



CEFR LEVELS AND THEIR COMMUNICATIVE DESCRIPTORS

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Abstract: The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is an internationally recognized system used to describe language proficiency. This article examines the six CEFR levels (A1–C2) and their communicative descriptors, focusing on learners' ability to use language in real-life situations. The study outlines how each level reflects a gradual development of communicative competence, from basic interaction to advanced fluency. The paper also highlights the importance of CEFR in language teaching, assessment, and curriculum design.

Keywords: CEFR, language proficiency, communicative competence, descriptors, language learning, assessment

In the field of language education, it is essential to have a clear and standardized way to measure learners' abilities. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, developed by the Council of Europe, provides such a system. It divides language proficiency into six levels: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, and C2. These levels are widely used by educators, institutions, and testing organizations to assess and describe language skills. This article focuses on the communicative descriptors associated with each level and explains how they reflect learners' ability to function in real-life communication.

Overview of CEFR levels; the CEFR categorizes learners into three broad groups:

- **Basic User** (A1, A2)
- **Independent User** (B1, B2)
- **Proficient User** (C1, C2)

Each level describes what learners can do in four key skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

A1 Level (Beginner): At the A1 level, learners can understand and use basic expressions related to everyday needs. Communication is very limited and depends on the cooperation of the interlocutor.

Communicative descriptors:

- Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions
- Can introduce themselves and ask simple personal questions





- Can interact in a simple way if the other person speaks slowly and clearly

A2 Level (Elementary): At this level, learners can communicate in routine situations that require a simple exchange of information.

Communicative descriptors:

- Can understand frequently used expressions related to everyday topics
- Can communicate in simple and direct exchanges
- Can describe their background and immediate environment

B1 Level (Intermediate): Learners at B1 can deal with most situations likely to arise while traveling. They can produce simple connected text and express opinions.

Communicative descriptors:

- Can understand the main points of clear standard input
- Can describe experiences, events, and plans
- Can briefly explain opinions and give reasons

B2 Level (Upper-Intermediate): At B2, learners can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity. They can understand more complex texts and participate actively in discussions.

Communicative descriptors:

- Can understand the main ideas of complex texts
- Can interact with native speakers without strain
- Can produce clear, detailed texts on various subjects

C1 Level (Advanced): C1 learners have effective operational proficiency. They can use language flexibly in academic, professional, and social contexts.

Communicative descriptors:

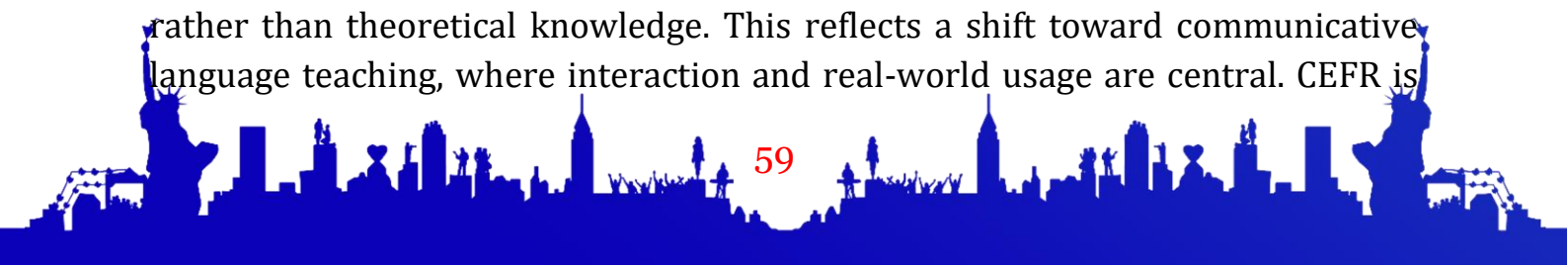
- Can understand demanding and longer texts
- Can express ideas fluently without searching for expressions
- Can use language effectively for professional purposes

C2 Level (Proficiency): C2 represents the highest level of language proficiency. Learners can understand virtually everything and express themselves precisely.

Communicative descriptors:

- Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read
- Can summarize information from different sources
- Can express themselves spontaneously with a high degree of accuracy

The communicative descriptors in CEFR emphasize practical language use rather than theoretical knowledge. This reflects a shift toward communicative language teaching, where interaction and real-world usage are central. CEFR is





widely used in designing language courses, developing textbooks, and creating assessment tools. It helps ensure consistency and transparency in evaluating language proficiency across different contexts and countries.

Conclusion, the CEFR framework provides a comprehensive and practical approach to understanding language proficiency. Its communicative descriptors allow learners and educators to focus on real-life communication skills. By progressing through the CEFR levels, learners gradually develop from basic users to proficient speakers capable of effective communication in diverse situations.

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