UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA

Oral Discourse in Foreign Language Education. The Speaking Activities in EFL Textbooks and the CEFR

Marisol Valldepérez Castillo

Aquesta tesi doctoral està subjecta a la llicència *Reconeixement- SenseObraDerivada 3.0. Espanya de Creative Commons*.

Esta tesis doctoral está sujeta a la licencia *Reconocimiento - SinObraDerivada 3.0. España de Creative* Commons.

This doctoral thesis is licensed under the *Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivatives 3.0. Spain License.*

Oral Discourse in Foreign Language Education. The Speaking Activities in EFL Textbooks and the CEFR

Marisol Valldepérez Castillo

Tesi presentada per optar al
Grau de **Doctor amb menció internacional**,
en el programa de doctorat *Ciència Cognitiva i Llenguatge*.

Departament de Filologia Catalana i Lingüística General,
Universitat de Barcelona,

amb la supervisió del
Dr. Xavier Laborda Gil (director i tutor)
Universitat de Barcelona
i
Dra. Carmen López Ferrero (cotutora)
Universitat Pompeu Fabra

2016

A totes aquelles persones que estimo
i que m'estimen, sense les quals
res no em seria possible

El reflex de la llum
damunt d'una imatge inerta,
a través d'ombres i relleus
de vida l'omple.

Talment una mà gegant que
l'acarona i fa sentir la força
creativa de la mirada damunt
l'objecte que la contempla

En homenatge a la poetessa
Montserrat Abelló, (1918-2014)

Table of contents

Acknowledgments xv
Summary xvii
Abstract xix

Part One. Introduction and theoretical framework

CHAPTER 1
Introduction **1**
1.1 Hypothesis 5
1.2 Research question 5
1.3 Objectives 6
1.4 Structure of the dissertation 6

CHAPTER 2
Theoretical points of departure **9**
2.1 The CEFR: its meaning and relevance 11
2.2 Plurilingualism, democratic citizenship and interculturality 12
2.3 The foundational background of the CEFR: the two *Thresholds* 13
2.4 The communicative movement in the CEFR 15
2.5 The action-oriented approach of the CEFR 17
2.6 The priority of written language and the speaking activities in EFL textbooks 18
2.7 Current concerns in EFL: approaching language from a social perspective 21
2.8 Future directions in EFL: an alternative to language theory 24

CHAPTER 3
Foreign language education policy in Europe **27**
3.1 The Council of Europe and the CEFR 28

3.2 A historical overview of the general educational aims of the Council of Europe 30
3.2.1 The after-war period. Previous activities (1950s-1960s)........................32
3.2.2 The Major Project in Modern Languages (1964-1974) 34
3.2.3 The European unit/credit scheme for adult education (1971-1976) 37
3.2.4 Project No. 4: Modern Languages: (1978-1981) 40
3.2.5 Project 12: (1982-1987).. 42
3.2.6 Language learning for European citizenship (1990-1997) 43
3.2.7 A Common European Framework and Portfolio (1996-97 – 2001).......45
3.3 An overview of preliminary works to the CEFR 46
3.4 Recommendations R (82) 18 and R (98) 6 and other relevant policy documents endorsed by the Council of Europe...47
3.5 The CEFR and its action-oriented approach: a way to understand foreign language education in Europe 52

CHAPTER 4

Plurilingualism and the EDC Project in relation to the CEFR 55

4.1 Plurilingualism on the grounds of language education policies in the Council of Europe 56
4.1.1 The European Cultural Convention of 1954..57
4.1.2 Recommendation No. R (82) 18 58
4.1.3 The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992).......59
4.1.4 Recommendation No. R (98) 6...60
4.1.5 Recommendation 1383 (1998) 60
4.1.6 Recommendation 1539 (2001) 61
4.2 Interculturality vs. plurilingualism and multilingualism in the CEFR and the EDC Project 62
4.2.1 Plurilingualism and the CEFR...62
4.2.2 Plurilingualism and the EDC Project....... 66
4.2.2.1 The EDC Project: its impact on foreign language education.........67
4.2.2.2 The EDC Project and the core competences................................70
4.2.2.3 The EDC Project and interculturality..72

CHAPTER 5

Communicative competence in the CEFR **75**

5.1 The relationship between communicative competence and proficiency in the CEFR 77

5.2 The development of competences in the Council of Europe's publication between 1975 and 2001 79

5.2.1 Two Canadian projects: Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) 81

5.2.2 The Six components of communicative ability: van Ek (1976) 83

5.2.3 The *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek and Trim, 1991) 86

5.3 The communicative language competences in the CEFR 87

5.3.1 Linguistic competences 88

5.3.2 Sociolinguistic competences 89

5.3.3 Pragmatic competences 91

5.4 The general competences in the CEFR and the work by Byram and Zarate (1997) 93

5.4.1 Declarative knowledge (*Savoir*) 97

5.4.2 Skills and *know-how* (*Savoir-faire*) 100

5.4.3 Existential competence (*Savoir-être*) 102

5.4.4 Ability to learn (*Savoir-apprendre*) 103

5.5 The scope of the intercultural speaker in the CEFR 105

5.6 Some final considerations on the term communicative competence and the CEFR 108

CHAPTER 6

EFL Textbooks and the CEFR: a linguistic and social approach **111**

6.1 Language proficiency and communicative language activities in terms of the CEFR 111

6.1.1 The significance of the communicative language activities in relation to the CEFR descriptors 114

6.1.2 Communicative language activities: an alternative to the four language skills 116

6.1.3 Receptive and productive communicative language activities in the CEFR 120

6.2 The CEFR's influence over textbook writers and course designers 122

6.2.1 The role of tasks in the production of EFL textbooks 123

6.2.2 the relevance of context in EFL activities 125
6.3 The nature of language promoted in EFL textbooks 127
6.3.1 Written language as a linguistic model 128
6.3.1.1 The use of standard English in EFL textbooks 131
6.3.1.2 Written language as product and as process 133
6.3.2 Oral and written language from a social perspective 135
6.3.2.1 Basic differences in form between spoken and written language 139
6.3.2.2 Major features of oral spontaneous speech 141
6.3.3 The treatment of language in EFL textbooks: reading aloud 143

Part Two. Research study

CHAPTER 7

Research methodology **149**

7.1 The speaking activity samples in EFL textbooks 150
7.1.1 Overview of textbooks and activities 152
7.1.1.1 The *Global* series 153
7.1.1.2 The *New Headway* series 155
7.1.1.3 The *New English File* series 157
7.1.1.4 The *Straightforward* series 159
7.1.1.5 The *English Unlimited* Series 161
7.1.2 The speaking sections in EFL textbooks 163
7.1.3 A reference frame for the speaking activity samples 164
7.2Data collection 166
7.2.1 Distribution of the subscales in the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR 166
7.2.1.1 Number and distribution of the subscales in the Spoken Production descriptors in the CEFR 167
7.2.1.2 Number and distribution of the subscales in the Spoken Interaction descriptors in the CEFR 168
7.2.2 An overview of some relevant features about the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR 169

7.2.2.1 The Pre-Intermediate level in the five series of EFL textbooks 170
7.2.2.2 The holistic "Can Do" descriptors in the CEFR and their constituent parts.. 171
7.2.2.3 The absence of some Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR.. 172
7.2.2.4 The repetition of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR.. 173
7.3 Quantitative data analysis 175
7.3.1 A template to measure the attainment of the Spoken Production descriptors in the speaking activity samples 176
7.3.2 A template to measure the attainment of the Spoken Interaction descriptors in the speaking activity samples 177
7.4 Qualitative data analysis.. 178
7.4.1 A template to illustrate the four language skills in the speaking activity samples 178
7.4.2 A template to illustrate the speaking skill as the ultimate goal of the speaking activity samples at low and high levels of proficiency.. 179
7.4.3 A template to show the fulfilment of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the five series of EFL textbooks 181
7.5 Symbols used in the tables for quantitative and qualitative analysis 182
7.5.1 The five series of EFL textbooks 182
7.5.2 The six levels of proficiency in the five series of EFL textbooks 183
7.5.3 The Spoken Production descriptors in the CEFR 183
7.5.4 The Spoken Interaction descriptors in the CEFR 183
7.5.5 The zero value for the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR 184
7.5.6 The four language skills 184
7.5.7 The speaking skill is subsequent to one or more language skills at low and high levels of proficiency 184

CHAPTER 8

Results **189**
8.1 The quantitative results of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR 189

8.1.1 Attainment of the Spoken Production descriptors in the speaking activities samples in the five series of EFL textbooks: answering the first research question 190

8.1.1.1 The complete fulfilment of the Spoken Production descriptors 192

8.1.1.2 The partial fulfilment of the Spoken Production descriptors 192

8.1.1.3 The zero value of the Spoken Production descriptors 193

8.1.2 Attainment of the Spoken Interaction descriptors in the speaking activities sample in the five series of EFL textbooks: answering the first research question 194

8.1.2.1 The complete fulfilment of the Spoken Interaction descriptors 196

8.1.2.2 The partial fulfilment of the Spoken Interaction descriptors 196

8.1.2.3 The zero value of the Spoken Interaction descriptors 198

8.1.3 An overview of the first research question 199

8.2 The qualitative results of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR 201

8.2.1 Essential aspects of the four language skills in the speaking activities sample to carry out communicative tasks: answering the second research question 202

8.2.1.1 Writing as the introductory skill in the speaking activity samples at low and high levels of proficiency 203

8.2.1.2 Reading as the introductory skill in the speaking activity samples at low and high levels of proficiency 205

8.2.1.2.1 Two sequences of the reading skill at low levels of proficiency 205

8.2.1.2.2 Two sequences of the reading skill at high levels of proficiency 207

8.2.1.3 Listening as the introductory skill in the speaking activity samples at low levels of proficiency 209

8.2.1.4 Speaking as the ultimate goal in the speaking activity samples at low and high levels of proficiency 210

8.2.2 An overview of the second research question 213

8.2.3 Interdependency between the speaking activity samples and the accomplished subscales of descriptors in the CEFR: answering the third research question 214

8.2.3.1 Interdependency between the speaking activities and the accomplished Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors at the Beginner level 214

8.2.3.2 Interdependency between the speaking activities and the accomplished Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors at the Elementary level 217

8.2.3.3 Interdependency between the speaking activities and the accomplished Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors at the Pre-Intermediate level 220

8.2.3.4 Interdependency between the speaking activities and the accomplished Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors at the Intermediate level 222

8.2.3.5 Interdependency between the speaking activities and the accomplished Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors at the Upper-Intermediate level 224

8.2.3.6 Interdependency between the speaking activities and the accomplished Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors at the Advanced level 227

8.2.4 An overview of the third research question 228

CHAPTER 9

Discussion **231**

CHAPTER 10

Conclusions **239**

Bibliographical references **245**

EFL textbooks references **273**

Appendices **277**

Appendix A. The speaking activity samples in the five series of EFL textbooks **279**

A.1. The speaking activity sample at the Beginner level 281

A.2. The speaking activity sample at the Elementary level 283

A.3 The speaking activity sample at the Pre-Intermediate level 285

A.4 The speaking activity sample at the Intermediate level..........................287
A.5 The speaking activity sample at the Upper-Intermediate level............. 289
A.6 The speaking activity sample at the Advanced level 291

Appendix B. The speaking activity samples from the five series of EFL textbooks 295

B.1 The speaking activity samples at the Beginner level.............................. 297
B.1.1 The speaking activity from *Global Beginner* 299
B.1.2 The speaking activity from *New Headway Beginner* 300
B.1.3 The speaking activity from *New English File Beginner* 301
B.1.4 The speaking activity from *Straightforward Beginner* 302
B.1.5 The speaking activity from *English Unlimited Beginner* 303
B.2 The speaking activity samples at the Elementary level 305
B.2.1 The speaking activity from *Global Elementary* 307
B.2.2 The speaking activity from *New Headway Elementary*..............308
B.2.3 The speaking activity from *New English File Elementary*........... 309
B.2.4 The speaking activity from *Straightforward Elementary*........... 310
B.2.5 The speaking activity from *English Unlimited Elementary*......... 311
B.3 The speaking activity samples at the Pre-Intermediate level 313
B.3.1 The speaking activity from *Global Pre-Intermediate* 315
B.3.2 The speaking activity from *New Headway Pre-Intermediate* 316
B.3.3 The speaking activity from *New English File Pre-Intermediate* 317
B.3.4 The speaking activity from *Straightforward Pre-Intermediate* 318
B.3.5 The speaking activity from *English Unlimited Pre-Intermediate* 319
B.4 The speaking activity samples at the Intermediate level 321
B.4.1 The speaking activity from *Global Intermediate*......................... 323
B.4.2 The speaking activity from *New Headway Intermediate*............. 324
B.4.3 The speaking activity from *New English File Intermediate* 325
B.4.4 The speaking activity from *Straightforward Intermediate* 326
B.4.5 The speaking activity from *English Unlimited Intermediate*........ 327
B.5 The speaking activity samples at the Upper-Intermediate level............. 329

B.5.1 The speaking activity from *Global Upper-Intermediate*............. 331

B.5.2 The speaking activity from *New Headway Upper-Intermediate*..332

B.5.3 The speaking activity from *New English File Upper-Intermediate*..333

B.5.4 The speaking activity from *Straightforward Upper-Intermediate* 334

B.5.5 The speaking activity from *English Unlimited Upper-Intermediate* 335

B.6 The speaking activity samples at the Advanced level 337

B.6.1 The speaking activity from *Global Advanced* 339

B.6.2 The speaking activity from *New Headway Advanced*................ 340

B.6.3 The speaking activity from *New English File Advanced* 341

B.6.4 The speaking activity from *Straightforward Advanced* 342

B.6.5 The speaking activity from *English Unlimited Advanced*............ 343

Appendix C. Correlation of the Spoken Production descriptors and the speaking activities from Beginner to Advanced levels 345

C.1 Correlation of the Spoken Production descriptors and the speaking activities at the Beginner level 347

C.2 Correlation of the Spoken Production descriptors and the speaking activities at the Elementary level..348

C.3 Correlation of the Spoken Production descriptors and the speaking activities at the Pre-Intermediate level 351

C.4 Correlation of the Spoken Production descriptors and the speaking activities at the Intermediate level 355

C.5 Correlation of the Spoken Production descriptors and the speaking activities at the Upper-Intermediate level 358

C.6 Correlation of the Spoken Production descriptors and the speaking activities at the Advanced level 361

Appendix D. Correlation of the Spoken Interaction Descriptors and the speaking activities from Beginner to Advanced levels 363

D.1 Correlation of the Spoken Interaction descriptors and the speaking activities at the Beginner level 365

D.2 Correlation of the Spoken Interaction descriptors and the speaking activities at the Elementary level... 368

D.3 Correlation of the Spoken Interaction descriptors and the speaking activities at the Pre-Intermediate level 376

D.4 Correlation of the Spoken Interaction descriptors and the speaking activities at the Intermediate level 384

D.5 Correlation of the Spoken Interaction descriptors and the speaking activities at the Upper-Intermediate level 391

D.6 Correlation of the Spoken Interaction descriptors and the speaking activities at the Advanced level 396

Appendix E. "Can Do" descriptors for Spoken Production in the CEFR 389

Table E.1 The illustrative scales for *Overall Spoken Production* 401

Table E.2 The illustrative scales for *Sustained Monologue: Describing Experience* 403

Table E.3 The illustrative scales for *Sustained Monologue: Putting a case (e.g., in a debate)* 404

Table E.4 The illustrative scales for *Public Announcements* 404

Table E.5 The illustrative scales for *Addressing Audiences* 405

Appendix F. "Can Do" descriptors for Spoken Interaction in the CEFR 407

Table F.1 The illustrative scales for *Overall Spoken Interaction* 409

Table F.2 The illustrative scales for *Understanding a Native Speaker Interlocutor* 410

Table F.3 The illustrative scales for *Conversation* 411

Table F.4 The illustrative scales for *Informal Discussion (with friends)* 412

Table F.5 The illustrative scales for *Formal Discussion* 413

Table F.6 The illustrative scales for *Goal-oriented Co-operation* 414

Table F.7 The illustrative scales for *Transactions to Obtain Goods and Services* 415

Table F.8 The illustrative scales for *Information Exchange* 416

Table F.9 The illustrative scales for *Interviewing and Being Interviewed*.. 417

Appendix G. The five series of EFL textbooks: authors, year of publication, publishers, distribution of units and sections, and units selected 419

G.1 The *Global* series 421

G.1 The *New Headway* series 422

G.1 The *New English File* series 423

G.1 The *Straightforward* series 424

G.1 The *English Unlimited* series 425

Appendix H. Confidence intervals for the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR and the speaking activities sample in EFL textbooks 427

Table H.1 Confidence intervals for the Spoken Production descriptors and the speaking activities sample in EFL textbooks........ 429

Table H.2 Confidence intervals for the Spoken Interaction descriptors and the speaking activities sample in EFL textbooks........ 429

List of Tables and Figures

Tables

3.1 The after-war period: early initiatives (1950s-1960s) 33

3.2 The Modern Languages Project (1964-1974) 35

3.3 The European unit/credit scheme for adult education (1971-1976) 38

3.4 Project No. 4 (1978-181) 41

3.5 Project 12 (1982-1987) 43

3.6 Project: “Language Learning for European Citizenship” (1990-1997) 44

3.7 The Common European Framework and the ELP (1996-97 – 2001) 45

3.8 Preliminary works previous to the publication of the framework. major events and publications 46

3.9 A comparative list of the measures to be implemented in R (82) 18 and R (98) 6 49

5.1 An overview of the components of communicative competence of the Council of Europe's projects 80

5.2 Communicative language competences in the CEFR 88
5.3 Linguistic competences in the CEFR 89
5.4 Sociolinguistic competence in the CEFR 90
5.5 Definitions of discourse competence in the Council of Europe's projects between 1983 and 2001 91
5.6 Pragmatic competences in the CEFR 93
5.7 General competences: a comparison 96
5.8 Knowledge – (*Savoir*) 98
5.9 Skills and know-how (*Savoir-faire*) 101
5.10 Existential competence (*Savoir-être*) 103
5.11 Ability to learn (*Savoir-apprendre*) 104

6.1 Alternative categories to the four language skills 118
6.2 An outline of the illustrative scales for communicative language activities in chapter 4 of the CEFR 120
6.3 Scheme of communicative language activities 121
6.4 External context of language use 127

7.1 A map of EFL course book samples 163
7.2 Distribution of the statements in the speaking activities sample and the six CEFR levels 164
7.3 Number of subscales for each Spoken Production descriptor at the six levels of proficiency provided in the CEFR 167
7.4 Number of subscales for each Spoken Interaction descriptor at the six levels of proficiency provided in the CEFR 168
7.5 Levels A2 and B1: *Overall Spoken Interaction* 171
7.6 Spoken Production descriptors: *Sustained Monologue: Putting a Case (e.g. in a Debate)* and *Public Announcements* 173
7.7 Oral Interaction descriptors: *Informal Discussion (with Friends) and Formal Discussion* and *Meetings* 173

7.8 Recurrence of the subscales at the Upper-Intermediate and Advanced levels for the descriptor *Overall Spoken Production* 173
7.9 Repetition of the subscales in three Spoken Interaction descriptors at levels A1, A2 and B1.. 174
7.10 Repetition of the subscales descriptors at the Upper-Intermediate and Advanced levels in some Interaction descriptors in the CEFR 175
7.11 Template to illustrate the number of subscales fulfilled in the Spoken Production descriptors 176
7.12 Template to illustrate the number of subscales fulfilled in the Spoken Interaction descriptors 178
7.13 Template to illustrate the four language skills in the speaking activity samples in EFL textbooks..179
7.14 Template to illustrate the speaking skill as the ultimate goal of the speaking activity samples at low levels of proficiency 180
7.15 Template to illustrate the speaking skill as the ultimate goal of the speaking activity samples at high levels of proficiency..181
7.16 Template to illustrate the fulfilment of the Production and Interaction descriptors...180

8.1 Fulfilment of the Spoken Production descriptors in the speaking activity samples in EFL textbooks.. 191
8.2 Fulfilment of the Spoken Interaction descriptors in the speaking activity samples in EFL textbooks.. 195
8.3 Language skills promoted in the speaking activity samples in EFL textbooks... 203
8.4 Writing as the introductory skill at low and high levels of proficiency 204
8.5 Reading as the introductory skill at low and high levels of proficiency..205
8.6 Reading as the introductory skill at low levels of proficiency 206
8.7 Reading as the introductory skill at high levels of proficiency 207
8.8 Reading as the introductory skill and the listening skill at high levels of proficiency.. 208

8.9 The listening skill precedes the ultimate goal of the speaking activity....209
8.10 Speaking as the final skill at low levels of proficiency 211
8.11 Speaking as the ultimate goal in the speaking activities at high levels of proficiency.... 211
8.12 Fulfilment of the Production and Interaction descriptors at the Beginner level.... 215
8.13 Fulfilment of the Production and Interaction descriptors at the Elementary Level 217
8.14 Fulfilment of the Production and Interaction descriptors at the Pre-Intermediate level 220
8.15 Fulfilment of the Production and Interaction descriptors at the Intermediate level 223
8.16 Fulfilment of the Production and Interaction descriptors at the Upper-Intermediate level 225
8.17 Fulfilment of the Production and Interaction descriptors at the Advanced Level.... 227

Figures

Figure 1.1 Main components of the CEFR and their influence in the speaking activities in EFL textbooks 3

Acknowledgements

This PhD dissertation has grown out of contact in diverse situations. First, my personal experience and interest in the professional world of language teaching, with the special contribution of a variety of students, contexts and conditions, as well as diverse places, people and sources. And second, the M.A. Thesis, which has paved the way to widen the horizon of personal knowledge and research experience.

My PhD advisors, Professors Xavier Laborda Gil and Carmen López Ferrero, deserve special thanks for their earlier guidance and their continuing support, since they have been genuinely involved in all stages of the research study presented here.

I am very thankful to Professor Manuela Guilherme for being my supervisor during my research stay of five-months between the Centro de Estudios Sociais of the University of Coimbra and the Universidade Lusofona. I appreciate her encouragement and valuable advice on the development of my dissertation.

Special thanks to Professor Jaume Llopis for his stimulating introductory course in statistics and further assistance in terms of calculating the confidence interval. My sincere thanks, too, to Ana Tornero who provided much useful comment on the final version of the manuscript. Any remaining shortcomings are, of course, my own responsibility.

There are some people to whom I am greatly indebted for useful suggestions or simply asking good questions. They include some of my students in secondary school and more recent students in undergraduate courses.

I also would like to thank all those people whom I have not mentioned by name but who in one way or another have contributed to the completion of this project.

A very special debt of gratitude is due to my parents, Ramon Valldepérez Prades and Soledad Castillo Caro. They were in their supportive ways decisive in

nurturing my love of language, and I regret that they cannot see the results of my research.

Finally, I owe the most to one person: my husband, Francesc Bernat i Baltrons, whose loving kindness sustained me through the several hardships and many tedious moments that such work entails. My dearest thanks are due to him because this research would not have been possible without his attentive support, from whom I learned the passion needed to pursue what seemed at first more intellectual matters but always turned out to be more than that. Francesc has shown me again and again that we share a common research aim: our love for the study of language.

Summary

The main aim of this dissertation consists in evaluating the oral language taught in EFL textbooks considering the influence of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The relevance of the two parameters among practitioners in foreign language education such as textbook writers, publishers, teachers as well as researchers has led us to analyse their adequacy and contribution in the design and content of a representative sample of speaking activities in EFL course books published between 2009 and 2013. Furthermore, this research focusses not exclusively on a pedagogical or language policy perspective, but it contemplates other disciplines such as sociolinguistics, applied linguistics and discourse analysis.

The CEFR is approached from a twofold perspective: the foreign language policy and the pedagogical counterparts. First, the CEFR has resulted from the Council of Europe's ratification of the resolutions put forward by Member States in which key notions, such as "plurilingualism", "democratic citizenship" and "interculturality", are inextricably related with the development of foreign language education and policy in Europe. And second, the CEFR has derived from two representative projects sponsored by the Council of Europe, the *Threshold Level* (van Ek 1976) and the *Threshold Level English 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1991), which have laid the foundations for communicative or notional-functional language teaching methodology. Indeed, foreign language education in Europe since the 1970s has highlighted the term "communicative competence" and the four language skills. Thanks to the final document definitely published in 2001 by the Council of Europe, the CEFR has provided new terms such as "communicative language activity" to facilitate the integration of the Common Reference Levels among practitioners in the field.

The research methodology that guided this investigation showed quantitatively the fulfillment of the illustrative scales of the two Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the speaking activity samples. Moreover, there was a qualitative approach that explored, first, the relevance of the four language skills in the speaking activities in EFL textbooks and the two

Spoken descriptors; and second, the degree of interdependence between the speaking activities and the statements of the subscales provided in the two Spoken descriptors.

Results show the poor fulfillment of the subscales of the two descriptors in the speaking activity samples. In addition, it is notorious the recurrent and vague content of the Spoken descriptors about language use in EFL academic settings. Furthermore, the explicit use and expected performance of the traditional four language skills in the speaking activity sample contrasts with a reasonable use in the CEFR. This means that there is a wide gap between the content of the two Spoken descriptors and the speaking activity samples because the linguistic model promoted in these kinds of practices originates in the world of written language giving evidence that language is taught as a final product rather than as a process, whereas the two major language modalities, written and oral, are seen as opposites.

In conclusion, if we assume that literacies are politically constructed and that the borders between orality and writing have developed as a result of the current changing values of literacy, then, those changes ought to be consequently translated into foreign language education practice. In this sense, the dialogical theory should open its path towards more effective ways of implementing alternative and optimal resources advocating for integrating multiliteracies on behalf of future foreign language policies and education.

Abstract

Aquesta tesi analitza la llengua oral dels llibres de text d'anglès com a llengua estrangera i la seva relació amb els descriptors orals de producció i interacció del Marc Europeu Comú de Referència. L'objectiu consisteix a esbrinar com influeixen aquests descriptors en el disseny i el contingut d'una mostra representativa d'activitats orals publicades entre el 2009 i el 2013. La investigació s'enfoca des de diferents perspectives, com ara l'ensenyament de llengües estrangeres, la sociolingüística, la lingüística aplicada i l'anàlisi del discurs.

La metodologia es basa en una anàlisi quantitativa i qualitativa. La recerca quantitativa pretén analitzar el compliment dels descriptors en les activitats orals, mentre que l'enfocament qualitatiu vol, en primer lloc, identificar l'ús de les quatre habilitats lingüístiques en les activitats orals i, en segon lloc, veure quin tipus de dependència hi ha entre el contingut de les activitats orals i els descriptors orals.

Els resultats demostren que el grau de compliment dels descriptors en les activitats orals és molt baix i, a més, es repeteixen sovint. D'altra banda, la poca presència de les quatre habilitats lingüístiques en el Marc Europeu contrasta amb l'ús explícit i freqüent que se'n fa a les activitats orals. Si hi afegim l'escassa relació entre el contingut dels descriptors i els objectius de les activitats orals, ens adonem que hi ha una gran distància entre els descriptors i les activitats orals analitzades, perquè aquestes pràctiques es conceben des del llenguatge escrit.

En conclusió, el contingut i el disseny de les activitats orals i els descriptors orals del Marc Europeu no tenen en compte que el coneixement prescriptiu d'una llengua no és l'únic que fa possible l'aprenentatge d'un segon idioma, sinó que hi ha factors pragmàtics que intervenen decisivament en les interaccions orals.

Paraules clau: Marc Europeu Comú de Referència, ensenyament de llengües estrangeres, discurs oral, activitats orals, llibres de text.

Keywords: Common European Framework of Reference, foreign language education, oral discourse, speaking activities, textbooks.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Everyday life situations give evidence that we neither write dialogues to communicate something to someone – a common exercise required from students when practising oral activities in EFL textbooks – nor do conversations follow symmetrical patterns when exchanging information. However, ordinary life shows that writing and speech fulfil other social functions that demand closer examination. From this standpoint, and our interest in reflecting on oral discourse in learning environments, we decided to enquire about the gap between the nature of language used in spontaneous interactions and the kind of language promoted in the speaking activities in EFL textbooks.

This investigation examines the use and nature of oral spontaneous discourse in a representative sample of speaking activities in English as a foreign language (EFL) textbooks published in the four-year span between 2009 and 2013 and explores the CEFR as a basic tool in foreign language policy education and for its relevance in the design of these kinds of activities. When analysing the sort of language to be performed in EFL oral activities together with the notion of communicative language activity, the implicit understanding of language in terms of the four language skills rather than a pragmatic interpretation of oral spontaneous discourse is revealed. Thus, the inquiry about the use of oral discourse in the speaking activities in EFL textbooks is intended to raise questions about the value of communicative language activity as it is expressed in the CEFR.

This research also brings evidence that the classical notion of the four language skills remains latent in the design and implementation of the speaking activities in EFL textbooks. In addition, the language promoted in these kinds of activities responds to a "functional systemic model" in which the use of grammar, vocabulary and the meaning of sentences are made within the context of social stereotypes (four domains in the CEFR), being this model

one of the basic features that is entailed in the action-oriented approach and that has been advocated by the Council of Europe.

As far as foreign language education is concerned, this is a subject-matter which it is not exclusively focused on a language policy perspective nor examined from a pedagogical viewpoint as it would be expected. Rather, it covers a wide range of areas from diverse disciplines such as sociology of education, sociolinguistics, applied linguistics and discourse analysis. In this sense, I intend to point out the overlap between pedagogy and language policies in the CEFR along with the wide range of fields of investigation (Part I), since this analysis throws light on the current state of art of the speaking activities in EFL textbooks (Part II). Next, we proceed with an overview of the most relevant aspects of the theoretical framework that will be explored in this dissertation.

The theoretical framework was developed, first, in accordance with the CEFR. Despite the fact that it is a key point of reference for practitioners, in the 21st century and in the field of foreign language education, this posed a challenge for this investigation for two reasons. First, we found that the long and complex chapters in the CEFR contained excerpts from the original recommendations adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and addressed to the Governments of the Council of Europe member states. And second, it was necessary to comprehend every facet of the CEFR descriptors for their relevance among practitioners in the field. This is how a challenging task, originated from an imperative need to study the CEFR, was about to begin.

The main topic areas of the theoretical framework are, particularly, developed around the CEFR in which the analysis of pedagogical criteria paves the way for the inclusion of several disciplines such as foreign language policy, applied linguistics, sociology of education and discourse analysis. Widening the scope of foreign language learning and teaching favours an understanding of the close relationship between foreign language policy and the Council of Europe's projects. For example, the functional approach to language starting in the 1970s is in line with the seminal work on communicative competence by Canale and Swain (1980), whereas the progressive Council of Europe's projects headed by van Ek and Trim (1975), van Ek (1986), van Ek and Trim

(1991) culminates in the definite publication of the CEFR (2001). The development of these projects gives rise to the diffusion of the concept of communicative competence among a large number of disciplines other than the pedagogical. This is how the Council of Europe's projects mainly concerned with the topics and issues debated and discussed in the meetings and agreements of the member states result in concrete policy recommendations that would allow governments to forge the future of foreign language education in Europe.

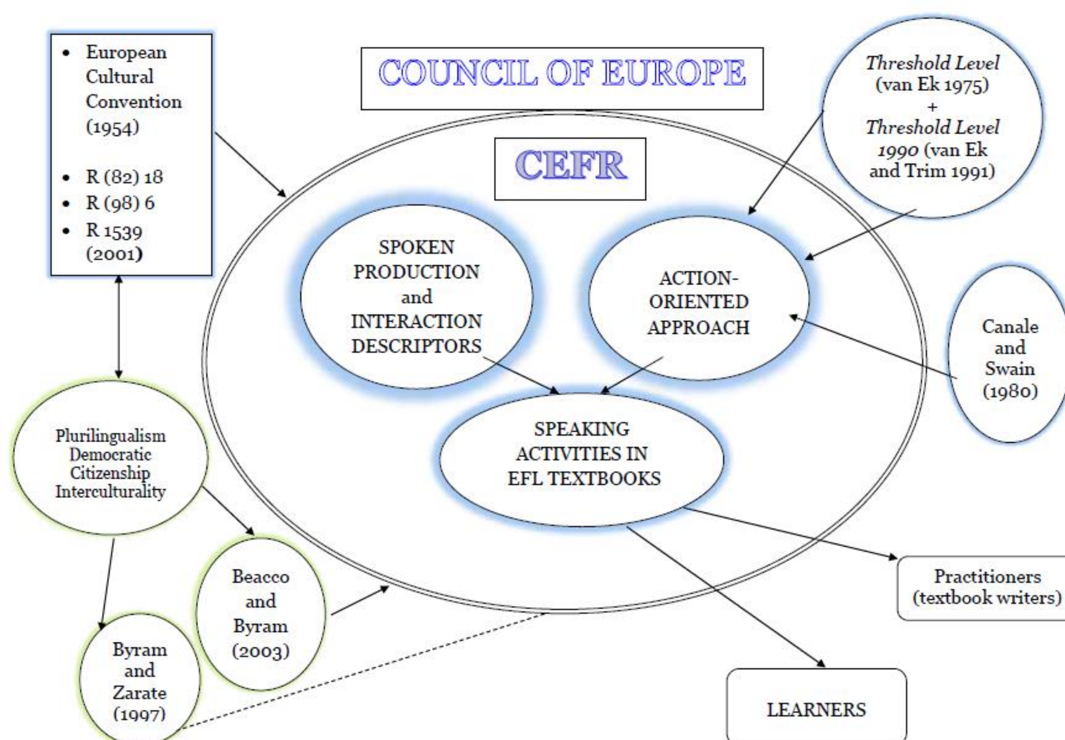

Figure 1.1 Main components of the CEFR and their influence in the speaking activities in EFL textbooks[1]

In a similar vein, notions such as "interculturality" and "democratic citizenship" have gained ground as a common aim for education reforms all over Europe. The relevance of the topic and the need to adapt to new times contributed to incorporate these concepts in the field of foreign language education towards the end of the 20th century. However, the existence of a theoretical approach that integrated the notion of "intercultural competence"

[1] Figure 1.1 aims to illustrate a network of the fundamental components of the CEFR for over 40 years. However, I have excluded other relevant references, mainly for reasons of methodological shortcomings, that can be found in detail in the subsequent chapters of the first part of this dissertation

through Byram and Zarate's (1997) project sponsored by the Council of Europe did not find a place in the CEFR. Hence, the absence of this term in the definite version of the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a).

Given the wide scope of the CEFR addressed in the first part of the theoretical framework of this dissertation, the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors are used as a referential source for the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the speaking activity samples in EFL textbooks in the second part of the dissertation. It should be underlined in this context that, the CEFR does not provide any explanation for the source from which the two Spoken descriptors have arisen.

In addition, a variable number of subscales for the two Spoken descriptors created some difficulties in finding a way to systematize the diverse features for each descriptor at the six levels of proficiency. For the purposes of this investigation the subscales for each descriptor are considered as individual items rather than blocks of information as they originally appear in the CEFR. As a result, our classification of descriptors into separate subscales is intended to evidence inherent features such as their repetition among different descriptors at the same level of proficiency, the use of similar prompts to describe different descriptors as well as the relevance of the zero value. Those irregularities are taken into account when redistributing the subscales of the two Spoken descriptors at six levels of proficiency for research purposes.

After considering the accomplishment of the two Spoken descriptors in terms of number and percentage in the speaking activity samples in EFL textbooks (section 8.1), the data analysis is approached from a qualitative perspective. Whereas the first qualitative analysis (section 8.2.1) aims at finding evidence of the linguistic nature of the EFL activities on the basis that the traditional classification of the four language skills has been implicitly recognised in the distribution of the communicative language activities provided in the CEFR, the second qualitative inquiry explores the interdependence between the subscales of the two Spoken descriptors and the statements of the activity samples in EFL textbooks (section 8.2.3).

Finally, the purpose of this investigation can be summarized in two main goals. First, to realise that the design of textbooks and oral activities

depends on a common basis which has derived from foreign language policies for over 40 years. And second, to bring evidence of the quality of spoken discourse promoted in the speaking activities in EFL textbooks in sharp contrast to the parameters of everyday spontaneous interactions.

1.1 Hypothesis

The working hypothesis is that an analysis of a representative sample of EFL speaking activities, when compared with the purposes and social functions of spoken and written language in ordinary settings, will show that the speaking activities in EFL textbooks do not correspond to their original counterparts in everyday social interactions, and also that these kinds of oral practices encourage students to make use of a model of written language which has become the norm in foreign language education as well as in the CEFR.

1.2 Research question

The research question, put simply, investigates a hypothesized gap between the oral communicative practices in EFL textbooks and the kind of language produced by users of English in ordinary communicative events. This aim breaks down into three research questions:

1. To what extent do the speaking activities in EFL textbooks match the two Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR?

2. What aspects of the four language skills are apparent in the communicative speaking activities in EFL courses to carry out communicative tasks?

3. Is there a correlation between the content of the speaking activity samples and the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR?

1.3 Objectives

- To investigate different aspects of foreign language education covering the significance of the CEFR as a language policy model for practitioners (e.g., textbook writers).
- To evaluate the content of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR to show their relevance in the content and design of the speaking activities in EFL textbooks.
- To be aware of the kind of discourse promoted in the speaking activities in EFL course books.
- To demonstrate that the speaking activities in EFL textbooks are based on the priority of written language practices rather than on oral discourse parameters.
- To discuss why the traditional dichotomy oral versus written language remains latent in EFL language courses currently designed under the CEFR model.

1.4 Structure of the dissertation

This dissertation is organized into two main parts. Part One (chapters 1-6) is devoted to the introduction and the theoretical framework of this investigation. Chapter 1 states the hypothesis, research questions and the objectives, whereas the theoretical points of departure are presented in chapter 2. The aim of the second chapter is to review the topic of foreign language education from a wide range of disciplines other than the pedagogic one in order to find an answer to our concern about foreign language learning and teaching. It also considers the relevance of writing and speech from a sociolinguistic perspective. Finally, the two last sections of chapter 2 are focussed, first, on some ongoing studies approaching foreign language from a social perspective and second, on offering the dialogic theory, as a new

proposal to the existing language theory, that may bring new ideas on how to tackle key challenges in social communication for current and future generations.

Chapters 3 and 4 basically deal with a comprehensive review of the origin and development of foreign language policy within the Council of Europe for over forty years. These chapters offer descriptions and analysis of the projects of the Council of Europe, focussing on a historical overview of foreign language policy in Europe and introducing the grounds of language education policies in the Council of Europe (i.e., plurilingualism, the EDC Project and interculturality). The references to the most relevant recommendations and official documents published by the Council of Europe serve the purpose of clarifying the theoretical development of the CEFR and guide the reader towards a comprehensive view of a wider notion of foreign language education in Europe.

Chapter 5 explores the relationship between language proficiency and communicative competence in the CEFR. It offers a brief outline of the components of communicative language competences since 1980 until 2001 following the outstanding works by experts such as Canale and Swain (1980), Canale (1983), Van Ek (1986) and van Ek and Trim (1991). The most relevant differences between the general competences set out in the CEFR and the proposal suggested in Byram and Zarate's study are pointed out. A brief discussion on the notion of intercultural competence put forward first by Byram and Zarate (1997) and some final considerations on the term communicative competence close chapter 5.

Chapter 6 describes language proficiency and communicative language activities in connection with the CEFR and EFL textbooks. In particular, it offers further description of communicative language activities with reference to the CEFR and explores the origin of this term as a consequence of finding out a way to homogenise the scales for assessment. Surprisingly enough, the classical linguistic distribution of the four skills is still prevalent in the notion of communicative language activities endorsed by the co-authors of the CEFR as evidenced in subsequent chapters concerned with the results and discussion of this investigation.

This chapter also looks at the CEFR's influence over textbook writers addressing substantive issues, including the nature and use of written language as a linguistic model in EFL course books and the complex issue of oral and written language from a sociolinguistic perspective. Chapter 6 gives a brief overview of the role of tasks and the relevance of context in the design of speaking activities in EFL textbooks as well.

Part Two (chapters 7-10) is devoted to the research, data collection, and the results together with the final discussion and conclusions carried out in this investigation. Chapter 7 describes the corpus of the speaking activity samples in EFL textbooks as well as the number and distribution of the subscales contained in the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR. The organisation and number of the two Spoken descriptors is evaluated for their relevance in the design of the speaking activities in EFL textbooks. The quantitative and qualitative data are illustrated by means of templates particularly designed for this purpose. This chapter closes with a description of the symbols used in the qualitative analysis of data.

Chapter 8 shows the results obtained in the quantitative and qualitative analysis. They are classified in accordance with the kind of data collected in the templates and are distributed into two main sections. The quantitative results are organized in two separate groups on the basis of the individual attainment of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the speaking activity samples in the CEFR. The first part of chapter 8 also includes an overview of the quantitative results to generate an approximate response to the first research question, prior to the final discussion.

The qualitative results are distributed into two individual sections illustrating the data collected in the templates which have been designed to respond to the second and third research questions. An overview of the qualitative results, previous to the final discussion, is intended to orient the reader with regard to the second and third research questions.

The last two chapters provide the discussion and the conclusions of this investigation. Chapter 9 discusses the quantitative and qualitative results obtained from the three research questions, while chapter 10 contains the conclusions and indicates an example for an alternative approach to meeting the needs for the increasing complexity of a sociocultural mediated society.

CHAPTER 2

Theoretical Points of Departure

A review of the literature on foreign language education policy together with a brief outline of a wide range of disciplines including sociology of education, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis and applied linguistics will support the theoretical background of this investigation and will serve a twofold purpose in broad terms. On the one hand, it examines the reference sources of this investigation such as the CEFR for its use as a guide for practitioners (e.g., textbook writers) in the area of teaching and learning English as a foreign language. On the other hand, it is concerned with the significance of oral discourse in the organisation and content of the speaking activity samples in EFL courses.

In more concrete terms, the CEFR provides essentially the foundational background of this investigation because it is focused on primary notions and official documents of language policies in Europe that have been developed for over 40 years by the Council of Europe. Moreover, the theoretical framework of this investigation illustrates the overlap between language policy and pedagogic processes and evidences that both perspectives are intertwined in many ways. For example, while the democratic value of the Council of Europe's project has brought up relevant notions such as "plurilingualism", "democratic citizenship" and "interculturality", textbooks have been designed under policies which have sustained implicitly, though partially, those values in language courses. In this sense, the CEFR supports a varied model of language teaching methodology which fulfils its own principles and official documents such as Recommendations R (82) 18 and R (98) 6 of the Committee of Ministers addressed to member governments (Council of Europe 2001a, 18), instead of presenting one particular approach based on the communicative needs of learners (Council of Europe 2001a, 142). On the other

hand, and as a guide[2], the CEFR provides a descriptive scheme which contributes to the analysis of language in terms of specifying learners' needs and goals as well as the assessment of L2 learning outcomes (Council of Europe 2001a, xv). In this sense, the illustrative scales of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors (Council of Europe 2001a, 56-62; 63-82) become one of the main references for the research methodology in this investigation as we shall see in chapter 7.

As regards the interest of this investigation, the most outstanding aspects of oral discourse in traditional linguistics and discourse analysis will be examined in order to point out its significance in the content and design of the speaking activities in EFL textbooks. Thus, discourse analysis will help us disentangle true features of spontaneous oral interactions and compare them with those aspects of discourse promoted in EFL speaking practices by illustrating the state of the art of the social functions of writing and speech in every day social exchanges.

Subsequent to the description of the CEFR in three sections (2.1, 2.2, and 2.3), the review of the literature in this investigation proceeds with the analysis of the aims of the CEFR in terms of language acquisition, learning and teaching in section 2.4 as well as its objectives as an action-oriented approach together with other issues such as communicative language competences and activities in section 2.5). After that, there is an overview of the notion of communicative language ability in which its relationship with the nature of discourse in EFL materials is illustrated in section 2.6. Finally, sections 2.7 and 2.8 will bring light to present-day foreign language education issues illustrating both the current social perspective of language and suggesting new approaches in foreign language education within the scope of a dialogic theory, respectively.

[2] It should be noted the increasing number of complementary guides on specific aspects of the CEFR edited by the Council of Europe in the last years against the occasional publication of partial analytical studies about it. For more information, visit the website: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Publications_en.asp#P115_3863.

2.1 The CEFR: its meaning and relevance

The CEFR has become one of the main referential tools in developing the theoretical framework of this dissertation due to its relevance for practitioners involved in the study of foreign language education. When analysing the significance of the language policy literature in the CEFR there is a wide disparity in both the original documents and the adjustment of excerpts from recommendations and other legal works published by the Council of Europe, so the two first chapters of the CEFR result both in confusion about the contents and in failure of the comprehension of their essential meaning without acknowledging their sources.

The extensive description of the Council of Europe's language policies in the first and second chapters of the CEFR required time and complementary effort to disentangle their comprehension as pointed out by some experts in this field, namely Morrow (2004a), Little (2006), and Heyworth (2006). Particularly, the initial examination of Trim's (1992, 2007) publications of the most outstanding periods in the creation and development of the Council of Europe contributed to a general, but incomplete understanding of the CEFR. Nevertheless, once these difficulties have been overcome with a comprehensive reading and analysis of the original sources in the CEFR, I am in a position to provide an overview of the main orientations collected and adopted to interpret the theoretical complexity of the CEFR.

On the one hand, Stern (1983) contributes to realising of the twofold rationale of foreign language education: basically, language education policies and language teaching methodology. Indeed, Stern (1983) provides an essential, reflective background on these issues while laying the basis for analysing language education from different perspectives other than the traditional pedagogical one such as sociology of education, sociolinguistics, applied linguistics and discourse analysis. This wide interpretation of foreign language education has been essential for ensuring the analysis of the three research questions in this investigation.

On the other hand, it is convenient to consider a more updated understanding of recent applied linguistics within foreign language education

provided by the works of Johnson (2008), Hall (2011) and Hulstijn (2014). Whereas Johnson (2008) covers a historical perspective necessary to understand the implicit issues in current society, Hall (2010) considers the organization and planning of second language and learning within the institutional frameworks and social contexts. Furthermore, Hulstijn (2007, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014) examines language proficiency critically from a constructive approach which departs from his particular experience in second language acquisition theory and research.

2.2 Plurilingualism, democratic citizenship and interculturality

Key notions such as plurilingualism, democratic citizenship and interculturality are inextricably related with the development of foreign language education and policy in Europe. Concerning plurilingualism, it has become a primary objective for language education as shown in a variety of texts edited by the Council of Europe: the European Cultural Convention (1954), the European Democratic Citizenship Project (1997), the Recommendation 1539 (2001b), as well as the CEFR (2001a), together with the European Year of Languages campaign (in cooperation with the European Union) first launched in 2001.

Regarding the Western values of democracy, they were first encouraged for the economic expansion of society since the origin of the Council of Europe in the late 1940s, hence their constant and relevant role in the treaties and conventions signed by state members (Trim 2007). Thus, with the creation of the European Democratic Citizenship Project (EDC) in 1997 those values have been stressed again, in order to promote the new democracies of Eastern European countries. In this sense, the term democratic citizenship has received different denominations such as *democratic education* or *education for democracy* as well as *citizenship education*, though the latter is a concept with different meaning in countries such as Germany, the United Kingdom and the USA (Himmelmann 2006).

With reference to the notion of interculturality, the aims and purposes of foreign language education have changed with much stronger emphasis on

communication in the past few decades (Byram 2009, 331-32), so that the intercultural dimension has become a major educational aim of the EDC Project along with the classical notion of plurilingualism (Bîrzéa 2000). Therefore, democratic citizenship and interculturality represent two concepts that have contributed to create and develop more democratic agents to ensure peace among countries whose presence is evidenced in European language education policies (Duerr *et al.* 2000, 37-39).

As a result, intercultural competence and the capacity for intercultural mediation are two terms which have become one of the potential goals of language teaching in the course of the years within the European context, though the absence of explicit references to both terms is notorious in the CEFR (Zarate *et al.* 2004, 101).

2.3 The foundational background of the CEFR: the two *Thresholds*

This section illustrates that the CEFR is a foreign language education policy tool with minor changes on the basis of two previous projects edited by the Council of Europe. First, the *Threshold Level* (van Ek 1975) and second, the *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1991). Indeed, North (2010a), one of the co-authors of the CEFR, has made exactly this point:

> the descriptive scheme [of the CEFR] builds on the sets of objectives for specific levels developed in a European context in the 1970s-1990s in the wake of the publication of *The Threshold Level* (Van Ek 1976; Van Ek and Trim 1991).
>
> (North 2010a, 221-222)

Particularly, in a more recent publication North (2014, 14) asserts that "the history of the CEFR really starts in the 1960s," though he acknowledges Trim's viewpoint of setting "a language framework back to Comenius (...) in his 1631 *The Gate of Languages Unlocked* (Trim 2012b, 15)." No matter what recent subtleties have been made in this area, the particular point we must emphasize next is the two Council of Europe's language policy documents which make up the original

background of the CEFR: the *Threshold Level* (van Ek 1975) and the *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1991).

Indeed, the correspondence between the first *Threshold* (Van Ek 1975) and the communicative or notional-functional language teaching methodology was namely advocated by (Wilkins 1976; Spolsky 1982; Stern 1983; Richards 1984, 2006; van Ek 1986). While Stern (1983, 259) acknowledges the favoured position of the communicative principles in language education and stresses their influence and application in the Council of Europe Modern Languages Project (see chapter 2), Richards (1984, 10) claims that "many communicative texts, for example, draw on the *Threshold Level syllabus* (van Ek and Alexander 1975)."

The following examples illustrate that the inherent nature of the general and specific notions as well as the language functions proposed in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 52-54, 102, 125-126) has derived from two prior projects of the Council of Europe (van Ek 1975; van Ek and Trim 1991). On the one hand, the thematic categories of various domains such as *Communication Themes* are introduced in section 4.2 in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 51-52). Those categories respond to the original list of 'specific notions' presented in chapter 7 of the *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1991, 59) and, in turn, to Division III of chapter 11 of the *Threshold English* (van Ek 1975, 34). On the other hand, whereas section 4.3, *Communicative tasks and purposes* (Council of Europe 2001a, 53-54) takes account of the four main domains (e.g. personal, public, educational and occupational), the vocational domain becomes a complement of the four domains (Council of Europe 2001a, 52-53). In contrast to what is claimed in the CEFR for the *vocational* domain (Council of Europe 2001a, 53), we could not find any explicit reference to this particular domain in any of the two *Thresholds*[3]. There is an exception, however, to the *personal* domain (Council of Europe 2001a, 54), since the first item, *personal identification*, corresponds to the list of 'specific notions' in chapter 7 of the *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1991, 59-81) and to Division III, *Notions derived from topics and their T-level exponents for English*, in chapter 11 of the *Threshold Level* (van Ek 1975, 65-112).

---

[3] It is worth noting that the bibliographic reference of the *Threshold 1990* in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 53) should say "*Threshold Level 1990* (Chapter 3, section 1.12)" rather than "*Threshold Level 1990* (Chapter 2, section 1.12)".

As regards the following two terms, *knowledge of the world* and *microfunctions*, they result in referential categories in the CEFR for the 'general competences' and the 'functional competence', respectively, (Council of Europe 2001a, 101 and 125). First, the notion of *knowledge of the world* in the CEFR is consistent with the categorization of 'general notions' in the first *Threshold* chapters 9 and 11, (van Ek 1975, 29-32, 34-112) and also, with chapter 6 in the *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1991, 48-58). And second, the term *microfunctions*, which is conceived as one of the categories of functional competence in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 125), has its referential source in chapter 11 of the *Threshold Level* (van Ek 1975, 35-44) as well as in chapters 5 and 7 of the *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1991, 19-21, 27-47). It follows that the classification of *entities, their properties and relations* (Council of Europe 2001a, 102) is also consistent with the categorization of 'general notions' in chapter 6 of the *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1991, 48) as well as in chapter 9 and 11 in the *Threshold Level* (van Ek 1975, 29, 34).

In sum, this overview of the two foundational projects by the Council of Europe provides a short outline of the essence of the CEFR indicating that it is strongly founded on the communicative principles of language teaching and learning that were first put forward in Canale and Swain's (1980) seminal study on communicative competence. In addition, it is notorious that the CEFR partly obviates the first representative project of the Council of Europe (van Ek 1975) and refers to the *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1991) as the reference source for the list of concepts such as language functions and notions. This issue will be revisited in chapter 5.2.3.

2.4 The communicative movement in the CEFR

Theorists in linguistics within an educational and research perspective affirm that the communicative movement has implied a shift of emphasis that runs from a grammar-based paradigm to the ability to use language (Faerch *et al.* 1984, 167; Leung 2005, 3). Whereas structural theories of language ignore any reference on language with a particular context of language use, communicative

theory understands second language use in a specific social context and situation (Stern 1983, 269). With reference to the performance side of the functional model, Spolsky (1989, 141) considers the results as tentative and inconclusive. For example, in more recent studies, Sauvignon (2002, 4) and Leung (2005) give evidence that functional language ability has been promoted through both learners' participation in communicative events by means of a simulated situation in the classroom and the elaboration and implementation of programs and methodologies.

This section outlines a short summary of the evolution of the term communicative competence in the Council of Europe's projects on foreign language policies for their strong influence on the development in modern language teaching since their first publication in the 1970s. As regards the foundation of the communicative approach, Canale and Swain's (1980) influential work on communicative competence must be taken into account for two reasons. First, because their theory about the relationship between communicative competence and proficiency has reinforced the development of the communicative movement in general theory. And second, because its definite incentive has also contributed to the latest design and distribution of competences in the CEFR.

Van Ek's (1986) referential study on the development of communicative competences also deserves attention for its significance of the communicative tendency in the foundational and final projects by the Council of Europe. Particularly, in his book *Objectives for foreign language learning*, van Ek (1986) provides a summary of the most outstanding aspects of foreign language education policies in some countries in Europe, as well as a close reference to the National Congress on Languages Education (NCLE) together with the Modern Languages Project of the Council of Europe which attempted to develop a consensus among European nations on standards of language proficiency for adults (van Ek 1986, 17).

There is evidence that *the language needs of the language learners* along with the *notions* and *language functions* in the two *Thresholds* have become the rationale of both the Council of Europe's projects since its origins as well as in communicative language teaching (van Ek 1975; Wilkins 1976; van Ek 1986; van Ek and Trim 1991; Council of Europe 2001a; Savignon 2002; Trim 2001b).

Though the *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1991) has been referred to as the only source of functions and notions in the CEFR, the omission of any reference to the former *Threshold* (Van Ek 1975) in the CEFR must be uncovered in this investigation for two reasons. First, for its relevance in the origin and development of the communicative principles in the Council of Europe's projects and second, because concepts such as language functions, general and specific (topic-related) notions which integrate the content specification for *Threshold Level English* (van Ek 1975, 42) as well as the latter *Threshold* (van Ek and Trim 1991) constitute the basis for the present-day CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a).

2.5 The action-oriented approach of the CEFR

The action-oriented approach is well known in the field of foreign language education for the provision of essential aspects of the communicative movement as we shall see next. This section summarizes the most relevant aspects that have been elaborated for over 40 years by experts of the Council of Europe's projects (Trim 2002, Little 2006, Little *et al*. 2007).

On the one hand, the action-oriented approach reveals one of the most outstanding aims of the CEFR: to favour the comparison of language examinations as well as "the specification of learning goals, the development of teaching and learning materials and procedures, and the design of examinations and tests" (Little 2006, 185). And on the other hand, it is said to confer a long and complex descriptive apparatus in which any form of language use and learning comprises six main features such as communicative acts, language activity, communicative language competence, context, tasks and strategies (Council of Europe 2001a, 9-20; Little *et al*. 2007, 13-14).

A short overview for each of the components of this approach follows next. First, *communicative acts* can be either external and social or internal and private. Thus, *communicative acts* comprise *language activity*. This activity is divided into reception and production together with two new modes of communication, interaction and mediation. While interaction is concerned with spoken or written exchanges between two or more individuals, mediation

indicates that individuals or groups are unable to communicate directly. From these two modes of communication, the CEFR takes for granted that communication is possible by means of translation or interpretation. In addition, *communicative language competence* is essential to engage in *language activity*. This competence consists in knowledge about the words, sounds, and syntactic rules of the language which is used, together with the ability to use such knowledge in order to understand and produce language. It follows that the *language activity* to perform communicative acts always occurs in a *context* (with conditions and constraints, the four *domains* of language use in the CEFR). In this sense, *communicative acts* are always contextualized and *communicative language competence* includes sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence. Finally, *communicative acts* entail the performance of *tasks* and they require users to employ *strategies* in order to understand and/or produce spoken or written texts. For a full description of the action-oriented approach see chapter 2 of the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 9-20).

