

Initial stages of individual teacher CEFR-related classroom curriculum projects at Miyazaki International College

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This paper explores steps individual instructors have undertaken to incorporate the CEFR into oral communication, reading, writing, and team-taught CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) courses absent of administrative mandates, within a large-scale curricular framework of the International Liberal Arts Department at Miyazaki International College (MIC). Although the curricular framework specifies general learner and course goals, a high level of teacher autonomy allows instructors to embark on their own projects integrating CEFR-related goals. For example, instructors have found ways to input larger conceptual goals of the CEFR through Can Do statements, and other reflective activities aimed to raise learner awareness, as well as noting where curriculum already aligns with established descriptors of the CEFR scales. In addition, aspects of the newer Illustrative Descriptors Scales of the CEFR Companion Volume (CEFR/CV) including reception, production, interaction and mediation provide benchmarks for instructors to reflect on the way language is taught and negotiated in the CLIL program. While the paper focuses on projects within such an autonomous environment, it offers a case study of steps individual instructors can attempt in order to incorporate the CEFR into curricula absent of administrative mandates and provides guidance for those receiving various mandates to reform curriculum.

Keywords: CEFR-informed curriculum design and mapping; teacher autonomy; learner awareness; learner reflection; CLIL; EMI institution; Can Do statements; Illustrative Descriptor Scales, CEFR/CV; action research approach

1 Introduction

Since the official launch in 2001, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) has significantly affected language learning, curriculum planning, teaching practices, and assessment worldwide (Byram and Parmenter 2012; Piccardo, North and Goodier 2019; Szirmai 2014). Its action-oriented approach considers language learners as “users and social agents”, promotes learner awareness, autonomous learning and “builds on and goes beyond the communicative approach” of functional-notional syllabi and curriculum planning (Council of Europe 2001 and 2018: 25-26). As Japanese universities and the Ministry of Education (MEXT) aim to improve English language education, the CEFR has emerged as a framework for curriculum development in Japan both at the secondary and tertiary levels (Morrow 2004; Nagai and O'Dwyer 2011; Cook and Rutson-Griffiths 2018; Schmidt, Runnels and Nagai 2017). Although this emergence was influenced by well-documented CEFR informed curricula within the European Context, many challenges remain with implementing the CEFR in European public education curriculum development as correlation between language “learning outcomes to CEFR levels lack in general empirical evidence,” (EU 2013: 13). Nonetheless as the EU (2013) study concludes, “the more the CEFR is implemented

and used in policy documents, the more the CEFR is used in examination, schoolbooks and teacher training,” (13). Indeed, MEXT’s core curriculum document for junior and senior high school English language mentions the CEFR B2 as a target goal for language teachers to obtain (MEXT 2019: 7). Several students in MIC’s School of International Liberal Arts (ILA) are also enrolled in the teacher certification course. Given this environment, there exists a potential for future mandates from MEXT or universities to show where curricula or class syllabi align with the CEFR A1-C2 reference levels. During the period from 2001 to 2010, over one hundred CEFR-based “language portfolio models” were validated by the Council of Europe (Little, Goullier and Hughes 2011). Creating local, context-sensitive models and having projects validated by a central authority was an important dynamic in the way that applications of the CEFR unfolded. In Asia, on the other hand, the dynamic interaction between the center and the periphery has generally been missing and the understanding of the CEFR was not so strongly rooted in a culture of locally initiated curricular development. CEFR is seen more as a comprehensive set of targets to be achieved. Awareness of possibilities of future mandates from MEXT, along with a commitment to learner autonomy and positive prior experience with the CEFR and portfolios, inspired the authors to investigate how the current curricular goals of the School of International Liberal Arts could be re-framed and clarified by drawing on the CEFR and CEFR Companion Volume (Council of Europe [CoE] 2001, 2018).

After explaining the background of the university as an English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) institution, we proceed to detail the classroom initiatives taken to incorporate the CEFR concepts into courses being taught by the authors using an action research approach. First, the language program’s oral communication course is discussed in terms of how its functional objectives aligned with CEFR descriptors and other reflective activities implemented. Secondly, we examine the use of Can Do statements for setting goals in reading and writing skills courses in the light of the CEFR. Finally, we discuss ways the descriptors of the CEFR Companion Volume (CV) can be used to analyze practices within one CLIL classroom.

It is worth saying at the outset that the two authors represent different perspectives on the CEFR. R. Schmidt had experienced the process of aligning to the CEFR, seeing how it could bring a whole staff together to improve materials, teaching and assessment at Hiroshima Bunkyo University. Bringing accuracy to a large amount of curricular data to sequence course levels and facilitate students’ path through the curriculum therefore emerged as her major focus of interest. On the other hand, E. Head had worked in various communities of practice related to assessment for learning, starting with involvement in Cambridge suite exams in the 1990s, going on to work with the FLP and Language Portfolio SIG on classroom applications of the CEFR, and most recently working in China, where she was engaged in helping teachers to work with CEFR-based criteria as assessment for learning for a CEFR-based test called Aptis. Head’s vision of the CEFR was as a reference point for cyclic processes of assessment in a learning community. Establishing processes of standardization of language assessment emerged as her major preoccupation during the time working on the project with R. Schmidt. Both authors share a strong commitment to transparency of assessment and strong linkage of assessment with classroom practice, which the CEFR promotes.

2 The context

2.1 The School of International Liberal Arts

The School of International Arts (SILA) at MIC offers a liberal arts degree, a combination of an English Language Curriculum and CLIL courses. Generally, students study in Japan for the first three semesters, followed by a semester abroad. In years 3-4 they write a senior thesis with 1:1 supervision. Content includes English literature, sociology, political science, economics, history, psychology, anthropology, IT and science. In 2019-20, around 18% of freshmen were non-Japanese students. The trend towards recruiting overseas is creating new challenges in terms of identifying the level of content in classes and verifying acceptable standards for incoming students and for graduation (Brown 2017: 8).

