



Relating language curricula, tests and examinations  
to the Common European Framework of Reference  
(RELANG)

## RELANG

**Relating language curricula, tests and examinations to  
the common European reference levels of language  
proficiency**

*Promoting quality assurance in education and  
facilitating mobility*

Madrid, 29-31 May, 2019

This initiative is carried out within the framework of the **Innovative Methodologies  
and Assessment in Language Learning** cooperation agreement between  
the European Centre for Modern Languages and the European Commission  
[www.ecml.at/ec-cooperation](http://www.ecml.at/ec-cooperation)



## RELANG Team Members

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## Basic Documentation

Two Council of Europe / ECML publications on the construction and validation of language tests linked to the CEFR:

- The ALTE Manual for Language Test Development and Examining
- Relating Language Examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR): Highlights

# Linking Procedures in the Manual

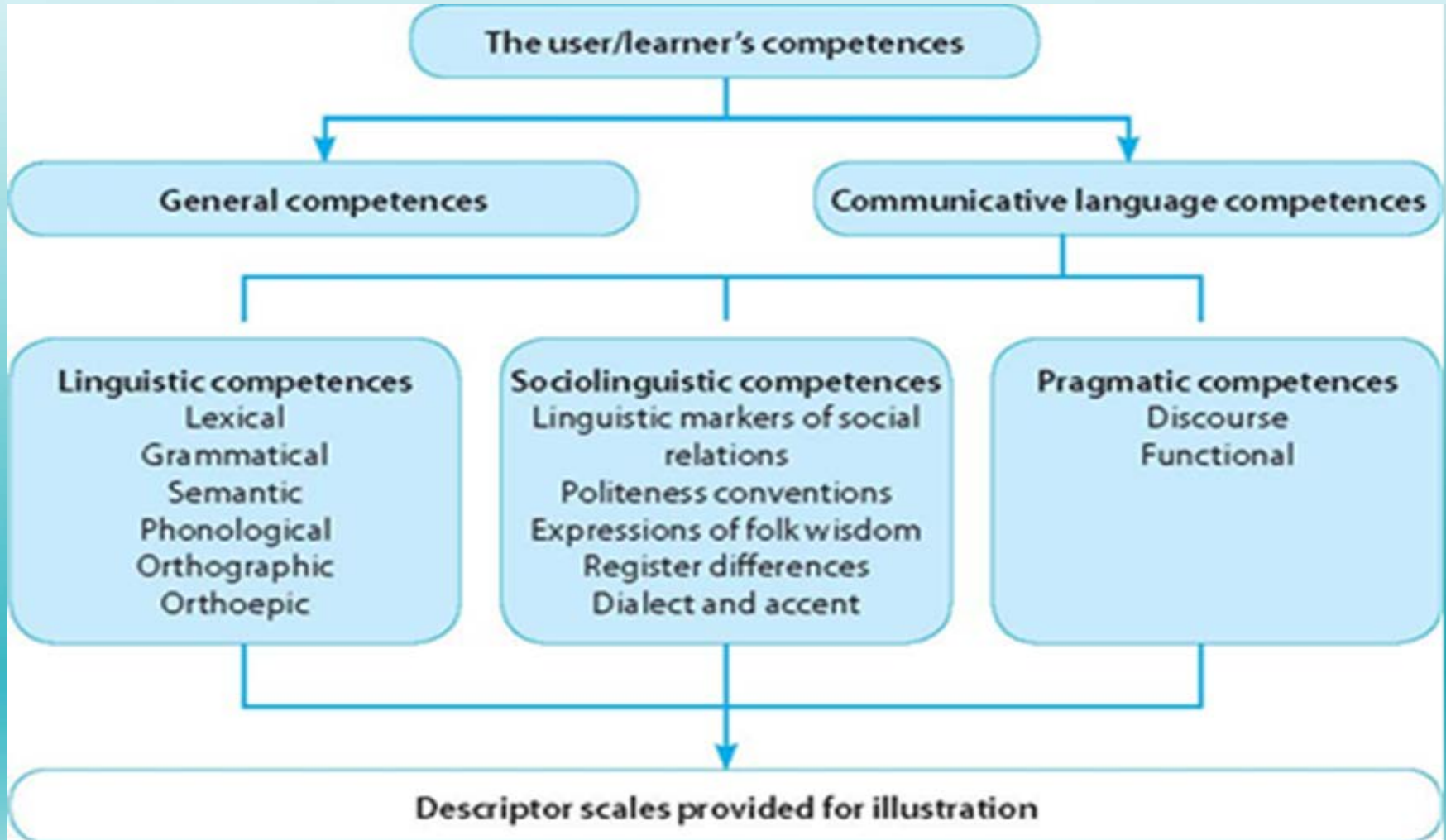
- Familiarisation with the CEFR
- Linking on the basis of specification of examination content
- Standardization and Benchmarking
- Standard setting
- Validation: checking that exam results relate to CEFR levels as intended

