



## Instructors' Views towards Curriculum Implementation of CEFR in Language Development Center

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### Article Info

#### *Article history:*

Submitted October 29, 2020

Accepted November 10, 2020

Published December 12, 2020

#### *Keywords:*

CEFR

Instructors' views

In-service training

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### ABSTRACT

The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) is something new for some people but it provides a common basis of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examination, textbooks, etc. across Europe. Hence, some universities use CEFR as their curriculum to divide students into six levels of language. This study discovers instructors' views towards curriculum implementation of CEFR in Language Development Center of Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto, investigates the applicability of documents and how they apply CEFR in the teaching learning process. Through qualitative design, the study was conducted by interviewing two instructors of LDC (Language Development Center). The findings reveal that; (1) instructors have a good views of CEFR; (2) the documents of CEFR is applicable in LDC; (3) Instructors apply CEFR in their teaching learning process based on the textbooks and also give different treatment, activities, exercises and output in different level. Since instructors' views about CEFR is good, LDC still have to do in-service training in order to provide instructors with further understanding of the CEFR.

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### *How to Cite:*

Nurhaliza, Nisrina. (2020). Instructors' Views towards Curriculum Implementation of CEFR in Language Development Center. *Aplinesia-Journal of Applied Linguistics Indonesia*, Vol. 01(01). December 2020

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### 1. Introduction

The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) provides a basis for the mutual recognition of language qualifications, thus facilitating educational and occupational mobility. The Council of Europe (Council of Europe, 2001) describes the aim of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR or CEF) as promoting transparency and coherence in the learning and teaching of modern languages in Europe. Although the word European refers to European languages, the CEF has been translated into more than 30 languages, some of which are not European languages, and this has made the CEF accessible to almost everybody in the world. The CEF provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe (Council of Europe, 2001). In this reference tool, language learners' levels are described at six levels: A1 and A2 (Basic Users), B1 and B2 (Independent Users), C1 and C2 (Proficient Users). In the CEF document, each level is described in detail. The description of each level includes competencies needed for effective communication, skills

and knowledge related to language learning and competencies, and situations and contexts in which communication takes place (Council of Europe, 2001).

Language Development Center of Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto also adopts CEFR as a curriculum for English enrichment program. It uses six level as language qualification of competencies start from starter, elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper-intermediate until advance level. Each level relates with students' skills and competencies. In deciding students' level, instructors who work at the university conduct a pre-test to find out the extent to which the students' English skills into which category. The Council of Europe (2001) describes benefits of the CEF as eliminating the different educational systems in Europe, providing the means for educational administrators, teachers, teacher trainers, course designers etc., providing a comprehensive description of what skills and knowledge language learners have to develop in order to communicate effectively, and enhancing the transparency of syllabuses and courses by providing a common basis for the explicit description of objectives, methods and contents. Based on the background above, this study aimed to achieve research objectives through following questions: (1) what do Instructors know about CEFR? (2) What do they think about the applicability of the document? And (3) how do they apply CEFR in their teaching learning process?

## **2. Methodology**

Reference to the background of the study, the researcher used descriptive method since the researcher aimed to know about the instructors' views about CEFR, the applicability of the document and how they apply CEFR in their class. Descriptive method is defined as a method that is intentionally done to collect information about a phenomenon as in the pure condition (Yin, 2011, p.7). This research was determined as a case study research which forms of a qualitative research focused on providing a detailed account of one or more cases. Moreover, this study can also be regarded as a case study since it was carried out in a small scale, a single case and focused on one particular instance of educational experience or practice and not be generalized (Cresswell, 2008). The sources of data were two instructors as the respondent and to answer the research questions, the researcher used interview as data collection. Interview was a technique that is used by the researcher by having dialog with the interviewees in collecting information to get the data.

## **3. Findings and Discussion**

The researcher got the data from the interview. Interview was conducted twice with different instructors in different time. The schedules were agreed by the researcher and instructors. Semi-structured interview is given to instructors with six basic questions and some additional questions to support the basic questions. Furthermore, the interview lasted for about 15-20 minutes.

