

Profiling teachers' foreign language competences

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- <http://www.phsg.ch/web/forschung/institut-fuer-fachdidaktik-sprachen/projekte/uebersicht-projekte/berufsspezifische-sprachkompetenzprofile-fuer-lehrpersonen-fuer-fremdsprachen.aspx>

1. Where does the need to profile teachers' language competences come from?
2. What are the profession-specific language competence profiles for language teachers?
3. How can we model CEFR-inspired competence levels for students' and teachers' self-evaluation?

- In Switzerland, the language competence requirements for foreign language teachers have been defined by simply distributing CEFR levels to educational ones:

- Leaving certificate (Matura): B2
- Primary: C1
- Lower secondary: C2
- Upper secondary: ?



- The system seems coherent, but is difficult to implement
- More seriously, there is a lack of coherence between the policy requirements on the one hand, and the real-life needs of professional practise on the other

Loder Büchel (2014: 189):

Empirical study of Swiss primary school teachers, their test scores (CAE etc.) and their learners' competences

“the language skills of the teacher are not the most important part of effective teaching and could even be detrimental at times”

Loder Büchel, Laura. 2015 Association between young learners' English language performance and teacher proficiency and experience with English. Dissertation UNIFR. <http://doc.rero.ch/record/234689>

„they [high currency tests] are likely to **underrepresent the teacher proficiency construct**. Furthermore, if used **on their own**, rather than in conjunction with more teacher-specific measures, they are likely to have **negative washbacks on the kinds of language teaching and learning** undertaken in preparation for performance in a classroom context.“

(Elder & Kim 2014: 465; emphasis added)

Elder, Cathie and Sun Hee Ok Kim. 2014. „Assessing Teachers' Language Proficiency“. *The Companion to Language Assessment, Vol 1*. Ed. Antony John Kunnan. Malden MA/Oxford: Wiley Blackwell. 454-470.

“It is really important to emphasise that **the CEFR is an instrument to promote profiling and not levelling**. (....) **All such standards** – e.g. to study at university in the language, to teach mathematics in the language, to apply for citizenship – are **fairer and more effective** when they are based on an **appropriate needs profile rather than a blanket ,level‘**. This is perhaps the CEFR’s main message.” (North 2014: 13; emphasis added).

North, Brian. 2014. *The CEFR in Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- **Partners**

- Institut für Fachdidaktik Sprachen (IFDS), **PH St.Gallen**
- Scuola universitaria professionale della Svizzera italiana (**SUPSI**)
- Haute école pédagogique du canton de Vaud (**HEP VD**)
- Université de Lausanne, Centre de langues (**UNIL**)
- Universität Freiburg (Main Consulting)
- Swiss conference of cantonal ministers of education (**EDK**)



- **Commissioned by / support**

- Swiss Federal Office of Culture (2010-2017)







Needs analysis (c.f. Long 2005)

- Literature review (CoE / ECML publications, curricula (mainly Swiss), manuals)
- Field studies (classroom research)
- Consultation of *insiders* (language teachers) and *domain experts* (teacher educators)
- Consultation of applied linguists, methodologists, specialists for plurilingualism and interculturality



Language competence profiles: Areas of activity & communicative skills

- Which **language competences** do (future) **foreign language teachers** require in order to plan effective lessons?
- **Profession-related language competence profiles:** List of linguistic activities
 - **5 areas of activity**
 - Area of activity 1: Preparing lessons
 - Area of activity 2: Conducting lessons
 - Area of activity 3: Assessing, giving feedback and advising
 - Area of activity 4: Establishing external contacts
 - Area of activity 5: Learning and further training
 - **6 communicative skills**

 Reading	 Listening	 Writing	 Spoken production	 Spoken interaction	 Learning strategies and language awareness
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- Based on **current didactic approaches**, e.g. didactics of multilingualism, content- & task-based learning, bilingual subject teaching)
- Cover **linguistic and intercultural aspects** as well as **learning and communication strategies**
- Include separate profiles for primary and secondary levels with multiple overlaps

