

Dear members of the CEFR & LP SIG,

Hopefully this message finds you well after the first month of the new academic year and start of the new era. Newsletter no.25 includes a variety of topics: The detailed program on CEFR-related presentations at PanSIG 2019 in Nishinomiya, the report on a new Kaken of SIG officer Alexander Imig, the announcement of the new CEFR&LP SIG journal called *CEFR Journal – Research and Practice*, and a list of presentations for preparing the selection of Best of JALT 2019 for CEFR&LP SIG.

Looking back, we want to say thank you to JALT Tokyo chapter for the joint event on April 19th, hosted at Rikkyo University, which was very well organized and attended. The audience reacted with thoughtful questions regarding the presentations by Maria Gabriela Schmidt, Noriko Nagai and Alexander Imig, showing the needs of using CEFR in our everyday practice. Hopefully there will be other opportunities to have joint events to share and discuss.

Looking forward to JALT International 2019 Nagoya (November 1st – 4th, 2019), CEFR & LP SIG will have a combined SIG Forum and AGM on Sunday, November 3rd, 2019. On request of some members, we will introduce a “My share corner” where SIG members can introduce their CEFR-related project(s).

If you would like to organize a joint event with the CEFR&LP SIG, please contact one of our officers. We ask all our members to get involved in organizing meetings and mini-conferences. Therefore, we are seeking your cooperation to make this happen.

Best regards

Gabriela Schmidt

Your coordinator on behalf of all officers

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----- At a Glance -----

The upcoming event in May is

Pan SIG 2019 - <http://www.pansig.org/>

May 18th and 19th, 2019

in Nishinomiya (Hyogo) at Konan University (Cube)

PanSIG 2019 – the online registration is already closed, on-site registration is available.

CEFR&LP SIG Forum, Saturday - May 18th, 2019 - 10:35 - 12:00 - Room 303

This CEFR&LP SIG Forum will address the recent discussion on the CEFR and CEFR/CV with three presentations. The first presentation gives fresh insights into English language policies and the influence of CEFR and CEFR/CV in foreign language teaching in Japan. The second presentation will show two CEFR-related case studies, one on assigning can-do descriptors and mapping them onto oral communication materials, the other on language learning histories, adapting tools from the ELP to classroom teaching. The context of a CLIL and EMI institution and its English language program and curriculum will be explained. The third presentation will talk about the results of the Kaken research project, addressing the needs of teachers to use CEFR resources efficiently and further perspectives developing tools for teachers. The Forum will give first hand, exemplary trends on CEFR-related implementation in Japan. It would be nice to hear and include your experiences with CEFR! Come to the Forum and get involved!

CEFR & LP SIG Program

10:35~ Maria Gabriela Schmidt (Nihon University)

Opening and Introduction

10:40~ Yukie Saito (Chuo University)

English language policies in Japan - Influences of CEFR and CEFR/CV

11:00~ Ellen Head and Rebecca Schmidt (Miyazaki International College)

**At the university level - case studies on curriculum and classroom:
Initial stages of individual teacher CEFR-related projects at Miyazaki International
College**

11:40~ Noriko Nagai (Ibaraki University)

Practical Guide for Teachers (publication project)

11:50~ Alexander Imig (Chukyo University) - Kaken 4 for CEFR&LP SIG granted!

CEFR and Academic Writing (composition B1/B2)

Yukie Saito (Chuo University)

English language policies in Japan - Influences of CEFR and CEFR/CV

In this presentation, I will talk about influences of CEFR on English education in Japan, the background of developing CEFR/ CV by the Council of Europe, features of CEFR/ CV, and possible adaptation of CEFR/ CV to English education in Japan. In recent years, we have seen significant influence of CEFR on English education in Japan. One of the examples is that the objectives of the latest Course of Study reflect five domains of listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production, and writing of the CEFR. The other example is CEFR was used as a reference in the selection process of externally available four-skill English tests and the levels of CEFR will be used in applications of university entrance examinations along with results of each test. Though CEFR, which was published in 2001, has had an influence on English education in Japan, CEFR Companion Volume with more emphasis on mediation, the addition of written and online interaction, and revisions to the 2001 CEFR descriptors was issued in 2018 (Council of Europe). In this global society where information technology evolves, changes in language learning and teaching are inevitable. In the last part of the talk, I will suggest how we can incorporate CEFR/ CV in English education in Japan.

