

HELLENIC REPUBLIC National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

European Perspectives in Language Teaching, Learning, Assessment Frameworks for the promotion of multilingualism in Greece

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A multilingual exam suite



National Foreign Language Exam System (KPG)



Promoting multilingualism

Two of our most important projects are:

- a new integrated multilingual curriculum for the most commonly taught European languages.
- a multilingual foreign language examinations suite, leading to a state certificate for language proficiency, known with the Greek acronym KPG.



What is the KPG exam suite?

- Developed by a group of experts appointed by the Greek Ministry of Education, it is an examination suite for the foreign languages most widely taught in Europe.
- It has been designed from the beginning as a multilingual framework.



In what way is KPG a multilingual framework for language tests?

The KPG framework contains common:

- proficiency scaling (aligned to the 6-level scale of the Council of Europe).
- illustrative descriptors (aligned to the CEFR) but validated through empirical data.
- accompanying criterial features from all the languages tested.
- (constructivist) view of language-in-use.



Other characteristics of the KPG?

- It contains test specifications for objective assessment of language proficiency, based on clear benchmarks and standardized measures.
- The measures are descriptors of competences on the 6-level scale (aligned to the CEFR).
- These descriptors have since been validated through empirical data.



How are descriptors validated?

- By using a task and text-based approach.
- By providing documentation to describe not only what one should be able to do, but also how.
- To this end, the language use that learners make in various communicative contexts is being described linguistically and documented.



Validation through documentation (1/2)

- The documentation uses extensive empirical evidence.
- Data is derived from the KPG English Corpus, which comprises collections of written texts [scripts] produced by candidates when tested at each of the 6-levels of foreign language proficiency.
- This Corpus has been developed over a period of seven years and, up to date, totals to 3.7 million words.



Validation through documentation (2/2)

 The KPG script collections have been systematized in a Script Database which is being enriched on an ongoing basis, maintaining a balance across proficiency levels, types of tasks which candidates are asked to perform as well as communicative environments to which they are asked to respond using the target language.



Multilingual operationalisation

- The exam suite is based on a generic (portable across languages) methodological framework, suitable for describing language performance across proficiency levels.
- Also, across languages, the exams:
 - test common competences and strategies.
 - are regulated by common specifications.
 - use a common test-task typology.



Administration

The KPG exams, administered by the Ministry of Education:

- are presently offered as paper-based tests in 6 languages.
- will soon be offered as a computer-based adaptive test –to test 6 levels of proficiency in 6 languages.



Testing understanding

- The KPG Computer Adaptive Language Test (CALT) platform is developed on a multilingual electronic platform to test both comprehension and production.
- The first part of the CALT tests:
 - reading comprehension,
 - listening comprehension,
 - language awareness.



The task-based CALT

- The CALT is not item but task based, as the smallest unit of the comprehension part is a task, not an item.
- Three test tasks comprise a 'testlet'.
- The candidate's performance in each testlet determines what testlet level s/he will be served next.



Composition of testlets

- Each testlet is composed of three tasks:
 - 1. One reading comprehension task.
 - 2. One language awareness task.
 - 3. One listening comprehension task.
- There is a common (across languages) formula as to the mix of the types of tasks that each testlet contains.



CALT task typology

- The KPG CALT contains 10 task types giving us in all 12 types of testlets.
- Each task is composed of 5 items as follows:
 - items testing comprehension of a source (written or audio) text.
 - items testing awareness of correct and appropriate use of language.



CALT testlet typology

- 3 tasks comprise a testlet.
- 3 testlets comprise a testing unit.
- 3-5 testing units comprise a complete.
 - a complete test for each of the lower levels (A1-B1) contains 3 testlets (45 items in total)
 - a complete test for each of the higher levels
 (B2-C2 level) contains 4 testlets (60 items).



Starting and moving through the test

- The candidate chooses the level of the testlet s/he wants to start with and then if:
 - s/he is successful on 50% of the items, the next testlet is of the same level.
 - his/her success is below 50%, the next testlet is of lower level.
 - If his/her success is above 50%, the next testlet is of higher level.



Digital e-test typology

Reading comprehension (French B2) Multiple choice (MC)-tick

| πεδο Β2 | Υπολογισμένος χρόνος:2802 | |
|----------|---------------------------|--|
| αμασία 1 | Αποθηκευμένος χρόνος: | |

Click the white button near the letter of the correct answer Επιλέξτε τη λευκή κουκίδα δίπλα από το γράμμα της σωστής απάντησης.

Submit & Next

Q

Επί

Δοκ

Lisez le texte reproduit ci-dessous et essayez de répondre aux questions suivantes.

1. Ce texte s'adresse surtout aux

- A. parents.
- B. médecins.
- C.O enseignants.

2. Sous quelle rubrique peut paraître le texte ci-dessous ?

- A. Santé.
- B. Loisirs et Activités.

C.O Culture.