2.2 EMI and CLIL courses at MIC

MIC College was the first university in Japan to allow students to graduate by taking all their courses in English (Mulvey 2018: 42). Before going on to consider the current English program in the light of the CEFR, we will look briefly at the domains of target language use (TLU) for students across their four years at MIC. Although much is made of the fact that students spend a semester abroad in second year, they generally join English-language programs appropriate to their level abroad, and so their on-campus classes aim to provide as much of a challenge as anything they encounter abroad (Bennett 2018; Bishop 2018). There has been a shift in practice at MIC from EMI (the term used by Mulvey (2018), referring to practice in 1994) towards CLIL, particularly in the content classes for first and second-year students. Originally classes were team-taught by content-experts with a language teacher to provide support but without structured language development. Mulvey explains how the MEXT accreditation process in 2007-8 led to improvements to the program. “MIC used feedback from its assessment review to initiate clearer delineations of level and learner appropriate outcomes for its EFL classes, not to mention better coordination between these classes and the EMI curriculum,” (Mulvey 2018: 41). Looking at reports of first year content courses, we can see that teachers make an effort to tailor the material and goals to fit the needs of students. Hamiuc and Parker (2016) describe how they worked to make the targets of a religious studies course achievable despite conceptually challenging content. Only 81% of the vocabulary in their initial texts belonged to the first 2000 words of English of the K1 and K2 lists. Content objectives were redefined to suit the abilities of the students. These procedures are similar to those carried out on an ongoing basis by teachers of first year courses. Both authors have experienced this process as co-teachers of Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology, and History. We note that although these courses have been adapted by language teachers, the amount of subject-specific vocabulary is still overwhelming for students. Schmidt, Jiang and Grabe (2011) believe that readers can only read independently if they have 98% coverage of the vocabulary level of the text. A study by Bennett (2018) of vocabulary needed by students for aural comprehension of the Japanese Popular Culture course showed that the vocabulary used in lectures and videos was 95% covered by the NGSL list of 2,800 most frequent words. Assuming students had mastered the NGSL by the time they took the Popular Culture course they would still have 5% not covered. Bennett estimated that one in 15 words heard would be unknown to students (Bennett 2018: 17-18).

The issue of starting to do English-medium courses with a very low level of English has been the subject of global debate in recent years. Breeze (2014: 146) raises important questions: “How far does knowledge of the target language impact [students’] chance of doing well?” and “How can content teachers provide help without sacrificing quality?” She reports a study of correlations between listening levels and success in content classes such as law and medicine at a Spanish university, concluding that above a certain threshold, study skills, commitment, memory and information-gathering can help students succeed even with a relatively low listening level. In our context, introducing a minimum entry requirement has been discussed but currently most first and second year courses do not have such a minimum. However, students’ feedback questionnaires show that CLIL classes are motivating for lower level students, particularly when they have the opportunity to work in a group with peers who are of a higher level. The more proficient students can help by explaining concepts and modelling the desired products and behavior to their classmates, and students employ different levels of mediation to gain understanding. We perceive this as an area in which CEFR/CV would be an invaluable tool for developing our understanding of student needs in relation to CLIL in our specific context. Hitherto, approaches have focused on quantitative analysis of material encountered by students. In section 3.5.1 below, we explain how text analysis tools were used to simplify the vocabulary required for the Introduction to History course.

2.3 The English language curriculum: Core Program

The program, outlined in the language program handbook (Bennett 2017), began in 2011 and has been in its current form since 2015. Students are streamed into levels for the 3 core courses: oral communication, reading, and writing. Content classes are mixed-ability, but a language instructor team-teaches with a content instructor. Besides the language teachers being familiar with content of the language program, there is little sequencing or scaffolding for language needed to do the content classes beyond overarching goals to encourage discussion and critical thinking. The English program, “planned, developed, and revised by faculty” aims to “foster students’ ability for self-expression, questioning, evaluation analysis, and creative thought through the medium of English” (Bennett 2018: 1). Rather than CEFR, vocabulary was the guiding principle in the construction of the curriculum, as Bennett (2018: 1) explains: “The underlying ethos of the program loosely follows Nation’s (2007) *Four Strands* approach to curriculum design, in which learners are exposed to an approximately equal balance of activities designed to provide meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output, language-focused learning, and fluency development.” Courses were developed considering these strands, where material for reading (input) and speaking and writing (output) aimed to be familiar to the learners (Nation 2007). All of these components were incorporated into a spiraled curriculum of “topical linking of classes” for the three courses in the Core Program (Bennett 2017: 1).

Although the CEFR was not an inspiration for the course objectives, there appears to be overlap in its goals. Moreover, conceptual goals to “develop sufficient language proficiency and learner autonomy to become successful participants in the MIC setting and in the larger English-medium global community” (Bennett 2017: 1) coincide with conceptual goals of the CEFR. It is from this starting point that the authors began to evaluate specific ways the curriculum already aligned with the CEFR and how it could be improved by using CEFR in future.

2.4 Teacher autonomy and larger curricular goals

The learning objectives for each course remain general enough to allow for teacher autonomy in the ways teachers create or supplement program material in each of their individual classes. Such high teacher autonomy and flexibility provides an ideal environment for teachers to embark on their own classroom level projects. Cook (2019) discusses the disadvantages of teachers being too independent, “working in silos” as they often tend to do in university settings to the point that it can “inhibit the exchange of knowledge amongst staff” (Swap and Wayland (2013) in Cook 2019: 2). However, he outlines ways that these individual classroom practices, initiatives, and activities can be brought together to enhance a more collaborative program. It is possible our projects could influence the Core SILA Language Program. As CEFR-informed curriculum benchmarks, assessments and conceptual CEFR classroom practices grow in importance in Japan, it will be beneficial for the language program at MIC to have explicitly defined ways in which its curriculum aligns with the CEFR.

3 The classroom projects

3.1 An action research approach

Action Research is a common approach in Educational academic research which follows a cyclical method. Researchers identify a problem, attempt to implement a solution, collect data, reflect on the process and results, and evaluate those results to create a better solution (Mills 2006). However, as Burns (1999: 35) notes, “models such as these” can be seen as “too prescriptive” as researchers “will need to make their own interpretations of what are appropriate processes for the circumstances of the research.” Therefore instead of a cycle, researchers may prefer to see the process “as a series of interrelated experiences involving the following phases: 1-exploring, 2-identifying, 3-planning, 4-collecting data, 5-

analyzing, reflecting 6-hypothesising, speculating, 7-intervening, 8-observing, 9-reporting, 10-writing, 11-presenting,” (Burns 1999: 35). The authors have chosen to adopt this model of action research to explain classroom projects being undertaken by the authors. This paper discusses the initial stages of these projects to attempt to investigate ways the CEFR could more explicitly be incorporated into their individual classroom projects and ultimately investigate ways the CEFR could be used in the overarching curriculum. As discussed in the introduction, MEXT explicitly states goals in its core curriculum for junior and senior high teachers to have a CEFR B1 level (MEXT 2019: 7). Thus, it is possible, MEXT could ask universities to demonstrate ways the CEFR informs certain course curricula. As both authors had experience with the CEFR before joining MIC, they noticed the lack of any official mention of the CEFR in the curricular goals both conceptually and in ways its learning objectives overlap, despite existence implicitly. Therefore, in terms of action research, this lack of explicit mention serves as the ‘identified problem’. Yet, much of what has been done is still in the exploratory and planning stages as they have attempted to collect preliminary data to note existing ways the CEFR fits into the current curriculum. This paper will explore the processes of ‘exploring’, ‘identifying’ and ‘planning’ their classroom projects.