Yukie Saito obtained a MA in TESOL from Teachers College Columbia University. She works at Chuo University. Her research areas are high school teachers' cognition and the application of the CEFR and the European Language Portfolio in the context of Japan.

Ellen Head and Rebecca Schmidt (Miyazaki International College)

At the university level - case studies on curriculum and classroom: Initial stages of individual teacher CEFR-related projects at Miyazaki International College

First, we will briefly introduce the context of MIC as a CLIL and EMI institution and its English Language Program, where teacher-autonomy in course planning is quite strong. Then we explain initial stages and plans of implementing or referring to the CEFR in our individual classrooms within the context of the university's larger language programs.

Case study 1: Assigning 'can do' statements to lessons taught in the Language Program's Oral Communication Course and mapping them to see where they lie on the CEFR scale, while using the framework of the mapping project at Hiroshima Bunkyo Women's University to assess an individual teacher's course materials.

Case study 2: Using language learning histories and 'can do' statements, adapting tools from ELP to classroom teaching.

Finally, as perspective, we outline other projects occurring and what larger implications of what we are doing can hold for the future in terms of university-wide curriculum.

Instructor backgrounds with the CEFR: Rebecca worked six years at Bunkyo as a language instructor and by doing so was part of a three-stage project which aligned the entire university's language program with the CEFR. Ellen created can-do lists and portfolio assessment for pre-service Elementary School Teaching license students at Poole Gakuin University 2008-2011 and worked as consultant supporting institutions using the British Council's Aptis Test, an assessment system referenced to the CEFR, based in China 2015-2017.

Noriko Nagai (Ibaraki University)

Practical Guide for Teachers (publication project)

From April 2016 to March 2019, the CEFR&LP SIG was involved in a research project on “Designing a support system for innovative CEFR-informed language education”. One result of the project was the need for teacher support in using the abundant resources of the CEFR efficiently to navigate safely through the sheer amount of information available. In creating a toolkit for teachers, the next step would be thinking of contents and forms for teacher training.

Alexander Imig (Chukyo University)

CEFR and Academic writing (composition B1 & B2)

In April 2019, the fourth consecutive JSPS research CEFR-related project was granted to a CEFR&LP SIG member. This time the focus is on academic compositions at the level B1 and B2. The purpose of this research project will be explained.

Congratulation to our treasurer Alexander Imig - Kaken 4 for CEFR&LP SIG granted !!!

The fourth Kaken-project of the CEFR&LP SIG is a Kaken C type project as the others before, but the sum is smaller than before. The Kaken C type project is a small type of Kaken project compared to type A and B. Nevertheless, the topic is important for CEFR-related research worldwide. The title of the new project is:

Developing a CEFR-informed Mediation scheme (CEFR-MSfAW) for academic writing (composition) in World Englishes

The research agenda has strong qualitative elements. While it is far too early even to disseminate first results of the data here, the relation of the planned research and work of the CEFR&LP SIG is the topic of this article. While academic writing has yet not been a central research focus of the SIG, an important aspect of previous research has been the academic development of students. The product of the first Kaken project, a textbook on CLIL (Naganuma et al *Connections* 2015), included academic writing, which shows a strong relation to this project, not only because of the topic, but also because of the targeted CEFR-level teaching at B1 level. This is the starting point for the new research taking place in Japan. In Japan, the overall level of English language teaching (up to B2, mainly A2 and B1) is not as high compared to other countries (for example in Europe: B2 to C1/ C2). Therefore, the research for academic writing is concentrating on the B-levels. Collecting data for these levels seems to be very important for the English teaching in Japan. ‘Data’ refers to the following in this context:

