

Translating the CEFR Companion Volume (2020) into Turkish: The Real Experience Unraveled

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Abstract

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is one of the most widely consulted reference works that define international standards for the learning, teaching, and assessment of languages. Since its appearance in 2001, the CEFR has been translated into more than 40 languages, including Turkish, making it the second most-translated document of the Council of Europe (CoE) after the European Convention of Human Rights. The CEFR was complemented by the Companion Volume with New Descriptors in 2018. This provisional version was later replaced by the CEFR Companion Volume (CV) in 2020, which includes added descriptors for mediation, online interaction, plurilingual/pluricultural competence, and sign language competences, ensuring modality-inclusive formulations in adapted illustrative descriptors for sign languages and gender-neutrality in

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all descriptors. The CEFR CV has already been translated into French, Arabic, Italian, Spanish, and Turkish, and translations to several other languages are underway and expected to become available shortly. The Turkish translation was completed in October 2021 by a committed team of scholars with the initiative and coordination of the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in cooperation with the CoE. The translation of the CEFR Companion Volume into Turkish is an excellent example of how hard work and perseverance pay off. The translation team and others who have contributed to the work have demonstrated a fine example of sheer dedication, patience, and multidisciplinary collaboration to create a reader-friendly text to guide anyone involved in language teaching and testing—from teachers, learners, and material developers to educational institutions, researchers, and employers. This paper uncovers the background story, events, and actions behind this text for users to better understand its intricacies, nuances, and complexities. It is anticipated that the “backstage information” shared here will provide insights for prospective translators of the CEFR CV into other languages.

Keywords: CEFR, Companion Volume, Translation, Turkish, Council of Europe

DOI: 10.29329/epasr.2022.478.13

Submitted: 25 August 2022

Accepted: 02 November 2022

Published: 05 December 2022

Background Information and Context

The CEFR: From past to present

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is an internationally recognized standard and policy instrument for defining language-related abilities. The document should be understood as a continuation of the prior language education-related attempts of the Council of Europe (CoE) during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. Accepted as not “a revolution” yet “a part of an evolution of practice,” the development process started with the communicative approach in the 1960s when language projects encouraged language learning for communication and promoted learner autonomy. In the 1970s and 1980s, Threshold Level specifications in various languages were developed to help design language learning objectives, i.e., independent communication. Language learning objectives were specified based on the approach that language is more than linguistic knowledge, considering the five dimensions of communicative competence: linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, sociocultural, and social competence. However, it was in 1991, at the symposium Transparency and Coherence in Language Learning held in Switzerland, Europe, when the CoE first had the idea of developing such an international framework. After three drafts and revisions starting in 1995 and its piloting, the final version was officially launched by the Language Policy Division of

the CoE in 2001, accepted as the European Year of Languages, and published in English by Cambridge University Press and French by Hatier-Didier (CEFR CV, 2018; CoE, 2022).

The Education Policy Division (Language Policy Programme) of the CoE started a project to update the CEFR descriptors, which introduced the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment - Companion Volume with New Descriptors* as a project product. Adopting an action-oriented rather than solely a communicative approach, the Companion Volume is an updated version of the CEFR (2001) authored by Brian North, Tim Goodier, and Enrica Piccardo and published in 2018 with extended descriptors for four new aspects, namely mediation, online interaction, plurilingual/pluricultural competence, and sign language competences, all of which cover modality-inclusive formulations and are gender-neutral. The extended illustrative descriptors in the Companion Volume were developed in four stages (CEFR CV, 2020; North & Piccardo, 2019). First, the gaps on the original scales were identified, and the 2001 scales, particularly the C and bottom levels, were updated (2014-2015). In the second stage (2014-2016), descriptor scales for missing areas, particularly mediation with literature, plurilingual and pluricultural competence, and online interaction, were developed. Then in the next stage (2015-2016), a new analytic scale for phonological control was devised.

Similarly, descriptors for sign languages were developed in the fourth stage (2015-2018). By the way, descriptors for two age groups were collated for young learners, which is accepted as Stage 5 (2014–2016) (CEFR CV, 2018). In short, this initiative, with several stages of development, validation, analysis and revision, consultation, piloting, and finalization (North & Piccardo, 2019), ended up with the updated version published online in 2018. In 2020, the framework was updated under almost the same name, i.e., *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment Companion Volume*, which provides extended illustrative descriptors and explains its aims and principles in a more user-friendly way to increase CEFR awareness. The links and references to the 2001 CEFR show that the earliest version is still valid. As the second most translated policy document of the CoE, the framework has been translated into over 40 European and non-European languages, including Turkish (CoE, 2022).

