A1-B2 using learner data from the tests. Participants in the study will be students of L2 Arabic with a host of different first languages. The study adds value as L2 Arabic is typically under-researched, especially in relation to the CEFR.
The study is believed unique in that it combines three different versions of the same language and that no major study on CEFR and Arabic has been conducted. The paper is likely to provoke discussions about the universal nature of the CEFR, and CEFR and diglossia.

Room 9

Looking beyond scores – A study of raters and ratings of Speaking
Linda Borger, University of Gothenburg

A challenge with the paired speaking test format is scoring reliability. In order to interpret test scores from this kind of performance assessment, it is important to explore how raters reach their decisions. The present study aims to examine the rating of oral proficiency in a paired speaking test, part of a Swedish national test of English. The first group of raters are Swedish teachers of English (n = 17), who made individual ratings of six audio-recorded paired conversations in relation to national standards. In addition, two groups of external European raters (n = 14) rated the same conversations in relation to corresponding CEFR scales from the Manual, the latter with the additional aim of making a small-scale and tentative comparison between Swedish performance standards and the CEFR levels.

The data consist of rater notes, summary comments and scores. Notes and summary comments are analysed to possibly identify features of the performances salient to the raters. Furthermore, scores are analysed to examine rater profiles and issues of consistency. Finally, the relationship between comments and scores is focused upon. Initial analyses of scores show that the rank ordering of performances as well as the degree of variability of ratings are very similar between the Swedish and CEFR raters. The presentation will briefly discuss the design of the study. It will then present findings from analyses of rater comments and scores. Moreover, some attention will be paid to the comparison between the Swedish national standards and the CEFR scales.

Implementing CEFR in an Intensive English Program at an American University
Eddy White, University of Arizona

Room 10

A key theme of the EALTA 2014 conference will focus on the implementation of CEFR in different educational settings. The presentation proposed here focuses on such an implementation in a higher education context - at an English center in a state research university in the USA. The presenter, Assessment Coordinator at the university's English center, is responsible for implementing CEFR and aligning the Intensive English Program (IEP) with the framework.
This is a current and ongoing project, scheduled for full implementation in 2014. As such, this may be considered a work-in-progress presentation that will focus primarily on the challenges of implementation, related to such things as: the alignment process, teacher training, effects on student assessment and advancement, and other consequences encountered during this process. Some of the related issues this presentation will focus on include:

- linking procedures and instruments used for aligning the IEP proficiency levels with CEFR
- the impact of this CEFR implementation on the English center's approximately 40 teachers and 400 international students
- the effectiveness of teacher-training sessions intended to make instructors more "CEFR-literate"
- the consequences of CEFR implementation on instructor's teaching and assessment practices
- instructor's views of CEFR and its implementation in the IEP
- the current state of play of CEFR implementation, and remaining challenges

This work-in-progress presentation will report on the challenges, choices, and consequences faced by an Assessment Coordinator in anchoring an intensive English program on an American university campus to CEFR.

17:20 – 17:40

Intercultural competence: to what extent is this integral to test validity
Kathryn Brennan, Kaplan International Colleges

Room 8

The Common European Framework for Reference (CEFR) has been informing and guiding language learning, teaching and assessment for over a decade. With an original objective of promoting language acquisition across Europe, it aimed to encourage not only plurilingualism but also pluriculturalism in an attempt to overcome 'barriers in communication' as well as transforming cultural diversity between European nations into 'a source of mutual enrichment and understanding'(Council of Europe, 2001).
With regard to the benchmarking of language learning and teaching across Europe, these aims and objectives have met with a high level of recognition. More recently, educational systems beyond the socio-political context of Europe have begun to look towards expanding the use of English as a language of instruction and have sought to communicate more clearly the aims of their education programmes to stakeholders, other educational institutions and, in a broader context, to the international language education community. For this purpose, the CEFR has been considered as a means to set accurate, transparent and comparable standards between English language curricula and assessments in both European and non-European cultural settings.
This presentation will examine to what extent the CEFR is suitable and adaptable for a 'globally' recognisable proficiency scale of language teaching and assessment while remaining true to its pioneering objective of promoting intercultural awareness. The question will be posed of whether a test can truly be considered innovative, valid and authentic if it does not enable the full interaction of learners with other world cultures and encourage intercultural competence.

Common European Framework impact on English language speaking test rater standardization

Vita Kalnberzina, Latvia University, Valda Cepurite Berzina, Stradins University

Room 9

The popularity of the Common European Framework demands us to produce comparable measurement systems. To answer such a demand multiple research activities have been taking place at the Ministry of Education of Latvia examination centre. Here we want to report on the events taking place in standardisation of English language speaking test which operates within the Year 12 examination and is administered by the Curriculum and Examination centre of Latvia.

The main focus will be the investigation of the process of standardisation of English spoken language performance samples for the relation to the CEFR. This includes rater training, analysis of both training and standardisation results. In addition, we aim at identifying the extent to which a sample population of language test raters differ when rating the same spoken performance samples. Finally, the most severely rated qualitative aspect of spoken language performance is to be identified and discussed.

In order to ensure triangulation of the research several data collection instruments have been employed: descriptive statistics of the quantitative approach is used to present the data and their analysis obtained with the use of FACETS software Minifac (Linacre, 2011). Qualitative approach is used to analyse raters' comments provided on the sample performances in question.