In addition to noting explicit lack of mention of the CEFR as the identified problem, the authors seek to identify other ways the CEFR might possibly improve aspects of the curriculum, such as leveling of classes, material development, assessment and allowing students to identify their level of English beyond the TOEIC. Nonetheless, in the case of these initial classroom projects, the goal is showing ways the CEFR could be used in the classroom as evidence for how it could be implemented at a wider curricular level. To put it another way, the CEFR contains tools and processes for sorting out levels in language programs, and these tools would add clarity and coherence to our program in terms of organizing materials and assessment. Thus, the projects discussed serve as attempts to ‘identify’ the issues, clarify ‘planning’ and ways to go about ‘collecting data’ in current and potential future projects with the ultimate goals of making the CEFR more explicit in individual teacher practices and ultimately program curricular goals. We have chosen to define our discussion of projects in this paper as *initial stages* to stress that we are still in the ‘planning’ steps of collaborative projects involving CEFR use at MIC.

3.2 *The oral communication course*

The oral communication course is one of the three main courses in the Core Program of the language program. According to the SILA English Program Handbook (Bennett 2017: 8), the primary aims of oral communication are to fluently perform “communication tasks for an academic setting, using controlled vocabulary and grammar.” Benchmark goals are set in terms of six functional objectives and correlating grammar points for each level. In addition, vocabulary targets are set, based on the most frequently-occurring words according to the NGSL. Vocabulary development is assessed within the Reading course and will be discussed further below. Students are assessed through speaking production and interaction tasks, grammar quizzes and a final oral and grammar exam. Although the goals of the program are centered on an academic setting, many of the functional objectives are everyday communicative tasks, such as describing daily routines and past experiences. The functional-notional approach for these learning objectives, and overall curricular goal of learner autonomy, coincide with the emphasis on social agency and action-oriented approach of the CEFR (CoE 2001, 2018). Thus, this course provided an excellent starting place to explore ways the language program aligns with CEFR goals and descriptors.

3.2.1 *Using the Hiroshima Bunkyo University model*

In 2012, the administration of the English Communication Center at Hiroshima Bunkyo University decided to revise its General English (GE) curriculum to make it more CEFR-informed. As one author was a part of this project from 2012 through March 2018, it was the inspiration and model to begin evaluating ways the CEFR could be implemented in the oral communication course at MIC. Although course

objectives and specified functional objectives were clearly defined in the SILA language handbook, high teacher autonomy was granted to individual instructors to develop material and decide approaches to teaching the functional objectives. This provided an ideal environment to use the experiences at Hiroshima Bunkyo University to map functional objectives and conceptual course objectives in the Oral Communication course at MIC aligned with the CEFR.

Although the Bunkyo project began with administrative mandates and all faculty were given roles in the project, it still provides a model for how one teacher could initiate a similar approach within a single classroom without administrative mandates. For the purpose of briefly explaining the CEFR project at Bunkyo, the author has defined it in terms of three stages. The first stage involved mapping the existing Communicative Language Teaching curriculum to the CEFR-J, the Japanese version of the CEFR. Mapping in this project and in the ones discussed in this paper refers to the process of investigating current curriculum content and goals to see how they align to Can Do descriptors. The CEFR-J was chosen for its greater micro-levels, which were deemed more applicable within the context of low-level of English of the students at a Japanese university (Negishi, Takeda and Tono 2013). First, teachers wrote Can Do statements for each lesson in the General English Program. Then these were mapped (examined to see how they aligned) to the descriptor levels of the CEFR-J. One Can Do statement was chosen for each lesson and placed at the beginning and end of it. Also, overall curriculum level Can Do statements were created. More details on this first stage of the Bunkyo curriculum reform can be found in Bower et al. 2017 (also Kodate 2017; Schmidt 2018). The mapping revealed many inconsistencies and gaps in the program so it was decided to rewrite the entire curriculum. Due to lack of external resources like grammar and vocabulary lists, a decision was made to use the CEFR instead of the CEFR-J. Thus, stage two consisted of redesigning the entire curriculum based on the CEFR A1-A2 and A2-B1 levels, aligning tasks in the Self Access Learning Center (SALC) and developing CEFR-informed assessments. Stage three involved creating and mapping Can Do statements for Global Communication Department courses (Cook 2019). Experiences learned in stages 1 and 3 on writing Can Do statements and noting their alignment with the CEFR provide the background model for mapping the Oral Communication functional objectives at MIC.¹

3.2.2 Mapping the functional objectives

The Language Program Handbook (Bennett 2017) for SILA at MIC clearly lists learning objectives, including six functional speaking objectives for each level of Oral Communication. Thus, the first step was to evaluate where these goals are similar to the CEFR descriptors. Using the experience from experiences at Bunkyo as discussed above, the author chose to investigate how they aligned with the Equals (European Association for Quality Language Services) Core Inventory for General English, an interpretation of the CEFR into English language learning goals. In addition, other sources such as the digital grammar analysis provided by English Profile website were used to help map functions and grammar targets. (English Profile 2015). Analysis of the first three functional objectives can be seen in Table 1, below.

Although the curriculum was not based on CEFR-informed goals and benchmarks, our functional objectives and target grammar correlate well with descriptors for understanding, spoken interaction and production in the inventory. Students enter the university with an average TOEIC score of around 350 and start their second year around 460. With scores 225-545 correlating to an A2 level (Tannenbaum

1. It should be noted that the mapping of the Oral Communication discussed below is the work of one instructor, the first author of this contribution, who had the experience of mapping course objectives at Hiroshima Bunkyo University, but is by no means an expert. While we recognize that the process of mapping to the CEFR has been carried out numerous times by curriculum and test-developers, it was decided to draw on the models known for this initial step. The primary purpose of this project is to give a case study of what individual instructors could do to initially see where the material they are teaching lies on the CEFR scales. Identifying correspondences between our curricular goals and CEFR descriptors was the first step taken.

and Wylie 2015), we can see the program is fairly well leveled for the first semester but with an increase in B1/B2 content in the second semester, it becomes increasingly challenging for lower level students (see Appendix 1).

Table 1. (see Appendix 1 for all functional speaking objectives for the entire Oral Communication course)

Functional Speaking Objective (as listed in the language Program Handbook)	Functions	Grammar
Oral Communication 1: Spring Semester (1st year)		
1. Managing conversations (<i>wh-questions / yes / no questions</i>)	A1- Giving Personal Information (family life, hobbies, leisure activities)	A1: Questions / To be / Verb + -ing
2. Classroom English	B1- Expressing Opinions / Expressing agreement and disagreement / Taking the Initiative in Interaction / Checking Understanding / Managing Interaction	A2: Modals - should
3. Describing routines & habits (<i>present simple tense</i>)	A1/ A2 - Describing habits and routines	A1 / A2: Adverbs of Frequency A2: Adverbial phrases of time A1: Present Simple Tense

A brief overview of the mapping also reveals a general progression in difficulty from A1 to B2, although it is not completely linear. However, it should be noted that in other classes students are tackling CLIL content in the B2-C1 range, despite efforts to simplify. Giving opinions, expressing an argument, and joining in group discussions, which fall into B1 and B2 descriptors, are of utmost importance in CLIL courses. Thus, these functions are placed at the beginning of each semester in Oral English. This discrepancy of levels also highlights weaknesses in the program where A2 level students are mixed with B2 level students in the CLIL courses, yet under these circumstances it is appropriate to have some oral communication course goals at the B2 level. The Oral Communication classes are streamed into four levels and teachers have freedom to modify content to best meet the needs of their students. This need for flexibility thus means the functional objectives remain as overarching goals and make a true mapping of content to CEFR difficult at this stage. This initial investigation thus reveals that actual course content each teacher uses at each level should be examined more closely. Such projects could be embarked on as a way to collect more data to determine real alignment of the oral communication course.