2.6 The priority of written language and the speaking activities in EFL textbooks

EFL textbooks have mainly been concerned with Standard English, since this language variety has been recommended as a desirable educational target and the norm of communication (Stubbs 1980, 1983, 1986; Carter 1994, 1997; Wiley 1996; Foley 1997; Liddicoat 2007; Snyder 2008; Trudgill and Hannah 2008). In addition, David Crystal (1995, 5-6) acknowledges that “written English provides the standard that society values, and its relative permanence and worldwide circulation have given it a very special place within the life of the community.” Crystal (1994, 24) suggests as well that “SE is the variety of English which carries most prestige within a country in which that “prestige” is a social concept, whereby some people have high standing in the eyes of others, whether this derives from social class, material success, political strength, popular acclaim, or educational background.” In a similar description of a standard

language, David Barton (2007) incorporates the idea of "legal weight" to the social status of written language.

Therefore, oral communicative activities in EFL textbooks are conceived as pieces of writing that stand entirely on their own in which all the necessary contextual information required in any spontaneous exchange has been supplied explicitly when describing the methodological purpose of the activity in educational settings. In this sense, students are encouraged to produce grammatical sentences with the appropriate vocabulary and the correct pronunciation according to the topic and purpose of the unit under study, rather than practice any spontaneous use of speech. In effect, as Cook (1989, 11) suggests "students make use of an idealised system of language that does not correspond with the particular characteristics of spontaneous speech."

In the same line, in the oral language perspective, Ronald Carter (1997, 59) affirms that "spoken English continues to be judged by the codified standards of written English and that teaching pupils to speak standard English may, in fact, be to teach them to speak in formal written English." In a more recent work, Joan Cutting (2006) argues that the informal side of spoken English has been ignored in methodology books designed to train EFL teachers. She mentions the works by Bygate (1984) and Dörnyei and Thurrell (1992) as examples concerned with describing conversational rules and structure rather than recognizing informal grammar and texts (Cutting 2006, 174). The result provided in Cutting's analysis concerning informal spoken English may be evidenced in most functional methodologies in which the issue of "authentic materials" has been of major concern among the authors in favour of that kind of methodology.

Approaching language activities in EFL textbooks from a social perspective, the CEFR suggests four domains such as public, personal, educational and occupational for general purposes of language learning and teaching (Council of Europe 2001a, 45; 48-49). This categorisation provides a partial representation of reality and has tangibly predetermined the use of language as a social phenomenon in these kinds of materials. As a result, the social dimension of communication has turned into a matter of primary interest in communicative language teaching literature.

Constant Leung (2005, 136) points out that "the social dimension – the dynamic and co-constructed processes of actual communication – has been

narrowly rendered into a form of guided social practice to be learned by students in the CLT teacher training literature." Similarly, Pavlenko (2002) considers that the way of approaching the "social" in academic environments denotes "a reductionist, static and homogeneous view of culture." Consequently, from the functions that writing and speech fulfil in society it can be inferred that language learning materials have ignored the complex social functions of spoken and written forms of language as well as the overlap between them in communicative affairs (Blanche-Benveniste 1998, 51-54).

As regards the frequent overlap between written and spoken language, David Barton (2007, 43) claims that "writing is based on speech in some very real ways: spoken language is the basis for most people's learning for written language, for instance, and the very form of written language gets its inspiration from spoken language." While common instances of the simultaneous use of spontaneous writing and speech go unnoticed in teaching materials and academic environments, they have become indispensable in modern western society. For example, extra-linguistic factors and the effort made by participants in communicative interactions are two of the major features of communication that guarantee that oral spontaneous exchanges are meaningful, and therefore, fruitful (Poyatos 1993; 2002, Calsamiglia and Tuson 1999, Brown 1995). Further study on this issue will be provided in the analysis of the sample activities (see chapter 6).

It makes no sense, then, to assert that writing is speech written down or that both types of language are opposite. Neither of these assertions is valid despite their considerable value in the traditional field of linguistics (Stubbs 1980; Ferreiro 1999). It would also be naive to claim that both types of language are interchangeable by means of translating one into the other, since as Halliday (1985, 93) states, there is no point in having written and spoken language both doing all the same things –so there would be no point in having both speech and writing if the two simply duplicate the functions of each other.

Finally, it is important to consider an alternative way to understand human communication in oral spontaneous interactions that considers both, writing and speech, as integral parts of the same underlying system of language (Gee 1996; Kress 2003; Lotherington 2004; Barton 2007). Take, for example, the fact that the form and composition of speech have been essential elements of study for

discourse analysis, as illustrated in the studies by researchers such as Stubbs (1986); Cook (1989); McCarthy (1991); Schifrin (1994); Gee (1996); Carter (1997); Corbett and Carter (2001); Mercer (2001); and Barton (2007). Finally, it is important to notice that the various disciplines related with discourse analysis are centred "on the study of language in use and how people use real language, as opposed to studying constructed sentences" (McCarthy 1991, 1).

2.7 Current concerns in EFL: approaching language from a social perspective

This section sets out to review the current state of play on the four language skills in foreign language education. To this end, we shall consider a real concern among researchers over the recent innovating technological advances in the communication area, increasingly evident in educational environments (i.e. schools, colleges and universities). An overview of some experts' opinions united by a common interest, to illustrate that the traditional division of language into four language skills lacks a social basis, will help us argue that this is a criterion that cannot explain recent literacy issues in school and society.

For example, Günther Kress points out that "it is no longer possible to think about literacy in isolation for a vast array of social, technological and economic factors" (Kress 2003, 1). Similarly, Heather Lotherington contrasts the prevalent and familiar four-skill language division and their incompatibility with the innovating technological changes in current society, as follows:

> Although compartmentalized four-skills approaches to language and literacy education are commonplace in contemporary English-language-teaching (ELT) courses and materials, the four skill areas historically demarcated as reading, writing, speaking, and listening are artificial distinctions in digital communication where the borders between oral and written language are no longer clearly distinguishable.
>
> (Lotherington 2004, 69)

Correspondingly, Barton (2007) warns of how accelerated technological and social changes have transformed the basis of communication, especially related with the progress of literacy in learning and teaching environments:

> Rapid technological and social change is affecting what we know and how we communicate. The nature of knowledge and the nature of communication are changing in fundamental ways, and literacy is central to this. (...) literacy has become a contentious issue in schools and colleges, in the community and in political debate.
>
> (Barton 2007, 1)

Indeed, discussing the inefficacy of the traditional division of language into four skills has been perceived as a matter of considerable concern among representative scholars in the fields of applied linguistics and foreign language education, whereas finding a precise definition of *literacy* is still problematic as we shall see below.

First of all, Lotherington (2004, 67) points out a set of definitions for the term *literacy* ranging from the simple notion of deciphering an alphabet to "a far more conceptually complex ability to negotiate the encoded world, including sophisticated, interactive ICT." For obvious reasons, the priority of the four skills division contrasts with the current new technological challenges as some researchers have evidenced arguing that relevant areas of a literate culture such as education or language policy seem to have turned their backs on recent social and technological changes. In this sense, Lotherington (2004, 65) indicates that "the teaching of English in digital environments in ESL courses, many of which continue to rely on four skills curriculum models, lags behind daily communicative realities."

Subsequently, an overview of relevant works by some experts illustrating the social basis of literacy will contribute to seeing the relationship between written and spoken language and how both modes of language have become essential in educational and social environments. First, in the area of language policy, Cummins and Yee-fun's (2007, 797) study illustrates the particular relation between English language proficiency and the four language skills revealing how policy makers and curriculum designers refer to this conceptualization of language proficiency in the area of English language teaching. In the same vein, Merkx (2000, 107) points out that language skills are "the most valued by

government, business and other non-academic employers", so that they "cannot be abandoned as irrelevant or useless." Second, further research on foreign language education also reveals that "second language teaching has been slow to adopt conceptions of social literacy into teaching methodologies" (Cray and Currie 2007, 68). Indeed, Cray and Currie's study (2007, 68) points out the priority of writing as one of the four language skills that "learners must develop if they are to become proficient in an additional language." And third, concerning language use in Internet encounters, Lotherington (2007, 896) notices the existence of a gap between the four linguistic skills, "the very cornerstone of English language teaching" and the Internet encounters, so that her study focuses on the new conventions that have emerged and the subsequent disintegration of the borders between orality and writing.

In sum, this short review of the four-skill division corroborates the idea that such a classification of language is "a well-established" notion in determining the objectives of language learning. This is an idea promulgated, among other experts in the field of applied linguistics, by Widdowson (2000, 549) who also alludes to a lack of certainty about the validation of this term for being not "well-founded." Therefore, Widdowson claims that the notion of skill should be redefined as a dynamic concept (2000, 550). In this sense, the absence of any kind of interdependence between the new demands of a global society and the well-grounded model of the four-skill language classification in current society becomes evident from the above review. However, it should be considered that, the notion of *literacy* includes language and literacy as two basic aspects of sociocultural life which, according to Gee (1996, 122), are "meaningless" unless they are valued as "ways of being in the world" or "forms of life," arguing that:

> Literacy is measured out and quantified, like time, work, and money. We get 'reading levels', 'graded texts', 'levels of literacy skills', 'levels of literacy', 'amounts of literacy and illiteracy', and 'rate of literacy'. We match jobs with 'literacy skills' and skills with 'economic needs'.
>
> (Gee 1996, 122)

Indeed, Gee's considerations for quantifying literacy skills corroborate the potential of proficiency for measuring knowledge and skills to the same extent the Common Reference levels by the Council of Europe do. In this sense, as it has been illustrated in section 1.4.6, the new paradigm of "communicative language

ability" in the CEFR, as an alternative model to the four language skills to represent a more justifiable system for measuring students' proficiency, did not add anything new to the preceding model. Despite the reasons for the prevalence of one system or the other, the true fact is that technological advances and their effects in current society, particularly concerned with the essence of communication in everyday social exchanges, cannot be ignored and should be considered when approaching the social welfare of future generations in short-term.

2.8 Future directions in ELF: an alternative to language theory

This section presents an overview of recent studies aimed at finding an alternative to the concept of the language skills due to its ineffectiveness in recent technological perspectives as well as in social and language policy environments. First, a challenging project by a research group in Finland will be provided in which, starting from the traditional understanding of language education, they move towards a critical perspective that enhances a more comprehensive view of language focussing on a dialogical view rather than on a monological one. And second, we shall notice that recent SLA research has been particularly addressed to investigating the nature of the theories about language and how they impinge on the learning and teaching process. This inquiry has resulted from the changing conceptualizations of language, regarding both research and classroom practices. In this sense, the below review of the literature will point out those studies whose aim consists in providing an answer to new technological changes in current social communication in order to find a path towards a better understanding of foreign language education embedding the transformation of traditional values in theories and research of language as well as in literacy approaches.

A group of experts leaded by Hannele Dufva (2011; 2014) assume a challenging view of language education on the basis of a "dialogical" perspective of language as an alternative to the influential monological conceptualization of

language involving a written language bias[4]. Such a dialogical notion of language has derived from Mikhail Bakhtin's philosophy of dialogue, suggesting that language itself is essentially "multilingual" (Dufva *et al.* 2011, 110). Furthermore, this particular view of language has been under discussion by the members of the Bakhtin Circle and Voloshinov, as well as in the recent work within critical applied linguistics, sociolinguistics and language education (Dufva *et al.* 2011, 109). In this sense, Dufva and her collaborators (2011) also mention the "monolingually" biased concept in second language acquisition acknowledged through David Block's (2003, 2014) research, so that the above two studies by Dufva and Block agree on a shortcoming of the classical conceptualization of language learning and teaching, resting on one and the same assumption: the monolingual bias in second language acquisition theories and research. In turn, the Dufva *et al.* project is concerned in providing a multilingual approach based on dialogical arguments overcoming the drawbacks from the monological approach in order to "contribute to a better understanding of what learning a language means – and also pointing out how learners might potentially benefit from the multilingual languaging that is going around them," while Block's research focuses on framing second language acquisition research in terms of dialects and languages as well as "taking on board the multiplicity of embodied and multimodal forms associated with any given linguistic repertoire."

We shall illustrate, next, future directions in English foreign language education and research that have arisen recently as an alternative to old conceptions and theories of language. The following prompts by some researchers concerned with a dialogical approach of language will bring evidence on how to tackle the traditional system of language education and transform it into a more appropriate one that can contribute to interpret and implement language education in accordance with the upcoming challenges ahead.

On the basis of Cope and Kalantzis' latter project (2009)[5], these experts enhance the use and effectiveness of multimodal texts instead of the traditional texts (e.g. written, basically). Concerning written language, they stress that its use is simply intertwined with other modes of communication rather than fading

---

[4] For a detailed description of the written language bias, see the works by Taylor (1997) and Linell (2003; 2005).

[5] Cope and Kalantzis' latter project (2009) was first published as a book in 2000 (and the *Circle* in 1996).

away. In sum, in their review of "a pedagogy of multiliteracies," Cope and Kalantzis appraise the multimodal functions of language in ordinary communication being aware of both, that communications range from the medium of writing (e.g. page of a book, magazine, etc.) to the visual on the screen (Cope and Kalantzis 2009, 181), and that writing is not a transliteration of speech, but a different mode with a significantly different grammar.

Lastly, Per Linell's alternative to understanding language theory is the ultimate reference that closes the innovative projects on dialogism carried out since the beginning of this century. Indeed, Linell's dialogical perspective encompasses values, attitudes and beliefs on the grammatical constructions concerned with actions and doings and how they should be thought in terms of methods, procedures or operations (Linell 2009, 106). Furthermore, his research interests focus on describing "most kinds of human action, cognition, communication and semiotic practices" by means of a theoretical CEFR on the basis of the dialogical theory or "dialogism" to explain the dynamic use of linguistic resources in interaction and contexts, "whether the medium is spoken, written or electronic" (Linell 2009, 99). In this sense, his communicative projects point out the lack of significant aspects of everyday interactions that have been ignored in traditional and theoretical grammar (Linell *et al.* 2003).

Finally, after providing a short overview of the most relevant challenges to adapt foreign language learning and teaching to recent changes in social communication, we become aware that the dialogical view of language has been ignored in its implementation in the foreign language policy and educational context. Therefore, we believe that further investigations on the basis of dialogical theory could integrate the innovative changes in social communication for their relevance in the future generations.

CHAPTER 3

Foreign language education policy in Europe

Since one of the main objectives of this investigation was, as mentioned in the Introduction, to analyse the theoretical and methodological aspects which have sustained the basis of the CEFR, this chapter will take account of an overview of its emergent publication and application in current academic environments between the late 20th and early 21st centuries. This chapter also focusses on a broader view of foreign language education other than linguistic and pedagogic that incorporates a language policy perspective originated in the Council of Europe.

Indeed, the CEFR has resulted from the discussion and promotion of language policies at the level of international governmental organization such as the Council of Europe as well as through a supranational organization, the European Union. With this end, an overview of the vast history of foreign language teaching and learning over the last 40 years is provided, because today's situation in this area is the result of its effectiveness for such a long period of time.

As Robert Phillipson explores in his work *English-only Europe? Challenging Language Policy* (2003), foreign language education has arisen in the particular needs and interests of the governments to carry on the socio-political and economic development in accordance with the historical process of economic expansion in western society. For example, Phillipson informs that:

> The Council of Europe has been instrumental in coordinating and disseminating a great deal of "best practice" in foreign language learning from all over Europe. Like the EU, it also campaigns for diversification in the languages learned, and attempts to encourage the learning of less widely learned languages. It has also produced an impressive set of instruments that can assist governments and educational planners, such as the *Common European CEFR of references for languages: Learning, teaching and assessment*', the *European language portfolio*, and a guide for the development of language education policies in Europe.
>
> (Phillipson 2003, 97)

In this respect, it should be born in mind that the European Language Portfolio (ELP) and the CEFR both reflect all of the major concerns of Council of

Europe's modern language projects since the 1970s, though the CEFR has become the main tool of our research given its relevance for textbook writers. The concept of the ELP took shape in parallel with the CEFR as a way of mediating key concepts and issues while at the same time fostering the development of learner autonomy (Kohonen 2002, 82; Little 2006, 177). For example, Kohonen (2002, 85) states that "the ELP reinforces the pedagogical function of the CEFR by integrating the ELP as a regular instrument in classroom work and private study making students aware of their language learning aims, contents, process and outcomes." In addition, Little (2002, 188) claims that the ELP is put forward as a means of documenting progress towards plurilingual competence, arguing that such competence "emphasizes the importance of plurilingualism and cultural exchange; and it supports the development of learner autonomy, partly out of a commitment to democracy in education and partly because learner autonomy is the most likely guarantee of lifelong learning."

Next, the most relevant features of the Council of Europe as regards the area of language education policy are classified into the following five sections. Section 3.1 starts with an overview of the most outstanding aspects of the origin and functions of the Council of Europe. An outline of the continuous series of medium term projects concerning the Modern Language Projects from 1950s to 2001 follows in section 3.2. After that, a list of the publications of the Council of Europe previous to the CEFR is provided in section 3.3. Then, the most relevant articles of Recommendations which have devised the basis of foreign language education and the subsequent issued documents by the Council of Europe are considered in section 3.4. Finally, section 3.5 closes the chapter with an overview of the action-oriented approach, since it has been regarded as one of the most significant aspects of the CEFR.

3.1 The Council of Europe and the CEFR

The area of language education policy has been discussed and promoted at the level of the Council of Europe as well as through the institutional organs of the European Union. Since a deep study of the latter organisation is beyond the

scope of the present study, the following description by Theo J.M. Van Els (2006) will help us clarify some relevant language political aspects of the European Union:

> With the 1958 Treaty of Rome, the EU commenced as three Communities: the European Economic Community, Euratom and the European Coal and Steel Community. In 1967, these three were united and continued as the European Economic Community. This lasted until 1979 when the members of the European Parliament were first elected directly by the citizens and the emphasis on co-operation gradually began to include more than strictly economic motives. Therefore, from then on, the participants preferred to speak simply of the European Community. With the signing of the Maastricht Treaty in 1993, the creation of the European economic union was completed and the member states had definitely opted for – and already given shape to – the route towards further political and social integration. From then on, the community was called the European Union.
>
> (Van Els 2006, 205)

The Council of Europe was officially founded in 1949 by the Treaty of London and is one of the oldest and the biggest European organisation that unifies 47 member states[6]**.** As a whole, the policies promoted by the Council strengthen linguistic diversity and language rights, deepen mutual understanding, consolidate democratic citizenship and sustain social cohesion (Sheils 1996; Little 2006; Beacco 2005). These principles were encompassed by the Council of Europe in five overarching objectives: (a) To protect human rights, parliamentary democracy and the rule of law in all member states; (b) To promote social cohesion and social rights; (c) To promote awareness and encourage the development of Europe's cultural identity and diversity; (d) To seek solutions to problems facing European society (discrimination against minorities, xenophobia, intolerance, environmental protection, human cloning, Aids, drugs, terrorism, organised crime, etc.) and (e) To help consolidate democratic stability in Europe by backing political, legislative and constitutional reform nationally, regionally and locally.

Furthermore, the Council of Europe's work has responded to the changing needs and priorities of member States for over five decades. In this sense, the

---

[6]The original 10 member states (Belgium, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and United Kingdom) have expanded to 47 countries and 6 observer status countries (Canada, the Holy See, Israel, Japan Mexico and the United States). http://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/47-members-states (accessed in January , 2016).

members of the Council of Europe who signed the European Cultural Convention in Paris in 1954 agreed in eleven articles that "the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity between its members for the purpose, among others, of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage" and that "a general European Cultural Convention had been designed to foster among the national of all members, (...), the study of the languages, history and civilisation of the others and of the civilisation which is common to them all" (Council of Europe 1954). In response to the celebration of its 50th anniversary, the general aims already expressed in the 1954 European Cultural Convention were reinforced in the whole text of the Preamble of the Declaration[7] that was held in December 2004 in Wroclaw (Poland), as follows:

> Wroclaw Declaration on fifty years of European Cultural Cooperation
>
> We, MINISTERS responsible for culture, education, youth and sport from the States parties to the European Cultural Convention, assembled in Wroclaw, on 9-10 December 2004:
>
> We CELEBRATE the 50th anniversary of the opening to signature of the Convention in Paris on 19 December 1954;
>
> We, AFFIRM that the values and the principles of the Convention that has brought our countries together in peaceful cooperation under the Council of Europe for 50 years remain as valid as ever, and represent a precious resource for an undivided, democratic Europe in the 21st Century;
>
> We ADOPT this Declaration and commend it to the Council of Europe and its member States for their future action.
>
> (Council of Europe 1954, 39)

3.2 A historical overview of the educational aims of the Council of Europe

This section deals with the evolution and implementation of language policy of foreign language learning and teaching within the years that followed

[7] See Appendix 4 in the document entitled "50 years of the European Cultural Convention" http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/CulturalConvention/Source/Bilan50_EN.pdf. (Accessed in August 2009).

the foundation of the Council of Europe in 1949 up until 2001. The great variety and density of events that happened over a long period make us consider the action of language education policies of the Council of Europe from a historical approach including the influence of disciplines such as language planning, applied linguistics and the sociology of language.

Concerning the main areas which have contributed to the current state of the art of foreign language education, Cooper (1989) considers the relevance of language planning and its overlap with both applied linguistics and the sociology of language by pointing out the Second World War and the decade of the 1960s as the starting point for the rise of scholarly inquiry in these fields. This is how Cooper (1989) puts special emphasis to the sixties:

> when unprecedented and continuous post war American prosperity gave rise to a liberal political agenda and the associated confidence that investment in social-science research would advance the solution of pressing social problems, in America and abroad.
>
> (Cooper 1989, 42- 43)

From another perspective, Stern (1983, 55) also points out how the increasing research in the 1960s began to impinge on policy issues and the method debate in second language education. Such an interest is illustrated with the emergence of language centres with a strong research orientation in several countries such as France, the United States, Britain and Canada. In this sense, Stern's (1983) concern on the connection between linguistics and language teaching and its powerful influence on foreign language education policies is another aspect worthy of mention together with applied linguistics and the sociology of language. Hence our interest in reflecting the relationship between several disciplines other than linguistics and pedagogy when exploring the field of foreign language education in this investigation.

As a case in point, the most representative milestones in the fifty-year period of the implementation of foreign language policy by the Council of Europe will be presented next. They will also be related with the main areas which have contributed to the current state of the art of foreign language education in Europe. Thus, the following seven sections illustrate the main stages of the evolution of the Council of Europe in foreign language policy in a chronological list that outlines the most outstanding aspects for each period starting with the

effects of the Second World War and finishing with the publication in 2001 of the final version of the CEFR and the ELP.

3.2.1 The after-war period. previous activities (1950s-1960s)

Subsequent to the aftermath of the Second World War the first priority of the Council of Europe as an intergovernmental body was to provide a "rallying point for the maintenance of pluralist parliamentary democracy and the protection of human rights" (Trim 2007, 5). As a result, a set of treaties and conventions were adopted in the following years for the restoration and further development of international communication and co-operation as we shall see below.

Two major aspects after the Second World War have featured the background and evolution of foreign language education in Europe. First, a strong interest in research orientation which led to the creation of language centres in several countries. And second, the need for a much broader knowledge of foreign languages which came to public attention towards the end of the 1950s. Moreover, at around the years of World War II American structuralism played a crucial role in changing the attitude of language teaching as regards foreign language education. Thus, the impact of linguistics on language teaching in the U.S.A. in the forties also influenced language pedagogy in Europe with an emphasis on description and authenticity of language data in the development of language teaching materials. Indeed, the Second World War and the decade of the 1960s have been considered as the starting point for the rise of scholarly inquiry in these fields by putting special emphasis on the sixties (Cooper 1989, 42-43; Stern 1983, 55). In this sense, the decade of the 1960s became crucial for the development of language policy issues and its overlap with both applied linguistics and the sociology of language.

The following two examples illustrate the increasing need for learning and teaching foreign languages in Europe. First, the linguistic research project on *Français Fondamental* (France 1954/1959) led the way in conceiving an innovating method for teaching French as a foreign language and it was also

known for pioneering a novel approach to the audio visual method. In this sense, as a result of the European Convention signed in Paris in 1954 the French government and the Council of Europe in 1959 put forward an outline programme of co-operation in the field of secondary and technical education in which the co-ordination of curricula and extension of language studies was one of the main concerns. Consequently, a short series of seminars on common problems in education by leading experts from the member states of the Council of Europe were organized (Decoo 2011, 63; Kettemann 1997, 177; Trim 2007).

Secondly, the Centre d'Étude du Français Elémentaire in 1951 which had been originated as a response to the declining role of French as a world language had a great influence on language teaching in the fifties and sixties. The main aim of this centre, which in 1959 was renamed the *Centre de Recherche et d'Études pour la Diffusion du Français* (CREDIF), was to teach French to beginners and to produce suitable teaching materials. This method became widely known for pioneering a novel approach to audio-visual teaching on the basis of *Français Fondamental* (also called *Français Elémentaire*) which has had a major influence on language teaching for over three decades (Stern 1983, 55; Trim 2007, Trim 2012, 2).

The most outstanding events and publications between the 1950s and 1960s are summarized in table 3.1.

Table 3.1 The after-war period: Early initiatives (1950s-1960s)	
	Major events and publications
1953	**International Seminar on the Contributions of the Teaching of Modern Languages towards Education for Living in a World Community** at Nuwara Eliya, Ceylon and sponsored by the UNESCO. In this seminar the language learning problems of the Third World were considered in conjunction with language teaching in developed countries for the first time.
1954	**The European Cultural Convention** was signed in Paris. The principles underlying the Audio-visual method were prepared and published by the CREDIF team: ◦ *Voix et Images de France*, a French course intended for adult beginners; ◦ *Bonjour Line*, an equivalent programme for young children; ◦ *De Vive Voix*, a revised version of *Voix et Images de France*.

1957	**First Intergovernmental conference on European co-operation in language teaching.** ▪ **Lado, R. *Linguistics across Cultures. Applied Linguistics for Language Teachers*** The first systematic statement of contrastive linguistics (Stern 1983, 105) ▪ **Skinner, B.F. *Verbal Behaviour*** ▪ **Chomsky, N. *Syntactic Structures***
1958	**The school for Applied Linguistics was founded at the University of Edinburgh**
1959	**The first experiment in a British grammar school with an audio-visual language-course** (Ingram and Mace, 1959). Basic audio-lingual materials in French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish.
1961	**Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL)** founded in Washington, D.C. The first language laboratory was established in the Ealing Technical College (Great Britain). ▪ **Austin, J.L., *How to do things with words***
1962-63	**The first language laboratory** was established in the Ealing Technical College (Great Britain).

3.2.2 The Major Project in Modern Languages (1964-1974)

The first "Major Project in Modern Languages" (1964-1974) was created by the Council for Cultural Cooperation of the Council of Europe[8] (CDCC) in 1964. This project favoured international co-operation, covered all educational sectors and concentrated on the modernisation of teacher training. Furthermore, it also

[8] The CDCC was set up in 1961 as a committee of governmental representatives responsible for setting the agenda for action in the fields of education, culture, media, sport and youth. In order to promote this aim in the field of education and culture, CDCC organized a continuous series of medium term projects concerning modern languages. See this website for further information http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/coe.php (accessed in January , 2016).

encouraged the application to language teaching of research in the linguistic sciences, the promotion of an International Association of Applied Linguistics (AILA), as well as the use of audio-visual methodology. All these aspects together achieved a growing international consensus and the Council of Europe was considered a "natural focus for modern-languages policy development" (Trim 2007, 10-11; 2012, 22).

Consequently, the results of the agreement would be incorporated in Recommendation (69) 2, the first of the major recommendations agreed by the Committee of Ministers that have remained a landmark in the history of language teaching in the twentieth century, especially for the development of European language-teaching policy (Trim 2007, 13).

Table 3.2 provides an outline of the most relevant aspects in a ten-year period between 1964 and 1974.

Table 3.2 The Major Project in Modern Languages (1964-1974)	
	Major events and publications
1964	**Launch of the first Major Project on language teaching** The Council for Cultural Co-operation of the Council of Europe initiates the "Major Project-Modern Languages" A "Committee on Research and Development in Modern Languages" was set up in Britain under government auspices. AILA (Association Internationale de Linguistique Apliquée) was officially launched and planned at the First International Colloquy of Applied Linguistics. It was organised at the University of Nancy (France). ▪ **Rivers, W. *The Psychologist and the Foreign Language Teacher*** The first major work of a writer on language pedagogy who has influenced the thinking of many language teachers across the world for nearly two decades (Stern 1983, 107). M.A.K. Halliday directed the "Programme in Linguistics and English Teaching". This project produced a range of innovative mother-tongue teaching materials for schools, and, in a more descriptive mode, promoted research on the workings of cohesion (Hasan 1968) which were later expanded into a major study, *Cohesion in English* (Halliday and Hasan 1976). See Howatt and Widdowson (2004, 248).

1966 **TESOL Association** (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) was created out of professional concern over the lack of a single, all-inclusive professional organization that might bring together teachers and administrators at all educational levels with an interest in teaching English to speakers of other languages (ESOL)[9].

1967-70 **Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (Canada)**
As a result of the policy implications of this report, second language learning and bilingual education became important educational and policy issues in Canada approximately between 1969 and 1978. (Stern 1983, 108)

1968 **The Bilingual Education Act** was the first United States federal legislation regarding minority language speakers. It was introduced in 1967 to establish educational programs for students with limited English speaking ability. In 1968 the new legislation merged into the all-encompassing Bilingual Education Act or Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). (Wiese and Garcia 2001).

The Modern Language Centre of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education was established in Toronto (Canada). Stern (1983, 108).

- **Rivers, W. *Teaching Foreign Language Skills*. Second Edition.** (First edition, 1968)

1969 **Recommendation 69(2)**

Recommendation 69 (2) proclaimed clearly that the aim of language learning was to enable Europeans to communicate and co-operate freely with each other whilst maintaining the full diversity and vitality of their languages and cultures. Also it emphasized the central importance of teacher training and foresaw the need for the reform of examinations and the introduction of new methods of testing. (...) Despite the problems of immediate implementation, the perspectives opened up by the formulations of Recommendation R (69) 2 have remained dominant in the development of European language-teaching policy over almost half a century (Trim 1997, 13; 2012, 22).

[9] The Early History of TESOL by James E. Alatis, Georgetown University. https://www.tesol.org/about-tesol/association-governance/tesol's-history/the-early-history-of-tesol (accessed January 2016)

1971	**The Rüschlikon Symposium – *The linguistic content means of evaluation and their interaction in the teaching and learning of modern languages in adult education*** First of several meetings organized by the Council of Europe to start a project on a flexible European language curriculum for adult learners.
1971-81	**Project No. 4 "Modern languages: improving and intensifying language learning as a factor making for European understanding, cooperation and mobility"**

3.2.3 The European unit/credit scheme for adult education (1971-1976)

The Rüschlikon Symposium held in 1971 entitled "The linguistic content means of evaluation and their interaction in the teaching and learning of modern languages in adult education" was the first of several meetings organized by the Council of Europe to start a project on a flexible European language curriculum for adult learners (Girard and Trim 1988, 9). This project by the Council of Europe came to be known as the "Threshold Level ('T-level') Project" (Howatt and Widdowson 2004, 338) and it has been outstanding for its development and implementation in foreign language education. Indeed, a working group formed by John Trim, René Richterich, David Wilkins, and Jan Van Ek investigated "the feasibility of a European unit-credit scheme for foreign language learning by adults" (Trim 2007, 14-23; Decoo 2011, 70). Three position papers by Richterich, Wilkins and Van Ek were commissioned by the Modern Languages Project and their content laid down the basic aims and principles based on the educational and political aims of the COE. For further information about the three papers see *A History of English Language Teaching* by Howatt and Widdowson (2004, 338) as well as the recent *Systematization in Foreign Language Teaching* by Wilfried Decoo (2011). Curiously enough, the latter referential work by Decoo states that particularly the classification of functions and notions of the Threshold:

> is indebted to a nineteenth-century source–Roget's Thesaurus, itself inspired by a seventeenth-century construct–John Wilkins's *Essay* on language. To note this ancestry is not disparaging to the Threshold

> endeavour but is rather a tribute to predecessors whom our profession tends to ignore.
>
> (Decoo 2011, 72)

The most outstanding milestones of the period between 1971 and 1976 are summarized in table 3.3.

Table 3.3 The European unit/credit scheme for adult education (1971-1976)	
Major events and publications	
1971	**The Rüschlikon Symposium – *The linguistic content means of evaluation and their interaction in the teaching and learning of modern languages in adult education* -** First of several meetings organized by the Council of Europe to start a project on a flexible European language curriculum for adult learners.
1971-81	**Project No.4 "Modern Languages: improving and intensifying language learning as a factor making for European understanding cooperation and mobility"**
1972	• **Hymes, D.H. *On communicative competence*** • **Savignon, S.J. *Communicative Competence: An Experiment in Foreign Language Teaching.* A Seminal Experiment on a Communicative Approach to Foreign Language Teaching** St. Wolfang Symposium, the second meeting on European language projects
1973-75	**A major research project in Canada** on immersion and other alternative approaches to teaching French as a second language
1975	**Jan Van Ek's publication of "Systems Development in Adult Language Learning: The Threshold level in a European Unit Credit System for Modern Language Learning by Adults." (1975a)**. • *The Threshold Level* is a landmark document in n/f syllabus design. It appeared in two forms: Van Ek (1975b) for the adult learner, and Van Ek (1978) for the secondary school student: 'The Threshold Level for Schools."

- The Council of Europe Threshold Level (Van Ek 1975) represents an attempt to define a general social communicative ability of second language learners as a standard of reference level. [It specifies situations in terms of learners' roles, settings and topics, as well as language activities, functions and notion. In other words,] it offers a multidimensional semantic-pragmatic inventory for syllabus development with adult learners in a European context in mind. (Stern 1981, 429)

- Alongside the T-Level, there are comparable documents in other languages, all based on the same basic categories. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. (Howatt and Widdowson 2000, 339, 351)

"The National Congress on Languages in Education" (NCLE) was established as a permanent body which was administered through the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research.
Stern (1983, 285) points out that the overviews published by the (NCLE) after the first assembly tended to be policy statements rather than status studies; however, as he explains, "they give impressions of the state of affairs as it was in Britain around 1980".

- **Coste, D. *Un niveau-seuil***

A French team led by Daniel Coste produced the French equivalent to Van Ek's English curriculum.

- **Wilkins, D. *Notional Syllabuses***

An influential book on notional-functional approaches to language learning.

1976

- **Candlin, C. *Communicative Language Teaching and the Debt to Pragmatics***

1977

- **Allwright, R. "Language Learning Through Communication Practice."** *ELT Documents* 76 (3): 2-14.

1978

Adoption of Functional Syllabuses for General Language Teaching Courses

- **Shaw, A.M. 'Foreign-language Syllabus Development: Some Recent Approaches.'** *Language Teaching and Linguistics: Abstracts* 10: 217-33.

- **Johnson, K. "Adult Beginners: A Functional or just a Communicative Approach?"** *Modern English Teacher* 6/2.

3.2.4 Project No. 4: Modern Languages (1978-1981)

Project 4: “Modern languages: improving and intensifying language learning as a factor making for European understanding, cooperation and mobility” was also directed by John Trim and it ran from 1978 to 1981. It was conceived to serve the interests of increased European understanding, cooperation and mobility by improving and broadening the learning of modern languages, making appropriate provision for all sections of the population.

Its main aim was to make generally available the “basic conceptual tools” developed by the Council of Europe experts “for the planning, construction and conduct of learning programmes closely geared to the needs, motivations and characteristics of learner”. Furthermore, another goal was to demonstrate in a series of pilot applications their value in “improving and broadening the learning of modern languages, making appropriate provision for all sections of the population” (Girard and Trim 1988, 23; Trim 2012, 22).

For example, in 1981 “Project 4” of the Council for Cultural Cooperation (CDCC) was applied in a series of experiments in adult education, in provision for the learning of the host language and mother-tongue maintenance by migrants and their families, as well as in the use of mass media (especially the Anglo-German multimedia broadcast-led English course *Follow me*). Moreover, it is important to notice that between 1971 and 1981, the Modern Languages Project had already attempted to develop a consensus among European nations on standards of language proficiency for adults (Stern 1983, 112, 283). Following the positive evaluation of “Project 4” the COE Committee of Ministers issued Recommendation R (82) 18, recommending to all member governments the general reform of modern-language teaching.

Table 3.4 shows the most outstanding events and publications that happened in a ten-period year between the 1970s and 1980s.

Table 3.4 Project No. 4: Modern Languages (1978-1981)	
Major events and publications	
1978	**Widdowson, H.G. *Teaching Language as Communication***
	Richterich, R. and Chancerel L. *Identifying the Needs of Adults Learning a Foreign Language* The definition and identification of these language needs has constituted a first and important stage in the procedures to make language teaching communicative. Stern (1983, 259)
	Munby, J. *Communicative Syllabus Design: A Sociolinguistic Model for Defining the Content of Purpose-Specific Language Programmes*
1979	**Slagter, P.J. *Spanish* Un *nivel umbral***
1980	The Ontario Ministry of Education (Canada) published a 'core programme' for French which expressed the French curriculum through a carefully designed list of objectives and sub-objectives, each of which was illustrated by sample activities (Ontario 1980), Stern (1983, 449-50).
	Canale M. and Swain, M. *Communicative Competence.*
	Applied Linguistics, Applied Psycholinguistics, and the Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development (first publication of these scholarly journals). They reflected the intense theoretical and empirical research interests in the language area, and the intention to back up policy with language research.
	Baldegger, M. *et al.* *German Kontaktschwelle, Deutsch als Fremdsprache*
	Trim, J.L.M. *Developing a Unit/Credit scheme of adult language learning*
	Trim, J.L.M., Richterich, R., Van Ek, J.A. & Wilkins, D.A. *Systems development in adult language learning*
	Richterich, R. and J.L. Chancerel. *Identifying the needs of adults learning a foreign language*
	Galli de Paratesi, N. *Italian Livello Soglia*

3.2.5 Project 12 (1982-1987)

Project 12: "Learning and Teaching Modern Languages for Communication" was devoted to supporting the general implementation of Recommendation R (82) 18 in national reforms of curricula and examinations, in which the schools' interaction network and the further development of threshold level descriptions played a part (Girard and Trim 1988). Teacher trainers were identified as key personnel in bringing new methods to the classroom and a series of thirty-seven interactional workshops were held in fifteen countries on the many aspects of the "communicative approach" to language teaching and their incorporation into programmes of initial and in-service teacher training. The principal mechanisms employed in Project 12 are described in the Final Report of the project (Girard and Trim 1988).

This project aimed at the support of member states in their efforts to reform lower secondary education in line with the Committee of Ministers R (82) 18 advocating a general programme of reform in member states in accordance with "the principles of the constructions of language-learning system" (as these are progressively developed within the Council of Europe's 'Modern-languages programme).

Next, table 3.5 provides a list with the most outstanding events between the 1980s and 1987.

Table 3.5 Project 12 (1982-1987)	
Major events and publications	
1982	**Project No. 12 "Learning and teaching modern languages for communication" (1982-1986)** **Recommendation No. R (82)18 -** A CEFR for the reform of curricula, methods and examinations throughout the 1980s. **Krashen, S.D. *Principles and practice of second language acquisition***
1983	**Stern, H. H. *A foundation of English language teaching*** **Levinson, S.C. *Pragmatics***
1986	**Van Ek, J. *Objectives for foreign language learning. Volume I: Scope***

3.2.6 Language learning for European citizenship (1990-1997)

In 1990 the CDCC (the Council for Cultural Cooperation) launched the Project "Language Learning for European Citizenship." The main aim of the project was to develop further the principles and models which evolved in the course of previous projects and to give preference to educational sectors not previously focused upon. Four new priority sectors were defined: primary education, upper secondary education, vocationally-oriented education and training, as well as advanced adult education (Trim 1997, 34). On the other hand, the political changes in Central and eastern Europe led to an increase in the CDCC membership from 24 to 44 states, and support was given to new member states in reorienting and modernising language teaching in accordance with Recommendation R (82) 18.

In 1991 a Symposium entitled "Transparency and coherence in language learning in Europe: objectives, evaluation, certification" was held in Rüschlikon (Switzerland). In that symposium two projects which shared aspects of a coherent, integrated programme were to be considered: (a) the introduction of a Common European CEFR of Reference for the description of objectives and methods for language learning and teaching, curriculum and course design, materials production and language testing and assessment, and (b) the introduction of a European language portfolio, in which individual learners could record both institutional courses attended and qualifications gained and less formal experiences with respect to as wide a range of European languages and cultures as possible.

Finally, following the endorsement of the Project's findings by an intergovernmental Conference held in Strasbourg in 1997, Recommendation R (98) 6 was adopted by the Committee of Ministers. Table 3.6 shows the most relevant events and works in the 1990s.

Table 3.6 Language learning for European citizenship (1990-1997)	
Major events and publications	
1989-1997	**Language Learning for European Citizenship –** enrichment of the programme by the participation of the newer member states from Central and Eastern Europe.
1991	**Symposium at Rüschlikon (Switzerland)**
	Van Ek, J.A. & Trim, J.M.L. ***Threshold Level 1990***
	Van Ek, J. And Trim, J.M.L. ***Waystage 1990***
1992	**Transparency and coherence in language learning in Europe: objectives, evaluation, certification.** Report edited by B. North of the Symposium held in Rüschlikon in 1991.
1993	**Kramsch, C.** ***Context and Culture in language teaching***
1995	**The foundation of the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML)** The Centre was formed by eight founding members: Austria, France, Greece, Liechtenstein, Malta, The Netherlands, Slovenia and Switzerland and it was initially set up for a trial period of three years. It was opened in March 1995 with the seminar 'Integrating spoken skills in the foreign language classroom, with participants from 20 countries.
1997	**The Final Declaration of the Second Council of Europe Summit** (10-11 October 1997) in which the Heads of State and Government of member States stressed the development of a Europe based on the principles of pluralistic democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law.
	• **Savard, J. G. "Besoins langagières et fonctions langagières."** *Canadian Modern Language Review* 33: 632-46.
1998	**Recommendation No. R (98) 6**
	Recommendation No. R (98) 6 of the Committee of Ministers, resulting from the "Language Learning for European Citizenship" project implemented by the Education Committee between 1989 and 1996. This emphasises intercultural communication and plurilingualism as key policy goals and sets out concrete measures for each educational sector and for initial and in-service teacher education.

3.2.7 A Common European Framework and Portfolio (1996-97 – 2001)

A draft version of the CEFR was produced on the recommendation of a Symposium: *Transparency and coherence in language learning in Europe: objectives, evaluation, certification* held in Switzerland in 1991 "to consider the introduction of a *Common European Framework of Reference* (…) and the introduction of a *European Language Portfolio*" (Trim 2007). It was first published in 1996 by the Council of Europe, and previously amended by an extensive field consultation (Trim 2007). Accordingly, a new project centred on the concept of European plurilingualism was launched in 2001 involving the field trialling of CEF and ELP for public launching in the European Year of Languages (Byram 2000, 219). See table 3.7 for a summary of the most relevant events and publications between the mid-1990s and 2001.

Table 3.7 A Common European Framework and Portfolio (1996-97– 2001)	
	Major events and publications
1998	**Recommendation No. R (98) 6** Recommendation No. R (98) 6 of the Committee of Ministers, resulting from the "Language Learning for European Citizenship" project implemented by the Education Committee between 1989 and 1996. This emphasises intercultural communication and plurilingualism as key policy goals and sets out concrete measures for each educational sector and for initial and in-service teacher education. **Recommendation 1383 (1998)** of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe expressly devoted to "Linguistic Diversification"
1999	**The "Education for democratic citizenship" project** was regarded as a "top priority in the Council of Europe's work programme", and was adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 7 May 1999. This now constitutes a central working theme in the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Division, which since the beginning of the project has become the Language Policy Division. The project is aimed at implementing language curricula from a new operational angle focussing on identity issues (Zarate 2004 13).

2001	**Recommendation 1539 (2001)** of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on the European Year of Languages states that plurilingualism "should be understood as a certain ability to communicate in several languages, and not necessarily as perfect mastery of them". It recommended that the Committee of Ministers call upon member States to "maintain and develop further the Council of Europe's language policy initiatives for promoting plurilingualism, cultural diversity and understanding among peoples and nations" and "to encourage all Europeans to acquire a certain ability to communicate in several languages, for example by promoting diversified novel approaches adapted to individual needs …" **Council of Europe, *The Common European CEFR for References of Languages*** **Council of Europe, *European Language Portfolio***

3.3 An overview of preliminary works to the CEFR

The list in table 3.8 contains the most representative publications of the members of the Council of Europe's projects previous to the elaboration and publication of the CEFR and the ELP which have resulted from the Europe Modern Languages Projects in a 50-year span of time.

Table 3.8 Preliminary works previous to the publication of the CEFR	
	Major events and publications
1973	In the early 1970s the foundations for the development of learning systems were laid by a group of experts such as Trim, Richterich, Van Ek and Wilkins (among others) convened by the Council of Europe to investigate ways and means of promoting language learning in Europe.
1975	**van Ek, J.A *The Threshold level in a European unit credit system for modern language learning by Adults. Systems Development in Adult Language Learning*** His document, called *the Threshold Level*, is a landmark document in n/f syllabus design. It appeared in two forms: van Ek (1975) for the adult learner, and van Ek (1978) for the secondary school student: *The Threshold Level for Schools*. London: Longman.

1976	**Coste, D. *et al. Un niveau seuil*** A French team led by Daniel Coste produced the French equivalent to Van Ek's English curriculum.
1977	**van Ek, J.A. *The Threshold Level for Modern Language Learning in Schools***
	van Ek, J.A, Alexander, L.G., and Fitzpatrick, M.A. *Waystage English: an intermediary objective below threshold level in a European unit/credit system of modern language learning by adults*, re-issued as *Waystage English* (1980) and as *Waystage 1990* Cambridge
1986	**van Ek, J.A. *Objectives for foreign language learning,* vol. I: Scope**
1991	**van Ek, J.A and Trim, J.M.L. *Threshold Level 1990*, re-issued as *Threshold 1990* (1998)**
	van Ek, J.A and Trim, J.M.L. *Waystage 1990*
1997	**van Ek, J.A and Trim, J.M.L. *Vantage Level***

3.4 Recommendations R (82) 18 and R (98) 6 and other relevant policy documents endorsed by the Council of Europe

This section aims to study the explicit references in two Recommendations, R (82) 18 and R (98) 6, along with other relevant policy documents endorsed by the Council of Europe, since these documents have become definitely the very basis of the CEFR. Indeed, these legal instruments have provided the aims, objectives and functions of the CEFR in which the notion of "plurilingualism" is suggested as a key component for the curriculum design (Beacco and Byram 2003, 32-34). In fact, it is not until the late 20th century that the CEFR has been introduced as an explicit tool that served the language education policies of the Council of Europe by encouraging reflection and communication among its practitioners about all aspects of language learning,

teaching and assessment (Sheils 1996; Council of Europe 2001a; Beacco and Byram 2003; Little 2006; Decoo 2011).

The following paragraphs will clarify the relationship between the first chapter of the CEFR (especially, sections 1.2, 1.4 and 1.6) with organizational documents such as Recommendations R (82) 18 and R (98) 6. The relevance of those texts within the political and educational context of the CEFR is shown next.

The most outstanding stages for each project of the Council of Europe have illustrated the sequential processes of foreign language learning and teaching developed for over 50 years as we have seen in section 2.2, in which foreign language pedagogy is shared with the interests of the member states in order to provide democratic principles on the basis of a united Europe. In this sense, the general aim of the Council of Europe: "to achieve greater unity among its members (...) pursued in particular by the adoption of common action in the cultural field" has been pointed out equally in Recommendations R (82) 18 and R (98) 6 and its purpose has been acknowledged in the first chapter of the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 2). On the other hand, both documents differ greatly in content from the purpose for which they arose. For example, whereas Recommendation R (82) 18 resulted from the report "Modern Languages: (1971-81)" which was drawn up by Project Group No. 4 of the Council for Cultural Co-operation and was adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 24 September 1982 at the 350th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies, Recommendation R (98) 6 originated later in the project "Learning for European Citizenship" as a result of the conference entitled "Language learning for a new Europe' and was adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 17 March 1998 at the 623rd meeting of the Ministers' Deputies.

However, the main purpose and significance of the original Recommendations have been minimised in the CEFR. For example, only part of their content is used to develop, exclusively, the aims and objectives of the Council of Europe language policy in section 1.2 (Council of Europe 2001a, 1-4), while sections 1.4, *Why the CEF is needed*, and section 1.6, *The criteria the CEF must need*, refer to the main principles achieved by the Rüschlikon Symposium in 1991. Before analysing section 1.2 of the CEFR and the policy instruments ratified by the Council of Europe, table 3.9 shows a comparative list of the measures to be implemented concerning the learning and teaching of modern

languages in Recommendations R (82) 18 and R (98) 6 (Council of Europe 1982; 1998, respectively).

Table 3.9 A comparative list of the measures to be implemented in R (82) 16 and R (98) 6	
RECOMMENDATION No. R (82) 16 *Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 24 September 1982 at the 350th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies*	**RECOMMENDATION No. R (98) 6** *Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 17 March 1998 at the 623rd meeting of the Ministers' Deputies*
Appendix to Recommendation No. R (82) 18	**Appendix to Recommendation No. R (98) 6**
Measures to be implemented concerning the learning and teaching of modern languages	
(a) *General measures* **(b)** *Language learning in schools* **(c)** *Language learning in upper secondary school, higher education, further education and adult education* **(d)** *Language learning by migrants and their families* **(e)** *Initial and further teacher training* **(f)** *International co-operation*	**A.** *General measures and principles* **B.** *Early language learning (up to age 11)* **C.** *Secondary education* **D.** *Vocationally-oriented language learning* **E.** *Adult education* **F.** *Bilingual education in bilingual or multilingual areas* **G.** *Specification of objectives and assessment* **H.** *Teacher training*

First, concerning language learning measures, Recommendation (98) 16 distinguishes specific measures for different kinds of education such as early language learning, secondary education, vocationally-oriented, and adult education. On the other hand, Recommendation (82) 6 only provides one section for three different kinds of education (i.e. secondary, further and adult). Second, as regards Recommendation R (82) 16, the issues of language learning by migrants as well as international co-operation were first dealt with in the "Modern Languages Project (1971-81)," whereas bilingual education and the specification of objectives and assessment was covered in the project "Learning for European Citizenship" and promulgated in Recommendation R (98) 6.

Finally, section 1.2 of the CEFR reveals a partial approach of both Recommendations when quoting the general aim of the Council of Europe equally defined in Recommendations R (82) and R (98) 6: “The aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve greater unity between its members and that this aim can be pursued in particular by the adoption of common action in the cultural field” (Council of Europe 2001a, 2).

Next, it follows that principles such as “the heritage of diverse languages and culture in Europe”, “a better knowledge of European modern languages” and “the adoption or development of national policies in the field of modern language learning and teaching” are contained in the preamble to Recommendation R (82) 16. Subsequently, those principles will be achieved by means of two aspects (F14 and F17) that belong to *International co-operation*, and is the last measure adopted in R (82) 18:

> (F14) To promote the national and international collaboration of governmental and non-governmental institutions engaged in the development of methods of teaching and evaluation in the field of modern language learning and in the production and use of materials, including institutions engaged in the production and use of multi-media materials.
>
> (F17) To take such steps as are necessary to complete the establishment of an effective European system of information exchange covering all aspects of language learning, teaching and research, and making full use of information technology.
>
> (Council of Europe 1982)

Particularly, section 1.2 of the CEFR includes the list of general measures from Recommendation R (82) 18 which is supported by other European institutions such as the CDCC (Council for Cultural Co-operation), “to encourage, support and coordinate the efforts of member governments and non-governmental institutions to improve language learning” (Council of Europe 2001a, 3). Thus, when indicating the political objectives in the area of modern languages of the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 3-4) not only refers to a small number of the considerations agreed by the Committee of Ministers in the preamble to Recommendation R (98) 6, but also to the resolutions of the Declarations of the Council of Europe’s First Summit (Vienna, 1993) and the Second Summit of Heads of State and Government (Strasbourg, 1997). Finally, the closing paragraph of section 1.2 of the CEFR stresses the promotion of plurilingualism in

a pan-European context, which is one of the statements in the preamble to Recommendation R (98) 6, saying that:

> In the light of these objectives, the Committee of Ministers stressed 'the political importance at the present time and in the future of developing specific fields of action, such as strategies for diversifying and intensifying language learning in order to promote plurilingualism in a pan-European context' and drew attention to the value of further developing educational links and exchanges and of exploiting the full potential of new communication and information technologies.
>
> (Council of Europe 2001a, 4)

On the other hand, the Intergovernmental Symposium held in Rüschlikon (Switzerland) in 1991 under the title, *Transparency and Coherence in Language Learning in Europe* (Trim, 1997) is partially reviewed in sections 1.4 and 1.6 of the CEFR. Thus, section 1.4, "Why is CEF needed?", provides a literal version of the conclusions adopted at the Rüschlikon Symposium (Trim, 1997, 30) with reference to concepts such as "plurilingualism", "pluriculturalism" and "pluricultural competence", whereas section 1.6, "What criteria must CEF meet?", describes in detail that a Common European Framework of Reference, must particularly be "comprehensive", "transparent" and "coherent" (Trim 1997, 30-32; Council of Europe 2001a, 7).

In conclusion, section 1.2 of the CEFR deals with the aims and objectives of the Council of Europe which have been promulgated by means of legal or policy texts such as recommendations and declarations subsequent to the Committees of Ministers. In addition, the conclusions adopted at the Rüschlikon Symposium subsequent to the Project Group in 1990 have been considered in which notions such as "plurilingualism" and "pluricultural competence" (section 1.4) as well as the main principles of a Common European CEFR (i.e. comprehensive, transparent and coherent) are mentioned for their relevance to introduce a common CEFR for the description of objectives and methods in language teaching, curriculum and course design, materials production, and language testing and assessment.

In sum, this chapter has considered the relationship between foreign language policies and foreign language education promulgated by the Council of Europe's projects. In addition, it has illustrated that the CEFR is the result of a process of language policy education for over 50 years that shows the progressive

development of laws and resolutions on foreign language policies which have advocated for 'democracy' promoting the communication and intercomprehension among Europeans and between different countries in order to achieve mutual enrichment and understanding.

3.5 The CEFR and its action-oriented approach: A way to understand foreign language education in Europe

According to the CEFR, the *action-oriented approach* comprises seven basic components of the communicative language learning process such as general and communicative language competences, language activities (reception, production, interaction, mediation), context, domains (educational, occupational, public and personal), strategies and tasks (Council of Europe 2001a, 9-10). In addition, the CEFR incorporates the cognitive, emotional and volitional resources together with "the full range of abilities specific to and applied by the individual as a social agent" (Council of Europe 2001a, 9). In this sense, users and learners of a language are regarded essentially as "social agents" with tasks to be accomplished "in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action" (Council of Europe 2001a, 9).

From an educational science viewpoint, the term "action-oriented" stands for "the aim of developing the ability to act through a special concept of apprenticeship, as well as for a theory which focuses on the social dimension of learning situations" (Niemeyer 2004, 55). This is an appreciation that obviously enriches and coincides with the pedagogical perspective of an action-oriented approach as happens with the CEFR. Indeed, Niemeyer (2004) not only brings evidence of the action-oriented learning competences which are gained through accumulation of knowledge, but she refers to the individual ability to transfer it to new situations as well.

In addition, Little (2006, 185) remarks that one of the most outstanding aims of the CEFR's action-oriented approach is "intended to apply not only to the comparison of language examinations but to the specification of learning goals,

the development of teaching and learning materials and procedures, and the design of examinations and tests." In this sense, Guilherme (2002, 140) corroborates the main feature of the action-oriented approach in foreign language teaching consisting in "being functional, with objectives defined in terms of 'better performance', optimal functional operation, or fulfilment of tasks". The same arguments can be found in the prefaces of the two *Thresholds* (van Ek 1975; van Ek and Trim 1990) as well as in the *Objectives* by van Ek (1986), though such a coincidence will be illustrated in chapter 4.

Similarly, other scholars who are specialists in the CEFR acknowledge its sequential development in the history of language education agreeing that the action-oriented approach has resulted from the first *Threshold* (van Ek 1975) and that it has been a consequence of the different Project Works of the Council of Europe for over a fifty-year period (Trim 2000; Little 2006; Little *et al.* 2007; Decoo 2011; Hulstijn 2015). However, whereas the action-oriented approach represents a primary means of understanding foreign language teaching and learning in terms of learning goals and proficiency tests, Decoo (2011) points out the ambiguous goals of the CEFR arguing that:

> On the one hand, in order to guarantee flexible, open and non-dogmatic approaches in all circumstances, it claims that it "does not imply the imposition of one single uniform system" (Council of Europe 2001, pp. 7-8). On the other hand, it "provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe.
>
> (Decoo 2011, 84)

Not in vain, the concatenation of successive stages of transformation of the action-oriented approach would suggest that the content and design of EFL textbooks closely resemble each other, though not alike in all respects. This observation brings evidence of the similar learning objectives and content of the speaking activity samples in the five series of EFL textbooks.