### **3.1 The Instructors Views about CEFR**

Based on the interview, instructors have known about the meaning and the goals of CEFR well. They also think that CEFR should have a place in education because it is used for academic purposes.

### 3.1.1 Instructor 1

The researcher interviewed instructor 1 through Whatsapp call for about 15 minutes because of government policy to work from home. The researcher also takes notes while recorded the statements from instructor 1.

*Interviewer* : “Do you know about the common European framework of reference for languages (CEFR)? If yes, so what is it?”

*Interviewee* : “Yes. I know about it. CEFR is one type of curriculum used in Europe. It is the standard to teach languages.”

*Interviewer* : “Do you think that the CEFR should have a place in teacher education? Why?”

*Interviewee* : “Yes. Because when we use CEFR, teacher will teach the students because of their abilities. Teacher should have the consideration and hold placement test to know the abilities and needs of the students.”

### 3.1.2 Instructor 2

The researcher interviewed instructor 2 through Whatsapp call for about 20 minutes because of government policy to work from home. The researcher also takes notes while recorded the statements from instructor 2.

*Interviewer* : “Do you know about the common European framework of reference for languages (CEFR)? If yes, so what is it?”

*Interviewee* : “I little bit understand about it. CEFR is European Standard for Academic Curriculum and also test for school and also some company to standardize the competence of students and also the workers if they work in a company.”

*Interviewer* : “Do you think that the CEFR should have a place in teacher education? Why?”

*Interviewee* : “Yes. Based on what I understand about CEFR, it is very good for academic purpose and this system met by European to make easier for European to study other languages. So, this is very good for academic purposes especially for teacher in school and also university.”

Based on the interview script above, instructor 2 have known the meaning about CEFR well and also thought that it should have place in education because it is good for academic purposes and make people easier to study other languages.

## 3.2 The Applicability of CEFR Documents

Documents of CEFR based on statements from “European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages” designed by the Modern Centre for European Languages in Graz which aims to provide a guidance both for trainers and trainees were chosen according to the views of experts in foreign language education. Which means the documents will connect between material development and students’ abilities. Before teacher/instructor divides the students into some levels, students will test using placement test.

### 3.2.1 Instructor 1

The researcher interviewed instructor 1 according to the goal of this research which to find out about the applicability of documents in applying CEFR. The researcher also adds some questions related with the basic question.

*Interviewer* : "Do you know the documents of CEFR? What are they?"

*Interviewee* : "Maybe textbooks and other resources from internet."

*Interviewer* : "Are the documents are applicable in LDC?"

*Interviewee* : "Yes. I just use what my office gives to me."

*Interviewer* : "Do you need in-service training on CEFR? If yes why?"

*Interviewee* : "Yes, I still need in-service training on CEFR because I need more explanation and practices about it."

Based on the interview script above, instructor 1 already know the documents that used in CEFR that are textbooks and other resources related with the materials. Those documents also applicable in LDC because she just does what the office gives to her. But she still needs in-service training in order to have more explanation and practice about CEFR.

### 3.2.2. Instructor 2

The researcher interviewed instructor 2 according to the goal of this research which to find out about the applicability of documents in applying CEFR. The researcher also adds some questions related with the basic question.

*Interviewer* : "Do you know the documents of CEFR? What are they?"

*Interviewee* : "The workers in my university or the place where I work give me some books that adopted from CEFR, some units in textbooks show some materials. But I just run what the leader in my office give to me. Yea, there are some people who are designed or place the students to some levels. But I see that there are differences between the original CEFR level and my company level. Still, there are six levels but the name is different."

*Interviewer* : "Are the documents are applicable in LDC?"

*Interviewee* : "Yes. I believe that it is applicable enough where the place where I work has been adopted from CEFR well."

*Interviewer* : "Do you need in-service training on CEFR? If yes why?"

*Interviewee* : "Actually, I just use this curriculum for 2 semesters, but I have to learn more for this kind of curriculum but actually I have to learn by myself to apply the CEFR curriculum. I just implemented one rather than study deeper or influence the curriculum because I just an instructor who have arranged by my company. It is not a must for me to know more about CEFR, but if LDC wants to hold it, I will be happy to join it."