3.2.3 Can Do statements and reflection tasks

In addition to the mapping of the functional objectives, the first author aimed to add more conceptual goals of the CEFR to enhance learner awareness of autonomous learning, in accordance with the overarching goals of the SILA. One of the main purposes of incorporating the CEFR into the Oral Communication course is to increase awareness of the learning objectives and provide means for reflection. Again, experiences learned from the Bunkyo project were applied. First, one single Can Do statement was created for each functional objective. This Can Do statement, with a four-point Likert scale was placed at the beginning of a unit created for each functional objective. This Can Do had two boxes, one to check before the lesson and one after.

Table 2

How well can you do the following objective?		I Can Do it easily	I Can Do it	I Can Do it, but it is difficult	I can't do it
I can ask and answer questions and discuss my life, daily routine, and habits with classmates.	Before				
	After				

Although there were various handouts for each functional objective created by present and past instructors, the sequencing was disjointed. It was unclear whether students were even aware of what the learning objectives were unless they read the syllabus. Although there was some sharing of material, this high teacher autonomy had resulted in numerous single page handouts without any overarching coherence. Thus, creating one single handout has also helped increase collaboration with material design. Finally, reflective activities were created for students to note weaknesses and goals to improve for each speaking production and speaking interaction tasks. Functional Objective performances were recorded using *Flipgrid*, a website designed for students to upload videos with space for teacher evaluation and feedback. Other tasks, such as presentations were recorded. The new reflection worksheet helped students to reflect on their pronunciation, fluency, conversation strategies (interaction tasks) and actual use of the target functional objective for each speaking task. It is hoped these could be used by other teachers on a voluntary basis in future.

3.3 The Reading Course

The MIC Reading course was designed to build the skills and vocabulary students need in content classes. The goals cover reading strategies, grammar, vocabulary, dictionary use and reading fluency (Bennett 2017: 39). In contrast to the Oral Communication course, the materials and sequence are specified in detail. In-house readings 500-1000 words long provide the backbone of the course. The second feature of the Reading course is mandatory use of applications to achieve targets for vocabulary study and extensive reading. This reduces the freedom teachers have to create extra projects as students must devote homework time to these applications, leaving no time for tasks such as book reports or reading circles. The targets are demanding in terms of breadth and volume, leading many students to struggle with managing their time outside class. Table 3 gives an overview of the program.

Table 3

CEFR/CV	MIC Reading program	
Reading for orientation	Reading for speed and fluency	2 passages/week
Reading for information/argument	In-house intensive reading passages	8x 500 word passages per term
Reading for information/argument	Read Theory (2020) (reading comprehension training app for native speaker children)	12-15 sessions per month
Reading for leisure	Extensive reading using Xreading VL (2020) Virtual Library app	15,000 words/month
	Vocabulary study using Praxis Ed (2008/2020) app	12-15 sessions/month

In addition to time management issues, the variety of ability levels adds to the problem. Even though the classes are streamed, reading speeds and vocabulary levels vary widely. This became the focus of the second author's action research project for the reading course. In the next sections we attempt to relate the goals of Reading 1 and 2 to the CEFR, before examining how Can Do lists were used to help students to make individualized goals.

3.3.1 Mapping curricular content to the CEFR/CV

CEFR/CV conceptualizes reading progression in terms of ability to understand information on a cline in terms of "length and complexity/simplicity of message", "the extent to which the subject is an everyday one, related to interests, or specialized" (CoE 2018: 61), and "type of language, from simple to stylistically complex" (CoE 2018: 65). Our intensive reading material follows a progression from the familiar to unfamiliar. The initial texts describe familiar subject matter: the classroom, successes and failures of English study and school life. However, students encounter complex syntax from the start. This is done deliberately to challenge students (Bennett 2018: 17). Questions focusing on the line of argument appear early in the course. This equates to a B1 level goal: "Can recognize the line of argument in the treatment of the issue presented, though not necessarily in detail" (CoE 2018: 63). The readings include summarizing and paraphrasing tasks. This coincides with B1 level of processing text in speech in the CEFR/CV: "Can summarize the main points made in clear, well-structured spoken and written texts" (CoE 2018: 111).

The intensive readings require sophisticated syntactic and vocabulary knowledge. The following example, from Reading 1, may serve to illustrate the kind of complexity students encounter. "As a human being, you have a natural talent for learning the advanced form of communication that we call language." The accompanying questions include "What do humans have a talent for?" Most students respond "the advanced form of communication that we call language", while the desired answer is "language". This creates an opportunity to teach students about reading for the main idea. By working on grammar and rhetorical structures in this way, it is hoped students will learn to analyze complex sentences by themselves. But in practice, many students try to translate into Japanese. Beginning readers might be better served by easier material.

CEFR resists specifying numerical parameters for reading speed and vocabulary size, due to the variations in parameter/skill correlations for different languages (Milton and Alexiou 2009: 196). At first sight, MIC Reading course goals appear unrelated to CEFR, in that they refer to mastery of vocabulary according to NGSL levels and increasing reading speed (Bennett 2018: 5-8). The intensive reading texts in the first semester draw on NGSL level 1 to 3 words (roughly the most frequent 1,500 words) and vocabulary gradually expands to include level 4 and 5 (most frequent 2,800 words) by third semester. The same wordlists are assessed in a vocabulary test which makes up part of their reading class score. The test is done at the start of the program and at the end of each semester, to measure not only individual performance but also program effectiveness (Bennett 2017: 17-19).

The applications (Praxis Ed, Xreading VL, Read Theory) give instant feedback, showing not only correct or wrong answers, but also the number of attempts, the time spent on each page or problem, and the stats for their previous sessions, in great detail. Tracking quantitative information such as vocabulary scores and reading speeds allows students to see their progress. However this approach is less strong on the instrumental and integrative aspects of reading, which the CEFR highlights. The emphasis on quantitative targets makes it difficult to focus on the development of integrated skills and overarching competencies.

3.3.2 Using Can Do lists for goal-setting in Reading 1 and 2

A Can Do list was constructed based on the program handbook goals for Reading 1 in Spring 2019 and 2020 (see Appendix 2). Using the list at the beginning, middle and end of the course was intended to

help students to prioritize and make choices between various activities, particularly for out-of-class study. At the time the Can Do list was first administered, students were told that they should try to work on their own goals and make some progress from their own initial level rather than competing with each other. Different students responded to the Can Do list in various ways. For lower level students, improving their reading speed, vocabulary and reading amount were the most popular goals. The list worked well within the program because feedback was available quickly on quantitative goals such as reading speed. Higher level students picked more sophisticated goals such as inferencing, identifying tone, trustworthiness and humor.