The Aim of the CEFR

The framework is officially aimed at solving the possible communication problems language professionals, including administrators, course and materials designers, teachers and teacher trainers, language testers, and examiners encounter due to diverse education systems across Europe (CEFR, 2001). In its own words, it “provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, across Europe” by offering them the means “to reflect on their current practice, with a view to situating and co-ordinating their efforts and to ensuring that they meet the real needs of the learners for whom they are responsible” (CEFR, 2001, p. 1). The

ultimate aim of that language-free initiative was to help European mobility by ensuring transparency in language courses, syllabuses, and learner qualifications in different areas, which could promote and facilitate international cooperation in teaching any modern languages. Since then, the framework has been used to plan language learning programs, language certification, and self-directed learning regarding their assumptions, objectives, content, and assessment until it was updated in 2018. Furthermore, with its language ability descriptors on a scale from A1 for beginners to C2 for proficient ones, i.e., “can do” statements, it helps teachers, learners, test designers, educational administrators, and employers to identify qualification levels and compare them to various exams.

The aims of the current version published in 2018 are broadened to include attempts “to protect linguistic and cultural diversity, promote plurilingual and intercultural education, reinforce the right to quality education for all, and enhance intercultural dialogue, social inclusion, and democracy” (CoE, 2022, para. 4). In other words, the current initiative “is intended to provide a common metalanguage for the language education profession in order to facilitate communication, networking, mobility and the recognition of courses taken and examinations passed” (CEFR CV, 2018, p. 26).

The Philosophy and Content of the CEFR

The philosophy behind the CEFR is that language should be taught and learned as an aid to show how to behave appropriately in authentic situations, communicate feelings and ideas, and accomplish a wide range of tasks (CEFR CV, 2018). It adopts the action-oriented approach, as language teaching aims not to exchange information and thus train effective communicators. Instead, the aim is to ensure collaboration in and outside the school to train social actors who can communicate successfully, live, and collaborate with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This aim is in line with the desire of Europe to create a multicultural and multilingual social structure. Therefore, the older version emphasizes plurilingual and pluricultural competence, while the current one also deals with mediation (Acar, 2020b). The framework covers a continuum of ability in the form of six levels of foreign language proficiency from A1 to C2.: A1 and A2 (basic user), B1 and B2 (independent user), and C1 and C2 (proficient user). Resulting from the need to devise descriptors for young and very young learners whose cognitive and linguistic development needs special consideration, the new label of Pre-A1 was included in the 2018 and 2020 updated versions of the framework as a new proficiency level (Alexiou & Stathopoulou, 2021).

The framework presents illustrative descriptive scales for four areas: (1) communicative language activities and strategies, (2) plurilingual and pluricultural competences, (3) communicative language competences, and (4) signing competences. The traditional model of four skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing, is substituted for communicative language activities and strategies in the framework as it could not reflect the true nature of real interaction. The framework presents illustrative descriptive scales for communicative activities and strategies under four modes:

reception, production, interaction, and mediation. As the CoE values cultural and linguistic diversity and prioritizes equal rights and social justice, the framework also offers illustrative descriptor scales for plurilingual and pluricultural competence under three headings: building on pluricultural repertoire, plurilingual comprehension, and building on plurilingual repertoire. Language learners are regarded as “social agents” who “draw on all their linguistic and cultural resources and experiences in order to fully participate in social and educational contexts, achieving mutual understanding, gaining access to knowledge and in turn, further developing their linguistic and cultural repertoire” (CEFR CV, 2020, p. 123). Inspired by various competence models in applied linguistics since the 1980s, the framework also presents communicative language competences under three headings: linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, and pragmatic competence, which cannot be isolated from each other. Furthermore, the framework covers signing competences under linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic areas, which apply communicative activities to sign languages. Therefore, the extended descriptors are “modality-neutral” (CEFR CV, 2020, p. 143).

The CEFR in Türkiye

As a result of Türkiye’s attempt to cooperate with the CoE by following the regulations of the European Union, English language teaching curricula in Türkiye attempts to integrate the fundamental philosophies of the CEFR into foreign language education. The Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE) piloted the framework in Türkiye, starting in the 2001-2002 academic year, offered in-service teacher training activities to increase CEFR awareness, organized numerous seminars, put the European Language Portfolio into practice, a project devised in parallel with the CEFR to support learner autonomy and intercultural communicative competence, devised textbooks adopting the action-oriented approach of the framework (Acar, 2020a, 2021; Hismanoglu, 2013; Kır & Sülü, 2014; Sahinkarakas et al., 2009).