Overview of areas of activity & communicative skills

Area of activity 1 Preparing lessons	Area of activity 2 Conducting lessons	Area of activity 3 Assessing, giving feedback and advising	Area of activity 4 Establishing external contacts	Area of activity 5 Learning and further training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile language- & content-based references • Design learning materials • Formulate written instructions and questions • Collect information and compose messages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the lesson • Design a linguistically appropriate lesson • Raise language awareness • Promote linguistic activities (listening, reading, speaking, writing) • Raise/expand awareness of interculturality • Promote autonomous learning • Teach school subjects in the target language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess linguistic & cultural competences • Provide feedback and advice • Provide instructions for self- & peer-assessment • Provide information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan & supervise authentic communicative situations • Organise events in the target language region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ resources for further learning • Actively participate in courses and events • Raise awareness of one's own language learning process

Kuster, W., Klee, P., Egli Cuenat, M., Roderer, T., Forster-Vosicki, B., Zappatore, D., Kappler, D., Stoks, G., Lenz, P. (2014). Berufsspezifisches Sprachkompetenzprofil für Fremdsprachenlehrpersonen der Primarstufe / der Sekundarstufe I.

- **Communication-oriented linguistic tasks** relevant to teachers of foreign languages
- **“can do” descriptors** complemented with sample tasks

Example 1: speaking (production), area of activity 2: **conducting lessons**, lower secondary level

2.12 *In the target language, the teacher is able to ...*



give oral instructions regarding the organisation of a lesson or task.

- a Instruct learners to get ready, use or put away specific school material (e.g. pencils, crayons, pens).
- b Give precise instructions on how learning material (language cards, games, tables, etc.) is to be used.
- c Tell learners to form pairs or mixed groups (by gender, ability, interest, etc.).

Example 3: listening, area of activity 5 – **Learning and further training**

5.4 *In the target language, the teacher is able to ...*



understand a specialist talk on the learning and teaching of languages.

- a Understand the contents of a lecture on learning and teaching a foreign language well enough to make notes that are also of use to others.
- b Understand a radio programme on the learning and teaching of a foreign language.

Language competence profiles: Target audience and use

- Target audience:
 - **Teachers** in education and further training
 - **Foreign language teachers**
 - **Curriculum developers**
- Use:
 - **Language course design** with a practical orientation
 - **Practice-oriented self-assessment** for further training of future teachers
 - **Determination of linguistic objectives** in the basic and further training of teachers with a clear focus on specific practical demands
 - **Certification** of profession-specific language competences for teachers (e.g. in combination with international language diploma)



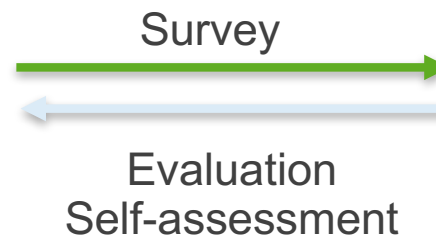
Online platform: Three levels

Administrators
(Provide access & contents)

Link: <http://v2ftp.inf.educa.ch/>



Teacher trainers / managers
(e.g. Create & distribute questionnaires)



Respondents
(Self-assessment: direct access or invitation)

Self-assessment of profession-related language competences

- **Goal: Online-tool** for self-assessment
- Given: **Linguistic tasks & examples** (competence profiles)
- Required: Scale for self-assessment
 - Should be more precise and reliable than current «dummy-scale»

○ I cannot do this.	○ I can do this with considerable effort.	○ I can do this rather well.	○ I can do this effortlessly.
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- We need: comprehensible **self-assessment descriptors** on various levels that describe the level of performance for a given **linguistic task**
- Self-assessment **descriptors** include various linguistic **components** (e.g. speaking: fluency, accuracy, pronunciation,...)

Scale for self-assessment of profession-related language competencies? - Scaling survey!