Since both authors had been using Can Do lists in their classes individually, in Spring 2019 they decided to try working together to relate their work more closely with CEFR and CEFR/CV. This project stimulated the second author to investigate how her program-based Can Do statements could be calibrated with the CEFR/CV (see Appendix 2). This process highlighted the challenging nature of Reading 1 for students who enter the program below B1 level. Of the 11 items on the Reading 1 Can Do list, six relate to B1, two to B2, two to A2 and two are not in the CEFR (using punctuation marks to help with reading aloud, reading 200 words per minute). The possibility of creating differentiated targets to cater for lower levels in the program was discussed during 2018-19 but rejected. It was thought that it might be difficult to change the targets, because it would be perceived as unfair by high level students who had more demanding targets. It might also be unfair to deprive lower level students of the potential gains they would make if they studied hard.

Given the many fixed elements in the reading curriculum, it is difficult to combine the mandatory elements into an assessment which is learning-oriented, achievable for lower levels and motivating for higher level students. Most teachers include the recognition of effort and improvement in the final grade, evidenced by hours spent in on-line study and meticulous performance on the intensive reading worksheets. The adoption of Can Do lists in one individual class was an attempt to help students to communicate with the teacher about what they found difficult, and calibrate their own progress independently. Systematic feedback needs to be gathered in the next stage of the project in order to determine whether this was effective from the students' point of view.

3.4 Academic Writing Within the English Program

In this section we will look at first year Academic Writing at MIC and describe current practice and potential improvements which could be made by implementing CEFR-derived tools and processes such as Can Do lists, portfolio assessment and collective standard-setting. The course raises similar issues to those described in the section on oral communication, in that there is a high degree of teacher autonomy and a wide range of levels being graded within one program. In contrast with the Oral Communication course, there is no program-wide collaboration on grading of the final test, even though the attainment targets and test are the same. Although the situation is not viewed as problematic by faculty, the need for increased accountability in 2020-21 due to grade-linked criteria for government scholarships may create a need for working towards standardization in the future.

Over two semesters (Academic Writing 1 and 2), the course aims to teach students how to write an academic essay, building up from sentence to paragraph to a five paragraphs essay over three semesters. A third semester offers students a chance to work more on five paragraph essays, but we focus on first year classes here. Goals are specified in the program handbook in terms of grammar and functions ("rhetorical styles") such as classification, persuasion or comparison. (Bennett 2017: 23). The functions mirror those introduced in the Oral Communication course. Writing fluency is a further goal, addressed through timed writing practice and journaling. The course is assessed through continuous assessment and a program-wide final exam featuring essay-writing and sentence-writing tasks focused on the material introduced in class. An in-house student writing handbook provides back-up in the form of example essays and paragraphs, detailed explanation of relevant grammar and cohesive devices. As

with the other courses, most of the tasks require B1 or B2 in CEFR terms to be completed adequately. Teachers in the lower level classes spend more time working on basic grammar and paragraph-level. In practice, teachers' norm-reference to individual classes to enable weak but industrious students to pass. Problems sometimes arise when students' progress to third year and start writing their senior thesis, as the three-semester course is not adequate to prepare them to organize a 4,000 word academic essay.

3.4.1 Supporting transparent assessment: rubrics and Can Do lists

During 2015-19 the whole college implemented a drive to use rubrics for assessment and make the rubrics available to students through documents such as syllabi. The student writing material contains a bilingual rubric in English and Japanese, for scoring paragraphs and essays, using the criteria organization, lexis, grammar and content. However the rubric is designed to assist teachers with grading. It is too condensed to be used for scaffolding an on-going awareness of the development of subskills. Yet for students to achieve the goal of writing better paragraphs or more complex types of text, subskills need to be listed and worked on one by one. The author felt that Can Do lists would give students a sense of their own progress and needs, in a more dynamic way than the rubrics. The effectiveness of this methodology should be investigated by survey research in 2020-21.

As part of a classroom project to increase students' understanding of the mechanics of writing, Can Do lists were created based on the goals set out for the writing courses in the program handbook (Bennett 2017) (see Appendix 3). The list was used at the start, middle and end of term aiming to familiarize students with the terms needed on the course (punctuation, paragraph, draft, re-draft) and give students a chance to make short-term goals. Keeping a tally of students' self-rating on Can Do lists helped the instructor decide when to move on from single-paragraph to two-paragraph essays. The Can Do list was also useful to guide reflection at the end of the course. Most of the Can Do statements for our course were detailed, task-related statements which fit into B1 "Overall Written Production." But our goals also drew on overarching production-related competencies: planning, grammatical accuracy and vocabulary range. Goals which related to various sub-tasks of process writing were difficult to account for within the CEFR/CV framework and often overlapped with competencies related to speaking. For example, planning writing using a mind-map or list, seemed to be subsumed in CEFR/CV under planning a speech (CoE 2018: 78). Similarly, developing an argument, accounted for in CEFR/CV under "coherence and cohesion," appears to be presumed transferable from speech to writing (CoE 2018: 141). The process of attempting to map our curriculum-based Can Do list to the CEFR/CV appeared to highlight areas of the CEFR/CV which would benefit from further details being added.

3.4.2 Future steps: Portfolios and a round table on writing

Although the course encourages process-writing and learning journals, portfolios were not being used for assessment by any writing teachers in 2017-2019. The college had recently started using the Mahara system to make e-portfolios for IT, with the result that "portfolio" was understood by students to mean something to do with IT skills rather than reflection. However, the second author was very interested in trying out portfolios after using them in her former workplace. Re-reading "Developing an ELP Model" she was struck by the question "Will the learner be able to trace their development?" as it points towards the need for students to go through a process of looking at their old work and comparing their old and current productions. From 2017 to 2019, a final, reflective task was set where students mentioned increases in writing speed, sentence complexity and the ability to construct essays in their final reflections. However, in summer 2020, an example portfolio was made using written work collected from a student in third year (with permission) and students were asked to select work for their own portfolios, aiming for a balance of spontaneous and planned writing, showing evidence of their progress between April and July. At the time of writing we await the first round of portfolios.

E-portfolios have a great merit in bringing together student work in a form that can be conveniently sampled by various faculty members. In order to make grading fair, it seemed important to discuss samples of student output in relation to grading criteria. Two out of five writing teachers met to compare the grading of selected essays written during the tests in summer and fall 2018. The teachers agreed on the order in which they ranked the essays but their way of justifying their decision varied widely. However, in 2019, such collaboration did not happen. It is hoped that carrying out successful pilot projects using Can Do lists and portfolios will inspire faculty to work together on a standard setting.