In 2009, the English framework was translated into Turkish by a translation commission consisting of 8 academicians and a representative from the MoNE and published by MoNE Board of Education (MoNE BoE). In 2013, it was translated into Turkish for the second time, but this time from the German version as the source text, by a commission consisting of four experts based in Germany, including two academicians, a teacher of Turkish, and the then-director of a specialist advice center for languages of origin, multilingualism, and school integration in Frankfurt [Fachberaterzentrum für Herkunftssprachen, Mehrsprachigkeit und schulische Integration] in the coordination of telc gGmbH, an international language test provider, and the MoNE, and published by telc gGmbH.

The framework has affected foreign language education in Türkiye in three ways: curriculum development, pre-service and in-service teacher education, and instructional materials development (Yılmaz-Yakışık & Ünveren-Gürocak, 2018). Most of the fundamental philosophies of the

framework, such as intercultural awareness, communicative approach, task-based learning, action-oriented approach, autonomous learning, learner-centeredness, and self-assessment, are embraced in curricula development and curricular revisions (Yüce & Mirici, 2019; Zorba & Arıkan, 2016). However, still, the English language curricula devised in Türkiye are considered deficient in terms of compatibility with the CEFR for a number of reasons, particularly for the lack of correspondence between program outcomes and the CEFR proficiency descriptors, the negligence of plurilingualism and pluriculturalism (Yüce & Mirici, 2019), and the failure to adhere to the framework by not adopting the action-oriented approach (social-action-based learning) of the 2020 CEFR CV (Acar, 2021). Besides, textbooks are argued to be designed in line with this new goal for language teaching (Acar, 2020b; Yüce & Mirici, 2019).

The disciplines of teaching Turkish as a foreign language and English language teaching accept the CEFR as an essential reference material (Demirdöven, 2021; Özbal, 2021). The framework has been integrated into teaching Turkish as a foreign language to devise speaking and writing activities in textbooks despite further room for improvement (Demirel & Fakazlı, 2021).

Earlier research in Türkiye reports mixed results about the CEFR. Several studies have shown that English language teachers are aware of the CEFR, apply and align it to their classroom practices, and are willing to integrate its pillar and practices, such as self-assessment, portfolios, and performance tasks, into their teaching, which are also observed in instructional materials (see, for instance, Çağatay & Ünveren-Gürocak, 2016; Hismanoglu, 2013; Mirici & Kavaklı, 2017). Instructors at public schools were found more knowledgeable about the framework due to practical in-service training activities (Çağatay & Ünveren-Gürocak, 2016), and teachers working at private schools were found more informed about the document, its impact on language textbooks and testing, and language teaching techniques (Yılmaz-Yakışık & Ünveren-Gürocak, 2018). Regardless of their recognition of the CEFR, however, some studies state that teachers show a lack of awareness concerning plurilingual and pluricultural competence, critical philosophy, and descriptor of the framework, despite their positive attitudes toward the enhancement of their students' intercultural awareness (see, for instance, Çelik, 2013). Although they know the CEFR framework, several studies report that teachers do not integrate its principles into their instructional practices (see, for instance, Sülü & Kır, 2014). There are calls to devise in-service training to guide teachers on how to integrate the CEFR scales into language teaching, CEFR-oriented lesson plans, and testing (Hazar, 2021; Kır & Sülü, 2014; Ünlücan-Tosun & Glover, 2020; Yılmaz-Yakışık & Ünveren-Gürocak, 2018; Yüce & Mirici, 2019).

Procedures for translating the CEFR CV into the Turkish language

Forming of the Translation Team and the Procurement Process

The translation work was one of the activities within the scope of the Development of Foreign Language Education (Yabancı Dil Eğitiminin Geliştirilmesi: YADEG) project carried out by the Turkish and Language Education Research and Development Center (Türkçe ve Dil Eğitimi Araştırma ve Geliştirme Merkezi: TDE-ARGEM) established under the BoE. Before the translation process started, the MoNE BoE contacted the CoE to obtain permission to translate the CEFR CV into the Turkish language and was granted the right to be the authorized body for the translation. Then, the tender process for the translation work was initiated.

A number of qualifications for the translation commission were listed in the tender specifications. The first author (Servet Çelik of Trabzon University) was approached by one of the private companies planning to submit a bid for the tender. Next, he established a team of academics with expertise spanning foreign language education, language assessment, language teaching programs, and cultural diversity and plurilingual/pluricultural competence as they related to CEFR, including himself, Yasemin Kırkgöz of Çukurova University, Pelin Irgin of TED University, Deniz Şallı-Çopur of Middle East Technical University, and Şakire Erbay-Çetinkaya of Karadeniz Technical University. He then communicated the purpose and content of the project to them and discussed with them the details of the tender (i.e., instructions, specifications). Finally, the team negotiated the contract conditions and pricing schedule with the company, and the company prepared and submitted a bid for the tender to the contracting authority. Bids were received from three different companies and assessed in terms of both the adequacy of the commissions and the cost. Upon the successful evaluation of their bid, the team was awarded a contract, signed on May 5, 2021, to complete and deliver the work in 120 days.

