PROSIGN

Sign languages and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

Common Reference Level Descriptors

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About this document

The PRO-Sign project set out to establish European standards for sign language proficiency for professional purposes, focusing specifically on sign language teaching in Deaf Studies and Sign Language Interpreting programmes. The project worked with associate partners, workshop and network participants who engaged in evaluating, testing and validating CEFR descriptors for sign language teaching, learning and assessment over the period 2012-15. The result is the descriptors for sign languages aligned to the reference levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) presented in this document.

In this document, shaded area = upper level of competency in a range. Following the CEFR (2001) differentiations.

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About this document

The ECML's PRO-Sign project set out to establish European standards for sign language proficiency for professional purposes, focusing specifically on sign language teaching in Deaf Studies and Sign Language Interpreting programmes (see also Leeson and Calle 2013, Leeson and Bowen 2013). The project worked with associate partners and workshop and network participants who engaged in evaluating, testing and consolidating CEFR descriptors for sign language teaching, learning and assessment over the period 2012-2015. The result is the descriptors for sign language, aligned to the reference levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), presented in this document.

Drawing on preliminary work undertaken in adapting the CEFR to sign languages in a number of European countries, the ECML project *Signed languages for professional purposes* (PRO-Sign) is the first to specify proficiency levels for sign languages, thus establishing European standards for use in programmes where sign language classes are offered at tertiary level across Europe and beyond.

This document is part of the project's website, where all information can be found: www.ecml.at/prosign

Who is this document for?

The webpage and this document seek to function as a point of reference for teachers, teacher trainers and curriculum developers of sign languages in tertiary educational environments. It may also support the work of international non-governmental organisations such as the European Union of the Deaf (EUD), the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD), the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters (efsli) and other relevant international organisations.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Language: Learning, Teaching and Assessment (CEFR)

The CEFR was published in 2001 by the Council of Europe, and is used in many European countries as a reference tool in second and foreign language instruction and assessment.

> "The Common European Framework provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe. It describes in a comprehensive way what language learners have to learn to do in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they have to develop so as to be able to act effectively. The description also covers the cultural context in which language is set. The Framework also defines levels of proficiency which allow learners' progress to be measured at each stage of learning and on a life-long basis. The Common European Framework is intended to overcome the barriers to communication" (CoE 2001:1)

This document provides 'Can Do' descriptors for reception, interaction and production from A1 all the way up to C2 level. As in other CEFR documents, there may not be descriptors for all sub-categories for every level, since some activities cannot be undertaken until a certain

level of competence has been reached, whilst others may cease to be an objective at higher levels. For more detailed information on the individual proficiency levels and different scales of the CEFR, please refer to the Council of Europe publication (2001)[1].

As a user, you are invited to use the scaling system and associated descriptors critically. While the Global Scale for Sign Languages – Common Reference Levels provides you with a simple and more holistic representation, it may not be appropriate for some purposes. The CEFR needs further adaption depending on the context that it is applied in. The sets of descriptors offered in the PRO-Sign tool suggest situations in which sign language users engage.

An International Sign (IS) version of this document as well as assessment examples in accordance with CEFR is also available on our website.

Methodology: Development and validation of SL descriptors

The following resources were used to inform the development of the descriptors for sign languages:

- Common European Framework of Reference (Council of Europe, 2001)
- CEFR-aligned curriculum for Irish Sign Language (Leeson & Byrne-Dunne, 2009; Leeson & Grehan, 2009)
- CEFR alignments for German Sign Language (Rathmann et al., 2012)
- CEFR alignments for Sign Language of the Netherlands (ATERK NGT, 2013)

The task of ensuring that the descriptors were fit for purpose in describing gradated progress in a visual-gestural modality, for languages that do not have a written form was quite complex. While some of the existing CEFR descriptors required only a slight change in the wording to ensure appropriateness for sign languages, others required significant re-wording to meet the modality-specific nature of sign languages. Apart from the resources mentioned above, existing research on the linguistics and acquisition of sign languages as second languages implicitly informed the descriptors' development.

In March 2015, 16 deaf and hearing experts across Europe attended the PRO-Sign network meeting in Graz, Austria. All participants received the descriptors before the network meeting in English and in International Sign. During the network meeting, the descriptors were shown in International Sign to the participants and they provided feedback as to their efficacy in capturing the intended competency levels, i.e., a consolidation of the descriptors took place. Further feedback was collected from experienced sign language instructors who were not at the network meeting. All feedback served as the basis for some final revisions of the level descriptors for sign languages. The process of validating these descriptors can only be done after they have been adapted into a local context, for example, post-development of a CEFR-aligned curriculum to German or Irish Sign Language.

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[1] http://www.ecml.at/Portals/1/mtp4/pro-sign/documents/Common-Reference-Level-Descriptors-EN.pdf

How can the document be used on national level?

The CEFR has proven to be a very valuable instrument for getting a grip on foreign language teaching, though initially, this was prepared only with spoken languages in mind.

In most European countries, sign language teaching is still in its infancy. The grammars of many sign languages are not yet fully described, and there is significant variation in the level of interpreter training available across the continent (see De Wit, 2012). With a view to these issues, therefore, this document can be used in different ways. For sign language teaching courses, it may function as a baseline to support teachers to assess language levels in their learners. It may support learners in their process of achieving proficiency. However, depending on the duration and the depth of the language courses in the interpreting programmes, the CEFR may be used simply as a source of reference or as a solid framework to which all sign language courses delivered are fully aligned.

Considering the significant variation in sign language education in Europe, much work still remains to be done at a national level for indigenous sign languages in order for this CEFR to be maximally useful. We hope that these documents – in English and in International Sign – will support such efforts.

