

# Common European Framework of Reference Introduction

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Dr. Craig L. Dicker

U.S. Embassy, Ankara

[DickerCL@State.gov](mailto:DickerCL@State.gov)

[www.turkey.usembassy.gov](http://www.turkey.usembassy.gov)

# Bologna Principles

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- The introduction of a degree system based on two main cycles (commonly referred to as Bachelor and Master).
- Establishment of a system of credits with both transferability and accumulation functions.
- Enhancing transparency of qualifications e.g. by the European diploma supplement.
- Promoting student and staff mobility and cooperation on an international, and, particularly, on a European level.
- Strengthening of the European dimensions of higher education and graduate employability.

# What the CEF is NOT....

- A system that reflects an order or hierarchy of language acquisition that has empirical support
- A proficiency/standards based curriculum that guides teachers and learners with regard to what should be taught and when
- A set of proficiency descriptors that can be used as a rating scale to assess a person's language proficiency level
- A framework upon which existing language exams can be mapped so that a score on one exam (e.g. the TOEFL) can be equated with a CEF score

# The CEF can help...

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- Move language education programs away from a “knowledge of the target language” focus to a “ability to use the target language” focus
- Empower programs in language education to develop skills-oriented curricula, exams and instructional materials
- Create a system of continuous assessment where class participation, self and peer assessment and completion of course requirements count much more than successfully passing a single exam.

# The CEF can also help to...

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- Encourage teachers to use more interactive, “communicative” methods in their language classes.
- Increase inter-institutional and international student mobility by providing a common framework allowing users to assess the similarities and differences among systems and give meaning to courses completed.
- Address workplace language needs by producing graduates with the language skills needed in global markets.

# Competence vs. Performance

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- Definition of "Competence"-  
What a person can actually do
- Can NOT be directly measured
- A purely psychological construct- no reference to the social nor environmental variables
- Definition of "Performance"- what a person actually does in a particular setting (e.g. taking a test)
- Competence can only be measured via one's performances
- One's performance can never equal one's ideal competence- the former will always fall somewhat short

# Curriculum vs Standards-Referenced Programs

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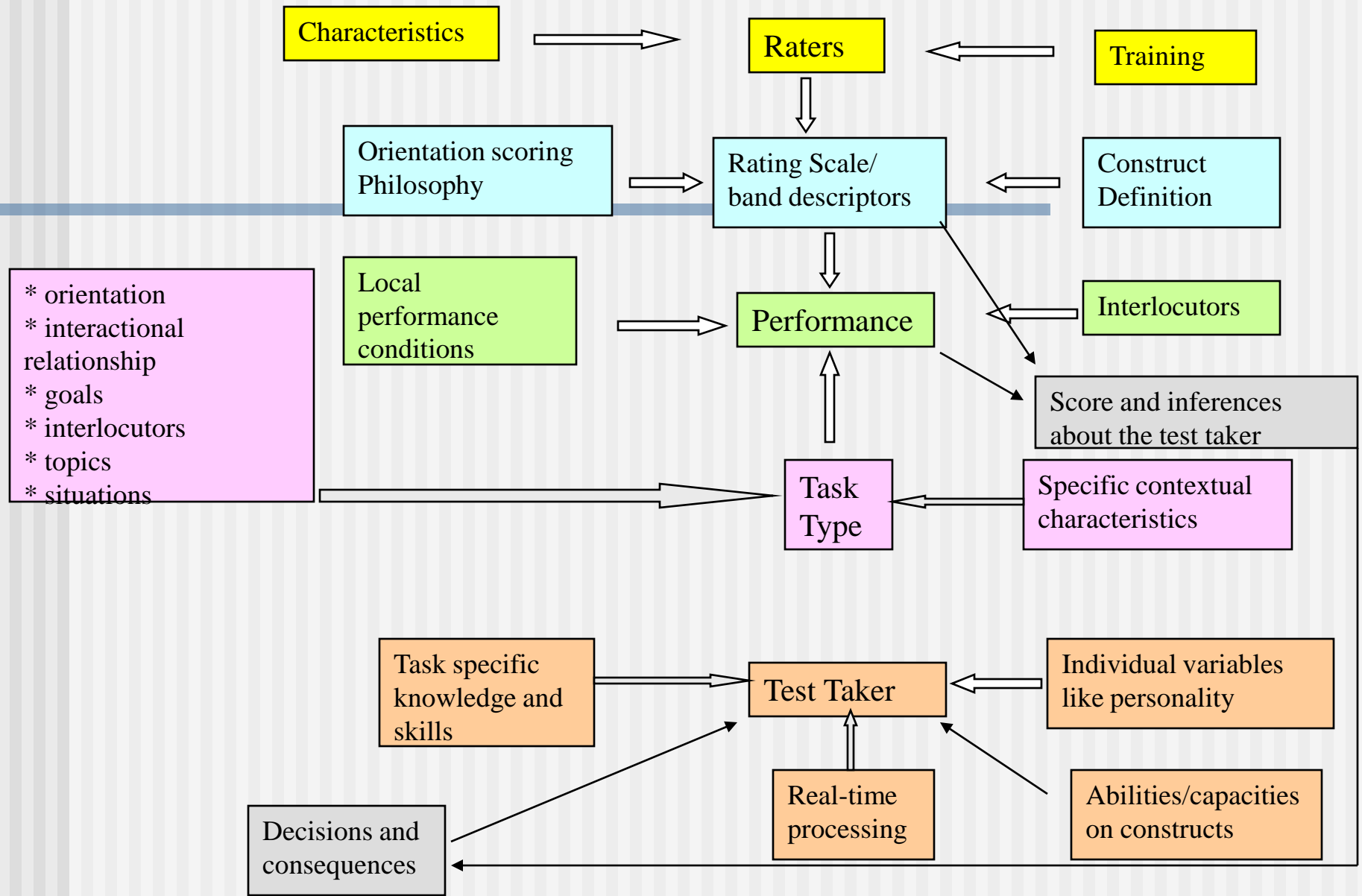
- Curriculum-based programs...
  - consist of a series of related items to "cover"- often dictated by a textbook-curriculum
  - can be grammatical, functional, thematic, task-based, procedural, situational, etc. or a combination of the above
- Standards-referenced programs...
  - revolve around a set of articulated "behavioral objectives" which the course is designed to help learners achieve
  - are often institution-specific and reflect the institution's stated goals and assessed learner needs