According to the terms of the contract:

- The completed parts of the translation would be submitted to the BoE as a report every thirty days from the start of the study.
- In addition to the translation commission, two expert academicians—one from the field of Turkish Language and Literature and another from Sign Languages, would be included in the study team to do the post-reading.
- The translation team will work under the coordination of a board member.
- The contractor would ensure that the Turkish translation of the text was fluent, comprehensible, and internally consistent.
- The revisions requested by the administration would be made to the submitted text.

- The commission would be expected to participate in at least three online meetings organized by the administration, and participants would be informed in advance. These meetings would take place in the form of interim summary evaluations covering issues such as the features of the work to be done, its current status, next steps, regulations, and suggestions.

- An evaluation workshop on translation work would be held in Ankara on May 24, 2021. In the workshop, the commission would be expected to inform the participants of the process and discuss how they progressed and where they were with the translation. In addition, the participants would have an exchange on the main concepts and terms, talk about the design and technical details, and determine the roadmap for the remaining work.

- Before the end of the translation work, a final evaluation workshop would be held in Balıkesir on July 8-9, 2021. In the workshop, it was expected that the final version of the text would be presented to the participants; the text would be evaluated in terms of each participant's field of expertise, and the choices regarding concepts and terminology would be finalized.

Procedures and Activities

The translation project commenced with an online meeting organized by the MoNE BoE on April 30, 2021, where the coordinating BoE member (Author 9) and MoNE experts (Authors 10 and 11) met with the core team members (Authors 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5) and Turkish language and sign language experts (Authors 6 and 7, respectively). After the personal introductions, the expectations of the MoNE BoE regarding the translation work were clarified and communicated to the team. In addition, the MoNE experts discussed the details of the activities to be carried out and provided further information about the YADEG project executed within the framework of the Presidential Investment Program, of which the translation work was a small part. The approximately 90-minute meeting helped establish a mutual dialogue between the parties involved.

Right after the meeting, MoNe experts sent the team an email containing a link to a folder of necessary documents to be used in the translation; namely, the original English version of the CEFR (2001)—the source text, the English version of the Companion Volume (2020), and the Turkish translations of the CEFR (2009, 2013).

The next day, the translation team had an online meeting to thoroughly analyze the source text before any attempts to translate it and to discuss how they would proceed with the work. They decided to tackle the different parts (i.e., chapters) of the source material one at a time and follow a process-oriented approach to focus on meaning and exploring and resolving any potential issues and challenges faced in the transfer of meaning through feedback and communication. As such, they agreed they would first translate the assigned parts individually, then perform cross readings, checks, and corrections collectively with a partner, and finally send them to the head of the translation team

(Author 1) to convert to a single file and upload the combined file to a Google drive to begin collaboration as a team by conducting further readings, adding notes, comments and suggestions, and completing the final proofing, corrections, and edits on the document. Each completed draft of a chapter—or multiple chapters, would be sent out for review by the Turkish language and sign language experts (Authors 6 and 7), MoNE experts (Authors 10 and 11), and/or other internal (teachers of English at MoNE) or external readers (local experts at universities), as the translation team would continue working on the following parts. This revolving cycle would last until producing the final version of the translation.

Within this framework, the following main activities were carried out:

- The draft translation of the first two chapters and a draft program of the first face-to-face meeting in Ankara were submitted to the BoE on May 19, 2021.
- A meeting was held in Ankara on May 24, 2021, where the then BoE member and TDE-ARGEM coordinator (Author 9) member and head of the translation commission (Author 1) each gave a short talk on the process. The completed two chapters were discussed in relation to the overall text fluency, readability, and functionality. Problematic concepts and terms, as well as some complex and challenging structures and sentences, were negotiated. Some design-related issues and technical details were clarified, and the roadmap for future activities was devised.
- The revised version of the first two chapters, along with a list of terminology for commonly used terms in the CEFR CV, were submitted to the BoE (in word and pdf formats) for feedback from the MoNE readers, and Turkish and sign language experts—as the team was working on the 3rd chapter.
- The sign language expert’s evaluations, comments, and feedback were received on June 6, 2021.
- The evaluations, comments, and feedback of the MoNe readers were received on June 12, 2021.
- The translation team participated in the online conference on “Foreign Language Education in Turkey and European Practices: Developments and Suggestions,” organized by the MoNE BoE on June 28-29, 2021. It was extremely valuable to listen to expert speakers and participants in reconsidering the Turkish equivalents of some of the keywords and terminology in the CEFR CV.
- The revised versions of the first two chapters and the first drafts of the translations of chapters 3, 4, and 5 were submitted to the BoE on July 1, 2021.