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Common Reference Levels: Global Scale for Sign Languages

Proficient User	C2	Can understand with ease virtually all [signed] texts. Can summarise information from different sources and reconstruct arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating nuances of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native/proficient signers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points when clear, standard language [which for sign language users may be a locally used variation] is used and the topics are familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise where the sign language is used. Can produce simple connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently-used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details, such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person communicates slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

PRO-Sign Reference Levels

Production

	ADDRESSING AUDIENCES
C2	*Can present a complex topic confidently and articulately to an audience unfamiliar with it, structuring and adapting the talk flexibly to meet the audience's needs.* *Can handle difficult and even hostile questioning.*
C1	*Can give a clear, well-structured presentation of a complex subject, expanding and supporting points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples.* *Can handle interjections well, responding spontaneously and almost effortlessly.*
B2	*Can give a clear, systematically developed presentation, with highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail.* *Can depart spontaneously from a prepared text and follow up interesting points raised by members of the audience, often showing remarkable fluency and ease of expression.*
	Can give a clear, prepared presentation, giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view and giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options. *Can take a series of follow up questions with a degree of fluency and spontaneity which poses no strain for either him/herself or the audience.*
B1	*Can give a prepared straightforward presentation on a familiar topic within his/her field which is clear enough to be followed without difficulty most of the time, and in which the main points are explained with reasonable precision.* *Can take follow up questions, but may have to ask for repetition if the delivery was rapid.*
A2	*Can give a short, rehearsed presentation on a topic pertinent to his/her everyday life, briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions, plans and actions.* *Can cope with a limited number of straightforward follow up questions.*
	Can give a short, rehearsed, basic presentation on a familiar subject. *Can answer straightforward follow up questions if he/she can ask for repetition and if some help with the formulation of his/her reply is possible.*
A1	*Can deliver a very short, rehearsed statement – e.g. to introduce a presenter, propose a toast.*

	COMPENSATING
C2	*Can substitute an equivalent term for a word he/she can't recall so smoothly that it is scarcely noticeable.*
C1	*As B2+*
B2	*Can use circumlocution and paraphrase to cover gaps in vocabulary and structure.*
B1	*Can define the features of something concrete for which he/she can't remember the word [sign].* *Can convey meaning by qualifying a word [sign] meaning something similar (e.g. a truck for people = bus).* *Can use a simple word [sign] meaning something similar to the concept he/she wants to convey and invites 'correction'.*
A2	*Can use an inadequate word [sign] from his/her repertoire and use gesture to clarify what he/she wants to say.* *Can identify what he/she means by pointing to it (e.g. 'I'd like this, please').*
A1	*No descriptor available*

	MONITORING AND REPAIR
C2	*Can backtrack and restructure around a difficulty so smoothly the interlocutor is hardly aware of it.*
C1	*Can backtrack when he/she encounters a difficulty and reformulate what he/she wants to say without fully interrupting the flow of signing.*
B2	*Can correct slips and errors if he/she becomes conscious of them or if they have led to misunderstandings.* *Can make a note of 'favourite mistakes' and consciously monitor output for it/them.*
B1	*Can correct mix-ups with the marking of time or expressions that lead to misunderstandings provided the interlocutor indicates there is a problem.* *Can ask for confirmation that a form used is correct.* *Can start again using a different tactic when communication breaks down.*
A2	*No descriptor available*
A1	*No descriptor available*

	OVERALL PRODUCTION
C2	*Can produce clear, smoothly flowing well-structured [signed] text with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.*
C1	*Can give clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on complex subjects, integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion. Can give clear, systematically developed descriptions and presentations, with appropriate highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail.*
B2	*Can give clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on a wide range of subjects related to his/her field of interest, expanding and supporting ideas with subsidiary points and relevant examples.*
B1	*Can reasonably fluently sustain a straightforward description of one of a variety of subjects within his/her field of interest, presenting it as a linear sequence of points.*
A2	*Can give a simple description or presentation of people, living or working conditions, daily routines, likes/dislikes, etc. as a short series of simple phrases and sentences linked into a list.*
A1	*Can produce simple mainly isolated phrases about people and places.*

	PLANNING
C2	*As B2*
C1	*As B2*
B2	*Can plan what is to be signed and the means to say it, considering the effect on the recipient/s.*
B1	*Can rehearse and try out new combinations and expressions, inviting feedback.*
	Can work out how to communicate the main point(s) he/she wants to get across, exploiting any resources available and limiting the message to what he/she can recall or find the means to express.
A2	*Can recall and rehearse an appropriate set of phrases from his/her repertoire.*
A1	*No descriptor available*

	PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS
C2	*No descriptor available*
C1	*Can deliver announcements fluently, almost effortlessly, using stress and intonation [NMFs?] to convey finer shades of meaning precisely.*
B2	*Can deliver announcements on most general topics with a degree of clarity, fluency and spontaneity which causes no strain or inconvenience to the interlocutor.*
B1	*Can deliver short, rehearsed announcements on a topic pertinent to everyday occurrences in his/her field which, despite possibly very foreign stress and intonation [use of NMFs?], are nevertheless clearly intelligible.*
A2	*Can deliver very short, rehearsed announcements of predictable, learnt content which are intelligible to interlocutors who are prepared to concentrate.*
A1	*No descriptor available*

	SUSTAINED MONOLOGUE: Describing experience
C2	*Can give clear, smoothly flowing, elaborate and often memorable descriptions.*
C1	*Can give clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects.* *Can give elaborate descriptions and narratives, integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.*
B2	*Can give clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to his/her field of interest.*
B1	*Can give straightforward descriptions on a variety of familiar subjects within his/her field of interest.* *Can reasonably fluently relate a straightforward narrative or description as a linear sequence of points.* *Can give detailed accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions.* *Can relate details of unpredictable occurrences, e.g. an accident.* *Can relate the plot of a book or film and describe his/her reactions.* *Can describe dreams, hopes and ambitions.* *Can describe events, real or imagined.* *Can narrate a story.*
A2	*Can tell a story or describe something in a simple list of points. Can describe everyday aspects of his/her environment e.g. people, places, a job or study experience.* *Can give short, basic descriptions of events and activities.* *Can describe plans and arrangements, habits and routines, past activities and personal experiences.* *Can use simple descriptive language to make brief statements about and compare objects and possessions.*
A1	*Can explain what he/she likes or dislikes about something.* *Can describe him/herself, what he/she does and where he/she lives.*

	SUSTAINED MONOLOGUE: Putting a case (e.g. in a debate)
C2	*No descriptor available*
C1	*No descriptor available*
B2	*Can develop an argument systematically with appropriate highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail.*
	Can develop a clear argument, expanding and supporting his/her points of view at some length with subsidiary points and relevant examples. *Can construct a chain of reasoned argument: Can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.*
B1	*Can develop an argument well enough to be followed without difficulty most of the time.*
	Can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions, plans and actions.
A2	*No descriptor available*
A1	*No descriptor available*

Comprehension

	COMPREHENSION AS A MEMBER OF A LIVE AUDIENCE
C2	*Can follow specialised lectures and presentations employing a high degree of colloquialism, regional usage or unfamiliar terminology.*
C1	*Can follow most lectures, discussions and debates with relative ease.*
B2	*Can follow the essentials of lectures, talks and reports and other forms of academic/professional presentation which are propositionally and linguistically complex.*
B1	*Can follow a lecture or talk within his/her own field, provided the subject matter is familiar and the presentation straightforward and clearly structured.*
	Can follow in outline straightforward short talks on familiar topics provided these are delivered in clearly articulated standard sign.
A2	*No descriptor available*
A1	*No descriptor available*