3. La console de jeux et la toile agissent sur l'être humain

- A. physiologiquement.
- B. psychologiquement.
- C. psychologiquement ainsi que physiologiquement.
- 4. Les enfants passent un temps considérable devant le petit écran car
- A. ils en sont dépendants.
- B. des activités alternatives ne leur sont pas offertes.
- C. c'est leur principale source de plaisir.

5. Les parents doivent

- A. expliquer les images diffusées à la télévision.
- B. cacher leurs sentiments négatifs.
- C. regarder eux-mêmes les émissions de télévision avant de
- L. laisser leurs enfants les regarder.

LA « NOCIVITÉ » DES ÉCRANS EN QUESTION : DOIT-ON LES BANNIR ?

Votre enfant passe sa vie devant l'écran de télévision, d'ordinateur ou de sa console et cela vous inquiète. Mais les écrans sont-ils nocifs ? Voyons ce qu'en pense Serge Tisseron, psychiatre et psychanalyste, spécialiste de l'image.



Les différents supports (tv, portable, ordi, console...) amènent-ils une influence différente chacun ? Il y a une grande différence entre la télévision et les jeux vidéo ou l'ordinateur en général : c'est l'interactivité. Devant un écran de télévision, le spectateur n'a pas d'interactivité physique mais psychique et mentale. Si vous regardez un film, vous êtes amené à imaginer ce qu'il va se passer ou à juger le comportement du héros. L'expérience menée à Strasbourg (visant à moins utiliser voire supprimer tous les écrans de la vie des enfants pendant 10 jours) a montré que les enfants eux-mêmes étaient prêts à ne plus regarder la télé si on leur proposait autre chose. Ils sont beaucoup moins « accros » aux écrans que les adultes. Les enfants qui regardent le plus la télé sont ceux dont les parents sont rivés à leur télé, selon une étude américaine. Souvent ce qui pousse les enfants à allumer un écran, c'est de lutter contre le sentiment de solitude et d'abandon.

Diriez-vous que les écrans ne sont pas nocifs ?

Tout est question d'usage. Il faut apprendre à utiliser les écrans pour le meilleur de ce qu'ils peuvent nous apporter. Il ne faut pas les considérer



Reading comprehension (German C1) Multiple choice (MC)-tick

Επίπεδο C1 Υπολογισ Δοκιμασία 1 Αποθηκευ

ολογισμενος χρονος:2/2 οθηκευμένος χρόνος: Click the white button near the letter of the correct answer Επιλέξτε τη λευκή κουκίδα δίπλα από το γράμμα της σωστής απάντησης.

Submit & Next

Q

Lesen Sie den Text und wählen Sie Antwort A, B oder C.

1. Das Franzbrötchen ...

- A. ist eine französische Erfindung.
- B. gibt es seit 200 Jahren.
- C. O schmeckt nicht besonders.

2. Die Bäckerei rationiert die Abgabe der Cronuts, weil ...

- A. sie so gefragt sind.
- B. sie nicht mehr produzieren kann.
- C. sie zu teuer sind.
- 3. Der Lieferservice für die Cronuts ...
- A. O wurde von der Bäckerei organisiert.
- B. 🗇 lässt sich vor allem für das Warten bezahlen.
- C. O hält das Warten für lästig.
- 4. Die Bäckerei ...
- A. \odot warnt davor, Cronuts zu kaufen, die ein anderer schon in der Hand hatte.
- B. ist von dem Lieferservice begeistert.
- C. sieht sich ihre Kunden genau an.

5. In New York ...

- A. gibt es keine braven Bäcker mehr.
- B. \bigcirc macht man sogar aus einer Not einen Werbegag.
- C. wird offenbar alles angeboten.

Im Dutzend teurer

Es gibt Dinge, die man außerhalb bestimmter Regionen einfach nicht versteht: Warum gibt es zum Beispiel Leute, die für zwei Exemplare eines Kleingebäcks je 100 Dollar zahlen, wenn eines für nur fünf Dollar zu haben ist? Und warum kosten zehn Stück gleich 1500 Dollar? Das kann wirklich nur ein New Yorker erklären. Wer schon einmal hungrig in Hamburg war, der kennt es vielleicht: das Franzbrötchen, ein süßes Plundergebäck mit Zimt. Es geht die Sage, dass Bäcker zur Zeit der französischen Besatzung im frühen 19. Jahrhundert versucht haben sollen, Croissants zu kopieren. Das mehr oder weniger traurige Ergebnis sei dann als Ur-Franzbrötchen in die Geschichte eingegangen und habe diese hanseatische Spezialität begründet.

Ein ähnliches kulturelles Crossover-Gebäck erobert nun New York: Der "Cronut" ist eine Fusion aus Croissant und Donut - und so begehrt, dass die Dominique Ansel Bäckerei, die sie erfunden hat, sie streng rationiert: Maximal zwei Teilchen werden an einen Kunden abgegeben - für fünf Dollar pro Stück.



Tasche greifen: Für zehn Stück muss man 1500 Dollar (1120 Euro) anlegen, 20 gibt es für 5000 Dollar (3730 Euro).