- A draft program for the meeting in Balıkesir was submitted to the BoE on July 6, 2021.
- The second workshop organized for the Turkish translation of the CEFR CV was successfully completed on July 8-9, 2021, in Balıkesir. First, the then BoE member and TDE-ARGEM coordinator (Author 9) gave an opening speech. He talked about the importance of the CEFR CV and the added value of the translation of the text into Turkish for the BoE, the MoNE, and all stakeholders. Next, the head of the translation commission provided information regarding the current status of the translation. He stated that the translation team had weekly online meetings after the first workshop in Ankara to discuss and complete the necessary revisions and tasks. He added that the translation was coming to an end and would be finalized after the final proofs and touches following the discussions in Balıkesir and the subsequent checks by the Turkish language expert and external reviewers. The participants then went over the highlighted parts of the text and had final exchanges on the challenging terms and concepts for two days.
- As per the decision in Balıkesir, the entire translated document and its attachments were sent to the BoE on August 2, 2021.
- The evaluations, comments, and feedback from the MoNe readers and the Turkish language expert were received on August 24, 2021.
- The external reader's evaluations, comments, and feedback (Elif Kantarcioğlu of Bilkent University) were received on August 31, 2021. This specific external reviewer was selected for her expertise and work in CEFR. Elif Kantarcioğlu obtained her doctoral degree from the University of Roehampton upon completing her thesis titled "Relating an Institutional Proficiency Examination to the CEFR: A case study" and later published widely on CEFR-related issues.
- Revisions and corrections were made to the text based on the feedback from internal and external readers, and the revised copy was submitted to the BoE on September 3, 2021.
- The final feedback from the Turkish language expert was received on September 7, 2021.
- The finishing touch-ups were completed, and the final draft of the translation was submitted to the BoE on September 10, 2021.
- The copyright transfer agreement form was signed by the translation team members and submitted to the BoE on September 10, 2021.
- The proofs of the typeset copy were received and approved on October 1, 2021.
- The final draft of the translation was introduced to the public in a meeting organized by the BoE in Ankara on November 8, 2021.

- The Turkish version of CEFR CV was printed in 1500 copies and distributed to 1000 different addresses, including Turkish and Foreign Languages Research and Application Centers (TÖMERs), language centers, language departments of universities, provincial national education directorates, relevant units of the MoNe, local libraries, university libraries, International Anatolian Imam Hatip high schools and other relevant people and institutions, with the support of the CoE and the coordination of BoE.

The CEFR CV 2020

New descriptors in the CEFR CV 2020: Translating from English to Turkish

The translation team experienced a well-established process to provide an accurate and well-worded translation of new descriptors in the CEFR CV 2020. To convey the actual meaning of the original text and to make the translated text of the CEFR CV 2020 more legible, the team members simultaneously juggled word choices and arranged grammatical structures as well. A multi-step translation process was followed to improve the translation quality and consistency (Esen-Eruz, 2000). A preface was written by the translation team to present the translation process step by step and to share references of valuable sources used during the translation of the CEFR CV 2020. Furthermore, a glossary of terms (from English to Turkish) including 157 words, a glossary on sign language competences, consisting of 84 words, and translation notes, a total of 10 bullet points, were jotted down, which are available in the translated version of the CEFR CV 2020 to make it more reader-friendly (CoE, 2021).

In the translation process of the CEFR CV 2020, the translation team was of one mind about neatly translating the standpoints of new descriptors of the CEFR 2020 and how these descriptors would be understood when they were translated into Turkish. However, there were some challenges in the translation of new descriptors in the CEFR CV 2020 which broadens the vision of the CEFR 2001 with its new descriptors: Mediation, online interaction, plurilingual/pluricultural competences, and sign language competences. Specifically, the difficulties were establishing similarities by means of translation between the original text (English) and the translated version (Turkish), transferring between literary concepts belonging to specific fields, and translating word patterns from English to Turkish. Even though there are similar and/or identical idioms and word patterns in terms of content in both languages, their manners of expression can be different. Therefore, the translation team established parallel expression patterns between English and Turkish during the translation period. In that sense, the contribution of the Turkish language expert and external reviewers was as precious as the rigorous work of the translation team.