	COMPREHENSION OF VISUAL MEDIA
C2	*As C1*
C1	*Can understand a wide range of recorded and broadcast material, including some non-standard usage, and identify finer points of detail including implicit attitudes and relationships between signers.*
B2	*Can understand recordings in standards dialect likely to be encountered in social, professional or academic life and identify signer viewpoints and attitudes as well as the information content.*
	Can understand most documentaries and most other recorded or broadcast material delivered in standard dialect. *Can identify the signer's mood, tone, etc.*
B1	*Can understand the information content of the majority of recorded or broadcast material on topics of personal interest delivered in clear standard [or local] sign.*
	Can understand the main points of radio news bulletins and simpler recorded material about familiar subjects delivered relatively slowly and clearly.
A2	*Can understand and extract the essential information from short, recorded passages dealing with predictable everyday matters which are delivered slowly and clearly.*
A1	*No descriptor available*

	IDENTIFYING CUES AND INFERRING (SIGNING)
C2	*As C1*
C1	*Is skilled at using contextual, grammatical and lexical cues to infer attitude, mood and intentions and anticipate what will come next.*
B2	*Can use a variety of strategies to achieve comprehension, including identifying main points; checking comprehension by using contextual cues.*
B1	*Can identify unfamiliar words from the context on topics related to his/her field and interests.* *Can extrapolate the meaning of occasional unknown words from the context and deduce sentence meaning provided the topic discussed is familiar.*
A2	*Can use an idea of the overall meaning of short texts and utterances on everyday topics of a concrete type to derive the probable meaning of unknown words from the context.*
A1	*No descriptor available*

	OVERALL COMPREHENSION
C2	*Has no difficulty in understanding any kind of sign language, whether live or broadcast, delivered at fast native speed.*
C1	*Can understand enough to follow extended texts on abstract and complex topics beyond his/her own field, though he/she may need to confirm occasional details, especially if the variant is unfamiliar.* *Can recognise a wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms, appreciating register shifts.* *Can follow extended texts even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly.*
B2	*Can understand widely used [variants] of a sign language, live or broadcast, on both familiar and unfamiliar topics normally encountered in personal, social, academic or vocational life. Only extreme background [visual or auditory] noise, inadequate discourse structure and/or idiomatic usage influences the ability to understand.*
	Can understand the main ideas of propositionally and linguistically complex texts on both concrete and abstract topics delivered in a standard dialect, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. *Can follow extended text and complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar, and the direction of the talk is sign-posted by explicit markers.*
B1	*Can understand straightforward factual information about common everyday or job related topics, identifying both general messages and specific details, provided sign is clearly articulated in a generally familiar variant.*
	Can understand the main points of clear standard sign on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure etc., including short narratives.
A2	*Can understand enough to be able to meet needs of a concrete type provided sign is clearly and slowly articulated.*
	Can understand phrases and expressions related to areas of most immediate priority (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment) provided sign is clearly and slowly articulated.
A1	*Can follow sign which is very slow and carefully articulated, with long pauses for him/her to assimilate meaning.*

	UNDERSTANDING CONVERSATION BETWEEN NATIVE SIGNERS
C2	*As C1*
C1	*Can easily follow complex interactions between third parties in group discussion and debate, even on abstract, complex unfamiliar topics.*
B2	*Can keep up with an animated conversation between native signers.*
	Can with some effort catch much of what is signed around him/her, but may find it difficult to participate effectively in discussion with several native signers who do not modify their language in any way.
B1	*Can generally follow the main points of extended discussion around him/her, provided sign is clearly articulated in standard dialect.*
A2	*Can generally identify the topic of discussion around him/her, when it is conducted slowly and clearly.*
A1	*No descriptor available*

	WATCHING ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS
C2	*As C1*
C1	*Can extract specific information from poor quality, somewhat distorted video content (e.g. old VHS tape).* *Can understand complex technical information, such as operating instructions, specifications for familiar products and services.*
B2	*Can understand announcements and messages on concrete and abstract topics signed in a standard [or local] dialect at normal speed.*
B1	*Can understand simple technical information, such as operating instructions for everyday equipment.* *Can follow detailed directions.*
A2	*Can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.* *Can understand simple directions relating to how to guess from X to Y, by foot or public transport.*
A1	*Can understand instructions addressed carefully and slowly to him or her and follow short, simple directions.*

	WATCHING TV AND FILM
C2	*As C1*
C1	*Can follow films employing a considerable degree of slang and idiomatic usage.*
B2	*Can understand most TV/Internet based news and current affairs programmes. Can understand documentaries, live interviews, talk shows, plays and the majority of films in standard dialect.*
B1	*Can understand a large part of many TV/internet-based programmes on topics of personal interest such as interviews, short lectures, and news reports when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.*
	Can catch the main points in TV programmes on familiar topics when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.
A2	*Can follow changes of topic of factual TV news items, and form an idea of the main content.*
A1	*No descriptor available*

Signed Interaction

	CONVERSATION
C2	*Can converse comfortably and appropriately, unhampered by any linguistic limitations in conducting a full social and personal life.*
C1	*Can use language flexibly and effectively for social purposes, including emotional, allusive and joking usage.*
B2	*Can engage in extended conversation on most general topics in a clearly protested the tree fashion, even in a visually noisy environment.* *Can sustain relationships with native signers without unintentionally amusing or irritating them or requiring them to behave other than they would with a native signer.* *Can convey degrees of emotion and highlight the personal significance of events and experiences.*
B1	*Can enter unprepared into conversations unfamiliar topics.* *Can follow clearly articulated sign directed at him/her in everyday conversation, though will sometimes have two ask for repetition of particular words and phrases.* *Can maintain a conversational discussion but may sometimes be difficult to follow when trying to say exactly what he/she would like to.* *Can express and respond to feelings such as surprise, happiness, sadness, interest and indifference.*
A2	*Can establish social contact: greetings and farewells; introductions; giving thanks.* *Can generally understand clear, standard sign unfamiliar matters directed at him/her, provided he/she can ask for repetition or reformulation from time to time.* *Can participate in short conversations in routine contexts on topics of interest.* *Can express how he/she feels in simple terms, and express thanks.*
	Can handle very short social exchanges but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own accord, though he/she can be made to understand if the signer will take the trouble. *Can use simple everyday polite forms of greeting and dress.* *Can make and respond to invitations, suggestions and apologies.* *Can say what he/she likes and dislikes.*
A1	*Can make an introduction and use basic greeting and leave-taking expressions.* *Can ask how people are and react to news.* *Can understand everyday expressions aimed at the satisfaction of simple needs of a concrete type, delivered directly to him/her in clear, slow and repeated sign by a sympathetic signer.*