CHAPTER 4

Plurilingualism and the European Democratic Citizenship Project in relation to the CEFR

The most outstanding aspects of plurilingualism with reference to the CEFR as well as the European Democratic Citizenship (EDC) Project are presented in this chapter in order to see the particular role the EDC project has played in the development of foreign language education in Europe. In the following statement, Gouveia (2010) introduces the essentials of the CEFR in the context of foreign language education in Europe, claiming that:

> Based on a background political will for an education in democratic citizenship at a European level (Europe, Council of Europe and European Union), the Common European CEFR is a Council of Europe document whose main aim may be said to be the standardization of the discourse on language learning across Europe.
>
> (Gouveia 2010, 10)

More specifically, Beacco and Byram (2003) uncover the issue of plurilingualism because of the way it affects the background of foreign language education in Europe, either in practice or in theory:

> It is the very notion of plurilingualism which has asserted itself as a form of language education appropriate to European realities. (...) This educational culture has been disseminated among language professionals and is sufficiently developed at the theoretical and practical levels to be submitted for political examination in a real sense.
>
> (Beacco and Byram 2003, 32)

In addition, the two experts stress that one of the central principles of their *Guide* is that Council of Europe's policies should be built on plurilingualism as a value and a competence arguing that "adopting plurilingualism as a goal" could be used as a substantial ground to construct democratic citizenship in Europe. In this sense, Beacco and Byram (2003, 8) suggest that what characterizes European citizens is "not so much mastery of a particular language or particular languages, as a plurilingual, pluricultural competence which ensures communication, and

above all results in all languages being respected" in accordance with the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 5).

This chapter is organized around three major issues providing an overview of plurilingualism and its uses in the Council of Europe as well as in the EDC Project. First, there is a brief review of a series of language policy documents by the Council of Europe so as to situate the origin and development of the term plurilingualism (section 4.1). Second, attention is drawn to the following terms such as plurilingualism, multilingualism and interculturality due to their relevance in the two European projects mentioned above (section 4.2). And third, the EDC Project will be regarded for its impact in foreign language education (section 4.2.2.1), its significance for the core competencies (section 4.2.2.2) as well as for the concept of interculturality (section 4.2.2.3).

4.1 Plurilingualism on the grounds of language education policies in the Council of Europe

Plurilingualism has been defined on the basis of the Council of Europe texts, such as conventions ratified and recommendations approved by member states (e.g., Recommendations R (82)18; R (98)6; R 1383; R 1539). Those texts contain the principles on languages and education that form the essence of common language education policies in Europe and their legitimacy is derived from higher political principles, those of democracy and human rights. In this sense, Beacco and Byram (2003) affirm that:

> Language education policies are intimately connected with education in the values of democratic citizenship because their purposes are complementary: language teaching, the ideal *locus* for intercultural contact, is a sector in which education for democratic life in its intercultural dimension can be included in education systems.
>
> Beacco and Byram (2003, 35)

This section, then, discusses the notion of plurilingualism as a principle and a goal on the grounds of common language education in Europe. Indeed, the term, plurilingualism, has become fundamental in the field of foreign of language

learning and teaching as some researchers within the Council of Europe projects have suggested in their works. Particularly, Jean Claude Beacco and Michael Byram (2003, 32) and David Little (2006, 176) provide evidence of the official texts in which the goal of plurilingualism has originated. In their respective works these authors suggest that the goal of plurilingualism has always been incorporated in the Council of Europe's initial texts like the European Cultural Convention of 1954 (Council of Europe 1954) though it becomes explicitly identified in more recent documents as we shall see subsequently.

Accordingly, a representative sample of six official texts such as conventions and recommendations published between the mid-fifties and the year 2001 ratified and approved by the member states of the Council of Europe will illustrate below how the term *plurilingualism* shifts progressively towards a more explicit use as the incipient documents are left behind in the course of creating official laws.

4.1.1 The European Cultural Convention of 1954

The notion of plurilingualism is not openly stated in the European Cultural Convention of 1954 (Council of Europe 1954). However, representative specialists in foreign language education in Europe such as Beacco and Byram (2003, 32) and Little (2006, 176) have argued its central position. Indeed, from the eleven articles which integrate the original text of the European Cultural Convention of 1954, only *Article 2* underpins the development of European culture, as well as the study of their own and others languages, history and civilisation among their members, rather than expressing the notion of "plurilingualism" in a clear and direct way, saying that:

> "Each Contracting Party shall, insofar as may be possible,
>
> a) Encourage the study by its own nationals of the languages, history and civilisation of the other Contracting Parties and grant facilities to those Parties to promote such studies in its territory, and
>
> b) Endeavour to promote the study of its language or languages, history and civilisation in the territory of the other Contracting Parties and grant

> facilities to the nationals of those Parties to pursue such studies in its territory."
>
> (Council of Europe 1954)

As we proceed with the review of the Council of Europe's founding texts we agree with Little (2006, 176) that "it is only in more recent years that the term plurilingualism has been explicitly identified as a key educational goal of the Council of Europe."

4.1.2 Recommendation No. R (82) 18

A partial view of plurilingualism is provided in the Appendix of Recommendation No. R (82) 18 resulting from the Project No. 4 "Modern Languages 1971-78" of the Council for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC). The Appendix to R (82) 18 is devoted to listing the measures to be implemented concerning the teaching and learning of modern languages in all stages of education, by migrants and their families, initial and further teacher training, as well as international co-operation. However, as illustrated next, only two out of six measures, *(A) General Measures* and *(B) Language Learning in School*, are focused on partial aspects of plurilingualism:

> A. *General measures*
>
> 1. To ensure, as far as possible, that all section of their populations have access to effective means of acquiring knowledge of the languages of other member states (or other communities within their own country) as well as the skills in the use of those languages that will enable them to satisfy their communicative needs (...)
>
> 2. To promote, encourage and support the efforts of teachers and learners at all levels to apply in their own situation the principles of the construction of language-learning systems (as these are progressively developed within the council of Europe "Modern Languages" programme) (...)
>
> 3. To promote research and development programmes leading to the introduction, at all educational levels, of methods and materials best suited to enabling different classes and types of student to acquire a communicative proficiency appropriate to their specific needs.

B. *Language learning in schools*

4. To encourage the teaching of at least one European language other than the national language or the vehicular language of the area concerned to pupils from the age of ten or the point at which they enter secondary education (...), to use the language effectively for communication with other speakers of that language, both in transacting the business of everyday living and in building social and personal relations, on the basis of mutual understanding of, and respect for, the cultural identity of others.

5. To make provision for the diversification of language study in schools (...)

6. To promote international contacts by individual pupils and classes through exchanges, study visits abroad and other means.

(Council of Europe 1982)

4.1.3 The *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* (1992)

Beacco and Byram (2003, 33) consider the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* (1992) "an essential legal instrument" for its concern with the specific use of regional or minority languages in relation to the notion of plurilingualism. In this respect, part III of the *Charter* presents specific measures to promote the use of these particular languages "without prejudice to the teaching of the official language(s) of the State" concerning pre-school, primary, secondary, technical and vocational, as well as university and other higher education. This aspect is particularly stated in Article 8.2:

> With regard to education and in respect of territories other than those in which the regional or minority languages are traditionally used, the Parties undertake, if the number of users of a regional or minority language justifies it, to allow, encourage or provide teaching in or of the regional or minority language at all the appropriate stages of education.
>
> (Council of Europe 1992, 7)

4.1.4 Recommendation No. R (98) 6

The widespread use of plurilingualism is made explicit in Recommendation No. R (98) 6 *of the Committee of Ministers to member states*

concerning Modern Languages resulting from the "Language Learning for European Citizenship." Particularly, sections 2.2 and 2.3 offer a thorough and detailed description of how to implement plurilingualism:

> 2. Promote widespread plurilingualism
>
> 2.1 by encouraging all Europeans to achieve a degree of communicative ability in a number of languages;
>
> 2.2 by diversifying the languages on offer and setting objectives appropriate to each language;
>
> 2.3 by encouraging teaching programmes at all levels that use a flexible approach - including modular courses and those which aim to develop partial competences - and giving them appropriate recognition in national qualification systems, in particular public examinations;
>
> 2.4 by encouraging the use of foreign languages in the teaching of non-linguistic subjects (for example history, geography, mathematics) and create favourable conditions for such teaching;
>
> 2.5 by supporting the application of communication and information technologies to disseminate teaching and learning materials for all European national or regional languages;
>
> 2.6 by supporting the development of links and exchanges with institutions and persons at all levels of education in other countries so as to offer to all the possibility of authentic experience of the language and culture of others;
>
> 2.7 by facilitating lifelong language learning through the provision of appropriate resources.
>
> (Council of Europe 1998a, 6)

4.1.5 Recommendation 1383 (1998)

Recommendation 1383 (1998) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe is expressly devoted to "linguistic diversification". In this sense, section 6 in this Recommendation lists the objectives, to be obtained with a new approach to modern languages in Europe's education systems, such as:

> i. a wider selection of languages to cater for the new needs generated by the development of international exchanges;

> ii. the teaching of languages of local minorities at school if there is sufficient demand;
>
> iii. the acquisition of satisfactory skills in at least two foreign languages for all pupils by the time they leave school;
>
> iv. the possibility of modern language learning as a lifelong activity;
>
> v. the recognition of partial skills and learning ability;
>
> vi. knowledge of the social, economic and cultural realities of the countries where the languages are spoken.
>
> (Council of Europe 1998b)

4.1.6 Recommendation 1539 (2001)

Recommendation 1539 (2001) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on the European Year of Languages recommends the practice of plurilingualism in different ways. For example, in section 4 it is emphasized that plurilingualism, "should be understood as a certain ability to communicate in several languages, and not necessarily as perfect mastery of them". Similarly, section 6 suggests that "States should demonstrate their political will and continue to implement cultural and language policies aimed at developing plurilingualism and protecting all languages spoken in their territories from the risk of extinction." Finally, in section 11, the Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers call upon member states:

> i. to maintain and develop further the Council of Europe's language policy initiatives for promoting plurilingualism, cultural diversity and understanding among peoples and nations
>
> ii. to encourage all Europeans to acquire a certain ability to communicate in several languages
>
> (Council of Europe 2001b)

In sum, the previous sections illustrate the development of the notion of plurilingualism from the Council of Europe's founding texts which has stemmed from the compilation of agreed measures by the Committee of Ministers to Member States concerning modern languages. In this sense, Recommendation 1539 (2001) may represent the summit of the concept of 'plurilingualism', since

it was promulgated before the last definite publication of the CEFR and the first celebration of the European Year of Languages in 2001.

4.2 Interculturality vs. plurilingualism and multilingualism in the CEFR and the EDC Project

The aim of this section is twofold: first, to outline the most relevant aspects of plurilingualism covered by experts; second and most importantly, to analyse the distinction between plurilingualism and multilingualism. The whole section is basically concerned with the relevance of the Council of Europe and its approach to the promulgation and publication of official documents concerning plurilingualism such as the CEFR (section 4.2.1) and the EDC Project (section 4.2.2). The latter subsection, in turn, is organized into three further subsections dealing with essential aspects of the EDC project such as its repercussion for foreign language education and the core competences (sections 4.2.2.1 and 4.2.2.2). Finally, section 4.2.2.3 considers the current state of art of the notion of 'interculturality' in the EDC project.

4.2.1 Plurilingualism and the CEFR

When considering the relationship between plurilingualism and pluriculturalism as relevant goals for future foreign language education (Council of Europe 2001a, 4-5), it must be borne in mind that exists a clear correlation in time between the definite publication CEFR and the promulgation of Recommendation 1539 (2001) in the European Year of Languages. Therefore, the affinity in time between both documents deserves some kind of explanation.

Taking into account that draft decisions of the Recommendations exist prior to the definite legal document by the Council of Europe, it should be considered that the corresponding final draft version of Recommendation 1539 had been previously published in the Act entitled "Decision No 1934/2000/EC of

the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 July 2000." In this way, the reiterative treatment of specific issues in the preambles to the Recommendations creates a sense of cohesion in which the measures adopted in the appendix facilitate its implementation in the documents addressed to foreign language professionals. Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that the CEFR as an instrument of foreign language education was going ahead of the time in which it was conceived. This assumption would confirm the initial idea for which the Council of Europe works have been created as "never-ending" projects, as has been often remembered in the COE projects since the publication of the *Threshold Level* (van Ek 1975), the *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1991) and the *CEFR* (Council of Europe 2001a). In this sense, rather than providing a definition, the CEFR understands "plurilingualism" as an approach which:

> emphasizes the fact that an individual person's experience of language in its cultural contexts expands, from the language of the home to that of society at large and then to the language of other peoples (...), he or she does not keep these languages and cultures in strictly separated mental compartments, but rather builds up a communicative competence to which all knowledge and experience of language contributes and in which languages interrelate and interact.
>
> (Council of Europe 2001a, 4)

Accordingly, Beacco and Byram (2003, 38) stress the idea of plurilingualism as a value which "may not only be the basis of education for plurilingualism, but also result in pluricultural awareness." In addition, Beacco and Byram (2003) summarize the most outstanding aspects of plurilingualism promulgated in the language education policies of the Council of Europe as follows:

- It is a *competence that can be acquired*: all speakers are potentially plurilingual in that they are capable of acquiring several linguistic varieties to different degrees, whether or not as a result of teaching. The aptitude for acquiring languages is natural and therefore within everyone's grasp. (...)

- That it is regarded as a not necessarily homogeneous repertoire. Being plurilingual does not mean mastering a large number of languages to a high level, but acquiring the ability to use more than one linguistic variety to degrees (which are not necessarily identical) for different purposes (conversation, reading or writing, etc.). (...)

- It is regarded as a changing repertoire. The degree of proficiency in the varieties in the repertoire may change over time, as may its composition. (...)

- It is considered a repertoire of *communicative resources* that speakers use according to their own needs. The linguistic varieties of which it is composed may have different functions: use in the family, at work, in official/ordinary situations, showing affiliation to a community, etc. (...)

- That it is regarded as a *transversal competence* extending to all the languages acquired or learnt. According to the *Common European CEFR of Reference for Languages*, such proficiency is not "the superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather ... the existence of a complex ... competence" (p. 168). (...)

- That it is regarded as having a cultural side, thus forming *plurilingual and pluricultural competence*, as potential experience of several cultures. This is regarded as being symmetrical in its functioning to linguistic skill in the strict sense of the term.

(Beacco and Byram 2003, 37-38)

In a subsequent study, Beacco (2005, 19) indicates that the concept of plurilingualism is not a synonym of polyglotism, but that it refers to "the capacity of individuals to use more than one language in social communication whatever their command of those languages." All in all, despite the interest of experts in finding a concise definition of plurilingualism, evidence shows that this is a term open to misunderstandings.

Nevertheless, Beacco and Byram (2003) reject the whole idea of multilingualism as it is developed in the CEFR. Certainly, multilingualism is referred to in terms of "the knowledge of a number of languages, or the co-existence of different languages in a given society." Whereas, later, it is said that "multilingualism may be attained by simply diversifying the languages on offer in a particular school or educational system, or by encouraging pupils to learn more than one foreign language, or reducing the dominant position of English in international communication" (Council of Europe 2001a, 4). From the ambivalence of such a term, Beacco and Byram (2003) examine the relevance of linguistic diversification as stated in Recommendation 1383 (1998) and conclude that the question of languages should be reformulated so as to ensure consistency in "a context of education for linguistic tolerance and inter-cultural education" (Beacco and Byram 2003, 39).

In sum, the striking similarities in the descriptions of plurilingualism and multilingualism provided above indicate that both concepts have been defined in

terms of the project works of foreign language education of the Council of Europe rather than in social politics terms. In this sense, Petitjean (2006, 121) points out the ambiguous definitions of plurilingualism and multilingualism in the Council of Europe's publications. His study reveals that plurilingualism has been approached from two different perspectives. The first view considers plurilingualism from a cognitive perspective without incorporating the geographical perspective of maintaining the linguistic diversity of the different territories which make up political Europe. The second view is a cohesive interpretation of plurilingualism incorporating both the cognitive and geographical viewpoints.

It can be concluded in the light of the above, that plurilingualism along with pluriculturalism are two primary goals of foreign language policies in Europe as evidenced by the language policy documents promulgated by the Council of Europe since the mid-fifties of the 20th century. Nonetheless, when considering the linguistic and cultural competences of the learners, the cultural aspect of plurilingualism becomes a single competence called plurilingual and pluricultural competence (Council of Europe 2001a, 168).

Indeed, the relevance of the cultural component of the plurilingual approach becomes essential in the CEFR: "Language is not only a major aspect of culture, but also a means of access to cultural manifestations" (Council of Europe 2001a, 6) and its value is revealed through the CEFR. For example, when describing the categories for the language user in chapter 4 of the CEFR, linguistic and cultural competences are considered essential for the learner to become *plurilingual* and develop *interculturality* (Council of Europe 2001a, 43). Similarly, in chapter 8 of the CEFR addressed to the discussion of linguistic diversification and the curriculum, the separate meaning of the terms, *plurilingual* and *pluricultural*, are matched into one single competence. In this sense, *plurilingual* and *pluricultural competence* denotes "The ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social agent has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures" (Council of Europe 2001a, 168).

4.2.2 Plurilingualism and the EDC Project

Beacco and Byram (2003, 35) announce in their *Guide* that plurilingualism and democratic citizenship education have become two central issues in European language education policies (see also the Declaration of the Council of Europe's First and the Second Summit published in 1993 and 1997, respectively). Both experts point out the development of plurilingualism as an essential component of democratic behaviour recognizing a complementary relationship between language education policies and education. In this sense, Beacco and Byram (2003) argue that:

> language teaching, the ideal locus for intercultural contact, is a sector in which education for democratic life in its intercultural dimensions can be included in education systems.
>
> (Beacco and Byram 2003, 11)

Owing to the relevance of plurilingualism and democratic citizenship in European language education policies, this section is basically devoted to the interpretation of the EDC Project as one outcome of the Council of Europe activities in the field of education in the late 1990s. In order to facilitate its description, the influence of the EDC Project in foreign language education is overviewed first in section 4.2.2.1. Then, the core competencies are analysed in section 4.2.2.2. Finally, the relationship between interculturality and the EDC Project is examined in section 4.2.2.3.

4.2.2.1 The EDC Project: its impact on foreign language education

The EDC has become a common reference point for all learning democracy processes in Europe. In this sense, Duerr *et al.* (2000, 15) state that "learning for democratic citizenship is deeply rooted in the idea of post-WW2 Europe as an integrated and yet culturally diverse area of democratic stability," adding that the EDC Project "confirms the principles of European standard-setting instruments and the decisions adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly and the Committee of

Ministers." However, the interest in expanding the diversification of democratic spaces had already started with the Council of Europe since its inception in 1949. For example, in the White Paper*, Teaching and learning: towards the learning society*, it is argued that:

> The future of European culture depends on its capacity to equip young people to question constantly and seek new answers without prejudicing human values. This is the very foundation of citizenship and is essential if European society is to be open, multicultural and democratic.
>
> (European Commission 1995)

In other relevant texts such as the *Decision No 1934/2000/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 July 2000 on the European Year of Languages 2001* (cf. OJ 2000 L, 232, 1-5), the importance of learning languages is suggested "as it enhances awareness of cultural diversity and helps eradicate xenophobia, racism, anti-Semitism and intolerance." For a comparative treatment on this issue in further Council of Europe's language policy documents, see the following publications (Council of Europe 1998a, b, 2000, 2001a, 2002).

In the Final Declaration of the Second Summit, adopted on 11 October 1997, the heads of state and government meeting in Strasbourg outlined an Action Plan to strengthen democratic stability in order to define the main tasks for the Council of Europe in the period leading to its 50th Anniversary. The Action Plan consisted of five areas including: (a) Democracy and Human Rights; (b) Social Cohesion; (c) Security of Citizens; (d) Democratic Values and Cultural Diversity and (e) Structures and Working Methods.

The major aspects that constitute the EDC Project are outlined by José Manuel Pureza, Chairman of the Steering Committee of the project European Democratic Citizenship. The following excerpt by Pureza (n.d.) summarizes the most relevant aspects:

> The European Democratic Citizenship project was launched by the Education Committee of the Council of Europe in 1997, having clearly assumed, from the first moment, that it would follow a global and lifelong perspective, covering both school and adult education, formal and informal strategies, and aiming at analysing how such different dimensions can help young people and adults to get the motivation, knowledge and skills to deal with democratic institutions and to share a set of values and attitudes including tolerance, solidarity, compassion, respect for others and civil courage.

Furthermore, the pivotal role of EDC in education policies and reforms is stressed in Recommendation Rec (2002) 12. Thus, the governments of member states as well as those states which are not members of the Council of Europe are guided in their present or future educational reforms by the following principles contained in the Appendix:

> (1) General guidelines for education for democratic citizenship policies and reforms;
> (2) Educational objectives and contents of education for democratic citizenship;
> (3) Methods of education for democratic citizenship;
> (4) Initial and further training for teachers and trainers, and
> (5) The role of the media and the new information technologies.
> (Council of Europe 2002)

Regarding the report on Education for Democratic Citizenship, Bîrzéa (2000) provides the outcomes, conclusions and impact of the EDC project. In his definition of EDC, Bîrzéa (2000, 32) includes its main aspects agreed by member States of the Council of Europe: "EDC is a system of educational practices and learning opportunities, available throughout life and in all circumstances, intended to enable individuals, groups and communities to participate actively in political life." Despite the considerable evidence of being a major dimension of educational policies, Bîrzéa notes what EDC is not: "a school subject, a curricular activity, a field of knowledge, a form of social action, a type of education, synonymous with human rights education, political education, global education or value education" (Bîrzéa 2000, 63).

Democratic citizenship, as a result of its expansion in the course of the years, has not only become a common goal of education policies in Europe but also has been promoted in the new democracies of Eastern European countries (Himmelmann 2006, 82). However, some experts in the EDC think that it is not easy to find a stable, generally accepted meaning of terms such as "democracy" or "citizenship." For example, Pureza (n.d.) is aware that "democracy is never a stabilized concept and practice but rather a fragile day-by-day process." Audigier (2000, 15) also notes that "the meanings of the term 'citizenship' are open to the new experiences that life constantly leads us to invent, to the new forms that citizenship and democratic political life will take in the future."

From this it can be inferred that EDC has become a major educational notion that has received different denominations such as "democratic education" or "education for democracy," as well as "citizenship education." In this sense, Himmelmann (2004), in his thorough article on "citizenship education," analyses models and concepts of citizenship and education for democracy in Western Europe and the USA. He argues that while "citizenship education" seems to be widely accepted in the UK (as the National Curriculum defined it in 1999); in the United States, the use of "education for democracy" began to grow as a consequence of the writings of John Dewey (1916), and in Germany the term *Politische Bildung* has been translated by "political education" (as a mode of instruction) or "political literacy" (as a mode of outcome). After this brief analysis on the various meanings of "citizenship education" by Himmelmann (2004), it is convenient to consider his accurate reflection of the meaning of words:

> Terms are embedded in a certain culture, its historical tradition, socio-political structures and geographical position. Words and terms emerge from that culture. They are modes of communication and ways of thinking in that culture. They symbolize certain contents and provoke certain connotations to those, who are used to the words and terms in question. Thus words and terms express certain mentalities. They are expressions of a certain culture, its mentalities, its collective self-understanding and sense of life.
>
> (Himmelmann 2004)

Despite the various interpretations of this term in different countries and by diverse researchers, the EDC project has been included in many reform programmes and has become a priority objective of all European and international organisations. From a formal perspective, in Recommendation (2002) 12 when referring to the fulfilment of the general aims of education for democratic citizenship it is suggested that:

> it would be appropriate to implement educational approaches and teaching methods which aim at learning to live together in a democratic society, and at combating aggressive nationalism, racism and intolerance and eliminate violence and extremist thinking and behaviour.
>
> (Council of Europe 2002)

4.2.2.2 The EDC Project and the core competences

The role of competences is one of the most relevant aspects in the EDC Project as Bîrzéa (2000) evidences in the following statement:

> The EDC Project views democratic citizenship not only as a formal status but also as the effective ability to act as citizens. To this end, regardless of the type and level of education, profession or age, each individual must acquire core competencies for democratic citizenship.
>
> (Bîrzéa 2000, 33)

The identification of competences, then, was made possible because of the shift of emphasis of the curriculum reform movement towards long-lasting competences. Therefore, the advantages of focussing on competences were highlighted in the seminar on concepts held in December 1997 as follows:

> - The lifelong learning perspective (core competencies are common to all educational environments);
> - a clear and systematic vision of learning outcomes;
> - increasing emphasis on the quality of education;
> - the possibility of measurement and transparency of educational outcomes (emphasis on standards and performance indicators);
> - the possibility of international comparisons
>
> (Bîrzéa 2000, 33)

In this sense, the relation competence-performance following Chomsky's distinction was suggested as a major action trend in which the human potential consists in a set of competences that produce practices and actions in a variety of situations (Bîrzéa 2000, 33). Furthermore, the late 1990s was a period in the world of education with an increasing interest in competences, so that the leading role of competences over knowledge was stressed by the EDC Project members. Thus, the superior quality of competences was pointed out for being more comprehensive and easily adaptable in comparison with a more "rigid" quality of knowledge (Bîrzéa 2000, 33). By contrast, Audigier (2000) in his report on *Basic Concepts and core competencies for education for democratic citizenship* qualifies core competencies as "a virtually unlimited field of experience and attitudes, of knowledge and behaviours" and points out the lack of agreement among several authors on providing a unanimous list of competences:

> They [several authors] stress the formal and highly unrealistic nature of such an effort. The resulting list would always be provisional, (...) it would be but a string of generalisations and commonplaces known to all, giving the impression that it is necessary to learn all of the competences cited through education. (...) These authors prefer to devote their efforts to the study of the conditions for this education. Other authors on the contrary think it necessary to try to put a little order in such a vast field: for them, it is precisely the infinitely extensible and constantly shifting nature of citizenship competences that means an effort should be made to clarify and classify them.
>
> (Audigier 2000, 21)

As a result, in the EDC context core competencies have become essential instruments for democratic behaviour. In spite of several classifications of core competences by different authors (see table 5 in the Annex by Bîrzéa 2000, 83-85) and the many ways of outlining EDC, Bîrzéa (2000, 34) points out that the inventories of European Democratic Citizenship core competences provide a holistic view for the curricula and training programmes. From such diversified lists their points in common are prioritized as follows:

- They have in view knowledge, skills, values and attitudes.
- They include only knowledge able to generate actions and practices (social competencies).
- As a result, skills are defined in terms of knowing how to do, how to be, how to live together and how to become.
- Notice a growing complexity of the lists of competencies

(Bîrzéa 2000, 34)

All in all, the basic components of education such as knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values, necessary to restructure schools (Banks 2009) can also be found both in the inventories of core competences for European democratic citizenship and in the classification of the General Competences in chapter 4 in the CEFR (2001, 43-100). There are two reasons that can explain the near coincidence of competences between the EDC project and the CEFR. First, the concern for the transmission and construction of knowledge and the possibility to enable individuals to participate actively in political life is a major educational aim in contemporary western society. And second, while learning continues to be one of the least known human phenomena, so that the debate on human learning remains open, it must be borne in mind that “foreign language education cannot be separated from language education” (Byram 2008, 16).

In sum, the classifications of the core competences in the EDC Project were conceived in discussions among researchers to provide a theoretical CEFR which could help them to define and analyse the constructs that list and classify competences (Bîrzéa 2000). Hence the list of core competences of the EDC, which on a provisional basis, was agreed to be a string of generalisations and commonplaces known to all (Bîrzéa 2000).

4.2.2.3 The EDC Project and interculturality

This section analyses the most relevant aspects of the intercultural dimension in the values of education for democratic citizenship and outlines the qualities which have defined European foreign language education. Indeed, Beacco and Byram (2003) point out the close relationship between language education policies and the values of democratic citizenship stating that, "their purposes are complementary: language teaching, the ideal *locus* for intercultural contact, is a sector in which education for democratic life in its intercultural dimension can be included in education systems" (Beacco and Byram 2003, 35).

Moreover, the two experts agree that intercultural competence is "fundamental for interacting with people of other languages and cultures in the context of mutually supportive activities within and across political boundaries and which constitute activities of democratic citizenship" (Beacco and Byram 2003, 34). So, if we consider the use of the term 'intercultural education' within the European context, then, intercultural competence and the capacity for intercultural mediation have become one of the potential goals of language teaching in the course of the years, especially, in contemporary Europe (Audigier 2000; Bîrzéa 2000; Duerr *et al.* 2000).

Although the relevance of the term 'democratic citizenship' cannot be obviated in the theory of European language education policies (Duerr *et al.* 2000), it is, in practice, in official documents such as the CEFR where the absence of explicit elements of democratic citizenship is evident. For example, there are specialists who suggest that the CEFR contains no explicit references either to interculturality or to democratic citizenship (Little 2006). However, in chapter 5

of the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 101-107), addressed to the general competences of language learners or users, one can find great similarities between the classification of general competences and the models of core competences designed in the EDC Project[10]. Obviously, this is not a mere coincidence. It is important to bear in mind that the classification of general competences in the CEFR resulted from a Council of Europe-sponsored study written by Michael Byram and Geneviève Zarate with a view to a definite version of the CEFR (Byram and Zarate, 1997). The main aim of Byram and Zarate's work was to design a model of foreign language teaching with the intercultural speaker in mind. However, despite the numerous documents and studies carried out by experts in the Council of Europe and the CDCC (Duerr *et al.* 2000), the references to intercultural competence are hardly perceived in the latest version of the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a) as we shall see subsequently in section 5.5.

[10] For further information, see Audigier's classification in (2000) as well as a relevant summary of competences in Bîrzéa (2000), and the general characteristics of EDC by Duerr *et al.* (2000, 56-59).

CHAPTER 5

Communicative competence in the CEFR

This chapter aims at presenting the concept of communicative competence in foreign language education in Europe over three decades. The purpose of this chapter is twofold. Firstly, we intend to provide an overview of the generalised notion of communicative competence together with the extended uses and applications of this term in social disciplines other than in foreign language education. Secondly, we shall consider the evolution of the term communicative competence in applied linguistics and second language teaching, from the seminal work by Canale and Swain (1980) to its implementation in the definite publication of the CEFR in the year 2001.

This chapter is organized into five sections. After a brief introduction to the wide scope of the term communicative competence and its extended uses and applications in diverse disciplines other than foreign language education, the relationship between communicative competence and proficiency in the CEFR follows in section 5.1. Subsequently, a comparative study of the competences which have been elaborated for over three decades by the Council's work teams is provided in section 5.2. In turn, this section considers a review of the publications previous to the CEFR and is distributed into three subsections. First, a short overview of two Canadian projects lead by Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) in section 5.2.1. Second, a brief analysis of the six components of communicative ability (van Ek 1986) is overviewed in section 5.2.2. Finally, the presentation of the elements of communicative ability dealt with in the *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1990) closes the third and final section 5.2.3. After that, section 5.3 deals with the two main constituent dimensions of competences in the CEFR, communicative language competences and general competences. Whereas section 5.3.1 gives an overview of communicative language competences, section 5.3.2 outlines general competences and provides a comparative analysis between the general competences in the CEFR and Byram and Zarate's work (1997). Thus, section 5.4 follows with the issue of the "intercultural speaker" put forward by Byram, and Zarate (1997). Finally, section

5.5 closes the chapter with some final remarks on the notion of communicative competence and the CEFR.

By way of introduction, we shall briefly recall the extended uses and applications of communicative competence in the last three decades of the 20th century focussing on two main concerns. On the one hand, its pervasive use in different areas of knowledge such as applied linguistics, sociology of education and foreign language education, and the relationship between proficiency and the CEFR, on the other.

Stern (1983, 111) acknowledges the consolidation of "communication or communicative competence," stating that "from the mid-seventies, [it is] the key concept that has epitomized the practical, theoretical, and research preoccupations in educational linguistics and language pedagogy." Concerning the eclectic nature of communicative competence, covering both societal and individual dimensions, Dubin (1989) points out a metaphoric use of *competence* in which literacy refers to all the meanings attributed to this concept such as, skills, ability, knowledge, proficiency and know-how depending on the particular compound expression in which the term occurs. On the basis of the notion of communicative competence, Dubin (1989, 172) provides some of the senses which have been used in areas such as educational psychology literature meaning *knowledge* and *skills*, whereas in the dictionary it means *ability*, and within the conception of education based on behavioural objectives, it is equated with *performance*.

As far as the scope of competence is concerned, this term has widened its borders either in significance or purpose in other areas of knowledge other than education. Wilson and Sabee (2003, 3) suggest an apparent array of different meanings and interpretations of communicative competence that has resulted from the heterogeneity of its sources and from such diverse fields within so many relational, institutional and cultural contexts. In a similar vein, Jablin and Sias (2001, 820) state that "there are almost as many definitions of communication competence as there are researchers interested in the construct."

Despite the great divergence of views on the term "competence", the influence of the communication movement in the first decade of the third millennium is still fully acknowledged in current foreign language education. It is worth highlighting at this point the relationship between proficiency and the

CEFR. In this sense, Byrnes (2006, 245) conceives the notion of communicative competence as "a theoretical construct[11], an overarching learning goal, and a pedagogical approach, even a criterion for assessment, all in one." Thus, Byrnes' interpretation of communicative competence makes sense with the levels of proficiency acknowledged in the CEFR, since those levels allow "learners' progress to be measured at each stage of learning and on a life-long basis" (Council of Europe 2001a, 1).

5.1 The relationship between communicative competence and proficiency in the CEFR

Proficiency has been looked at as a *goal* and thus defined in terms of objectives or standards in the field of foreign language education policy. Experts in the field indicate that the objectives or standards "serve as criteria by which to assess proficiency as an empirical fact, that is the actual performance of given individual learners or groups of learners" (Stern 1983, 341). Consequently, proficiency together with objectives has been conceived as the main standard for a language assessment system since the first Council project work, the *Threshold Level*, (van Ek 1975) up to the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a). Thus, the increasing use of the scales of language proficiency has resulted from "a general movement towards more transparency in educational systems and moves towards greater international integration, particularly in Europe" (North 2000; Little 2006).

North (2000, 571) explored the nature of proficiency and its relation to competence during the investigation for his PhD thesis which aimed at looking for "Proficiency descriptors for the CEF on models of competence and language use on the one hand, and on a model of measurement on the other hand (North 1996/2000)." Indeed, North's investigation focused on achieving test scores on the basis of Robert Schärer's metaphor of "a geographic map" (North 1992, 9). Hence, the vertical and horizontal dimensions of the CEFR's common reference

[11] See Wilson and Sabee's (2003, 3-50) comprehensive explanation of the notion of communicative competence as a theoretical term or construct.

levels[12] for describing learner proficiency. Likewise, North acknowledged that "the advantage of a scale would be that test scores could be reported in terms of the same definitions, summarising learner performance in the area of the level concerned" (North 1992, 9).

Competences are closely related with the "vertical" and "horizontal" dimensions of the descriptive scheme of the CEFR. On the one hand, the scales that constitute the vertical dimension are user/learner-oriented. In other words, they describe what the learner can do in his or her target language. In addition, they are accessible to learners as to curriculum designers, textbook authors, teachers and examiners. On the other hand, the horizontal dimension of the CEFR covers the learner's communicative language competences and communicative activities, as well as the strategies that link both these competences (e.g. the learner's linguistic resources) and communicative activities (e.g. what he or she can do with them). Hence, the scaling of the horizontal dimension depends on the scaling of communicative behaviour (e.g. user-oriented) and the scales of competences and strategies are designed with teachers and assessors in mind and are oriented to diagnosis and assessment (Little 2006, 170).

From this it can be inferred that the descriptive scheme of the CEFR, not only provides criteria for the assessment of L2 learning outcomes, but it "can be used to analyse L2 learners' needs, specify their learning goals" and "guide the development of L2 learning materials and activities" (Little 2006, 167).

In sum, despite the fact that the term communicative competence is far from achieving a consensual description, the concept of "communicative competence" as Risager (2006, 80) suggests, "is closely linked to the educational context and to individual assessment and testing in relation to general labour-market requirements." In this sense, the pervasiveness of the term also indicates that language assessment involves other social factors that may affect its functioning in the area of language education.

---

[12]"Those parts of the document that focus on the 'horizontal' dimension of language learning synthesize research findings at one remove, drawing on a number of preliminary studies, for example, those on strategic competence and strategies by Holec (1996), Little (1996a, b) and Richterich (1996), and on sociocultural competences by Byram, Zarate and Neuner (1997). Those parts of the CEFR that have to do with the 'vertical' dimension, on the other hand, are rooted in original research: the CEFR's 'Can do' scales and their descriptors were arrived at on the basis of rigorous empirical and statistical procedures" (Little 2006, 184).

We can conclude that the use of competences has become essential when constructing the basis for measuring learning proficiency and their outcomes, as well as for the design of textbooks and course materials. In this sense, the increasing use of scales of language proficiency has favoured the relationship between proficiency and communicative competence despite the inconclusive outcomes by experts in foreign language teaching and learning (Decoo 2011; North 1997).

5.2 The development of competences in European foreign language learning and teaching between 1975 and 2001

This section examines outstanding aspects of the term communicative competence that have been put into practical effect for over three decades in the field of foreign language education. It consists of a comprehensive study, organized into three subsections, that analyses the notions of communicative competence provided in three of the Council of Europe's projects previous to the CEFR.

First, we consider the evolution of the term communicative competence and the theoretical constructs in which this term originated in order to see its development and influence in foreign language education before the definite publication of the CEFR in the year 2001 (section 5.2.1). The absence of any reference to the concept of competence in the first Council of Europe's project by van Ek (1975) leads us to open this section with the first major work on communicative competence by Canale and Swain (1980) together with the complementary one by Canale (1983). After that, section 5.2.2 provides an overview of the six components of *communicative ability* designed by van Ek (1986). Finally, section 5.2.3 closes the section with a brief presentation of the elements of communicative ability dealt with in the *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1991).

Table 5.1 An overview of the components of communicative competence in the Council of Europe's projects

Canale and Swain (1980)	Canale (1983)	van Ek (1986)	*Threshold 90* (1991)	*CEFR* (2001)
Grammatical competence[†] • Knowledge of lexical items • Rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar, semantics and phonology.	**Grammatical competence** Mastery of the language code (verbal and non-verbal)	**Linguistic competence** The very basis of communicative ability.	---	**Linguistic competences** ▪ Lexical competence ▪ Grammatical competence ▪ Semantic competence ▪ Phonological competence ▪ Orthographic competence ▪ Orthoepic competence
Sociolinguistic competence • Socio-cultural rules of use	**Sociolinguistic competence**[‡] The extent to which utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts depending on contextual factor such as status of participants, purposes of the interaction, and norms or conventions of interaction.	**Sociolinguistic competence**	--- Compensation strategies (ch.12)	**Sociolinguistic competence** ▪ Linguistic markers of social relations ▪ Politeness conventions ▪ Expressions of folk wisdom ▪ Register differences ▪ Dialect and accent
• Discourse rules The combination of utterances and communicative functions (not the grammatical well-formedness of a single utterance nor the sociocultural appropriateness of a set of propositions and communicative functions in a given context).		**Social competence**	---	
		Socio-cultural competence	**Socio-cultural competence**	**Pragmatic competence** • Discourse competence • Functional competence 1. Microfunctions (*Threshold* 1975 & 1991) 2. Macrofunctions 3. Interaction schemata (*Threshold* 1975 & 1991)
---	**Discourse competence** Mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings in a unified spoken or written text.	**Discourse competence**	---	
Strategic competence Mastery of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies	**Strategic competence**	**Strategic competence**	---	

[†] **Canale 1983 -;** Note that the distinction between verbal and non-verbal language is not explicit in Canale and Swain (1980, 29).

[‡] Canale and Swain (1980, 30) distinguish between sociocultural rules of use and rules of discourse. Canale (1983, 7) defines Discourse competence as "The mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a unified spoken or written text in different genres."

Table 5.1 provides a compendious synthesis of the constituent elements of communicative competence in the four Council of Europe's projects. This table meets the particular features for each one of the Council of Europe's models of communicative competence that will serve as a reference point for discussion in subsections 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.2.3 and 5.3.1.

5.2.1 Two Canadian projects: Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983)

This section provides an overview of the first proposal of a theoretical framework for communicative competence. Two Canadian projects by Canale and Swain (1980)[13], first, and a posterior review by Canale (1983) have been enduringly influential in the development and implementation of communicative competence in foreign language education in the Council of Europe. The components of communicative competence by Canale and Swain will be outlined next.

In general, the two works do not differ so much, since Canale (1983) basically aims at clarifying essential aspects of the earlier theoretical framework (Canale and Swain 1980) rather than being an obstacle to it. From the coincidence of the nature of communicative competence in the two works and some additional observations by Canale (1983), we can infer that the teaching and testing purposes of their framework remain constant. Initially, not many relevant differences are found when defining the components of communicative competence in both Canale and Swain's (1980) and Canale's (1983) studies. As an exception, discourse competence is defined independently of the seminal work with subtle differences between them (see table 5.1).

With reference to the rest of components of communicative competence in the two models, we find that Canale and Swain (1980) provide an integrative communicative approach. Their main aim consists in finding ways "to prepare and encourage learners to exploit optimally their limited communicative

[13] Canale and Swain's (1980) proposal was promoted by the Ontario Ministry of Education under the contract "The Ontario Assessment Instrument Pool, French as a Second Language."

competence in the second language to participate in actual communication" (Canale and Swain 1980, 34-35).

Canale and Swain (1980, 6) argue that communicative competence refers to the relationship and interaction between grammatical competence, *knowledge of the rules of grammar,* and sociolinguistic competence, *knowledge of the rules of language use*. They also suggest the idea that "both knowledge and skill underlie actual communication in a systematic and necessary way." Unlike Canale and Swain (1980, 40), Canale (1983, 6) remarks the difference between *knowledge* and *skill* and assumes their interrelation.

Regarding the definition of grammatical competence, Canale and Swain (1980, 30) and Canale (1983, 7) agree that this kind of competence "focuses directly on the knowledge and skill required to understand and expresses accurately the literal meaning of utterances," adding that this kind of competence "will be an important concern for any second language programme." However, Canale (1983, 7) widens the scope of grammatical competence introducing the "mastery of the language code (verbal or non-verbal) itself." As we shall see below, the spoken-written language distinction is also included in Canale's notion of discourse competence.

Turning now to sociolinguistic competence, it encompasses two sets of rules: socio-cultural and discourse rules Canale and Swain (1980, 30). They also suggest that the "knowledge of these rules will be crucial in interpreting utterances for social meaning" indicating that rules of discourse are related with "the combination of utterances and communicative functions and not the grammatical well-formedness of a single utterance nor the sociocultural appropriateness of a set of propositions and communicative functions in a given context." Unlike their seminal work, Canale (1983) transforms the prior two sets of rules into two separate competences. Hence, Canale's distinction between sociolinguistic and discourse competences (see table 5.1).

As a result, Canale (1983, 7) considers that sociolinguistic competence "addresses the extent to which utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts depending on contextual factors such as status of participants, purposes of the interaction, and norms or conventions of interaction." On the other hand, discourse competence "concerns mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a unified

spoken or written text in different genres" (Canale 1983, 9). In addition, Canale (1983, 8) observes that in many second language programmes there is a tendency to treat sociolinguistic competence as less important than grammatical competence.

As far as strategic competence is concerned, in their respective works, Canale and Swain (1980 and 1983) agree that strategic competence consists of "verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence" (Canale and Swain 1980, 30; Canale 1983, 10-11). Therefore, they distinguish between those strategies that "relate primarily to grammatical competence" and those that "relate more to sociolinguistic competence" underlining that these kinds of strategies are "acquired through experience in real-life communication situations" rather than in "classroom practice that involves no meaningful communication" (Canale and Swain 1980, 30; Canale 1983, 12).

In conclusion, we could not find many relevant differences when defining the components of communicative competence in the two studies by Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983). In this sense, Canale's (1983) revision aimed at clarifying essential aspects of the seminal theoretical framework for communicative competence by Canale and Swain (1980). For example, despite Canale's (1983) concern on the written-spoken language distinction in the definitions of grammatical and discourse competences, it can be assumed that the teaching and testing purposes of the theoretical framework for communicative competence remain constant either in Canale and Swain (1980) or Canale (1983).

5.2.2 The six components of communicative ability: van Ek (1986)

This section considers the term "communicative ability" for its affinity with the term "communicative competence" in the CEFR. Van Ek is the first applied linguist who explicitly indicates different types of competence for the Projects of the Council of Europe. In his view, the components of communicative ability are

"different aspects of one and the same concept" and is aware of a considerable overlap among them (van Ek 1986, 32).

Van Ek's notion of "communicative ability" has a twofold origin. On the one hand, the affinity with Canale and Swain's (1980) theory and description of communicative competence. And the Bremen directive and the National Congress on Languages in Education (NCLE) specification for their relevance with the term "communicative ability" (van Ek 1986, 24), on the other.

Van Ek opted for "communicative ability", among the components in the NCLE specification, because it "covers almost the whole range of interpersonal contacts, including the knowledge, skills and attitudes required for fruitful interaction" (van Ek 1986, 24-25). The interpretation of this kind of ability in the CEFR, as well as in a previous classification of the *four savoirs* by Byram, and Zarate (1997) will be discussed in section 5.4. In the next paragraphs, I shall briefly outline the most relevant aspects of the six components of communicative ability by van Ek (1986) such as linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, strategic competence, sociocultural competence and social competence.

First, in his definition of "linguistic competence," van Ek (1986) states that it is "the ability to produce and interpret meaningful utterances which are formed in accordance with the rules of the language concerned and bear their conventional meaning" (van Ek 1986, 33). Moreover, he asserts that "linguistic competence" is the basic component of communicative ability, since it "lends itself most obviously to differentiation, grading and level distinctions" (van Ek 1986, 33).

Second, the contextual or situational meaning is what distinguishes sociolinguistic competence from linguistic competence. In this sense, van Ek (1986, 35) argues that "linguistic competence covers the relation between linguistic signals and their conventional meaning (...), whereas socio-linguistic competence covers the relation between linguistic signals and their contextual - or situational – meaning." Therefore, "sociolinguistic competence" is considered to be fundamental in communication processes, since "successful communication requires the ability to use and interpret language forms with situational appropriateness" (van Ek 1986, 35)

Third, “discourse competence” is defined as “the ability to use appropriate strategies in the construction and interpretation of texts” (van Ek 1986, 30) and distinguishes between “text-types which the learner will be able to produce and those which he will be able to interpret” (Van Ek 1986, 41). Van Ek also clarifies that “the individually produced texts may be spoken texts or written texts”, whereas “those produced by two or more people are usually spoken texts” (van Ek 1986, 41).

Fourth, van Ek (1986, 31) and Canale and Swain’s (1980, 30-31) agree on the definition of strategic competence: “the use of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to compensate for gaps in the language user’s knowledge of the code or for breakdown of communication for other reasons.” In addition, van Ek recommends the inclusion of communication strategies in foreign language learning objectives, since these kinds of strategies “should encourage the planning of learning-activities aimed at «learning how to cope» as well as “encourage acceptance of natural consequences of using a language which is not one’s native language, both by teachers and learners” (van Ek 1986, 50).

Fifth, as regards socio-cultural competence, van Ek focuses on the Bremen directive[14] which specifies that “every language act is situated in a socio-cultural context and is subject to conditions which in the foreign language are partly different from those in the native language” (van Ek 1986, 31). Consequently, van Ek puts forward the planning of learning-activities that “engage the learner not only as a learner but as a human being.” In this sense, this expert considers that “socio-cultural competence should go beyond the cognitive domain and address the learner’s attitudes, opinions, value-systems and emotions as well” (van Ek 1986, 52).

Finally, concerning the last type of competence that integrates the concept of “communicative ability”, van Ek (1986, 57) points out that “social competence brings the general education aims within the compass of the subject-specific aims of FLL.” In addition, he claims that this kind of competence involves the will and the skill to interact with others, hence the relevance of all the qualities of “communicative ability”, arguing that “communication is a social activity” (van Ek 1986, 31). Nevertheless, van Ek considers “social competence” as a separate

[14] See the directives for the teaching of English in secondary schools issued in 1982 by the Senator for Education of the Free City of Bremen (note 20) in van Ek (1986, 22)

component of FLL objectives assuming that "it is less linguistically oriented than the other components and more directly concerned with the personality of the learner" (van Ek 1986, 57).

5.2.3 The *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1991)

Threshold Level 1990 (van Ek and Trim 1991, iii) is a second, thoroughly revised and extended edition of *The Threshold Level in a European unit/credit system for modern language learning by adults*, written by J. A. van Ek, and first published by the Council of Europe in 1975 under the title *Threshold Level English*.

In the renewed version of the first *Threshold,* van Ek and Trim (1991, iii) claim that "it is not itself a syllabus but a statement of objectives." In addition, the preface to the first edition of the *Threshold* (van Ek 1975) responds to some criticism for not involving the treatment of a communicative approach. For example, van Ek and Trim (1991) point out two particular aspects that distinguishes the *Threshold Level 1990* from its predecessor. On the one hand, they make explicit the incorporation of the functional and notional categories with their linguistic exponents[15] (van Ek and Trim 1991, 4). And on the other, they disagree with the absence of cultural content in the first *Threshold*, and explain that "both socio-cultural and grammatical parameters were in fact omnipresent, the first in the selection and treatment of situations and topics, the second in the range and exponents of general notions" (van Ek and Trim 1991, iii).

With reference to the six components of "communicative ability" (van Ek 1986), "sociocultural competence" is the only component which has been dealt with extensively in chapter 11 of the *Threshold 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1991, 102-109). It is described as "the aspect of communicative ability which involves those specific features of a society with its culture which are manifest in the communicative behaviour of the members of this society" (van Ek and Trim 1991,

[15] Decoo (2011, 75) provides an interesting approach on some political aspects of the relationship between member states of the Council of Europe that may affect the implementation of the Threshold levels.

102). Although the five remaining competences in van Ek's (1986) *Objectives* are not apparent from the latter version of the *Threshold*, there are two aspects of "communicative ability" such as *compensation strategies* and *discourse strategies* which are included in the *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1991), as revealed in the following examples.

Chapter 12 of the *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1991, 103-109) is given the same name as van Ek's (1986) "compensation strategies." This chapter is concerned with the provision of techniques and strategies for learners in order to know how to deal, with "the demands of a communication situation that they are not fully prepared for" (van Ek and Trim 1991, 110). These kinds of strategies are listed "in terms of what the learner can do, and supplemented with recommended exponents where this is appropriate" (van Ek and Trim 1990, 111). Regarding the use of "discourse strategies", van Ek and Trim (1991, 111-113) provide a list of recommended exponents which the learner is expected to use "as a reader or listener, as a speaker or writer and as a social agent." Nevertheless, they recognize that there is an overlap with chapter 9, *Dealing with texts: reading and listening* (van Ek and Trim 1991, 104).

5.3 The communicative language competences in the CEFR

This section aims at focusing on the notion of communicative language competences for their affinity with the development and interpretation of linguistic competences in the bibliographical references previous to the CEFR. This is a choice which facilitates approaching this concept in the CEFR in line with the agreement and/or discrepancies with the former definitions of the term in prior projects of the Council of Europe. Therefore, this section examines the particular components that encompass the communicative language competences.

5.3.1 Linguistic competences

Van Ek's concept of linguistic competence agrees with the one in the CEFR, in the sense that it is "the component of communicative ability that lends itself most obviously to differentiation, grading and level distinctions" (van Ek 1986, 33). In line with van Ek's definition, the CEFR supports this categorization through the so called "horizontal dimension" which covers both parameters of communicative activity and communicative language competence (Council of Europe 2001a, 16). Table 5.2 lists the components for each one of the communicative language competences as they appear in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 108-129).

Table 5.2 Communicative Language Competences in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 108-129)

Linguistic competences	Sociolinguistic competence	Pragmatic competences
* Lexical competence	* Linguistic markers of social relations	* Discourse competence
* Grammatical competence	* Politeness conventions	* Functional competence
* Semantic competence	* Expressions of folk wisdom	• *Microfunctions*
* Phonological competence	* Register differences	• *Macrofunctions*
* Orthographic competence	* Dialect and accent	• *Interaction schemata*
* Orthoepic competence		

Linguistic competences in the CEFR are approached "from the point of view of a given individual's communicative language competence" which:

> relates not only to the range and quality of knowledge (e.g. in terms of phonetic distinctions made or the extent and precision of vocabulary) but also to cognitive organisation and the way this knowledge is stored (e.g. the various associative networks in which the speaker places a lexical item) and to its accessibility (activation, recall and availability).
>
> (Council of Europe 2001a, 13)

In this sense, the notion of linguistic competences in the CEFR with the parameters and categories designed to facilitate the description of linguistic content (Council of Europe 2001a, 109) resembles that of van Ek's categorization of communicative ability (van Ek 1986, 33). Table 5.3 illustrates the components of linguistic competences in the CEFR with a short description for each one of the elements. For the whole description of these kinds of competences see section 5.2 in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 109).

Table 5.3 Linguistic competences in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 109-118)

Linguistic competences	
Lexical competence	Knowledge of, and ability to use, the vocabulary of a language, consists of lexical items and grammatical elements.
Grammatical competence	Knowledge of, and ability to use, the grammatical resources of language. (...) Grammatical competence is the ability to understand and express meaning by producing and recognising well-formed phrases and sentences in accordance with these principles (as opposed to memorising and reproducing them as fixed formulae).
Semantic competence	Deals with the learner's awareness and control of the organisation of meaning.
Phonological competence	Involves a knowledge of, and skill in the perception and production of phonemes and allophones; syllable structure and, prosody.
Orthographic competence	Involves a knowledge of and skill in the perception and production of the symbols of which written texts are composed.
Orthoepic Competence	Conversely, users required to read aloud a prepared text, or to use in speech words first encountered in their written form, need to be able to produce a correct pronunciation from the written form.

5.3.2 Sociolinguistic competences

As far as the notion of sociolinguistic competence is concerned, not many differences can be found between the CEFR and the referential sources by Canale (1983) and van Ek (1986). The only exception to this kind of competence is for Canale and Swain's (1980, 30) inclusion of the *sociocultural rules of use* and the *rules of discourse* as we have seen in section 5.2. The relevance of social context,

situation and interaction, on the other hand, is encompassed within three works published between the early 80s and 90s of the 20th century. For example, Canale (1983, 7) uses the term "sociolinguistic contexts", whereas "situational appropriateness" is indicated by Van Ek (1986, 30) and the "social dimension of language use" belongs to the latter *Threshold* (van Ek and Trim 1991, 102).

All in all, the CEFR sees sociolinguistic competence as a component of the communicative language competences (see table 5.2) which is also "concerned with the knowledge and skills required to deal within the social dimension of language use" (Council of Europe 2001a, 118). In addition, "sociolinguistic competence" is related with the sociocultural conditions of language use (Council of Europe 2001, 13), although "much of what is concerned with the CEFR, particularly with respect to the sociocultural, is of relevance to the sociolinguistic competence" (Council of Europe 2001a, 118).

As a way of concluding this section, table 5.4 summarizes the components of sociolinguistic competence as presented in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 118-121).

Table 5.4 Sociolinguistic competence in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 118-121)

Sociolinguistic competence	
Linguistic markers of social relations	Use and choice of (greetings, address forms and expletives), and conventions for turntaking.
Politeness conventions	Politeness (positive and negative), appropriate use of 'please', 'thank you', Impoliteness (deliberate flouting of politeness conventions)
Expressions of folk wisdom	Proverbs, idioms, familiar quotations, clichés, etc.
Register differences	Frozen, formal, neutral, informal, familiar, and intimate.
Dialect and accent	Linguistic markers: social class, regional provenance, national origin, ethnicity, occupational group. Such markers include (lexicon, grammar, phonology, vocal characteristics, paralinguistics and body language).

5.3.3 Pragmatic competences

With reference to pragmatic competences, the CEFR refers to the user/learner's knowledge of the principles according to which messages are:

> a) organised, structured and arranged ('discourse competence');
> b) used to perform communicative functions ('functional competence')
> c) sequenced according to interactional and transactional schemata ('design competence').
>
> (Council of Europe 2001a, 123)

However, the term pragmatic competences *per se* is not mentioned before the publication of the CEFR, although it encompasses *discourse competence* and *functional competence* as shown in former projects prior to 2001. For example, Canale (1983) and van Ek (1986) consider discourse competence in their works. In addition, some aspects of *functional competence* such as *microfunctions* and *interaction schemata* are related to specific points in the two *Thresholds* (van Ek, 1975 and van Ek and Trim 1991) as illustrated in table 5. 5.