3.5 CLIL Courses

3.5.1 Text Analyzers as a means to identify levels

CLIL classes present a particular challenge both for students and teachers. Students select their courses according to interest, leading to a wide range of ability in one class. The average student is around A2 level yet there are numerous students above and below. The authors were concerned about vocabulary difficulties encountered by students in the first semester. As mentioned above, Hamiuc and Parker (2016) and Bennett (2018: 14-16) have both used lexical frequency profiling to explore the vocabulary encountered in CLIL courses, in Religious Studies and Japanese Pop Culture respectively. Hamiuc was concerned with the vocabulary encountered in reading. Bennett analyzed samples of the vocabulary encountered aurally, by transcribing lectures. In 2019, the language instructor of a new Introduction to History course (author 1) analyzed the class texts to evaluate CEFR levels and identify CEFR vocabulary levels and structures requiring simplification (Figure 1). The project is ongoing in that only initial analysis has been done. The next stage is to evaluate vocabulary, rewrite the texts with simpler grammar, and rerun the analysis, aiming to produce material at B1 level. This project is challenging to follow up, since not only vocabulary but also syntactic complexity impact on difficulty of understanding, and how these interact is not well understood. On the other hand, focusing on sharing classroom practice in relation to schema activation and other methods of scaffolding understanding by active learning and group work are approaches which are well established in the college (Mork and Howard 2015: 74).



List 1 refers to KET vocabulary list A2 / List 2 –PET(B1)

Figure 1. Text Analysis of a CLIL text using text analyzers: roadtogrammar.com/textanalysis/ and Lextutor.ca.

3.5.2 Using the CEFR/CV illustrators to evaluate levels

In addition to using text analyzers to identify content level, the CEFR/CV illustrative descriptors provide ways to evaluate the necessary skills for CLIL/EAP. The analysis immediately reveals that language skills at a B1 level are essential to participate successfully in CLIL courses. Students on the Introduction to History course listen to lectures, use critical thinking to discuss the lectures in small groups and then write answers to discussion questions. The CEFR/CV descriptors are very useful for relating actual classroom performance to levels (see Appendix 4). More detailed analysis, especially in terms of mediation descriptors is planned for the future. Moreover, input from other instructors of other CLIL courses would be helpful before proceeding further in evaluating ways CLIL courses align with CEFR/CV descriptors. The descriptors also have great potential as a means for students to self-evaluate their progress, particularly in relation to mediated skills. Currently there is not much discussion of student perspectives in relation to needs analysis in CLIL classrooms at MIC. We hope that in future, implementing needs analysis through small-scale surveys of students drawing on the descriptors for mediated skills will provide triangulation for the quantitatively focused text analytics and might also reveal learner perspectives that we are not aware of.

4 Conclusion

4.1 Next steps in the action research cycle: further planning and data collection

In conducting these initial steps of individual classroom projects, the authors were able to explore how the existing program relates to the CEFR, identify problems in doing so, and provide more clarification in future planning and ways to go about data collection in their investigation of how the CEFR could be further utilized in the MIC language program and language aspect of CLIL courses. The authors found that such collaborative action research, as Burns (1999) noted in surveying teachers of their experiences, that indeed such collaboration helped them “engage more closely with their classroom practice ... to explore the realities they face in the process of curriculum change,” as well as “understand the reasons and need for institutional curriculum change more clearly”, (Burns 1999: 14-15).

The process of initial mapping and documenting ways the Oral Communication, Reading, Writing, and CLIL courses related to the CEFR and CEFR/CV, as well as seeking more transparent and fairer assessments, allowed them to recognize they were indeed only in the planning stages of their action research project, where initial data collection served as a pilot. In relation to Oral Communication, the sequencing of the functional objectives was shared with other teachers and proposals were put forward to overhaul the in-house speaking test, moving in the direction of relating the speaking test more closely to the functional objectives. In relation to Reading, discussion with colleagues focused around the possibility of differentiated targets for reading to reduce the burden on lower level readers and allow them to build up reading fluency before undertaking more challenging work. Regarding the use of Can Do lists, both authors recognized the need to have their selection of Can Do items scrutinized by colleagues as a preliminary form of validation, and decided to seek opportunities to do this within the framework of a faculty development session. It was hoped that content-teaching colleagues might become more engaged with the task of simplifying and sequencing language within their courses as a result of exposure to our ideas. Finally, further investigations of student perceptions of the usefulness of Can Do checklists were also agreed upon as a follow-up that could be carried out by teachers on an individual basis.

Several weaknesses were identified. First, relying on only one author’s experience on curriculum mapping limits the conclusions and led to subjective judgements of results. Exploration of other evidence-based cases for mapping and alignment of curriculum to the CEFR is needed especially when looking beyond the Oral Communication course and the wider university targets. A different approach for CLIL courses is needed. In particular more exploration of mediation descriptors of the CEFR/CV is needed. Mediation especially between Japanese and English is an ignored skill within the program

because of an inherited “only English” rule within the program. Second, more collaboration is needed with other language faculty to assess the need for change to generate more effective data collection and to agree on processes for more transparent and fairer assessment. Doing so would provide much more in-depth data collection of the current program at MIC. For example, reflective projects such as adding Can Do statements to the lessons and surveys of students’ self-assessment of abilities and portfolios should be shared with other faculty. This should then be coupled with questionnaire feedback from colleagues and students. This would provide more evidence for the conclusions made by the authors, as well as, allow them to investigate how helpful such additions of reflective practice were for the students in raising awareness of their language learning goals. In addition, a round-table discussion and faculty development seminar on evaluating productive skills, looking at examples of output and comparing how different instructors’ rate them is needed. Doing so would lead to the development of more effective rubrics in the writing course, as well as, in the Oral Communication course.

4.2 Limitations and need for further research

In addition to the need for more extensive literature review of evidence-based cases for mapping and alignment of curriculum to the CEFR descriptors, much further research needs to be conducted in the area of EMI contexts and defining the target language use domain for the wider academic EMI program at MIC. In terms of action research, the projects of analyzing vocabulary profiles for the CLIL readings and ways in which the CEFR/CV relates to these courses are in an even more preliminary stage of exploring and identifying the issues to be examined. Although this paper outlined these initial efforts, without further literature review of how to evaluate vocabulary profiles against the wider academic TLU domain, the next steps of planning and effective data collection to evaluate these courses cannot be effectively conducted. As discussed in section 4. 1, collaboration with other faculty will provide insight into the direction which needs to be taken both with content curriculum and assessment reform. Gaining a greater understanding of the TLU at MIC, which attempts to prepare students for studying authentic content in an EMI setting, is essential for any claims of true alignment to the CEFR.