	INFORMAL DISCUSSION (WITH FRIENDS)
C2	*As C1*
C1	*Can easily follow and contribute to complex interactions between third parties in group discussion even on abstract, complex unfamiliar topics.*
B2	*Can keep up with an animated discussion between native signers.* *Can express his/her ideas and opinions with precision, and present and respond to complex lines of argument convincingly.*
	Can take an active part in informal discussion in familiar contexts, commenting, putting point of view clearly, evaluating alternative proposals and making and responding to hypotheses. *Can with some effort catch much of what is signed around him/her in discussion, but may find it difficult to put a paid effectively in discussion with several native signers who do not modify their language in any way.* *Can account for and sustain his/her opinions in discussion by providing relevant explanations, arguments and comments.*
B1	*Can follow much of what is signed around him/her on general topics provided interlocutors avoid very idiomatic usage and articulate clearly.* *Can express his/her thoughts about abstract cultural topics such as films.* *Can explain why something is a problem.* *Can give brief comment on the views of others.* *Can compare and contrast alternatives, discussing what to do, work to go, who which to choose, etc.*
	Can generally follow the main points in an informal discussion with friends provided sign is clearly articulated in standard dialect. *Can give seek personal views and opinions in discussing topics of interest.* *Can make his/her opinions and reactions understood as regards solutions to problems or practical questions of where to go, what to do, how to organise an event (e.g. an outing).* *Can express belief, opinion, agreement and disagreement politely.*
A2	*Can generally identify the topic of discussion around him/her when it is conducted slowly and clearly.* *Can discuss what to do in the evening, at the weekend.* *Can make and respond to suggestions.* *Can agree and disagree with others.*
	Can discuss everyday practical issues in a simple way when addressed clearly, slowly indirectly. *Can discuss what to do, where to go and make arrangements to meet.*
A1	*No descriptors available*

	INFORMATION EXCHANGE
C2	*As B2*
C1	*As B2*
B2	*Can understand and exchange complex information and advice on the full range of matters related to his/her occupational role.*
	Can pass on detailed information reliably. *Can give a clear, detailed description of how to carry out a procedure.* *Can synthesise and report information and arguments from a number of sources.*
B1	*Can exchange, check and confirm accumulated factual information on familiar routine and non-routine matters within his/her field with some confidence.* *Can describe how to do something, giving detailed instructions.* *Can summarise and give his her opinion about a short story, article, talk, discussion, interview, or documentary and answer further questions of detail.*
	Can find out and pass on straightforward factual information. *Can ask for and follow detailed directions.* *Can obtain more detailed information.*
A2	*Can understand enough to manage simple, routine exchanges without undue effort.* *Can deal with practical everyday demands: finding out and passing on straightforward factual information.* *Can ask and answer questions about habits and routines.* *Can ask and answer questions about past times and past activities.* *Can give and follow simple directions and instructions, e.g. explain how to get somewhere.*
	Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information. *Can exchange limited information on familiar and routine operational matters.* *Can ask and answer questions about what they do at work and in free time.* *Can ask for and give directions referring to a map or plan.* *Can ask for and provide personal information.*
A1	*Can understand questions and instructions addressed carefully and slowly to him/her and follow short, simple directions.* *Can ask and answer simple questions, initiate and respond to simple statements in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.* *Can ask and answer questions about themselves and other people, where they live, people they know, things they have.* *Can indicate time by use of such lexicalised phrases like NEXT WEEK, RECENT NOVEMBER, 3 O'CLOCK, etc.*

	INTERVIEWING AND BEING INTERVIEWED
C2	*Can keep up his/her side of the dialogue extremely well, structuring the talk and interacting authoritatively with complete fluency as interviewer or interviewee, at no disadvantage to a native signer.*
C1	*Can participate fully in an interview, as either interviewer or interviewee, expanding and developing the point being discussed fluently without any support, and handling interjections well.*
B2	*Can carry out an effective, fluent interview, departing spontaneously from prepared questions, following up and probing interesting replies.*
	Can take initiatives in an interview, expand and develop ideas with a little help or prodding from an interviewer.
B1	*Can provide concrete information required in an interview/consultation (e.g. describe symptoms to a doctor) but does so with limited precision.* *Can carry out a prepared interview, checking and confirming information, though he/she may occasionally have to ask for repetition if the other person's responses are rapid or extended.*
	Can take some initiatives in an interview/consultation (e.g. to bring up a new subject) but is very dependent on interviewer in the interaction. *Can use a prepared questionnaire to carry out a structured interview, with some spontaneous follow-up questions.*
A2	*Can make him/herself understood in an interview and communicate ideas and information unfamiliar topics, provided he/she can ask for clarification occasionally, and is given some help to express what he/she wants to.*
	Can answer simple questions and respond to simple statements in an interview.
A1	*Can reply in an interview to simple direct questions signed very slowly and clearly in direct non-idiomatic sign about personal details.*

	OVERALL SIGNED INTERACTION
C2	*Has good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms with awareness of connotative levels of meaning.* *Can convey finer shades of meaning precisely by using, with reasonable accuracy, a wide range of modification devices.* *Can backtrack and restructure around a difficulty so smoothly the interlocutor is hardly aware of it.*
C1	*Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly.* *Has a good command of a broad lexical repertoire allowing gaps to be readily overcome with circumlocutions.* *There is little obvious searching for expressions or avoidance strategies; only conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language.*
B2	*Can use the language fluently, accurately and effectively on a wide range of general, academic, vocational or leisure topics, marking clearly the relationships between ideas.* *Can communicate spontaneously with good grammatical control without much sign of having to restrict what he/she wants to say, adopting a level of formality appropriate to the circumstances.*
	Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction, and sustained relationships with native signers quite possible without imposing strain on either party. *Can highlight the personal significance of events and experiences, account for and sustain views clearly by providing relevant explanations and arguments.*
B1	*Can communicate with some confidence on familiar routine and non-routine matters related to his/her interests and professional field.* *Can exchange, check and confirm information, deal with less routine situations and explain why something is a problem.* *Can express thoughts on more abstract, cultural topics such as films, books, music etc.*
	Can exploit a wide range of simple language to deal with most situations likely to arise while travelling. *Can enter unprepared into conversation on familiar topics, express personal opinions and exchange information on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).*
A2	*Can interact with reasonable ease in structured situations and short conversations, provided the other person helps if necessary.* *Can manage simple, routine exchanges with out on due effort; can ask and answer questions and exchange ideas and information on familiar topics in predictable everyday situations.*
	Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters to do with work and free time. *Can handle very short social exchanges but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own accord.*
A1	*Can interact in a simple way but communication is totally dependent on repetition at a slower rate of sign, rephrasing and repair.* *Can ask and answer simple questions, in this series and respond to simple statements in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.*