Table 5.5 Definitions of discourse competence in the Council of Europe's projects between 1983 and 2001)

Discourse competence	
Canale (1983, 9)	Discourse competence is a sole competence that consists of "the mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a unified spoken or written text in different genres."
Van Ek (1986)	Discourse competence is "the ability to use appropriate strategies in the construction and interpretation of texts" (Van Ek 1986, 41). Discourse competence can be studied either as a whole ability or as a separate component and suggests that if approached individually, then, discourse competence is concerned with "the structuring and processing of texts" (Van Ek 1986, 48).
Council of Europe (2001a, 123)	The ability of a user/learner to arrange sentences in sequence so as to produce coherent stretches of language. It includes the knowledge and ability to control the ordering of sentences."

A brief outline of the definitions of discourse competence follow in chronological order though not that much difference can be found among them. For example, the double modality of texts (oral and written) is shared in their

respective definitions by Canale (1983) and van Ek (1986). In this sense, Canale (1983, 9) explains that discourse competence is a sole competence that consists of "the mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a unified spoken or written text in different genres", whereas van Ek (1986, 41) defines it as "the ability to use appropriate strategies in the construction and interpretation of texts." In addition, van Ek points out that *discourse competence* can be studied either as a whole ability or as a separate component and suggests that if approached individually, then, discourse competence is concerned with "the structuring and processing of texts" (van Ek 1986, 48).

On the other hand, the CEFR refers to discourse competence as "the ability of a user/learner to arrange sentences in sequence so as to produce coherent stretches of language. It includes the knowledge and ability to control the ordering of sentences" (Council of Europe 2001a, 123). From this it can be inferred that the latter definition of *discourse competence* including key words such as "knowledge" and "ability" is very close to van Ek's terms (1986, 41-45) when describing this kind of competence.

Concerning functional competence, we find that it refers to "the use of spoken discourse and written texts in communication for particular functional purposes" (Council of Europe 2001a, 125). Thus, functional competence in the CEFR includes the following components such as *Microfunctions*, *Macrofunctions* and *Interaction schemata*. Although functional competence *per se* is not mentioned in any of the three works previous to 2001, the references to *microfunctions* and *interaction schemata* are closely related with the two versions of the *Threshold* (van Ek 1975, van Ek and Trim 1991).

Indeed, *microfunctions* are defined as "categories for the functional use of single (usually short) utterances, usually as turns in an interaction" (Council of Europe 2001a, 125-126). A model to illustrate them is taken from Chapter 5, *Language functions*, of the *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1991, 27-47) in correlation with chapter 7 of the *Threshold Level English* (van Ek 1975, 19-21). *Macrofunctions* is another category of functional competence that is related with "the functional use of spoken discourse or written text consisting of a (sometimes extended) sequence of sentences" (Council of Europe 2001a, 126). Finally, *interaction schemata* consist of "patterns of social interaction which underlie communication, such as verbal exchange patterns" (Council of Europe 2001a,

126). The example provided for this category in the *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1991, 85-86) makes reference to the *General schema for purchase of goods or services* which belongs to Chapter 8, *Verbal exchange patterns*. Next, table 5.6 illustrates the most relevant aspects for each kind of pragmatic competence we have just considered.

Table 5.6 Pragmatic competences in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 123-130)	
Pragmatic competences	
Discourse competence	Knowledge of and ability to control the ordering of sentences in terms of (topic/focus, given/new, 'natural' sequencing, cause/effect, ability to structure and manage discourse, etc.)
Functional competence	***Microfunctions*** (imparting and seeking factual information, expressing and finding out attitudes, suasion, socialising, structuring discourse, communication repair) ***Macrofunctions*** (description, narration, commentary, exposition, exegesis, explanation, demonstration, instruction, argumentation, persuasion, etc.) ***Interaction schemata*** patterns of social interaction (e.g. verbal exchange patterns

5.4 The general competences in the CEFR and the work by Byram and Zarate (1997)

This section aims at providing a short overview of the referential study on the *four savoirs* by Byram and Zarate (1997) in order to consider its subsequent implementation and interpretation in the CEFR. Before proceeding with a comparative analysis of the classification of competences between Byram and Zarate's study (1997) and the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a), we shall provide, first, a short overview of the most relevant features of general competences. The *four savoirs* by Byram and Zarate will be introduced subsequently.

Knowledge and *skills*[16] are two essential principles which have underlain the notion of communicative competence in the theoretical works by Van Ek (1975), Canale and Swain (1980), Van Ek (1986), and Van Ek and Trim (1991) including the definite publication of the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a). In this sense, the CEFR adopts the concept of *General competences* of language learners or users which involve "their *knowledge*, *skills* and *existential competence* and also their *ability to learn"* (Council of Europe 2001a, 11). These kinds of competences comprise four sub-categories: (1) *declarative knowledge* (savoir); (2) *skills and know-how* (savoir-faire); (3) *existential competence* (savoir être); and (4) *ability to learn* (savoir-apprendre).

In general terms, declarative knowledge is commonly defined as *factual knowledge* ("knowing that") and *procedural knowledge* ("knowing how"). *Declarative knowledge* can be further subdivided into *semantic knowledge* (i.e. the individual's mental lexicon of abstract and categorical information) and *episodic knowledge* (i.e. autobiographical memories), whereas *procedural knowledge* refers to the knowledge of how to do something. It also consists of the skills, rules and strategies that are used to manipulate and transform declarative knowledge in the course of perceiving, remembering, thinking, and acting. Moreover, it can be further subdivided into cognitive and motor skills (Kihlstrom and Stanley 1994, 178).

Finally, the distinction between *knowing that* and *knowing how* is in sum the difference between *declarative knowledge* and *procedural knowledge*, so that it can be inferred that empirically "declarative knowledge is consciously accessible, at least in principle, whereas procedural knowledge is not" (Kihlstrom and Stanley 1994, 179).

Concerning the French terminology of the four *savoirs,* Byram and Zarate (1997) in their preparatory work for the CEFR suggested a revision of the term *sociocultural competence* that had first been proposed by specialists such as van Ek (1986, 51) and (van Ek and Trim 1991, 94). Indeed, Byram and Zarate's study (1997, 10) was a response to an ethnocentric perception of the system of values

[16] For a different perspective on the value of knowledge and skills, consider the application of psychological theory to educational practice. For instance, see the studies by Bygate *et al.* (2001) and Leung (2005) for their explanations and solutions to improve the outcome of foreign language learning and teaching.

and beliefs of the concept of the native speaker and they considered convenient to describe the learner as an "intercultural speaker". As a result, their interest for the assessment of intercultural competence resulted in the four competences being set out in the form of objectives (Byram and Zarate 1997, 13ff). After considering the different meanings of the term "competence", Byram and Zarate agreed that the term "intercultural speaker" would be understood as "a generic term comprising knowledge/knowing that ("savoir"), skills/knowing how ("savoir-faire", "capacité", "aptitude"), attitudes and values ("valeurs", "savoir-être") and behaviour ("comportement")".

In addition, Byram and Zarate become aware of some difficulties for the assessment of sociocultural competence such as (a) the combination of sociology and anthropology, (b) a qualitative assessment as a recent innovation in the education systems and (c) the evaluation of learners' personality or psychological development that could raise questions of ethical or moral responsibility. In this sense, their work evidences the impossibility of providing proposals for levels of assessment of "socio-cultural" competence (Byram and Zarate 1997, 10-12).

Table 5.7 illustrates an overview of the notion of "general competences" interpreted by Byram and Zarate (1997) and the definite version of the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a). While the column on the left indicates the four types of competences set out in the form of objectives by Byram and Zarate (1997), the column on the right provides an overview of the classification of general competences as they are set out in the CEFR.

Table 5.7 General Competences: a comparison	
Byram and Zarate (1997, 18)	The CEFR (2001a, 101)
Knowledge or "Savoirs" *Description of references*[17] • *References connected with national and cultural identity* • *References associated with space, social diversity, foreign influences, the operation of institutions, the dissemination of information and artistic and cultural creation*	**Declarative knowledge (*savoir*)** • Knowledge of the world • Sociocultural knowledge • Intercultural awareness
Skills and know-how (*savoir-faire*) *Specific objectives* • Knowing how/Relational skill • Knowing how/ Interpretative skill • Knowing how/ Behavioural skill • knowing how/Geopolitical skill	**Skills and know-how (*savoir-faire*)** • Practical skills and know-how • Intercultural skills and know-how
Attitudes and values (*savoir-être*) *Specific objectives* • Openness to other cultures • Command of the descriptive categories peculiar to the process of bringing different cultures into relation • Ability to distance oneself from the ordinary relation to cultural difference • Ability to fulfil the role of cultural intermediary	**Existential competence (*savoir-être*)** • Attitudes • Motivations • Values • Beliefs • Cognitive styles • Personality factors
Ability to learn (*savoir-apprendre*) *Specific objectives* • Instrumental ability to learn • Interpretative ability to learn	**Ability to learn (*savoir-apprendre*)** • Language and communication awareness • General phonetic awareness and skills • Study skills • Heuristic skills

[17] The notion of intercultural speaker (*intermédiare culturel*) pre-supposes that this system of references incorporates native-speaker perspectives – not academic disciplinary knowledge – and an awareness of the relationship with foreign-speaker perspectives on the issues in question (Byram and Zarate 1997, 18).

5.4.1 Declarative knowledge (*savoir*)

Byram and Zarate (1997, 18) define *knowledge* (or "savoirs") as "a system of cultural references which structures the implicit and explicit knowledge acquired in the course of linguistic and cultural learning, and which takes into account the specific needs of the learner in his/her interaction with speakers of the foreign language."

In addition, the two experts also introduce the notion of the intercultural speaker in order to modify the native-speaker ideal as "an implicit model for the language learners" especially prevalent in the projects works by the Council of Europe, including the CEFR (Byram and Zarate 1997, 9-10). In this sense, they argue that "when native and non-native speakers interact, each has a perspective on the otherness of the interlocutor, which is integral to the interaction." As a result, Byram and Zarate (1997, 10) suggest that the native-speaker which is "the underlying model of the scales proposed for the CEFR has to be modified."

Concerning the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 11), "declarative knowledge" or "savoir" is defined as "knowledge resulting from experience (empirical knowledge) and from more formal learning (academic knowledge)." Thus, it is said that the first "savoir" or "declarative knowledge" is made up of (a) *knowledge of the world*, (b) *sociocultural knowledge* and (c) *intercultural awareness*.

Table 5.8 provides a comparative view of "declarative knowledge" or "savoir" between Byram and Zarate's (1997) study and the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a). Subsequently, it follows a brief outline for each one of the three components that underlie the theoretical notion of declarative knowledge in the CEFR with complementary referential notes to previous projects of the Council of Europe.

Table 5.8 Knowledge - *savoir*	
Knowledge (or 'savoirs') Byram and Zarate (1997, 18)	Declarative knowledge (*savoir*) Council of Europe (2001a, 101-103)
Description of references • *National and cultural identity* • *Space* • *Social diversity* • *Foreign influences* • *The operation of institutions* • *The dissemination of information and artistic and cultural creation*	**Knowledge of the world** (i) Locations, institutions and organisations, persons, objects, events, processes and operations in different domains ii) Classes of entities and their properties and relations **Sociocultural knowledge** 1) everyday living, 2) living conditions, 3) interpersonal relations –power and solidarity-; 4) values, beliefs and attitudes; 5) body language; 6) social conventions; 7) ritual behaviour. **Intercultural awareness** It covers an awareness of how each community appears from the perspective of the other, often in the form of national stereotypes.

As we can see in the right column of table 5.8, the constituents of "knowledge of the world" are distributed into two groups. Whereas the first one embraces the locations, institutions and so on, the second group includes "classes of entities" and their properties and relations (Council of Europe 2001a, 102). However, considering the list of "general notions"[18] in the *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1991, 48-63) which in turn has arisen from a similar list (in

[18] In the *Threshold* (van Ek and Trim 1991, 48) it is stated that the list of general notions "is derived from a consideration of what, in general, people deal with by means of language, of what concepts they may be likely to refer to whatever the specific features of a particular communication situation may be." In the CEFR the list of general notions is presented under eight headings: existential, spatial, temporal, quantitative, qualitative, mental, relational, and deixis (Council of Europe 2001a, 102). In its turn, chapter 6 of the *Threshold Level 1990* has its equivalent in the *Threshold English Level* (van Ek 1975). The general notions in the first *Threshold* "were first conceived as heterogeneous for their wide variety of levels of abstraction and this list was systematized in accordance with language-learning objectives" (van Ek 1975, 38).

chapter 9) of the first *Threshold English Level* (van Ek 1975, 38-40), it can be inferred that "general notions" is the source from which "knowledge of the world" was originally derived.

Concerning "sociocultural knowledge", it is believed "to lie outside the learner's previous experience and may be well distorted by stereotypes" (Council of Europe 2001a, 102). The CEFR provides a list of seven features of "sociocultural knowledge" which are considered "distinctively characteristic of a particular European society and its culture" (Council of Europe 2001a, 102-103). However, the list in the CEFR differs from the cultural references that Byram and Zarate (1997, 18-19) provide in their study. In particular, the difference lies in the connection between cultural references and the specific needs of the learners in their interaction with speakers of the foreign language. This idea is suggested in Byram and Zarate's definition of "knowledge" or *savoirs* (Byram and Zarate 1997, 18).

On the other hand, there is a striking similarity between the features of "sociocultural knowledge" provided in the CEFR and those features of "sociocultural competence" listed[19] in the *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek 1991, 9-17 and 102-109). It should be noted, however, that the components of sociocultural competence are classified into three main groups such as *social conventions*, *social rituals* and *universal experiences* (van Ek and Trim 1991, 102). In addition, van Ek and Trim (1991, 102) suggest that "what the learners do with these experiences and how they affect their own attitudes and behaviour is deliberately left open." They justify their decision saying that "this is done to provide the fullest possible scope of a large variety of emphases required for different courses, different types of learners and even individual learners" (van Ek and Trim 1991, 103).

With reference to "intercultural awareness", the third and last feature of the first *savoir* in the CEFR, it is said that it is concerned with "knowledge, awareness and understanding of the relation (similarities and distinctive differences) between the "world of origin" and the world of the target community" (Council of Europe 2001a, 103). Therefore, it should be pointed out that the term

---

[19] While the features of 'sociocultural competence' are outlined in chapter 3 of the *Threshold Level 1990* (see items 4 and 6 of the 'extended characterization'), chapter 11 is fully devoted to develop the components of this kind of competence (van Ek and Trim 1991, 9-11 and 102-109).

"intercultural awareness" has remained latent in the description of the first *savoir* by Byram and Zarate (1997), whereas the native-speaker model has characterized all the project works on foreign language teaching and learning by the Council of Europe since 1975 (van Ek 1975; van Ek and Trim 1991). In this sense, Stern's (1983, 341-6) account of the conceptualization and description of proficiency make us aware of the origin and evolution of the particularities of the concept of "native speaker" up until today.

Retrieving both the concept of the "native speaker" and considering the notion of the "intercultural speaker" by Byram and Zarate (1997), it can be inferred to what extent this term has been ignored in the CEFR. Indeed, when describing the "declarative knowledge" or *savoir*, the co-authors in the CEFR mention the term "intercultural awareness" simply concluding that it "covers an awareness of how each community appears from the perspective of the other, often in the form of national stereotypes" (Council of Europe 2001a, 103). However, we could not find any evidence in the CEFR of the term "intercultural speaker" in the sense used by Byram and Zarate (1997) in their proposal of sociocultural competence.

5.4.2 Skills and "know-how" (*savoir-faire*)

This section gives an overview of the most relevant features of "skills and know-how" in the two studies (Byram and Zarate 1997 and Council of Europe 2001a) which are summarized in table 5.9. Byram and Zarate define "knowing-how" (or *savoir-faire*) as "a capacity which integrates *savoir-être*, *savoir-apprendre* and *savoirs* in 'specific situations of bicultural contact, i.e. between the culture(s) of the learner and of the target language" (Byram and Zarate 1997, 20).

Furthermore, they also argue that the abilities implied in the achievement of these skills aim at improving social skills whose success depend on the realisation of specific interactional actions. In this sense, when defining the *specific objectives* toward language pedagogy and the assessment of learning, Byram and Zarate (1997, 20-21) distinguish the following four skills: *Knowing*

how/Relational skill, knowing how/Interpretative skill, knowing how/Behavioural skill, and *knowing how/Geopolitical skill* (see table 4.9).

The CEFR, on the other hand, classifies *savoir-faire* or "skills and know-how" into two main groups: (a) *practical skills* and (b) *intercultural skills*. The first group, in its turn, is subdivided into four skills: *social*, *living*, *vocational and professional*, and *leisure*. However, it is important to observe that in the first group the nature of "socio-cultural knowledge" is pointed out as a relevant aspect of social skills in the CEFR. The reason is that socio-cultural knowledge is considered appropriate for outsiders and particularly foreigners" (Council of Europe 2001a, 104). Concerning the second group, *intercultural skills and know-how*, the CEFR only enumerates four abilities without providing a full description of their elements (Council of Europe 2001a, 104-105).

Table 5.9 Skills and "know-how" (*savoir-faire*)

Knowing-how (or *savoir-faire*) Byram and Zarate (1997, 20)	Skills and "know-how" (*savoir-faire*) Council of Europe (2001a, 104-105)
Specific objectives towards language pedagogy and the assessment of learning • *Knowing how /Relational skill* • *Knowing how/Interpretative skill* • *Knowing how/Behaviour skill* • *Knowing how/ Geopolitical skill*	• Practical skills and know-how *Social skills* The ability to act in accordance with sociocultural knowledge and to perform the expected routines. *Living skills* The ability to carry out effectively the routine actions required for daily life, maintenance and repair of household equipment, etc. *Vocational and professional skills* The ability to perform specialised actions (mental and physical) required to carry out the duties of (self)-employment. *Leisure skills* The ability to carry out effectively the actions required for leisure activities. • Intercultural skills and know-how a) The ability to bring the culture of origin and the foreign culture into relation with each other.

	b) The ability to overcome stereotyped relationships. c) the capacity to fulfil the role of cultural intermediary between one's own culture and the foreign culture (...) d) (d) the ability to overcome stereotyped relationships

5.4.3 Existential competence (*savoir-être*)

It is worthy of note the differing approach of existential competence (*savoir-être*) between the CEFR and Byram and Zarate's study in table 4.10. Indeed, Byram and Zarate (1997) renounce ethnocentrism in favour of promoting cognitive ability to enhance the ties between native and foreign cultures: "*Savoir-être* is an effective capacity to relinquish ethnocentric attitudes towards and perceptions of otherness and a cognitive ability to establish and maintain a relationship between native cultures and foreign cultures" (Byram and Zarate 1997, 14). Nevertheless, a bias toward ethnocentric values is avoided in the CEFR subscribing to a regular position in which:

> Existential competence (savoir être) may be considered as the sum of the individual characteristics, personality traits, and attitudes which concern, for example, self-image and one's view of others and willingness to engage with other people in social interaction.
>
> (Council of Europe 2001a, 11)

In sum, table 5.10 shows succinctly how the CEFR takes a partial account of the general objectives for *Existential competence* (*savoir-être*) suggested in Byram and Zarate 's study (1997, 14).

Table 5.10 Existential competence (*savoir-être*)	
Savoir-être Byram and Zarate (1997, 14)	Existential competence (*savoir -être*) Council of Europe (2001a, 105-6)
General objectives • Attitudes of openness towards and interest in foreign people, societies and cultures; • Willingness to relativize one's own cultural viewpoint and cultural system of values • Ability to master descriptive categories conducive to bringing the original and foreign cultures into relation • Ability to distance oneself from ordinary relationships to cultural difference, such as that of the tourist of the conventional school relationship; • Capacity to fulfil the role of cultural intermediary between one's own culture and the target culture, including in situations of conflict. Specific objectives towards language pedagogy and the assessment of learning • *Openness to other cultures* • *Command of the descriptive categories peculiar to the process of bringing different cultures into relation* • *Ability to distance oneself from the ordinary relation to cultural difference* • *Ability to fulfil the role of cultural intermediary*	The communicative activity of users/learners is affected not only by their knowledge, understanding and skills, but also by selfhood factors connected with their individual personalities, characterized by the *attitudes*, *motivations*, *values*, *beliefs*, *cognitive styles* and *personality types* which contribute to their personal identity. These include: attitudes, motivations, values, beliefs, cognitive styles and personality factors.

5.4.4 Ability to learn (*savoir-apprendre*)

The term "ability to learn" *(savoir-apprendre)* shares a common ground, regarding its general description, in both the CEFR as well as in Byram and Zarate's study. The two quotations below illustrate the similarities between them:

> Savoir-apprendre is an ability to produce and operate an interpretative system with which to gain insight into hitherto unknown cultural meanings, beliefs and practices, either in familiar or in a new language and culture.
>
> (Byram and Zarate 1997, 16)

> The ability to observe and participate in new experiences and to incorporate new knowledge into existing knowledge, modifying the latter where necessary. Language learning abilities are developed in the course of experience of learning. They enable the learner to deal more effectively and independently with new language learning challenges, to see what options exist and to make better use of opportunities.
>
> (Council of Europe 2001a, 106-108)

Despite the similar objectives on "the ability to learn" that can be found in the two works, there are two differences deserving our attention. First, Byram and Zarate do not make explicit the use of "general phonetic awareness and skills" when referring to the *interpretative ability to learn* as a specific objective (Byram and Zarate 1997, 16-17), whereas the CEFR considers these skills as one of the components of the ability to learn (Council of Europe 2001a, 107). And second, despite the fact that the CEFR ignores "the ability to interpret in a linguistically and culturally similar or dissimilar context", Byram and Zarate regard this ability as one specific objective (Byram and Zarate 1997, 17).

Table 5.11 Ability to learn (*savoir-apprendre*)

Ability to learn (or *savoir - apprendre*) Byram and Zarate (1997, 16-17)	Ability to learn (*savoir - apprendre*) Council of Europe (2001a, 107)
General objectives • ability to interpret a new aspect in a known language and culture;	• Language and communication awareness
• ability to interpret in a linguistically and culturally similar or dissimilar context	• General phonetic awareness and skills
Specific objectives • *Instrumental ability to learn* Concerning situations of geographical mobility Concerning information represented in graphic form and visual and audio-visual form Concerning non-verbal communication • *Interpretative ability to learn*	• Study skills • Heuristic skills

Necessary for the interpretation of authentic documents or interactive situations. • *In a culturally similar situation* • *In a culturally dissimilar situation*	

5.5 The scope of the intercultural speaker in the CEFR

The model of the intercultural speaker has been advocated in the last decade of the 20th century by Geneviève Zarate and Michael Byram (1997) though further studies have continued simultaneously since then (Sercu 2000, Deardorff 2009, Decoo 2011, Guilherme 2012).

This section focuses on the initial study on interculturality by Byram and Zarate (1997). Most importantly, though, it is their approach to the objectives and models of assessment in foreign language learning and teaching in which the native speaker prototype is rejected in favour of the intercultural speaker, as they explain in the introduction:

> Native speakers live at the centre of a system of values and beliefs, from which they –ethnocentrically- perceive their own sociocultural experience and their contact with other cultures. Language learners have a different outside perception of that same culture, from their own –ethnocentric- perspective. (...) Therefore, from our point of view, the underlying model of the scales proposed for the CEFR, the native speaker, has to be modified. Learners will have to be assessed as to the level they have reached as intercultural speakers rather than as 'near-native speakers.
>
> (Byram and Zarate 1997, 9-10)

Rather than comparing the evolution of the native speaker prototype with the most recent term of the intercultural speaker, this section considers the implicit relationship between the concept of the native speaker and communicative competence that has been developed for over four decades in the Council of Europe. Such a brief analysis aims at explaining why the native speaker is a recurrent model in the CEFR.

As we previously pointed out in section 5.4, the notion of intercultural competence has not been fully developed in the CEFR despite the preparatory

work to the CEFR by Michael Byram and Geneviève Zarate (1997) at request of the Council of Europe. In recent years, however, this notion has extended its scope and influence in foreign language education, though with the result that its presence in the CEFR as well as in the ELP is almost imperceptible (Decoo 2011; Dervin 2010,2011; Dervin and Liddicoat 2013; Sharifian and Jamarani 2013). For example, Little (2006, 184) notes that the notion of interculturality has been ignored in the European Language Portfolio. At the same time, Little (2006, 184) emphasizes that "the study of the ELP models validated to date shows that we have a long way to go before we can claim that the ELP has had its intended impact on the development of intercultural learning and intercultural awareness."

Concerning the use of the term intercultural in the CEFR, we can see that it is an adjective that serves to modify aspects such as *communication*, *awareness*, *interaction*, *skills*, and so on. More specifically, the CEFR suggests that "the linguistic and cultural competences in respect of each language are modified by knowledge of the other and contribute to intercultural awareness, skills and know-how" (Council of Europe 2001a, 43). From this it follows that in the process of becoming a language user, the language learner becomes plurilingual and develops interculturality.

In this sense, the idea of interculturality is mentioned in the CEFR in relation to specific elements of general competences such as *intercultural awareness* and *intercultural skills and language* which belong to *declarative knowledge* (*savoir*) and *skills and know-how* (*savoir-faire*), respectively (see sections 4.4.1 and 4.42 in the CEFR). Both *savoirs* are considered for their way of relating the culture of origin and the foreign culture concerning. First, in relation to the knowledge, awareness and understanding (*Declarative knowledge* or *savoir*) and, second, to the "cultural sensitivity and the ability to identify and use a variety of strategies for contact with those of other cultures" (*Skills* and *know-how* or *savoir- faire*).

Therefore, there is a lack of synchronization between the development of the Council of Europe foreign language policies in Europe such as the EDC Project and the CEFR with its implementation in educational materials and settings. Indeed, current events in the field indicate that while the theoretical counterpart of those policies ignore any specific reference to the intercultural speaker (see

chapter 5.5), the Council of Europe has organized specific courses on the development and implementation of the intercultural speaker model in the wide field of foreign language addressed to teacher trainers and other practitioners (Byram 1997; 2009; Byram, Gribkova and Starkey 2002).

Unfortunately, the above analysis on the intercultural speaker shows that the model of the native speaker remains valid and has led to a majority agreement among specialists. This is in contrast to the first theories of communicative competence that had already argued the idea of exchanging information in a specific situation between the culture of origin and the foreign culture. This is how Kramsch (1998) exemplifies the notion of the native speaker which is advocated, explicitly or implicitly in language pedagogy arguing that:

> The premium put on spoken communicative competence since the 1970s has endowed native speakers with a prestige they did not necessarily have in the 1950s and 1960s, when the grammar-translation and then the audiolingual methods of language teaching prevailed: today foreign language students are expected to emulate the communicative skills of native speakers.
>
> (Kramsch 1998, 359)

We can conclude that, despite the introduction of an intercultural element in the general competences in the CEFR (chapter 4.4), the notion of communicative competence persists as Canale and Swain (1980) first devised it and further developed in the project works by the Council of Europe such as the work *Objectives* by van Ek (1986, 51) in which the socio-cultural competence was introduced as "a major condition for the achievement of both subject-specific and general educational aims." In this sense, the comparative analysis on the evolution of communicative competence and the model of the native speaker[20] throws light on a current experience which is related to a wide notion of literacy and its relationship within the social use as we shall see in chapter 6.

[20] For a more recent study on language proficiency in native speakers, see Hulstijn's (2015) theory on basic language cognition (BLC) and higher language cognition (HLC).

5.6 Some final considerations on the term communicative competence and the CEFR

The CEFR has been devised as a language policy document whose main function consists in providing a valid scheme for assessing the knowledge and skills of a foreign language all over the world (Council of Europe 2001a, North 2000). Hence the distinction between, General Competences and Communicative Language Competences, as the user/learner's competences (Council of Europe 2001a, chapter 5). In fact, concepts such as "knowledge" and "skills" have been underlying every theory and project that considers the study of competences in foreign language education. In this sense, "knowledge" and "skills" are two essential aspects of communicative competence that have already been a concern for Canale and Swain (1980) as well as in the first *Threshold* (van Ek 1975) and subsequent documents published by the Council of Europe such as van Ek (1986), van Ek and Trim (1991) and the CEFR (2001a).

Concerning the sociocultural and sociolinguistic aspects of communicative competence, it is important to consider their relevance in the first theories of competence (van Ek 1975; Canale and Swain 1980; van Ek 1986; van Ek and Trim 1991), though their implementation in the proficiency scales of the CEFR has been partial and inconsistent. On the one hand, the sociocultural component in the CEFR lacks any relevance for assessment in foreign language education. In fact, *sociocultural knowledge* is included as one of the aspects of the "declarative knowledge" in the General competences, though it was considered in the *Threshold Level 1990* (van Ek and Trim 1991, 102-109) as "sociocultural competence". On the other hand, there are some items for aspects of sociolinguistic competence that deserve consideration since Appendix B in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 219) points out the difficulty in finding a "single measurement dimension". For example, the prompts for levels A1 and A2 of "sociolinguistic appropriateness" refer to "markers of social relations and politeness conventions", while level B2 descriptors consider the users' ability to "express themselves adequately in language skills which is sociolinguistically appropriate to the situation and persons involved" (Council of Europe 2001a, 121). These two facts would suggest the priority of the sociolinguistic aspects of competences over the sociocultural competence in previous Council of Europe

projects of the CEFR, since it has been relegated to as a feature of the "declarative knowledge" in general competences.

The following references can throw light on some of the reasons for the exclusion of the sociocultural competence in any educational programme. First, Appendix B of the CEFR considers that several categories such as sociocultural competence were "lost from the original descriptor tool' in order to 'safeguard the accuracy of the results" (Council of Europe 2001a, 219-220). Second, regarding the incompletion of the project, Michael Byram and Karen Risager (1999, 67) observe that the CEFR does not consider the levels or scales of proficiency for sociocultural competence, unlike the AATF (the American Association of Teachers of French). Both experts argue that the CEFR project has not yet gone further than a discussion of the principles behind pedagogical progression and levels of assessment. So they conclude that "more work needs to be done". Third, from a social point of view, Byram develops these points in two subsequent works (Byram 1997, 2000). In his latter publication, Byram makes the plausible reasons for the ignorance of the socio-cultural competence in the CEFR more explicit, as the following excerpt shows:

> Examinations and certification are of course highly sensitive issues to which politicians, parents and learners pay much attention. As a consequence, the examination of learners' competence has to be very careful and as 'objective' – meaning valid and reliable – as possible. This was the problem faced by the Council of Europe experts in the Common European CEFR, and a problem that they decided they could not solve at the time.
>
> (Byram 2000, 9)

Finally, from a critical option, Manuela Guilherme (2002) points out that the cultural component and the development of intercultural competence, which are part of "general competences", may not materialise in the foreign language classroom (Guilherme 2002, 149). This expert also reveals that the critical potential in the CEFR remains unexplored. Thus, from the eight possibilities enumerated in the CEFR which answer the question:

> How then should the general, non-language-specific competences be treated in language courses?
>
> (Council of Europe 2001a, 148)

Manuela Guilherme argues that there is only one which may contribute to developing the "general competences"':

> Through an intercultural component designed to raise awareness of the relevant experiential, cognitive and sociocultural backgrounds of learners and native speakers respectively.
>
> (Guilherme 2002, 148)

Indeed, Guilherme, in the original text, refers to letter (e) as the corresponding answer in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 148) concluding that foreign culture education "is neither explicitly nor implicitly included in the document [the CEFR], nor is it hindered or valorised" (Guilherme 2002, 148).

CHAPTER 6

EFL Textbooks and the CEFR: a linguistic and social approach

Chapter six closes the theoretical framework of this dissertation. In general, it focuses on the CEFR as the textbook writers' main source of information for the design of EFL course books with a subsequent overview of the nature of language promoted in the speaking activities in EFL textbooks.

It is organized into three main parts. First, section 6.1 broadly illustrates the relevance of language proficiency and the communicative language activities in the CEFR. A short overview of the proposal of tasks and the function or purpose of context in the CEFR follows in section 6.2. Finally, as regards the model of language put forward in foreign language materials, section 6.3 deals with the priority of the written language as well as on the social perspective of the oral modality of language in contrast to the frequent activities of reading aloud in EFL *speaking* activities.

6.1 Language proficiency and communicative language activities in terms of the CEFR

First, and most importantly, this investigation on speaking activities in EFL textbooks is closely connected with the descriptive scheme of the CEFR's action-oriented approach, since this document has been designed "to apply not only to the comparison of language examinations but to the specification of learning goals the development of teaching and learning materials and procedures and the design of examinations and tests" (Little 2006, 185).

This section explores the applicability of the term *communicative language activity* in the CEFR and it also shows its persistent relationship with the classical distribution of the four language skills. It consists of three main

topics. Initially, proficiency descriptors are briefly considered for their relevance in the design of communicative language activities in the CEFR (section 6.1.1). After that, the notion of communicative language activity in the CEFR is explored in order to contrast it with the traditional notion of the four language skills (section 6.1.2). Finally, there is a review of the most relevant features of receptive and productive communicative language activities in the CEFR (section 6.1.3).

The terms proficiency and communicative competence have become a major concern for foreign language instruction since the late 1960s (Sharifian 2013) and have been taken for granted in current language education (see section 5.1). For instance, Stern (1983, 341) refers to proficiency as a tool for practitioners in foreign language education and reveals its basic aspects such as *goal* and *objectives* or *standards* which "can serve as criteria by which to assess proficiency as an empirical *fact*, that is the actual performance of given individual learners or groups of learners." In this sense, the pedagogical treatment of language instruction pointed out by Stern (1983, 478) "in terms of language content – phonology, grammar, vocabulary, literature and culture," as well as "in terms of stages of instruction – beginners, intermediate, and advanced" is not distant from the more recent descriptive scheme of the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 108-118) including the communicative language competences (linguistic, socio-linguistic, pragmatic) as a part of general human competences (including socio-cultural competence), as we have already seen in chapter 5.

Indeed, Stern's notable concern for the affinity between proficiency and competence remains latent in the descriptive scheme of the CEFR. This document provides both a common set of proficiency statements, the Common Reference Levels, to facilitate comparisons of objectives, levels, materials, tests and achievements in different systems and situations (Council of Europe 2001a, 21-42) as well as objective criteria for the mutual recognition of qualifications in different learning contexts (Little 2006).

Regarding the theoretical source of the CEFR's descriptive scheme, it is inspired by Bachman's (1990) model of communicative language use consisting of "a communicative language ability and strategic competence which comes into play when that ability is put to use" (North 1997, 94). Bachman (1990) defines strategic competence as:

> a general ability, which enables an individual to make the most effective use of available abilities in carrying out a given task, whether the task be related to communicative language use or to non-verbal tasks such as creating a musical composition, painting, or solving mathematical equations.
>
> Bachman (1990, 16)

In this sense, North (2000, 656; 2007, 571) claims that in Bachman's model of communicative language ability, strategies are seen as "a kind of hinge between competences and the exigencies of relevant task in the language activity one is undertaking" (Bachman 1990, 106). Moreover, Alderson's (1991) orientations relevant to a CEFR must not be ignored, since together with Bachman (1990), the two experts provide a common defined point of reference for different educational contexts and perspectives. In fact, it is Brian North, one of the co-authors of the CEFR, who has reiterated the relevance of Bachman's model of strategic competence over the years. Indeed, North (2014, 17) points out that strategic competence covers the use of both "competences and skills in order to achieve a certain goal within the processing restraints of a communicative task" rather than Canale and Swain's original (1980, 30) model of communicative competence, since in the latter model strategies were approached negatively as mechanisms of compensation (see section 5.2.1).

From a language policy perspective and in the context of the Swiss National Research Council project[21] that took place between 1994 and 1995, Brian North and Günther Schneider (1998) elaborated scales of language proficiency from Bachman's (1990) and Alderson's (1991) works on orientations suitable for the CEFR so as to provide a common, defined point of reference for different educational contexts and perspectives. This is how the Swiss project developed a scale of language proficiency in the form of a "descriptor bank" (North and Schneider 1998) and that sometime later would become the illustrative descriptors for chapters 3, 4 and 5 of the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 21-130).

[21] "A pilot project for English was conducted in 1994 (Year 1). It focused on spoken interaction, including comprehension in interaction, and on spoken production (extended monologue). Some descriptors were also included for written interaction and for written production. In 1995 (Year 2) the survey was extended to French, German as well as English. Descriptors were also added for reading and for non-interactive listening" (North and Schneider 1998).

As a result, the core of the descriptive scheme of the CEFR would focus on the following two outstanding criteria: (a) the set of communicative language activities and strategies, and (b) the set of communicative language competences and the common reference levels (Council of Europe 2001a, 9; North 2007, 656; North 2014, 16-17).

6.1.1 The significance of the communicative language activities in relation to the CEFR descriptors

This section outlines the most relevant features of the theoretical approach to the scales of language proficiency in the CEFR in order to clarify the notion of communicative language activities. The proficiency descriptors in the CEFR deserve our attention for two reasons in particular. First, scaling descriptors are based both on "models of competence and language use and on a model of measurement" (North 2000, 571). And second, the theoretical source of these kinds of descriptors originated in the division between global proficiency and the four language skills (Schärer and North 1992, 13).

On the one hand, the descriptors for communicative language activities were designed within theoretical perspectives that explored the issues related with the nature of proficiency and its relationship to competence in order to identify categories for description in a common reference framework (see sections 4.1 and 4.6). Being aware of the absence of a universal, validated, theoretical model of communicative language use, Brian North brings forward new proposals to tackle the problem. North suggests that "in order to develop workable descriptors for a set of categories that is informed by theory would seem to be a forum for dialogue between the practitioners and the theoretical categories" (North 1996, 93). In a subsequent study, North and Schneider (1998, 242) state that "the purpose of descriptors of common reference levels is to provide a metalanguage of criterion statements which people can use to roughly situate themselves and/or their learners in response to a demand for this." Nevertheless, at the same time, the two experts recognize "a tension between theoretical models developed by applied linguists (which are incomplete) on the one hand and operational models

developed by practitioners (which may be impoverished) on the other hand" (North and Schneider 1998, 242).

On the other hand, regarding the four language skills, North (1992) realised that the source of proficiency descriptors was no longer suitable due to its long and complicated combination of elements, since "they do not directly relate to any real world tasks with which a learner may identify" (North 1992, 13). Hence, North (2007 a, b, c) put forward a proposal, based on Brumfit's (1984) alternative to the four skills, comprising the following four elements: production, reception and interaction; whereas the term "mediation," as a new aspect of language use, would originate after the acceptance of his proposal at the Rüschlikon Symposium in 1991 as we shall see in more detail in section 6.1.2. Nevertheless, in his PhD thesis, North (2000) remarks that:

> all scales of language proficiency are specifications of outcomes, generally expressed in terms of tasks the learner can perform (constructor/user-oriented; "real-life") and/or the degrees of skill in various aspects of performance (assessor /diagnosis oriented; "interactional-ability").
>
> (North 2000, 25)

In a more recent article on the CEFR descriptor scales, North (2007) states that "the CEFR's long-term influence will be confined to examination boards and language testing agencies." It is with reluctance, though, that North (2007) concludes his article admitting that:

> People tend to fixate on the levels and descriptors; few institutions have replaced the 1960s four skills model with the more sophisticated descriptive scheme, and many people equate the action-oriented approach with just using can-do descriptors for self-assessment and role plays. But the fundamental advance is that people now understand each other much better across pedagogic cultures and divides (e.g. language testing and teacher training) and thus are able to discuss these issues more fruitfully.
>
> (North 2007, 659)

It should be pointed out that North (2007, 657) acknowledges, first, that "many descriptors for spoken production were derived from writing scales" and that "conceptual elements were being coherently scaled to different levels (irrespective of the skill they related to), in addition to individual descriptors." Furthermore, North argues that "what is being scaled is not necessarily learner

proficiency, but teacher/raters' perception of that proficiency – their common framework" (North 2000, 573; North 2007, 657). This observation on the quality of proficiency descriptors basically denotes the traditional priority of written language over speech, although the relevance of spoken language has been demonstrated through fruitful and recent research as we shall see in section 6.2.

All in all, Brian North is not only aware of "the inevitable incompleteness of any descriptions of proficiency in a common CEFR" but also of "their accessibility to those people who will use them" (North 1996, 92). However, in a more recent article, North admits that "the fundamental advance is that people now understand each other much better across pedagogic cultures and divides (e.g. language testing and teacher training) and thus are able to discuss these issues more fruitfully" (North 2007c, 659).

6.1.2 Communicative language activities: An alternative to the four language skills

This section explores the use and meaning of the term *communicative language activity* in the CEFR and reveals that this kind of language activity does not differ much from the traditional classification of the four language skills. However, the term *communicative language activity* has represented a turning point in the development of the Council of Europe projects pointing out two aspects in language learning and teaching such as the learner's ability to engage in observable language activities and to operate communication strategies which denote progress and that are considered as a convenient basis for the scaling of language ability (Council of Europe 2001a, 57).

In particular, the reorganisation of the well-established division of the four language skills was in response to the need to develop a bank of transparent descriptors of communicative language proficiency to produce the "Common Reference Levels" that later would be implemented in the CEFR by the Council of Europe (North 1992; 2000; 2007; North and Schneider 1998). In this sense, the CEFR establishes that:

> To carry out communicative tasks, users have to engage in communicative language activities and operate communicative strategies. (...) Progress in language learning is most clearly evidenced in the learner's ability to engage in observable language activities and to operate communication strategies.
>
> (Council of Europe 2001a, 57)

Language activity was first suggested by North (1992a), as an alternative term to the traditional notion of the four language skills. North considers language activity as being an organizing principle that "corresponds more closely to real use and could aid harmonization between a system for General Language, and one for Language for Specific Purposes" (North 1992, 17).

In effect, Brian North (1992a), together with various experts in foreign language education, developed a preferable model to the division between global proficiency and the four language skills warning that:

> defining the four skills for three domains (work, study, general) could give a rather cumbersome set of about seventeen scales organized in a hierarchical pyramid with very repetitive wording which still does not directly relate to any real world tasks with which a learner may identify.
>
> (North 1992, 13)

Next, table 6.1 illustrates the particular features of the alternative proposals to the traditional language skills (North 2007b, 24). This alternative categorization to the four language skills resulted from representative works by applied linguists in the 1980s and early 1990s such as Breen and Candlin (1980), Brumfit (1984), Swales (1990) and North (1992a) who indicated different ways of interpreting the nature of communicative behaviour.

Table 6.1 Alternative categories to the four language skills in North (2007b, 24)

Breen & Candlin (1980)	**Brumfit (1984)**	**Swales (1990)**	**North (1992)**
Interpretation	Comprehension	[Listening to story-telling]	Reception
Negotiation	Conversation	Conversation	Interaction
Expression	Extended Speaking / Writing	Story-telling	Production
---	---	---	*Processing*
Underlying Abilities	**Major Activities**	**Pre-genres**	**Macro-skill**

Breen and Candlin (1980, 92) consider that the communicative abilities of interpretation, expression, and negotiation – although not necessarily linguistic – are an essential part of competence. They also assume that the use of these communicative abilities is manifested in communicative performance through a set of skills (i.e. speaking, listening, reading and writing). Therefore, both experts conclude that "the skills are the meeting point between underlying communicative competence and observable communicative performance; they are the means through which knowledge and abilities are translated into performance, and vice versa" (Breen and Candlin 1980, 92).

Christopher Brumfit (1984, 69), when redefining the four skills, considers that this division of language "ignores the function of language altogether," since "the four categories describe things which happen, but only as external, discrete, unmotivated activities." As a result, Brumfit (1984) suggests four major activities in language work: "conversation, or discussion," "comprehension," "extended writing," and "extended speaking." The advantage of this reclassification of the four language skills is that:

> the new classification integrates each activity with communication, whereas the listening/speaking particularly separates activities which are often in practice simultaneous and interdependent, and, second, that it focuses attention on meaning rather than on the analysable formal elements.
>
> (Brumfit 1984, 70)

Lastly, John Swales (1990, 58-61) approaches language use from a genre perspective in which "casual conversation" or "chat" and "ordinary narrative story-telling" can be regarded as "pre-generic" and "common to all societies" (in North 1997, 97). As a result, North's provisional systematization of "language activity" comes under three headings: Reception, Interaction and Production (North 1992, 17), though a fourth category such as *Processing* (*integrated skills*) is developed subsequently by the Framework Working Party as the concept of *Mediation* (North 1992, 17).

Table 6.2 provides an overview of illustrative scales for the oral and written modes of communicative language activities (Council of Europe 2001a, 222). As regards the distribution of communicative language activities (reception, production, interaction and mediation), North's classification of language activity

does not differ so much from the traditional division of the four language skills. While both models distinguish the oral and written modality of language, the notion of communicative language ability has incorporated two new aspects of language use, interaction and mediation (North 1992).

In addition, table 6.2 shows three categories for the oral and written mode of activities (reception, interaction and production). The "mediation" category[22] has been overlooked in this investigation due to the lack of validated descriptors in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 222; North 2016, 132). Another reason for ignoring this category is that the initial concept of mediation, as a language activity that involves "reception, interaction or production, together with a cognitive and interpersonal challenge," would be inconsistent with the traditional classification of the four language skills and it is still in need of improvement (Little 2006, 168; 178).

[22] In a recent article, North (2016) presents the CEFR illustrative descriptors for the mediation category in a consultative process before publication. He focusses on a broader view of mediation and provides an outline of the validation process of the categories for descriptor scales. In his broader view of mediation, North (2016, 133) acknowledges that "A fundamental point about mediation is that it is not concerned with the linguistic expression of a speaker. Instead, the focus is on the role of language in processes like creating the space and conditions for communication and/or learning, constructing new meaning, encouraging others to construct or understand new meaning, passing on information in an appropriate form, and simplifying, elaborating, illustrating or otherwise adapting input in order to facilitate these processes (mediation strategies). Mediation always involves bridging across spaces, facilitating understanding."

Table 6.2 An outline of the illustrative scales for communicative language activities in chapter 4 of the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 222)

PRODUCTION	**SPEAKING** • Overall spoken production • Sustained monologue: describing experience • Sustained monologue: putting a case (e.g. debate) • Public announcements • Addressing audiences	**WRITING** • Overall written production • Creative writing • Writing reports and essays
RECEPTION	**AURAL RECEPTION (LISTENING)** • Overall listening comprehension • Understanding Interaction between native speakers • Listening as a member of a live audience • Listening to announcements and instructions • Listening to radio and audio recordings	**VISUAL RECEPTION (READING)** • Overall reading comprehension • Reading correspondence • Reading for orientation • Reading for information and argument • Reading instructions
INTERACTION	**SPOKEN INTERACTION** • Overall spoken interaction • Understanding a native speaker interlocutor • Conversation • Informal discussion • Formal discussion (Meetings) • Goal-oriented co-operation • Obtaining goods and services • Information exchange • Interviewing and being interviewed	**WRITTEN INTERACTION** • Overall written interaction • Correspondence • Notes, messages and forms

6.1.3 Receptive and productive language activities in the CEFR

This section is particularly devoted to analysing the distribution of the oral and written model of productive and receptive activities in the CEFR. Table 6.3 shows a simplified version of the communicative language productive and

interactive activities in the written and oral mode in the CEFR in which mediation activities have been left out as in the previous example in table 6.2.

Table 6.3 Scheme of communicative language activities

PRODUCTION	RECEPTION
Oral Production (Speaking)	Aural Reception (Listening)
Written Production (Writing)	Visual Reception (Reading)

This preference responds to the need to provide an outlook to the four basic components of communicative language activities on the basis of the classical distinction of the two language modalities (e.g., written vs. oral and receptive vs. productive). Indeed, while the simplified dual version of the communicative language production and reception activities may correspond apparently to the traditional division of the four language skills, there are great contrasts with the holistic classification of language activities put forward by some applied linguists (North 1992) as we have previously seen in section 6.1.2. In order to find an explanation for the differences, it is convenient to review chapters 2 and 4 of the CEFR, since they offer a paradoxical interpretation of production and reception activities.

The first equivocal example is found in the introductory section in chapter 2 of the CEFR addressed to the action-oriented approach (Council of Europe 2001a, 14). For example, in section 2.2 it is assumed that “the performance of language activities involves reception, production, interaction or mediation (in particular interpreting or translating) in relation to texts in oral or written form” (Council of Europe 2001a, 14). Furthermore, reception and production are also considered as “primary” processes required for interaction. The crucial point here is not whether reception and production are distinguished as processes or language activities, what is crucial, according to the CEFR, is that “the use of these terms for language activities is confined to the role they play in isolation” (Council of Europe 2001a, 14). Thus, silent reading and following the media are presented as two examples of receptive activities; while oral presentations, written studies and reports are said to represent productive activities (Council of Europe 2001a, 14). To this extent, in the CEFR, the dual distinction between reception and

production as processes, and language activities in isolation lacks specificity and is based on imprecision.

The second confusing example refers to the description and provision of the illustrative scales for communicative language activities and strategies in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, section 4.4). It is assumed that "to carry out communicative tasks, users have to engage in communicative language activities and operate communication strategies" (Council of Europe 2001a, 57). Considering the diverse roles participants can play in different communicative situations, for example, in *interactive* activities (e.g., in conversation and correspondence) participants can alternate their roles as producers and receivers; while in recorded speech, broadcast or written texts to be published (e.g. the *speaking*, *writing*, *listening to* or *reading* of a text) producers are separated from receivers (Council of Europe 2001a, 57).

In the light of the above, we can conclude that the CEFR is not clear enough about the distinction between the roles of participants as producers and receivers and the appropriate use of concepts for different kinds of language activities.

6.2 The CEFR's influence over textbook writers and course designers

This section focusses on two basic aspects of the descriptive scheme in the CEFR that deserve our attention for their applicability to the design of oral activities in foreign language courses. First, the functions of tasks and second, the value of context in communicative language activities.

As it was pointed out in previous chapters of the theoretical framework, the CEFR is addressed to a wide list of practitioners in foreign language education and has also been conceived as a referential source for textbook and material writers (Council of Europe 2001a, 141). Furthermore, textbook writers and course designers are encouraged to "formulate their objectives in terms of the tasks they wish to equip learners to perform" (Council of Europe 2001a, 141), so they make appropriate use and selection of learning materials to obtain advantageous results in the teaching and learning process.

In a similar fashion, *A Guide for Users* (Trim *et al.* 2002) has been conceived as a complementary source of the CEFR, since it is intended to meet the needs of "all members of the language teaching profession to make full use of the Common European CEFR of Reference for Language Learning, Teaching and Assessment" (Trim *et al.* 2002, 1). However, we could find an only chapter in the whole guide exclusively addressed to everyone engaged in developing, designing and creating textbooks and language learning materials for working with the CEFR. The content of the chapter is organised around the following eight main areas of decision-making:

> 1. What characterises the contexts in which the materials will be used?
> 2. In what terms will the aims of the materials be described?
> 3. What information is available regarding learners' needs and wants?
> 4. What media are desirable and practical for the materials?
> 5. How will the materials be weighted, grouped and sequenced?
> 6. What kinds of approach are appropriate?
> 7. What range of tasks should the materials contain?
> 8. How will texts be selected for inclusion?
>
> (Trim *et al.* 2001, 201)

The above suggestions on the use and selection of learning materials point out chapters 4 and 5 of the CEFR as being a reference to textbook writers, whereas the rest of the chapters are referred to in a more general sense. In order to avoid unnecessary repetitions, a short overview of issues such as task design and the context of language use is provided in sections 6.2.1 and 6.2.2.

6.2.1 The role of tasks in the production of EFL textbooks

A growing interest in the task-based approach is evidenced by the large number of recent publications relating to this issue. Hall (2010, 95) evidences this fact by pointing out that "the role of tasks in language teaching and learning is much discussed in SLA research and, of course, TBL [Task-based Learning] is currently much discussed within ELT." Rather than providing a thorough

analysis of the development of TBL, this section considers the role of tasks in foreign language education from a restricted perspective. Indeed, we shall basically deal with the CEFR and the *Guide for Users* edited by Trim (2002) as two reference points in foreign language learning materials.

However, whereas the use of competences, strategies, and context of language use are considered relevant aspects in the description of tasks (Council of Europe 2001a, 157; Trim *et al.* 2002, 219-220), a simple, clear and brief definition of the term "task" is absent in the two studies. In addition, the great number of definitions of tasks with significant differences in the way its various proponents in the field of second language acquisition have conceptualized the approach, it makes it difficult to identify what TBL is (Hall 2011, 97). Despite the difficulty in finding a definition of this term, we consider two explanations of "tasks" by two experts in Applied Linguistics such as David Nunan and Rod Ellis.

First, this quotation from Nunan (2004) confirms the main features of "task performance" in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 158):

> A task is a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge in order to express meaning, in which the intention is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form.
>
> (Nunan 2004, 4)

Similarly, Ellis (2003) points out the lack of agreement to what constitutes a task among researchers in second language acquisition and applied linguists, claiming that a "task" encompasses the communicative and pragmatic aspects of the language learning process of an individual. In this sense, Ellis (2003, 16) considers that:

> A task is a workplan that requires learners to process language pragmatically in order to achieve an outcome that can be evaluated in terms of whether the correct or appropriate propositional content has been conveyed. To this end, it requires them to give primary attention to meaning and to make use of their own linguistic resources, although the design of a task may predispose them to choose particular forms. A task is intended to result in language use that bears a resemblance, direct or indirect, to the way language is used in the real world. Like other language activities, a task can engage productive or receptive, and oral or written skills, and also various cognitive processes.

Finally, this section closes with the following excerpt by Richards and Rodgers (2001, 241) in which both authors dissent from the efficacy of TBL arguing that:

> Many aspects of TBLT have yet to be justified, such as proposed schemes for task types, task sequencing, and evaluation of task performance. And the basic assumption of TBLT –that it provides for a more effective basis for teaching than other language teaching approaches – remains in the domain of ideology rather than fact.
>
> (in Hall 2010, 97)

6.2.2 The relevance of context in EFL activities

This section outlines the relevance of context in foreign language education materials from two perspectives. First, the notion of "context" is considered within the development of the Council of Europe's projects. And second, we broaden the focus of "context" with a short overview of the studies by Brown (1995) and Mercer (2000) in this field.

On the one hand, the CEFR advocates an action-oriented approach whereby learners use language by performing tasks to communicate in a variety of contexts. So, the role of context becomes one of the most outstanding features of the action-oriented approach in which:

> users and learners of a language are primarily viewed as 'social agents', i.e. members of society who have tasks (not exclusively language-related) to accomplish in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action.
>
> (Council of Europe 2001a, 9).

Indeed, the social use of language is not a new issue, since its relevance has already been manifested in the syllabus designs commissioned by the Council of Europe's projects that were first published in the late 1970s. For example, the *Notional Syllabus* (Wilkins, 1976), the *Threshold Level English* (Van Ek 1975), and the *Threshold English 1990* (Van Ek and Trim 1991).

In a more recent study, Little and his collaborators (2007) describe the most outstanding features of the CEFR in relation to the contextualized situations of the activities in EFL textbooks. They also point out that:

> the CEFR at any level of proficiency enables us to consider how the capacities of the language learner, the different aspects of language activity, and the conditions and constraints imposed by context combine to shape communication.
>
> (Little *et al.* 2007, 14)

In this sense, communicative language activities in the CEFR have been designed with a "recommended" model of context and they have been contextualized within *domains*. As it is suggested in the CEFR, "for most practical purposes in relation to language learning they may be broadly classified as fourfold: the *public domain*, the *personal domain*, the *educational domain* and the *occupational domain*" (Council of Europe 2001a, 14). Such a limited choice of *domains*, according to the CEFR, responds to "the needs in which learners are being prepared to operate" and has "far-reaching implications for the selection of situations, purposes, tasks, themes and texts for teaching and testing materials and activities" (Council of Europe 2001a, 45). Furthermore, the external situations which arise for each domain are described in terms of "locations, institutions or organisations, persons involved, objects, events, operations and texts" (Council of Europe 2001a, 46).

Table 6.4 exemplifies the descriptive categories of the external context of use which "are likely to be met in most European countries." For a full overview of its content see (Council of Europe 2001a, 48-49).

Table 6.4 External context of language use (Council of Europe 2001a, 48-49)

DOMAIN	Locations	Institutions	Persons	Objects	Events	Operations	Texts
Personal							
Public							
Occupational							
Educational							

On the other hand, some studies illustrate the relevance of context for becoming central in any communicative interaction. For example, Gillian Brown argues that, it is the frame that surrounds the event being examined what provides resources for its appropriate interpretation, as follows:

> You have to provide a context to arrive at any sort of interpretation since the "thin" semantic meaning of a sentence, derived just from a series of vocabulary items in a syntactic structure, yields only such a sketchy and partial content that it cannot alone provide the material for an interpretation. It is not until the "thin" meaning is enriched by the provision of extra material, which you infer from the immediate context and from your previous knowledge, that you know what the utterance means.
>
> (Brown 1995, 13)

Similarly, Neil Mercer suggests that "in order to combine their intellectual efforts, people have to strive to create foundations of common, contextualizing knowledge" concluding that context is not something that exists independently of people (Mercer 2000, 44). In this sense, Mercer considers that "the conversational process of thinking together" depends on both the use of particular techniques as well as a remarkable human ability for making conversation flow (Mercer 2000, 56).