- Lesson data (e.g. syllabus, assignments, in some cases textbook pages)
- (Written) texts of learners (in different states of development)
- For the purpose of research collected data (e.g. interviews, questionnaires)
- Others (e.g. research reports for Kaken)

Even the content and the analysis of the data will take some time to be disseminated, and new data will be collected, the piloting studies showed their special purpose: giving a thick description for networking research, but also teaching and learning. Thompson (2016) claims a relation between the size of a corpus-database and possible generalizations about the structure of a genre and his example is the large corpus Hyland build at the Hong Kong University. This assertion is problematic because even a large corpus based on the data of only one institution cannot deliver generalizations. Only a big corpus built up from different institutions is able to show findings, which can be used in different settings of the English speaking world.

Reference (to this article)

Thompson, Paul (2016), Genre Approaches to Theses and Dissertations, in: The Routledge Handbook of English for Academic Purposes, Hyland, Ken / Shaw, Philip (eds) p 378-393

An extended Reference list (including networking links) can be found under: www.cefrjapan.net

Naganuma, (2015), Connections. Tokyo: Asahi Press.

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Presentation of our member

Richard Sugg (Hiroshima Bunkyo University)

CEFR Based Rubrics and Feedback: What You CAN DO!

Pan SIG, Saturday, May 17th, 2019 - 14:05-14:30 - Room 207

Keywords: CEFR, Rubrics, Feedback, Self-Access

The advantages of having clear rubrics and standardized assessment are well documented, as are the advantages of giving clear, positive feedback to all students. However, are all institutions actually linking the two? For the last three years, teachers at the Bunkyo English Communication Centre (BECC) have been working with CEFR based rubrics and standardization as part of a longer running project basing materials and courses around the CEFR. For the last year and a half, we have also been giving CEFR based feedback for spoken and written assessments. Rather than getting 'just a number', students are encouraged to take the feedback they are given and use it to inform their extra studies within our Self Access Learning Centre. This presentation will explain the development of the CEFR based rubrics for our speaking test, spoken presentations and written assessments, and their development into a means of giving positive and motivating CEFR based feedback to students. The presenter will outline where the rubrics have come from, and how they helped standardize grading and feedback within the BECC. Reasons for using the CEFR rather than CEFR-J or GSE, problems faced so far, and possible areas of future development will also be discussed.

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CEFR Journal – Research and Practice

to be launched !!!

Long planned, almost forgotten but finally being realized. The CEFR&LP SIG is pleased to announce

CEFR Journal – Research and Practice
URL <https://cefrjapan.net/publications/journal>
Contact: journal@cefrjapan.net
ISSN 2434-849X (tbc)

Mission statement

The CEFR Journal is an online, open-access, peer-to-peer journal for practitioners and researchers. Our board of editors comprises stakeholders on a wide range of levels and from around the world. One aim of our journal is to create an open space for exchanging ideas on classroom practice and implementation related to the CEFR and/or other language frameworks, as well as sharing research findings and results on learning, teaching, and assessment-related topics. We are committed to a strong bottom-up approach and the free exchange of ideas. A journal by the people on the ground for the people on the ground with a strong commitment to extensive research and academic rigor. Learning and teaching languages in the 21st century, accommodating the 21st century learner and teacher. All contributions have undergone multiple double-blind peer reviews.

We encourage you to submit your texts and volunteer for reviewing. Thanks a million.

Aims, goals, and purposes

Our aim is to take a fresh look at the CEFR and other language frameworks from both a practitioner's **and** researcher's perspective. We want the journal to be a platform for all to share best practice examples and ideas, as well as research. It should be globally accessible to the wider interested public, which is why we opted for an open online journal format.