	TRANSACTIONS TO OBTAIN GOODS AND SERVICES
C2	*As B2*
C1	*As B2*
B2	*Can cope linguistically to negotiate a solution to dispute like an undeserved rebuke, financial responsibility for damage in a flat, for blame regarding an accident.* *Can outline the case for compensation, using persuasive language to demand satisfaction and state clearly be limits to any concession he/she is prepared to make.*
	Can explain a problem which has arisen and make it clear that the provider of the service/customer must make a concession.
B1	*Can deal with most transactions likely to arise while travelling, arranging travel accommodation, or dealing with a torrid tease during foreign visits.* *Can cope with less routine situations in shops, e.g. returning an unsatisfactory purchase.* *Can make a complaint.* *Can deal with most situations likely to arise when making travel arrangements of wine actually travelling, e.g. asking another signer where to get off for an unfamiliar destination.*
	Can deal with common aspect of everyday living such as travel, lodgings, eating and shopping.
A2	*Can ask for and provide everyday goods and services.* *Can get simple information about travel, use public transport: Buses, trains and taxis, ask and give directions, and buy tickets. Can ask about things and make simple transactions in shops.* *Can receive and give information about quantities, numbers, prices, etc.* *Can make simple purchases by stating what is wanted in asking the price.* *Can order a meal.*
A1	*Can ask people for things and give people things. Can handle numbers, quantities, cost and time.*

	UNDERSTANDING A NATIVE SIGNER INTERLOCUTOR
C2	*Can understand any native signer interlocutor, even on abstract and complex topics of a specialist nature beyond his/her own field, given an opportunity to adjust to a non-standard dialect.*
C1	*Can understand in detail signed content on abstract and complex topics of the specialist nature beyond his/her own field, though he/she may need to confirm occasional details, especially if the accent/dialect is unfamiliar.*
B2	*Can understand in detail what is signed to him/her in the standard signed language even in a visually noisy environment.*
B1	*Can follow clearly articulated sign directed at him/her in everyday conversation, though will sometimes have two ask for repetition of particular words and phrases.*
A2	*Can understand enough to manage simple, routine exchanges with doubt on due effort. Can generally understand clear, standard sign unfamiliar matter is directed at him/her, provided he/she can ask for repetition or reformulation from time to time.*
	Can understand what is signed clearly, slowly and directly to him/her in simple everyday conversation; can be made to understand, if the signer can take the trouble.
A1	*Can understand everyday expressions aimed at the satisfaction of simple needs of a concrete type, delivered directly to him/her in clear, slow and repeated sign by a sympathetic signer.* *Can understand questions and instructions addressed personally and slowly to him/her and follow short, simple directions.*

Interaction Strategies

	ASKING FOR CLARIFICATION
C2	*As B2*
C1	*As B2*
B2	*Can ask follow-up questions to check that he/she has understood what a signer intended to say, and get clarification of ambiguous points.*
B1	*Can ask someone to clarify or elaborate what they have just said.*
A2	*Can ask very simply for repetition when he/she does not understand.* *Can ask for clarification about keywords or phrases not understood using stock phrases.*
	Can say he/she did not follow.
A1	*No descriptor available*

	CO-OPERATING		
C2	*As C1*		
C1	*Can relate own contribution skilfully to those of other signers.*		
B2	*Can give feedback on and follow-up statements and inferences and so help the development of the discussion.* *Can help the discussion along unfamiliar ground, confirming comprehension, inviting others in, etc.*		
B1	*Can exploit a basic repertoire of language and strategies to help keep a conversation or discussion going.* *Can summarise the point reached in a discussion and so help focus the talk.*		
	Can repeat back part of what someone has said to confirm mutual understanding and help keep the development of ideas on course. *Can invite others into the discussion.*		
A2	*Can indicate when he/she is following.*		
A1	*No descriptor available*		

	TAKING THE FLOOR
C2	*As C1*
C1	*Can select a suitable phrase from a readily available range of discourse functions to pre-face his/her remarks appropriately in order to get the floor, or to gain time and keep the floor whilst thinking.*
B2	*Can intervene appropriately in discussion, exploiting appropriate language to do so.* *Can initiate, maintain and end discourse appropriately with effective turn taking.* *Can initiate discourse, take his/her turn when appropriate and end conversation when he/she needs to, though he/she may not always do this elegantly.* *Can use stock phrases "e.g. DIFFICULT QUESTION) to gain time and keep the turn while formulating what to say.*
B1	*Can intervene in a discussion on a familiar topic, using a suitable phrase to get the floor.*
	Can initiate, maintain and close simple, face-to-face conversation on topics that are familiar or of personal interest.
A2	*Can use simple techniques to start, maintain or end a short conversation.* *Can initiate, maintain and close simple, face-to-face conversation.*
	Can ask for attention.
A1	*No descriptor available*

Processing Text

	GENERAL LINGUISTIC RANGE
C2	*Can exploit a comprehensive and reliable mastery of a very wide range of language to formulate thoughts precisely, give emphasis, differentiate and eliminate ambiguity... No signs of having to restrict what he/she wants to say.*
C1	*Can select an appropriate formulation from a broad range of language to express him/herself clearly, without having to restrict what he/she wants to say.*
B2	*Can express him/herself clearly and without much sign of having to restrict what he/she wants to say.*
	Has a sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints and develop arguments without much conspicuous searching for words, using some complex sentence forms to do so.
B1	*Has a sufficient range of language to describe abstract or cultural topics such as sign poetry or films.*
	Has enough language to get by, with sufficient vocabulary to express him/herself with some hesitation and circumlocutions on topics such as family, hobbies and interests, work, travel, and current offence, but lexical limitations cause repetition and even difficulty with formulation at times.
A2	*Has a repertoire of basic language which enables him/her to deal with everyday situations with predictable content, though he/she will generally have to compromise the message and search for words.*
	Can produce brief everyday expressions in order to satisfy simple needs of a concrete type: personal details, daily routines, wants and needs, requests for information. *Can use basic sentence patterns and communicate with memorised phrases, groups of a few words and formulate about themselves and other people, what they do, places, possessions, etc.* *Has a limited repertoire of short memorised phrases covering predictable survival situations; frequent breakdowns and misunderstandings occur in non-routine situations.*
A1	*Has a very basic range of simple expressions about personal details and needs of a concrete type.*

