

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages p. 58 to p. 82

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Chapter 4 Language use and language user/learner in 4.1  
« Communicative language activities and strategies »

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Oral Production and Spoken Interaction

<b>4.4.1.1 - Oral Production</b>	<b>p.2</b>	<b>4.4.3.1 - Spoken Interaction</b>	<b>p.6</b>
OVERALL ORAL PRODUCTION	p.3	OVERALL SPOKEN INTERACTION	p.7
SUSTAINED MONOLOGUE: Describing experience	p.4	UNDERSTANDING A NATIVE SPEAKER INTERLOCUTOR	p.8
ADDRESSING AUDIENCES	p.5	CONVERSATION	p.9
		INFORMAL DISCUSSION (WITH FRIENDS)	p.10
		<i>FORMAL DISCUSSION AND MEETINGS</i>	p.11
		INFORMATION EXCHANGE	p.12
		<i>GOAL-ORIENTED CO-OPERATION</i> (e.g. Repairing a car, discussing a document, organising an event)	p.13
		INTERVIEWING AND BEING INTERVIEWED	p.14

4.4.1.1 In **oral production (speaking)** activities the language user produces an oral text which is received by an audience of one or more listeners. Examples of speaking activities include:

- public address (information, instructions, etc.)
- addressing audiences (speeches at public meetings, university lectures, sermons, entertainment, sports commentaries, sales presentations, etc.).

They may involve, for example:

- reading a written text aloud;
- speaking from notes, or from a written text or visual aids (diagrams, pictures, charts, etc.);
- acting out a rehearsed role;
- speaking spontaneously;
- singing.

Illustrative scales are provided for:

- Overall spoken production;
- Sustained monologue: describing experience;
- Sustained monologue: putting a case (e.g. in debate);
- Public announcements;
- Addressing audiences.

## **OVERALL ORAL PRODUCTION**

### **C2**

*Can produce clear, smoothly flowing well-structured speech with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.*

### **C1**

*Can give clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on complex subjects, integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.*

*Can give clear, systematically developed descriptions and presentations, with appropriate highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail.*

### **B2**

*Can give clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on a wide range of subjects related to his/her field of interest, expanding and supporting ideas with subsidiary points and relevant examples.*

### **B1**

*Can reasonably fluently sustain a straightforward description of one of a variety of subjects within his/her field of interest, presenting it as a linear sequence of points.*

### **A2**

*Can give a simple description or presentation of people, living or working conditions, daily routines, likes/dislikes, etc. as a short series of simple phrases and sentences linked into a list.*

### **A1**

*Can produce simple mainly isolated phrases about people and places.*

**SUSTAINED MONOLOGUE: Describing experience**

**C2** *Can give clear, smoothly flowing, elaborate and often memorable descriptions.*

**C1**

*Can give clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects.*

*Can give elaborate descriptions and narratives, integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.*

**B2** *Can give clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to his/her field of interest.*

*Can give straightforward descriptions on a variety of familiar subjects within his/her field of interest.*

*Can reasonably fluently relate a straightforward narrative or description as a linear sequence of points.*

*Can give detailed accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions.*

**B1** *Can relate details of unpredictable occurrences, e.g. an accident.*

*Can relate the plot of a book or film and describe his/her reactions.*

*Can describe dreams, hopes and ambitions.*

*Can describe events, real or imagined.*

*Can narrate a story.*

*Can tell a story or describe something in a simple list of points. Can describe everyday aspects of his/her environment e.g. people, places, a job or study experience.*

*Can give short, basic descriptions of events and activities.*

*Can describe plans and arrangements, habits and routines, past activities and personal experiences.*

**A2**

*Can use simple descriptive language to make brief statements about and compare objects and possessions.*

*Can explain what he/she likes or dislikes about something.*

*Can describe his/her family, living conditions, educational background, present or most recent job.*

*Can describe people, places and possessions in simple terms.*

**A1**

*Can describe him/herself, what he/she does and where he/she lives.*

**SUSTAINED MONOLOGUE: Putting a case (e.g. in a debate)**

**C2** *No descriptor available*

**C1** *No descriptor available*

*Can develop an argument systematically with appropriate highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail.*

