

“Students in the Core French classroom are not only accumulating banks of new vocabulary, they are developing competence, along with strategies, to communicate effectively and to manage their use of the language within the context of various situations and the tasks to be accomplished.”

A Guide to Reflective Practice for Core French Teachers: The Action-Oriented Approach, p. 3.

“The CEFR has been developed from more than thirty years of work on language teaching, learning and assessment by the Council of Europe. It is intended to provide a common basis for defining language proficiency...”

Vandergrift (2006), *New Canadian Perspectives: Proposal for a Common Framework of Reference of Languages for Canada* p. 21.

It is important to note that there is no correlation between the levels of proficiency of the CEFR and grade level. There is also no correlation between the levels of the CEFR and the levels and categories of the provincial achievement chart. Learners will use CEFR descriptors to help them identify their current proficiency level and to set goals to move forward. This aligns with *Growing Success*, which establishes goal setting as a fundamental element of assessment and evaluation. Students need to develop their “self-assessment skills to enable them to assess their own learning, set specific goals, and plan next steps for their learning” (*Growing Success*, p. 6).

The Ottawa-Carleton DSB’s document, *Effective Assessment Practices in FSL: Connecting Growing Success and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR): Kindergarten to Grade 12*, further explores the connections between *Growing Success* and the CEFR.

What is the Action-Oriented Approach?

According to the CEFR, the act of learning a second language is viewed as a social undertaking. “The action-oriented perspective is described as one that views language users and learners as social agents who must accomplish tasks relevant to their life experiences” (CEFR, p. 9). Action-oriented tasks are designed to engage the learner in meaningful, authentic communication in order to solve a problem or achieve a goal. Until recent years, language instruction placed a greater emphasis on oral production (often memorized or rehearsed) rather than on **spontaneous oral interaction**. The CEFR challenges us to go beyond the communicative approach and emphasizes active language in order to develop the five language competences.

What might school principals/vice-principals experience in a CEFR-inspired classroom?

Spoken production and spoken interaction are at the forefront of second-language learning. In a CEFR-inspired classroom, French is the language of communication and grammar is presented in context, not as grammar checklists or vocabulary lists. Increased student talk time is maximized through spontaneous oral interactions in situations connected to students’ lives. Students are exposed to a variety of French oral, written, and visual texts. A strong oral foundation prepares students to be effective writers.

WHAT’S MY ROLE?

How will this improve FSL programming at my school?

There are many advantages to using the CEFR as a reference for FSL. The application of concepts and strategies from the CEFR fosters metacognition, increases motivation to learn French, supports the development of functional bilingualism, and builds student confidence.



One article to read, one quote to consider, one link to click...

1. ***Effective Practices in FSL: Connecting Growing Success and the CEFR***: This document is intended to support educators in using the CEFR to inform assessment practices in alignment with *Growing Success*. <http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesFSL/PDF/EffectiveAssessmentPracticesinFSL/EffectiveAssessmentPracticesinFSL.pdf>
2. **“When I began to use the CEFR philosophy in my classroom practice, I noticed many more of the students participated. It was clear the reason for the shift was that the oral discussions were focused around the students and their interests, personal lives, and experiences. When the topic of conversation was about them, they were more motivated to participate.”** *A Guide to Reflective Practice for Core French Teachers: Oral Proficiency*, p. 3.
3. ***Exploring the CEFR***: This project presents an opportunity to increase awareness and deepen understanding of how the CEFR can inform FSL instruction and assessment practices in Ontario. It includes a series of video clips on big ideas related to the CEFR. <https://transformingfsl.ca/en/resources/exploring-the-cefr/>