In the CEFR 2001, there were innovative concepts and descriptors relevant to tasks with limited linguistic and cognitive demands. The CEFR in 2001 had the policy to be plurilingual, to adopt the integration of four skills by moving from reception and production to interaction and

mediation in communication, and to present an action-oriented approach very clearly to satisfy the needs of learners/users as social agents standing on “can do” statements together with self-assessment, learner autonomy and communication strategies (North, 2020; North & Piccardo, 2019). In the CEFR CV 2020, all these interrelated notions and the rationale behind each descriptor scale were explained better to overcome the blurred picture among teachers, practitioners, and professionals in teacher education. The CEFR CV 2020 highlights and further clarifies these innovative concepts in the CEFR 2001 (Piccardo, 2021) and emphasizes visions of users/learners as social agents who co-construct meaning in mediation and mobilize cognitive, emotional, linguistic, and cultural resources in real-life tasks (CoE, 2020).

The CEFR CV 2020 goes beyond the four skills and conceptualizes mediation. A new vision was developed as it focused on the complexity of the message in the co-construction of meaning with mediation, which led to the development of mediation. Piccardo (2021), North and Piccardo (2016), and Piccardo and North (2019) highlighted that the inter-related concepts of mediation and agency have developed in relation to education generally and language education particularly. Therefore, a user/ learner with plurilingual and plurilingual competences becomes a real social agent. In the descriptive scheme of the CEFR, mediation was presented as part of communicative language activities and communication strategies. Thus, the CEFR CV 2020 operationalizes this new vision into calibrated and validated descriptors: Mediating communication, mediating a text, mediating concepts, and some strategies related to the mediation. These three categories—mediating communication, mediating concepts, and mediating text—imply seeing language as an activity rather than an entity. Creating space, managing tensions, counseling, etc. (mediating communication) is related to the (co)construction and reconstruction of meaning/knowledge (mediating concepts) individually and collectively through changing the way of communication such as reformulating, switching oral to written, changing genres, and combining text and other modes (mediating text) (Piccardo, 2021).

Social agents are languaging (a) as they think concepts by relating to the other things in mediating concepts, (b) in the process of self-other regulation in mediating communication, and (c) to find formulations that enable understanding of the text itself for themselves and for or with others in mediating a text (CoE, 2020; Piccardo, 2021). From a socio-constructivist perspective, learning a language is a complex and situated process of emergence in a social environment (Larsen-Freeman, 2017; van Lier, 2010). The social agents mediate the language learning process for themselves or other people (e.g., teacher, fellow students, family members), which is the basis of collaborative learning through interaction. In the languaging process, social agents deal with emotional, cognitive, intrapersonal, interpersonal, cultural, and textual dimensions (North & Piccardo, 2019) in various settings and levels. With the action-oriented approach of the CEFR CV, social agents continually are

part of a doing/acting process requiring mediation at different stages within in-person social communities and/or distant online interactions.

The CEFR CV 2020 presents the difference between multilingualism [çok dillilik]—languages side by side adding a series of elements like numbers and/or people in a multitude), and plurilingualism [çoğul dillilik]—a dynamic network and/or interrelationship in a more plural and holistic way). The CEFR CV 2020 “removes the ghost of the ‘native-speaker’ and puts plurilingualism on the map for curriculum development with the provision of concrete descriptors suitable for different levels” (North, 2020, p. 556). Plurilingualism is “the dynamic and developing linguistic repertoire of an individual user/learner (CoE, 2020, p. 30). The concept of plurilingual competence basically refers to the CoE’s distinction between “plurilingualism” and “multilingualism.” The CEFR 2020 defines “plurilingualism” as the ability to use more than one language and accordingly accepts languages from the standpoint of speakers/learners (CoE, 2020). On the other hand, “multilingualism” refers to the existence of several languages in a given setting, regardless of learners/users who speak them. In other words, the presence of two or more languages in one geographical area does not necessarily mean that “people in that area can use several of them; some use only one” (Beacco et al., 2016, p.20). Plurilingual competence is defined as the ability to use a plural repertoire of linguistic and cultural resources to meet a user/learner’s needs for communication and interaction with other people from different cultural and linguistic contexts and enrich their repertoire in that way (Beacco et al., 2016). Pluricultural [çoğul kültürlü] competence is the ability to identify with two or more social groups and their cultures and is related to the cultures of the target languages and having critical awareness of other cultures (Piccardo, 2021; Remmert, 2021). Additionally, sign language competences [işaret dili yetkinliği], ensuring modality-inclusive formulations in adapted illustrative descriptors for sign languages and gender neutrality in all descriptors, were produced in the CEFR CV 2020. “It identified and calibrated descriptors for productive and receptive signing competence” (CoE, 2020, p. 252).

