

The CEFR Companion Volume in language testing and assessment

1. Angelica de Paiva: Are there any research projects (big or small) one could get involved with, please? -- Either individually or as part of a work project (I work for an awarding organisation). Thank you

2. Angelica de Paiva: Sorry, I also wanted to add either in English or German, or both –

Hi Angelica! There are a number of case studies in process now, which will be published in the Council of Europe's website when they are completed. I would recommend to be on the alert, but also to try and identify your main area of interest in the CV and then either start a "soft" individual research project and/or find interested colleagues at teacher/assessment/tester events who are willing to work together. If you are based in Europe you might also be interested in proposing a project to the European Centre of Modern Languages in Graz (ECML).

3. Sharon Hartle-webinar co-moderator: Do the mediation scales take ELF use into account?

I would say yes, although not explicitly. Awareness of ELF is key in most mediation activities, and also in the activation of plurilingual and pluricultural competences.

4. Neil Bullock - webinar Moderator: Are rating scales always liable to imprecision as they include such subjectivity?

I think that the descriptor scales in the CEFR 2001 and in the CEFR CV need to be read carefully and understood before rushing into using them. Moreover, as with rating scales in any assessment endeavour, familiarization and standardization is necessary to guarantee a common understanding. The Manual for Relating Examinations to the CEFR insists a lot on that.

5. Neil Bullock - webinar Moderator: Do you think there is a move globally towards more communicative skills than purely linguistic ones?

Sure, although it seems it is taking too long!!! Rudy Camerer's session was crystal clear in that respect. It seems that we have been "moving" towards communication since the 1960s.... Change takes long, and although many classrooms will claim "communicative orientation" reality does not support that claim.

6. Sharon Hartle-webinar co-moderator: Although the 'native speaker' creates impossible expectations of learners, 'other speakers' does not seem to give any indication of language levels. How is this accounted for?

Appendix 6 in the CV provides a summary of the instances where "native speaker" has become "speaker of the target language" or "proficient speaker". If

we want to be precise we might say that a speaker is not a learner, but this might not take us too far. In any case, the term “native speaker” did not help with level either, as we all know there are many types and levels of nativeness. This – together with the many misunderstandings that using the term caused, also considering ELF use- is what recommended NOT using “native speaker”.

7. Sharon Hartle-webinar co-moderator: Do you have any information about how widely the portfolio is being used?

There is not much quantitative information on the actual use of the ELP beyond the number of validated and accredited ELPs you can access in the CoE website <https://www.coe.int/en/web/portfolio>

However, in the above webpage you can have an idea of where and how it is being used if you go to the Use of the ELP section, as it takes you to the ECML website. You can also access David Little’s many publications on the use (full or partial) of the ELP in researchgate https://www.researchgate.net/profile/David_Little2

8. Angelica de Paiva: In how far would the CV impact on standardisation, moderation and verification

This is to be seen, but I would insist on the need to identify first what scales and descriptors are relevant for one’s giving context and then work on familiarization and standardization, collecting – as far as it is possible, and as far as needed, depending on whether we are talking about low stakes or high stakes assessment- evidence.

9. Sharon Hartle-webinar co-moderator: How could the new mediation scales be linked to translation exams?

The Companion Volume does not aim at professional translators but at informal translation activities. The relevance of the descriptors will depend on the construct being assessed.

10. Fumiyo Nakatsuhara: Thank you for the informative talk, Neus. Could you elaborate on the two YL documents that you mentioned and its relationship to CV, if you have time?

The two documents I mentioned are very useful for those professionals working with young learners, as they include a selection of the relevant descriptors for YL selected from the CEFR 2001, the CV and validated portfolios. I would suggest that you access Tim Goodier’s presentation of these documents which outlines the aims and methodology of the project and provides an excellent point of entry to the two documents <https://rm.coe.int/the-collation-of-validated-portfolio-descriptors-for-young-learners-go/1680788b28>