The impact of the CEFR and now the CEFR Companion Volume (CEFR/CV) has been growing to previously wholly unforeseeable levels. Especially in Asia, there are several large-scale cases of adoption and adaptation of the CEFR to the needs and requirements on the ground. Such contexts often focus primarily on English language learning and teaching. However, there are other language frameworks, such as the ACTFL and the Canadian benchmarks, while the Chinese Standard of English (CSE) is also on its way. On the one hand, there is a growing need for best practice examples in the form of case studies, and on the other hand practitioners are increasingly

wanting to exchange their experiences and know-how. Our goal is to close the gap between research and practice in foreign language education related to the CEFR, CEFR/CV, and other language frameworks. Together, we hope to help address the challenges of 21st century foreign language learning and teaching on a global stage. In Europe, many take the CEFR and its implementation for granted, and not everyone reflects on its potential uses and benefits. Others are asking for case studies showing the effectiveness of the CEFR and the reality of its usage in everyday classroom teaching. In particular, large-scale implementation studies simply do not exist. Even in Europe, there is a center and a periphery of readiness for CEFR implementation. It is difficult to bring together the huge number of ongoing projects from the Council of Europe (CoE), the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML), and the EU aiming to aid the implementation of the CEFR. This results in a perceived absence in the substance of research. Outside Europe, the CEFR has been met with very different reactions and speeds of adaptation and implementation. Over the last few years, especially in Asia, the demand by teachers for reliable (case) studies has been growing.

For more than a decade, the people behind this journal – the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT) CEFR & Language Portfolio special interest group (CEFR & LP SIG) – have been working on a number of collaborative research projects, yielding several books and textbooks, as well as numerous newsletters. This is a not-for-profit initiative; there are no institutional ties or restraints in place. The journal aims to cooperate internationally with other individuals and/or peer groups of practitioners/researchers with similar interests. We intend to create an encouraging environment for professional, standard-oriented practice and state-of-the-art foreign language teaching and research, adapted to a variety of contexts.

Call for Papers for Volume 2

Title: CEFR Journal – Research and Practice
Type: Online Journal
URL: <https://cefrjapan.net/publications/journal>
Contact: journal@cefrjapan.net

Edited by: Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)
CEFR & Language Portfolio SIG
Maria Gabriela Schmidt (coordinator, editor)
Morten Hunke (chief liaison officer, editor)
Alexander Imig (treasurer, website editor)

ISSN: 2434-849X (tbc), J-Stage

Submission (Call for Papers)

This journal attempts to fall somewhere in between an inaccessible academic journal (long waiting times, fairly strict guidelines/criteria) and a newsletter (practical in nature but lacking in theoretical support/foundation), linking research of a practical nature with relevant research related to foreign language education, the CEFR, other language frameworks, and the European Language Portfolio. While the CEFR was introduced by the Council of Europe and intended for use, first and foremost, within Europe, the influence of the CEFR now has to be attested in many places beyond European borders. It has become a global framework, impacting a variety of aspects of language learning, teaching, and assessment across countries and continents beyond the context for which it was originally created. As such, there is a pressing need to create a quality forum for sharing research, experiences, and lessons learned from applying the CEFR in different contexts. This journal provides such a forum where people involved or interested in processes of applying the CEFR can share and learn from one another.

We are continuously seeking contributions related to foreign language education, the CEFR, other language frameworks, and the European Language Portfolio. We are particularly interested in specific contextual adaptations.

Please contact the editors and submit to: journal@cefrjapan.net

Guidelines

- Submission:** Annually by March 31st
- Contributions:** Articles (research), reports (best practice, work in progress, conference presentations), research notes, book reviews, information exchange
- Language(s):** English (British, American, international) preferred, but not mandatory. Other languages by request, with an extended abstract in English.
- Review type:** Peer review, double blind

Call for reviewers and for proofreaders!