6.3 The nature of language promoted in EFL textbooks

The kind of language covered in the speaking activities in ELF language courses leads us to consider the priority of written language versus oral language from a social perspective in learning and teaching contexts. In order to reduce complexity to simplicity, this section is organized into three subsections.

First, written language will be considered for its prestige and priority in society as well as in educational contexts in section 6.3.1. In its turn, writing is briefly analysed as a variety of English with social prestige in section 6.3.1.1 and the traditional perspective of understanding writing as product rather than as process is discussed in section 6.3.1.2. After that, oral and written language are examined from a social perspective in section 6.3.2. First, taking account of the distinction in form between oral and written language (section 6.3.2.1) and second, providing an overview of the major features of oral spontaneous speech (section 6.3.2.2). Finally, section 6.3.3 covers a brief analysis of the treatment of language in EFL textbooks paying special attention to the language quality of

reading aloud which results from the practice of the speaking activities in academic environments.

6.3.1 Written language as a linguistic model

It is conventionally held that writing systems do represent speech and the model provided by the script tends to be seen as a complete representation of what is said. This is the result of a simple illusion of our writing system. In this sense, Stubbs (1980) indicates that the social prestige of literacy results in a peculiar confusion and misconceptions about the relative status of written and spoken language arguing that:

> In a literate society, the written language takes on a life of its own, develops along partly independent lines, is used for different purposes, and is believed by many people to be superior in various ways. (...) But the sociolinguist and educationalist has to recognize that in education it is often people's beliefs, perceptions, attitudes and prejudices which are crucial, however false they may be on objective grounds.
>
> (Stubbs 1980, 30)

The fact that we are acquainted with a literate culture from the inside may prevent us from being aware that language is essentially an oral phenomenon that is natural to human beings. However, a written culture, as a product of human evolution, is a consequence of the process of adaptation to the new, changeable circumstances (Halliday 1985, 39; Moreno and Mendívil-Giró 2014, 56-86). From this it follows that spoken language is universal and writing is artificial, since written language has to be learnt and its existence is a comparatively recent historical event as evidence demonstrates[23].

The transition from oral to written language was made following an evolutionary process of accommodation to the necessities of the social group. The invention of graphic means of communication was a response to the demands of living in a more complex society, whose evolution for thousands of years opened the way to the invention of writing. The clear inference, then, is that speech is

---

[23] We have no evidence of a true writing system before 3500 BC (Stubbs 1980; Olson 1994; Tuson 1994; Calvet 1996).

prior to writing[24] and that writing systems were created not to represent speech, but to communicate information. This view, supported by specialists in the history of writing (Harris 1986; Gaur 1984), does not correspond with the traditional assumption that writing is the transcription of speech. This assumption could explain the assumed superiority of writing over speech, a fact that has been significant in determining prevailing cultural standards, and traditional linguistics, and has influenced the way writing has been interpreted throughout history.

The assumed notion that writing is the transcription of speech, though misleading, dates back to Aristotle (Olson 1994, 65) and it is also explicitly expressed in the technical writings of Saussure and Bloomfield as the two quotations below illustrate:

> The sole reason for the existence of [writing] is to represent [speech]. The linguistic object is not defined by the combination of the written word and the spoken word: The spoken form alone constitutes the object.
> (Saussure 1916/1983, 23-24)

> The art of writing is not a part of language, but rather a comparatively modern invention for recording and broadcasting what is spoken; it is comparable, in a way, with the phonograph or with such a recent invention as the radio. (...) Writing is merely an attempt, more or less systematic, at making permanent visual records of language utterances.
> (Bloomfield 1970/1987, 255-6)

Due to their relevance in the discipline of linguistics, it is worthwhile considering the purpose for which these statements were written. In this sense, Stubbs (1980) and Ferreiro (1999) provide arguments on the point at issue. On the one hand, Stubbs (1980, 24) argues that such affirmations by Saussure and Bloomfield were intended to combat the denigration of spoken language at the expense of written, and usually literary, language. On the other, Ferreiro (1999, 105) asserts that the way in which both eminent linguists interpret writing is justifiable since writing systems capture only certain properties of what is said. Moreover, Ferreiro (1999) argues that Bloomfield's is a common sense view, since although it is true that

[24] Archeological evidence shows that very early humans had speech (Mithen 1996:158-60; Bickerton 1996; Cavalli-Sforza 1994, 1997; Savage-Rumbaud 1998). Speech, however, is not only biologically based but also comes first for individuals, since almost all children learn first to talk and only later to write (Havelock 1986, 100). For a full discussion of the chronological priority of spoken language, see (Stubbs 1980, 25).

writing systems represent units of the spoken language, and that anything which is written down can be read aloud, written language does not directly represent spoken language (Stubbs 1980, 117; Junyent 1999, 89-90). In this sense, Ferreiro (1999) points to the invention of the International Phonetic Alphabet for its effectiveness in a well delimited field, that of phonetics, but with a totally different goal from that for which writing systems were originated. Furthermore, Moreno-Cabrera's (2005, 31-34) concern over the ethnocentric view of writing rests on important arguments showing the wrong correspondence between sound and alphabetic writing in the works by Ong (1987, 342) and Havelock (1991, 38).

All in all, the prior classification of speech as secondary lies at the heart of the myth of written language. This fallacy has contributed to a distortion of the real value of speech as a means of human communication. For example, the secondary status speech has been assigned results from the social prestige of written language, rather than any consideration of how humans relate to each other. In fact, a writing system cannot be regarded as an autonomous, purely linguistic structure, since any writing system is subject to influences from the socio-political and cultural environment in which it develops (Stubbs 1980, 161; Moreno-Cabrera 2005; Moreno-Cabrera and Mendívil-Giró 2014 and Moreno-Cabrera 2016).

In sum, this dichotomy of language is strengthened by the close correspondence between written language and standard language, especially promoted in formal educational settings (McGroarty 1996; Stubbs 1996; Blanche-Benveniste 1998). Indeed, as Michael Stubbs (1996, 63) explains "since most written language is standard language, there arises a logical relation between written forms, standard forms and linguistic description."

Finally, it is the prominent role of written language and its idealisation as a model, which has contributed to creating such a complex polarisation between writing and speech. Such primacy accorded to writing[25] has been a significant drawback for the social use and understanding of natural language, since its status has contributed to deprive orality of its essential feature as a means of natural human communication, especially in the field of linguistic theory, until very recent times.

[25] Refer to chapter 17 in Moreno-Cabrera (2016, 197-217) for a thorough description of the evolution of written and spoken language.

In terms of the evolution of writing in the history of humankind, in agreement with Tuson's words quoted in Junyent (1999) we can conclude that:

> If language (among other reasons) is what makes us human, it is within its primary condition as a mechanism of oral communication. Writing as a secondary system came along when it was all said and done. So it did not add anything new to what we already know about our intrinsic nature as human beings (Tuson 1996, 13).
>
> (Junyent 1999, 87-88)

6.3.1.1 The use of standard English in EFL textbooks

This section is especially focussed on the close relationship between Standard English and the written language. Indeed, Standard English is undoubtedly a central issue of language education, since all EFL textbooks have been mainly concerned with this variety of language. As Carter (1997) points out:

> all the most authoritative, standard grammars are based on written examples or on examples of very formal contexts of spoken English. No recognised descriptive terms exist because the forms are not recognised as part of the standard grammar. (...) One main danger is that spoken English continues to be judged by the codified standards of written English, and that teaching pupils to speak Standard English may, in fact, be to teach them to speak in formal written English.
>
> (Carter 1997, 58-59)

Standard English is often regarded as the variety of English that students of English as a foreign or second language are taught when receiving formal instruction (Trudgill and Hannah 2008, 5) and it also has to do with passing exams, getting on in the world, respectability, prestige and success (Stubbs, 1986, 83). Therefore, learners of a language are going to deal with its predominantly written variety which is acquired through instruction (Stubbs 1980; Carter 1994; 1997; Liddicoat 2007). Moreover, the concept of Standard English is fully applicable only to written language, since there is a single standard for the written language in spelling, but not for the spoken language in accent (Stubbs 1980, 128).

The reason why written language has become a linguistic model of language and has served as the underlying frame of reference for language teaching is because its supremacy has prevailed in present-day literacy contexts. The most obvious example is that of Classical Latin which became the language of prestige and was regarded as the ideal form of language in Europe. Thus, the same basic procedures that were used for teaching Latin would be the basis for teaching and learning other languages, which for political reasons in Europe became the dominant languages of education, commerce, religion and government. This is, briefly, how a basic theoretical orientation has been transmitted directly into the pedagogic domain. Thus, rules of grammar usually served the purposes of reforming or standardising language and were also applied to formal written, literary language, but did not apply to all the varieties of actual spoken language (Foley 1997, 403-16).

Ignoring the social dimensions of standardisation and in support of the prior view that "most written language is standard language" (Stubbs 1980; 1996), it is clear that writing has been promoted in educational settings through continued academic learning (Wiley 1996, 125-26; Snyder 2008). Moreover, this kind of language, according to Stubbs (1983, 35), "brings us to the special relationship between SE and the education system, for it is the education system which is a powerful instrument for promoting such codified norms of language."

This sort of linguistic educational pattern confirms the formal difference between the uniformity of written language and the variability of speech which remains unquestioned in academic environments. Carter (1997) argues that:

> there are forms of spoken English which are perfectly standard and which are indeed grammatically correct. These forms do not appear in standard grammars, however, so it is easy for them to be judged as non-standard and ungrammatical.
>
> (Carter 1997, 58-59)

Thus, Standard English has been recommended as a desirable educational target and the norm of communication.

In practice, the prestige of written language is a social concept based on social class, material success, political strength, popular acclaim and educational background and it is recognised as such by the adult members of the community. In this sense, Foley's (1997) arguments about language standardisation and its

role in education are made on the basis of "one of the major sociocultural changes over the last 200 years" which has been "the rise of the nation-state" and "[is] closely correlated with that has been the development of standard languages. Then, he goes on arguing that:

> Standard languages typically reflect the speech of the local elites, those who have power and prestige. Access to the ranks of the cities is regulated through control of the norms of the standard language, and it is a primary function of the education system to screen for this control of possible access. (...) Often, given the dominance of the industrialized West in technological spheres, this has resulted in the "Westernization" of the language, adoption of European lexical items and even grammatical structures into the local languages.
>
> (Foley 1997, 415-16)

In sum, the view that written language is to be more highly valued than spoken language is not a universally held belief, but a belief that has particularly deep historical roots in Western culture (Stubbs 1980; Barton 2007; Moreno-Cabrera 2016).

6.3.1.2 Written language as product and as process

Describing language in terms of product or process corresponds to two, opposite ways of understanding the human faculty of communication. In fact, the primacy of written language and the study of language from a traditional perspective have contributed a great deal to understand writing as product and not as process (Halliday 1985, 92; Gee 1996; Corbett 2003, 87; Boyle and Scanlon 2010, 224). This section, therefore, deals with two aspects of language that must be considered for an overview: language as product vs. language as process.

On the one hand, language as product implies the analysis of an acquired and completed body of knowledge reduced to its component parts and rules for their operation. A recognisable example is that of traditional linguistics in which

theories of language have originated in an idealising framework designed by grammarians. Their main concern has been in accordance with generating correct sentences, the formulation of rules, rather than considering the kind of language which is manifested in everyday use. In recent discourse, Tomasello (2010) points out the fact that:

> the actual grammatical conventions are, of course, not created by evolutionary processes at all, they are created by cultural-historical ("invisible hand") processes that we have called the conventionalization of grammatical constructions.
>
> (Tomasello 2010, 317)

Language as process, on the other hand, involves the treatment of natural cognitive and communicative strategies for the exploitation of linguistic resources. In fact, the realisation of language as an actual activity of communication involves the study of psychological and social factors. The influence of these conditions constrains the way speakers of a language draw upon their knowledge of the language system, and how this system varies and changes over time.

Indeed, the world of written language is defined as product rather than as process in accordance with a partial view of linguistics that is widely held when referring to literacy contexts, especially in educational environments. In fact, this is a synoptic view of language in which the primary features of the writing process are ignored. This attitude, however, does not account for the practice of writing in natural circumstances in which a process of reflection on the language being produced is involved. For example, understanding the process of writing means that its purposes and conventions associated with particular aims have to be learnt, since many of the situations in which written language is required are of a fairly specialised and restricted kind, if compared to those associated with spoken language.

While language as product is closely related to written language, speech defines its world, primarily as process and presents a dynamic view of how speech phenomena happen. This would explain why spoken language is learned in early childhood without any special training, since language phenomena do not exist in isolation but happen in real contexts of use. In this sense, in their theoretical considerations and empirical findings, Tomasello (1988, 2003) and his co-

researchers (Tomasello and Farrar 1986; Carpenter, Nagell, and Tomasello 1998) point to the same conclusion:

> Young children do not learn their initial linguistic conventions by simply associating or mapping arbitrary sounds onto recurrent experiences in an individualistic manner. Rather, they acquire their initial linguistic conventions by attempting to understand how others are using particular sounds to direct their attention within the space of their current common ground – sometimes supplied top-down by the joint collaborative activity in which they are currently participating, and sometimes by other forms of bottom-up common ground as well.
>
> (Tomasello 2010, 161)

6.3.2 Oral and written language from a social perspective

In this section we shall examine how both types of language differ in function by paying attention to the particular features that define spoken language as a natural means of spontaneous interaction and those of written language for effective social language use. The sociolinguistic relationship between oral and written language has been influenced by sudden changes in social habits produced in the history of humanity. In this sense, and regarding the important sociolinguistic dimension of speech, Tuson (1996, 9) points out the close relationship between the social functions of writing and speech, "it is especially because of writing that a great part of the memory of human beings has been stored up and preserved, that is, the sciences and techniques that allow every new generation to make one's way without starting from scratch."

In practice, the basic, primary function of written language – recording and transmitting information involved in a verbal exchange – has been complemented by more complex functions in accordance with new social needs such as institutional (as opposed to personal/informal) correspondence, and administrative or bureaucratic functions (commercial dealings, legal decisions, diplomatic treaties, etc.). Indeed, written language as well as spoken language fulfils a great range of social functions that respond to the growing social demands of a community.

From its origins, the basic primary function of written language has been that of recording (i.e., storage). Ordinarily, it is used to make accurate records of

what has been said or done in a particular occasion (e.g., taking notes). This way of keeping information responds to our generally very inexact memories of verbal interaction, since any report that is written down can be kept in a durable, permanent form. Similarly, there is no limitation on time and no limit on distance, since writing may be transportable. From this point of view, we can see that spoken language is limited in these respects because it is composed spontaneously in real time. With reference to the volume of traceable evidence, writing is relevant for its capacity of expository density (Moreno-Cabrera 2005, 16). Any explanation can be reduced in length by means of choosing appropriate vocabulary and the combination of certain structures involving less repetition, with the use of more lexically precise words that contribute to keeping most of it in less space. Consequently, flexibility in reading techniques will be required to decipher so much condense information (Stubbs 1980).

Amidst the great variety and density of information two implicit features of speech and writing can be perceived: spontaneity and elaboration, respectively. However, despite the interdependence between both types of language, they are not similarly distributed. We find evidence of this fact in diverse communicative situations in which a lot of complex written texts and non-formalized orality are produced. Thus, although formalized orality and spontaneous writing are less frequent, it is not unusual to find oral exchanges that are not spontaneous. For example: (a) written texts that have been designed to be spoken as if they were not written such as speaking in turns, television debates or even play scripts in which the conventions of formal orality have been exploited; (b) texts written to be spoken without concealment of their written origin, such as conferences, speeches or lectures; and (c) written texts that have not necessarily been conceived to be spoken, but can be read out as novels or newspaper articles (Luque and Alcoba 1999). We should mention as well those situations in which spontaneous writing has become a need: communicative exchanges by fax, electronic mail, chats or messages via mobile telephones (Blanche-Benveniste 1998).

As far as the functions that written and spoken language fulfil in social communicative affairs are concerned, Barton (2007) points out there is considerable overlap between them:

> Although they are very different, written and spoken language are not easy to separate. In fact, they are closely entwined, and in daily life people participate in literate events where reading and writing are mixed in with spoken language and with other means of communication. (...) In many ways written and spoken language are not separable in literacy events and some researchers would go so far as to blur any distinction between written and spoken and call all forms of public communication literate.
> (Barton 2007, 43)

Furthermore, Barton also notes that writing has a "social priority," in that it "carries greater social status in many societies and often carries legal weight" (Barton 2007, 90).

With reference to the social environment we live in and how language is used for communicative purposes, we can see that oral spontaneity in natural interaction lives along with a non-spontaneous orality. This means that we, as members of a modern western society, have been facing double orality. Whereas spontaneous interactions are implicit in human communicative behaviour, oral mass media communication, including television, radio, advertising, movies, and the Internet, are reported orally since the final result depends to a great extent on a previous elaborated text in written form. For further development on this issue see the works by Alcoba (1999) and Blanche-Benveniste (1998) among other experts.

Indeed, when following a restrictive way of interpreting orality, the different modes between writing and speech for expressing linguistic meaning have been ignored, as well as, the diverse social functions both kinds of language fulfil in society. However, the reality of speech and writing in contemporary society reveals how the complex social functions of spoken and written forms of language relate each other in everyday circumstances. For example, Blanche-Benveniste (1998, 34) considers the fact that people speak, listen, write and read illustrates the need for communicating for a variety of purposes in different social situations.

All in all, the sociolinguistic use of speech and writing is not confined to a specific kind of social interaction but corresponds to the communicative purposes for which an event has arisen. The complex and demanding needs of living in modern society have promoted a considerable overlap between speech and writing, to the extent that the increasingly involvement of writing in the recording of social events has become a trivial and natural phenomenon. Let us take any

conventional communicative situation involving any kind of information that we require to remember, to be confirmed or verified in the future. For example, when making an appointment there must be some kind of agreement between the participants upon the exact date and time of the event. In order not to forget the relevant information both participants will take it down in their respective diaries or any other sort of writing support. There are other social events in which writing is simultaneous with speech as the interaction between the participants is going on such as: filling in an application form, taking down orders, making a shopping list or writing a note to remember something, etc.

Therefore, it makes no sense to assert that writing is speech written down. It would also be naive to claim that both types of language are interchangeable by means of translating one type into the other, since as Halliday (1985) states:

> there is no point in having written and spoken language both doing all the same things –so there would be no point in having both speech and writing if the two simply duplicate the functions of each other.
>
> (Halliday 1985, 93)

In addition, Blanche-Benveniste (1998, 51-54) provides a list of examples such as CD-ROM (reading and hearing the text simultaneously), difficulties in transcribing oral phenomena such as hesitations, pauses in video-recordings, punctuation, and difficulties in interpreting literally what we have just heard in which she reveals the obvious overlap between writing and speech as a result of ordinary/everyday social circumstances.

In sum, writing and speech cannot be considered as opposites. In fact, we have uncovered a misjudgement about the formlessness of speech. It cannot be held that writing is the transcription of speech, since this is a view which has been based on a high, idealised notion of writing as a finished product, rather than as a process (Stubbs 1980; Brown 1983; Halliday 1985; Cook 1989; McCarthy 1991; McCarthy and Carter 1994; Junyent 1999; Moreno-Cabrera 2005; 2016).

We have mentioned only some examples that show why it is necessary to reflect on the use of writing in combination with speech in oral spontaneous exchanges. Thus, whereas common instances of the simultaneous use of spontaneous writing and speech have become indispensable in modern western society, they go unnoticed in teaching materials and academic environments.

6.3.2.1 Basic differences in form between spoken and written language

In this chapter, we shall illustrate the differences in form between oral and written language for communicative purposes. Next, emphasis will be placed on how successful interaction, either oral or written, is achieved in a situational context.

Spoken and written language, either in educational settings or in the traditional field of linguistics, have been considered as two distinct and opposite types of language, but not as integral parts of the same underlying system of language. There have been arguments in which spontaneous speech has been categorised in terms of "incompleteness." For example, a groundless comparison to the detriment of the essence of speech and with strong linguistic prejudices is the one in which the units of spontaneous speech have been opposed to well-formed sentences that belong to written language. Moreover, the fragmented nature of speech rests on arguments in which it is stated that spoken language consists of isolated, unconnected linguistic utterances. This is an assumption that has been developed simultaneously by those linguists who have analysed language in terms of phonology, syntax and so on from idealised examples of contrived, out of context data (Barton 2007, 87-100). Although they might seem unquestionable facts, complex linguistic units of this sort are not characteristic of speech. In the following paragraphs, we shall provide a brief account of arguments that give evidence of the organisation and form of speech.

Akmajian *et al.* (2001, 386-7) state that "The unit of communication is not always a single complete sentence. Often we speak in single words, phrases and fragments of sentences (...). At other times we speak in units of two or more connected sentences." On the other hand, Blanche-Benveniste (1998, 22) suggests comparing speech and writing on equal terms by contrasting a sample of spoken language with a written draft version instead of an edited text. Similarly, Halliday (1985) considers key attitudes related with oral interactions:

> the idea that spoken language is formless, confined to short bursts, full of false starts, lacking in logical structure, etc. is a myth – and a pernicious one at that, since it prevents us from recognising its critical role in learning. It arises because in writing people only ever analyse the finished product, which is a highly idealised version of the writing process; whereas in speech they analyse – indeed get quite obsessed with – the bits

> that get crossed out, the insertions, pauses, the self-interruptions, and so on.
>
> (Halliday 1985, 99-100)

Hence, the favourable arguments sustaining that speech is structured and polysistemic add corroborative evidence that it is organised. De Beaugrande (1997a, 46) similarly argues that "English has been dominated by 'written culture', encouraging the belief that the order of language only emerges when written down in neat sentences – a belief shared by many homework linguists." Therefore, misinterpretations have their origin in the false assumptions about the social prestige of writing as a final product, rather than as a process.

As far as the form of written language is concerned, we find that it is *structured*. This means that sentences follow basic syntactically correct patterns. Thus, complete sentences are characterised by subordination and modifications via adjectives and adverbs. We can find, as well, rhetorical organisers that are used in larger stretches of discourse (*firstly, more important than, in conclusion*); metalingual markers that mark the relationships between clauses (*that, when/while, besides, moreover, however, in spite of*). It is also noteworthy the use of rather heavily premodified noun phrases, which serve to concentrate information related to a particular referent. And finally, lexicalization also has an important role in marking the relationships between ideas, and the writer's attitude toward them, together with explicit statements, careful choice of words, complex syntactic constructions, etc.

From the above, it can be inferred that a traditional description of speech based on its linguistic structure with incomplete sentences, little subordination, few premodifying adjectives, repetition of the same syntactic form, active declarative forms rather than passive non-attribution of agency, and so on, makes sense only if compared to written language in opposite terms. Indeed, to understand the formal distinction between spoken and written language it must be considered that the two types of language are founded on unequal processes of production as Halliday states (1985, 93): "Speech and writing impose different grids on experience. There is a sense in which they create different realities. Writing creates a world of things; talking creates a world of happening."

Barton (2007), however, points out a long and impressive list of differences between writing and speech claiming that:

> "There is no structure found only in written language or only in spoken. (...) There is a great deal of overlap between these two extremes and it appears that writing has developed no syntactic structures which are not also found in spoken language."
>
> (Barton 2007, 91)

The fact that non-linguistic basic components of spontaneous speech have no written counterpart has resulted in some problems for transcription, especially because of the lack of graphic systems or symbols to represent essential features in oral spontaneous communication. Although the problems of transcribing spontaneous conversation may seem not relevant to our investigation, since this is a topic that has been exhaustively examined by the disciplines of Ethnography of Communication and Conversation Analysis, we consider it necessary to point to some statements on this issue.

Halliday (1985, 77) asserts that "the 'formlessness' of speech is an artefact of the transcription." Stubbs (1980, 117) affirms that considering the elements in the writing system (spacing between words, punctuation, italicisation and so on) which have no counterpart in speech would lead to a better knowledge of "which characteristics of language can be assumed to be transferred from speech to reading and writing, and which need to be taught explicitly." Similarly, Olson (1994, 111) argues that:

> writing readily preserves the lexical and syntactic properties of speech but loses the voice-qualities of the speaker including stress and intonation, the "silent language" revealed in bodily clues manifest in the eyes, hands, and stance as well as the cognitively shared context, all of which in oral contexts indicate how the utterance is to be taken.

These assertions would explain the western cultural urge for appeal to discursive strategies that belong to written discourse in order to facilitate the comprehension of a situation and of the participants' feelings and emotions in a specific exchange.

6.3.2.2 Major features of oral spontaneous speech

This section focuses on aspects of speech that are essential in the progression of any communicative interaction. Extra-linguistic factors are the major features of communication that guarantee that oral spontaneous exchanges are meaningful and therefore, fruitful as Docherty and Khattab (2008) observe the following:

> In recent years there has been a sharply growing awareness that developing our understanding of how speaker performance is shaped by extra linguistic factors associated with particular communicative situations is fundamental in building models of speech production.
>
> Docherty and Khattab (2008, 603)

In a conversational exchange the participants may communicate either verbally or non-verbally, or in a combination of both. When communicating something to someone they make use not only of words to express their ideas, feelings, etc., but of features of spoken language such as rhythm, tempo, intonation, voice quality, and so forth (Poyatos 1993; 2002).

When we want to communicate something to someone do not only make use of the respiratory system but also of different parts of the head such as lips, the tongue, and nasal fossae to produce language. The communicative activity is complemented with kinesics (body movements), proxemics and non-linguistic vocal noises such as voice quality and vocalisations (Calsamiglia and Tuson 1999).

Indeed, it is important to consider that successful spontaneous speech is possible not only because of linguistic and extra-linguistic factors, but also because of the effort made by the participants as in the transmission and interpretation of a message (Brown 1995). In this sense, Brown considers that:

> As language use moves away from short exchanges which relate to the here-and-now, towards more abstract and complex genres, the opportunities for misunderstanding multiply, and there is room for a wider range of justifiable interpretations, any one of which may be adequate for the listener's current purposes.
>
> (Brown 1995, 23)

In this way, the participants' actions and reactions will depend to a great extent on the person or people who take part in an exchange as well as the

circumstances in which it takes place. For example, Gillian Brown (1985) points out the relevance of context in any communicative interaction, since it is the frame that surrounds the event being examined and provides resources for its appropriate interpretation, stating that:

> You have to provide a context to arrive at any sort of interpretation since the "thin" semantic meaning of a sentence, derived just from a series of vocabulary items in a syntactic structure, yields only such a sketchy and partial content that it cannot alone provide the material for an interpretation. It is not until the "thin" meaning is enriched by the provision of extra material, which you infer from the immediate context and from your previous knowledge, that you know what the utterance means.
>
> (Brown 1995, 13)

In this sense, the situational components that take place in any kind of spontaneous interaction have continuously either been ignored in the classical analysis of spoken language or have been described as trivial and irrelevant. However, according to McCarthy (1991, 1), "the various disciplines that feed into Discourse Analysis are centred on the study of language in use and how people use real language, as opposed to studying artificial constructed sentences."

In short, the main factors that make spontaneous conversation effective are the participants' commitment and implication and sharing the object of information and having knowledge of the immediate background in which the exchange is happening. It is worth noting that Brown (1995, 22) points out that the success of a communicative exchange depends to a great extent on the participants' ability to identify and revise a mistaken interpretation in order to avoid ambiguity.

6.3.3 The treatment of language in EFL textbooks: reading aloud

The speaking communicative activities in EFL textbooks are conceived as pieces of writing that stand entirely on their own in which all the necessary contextual information required in any spontaneous exchange has been supplied explicitly when describing the methodological purpose of the activity. In this

sense, the language creativity of students in classroom contexts is subject to the linguistic constraints of the prescriptive practices of language, since they are expected to find correct linguistic structures and appropriate vocabulary in accordance with the topic and purpose of the unit. Therefore, writing a dialogue or a conversation has become a habitual practice in EFL textbooks though it does not involve any spontaneous use of speech. This particular kind of practice in the oral *speaking* activities in EFL textbooks will be illustrated next.

Indeed, students are commonly asked to write a dialogue as the initial or final part of an oral activity in EFL learning materials. They are expected to show their knowledge on relevant grammar and vocabulary they have already learnt in previous lessons or that have just been introduced in order to examine them in subsequent units. In addition, the participants' reactions and answers as well as the openings and endings of these kinds of *speaking* practices are well delimited, so that they can be easily perceived. Thus, in the EFL *speaking* communicative activities students play active and passive roles in which the speaker is the one who initiates the interaction and therefore, selects the appropriate information for the passive listener. However, as (Brown 1995, 28) points out this is a kind of situation that hardly ever arises in any spontaneous interaction, since "an account of communication which assumes that only the speaker's intentions need to be taken into account is as inadequate as one which assumes that speaker and listener will share common goals and a common context."

With these kinds of oral activities in EFL textbooks students are encouraged to produce grammatical sentences rather than practice any spontaneous use of speech (See Appendix B). Indeed, in her analysis of casual conversations by students at Edinburgh University Joan Cutting (2000) evidences the lack of any true communicative sense in ordinary interactions arguing that:

> Methodology books purporting to train EFL teachers to teach spoken English mainly ignore the informal side of spoken English. Bygate (1987) and Dörnyei and Thurrell (1992) are examples. They describe conversational rules and structure but do not train students to recognise informal grammar and texts.
>
> (Cutting 2006, 174)

Ronald Carter (1997, 59) in a previous work, though with a similar conclusion, pointed out that "spoken English continues to be judged by the codified standards of written English, and that teaching pupils to speak standard English may, in fact, be to teach them to speak in formal written English."

It is not surprising, therefore, to find that students have many difficulties when they attempt to use the target language in oral spontaneous situations. Although they have acquired a high level of proficiency in the classroom, in many of the oral communicative activities central features that characterise either written or spoken language are ignored. As Cook (1989, 11) states, this is why in current communicative situations students make use of an idealised system of language that does not correspond to the particular characteristics of spontaneous speech.

On the other hand, concerning the essential linguistic features of reading aloud, Chafe points out that written language is used first and the spoken language comes last, as he originally stated:

> Reading aloud consists of language that was first produced as writing and then, at some later time, delivered as speaking. In spite of its origin as writing, its audience does not read it but hears it. It is written at the beginning, spoken at the end.
>
> (Chafe 2006, 54)

In conclusion, from the above it can be inferred that reading aloud becomes a frequent activity in instructional environments, involving no genuine communicative function, since this is a teaching technique intended for students to respond and demonstrate what they have learnt in a lesson (vocabulary, syntax and pronunciation). In this sense, the dialogues to be read aloud belong to models of written language with syntactically correct patterns, subordination, rhetorical organisers, metalingual markers, use of pre-modified noun phrases and lexicalization. In addition, these kinds of speaking communicative activities practised in language learning contexts are artificial or invented and they are taught as final and static products (Stubbs 1980; Halliday 1985; Cook 1989; McCarthy 1991; Carter 2004 ,59).

On the other hand, if compared to written language in oppositional terms, we find that spontaneous speech is characterised by simple sequences of phrases, repetition of the same syntactic form, generalised vocabulary, and so on.

Furthermore, spoken everyday language has to be processed in real time and involves constant checking and reassuring in order to minimise the risk of misunderstanding in face-to-face interactions. Written language, however, can be planned in advance, re-drafted and edited. It is, therefore, the distinctive functions and purposes they serve in current language use which make it clear that speech and writing are natural manifestations of the same system of language, rather than opposite as has been traditionally held (see section 5.3.2). In this sense, Barton (2007, 90) suggests viewing "written and spoken language as having different grammars." In this sense, it should be convenient to consider McCarthy and Carter's challenge on the design and implementation of spoken grammars in the practice of language teaching today (McCarthy and Carter 2001).

Obviously, writing a dialogue or reading it aloud are two practices of oral communicative activities that do not fulfil any of the crucial features that characterise a spontaneous exchange. Thus, in any communicative interchange participants do not show their knowledge of a language by practising the prescriptive rules and making an exchange cohesive and coherent. As Cook (1989, 117) argues, "conversation (...) involves the gaining, holding, and yielding of turns, the negotiation of meaning and directions, the shifting of topic, the signalling and identification of turn type, the use of voice quality, face, and body," whereas Barton (2007, 43) claims that "writing is based on speech in some very real ways: spoken language is the basis for most people's learning of written language, for instance, and the very form of written language gets its inspiration from spoken language." It should also be taken into account that, as Carter (2004, 55) points out, "some ceremonial functions of language such as marriage vows remain oral, but when spoken language is preserved, it is normally in the form of a transcribed 'text' which provides its own distortion of the communicative complexity of the original source."

All in all, the content of the speaking activities in EFL textbooks is focused on analysable formal elements rather than on meaning understood as a pragmatic matter of negotiating an indexical relationship between linguistic signs and features of the context; hence our interest in exploring these kinds of practices in this investigation.

CHAPTER 7

Research methodology

In general, the present study aims to investigate different aspects of foreign language education covering the significance of the CEFR as a language policy model for practitioners and the kind of discourse promoted in EFL course books. More specifically, the main interest in this dissertation lies in examining a sample of thirty speaking activities in EFL textbooks in order to study the accomplishment of the illustrative scales of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors as categorized in chapter 4 of the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 55-61 and 63-82, respectively). Considering the two Spoken descriptors in the CEFR as the main referential source in this research obeys the fact that, not in vain, the CEFR has turned into one of the most relevant sources in foreign language education in Europe, including textbook writers, since its definite publication in 2001.

Next, we present the process variables that will be explored in the present investigation such as the fulfilment of the illustrative scales of the two Spoken, Production and Interaction, descriptors in the CEFR, the relevance of the four language skills in the communicative language abilities in the CEFR as well as the degree of interdependence between the speaking activity samples and the statements of the subscales provided in the CEFR descriptors. This set of variables are contained in the three research questions that we have already expounded in section 1.2.

Before launching the presentation about the organization of this chapter, we shall report the value of the Confidence Interval for this investigation. Considering that the small size (not more than 30 activities) of the speaking activity samples in EFL textbooks can restrict the confidence that can be attributed to the results, it is convenient to estimate a statistical parameter such as the Confidence Interval that validates the sample size statistical efficacy at 95 per cent.

The Confidence Intervals were calculated by means of the statistical program G-Stat 2.0, providing a range of values which are likely to contain the

population parameter of interest in order to validate the sample efficacy in this investigation. First, we found a total of 360 subscales for the Spoken Production descriptors in the CEFR from which only 87 descriptors were met in the speaking activity samples in this study. This means that the Confidence Interval for the Spoken Production descriptors falls within the range of 19.83% to 28.93%. And second, we calculated the total number of subscales for the Spoken Interaction descriptors in the CEFR at 1020. However, there were only 92 subscales that accomplished the sample of the speaking activities. This means that the Confidence Interval falls within the range of 7.33% to 10.95%.

After applying appropriate statistical techniques, we can conclude that the sample consisting of thirty speaking activities in EFL textbooks confirms the 95% Confidence Interval of the observed values in the two groups of the Spoken descriptors in the CEFR (see Appendix H for details).

7.1 The speaking activity samples in EFL textbooks

The corpus in this study consists of thirty *speaking* activities comprising the following five complete series of EFL textbooks: *Global*, *New Headway*, *New English File*, *Straightforward* and *English Unlimited*. This translates into an only speaking activity per course book in the five series.

Searching on the Internet for relevant websites about publishers in the field of English as a foreign language (i.e. Cambridge University Press, McMillan and Oxford University Press) was a first step that made a supply of sample copies of units for this investigation possible. After collecting the randomized sampling of units from the five series of EFL textbooks, I moved to the next stage which gave me the final collection of thirty speaking activity samples published between the years 2009 and 2013. An important aspect to consider in this context is that most of the speaking activities in EFL textbooks were not isolated from other practices in the unit. This quality was an important one for my objective, since it was not easy to find individual simple models of activities to conduct a comprehensive analysis at this stage of the research.

The five series of EFL language courses, published during the four-year span from 2009 to 2013, cover six-level learning stages which range from Beginner (A1) to Advanced (C1) levels. This is a peculiar classification adopted by the publishers (i.e., McMillan, Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press) of the five series of EFL courses, since it does not follow the original Common Reference Levels by the Council of Europe exhaustively, as it would be expected. In this sense, while the "mastery" level (C2) has been ignored in the five series of the EFL textbooks sample, the Pre-Intermediate courses comprising the levels A2^{+} (plus) and B1^{-} (minus) complete the six-level classification that range from Beginner (A1), Elementary (A2), and Pre-Intermediate (A2^{+}/B1^{-}) to Intermediate (B1), Upper-Intermediate (B2) and Advanced (C1).

The EFL textbooks sample covered in this investigation were chosen on the basis of two main criteria: a recent date of publication and a marketing reference in the field of foreign language education. Particularly, up-to-date publications embrace innovation and respond to recent socio-cultural changes in western society in the 21st century, on the one hand. And, on the other hand, the selection of the five complete series of English courses also depends on their frequent use in foreign language academic settings which are addressed to the university community and adult learners in general.

In addition, it should be noted that in most cases we have analysed the most recent publication which is a revised edition of the original course first published in the last decade of the twentieth century (e.g., *New Headway* and *New English File*). All in all, it is relevant to point out that the new editions of this sample of EFL textbooks reflect the same curricular aims of the original courses in their first edition and differ only in having a more attractive design and topics in accordance with current social stereotypes.

The collection of EFL textbooks covered in the analysis correspond to the following five series of EFL language courses published between 2009 and 2013 as follows:

(a) *Global Beginner* and *Global Elementary* (Clandfield *et al.* 2010), *Global Pre-Intermediate* (Clandfield 2010), *Global Intermediate* and *Global Upper-Intermediate* (Clandfield and Benne 2011) and *Global Advanced* (Clandfield and Jeffries 2012)

(b) *New Headway Beginner*, *New Headway Elementary*, *New Headway Pre-Intermediate* and *New Headway Intermediate* (Soars and Soars, 2013), *New Headway Upper-Intermediate* and *New Headway Advanced* (Soars and Soars 2012)

(c) *New English File Beginner, New English File Elementary, New English File Pre-Intermediate, New English File Intermediate, New English File Upper-Intermediate* and *New English File Advanced* (Oxenden and Latham-Koenig 2009)

(d) *Straightforward Beginner*, *Straightforward Elementary*, *Straightforward Pre-Intermediate*, *Straightforward Intermediate*, *Straightforward Upper-Intermediate* and *Straightforward Advanced* (Clandfield 2013)

(e) *English Unlimited Beginner* (Doff 2010), *English Unlimited Elementary* (Tilbury *et al.* 2010), *English Unlimited Pre-Intermediate* (Hendra 2010), *English Unlimited Intermediate* (Rea and Clementson 2010), *English Unlimited Upper-Intermediate* (Tilbury and Hendra 2010) and *English Unlimited Advanced* (Doff and Goldstein 2010).

7.1.1 Overview of textbooks and activities

This section presents an overview of the main content of the speaking activity samples in the five series of EFL courses selected for this investigation. We shall also see that the activities corresponding to the speaking samples are presented either as separate skills (e.g., *Speaking*) or as integrated-skills activities (e.g., *Writing and Speaking* or *Everyday English*).

7.1.1.1 The *Global* series

Global Beginner (A1)

Global Beginner (Clandfield *et al.* 2010) consists of 15 units. The sample activity belongs to the section *Writing & Speaking* in Unit 1, *Name & Address*. Students are asked to complete a form regarding particular aspects such as the name, address, postcode and telephone number they have been working with previously in the same unit. In order to fill in the form, students are encouraged to work in pairs asking about others and responding about themselves or regarding specific information with the help of the useful phrases provided in this activity.

Global Elementary (A2)

Global Elementary (Clandfield *et al.* 2010) is divided into 12 units. The *speaking* activity chosen in Unit 6, *News & Weather*, aims to go over the form and use of the pronoun *it* that has been studied in the previous *Grammar* section in unit 6 in order to allow students to put the grammar into practice. Thus, students are encouraged to work in pairs and after reading the conversations from Grammar exercise 2 together, and changing some information in the conversations provided, they will read their answers aloud. Next, students choose other conversations from the same grammar exercise which they read together and then try to continue with the conversation provided.

Global Pre-Intermediate ($A2^{+}/B1^{-}$)

Global Pre-Intermediate (Clandfield 2010) has 12 units. The *speaking* activity is designed for talking. In unit 4, *Hopes & Fears*, students are required to work in pairs in order to tell their partner about some defined topics provided in the activity and ask them for further information. Then, students will be required to swap roles and repeat the exercise.

Global Intermediate (B1)

Global Intermediate (Clandfield and Benne 2011) consists of 12 units. The sample *speaking* activity of Unit 2, *Lives & Legends*, belongs to the section *Function Globally*. The main aim of this section is that students deal with generalising and giving examples. Hence, in the *speaking* activity chosen, students are expected to work in pairs and make use of the new expressions they have learnt in the previous practice of this section. The sample task is divided into two parts. First, students A, tell their partner about something he/she generally likes or dislikes and gives examples. Then, students B, tell their partner about a member of their family or a friend. Finally, they make three general statements providing specific examples.

Global Upper-Intermediate (B2)

Global Upper-Intermediate (Clandfield and Benne 2011) is divided into 12 units. The *speaking* activity in Unit 3, *Land & Sea* is a pair-work activity. Students are encouraged to choose three of the questions in a list and ask and answer them. Then, they are required to look at the *Carta Marina* map below and they have to explain what it shows and say how old they think it is.

Global Advanced (C1)

Global Advanced (Clandfield and Jeffries 2012) has 12 units. In Unit 6, *Trade & Commerce*, the *speaking* activity consists of looking at the pictures and discussing with a partner their connection with trade. After that, students are asked to read some quotations about freedom and slavery and complete each one with a suitable word in the blank space of the text. Finally, students are invited to say which quotation they like best and why.

7.1.1.2 The *New Headway* series

New Headway Beginner (A1)

New Headway Beginners (Soars and Soars 2013) is a course book with 14 units. The *speaking* activity chosen belongs to the *Practice* section in Unit 6, *Everyday*. It aims to go over the forms and use of the third person singular pronouns in the simple present that have been studied previously in this unit. Students are expected to put the grammar into practice working in pairs and inquiring about personal information of the members of their family such as occupation, living and working place, etc.

New Headway Elementary (A2)

New Headway Elementary (Soars and Soars 2013) is divided into 12 units. The *speaking* activity is found in the Practice section in Unit 9, City living. Students are required to complete brief conversations between two participants using the comparative form of the adjectives which have been previously introduced in that unit. The second part of this activity consists of working in pairs in order to practise the conversations above considering aspects such as stress and intonation. The final part of this activity requires students to work in small groups to compare two capital cities they know following the example provided.

New Headway Pre-Intermediate ($A2^{+}/B1^{-}$)

New Headway Pre-Intermediate (Soars and Soars 2013) consists of 12 units. The speaking activity, *Making conversation*, has been selected from the section *Everyday English* in Unit 2. In this activity students are encouraged to listen to a sample of two conversations which give some hints on how to carry out a conversation. It consists of two main activities: (a) students must think of three questions to ask someone about stereotyped topics such as *job, home, free time*

and *last holiday* and (b) students are prompted to invent a new name and background for themselves and try to make some new friends in the classroom.

New Headway Intermediate (B1)

New Headway Intermediate (Soars and Soars 2013) is divided into 12 units. The sample *speaking* activity (numbers 5 and 6) belongs to unit 3, *Good times, bad times* in the section *Everyday English*. The diverse tasks encapsulated in this section aim, all together, to give opinions. In exercise 5, students are encouraged, first, to write down some opinions on different topics such as the weather, a programme on TV, etc. In exercise 6, learners will be required to ask for and give opinions on the topics mentioned in this section.

New Headway Upper-Intermediate (B1)

New Headway Upper-Intermediate (Soars and Soars 2012) has 12 units. The sample activity (number 5) belongs to Unit 9, *Forever Friends* in the section *Everyday English, Making your point*. Students are divided into groups in order to prepare a debate and conduct it. The debate consists of talking about one of the topics provided and which students feel strongly about it.

New Headway Advanced (C1)

New Headway Advanced (Soars and Soars 2012) consists of 12 units. The sample *speaking* activity is found in the section *The Last Word*, *Softening the message*. After considering some previous exercises on how to express themselves politely, students are encouraged to work with a partner and write down some conversations for three hypothetical situations using the previous hints on how to behave politely. Then, they are expected to act it out in front of the class. Finally, students are invited to listen to similar polite conversations to compare them with their own.

7.1.1.3 The *New English File* series

New English File Beginner (A1)

New English File Beginner (Oxenden and Latham-Koenig 2009) covers 6 units. The sample activity is divided into three parts and is found in the section *Speaking and Writing* that belongs to section C of unit 2, *A man's car or a woman's car?* In the first part of this activity, after studying the colours and common adjectives students are asked to work in small groups in order to talk about their car or their family's car. In the second part, they are expected to write a short description about their 'dream' car. And after that, they are required to describe their car to a partner.

New English File Elementary (A2)

New English File Elementary (Oxenden and Latham-Koenig 2009) consists of 9 units. In unit 5, *Who were they?* the sample activity, *Who was the top British person of all time?,* belongs to the section *Speaking*. Students are expected to decide, first, which is the top British person of all time. Then, they will have to choose the top three people of all time from their country. And finally, the students in the group will explain their decisions to the rest of the class.

New English File Pre-Intermediate ($A2^{+}/B1^{-}$)

New English File Pre-Intermediate (Oxenden and Latham-Koenig 2009) has 9 units. The *speaking* activity in unit 6 A, *Famous fears and phobias*, consists of asking and answering questions with a verb phrase such as *How long*. Thus, students are required to work in pairs and answer the questions using *for* or *since*. After that, students will swap their roles.

New English File Intermediate (B1)

New English File Intermediate (Oxenden and Latham-Koenig 2009) consists of 6 units. The selected activity corresponds to the section *Speaking* in unit 4, *Back to school, aged 35*. Students are divided into groups that will choose one topic from a list. Students will have to decide if they agree or disagree with the topic and write down at least three reasons that explain their decision. After that, students will present their arguments for or against the topic and will listen to the rest of groups reasoning if they agree or disagree with the arguments provided. Students are expected to use some expressions from a list of useful language such as *first of all, secondly, another important point is that*, etc.

New English File Upper-Intermediate (B2)

New English File Upper-Intermediate (Oxenden and Latham-Koenig 2009) is divided into 6 units. The *speaking* activity in unit 5, *The psychology of music*, deals with holding a debate about a topic provided in the activity. Students discuss the topic in small groups divided into As and Bs. While the As make their points, the Bs take notes and vice versa. Finally, each group try to argue against the points made by the other group.

New English File Advanced (C1)

New English File Advanced (Oxenden and Latham-Koenig 2009) consists of 6 units. In the sample activity in unit 1 A, *What motivates you?* students are required to argue about a job they would love to do and one they would hate to do. They are encouraged to work in groups of three and take turns to describe the jobs they would like or dislike to do using the vocabulary and phrases in the Vocabulary Bank *Work*. Finally, students will have to decide which of the jobs described is the most attractive.

7.1.1.4 The *Straightforward* series

Straightforward Beginner (A1)

Straightforward Beginner (Clandfield 2013) has 12 units, each divided into four sections (A, B, C and D). The *speaking* activity belongs to unit 11, *Special people*, section B. Students are asked to listen to a dialogue in order to match the sentences to the pictures provided in the activity. This kind of task aims at putting into practice the modal verb *can*. Then, students are asked to work in pairs and make a similar dialogue from a different picture. Finally, they are invited to roleplay the dialogue.

Straightforward Elementary (A2)

Straightforward Elementary (Clandfield 2013) consists of 12 units. There are four sections in each unit: A, B, C and D. In the *speaking* activity in unit 3, *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue*, students are encouraged to draw a map of their house and prepare a short presentation to the rest of the class. Thus, students are required to use the related vocabulary learnt in the lesson as well as the useful language list provided in this activity.

Straightforward Pre-Intermediate ($A2^+/B1^-$)

Straightforward Pre-Intermediate (Clandfield 2013) consists of 12 units, each divided into four sections (A, B, C and D). The *speaking* activity in unit 8, *The futurological conference*, consists of two main activities. First, students must relate the content of a listening text with a list of topics provided in the book. Secondly, after choosing a topic from the list, they must prepare the content of their speech of thirty seconds. Finally, they are required to talk about the topic for thirty seconds without stopping.

Straightforward Intermediate (B1)

Straightforward Intermediate (Clandfield 2013) consists of 12 units, each divided into four sections (A, B, C and D). The *speaking* activity in unit 6 B, *Life changes*, consists of three main parts. In the first activity, students are encouraged to work in pairs and read a list of life-changing events and discuss some questions related with the topic. In the second activity, students are provided with a series of questions to help them develop the written answer to the questions in note form. Finally, they are required to interview their partner about their life change in order to know more details about their new lifestyle.

Straightforward Upper-Intermediate (B2)

Straightforward Upper-Intermediate (Clandfield 2013) consists of 12 units, each divided into four sections (A, B, C and D). The *speaking* activity in unit 10 D, *Good deeds*, aims to encourage students to discuss a hypothetical situation by reading the advice sheet provided and answering some questions about it.

Straightforward Advanced (C1)

Straightforward Advanced (Clandfield 2013) consists of 12 units, each divided into four sections (A, B, C and D). The *speaking* activity in unit 9, *A place in the sun*, is a pair-work activity. Students are invited to imagine they are on the small island of Tobago for one day during a Caribbean cruise. They will have to choose four activities from the ones provided in the course book. After that, they are expected to explain their choices and agree on the activities that they will do together. Thus, students will interchange their opinions and at the end, they will compare their ideas with the rest of the class.

7.1.1.5 The *English Unlimited* series

English Unlimited Beginner (A1)

English Unlimited Beginner (Doff 2010) consists of 10 units. The *speaking* activity belongs to unit 4, *About you* and aims to go over the main goals of this unit such as; (a) say how you spend your time, (b) talk about things you often do and (c) say what you like and don't like that students have been studying throughout the unit. The *speaking* activity consists of playing a game. Students are required, first, to read the conversation and listen to recording 1.64. Next, they will be invited to guess which person is the one mentioned in the text. After that, students are asked to play the game in the classroom and they will take turns in choosing a person. The rest of the students must guess the name of the person by asking questions.

English Unlimited Elementary (A2)

English Unlimited Elementary (Tilbury *et al.* 2010) is divided into 14 units. The pair-work activity chosen belongs to unit 12, *Are you OK?* Students are encouraged to work in pairs and play the roles of a pharmacist and a person who asks for some medical advice. After having a short conversation on buying and selling some medicine, students are required to change their roles and have another conversation.

English Unlimited Pre-Intermediate ($A2^{+}/B1^{-}$)

English Unlimited Pre-Intermediate (Hendra 2010) consists of 14 units. In the *speaking* activity in unit 8, *Things*, students are required to work in pairs in order to make a conversation between a seller and the customer after having chosen one of the stalls in the photo. Students change roles and choose another stall. At the end of the activity, students tell the class what they bought and how much they paid.

English Unlimited Intermediate (B1)

English Unlimited Intermediate (Rea and Clementson 2010) has 14 units. In the *speaking* activity (numbers 3 and 4) under the section *Have you thought about …?* in unit 6, *Let me explain*, students are encouraged to decide three things in their life from a list with some suggestions which they are not happy about. After their decision, students are invited to talk about their problems. A complementary activity follows in which students are expected to make suggestions and give each other advice. The language focus of this activity is to practise the use of a verb plus a gerund they have previously learnt at the very beginning of this section.

English Unlimited Upper-Intermediate (B2)

English Unlimited Upper-Intermediate (Tilbury and Hendra 2010) consists of 14 units. The *speaking* activity in unit 5, *Images*, aims at practising the use of past participles with verbs like: *designed*, *invented, called, known as*, etc. Students are required to work in groups and tell each other about their ideas for an exhibition of design classics.

English Unlimited Advanced (C1)

English Unlimited Advanced (Doff and Goldstein 2010) has 12 units. In unit 3, *Language and Literature*, the *speaking* activity consists of two parts in which students are required to talk about a book which has had a relevant impact on them, first, and then, they will be asked to refer to a book or an author they loved when they were younger. In the first part of the activity, students are asked to write in a "word cloud" some words or expressions that they could use to describe the plot, the character, the setting, etc. of the book chosen. In the same way, they are required to write a "word cloud" which contains words and/or expressions that refer to the time when they read the book, the effect it had in their life, for example. The second part of this activity consists of thinking of a

book or an author that students enjoyed when they were young and they are invited to discuss whether adults can be disappointed in the same book though reading it influenced them at a younger period of their life.

7.1.2 The speaking sections in EFL textbooks

The selected sample of oral activities in EFL language courses aims to be illustrative of the range of the speaking activities published between 2009 and 2013. To start with, it is important to point out that the term speaking is not in generalised use in the sample provided, though the aims and content of the selected sampling respond to this title. The reason for this lies in the mastery of the four language skills as a prevalent feature used in EFL course books. In this sense, the speaking skill is used in combination with some other skills such as writing, reading and listening (i.e., *Global* and *New English File*). Moreover, the use of metaphors that encourage the learning and practice of the speaking activities happens in the headlines of the six course books in *New Headway* (see table 7.1).

Table 7.1 A map of the EFL course books sample

	Global (G)	***New Headway (NH)***	***New English File (NEF)***	***Straightforward (ST)***	***English Unlimited (EU)***
Beginner (A1)	Unit 1 *Writing and Speaking*	Unit 6 *Talking about you*	Unit 1 *Speaking and Writing*	Unit 11 *Speaking*	Unit 4 *Speaking*
Elementary (A2)	Unit 6 *Speaking*	Unit 9 *Practice*	Unit 5 *Speaking*	Unit 3 *Speaking*	Unit 12 *Speaking*
Pre-Intermediate (A2+/B1-)	Unit 4 *Speaking*	Unit 2 *Everyday English*	Unit 6 *Speaking*	Unit 8 *Speaking*	Unit 8 *Speaking*
Intermediate (B1)	Unit 2 *Speaking*	Unit 3 *Everyday English*	Unit 5 *Speaking*	Unit 6 *Speaking*	Unit 6 *Speaking*
Upper-Intermediate (B2)	Unit 3 *Speaking*	Unit 9 *Everyday English*	Unit 5 *Speaking*	Unit 10 *Speaking*	Unit 5 *Speaking*
Advanced (C1)	Unit 6 *Speaking*	Unit 8 *The last word*	Unit 1 *Speaking*	Unit 9 *Speaking*	Unit 3 *Speaking*

To sum up, the sample of the speaking activities can be divided into three main groups. This classification simply obeys comprehensive reasons for the

reader, so it will not be considered in any further analysis in this research. The first group encompasses activities in which students are required to read a dialogue, discuss something with a partner or give a lecture. The second group of activities are aimed at practising prescriptive and functional grammar by means of writing dialogues. Finally, the third group consists of some examples of role-play activities in which students are encouraged to work in groups practising new dialogues to go over a linguistic function in a given context and act them out as well as discussing some relevant matters and then describing briefly some of the aspects they were required to work on. Table 7.2 includes more explicit information on the requirements for the *speaking* activity samples.

7.1.3 A reference frame for the speaking activity samples

Table 7.2 illustrates the main features of the *speaking* activity samples in the five series of EFL textbooks such as the skills prompted (reading, writing, speaking and listening) and the kind of work students are required to produce (e.g., reading aloud, talk/speaking, ask and answer, pragmatics and role play/exchange roles). Moreover, it is convenient to consider both that the linguistic source in EFL course books originates in a style of language that has been used and developed in foreign language teaching and learning materials up until today, and that the topics of the activities are covered in relation to the curricula content and design, in general terms.

Table 7.2 Distribution of the statements in the speaking activity samples at the six proficiency levels

Skills	***Statements in EFL activities***	**A1**	**A2**	**A2+/B1-**	**B1**	**B2**	**C1**
Individual Pair – group Work	Work in pairs / with a partner	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Work in small groups		√		√	√	√
	Individual work		√	√	√		√
Reading	Read and listen (to the dialogue)	√					
	Read the conversations (together)		√				
	Read the advice and answer the questions					√	
	Read some quotations and complete them with a suitable word						√
	Listen to two conversations			√			

Listening	Listen to three people speaking			√			
	Listen to all the groups' ideas.				√	√	√
	Listen to compare your ideas with the original quotations						√
Reading aloud	Practise the conversations (stress and intonation)		√				
	Choose two conversations from Grammar exercise 2. Read each one together and then try to continue it.		√				
	Practise the conversations with a partner.			√			
Talk **(*Speaking*)**	Prepare a short presentation		√				
	Talk in small groups	√					
	Have a conversation and buy some medicine		√				
	Practise the conversations with a partner			√			
	Talk about the topic for thirty seconds without stopping			√			
	Talk about a member of your family				√		
	Talk together about your problems				√		
	Talk about two jobs you like/hate						√
Writing	Write about something (a car)	√					
	Complete the conversations using the comparative form of the adjectives		√				
	Prepare a short presentation of your home. Use the words from the lesson…		√				
	Write down some opinions				√		
	Write your answers to the questions in note form				√		
	Take notes to hold / follow a debate					√	
	Make notes describing something						√
	Write some conversations for these situations …						√
	Write words/expressions you could use to describe/to talk about …						√
Ask and answer	Ask questions (to play a game / to complete a form)	√					
	Ask for and give opinions				√		
	Ask and answer questions	√		√		√	
Pragmatics	Interview your partner about a specific topic				√		
	Ask for and give opinions				√		
	Explain what you think about topic				√		√
	Look at the list below and discuss these questions.				√		
	Make suggestions and give each other advice				√		
	Have a debate					√	

	Discuss with a partner your choice // Explain your choice						√
	Argue against the points made by the other					√	
	Prepare some arguments and give examples					√	
Roleplay (Exchange roles)	Roleplay your dialogue	√					
	Change roles and have another conversation / Swap roles and repeat		√	√			

7.2 Data collection

Considering that our main interest lies both in examining a sample of speaking activities in EFL textbooks and exploring the accomplishment of the CEFR descriptors in these kinds of activities, the illustrative scales of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the oral modality categorized in chapter 4 of the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 56-62, 63-82) have been used as reference material to carry out this investigation.