	GRAMMATICAL ACCURACY
C2	*Maintains consistent grammatical control of complex language, even while attention is otherwise gauged (e.g. in forward planning, monitoring others' reactions).*
C1	*Consistently maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy; errors are rare and difficult to spot.*
B2	*Good grammatical control; occasional 'slips' or non-systematic errors and minor flaws in sentence structure may still occur, but they are rare and can often be corrected in retrospect.*
	Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical control. Does not make mistakes which lead to misunderstanding.
B1	*Communicates with reasonable accuracy in similar contact; generally good control though with notable noticeable mother tongue influence.* *Errors occur, but it is clear what he/she is trying to express.*
	Uses reasonably accurately a repertoire of frequently used 'routines' and patterns associated with more predictable situations.
A2	*Uses some simple structures correctly, but still systematically makes basic mistakes - for example tends to mix up the marking of time and forgets to mark agreement; it is usually clear what he/she is trying to say.*
A1	*Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a learnt repertoire.*

	PHONOLOGICAL CONTROL
C2	*As C1*
C1	*Can vary intonation and place sentence stress correctly in order to express finer shades of meaning.*
B2	*Has acquired a clear, natural, pronunciation and intonation.*
B1	*Pronunciation is clearly intelligible even if a "foreign accent" is sometimes evident and occasional mispronunciations occur.*
A2	*Pronunciation is generally clear enough to be understood despite a noticeable "foreign accent", but conversational partners will need to ask for repetition from time to time.*
A1	*Pronunciation of a very limited repertoire of learnt words and phrases can be understood with some effort by native signers used to dealing with learner signers.*

	SOCIOLINGUISTIC APPROPRIATENESS
C2	*Has a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms with awareness of, connotative levels of meaning.* *Appreciates fully the sociolinguistic and sociocultural implications of language used by native signers and can react accordingly.* *Can mediate effectively between signers of the target language and that of his/her community of origin taking account of sociocultural and sociolinguistic differences.*
C1	*Can recognise a wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms, appreciating register shifts; may, however, needs to confirm occasional details, especially if the "accent" is unfamiliar.* *Can follow video footage employing a considerable degree of slang and idiomatic usage.* *Can use language flexibly and effectively for social purposes, including emotional, allusive and joking usage.*
B2	*Can express him or herself confidently, clearly and politely in a formal or informal register, appropriate to the situation and person(s) concerned.*
	Can with some effort to keep up with and contribute to group discussions even when signing is fast and colloquial. *With native signers without unintentionally amusing or irritating them by requiring them to behave other than they would with a native signer.* *Can express him herself appropriately in situations and avoid crass errors of formulation.*
B1	*Can perform and respond to a wide range of language functions, using the most common exponent in neutral register.* *Is aware of the salient politeness conventions and act appropriately.* *Is aware of, and looks out for signs of, the most significant differences between the customs, usages, attitudes, values and beliefs prevailing in the community concerned and those of his or her own.*
A2	*Can perform and respond to basic language functions, such as information exchange and requests and express opinions and attitudes and simple way.* *Can socialise simply but effectively using the simplest common expressions and following basic routines.*
	Can handle very short social exchanges, using everyday polite forms of greetings and address. *Can make and respond to invitations, suggestions, apologies, etc.*
A1	*Can establish basic social contact by using the simplest everyday polite forms of: greetings and farewells; Introductions; saying please, thank you, sorry, etc.*

	VOCABULARY CONTROL
C2	*Consistently correct and appropriate use of vocabulary.*
C1	*Occasional minor slips, but no significant vocabulary errors.*
B2	*Lexical accuracy is generally high, though some confusion and incorrect word choice does occur without hindering communication.*
B1	*Shows good control of elementary vocabulary but major errors still occur when expressing more complex thoughts were handling unfamiliar topics and situations.*
A2	*Can control and narrow repertoire dealing with concrete everyday needs*
A1	*No descriptor available*

	VOCABULARY RANGE
C2	*Has a good command of a very broad lexical repertoire including idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms; shows awareness of connotative levels of meaning.*
C1	*Has a good command of a broad lexical repertoire [established and productive vocabulary] allowing gaps to be readily overcome with circumlocution; little obvious searching for expressions or avoidance strategies.* *Good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms.*
B2	*Has a good range of repertoire [established and productive] vocabulary for matters connected to his/her field and most general topics.* *Can vary formulation to avoid frequent repetition but lexical gaps can still cause hesitation and circumlocution.*
B1	*Has a sufficient repertoire [established and productive] vocabulary to express him/herself with some circumlocutions on most topics pertinent to his/her everyday life such as family, hobbies and interests, work, travel and current events.*
A2	*Has sufficient repertoire [established and productive] vocabulary to conduct routine, everyday transactions involving familiar situations and topics.* *Has a sufficient repertoire [established] vocabulary for the expression of basic communicative needs.* *Has a sufficient [established] vocabulary for coping with simple survival needs.*
A1	*Has a basic [established] vocabulary repertoire of isolated words and phrases related to particular concrete situations.*

Pragmatic Competencies

	FLEXIBILITY
C2	*Shows great flexibility reformulate ideas and different linguistic forms to give emphasis, to differentiate according to the situation, interlocutor, etc. and to eliminate ambiguity.*
C1	*As B2*
B2	*Can adjust what he/she says and the recipient and adopt a level of formality appropriate to the circumstances.*
	Can adjust to the changes of direction, style and emphasis normally found in conversation. Can vary formulation of what he/she wants to say.
B1	*Can adapt his/her expression to deal with less routine, even difficult, situations.*
	Can exploit a wide range of simple language flexibly to express much of what he/she wants.
A2	*Can adapt well rehearsed memorised simple phrases to particular circumstances through limited lexical substitution.*
	Can expand learned phrases through simple recombinations of their elements.
A1	*No descriptor available*

	NARRATIVES
C2	*As C1*
C1	*Can give elaborate descriptions and narratives, integrating sub-teams, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.*
B2	*Can develop a clear description or narrative, expanding and supporting his/her main points with relevant supporting detail and examples.*
B1	*Can reasonably fluently relate a straightforward narrative or description as a linear sequence of points.*
A2	*Can tell a story or describe something in a simple list of points.*
A1	*No descriptor available*