The washback effect of Cambridge English examinations in German secondary school contexts

Gillian Horton-Krueger, University of Bedfordshire

Room 10

The CEFR is increasingly prominent in the articulation of English curricula in the German school system. In recent years, there has also been increased uptake in secondary schools of external language certificates which are explicitly linked to the CEFR, one example being the Cambridge English certificates. These are an optional addition to the standard school qualifications and may play a mediating role in developing the teachers' CEFR "literacy".

The project for presentation is a washback study, addressing teachers in two of Germany's sixteen states. It explores the decision-making cycle as schools engage with Cambridge English examinations, and the teachers' situation as practitioners interpreting and working with the constructs and demands of both a local curriculum and an external examination system.

This is a mixed-methods study with a sequential design. The first phase comprises a broad-based survey of teachers who have prepared candidates for Cambridge English exams in two states, administered via an online questionnaire, and a comparative document study of the respective local curriculum and the Cambridge English First Certificate. The later phase will use qualitative approaches for case studies of selected typical respondents: interviews, classroom observation and document analysis (teacher assessment of students' written work).

The aim is investigate the nature of the washback or "wash-between" in classrooms at this particular point of intersection between two assessment systems, seeking to take into account aspects of complexity indicated in recent washback literature.

19:30 **Social Event: Dinner at Scarman Restaurant**

Saturday, 31st May

09:00 – 10:00 PLENARY 2

Arts Centre, Woods-Scawen Room

From Test Development to Test Use Consequences: What Roles does the CEFR Play in a Validity Argument?

Dorry M. Kenyon, Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, DC

The development and validation of large-scale language tests is a complicated endeavor, consisting of multiple layers of activity and involving multidisciplinary teams. Within each layer of activity, precedence must be given to the claims that will be made about the defensible interpretations of test scores, appropriate uses of test scores, and evaluation of the consequences of those uses.

Extending the ***Assessment Use Argument*** (AUA) of Bachman and Palmer (2010) and the ***Interpretation/Use Argument*** (IUA) of Kane (2013) and integrating it with the tenets of Evidence-Centered Design (ECD) by Mislevy and colleagues (for example, Mislevy, Steinberg and Almond, 2002; Mislevy and Yin, 2012), language testing experts at the Center for Applied Linguistics are developing an integrated validation argument framework. The goal of this framework is to help language testers and their colleagues across disciplines gain a complete picture of the interaction of all aspects of the language testing endeavor.

In this talk I will outline the layers of this integrated framework, illustrating in particular how it helps test developers clarify the role of proficiency level descriptions, such as embodied in the CEFR and other descriptions of developing language proficiency. For example, while standard-setting procedures such as described in the *Manual for Relating Examinations to the CEFR* may be useful to provide evidence to link claims about the interpretation of performances on test to the CEFR, the integrated framework clarifies how linkages can and should be related to many other layers of a test validation argument, beginning with foundational layers of domain analyses and description. In doing so I will illustrate the usefulness of an integrated validation argument framework in conceptualizing test development projects, communicating internally to multidisciplinary teams involved in a language test development project, and in communicating externally to all stakeholders.

Bachman, L. F., & Palmer, A. S. (2010). *Language assessment in practice.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kane, M. (2013). Validating the interpretation and uses of test scores. *Journal of Educational Measurement*, 50 (1), 1-73.

Mislevy, R.J., Steinberg, L.S. & Almond, R.G. (2002). Design and analysis in task-based language assessment. *Language Testing*, 19 (4), 477-496.

Mislevy, R. J., & Yin, C. (2012). Evidence-centered design in language testing. In G. Fulcher & F. Davidson (Eds.), *The routledge handbook of language testing* (pp. 208-222). Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

Dorry M. Kenyon is CAL's Vice President for Programs, with primary responsibility for preK-12 English language learner assessment and research. Active in research on language testing, Dr. Kenyon is particularly interested in the application of new technology to language assessment problems. Dr. Kenyon's unique expertise lies at the intersection of applied linguistics, language teaching, language testing, and psychometrics. At CAL, Dr. Kenyon has had considerable experience in all aspects of designing, developing, validating, and operationalizing both English and foreign language assessments for language learners of all ages, preschool through adult. Dr. Kenyon also serves as senior advisor on a variety of assessment and research projects at CAL

PAPERS
Arts Centre, Woods-Scawen Room

10.00 – 10.30

Complementing the CEFR: Developing objective criteria to assess interlingual mediation competence
Maria Stathopoulou, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

This paper is based on findings of a research project which explored the complex nature of interlinguistic mediation, i.e., translanguaging practice which entails relaying in one language messages purposefully extracted from a source text in another language, so as to restore communication gaps between interlocutors. Despite the fact that the CEFR has considered mediation as an important aspect of language users' proficiency, it provides no benchmarked illustrative descriptors relevant to mediation. This absence mainly due to lack of data has been a significant incentive for the particular research, which has used data from the Greek foreign language national exams (known as KPG), the only examination system in Europe which assesses test-takers' mediation ability. The research has identified (through an inductive approach to data analysis) successful mediation strategies in test-takers' scripts of different proficiency levels from different KPG writing test papers over a period of six years. This investigation has led to the development of an Inventory of Written Mediation Strategies and a levelled mediation task typology, outcomes which can be creatively exploited for the construction of levelled mediation strategy descriptors, thus complementing the CEFR. This paper provides an empirically based definition of interlinguistic mediation and suggests a framework for the construction of mediation specific can-do statements. These descriptors may make reliable assessment of the mediation competence possible and will also contribute to consistent development of syllabi and materials aiming at the development of learners' mediation skills. The paper concludes by critically discussing the non-inclusion of mediation descriptors in the CEFR.