This chapter is organized in two parts. First, section 7.2.1 introduces the number and distribution of the subscales of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR. Second, section 7.2.2 examines those CEFR descriptors that need some further revision to be used as the main components in our methodological analysis of the corpus in order to check their fulfilment in the speaking activity samples.

7.2.1 Distribution of the subscales in the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR

This section presents the number and distribution of the subscales for the two Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors provided in the CEFR. The data are organized in two main groups, the Spoken Production descriptors in the CEFR and the Spoken Interaction descriptors (sections 7.2.1.1 and 7.2.1.2, respectively).

7.2.1.1 Number and distribution of the subscales in the Spoken Production descriptors in the CEFR

Table 7.3 illustrates the number of the subscales contained in the five Spoken Production descriptors in the CEFR. It is quite notorious the lack of correlation between the number of subscales in the five Spoken Production descriptors and the six learning stages.

Table 7.3 Number of subscales for each Spoken Production descriptor at the six levels of proficiency provided in the CEFR

	Overall Spoken Production	Sustained monologue: Describing Experience	Sustained monologue: (a debate)	Public Announcements	Addressing Audiences	No of subscales per level
A1	1	1	0	0	1	**3**
A2	1	8	0	1	4	**14**
A2+/B1-	2	14	1	2	4	**23**
B1	1	8	2	1	2	**14**
B2	2	1	4	1	4	**12**
C1	1	2	0	1	2	**6**
No of subscales per descriptor	**8**	**34**	**7**	**6**	**16**	

Indeed, table 7.3 shows that the subscales for the five Spoken Production descriptors in the CEFR are irregularly distributed either per level or per descriptor. As regards the distribution of the subscales in the six levels of proficiency, the descriptor, *Sustained Monologue: Describing Experience* (DE), covers the highest rate with a total of 34 subscales irregularly distributed. Subsequently, the descriptor *Addressing Audiences* (AU) follows with only 16 subscales and it hardly reaches the 50 per cent of the highest rank of subscales in this group. The number of subscales continues to decline in number in the three remaining Production descriptors. On the one hand, the descriptor *Overall Spoken Production* covers 8 subscales. After that, the descriptor *Sustained Monologue: a debate* (Deb) shows an irregular oscillation of the subscales, ranging from 0 to 4. The value zero[26] indicates that the CEFR provides no subscale for the following three levels (i.e. Beginner, Elementary and Advanced).

[26] See section 7.2.3.3 for the absence of the Spoken Production descriptors in the CEFR.

Finally, the descriptor *Public Announcements* covers the lowest number of subscales in five learning stages out of five, since the CEFR does not provide any subscale at the Beginner level.

7.2.1.2 Number and distribution of the subscales in the Spoken Interaction descriptors in the CEFR

This section takes account of a brief overview of the number of subscales in descending order for each one of the nine Spoken Interaction descriptors in the CEFR as shown in table 7.4.

Table 7.4 Number of subscales for each Spoken Interaction descriptor at the six levels of proficiency provided in the CEFR

	Overall Spoken Production	**Understanding a native speaker interlocutor**	**Conversation**	**Informal discussion (friends**	**Formal discussion**	**Goal-oriented co-operation**	**Transactions to obtain goods and services**	**Information exchange**	**Interviewing and being interviewed**	**No of subscales per level**
A1	2	2	3	0	0	2	2	4	1	**16**
A2	5	4	8	6	3	4	8	10	2	**50**
A2+/B1-	5	3	8	8	3	5	6	8	3	**49**
B1	5	1	4	9	3	6	4	6	4	**42**
B2	4	1	3	5	5	3	3	4	2	**30**
C1	1	1	1	1	2	3	3	4	1	**17**
No of subscales per descriptor	**22**	**12**	**27**	**29**	**16**	**23**	**26**	**36**	**13**	

In order to facilitate the overview of the oscillating number of the subscales and the lack of a systematic sequence in the nine Spoken Interaction descriptors, the erratic distribution of the subscales will be organized in three major groups in accordance with the number of subscales provided in the CEFR.

The first group consists of an only descriptor, *Information Exchange* (IE), with the highest number of subscales in the group (36 subscales). The number of subscales for the second group of Interaction descriptors oscillates between a minimum of 22 and a maximum of 29 subscales. Heading the list of the second

group, we find the descriptor *Informal Discussion* (ID) with a total of 29 subscales, ranging from zero to nine as the highest value. The zero score at the Beginner level (A1) indicates that the CEFR does not provide any descriptors at this level. The descriptor *Conversation* (CON) follows with a total of 27 subscales distributed with one subscale at the Advanced level (C1) as in the previous descriptor, ID. Subsequently, the descriptor *Transactions to Obtain Goods and Services* (TOGS) comes next with 26 subscales. Then, the descriptor *Goal-Oriented Co-operation* (GOCO) follows covering a total number of 23 subscales. Finally, the descriptor *Overall Spoken Interaction* (OSI) covers up to a maximum of 22 subscales.

The third and last group of the three remaining Interaction descriptors shows an oscillating number of subscales ranging from 12, 13 and 16. Whereas the descriptor, *Formal Discussion* (FD), consists of 16 subscales, in descending order the descriptor, *Interviewing and being Interviewed* (IBI), comprises 13 subscales and the descriptor, *Understanding a Native Speaker Interlocutor* (UNSI), consists of a total of 12 subscales.

7.2.2 An overview of some relevant features about the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR

This section analyses the criteria for which some of the components in the subscales of the CEFR descriptors require some kind of amendment and further revision for the present investigation. First, we consider the peculiar classification of the six levels of proficiency adopted by the publishers of the five series of EFL textbook samples (section 7.2.2.1), since it differs from the original distribution of the six-learning stages put forward in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 36). Subsequently, the reasons for subdividing the holistic scales of descriptors in the CEFR into their constituents are introduced in section (7.2.2.2). After that, evidence and explanation of the absence of some Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors at particular learning stages in the CEFR is provided in section (7.2.2.3). Finally, the repetition of some Spoken Production and

Interaction descriptors in the CEFR is revealed, since the reiteration of some subscales may affect the results of this study (section 7.2.2.4).

7.2.2.1 The Pre-Intermediate level in the five series of EFL textbooks

This chapter introduces the inconsistency of the differing learning stages between the two referential sources for this study, the CEFR descriptors and the five series of EFL textbooks. It should be remembered that whereas the six levels in the CEFR range from the lowest to the highest level (A1 to C2), the EFL textbooks series chosen for this investigation covered the Pre-Intermediate level instead of the "mastery" (C2) level as in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 23). On the other hand, the structural readjustment of the six-learning stages in the EFL textbook samples with the addition of the Pre-Intermediate level (and the avoidance of the highest proficiency level in the CEFR) resulted from the distinction of the "criterion levels." Thus, the "plus" and "minus" levels in the CEFR have been particularly designed to be applied to the Elementary (A2) and the Pre-Intermediate (B1) levels of proficiency (Council of Europe 2001a, 32).

Indeed, the "criterion levels" of proficiency are represented in the CEFR by a thin horizontal line in the box containing the scales of descriptors. When the standard level is significantly higher than that represented by the criterion level, it is indicated by the sign plus (+), while the sign minus (–) indicates that the standard for the following level is not achieved (Council of Europe 2001a, 32). In this sense, the CEFR points out the existence of cut-off points between levels as well as evidencing the relevance of a flexible branching scheme that facilitates developing the branches relevant to diverse institutions (e.g., ELT publishing houses in our corpus). Table 7.5 illustrates the difference between the two criterion and plus levels with the descriptor (OSI) one of the many examples we found in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 74).

Table 7.5 Levels A2 and B1: *Overall Spoken Interaction*

B1	Can communicate with some confidence on familiar routine and non-routine matters related to his/her interests and professional field. Can exchange, check and confirm information, deal with less routine situations and explain why something is a problem. Can express thoughts on more abstract, cultural topics such as films, books, music etc.
	Can exploit a wide range of simple language to deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling. Can enter unprepared into conversation on familiar topics, express personal opinions and exchange information on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).
A2	Can interact with reasonable ease in structured situations and short conversations, provided the other person helps if necessary. Can manage simple, routine exchanges without undue effort; can ask and answer questions and exchange ideas and information on familiar topics in predictable everyday situations.
	Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters to do with work and free time. Can handle very short social exchanges but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own accord.

Finally, it should be noticed that the subdivision of the "criterion levels" of proficiency is possible in levels such as A2, B1 and B2. However, the "minus" and "plus" criterion levels are not represented in all the Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 37). Therefore, in order to avoid biased results in our research, the absence of the plus (A2+) and minus (B1-) distinction in some descriptors at Elementary and Intermediate levels made us consider their full criteria instead (see Appendices C and D).

7.2.2.2 The holistic 'Can Do' descriptors in the CEFR and their constituent parts

The holistic approach of the illustrative bank of Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR deserves our attention because the diverse features contained in one and the same descriptor may hamper their analysis and the consequent design of the tables for further study. In this sense, the subdivision of the great variety of components for one and the same descriptor into subscales in the CEFR contributed to uncovering the quality criteria of the speaking activity samples in order to facilitate further analysis on the accomplishment of these descriptors through the individual treatment of the subscales for each descriptor. The integrated content of a descriptor in the CEFR

and the corresponding subdivision into subscales used for this study is illustrated in Appendices C and D.

7.2.2.3 The absence of some Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR

There is evidence showing that some scales in the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors are not available in the CEFR. The reasons for this absence are explained in different parts of the CEFR admitting that, for example, not all sub-categories for every level have descriptors because "some activities cannot be undertaken until a certain level of competence has been reached. Others may cease to be an objective at higher levels" (Council of Europe 2001a, 25). On the other hand, the CEFR also justifies the lack of descriptors in a particular area (e.g. of knowledge, of immediate need, etc.) and at a particular level arguing that "not every level is described on all scales" due to one of several different reasons, or to a combination of them such as that:

- The area exists at this level: some descriptors were included in the research project, but were dropped in quality control;
- The area probably exists at this level: descriptors could presumably be written, but haven't been;
- The area may exist at this level: but formulation seems to be very difficult if not impossible;
- The area doesn't exist or isn't relevant at this level; a distinction cannot be made here.

(Council of Europe 2001a, 36)

Finally, tables 7.6 and 7.7 illustrate the absence of scales for the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors at different learning stages in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 59-60), though the reasons for being ignored in the CEFR are not discussed in this study.

Table 7.6 Spoken Production descriptors: *Sustained Monologue: (e.g., in a Debate)* and *Public Announcements* (Council of Europe 2001a, 59, 60)

	SUSTAINED MONOLOGUE: Putting a case (e.g., in a debate)	**PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS**
A1	*No descriptor available*	
A2	*No descriptor available*	----------
C1	*No descriptor available*	----------

Table 7.7 Oral Interaction descriptors: *Informal Discussion (with friends)* and *Formal Discussion and Meetings* (Council of Europe 2001a, 77-78)

	INFORMAL DISCUSSION (WITH FRIENDS)	**FORMAL DISCUSSION AND MEETINGS**
A1	*No descriptor available*	Note: The descriptors on this sub-scale have not been empirically calibrated with the measurement model.

7.2.2.4 The repetition of Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR

This chapter considers the notorious repetition and restatement of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in some illustrative scales at the same learning stage (see Appendices C and D). The coincidences in content of the statements in different descriptors and between different learning stages have been classified in the following three groups.

First, the recurrent scales for the descriptor *Overall Spoken Production* at the Upper-Intermediate and Advanced levels are reproduced in two different Production descriptors such as (AU, DE and DE, respectively) as illustrated in table 7.8.

Table 7.8 Recurrence of the subscales at the Upper-Intermediate and Advanced levels for the descriptor *Overall Spoken Production*

OVERALL SPOKEN PRODUCTION	
B2 • Give clear, systematically developed descriptions and presentation. • Give clear, detailed descriptions on a range of wide subjects within his/her field of interest, expanding and supporting ideas with subsidiary points and relevant examples.	**repeated in B2** • Addressing Audiences • Sustained monologue: Describing Experience
C1	**repeated in C1**

• Give clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on complex subjects, integrating sub themes, developing particular points and appropriate conclusion. •	• Sustained monologue: Describing Experience

Second, the repetition of the subscales for three Interaction descriptors such as (OSI, ID and GOCO) at the following three levels such as Beginner, Elementary and Intermediate is evidenced in table 7.9.

Table 7.9 Repetition of the subscales in three Spoken Interaction descriptors at levels A1, A2 and B1

OVERALL SPOKEN INTERACTION	
A1 • Asking and answering simple questions, initiating and responding to simple statements in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.	**repeated in A1** • Information Exchange
A2 • Managing simple, routine exchanges without undue effort • How to handle very short social exchanges but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own accord.	**repeated in A2** • Understanding a native speaker interlocutor • Information exchange • Conversation
B1 • Expressing thoughts on more abstract, cultural topics such as films, books, music, etc.	**repeated in B1** • Informal discussion
INFORMAL DISCUSSION	
B1 • Expressing thoughts on more abstract, cultural topics such as films, books, music, etc.	**repeated in B1** Overall Spoken Interaction
B2 • Expressing his/her ideas and opinions with precision, present and respond to complex lines of argument convincingly	**repeated in A2** • Formal Discussion
GOAL-ORIENTED CO-OPERATION	
A1 • Asking people for things, and giving people things	**repeated in A1** • Transactions to obtain goods and services

Finally, the same wording of scales for two subsequent levels (B2 and C1) in three Interaction descriptors such as (GOCO, TOGS and IE) is shown in table 7.10.

Table 7.10 Repetition of the subscales descriptors at the Upper-Intermediate and Advanced levels in some Interaction descriptors in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001a, 79-81)

	GOAL-ORIENTED CO-OPERATION
C1	*As B2*
B2	*Can understand detailed instructions reliably.* *Can help along the progress of the work by inviting others to join in, say what they think, etc.* *Can outline an issue or a problem clearly, speculating about causes or consequences, and weighing advantages and disadvantages of different approaches.*
	TRANSACTIONS TO OBTAIN GOODS AND SERVICES
C1	*As B2*
B2	*Can cope linguistically to negotiate a solution to a dispute like an undeserved traffic ticket, financial responsibility for damage in a flat, for blame regarding an accident.* *Can outline a case for compensation, using persuasive language to demand satisfaction and state clearly the limits to any concession he/she is prepared to make.*
	Can explain a problem which has arisen and make it clear that the provider of the service/customer must make a concession.
	INFORMATION EXCHANGE
C1	*As B2*
B2	*Can understand and exchange complex information and advice on the full range of matters related to his/her occupational role.*
	Can pass on detailed information reliably. *Can give a clear, detailed description of how to carry out a procedure.* *Can synthesise and report information and arguments from a number of sources.*

Despite the interest in an improved classification of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR, we cannot provide a further analysis on the significance of this particular question, since a more comprehensive treatment of this subject would oblige us to develop a further study and would deviate from our main concerns in this dissertation.

7.3 Quantitative data analysis

This section takes account of the design of two table templates that serve to show the fulfilment of the two Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors, when examining the sample of the thirty speaking activities in EFL textbooks. The table templates are displayed individually in the following two sections (7.3.1 and 7.3.2, respectively).

7.3.1 A template to measure the attainment of the Spoken Production descriptors in the speaking activity samples

Table 7.11 shows the number of subscales for the five Spoken Production descriptors provided in the CEFR and the accomplished subscales in the five series of EFL courses. This template shows the number of subscales for the five Spoken Production descriptors that have been accomplished in the five series of EFL textbooks.

Table 7.11 displays the five Spoken Production descriptors in the left column and the five EFL courses are located below each descriptor. The horizontal top row is organized into six columns indicating the six proficiency levels running from A1 to C1. In addition, each course book has a small box which is divided into two further boxes. The box on the left contains both the original number of subscales for each descriptor at a particular learning stage in the CEFR (denominator) and the accomplished subscales for each one of the speaking activity samples at a particular proficiency level (numerator). As regards the small box on the right, it indicates the percentage of the subscales fulfilled in each one of the activities at the six levels of proficiency.

As far as concerns the top horizontal row, it is distributed into six columns indicating the six proficiency levels. In its turn, each textbook has a small box which is divided into two further boxes. The box on the left reproduces both the original number of subscales for each descriptor at a particular learning stage in the CEFR (denominator) and the accomplished subscales for each one of the speaking activities sample at a particular proficiency level (numerator). As regards the small box on the right, it indicates the percentage of the subscales fulfilled in each one of the activities at the six levels of proficiency.

Table 7.11 Template to illustrate the number of subscales fulfilled in the Spoken Production descriptors

	A1		**A2**		**A2⁺B1⁻**		**B1**		**B2**		**C1**	
Overall Spoken Production												
Global	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%
New Headway	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%
New English File	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%
Straightforward	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%
English Unlimited	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%
Descriptors												

Additionally, the boxes below the proficiency levels are coloured to assist the reader at a glimpse of the fulfilment of the Spoken Production descriptors. The grey and blue boxes are indicative of the negative fulfilment of the descriptors: blue indicates that the speaking activity did not fulfil any of the descriptors at a particular level of proficiency; while grey represents the absence of descriptors in the CEFR. Three more colours are used to indicate the partial fulfilment of descriptors up to 50 per cent (i.e., purple) and below 50 per cent (i.e., pink) as well as their full attainment which is represented in yellow.

7.3.2 A template to measure the attainment of the Spoken Interaction descriptors in the speaking activity samples

Table 7.12 illustrates the number of subscales for the Spoken Interaction descriptors provided in the CEFR as well as the fulfilled subscales in the speaking activity samples. This template shows the number of subscales for the nine Spoken Interaction descriptors that have been accomplished in the five series of EFL textbooks.

In more detail, the nine Spoken Interaction descriptors are located in the left column of the table and below each descriptor we find the five EFL courses. The horizontal top row is organized into six columns indicating the six proficiency levels running from A1 to C1. In addition, each course book has a small box which is divided into two further boxes. The box on the left contains both the original number of subscales for each descriptor at a particular learning stage in the CEFR (denominator) and the accomplished subscales for each one of the speaking activity samples at a particular proficiency level (numerator). As regards the small box on the right, it indicates the percentage of the subscales fulfilled in each one of the activities at the six levels of proficiency.

Additionally, the boxes below the proficiency levels are coloured to assist the reader at a glimpse of the fulfilment of the Spoken Interaction descriptors. The grey and blue boxes are indicative of the negative fulfilment of the descriptors: blue indicates that a speaking sample did not fulfil any of the descriptors at a particular level of proficiency; while grey represents the absence

of descriptors in the CEFR. Three more colours are used to indicate the partial fulfilment of descriptors up to 50 per cent (i.e., purple) and below 50 per cent (i.e., pink) as well as their full attainment, which is represented in yellow.

Table 7.12 Template to illustrate the number of subscales fulfilled in the Spoken Interaction descriptors

	A1		A2		$A2^{+}B1^{-}$		B1		B2		C1	
Overall Spoken Interaction												
Global	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%
New Headway	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%
New English File	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%
Straightforward	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%
English Unlimited	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%	/	%
Descriptors												

7.4 Qualitative data analysis

This section explores the relationship between the accomplishment of the CEFR descriptors and the classical concept of the four language skills (e.g., reading, writing, speaking and listening) as inferred from the statements in the speaking activities sample. A qualitative descriptive analysis of these data will facilitate the elaboration of the answers for the two remaining research questions as we shall see in chapter 8 which is devoted to present the results obtained from this analysis. In addition, the two subsequent sections (7.4.1 and 7.4.2) describe the content and the purpose for which some table templates have been designed to illustrate the most relevant aspects inferred from the two last research questions.

7.4.1 A template to illustrate the four language skills in the speaking activity samples

Table 7.13 assists the reader in answering the second research question: "What aspects of the four language skills are apparent in the *speaking* activities in EFL textbooks to carry out communicative tasks?" as well as in identifying the

use of the four language skills, reading, writing, listening and speaking, promoted in the *speaking* activities sample.

The table template was particularly designed to inquiry the most relevant features of the language quality promoted in the speaking activities covering the six learning stages in the five series of EFL textbooks. It is divided into two main columns in which low and high proficiency levels are distinguished (i.e. Beginner, Elementary and Pre-Intermediate, on the left column, and Intermediate, Upper-Intermediate and Advanced, on the right column). As far as the low level group is concerned, the language skills prompted in the activities are distributed into five rows, whereas the high level group consists of three rows. The low number of rows in the latter group obeys to the fact that the skill of listening does not have a counterpart at high levels as we shall report when presenting and discussing the results of this study in chapters 8 and 9, respectively.

Table 7.13 Template to illustrate the four language skills in the speaking activities sample in EFL textbooks

LOW LEVELS			**HIGH LEVELS**		
Linguistic features of activities	**levels**	**textbooks**	**Linguistic features of activities**	**levels**	**textbooks**
W + Ra			**W + S**		
R + (W) + Ra			**R + (W) + S**		
R + L + (W) + Ra			**R + L + (W) + S**		
L + Ra			---	---	---
L + W + Ra			---	---	---

7.4.2 A template to illustrate the speaking skill as the ultimate goal of the speaking activity samples at low and high levels of proficiency

As explained in section 7.4.1, the templates in tables 7.14 and 7.15 show additional information to assist the reader in answering the second research question: “What aspects of the four language skills are apparent in the *speaking* activities in EFL textbooks to carry out communicative tasks?”

Table 7.14 serves to illustrate the scope of the skill of speaking in combination with the remaining language skills (i.e., writing, reading and listening) at low learning stages such as Beginner (A1), Elementary (A2) and Pre-Intermediate ($A2^{+}/B1^{-}$). The far left column of the template reproduces the linguistic structure for analysis with the subsequent identification of the proficiency level and the course book with the particular statement.

Table 7.14 Template to illustrate the speaking skill as the ultimate goal of the speaking activities sample at low levels of proficiency

LOW LEVELS			
Linguistic features	**Level**	**Textbooks**	**Statements**
W + S	**A1**		
	A2		
	$A2^{+}$		
R + (W) + S	**A2**		
	$A2^{+}$		
R + L + (W) + S	**A1**		
L + S	**A2+**		
L + W + S	**A2+**		

Subsequently, table 7.15 displays the statements of the speaking activity samples at high levels of proficiency such as Intermediate (B1), Upper-Intermediate (B2) and Advanced (C1) in order to see the scope of the skill of speaking in combination with the rest of language skills. As in the prior template (table 7.14), the far left column of the template reproduces the linguistic features for analysis with the subsequent identification of the proficiency level and the course book with the particular statement.

Table 7.15 Template to illustrate the speaking skill as the ultimate goal of the speaking activities sample at high levels of proficiency

HIGH LEVELS			
Linguistic features	**Level**	**Textbooks**	**Statements**
W + S	**B1**		
	C1		
R + W + S	**B1**		
	B2		
	C1		
R + L + W + S	**C1**		

7.4.3 A template to show the fulfilment of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the five series of EFL textbooks

Table 7.16 has been specifically designed to answer the third research question: "Is there a correlation between the content of the speaking activity samples and the statements of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR?" To this effect, the table template illustrates the accomplishment of the Production and Interaction descriptors in the five series of EFL textbooks at the six levels of proficiency, so the same design of the template table will serve as a basis for the six proficiency levels and for presenting the results in section (8.2.3).

Table 7.16 Template to illustrate the fulfilment of the Production and Interaction descriptors

		PRODUCTION DESCRIPTORS				***INTERACTION DESCRIPTORS***					
		OSP	**DE**	**Deb.**	**AU**	***OSI***	***CON***	***ID***	***TOGS***	***IE***	***IBI***
A1	**Global**										
	New Headway										
	New English File										
	Straightforward										
	English Unlimited										

The left-hand column, in table 7.16, indicates the learning stage under study and next to it we find the corresponding five course books. Next, the third and fourth columns display the fulfilment of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors. Furthermore, each textbook has a small box that indicates whether the descriptor is fulfilled or not.

With reference to the number of boxes for the two Spoken descriptors displayed in the table template, we realise that they contain a different quantity compared to the original number of the two Spoken descriptors in the CEFR. The reason is that some descriptors were not fulfilled in the five series of the speaking activities samples (see section 7.2.2.3). Thus, the Production descriptors are distributed into four boxes including (i.e. *Overall Spoken Production*, *Describing Experience*, *Debate* and *Addressing Audiences*), whereas the Spoken Interaction descriptors are organized into the following six boxes: *Overall Spoken Interaction*, *Conversation*, *Informal Discussion*, *Transactions to Obtain Goods and Services*, *Information Exchange* and *Interviewing and being Interviewed*.

7.5 Symbols used in the tables for quantitative and qualitative analysis

This section indicates each of the symbols that have been used in this investigation to represent the particular features of the speaking activity samples (i.e., titles of the course books, the proficiency levels and the four language skills) and the headlines of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors as well as the absence of subscales in some descriptors.

7.5.1 The five series of EFL textbooks

- GL stands for the textbook *Global*
- NH stands for the textbook *New Headway*
- NEF stands for the textbook *New English File*
- ST stands for the textbook *Straightforward*

- EU stands for the textbook *English Unlimited*
- It should be noted that a textbook between brackets means that the activity sample may be established on an optional basis in accordance with the teacher's pedagogical criteria.

7.5.2 The six levels of proficiency in the five series of EFL textbooks

- A1 means the Beginner level
- A2 means the Elementary level
- $A2^{+}/B1^{-}$ means the Pre-Intermediate level
- B1 means the Intermediate level
- B2 means the Upper-Intermediate level
- C1 means the Advanced level

7.5.3 The Spoken Production descriptors in the CEFR

- OSP stands for *Overall Spoken Production*
- DE stands for *Sustained monologue: Describing Experience*
- Deb stands for *Sustained monologue: a Debate*
- PA stands for *Public Announcements*
- AU stands for *Addressing Audiences*

7.5.4 The Spoken Interaction descriptors in the CEFR

- *OSI* stands for *Overall Spoken Interaction*
- *CON* stands for *Conversation*
- *ID* stands for *Informal Discussion (with friends)*
- *TOGS* stands for *Transactions to Obtain Goods and Services*

- *IE* stands for *Information Exchange*
- *IBI* stands for *Interviewing and being Interviewed*

7.5.5 The zero value of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR

- 0 is used to represent that the speaking activity samples did not fulfil the subscales of a descriptor
- ø means that the CEFR did not provide a subscale for a descriptor

7.5.6 The four language skills

The linguistic abilities students are expected to practise through the speaking activities have been systematised in accordance with the traditional linguistic division of language into the four skills:

- R stands for reading
- S stands for speaking
- L stands for listening
- W stands for writing
- (W) the bracket indicates that the skill of writing has been conceived as an optional activity

7.5.7 The speaking skill is subsequent to one or more language skills at low and high levels of proficiency

The list below displays the representative linguistic characteristics featured in the speaking activity samples and is accompanied with some examples

of the instructional statements for completion of tasks as they appear in EFL textbooks distinguishing the stage of language proficiency in which they occur.

- (**W** + **S**)

At low levels of proficiency,
this represents that after writing down the answer to the activity students are encouraged to read it aloud (i.e. in order to practice the pronunciation skills).

e.g. *Complete the conversations using the comparative form of the adjective (...). Practice the conversation in exercise 1. Be careful with stress and intonation.*

At high levels of proficiency,
this indicates that after writing down their answers learners are required to utter them without looking at the exercise they have previously written in their notebook.

e.g. *With a partner, write some conversations for these situations, using tactful, polite language. Choose one and act it out in front of the class.*

- (**R** + **W** + **S**)

At low levels of proficiency,
this indicates that after reading a previous text and writing a complementary activity, learners are expected to read it aloud.

e.g. *Ask and answer in pairs. A ask B How long ...? Questions with a verb phrase. B answer with for or since (...). Then swap roles.*

At high levels of proficiency,
this indicates that learners after reading a source text about the topic to be developed in the spoken modality, will be encouraged to write down their answers in their notebooks.

e.g. *Think about two jobs you could talk about. Use the questions below to help you. Add any other information that you think would be relevant. Use the words and phrases in Vocabulary Bank to help you.*

- (**R** + **(W)** + **S**)

At low levels of proficiency,
this means that after reading aloud the introductory text in the activity, students are required to write down some new information to obtain a new exemplification in the final part of this activity, students will be encouraged to read it aloud,

e.g. *Read the conversations from Grammar Exercise 2 together. Change some information in the conversations from Grammar Exercise 2. Then read them together.*

At high levels of proficiency,
this is used to represent those instructional statements in EFL language courses that require learners to discuss a topic which involves the prior reading of its source to inform students.

e.g. *Work in pairs. Look at the list of life-changing events below and discuss these questions.*

- (**R** + **W** + **L** + **S**)

At low levels of proficiency,
this indicates that learners after reading and listening to a text with the option to writing it down, are encouraged to role play the resulting dialogue.

e.g. *Read and listen to the dialogue. Match it to one of the pictures A-D. Work in pairs. Choose a different picture and make a similar dialogue. Role play your dialogue.*

At high levels of proficiency,

this represents that learners, after reading a source text about the main topic in the activity, will be encouraged to listen to the original source.

e.g. *Read some quotations about freedom and slavery, and complete each one with a suitable word, as in the example. Then listen to compare your ideas with the original quotations. (...) Which quotation did you like best, and why?*

- (**L** + **S**)

At low levels of proficiency,

this stands for those activities in which students are required to read a dialogue aloud after having listened to it.

e.g. *Listen to two conversations. (...). Listen and check. Practice the conversations with a partner.*

- (**L** + **W** + **S**)

At low levels of proficiency,

this indicates that after listening to a dialogue and writing the answer down, learners are expected to provide their answers in the oral modality of language either reading their answers aloud or explaining them. Teachers or students will be able to decide previously what modality of oral language they are going to use when answering the practice in the unit (e.g. reading aloud or speaking).

e.g. *Listen to three people speaking (...). Choose a topic from the list. You must talk about the topic for thirty seconds without stopping. Before you speak, spend some time preparing what you are going to say.*

CHAPTER 8

Results

This chapter presents our findings about the accomplishment of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the speaking activity samples in quantitative terms. From a qualitative approach, it explores, on the one hand, the correspondence between the four language skills in EFL textbooks and the statements of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR. On the other hand, it examines the interdependence between the content of the speaking activities sample and the statements of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CERF.

This chapter is organized into two main parts in order to evaluate the results obtained from the analysis of the three research questions from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives. The quantitative outcomes are presented, first, in section 8.1. And, subsequently, section 8.2 deals with the qualitative study of the results.

8.1 The quantitative results of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR

This section is based on the insight we have gained in our understanding of the quantitative results which have been obtained from the analysis of contrasting the degree of attainment of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR and the sample of speaking activities in EFL textbooks.

The quantitative results are organized into two main sections dealing with the Spoken Production (section 8.1.1) and Interaction (section 8.1.2) descriptors. In turn, the two sections are subdivided into three further subsections each. First, the complete fulfilment of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the speaking activity samples is provided in sections 8.1.1.1 and 8.1.2.1. Then, the partial fulfilment of the two Spoken descriptors continues in sections 8.1.1.2 and

8.1.2.2. After that, the zero value of these kinds of descriptors is shown in sections 8.1.1.3 and 8.1.2.3. Finally, section 8.1.3 provides an overview of the most relevant outcomes inferred from the accomplishment of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the sample of speaking activities.

Before turning to the quantitative results in detail, it should be remembered that the calculation of the Confidence Intervals confirmed the validity of the size of the thirty speaking activity samples (see Chapter 7). On the one hand, 87 Spoken Production descriptors out of 360 were met in the thirty speaking activities with the Confidence Intervals ranging from 19.83% and 28.93%. On the other hand, 92 Spoken Interaction descriptors out of 1020 were met in the thirty speaking activities with the Confidence Intervals ranging from 7.33% and 10.95%.

8.1.1 Attainment of the Spoken Production descriptors in the speaking activity samples in the five series of EFL textbooks: answering the first research question

This section responds to the first research question: "To what extent do the speaking activities in EFL textbooks match the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR?" It consists of three subsections that explore the degree of accomplishment (complete, partial and the zero value) from the Spoken Production descriptors in the five series of ELF textbooks. Table 8.1 illustrates the results achieved from the analysis referred to in terms of number and percentage. The coloured boxes assist the reader further to appreciate relevant trends clearly emerging from an initial and visual examination of the results.

Table 8.1 Fulfilment of the Spoken Production descriptors in the speaking activity samples in EFL textbooks

CEFR LEVELS IN EFL TEXTBOOKS						
	A1 Beginner	**A2** Elementary	**A2+/B1-** Pre-Interm.	**B1** Intermediate	**B2** Upper-Interm.	**C1** Advanced
Overall Spoken Production (OSP)						
Global	1/1 (100%)	0/1 (0%)	2/2 (100%)	0/1 (0%)	0/2 (0%)	1/1 (100%)
New Headway	1/1 (100%)	0/1 (0%)	0/2 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	2/2 (100%)	0/1 (0%)
New English File	1/1 (100%)	1/1 (100%)	0/2 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	2/2 (100%)	1/1 (100%)
Straightforward	1/1 (100%)	1/1 (100%)	2/2 (100%)	0/1 (0%)	2/2 (100%)	1/1 (100%)
English Unlimited	1/1 (100%)	0/1 (0%)	0/2 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	2/2 (100%)	1/1 (100%)
Sustained monologue: Describing Experience (DE)						
Global	1/1 (100%)	0/8 (0%)	6/14 (42%)	1/8 (13%)	0/1 (0%)	2/2 (100%)
New Headway	1/1 (100%)	1/8 (13%)	0/14 (0%)	1/8 (13%)	1/1 (100%)	0/2 (0%)
New English File	0/1 (0%)	2/8 (25%)	0/14 (0%)	1/8 (13%)	1/1 (100%)	2/2 (100%)
Straightforward	0/1 (0%)	2/8 (25%)	6/14 (42%)	1/8 (13%)	1/1 (100%)	2/2 (100%)
English Unlimited	0/1 (0%)	0/8 (0%)	0/14 (0%)	1/8 (13%)	1/1 (100%)	2/2 (100%)
Sustained monologue: a Debate (Deb)						
Global	0/0 (0%)	0/0 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	0/2 (0%)	0/4 (0%)	0/0 (0%)
New Headway	0/0 (0%)	0/0 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	0/2 (0%)	1/4 (25%)	0/0 (0%)
New English File	0/0 (0%)	0/0 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	2/2 (100%)	1/4 (25%)	0/0 (0%)
Straightforward	0/0 (0%)	0/0 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	2/2 (100%)	1/4 (25%)	0/0 (0%)
English Unlimited	0/0 (0%)	0/0 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	0/2 (0%)	1/4 (25%)	0/0 (0%)
Public Announcements (PA)						
Global	0/0 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	0/2 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	0/1 (0%)
New Headway	0/0 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	0/2 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	0/1 (0%)
New English File	0/0 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	0/2 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	0/1 (0%)
Straightforward	0/0 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	0/2 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	0/1 (0%)
English Unlimited	0/0 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	0/2 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	0/1 (0%)
Addressing Audiences (AU)						
Global	0/1 (0%)	0/4 (0%)	2/4 50%	1/2 (50%)	0/4 (0%)	1/2 (50%)
New Headway	0/1 (0%)	0/4 (0%)	0/4 (0%)	0/2 (0%)	2/4 (50%)	0/2 (0%)
New English File	0/1 (0%)	1/4 (25%)	0/4 (0%)	1/2 (50%)	2/4 (50%)	1/2 (50%)
Straightforward	0/1 (0%)	1/4 (25%)	2/4 50%	0/2 (0%)	2/4 (50%)	1/2 (50%)
English Unlimited	0/1 (0%)	0/4 (0%)	0/4 (0%)	0/2 (0%)	2/4 (50%)	1/2 (50%)

List of colours representing the accomplishment of the Spoken Production descriptors

Grey	indicates the absence of descriptors in the CEFR
Blue	indicates that descriptors were not fulfilled in any of the five *speaking* activities sample
Purple	represents the partial fulfilment of descriptors up to 50 per cent
Pink	represents the partial fulfilment of descriptors below 50 per cent.
Yellow	points out the full attainment of descriptors

8.1.1.1 The complete fulfilment of the Spoken Production descriptors

Regarding the full accomplishment of the Spoken Production descriptors in the speaking activity samples in EFL textbooks, the yellow boxes in table 8.1 show a remarkably sparse fulfilment of three Spoken Production descriptors in few particular levels of proficiency. There is evidence of a sole descriptor, *Overall Spoken Production*, in which the only subscale was fully accomplished in the five activities at the Beginner level. Even though, the same descriptor and the corresponding subscales at the Upper-Intermediate and Advanced levels were met in the same four textbooks. In contrast, only two different speaking activities matched the subscales at the Elementary and Pre-Intermediate levels.

Subsequently, the descriptor, *Sustained Monologue: Describing Experience,* was fully accomplished at the two higher levels, Upper-Intermediate and Advanced, in the same four textbooks as in the former descriptor *Overall Spoken Production*, whereas the only subscale at the Beginner level for *Sustained Monologue: Describing Experience* was matched in only two activities (e.g., *Global* and *New Headway*).

Finally, the descriptor, *Sustained monologue: a Debate*, was poorly fulfilled, since the two subscales for this descriptor were only accomplished in two *speaking* activities at the Intermediate level (e.g., *New English File* and *Straightforward*).

8.1.1.2 The partial fulfilment of the Spoken Production descriptors

The partial accomplishment of the Spoken Production descriptors deserves our attention, since it offers a striking result in terms of the low percentage of fulfilment of the CEFR descriptors ranging in number from a few (13 per cent) to several which did not exceed the 50 per cent. Table 8.1 shows these results by two differently coloured boxes, pink and purple, respectively.

Regarding the two higher learning stages, Upper-Intermediate and Advanced, the following four descriptors, *Overall Spoken Production*, *Sustained Monologue: Describing Experience*, *Sustained monologue: a Debate* and

Addressing Audiences, were fulfilled both wholly and partially in the same number of textbooks, though alike for each one of the two levels. In particular, *New Headway*, *New English File*, *Straightforward* and *English Unlimited* at the Upper-Intermediate levels and *Global*, *New English File*, *Straightforward* and *English Unlimited* at the Advanced level fully accomplished the corresponding subscales for two descriptors *Overall Spoken Production* and *Sustained Monologue: Describing Experience*. On the other hand, the descriptor, *Addressing Audiences*, was partially fulfilled (not exceeding 50 per cent) at the two higher levels in conjunction with the same four textbooks as for the three previous descriptors mentioned above (see table 8.1).

Finally, the partial accomplishment of the two last Spoken Production descriptors, *Sustained Monologue: Describing Experience* and *Addressing Audiences*, in the remaining three levels (e.g., Elementary, Pre-Intermediate and Intermediate) pointed out striking results in terms of the low percentage of fulfilment ranging in number from a few (e.g., 13 per cent) to several descriptors which did not exceed the 50 per cent.

8.1.1.3 The zero value of the Spoken Production descriptors

This section uncovers evidence of two facts about the lack of fulfilment of the Spoken Production descriptors. First, the CEFR does not provide any statement for some Spoken Production descriptors at certain learning stages. Indeed, the grey boxes, in table 8.1, indicate the absence of two Spoken Production descriptors in the CEFR: *Sustained monologue: a Debate* at the Beginner, Elementary and Advanced levels and *Public Announcements* at the Beginner level (Council of Europe 2001a, 59-60).

And second, some speaking activities in the five series of EFL courses did not fulfil the Production Spoken descriptors. This result is illustrated in table 8.1 by means of blue boxes. On the one hand, the subscales for the descriptor, *Public Announcements*, ranging from the Elementary to the Advanced levels, were not accomplished in any of the five series of the EFL textbooks sample. On the other hand, the sole subscale for the descriptor, *Sustained monologue: a Debate*, at the

Pre-Intermediate level was not accomplished in any of the five speaking activities sample, whereas three course books did not fulfil any of the two subscales at the Intermediate level and only one textbook did not meet any of the four subscales at the Upper-Intermediate level. And third, there was an only subscale that was not accomplished for the descriptor, *Addressing Audiences*, at the Beginner level, while there were some speaking activity samples, from Elementary to the Advanced levels, which did not fulfil the corresponding subscales.

8.1.2 Attainment of the Spoken Interaction descriptors in the speaking activity samples in the five series of EFL textbooks: answering the first research question

This section also responds to the first research question: "To what extent do the speaking activities in EFL textbooks match the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR?" It is organized into three subsections that present the nuanced variants of accomplishment (complete, partial and the zero value) from the Spoken Interaction descriptors in the five series of ELF textbooks.

Table 8.2 displays the results by number and percentage of subscales fulfilled. The coloured boxes are conducive to facilitate the view of the accomplishment of a few subscales in the nine Spoken Interaction descriptors in the five series of EFL textbooks.

Table 8.2 Fulfilment of Spoken Interaction descriptors fulfilled in the *speaking* activities sample in EFL textbooks

CEFR LEVELS IN EFL TEXTBOOKS												
	A1 Beginner		A2 Elementary		A2+/B1- Pre-Interm.		B1 Intermediate		B2 Upper-Interm.		C1 Advanced	
Overall Spoken Interaction (OSI)												
Global	1/2	(50%)	3/5	(60%)	2/5	(40%)	1/5	(20%)	0/4	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
New Headway	1/2	(50%)	0/5	(0%)	0/5	(0%)	1/5	(20%)	0/4	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
New English File	0/2	(0%)	0/5	(0%)	0/5	(0%)	2/5	(40%)	0/4	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
Straightforward	1/2	(50%)	0/5	(0%)	0/5	(0%)	2/5	(40%)	0/4	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
English Unlimited	1/2	(50%)	3/5	(60%)	2/5	(40%)	2/5	(40%)	0/4	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
Understanding a Native Speaker Interlocutor (UNSI)												
Global	0/2	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/1	(0%)	0/1	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
New Headway	0/2	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/1	(0%)	0/1	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
New English File	0/2	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/1	(0%)	0/1	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
Straightforward	0/2	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/1	(0%)	0/1	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
English Unlimited	0/2	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/1	(0%)	0/1	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
Conversation (CON)												
Global	0/3	(0%)	1/8	(13%)	1/8	(13%)	0/4	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
New Headway	0/3	(0%)	0/8	(0%)	1/8	(13%)	0/4	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
New English File	0/3	(0%)	0/8	(0%)	1/8	(13%)	0/4	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
Straightforward	0/3	(0%)	0/8	(0%)	0/8	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
English Unlimited	0/3	(0%)	1/8	(13%)	1/8	(13%)	0/4	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
Informal Discussion (with friends) – (ID)												
Global	0/0	(0%)	0/6	(0%)	0/7	(0%)	2/9	(22%)	0/5	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
New Headway	0/0	(0%)	0/6	(0%)	0/7	(0%)	2/9	(22%)	0/5	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
New English File	0/0	(0%)	0/6	(0%)	0/7	(0%)	2/9	(22%)	0/5	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
Straightforward	0/0	(0%)	0/6	(0%)	0/7	(0%)	2/9	(22%)	0/5	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
English Unlimited	0/0	(0%)	0/6	(0%)	0/7	(%)	2/9	(22%)	0/5	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
Formal Discussion (FD)												
Global	0/0	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/5	(0%)	0/2	(0%)
New Headway	0/0	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/5	(0%)	0/2	(0%)
New English File	0/0	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/5	(0%)	0/2	(0%)
Straightforward	0/0	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/5	(0%)	0/2	(0%)
English Unlimited	0/0	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/5	(0%)	0/2	(0%)
Goal-Oriented Co-operation (GOCO)												
Global	0/2	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/5	(0%)	0/6	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/3	(0%)
New Headway	0/2	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/5	(0%)	0/6	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/3	(0%)
New English File	0/2	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/5	(0%)	0/6	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/3	(0%)
Straightforward	0/2	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/5	(0%)	0/6	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/3	(0%)
English Unlimited	0/2	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/5	(0%)	0/6	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/3	(0%)
Transactions to obtain goods and services (TOGS)												
Global	1/2	(50%)	0/7	(0%)	0/6	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/3	(0%)
New Headway	1/2	(50%)	0/7	(0%)	0/6	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/3	(0%)
New English File	1/2	(50%)	0/7	(0%)	0/6	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/3	(0%)
Straightforward	0/2	(0%)	0/7	(0%)	0/6	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/3	(0%)
English Unlimited	0/2	(0%)	0/7	(0%)	0/6	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/3	(0%)
Information Exchange (IE)												
Global	2/4	(50%)	3/10	(30%)	2/8	(25%)	2/6	(33%)	1/4	(25%)	1/4	(25%)

New Headway	2/4	(50%)	1/10	(10%)	2/8	(25%)	2/6	(33%)	1/4	(25%)	1/4	(25%)
New English File	0/4	(0%)	1/10	(10%)	2/8	(25%)	2/6	(33%)	1/4	(25%)	1/4	(25%)
Straightforward	2/4	(50%)	1/10	(10%)	2/8	(25%)	2/6	(33%)	1/4	(25%)	1/4	(25%)
English Unlimited	2/4	(50%)	3/10	(30%)	2/8	(25%)	2/6	(33%)	1/4	(25%)	1/4	(25%)
Interviewing and being interviewed (IBI)												
Global	1/1	(100%)	0/2	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/2	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
New Headway	1/1	(100%)	0/2	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/2	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
New English File	0/1	(0%)	0/2	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/2	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
Straightforward	1/1	(100%)	0/2	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/2	(0%)	0/1	(0%)
English Unlimited	1/1	(100%)	0/2	(0%)	0/3	(0%)	0/4	(0%)	0/2	(0%)	0/1	(0%)

List of colours representing the accomplishment of the Spoken Interaction descriptors

Grey	indicates the absence of descriptors in the CEFR
Blue	indicates that descriptors were not fulfilled in any of the five *speaking* activities sample
Purple	represents the partial fulfilment of descriptors up to 60 per cent
Pink	represents the partial fulfilment of descriptors below 50 per cent.
Yellow	points out the full attainment of descriptors

8.1.2.1 The complete fulfilment of the Spoken Interaction descriptors

The whole accomplishment of the Spoken Interaction descriptors in the speaking activity samples is remarkably sparse. Table 8.2 shows that *Interviewing and being Interviewed* is the only descriptor with a unique subscale at the Beginner level which is fulfilled in only four speaking activities of the sample (e.g. *Global, New Headway, Straightforward* and *English Unlimited).*

8.1.2.2 The partial fulfilment of the Spoken Interaction descriptors

The partial accomplishment of the nine Spoken Interaction descriptors in the five series of EFL textbooks is highlighted through the great variability of results that run from the lowest percentage (10 per cent) to the highest one (60

per cent). For example, there are numerous cases related with the low percentages of the fulfilment of descriptors ranging from 13 per cent to 25 per cent, whereas to a lesser extent the highest percentages of the partial fulfilment of subscales are in correspondence with few of the lowest learning stages (see table 8.2).

Indeed, the gap between the highest and lowest percentage of partial results indicates that the number of subscales fulfilled in the speaking activity samples is very small in relation to the number of subscales that compound the original descriptors in the CEFR. First, we shall deal with the partial fulfilment of a few descriptors reaching the highest percentage oscillating between 40 and 60 per cent. And second, an overview of the remaining descriptors whose fulfilment is not above 25 per cent will be provided.

The highest percentage of the partial fulfilment, oscillating between 40 and 60 per cent, is concentrated in two descriptors: *Overall Spoken Interaction* and *Transactions to obtain Goods and Services*, though the latter is accomplished in a smaller number of course books and at fewer learning stages than the former descriptor. Thus, *Overall Spoken Interaction* is partially fulfilled in four learning stages such as Beginner, Elementary, Pre-Intermediate and Intermediate. In this sense, the maximum rate of fulfilment (60 per cent) is achieved at the Elementary level in two course books (*Global* and *English Unlimited*). In descending order of percentage, there are four course books at the Beginner level (*Global*, *New Headway*, *Straightforward* and *English Unlimited*) rating the 50 per cent of the subscales, whereas the Pre-Intermediate and Intermediate levels do not go beyond the 40 per cent in two and three course books, respectively (see table 8.2).

Concerning the low remaining rate of the partial fulfilment of the Spoken Interaction descriptors, it oscillates between a minimum of 10 per cent (1 descriptor out of 10), followed by 13 per cent (1 descriptor out of 7); then, 22 per cent (2 descriptors out of 9); after that, 25 per cent (1 descriptor out of 4), until reaching 33 per cent (2 descriptors out of 6). Indeed, these low rates mainly represent the accomplishment of the Interaction descriptors at low levels such as Elementary, Pre-Intermediate and Intermediate in the following three descriptors: *Conversation*, *Informal Discussion*, and *Transactions to obtain Goods and Services*, though to a lesser extent.

However, considering the higher learning stages in EFL textbooks, there is evidence of a great number of subscales of the Spoken Interaction descriptors which have barely been fulfilled. In effect, unlike the Spoken Production descriptors at the three highest levels (see table 8.1), there is one sole descriptor, *Information Exchange*, in which five textbooks partially fulfilled the corresponding subscales at the following three levels, Intermediate, Upper-Intermediate and Advanced, with a rate between 33 per cent (2 descriptors out of 6) and 25 per cent (1 descriptor out of 4) as shown in table 8.2.

8.1.2.3 The zero value of the Spoken Interaction descriptors

The lack of fulfilment of the Spoken Interaction descriptors is illustrated in table 8.2 by means of grey and blue boxes. Concerning the absence of the Interaction Spoken descriptors in the CEFR, the grey boxes in table 8.2 evidence the lack of any descriptors, both at the Beginner level, for the following two descriptors, *Informal Discussion* and *Formal Discussion*.

On the other hand, with reference to the zero value obtained in the fulfilment of the Interaction Spoken descriptors, the blue boxes in table 8.2 indicate that the descriptors and their corresponding subscales were not accomplished in the *speaking* activity samples. For example, the following two descriptors, *Understanding a Native Speaker Interlocutor* and *Goal-oriented Co-operation*, are not fulfilled in any of the five series of the speaking activities sample in the six learning stages. Similarly, the descriptor, *Formal Discussion,* is not fulfilled in five learning stages of the speaking activity samples ranging from Elementary to Advanced levels.

From this standpoint, it is relevant to take account of the zero accomplishment of the following descriptors in diverse learning stages. First, the descriptor, *Overall Spoken Interaction,* was not accomplished in any of the two highest proficiency levels, Upper-Intermediate and Advanced (see table 8.2). Second, there are two descriptors, *Informal Discussion* and *Transactions to obtain Goods and Services*, which are not fulfilled at all in the following three learning stages: Elementary, Upper-Intermediate and Advanced. And third, the

irregular accomplishment of the subscales in two more descriptors such as *Conversation* and *Interviewing and being Interviewed* should be pointed out. More specifically, the descriptor, *Conversation*, is not fulfilled at the following four learning stages; Beginner, Intermediate, Upper-Intermediate and Advanced in the five series of EFL textbooks, whereas the descriptor *Interviewing and being Interviewed* is not accomplished in the following four learning stages: Elementary, Pre-Intermediate, Upper-Intermediate and Advanced, as indicated in table 8.2.

8.1.3 An overview of the first research question

In my view, the above data demonstrate a certain lack of consistency in the fulfilment of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the speaking activity samples. Indeed, it is clear that not all of the subscales in both descriptors were fulfilled homogeneously as would have been expected. For example, few textbooks partially fulfilled the subscales of two Production descriptors not exceeding 50 per cent (e.g., *Sustained monologue: a Debate* and *Addressing Audiences*).

In addition, there is a notorious lack of some Production descriptors such as *Sustained monologue: a Debate* and *Public Announcements*, and Interaction descriptors such as *Informal Discussion* and *Formal Discussion* at specific learning stages (e.g., Beginner, Elementary and Advanced) as illustrated in section 8.1.1, although this may be of little significance in this study if we consider the reasons for their absence put forward in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001, 25, 60) and already explained in section 7.2.3.3. In this sense, the lack of speaking samples fulfilling the Production Spoken descriptor, *Public Announcements*, and the three Interaction descriptors, *Understanding a Native Speaker Interlocutor*, *Formal Discussion* and *Goal-oriented Co-operation*, as the most representative ones, would deserve some kind of explanation though this is an issue that exceeds the original objectives of this study.

In general, the results obtained in this analysis may understate the original value of the CEFR descriptors for material writing designers, since the fulfilment

of the subscales at low and high learning stages in the five series of EFL textbooks evidence the scarce number of the speaking activities designed in accordance with the Spoken Production descriptors. Even though the existence of a sole descriptor, *Overall Spoken Production*, accomplishing all the subscales in the six learning stages in only one series of textbooks such *Straightforward*, is not necessarily significant if compared with the rest of subscales in the Spoken Production descriptors, since the latter were accomplished irregularly and their fulfilment resulted in low numbers and percentages as we have already seen in previous sections.

Similarly, the quantitative analysis of the Spoken Interaction descriptors evidences the scarce number of subscales fulfilled as well as the low percentage accomplished in the five series of EFL textbooks (see table 8.2). For example, the most striking result for the latter descriptors is the poor fulfilment of the six Spoken Interaction descriptors in comparison with the four Spoken Production descriptors (see tables 8.1 and 8.2). Whereas the Spoken Interaction descriptor, *Interviewing and being Interviewed,* is the only one at the Beginner level that met four *speaking* activities, there are five more in the same group *Overall Spoken Interaction*, *Conversation*, *Informal Discussion*, *Transactions to obtain Goods and Services* and *Information Exchange*) in which the percentage of their partial fulfilment ranged from a minimum of 10% and a maximum of 60% to a lesser extent. On the other hand, *Information Exchange* was the only descriptor which partially fulfilled most of the speaking activities at the six learning stages. Conversely, other descriptors such as *Understanding a Native Speaker Interlocutor*, *Formal Discussion* and *Goal-oriented Co-operation* were not fulfilled in any of the five series of the *speaking* activities as we have already explained in section 8.1.2.

Nevertheless, within a quantitative approach, the quality of the fulfilment of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the five series of EFL samples under study brings evidence of the poor consistency of the outcomes obtained in this study. A further discussion follows in chapter 9, though it becomes necessary, first, to consider the qualitative results obtained from this kind of analysis in the subsequent section 8.2.

8.2 The qualitative results of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR

The results obtained from the fulfilment of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the five series of ELF textbook samples will be evaluated next from a qualitative perspective answering the two remaining research questions:

a) What aspects of the four language skills are apparent in the speaking activities in EFL textbooks to carry out communicative tasks?

b) Is there a correlation between the content of the speaking activity samples and statements of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR?

This chapter is organized into four main sections which evaluate from a qualitative perspective the two research questions with the help of two separate tables which have been specifically designed for this purpose.

The use of the four language skills in the speaking activity samples is illustrated, first, in section 8.2.1. It is divided into four smaller subsections providing the results obtained from the analysis of the use of the four language skills in the speaking activity samples. Subsequently, section 8.2.2 provides an overview of the most outstanding outcomes from the study of the second research question. After that, section 8.2.3 is divided into six subsections dealing with the outcomes obtained from the enquiry of the third research question. Finally, section 8.2.4 outlines the most relevant aspects achieved from the analysis of the third research question.

8.2.1 Essential aspects of the four language skills in the speaking activity samples to carry out communicative tasks: answering the second research question

This section is organized in four subsections which consider several sequences of the language skills featured in the thirty speaking activity samples answering the second research question:

> What aspects of the four language skills are apparent in the speaking activities in EFL textbooks to carry out communicative tasks?

First, writing as the introductory language skill is explored in section 8.2.1.1, whereas reading as the introductory skill is analysed in section 8.2.1.2. In its turn, the latter section is divided into two further sections. Section 8.2.1.2.1 considers the two sequences of the reading skill at low levels and section 8.2.1.2.2 takes account of the same kind of sequences at high levels of proficiency. After that, the listening skill is looked at in section 8.2.1.3. Finally, section 8.2.1.4 studies the speaking skill as the ultimate goal of the activity at low and high levels.

Table 8.3 shows the sample data organized in two equally distributed groups in number of activities in which low and high levels of proficiency of activities are distinguished. The low level group comprises the following three learning stages such as Beginner (A1), Elementary (A2) and Pre-Intermediate ($A2^{+}/B1^{-}$), whereas the three higher levels, Intermediate (B1), Upper-Intermediate (B2) and Advanced (C1) are included in the second group.

The language skills features represented in table 8.3 are distributed into three main groups, encompassing three introductory skills, namely writing, reading and listening. In more detail, whereas writing and reading are met in the whole six learning stages and precede speaking as the final aim of the activity, the listening skill leads two sequences of skills at the Pre-Intermediate level.

Table 8.3 Language skills promoted in the speaking activity samples in EFL textbooks

LOW LEVELS			**HIGH LEVELS**		
Linguistic features of activities	**levels**	**textbooks**	**Linguistic features of activities**	**levels**	**textbooks**
W + S	**A1**	G, NH, NEF	**W + S**	**B1**	NH
	A2	NH, ST, EU		**C1**	NH, EU
	$A2^{+}/B1^{-}$	EU			
R + (W) + S	**A2**	(G), (NEF)	**R + (W) + S**	**B1**	(G), NEF, (ST), (EU)
				B2	(G), NH, NEF, (ST), (EU)
	$A2^{+}/B1^{-}$	(G), (NEF)		**C1**	(ST)
R + L + (W) + S	**A1**	(ST), (EU)	**R + (W) + L + S**	**C1**	(G), (NEF)
L + S	**$A2^{+}/B1^{-}$**	NH	---	---	---
L + W + S	**$A2^{+}/B1^{-}$**	ST	---	---	---

Before proceeding any further with a brief description of the combination of the language skills found in the speaking activity samples, it is convenient for the reader to consider Appendix A1, since it supplements the content of table 8.3 by providing a detailed description of the statements for each activity.

8.2.1.1 Writing as the introductory skill in the speaking activity samples at low and high levels of proficiency

The writing skill leads the list of sequences of the "linguistic features of activities" with speaking as the ultimate aim at low and high learning stages (Table 8.4). The findings in this section are distributed into two paragraphs presenting, first, the sequence of the writing skill at low levels and, subsequently, at high levels.

Table 8.4 Writing as the introductory skill at low and high levels of language proficiency

LOW LEVELS			**HIGH LEVELS**		
Linguistic features of activities	**levels**	**textbooks**	**Linguistic features of activities**	**levels**	**textbooks**
W + S	**A1**	G, NH, NEF	**W + S**	**B1**	NH
	A2	NH, ST, EU		**C1**	NH, EU
	$A2^+/B1^-$	EU			

What follows is a short overview of the six speaking activities at three proficiency low levels (i.e., Beginner, Elementary and Pre-Intermediate) that met the sequence (W + S).

To start with, Beginner learners are basically encouraged to ask and answer questions to fill in a form (*Global*) as well as to know about someone (*New Headway*), or even to complete the gaps of a cloze test in order to obtain a description of a car and explain it to the classmates (*New English File*). On the other hand, Elementary learners are required to complete conversations using the comparative form (*New Headway*), prepare a short presentation of one's home (*Straightforward*) as well as having conversations in role play and exchanging their roles (*English Unlimited*). Similarly, Pre-Intermediate students are required to make a dialogue which follows the same procedure as in the prior activity at the preceding level, since the two course books belong to the same series, *English Unlimited* (see Appendices A1, A2 and A3).

In contrast, at high levels the role of writing is not outstanding when compared to the prior low level group, since only a smaller sample of activities are met at the Intermediate and Advanced levels as we shall see next. While at the Intermediate level (Appendix A4), learners are encouraged to write down opinions about some topics provided in a list (*New Headway*), two examples at the Advanced level (Appendix A 6) illustrate that students are asked to write down some conversations to be acted out in front of the class (*New Headway*) and write some "word clouds" with the words or expressions to be used when explaining the impact, a book made on them (*English Unlimited*).

8.2.1.2 Reading as the introductory skill in the speaking activity samples at low and high levels of proficiency

The reading skill follows the list in table 8.3, including the listening skill for the combination of reading and writing at both low and high proficiency levels. This section distinguishes the two sequences of the reading skill at the two proficiency level groups. First, we shall present the two sequences [R + (W) + S] and [R + L + (W) + S] of the reading skill at low levels (section 8.3.1.2.1). And subsequently, we shall proceed with the same two reading sequences though at high levels (section 8.3.1.2.2).

Table 8.5 Reading as the introductory skill at low and high levels of language proficiency

LOW LEVELS			**HIGH LEVELS**		
Linguistic features of activities	**levels**	**textbooks**	**Linguistic features of activities**	**levels**	**textbooks**
R + (W) + S	**A2**	(G), (NEF)	**R + (W) + S**	**B1**	(G), NEF, (ST), (EU)
				B2	(G), NH, NEF, (ST), (EU)
	$A2^{+}/B1^{-}$	(G), (NEF)		**C1**	(ST)
R + L + (W) + S	**A1**	(ST), (EU)	**R + (W) + L + S**	**C1**	G, (NEF)

8.2.1.2.1 Two sequences of the reading skill at low levels of proficiency

The sequence [R + (W) + S] is met in four speaking activities at the low level group in which the writing skill is not stated directly, though it may be implicitly understood, hence the use of brackets to illustrate the double interpretation of this skill in table 8.5. In addition, the writing skill may be considered as a support skill at low learning stages, apart from the fact that writing procedures selected in the classroom will depend on the teacher's pedagogical criteria.

Table 8.6 Reading as the introductory skill at low levels of language proficiency

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">LOW LEVELS</th></tr>
<tr><th>Linguistic features of activities</th><th>levels</th><th>textbooks</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">R + (W) + S</td><td>A2</td><td>(G), (NEF)</td></tr>
<tr><td>(A2+/B1-)</td><td>(G), (NEF)</td></tr>
<tr><td>R + L + (W) + S</td><td>A1</td><td>(ST), (EU)</td></tr>
</table>

At the Elementary level (A2), the following two examples show that after changing some information in the template conversations, students are expected to read together and continue them (*Global*). Similarly, the speaking activity, in *New English File*, has been designed on the basis of describing a famous character with additional template sentences to help students inform their classmates of the resulting description (see Appendix A2).

With reference to the Pre-Intermediate level (A2+/B1-), there are two similar activities which respond to the same previous sequence in which learners, after being provided with a list of ideas to work with, are asked either to talk about and ask for further information (*Global*) or to construct questions and answers to make use of the particles "for" and "since" (*New English File*) with the final exchange of their roles (see Appendix A3).

Next, we proceed with the second sequence of skills [R + L + (W) + S] at low levels in which the Listening skill supports the initial reading text of the activity and a writing activity precedes speaking as the ultimate goal of the activity. The following two course books at the Beginner level, *Straightforward* and *English Unlimited*, met this sequence of skills (see Appendix A1), in which students are initially encouraged to read and listen to a dialogue. Subsequently, and according to the teacher's pedagogical criteria, students will be asked either to write down their answers to make a similar dialogue as the one provided in the template (*Straightforward*) or ask questions in a game to guess the character that classmates agreed on, except one (*English Unlimited*).

8.2.1.2.2 Two sequences of the reading skill at high levels of proficiency

At the high level group, the sequence [R + (W) + S] is met in ten speaking activities in which the skill of writing is both directly and indirectly stated (see table 8.7). First, we shall start with the results of three activities in which the writing skill is explicit. After that we shall proceed with the implicit use of the writing skill in the remaining seven samples.

As regards the explicit use of the writing skill, Intermediate students, at the initial stage of the activity (Appendix A4) are asked to write down three reasons showing agreement or disagreement with one of the topics from the list. After that, the rest of their classmates have to say whether they agree or not with the reasons an individual student has just explained (*New English File*). On the other hand, at the Upper-Intermediate level (Appendix A5), there are two samples in which students before having a debate in the classroom are encouraged to choose either one topic from a list (*New Headway*) or a hypothetical situation (*New English File*) on a double basis. Whereas, in the former textbook, students are asked to "prepare their ideas" before conducting the debate, in the latter, and after preparing several arguments with examples, students are encouraged to hold the debate while taking notes trying to argue against the proposals made by the other side.

Table 8.7 Reading as the introductory skill at high levels of proficiency

HIGH LEVELS		
Linguistic features of activities	**levels**	**textbooks**
R + (W) + S	**B1**	(G), NEF, (ST), (EU)
	B2	(G), NH, NEF, (ST), (EU)
	C1	(ST)

Concerning the implicit use of the writing skill, the remaining seven activities (indicated in brackets in table 8.7), in accordance with this sequence, are grouped under two broad areas: (a) a list of topics for discussion, and (b) the provision of a given situation for a debate.

As regards the first area of discussion, three *speaking* activities show slight differences in approaching a debate as we shall see next. On the one hand, students at the Intermediate level (see Appendix A4) are encouraged to choose

one of the following two options including some examples: describe something they like or dislike and describe someone in their family or a friend they know (*Global*). Next, in two more examples at the same level, learners are encouraged to discuss several questions about a list of general topics provided in the exercise (*Straightforward*), whereas in *English Unlimited*, students are asked to discuss problems they may have in everyday life and they are invited to make suggestions and give each other advice as well as make use of the *verb* + *-ing* grammar construction.

The second area of discussion, (b) promotes debates as oral on the basis of a given situation at two high levels. First, at the Upper-Intermediate level (see Appendix A5) students are invited to read some advice to give them clues on how to answer a list of questions that cover the topic of discussion in the unit (*Straightforward*) and second, after selecting their choice in groups, students are asked to explain their decision to the rest of classmates with sound arguments (*English Unlimited*). Finally, in a similar way, Advanced students (see Appendix A6) are encouraged to select some activities from a list providing reasonable and convincing arguments for their choices in order to compare and discuss their decision (*Straightforward*).

As far as the second sequence of skills [R + L + (W) + S] at the high levels is concerned, table 8. 8 shows the following two examples at the Advanced level.

Table 8.8 Reading as the introductory skill and the skill of listening at high levels of proficiency

HIGH LEVELS		
Linguistic features of activities	**levels**	**textbooks**
R + (W) + L + S	**C1**	G, (NEF)

The two activities at the Advanced level shared the following two common features: the implicit use of writing and the skill of listening as a support for students to check the information before discussion takes place as we shall see next (see Appendix A6). For example, Advanced students, in *Global,* are invited to complete an open cloze test on the basis of the topic of discussion and check their answers listening to a CD. Then, they are encouraged to give their opinion on the topic, defending their answers and discussing them with a partner. Also, in *New English File*, Advanced students are provided with a list of questions

introducing them to the topic to be discussed. A listening allows them to check their arguments before discussing the topic in the classroom.

8.2.1.3 Listening as the introductory skill in the speaking activity samples at low levels of proficiency

The listening skill closes the last sequence of language skills at low levels marked by only two activities both at the Pre-Intermediate level as illustrated in table 8.9. Moreover, the two examples evidence both that a listening activity precedes the final speaking activity (*New* Headway) and that a listening activity replaces reading as the initial skill (*Straightforward*).

Table 8.9 The listening skill precedes the ultimate goal of the speaking activity

HIGH LEVELS		
Linguistic features of activities	**levels**	**textbooks**
L + S	**A2+/B1-**	NH
L+ W + S	**A2+/B1-**	ST

Two *speaking* activities at the Pre-Intermediate level illustrate the listening skill as a practice that allows students to be introduced into the discussion of two different topics. First, *New Headway* focuses on making students aware of how to have a successful daily conversation among foreigners, whereas *Straightforward* provides a listening in which students must identify the main content and use it as a referential source in the subsequent practice. Thus, before talking about a topic from the list for less than a minute, they will be encouraged to prepare a short speech (see Appendix A3).

8.2.1.4 Speaking as the ultimate goal in the speaking activity samples at low and high levels of proficiency

The aim of this section is to uncover the role that speaking, as the ultimate goal of the oral practices in EFL language course books, plays in the set of the speaking activities both in low and high levels of proficiency. In order to simplify the numerous variations of the statements we found in the selected sample (see table 8.3), the results will be approached as a whole rather than as two separate groups. In this way, the particular aspects in the two level proficiency groups will be considered for discussion, since either the differences or the similarities between them, and even their overlapping will bring light to the particular role the speaking skill plays in these kinds of activities in EFL materials as well as their relevance in the CEFR.

In general terms, low and high levels of proficiency in foreign language practice outline a two-fold understanding of the oral performance of language that of *reading aloud* and *speaking* in which students are required to make use of oral language through a variety of practices that range from making up dialogues and exchanging roles in a conversation to preparing short speeches or expressing their opinions in a discussion. In particular, reading aloud is the kind of oral performance mostly aimed at low levels of proficiency, but other euphemistic labels such as *Read together, Practise the conversations, Tell the class, Have a conversation,* and *Role play together* are used instead as shown in table 8.10. In this sense, the symbol "S" standing for speaking is used as well when displaying the linguistic features of the activities at the three low levels.

In the same manner, at high levels of proficiency the speaking skill is not mentioned explicitly (except in the guidance for the exercises), but a wide range of labels such as *Ask and answer questions, Talk together about a topic, Discuss some questions, Conduct the debate* and so on are used in the statements to engage students in these kinds of oral practice in academic environments as shown in table 8.11.

Table 8.10 Speaking as the final skill at low levels of proficiency

LOW LEVELS			
Linguistic features	**Level**	**Textbooks**	**Statements**
W + S	**A1**	***Global*** *Writing and Speaking*	Ask your partner questions to complete the form. A: talk about yourself
		New Headway *Talking about you*	Ask and answer questions about them
		New English File *Speaking and Writing*	Write about your 'dream' car. Now tell a partner
	A2	***New Headway*** *Comparing cities*	Practise the conversations in exercise 1. Be careful with stress and intonation.
		Straightforward *Speaking*	Prepare a short presentation of your home.
		English Unlimited *Speaking*	A, you're the pharmacist. B, you fell ill. Have a conversation and buy some medicine
	A2^{+}/B1^{-}	***English Unlimited*** *Speaking*	Role play together
R + (W) + S	**A2**	***Global*** *Speaking*	Change some information in the conversations from Grammar Exercise 2. Then read them together
		(New English File) *Speaking*	In groups of three, decide which you think are the top three people of all time from your country. Tell the class about them
	A2^{+}/B1^{-}	***Global*** *Speaking*	Work in pairs. A: tell B about your ideas. B: ask for more information.
		(New English File) *Speaking*	Ask and answer in pairs. A, ask B six *How long* ...? questions with a verb phrase. B, answer with *for* or *since*.
R + L + (W) + S	**A1**	(***Straightforward***) *Speaking*	Choose a different picture and make a similar dialogue.
		(***English Unlimited***) *Speaking*	Student A: choose a person. The others, guess the person. Ask questions.
L + S	**A2^{+}/B1^{-}**	***New Headway*** *Making conversation*	Practise the conversation with a partner.
L + W + S	**A2^{+}/B1^{-}**	***Straightforward*** *Speaking*	You must talk about the topic for thirty seconds, without stopping.

Table 8.11 Speaking as the ultimate goal in the *speaking* activities at high levels of proficiency

HIGH LEVELS			
Linguistic features	**Level**	**Textbooks**	**Statements**
W + S	**B1**	***New Headway*** *Giving opinions*	In pairs, ask for and give opinions.
	C1	***New Headway*** *Softening the message*	With a partner, write some conversations for these situations, using tactful, polite language. Choose one and act it out in front of the class.
		English Unlimited *Speaking*	Talk about each other's books. Ask questions to find out more.
	B1	***(Global)*** *Speaking*	Tell your partner about a member of your family or a friend. Make three general statements and give specific examples.
		New English File *Speaking*	Explain to the rest of the group what you think about your topic.
		(Straightforward) *Speaking*	Look at the list of life-changing events below and discuss these questions.
		(English Unlimited) *Speaking*	Talk together about your problems. Make suggestions and give each other advice.
		(Global) *Speaking*	Choose three of the questions below and ask and answer.
		New Headway *Making your point*	Have a class debate.

R + W + S	**B2**	***New English File*** *Speaking*	You're going to debate the following topic in small groups.
		(Straightforward) *Speaking*	Discuss this situation.
		(English Unlimited) *Speaking*	In pairs, decide on a picture to go in your classroom (...) Explain your choice to another pair.
	C1	***(Straightforward)*** *Speaking*	Explain your choices to each other and agree on three that you will do together.
R + W + L + S	**C1**	***(Global)*** *Speaking*	Choose two or three of the quotations to discuss with a partner.
		(New English File) *Speaking*	Think about two jobs you could talk about.

From the data displayed on tables 8.10 and 8.11, it can be inferred that the final goal for the speaking activities at low levels of proficiency has been conceived as a collection of short isolated phrases that range from reading conversations together, asking and answering questions and making a dialogue to simple descriptions of people, objects, and places. On the other hand, the discussions and exchanges promoted at high levels of proficiency give special emphasis on the production of complex sentences and specialized vocabulary, rather than resembling procedures of regular debates and discussions in everyday life situations.

8.2.2 An overview of the second research question

Regarding the sequences of language skills in the speaking activity samples at low and high levels, we are now in a position to outline some of the key features that can be inferred from the results obtained in the second research question: "What aspects of the four language skills are apparent in the speaking activities in EFL textbooks to carry out communicative tasks?".

Table 8.3 shows a significant number of examples: twelve course books at the high levels and six at the low levels in connection with reading as the initial skill of the sequence. In fact, the reading skill in the speaking activities in EFL textbooks must be interpreted in terms of informing about the procedure on how to carry out a communicative task in order to produce an oral activity, rather than as a particular text to be read aloud (section 8.2.1.2). In this sense, whereas the most common practices suggested at low levels cover a wide range of examples such as templates for conversations, templates with incomplete sentences, and

lists of topics to be developed further or to construct questions and answers to practice grammar; at high levels the initial reading activities are focused on guiding students on the initial steps to carry out a discussion or a debate (see Appendix A).

From the above it follows that the writing skill becomes relevant for its intermediate role after reading in two sequences of skills [R + (W) + S] and [R + L + (W) + S] at both low and high levels (table 8.3). So, it is a matter of course that the writing skill, whatever its concern, explicit or implicit, as well as its initial or intermediate position in the sequences of skills holds its highest role preceding the final oral performance of students. To be more precise, we found that the number of course books which met writing as the initial skill at low levels (seven samples) is twice the number at high levels (three samples). Evidence illustrates as well that reading as the initial skill (with writing either implicit or explicit) provides a significant number of samples with twelve course books at high levels and six at low levels.

As far as the listening skill is concerned, it is relegated to the background for the support role it plays (e.g., check information in a CD) either in the second sequence of skills between reading and writing at both low and high levels [R + L + (W) + S] or in the two examples at the Pre-Intermediate level [L + S] and [L + W + S] in which a listening activity initiates a speaking activity and it even replaces reading as the initial skill in the above examples (see table 8.3).

Finally, with reference to the ultimate goal of the sequences of language skills, speaking covers a two-fold purpose, that of "reading aloud" and "speaking." This means that the kind of oral performance resulting from the speaking activities sample depends on the proficiency level (either low or high) for which they have been designed as we have already explained in section 8.2.1.4.

8.2.3 Interdependency between the speaking activity sample and the accomplished Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR: answering the third research question

The main aim of this section consists in showing the correspondence between the content and design of the speaking activities sample and the particular statements for the two Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR, answering the third Research Question: "Is there a correlation between the content of the speaking activity samples and the statements of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR?" This section is divided into six sections in accordance with the number and distribution of the six levels of proficiency.

Before proceeding with the results, it is worth pointing out that the Production and Interaction descriptors at low and high levels do inform about the kind of language performance that students are expected to achieve (e.g., use of descriptive and narrative language, making conversations, preparing presentations, providing personal opinions, discussing a topic and so on). However, it is convenient to consider that these kinds of descriptors do not make any explicit reference to language aspects such as grammar, vocabulary and so on, though learners will be required to practice in line with the design of the speaking activities in EFL courses.

8.2.3.1 Interdependency between the speaking activities and the accomplished Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors at the Beginner level

Table 8.12 uncovers the low and irregular accomplishment of both Production and Interaction descriptors in the five speaking activities at the Beginner level (A1). The zero value in two Spoken Production descriptors, *Sustained Monologue: a Debate* (Deb.) and *Addressing Audiences* (AU), is also noteworthy. Whereas the former descriptor lacks any statement in the CEFR (see section 8.1.1.3), the latter descriptor was not fulfilled in any of the sample activities at the Beginner level (see Appendix C1).

Table 8.12 Fulfilment of the Production and Interaction descriptors at the Beginner level

		SPOKEN PRODUCTION DESCRIPTORS				***SPOKEN INTERACTION DESCRIPTORS***					
		OSP	**DE**	**Deb.**	**AU**	***OSI***	***CON***	***ID***	***TOGS***	***IE***	***IBI***
A1	**Global**	OSP	DE	0	ø	*OSI*	ø	ø	*TOGS*	*IE*	*IBI*
	New Headway	OSP	DE	0	ø	*OSI*	ø	ø	*TOGS*	*IE*	*IBI*
	New English File	OSP	ø	0	ø	ø	ø	ø	*TOGS*	ø	ø
	Straightforward	OSP	ø	0	ø	*OSI*	ø	ø	ø	*IE*	*IBI*
	English Unlimited	OSP	ø	0	ø	*OSI*	ø	ø	ø	*IE*	*IBI*

Next, we proceed with the description of the two remaining Spoken Production descriptors fulfilling the speaking activities at the Beginner level. Table 8.12 illustrates that the five speaking activities at the Beginner level could hardly support the four Spoken Production descriptors with the exception of *Overall Spoken Production*, which was met in the five samples as well as the partial fulfilment of the descriptor, *Describing Experience*, in only two course books (e.g., *Global* and *New Headway*).

Indeed, the five speaking activities sample at the Beginner level met the descriptor, *Overall Spoken Production*, despite the extreme vagueness of the statement claiming that "A1 learners or users are expected to produce simple isolated phrases about people and places" (see Appendix C1). For example, two samples (i.e., *Global* and *New Headway*) at the Beginner level required students to ask and answer questions to fill in a form and to find out about someone, respectively. In a similar way, students were encouraged both to write template sentences to describe a car (*New English File*) as well as to read and listen to a dialogue: to make a similar one from a template (*Straightforward*) and to guess the person in a game (*English Unlimited*). From this it can be inferred that the five Beginner speaking activities encouraged students to practice questions and answers to construct a "dialogue" as well as to produce short descriptions of objects, usually on the basis of a template provided in the unit (see Appendix A1).

With reference to the sole subscale of the Production descriptor, *Describing Experience*, it consists in claiming that "A1 learners can describe him/herself and what he/she does and where he/she lives." From the five statements of the activities sample above it can be inferred that only two course

books, *Global* and *New Headway*, could meet the claim for this descriptor (see Appendix C1).

As regards the Interaction descriptors at the Beginner level, their fulfilment is quite homogeneous in four activities (e.g., *Global*, *New Headway*, *Straightforward* and *English Unlimited*) as shown in Table 8.12, though apparently lacking a fixed basis as we shall see next. In this sense, the repetition of the same statement in two Interaction descriptors, *Overall Spoken Interaction* and *Information Exchange*, claiming that "A1 user can ask and answer simple questions on familiar topics," contributes to reducing the consistent fulfilment of the Interaction descriptors at the Beginner level, since the identical statement for the descriptor, *Information Exchange*, does not add value to the final results. Even so, the same four activities share one more subscale for *Information Exchange* in line with the first one, stating that "A1 user can ask and answer questions about themselves and other people, where they live, people they know, things they have," without adding much value (see Appendix D1).

Concerning the last descriptor, *Interviewing and being Interviewed*, with only one subscale out of two stating that "A1 learner can reply in an interview simple direct questions spoken very slowly and clearly in direct non-idiomatic speech about personal details," it formulates a similar statement, though in a more general sense, as in the two previous descriptors (e.g., *Overall Spoken Interaction* and *Information Exchange*). Therefore, the three Interaction descriptors, *Overall Spoken Interaction*, *Information Exchange* and *Interviewing and being Interviewed*, at the Beginner level corroborate one and the same idea that students are expected to ask and answer questions on familiar topics and personal details as illustrated in the four speaking samples (e.g., *Global*, *New Headway*, *Straightforward* and *English Unlimited*), as shown in Appendix D1.

Finally, the descriptor, *Transactions to obtain Goods and Services*, with only one subscale out of two claiming that "A1 learner can handle numbers, quantities, cost and time" (see Appendix D1) was fulfilled in only three activities (e.g., *Global*, *New Headway* and *New English File*). The three statements required students to make use of numbers and quantities to describe one's car (*New English File*), as well as to fill in a form (*Global*) or to get further information on someone (*New Headway*).

8.2.3.2 Interdependency between the speaking activity samples and the accomplished Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors at the Elementary level

Table 8.13 illustrates the partial fulfilment of the Production and Interaction descriptors at the Elementary level showing few numbers of samples unevenly distributed. Next, an outline of the most relevant features from the irregular accomplishment of the subscales at the Elementary level follows.

Table 8.13 Fulfilment of the Production and Interaction descriptors at the Elementary level

		PRODUCTION DESCRIPTORS				***INTERACTION DESCRIPTORS***					
		OSP	**DE**	**Deb.**	**AU**	***OSI***	***CON***	***ID***	***TOGS***	***IE***	***IBI***
A2	**Global**	ø	ø	ø	ø	*OSI*	*CON*	ø	ø	*IE*	ø
	New Headway	ø	DE	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	*IE*	ø
	New English File	OSP	DE	ø	AU	ø	ø	ø	ø	IE	ø
	Straightforward	OSP	DE	ø	AU	ø	ø	ø	ø	*IE*	ø
	English Unlimited	ø	ø	ø	ø	*OSI*	*CON*	ø	ø	*IE*	ø

Two speaking activities at the Elementary level such as *New English File* and *Straightforward* shared a similar goal on the basis of describing a famous character and presenting a short presentation of one's home. They met and agreed on the varied subscales of three Production descriptors such as *Overall Spoken Production, Describing Experience and Addressing Audiences*. In this sense, the similarities identified in the Production descriptors, as illustrated in table 8.13, highlights their homogeneity at the Elementary level despite the varied number of subscales for each one of them and their poor fulfilment in few textbooks as we shall see next.

Firstly, *New English File* and *Straightforward* met the sole subscale for the descriptor *Overall Spoken Production* claiming that "A2 learner can give a simple description or presentation of people, living or working conditions, daily routines, likes/dislikes, etc. as a short series of simple phrases and sentences linked into a list" (see Appendix C2). Whereas students were expected to describe a famous character by completing template sentences (*New English File*), in *Straightforward* they were asked to prepare a short presentation of their home.

Second, the activities in *New English File* and *Straightforward* agreed on one more descriptor, *Addressing Audiences*, in one of the subscales (out of four) claiming that “A2 learner can give a short, rehearsed basic presentation on a familiar subject” (see Appendix C2). Finally, proceeding with the accomplished subscales for the descriptor *Describing Experience*, the following two course books at the Elementary level, *New English File* and *Straightforward*, met the same two subscales referring to the description of people or places: (1) “A2 learner can describe everyday aspects of his/her environment e.g. people, places a job or study experience” and (2) “A2 learner can describe people, places and possessions in simple terms.” As regards the Elementary activity in *New Headway*, it met one more subscale for the Production descriptor, *Describing Experience*, claiming that “A2 learner can use simple descriptive language to make brief statements about and compare objects and possessions” (see Appendix C2). Indeed, this statement agreed with the main objective of the activity in *New Headway*: to ask students to fill sentences with the comparative form of adjectives to be read aloud subsequently.

With reference to the Interaction descriptors at the Elementary level, it is notorious that *New Headway* met only one subscale (out of ten) for the Interaction descriptor, *Information Exchange*, in the same manner as happened with the sole subscale for the former Production descriptor, *Describing Experience*. However, it should be noted that the same subscale for *Information Exchange* was also met in the remaining four speaking activities at the Elementary level due to the neutral sense of this statement in which it is claimed that “A2 user can deal with practical everyday demands; finding out and passing on straightforward factual information” (see Appendix D2).

In addition, *Global* and *English Unlimited* met two more subscales for the descriptor, *Information Exchange*, stating that: (1) “A2 learner can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information” and (2) “A2 learner can exchange limited information on familiar and routine operational matters.” In this sense, both activities encouraged students to read conversations together changing some information as well as have a conversation to buy some medicine (see Appendix D2).

Regarding the two remaining accomplished Interaction descriptors, *Overall Spoken Interaction,* and *Conversation*, in the absence of fulfilling any

other Interaction descriptors (see table 8.13), the following two course books, *Global* and *English Unlimited*, met three subscales (out of five) for the descriptor, *Overall Spoken Interaction*, as follows: (1) "A2 learner can interact with reasonable ease in structured situations and short conversations provided the other person helps if necessary," (2) "A2 learner can ask and answer questions and exchange ideas and information on familiar topics in predictable everyday situations" and (c) "A2 learner can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters to do with work and free time" (see Appendix D2).

Concerning the descriptor, *Conversation*, the same previous two course books fulfilled one and the same subscale (out of eight): "A2 learner can participate in short conversations in routine contexts on topics of interest." Indeed, *Global* provided students with several template conversations to change information and read them together, whereas *English Unlimited* required students to have a conversation between the pharmacist and someone who feels ill (see Appendix D2)

In sum, after this complex and irregular accomplishment of the Production and Interaction descriptors at the Elementary level, it must be pointed out that only three textbooks, *New Headway*, *New English File* and *Straightforward* matched some subscales of the corresponding Spoken Production descriptors (*Overall Spoken Production, Describing Experience* and *Addressing Audiences*), but they only met one subscale for the Spoken Interaction descriptor, *Information Exchange*. Regarding the two remaining textbooks, *Global* and *English Unlimited*, they exclusively matched, though partially, three Spoken Interaction descriptors such as *Overall Spoken Interaction*, *Conversation* and *Information Exchange* (see table 8.13).

8.2.3.3 Interdependency between the speaking activities and the accomplished Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors at the Pre-Intermediate level

Table 8.14 shows the irregular fulfilment of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors at the Pre-Intermediate level which becomes a constant feature through the three low levels of proficiency, as we have already evidenced in the previous two sections.

Table 8.14 Fulfilment of the Production and Interaction descriptors at the Pre-Intermediate level

		PRODUCTION DESCRIPTORS				***INTERACTION DESCRIPTORS***					
		OSP	**DE**	**Deb.**	**AU**	***OSI***	***CON***	***ID***	***TOGS***	***IE***	***IBI***
A2^{+}/B1^{-}	**Global**	OSP	DE	ø	AU	*OSI*	*CON*	ø	ø	*IE*	ø
	New Headway	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	*CON*	ø	ø	*IE*	ø
	New English File	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	*CON*	ø	ø	IE	ø
	Straightforward	OSP	DE	ø	AU	ø	ø	ø	ø	*IE*	ø
	English Unlimited	ø	ø	ø	ø	*OSI*	*CON*	ø	ø	*IE*	ø

As regards the Spoken Production descriptors at the Pre-Intermediate level, Table 8.14 illustrates that only two textbooks, *Global* and *Straightforward*, partially met the same three descriptors, *Overall Spoken Production*, *Describing Experience* and *Addressing Audiences*, since the procedure promoted in the two *Speaking* activities consisted in the description and presentation of familiar topics (see Appendix A3).

First, *Global* and *Straightforward* met the two subscales for the descriptor *Overall Spoken Production* in which A2^{+}/B1^{-} user: (1) "can give a simple description or presentation of people, living or working conditions, daily routines, likes/dislikes, etc. as a short series of simple phrases and sentences linked into a list," and (2) "can reasonably sustain a straightforward description of one of a variety of subjects within his/her field of interests, presenting it as a linear sequence of points" (see Appendix C3).

Second, the same two course books also fulfilled the following six subscales (out of 14) for the descriptor, *Describing Experience,* stating that: (1) "A2^{+} user can tell a story or describe something in a simple list of points," (2) "A2^{+} user can describe everyday aspects of his environment e.g. people, places, a job or study

experience," (3) "B1^{-} user can give straightforward descriptions on a variety of familiar subjects within his/her field of interest," (4) "B1^{-} user can give detailed accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions," (5) "B1^{-} user can describe dreams, hopes and ambitions," and (6) "B1^{-} user can describe events, real or imagined" (see Appendix C3).

And third, *Global* and *Straightforward* met the descriptor, *Addressing Audiences*, fulfilling two subscales (out of four) claiming that, A2^{+}/B1^{-} user: (1) "can give a short, rehearsed presentation on a topic pertinent to his/her everyday life, briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions, plans and actions" and (2) "can give a prepared straightforward presentation on a familiar topic within his/her field which is clear enough to be followed without difficulty most of the time, and in which the main points are explained with reasonable precision" (see Appendix C3).

Finally, it is the turn of the poorest fulfilled activities at the Pre-Intermediate level (A2^{+}/B1^{-}). The speaking activities in *New Headway*, *New English File* and *English Unlimited* did not match any Spoken Production descriptors as shown in table 8.14, since the main aim of the three activities consisted in asking and answering questions. For example, in *New Headway*, students were expected to make some new conversations from a guided template in which they had to match the reply with a further comment and then, read them with their partner. In a similar way, the activity in *New English File* consisted basically in asking and answering questions to make use of the particles "since" and "for". Lastly, in *English Unlimited* students were expected to create a dialogue on a given situation in order to role play them together exchanging their roles (see Appendix C3).

As regards the accomplishment of the Interaction descriptors at the Pre-Intermediate level, only some of them were met in two course books (*Global* and *English Unlimited*), so that their unbalanced fulfilment brings evidence of the relevant features in the activities themselves. For example, the speaking activity in *Global* aimed at describing different aspects of everyday life though in its second step, students were required to ask their partner for further information about the topic just described. In this sense, the second part of the activity in *Global* makes the prior description develop into an exchange of information. Thus, asking for and answering to obtain information becomes essential to fulfil

the particular Interaction descriptors as well as evidencing similarities with the activity in *English Unlimited* at the Pre-Intermediate level (see Appendix C3).

Table 8.14 shows that *Global* and *English Unlimited* met the same two subscales (out of five) for the descriptor, *Overall Spoken Interaction*, in which $A2^+/B1^-$ learner: (1) "can interact with reasonable ease in structured situations and short conversations provided the other person helps if necessary" and (2) "can ask and answer questions and exchange ideas and information on familiar topics in predictable everyday situations" (see Appendix D3).

One subscale (out of 8) for the descriptor *Conversation* was also met in the same two textbooks above, *Global* and *English Unlimited*, as well as in the following two activities in *New Headway* and *New English File*. The accomplished subscale for the descriptor *Conversation* claimed that "$A2^+/B1^-$ learner can participate in short conversations in routine contexts on topics of interest."

Finally, as regards the descriptor, *Information Exchange*, *Global* and *English Unlimited* matched the same two subscales (out of 8) together with three more course books such as *New Headway*, *New English File* and *Straightforward*, in which $A2^+/B1^-$ user (1) "can deal with practical everyday demands: finding out and passing on straightforward factual information" and (2) "can find out and pass on straightforward and factual information," although the two subscales could be one and the same as far as its content is concerned (see Appendix D3).

8.2.3.4 Interdependency between the speaking activities and the accomplished Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors at the Intermediate level

Concerning the fulfilment of the Production and Interaction descriptors at the Intermediate level, it must be noted that the accomplishment of the Interaction descriptors is rather homogeneous, in contrast to the diverse combinations of the Production descriptors as shown in table 8.15. In this sense, the variation of descriptors accomplished at Intermediate level resemble the varied results obtained from the fulfilment of the Production descriptors in the

three low levels rather than the balanced and homogeneous results in the two higher levels as we shall see in the two subsequent sections 8.2.3.5 and 8.2.3.6.

Table 8.15 Fulfilment of the Production and Interaction descriptors at the Intermediate level

		PRODUCTION DESCRIPTORS				***INTERACTION DESCRIPTORS***					
		OSP	**DE**	**Deb.**	**AU**	***OSI***	***CON***	***ID***	***TOGS***	***IE***	***IBI***
B1	**Global**	ø	DE	ø	AU	*OSI*	ø	*ID*	ø	*IE*	ø
	New Headway	ø	DE	ø	ø	*OSI*	ø	*ID*	ø	*IE*	ø
	New English File	ø	DE	Deb	AU	*OSI*	ø	*ID*	ø	*IE*	ø
	Straightforward	ø	DE	Deb	ø	*OSI*	ø	*ID*	ø	*IE*	ø
	English Unlimited	ø	DE	ø	ø	*OSI*	ø	*ID*	ø	*IE*	ø

Behind the five *speaking* activities, Intermediate students were expected to provide information about likes and dislikes or someone they know (*Global*); exchange and discuss specific topics in everyday situations (*Straightforward*); suggest and give advice (*English Unlimited*) as well as express belief, opinion, agreement and disagreement (*New Headway* and *New English File*).

As regards the varied fulfilment of the Production descriptors (see table 8.15), the five *speaking* activities met only one subscale for the descriptor, *Describing Experience*, claiming that "B1 user can give detailed accounts of experiences, describing feelings and actions." With reference to the Production descriptor, *Sustained Monologue: a Debate*, two course books such as *New English File* and *Straightforward* met the only two subscales stating that: (1) "B1 user can develop an argument well enough to be followed without difficulty most of the time" and (2) "B1 user can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions, plans and actions." Finally, regarding the Production descriptor, *Addressing Audiences*, *Global* and *New English File* met one subscale (out of two) stating that "B1 learner can give a prepared straightforward presentation on a familiar topic within his/her field which is clear enough to be followed without difficulty most of the time, and in which the main points are explained with reasonable precision" (see Appendix C4).

With reference to the regular accomplishment of the Interaction descriptors (with minor variants of subscales) in the five activities at the Intermediate level, the five course books at the Intermediate level met the

following three descriptors: *Overall Spoken Interaction*, *Informal Discussion*, and *Information Exchange*.

On the one hand, the five subscales for the descriptor *Overall Spoken Interaction* were fulfilled in different ways, since they were to a greater or lesser extent in correspondence with the content of the speaking activity samples. Five textbooks at the Intermediate level met one and the same subscale for the descriptor *Overall Spoken Interaction* stating that "B1 user can communicate with some confidence on familiar routine and non-routine matters related to his/her interests and professional field," whereas *New English File*, *Straightforward* and *English Unlimited* also fulfilled a second subscale stating that "B1 learner can exchange, check and confirm information, deal with less routine situations and explain why something is a problem" (Appendix D4).

On the other hand, the five *speaking* samples again met two subscales (out of nine) for the descriptor, *Informal Discussion*, claiming that (1) "B1 learner can give or seek personal views and opinions in discussing topics of interest" and (2) "B1 learner can express belief, opinion, agreement and disagreement politely." Finally, in a similar way, the five *speaking* activities met two subscales (out of six) for the descriptor, *Information Exchange,* stating that (1) "B1 user can exchange, check and confirm accumulated factual information on familiar routine and non-routine matters within his/her field with some confidence" and (2) "B1 user can summarise and give his or her opinion about a short story, article, talk, discussion interview, or documentary and answer further questions of detail" (see Appendix D4).

8.2.3.5 Interdependency between the speaking activities and the accomplished Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors at the Upper-Intermediate level

The most homogenous fulfilment of the two Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the five activity samples is evidenced at the two highest levels of proficiency, Upper-Intermediate and Advanced.

Table 8.16 Fulfilment of the Production and Interaction descriptors at the Upper-Intermediate level

		PRODUCTION DESCRIPTORS				***INTERACTION DESCRIPTORS***					
		OSP	**DE**	**Deb.**	**AU**	***OSI***	***CON***	***ID***	***TOGS***	***IE***	***IBI***
B2	**Global**	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	*IE*	ø
	New Headway	OSP	DE	Deb.	AU	ø	ø	ø	ø	*IE*	ø
	New English File	OSP	DE	Deb.	AU	ø	ø	ø	ø	*IE*	ø
	Straightforward	OSP	DE	Deb.	AU	ø	ø	ø	ø	*IE*	ø
	English Unlimited	OSP	DE	Deb.	AU	ø	ø	ø	ø	*IE*	ø

Concerning the Production descriptors at Upper-Intermediate level, there are four course books, *New Headway*, *New English File*, *Straightforward* and *English Unlimited* fulfilling the same four descriptors, *Overall Spoken Production*, *Describing Experience*, *Sustained Monologue: a Debate* and *Addressing Audiences*, whereas the course book, *Global*, did not meet any of them. In this sense, the four *speaking* activities required students to a greater or lesser extent to have a class debate (*Global* and *English Unlimited*); to argue against the points made by the other side (*New English File*) or even to give advantages or disadvantages of various options from a list (*Straightforward*). On the other hand, the lack of involvement of the four Spoken Production descriptors in *Global* can be explained by the fact that Upper-Intermediate students were expected to ask and answer questions from a list that had been designed as a warming-up exercise at the beginning of the unit (see Appendices C5 and D5).

Before proceeding with further details, it is important to point out that some of the fulfilled subscales are repeated in different descriptors under the same proficiency level (the red colour indicates the repetition of the subscales in different descriptors at the Upper-Intermediate level). The paragraphs below will take account of the repetitions of the subscales as well as what other descriptors are being affected by this anomaly.

First, the descriptor *Overall Spoken Production* consists of two subscales, which were equally fulfilled in four textbooks (*New Headway*, *New English File*, *Straightforward* and *English Unlimited*), and which converged in several aspects claiming that: (1) "B2 learner can give clear, systematically developed descriptions and presentations, with appropriate highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail" and (2) "B2 learner can give, clear detailed

descriptions and presentations on a wide range of subjects related to his/her field of interest, expanding and supporting ideas with subsidiary points and relevant examples" (see Appendices A5 and C5).

However, the two subscales for the descriptor *Overall Spoken Production* were repeated in the following Production descriptors: *Describing Experience* and *Addressing Audiences*. On the one hand, the first subscale for *Overall Spoken Production* was repeated in the descriptor *Addressing Audiences*, and the second subscale was the only one and the same statement for the descriptor *Describing Experience*, on the other (see Appendix C5). As regards the descriptor, *Addressing Audiences*, again the same previous four course books at Upper-Intermediate level met one more scale (out of four) in which it was assumed that "B2 user can give a clear, prepared presentation, giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view and giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options" (see Appendix C5).

And second, the four speaking samples at Upper-Intermediate level (*New Headway*, *New English File*, *Straightforward* and *English Unlimited*) accomplished one subscale (out of four) for the descriptor, *Sustained Monologue: a Debate*, in which it was claimed that "B2 learner can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options" (see Appendix C5).

Next, we proceed with the only accomplished Interaction descriptor, *Information Exchange*, in which the five *speaking* activities at Upper-Intermediate level met only one and the same subscale claiming that "B2 user can synthesize and report information and arguments from a number of sources" (see Appendix D5). Before proceeding with the subsequent overview of the fulfilment of descriptors at the Advanced level (section 8.2.3.6), it should be noted that the whole descriptor, *Information Exchange*, consists of the same statements at both levels, Upper-Intermediate and Advanced (see section 7.2.3.4).

8.2.3.6 Interdependency between the speaking activities and the accomplished Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors at the Advanced level

Before proceeding with this section, it is important to point out that the repetition of some subscales in different descriptors at the Advanced level is noticeable in much the same way as when describing the same sort of descriptors at Upper-Intermediate level in section 7.2.3.4.

Next, table 8.17 illustrates the accomplishment of the two kinds of Spoken descriptors.

Table 8.17 Fulfilment of the Production and Interaction descriptors at the Advanced level

		PRODUCTION DESCRIPTORS				***INTERACTION DESCRIPTORS***					
		OSP	**DE**	**Deb.**	**AU**	***OSI***	***CON***	***ID***	***TOGS***	***IE***	***IBI***
C1	**Global**	OSP	DE	ø	AU	ø	ø	ø	ø	*IE*	ø
	New Headway	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	ø	*IE*	ø
	New English File	OSP	DE	ø	AU	ø	ø	ø	ø	*IE*	ø
	Straightforward	OSP	DE	ø	AU	ø	ø	ø	ø	*IE*	ø
	English Unlimited	OSP	DE	ø	AU	ø	ø	ø	ø	*IE*	ø

Only four course books at Advanced level, *Global*, *New English File*, *Straightforward* and *English Unlimited*, could meet the following three Production descriptors namely *Overall Spoken Production*, *Describing Experience* and *Addressing Audiences*. In contrast, the five speaking activities sample fulfilled one subscale (out of four) for the Interaction descriptor, *Information Exchange*.

As regards the content of the five speaking activities at the Advanced level (see Appendix A6), students were asked to discuss a series of quotations about freedom and slavery (*Global*); to argue the pros and cons of doing a job (*New English File*); to reach an agreement on different choices for visiting the island of Tobago (*Straightforward*); to talk about a book and its effect on the reader (*English Unlimited*) and finally, to write down a conversation from a list of hypothetical situations and to act it out in front of the class (*New Headway*).

Concerning the Production descriptor, *Overall Spoken Production,* it consists of only one subscale that was matched in the four following samples,

Global, *New English File*, *Straightforward* and *English Unlimited*, stating that "C1 learner can give clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on complex subjects, integrating sub themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion" (see Appendix C6).

In addition, it is significant to point out the fact that the sole subscale for the descriptor, *Overall Spoken Production*, was transformed into two more subscales for the descriptor, *Describing Experience*. Therefore, the same four course books fulfilled the two subscales claiming that (1) "C1 learner can give clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects" and (2) "C1 learner can give elaborate descriptions and narratives, integrating sub themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion" (see Appendix C6). In a similar way, the same four previous activities accomplished one subscale (out of four) for the last Production descriptor, *Addressing Audiences,* assuming that "C1 learner can give a clear, well-structured presentation of a complex subject, expanding and supporting points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples" (see Appendix C6).

Last but not least, the Interaction descriptor, *Information Exchange*, was fulfilled in the five samples at Advanced level, though partially, since the five course books met one and the same subscale (out of four) claiming, the same statement as the one at Upper-Intermediate level, that "C1 user can synthesize and report information and arguments from a number of sources" (see Appendix D6).

8.2.4 An overview of the third research question

This is an outline of the most relevant data from the results obtained on the third research question. Unlike the previous overview on the second research question in section (8.2.2) and in view of the varied outcomes and amount of data generated in this analysis, the results from the third research question cannot be covered in the same manner (see section 8.2.3). Due to this fact, this section will point out the most relevant aspects preceding a more complete discussion in chapter 9.

First of all, the irregular outcomes obtained in the analysis of the three low proficiency levels (e.g. Beginner, Elementary and Intermediate) as a constant feature should be noted, since not all of the five speaking samples could meet all the goals claimed in the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR (see sections 8.2.3.1, 8.2.3.2 and 8.2.3.3). Second, the homogeneous fulfilment of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors is evidenced at the two highest levels of proficiency, Upper-Intermediate and Advanced (see sections 8.2.3.5 and 8.2.36), though it particularly contrasts with the accomplishment of the two Spoken descriptors at the Intermediate level, since the latter does not differ much from the three low levels on the whole (see section 8.2.3.4). And third, the irregular outcomes obtained in the analysis of the third research question together with the scarce number of descriptors fulfilled at both low and high levels of proficiency highlights the difficulty in arguing for an enhanced interdependency between the design of the speaking activity samples and the two Spoken descriptors in the CEFR.

CHAPTER 9

Discussion

The clear inference drawn from the analysis of the three research questions in this investigation is that the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR are scarcely accomplished in the five series of the speaking activity samples in EFL textbooks. On the one hand, the quantitative analysis, in terms of number and percentage, evidences the poor and irregular fulfilment of the two Spoken descriptors in the speaking activity samples. However, despite the small size of the sample corpus, the 95% Confidence Interval is confirmed by the observed values in the two groups of the Spoken descriptors (see chapter 7). On the other hand, the first part of the qualitative analysis brings out the priority of the model of written language rather than providing a clear distinction of the four language skills as they have been traditionally conceived, whereas the second part of the analysis shows the existence of the statements of the Spoken Production descriptors and the speaking activities in EFL textbooks as individual identities rather than evidencing interconnection between them.

In general terms, the results obtained from the first research question uncovers strong evidence that the accomplishment of these kinds of descriptors in the speaking activity samples is far from satisfactory. For example, their inefficacy in the design of the speaking activities is illustrated by the frequent number of descriptors which are not fulfilled in the EFL activities sample as well as the absence of certain descriptors in the CEFR. Moreover, the repetition of a few descriptors at the same proficiency level indicate that the quantification of the recurrent meeting of some subscales of the two Spoken descriptors cannot represent relevant and real numeric values assigned to each descriptor at a particular level of proficiency.

Regarding the role that the four language skills play in the speaking activity samples to carry out communicative tasks, the clear inference obtained from the second research question is that inquiring about the four language skills is not exactly in line with the CEFR, since the term language skill is hardly mentioned in it. There are, however, additional reasons why this issue is worth highlighting.

The first reason is directly concerned with the CEFR, whereas the second one refers to the speaking practices in EFL textbooks as we shall see next.

Indeed, inquiring about the four language skills would be a matter of the past if it were not for the fact that this is a concept that has survived until the present day as a prominent classification of English as a foreign language for educational purposes. In this sense, the implementation of the CEFR with its ultimate publication in 2001 provided a new redistribution of the four language skills giving rise to the new concept, communicative language activities. In its turn, the new term spread over other neighbouring concepts involving the following four activities: reception, production, interaction or mediation, which contributed to extend the scope of the learners' communicative language competence in foreign language. Thus, productive and interactive activities both in the written and spoken modalities of language with their corresponding illustrative scales of descriptors have become evident in major EFL publishers.

Despite the modest approach to the four language skills in the CEFR, this is an issue which is explicitly mentioned in EFL textbooks both in the headings of the speaking activities and also in the distribution of the different sections in each unit (see table 7.1). Thus, terms such as writing, reading, listening and speaking are basically used, either alone or in combination, to inform about the kind of language activity that students are expected to learn and perform in the target language. Hence, the consistent results obtained from the second research question evidence the relevance of the sequences of language skills at the six levels of proficiency in the speaking activity samples in EFL textbooks (see table 8.3).

We are now in the position to begin to discuss the implementation of the four language skills in the five series of EFL textbooks sample, though it should be born in mind that it is the curricular content of the language courses that determines the aims and compositions of the communicative activities. In order to bring evidence of the kind of language promoted in these kinds of activities and for all practical purposes, it is convenient to understand the relevance of the sequences of the four language skills rather than considering them on a-one-by-one basis, since they are fully integrated in the same statement as evidenced in most of the speaking activity samples.

Firstly, the most common language skills used in the EFL practice samples, according to the sequences of language skills, are writing, either as initial or intermediate goal, and speaking, as the ultimate purpose of the oral activities. And secondly, in most instances the skills of reading and listening play a secondary role in those sequences. For example, the skill of reading serves to introduce the topic by means of a text, either to be written or listened, whereas the skill of listening, with a very small number of samples, plays a support role for two language skills such as reading and writing which precede the skill of speaking as the final aim of the EFL activity. It is fairly certain, therefore, the outstanding role of written language enhanced by the acquisition of basic aspects of language such as grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation.

Regarding the third research question and before assuming a direct correlation between the CEFR and the EFL speaking practices, we should be aware of the meaning behind the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in terms of quality and adequacy, since the CEFR has ignored a definition or description of the two Spoken descriptors as well as their particular sets of subscales. Moreover, a poor systematization of the common features met in the holistic descriptors in the CEFR, as well as the recurrence of the subscales between descriptors at the same proficiency level together with the relevant role of the quality of the performance to be assessed in the statements of the CEFR descriptors should be added. The above irregularities evidence, therefore, the existence of a wide gap between the particular content of the two Spoken descriptors and the specific design of the speaking activities in EFL textbooks.

In the light of the above considerations, and in order to contribute to bridging the divide, we shall discuss the main results from a wide scope that encompasses the homogenous outcomes particularly achieved at the high levels of proficiency as well as the more varied accomplished descriptors at the three remaining low levels. The results obtained from the third research question, then, indicate to what extent the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR are likely to affect the design of the speaking activities in EFL textbooks.

The most relevant aspects that invalidate the CEFR descriptors as a reference for the design and content of the speaking activity samples can be grouped under the following four core issues. First, the CEFR provides the illustrative scales of the Production and Interaction descriptors without

establishing the baseline data that make up each one of the descriptors, even though repeating at the same learning stage. Second, the absence of descriptors in the CEFR as well as their particular design to assess students' performance denotes that the application of descriptors becomes inadequate and insufficient for the procedure and content of these kinds of activities in EFL textbooks. Third, the partial fulfilment of the two Spoken descriptors indicates that a representative number of subscales must be ignored for their focus on assessment, so that the application of these descriptors becomes inadequate and insufficient to be used as criteria for designing these kinds of activities. And fourth, the ambiguity of the statements for some descriptors led to confusion and created an obstacle to ensuring consistency and efficacy in our decision to meet the application criteria for this analysis.

Concisely stated, the four core issues above bring evidence of the difficulties we had in the selection of the appropriate descriptors for this investigation. For instance, the fact that the content of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors did not deal with either the curricular content or with the linguistic practices in the EFL course books caused most of the statements for the descriptors to pose difficulties for their reinterpretation, since they had been basically designed for "assessment."

Last but not least, there is more to the conclusions reached for the second and third research questions than meets the eye, especially when considering the inherent linguistic features of the speaking activity samples such as the promotion of the oral language use and the means of approaching its study and practice. Furthermore, the speaking activities in EFL textbooks consist of hypothetical interactions which students are expected to carry out in academic environments by means of the contextualization clues provided in the enunciation of those kinds of practices. In this way, the list of topics to be developed in the units originate in the CEFR in which the references to "broad sectors of social life" are organised into four major categories or domains such as educational, occupational, public and personal (see table 6.4). Therefore, written language has a priority role in the communicative functions of the speaking activities in EFL textbooks, whereas the particular features of the oral modality of language in social interactions are far from being considered in these kinds of

ELF materials, so that students cannot learn how to communicate spontaneously in the target language.

Another relevant factor referring to the linguistic features covered in the six levels of proficiency in the EFL textbooks sample affects the kind of language structures and vocabulary promoted in low and high levels. Indeed, the promotion of the language structures in EFL language courses can be presented in two large groups of proficiency for the relevant results that can be brought to light. First, at low levels of proficiency, the baseline of the speaking activities is for students to practice "dialogues" or "conversations" which consist in asking and answering questions, using a set of templates related to the topics and vocabulary as well as the grammar structures and pronunciation that students are expected to learn and practise in the classroom. In addition, the speaking activities consist also of eliciting basic presentations of objects and people in which students are expected to put into practice the correct use of grammatical structures previously learnt. And second, at high levels of proficiency, complex language use gains ground over the simplicity of language structures in low proficiency learning stages. In this sense, activities such as discussions and debates become a habitual practice at high proficiency levels. However, students are provided with procedures of great simplicity to carry out either debates or discussions, ignoring detailed methodological guidance to support them on how to argue appropriately sticking to the point. Evidence demonstrates that the templates provided in the speaking activities in EFL textbooks consist of a list of topics which have already been predetermined to help learners develop their answers rather than making them aware of how to persuade people by means of supporting or opposing ideas when presenting an argument.

Finally, this way of practising language in EFL speaking activities overlooks the existence of extra-linguistic features and how people can make use of them in ordinary conversations. For example, by predicting what a speaker is going to say or by being aware of the use of and differences between, spontaneous and non-spontaneous speech. Thus, the frequency and implicit use of these factors in spontaneous exchanges has been assumed as being so natural that speech has been considered as an irrelevant model of language with no apparent degree of prestige, in contrast with written language in Western society. But this

is a mistaken assumption that for many centuries has obscured the fact that speech is prior to writing in human communication.

We can conclude, then, that human communication involves much more than having a proper knowledge of how a language systems functions prescriptively, and also that language is a natural means by which humans communicate in any interaction. But the most relevant fact is that speech is the type of language that humans learn first, whereas written language comes after. Particularly, it is this basic fact that underlies the nature of conversational exchange and the conditions for its development in educational environments.

CHAPTER 10

Conclusions

Widening the scope of foreign language education, in my view, has contributed to expand the knowledge of particular aspects of the subject matter as well as to increase the awareness of their relevance as a whole rather than individually as had been traditionally approached. In other words, the holistic approach to foreign language education adopted in the theoretical framework (Part I), illustrates that there is not significant change in the theoretical and pedagogical issues which have resulted from the early 1970s, neither in these fields nor among EFL publishers. Proof of this is that fundamental concepts in the area of foreign language learning and teaching such as communicative competence and the four language skills – even though the use of new terms with a similar approach such as general competences, communicative language competences as well as communicative language activities – have not been substantially altered since then. Furthermore, EFL publishers refer to the CEFR levels as a mere formal requirement to classify the content of the language courses in accordance with the curriculum design. Additionally, regarding new concepts such as "intercultural competence", while notably in vogue, it has timidly started to be implemented, in some projects concerned with pedagogical and linguistic aims in foreign language education.

Concerning the information contained in the statements of the Spoken Production and Interaction descriptors in the CEFR, the results obtained from the analysis evidenced their inadequacy to analyse the speaking activity samples due to the scarce number of subscales matched in this kind of practice as well as their recurrent content on vaguely worded descriptions about language use. In this sense, the CEFR as a guide for textbook writers could not be accomplished because the two Spoken descriptors were basically addressed to assess the learners' performance rather than to provide guidance on how to design the content of the speaking activities in EFL textbooks.

As regards the linguistic features of the speaking activities in EFL textbooks, they consist of a range of questions and answers in which the

participants play a passive role as listeners and speakers. Moreover, reading aloud and writing down are used arbitrarily, as primary or secondary teaching techniques. Thus, while reading aloud helps learners practise the language functions, structures and vocabulary orally, especially at low proficiency levels (e.g., Beginner, Elementary and Intermediate), the writing skill is used to facilitate the acquisition of what students have learnt at the six proficiency levels in EFL textbooks. Although incomplete, this is a description of reading and writing as a linguistic activity commonly practised in teaching environments, rather than in everyday interactions. In addition, these kinds of oral practices ignore both the learners' own need to communicate in social contexts like any human being in society, and their control of other language varieties, depending on the purpose and the content of the communicative situation. In this sense, the results of our research revealed that the kind of language taught in EFL oral activities originates in the world of written language with well-formed, complex and lexically rich sentences. From this we can conclude that language is taught as a final product and not as a process.

Furthermore, whereas the written-biased concept of language has become an inherent quality in contexts particularly concerned with educational issues from a traditional point of view, the current social use of language evidences the blurring borders between writing and orality as well as the overlap of diverse modalities of language communication which have arisen as a result of the current increasing interest and need of digital literacies. From this it can be inferred that the distinction between written and spoken language as opposites is no longer sustainable in current Western society.

The fact that our investigation has dealt with the nature of language use promoted in EFL language courses together with the CEFR, as a major issue in foreign language education, uncovers linguistic and social prejudices inherent in such sorts of learning materials. These kinds of prejudices, whose origins and nature we have illustrated in this study, are obstacles which prevent students from being aware of the values of language use in society by presenting them with a model of communication based on a distortion of the relevant features that integrate the complex relation between spoken and written discourse. This model has come about for historical and sociolinguistic reasons, which have tended to prioritise written forms as linguistic models to aspire to, compounded by a

prescriptive conception of education in which the development of effective spontaneous oral communication is sacrificed in favour of conventional and traditional models of language.

Clearly, it is not our intention to suggest that spontaneous spoken communication should not conform to standards of correctness, but our concern has been to show that by misrepresenting the processes involved in spontaneous spoken communication, many EFL speaking tasks, in fact, fail to develop the skill for which they were ostensibly designed. These kinds of features in the EFL education discipline respond to the traditional value of the language dichotomy, written against oral, in close connection with the classical distinction of the four language skills. As a result, we can assume that these language patterns and formulas are no longer valid in today's world, in which the complexity of communication devices and digital techniques are a priority.

In this sense, assuming that the traditional notion of the four language skills is still prevalent in the speaking activities in EFL textbooks as well as in educational and collective mentality, we realise that current foreign language education may take us backwards if no remedial action is taken in the near future. As some researchers have evidenced, it is very important that EFL publishing together with foreign language education policy should reflect on the current state of the art to face the challenges faced ahead and find a path that solves and ameliorates the inaccuracies with regard to the past. Therefore, we consider essential to act in line with contemporary world realities in order to know how to evaluate the findings and be able to adapt to new times and new demands.

Accordingly, we found that foreign language education has been influenced over the years by a monological and monolingual perspective of language, as evidenced by the results obtained from our research data. On the one hand, foreign language education materials have promoted the use of an idealised model of language by means of decontextualized samples lacking the corresponding features in oral spontaneous interactions. On the other hand, learners are encouraged to learn a foreign language by means of summing up the acquired knowledge in a number and frequency of exercises in order to show their proficiency in grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation and bearing in mind the requirement to produce "simple, easy and structured" language at low levels of proficiency, whereas "complex and elaborated" linguistic structures are

demanded at high levels. From this standpoint, we can envisage the application of a comprehensive solution through an alternative language theory such as dialogism that would encompass human communication in our globalised and intercultural world.

Indeed, a dialogical theory can explore those linguistic weaknesses and find solutions because this is a theory that clearly argues how to understand and integrate a whole series of contextual as well as interacting factors that intervene in an increasingly globalised world in which the need for international communication and intercultural contact is ever more pressing. In this way, individuals must be empowered to communicate effectively in face to face exchanges in which they have points of view to defend, cases to argue, alternative positions to understand and aims to achieve. In this sense, uncovering the blurred borders between oral and written language should become a relevant concern for current practitioners to think of alternative designs for EFL materials and foreign language policies. Moreover, teachers of foreign languages could bring about these needs, and for this purpose, they should have the right to demand teaching materials as well as language policies which would be designed on the basis of an accurate understanding of the nature of discourse focussing on a variety of communication modalities which have arisen in a very recent demanding world.

In order to ameliorate the old traditional views in foreign language education and be able to cover the wide range of multiliteracies in particular areas and interests of students, foreign language policy should overcome the development gap between communication in today's world and foreign language education. For example, priority should be given to the former versions of foreign language policies in order to be aware of their achievements and shortcomings and consider them in subsequent editions to support the integration of more recent communication techniques in a changing world to encompass language use from a wider perspective in educational contexts and materials.

On the other hand, a revised document that improved and strengthened the management of the oral language model integrating the increasing interest of digital literacies would become a valuable tool for all practitioners in ELT environments. Going no further than our own countries in Europe, we can take note of a research team in Finland led by Dr. Hannele Dufva at the University of Jyväskylä to update contents and methodology in accordance with the basis on

dialogical theory when applying multiliteracies and multilingual literacies in the foreign language policies of that country. Indeed, this is one example of how spoken discourse and the overlapping of diverse kinds of language modalities could gain terrain in this alternative theoretical approach of dialogism.

In a similar fashion, the term communicative competence would also have to be reconceptualised, since it appears to be no longer justified or efficient in accordance with a dialogic theory. Thus, concepts such as multiliteracies, multilingual literacies, interculturality should become essential when establishing new definitions for the term communicative competence. Consequently, there would be evidence of emerging a new paradigm of communication, though complex, since other modalities of language communication would be included as well. In this sense, it would mean a new way to approach the understanding of language which has not been covered either in the CEFR or in EFL textbooks.

In conclusion, this research has shown that what makes human communication possible is not only the prescriptive knowledge of language, but also the absolutely essential pragmatic value of interactions with a multiliteracies perspective. We found it necessary to point out that any educational perspective to language teaching should focus not only on the quality of the language being taught but also the social use of language in which the participants share meaning. The essence of language as a means of meaningful human communication, in which other modalities of language apart from the basic differences in form and function of writing and speech should be fully recognized, must be the basis for designing the contents of foreign language courses. This claim is consistent with a general belief concerning the relation between theory and practice in foreign language education, in that educational procedures and language policy are unlikely to be effective if they work against natural processes involved in language use and language learning. We only need to remember that a new term such as communicative language activities is of little consequence in the CEFR, since it agrees on the basic principles of the four language skills.

It has been the aim of this study to identify the areas of foreign language education and policy in which the lack of correspondence between everyday language use and learning appears to be a persistent problem, and thus signal the need for methodological revision and further accomplishment of official

documents in foreign language policy. This is why it is so important that dialogical theory could open its path towards more effective ways of implementing changes and optimal resources to improve alternative ways of understanding foreign language education procedures and policies for a globalised an increasingly complex, interconnected and intercultural world.

Bibliographical references

Akmajian, Adrian, Richard A. Demers, Aan K. Farmer and Robert M. Harnish. 2001 (5th ed.). *Linguistics. An Introduction to Language and Communication*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Alderson, J. Charles. 1991. "Bands and Scores." In *Language testing in the 1990s: The Communicative Legacy (Developments in English Language Teaching)*, ed. by J. Charles Alderson and Brian North, 71-86. London: Macmillan.

Audigier, François. *Basic Concepts and Core Competencies for Education for Democratic Citizenship*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. http://www.corte-roncati.it/sites/default/files/norme/2000%2006%2026%20Audigier_0.pdf (accessed February 10, 2010).

Allwright, Richard. 1976. "Language Learning through Communication Practice." *ELT Documents* 76 (3): 2-14.

Austin, John Langshaw. 1961. *How to do Things with Words*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bachman, Lyle F. 1990. *Fundamental Considerations in Language Testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Baker, Colin. 2001. *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Baker, Colin. and Nancy Hornberger. (Eds.). 2001. *An Introductory Reader to the Writings of Jim Cummins*. U.S.A.: Multilingual Matters, Ltd.

Baldauf, R.B. Jr and Kaplan, R.B. (Eds.) (2006) *Language Planning and Policy in Europe, Vol. 2. The Czech Republic, the European Union and Northern Ireland*. U.S.A.: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Ball, Stephen. 2004. "The Sociology of Education. A Disputational Account." In *The Routledge Falmer Reader in Sociology of Education*, ed. by Stephen Ball and Stephen J. Ball, 1-12. London: Routledge.

Ball, Martin J. *et al*. 2008. *The Handbook of Clinical Linguistics*, ed. by Ball, Martin J. *et al*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Banks, James A. 2004. “Multicultural Education: Historical Development, Dimensions, and Practice." In *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education*, ed. by James A. Banks and Cherry A. McGee Banks, 3-29. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Banks, James A. (Eds.). 2004. *Diversity and Citizenship Education. Global Perspectives*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Banks, James A. 2004. “Migration, Citizenship and Education.” In *Diversity and Citizenship Education. Global Perspectives*, ed. by James A. Banks, chapter 1. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Banks, James A. (Eds.). 2009. *The Routledge International Companion to Multicultural Education*. New York: Routledge.

Barton, David. 2007. *Literacy: An Introduction to the Ecology of Written Language*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Bascia, Nina *et al.* 2005. *International Handbook of Educational Policy*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Beacco, Jean Claude. 2005. *Languages and Language Repertoires: Plurilingualism as a Way of Life in Europe*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Beacco_EN.pdf (accessed March 3, 2010).

Beacco, Jean Claude and Michael Byram. 2003. *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe. From Linguistic Diversity to Plurilingual Education*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Biber, Douglas. 1998. *Variation across speech and writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bîrzéa, César. 2000. *Education for Democratic Citizenship: A Lifelong Learning Perspective*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Blanche-Benveniste, Claire. 1998. *Estudios Lingüísticos sobre la Relación entre Oralidad y Escritura*. Barcelona: Gedisa.

Block, David. 2003. *The Social Turn in Second Language Acquisition*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Block, David. 2014. "Moving beyond 'Lingualism': Multilingual Embodiment and Multimodality in SLA." In *The Multilingual Turn. Implications for SLA, TESOL and Bilingual Education*, ed. by Stephen May, 54-77. London: Routledge.

Bloomfield, Leonard. 1993. *Language*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Boyle, Joseph and David Scanlon. 2010. *Methods and Strategies for Teaching Students with Mild Disabilities: A Case-Based Approach*. Canada: Wadsworth, 2010.

Breen, Michael P. and Cristopher N. Candlin. "The Essentials of a Communicative Curriculum in Language Teaching." *Applied Linguistics1/2*, 89-112.

Brown, Gillian. 1995. *Speakers, Listeners and Communication. Explorations in Discourse Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brumfit, Christopher. 1984. *A Communicative Methodology for Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bygate, Martin. 1984. *Speaking*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bygate, Martin, Peter Skehan, and Merrill Swain (Eds.). 2001. *Researching Pedagogic Tasks: Second Language Learning, Teaching and Testing*. Harlow, UK: Pearson Education.

Byram, Michael. 1997. T*eaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Byram, Michael. 2000a. "Assessing Intercultural Competence in Language Teaching." *Sprogforum*, 18:6, 8-13. http://inet.dpb.dpu.dk/infodok/sprogforum/Espr18/byram.html (accessed February 10, 2010).

Byram, Michael. 2000b. *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning*. London: Routledge.

Byram, Michael (Eds.). 2003. *Intercultural Competence*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Byram, Michael. 2008. *From Foreign Language Education for Intercultural Citizenship: Essays and Reflections*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Byram, Michael. 2009. "Intercultural Competence in Foreign Languages. The Intercultural Speakers and the Pedagogy of Foreign Language Education." In *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*, ed. by Darla K. Deardorff, 321-332. USA: SAGE Publications.

Byram, Michael and Geneviève Zarate. 1996. "Defining and Assessing Intercultural Competence. Some Principles and Proposals for the European Context." *Language Teaching* 29, no 2: 239-243.

Byram, Michael and Geneviève Zarate. 1997. "Definitions, Objectives, and Assessment of Sociocultural Competence." In *Sociocultural Competence in Language Learning and Teaching*, ed. by Michael Byram, Geneviève Zarate and Gerhard Neuner, 7-43. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Byram, Michael and Karen Risager. 1999. *Language Teachers, Politics and Cultures*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Byram, Michael, B. Gribkova and Hugh Starkey. 2002. *Developing the Intercultural Dimension in Language Teaching: A PracticaI Introduction for Teachers*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Byram, Michael and Peter Grundy. 2003. *Context and Culture in Language Teaching and Learning*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Byram, Michael and Lynne Parmenter. (Eds.). 2012. *The Common European Framework of Reference: The Globalisation of Language*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Byrnes, Heidi. 2006. "Perspectives". *The Modern Language Journal*, 90, ii, 244-246.

Calsamiglia, Helena and Amparo Tuson. 1999. *Las cosas del decir. Manual de análisis del discurso*. Barcelona: Ariel.

Canagarajah, A. Suresh. 1999. *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism in English Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Canale, Michael. 1983. "From Communicative Competence to Communicative Language Pedagogy." In *Language and Communication*, ed. by J.C. Richards, J.C. and Richard W. Schmidt, 2-27, London: Longman.

Canale, Michael and Michael Swain. 1980. "Theoretical Bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing." *Applied Linguistics*, 1/1: 1-47.

Candlin, Michael. 1975. "Communicative Language Teaching and the Debt to Pragmatics." In *Georgetown University Roundtable 1976*, ed. by Clea Rameh, 237-279. Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

Carpenter, M., Karen Nagell and Michael Tomasello. 1998. "Social cognition, joint attention and communicative competence from 9 to 15 months of age." *Monographs of the Society of Research in Child Development*, 63 (4).

Carter, Ronald. 1994. "Standard Englishes in Teaching and Learning." In *Who Owns English?* ed. by Mike Hayhoe and Stephen Parker, 10-23. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Carter, Ronald. 1997. *Investigating English Discourse. Language, Literacy and Literature*. London: Routledge.

Carter, Ronald. 2004. *Language and Creativity. The Art of Common Talk*. London: Routledge.

Chafe, William. 2006. "Reading aloud". In *Spoken English, TESOL and Applied Linguistics. Challenges for Theory and Practice*, ed. by Rebecca Hughes, 53-71. London: Palgrave McMillan.

Chomsky, Noam. 1957. *Syntactic Structures*. The Hague: Mouton.

Commission of the European Communities. 1995. *Teaching and Learning: towards the learning society*. Brussels: Office for Official Publications.

Cook, James. 1989. *Discourse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cook, Vivian (Eds.). 2002. *Portraits of the L2 User*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Cooper, R. L. 1989. *Language Planning and Social Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cope, Bill and Mary Kalantzis. 2009. "'Multiliteracies': New Literacies, New Learning." *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, 4: 164-195.

Corbett, J. 2003. *An Intercultural Approach to English Language Teaching*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Cornbleet, Sarah and Ronald Carter. 2001. *The Language of Speech and Writing*. Routledge: London.

Coste, Daniel *et al*. 1975. *Un Niveau-Seuil*. Strasborug: Council of Europe.

Coulmas, Florian. 2003. *Writing Systems: An Introduction to their Linguistic Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Council of Europe. 1954. *European Cultural Convention*. https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168006457e (accessed April 30, 2010).

Council of Europe. 1982. *Recommendation n° R (82) 18 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States Concerning Modern Languages*. Strasbourg, Council of Europe. https://wcd.coe.int/com.instranet.InstraServlet?command=com.instranet.CmdBlobGet&InstranetImage=601630&SecMode=1&DocId=676400&Usage=2 (accessed December 20, 2009).

Council of Europe. 1992. *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*. http://www.refworld.org/docid/3de78bc34.html (accessed April 28, 2010).

Council of Europe. 1997. *European Language Portfolio: Proposals for Development*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Council of Europe. 1998a. *Recommendation nº R (98) 6 of the Committee of Ministers to member States concerning modern languages*. Strasbourg, Council of Europe. https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016804fc569 (accessed April 15, 2010).

Council of Europe. 1998b. *Recommendation 1383 (1998) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/SourceForum07/Rec%20CM%202008-7_en.doc. (accessed April 15, 2010).

Council of Europe. 2001a. *Common European CEFR of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Council of Europe. 2001b. *Recommendation 1539 (2001) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on the European Year of Languages*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/SourceForum07/Rec%20CM%202008-7_en.doc. (accessed June 15, 2011)

Council of Europe. 2002. *Recommendation Rec (2002) 12 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on Education for Democratic Citizenship*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?Ref=CM/Rec(2012)12&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=original&Site=CM&BackColorInternet=C3C3C3&BackColorIntranet=EDB021&BackColorLogged=F5D383 (accessed July 20, 2012).

Council of Europe (2005). *Plurilingual Education in Europe. 50 Years of International Cooperation*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/PlurinlingalEducation_EN.pdf (accessed April 15, 2010).

Council of Europe. 2007. Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue in Youth Work. Symposium Report. Edited by Silvia Volpi. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Cray, Ellen and Pat Currie. 2007. “Conceptions of Literacy in Canadian Immigrant Language Training.” In *Language Planning and Policy: Issues in Language Planning and Literacy*, ed. by Anthony J. Liddicoat, 63-75. U.S.A.: Multilingual Matters.

Crystal, David. 1994. “What is Standard English?” *Concorde* (English-Speaking Union), 24-6.

Crystal, David. 1995. “Speaking of Writing and Writing of Speaking.” *Longman Language Review* 1, 5-8.

Cummins, Jim, Colin Baker, and Nancy C. Hornberger. (Eds.). 2001. *An Introductory Reader to the Writings of Jim Cummins*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Cummins, Jim. 2000. *Language, Power, and Pedagogy: Bilingual Children in the Crossfire*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Cummins, Jim and C. Davison, Chris (Eds.). 2007. *International Handbook of English Language Teaching*. *Part I*. New York: Springer.

Cummins, Jim and Yee-Fun. 2007. “What is it and how do we acquire it?” In *International Handbook of English Language Teaching*. *Part I*, ed. by Jim Cummins and Chris Davison, 797-80. New York: Springer.

Cutting, Joan. 2006. “Spoken Grammar: Vague Language and EAP.” In *Spoken English, TESOL and Applied Linguistics*. *Challenges for Theory and Practice,* ed. by Rebecca Hughes, 159-181. London: Palgrave McMillan.

Davies, Alan. 2007. *An Introduction to Applied Linguistics*. *From Practice to Theory*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Deardorff, Darla K. (Eds.). 2009. *The Sage Handbook of Intercultural Competence*. London: SAGE Publications.

De Beaugrande, Robert. 1997. “The Story of Discourse Analysis.” In *Discourse as Structure and Process*, ed. by Teun Van Dijk, 35-62. London: SAGE.

Decoo, Wilfried. 2011. *Systematization in Foreign Language Teaching: Monitoring Content Progression*. New York: Routledge.

Dervin, Fred. 2010. "Assessing Intercultural Competence in Language Learning and Teaching: A Critical Review of Current Efforts." In *New Approaches to Assessment in Higher Education*, ed. by Fred Dervin and Eija Suomela-Salmi, 155-172. Bern: Peter Lang. http://users.utu.fi/freder/Assessing%20intercultural%20competence%20in%20Language%20Learning%20and%20Teaching.pdf. (accessed April 15, 2010).

Dervin, Fred and Eija Suomela-Salmi. (Eds.). 2010. *New Approaches to Assessment in Higher Education*. Bern: Peter Lang. http://users.utu.fi/freder/Assessing%20intercultural%20competence%20in%20Language%20Learning%20and%20Teaching.pdf. (accessed April 15, 2010).

Dervin, Fred and Liddicoat, Anthony J. 2013. "Introduction: Linguistics for Intercultural Education." In *Linguistics for Intercultural Education*, ed. by Fred Dervin and Anthony J. Liddicoat, 3-28. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Dervin, Fred and Liddicoat, Anthony J. (Eds.). 2013. *Linguistics for Intercultural Education*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Docherty, Gerry and Ghada Khattab. 2008. "Sociophonetics and Clinical Linguistics." In *The Handbook of Clinical Linguistics*, ed. by Martin J. Ball, Michael R. Perkins, Nicole Muller and Sara Howard, 603-625. U.S.A: Blackwell.

Dörnyei, Zoltan and Sarah Thurrell. 1992. *Conversation and Dialogues in Action*. Hemel Hempstead: Prentice Hall.

Dubin, Fraida. 1989. "Situating Literacy within Traditions of Communicative Competence." In *Applied Linguistics* 10 (2): 171-181.

Duerr, Karlheinz, Vedrana Spajic-Vrka and Isabel Ferreira Martins. 2000. *Strategies for Learning Democratic Citizenship*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Dufva, Hannele, Minna Suni, Mari Aro and Olli-Pekka Salo. 2011. “Languages as Objects of Learning: Language Learning as a Case of Multilingualism.” *Apples. Journal of Applied Language Studies*, 5 (1): 109-124.

Dufva, Hannele, Mari Aro and Minna Suni. 2014. “Language Learning as Appropriation: How Linguistic Resources are Recycled and Regenerated.” In *AFinLA-e Soveltavan Kielitieteen Tuktkimuksia*, ed. by P. Lintunen, M.S. Peltola and M.-L. Varila, 20-31.

Ek, Jan Ate, van. 1975a. *Systems Development in Adult Language Learning. The Threshold Level in a European Unit/Credit System for Modern Language Learning by Adults*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Ek, Jan Ate, van. 1975b. *The Threshold Level in a European Unit Credit System for Modern Language Learning by Adults. Systems of Development in Adult Language Learning*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Ek, Jan Ate, van, Alexander, L.G., and Fitzpatrick, M.A. 1977. *Waystage English: an Intermediary Objective below Threshold Level in a European Unit/Credit System of Modern Language Learning by Adults*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe

Ek, Jan Ate, van. 1978. *The Threshold Level for Modern Language Learning in Schools*. London: Longman.

Ek, Jan Ate, van. 1979. “The Threshold Level (Extracts)”. In *The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching* ed. by Christopher Brumfit and Keith Johnson, 103-116. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ek, Jan Ate, van. 1986. *Objectives for Foreign Language Learning. Volume I: Scope*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Ek, Jan Ate, van and Louis George Alexander. 1980. *Threshold Level English*. Oxford: Pergamon.

Ek, Jan Ate, van and John Trim. 1991. *Threshold Level 1990*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Ek, Jan Ate, van and John Trim. 1997. *Vantage Level*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ellis, Rod. 2003. *Task-based Language Learning and Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Els, Theo, van. 2006. "The European Union, its Institutions and its Languages: Some Language Political Observations". In *Language Planning and Policy in Europe, Vol. 2*. The Czech Republic, the European Union and Northern Ireland, ed. by Richard B. Baldauf and Robert B. Kaplan, 202-251. U.S.A.: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

European Commission. 1995. *White Paper on Education and Training, Teaching and Learning: towards the Learning Society*. Luxemburg: OOPEC.

Evans, K. and B. Niemeyer. 2004. *Reconnection: Countering Social Exclusion through Situated Learning*. The Netherlands: Springer.

Faerch, C., Haastrup, K. and Robert Phillipson. 1984. *Learner Language and Language Learning*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Ferreiro, Emilia. 1999. *Cultura Escrita y Educación. Conversaciones con Emilia Ferreiro*. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica,

Foley, William A. 1997. *Anthropological Linguistics: An Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Gee, James Paul. 1996 (2nd ed.). *Social Linguistics and Literacies: Ideology and Discourses*. London: Routledge.

Girard, Denis and Trim, John L.M. 1988. Project no. 12: "Learning and Teaching Modern Languages for Communication". Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Goodier, Tim. 2014. *Working with CEFR Can-Do Statements. An Investigation of UK English Language Teacher Beliefs and Published Materials*. British Council.

http://englishagenda.britishcouncil.org/sites/ec/files/Working%20with%20CEFR%20can-do%20statements%20v2.pdf (accessed February 2, 2016).

Gougenheim, G., Michea R., Sauvageot, A., Rivenc, P. 1964. *L'élaboration du Français fundamental. Étude sur l'établissement d'un vocabulaire et d'une gramatique de base*. Paris: Didier.

Gouveia, Carlos A.M. 2007. "The Role of a Common European Framework in the Elaboration of National Language Curricula and Syllabuses." In *Cadernos de Linguagem e Sociedade,* 8: 8-25.

Green, John O. and Brant R. Burleson, (Eds.). 2003. *Handbook of Communication and Social Interaction Skills*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Guilherme, Manuela. 2002. *Critical Citizens for an Intercultural World. Foreign Language Education as Cultural Politics*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Guilherme, Manuela. 2012. "Critical Language and Intercultural Communication Pedagogy". In *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Intercultural Communication*, ed. by Jane Jackson. London: Routledge, 357- 371.

Hall, Gray. 2011. *Exploring English Language Teaching. Language in Action*. Oxon: Routledge.

Halliday, Michael A. Kirkwood. 1985. *Spoken and Written Language*. Victoria (Australia): Deakin University Press.

Halliday, Michael A. Kirkwood and Ruqaiya Hasan. 1976. *Cohesion in English.* London: Longman.

Hayhoe, Michael and Sarah Parker, (Eds.). 1994. *Who Owns English?* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Heyworth, Frank. 2004. "Why the CEF is important." In I*nsights from the Common European Framework*, ed. by Keith Morrow. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 12-21.

Heyworth, Frank. 2006. "The Common European Framework." *ELT Journal* 60 (2): 181-183.

Himmelmann, Gerhard. 2006. "Concepts and Issues in Citizenship Education. A Comparative Study of Germany, Britain and the USA". In *Education for*

Intercultural Citizenship: Concepts and Comparisons, ed. by Geoff Alred, Michael Byram and Mike Fleming, 69-85. Great Britain: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Hinkel, Eli and Sandra Photos. (Eds.). *New Perspectives on Grammar Teaching in Second Language Classrooms*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Holec, H. 1980. "You Did Say 'Oral Interactive Discourse?" *Applied Linguistics*, I (3): 189-199.

Howatt, Anthony Philip Reid. 1984. *A History of English Language Teaching*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Howatt, Anthony Philip Reid and Henry G. Widdowson. 2004. *A History of English Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hughes, Rebecca (Eds.). 2006. *Spoken English, TESOL and Applied Linguistics. Challenges for Theory and Practice*. London: Palgrave McMillan.

Hulstijn, Jan H. 2007. "The Shaky Ground beneath the CEFR: Quantitative and Qualitative Dimensions of Language Proficiency." *The Modern Language Journal,* 91: 663-667.

Hulstijn, Jan H. 2010. "Linking L2 Proficiency to L2 Acquisition: Opportunities and Challenges of Profiling Research." In *Communicative Proficiency and Linguistic Development: Intersections between SLA and Language Testing Research*, ed. by Maisa Martin and Ineke Vedder, 233-238. Eurosla Monographs Series, 1. http://eurosla.org/monographs/EM01/EM01home.html (accessed July 7th, 2016)

Hulstijn, Jan H. 2011. "Foreign-language Syllabus Design and the Common European Framework for Languages in Revolutionary Times: 1971-2001". In *Peer Perspectives on Systematization. A Book Review of Wilfried Decoo's Systematization in Foreign Language Teaching*, ed. by Mathea Simons and Jozef Coalpaert, 87-96. Antwerpen: Universiteit Antwerpen.

Hulstijn, Jan H. 2012. “The Construct of Language Proficiency in the Study of Bilingualism from a Cognitive Perspective.” *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 15, 422-433.

Hulstijn, Jan H. 2014. “The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: A Challenge for Applied Linguistics.” *ITL International Journal of Applied Linguistics,* 165 (1): 3-18.

Hulstijn, Jan H. 2015. *Language Proficiency in Native and Non-native Speakers*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Jablin, Frederic M. and Linda L. Putnam. (Eds.). 2001. *The New Handbook of Organizational Communication. Advances in Theory, Research, and Methods*. U.S.A.: Sage Publications.

Jablin, F. M. and P. M. Sias. 2001. “Communication competence”. In *The New Handbook of Organizational Communication*, ed. by Frederic M. Jablin and Linda L. Putnam, 819-864. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Jackson, Jane. (Eds.). 2012. *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Intercultural Communication*. London: Routledge.

Johnson, Keith. 1978. “Adult Beginners: A Functional or just a Communicative Approach?” *Modern English Teacher* 6/2.

Johnson, Keith. *(2001) An Introduction to Foreign Language Learning and Teaching. Longman.*

Johnson, Keith. 2006. “Revisiting Wilkin’s Notional Syllabuses.” In *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* 16 (3): 414 – 418.

Johnson, Keith. 2008 (2nd ed.). *An Introduction to Foreign Language Learning and Teaching*. Great Britain: Longman/Pearson Education.

Junyent, Maria Carme. 1999. *La diversitat lingüistica. Didáctica i recorregut de les llengües del món*. Barcelona: Edicions Octaedro.

Kaplan, Robert B. and Baldauf, Richard B. Jr. (Eds.). 2006. *Language Planning and Policy in Europe, Vol. 2*. The Czech Republic, the European Union and Northern Ireland. U.S.A.: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Keddle, Julia Starr. 2004. “The CEF in Course Design and in Teacher Education.” In *Insights from the Common European Framework*, ed. by Keith Morrow, 43-54. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kettemann, Bernhard. 1997. “Innovative Second Language Education in Western Europe.” In *Encyclopedia of Language and Education: Second Language Education* ed. by Richard Tucker and David Corson, 175-186. USA: Springer.

Kihlstrom, John F. and B. K. Stanley. 1994. “The Self as a Knowledge Structure.” In *Handbook of Social Cognition: Basic Processes*, ed. by Robert S. Wyer and Thomas K. Srull, 153-208. U.S.A.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Kaplan, Robert B., and Richard B. Baldauf. 2006. *Language Planning and Policy in Europe, Vol. 2*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Kohonen, Vijo. 2002. “The European Language Portfolio: from Portfolio Assessment to Portfolio-oriented Language Learning.” In *Quo Vadis Foreign Language Education?* ed. by Vijo Kohonen and P. Kaikkonen, 77-95. Tampere: Publications of the Department of Teacher Education in Tampere University.

Kramsch, Claire. 1998. “The Privilege of the Non-native Speaker.” In *PMLA* 112 (3): 359-369.

Kramsch, Claire. 2002. “Standard, Norm, and Variability in Language Learning: A View from Foreign Language Research.” In *Pedagogical Norms for Second and Foreign Language Learning*, ed. by Albert Valdman and Susan Gass, 59-80. The Netherlands: John Benjamins Publishing.

Krashen, Stephen. 1982. *Principles and Practice of Second Language Acquisition*. USA: Pergamon Press.

Kress, Günter. 2003. *Literacy in the New Media Age*. London: Routledge.

Lado, Robert. 1957. *Linguistics Across Cultures. Applied Linguistics for Language Teachers*. Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press.

Lambert, Richard D. and Elana Shohamy (Eds.). 2000. *Language Policy and Pedagogy. Essays in Honor of A. Ronald Walton*. The Netherlands: John Benjamins.

Leclercq, Jean-Michel. 2003. *Facets of Interculturality in Education. Responses to Violence in Everyday Life in a Democratic Society*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Leung, Konstanz. 2005. "Convivial Communication: Recontextualizing Communicative Competence." *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 15 (2): 119-144.

Levinson, Stephen C. 1983. *Pragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Liddicoat, Anthony J. (Eds.). 2007. *Language Planning and Policy: Issues in Language Planning and Literacy*. U.S.A.: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Linell, Per. 2005. *The Written Language Bias in Linguistics: Its Nature, Origins and Transformation*. London: Routledge.

Linell, Per. 2009. "Grammatical Constructions in Dialogue." In *Contexts and Constructions*, ed. by Alexander Bergs and Gabriele Diewald, 97-110. The Netherlands, John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Linell, Per. 2010. "With Respect to Bakhtin: Some Trends in Contemporary Dialogical Theories." In *Proceedings from the Second International Interdisciplinary Conference on Perspectives and Limits of Dialogism in Mikhail Bakhtin*, ed. by Karin Junefelt and Pia Nordin, 18-32. Stockholm: Stockholm University.

Linell, Per, Johan Hofvendahl and Camilla Lindholm. 2003. "Multi-unit Questions in Institutional Interactions: Sequential Organizations and Communicative Functions." *Text and Talk* 23 (4): 539-571.

Little, David. 2002. "The European Language Portfolio: Structure, Origins, Implementation and Challenges." *Language Teaching* 35: 182-189.

Little, David. 2006. “The Common European CEFR of Reference for Languages: Content, Purpose, Origin, Reception and Impact.” In *Language Teaching* 39, 167-190.

Little, David, Hans-Peter Hodel, Vijo Kohonen, Dick Meijer and Radka Perclova. 2007. *“Preparing Teachers to Use the European Language Portfolio: Arguments, Materials and Resources*.” In European Centre for Modern Languages. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Lotherington, Heather. 2004. “What Four Skills? Redefining Language and Literacy Standards for ELT in the Digital Era.” In TESOL *Canada Journal / Revue TESL du Canada* 22 (1): 64-78.

Lotherington, Heather. 2007 “From Literacy to Multiliteracies in ELT.” In *International Handbook of English Language Teaching*, ed. by Cummins, James. and Chris Davison, 891-905. New York: Springer.

Macaro, Ernesto. 1997. *Target Language. Collaborative Learning and Autonomy.* United Kingdom: Multilingual Matters.

May, Stephen (Eds.). 2014. *The Multilingual Turn. Implications for SLA, TESOL and Bilingual Education*. London: Routledge.

McCarthy, Michael. 1991. *Discourse Analysis for Language Teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McCarthy, Michael and Ronald Carter. 1994. *Language as Discourse: Perspectives for Language Teaching*. London: Longman.

McCarthy, Michael and Ronald Carter. 2002. “Ten Criteria for a Spoken Grammar.” In *New Perspectives on Grammar Teaching in Second Language Classrooms*, ed. by Eli Hinkel and Sandra Photos, 53-78. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

McKay, Sandra Louise and Nancy H. Hornberger (Eds.). 1996. *Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McGroarty, Mary. 1996. “Language Attitudes, Motivation, and Standards.” In *Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching*, ed. by Sara Louise McKay and Nancy H. Hornberger, 3-46. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McNamara, Tim. 2000. *Language Testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mercer, Neil. 2001. *Words and Minds. How we Use Language to Think Together*. London: Routledge.

Merkx, Gilbert. 2000. “Foreign Language and Area Studies through Title VI: Assessing Supply and Demand.” In *Language Policy and Pedagogy. Essays in Honor of A. Ronald Walton*, ed. by Richard D. Lambert and Elana Shohamy, 93-110. The Netherlands: John Benjamins.

Méron-Minuth, Sylvie and Minuth Christian. 2014. “France.” In *Manual of Second Language Acquisition*, ed. by Christiane Fäcke, 513-528. De Gruyter.

Ministére de l’Éducation Nationale, Direction de la coopération, *Le Français Fondamental* (1er Degré), s.d., Paris: Institut Pédagogique national (épuise).

Moreno-Cabrera, Juan Carlos. 2005. *Las lenguas y sus escrituras. Tipología, evolución e ideología*. Madrid: Editorial Síntesis.

Moreno-Cabrera, Juan Carlos. 2016. *La dignidad e igualdad de las lenguas. Crítica de la discriminación lingüística*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial.

Moreno-Cabrera, Juan Carlos and José Luís Mendívil-Giró. 2014. *On Biology, History and Culture in Human Language. A Critical Overview*. Sheffield: Equinox Publishing Ltd.

Morrow, Keith. 2004a. “Background to the CEF.” In *Insights from the Common European CEFR*, ed. by Morrow, Keith, 3-11. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Morrow, Keith (Eds.). 2004b. *Insights from the Common European Framework*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Munby, John. 1978. *Communicative Syllabus Design: A Sociolinguistic Model for Defining the Content of Purpose-Specific Language Programmes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Neunar, Gerhard, and Michael Byram. 2003. *Intercultural Competence*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

North, Brian. 1992. "European Language Portfolio: Some Options for a Working Approach to Design Scales of Proficiency". In *Transparency and Coherence in Language Learning in Europe: Objectives, Assessment and Certification*, 158-174. Strasbourg: Council for Cultural Co-operation. (Reprinted in Schärer, R. and Brian North (eds). 1992. *Towards a Common European Framework for Reporting Language Competency*, Washington D D: NFLC Occasional Paper, National Foreign Language Center).

North, Brian. 1993. "The Development of Descriptors on Scales of Proficiency: Perspectives, Problems, and a Possible Methodology." (NFLC Occasional Paper, April). National Foreign Language Center, Washington DC.

North, Brian. 1996. *The development of a Common Framework Scale of Language Proficiency*. New York: Peter Lang.

North, Brian. 1997. "Perspectives on Language Proficiency and Aspects of Competence." *Language Teaching* 30 (2): 93-100.

North, Brian. 2000a. *The Development of a Common Framework Scale of Language Proficiency*. New York: Peter Lang.

North, Brian. 2000b. "Linking Language Assessments: An Example in a Low Stakes Context" *System 28*, 555-577.

North, Brian. 2004. "Relating Assessments, Examinations, and Courses to the CEF." In *Insights from the Common European Framework*, ed. by Keith Morrow, 77-91. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

North, Brian. 2007a. "Perspectives on Language Proficiency and Aspects of Competence." In *Language Teaching* 31 (29): 93-100.

North, Brian. 2007b. "The CEFR: Development, Theoretical and Practical Issues. Babylonia, 1: 22-29. (accessed December 10, 2009).

North, Brian. 2007c. "The CEFR Illustrative Descriptor Scales." *Modern Language Journal* 91 (4): 656-659.

North, Brian. 2010a. "Levels and Goals: Central CEFRs and Local Strategies". In *The Handbook of Educational Linguistics*, ed. by Bernard Spolsky and Francis M. Hult, 220-232. U.S.A.: Wiley-Blackwell.

North, Brian. 2010b. *Working with the Common European CEFR of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in the Canadian Context. Guide for Policy-makers and Curriculum Designers*. Canada: Council of Ministers of Education (Canada).

North, Brian. 2014. *The CEFR in Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

North, Brian. 2016. "Developing CEFR Illustrative Descriptors of Aspects of Mediation". In *International Online Journal of Education and Teaching (IOJET),* 3 (2), 132-140. http://iojet.org/index.php/IOJET/article/view/125/131 (accessed July 12, 2016).

North, Brian and Günther Schneider. 1998. "Scaling descriptors for language proficiency scales." In *Language Testing* 15 (2): 217-263.

Norton, Bonny and Kelleen Toohey (Eds.). 2004. *Critical Pedagogies and Language Learning: An Introduction*. USA: Cambridge University Press.

Nunan, David. 2004. *Task-Based Language Teaching. A Comprehensively Revised Edition of Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Olson, David. 1994. *The World on Paper: The Conceptual and Cognitive Implications of Writing and Reading*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ong, Walter. 1982. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. London: Methuen.

Patten, Bill, van and Jessica Williams (Eds.). 2008. *Theories in Second Language Acquisition. An Introduction*. New York: Routledge.

Pavlenko, Aneta. 2002. "Poststructuralist Approaches to the Study of Social Factors in Second Language Learning and Use". In *Portraits of the L2 user*, ed. by Vivian Cook, 277-302. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Peschar, J.L. 1997. *Prepared for Life? How to Measure Cross-Curricular Competencies*. Paris: OCDE.

Petitjean, Cécile. 2006. "Plurilinguisme et Politique Linguistique Educative en Europe: de la Théorie à la Pratique." In *Revue des Étudiants en Linguistique du Québec*, 1 (2): 99-125.

Phillipson, Robert. 2003. *English-Only Europe? Challenging Language Policy*. Routledge: United Kingdom.

Poyatos, Fernando. 1993. *A Linguistic and Interdisciplinary Approach to Interactive Speech and Sounds*. The Netherlands: John Benjamins Publishing.

Poyatos, Fernando. 2002. *Nonverbal Communication Across Disciplines: Culture, Sensory Interaction, Speech, Conversation.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Pureza, José Manuel. (n.d.) Education for Democratic Citizenship. A Project of the Council of Europe. ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/improving/docs/ser_citizen_pureza.pdf (accessed February 12, 2009).

Richards, Jack C. 1984. "The secret life of methods". In *TESOL Quarterly* 18 (1): 7- 23.

Richards, Jack C. 1990. *The Language Teaching Matrix*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, Jack C. 2006. *Communicative Language Teaching Today*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, Jack C. and Richard Schmidt (Eds.). 1983. *Language and Communication*. London: Longman.

Richterich, R. And L. Chancerel, 1978. I*dentifying the Needs of Adults Learning a Foreign Language*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Richterich, René and Gerhard Schneider. 1992. "Transparency and Coherence: why and for whom?" In *Language Learning in Europe: Objectives, Assessment and Certification. Symposium held in Rüschlikon, Switzerland, 10-16 November 1991*, 43-50. Strasbourg: Council for Cultural Cooperation.

Rivers, Wilga M. 1968. *Teaching Foreign Language Skills*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Saussure, Ferdinand de. 1983. *Course in General Linguistics*. London: Duckworth.

Savard, Jean-Guy. 1997. "Besoins langagiers et fonctions langagières." *Canadian Modern Language Review* 33: 632-46.

Savard, Jean-Guy and Lorne Laforge. 1981. *Proceedings of the 5th Congress of L'Association International de Linguistique Apliquée (AILA)*. Publication of the International Centre for Research on Bilingualism. Québec: Les Presses de l'Úniversité Laval.

Savignon, Sandra J. 2000. "Communicative Language Teaching." In *Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning*, ed. by Michael Byram, 125-129. London: Routledge.

Savignon, Sandra J. 2002. *Interpreting Communicative Language Teaching. Contents and Concerns in Language Education*. U.S.A.: Yale University Press.

Savignon, Sandra J. 2007. "Beyond Communicative Language Teaching: What's ahead?" In *Journal of Pragmatics*, 39, 207-220.

Schärer, Rolf and Brian North. (1992). "Toward a common European framework for reporting language competency." In NFLC Occasional Paper. Washington D: National Foreign Language Center.

Seidlhofer, Barbara (Eds.). 2003. *Controversies in Applied Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Schiffrin, Deborah. 1994. *Approaches to Discourse*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Sercu, L. (2000). *Acquiring Intercultural Communicative Competence from Textbooks*. Belgium: Leuven University Press.

Sharifian, Farzad. 2013. "Globalisation and developing metacultural competence in learning English as an International Language." In *Multilingual Education*: 3: 7, 1-11.

Sharifian, Farzad and Jamarani, Maryam (Eds.). 2013. *Language and Intercultural Communication in the New Era.* London: Routledge.

Shaw, A. M. 1977. "Foreign-Language syllabus development: some recent approaches." In *Language Teaching and Linguistics: Abstracts*: 10, 217-33.

Sheils, Joseph. 1996. "The Council of Europe and Language Learning for European Citizenship.*" In Research in Education* 10 (2/3): 88-103.

Skehan, Peter. 1988. *A Cognitive Approach to Language Learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Skinner, Burrhus Frederic. 1957. *Verbal Behavior*. New York: Appleton Century-Crofts.

Slagter, Peter Jan. 1979. *Un nivel umbral*. Germany: Council of Europe.

Smith, Eliot R. 1994. "Procedural Knowledge and Processing Strategies in Social Cognition." In *Handbook of Social Cognition: Basic Processes*, ed. by Wyer, Robert S. and Thomas K. Srull, 99-152. U.S.A.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Smith, Richard C. 2007. “The origins of ELT Journal”. Online (Oxford University Press website): http://www.oxfordjournals.org/our_journals/eltj/resource/the%20origins%20of%20elt%20journal2.pdf (accessed April 15, 2010).

Snyder, Ilana (Eds.). 2003. *Silicon literacies. Communication, Innovation and Education in the Electronic Age*. London: Routledge.

Snyder, Ilana. (Eds.). 1998. *Page to Screen. Taking Literacy into the Electronic Era*. Routledge: New York.

Snyder, Ilana. 2008. *The Literacy Wars. Why Teaching Children to Read and Write is a Battleground in Australia*. Australia: McPherson’s Printing Group.

Spada, Nina. 2007. “Communicative Language Teaching: Current Status and Future Prospects.” In *International handbook of English Language Teaching,* ed. by Jim Cummins, J. and Chris Davison, 271-288. New York: Springer.

Spolsky, Bernard. 1982 “Sociolinguistics of Literacy, Bilingual Education, and Tesol.” *TESOL Quarterly* 16: 141-51.

Spolsky, Bernard. 1988. “Bridging the Gap. A general Theory of Second Language Learning.” *TESOL Quarterly* 22: 377-96.

Spolsky, Bernard. 1989. “Communicative Competence, Language Proficiency, and beyond.” *Applied linguistics*, 10: 138-56.

Spolsky, Bernard. 1990. “Introduction to a Colloquium: The Scope and Form of a Theory of Second Language Learning.” *Tesol Quarterly* 24 (4): 609-616.

Spolsky, Bernard. (Eds.). 2005a. Is language Policy Applied Linguistics? In *Directions in Applied Linguistics: Essays in Honor of Robert B. Kaplan*, ed. by Paul Bruthiaux, Dwight Atkinson, William Egginton, William Grabe, Vaidehi Ramanathan, 26-36. Great Britain: Multilingual Matters.

Spolsky, Bernard. 2005b. “Language in its Social Context”. *Journal of Baltic Studies,* 36 (3): 254-272.

Spolsky, Bernard and Elana Shohamy. 2000. “Language Practice, Language Ideology, and Language Policy for a more Recent Description of the Nature of Language Policy.” In *Language Policy and Pedagogy. Essays in Honor of A. Ronald Walton* ed. by Lambert and Elana Shohamy, 1-41- The Netherlands: John Benjamins.

Spolsky, Bernard and Francis M. Hult (Eds.). 2010. *The Handbook of Educational Linguistics*. U.S.A.: Blackwell.

Stern, H.H. 1981. “The Formal-functional Distinction in Language Pedagogy: a Conceptual Clarification”. In *Proceedings of the 5th Congress of L’Association International de Linguistique Apliquée (AILA)*, ed. by Savard, Jean-Guy and Lorne Laforge, 425-55. Québec: Les Presses de l’Úniversité Laval.

Stern, H. H. 1983. *Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stubbs, Michael. 1980. *Language and Society*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Stubbs, Michael. 1983. *Discourse Analysis*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Stubbs, Michael. 1986. *Educational Linguistics*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Stubbs, Michael. 2000. “Society, Education and Language: The Last 2,000 (and the next 20?) Years of Language Teaching.” In *Change and continuity in Applied Linguistics*, ed. by Hugh Trappes-Lomax, 15-34. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Swales, John. 1990. *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Taylor, Talbot J. 1997. *Theorizing Language*. Amsterdam: Pergamon Press.

Tomasello, Michael. 1988. “The Role of Attentional Process in Early Language Development.” *Language Sciences, 10:* 69-88.

Tomasello, Michael. 2003. *Constructing a Language: A Usage-Based Theory of Language Acquisition*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Tomasello, Michael. 2010. *Origins of Human Communication*. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press.

Tomasello, Michael. and Farrar, J. M. 1996. “Object Permanence and Relational Words: A Lexical Training Study.” *Journal of Child Language, 13:* 495-506.

Trim, John L. M. 1992. *Language Teaching in the Perspective of the Predictable Requirements of the Twenty-first Century*, J.F. Matter (ed.), *Language Teaching in the Twenty-first Century: Problems and Prospects*, AILA Review 9, Amsterdam: Free University Press.

Trim, John L.M. 1997. *Language Learning for European Citizenship. Final Report of the Project Group (1989-96)*. Council of Europe: Strasbourg.

Trim, John L. M. 2000. “Common European Framework of Reference.” In *Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning*, ed. by Michael Byram, 128-131. London: Routledge.

Trim, John L.M. 2001a. The Work of the Council of Europe in the Field of Modern Languages, 1957-2001. In European Day of Languages – 26 September 2001 – at the premises of the European Center for Modern Languages, Graz.

Trim, John L.M. 2001b. “The Common European Framework”. In *Sprogforum*, 19: 9-14.

Trim, John L. M. 2007. *Modern Languages in the Council of Europe 1954-1997. International Co-operation in Support of Lifelong Language Learning for Effective Communication, Mutual Cultural Enrichment and Democratic Citizenship in Europe*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Trim, John L.M. 2012. “The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and its Background: A Case Study of Cultural Politics and Educational Influences.” In *The Common European Framework of Reference: The Globalisation of Language*, ed. by Michael Byram and Lynne Parmenter, 14-34. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Trim, John M.L., Richterich, R., van Ek, Jan A., and Wilkins, D.A. 1973. *Systems Development in Adult Language Learning*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe; (1980) Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Trim, John L. M., Bailly, S.; Devitt, S.; Gremmo, M.J.; Heyworth, F; Hopkins, A.; Jones, B. Makosch, M.; Riley, P.; Stoks, G. (Eds.). 2002. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment. A Guide for Users.* Strasbourg: Council of Europe Language Policy Division.

Trudgill, Peter and Jean Hannah. 2008 (5th ed.). *International English. A Guide to Varieties of Standard English*. London: Hodder Arnold.

Tucker, Richard and Corson, David (Eds.). 1997. *Encyclopedia of Language and Education: Second Language Education*. U.S.A: Springer.

Tuson, Jesús. 1996. *El llenguatge*. Barcelona: Editorial Empúries.

Valdman, Albert and Gass, Susan (Eds.). 2002. *Pedagogical Norms for Second and Foreign Language Learning*. The Netherlands: John Benjamins Publishing.

Van Ek, Jan. 1975. *The Threshold Level in a European Unit Credit System for Modern Language Learning by Adults*. *Systems of Development in Adult Language Learning*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Van Ek, Jan A, Alexander, L.G., and Fitzpatrick, M.A. 1977. *Waystage English: An Intermediary Objective below Threshold Level in a European Unit/Credit System of Modern Language Learning by Adults*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Van Ek, Jan A. 1978. *The Threshold Level for Modern Language Learning in Schools*. London: Longman.

Van Ek, Jan A. 1979. "The Threshold Level (Extracts)." In *The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching*, ed. by Brumfit, C.J. and Johnson, K., 103-116. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Van Ek, Jan A. 1986. *Objectives for Foreign Language Learning. Volume I: Scope*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Van Ek, Jan A. and Alexander, 1980. *Threshold Level Syllabus*. Oxford: Pergamon.

Van Ek, Jan A. and Trim, John L.M. 1991. *Threshold Level 1990*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Van Ek, Jan A. and Trim, John M.L. 1997. *Vantage Level,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Van Els, T.J.M. 2006. "The European Union, its Institutions and its Languages: Some Language Political Observations." In *Language Planning and Policy in Europe, Vol. 2*. The Czech Republic, the European Union and Northern Ireland, ed. by Baldauf and Kaplan. U.S.A.: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Van Patten, B. & Williams, J. (Eds.). 2008. *Theories in Second Language Acquisition. An Introduction*. New York: Routledge.

Veiga, Rita de Cássia and Patricia Lupion (Eds.). 2009. *Handbook of Research on E-Learning Methodologies for Language Acquisition*. Hershey – New York: Information Science Reference.

Widdowson, Henry George. 2000. "On the Limitations of Linguistics Applied." *Applied Linguistics* 21 (1): 3-25.

Wiemann, John M. & Bradac, James J. 1989. "Metatheoretical Issues in the Study of Communicative Competence: Structural and Functional Approaches. Progress in Communication Sciences." In *Progress in Communication Sciences*, ed. by Brenda Dervin and M.J. Voight, Vol. 9, 261-284. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Wiese, Ann-Marie and Eugene E. Garcia. 2001. "The Bilingual Education Act Language Minority Students and U.S. Federal Educational Policy." *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 4 (4): 29-48.

Wiley, Terrence G. 1996. "Language Planning and Policy." In *Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching*, ed. by Sara Louise McKay and Nancy H. Hornberger, 103-147. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wilkins, David A. 1976. *Notional Syllabuses*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wilson, Steven R. and Christina M. Sabee. 2003. "Explicating Communicative Competence as a Theoretical Term." In *Handbook of Communication and Social Interaction Skills,* ed. by John O. Greene and Brant R. Burleson, 3-50. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Wyer, Robert S. and Thomas K. Srull (Eds.). 1994. *Handbook of Social Cognition: Basic Processes*. U.S.A.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Zarate, Geneviève; Aline Gohard-Radenkovic; Denise Lussier and Hermine Penz. (Eds.). 2004. *Cultural Mediation in Language Learning and Teaching*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

EFL textbooks references

Clandfield, Lindsay. 2013 (2nd ed.). *Straightforward Beginner Student's Book*. Great Britain: McMillan Education.

Clandfield, Lindsay. 2013 (2nd ed.). *Straightforward Elementary Student's Book*. Great Britain: McMillan Education

Clandfield, Lindsay. 2013 (2nd ed.). *Straightforward Pre-Intermediate Student's Book*. Great Britain: McMillan Education.

Clandfield, Lindsay. 2013 (2nd ed.). *Straightforward Intermediate Student's Book*. Great Britain: McMillan Education.

Clandfield, Lindsay. 2013 (2nd ed.). *Straightforward Upper-Intermediate Student's Book*. Great Britain: McMillan Education.

Clandfield, Lindsay. 2013 (2nd ed.). *Straightforward Advanced Student's Book*. Great Britain: McMillan Education.

Clandfield, Lindsay, Jackey McAvoy, Kate Pickering. 2010. *Global Beginner Student's Book*. Great Britain: McMillan Education.

Clandfield, Lindsay, Jackey McAvoy, Kate Pickering. 2010. *Global Elementary Student's Book*. Great Britain: McMillan Education.

Clandfield, Lindsay. 2010. *Global Pre-Intermediate Student's Book*. Great Britain: McMillan Education.

Clandfield, Lindsay, Benne, R. 2011. *Global Intermediate Student's Book*. Great Britain: McMillan Education.

Clandfield, Lindsay, Benne, R. 2011. *Global Upper-Intermediate Student's Book*. Great Britain: McMillan Education.

Clandfield, Lindsay, Jeffries, A. 2012. *Global Advanced Student's Book*. Great Britain: McMillan Education.

Doff, A. 2010. *English Unlimited Beginner Student's Book*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Doff, A. and Goldstein, B. 2010. *English Unlimited Advanced Student's Book*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hendra, L. 2010 *English Unlimited Pre-Intermediate Student's Book*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Oxenden, C. and Latham-Koenig, C. 2009. *New English File Beginner Student's Book*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Oxenden, C. and Latham-Koenig, C. 2009. *New English File Elementary Student's Book*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Oxenden, C. and Latham-Koenig, C. 2009. *New English File Pre-Intermediate Student's Book*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Oxenden, C. and Latham-Koenig, C. 2009. *New English File Intermediate Student's Book*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Oxenden, C. and Latham-Koenig, C. 2009. *New English File Upper-Intermediate Student's Book*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Oxenden, C. and Latham-Koenig, C. 2009. *New English File* Advanced Student's Book. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rea, D. and Clementson, T. 2010. *English Unlimited Intermediate Student's Book*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Soars, J. and Soars, L. 2013 (4th ed.). *New Headway Beginner Student's Book*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Soars, J. and Soars, L. 2013 (4th ed.). *New Headway Elementary Student's Book*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Soars, J. and Soars, L. 2013 (4th ed.). *New Headway Pre-Intermediate Student's Book*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Soars, J. and Soars, L. 2013 (4th ed.). *New Headway Intermediate Student's Book*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Soars, J. and Soars, L. 2012 (3rd ed.). *New Headway Upper-Intermediate Student's book*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Soars, J. and Soars, L. 2012 (3rd ed.). *New Headway Advanced Student's Book*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tilbury, Anne, Theresa Clemendson, Leslie Anne Hendra, David Rea. 2013. *English Unlimited Elementary*. *Student's Book*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tilbury, Anne, Theresa Clemendson, Leslie Anne Hendra, David Rea. 2013. *English Unlimited Pre-Intermediate*. *Student's Book*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tilbury, Anne, Theresa Clemendson, Leslie Anne Hendra, David Rea. 2013. *English Unlimited Intermediate*. *Student's Book*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tilbury, Alex and Leslie Anne Hendra. 2011. *English Unlimited Upper-Intermediate*. *Student's Book*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Pres