Thematic Development

	COHERENCE AND COHESION
C2	*Can create coherent and cohesive text making full and appropriate use of a variety of organisational patterns and a wide range of cohesive devices.*
C1	*Can produce clear, smoothly flowing, well structured sign, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.*
B2	*Can use a variety of linking words sufficiently to mark clearly the relationship between ideas.*
	Can use a limited number of cohesive devices to link his/her utterances into clear, coherent discourse, though there may be some "jumpiness" in a long contribution.
B1	*Can link a series of shorter, discrete simple elements into a connected, linear sequence of points.*
A2	*Can use the most frequently occurring connectors to link simple sentences in order to tell a story or describe something as a simple list of points.*
	Can link groups of words with simple lexical connectors like "AND", "BUT" and "WHY-BECAUSE" as well as list buoys.
A1	*Can link words or groups of words with very basic linear connectors like "AND" or "NEXT".*

Qualitative Factors

	PROPOSITIONAL PRECISION
C2	*Can convey finer shades of meaning precisely by using, with reasonable accuracy, a wide range of qualifying devices (e.g. adverbs expressing degree, clauses expressing limitations). Can give emphasis, differentiate and eliminate ambiguity.*
C1	*Can qualify opinions and statements precisely in relation to degrees of, for example, certainty/uncertainty, believe/doubt, likelihood, etc.*
B2	*Can pass on detailed information reliably.*
B1	*Can explain the main points in an idea or problem with reasonable precision.*
	Can convey simple, straightforward information of immediate relevance, getting across which point he/she feels is most important. *Can express the main point he/she wants to make comprehensively.*
A2	*Can communicate what he/she wants to say in a simple and direct exchange of limited information on familiar and routine matters, but in other situations he/she generally has to compromise the message.*
A1	*No descriptor available*

	SIGN FLUENCY
C2	*Can express him/herself at length with the natural, effortless, unhesitatingly flow. Pauses only to reflect on precisely the right words to express his/her thoughts or to find an appropriate example or explanation.*
C1	*Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language.*
B2	*Can communicate spontaneously, often showing remarkable fluency and ease of expression in even longer complex stretches of sign.*
	Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo; although he/she can be hesitant as he/she searches for passions and expressions, there are few noticeably long pauses. Can interact with the degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native signers quite possible without imposing strain on either party.
B1	*Can express him/herself with relative ease. Despite some problems with formulation resulting in pauses and "cul-de-sacs", he/she is able to keep going effectively without help.*
	Can keep going comprehensively, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident, especially in longer stretches of free production.
A2	*Can make him/herself understood in short contributions, even though pauses, false starts and reformulation are very evident.*
	Can construct phrases unfamiliar topics with sufficient ease to handle short exchanges, despite very noticeable hesitation and false starts.
A1	*Can manage very short, isolated, mainly pre-packaged utterances, with much pausing to search for expressions, to articulate less familiar words, and to repair communication.*

Glossary

CEFR Generic Terms

Bilingualism/bimodal bilingualism; Plurilingualism/multilingualism	**Bilingualism:** An individual or community's capacity to communicate, at whatever level of proficiency, in two languages.
	Bimodal bilingualism can be defined as bilingual competency in one spoken and one signed language referring to the different modes that they are used in.
	Multilingualism: The presence in a society or community of two or more languages.
	Plurilingualism: An individual's capacity to communicate, at whatever level of proficiency, in two or more languages.
Pronunciation and accent	Pronunciation refers to the way a word or a language is spoken, or the manner in which someone utters a word. If one is said to have 'correct pronunciation', then it refers to both within a particular dialect. A word can be spoken in different ways by various individuals or groups. Pronunciation differences are influenced by many factors including where someone grew up; where someone now lives; if they have a disorder that affects their speech or sign production; their ethnic/cultural group; their social class, or their education.
	Pronunciation can be defined as how someone pronounces (manual or vocal) signs/words; i.e. the utterance of a spoken or sign language. We can also note that the term pronunciation is also used to refer to the way a word or a sign is usually articulated (signed or spoken). "Sign production" is more widely used when talking about "pronunciation" in sign languages.
	Accent refers to a special way of pronouncing words or signs (e.g. because someone has a regional or foreign accent, which can be identified as 'different' from a local accent).

Fluency (functional communicative competency)	In CEFR, fluency is defined as the ability to express oneself effortlessly and skillfully in a language with a natural, smooth flow allowing the speaker/signer to communicate effectively in different settings. Fluency is often used to refer to a person's ability to speak or sign eloquently and at a proficient level.
Idiom/ idiomatic expression/idiomatic signs/metaphor	Idioms are certain expressions of a language with a meaning that cannot be guessed from the meanings of the individual words. If something happens "**out of the blue**" for English, for instance, it happens unexpectedly. In ÖGS (Austrian Sign Language), **ALTE SUPPE (OLD SOUP)** is used to express that something has been long out of date or a problem is already well-known.
	A thing regarded as representative or symbolic of something else is referred to as metaphor. If somebody is a "tiger" (English), they are very strong. If **EGG BROKEN** (ÖGS) is signed, it is to say that one cannot go back (i.e. it is too late to change the outcome of an event).
Colloquialism	Colloquialism describes informal expressions that are likely to be used in everyday situations and not in formal situations. If somebody is informally said to "have gone nuts", he/she has gone crazy, for example.
Pragmatics	Pragmatics is the study of how language is affected by the situation in which it is used. When a signer or speaker has pragmatic competence, they know how to use language to get things or perform actions; they know how signs/words can express concepts that are different from what they appear to mean. Context affects language use in all settings. For example, it affects how a text is spoken or written in a given situation. Context also affects the communicative situation in which discourse is produced or understood: the context affects signer/speaker linguistic choices. How a signer/speaker conceptualizes a context will influence what s/he signs/says, guided by the situation s/he is in. This results in appropriate communication, sensitive to the situated context.

Sociolinguistic competence	Sociolinguistic competence is concerned with the knowledge and skills required to deal with the social dimension of language use. Sociolinguistic competence is the ability to interpret the social meaning of linguistic variation, the language and code-switching choices made by signers/speakers in specific situations in order to participate in a range of communicative activities. In addition**, s**ociolinguistic competence is as part of the sociocultural competence that allows community members to participate in different activities in linguistically and culturally diverse contexts.
Proposition/propositional precision	Propositions in languages can be described as descriptors of states of affairs or the basic elements of sentence meaning. These include reference to agents, patients and activities to express the relationship between concepts that a signer/speaker refers to. Propositions can include (but are not limited to) statements, questions, and commands (imperatives). *Example:* *The woman made the soup. (command)* *Did the woman make the soup? (question)* *The woman must make the soup now! (imperative)* Even though the sentences above differ in illocutionary force (statement, question and command), all of them share a propositional element which is the agent (the woman), the activity (to make) and the patient (the soup). For sign languages, the proposition includes signs and non-manual components that combine in particular ways depending on the type of proposition presented. In CEFR, propositional precision is defined as the ability to formulate thoughts and propositions so as to make one's meaning clear.
Cohesion and coherence	Cohesion is the use of linguistic devices to scaffold relations between sentences and parts of texts. Coherence is a characteristic of the interlocutor's mental representation of a text. Cohesion and coherence cannot be completely separated out from each other: they work in harmony to ensure that the signer/speaker/writer's attempts at presenting a cohesive text can be perceived by their interlocutor/reader.