Bei der Dominique Ansel Bäckerei ist man alles andere als begeistert, dass man ihre begehrten Teigteilchen zu Wucherpreisen weiterverhökert. Die Mitarbeiter versuchen nun zweifelhaft, die Zwischenhändler unter ihren Kunden auszumachen und warnen alle Cronut-Fans davor, Gebäck aus zweiter Hand zu erwerben.

Noch auf der Suche nach einer Geschäftsidee?

So richtig scheint es den braven Bäckern jedoch nicht zu gelingen: Der Einkaufsservice



Reading comprehension (English C2) Multiple choice (MC)-tick



Arcimboldo: 16th c. Milanese painter

One of the questions concerning this unique painter (1527-1593) is his real name. He was the court painter at the Imperial courts in Vienna and Prague from 1562 to 1587. His name is being spelled differently until today: Giuseppe Arcimboldi, Arcimboldo, and Joseffi Arcimboldi. The name has probably a Germanic origin which can be traced back to a mythical ancestor, a certain Saxon knight called Siegfried who served the emperor etymology of Arcimboldo from, Erzim Wald ("Ore in the forest").



Arcimboldo is an artist with an indisputable claim to the word "marvelous." He singlemindedly pursued his invention, termed the "composite head," to which he applied numerous and varied subjects. In the form of painting he originated, apt and witty combinations of animals, fish, fruit, vegetables, and a variety of other objects, all painted with meticulous realism, are fitted together into head-and-shoulder figures that sometimes have the look of

Submit & Next

portraits. Each component, whether object or creature, is sensitively chosen and beautifully represented, and all are crowded together to produce figures. The viewer's eye recomposes the separate objects in such a way as to compose the human face by assembling the parts of

The matter of its sources is intensely debated. Firstly, Arcimboldo was exposed to Da Vinci's humourous sketches of those admirable monsters, those hybrids of flora and fauna meshing bizarrely into the human face. These drawings fascinated him and remained in his memory all his life. Secondly, there are many Indian miniatures showing animals, usually elephants, horses, and antelopes that overlap with other animals or with human figures, which he may have seen. Roger Caillois also points to decorated initials in 15th century manuscripts; the illuminators made whimsical composites of men, animals, and plants that retain the form of letters, and he suggests that the artist may have borrowed these stratagems, by which he says, "the eve is invited to decompose and to reconstruct the total image." Arcimboldo's major works were his numerous series on allegorical themes, especially the Four Seasons and

Art critics debate whether his paintings were whimsical or the product of a deranged mind.



Language awareness (Italian C1) Multiple match-insert missing item

Επίπεδο C1 Υπολογισμένος χρόνος Δοκιμασία 1 Αποθηκευμένος χρόνος Drag the letter from the text on the left into the white dot on the right. Σύρετε το γράμμα από το κείμενο αριστερά στις λευκές κουκίδες δεξιά.

Submit & Next

G

Tra le risposte (1-5) che il fisico Carlo Rubbia dà nel corso di un'intervista ("L'errore nucleare. Il futuro è nel sole" www.repubblica.it), dove fa ognuno degli atti comunicativi (A-F) seguenti?

Attenzione: c'è un atto in più, che non serve.

Smantella una delle obiezioni più frequenti da parte di chi si oppone al solare.

Ribadisce la necessità di rinunciare alle forme tradizionali di energia e di ricorrere all'energia solare.

Si dice certo della sconfitta dell'Italia nella corsa allo sfruttamento dell'energia solare.

D Esprime il suo dolore per l'ostilità all'energia solare da parte dei politici italiani.

• Mette in evidenza i molti interrogativi lasciati in sospeso da chi difende il nucleare.

Accenna ad un audace progetto in fase di elaborazione che risolve un altro ostacolo tecnico degli impianti solari.

Parla Carlo Rubbia, il Nobel per la Fisica

«Si sa dove costruire gli impianti? Come smaltire le scorie? Si è consapevoli del fatto che per realizzare una centrale occorrono almeno dieci anni? Ci si rende conto che quattro o otto centrali sono come una rondine in primavera e non risolvono il problema? Se non c'è risposta a queste domande, diventa difficile anche solo discutere del nucleare italiano».

«La Spagna ha già in via di realizzazione impianti per 14mila megawatt e si è dimostrata capace di avviare una grossa centrale solare nell'arco di 18 mesi. Tutto questo mentre noi passiamo il tempo a ipotizzare reattori nucleari che avranno

 bisogno di un decennio di lavori. L'unico dubbio ormai non è se l'energia solare si svilupperà, ma chi sarà a vincere la gara. Ovviamente non parlo dell'Italia. I paesi in cui si concentrano i progressi sono altri: Spagna, Cile, Messico, Cina, India, Germania, Stati Uniti».

«Si obietta spesso che anche per il solare non mancano i problemi. Basta che arrivi una nuvola... Questo inconveniente si supera con il solare termodinamico, che è capace di accumulare l'energia raccolta durante le ore di sole e il calore viene rilasciato durante le ore di buio o di nuvole. Gli impianti solari termodinamici - a differenza di pale eoliche e pannelli fotovoltaici - sono in grado di risolvere il problema dell'accumulo».