**B2** *Can develop a clear argument, expanding and supporting his/her points of view at some length with subsidiary points and relevant examples.*

*Can construct a chain of reasoned argument:*

*Can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.*

*Can develop an argument well enough to be followed without difficulty most of the time.*

**B1**

*Can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions, plans and actions.*

**A2** *No descriptor available*

**A1** *No descriptor available*

## **ADDRESSING AUDIENCES**

### **C2**

*Can present a complex topic confidently and articulately to an audience unfamiliar with it, structuring and adapting the talk flexibly to meet the audience's needs.*

*Can handle difficult and even hostile questioning.*

### **C1**

*Can give a clear, well-structured presentation of a complex subject, expanding and supporting points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples.*

*Can handle interjections well, responding spontaneously and almost effortlessly.*

*Can give a clear, systematically developed presentation, with highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail.*

*Can depart spontaneously from a prepared text and follow up interesting points raised by members of the audience, often showing remarkable fluency and ease of expression.*

### **B2**

*Can give a clear, prepared presentation, giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view and giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.*

*Can take a series of follow up questions with a degree of fluency and spontaneity which poses no strain for either him/herself or the audience.*

### **B1**

*Can give a prepared straightforward presentation on a familiar topic within his/her field which is clear enough to be followed without difficulty most of the time, and in which the main points are explained with reasonable precision.*

*Can take follow up questions, but may have to ask for repetition if the speech was rapid.*

*Can give a short, rehearsed presentation on a topic pertinent to his/her everyday life, briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions, plans and actions.*

*Can cope with a limited number of straightforward follow up questions.*

### **A2**

*Can give a short, rehearsed, basic presentation on a familiar subject.*

*Can answer straightforward follow up questions if he/she can ask for repetition and if some help with the formulation of his/her reply is possible.*

**A1** *Can read a very short, rehearsed statement – e.g. to introduce a speaker, propose a toast.*

#### **4.4.3.1 Spoken interaction**

In interactive activities the language user acts alternately as speaker and listener with one or more interlocutors so as to construct conjointly, through the negotiation of meaning following the co-operative principle, conversational discourse.

Reception and production strategies are employed constantly during interaction.

There are also classes of cognitive and collaborative strategies (also called discourse strategies and co-operation strategies) concerned with managing co-operation and interaction such as turntaking and turngiving, framing the issue and establishing a line of approach, proposing and evaluating solutions, recapping and summarising the point reached, and mediating in a conflict.

Examples of interactive activities include:

- transactions
- casual conversation
- informal discussion
- formal discussion
- debate
- interview
- negotiation
- co-planning
- practical goal-oriented co-operation

Illustrative scales are provided for:

- Overall spoken interaction
- Understanding a native speaker interlocutor
- Conversation
- Informal discussion
- Formal discussion and meetings
- Goal-oriented co-operation
- Transactions to obtain goods and services
- Information exchange
- Interviewing and being interviewed

## **OVERALL SPOKEN INTERACTION**

### **C2**

*Has a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms with awareness of connotative levels of meaning. Can convey finer shades of meaning precisely by using, with reasonable accuracy, a wide range of modification devices. Can backtrack and restructure around a difficulty so smoothly the interlocutor is hardly aware of it.*

### **C1**

*Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Has a good command of a broad lexical repertoire allowing gaps to be readily overcome with circumlocutions. There is little obvious searching for expressions or avoidance strategies; only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language.*

*Can use the language fluently, accurately and effectively on a wide range of general, academic, vocational or leisure topics, marking clearly the relationships between ideas. Can communicate spontaneously with good grammatical control without much sign of having to restrict what he/she wants to say, adopting a level of formality appropriate to the circumstances.*

### **B2**

*Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction, and sustained relationships with native speakers quite possible without imposing strain on either party. Can highlight the personal significance of events and experiences, account for and sustain views clearly by providing relevant explanations and arguments.*