- Goal: **Self-assessment scale** tailored to the realities of prospective foreign language teachers
- Development of the **scale**: combination of top-down and bottom-up processes
- Language teaching experts develop self-assessment **descriptors** for **components** of linguistic competences
 - Wording based various documents (e.g. CEFR components)
- Survey: Participants use these **descriptors** to indicate their level of performance for several **linguistic tasks** (self-assessments)
- Based on the results of the survey, the **descriptors** can be tailored to the self-assessments of the participants.

Development of the self-assessment scale

Scaling survey: Overview

- Participants: 220 teachers and students
 - Different levels of foreign language competence
 - Different language regions
- Self assessment in 16 **linguistic tasks**:
 - In all **areas of activity** and for all categories of **communicative skills** (reading, spoken interaction, ...)
 - 2 to 9 self assessments for each **linguistic task** (relevant components)

Umfrage "berufsspezifische Sprachkompetenzen" für die Stufe Sek 1

Um Ihre Antworten möglichst differenziert auswerten zu können, bitten wir Sie um einige Angaben zu Ihrer Person:

Geschlecht:

weiblich männlich

Alter in Jahren:

18 65

Ich bin mit dieser/diesen Sprache(n) aufgewachsen (Muttersprache/Zweisprachigkeit):

- Deutsch
- Französisch
- Italienisch
- Rätoromanisch
- Englisch

Questionnaire "Profil de compétences professionnelles" pour l'enseignement dans secondaire I

Afin d'exploiter au mieux vos réponses, veuillez renseigner les indications demandées:

Vous êtes:

une femme un homme

Votre âge:

18 65


J'ai grandi dans la/les langue(s) suivante(s) (langue maternelle / plurilingue):

- allemand
- français
- italien
- rhéto-roman
- anglais

Development of the self-assessment scale

Example: self-assessment

- Example of a self assessment: (AA 2: Conducting lessons):

 2.23 *In the target language, I am able to ... react appropriately to questions and other contributions by learners.*

Example


At the beginning of a lesson about leisure activities, I offer the pupils an overview of the lesson: what the topic is, why we treat, what the learning aims are and how we will proceed.

- Relevant linguistic components
 - Spontaneity
 - Fluency
 - Vocabulary
 - Accuracy
 - Pronunciation
 - Cohesion and coherence
 - Interaction competence
 - Appropriateness for learners
 - ...

Development of the self-assessment scale

Example: self-assessment

- Example of a self assessment: (AA 2: Conducting lessons):

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Example

At the beginning of a lesson about leisure activities, I offer the pupils an overview of the lesson: what the topic is, why we treat, what the learning aims are and how we will proceed.

- Self-assessment: (e.g. spontaneity)

I cannot (yet) do this

I can **only** do this spontaneously if the learners' questions and contributions are **simple** and **predictable**.