10.30 – 11.00

Extending and complementing the CEFR
John de Jong, Veronica Benigno, VU University Amsterdam

Available descriptors in the CEFR are limited in number and unevenly distributed over the levels. Also the width of the CEFR levels is unpractical in many educational contexts. This paper presents a longitudinal research project to complement the CEFR. In a first experiment 89 new descriptors were pooled with 19 original CEFR descriptors with known logit values from North (2000) as anchors. In an online survey the descriptors were rated on the CEFR levels by 316 teachers from 91 countries claiming to have detailed knowledge of the CEFR. A second rating was obtained from 89 professional courseware developers and editors from 50 countries who provided ratings on a numerical scale ranging from 10 to 90. Within each group raters with significant deviance from all other raters and descriptors with large errors were removed. Teacher ratings were located within the CEFR levels based on the probability of their distance from any two adjacent level cut-offs. The ratings obtained from the teachers and those obtained from courseware developers and editors correlated at 0.961, indicating that the two sets had 92% of common variance. By removing misfitting descriptors this correlation increased to 0.981. In addition the anchors correlated 0.93 with their original IRT-based estimates, thereby corroborating their validity outside of the context in which they were first calibrated. This study represents an original contribution and a novel approach to the research on CEFR linking procedures and presents the opportunity to create more granular measurement of language proficiency than offered in the original CEFR.

11.00 – 11.30 **Coffee Break**

11.30 –12.00

Reading Comprehension Text Complexity & the CEFR: implications for text selection
Trisevgeni Liontou, Greek Ministry of Education

This presentation reports on an exploratory study that aimed at delineating a range of linguistic features present at the B2 and C1 reading comprehension texts of the Greek national exams in English for the State Certificate of Language Proficiency (KPG), in order to better define text complexity per level of competence. By making use of advanced Computational Linguistics and Machine Learning systems an attempt has been made to find the relationship, if any, between a set of 135 text variables and the readability level of texts used in the specific exam battery. The rationale of this study is closely linked to Weir (2005: 292)[1] and Alderson *et al*. (2004: 11) words of caution that "although the CEFR attempted to describe language proficiency through a group of scales composed of ascending level descriptors, it does not contain any guidance, even at a general level, of what might be simple in terms of structures, lexis or any other linguistic level". One of the most important outcomes of the present study has, thus, been the description of a wide range of text features that has led to the creation of a rough Text Classification Profile per level of competence. The profile could provide practical guidance to test-designers and EFL material developers as to what kind of lexicogrammatical features a learner of an expected level of language ability might be able to handle for a successful exam performance.

[1] In fact, according to Weir, the argument that the CEFR is intended to be applicable to a wide range of different languages "offers little comfort to the test writer, who has to select texts or activities uncertain as to the lexical breadth of knowledge required at a particular level within the CEFR" (ibid: 293).

12.00 – 12.30

Language descriptors for mathematics and history/civics
Eli Moe, University of Bergen; Marita Härmälä, Finnish National Board of Education; Jose Pascoal, University of Lisbon

Success in the educational system is closely linked to having a good command of the language of schooling in the country of residence. Learners' level of language proficiency has an impact on their success in all school subjects: languages as well as other subjects. Therefore, having a migrant or minority background may affect young learners´ school performance.
This paper reports on a two-year European project attempting to identify language level requirements for the language of schooling, more specifically for mathematics and history/civics. The main aim of the paper is to discuss the challenges of developing CEFR language descriptors for non-language subjects. Approximately 160 language descriptors were developed for various skills with two age groups in mind: 12/13 and 15/16 year olds. Researchers as well as teachers at an international workshop provided feedback on the initial descriptors. Subsequently, two online questionnaires were launched and

1) 78 international language experts assigned descriptors to CEFR levels;
2) more than 100 teachers of mathematics and history/civics assessed whether pupils in the relevant age groups needed the competence indicated in the descriptors in order to succeed in mathematics and history/civics.

The results are diverse. On the one hand, specific CEFR language level requirements seem to emerge for the two subjects and age groups. On the other hand, the data yield no definitive conclusions. These results may be due to the diverse language requirements inherent in subject and competency goals and/or non-language teachers' inexperience in thinking in terms of language requirements.

How not to use the CEFR: Forced alignment is not equation
Lukácsi Zoltán

12.30 – 13.00

The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) plays a central role in language testing in Hungary. Examination of foreign language attainment is regulated by Government Decree 137/2008 (V. 16.), which states that certified language exam providers have to align their achievement levels with those of the CEFR. Such an alignment is viewed by the Hungarian Accreditation Board for Foreign Language Examinations (HABFLE) as evidence that different exams measure the same levels. The requirement of a B2-level language certificate for a master's degree aptly demonstrates the influence the CEFR exerts on educational policy.
The two empirical studies conducted thus far to compare test form difficulty and candidate performance in various examinations have yielded contradictory results (Kiszely & Szabó, 2009; 2010). However, if dissimilarities do exist, high-stakes decisions will prove to be biased.
The objective of this quantitative analysis is to compare candidates' results in three certified language examinations. In a common-item non-equivalent groups design, the three test forms were linked through common tasks to facilitate direct comparison after calibration. In a level test setting, a sample of 368 university students took the objectively scored parts of B2-level business English exams: listening, reading, and use of English. The item responses were described with the OPLM-model (Verhelst, Glas, & Verstralen, 1995). Estimated ability measures were transformed into reported scores following the operational standards. The results from paired-samples *t*-tests comparing the reported scores showed highly significant differences in every case. Consequently, indirect comparability through alignment to the CEFR is insufficient to guarantee similar requirements.