Based on the interview script above, instructor 2 already know the document of CEFR he used that is textbooks which adopted from CEFR materials designed by people in his office or LDC. He also thinks that the document is applicable because it is well-adopted. Instructor 2 stated that he just implements the CEFR and learn it by himself so it is not a must for him to study deeper or influence the curriculum but if his office holds in-service training about CEFR, he would join it.

### 3.3 How the Instructors Apply CEFR in The Teaching Learning Process

Participants were asked to explain how they apply CEFR in their teaching learning process. The researcher wanted to know their consideration in applying CEFR. The classes focusing on all language skills, general English in each level. According to the results, it is seen that participants focus on skills, material design, assessment and daily language. But there is a difference in naming the level in original CEFR and Language Development Center. According to Council of Europe (2001), there are six levels: A1 and A2 (Basic Users), B1 and B2 (Independent Users), C1 and C2 (Proficient Users). In the CEF document, each level is described in detail. The description of each level includes competencies needed for effective communication, skills and knowledge related to language learning and competencies, and situations and contexts in which communication takes place. But in Language Development Center, it develops the level based on the situation of needs and abilities of students in Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto, Indonesia. LDC divides the level into: starter, elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper-intermediate and advance level.

#### 3.3.1 Instructor 1

The researcher interviewed instructor 1 according to the goal of this research which to find out about how she applies CEFR in her teaching learning process.

*Interviewer* : "How do you apply CEFR in your teaching learning process?"

*Interviewee* : "I place students based on the level from placement test. I treat my students also based on their abilities because their abilities are different in each level. I give the material to the students first and give activities in four skills. Because I teach Intermediate level, I give more practices to my students because they have already the basic skill of English and the material also is customized with the needs of students so they will have output such as can speak more fluently than the previous level."

Based on the interview script above, instructor 1 apply the CEFR in teaching learning process by giving different treatment in different levels. She always gives the material then practical activities to the students, the output of students also different for each level. Hence, because she teaches intermediate level, so the output of students is they can speak more fluently than previous.

#### 3.3.2 Instructor 2

The researcher interviewed instructor 2 according to the goal of this research which to find out about how he applies CEFR in her teaching learning process.

*Interviewer* : "How do you apply CEFR in your teaching learning process?"

*Interviewee* : "Recently, I apply CEFR to my online class. The worker in my office gives me the module or textbook, then I adopt some materials and some exercises to the LMS. I also take other materials that still related with the unit then I try out to my students. In this semester, I teach three levels; starter, pre-intermediate and intermediate level. But actually, in CEFR there is no starter, but it is named beginner if I'm not mistaken, and no pre-intermediate. My company develops by themselves. I treat my students based on the level; the material also treats the students based on the ability of students from the placement test. So, they arrange placement test to know the English level of students before start to teach. The output of students in each level is also different. The differences are in their fluency of English in the applicable one or just

*in theoretical one. Here in my class, I try to make the students in applicable or practice one because most of the time in this semester, I teach the higher and middle level. But I also have a chance to teach starter level. So, in starter level, it is better to teach the theoretical one or the way how to master in vocabulary so in early level, it is better to understand the vocabulary and theory first then later they will get the practical one in higher level."*

Based on the interview script above, instructor 2 apply CEFR in his teaching learning process by adopting material from module or textbooks and other resources related with the material then try them out to the students. Because he teaches different level from beginner until higher level, the treatment he gives to students is also different. The difference is in the fluency of English whether it is applicable or practice one. In starter level, he teaches the theoretical one so that students will master about vocabulary then later they will get practical one in the higher level.

#### **4. Conclusion**

This study has explored instructors' views towards curriculum implementation of CEFR in Language Development Center of Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto. There are some conclusion which include 1) instructors have good views about CEFR; 2) the applicability of documents of CEFR in LDC is good because it have consideration between instructors and students in designing material based on students' abilities; 3) Instructors apply CEFR in their teaching learning process based on the textbooks and also give different treatment, activities, exercises and output in different level. In line with findings of the research which are revealed, Language Development Center of UMP still have to do in-service training for instructors so that they will have more study and understanding about CEFR.

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