Besides these conceptual definitions, there were some terms; “linguaging” [dilselleştirme], “translinguaging” [diller arası geçişlilik], “modality” [iletişim kanalı], “reception” [alımlama], “paralanguage” [ötedil], “scaffolding” [yönlendirici destek], and “circumlocution” [dolaylama] (Council of Europe, 2021) that the translation team settled for establishing a basic translation and understanding in them. The main emphasis in translating some literary terms was to build upon a clear translation and create a more complete and accurate comprehension.

From the Translation Team

Helpful Notes in the Translated (Turkish) Version of the CEFR CV 2020

The translation team presented a set of important translation notes in the translated version of the CEFR 2020, inserted in brackets, e.g., “see Translation Note 1” [bk. Çeviri Notu 1] (CoE, 2021, p.

18), and directed the readers to these notes in the appendix to avoid ambiguity. Here is a list of issues provided for the readers of the CEFR CV 2020 in Turkish:

- The Council of Europe wishes to thank all institutes organized in alphabetical order by country in the preface of the CEFR 2020. The translation team did not translate the names of the institutes and universities into Turkish to help readers quickly search for and locate them online (CoE, 2021, p. 18).

- The word “articulation” in the CEFR CV 2020 was translated into Turkish as “sesletim” (CoE, 2021, p. 28). The word “articulate” refers to “ekleme” or “boğumlanma” in phonological contexts in Turkish. The Turkish equivalent of the word “Pronunciation” is “söyleyiş” or “sesletim” in the sources. In this translation, “söyleyiş” is used for “pronunciation.” The word “articulation” is used as “sesletim” in the contexts of sign languages and signification. However, sign languages differ from verbal languages. There are five different sounds in a sign language, which are accepted as sounds, similar to vowels and consonants in spoken languages: hand shape, position, orientation, movement, and non-manual signs. While segmental phonemes are not produced simultaneously in spoken languages, segmental phonemes are necessarily produced simultaneously in sign languages. On the other hand, the articulators during signaling are translated as “sesletim organları.”

- The CEFR CV 2020 “represents a departure from the traditional distinction made in applied linguistics between the Chomskyan concepts of (hidden) “competence” and (visible) “performance” – with “proficiency” normally defined as the glimpse of someone’s underlying competence derived from a specific performance” (CoE, 2020, p.34). In the Turkish translation of the CEFR CV 2020, it was noted that competence/ performance (edinç/edim) concepts were developed by Noam Chomsky. “Edinç” is a person’s knowledge of the language, and “edim” is the study of the actual use of the language in a real-life situation (CoE, 2021, p. 38).

- The term “mediation” has been translated as “arabuluculuk” by the translation team who translated the CEFR 2001 version into Turkish. However, we decided to translate the word “mediation” in the CEFR CV 2020 into Turkish as “aracılık” (CoE, 2021, p. 96).

In the CEFR CV 2020, a scale representing analysis and criticism of creative texts (including literature) includes the conceptual terms “rhetoric” and “rhetorical devices,” for example, “At C2, the user/learner can recognize finer linguistic and stylistic subtleties, unpack connotations and give more critical appraisals of the way in which structure, language, and rhetorical devices are exploited in a work of literature for a particular purpose” (CoE, 2020, p. 107). The translation team decided to explain the actual meaning of the word “rhetoric” to readers and noted that the meaning of the word “rhetoric” is “the art of speaking and writing effectively and persuasively.” In the places where the

word “rhetoric” is used, it is mentioned about the elements specific to the rhetoric that enable the use of the language effectively.

- Before presenting the scales for “Sign language repertoire” and “Diagrammatical accuracy” in the CEFR CV 2020, some key concepts operationalized in the two scales were listed (CoE, 2021, p. 145). As one of those concepts stated, “language-specific knowledge relating to the combination of the manual and non-manual elements into possible signs, since neither manual nor non-manual elements ‘surface’ in isolation.” The translation team added a translation note (see CoE, 2021, p. 149) for readers to clarify the “surface” term stated in that sentence. In addition, a reference has been made to Chomsky’s generative grammar theory: The distinction between “Deep structure” and “Surface structure.”

- “Rhetorical question,” which is frequently used in the CEFR CV 2020, is defined as “a type of question that is asked to make a point rather than to receive an answer” (CoE, 2021, p. 287) by the translation team.

- In Appendix 9 (CoE, 2021, p. 273) and Appendix 10 (CoE, 2021, p. 277), the translation team noted that the references had not been translated into Turkish because of the possibility that the reader may want to search these sources, and they are left as they are in the source text.

