



Online CEF-based assessment of oral proficiency for intercultural professional communication

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Abstract: This deliverable describes the approach taken up by the CEFcult consortium to the assessment of intercultural competence. We give an overview of current relevant research on intercultural competence, and describe in more detail the context of learning and assessing intercultural competence. We posit CEFcult's aim to support intercultural communicative competence through a social assessment platform for a lifelong learner

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CEFcult Framework and Methodology

CEFcult project deliverable 4.1

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Executive Summary

The European Initiative on “New Skills for New Jobs” aims to study, understand and guide the upgrading and upskilling of the European workforce to deal with current and future labour challenges (CEDEFOP, 2008). CEDEFOP recognises three main challenges for the European economy: 1) Globalisation and economic integration, 2) Ageing population, 3) Productivity Gap (CEDEFOP 2009). All three challenges require a more flexible labour force that is able to adapt to different contexts and different needs as per the demands of the economy. These challenges also come with a consequence: they necessarily bring about increased contact between people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, through international economic migration and collaborations. Workers in this future economy need sufficient linguistic skills and intercultural competence to perform successfully. In order to build the required flexible labour force, trainers need to develop suitable pedagogical strategies to support learners in understanding and building their linguistic and intercultural competence.

The CEFcult project addresses the observed need in European enterprise for increased foreign language proficiency for intercultural professional communication. This report presents the approach taken to the assessment of intercultural communicative competence in the CEFcult project. We describe an assessment construct starting from Byram’s model of intercultural communicative competence (Byram, 1997). For providing practically applicable assessment tooling, this model is combined with the linguistic scales of the Common European Framework of Reference and the assessment scales of intercultural competence defined in the INCA project.

It is shown how intercultural communicative competence development needs a lifelong learning approach, and thereby needs particular techniques of assessment: (i) performance assessment; (ii) proficiency assessment; (iii) formative assessment; (iv) continuous assessment and fixed point assessment. It also requires inventive combining of several modes of assessment: (i) receiving assessment as an assessee and giving assessment as an assessor; and (ii) direct assessment vs indirect assessment.

Intercultural communicative competence development calls for ongoing formative assessment. However, providing this formative assessment is a challenge. Assessment of intercultural competence has often taken the form of self-assessment, in which learners are invited to reflect on their own experiences in multicultural contexts (as the examples discussed above). Providing formative feedback by others (peers or experts) in a social learning context needs to involve some instrumentation that can give learners an indication of their current level of intercultural competence and also offer them some tools to improve their performance. The feedback given should not stop at identifying problematic issues, but also offer the learner the tools to improve.

The innovative aspect of CEFcult will in its vision of seeing linguistic competence as a tool to assess and improve intercultural competence assessment. Feedback on intercultural communicative competence will provide the learner with concrete steps for learning. Regarding assessment, it will build on the outcomes of the WebCEF project, where self-assessment, peer assessment and expert assessment were combined to provide a 360 degree perspective on the performance of the learner. CEFcult will go further in this, giving more control to the learner to take charge of their intercultural performance and competence.

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1 Introduction

The European Initiative on “New Skills for New Jobs” aims to study, understand and guide the upgrading and upskilling of the European workforce to deal with current and future labour challenges (CEDEFOP, 2008). CEDEFOP recognises three main challenges for the European economy: 1) Globalisation and economic integration, 2) Ageing population, 3) Productivity Gap (CEDEFOP 2009). All three challenges require a more flexible labour force that is able to adapt to different contexts and different needs as per the demands of the economy. These challenges also come with a consequence: they necessarily bring about increased contact between people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, through international economic migration and collaborations.

Workers in this future economy need sufficient linguistic skills and intercultural competence to perform successfully. It has been established that European enterprise is losing business due to insufficient language skills (CILT, 2006), creating an acute need for higher language proficiency in professional settings. In order to build the required flexible labour force, trainers need to develop suitable pedagogical strategies to support learners in understanding and building their linguistic and intercultural competence.

The CEFcult project addresses the observed need in European enterprise for increased foreign language proficiency for intercultural professional communication. It builds on the results of the WebCEF project, which developed a web-based platform and other tools to allow teaching staff to jointly evaluate the oral skills and proficiency of their pupils in line with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR or CEF - 2001a) was developed within the Council of Europe through a process of scientific research and wide consultation. The CEF provides a practical tool for setting clear standards to be attained at successive stages of language learning and for evaluating outcomes in an internationally comparable manner. Since its creation, it has attained the status of a European standard. A European Union Council resolution in November 2001 recommended the use of the CEF instrument in setting up systems of validation of language competences. The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe addressed a Recommendation to the members states on the use of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and the promotion of plurilingualism (July 2nd 2008).

In an increasingly globalised world, language skills need to be supplemented with intercultural competence in order to guarantee successful communication. In this report, we will look at the nature of intercultural competences and existing theories and frameworks for intercultural competence assessment. We will make the case for the focus on intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and propose a framework for ICC as used in the CEFcult project and the developed CEFcult tool.

2 Intercultural Communicative Competence

When developing training and support for proficient intercultural professional communication, it is important to understand what intercultural competence (IC) is, and how it plays a constructive or hindering role in interpersonal communication. In this section, we will 1) define and discuss intercultural competence and intercultural (communicative) competence, 2) describe the assessment strategies for ICC from a lifelong learning perspective, 3) look at the state-of-the-art in instrumentation and tooling to support ICC and 4) presenting how CEFcult aims to go beyond this state-of-the-art.

2.1 Defining Intercultural Communicative Competence

In their recent book, Spencer-Oatley and Franklin (2009) define an intercultural situation as follows:

“An intercultural situation is one in which the cultural distance between the participants is significant enough to have an effect on the interaction/communication that is noticeable to at least one of the parties.” (op.cit. p. ix)

Deardorff (2006) notes that “scholars throughout the past 30 years have defined intercultural competence in its various iterations, but there has not been agreement on how intercultural competence should be defined” (p.242). She conducted a Delphi-study with a panel of 23 top experts in intercultural competence, who were asked to submit definitions of IC, refine them through an iterative process to reach consensus on definitions and key elements. She makes a claim that her study is “the first to document consensus among top intercultural scholars and academic administrators on what constitutes intercultural competence and the best ways to measure this complex construct, thus representing the first crucial step toward measurement.”(p.243) It should be mentioned that this study reflects a Western, largely U.S., perspective on intercultural competence.

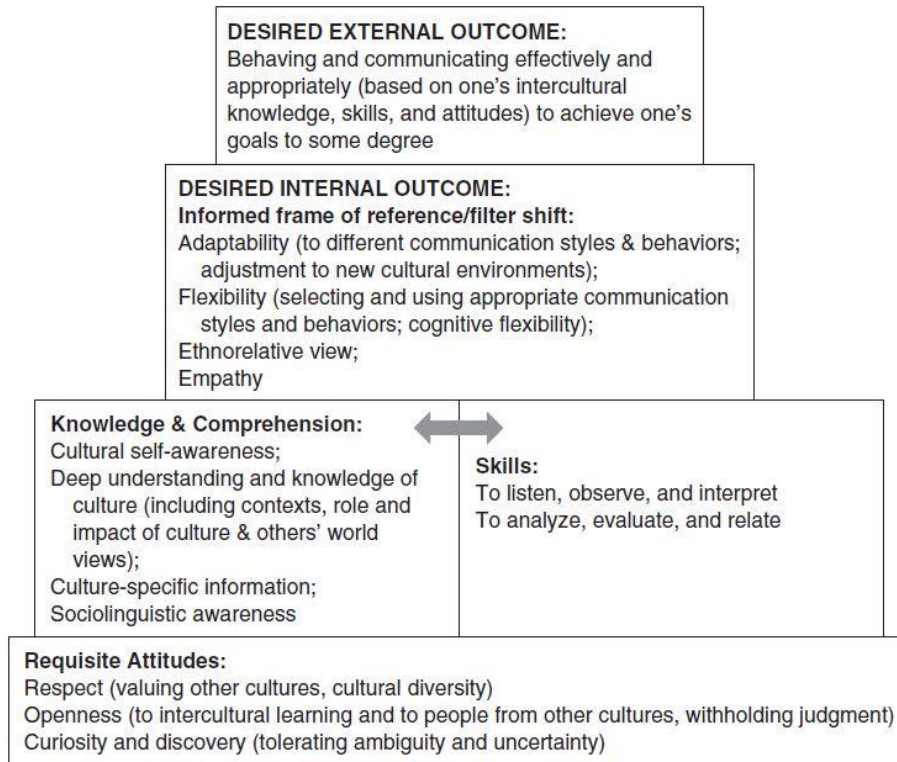
Deardorff found that the highest-rated definition among educational administrators was based on Byram’s (1997) definition and was summarised as

“Knowledge of others; knowledge of self; skills to interpret and relate; skills to discover and/or to interact; valuing others’ values, beliefs, and behaviors; and relativizing one’s self. Linguistic competence plays a key role” (Deardorff, 2006, p. p. 248)

The top-rated definition among intercultural scholars was one in which intercultural competence was defined as

“the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes” (Deardorff, 2004, p. 194).

The concept of intercultural competence is agreed to consist of a number of components, 22 of which were accepted by 80% to 100% of the respondents as essential aspects of intercultural aspects. These components are summarised in a static model (Figure 1) and a dynamic (Figure 2) model of intercultural competence.



- Move from personal level (attitude) to interpersonal/interactive level (outcomes)
- Degree of intercultural competence depends on acquired degree of underlying elements

Figure 1: Pyramid model of intercultural competence (Deardorff 2006, p.255)

The underlying message of Figure 1 is that attitude is perceived as a basic starting point. 100% of the participating intercultural scholars in the study identified “the understanding of others’ world views” as an important component of intercultural competence.