# Curriculum vs Standards-Referenced Exams

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- Curriculum-based exams are designed to assess the learners' mastery of the content of the curriculum. The nature of the exam should reflect the content of the curriculum
- Standards-referenced exams are designed to assess the learners' mastery of the behavioral objectives set out for the course. These objectives are based on the institution's

# Expanded Skehan Model of Speaking Test Performance



Fulcher, G. (2003). Testing Second Language Speaking. London: Pearson-Longman , p. 115

Adopted by Craig Dicker, Office of English Language Programs, U.S. Department of State

# CEF Overall Oral Production Standards

<b>C2</b> Mastery	Can produce clear, smoothly flowing well-structured speech with an effective logical structure
<b>C1</b> Effective Op.Proficiency	Can give clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on complex subjects, integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and ending w/ a conclusion
<b>B2+<sub>v</sub></b> Vantage+	Can give clear, systematically developed descriptions and presentations, with appropriate highlighting of significant points and relevant supporting detail
<b>B2</b> Vantage	Can give clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on a wide range of subjects related to field of interest, expanding and supporting ideas w/relevant examples
<b>B1</b> Threshold	Can reasonably fluently sustain a straightforward description of one of a variety of subjects within field of interest, presenting it as a linear sequence of points
<b>A2</b> Waystage	Can give a simple description or presentation of people, living-working conditions, daily routines, likes/dislikes as a short series of simple phrases and sentences
<b>A1</b> Breakthrough	Can produce simple mainly isolated phrases about people and places

## Comparing and Contrasting B1 and B2 Oral Standards

	<b>B1</b>	<b>B2</b>
<b>Range</b>	Can get by with sufficient vocabulary to express him/herself with circumlocutions on topics like family, hobbies and interests, work, travel and current events	Has sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints on most general topics without much conspicuous searching for words, using some complex sentence forms to do so
<b>Accuracy</b>	Uses reasonably accurately a repertoire of frequently used routines and patterns associated with more predictable situations	Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical control. Does not make errors which cause misunderstanding, and can correct most of his/her mistakes

Council of Europe (2001). Common European Framework of Reference for Languages Cambridge University Press

# Comparing and Contrasting B1 and B2 Oral Standards

	<b>B1</b>	<b>B2</b>
<b>Fluency</b>	Can keep going comprehensibly, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident	Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo; although can be hesitant as he/she searches for patterns/expressions.
<b>Interaction</b>	Can initiate, maintain and close simple face-face conversations on topics that are familiar or of personal interest. Can repeat back part of what has been said to confirm understanding	Can introduce discourse, take appropriate turns and end conversations. Can help the discussion along on familiar ground confirming comprehension, inviting others in, etc.
<b>Coherence</b>	Can link a series of shorter, discrete simple elements into a connected, linear sequence of points	Can use a limited # of cohesive devices to link utterances into clear, coherent discourse

# USEFUL REFERENCES

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- Common European Framework of Reference for Languages:  
[http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural\\_Cooperation/education/languages/Language\\_Policy](http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural_Cooperation/education/languages/Language_Policy)
- Fulcher, G. (2003). Testing Second Language Speaking. London: Longman/Pearson Educational
- Davidson, F. and Lynch, B. (2002). Testcraft: A Teacher's Guide to Writing and Using Language Test Specifications. New Haven: Yale University Press.