13.00 – 14.30 **Lunch Break**
Poster Presentation at Foyer **Arts Centre**

Parallel Paper and Work-in-Progress Sessions
Scarman Conference Centre

14:30 – 14:55 (Papers)

Using CEFR-scales for assessing young learners' oral interactional FL-skills in different settings
Astrid Jurecka, Judith Bündgens-Kosten, Ilonca Hardy, Goethe-University Frankfurt

Room 8

In Germany, foreign language instruction is compulsory from 3rd grade on and corresponding educational standards are based on the CEFR (A1/A2). However, regarding the assessment of *young learners' productive oral FL-skills*, two facts might cause a restriction of existing tests' (e.g. EVENING/Keßler, 2009) construct validity: First, *oral interaction* is part of the oral-language-skills construct (CEFR; ACTFL, 2012), but is often not assessed separately. Second, oral skills are usually assessed within expert-novice-settings and only few of them include peer-to-peer-settings. To enhance test validity, probably more assessments of oral interactional skills and peer-to-peer settings should be developed/included, with the CEFR as theoretical basis. However, since CEFR-oral-interaction-scales provide only few descriptors for lower levels, it's unclear whether CEFR-scales are suited for describing children's interactional skills. Questions are: Can *young learners' oral interactional FL-skills* be described/assessed based on CEFR-scales? Are peer-to-peer-settings suited for young learners? How do they differ from novice-expert/question-answer settings (*how much* happens: amount L1/L2/interactions; *what* happens: type of interactions)?

To compare different types of settings within the same task (computer-based English storybook MuViT/Elsner, 2011), 4th-grade-students (n=36; working in pairs) were video-recorded. Describing children's interactions by CEFR-scales reveals several problems (unambiguous assignment to CEFR-scales); however, qualitative description of interactions becomes possible by developing a descriptor- rather than scales-based coding system (discussion during presentation). Preliminary results (n=16) indicate that children used more German than English language, but peer-to-peer-settings are better-suited to activate interaction and language use (Wilcoxon-Test;p=.028/p=.018), that different types of interactions take place during the different settings and different parts of the construct are being measured (enhancement of test validity).

Room 9

CEFR as a framework for combining classroom and external assessment data
Neil Jones, Angeliki Salamoura, Cambridge English Language Assessment

External assessment emphasizes the measurement goals of reliability and validity, while classroom assessment prioritises the provision of information for teaching and learning. We will present a model of Learning Oriented Assessment with strongly complementary roles for classroom teachers and assessment experts, each providing different sources of evidence for learning. We will then argue that the Common European Framework (CEFR) can provide a shared methodology for aligning these different kinds of evidence.
Alignment implies good agreement as to the goals of learning. If the goal is to develop communicative language skills, then both assessments must share the same frame of reference. Language skills must relate to the same construct models. The CEFR's task-based approach allows us to base the validity of both classroom and external assessment on the same notion of interactional authenticity - engaging learners' cognition in the same way.
But there are obvious differences too, given formal assessment's requirement for a degree of measurement reliability and standardization, and the classroom's requirement for freer, more individualized forms of interaction. Comparisons of performance must also take scaffolding into account. Scaffolding is evident in all levels of assessment, but its nature and purpose in classroom interaction is different to that in formal testing. Another issue is that formal assessment focuses on learning outcomes, while teachers tend to see learning in terms of the teaching process. Thus the treatment of competence and performance may differ. A model of learning emphasizing acquisition may facilitate the alignment of these perspectives in tandem with the CEFR.

Room 10 (14:30 – 15:20)

Research Dating; Finding Your EALTA Study Partners
Jonathan Rees

This session aims to facilitate finding research partners with similar research interests, with a special focus on the projects and works in progress presented at the EALTA conference. The session facilitates networking and cooperation within EALTA. We plan to give all conference participants the chance to appeal for partners in research, briefly explaining their ongoing or planned projects. The audience can then circle the room and exchange with all who seek partners. At the end of the session, those seeking partners briefly report whether they have found potential partners or perhaps even refined their research plans in light of discussions with audience members.

We will introduce the session and its format in more detail at the beginning of the conference.

	15:00 – 15:20 (Work-in-progress)
Room 8	**The CEFR and testing children's reading** *Angela Hasselgreen, Bergen University College, Hildegunn Helness, University of Bergen* This paper presents the preliminary findings of a project the aim of which is to identify what young learners with different competence levels "can do" in their reading. The data consists of the test results for approximately 50,000 9-10 year olds on computerized National Tests of English (reading). Standard setting will be carried out to link these results to the CEFR and set the cut-off score for level A2. Next, reading items will be identified which are clearly 'doable' by children at levels A1 and A2, and in the transition zone. These items will be studied qualitatively in order to characterize, in terms of both text and task, what the children are able to 'do' at these levels of the CEFR. This research will provide information to a variety of stakeholders. Test-takers can benefit from feedback enriched by reference to the Framework and the ELP. This feedback is particularly important for children. Similarly, teachers can benefit from this linkage not only in giving feedback, but also in doing classroom assessment. From the testers' perspective, the study will increase our understanding of CEFR levels A1 and A2 with reference to young learners. In addition, item writing can be facilitated by implicitly linking reading items to a CEFR level. To do this, we need to know what a child can 'do' at a given level on a framework originally designed for adults. Ultimately, all of the stakeholders can benefit from more detailed lower-level CEFR descriptors of reading, specifically associated with children.
Room 9	**CEFR-linked test development in academic context: teachers' perspective** *Blanka Pojslova, Masaryk University* Linking of a test to the CEFR is a very challenging process which can be completed through five inter-related sets of procedures as specified in the Manual for Relating Language Examinations to the CEFR. The linkage to the CEFR itself presupposes that the test being linked to the CEFR demonstrates validity in its own right. Thus, a decision to relate all pro-achievement tests developed at our Language Centre, which provides LSP and LAP courses to all students at our University, entailed a shift from an intuitive test development to the test development following standards for good practice as described in the Manual for Language Test Development and Examining. Promoting language assessment literacy among our teachers, who are also test developers, in a series of interactive seminars was enhanced by immediate implementation of newly-gained expertise in a real test development, which was supervised by trained test developers. Following the first test development cycle, a qualitative and quantitative survey was conducted to find out how effective this strategy is and how the teachers can adopt assessment fundamentals while developing their tests. Its results show that teachers generally welcome this process which among other things helps them to apply CEFR descriptors more consistently, contributes to their professional growth, and brings them more reliable and practical assessment tools. On the other hand, they claim their concerns about potential washback and long-term sustainability as they find the test development organizationally demanding and time-consuming.
15.20 – 15.45	Coffee Break
15.45 – 17.00	Annual General Meeting **Scarman Conference Centre, Room 8**
18.00 – 23.30	**Social Event**: Conference Dinner at St Mary's Guildhall, Coventry

Sunday, 1st June

PAPERS
Arts Centre, Woods-Scawen Room

09:30 – 10:00

Balancing statistical evidence with expert judgement when aligning tests to the CEFR
Anthony Green, CRELLA, University of Bedfordshire; Colin Finnerty, Oxford University Press

The Council of Europe manual (Council of Europe 2009) provides a range of methods for aligning language tests to the framework, but is not prescriptive concerning which methods carry greater weight in determining cut scores. So how can we best ensure the quality of the alignment achieved and the fairness of the decisions made? This paper outlines the activities that underpinned the alignment of the Oxford Test of English B (OTE-B) to the CEFR and explores the process of triangulating objective test data with subjective expert judgement. Expert judgement is an inexact science, but it allows us to make the essential connections between test content and framework descriptors. Statistics provide objective information on the relative difficulty of each test item, but require interpretation. The two rarely match perfectly, but must be reconciled in the interests of quality and fairness in score reporting. OTE-B is a general proficiency test targeting CEFR levels B1 and B2 that is taken entirely online. The test was written with the CEFR levels in mind and each item was intended to target a CEFR level. A series of benchmarking activities have been undertaken to ensure that test scores appropriately align to CEFR bands. Pretesting statistics were mapped against expert ratings of tasks and pilot data provided a comparison of test scores with teacher estimates. This presentation will explore the findings of these different alignment methods and the approach adopted to reconciling them.

10.00 – 10.30

Investigating the relationship between empirical task difficulty, textual features, and CEFR levels
Jamie Dunlea, British Council

This paper investigates the relationship between the linguistic features of input texts used for test tasks and empirical task difficulty. Recently developed language tests are able to utilize a growing body of literature on vocabulary coverage and other textual features such as readability in order to generate test specifications which incorporate explicit descriptions of these criterial features. At the same time, the CEFR has provided a broad, common framework for the discussion of proficiency levels in language test development. However, because of the original intention to provide a common framework across languages, the CEFR is quite vague in terms of vocabulary levels. A number of tests have now been developed which explicitly incorporate CEFR level designations into test specification, along with vocabulary and other textual information. This paper uses input texts from the item bank of one such recently developed test, a test of English for general proficiency which aims to measure across the CEFR levels of A1-B2. The study uses regression analysis to investigate the relationship between the textual features of the input texts in the item bank and the empirical difficulty of the test tasks which utilize those texts. By investigating the relationship between empirical difficulty, textual features of input texts, and CEFR levels, the paper aims to add to our understanding of the CEFR, in particular adding greater specificity to our understanding of appropriate vocabulary levels and readability indices for different levels of the CEFR.

Influence from afar: The CEFR and a New Zealand tertiary-level qualification
John Read, University of Auckland, New Zealand

10.30 – 11.00

These days few countries around the world are immune to the influence of the CEFR, although its relevance and applicability outside Europe is a matter of ongoing debate. New Zealand is certainly geographically remote from Europe, although socially, culturally and educationally rather less so. Knowledge of the CEFR among language educationalists in New Zealand has been somewhat limited until now, except indirectly through the Cambridge English examinations and other CEFR-aligned European language tests. This situation is changing with the introduction from 2014 by the national qualifications authority of the New Zealand Certificates of English Language (NZCEL), a five-level sequence of awards for learners of English as an additional language which will replace the current array of 274 qualifications offered by individual public and private tertiary providers. The NZCEL levels have been defined in terms of CEFR levels, although not formally linked to them at this point. This paper will investigate the issues involved in referencing the new qualification to the CEFR. It is based on interviews with programme directors and senior teachers responsible for designing and implementing courses leading to the award of the NZCEL, in order to probe their understanding of the CEFR and the challenges involved in operationalising the levels, given the fact that the NZCEL must fit the existing National Qualifications Framework as well. The discussion will also draw on an earlier project by the author to explore the possibility of a home-grown system of English proficiency levels for international students.

11.00 – 11.30 **Coffee Break**

Round Table Discussion

11.30 – 13.00 **The CEFR and Language Testing and Assessment – Where are we now?**
Chair: *Neus Figueras*
Discussants: *Brian North, David Little, Dorry Kenyon, Claudia Harsch*

Conference Close

POSTER PRESENTATIONS
Friday, 30th May & Saturday, 31st May

13:00 – 14:30 **Arts Centre Foyer**

Assessing functional competence in writing: A corpus-based approach
Franz Holzknecht, Michael Maurer and Antonia Bechtold, Innsbruck University

The assessment of learners' "functional competence*"* as described in the CEFR (p. 125 ff.) poses certain challenges to language testers. Functional competence is "concerned with the use of spoken discourse and written texts in communication for particular functional purposes" (CEFR, p. 125). For the assessment of writing, "macrofunctions" are particularly important. These are defined as "categories for the functional use of […] written text consisting of a (sometimes extended) sequence of sentences" (CEFR, p. 126). However, the framework does not include an extended enumeration of macrofunctions, but only an unfinished list. In addition to the lack of specificity when it comes to translating functional competence into levels on the illustrative scales, this leaves language testers somewhat in the dark regarding the assessment of these features.
Our research addresses these issues by analyzing learner corpora of 835 test takers' writing samples of two languages (Italian and English) and two CEFR levels (B1 and B2). All samples are based on standardized writing tasks developed for a national high-stakes exam. The tasks specifically target the macrofunctions listed in the CEFR. The corpora are analyzed with analytical software tools such as *Antconc* to answer the following research questions: Does the inclusion of macrofunctions in writing prompts mean that test takers actually perform these functions? Which macrofunctions are test takers capable of performing at different CEFR levels and in different languages? The results of the study should be of interest for developers of writing tests at CEFR levels B1 and B2.

Assessment literacy of national examination interviewers / raters - Experience with the CEFR
Ene Alas and Suliko Liiv, Tallinn University

The presentation will investigate the training needs for the English language national examination interviewer and raters in light of a new national bi-level examination that is set to measure students' proficiency level at B1 and B2 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (henceforth the CEFR) scale. A questionnaire study conducted among the national examination novice and experienced interviewers and raters was designed to study CEFR- related assessment literacy - the extent to which the target population employed the CEFR in their daily professional life, how accessible they felt the CEFR was for their professional needs and if they thought they could accurately place their own students on the CEFR levels. Additionally, the respondents assigned a set of can-do statements derived from the CEFR to the levels deemed appropriate. The analysis of the results revealed ambiguity about CEFR levels among the respondents in both groups, which lead the authors to propose a 4-step training sequence - familiarisation, illustration, practice, individual assessment - designed to empower the interviewers and raters to function more efficiently within the new framework of the national examination speaking test.

Help, I'm Lost!: Mapping EAP descriptors to the CEFR
Lucy Davies and Jon Lishman, Swansea University

We are currently using the CEFR "can do" statements to create an autonomous feedback tool as part of our recently introduced assessment as learning system. Previously, we relied upon one summative, end-of-term test. It was felt, however, we could prepare students more effectively for university with a portfolio system including tasks reflecting authentic academic situations. Matrices were then introduced, which were intended to provide feedback and assessment and clearly outline learning outcomes for all stakeholders.
Each matrix is divided into four areas of assessment, for example, 'use of source material', 'critical thinking and organisation', 'linguistic competence' and 'planning, evaluation, reflection'. Each section has descriptors, graded A to E. A 'B' grade average is required for progression; however, there is a strong focus on using feedback for improvement. Tutors mark assessments using correction code and written feedback, before highlighting the appropriate descriptors on the matrix. Later, during tutorials, students analyse their strengths and weaknesses, using all this feedback, to inform future tasks. However, in practice, matrices are increasingly used more as assessment than feedback; therefore a wiki is being created for students where they can access matrices and click on descriptors for 'can do' statements and advice. This gave us an opportunity to retrofit the evolved assessment as learning system to the CEFR; however, we have been unable to uncover EAP specific literature, and with aspects of the CEFR being inappropriate for our purposes, an element of guesswork is necessary. We propose, therefore, to present a SWOT analysis of this project.

Implementing CEFR in a tertiary context: compromises and balance
Radmila Doupovcová and Eva Složilová, Masaryk University

Developing standardized language tests at university language centres is a highly demanding process full of compromises aimed at seeking balance within multi-faceted contexts of tertiary level language teaching. The proper ratio of proficiency and achievement, reasonable proportion between language for specific and language for academic purposes reflecting curricula and syllabi, appropriate weighting of language skills and subskills dominated by CEFR level descriptors represent just the tip of the iceberg.
The first part of the poster will present primary achievements and obstacles within a language test standardization process of a central European university language centre with regard to implementing CEFR. It will also contextualize the ambitious project encompassing nine faculties and four foreign languages and provide basic background information necessary for a closer look at the situation in one of the faculties.
The second part of the poster presentation follows up on the topic by submitting an example of the development of new final tests in legal English. The reasons that have led to replacing the current tests with the new ones lie in the effort to make the tests more corresponding to the criteria of CEFR and especially to the real needs of prospective lawyers. The poster will focus on the process of designing the new final tests, its challenges, and also the consequences and impact the tests will have on future language education at the faculty of law of the university.