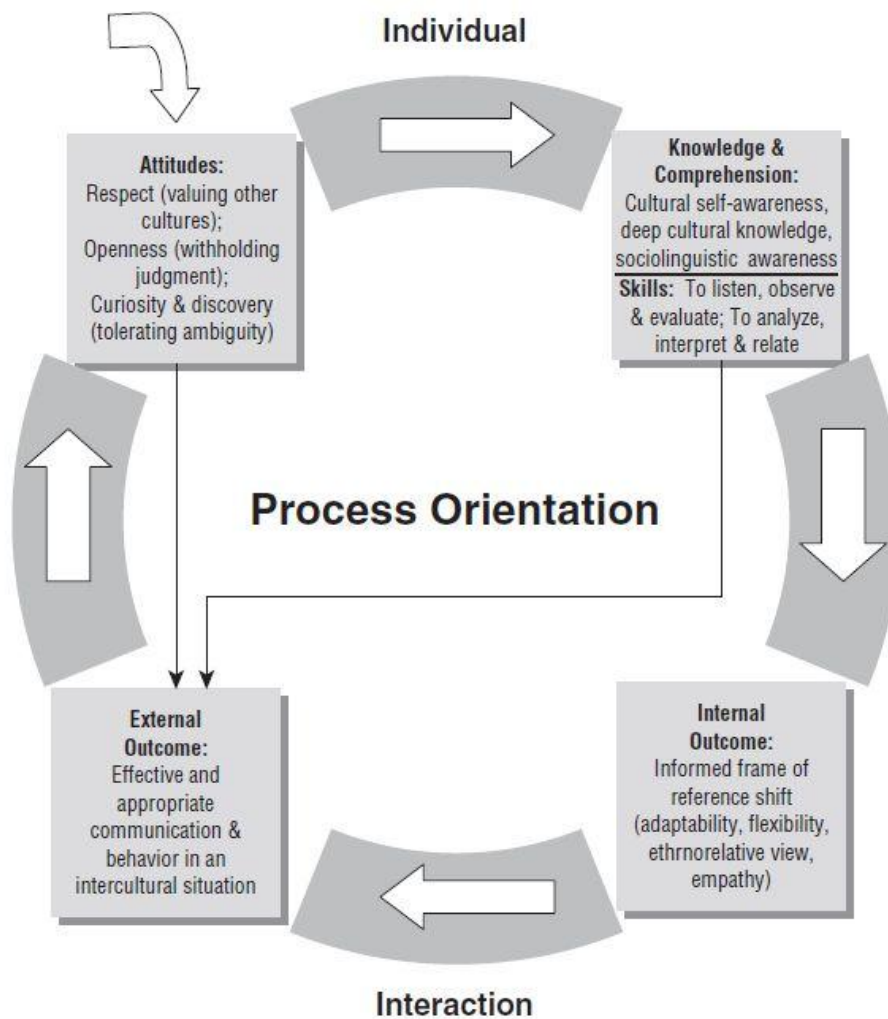


Figure 2: Process model of intercultural competence (Deardorff 2006, p. 257)

The process model of intercultural competence in Figure 2 illustrates the cyclic and complex nature of acquiring intercultural competence. The model denotes the interplay between the personal and the interpersonal / interaction levels. As with the pyramid model, the attitudinal element is the most critical and is therefore indicated as the starting point of the cycle.

Byram's (1997) definition mentioned above poses communicative competence as an important aspect of intercultural competence. In recent years, this model has been taken up by many researchers as a starting point. For example, the INCA project (2001-2004) has suggested the following definition of IC, which relates to Byram's definition:

"Intercultural competence enables you to interact both effectively and in a way that is acceptable to others when you are working in a group whose members have different cultural backgrounds."
(INCA Project, 2004b)

In the next paragraph, we will describe Byram's model for intercultural communicative competence in more detail.

2.2 Describing Intercultural Communicative Competence for Assessment

When looking to support learners in developing their intercultural communicative competence, it is necessary to be able to define and describe the assessment criteria related to ICC as comprehensively as possible, in order to be able to give feedback on different aspects and suggest training.

Assessing intercultural competence, and intercultural communicative competence in particular, however is not self-evident. In contrast to language assessment, there is not yet a generally accepted and endorsed European framework of reference for dealing with languages and cultures. The work on the FREPA / CARAP framework (European Centre for Modern Languages, 2010) is ongoing, but has yet to reach completion and consensus amongst decision makers and practitioners. Because no generally accepted framework was available, we needed to develop an appropriate assessment framework, starting from available models.

2.2.1 Byram's Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence

As mentioned above, we started from Byram's model of intercultural communicative competence (shown in Figure 3 below), for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is rather prevalent within the European context and has formed the basis for the majority of work currently published by the Council of Europe on intercultural competence. Secondly, it fits well with Deardorff's (2006) consensus model (presented in Figure 1 and Figure 2 above) and fits best with the educational practitioners' definition of intercultural competences in Deardorff's study. Thirdly, it is less complex than the Deardorff model presented above and therefore easier to implement in real assessment settings.

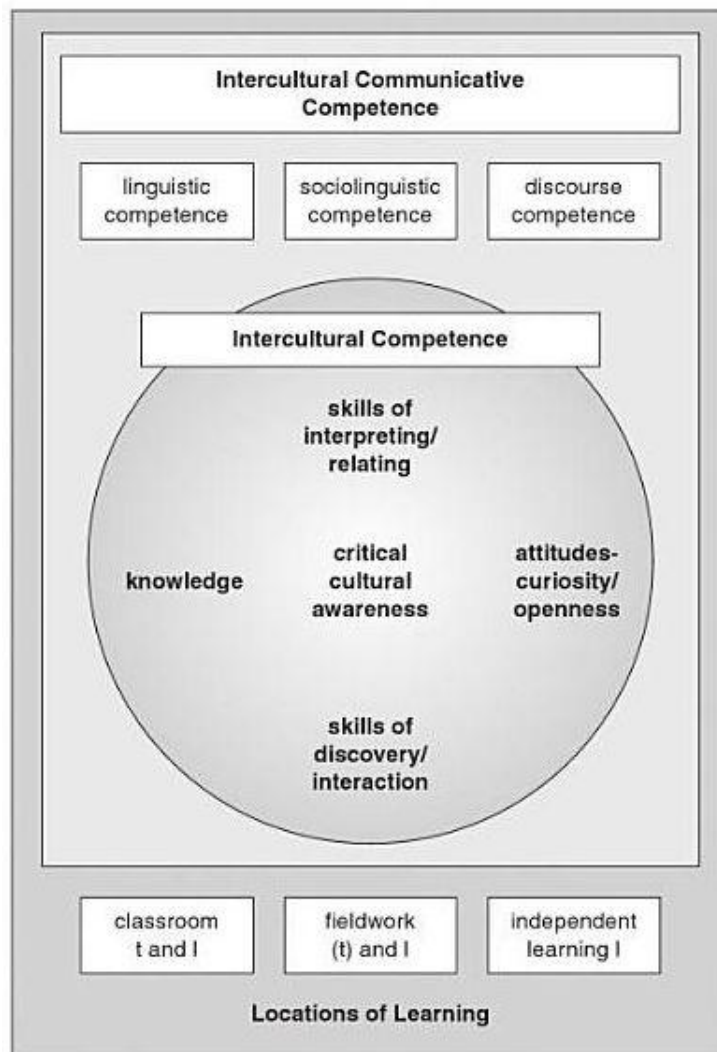


Figure 3: Diagram summarising Byram's (1997) model of Intercultural Communicative Competence, which encompasses both communicative and intercultural competences (Byram, 2009, p. 323)

For the purpose of assessment of intercultural communicative competence, we are particularly interested in Byram’s construct of Intercultural Communicative Competence. In Byram’s model, Intercultural Communicative Competence consists of communicative competences on the one hand, and intercultural competence on the other. The communicative competences consist of linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence and discourse competence. Intercultural competence consists of three components (knowledge, skills and attitudes) and is complemented by five values (the *savoirs*) (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey, 2002, pp. 11-13): (i) intercultural attitudes (*savoir être*), (ii) knowledge (*savoirs*), (iii) skills of interpreting and relating (*savoir comprendre*), (iv) skills of discovery and interaction (*savoir apprendre/faire*) and (v) critical cultural awareness (*savoir s’engager*). These five major intercultural competences are strongly interrelated, where Byram (2009) argues that “the basis of intercultural competence is in the attitudes of the person interacting with people of another culture (*savoir être*).” Without this basic competence, the other four cannot truly develop.

Within the CEFcult project, our aim was to support learners in the development of their intercultural communicative competence, as a combination of communicative competence and intercultural competence.

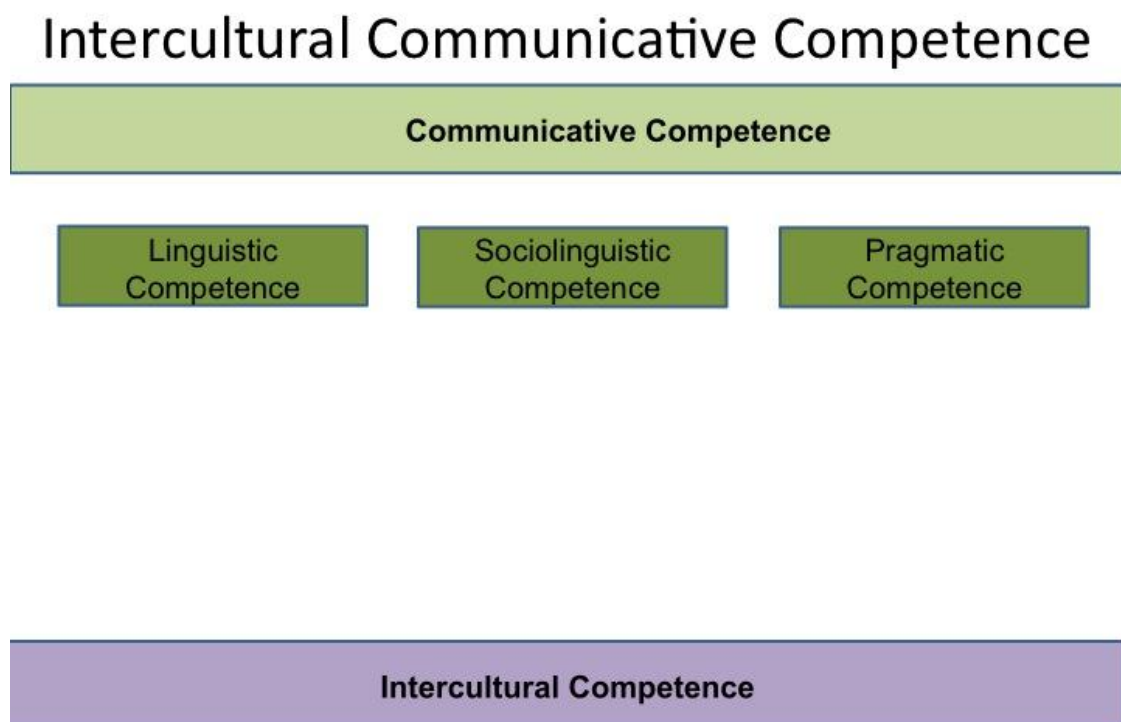
2.2.2 Assessing communicative competence and intercultural competence

Byram’s model provides some insight into the assessment criteria for intercultural communicative competence. However, for assessment in practice, we looked into existing assessment frameworks that could be combined with this model for intercultural communicative competence.