Language awareness (Spanish A2) Matching-drag-'n-drop (Q&A)

| Drag the corresponding text from the right into the blank space on the left. Σύρετε το σωστό κείμενο από δεξιά στο κενό που αντιστοιχεί αριστερά. Submit & Next | |
|--|--|
| rama televisivo | |
| B. <u>EL JARDÍN ENCANTADO: Dibujos animados.</u> | |
| C. <u>RECETAS DE LA ABUELA: Hoy 'especial sobre postres'.</u> | |
| D. <u>TELEDIARIO: Programa de noticias.</u> | |
| E. <u>CINE CLUB: 'Un amor de verano'.</u> | |
| F. <u>ESO VIENE DE LA FAMILIA: ¿Qué le pasará a Marisa después de</u> <u>la noticia sorprendente de ayer?</u> | |
| | Sóperze to osoció kzéjuévo anó šejué orto kzvó nou avruorovyci apiorzepá. Súbmit & Next rama televisivo Image: Some segue |



Language awareness (English B1) Fill in - write in a word

| he words in Column A (1-5) appear in the text. Change teem so that they are in the right form for the sentences in olumn B. δηγίες συμπλήρωσης: ρώτηση 1: Λείπουν 8 Γράμματα ρώτηση 2: Λείπουν 9 Γράμματα ρώτηση 3: Λείπουν 11 Γράμματα ρώτηση 4: Λείπουν 7 Γράμματα ρώτηση 5: Λείπουν 7 Γράμματα | Tour Guide 2010 Tour Guide 2010 The "Forest of Dean" is a plan atural beauty and rich histo Covering 35 square miles, the was formerly a royal hunting ground and for centuries it w valued for its resources of in stone, coal and timber. | ory. le forest (vas |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| | FOREST of DEAN tour guide 2010 | |
| | She told Parliament she had no 1. k of the affair. | (know) |
| | Recently the 2. p (popular) of the government has fallen dramatically. | |
| | I really enjoyed Nielsen's book. Basically, it's an 3. e (explore) of the human mind. | |
| | I don't know exactly what the ring is worth, but I thin guite 4. v (value). | k it's |
| | He comes from the North, so naturally he's got a | |
| | 5. n (north) accent. | |



Language awarness (German A1) Match-drag'n-drop

Επίπεδο Α1 Υπολογισμένο Δοκιμασία 1 Αποθηκευμένο

ογισμενος χρονος:556 πκευμένος χρόνος: Drag the correct word from the left into the blank space on the right. Σύρετε τη σωστή λέξη από αριστερά στο κενό που αντιστοιχεί δεξιά.

Submit & Next

G

Lies den Text und finde für jede Lücke (1-5) das richtige Wort (A-F). Ein Wort bleibt übrig. Διάβασε το κείμενο και διάλεξε για κάθε κενό (1-5) τη σωστή λέξη (A-F). Μία λέξη περισσεύει.

A Lieblingsfach

- B sind
- C zusammen
- D gern
- E Schwester
- F kommt

Kinder Europas

nach: planet-schule.de



Language awareness (English B1) writing in a word

Level C2 Activity 1 Time Remaining Fillin

Fillin the blank spaces by typing. Γεμίστε τα κενά με πληκτρολόγηση.

P FILL IN

Fill in the gaps in items 1-5 with ONE word, so that each statement makes sense.

Συμπλήρωσε τα κενά 1-5 με την πιο κατάλληλη λέξη.

Wedding customs from around the world

A Finland

The bride wears a crown and is blindfolded. She takes off her crown and places it on another girl's head. Whoever she crowns will be the next person to get **1**

B Holland

The bride and groom sit under a canopy of flowers following the ceremony, and they 2 best wishes and gifts from their friends.



C Georgia

The bride and groom go to the groom's house and 3 a plate into small pieces by standing on it together at the same time.

D Mexico

The guests 4 a circle around the couple in the shape of a heart. The newlyweds then dance their first dance together within this circle of love

E Romania

Right after the wedding, instead of rice, guests 5 sweets and nuts at the couple.



Listening comprehension (A1) Multiple match (drag-'n-drop letter/number)

| | Drag the letter from the right side of the screen into the white dot on the left. Σύρτε το γράμμα από τη δεξιά πλευρά της οθόνης στη λευκή κουκίδα αριστερά. |
|---|---|
| ten to five speakers telling how they like going to the city tre. Match what each speaker says with the most ropriate picture (A-F). Picture F is used in the example. αυσε πέντε ομιλητές να μιλούν για το μέσο που χρησιμοποιοί ν θέλουν να πάνε στο κέντρο της πόλης. Ταίριαξε αυτά που ε οι ομιλητές με την κατάλληλη εικόνα (A-F), όπως στο | EX 1 2 3 4 5 W How do you get to the city centre? |
| odócsyna. Speaker 1 | 0 0 0 |
| Speaker 2 | |
| Speaker 3 | |
| Speaker 4 | |
| Speaker 5 | |
| Speaker 6 | |
| | |



EX.

3.

Listening comprehension (Italian B1) Multiple match (drag-'n-drop letter/number)





Testing production

- Production performance is also computer based.
- The test with which production is tested is a leveled test.
- Its purpose to verify ...



Testing levelled performance

Testing speaking and oral mediation

Testing writing and written mediation

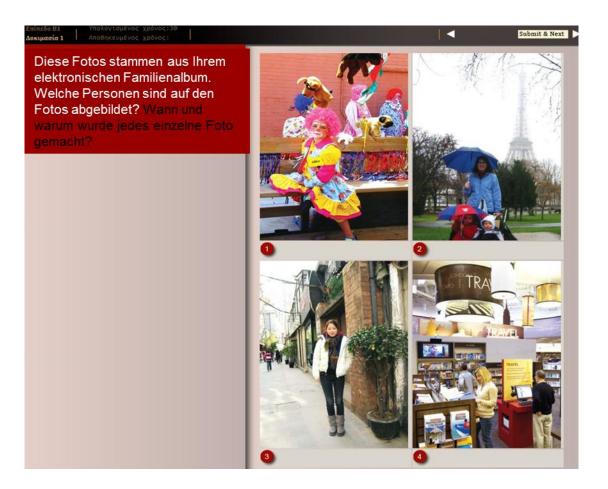


Oral production

- Similar test tasks across languages are aimed to assess context specific:
 - oral performance, stimulated by visual or multimodal texts in the target language.
 - oral mediation performance, stimulated by texts in the home language.



Speaking task (German B1)



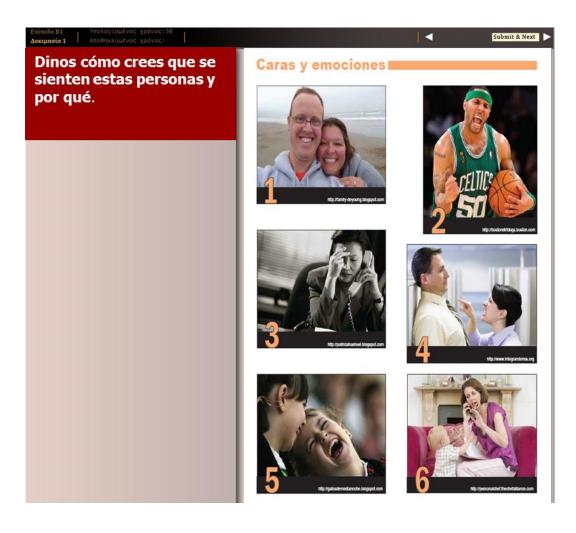


Speaking task (Italian B2)





Speaking task (Spanish B2)





Mediation in English (C2)





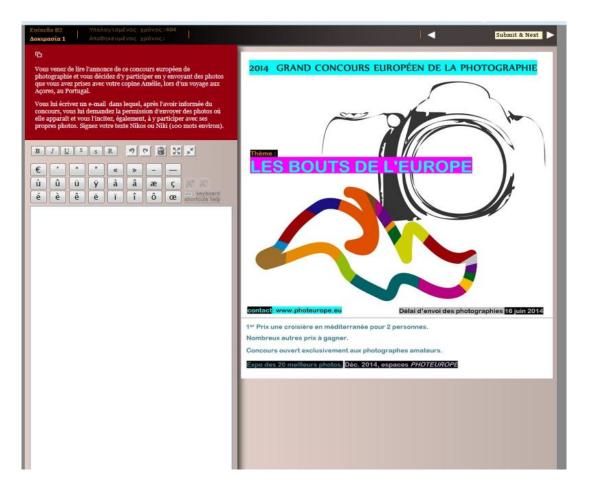
Writing production

Similar test tasks across languages are aimed to assess context specific:

- writing performance, stimulated by cues, visual or multimodal texts in the target language.
- written mediation performance, stimulated by texts in the home language.

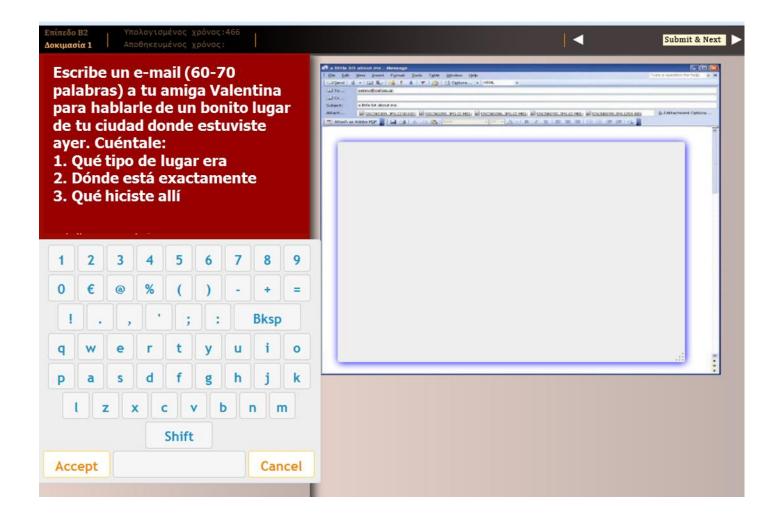


Writing task (French B2)



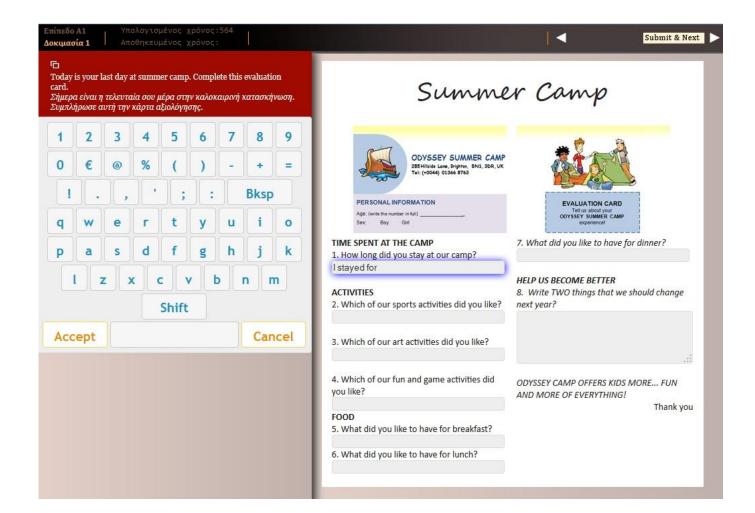


Writing task (Spanish A2)





Writing task (English A1)





Written mediation in Italian (C1)





The Piloting Tool

- It's a management system linked to the Authoring Tool.
- Its purpose is to manage trial runs (or the piloting) of each test task, in real-time conditions, with a view to examining the task's validity.



The Integrated Foreign Languages Curriculum (IFLC)

What is the Integrated Curriculum for Foreign Languages (IFLC)?

- Developed by a team of experts at the RCeL, UoA, as a component of the new National School Curriculum, this document constitutes a curriculum 'framework' which describes the language learning outcomes expected at key stages in school.
- The IFLC presents language teaching and learning content in terms of levels, equivalent to the 6 proficiency levels of the CEFR.
- It is a data-driven curriculum for the foreign languages taught in school, i.e., English, French, German, Italian and Spanish.



The pilot version of the IFLC (1/2)

- It includes levelled descriptors (what the language user should be able to do at different levels of language proficiency) in different situational contexts.
- IFLC descriptors are based on the KPG descriptors, which have been empirically trialled for several years through the levelled test tasks in test papers.



The pilot version of the IFLC (2/2)

- In order to be included in the IFLC, the KPG descriptors had to be revised as **learning outcome objectives**, using insights from additional resources such as:
 - previous curricula for foreign languages and syllabi.
 - foreign language course books used in Greek state schools.
 - test tasks for each of the competences to be developed.
 - learner data drawn from the scripts produced by different language candidates in the KPG exams.



The content of the IFLC

Articulated as can-do statements, the IFLC descriptors have been systematically structured in terms of regulated accounts of:

- communicative competences (linguistic, functional, pragmatic).
- cognitive processes reified in learning tasks (e.g. identification of information in text, sorting of information, text summarization, etc.).



The IFLC descriptors

These descriptors were then linked with:

- meta-data from the KPG Task Typology (the result of task analysis leading to a model language-use in communicative contexts)
- a subset of data acquired from syllabi and language teaching or testing materials were also used for specifying the IFLC descriptors and distributing them across levels.



Language theory behind the descriptors

- With an underlying view of language as a resource of meaning making) the IFLC can-do statements are formulated as social practices configured in texts.
- The term 'text' is defined as a coherent set of symbols, designed to articulate socially purposeful meaning.
- Texts are linked to context: the purpose for which each has been produced, the time and space constraints of the social situation to which each pertains, the knowledge, attitudes, and intentions of the participants in a given instance of communication.



IFLC vs. CEFR levelled descriptors (1/3)

- CEFR descriptors illustrate language use in terms of the language user's control of the properties of language (with statements about the range of vocabulary control that the language user is expected to have, for example, or the degree of grammatical accuracy s/he should exhibit at each proficiency level).
- The description is based on intuition (and influenced by a structural approach to language linearly classifying formal properties of language from easy to difficult.



IFLC vs. CEFR levelled descriptors (2/3)

- These statements are generic, functional characterisations of language proficiency, quite vague and open to personal interpretation.
- Here are a couple of examples:
 - C2 level learners are expected to maintain consistent grammatical control of complex language, even when attention is otherwise engaged.
 - B2 learners are expected to have 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 (CEFR, p. 114).



IFLC concerns (1/2)

- CEFR descriptors define what learners/users are expected to do, but not how (with what kind language to do it)
- Our concern for the IFLC was to be able to provide this kind of information (*the how*) and thus facilitate syllabus and materials design



IFLC concerns (2/2)

- Our goal was to provide more specific criterial features characterizing the communicative performance associated with each proficiency level
- We have been providing / adding grammatical, lexical, textual and other details to the functional characterisations



IFLC vs. CEFR levelled descriptors (3/3)

- The CEFR provides no criterial features (from one or from several languages).
- The criterial features the IFLC team have been providing to document the levelled functional descriptors are linguistic.
- The linguistic features do not come from a single language (as recent studies attempting to add linguistic details to the CEFR descriptors do), but from various languages, aided by corpus informed approaches.



Multilingual documentation

- **Q:** Providing multilingual documentation is a very complex endeavour. How is it done?
- A: Using inverse methodological and analytical strategies, the IFLC documentation process involves:
 - going back to language data from different languages.
 - formulating precise linguistic descriptions of competences in each language.
 - aligning them and cross-checking them to validate the initial, crosslanguage, levelled descriptors.
 - linking them in a system of comparable, interrelated linguistic features which can form standards for language learning and can be explicitly (i.e. unambiguously) incorporated to educational practice.



Use of ICT for the documentation

 In order to achieve our goal, the IFLC team developed a [multilingual] database containing detailed descriptions of elements approximating the linguistic and communicative competences across levels of language and languages included in the school curriculum.



The IFLC database

| τες ύλης Συνιστ | ώστες ύλης Παράμετροι Διαχείριση χρηστών | | | | | |
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A multilingual database with descriptions of elements of communicative performance

The IFLC database, organized in terms of the 6-level scale of language proficiency, currently includes the following language components:

- Reference level descriptors.
- Functions.
- Grammar (grammatical patterns).
- Lexis (lexical units).
- Text types.



The IFLC database language components (1/2)

- Reference level descriptors (Can-do statements) specifying what the learner is expected to be able to do using the foreign language, at different proficiency levels.
- Functions that the learner performs with language, at different proficiency levels *Grammar* (grammatical patterns) that the learner is expected to produce or comprehend at different levels.



The IFLC database language components (2/2)

- Lexis (lexical units) that the learner is expected to produce and comprehend at different levels.
- Text types that the learner is expected to produce or comprehend, when communicating through language, at different proficiency levels.



Link to the CEFR?

Each of the IFLC components, except the first, corresponds to a type of language competence as specified by the CEFR:

- Functional competence.
- Grammatical competence.
- Lexical competence.
- Discourse competence.





- Linguistic information has been selected from a variety of relevant resources and regulated so as to inform our multilingual database.
- Specifically, we used:
 - descriptions of competences for each language from 'Profile books'.
 - detailed descriptions of language elements, extracted from foreign language course books currently in use in Greek state schools.
 - descriptions from the KPG Task Typology.



Description of components (1/2)

Elements in the database components are described in terms of a common set of metadata:

- the language proficiency level to which they belong.
- the activity to which they pertain (reading or listening comprehension, written or oral production, interaction, or mediation).
- the channel of communication (written or spoken).



Description of components (2/2)

- the language with which they are associated (with the exception of the reference level descriptors which are common for all languages).
- the source from which they are retrieved (Profile book, foreign language course book, KPG Task Typology).
- the school grade to which they pertain, applicable only to elements drawn from course books.



Representation of competences in the database

- The database is ultimately aimed at supporting associations of the descriptions of distinct language components to one another, within or across languages, on the basis of shared metadata values. That is:
 - Individual descriptors or sets of descriptors can be connected to specific language functions, by which they are reified, as well as with linguistic (grammatical and lexical) elements and specific types of texts, at certain level of language proficiency.



What for?

- In effect, the descriptions of language competences across foreign languages and proficiency levels are aimed at documenting the language proficiency descriptors of the IFLC.
- That is, they constitute the essential data which will nosh the statements regarding what learners are expected to do at different learning stages.



The representation of language proficiency (1/4)

- A significant part of this project had to do with the mappings of ontologies and typologies emerging from different paradigms, so that the linguistic knowledge associated with each proficiency level be eventually described in a unified manner, across all languages.
- A single ontological and typological representation for each database component has emerged from these mappings.



The representation of language proficiency (2/4)

- Language functions are uniformly described in terms of broadly specified Hyper-functions and several, more fine-grained Micro-functions and Notions inheriting from the former.
- The concept of inheritance is used here in the standard sense, corresponding to a basic *is-a* ontological relation: if a category x inherits from a category y, it is designated to have equally or more specific characteristics than category y.
- The ontology of language functions is simple, incorporating three levels of specificity.



| Hyper-function | Micro-function | Notion |
|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Give or ask for | Announce | |
| information | Report | |
| | Reassure | |
| | Claim | Present as possible |
| | | Present as certain |
| Express or ask | Express certainty | |
| about opinions | Express uncertainty | |
| | Express ignorance | |
| | Express hypothesis | |
| Express or ask | Express anger | |
| about preferences, | Express satisfaction | Express satisfaction with |
| desires, | | reservations |
| emotions | | Express satisfaction |
| | | without reservations |
| | Express despair | |
| | Ask about interest or lack | |
| | of interest | |



The representation of language proficiency (3/4)

 The organization of linguistic data in simple ontological structures enables the formulation of generalizations over possible associations of individual descriptions (entries). For example, lexical and grammatical elements can be linked with finegrained types of language functions (microfunctions); hyper-functions, as shown in Table 1, will abstract over such associations.



The representation of language proficiency (4/4)

 This kind of abstraction is intended to support the development of learning sequences for a certain language or for more than one language. Learning sequences are envisaged to systematically build on learners' knowledge and competences which are gradually acquired in the foreign language(s).



Grammatical knowledge

- The grammatical knowledge to be acquired at distinct levels of language proficiency is also represented in terms of structures including a Super-category and several Subcategories.
- Contrary to language functions, which essentially encode pragmatic aspects of linguistic communication and are language-independent, the grammatical patterns are language-specific: each sub-category is associated with the description of a pattern pertaining to one of the five languages of the database. The description of the grammatical elements is based on simple part of speech labels.



Extract from the ontology and types of grammatical patterns

| Super-category | Sub-category | Language-specific pattern |
|----------------|--------------|---|
| Noun | Common noun | Common nouns appearing only in plural: trousers, tights, scissors, people (English) |
| Noun | Common noun | Inflection of common nouns - Case: Akkusativ (German) |
| Noun | Common noun | Derivation of common nouns from adjectives: suffix ité (French) |
| Noun | Proper noun | Family names: los + surname (Spanish) |



Lexical knowledge

 Similarly, the lexical knowledge associated with proficiency levels is described in generic terms and is also organized in ontologies which are based on general thematic domains and related, more finegrained sub-domains, as exemplified in Table 3 below.



Extract from the ontology and types of thematically organized lexical units

| Super-category | Sub-category | Language-specific lexical unit |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| Economy and industry | Agriculture | sembrar, cosechar, cultivo, explotación, producción, recolección, fruto (Spanish) |
| Personal relationships | Social life | friend, partner, colleague, guest, to know, to visit, party, present (English) |
| Geography and environment | Environment | ambiente, deserto, difendere, ghiacciaio, inquinamento, naturale / artificiale, proteggere, salvare (Italian) |
| Geography and environment | Human environment | casa, centro, chiesa, città, fabbrica, industria, parco, piazza, strada, via (Italian) |
| Education | Examinations and certificates | Prüfung, Klassenarbeit, Schularbeit (German) |



Textual knowledge

- Finally, the text types with which the learner/user of language is expected to communicate are summarized in typed structures.
- As shown in Table 4, the parameters of the communicative context in which a text is assumed to function are included in more fine-grained descriptions (subcategories) inheriting from general text descriptions.
- Note that while text types and language functions are usually associated with specific language activities (comprehension, production, or mediation) and channels of communication (written or oral), the grammatical and lexical elements are usually underspecified as regards the values of these features.



Extract from the ontology of texts

| Super-category | Sub-category |
|----------------|---|
| Email | Email for personal communication |
| | Professional email giving or asking for information |
| Poster | Poster for public show |
| | Detailed poster for concert |
| Form | Airplane landing form |
| | Hotel check-in form |



The mapping process (1/3)

- The mapping of ontologies and typologies collected from different sources of data, for different languages, is not a trivial task.
- To facilitate and speed up the process of developing a common framework, we treated it as a modular task, initially relying on the data of the Profiles for English, French, German, Spanish, and Italian.



The mapping process (2/3)

- Common ontologies and typologies have emerged from the mappings of the Profiles data. At a subsequent stage, these ontologies have been employed for description of the contents of foreign language course books.
- Slightly modified and, in some cases, enriched, to accommodate the heterogeneous body of language data retrieved from a variety of course books for the different languages, written by different authors, following distinct language teaching approaches.



The mapping process (3/3)

- The revised ontology was mapped onto the descriptions acquired from the KPG Task typology, referring to language functions, grammatical and lexical knowledge, and the types of texts assessed at each language level (KPG data have also been stored in the database, described in terms of the common ontological schema used for the rest of the data).
- The English T-series has served as the basis for the compilation of the Profiles for the rest of the languages considered.



The use of the data

- The documented level descriptors can be straightforwardly transferred and incorporated into educational practice and may form the basis for the development of syllabi and language teaching units, which are not based on intuition and thus prone to arbitrary changes and reformulations.
- Individual language components having common metadata (level, language, etc.) can be associated to one another and to corresponding level descriptors. Such associations can form the basis for the development of language teaching units, targeted to particular language learning outcomes.



Financing

- The present educational material has been developed as part of the educational work of the instructor.
- The project "Open Academic Courses of the University of Athens" has only financed the reform of the educational material.
- The project is implemented under the operational program "Education and Lifelong Learning" and funded by the European Union (European Social Fund) and National Resources.





Notes

Note on History of Published Version

The present work is the edition 1.0.



Reference Note

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http://opencourses.uoa.gr/courses/ENL13/



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