*Can communicate with some confidence on familiar routine and non-routine matters related to his/her interests and professional field. Can exchange, check and confirm information, deal with less routine situations and explain why something is a problem. Can express thoughts on more abstract, cultural topics such as films, books, music etc.*

### **B1**

*Can exploit a wide range of simple language to deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling. Can enter unprepared into conversation on familiar topics, express personal opinions and exchange information on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).*

*Can interact with reasonable ease in structured situations and short conversations, provided the other person helps if necessary. Can manage simple, routine exchanges without undue effort; can ask and answer questions and exchange ideas and information on familiar topics in predictable everyday*

### **A2 situations.**

*Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters to do with work and free time. Can handle very short social exchanges but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own accord.*

### **A1**

*Can interact in a simple way but communication is totally dependent on repetition at a slower rate of speech, rephrasing and repair. Can ask and answer simple questions, initiate and respond to simple statements in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.*

## **UNDERSTANDING A NATIVE SPEAKER INTERLOCUTOR**

### **C2**

*Can understand any native speaker interlocutor, even on abstract and complex topics of a specialist nature beyond his/her own field, given an opportunity to adjust to a non-standard accent or dialect.*

### **C1**

*Can understand in detail speech on abstract and complex topics of a specialist nature beyond his/her own field, though he/she may need to confirm occasional details, especially if the accent is unfamiliar.*

### **B2**

*Can understand in detail what is said to him/her in the standard spoken language even in a noisy environment.*

### **B1**

*Can follow clearly articulated speech directed at him/her in everyday conversation, though will sometimes have to ask for repetition of particular words and phrases.*

*Can understand enough to manage simple, routine exchanges without undue effort.*

### **A2**

*Can generally understand clear, standard speech on familiar matters directed at him/her, provided he/she can ask for repetition or reformulation from time to time.*

*Can understand what is said clearly, slowly and directly to him/her in simple everyday conversation; can be made to understand, if the speaker can take the trouble.*

*Can understand everyday expressions aimed at the satisfaction of simple needs of a concrete type, delivered directly to him/her in clear, slow and repeated speech by a sympathetic speaker.*

### **A1**

*Can understand questions and instructions addressed carefully and slowly to him/her and follow short, simple directions.*



## **CONVERSATION**

**C2** *Can converse comfortably and appropriately, unhampered by any linguistic limitations in conducting a full social and personal life.*

### **C1**

*Can use language flexibly and effectively for social purposes, including emotional, allusive and joking usage.*

*Can engage in extended conversation on most general topics in a clearly participatory fashion, even in a noisy environment.*

**B2** *Can sustain relationships with native speakers without unintentionally amusing or irritating them or requiring them to behave other than they would with a native speaker.*

*Can convey degrees of emotion and highlight the personal significance of events and experiences.*

*Can enter unprepared into conversations on familiar topics.*

*Can follow clearly articulated speech directed at him/her in everyday conversation, though will sometimes have to ask for repetition of particular words and phrases.*

### **B1**

*Can maintain a conversation or discussion but may sometimes be difficult to follow when trying to say exactly what he/she would like to.*

*Can express and respond to feelings such as surprise, happiness, sadness, interest and indifference.*

*Can establish social contact: greetings and farewells; introductions; giving thanks.*

*Can generally understand clear, standard speech on familiar matters directed at him/her, provided he/she can ask for repetition or reformulation from time to time.*

*Can participate in short conversations in routine contexts on topics of interest.*

*Can express how he/she feels in simple terms, and express thanks.*

### **A2**

*Can handle very short social exchanges but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own accord, though he/she can be made to understand if the speaker will take the trouble.*

*Can use simple everyday polite forms of greeting and address.*

*Can make and respond to invitations, suggestions and apologies.*

*Can say what he/she likes and dislikes.*

*Can make an introduction and use basic greeting and leave-taking expressions.*

### **A1**

*Can ask how people are and react to news.*

*Can understand everyday expressions aimed at the satisfaction of simple needs of a concrete type, delivered directly to him/her in clear, slow and repeated speech by a sympathetic speaker.*

## **INFORMAL DISCUSSION (WITH FRIENDS)**

**C2 As C1**

**C1**

*Can easily follow and contribute to complex interactions between third parties in group discussion even on abstract, complex unfamiliar topics.*

*Can keep up with an animated discussion between native speakers.*

*Can express his/her ideas and opinions with precision, and present and respond to complex lines of argument convincingly.*

*Can take an active part in informal discussion in familiar contexts, commenting, putting point of view clearly, evaluating alternative proposals and making and responding **B2** esponding to hypotheses.*

*Can with some effort catch much of what is said around him/her in discussion, but may find it difficult to participate effectively in discussion with several native speakers who do not modify their language in any way.*

*Can account for and sustain his/her opinions in discussion by providing relevant explanations, arguments and comments.*

*Can follow much of what is said around him/her on general topics provided interlocutors avoid very idiomatic usage and articulate clearly.*

*Can express his/her thoughts about abstract or cultural topics such as music, films. Can explain why something is a problem.*

*Can give brief comments on the views of others.*

*Can compare and contrast alternatives, discussing what to do, where to go, who or which to choose, etc.*

**B1**

*Can generally follow the main points in an informal discussion with friends provided speech is clearly articulated in standard dialect.*

*Can give or seek personal views and opinions in discussing topics of interest.*

*Can make his/her opinions and reactions understood as regards solutions to problems or practical questions of where to go, what to do, how to organise an event (e.g. an outing).*

*Can express belief, opinion, agreement and disagreement politely.*

*Can generally identify the topic of discussion around him/her when it is conducted slowly and clearly.*

*Can discuss what to do in the evening, at the weekend.*

**A2**

*Can make and respond to suggestions.*

*Can agree and disagree with others.*

*Can discuss everyday practical issues in a simple way when addressed clearly, slowly and directly.*

*Can discuss what to do, where to go and make arrangements to meet.*

**A1** No descriptors available

## **FORMAL DISCUSSION AND MEETINGS**

### **C2**

*Can hold his/her own in formal discussion of complex issues, putting an articulate and persuasive argument, at no disadvantage to native speakers.*

*Can easily keep up with the debate, even on abstract, complex unfamiliar topics.*

**C1** *Can argue a formal position convincingly, responding to questions and comments and answering complex lines of counter argument fluently, spontaneously and appropriately.*

*Can keep up with an animated discussion, identifying accurately arguments supporting and opposing points of view.*

*Can express his/her ideas and opinions with precision, present and respond to complex lines of argument convincingly.*

### **B2**

*Can participate actively in routine and non-routine formal discussion.*

*Can follow the discussion on matters related to his/her field, understand in detail the points given prominence by the speaker.*

*Can contribute, account for and sustain his/her opinion, evaluate alternative proposals and make and respond to hypotheses.*

*Can follow much of what is said that is related to his/her field, provided interlocutors avoid very idiomatic usage and articulate clearly.*

*Can put over a point of view clearly, but has difficulty engaging in debate.*

### **B1**

*Can take part in routine formal discussion of familiar subjects which is conducted in clearly articulated speech in the standard dialect and which involves the exchange of factual information, receiving instructions or the discussion of solutions to practical problems.*

*Can generally follow changes of topic in formal discussion related to his/her field which is conducted slowly and clearly.*

### **A2**

*Can exchange relevant information and give his/her opinion on practical problems when asked directly, provided he/she receives some help with formulation and can ask for repetition of key points if necessary.*

*Can say what he/she thinks about things when addressed directly in a formal meeting, provided he/she can ask for repetition of key points if necessary.*

**A1** *No descriptor available*

## **GOAL-ORIENTED CO-OPERATION**

**(e.g. Repairing a car, discussing a document, organising an event)**

**C2 As B2**

**C1 As B2**

*Can understand detailed instructions reliably.*

**B2**

*Can help along the progress of the work by inviting others to join in, say what they think, etc.*

*Can outline an issue or a problem clearly, speculating about causes or consequences, and weighing advantages and disadvantages of different approaches.*

*Can follow what is said, though he/she may occasionally have to ask for repetition or clarification if the other people's talk is rapid or extended.*

*Can explain why something is a problem, discuss what to do next, compare and contrast alternatives.*

*Can give brief comments on the views of others.*

**B1**

*Can generally follow what is said and, when necessary, can repeat back part of what someone has said to confirm mutual understanding.*

*Can make his/her opinions and reactions understood as regards possible solutions or the question of what to do next, giving brief reasons and explanations.*

*Can invite others to give their views on how to proceed.*

*Can understand enough to manage simple, routine tasks without undue effort, asking very simply for repetition when he/she does not understand.*

*Can discuss what to do next, making and responding to suggestions, asking for and giving directions.*

**A2**

*Can indicate when he/she is following and can be made to understand what is necessary, if the speaker takes the trouble.*

*Can communicate in simple and routine tasks using simple phrases to ask for and provide things, to get simple information and to discuss what to do next.*

**A1**

*Can understand questions and instructions addressed carefully and slowly to him/her and follow short, simple directions.*

*Can ask people for things, and give people things.*

## **INFORMATION EXCHANGE**

**C2 As B2**

**C1 As B2**

*Can understand and exchange complex information and advice on the full range of matters related to his/her occupational role.*

**B2**

*Can pass on detailed information reliably.*

*Can give a clear, detailed description of how to carry out a procedure.*

*Can synthesise and report information and arguments from a number of sources.*

*Can exchange, check and confirm accumulated factual information on familiar routine and non-routine matters within his/her field with some confidence.*

*Can describe how to do something, giving detailed instructions.*

**B1**

*Can summarise and give his or her opinion about a short story, article, talk, discussion, interview, or documentary and answer further questions of detail.*

*Can find out and pass on straightforward factual information.*

*Can ask for and follow detailed directions.*

*Can obtain more detailed information.*

*Can understand enough to manage simple, routine exchanges without undue effort.*

*Can deal with practical everyday demands: finding out and passing on straightforward factual information.*

*Can ask and answer questions about habits and routines.*

*Can ask and answer questions about pastimes and past activities.*

**A2** *Can give and follow simple directions and instructions, e.g. explain how to get somewhere.*

*Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information.*

*Can exchange limited information on familiar and routine operational matters.*

*Can ask and answer questions about what they do at work and in free time.*

*Can ask for and give directions referring to a map or plan.*

*Can ask for and provide personal information.*

*Can understand questions and instructions addressed carefully and slowly to him/her and follow short, simple directions.*

**A1**

*Can ask and answer simple questions, initiate and respond to simple statements in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.*

*Can ask and answer questions about themselves and other people, where they live, people they know, things they have.*

*Can indicate time by such phrases as next week, last Friday, in November, three o'clock.*

## **INTERVIEWING AND BEING INTERVIEWED**

### **C2**

*Can keep up his/her side of the dialogue extremely well, structuring the talk and interacting authoritatively with complete fluency as interviewer or interviewee, at no disadvantage to a native speaker.*

### **C1**

*Can participate fully in an interview, as either interviewer or interviewee, expanding and developing the point being discussed fluently without any support, and handling interjections well.*

*Can carry out an effective, fluent interview, departing spontaneously from prepared questions, following up and probing interesting replies.*

### **B2**

*Can take initiatives in an interview, expand and develop ideas with little help or prodding from an interviewer.*

*Can provide concrete information required in an interview/consultation (e.g. describe symptoms to a doctor) but does so with limited precision.*

*Can carry out a prepared interview, checking and confirming information, though he/she may occasionally have to ask for repetition if the other person's response is rapid or extended.*

### **B1**

*Can take some initiatives in an interview/consultation (e.g. to bring up a new subject) but is very dependent on interviewer in the interaction.*

*Can use a prepared questionnaire to carry out a structured interview, with some spontaneous follow up questions.*

### **A2**

*Can make him/herself understood in an interview and communicate ideas and information on familiar topics, provided he/she can ask for clarification occasionally, and is given some help to express what he/she wants to.*

*Can answer simple questions and respond to simple statements in an interview.*

### **A1**

*Can reply in an interview to simple direct questions spoken very slowly and clearly in direct nonidiomatic speech about personal details.*