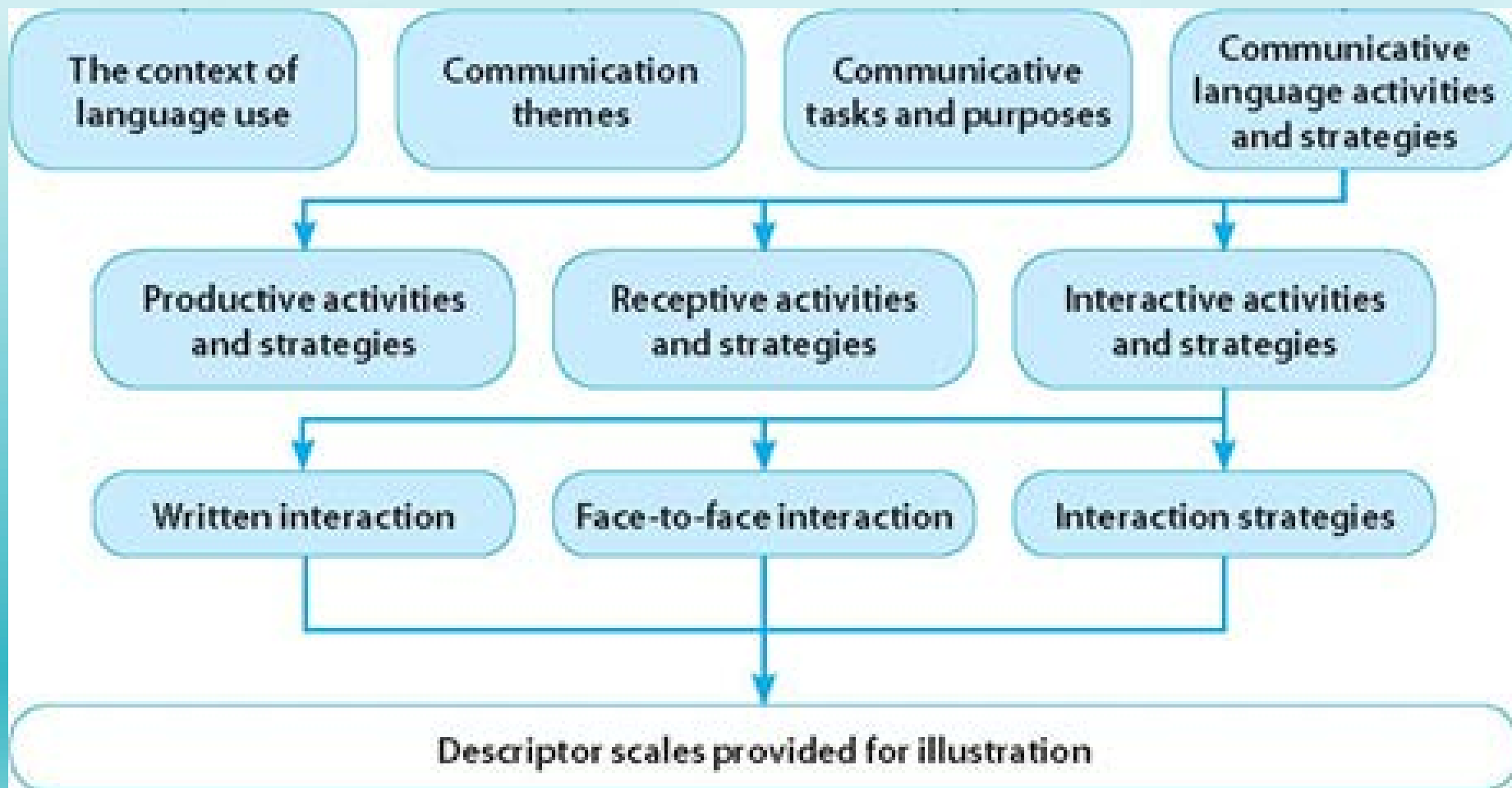
# The CEFR Model of Language Use

Action-oriented approach:

- Actions performed by persons - individuals and social agents
- A range of competences
  - general
  - communicative language competences
- Various contexts under various conditions and constraints to engage in language activities
- Language processes to produce and/or receive texts in relation to themes in specific domains

# The user/learner's Competences





# What is Validity?

- A test is valid if it measures what we intend it to measure.
- Definition extended to the way tests are *used*, i.e. the interpretations of test scores

# Validity and the CEFR

- Demonstrating that a learner reported to be at B1 actually *is* at B1 according to the evidence
- Focus on *use*: validity evidence relates to language used for communicative purposes
- Focus on *competence*: validity evidence relates to cognitive skills, strategies and language knowledge

# What is Reliability?

- Reliability in testing means consistency
  - same or similar results on repeated use
- High reliability does not mean the test is valid

# Reliability in Practice

- Minimising likely sources of error
- Using statistics to estimate reliability of test scores
- No reliability target for the scores of all tests: estimates dependent on how much scores vary
- Reliability depends on task type and way of marking

# Fairness

- Making the test as fair as possible
- Codes of Practice or Codes of Fairness to assist test providers
- Minimising bias when designing tests
  - list of topics to avoid

# Ethical Concerns

- High-stakes language tests can have negative consequences (e.g. in the context of migration)
- Test providers to ensure relevant principles are widely disseminated and understood