4.3 Overall reflections

In conclusion, initial steps of projects discussed in this paper have been described in terms of an action research approach, where each project is part of a larger goal to discover ways the CEFR could be more explicit in the program curricular goals and individual teacher practices. We have explored the utility of CEFR descriptors and CEFR-inspired tools in our own classes, and the process has created opportunities to dialogue together and with colleagues. It can be seen that the CEFR and CEFR/CV highlight gaps in stated goals and inconsistencies in level progression not only within the English program but also in CLIL courses. The writing of this paper has offered a chance to reflect with the intention of improving what we as individual teachers offer to learners, both in teaching, assessment, and out-of-class support. Our projects are limited to our own classroom, but they have helped to keep us and our students engaged. In terms of the bigger picture, further work on the assessment and level-management system is a perceived need in our university. Since 2019 the proportion of overseas students is increasing, including those who may stay for a single semester or year. As the diversity of the student body increases it will become more important to have a framework which corresponds with those used by other institutions globally. In addition, the introduction of means-tested government scholarships in 2020 will increase pressure to standardize grading. The existing assessment system is well designed but leaves some of the target skills and abilities unaccounted for. The CEFR/CV offers a descriptive framework which has proved useful in our own classes and has been used by other universities to relate their curricular levels to those of testing bodies and national frameworks. It is worth remembering that the CEFR was always intended to be adapted to fit local contexts (North 2010) and aid dialogue between classroom teachers and those working to create externally referenced, objective standards. It remains to be seen how we

at MIC will deal with our assessment challenges but we hope that our work will prove helpful to others in our college and outside.

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6 Biographies

Rebecca Schmidt is currently a Lecturer at Miyazaki International College. She previously worked 6 years with a team of instructors at Hiroshima Bunkyo University that aimed to align the entire university's language program with the CEFR through a three-stage project. Prior to that she taught 10 years in Japanese public schools, where she also helped establish a curriculum for elementary schools' English language programs. She has a Master's in Applied Linguistics from Macquarie University. Other research interests involve collaborative learning, classroom group dynamics, and ludic uses of language in teaching practice.

Ellen Head has worked in Japan since 2000. She has a strong interest in learner autonomy and assessment for learning. After becoming involved with the Learner Development SIG in 2001, she wrote her MA dissertation on Learner Autonomy in Language Education in Japan (2006), and worked with the Framework and Language Portfolios SIG on a chapter for Can do statements in Language Education in Japan and Beyond in 2009-10. She has also worked as a language researcher on the Cambridge International Dictionary of English (1998) and an assessment consultant for British Council China (2015-7). Currently she teaches at Miyazaki International College.

Appendix 1: MIC Functional Speaking Objectives Mapped to CEFR Levels

Functional Speaking Objective (as listed in the SILA Language Program Handbook)	Functions	Grammar
Oral Communication 1: Spring Semester (1st year)		
1. Managing conversations (<i>wh-questions / yes / no questions</i>)	A1- Giving Personal Information (family life, hobbies, leisure activities)	A1: Questions / To be / Verb + -ing
2. Classroom English	B1- Expressing Opinions / Expressing agreement and disagreement / Taking the Initiative in Interaction / Checking Understanding / Managing Interaction	A2: Modals - should

Functional Speaking Objective (as listed in the SILA Language Program Handbook)	Functions	Grammar
3. Describing routines & habits <i>(present simple tense)</i>	A1/ A2 - Describing habits and routines	A1 / A2: Adverbs of Frequency A2: Adverbial phrases of time A1: Present Simple Tense
4. Describing visual images <i>(present simple tense / present progressive tense / present perfect tense)</i>	A2: Describing people, places, and things B1: Describing places	A1: There is / are / present simple tense / prepositions of place. A2: Present continuous B1: Present perfect
5. Recounting past events <i>(past simple tense)</i>	A2: Describing past experiences	A2: Past Simple / Wh- Questions in the past
6. Giving & responding to advice <i>(modals of advice)</i>	A2: Obligation & Necessity / Suggestions	A2: Modals - have to / should B1: Modals - must / have to
Oral Communication 2: Fall Semester (1st year)		
1. Managing conversations <i>(leading group discussions / bringing others into the discussion / offering alternative suggestions and opinions)</i>	B1 - Expressing Opinions / Expressing agreement and disagreement / Checking Understanding / Initiating and Closing Conversation / Managing Interaction/ B2: Expressing reaction / Interacting informally, reacting, expressing interest, sympathy, surprise, etc. / Taking initiative in interaction	B1 Negative questions / complex question tags
2. Describing situations and circumstances <i>(describing present situations / how they originated and how long they have lasted)</i>	B1: Describing places B2- Describing experiences	B1: present perfect tense / and past simple tense / present perfect progressive / used to
3. Talking about the future <i>(talking about planned future events and possibilities)</i>	B1 / B2- Describing experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.	A2: future simple tense / going to / present simple tense for the future / present progressive tense / first conditional - future possibilities B2: Will and going to for prediction

Functional Speaking Objective (as listed in the SILA Language Program Handbook)	Functions	Grammar
4. Comparing and contrasting (<i>compare and contrast situations and people/ Discuss changes from past to present</i>)	A2: Describing people, places, and things B1: Describing places	A1: <i>-er / more</i> with adjectives adverbs, nouns or verbs. A2: <i>as . . . as . . .</i> B1: superlative Present and past participial adjectives
5. Expressing possibility, probability, and certainty (<i>discuss present and past forms of probability</i>)	B2: Expressing certainty, probability, doubt	A2: <i>models-could, can't</i> Adverbs of probability: <i>perhaps, possibly, maybe, probably</i> B1: : modals <i>must, may, might</i>
6. Expressing rules and obligations (<i>modals of advice</i>)	A2: Obligation & Necessity / Suggestions	A2: Modals - <i>have to / should</i> B1: Modals - <i>must / have to / mustn't / don't have to</i>
Oral Communication 3: Spring Semester (2nd year)		
1. Managing conversations (<i>actively engage with the ideas expressed in discussion/ justify opinions: giving examples, listing reasons, being more specific / clarify meaning</i>)	B2: Developing an argument / Encouraging and inviting another speaker to come in / Expressing agreement and disagreement / Expressing opinions/ Interacting and reacting / opinion – justification / Taking the initiative	No specified grammar targets
2. Giving definitions of new words or ideas (<i>adjective clauses</i>)	A2: Describing people, places, and things B1: Describing places	B1: <i>defining, object, with 'who/ that'</i> <i>Can use a defining relative clause with 'who' or 'that' as the object.</i>
3. Telling stories with complex time frames (<i>past simple; past progressive; past perfect</i>)	B1: Describing experiences and events / describing feelings and emotions / describing places	A2: simple past; past continuous- <i>describing background events and events in progress</i> B2: past continuous – <i>giving reason and explaining ongoing repeated events</i>
4. Expressing the unreal past <i>including expressing criticism and regret</i> (<i>past modals of advice: should have; ought to have / third conditional</i>)	B1: Describing experiences and events / describing feelings and emotions / B2: Critiquing and Reviewing / Describing experiences, feelings and emotions/ expressing abstract ideas	B2/C1: <i>models past: should have; might have</i> B1: <i>if +past perfect + would have – to talk about imagined situations in the past, often with regret</i>

Functional Speaking Objective (as listed in the SILA Language Program Handbook)	Functions	Grammar
5. Making hypotheses or predictions (<i>first conditional / second conditional</i>)	B2: Critiquing and Reviewing / Describing hopes and plans; expressing abstract ideas	B1: Modals of deduction and speculation; if + will to introduce a possible future condition; if + past simple + would to talk about an imagined situation B2: Modals of deduction and speculation; will and going to for prediction
6. Reporting opinions & summarizing (<i>reported speech</i>)	B2: Critiquing and Reviewing	B2: reported speech