Item exposure control in FFL large scale assessment
Sebastien Georges, Centre international d'études pédagogiques (CIEP)

The *Centre international d'études pédagogiques* (CIEP) offers on behalf of the French ministries of education and higher education numerous tests and diplomas in *French as a foreign language* (FFL). This range of certifications –which all are aligned on the Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFRL)- is distributed approximately to half a million of test takers through a network of more than 1 000 centres in about 175 countries. By linking its examinations to the international standards for language assessment, the CIEP wants to maximize validity, reliability, sensitivity, and fairness. In this context, this poster aims at presenting the work that has already been initiated to improve exposure control of items used in the *Test de connaissance du français* (TCF) which is administered to more

than 100 000 test takers every year. This "work in progress" –led by the psychometricians of the CIEP- targets the definition of a set of indicators. These indicators will be easy to obtain and to interpret for completing the status of items already banked. These indicators will inform spatial and temporal dimensions of item exposition. In the light of these possibilities, we will examine the condition that should strengthen the reliability of paper-based as well as computer-based versions of the test used in large scale assessment. We expect to be able to measure the exposition of test versions in combining the exposition degree of each item that compose them.

Linking EFL textbooks to the CEFR

Dina Tsagari, University of Cyprus

Ever since the publication of the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001), various educational providers such as examination designers, textbook publishers, and curriculum developers have made various claims about the relationship between their products to the CEFR. Such claims have led to the production of enormous amounts of exams, books and curricula in various educational contexts around Europe and beyond. However, there is still little empirical evidence to support claims of linkage to the CEFR.

The present research examined the claims of textbook publishers of a series of new EFL books recently introduced in the Greek State school system for Levels A1 to B1. Analysis of the textbook materials was undertaken using a series of checklists examining the nature and use of texts, tasks and other textbook features and linking its contents to the targeted CEFR levels. The checklists were mainly informed by the CEFR Content Analysis Grids (Manual for Relating Language Examinations to the CEFR, 2009:153-179) and other checklists used in textbook evaluation (Tomlinson, 2012). The results of the study revealed interesting findings about the nature of the textbooks and the ways in which writers chose and designed the textbook materials in their attempt to conceptualize the desired CEFR levels. The poster presentation makes suggestions about the ways material writers need to approach the task of designing textbooks linked to the CEFR.

The PTE Academic score profile, proficiency descriptors and Student Performance at University

Roy Wilson, University of Warwick

My study investigates the predictive validity of a relatively new English test - the Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic or PTEA) which was launched in 2009. The study aims at carrying out qualitative research to reveal how students are linguistically prepared for university study in their first year; contributing to knowledge of the implications of PTEA test scores for international student performance and EAP support at university; and shedding light on the usefulness of score profiles for admissions.

I take a case study approach and look at four cases (2 UG and 2 PG students) in four different UK HE institutions, conducting student tutorials over three terms during the academic year 2013-2014 as well as surveying the perspectives of subject and EAP tutors and accessing documentary evidence for assessment of student proficiency and performance.

Using CEF descriptors for 'describing learner proficiency', I compare students' and tutors' assessment of proficiency with the students' original PTE Academic score profiles (whose score ranges are aligned with the CEF). I use these descriptors as a tool to follow the same concept of 'rating own language behaviour' (Ingram & Bayliss, 2007) and in line with the CEF intended uses of 'student self assessment' and 'raising awareness of their current level'.

The objectives of my paper are to present an overview of my study and taking into account the conference theme, to present and promote discussion of the rationale, benefits and limitations of using these CEF descriptors to describe learner proficiency in my study.

Social Programme

Thursday, 29th May

Opening reception at **Scarman** Conference Centre between 19:00 – 21:00

Friday, 30th May

Dinner at **Scarman** Conference Centre at 19:00 (please book in advance)

Saturday, 31st May

Conference Dinner at the Coventry **St Mary's Guildhall** (please book in advance)
(pick up at 18:00 from Scarman, return pick up at 23:30 in town)

Sunday, 1st June

Trip to **Stratford-upon-Avon** after the conference. This includes a guided tour and visiting Shakespeare's Birthplace.

for details, please visit http://www.warwick.ac.uk/ealta2014/social/

List of food outlets available on campus

(Lunch)

Le Gusta Oven & Bar (Restaurant, *Arts Centre*)

Café Bar (Café, *Arts Centre*)

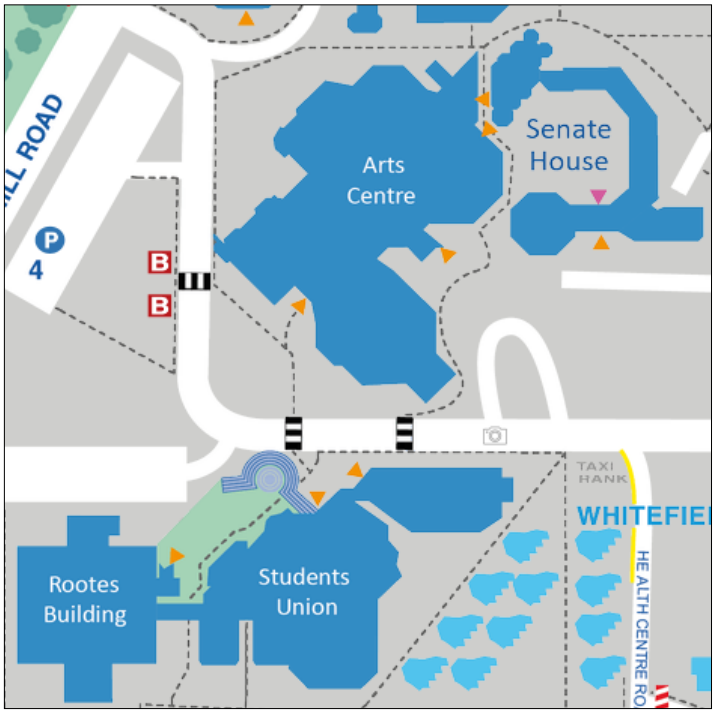
Xananas (Restaurant, *Students Union, Floor 1*)