For assessment of communicative competence, the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) was an obvious choice (Council of Europe, 2001a). To align Byram’s construct with the CEFR, we relabelled discourse competence as pragmatic competence, following the definition adhered to in the CEFR.

“[pragmatic competence] also concerns the mastery of discourse, cohesion and coherence” (CEFR:13).

As a result, the construct of intercultural communicative competence that we aimed to support within CEFcult was as illustrated in Figure 4.



After Byram 1997

Figure 4 CEFcult construct Intercultural Communicative Competence (based on Byram 1997)

However, it quickly became clear that the CEFR could not by itself cover all aspects of the targeted construct. The 54 illustrative scales that the CEFR contains adequately cover linguistic as well as pragmatic competence. However, by their own account, the authors of the CEFR framework state that sociolinguistic competence was very problematic throughout the creation of the CEFR. Brian North (2008) has distanced himself from the scales for sociolinguistic scales stating that they are not backed by empirical data (North 2008:30, 40, 41 (in *Studies in Language Testing* 27, CUP). Moreover, although intercultural competence is cited 27 times in the CEFR, no scales have been developed within CEFR to assess it. Figure 5 illustrates the CEFcult construct, with the CEFR scales for the five qualitative aspects of spoken language use (table 3 in CEFR:28-29).

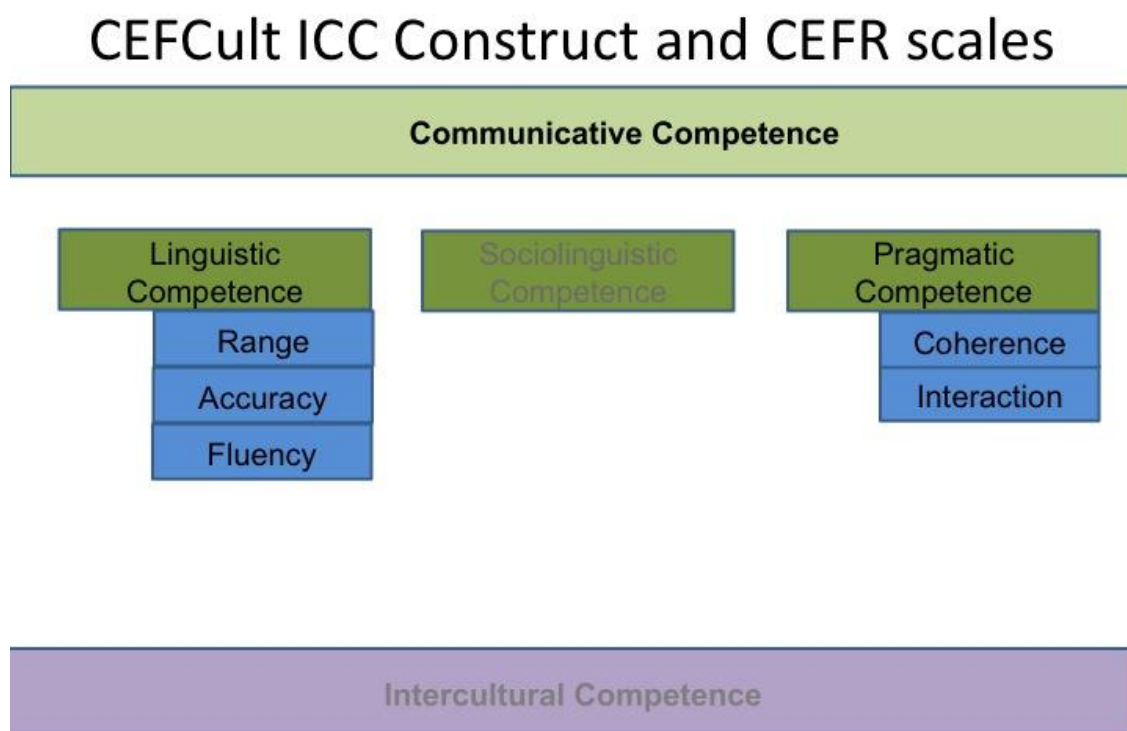


Figure 5 CEFcult Intercultural Communicative Competence and CEFR scales

So clearly, sociolinguistic competence and intercultural competence are not covered by the CEFR. This obliged us to look for alternative existing assessment frameworks to include in the CEFcult framework.

Our search led us to the INCA project (2001-2004), which was funded under the Leonardo da Vinci II programme. This project developed a framework, a suite of assessment tools, including INCA on-line, and a portfolio for the assessment of intercultural competence linked to language and subject knowledge competence” (INCA Project, 2004a).

The INCA assessment scales measure a learner’s proficiency on six intercultural competence scales. The INCA project refers to them as six ‘elements’ of competence: “It has been observed how people in groups of mixed cultural background recognise and deal with the differences that emerge as the group works together. From such observations, it has been possible to identify a number of ‘elements’ of competence that people

bring to bear on the situation. These elements are not definitive. Intercultural competence can include other 'elements' of competence, but the INCA project 'elements' provide a snapshot, useful as an assessment tool, to provide a baseline to inform training programmes." (INCA Project, 2004a, p. 5). These six elements are described below, at the 'full' level of proficiency (ibid. pp. 5-7):

- **Tolerance of ambiguity**

Tolerance of ambiguity is understood as the ability to accept lack of clarity and ambiguity and to be able to deal with it constructively. In other words, you find the unexpected and unfamiliar an enjoyable challenge and want to help resolve possible problems in ways that appeal to as many other group members as possible.

- **Behavioural flexibility**

Behavioural flexibility is the ability to adapt one's own behaviour to different requirements and situations. In other words, you adapt the way you work with others to avoid unnecessary conflicts of procedure and expectation. You will tend to adopt other people's customs and courtesies where this is likely to be appreciated, accept less familiar working procedures where this will raise the level of goodwill, and so on.

- **Communicative awareness**

Communicative awareness is the ability in intercultural communication to establish relationships between linguistic expressions and cultural contents, to identify, and consciously work with, various communicative conventions of foreign partners, and to modify correspondingly one's own linguistic forms of expression. In other words, you are alert to the many ways in which misunderstanding might arise through differences in speech, gestures and body language. You may, where this helps, be prepared to adopt less familiar conventions. To be effective, you will always be ready to seek clarification and may need, on occasion, to ask other members of the group to agree on how they will use certain expressions or specialised terms.

- **Knowledge discovery**

Knowledge discovery is the ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to act using that knowledge, those attitudes and those skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction. In other words, you are willing both to research in advance and to learn from intercultural encounters. You will take the trouble to find out about the likely values, customs and practices of those you are going to work with, and will note carefully, as you interact with them, any additional points that might influence the way you choose to work with them.

- **Respect for otherness**

Respect for otherness concerns curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own. In other words, you are ready to regard other people's values, customs and practices as worthwhile in their own right and not merely as different from the norm. While you may not share these values, customs and practices, you feel strongly that others are entitled to them and should not lose respect on account of them. You may sometimes need to adopt a firm but diplomatic stance over points of principle on which you disagree.

- **Empathy**

Empathy is the ability to intuitively understand what other people think and how they feel in concrete situations. Empathic persons are able to deal appropriately with the feelings, wishes and ways of thinking of other persons. In other words, you are able to get inside other people's thoughts and feelings and see and feel a situation through their eyes. While this competence often draws on knowledge of how you would expect others to feel, it goes beyond awareness of facts. It often shows itself in a concern not to hurt others' feelings or infringe their system of values.

As said before, the descriptions above relate to full competence in each of the six characteristics. In reality, knowledge and experience vary considerably between people: an individual progresses in intercultural competence as he acquires new knowledge and experience.

The assessment according to each of these scales is performed by evaluating learner behaviour or responses and relating those responses to descriptors that represent a level of proficiency in a competence. The assessor version of these descriptors is presented in Table 1 below.

Level ⇨ Competence ↻	1 'Basic'	2 'Intermediate'	3 'Full'
General profile	The candidate at this level is on the ladder of progression. They will be disposed to deal positively with the situation. Their responses to it will be piecemeal and improvised rather than principled, even though mostly successful in avoiding short term difficulties. These will be based on fragmentary information.	The candidate at this level has begun to induce simple principles to apply to the situation, rather than improvise reactively in response to isolated features of it. There will be evidence of a basic strategy and some coherent knowledge for dealing with situations.	The candidate at this level will combine a strategic and principled approach to a situation to take the role of a mediator seeking to bring about the most favourable outcome. Knowledge of their own culture and that of others, including work parameters, will be both coherent and sophisticated.
i) Tolerance of ambiguity	1T Deals with ambiguity on a one-off basis, responding to items as they arise. May be overwhelmed by ambiguous situations which imply high involvement.	2T Has begun to acquire a repertoire of approaches to cope with ambiguities in low-involvement situations. Begins to accept ambiguity as a challenge.	3T Is constantly aware of the possibility of ambiguity. When it occurs, he/she tolerates and manages it.
ii) Behavioural flexibility	1B Adopts a reactive/defensive approach to situations. Learns from isolated experiences in a rather unsystematic way.	2B Previous experience of required behaviour begins to influence behaviour in everyday parallel situations. Sometimes takes the initiative in adopting/conforming to other cultures' behaviour patterns.	3B Is ready and able to adopt appropriate behaviour in job-specific situations from a broad and well-understood repertoire.
iii) Communicative awareness	1C Attempts to relate problems of intercultural interaction to different communicative conventions, but lacks the necessary knowledge for identifying differences; tends to hold on to his own conventions and expects adaptation from others; is aware of difficulties in interaction with non-native-speakers, but has not yet evolved principles to guide the choice of strategies (metacommunication, clarification or simplification).	2C Begins to relate problems of intercultural interaction to conflicting communicative conventions and attempts to clarify his own or to adapt to the conventions of others. Uses a limited repertoire of strategies (metacommunication, clarification, simplification) to solve and prevent problems when interacting with a non-native-speaker.	3C Is able to relate problems of intercultural interaction to conflicting communicative conventions and is aware of their effects on the communication process; is able to identify and ready to adapt to different communicative conventions, or to negotiate new discourse rules in order to prevent or clarify misunderstandings; uses a variety of strategies (metacommunication, clarification, simplification) to prevent, to solve, and to mediate problems when interacting with a non-native-speaker.
iv) Knowledge discovery	1K Draws on random general knowledge and minimal factual research about other cultures. Learns by discovery and is willing to modify perceptions but not yet systematic.	2K Has recourse to some information sources in anticipation of everyday encounters with the other cultures, and modifies and builds on information so acquired, in the light of actual experience. Is motivated by curiosity to develop his knowledge of his own culture as perceived by others.	3K Has a deep knowledge of other cultures. Develops his knowledge through systematic research-like activities and direct questioning and can, where this is sought, offer advice and support to others in work situations.
v) Respect for otherness	1R Is not always aware of difference and, when it is recognised, may not be able to defer evaluative judgement as good or bad. Where it is fully appreciated, adopts a tolerant stance and tries to adapt to low-involving demands of the foreign culture.	2R Accepts the other's values, norms and behaviours in everyday situations as neither good nor bad, provided that basic assumptions of his own culture have not been violated. Is motivated to put others at ease and avoid giving offence.	3R Out of respect for diversity in value systems, applies critical knowledge of such systems to ensure equal treatment of people in the workplace. Is able to cope tactfully with the ethical problems raised by personally unacceptable features of otherness.
vi) Empathy	1E Tends to see the cultural foreigner's differences as curious, and remains confused about the seemingly strange behaviours and their antecedents. Nonetheless tries to 'make allowances'.	2E Has the beginnings of a mental checklist of how others may perceive, feel and respond differently to, a range of routine circumstances. Tends increasingly to see things intuitively from the other's point of view.	3E Accepts the other as a coherent individual. Enlists role-taking and de-centring skills, and awareness of different perspectives, in optimising job-related communication/interaction with the cultural foreigner.

Table 1: INCA framework (assessor version) – From (INCA Project, 2004a)

The descriptors in Table 1 are rather abstract descriptions, and are hard to use in actual assessment situations. In order to be practically usable, these descriptors need to be operationalised. Each assessment situation (or scenario) will call for specific operationalisations, which relate the abstract descriptors to the specific scenario that the learner is enacting. Table 2 presents an example of such operationalised descriptors from the INCA project. The table relates to a simulation exercise in which an individual learner watches a video portraying an interactive situation between an English and a Chinese businessman. The learner is asked to answer questions based on this scenario, to explain the problems that arise and suggest solutions. The learner's reactions are observed by an assessor and evaluated according to the statements in the table. In the example, the assessor's total score for the learner's observed 'respect for otherness' in this exercise is rated as 'basic', because at the basic level, three statements were scored, versus only two at the intermediate level.

Respect for Otherness basic	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Addresses only one culture ▪ Describes the behaviour of one person as negative (e.g. Mr Parker is focused on pursuing his own interests) ▪ Criticises one culture (e.g. 'The Chinese can't do business') ▪ Sees one attitude towards work as the only correct attitude (e.g. Mr Parker's attitude 'business is business' is correct) ▪ Uses negative attributes to describe a person (e.g. 'Mr Wang is not a good businessman') ▪ Mr Parker should have addressed the importance of the business deal more clearly ▪ He should have made threats to leave the country without the deal ▪ 	/
Respect for Otherness intermediate	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mostly addresses one culture, sometimes addresses both ▪ Describes the behaviour of both persons as neutral ▪ Does not criticise the two cultures involved ▪ Sees one attitude towards work as better than the other, but also sees the other attitude ▪ Does not use negative attributes for one or both of the persons involved ▪ Mr Parker should have been better alert to the other person ▪ He didn't give a satisfactory answer to the question about his family ▪ 	/
Respect for Otherness full	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Describes both cultures (e.g. both persons come from different cultural spheres with different but equal rules) ▪ Identifies rules from both cultures (e.g. typically direct way of speaking in English vs. typically indirect way of speaking in Chinese; pocketing the business card right away is seen by Mr Wang as impolite) ▪ Appreciates and respects the values and norms of both business partners (e.g. both should show more respect for the other person's culture) ▪ 	
Total score: RO 1-----2-----3	
X	

Table 2: Example of an operationalised assessment sheet. Example taken from the INCA simulation exercise "A Business Trip to China" (INCA Project, 2004a, p. 29)

The INCA project developed an assessee version of the framework that is a simplified version of the assessor version, in that it combines the 6 competences into 3 three strands of competences: openness, knowledge and adaptability.

- **Openness** includes *respect for otherness* and *tolerance of ambiguity*.
 - To be open means to be open to the other and to situations in which something is done differently. You can tolerate your partner as being different and doing things differently.
- **Knowledge** includes *knowledge discovery* as well as *empathy*.
 - You not only want to know the ‘hard facts’ about a situation or about a certain culture, but you also want to know, or you know something about, the feelings of the other person. You also know how your interlocutor feels.
- **Adaptability** includes *behavioural flexibility* and *communicative awareness*.
 - You are able to adapt your behaviour AND your style of communication.

The INCA project felt that it was more appropriate to confront the learners with the assessee version, due to its reduced complexity. In the CEFcult project, we have chosen to maintain assessment in terms of the six competences, as these sufficiently cover the CEFcult construct based on Byram’s model of intercultural communicative competence.

Level ⇨ Dimension ⇨	Level 1 Basic	Level 2 Intermediate	Level 3 Full
Overview of competence	I am already willing to interact successfully with people of other cultures. I tend to pick things up and learn from them as I go along, but I haven't yet the experience to work out any system of dealing with intercultural situations in general. I respond to events, rather than planning for them. At this stage I am reasonably tolerant of other values, customs and practices although I may find them odd or surprising and approve or disapprove.	As a result of experience and/or training, I am beginning to view more coherently some of the aspects of intercultural encounters I used to deal with in a 'one-off' way. I have a mental 'map' or 'checklists' of the sort of situations I am likely to need to deal with and am developing my skills to cope with them. This means that I am more prepared for the need to respond and adapt to the demands of unfamiliar situations. I am quicker to see patterns in the various experiences I have and I am beginning to draw conclusions without having to seek advice. I find it easier to respond in a neutral way to difference, rather than approving or disapproving.	Many of the competences I developed consciously at level 2 have become intuitive. I am constantly ready for situations and encounters in which I will exercise my knowledge, judgement and skills and have a large repertoire of strategies for dealing with differences in values, customs and practices among members of the intercultural group. I not only accept that people can see things from widely varying perspectives and are entitled to do so, but am able to put myself in their place and avoid behaviour I sense would be hurtful or offensive. At this level of operation I am able to intercede when difficulties arise and tactfully support other members of the group in understanding each other. I am confident enough of my position to take a polite stand over issues despite my respect for the viewpoint of others.
Openness	<p>O1.1 When uncertainty arises from cultural difference, I adopt a tolerant attitude as long as the issue is not a sensitive one for me TA</p> <p>O1.2 Sometimes I may jump to conclusions about different behaviour that I later realise were not entirely correct RO</p>	<p>O2.1 I now see the uncertainties that can arise from intercultural encounters as an interesting challenge, provided that the issues involved are not sensitive for me TA</p> <p>O2.2 I react neutrally to cultural differences, rather than hastily categorising them as good or bad RO</p>	<p>O3.1 I am aware of ways of coping with ambiguous situations even when these give rise to inner moral conflicts that are serious for me TA</p> <p>O3.2 I fully respect the right of those from other cultures to have different values from my own and can see how these values make sense as part of a way of thinking RO</p>
Knowledge	<p>K1.1 I have some general knowledge about the cultures of those I work with. This knowledge consists of facts that are not always connected and I don't yet have an overall picture of the relevant cultures KD</p> <p>K1.2 I learn from intercultural experiences and add to my previous knowledge KD</p> <p>K1.3 Although I often find culturally different behaviour curious, I try to make allowances for it E</p>	<p>K2.1 I take the trouble to find out about the cultures I am likely to be working with, paying attention not only to isolated facts, but to values, customs and practices common in those cultures KD</p> <p>K2.2 When I experience new values, customs and practices I use the knowledge to develop into an overall system of principles KD</p> <p>K2.3 I have developed a mental checklist of how others may perceive, feel and respond differently to, a range of routine circumstances. This supports my concern to put others at ease and avoid upsetting them E</p>	<p>K3.1 I have a deep understanding of cultures I encounter frequently. When involved in new intercultural situations I strive to acquire the best possible available knowledge and understanding both through prior research and by seeking regular clarification within the group KD</p> <p>K3.2 I have acquired a system of principles that can be applied reliably to almost any intercultural encounter KD</p> <p>K3.3 I often imagine myself in the place of those from different cultures when trying to understand all aspects of a work problem. This supports my spontaneous concern that others in the group should receive fair treatment and consideration E</p>
Adaptability	<p>A1.1 I learn bit by bit the best ways of behaving, but have not yet arrived at underlying principles and do not have a plan for reacting to events. When a situation becomes confusing, I tend to take a passive role BF</p> <p>A1.2 I take events as they come, doing what seems right at the time BF</p> <p>A1.3 When people communicate in ways I do not understand I try in an unsystematic way to take part, but hope that they will eventually adapt to the way I communicate BF/CA</p> <p>A1.4 I know that others may communicate in ways I am not familiar with CA</p>	<p>A2.1 My behaviour is now influenced by principles that guide me and I often plan for eventualities, including ambiguous situations BF/CA</p> <p>A2.2 I adapt my behaviour in new situations, taking account of lessons learnt in previous intercultural situations. I sometimes adopt the behaviour patterns of others, rather than waiting for them to adopt mine BF</p> <p>A2.3 I seek to achieve good communication both by making my own conventions clearer and by adopting those of others. When there is, or might be, a problem with communication, I quite often find ways around it, e.g. using gesture, re-explaining, simplifying etc. BF/CA</p> <p>A2.4 I am aware of a number of useful strategies for dealing with common communication problems. CA</p>	<p>A3.1 When ambiguous situations arise, I can usually clarify or otherwise deal with them to the benefit of the group BF/CA</p> <p>A3.2 I make use of my knowledge and understanding to inform tactfully, support and encourage others in an intercultural group. I consistently adopt behaviour that minimises the risk of offending or hurting others' feelings BF</p> <p>A3.3 I use my communication strategies to prevent, solve and mediate problems arising from differences in language or other communication conventions BF/CA</p> <p>A3.4 I have a good overall understanding of the kinds of communicative difficulties that can arise in an intercultural context and of a wide range of strategies for resolving them CA</p>

Table 3: INCA framework (assessee version) – From (INCA Project, 2004a)

The inclusion of these INCA scales results in the construct illustrated in Figure 6.

CEFCult ICC Construct and INCA scales

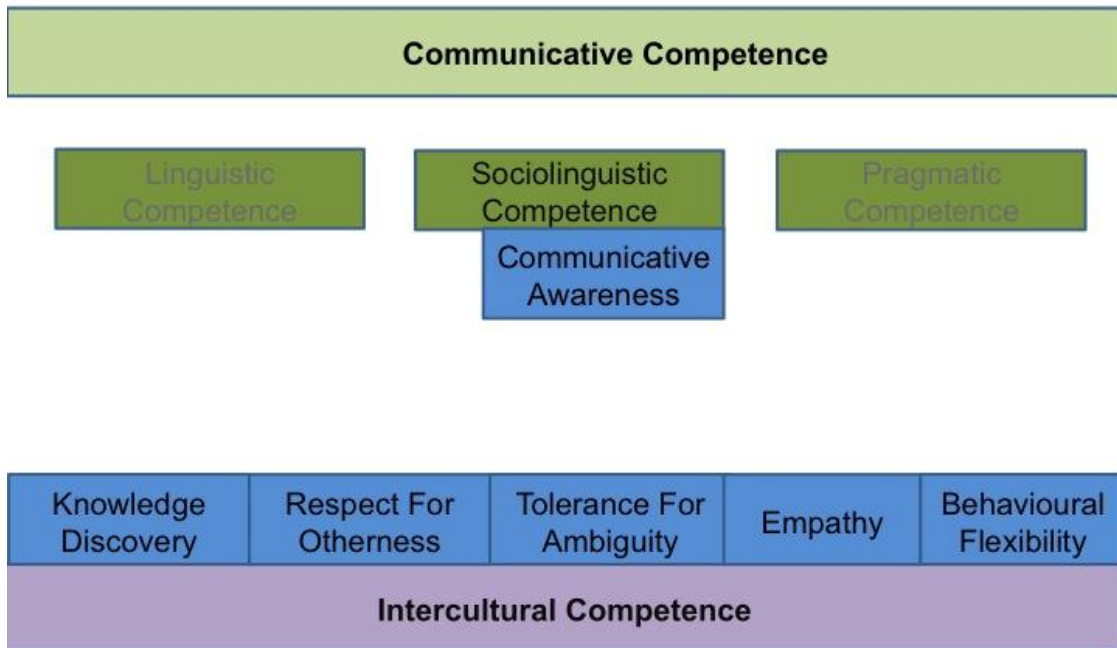


Figure 6 CEFCult Intercultural Communicative Competence and INCA scales

2.2.3 CEFCult Construct for Intercultural Communicative Competence

By including the CEFR scales and the INCA scales, the concepts of both communicative competence and intercultural competence have been translated into an assessment framework that is applicable in practice. The elaborated example of the INCA scales above show the importance of considering operationalised scales, depending on the context of the specific task at hand. Figure 7 illustrated the complete CEFCult assessment framework for Intercultural Communicative Competence based on Byram's model, the CEFR scales and the INCA scales.

CEFCult ICC Construct with CEFR & INCA

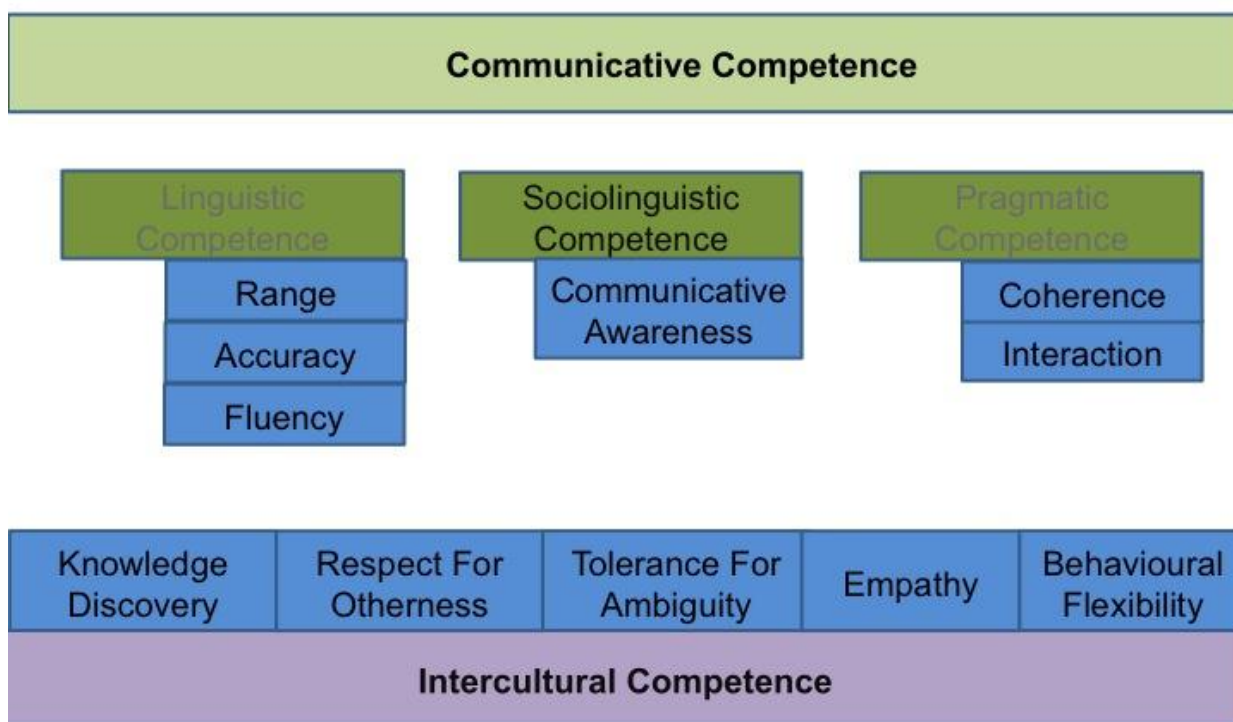


Figure 7 CEFCult Intercultural Communicative Competence Framework

By including the INCA outcomes for the assessment of intercultural competence, Deardoff's pyramid (illustrated in Figure 2) can also be redefined in the light of these scales, for the purpose of building intercultural communicative competence. This is illustrated in Figure 8.

At the top of the pyramid stands External Outcome, or how the learner is perceived by the beholder. Ever since Fantini (1995), effectiveness and appropriateness have been widely cited as the most readily accessible criteria for communicative success in intercultural encounters. Appropriateness lies in the eye of the beholder so it is essential to involve the view of others to learn and grow. In CEFCult learners invite peers and experts to assess your recordings become aware of what it means to be seen and heard by the other.

The six categories of INCA cover the three deeper layers of intercultural competence - two INCA categories for each layer: the "Internal Outcome" layer is related to the INCA competences of 'empathy' and 'behavioral flexibility'; the "Knowledge and Skills" layer is related to 'knowledge discovery' and 'communicative awareness'; the "Requisite Attitudes" layer is related to 'Openness' which is composite of 'Respect for Otherness' and 'Tolerance of Ambiguity'

Intercultural Competence

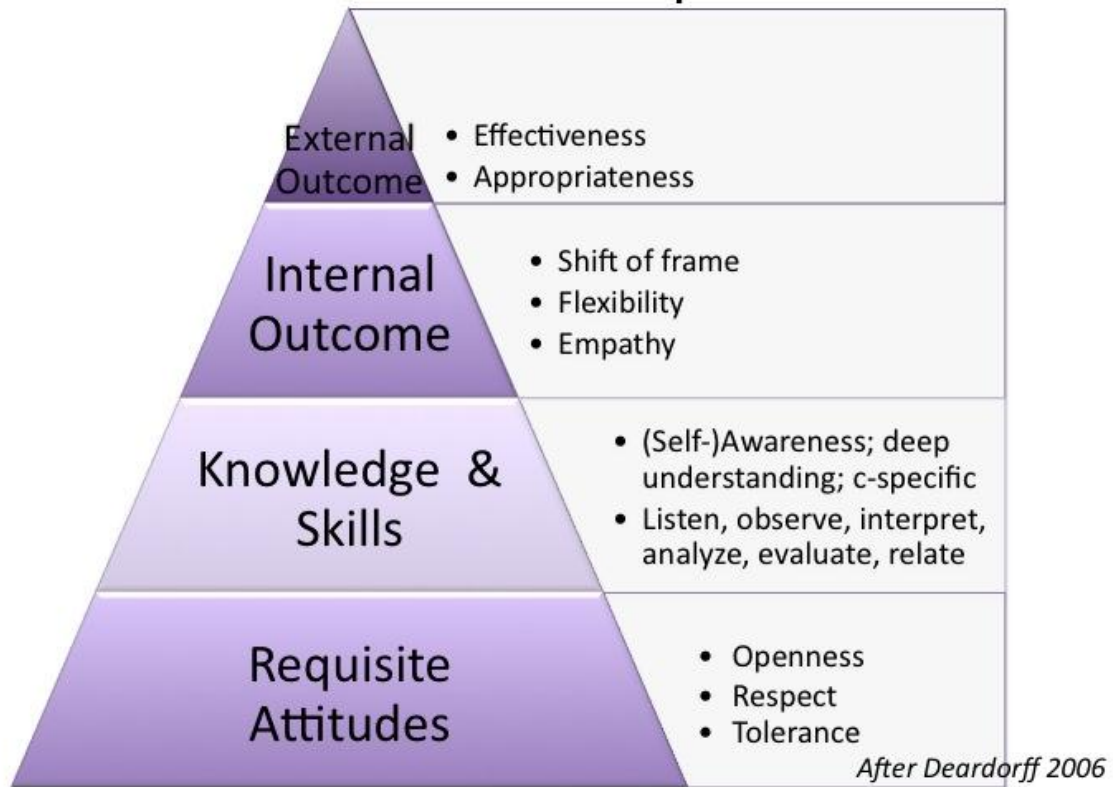


Figure 8 Deardoff (2006) and Intercultural Competence Assessment

3 Intercultural Communicative Competence for Lifelong Learners

Possible Methods and aspects of assessment and why LL strategy is most suitable for ICC building

State-of-the-Art of tools to support ICC in lifelong learner

Intercultural communicative competence is a competence that is built up throughout one's life. As Byram, Gribkova and Starkey (2002) state: "The acquisition of intercultural competence is never complete and perfect, but to be a successful intercultural speaker and mediator does not require complete and perfect competence." Cultures, social identities and values are constantly developing, so the important learning goal is to "be constantly aware of the need to adjust, to accept and to understand other people. It is never a completed process". This specific context of intercultural competence therefore requires a lifelong learning approach to training, support and feedback for competence building. Below, we briefly discuss these aspects of the CEFcult approach.

3.1 Lifelong learning: context-defined, continuous and social

Learning to become interculturally competent is an **ongoing process** which ideally spans a whole lifetime, starting at pre-primary education, through primary, secondary and higher education, extending into lifelong learning situations (Council of Europe, 2008).