Appendix 2: Reading 1 Can Do list items referenced to descriptors in CEFR/CV

Reading Can Do List (Reading 1 & 2)	Descriptors from the CEFR Companion Volume (CEFR/CV)
1. I can enjoy reading stories or non-fiction in English if the level of the book is right for me. (Reading as a leisure activity)	B2 Reading as a leisure activity. Can read for pleasure with a high degree of independence, adapting the style and speed of reading to different texts. (p.65) Reading for orientation B1 Can assess whether a book or article is on the required topic. (62)
2. I can read with a reading speed of about 200 words per minute.	B 2 Reading for Orientation: reading quickly. (62)
3. When I see a reading passage in English, I can predict what the article will be about by looking at the title and pictures. (Reading for orientation)	B1 Identifying cues and inferring. (67) Can make basic inferences about text content from headings, titles and headlines.
4. I can find the main idea in a reading passage and highlight it. (Reading for information and argument)	B1 Reading for information and argument. (63) Can identify main conclusions in a straightforward text.
5. I can scan quickly through a reading passage to find information which I need such as numbers or places. (Reading for orientation)	B1 Reading for orientation. (62)
6. I can use an English-English dictionary to help me understand what I read. (Reading for information; translation)	A2 Can locate specific information in lists. (62) (dictionary use is mentioned as an aid to understanding rather than as a goal)
7. I can use punctuation marks (, . ; - "!" "?") to help me read aloud.	not mentioned

Reading Can Do List (Reading 1 & 2)	Descriptors from the CEFR Companion Volume (CEFR/CV)
8. I can re-write something in my own words after reading it (paraphrase). (Mediation)	B1 Relaying specific information in writing. (108) A2 to B2 Can exploit paraphrasing and simplification to make spoken and written texts more accessible. (112) B1 Adapting language. Can paraphrase the main points in straightforward written or spoken text. (128)
9. I can make notes on what I read. (Mediation)	A2 Processing text in writing. Can list main points as bullet points. (112)
10. I can explain what I have read to another person. (Mediation)	A2 to B2 Can exploit paraphrasing and simplification to make spoken and written texts more accessible. (112). B1 Adapting language. Can paraphrase the main points in straightforward written or spoken text. (128)
11. I can think about what I read and make inferences. (Mediation)	B1 Reception strategies. Identifying cues and inferring. (67)

Appendix 3: Academic Writing 1 Can Do List Correlation with CEFR/CV Descriptors

Academic Writing 1 Can Do List	Correlation with CEFR/CV Descriptors
Item	CEFR/CV
1. I can write a paragraph introducing myself and my hobbies and interests.	Overall Written Production A1 can give information in writing about matters of personal relevance. (75) Coherence and cohesion, using paragraphs to emphasize text structure. B1 Can link a series of shorter, discrete simple elements into a connected, linear sequence of points. (145)
2. I know how to word-process and layout and format a paragraph on the computer.	NOT in CEFR
3. I can write a paragraph describing a person or place, with a topic sentence and supporting details.	Overall Written production: B1 Can write straightforward connected text on a range of familiar subjects within his/her field of interest, by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence. (75)
4. I can write a story about something interesting which happened to me or something interesting which I heard.	Creative writing: B1 Can clearly signal chronological sequence in narrative text. Can narrate a story. (76)

Academic Writing 1 Can Do List	Correlation with CEFR/CV Descriptors
5. I can write a paragraph giving my opinion and using examples and reasons to support my opinion.	Written reports and essays: B1 Can write a text on a topical subject of personal interest, using simple language to list advantages and disadvantages and give his/her opinion. (from old CEFR) (77) Thematic development: B1 Can develop an argument well enough to be followed most of the time. (141) B2 Can develop a clear argument, expanding and supporting his/her point of view with relevant supporting detail and examples. (141)
6. I can use grammar accurately, for example, using the past tense for telling a story and using singular and plural verbs.	Not dealt with in this sense? Dealt with under spoken production? Grammatical accuracy: B1 Uses reasonably accurately a repertoire of frequently used routines and patterns associated with more predictable situations. (133)
7. I can plan a paragraph or essay using techniques like brainstorming, mind-mapping or free-writing.	Not dealt with specifically in relation to writing? Dealt with under spoken production? Production strategies: Planning B1. (78)
8. I can make my writing interesting by using a variety of different words, and expressions, not repeating the same word.	Communicative language competence: vocabulary range B2 Can vary formulation to avoid frequent repetition. (132)
9. I can edit my writing or my partner's writing to improve the grammar and content.	Not mentioned
Second semester: same list with additional points added in AW2	
10. I can write a five paragraph essay giving my opinion about a controversial topic such as global warming.	Written reports and essays B 2 Can write an essay or report that develops an argument systematically with appropriate highlighting of significant points and relevant supporting details. (77)
11. I can write an essay using evidence to persuade someone that my opinion is correct.	Covered under speaking Sustained monologue: putting a case (eg. In a debate) B2 Can develop a clear argument, expanding and supporting his/her points of view at some length with subsidiary points and relevant examples. (72)
12. I can write an essay or report which describes a problem and suggests solutions to the problem.	Covered under Production It involves learning the expectations and conventions of the genre concerned. (68)
13. I can use language to explain the causes of an event (for example, Why did Sei Shonagon call her book "The Pillow Book"?)	As above, number 10.

Academic Writing 1 Can Do List	Correlation with CEFR/CV Descriptors
14. I can use language to explain the effects of an event (for example, what were the effects of the USA election in 2017?)	As above number 10.

Appendix 4: CLIL Classroom Practices Mapped to CEFR/CV

Reception Activities CEFR level	Illustrative Descriptor	Classroom practice
Understanding conversation between other speakers: B1	Can generally follow the main points of extended discussion around him/her, provided speech is clearly articulated in a familiar accent.	Students discuss the main points of the lecture in small groups.
Listening as a member of a live audience: B1	Can follow in outline straightforward short talks on familiar topics, delivered in clearly articulated standard speech.	Students follow the content instructor's lecture aided by a slideshow, which should be somewhat familiar after reading texts for homework.
Overall reading comprehension B1	Can read straightforward factual texts on subjects related to his or her field of interest with satisfactory levels of comprehension.	Field of interest = course topic (history)/reading should be adjusted at B1 level to accomplish 'satisfactory' comprehension.
Reading for orientation B1	Can scan longer texts in order to locate desired information from different parts of the text.	Vocabulary and reading comprehension tasks require students to do this.
Overall written Production B1	Can write straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects	Students are expected to answer short essay questions on handouts and in assessments related to texts and lectures.
Overall spoken interaction	Can exchange, check and confirm information.	Each class, after listening to the lecture, students repeat what they understood, and check and confirm what they might be confused about.
Formal Discussion B1	Can take part in routine formal discussion of familiar subjects	