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**Vote on Best of JALT 2019 of CEFR&LP SIG
(on events and publications in 2018)**

(A) In 2018 the following presentations are related to CEFR&LP SIG members and/or CEFR&LP SIG events, JALT events and/or CEFR-related presentations (chronological order):

- (1) Naoyuki Naganuma “Use of a Can-do List as an Autonomy and Motivation Support Tool” JALT Yamagata chapter, May 2018, invited presentation, SIG member
- (2) Mark deBoer “Conceptualizing a model for assessment in CLIL” PanSIG 2018, May 2018, featured speaker, SIG presentation, SIG member
- (3) Rebecca Schmidt “Challenge of adapting the CEFR to one’s own course plan” PanSIG 2018, May 2018, CEFR&LP Forum presentation, SIG member
- (4) Maria Gabriela Schmidt “The CEFR: Steadily paving the way in Japan and Asia – Practical perspectives” IAFOR ACE, October 2018, presentation, SIG member
- (5) Dmitri Leontjev: “Assessing for understanding in a CLIL classroom” SIG event, October 2018, SIG event presentation, October 2018, non-SIG member
- (6) Mark deBoer: “Learner-learner interactionist dynamic assessment instances in CLIL” SIG event presentation, October 2018, SIG member
- (7) Chris Carl Hale “Academic Culture as Content Self-assessment in the CLIL Classroom in the International Liberal Arts University” SIG event presentation, October 2018, non-SIG member
- (8) Hidetoshi Saito “Assessing formatively in CLIL-oriented junior high EFL lessons in Japan” SIG event presentation, October 2018, non-SIG member
- (9) Alexander Imig “The CEFR- reception in Japan and CEFR-informed writing classes - a case study” New Directions, Malaysia, October 2018, presentation, SIG member
- (10) Noriko Nagai “*CEFR-Informed Teacher Training and Development*” JALT 2019, CEFR&LP SIG Forum presentation, SIG member
- (11) Gregory Birch “Considering the European Language Portfolio” JALT 2019, CEFR&LP SIG Forum presentation, SIG member
- (12) Timothy Wilson “CEFR-Based Curriculum at a Japanese University” JALT 2018, SIG related poster or presentation, SIG member
- (13) Michael McAuliffe “Text Memorization for Developing Speaking Skills” JALT 2018, SIG related poster or presentation, SIG member
- (14) Robin Reid “A Four-Skills Program for the Japanese JHS/SHS” JALT 2018, SIG related poster or presentation, non-SIG member
- (15) Yoshiaki Ehara, Ryoji Murakoshi, and Peter Parise “Using CEFR-J for Assessing Teacher Workshops” JALT 2018, SIG related poster or presentation, non-SIG members

(B) In 2018 publications of CEFR&LP SIG members and/or SIG newsletter and/or SIG-related topics in JALT related journals

(C) In 2018 special outcome (research or practice) achieved that exemplary for JALT and CEFR&LP SIG

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JALT International 2019 Nagoya (November 1st – 4th, 2019)

CEFR & LP SIG will have a combined SIG Forum and AGM on Sunday, November 3rd, 2019. We will introduce at that occasion a “My share corner”, where SIG members can introduce their CEFR-related project.

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Planning ahead!

The next British Council- sponsored *New Directions in English Language Assessment Conference* is scheduled for December 8th and 9th, 2019 in Yokohama. This year’s theme is “Realising Potential: Policy, Implementation, and Impact” **NEW Deadline for Submission is May 12th, 2019.** <https://www.britishcouncil.jp/en/new-directions>

May 18th and 19th, 2019 - PanSIG 2019 in Nishinomiya (Hyogo) at Konan University

Pan SIG 2019 - <http://www.pansig.org/>

May 18th, 2019 CEFR&LP SIG Forum

May 18th, 2019 R. Sugg “CEFR Based Rubrics and Feedback: What You CAN DO!”

September 2019 - AILA 2020 (Groningen, Netherlands) Deadline for submission

September/ October 2019 – CEFR-related joint event planned in West-Japan

November 1st – 4th, 2019 JALT International 2019 Nagoya

November 3rd, 2019 CEFR&LP SIG Forum & AGM

December 8th-9th, 2019 Yokohama, British Council *New Directions in English Language Assessment Conference* “Realising Potential: Policy, Implementation, and Impact”

PanSIG 2020 in Niigata

The next NEWSLETTER #26 is planned for July / September 2019.

Call for submissions!

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