Text types & genre	Text types refer to the kinds or categories of texts that we produce. These include argumentative texts (i.e. presenting both sides of an argument), informative texts (providing explanations of what has happened), explanatory (providing information about processes, often in chronological order) and narrative texts (presenting a story with information on characters, place and time).
Deictic (deixis) and anaphoric (anaphora) referencing	Deictic reference (deixis) relates to how we introduce referents in discourse from the vantage of our present position and time. For example, if we sign using a classifier, the classifier can be both deictic and anaphoric. For example, if a signer produces the following, the interlocutor can see the scenario that is presented as a deictic utterance (that is, information is presented from the point of view of the signer). **Examples:** *CL-LEGS (forward in signing space)* *TREE (located at side right of signing space)* *non-dominant hand indexes towards TREE* *CL-CAR) located at centre of signing space)* Anaphoric reference is when we can refer back to previously introduced referents at later points in time and space. For example, if we have previously mentioned a MAN in a sign language discourse, we can refer back to his position in signing space, using an INDEX. In this way, we know that we are still referring to the same person. We can mark deictic and anaphoric structures with manual indices (INDEX), a change eye gaze or head position.

Language learner (sometimes referred to as L2 learner	A person wishing to acquire a language that is not their mother tongue **L1** First language known and spoken by a person. **L2** Second language known and spoken by a person.
Learner autonomy	The ability to take charge of one's own learning. Learner autonomy includes a capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making and independent action. Autonomous learners take responsibility for their own learning. This implies choice of aims, goal setting, making informed decisions about the kinds of content they wish to pursue, informed by their own interests and their current stage of proficiency, which they can determine via self-evaluation.

Terms Relating to Assessment

Assessment	**(1)**
	Gathers, quantifies and uses information to measure the degree of achievement of individuals and/or institutions. Assessment is an aspect of evaluation.
	Achievement assessment: measures the degree of achievement of learners in relation to objectives set by a particular course and its curriculum.
	Proficiency assessment: measures the achievements of learners against common reference levels and competences.
	ECML comments that one typically assesses the skills, competences and abilities of individual learners over time, which gives a clear picture of how a language learner is progressing.
	(2)
	A distinction is made between formative and summative assessment.
	In *formative assessment* the student's learning (attitudes, skills, habits and knowledge) is analysed over longer stretches of time and used to improve learning and teaching. Strengths of formative assessment over time include the fact that teachers can evaluate a student and modify their teaching approach to support student learning over time, with the aim of assisting the student to meet their language learning goals.
	Summative assessment is based on discrete-point testing of a student's learning, for example, at the end of a unit or year of study. Possible disadvantages of this approach include the fact that it is impossible to evaluate how a student has progressed as a result of a process of teaching and learning over time.
	(3)
	Assessment
	The measuring of a student's performance in a course according to the aims and objectives of that course.

Validity	A test is valid if it measures what we intend it to measure. For example, if we want to measure a group of people's communicative ability in Italian, we would expect that the results would vary across the group, depending on their range of language competence: i.e. we would expect that some would score high, some would score less well.
	We can also talk about the validity of how tests are used: here, validity relates to how the evidence and theory supports interpretations of test scored proposed by test use.
	A test is said to have content validity if the items or tasks it comprises constitute a representative sample of items or tasks for the area of knowledge or ability to be tested.
Reliability	Reliability in testing means consistency: a test with reliable scores produces the same or similar result on repeated use. We note that high reliability does not necessarily imply that a test is good or interpretations of the results are valid. A bad test can produce highly reliable scores.
	inter-rater reliability The degree to which different raters agree in their assessment of candidates' performance.
	intra-rater reliability The degree to which the same rater judges the same performance similarly on different occasions.
Feasibility	An assessment procedure also needs to be practical, to be *feasible*. Feasibility is particularly an issue with performance testing. Assessors operate under time pressure. They see only a limited sample of performance. Users of the CEFR must select from, and potentially collapse categories that are separated in the Framework.

Sign Language Specific Terms

Sign language (gestural space, signing space, iconicity)	Unlike spoken languages which operate linearly, sign languages are visual languages. This is reflected in several aspects such as the use of iconic signs and in the use of signing space. Iconicity describes the intimate interrelationship between form and meaning (e.g. DRINK – you can drink from a cup, from a fountain, take a sip from a tap, etc.). Signing space is the space surrounding the signer and this is where signs are generally produced, even when referring to events that happened at a time in the past.
Phonological parameters of sign languages (also see: Non Manual Features)	Each sign consists of both manual and non-manual features. Manual features can be discussed in terms of 4 parameters: handshape, orientation, location and orientation. For example, in the video file, the sign SEE is shown. Here, a 'V' handshape can be articulated with palm towards the signer, moving from in front of the signer's face outwards and slightly downwards in the direction of the item that is seen or the locus associated with the item that the signer is reporting they have (previously) seen.
Non Manual Features	Non-manual features are those features that do not involve the hands. They include movement of the eyes and eyebrows (e.g. raising or lowering the eyebrows, squinting); facial expressions (e.g. open or closed mouth, pursed lips); and movements of other body parts (e.g. moving the shoulders and/or head forward or backward). These features tend to cluster, e.g. a signer may lean forward, with brows raised, eyes wide open and lips gently parted. We can also distinguish between two general kinds of mouth patterns that arise in sign languages: (i) mouthings and (ii) mouth gestures. Even though sign languages are independent from the spoken languages that surround them in their shared geographical space, they are typically influenced by them. For example, the sign THINK may be accompanied by the mouth pattern, 'think', borrowed from English. Signers may also use mouth gestures, which are not derived from spoken languages.
Constructed action/ constructed dialogue/ perspective/ POV	Constructed action and constructed dialogue can be described as interactional sociolinguistic description of the role shifting commonly found in signed languages. Simply put, the terms refer to the "the way signers use their body, head, and eye gaze to report the actions, thoughts, words and expressions of characters within a discourse" (Metzger 1995: 256). Often, CA and CD are used to narrate stories but they are equally used for other text types, too.

PROSIGN

ENG

EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR
MODERN LANGUAGES

E C M L
C E L V

CENTRE EUROPEEN POUR
LES LANGUES VIVANTES

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE