

Self-assessment, the CEFR and the ELP

Workshop leader: David Little, Trinity College Dublin

Intended learning outcomes

By the end of the workshop participants will be able to

- distinguish between two broad approaches to self-assessment in the research literature on assessment;
- explain the role of self-assessment in reflective language learning;
- summarise the implications of the CEFR's "action-oriented" approach to language learning and teaching, with particular reference to self-assessment;
- relate checklists of CEFR-derived "I can" descriptors to curriculum objectives;
- design self-assessment procedures based on the checklists;
- propose ways of linking self-assessment to other forms of assessment;
- design an action research project that explores the reliability and validity of ELP-based self-assessment in their educational context.

Contents

- Two approaches to self-assessment: (i) from the perspective of assessment; (ii) from the perspective of learning and teaching.
- The role of self-assessment in reflective language learning; the capacity for self-assessment as a necessary characteristic of the autonomous language learner.
- The CEFR's view of language learning as language use and its learner-centred ethos.
- The ELP as an embodiment of the CEFR's ethos: learner autonomy, plurilingual competences, the intercultural dimension of language learning and language use.
- Working with checklists of "I can" descriptors at the CEFR's six proficiency levels.
- Reliability and validity in self-assessment.
- Relating self-assessment to other forms of assessment.
- Researching self-assessment.

Methods

- Each theme will be introduced by a short presentation.
- Each presentation will be followed by a mini-workshop (participants will work in groups of three or four to facilitate intensive involvement in workshop activities and discussion).
- Each mini-workshop will conclude with a plenary discussion that leads into the next theme.
- Participants will keep personal logbooks in which they record and assess their participation in and contribution to the successive phases of the workshop.

Background knowledge/pre-workshop activities

- Participants should be familiar with the CEFR: not just the common levels and illustrative scales, but the discursive chapters dealing with language education policy, language teaching/learning, tasks in language teaching, and assessment.
- If they have not already worked with a version of the ELP, as learner or teacher, participants should also familiarize themselves with the Council of Europe's ELP website and one or more of the ELP models that can be accessed there.