Bar Fusion (Restaurant, *Rootes Building, Floor 1*)

Costa (Café, *Rootes Building*)

Dirty Duck (Pub, *Students Union*)

Costcutter (Supermarket, *Students Union*)



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Register for a workshop in your country at
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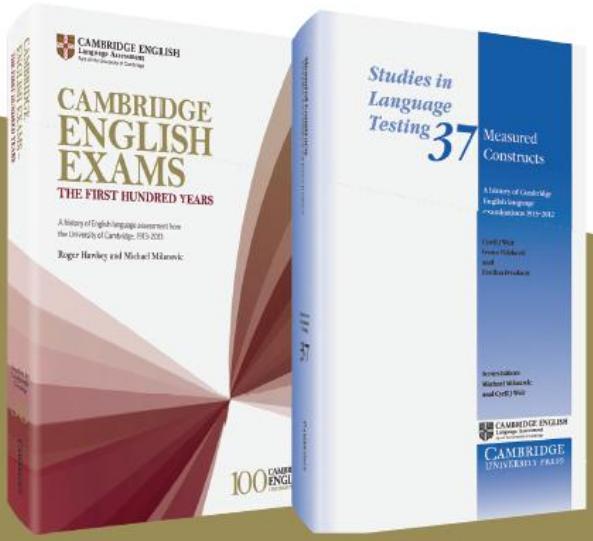

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BRITISH COUNCIL

The British Council Assessment Research Awards and Grants

Results for 2013-14

The British Council Assessment Research Awards and Grants recognise achievement and innovation within the field of language assessment and form part of the British Council's extensive support of research activities across the world.

Assessment Research Awards

These awards are designed to assist research students in their studies or in presenting their work at an international conference. The maximum award given is £2,500. Winners for 2014 are:

Ahmet Dursun (Iowa State University, USA, supervisor Professor Carol Chapelle)

Suwimol Jaiyote (University of Bedfordshire, UK, supervisor Fumiyo Nakatsuhara)

Glyn Jones (Lancaster University, UK, supervisor Luke Harding)

Yumiko Moore (University of Bedfordshire, UK, supervisor Professor Cyril Weir)

Assessment Research Grants

This grant scheme is designed to support projects that are directly focused on Aptis, the British Council's English assessment tool. The maximum grant given is £17,500. Winners for 2014 are:

Khaled Barkaoui (York University, Canada) for his project on roles of delivery mode and computer ability in performance on Aptis writing tasks.

Noriko Iwashita, Lyn May and Paul Moore (The University of Queensland, Australia) for their project which explores the features of discourse and lexical richness at different performance levels in the Aptis speaking test.

Andrea Phillott and Rosalind Warfield Brown (Asian University for Women, Bangladesh) for their project which explores the influence of sociocultural context on tertiary student understanding and performance on written Aptis English tests.

Susan Sheehan, Peter Sanderson and Ann Harris (University of Huddersfield, UK) for their project which seeks to identify key criteria of written and spoken English at the C1 level of the CEFR.

Innovation in Assessment Prize

The Innovation in Assessment Prize celebrates innovation in the area of language testing and assessment. Winners for 2014 are:

Department of English, University of Malta Junior College for developing the Advanced English Speaking Examination. This innovative examination was designed and implemented by a group of teachers on behalf of MATSEC, Malta's national body and, for the first time ever, it allows postsecondary students in Malta to be assessed on their speaking skills.

International Assessment Award

This award recognises an individual working for the promotion of excellence in language assessment internationally.

This year's award is presented to **Randolph Thrasher, Professor Emeritus, International Christian University, Japan.**

Randy Thrasher has made a significant contribution to the field of language assessment at a national, regional and international level and has facilitated the exchange of ideas and expertise between these contexts. During a career spanning 54 years in higher education in Japan, Randy taught the theory and practice of language test development and validation to generations of educators. Outside the classroom, he has actively contributed to the development of theory and best practice at all levels of our profession, serving as a founding member and past president of the Japan Language Testing Association (JLTA) and secretary of the International Language Testing Association (ILTA). His commitment and professionalism has promoted the ethics, principles and professionalism of our field, and has contributed to interaction and understanding across professional contexts and national borders.

www.britishcouncil.org/aptis

The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities.

Assessment Research Awards and Grants 2015

Key dates

Call for proposals: 18 October 2014
Closing date for proposals: 10 January 2015
Winners announced: 14 February 2015

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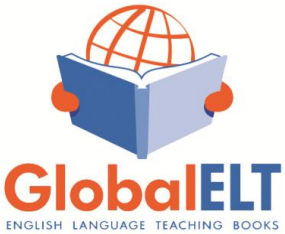
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