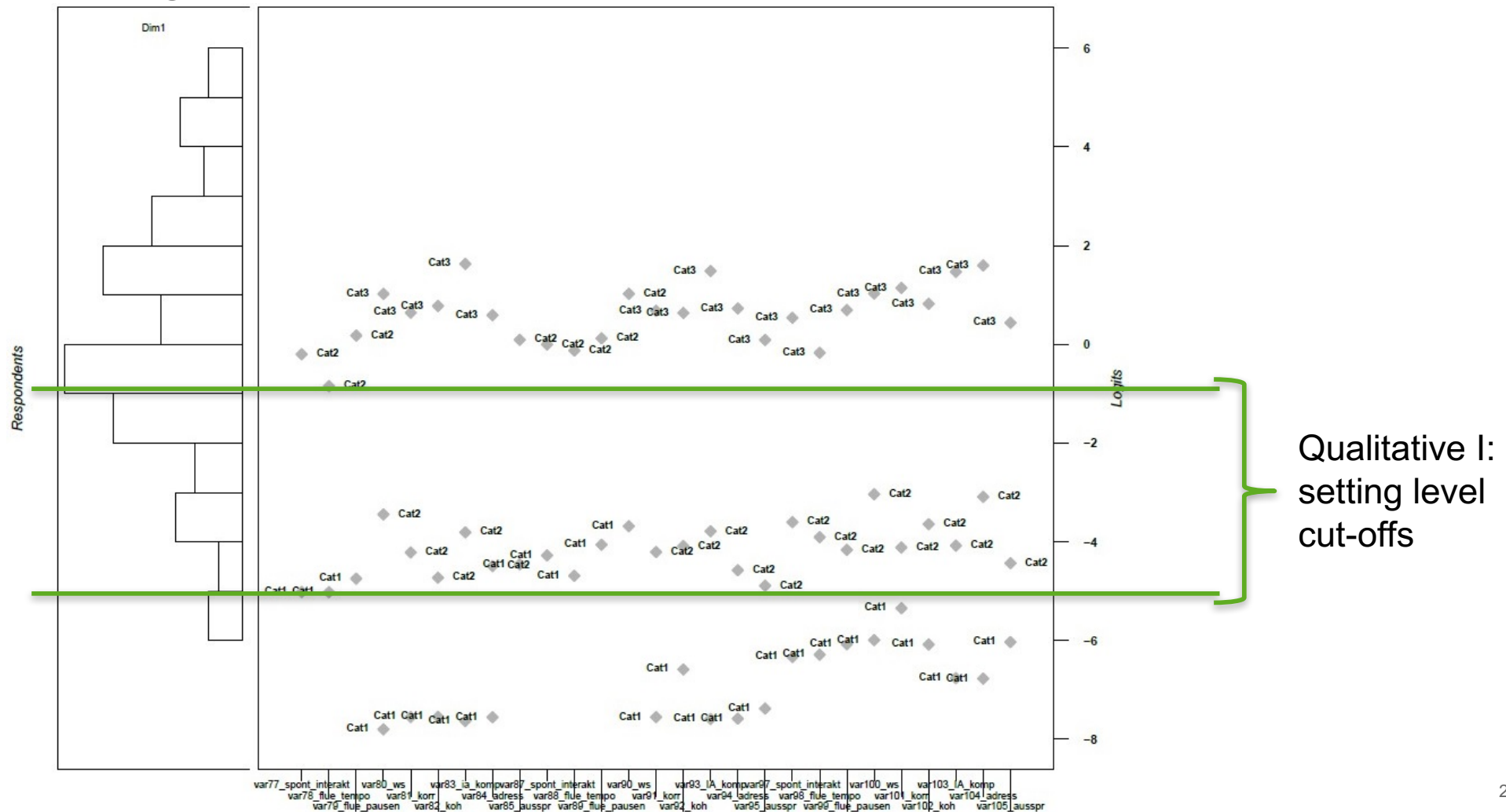
I can do this spontaneously if the learners' questions and contributions are **simple, even** if they are **not predictable**.

I can do this spontaneously even if the learners' questions and contributions are **challenging** and **not predictable**.

Development of the self-assessment scale

Data analysis: Quantitative I: IRT analysis - testing & scaling of items

- IRT-Analysis: Partial Credit Rasch Model
 - Testing the item fit / scaling self-assessments
 - Wright map: depicts both item and person parameters on the same scale