Intercultural learning can take place in a formal classroom **setting** with a teacher/trainer present, but it also (perhaps primarily) happens in non-formal and informal settings such as in the workplace, during a holiday, in a group of expatriates, or during a student exchange period. Byram's model for intercultural communicative competence (Figure 3) shows three learning settings: classroom teaching and learning, fieldwork (teaching and) learning, independent learning.

This ongoing nature of intercultural competence development requires supportive tools for the process of learning rather than (just) the outcome of learning. Byram, Gribkova and Starkey (2002) suggest a **portfolio** approach to the assessment of intercultural learning, and refer to the European Language Portfolio (Council of Europe, 2000-2010) as a possible tool to support that learning. "[...] the portfolio introduces the notion of self-assessment which is considered significant both as a means of recording what has been experienced and learnt, and as a means of making learners become more conscious of their learning and of the abilities they already have."

As mentioned above, intercultural communicative competence rests on the "external outcome" (Deardoff, 2006, as discussed in chapter 2) or perception by others. It is therefore typically a social learning activity. While acquiring information and knowledge about other cultures can be regarded as individual learning activities, knowledge and understanding are only part of intercultural competence. Intercultural communicative competence also includes learning and training of social skills such as listening, observing and interpreting. It includes empathy and last but not least the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately.

3.2 Assessment in Lifelong Learning

Assessment for lifelong learning can be characterised by a number of dichotomies, which define the type of assessment the learner receives. These include:

- Knowledge Assessment vs. Performance Assessment
- Achievement Assessment vs. Proficiency Assessment
- Summative Assessment vs. Formative Assessment
- Fixed Point Assessment vs. Continuous Assessment

Furthermore, the assessment is also defined by its mode, i.e. the role of the learner in the assessment and the extent of incorporating realism in the assessment task.

- Assessor Mode vs. Assessee Mode
- Direct Assessment Mode vs. Indirect Assessment Mode

Below, we will briefly describe each of the dichotomies and modes of assessment, each time indicating the relevant choices for CEFcult approach to assessment of intercultural communicative competence.

3.2.1 Knowledge Assessment vs. Performance Assessment

In assessment, a distinction can be made between performance assessment and knowledge assessment:

“Performance assessment requires the learner to provide a sample of language in speech or writing in a direct test. *Knowledge assessment* requires the learner to answer questions, which can be of a range of different item types in order to provide evidence of the extent of their linguistic knowledge and control.

Unfortunately one can never test competences directly. All one ever has to go on is a range of performances, from which one seeks to generalise about proficiency. Proficiency can be seen as competence put to use. In this sense, therefore, all tests assess only performance, though one may seek to draw inferences as to the underlying competences from this evidence.” (Council of Europe, 2001b, p. 187)

As stated above, assessing learners’ acquisition of knowledge is not so difficult. The real challenge when assessing intercultural communicative competence is to assess the learners’ skills and attitudes. The CEFcult project focuses mainly on assessing the users’ communicative performance, as an indicator for their intercultural communicative competence.

3.2.2 Achievement Assessment vs. Proficiency Assessment

Assessment can look at achievement of particular goals or proficiency in particular competences applicable across different aspects of their life.

“Achievement assessment is the assessment of the achievement of specific objectives – assessment of what has been taught. It therefore relates to the week’s/term’s work, the course book, the syllabus. Achievement assessment is oriented to the course. It represents an internal perspective.

Proficiency assessment on the other hand is assessment of what someone can do/knows in relation to the application of the subject in the real world. It represents an external perspective.” (Council of Europe, 2001b, p. 183)

CEFcult will assess proficiency rather than achievement, thereby following the approaches of both the CEFR as INCA. Within the CEFR, three levels of proficiency have been identified for the assessment of language proficiency, each with two sublevels. These are illustrated below:

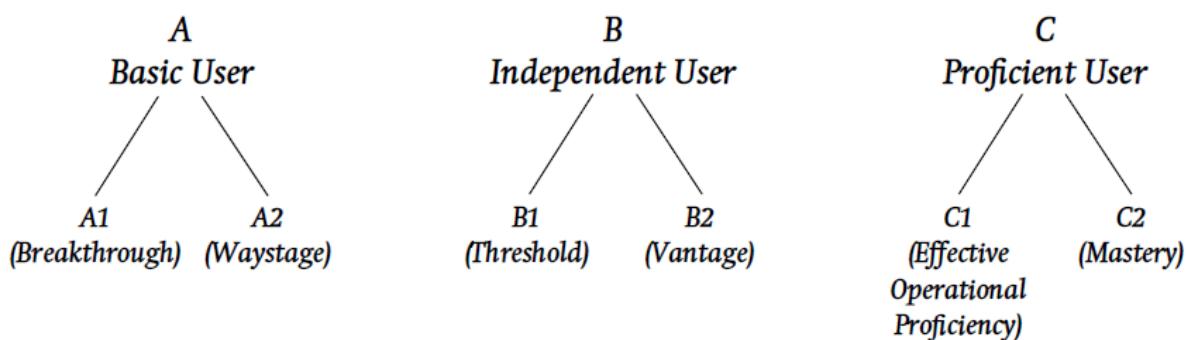


Figure 9: Levels of proficiency in the CEF framework. (From: Council of Europe, 2001a, p. 23)

The INCA project also uses three levels of proficiency, but refers to them as “Basic”, “Intermediate”, and “Full”. These levels are described in the following way (INCA Project, 2004b):

It has been observed how people in groups of mixed cultural backgrounds recognise and deal with the differences that emerge as the group works together. From such observations, it has been possible to identify a number of ‘elements’ of competence that people bring to bear on the situation. These elements are not definitive. Intercultural competence can include other ‘elements’ of competence, but the INCA project ‘elements’ provide a snapshot, useful as an assessment tool, in order to provide a baseline which can inform training programmes.

Basic: The candidate at this level is on the ladder of progression. They will be disposed to deal positively with the situation. Their responses to it will be piecemeal and improvised rather than principled, even though mostly successful in avoiding short term difficulties. These will be based on fragmentary information.

Intermediate: The candidate at this level has begun to induce simple principles to apply to the situation, rather than improvise reactively in response to isolated features of it. There will be evidence of a basic strategy and some coherent knowledge for dealing with situations.

Full: The candidate at this level will combine a strategic and principled approach to a situation to take the role of a mediator seeking to bring about the most favourable outcome. Knowledge of their own culture and that of others, including work parameters, will be both coherent and sophisticated.

However, as mentioned before, intercultural competence can never be complete or perfect. Therefore, the attribute “full” here does not intend to indicate completion or perfection in intercultural competence. Rather, it aims to seek out the people with a more mature and sophisticated intercultural competence.

In CEFcult, we have taken over the six proficiency levels of the CEFR for language proficiency and the three levels of proficiency in intercultural competence from the INCA framework. To make the assessment on these latter levels as relevant as possible, task-specific descriptors will be included in the assessment scales.

3.2.3 Summative Assessment vs. Formative Assessment

The CEF discusses the difference between formative and summative assessment as follows:

Formative assessment is an ongoing process of gathering information on the extent of learning, on strengths and weaknesses, which the teacher can feed back into their course planning and the actual feedback they give learners. Formative assessment is often used in a very broad sense so as to include non-quantifiable information from questionnaires and consultations.

Summative assessment sums up attainment at the end of the course with a grade. It is not necessarily proficiency assessment. Indeed a lot of summative assessment is normreferenced, fixed-point, achievement assessment.” (CEF 2001b, p. 186)

The INCA assessment method can be used in both formative and summative assessment situations. However, since the prospective CEFcult user is a lifelong learner, it is safe to assume that the CEFcult tool – and thus our use of the INCA assessment framework – will be mainly for formative purposes.

3.2.4 Fixed Point Assessment vs. Continuous Assessment

Assessment can take place at a fixed point in time, or continuously. Fixed-point assessment is described as follows:

“Fixed point assessment is when grades are awarded and decisions made on the basis of an examination or other assessment which takes place on a particular day, usually the end of the course or before the beginning of a course. What has happened beforehand is irrelevant; it is what the person can do now that is decisive.” (Council of Europe, 2001b, p. 185)

From a lifelong learning perspective, the development of one’s intercultural communicative competence is a continuous and never-ending process, and not (just) a time-limited learning activity that is assessed at the end of a course or semester. From the CEFcult perspective a continuous assessment process seems most appropriate, but such an approach obviously involves multiple assessment instances, and may include one or more fixed-point assessments too.

Both types of assessment will be included in the CEFcult approach. We will primarily focus on continuous assessment, allowing users to add and assess intercultural performance instances at different points in time. CEFcult instrumentation and tooling will support the ongoing analysis and potentially visualisation of users’ progress through time. Outcomes of continuous and fixed point assessments can be included in a learner portfolio.

3.2.5 Assessor Mode vs. Assessee Mode

Whereas the focus in the WebCEF project was primarily on expert assessment of oral language proficiency and the calibration of expert scores, the CEFcult project decidedly takes the individual learner and her lifelong learning activities as a starting point.

In self-assessment situations, learners are asked to make judgements about their own proficiency. This approach is taken up in the CEFR, for assessment of language proficiency:

“Learners can be involved in many of the assessment techniques outlined above. Research suggests that provided ‘high stakes’ (e.g. whether or not you will be accepted for a course) are not involved, self-assessment can be an effective complement to tests and teacher assessment. Accuracy in self-assessment is increased (a) when assessment is in relation to clear descriptors defining standards of proficiency and/or (b) when assessment is related to a specific experience. This experience may itself even be a test activity. It is also probably made more accurate when learners receive some training.” (Council of Europe, 2001b, p. 191)

For intercultural proficiency, the INCA framework was originally intended to be a “framework to underpin training and assessment in this field. There is also a need for an effective and efficient diagnostic tool to support assessment, benchmarking, recruitment and employee development” (INCA Project, 2004b).

In a self-assessment approach, the learner can take on the role of the assessor or the assessee (for example, as is the case in the INCA project). By extension, learners can also act as assessors to their peers, or be assessed by their peers.

The CEFcult approach starts from the perspective of user-centred assessment, initiated from the lifelong learner. Ultimately, the learner can choose to receive a 360-degree assessment, by performing self-assessment, but also collecting assessments from peers, colleagues or experts.

3.2.6 Direct Assessment vs. Indirect assessment

Assessment can also be defined and influenced by the authenticity of the performance of the learner. This can enable direct or indirect assessment.

“Direct assessment is assessing what the candidate is actually doing. For example, a small group are discussing something, the assessor observes, compares with a criteria grid, matches the performances

to the most appropriate categories on the grid, and gives an assessment. *Indirect assessment*, on the other hand, uses a test, usually on paper, which often assesses enabling skills” (Council of Europe, 2001b, p. 187)

Direct assessment allows an assessor to assess actual behaviour, which is often the most significant performance that can be assessed. The situation or context in which the user’s performance is triggered will determine the degree of ‘realism’ of the learner’s intercultural communicative performance. Therefore, the tasks that the learner is given and the medium with which the performance is supported play a very important role.

In the CEFcult project, we have identified several assessment situations with different degrees of directness and realism. Situations with a higher degree of directness and realism are more suitable for assessing learners’ skills and attitudes, which are harder to assess on the basis of situations in which no actual behaviour is elicited.

1. The highest degree of directness and realism can be achieved if a situation occurs in which a user can capture his real-life behaviour in a (professional) intercultural setting, for instance by capturing an intercultural meeting or conversation on video, recording an intercultural videoconference or job interview. However, such a situation is often hard to arrange, because people often find video recording too intrusive or perceive it as an intrusion on their privacy. Even if people agree to being filmed, their behaviour will often have a higher degree of ‘acting’ than when a camera is not present. Other authentic options for immediate feedback would involve face-to-face assessment (immediate or delayed) by a peer or an expert who is constantly present throughout the intercultural encounter. These situations are not effectively feasible, scalable or even desirable.
2. The second highest degree of directness and realism can be achieved by recording simulated situations and role-play. Learners are then asked to pretend to participate in an intercultural meeting, conversation or job interview, and act as if it were a real-life situation. The learners’ simulated behaviour can then be recorded, commented and analysed. These situations can be arranged when at least two people are involved in the exercise, such as in classroom settings or formal training sessions, but are more difficult to enact for individual users. Simulations are often perceived as less intrusive than real-life recordings, because they are part of a formal training and do not interfere with a real-life (business) situation. On the other hand, the degree of ‘acting’ of the learners will often be higher than in real-life situations.
3. A more indirect assessment – but still with a flavour of realism – can be performed on the basis of situations in which the learners’ intended or reported behaviour is captured. Learners are then presented with triggers from real life and asked to formulate their reaction. For instance, a video fragment of a job interview is shown and the learner is asked to react as if he were a participant in the interview. This situation can capture a learner’s intended behaviour. An other example is when a learner is asked to think back of an intercultural encounter (such as in Byram, et al., 2009) and report on how he behaved at that time. This type of situation can capture a learner’s reported behaviour, but also post-hoc emotions, reflections and interpretations. These situations can be arranged for individual users as well as groups of users.
4. The most indirect form of assessment is a situation in which a learner reports about his level of intercultural proficiency through questionnaires or fill-out forms. This type of situation is most suited for individual users, but allows for only a limited assessment of intercultural competence, because it is based solely on users’ self-reporting.

Ideally, a learner’s portfolio should have instances of several of these situations in order for an assessor to assess the breadth and depth of the learner’s intercultural communicative competence. Within the CEFcult project, a number of pilots will be performed that enact one or more of these assessment situations in the form of scenario’s and tasks (described in Chapter 5).

4 Instrumentation and Tooling for Lifelong Intercultural Communicative Competence Development

4.1 Current examples

As described above, in CEFcult we are starting from Byram's model of intercultural communicative competence (Byram 1997) in Figure 3. This model has been the basis for a number of tools for assessing intercultural competence.

The extensively described INCA project developed a framework for assessment based on Byram's model. They also created a number of assessment instrumentation for intercultural competence (the scales described above) and assessment tools as well. The tools consist of:

- questionnaires (Biographical Information and Intercultural Profile) (paper-based)
- text-based and video-based scenarios, i.e, descriptions of intercultural encounters, with related questionnaires with multiple choice and open-ended questions (paper-based and online tests)
- role plays i.e. simulations of intercultural encounters involving various role players, meant as a starting point for assessment by peers and experts of assessee behaviour (paper-based, face-to-face)

Another recently made set of tools developed for the Council of Europe by Byram, Barrett, Igrave, Jackson, & Méndez Garcia (2009) is the "Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters". This toolset further develops INCA's portfolio of intercultural competence and supplies a template for recording and evaluating intercultural encounters. Byram's most recent publication – The Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters (Byram, et al., 2009) – focuses on the user's self-analysis of specific events, so-called encounters. These encounters are meaningful instances of intercultural behaviour that a user can describe and analyse on the basis of targeted questions. Users can report on several of those instances in their 'autobiography', and thus repeatedly reflect on and improve their intercultural competence. Byram *et al.*'s autobiography thus provides an instrument for continuous self-assessment through self-reporting.

4.2 CEFcult's added value

The CEFcult project aims to provide learners the opportunity to develop their intercultural competence by providing an online social platform where they can receive feedback on their intercultural performance. On this platform, individual learners can collect evidences of their intercultural competence and upload them. Learners can then assess their own performance according to linguistic and intercultural assessment scales provided, but they can also invite others (peers and/or experts) to assess their performance. CEFcult builds on the results of the INCA toolset and approach of the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters, described above. This project also builds on the results and experiences of the WebCEF project, which developed a platform to capture oral language behaviour for assessing foreign language use. Learners receive feedback on their linguistic performance from language teachers and peers. This feedback in WebCEF takes the form of scores on the CEF scales on oral language production and optional annotations linked to the video sample.

As CEFcult provides both linguistic and intercultural scales for assessment, the feedback provided to the learner can be more comprehensive for several reasons. Firstly, intercultural competence is primarily expressed through and in linguistic skills. In interactions with cultures other than the own, communication can be hindered. Often, these obstacles are the communication tools (language, body language, etc.). Secondly, increased linguistic ability can boost intercultural competence. At the same time, intercultural competence can also be severally hindered by linguistic competence. Thirdly, because the CEFcult project builds on the WebCEF project and aims at providing a tool that allows individuals to capture and assess

(mainly) oral language production, these recorded utterances can be assessed on both the linguistic and intercultural skills. Working on linguistic skills within tasks eliciting intercultural behaviour will create an environment in which intercultural skills can be identified and assessed. Moreover, the assessment of language skills will also create the possibility to provide linguistic tools to help learners increase their intercultural communicative competence.

To elicit intercultural performance, CEFcult develops a number of scenarios/exercises that trigger users to reflect on and/or perform in intercultural contexts. These scenarios aim to construct a situation in which intercultural performance is triggered through role-play, simulation or self-reporting.

5 Scenarios for Intercultural Communicative Competence assessment

The CEFcult project will design and develop online platform for intercultural communicative competence assessment. To assess their intercultural performance, learners will be asked to perform certain tasks on this online platform.

5.1 Scenarios and tasks

The CEFcult *tasks* have been devised especially to elicit relevant intercultural behaviour, through linguistic performance. The tasks will make use of trigger texts and trigger videos that create an intercultural context.

Tasks will be organised as part of a larger scenario. A *scenario* is the description of a fictitious situation and a series of tasks for a learner, specifically created to elicit oral language behaviour from the actors involved. Scenarios are intended to elicit intercultural oral language behaviour, which can be assessed at a later stage. A task will give a single assignment to be fulfilled by the learner. For example, a scenario can be a fictitious job interview for a multinational company. It might include tasks such as presenting yourself, describing your suitability for the job, talking about extra-curricular activities, and closing the interview. This structure - scenarios consisting of smaller tasks - allows for more developed and intricate elicitation of learner performance.

Scenarios have several characteristics on form and content. Formally, scenarios can have a wide scope in use, including individual monologue, dialogue and group role-play situations. In CEFcult, these scenarios will be restricted due to practical reasons: the resulting behaviour needs to be easily captured using audio/video recording equipment. Content-wise, scenarios can elicit various situations where intercultural interactions can occur, from informal (travel, holiday, etc.) to formal contexts (workplace, business interactions, education, etc.). The learning activities can also pertain to several learning contexts, ranging from formal to informal learning. For the CEFcult scenarios, three of these contexts will be chosen.

The project consortium decided on the following template to describe the scenarios, and related tasks.

Name scenario	Description scenario	Scale	Language used	Task type	Monologue / Dialogue / Small group	Real / Simulated / Imaginary	Production	Observation / Reflection	Com
Task1									
Task2									
Task3									

Each scenario will be composed of several tasks. Each task can in its turn be defined by:

- Task type: what the learner is asked to do (describe, explain, reflect on, etc.)
- Language used (L1 or L2)
- Scales used to assess the results
- Monologue / Dialogue / Small group
- Real / Simulated / Imaginary: what the intended behaviour of the task is
- Production: is the learner asked to produce an utterance? In case of multiple subjects, which learner is asked to produce it?
- Observation / Reflection: is the learner asked to observe an intercultural interesting episode or to reflect on own intercultural experience? In case of multiple subjects, which learner is asked to observe/reflect?
- Comment: any comments relating to the task
- Rating: the ratings associated with the task

This results in three types of scenarios, depending on how the learner is asked to interact.

- The learner can be individually sat in front of computer to perform tasks: intended behaviour, actual behaviour or observations in reaction to trigger texts or videos can be captured in a video recording. Live interaction is also possible and being considered in the second stage of the project (e.g. online job interview).
- The learner is performing a task in dialogue situation with others (with actor, other learner or the assessor). The resulting dialogue is captured as a video recording and made available on the platform
- The learner performs a task as part of a group role play with others (with actors, other learners and/or assessor(s)). The role-play is captured in a video recording.

Two types of tasks can be distinguished: observation tasks and production tasks.

5.2 Setting up and organising an assessment exercise (pilot)

Apart from the context of the scenario and the specific tasks, the definition of a scenario also needs to include some guiding documents for the performing learners and the assessors. These supplementary documents will be necessary in the organisation of the pilot studies. We present these supplementary documents below.

- Scenario
The scenario refers to learning activities themselves, i.e. description of fictitious context, characters, story, and a list of tasks
- Instruction
This document is meant for the assessee explaining context, purpose, etc. of the exercise.
- Assessment guidelines
This document is intended for the assessor. It provides a briefing for the assessor in the assessment a learner's performance (which behaviour is to be expected during the tasks, what to look for, what to

pay attention to, etc.). These guidelines include the relevant assessment grid (with scales and descriptors).

- Pilot Guidelines

These documents are intended for assessor or assessment organiser and describe the purpose of the exercise from an assessor perspective and the steps to be taken to allow assesseees to carry out the tasks.

A pilot can be considered an instance of an intercultural competence learning activity. It consists of a set of documents, including pilot guidelines, assessment guidelines, instructions for the assesseees and actual scenario(s)

6 Developing scenarios for CEFcult assessment

Internal discussions within the CEFcult project consortium showed that there were several various routes to take in the development of a scenario. It was considered important that the scenarios developed during the project duration were as diverse as possible, to show the scope of the CEFcult approach and tools. To maintain some formal similarities, it was generally agreed to take into account the following guidelines, when developing scenarios.