Development of the self-assessment scale

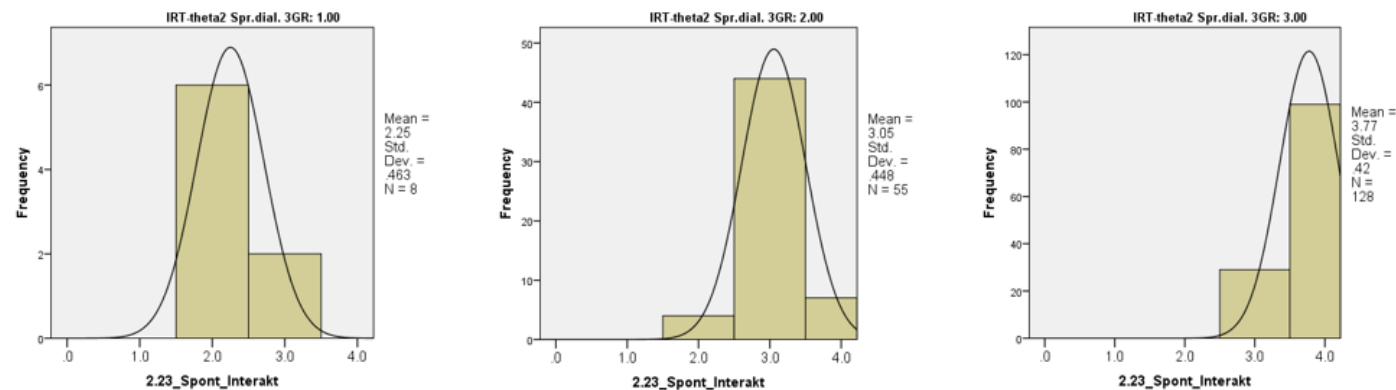
Data analysis: Quantitative & qualitative methods

- *Quantitative II*: Descriptive statistics for self-assessment levels

Spoken interaction

2.23 In the target language, I am able to ... react appropriately to questions and other contributions by learners.

Spontaneity



- Qualitative II: Interpretation of descriptive statistics
- Qualitative III: Editing self-assessment descriptors based on descriptive statistics
- Qualitative IV: Completion of self-assessment descriptors:
 - Combining the descriptors for all components for each linguistic task
 - Customizing and shortening descriptors for each linguistic task
 - Decision on number of self-assessments for each linguistic task

Development of the self-assessment scale

New self-assessment descriptors

- New complete scale describing how a specific linguistic task is performed:



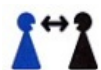
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- | | | | |
|---------------------|---|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ○ I cannot do this. | ○ I can do this with considerable effort. | ○ I can do this rather well. | ○ I can do this effortlessly. |
|---------------------|---|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
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Development of the self-assessment scale

New self-assessment descriptors

- New complete scale describing how a specific linguistic task is performed:



2.23 *In the target language, I am able to ... react appropriately to questions and other contributions by learners.*

<p>🔴 I cannot do this.</p>	<p>🟡 I can only do this spontaneously if the learners' questions and contributions are simple and predictable. I still make basic language mistakes (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation). I have a few basic means of expression to formulate answers, keep an exchange going, and concluding it.</p>	<p>🟢 I can do this spontaneously if the learners' questions and contributions are simple, even if they are not predictable. I still sometimes make basic language mistakes (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation). I have several means of expressions to formulate answers, keep an exchange going, and concluding it.</p>	<p>🟢 I can do this spontaneously even if the learners' questions and contributions are challenging and not predictable. I do not make any basic language mistakes (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation). I can choose from a large amount of means of expressions to formulate answers, keep an exchange going, and concluding it.</p>
<p>🔴 I cannot do this.</p>	<p>🟡 I often struggle to accommodate my language (e.g. choice of words, speech rate) to the learners, for the content to be clear and comprehensible.</p>	<p>🟢 I usually manage rather well to accommodate my language (e.g. choice of words, speech rate) to the learners, for the content to be clear and comprehensible.</p>	<p>🟢 I can accommodate my language (e.g. choice of words, speech rate) to the learners, for the content to be clear and comprehensible.</p>

- Last step: Integration of **complete scales** into **self-assessment tool** on the **online-platform**

Would you like to know more?

- We are happy to send you further information about our project.
- The online platform will be available to a large audience very shortly.
- The profiles are free for use by anybody, and we will be delighted to hear from your experiences for the purposes of research and further development.

Thank you for your attention!

Questions/discussion...