- The scenario should be well-defined in its intercultural setting. It should be clear which intercultural meeting or event the learner is expected to consider or perform in.
- A scenario consists of a number of tasks. The tasks should be well-defined and distinct from each other. When devising tasks, it may be advisable to take into account the intended competence to be rated, to allow for unambiguous peer assessment.
- A task should be defined by task type, language used, scales used to assess the results, Monologue/Dialogue/Small group, Real/Simulated/Imaginary, Production and Observation/Reflection.
- It may also be necessary to provide clear guidelines for assessors of the scenarios, including self-assessment, peer assessment and expert assessment. It should be clear what the task intends to elicit.
- Finally, as intercultural communicative competence development is an ongoing process, scenarios can be created that fit into this process view of intercultural competence (e.g. through increasing level of intercultural subtlety in tasks and scenarios).

7 Conclusion

This report presents the approach taken to the assessment of intercultural communicative competence in the CEFcult project.

We described a assessment construct starting from Byram's model of intercultural communicative competence. For providing practically applicable assessment tooling, this model is combined with the linguistic scales of the Common European Framework of Reference and the assessment scales of intercultural competence defined in the INCA project.

It was shown how intercultural communicative competence development needs a lifelong learning approach, and thereby needs particular techniques of assessment:: (i) performance assessment; (ii) proficiency assessment; (iii) formative assessment; (iv) continuous assessment and fixed point assessment. It also requires inventive combining of several modes of assessment: (i) receiving assessment as an assessee and giving assessment as an assessor; and (ii) direct assessment vs indirect assessment.

CEFCult will deal with the assessment of intercultural communicative competence, combining intercultural assessment with language assessment in order to provide comprehensive feedback. Intercultural competence calls for ongoing formative assessment. However, providing this formative assessment is a challenge. Assessment of intercultural competence has often taken the form of self-assessment, in which learners are invited to reflect on their own experiences in multicultural contexts (as the examples discussed above).

Providing formative feedback by others (peers or experts) in a social learning context needs to involve some instrumentation that can give learners an indication of their current level of intercultural competence and also offer them some tools to improve their performance. The feedback given should not stop at identifying problematic issues, but also offer the learner the tools to improve.

The innovative aspect of CEFcult will in its vision of seeing linguistic competence as a tool to assess and improve intercultural competence assessment. Feedback on intercultural communicative competence will provide the learner with concrete steps for learning. Regarding assessment, it will build on the outcomes of the WebCEF project, where self-assessment, peer assessment and expert assessment were combined to provide a 360 degree perspective on the performance of the learner. CEFcult will go further in this, giving more control to the learner to take charge of their intercultural performance and competence.

Annex: Scenarios

Scenario 1

Scenario name: Screening interviews

Target language: English

Assignments:

Assignment n°	Assignment type	Response type	Scales used*
1 Pre-pilot	Online screening interview Flashmeeting UNESCO foreign students and Belgian trainee of sensitive questions	Oral interview. Q&A. Completing questionnaire	6 Inca scales
2 Pre-pilot	F2F simulation of a job interview on the premises Siemens	Oral interview. Q&A. Feedback from manager	6 Inca scales
3 Pre-pilot	Online simulation of a screening interview with interviewer of different culture Flashmeeting	Oral interview. Flashmeeting Q&A. Feedback from recruiters	6 Inca scales
4 Pre-pilot	Online simulation of a screening interview with professional interviewer of different culture	Oral interview. Telepresence Q&A. Feedback from recruiters	6 Inca scales
5	Production scenario CEFcult: job interview	Doing an interview, annotating and (self) assessing an Oral interview CEFcult tool	1,2,3, 4,6
6	Observation scenario CEFcult: observ. Scen.	Annotating recorded interview	1 2 3 4 6

*CEF scales: (1) Overall (2) Range (3) Accuracy (4) Fluency (5) Interaction (6) Coherence

*INCA scales: (1) Overall (2) Tolerance of ambiguity (3) Respect for otherness (4) Knowledge discovery (5) Empathy (6) Communicative awareness (7) Behavioural flexibility

Scenario 2:

Scenario name: Helsinki CEFcult Scenario. Participating in an International Summer Course for Foreign Language Teachers

Target language: English / Finnish as L2

Tasks:

Task n°	Task type	Response type	Scales used*
1 Becoming aware of some features of your own communication style in L1	High/Low Context Culture Test Self-reflection	You prepare for the summer course by reflecting in advance which features are typical of your communication style. Choose the option (Yes/somewhat/no) that best corresponds to your communication style in your first language.	Intercultural Competence tested: Awareness of own communication style
2 Becoming aware of some features of your own communication style in L2	High/Low Context Culture Test Self-reflection	You prepare for the summer course by reflecting in advance which features are typical of your communication style. Choose the option (Yes/somewhat/no) that best corresponds to your communication style in general when speaking a foreign language.	Intercultural Competence tested: Awareness of own communication style
3 Becoming aware of your own intercultural competence	Self-reflection	You prepare for the summer course by reflecting on your intercultural skills in advance. Read the options (basic, intermediate, advanced) and choose the one that best corresponds to your level.	Intercultural Competence tested: Overview of intercultural competence (INCA)
4 Getting together and talking about this and that	Dialogue / Spoken interaction Conversation task in pairs in Finnish	You have just arrived at the summer course venue in Belgium, and you come across other Finnish participants. Now, talk in Finnish about 1) your trip to Belgium, 2) the weather 3) your common expectations about the course, 4) something general about yourselves (e.g., family/friends/hobbies/studies), and 5) your first impressions of Belgium.	Communicative Competence tested: Sociolinguistic appropriateness (CEFR) – not available at the Tool > Overall CEFR scale Intercultural Competence tested: Knowledge discovery (INCA)
5 Getting to know FL education in different countries	Dialogue / Spoken interaction Conversation task in pairs in English	In the course you discuss FL education in different countries <u>in English</u> . You are a teacher of French and your colleague is a teacher	Communicative Competence tested: Sociolinguistic appropriateness (CEFR) – not available at the Tool > Overall CEFR scale

		of Spanish/German. Compare - 1) the goals of - 2) the methods of and - 3) your own opinionsof FL education in your target language country.	Intercultural Competence tested: Knowledge discovery (INCA)
6 Discussing the communication styles in different countries	Dialogue / Spoken interaction Conversation task in pairs in English	You have spent a couple of weeks in the course and have taken part in lectures, work shops, social events, trips and parties. On these occasions, you have become aware of the different communication styles your colleagues from other countries have. One day you are talking about your experiences of different communication styles. You try to understand different communication styles and misunderstandings due to them. You are a teacher of French and your colleague is a teacher of Spanish/German. Now, talk in English with you colleague about your experiences and views of 1) silent listeners and big talkers, 2) direct and indirect speech, 3) non-verbal communication (body language), 4) tolerance for pauses, 5) turn-taking and 6) small talk in intercultural communication contexts.	Communicative Competence tested: Spoken interaction / Conversation (CEFR) Intercultural Competence tested: Communicative awareness (INCA)

**CEF scales: (1) Overall (2) Range (3) Accuracy (4) Fluency (5) Interaction (6) Coherence (7) others (please specify)*

**INCA scales: (1) Overall (2) Tolerance of ambiguity (3) Respect for otherness (4) Knowledge discovery (5) Empathy (6) Communicative awareness (7) Behavioral flexibility*

Scenario 3

Scenario name: "Working in a multinational team in Europe".

Target language: English, Italian.

Tasks:

Task n°	Task type	Response type	Scales used*
0 Introduction	Text providing the overall context.	No response.	
1	Text providing	Oral response to be	CEF: Oral production. (1)

‘Finding information’	the specific context + prompt containing an outline of points to develop.	video- or audio-recorded.	Overall (2) Range (3) Accuracy (4) Fluency (6) Coherence. Not possible to validate with the tool: Sustained monologue. Describing experience (4.4.1). INCA: Knowledge (Knowledge discovery).
2 ‘Meetings’	Text providing the specific context + prompt requiring the adoption of a personal and cultural point of view.	Oral response to be video- or audio-recorded.	CEF: Oral production. (1) Overall (2) Range (3) Accuracy (4) Fluency (6) Coherence. Not possible to validate with the tool: Sustained monologue. Putting a case (4.4.1). INCA: Knowledge (Empathy).
3 ‘Moderation and mediation’	Text providing the specific context + prompt requiring a role-play.	Oral response to be video- or audio-recorded.	CEF: Oral production. (1) Overall (2) Range (3) Accuracy (4) Fluency (6) Coherence. Not possible to validate with the tool: Sustained monologue. Putting a case (4.4.1) + Sociolinguistic competence. Sociolinguistic appropriateness (5.2.2). INCA: Openness (Respect for Otherness).
4 ‘Understanding each other’	Text providing the specific context + prompt requiring reflection and expression of feelings.	Oral response to be video- or audio-recorded.	CEF: Oral production. (1) Overall (2) Range (3) Accuracy (4) Fluency (6) Coherence. Not possible to validate with the tool: Sustained monologue. Describing experience (4.4.1). INCA: Openness (Tolerance of Ambiguity).
5 ‘Dress/address code’	Text providing the specific context to reflect upon on basis of work experience + prompt requiring a role-play.	Oral response to be video- or audio-recorded.	CEF: Oral production. (1) Overall (2) Range (3) Accuracy (4) Fluency (6) Coherence. Not possible to validate with the tool: Pragmatic competence. Discourse competence (thematic development) (5.2.3.1).

			INCA: Adaptability (Behavioural Flexibility).
6 'Explaining a procedure'	Text providing the specific context + video clip illustrating interaction between English speaker and her foreign colleague in the described context + prompt requiring reflection and reaction to the video clip situation, answering to 4 questions + prompt requiring a role-play.	Oral response to be video- or audio-recorded.	CEF: Oral production. (1) Overall (2) Range (3) Accuracy (4) Fluency (6) Coherence. Not possible to validate with the tool: Pragmatic competence. Discourse competence (flexibility) (5.2.3.1). Interaction. Information exchange (4.4.3). INCA: Adaptability (Communicative awareness).

**CEF scales: (1) Overall (2) Range (3) Accuracy (4) Fluency (5) Interaction (6) Coherence (7) others (please specify)*

**INCA scales: (1) Overall (2) Tolerance of ambiguity (3) Respect for otherness (4) Knowledge discovery (5) Empathy (6) Communicative awareness (7) Behavioral flexibility*

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