- The list of terms in the section of the translation note and their Turkish equivalents include the terms that were decided in the workshops held with the MoNE BoE during the translation process.

Benefits of Working on the Translation of the CEFR CV

Although translating the CEFR CV into Turkish was challenging, we, as the translators, think taking part in such a project has given us a unique and valuable experience in three different aspects.

Firstly, the project provided the opportunity to work with professionals in other disciplines. Having been in multidisciplinary collaboration with two expert academicians (one from the field of Turkish Language and Literature and another from Sign Languages) not only provided us with constructive feedback but also gave insights into certain parts of the original document. We all agree that being part of the translation of the CEFR CV has especially enabled us to be familiar with another language user group, the sign language users, and a modality-inclusive perspective in scale and descriptor design. The evaluations, comments, and feedback of the MoNE readers were also valuable in looking at the original text from various perspectives, especially in the first two chapters of the manuscript, which explain the theoretical background of the aims of the CEFR CV and its descriptors.

As the CEFR adopts an action-oriented approach to train social actors from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds to communicate and collaborate, the language teachers have a

vital role in this training. Especially, translating the chapters on plurilingual and pluricultural competence and mediation in the CEFR CV was both challenging and stimulating, as these two aspects were in line with the aim of creating a multicultural and multilingual social structure, which should stand as the desire of any national education curriculum and foreign language teacher education program. Although we, as teachers and teacher educators, have been familiar with the CEFR in our professional life for more than two decades, we also have developed an increased awareness, a deeper understanding, and a better vision of its latest components. Needless to say, this inspired us to integrate them into our courses in the foreign language teacher education programs we have been training prospective teachers.

Ultimately, as translators, we have become more aware of the beauty and strength of our native language, Turkish. It goes without saying that translating a text involves text analysis, discourse analysis, and critical reading. While translating our parts separately, discussing the translation of specific descriptors in small groups, and trying to agree on terminologies in large groups, we admire the flexibility, practicality, and uniqueness of our native language in each case. Thus, we are delighted to take part in a project that stands as a reference tool for language teachers who teach Turkish as a second/foreign language to speakers of other languages.

The CEFR CV User Testimonials

As the translation team, we have received numerous communication and feedback from actual CEFR CV users after the release of its Turkish version. Most of the comments and feedback we received were from administrators and language teachers at TÖMERs and teachers of Turkish as a foreign language at various centers, schools, and higher education institutions throughout Türkiye. We compiled some of those comments and decided to share them here as end-user testimonials to offer insights into the utility of the translated text.

The Turkish translation of the CEFR Companion Volume is very successful in terms of the use of terms, clarity, fluency, and language consistency.

This translation is much better than the previous one, especially in terms of expressiveness, suitability for the Turkish language, and semantic integrity/coherence of the text, and comprehensiveness.

The new translation of the CEFR is much more intelligible than the previous one. There is unity and coherence in the whole volume as reflected through sections. The Turkish expressions for the most occurring words in the text, such as mediator, are more appropriate compared to the previous version.

The reviews from language teachers and instructors indicate how efficient the CEFR CV (2020) translation into Turkish is and to what extent it benefits them. At this point, it seems that

practitioners will use the Turkish version of the CEFR CV (2020) as a reliable source. Over time, when they share their constructive feedback and valuable experiences, we will have more information to understand whether our translation performs its intended function adequately.

Conclusion and Implications

This paper draws a clear picture of the Turkish CEFR CV translation process and provides insights for prospective translators of the CEFR CV into other languages. This Turkish CEFR CV translation will be an official guide for CEFR users as it offers a complete background story about the translation process. It also provides a Turkish CEFR CV translation glossary comprised of critical discussions. The readers of this article can benefit from the multi-step translation process of the CEFR CV and have a better understanding of its intricacies, nuances, and complexities. This article also enables readers an in-depth description of new terms and re-contextualized words in the CEFR CV with its explanatory translation notes added to clarify the logical reasons behind decision making.

The description of the translation process of the current Turkish CEFR CV has implications for further translations of the same document or other versions or supplements of the document into other languages. The workload, budget, and time allocated for the CEFR CV translation process as the key components might set a good example for other stakeholders and translators in planning a translation project and strategy. To produce a high-quality CEFR translation in other languages and to fulfill the expectations of CEFR users, this paper will be a valuable source of information for all translators and other parties involved in the process. Finally, it may serve a unique contribution and an insider's view for CEFR users and researchers in making better sense of the content of the document.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Abdullah Sağdıç, Elif Tertemiz Arat, Ezgi Çelik Uzun, Murat Yılmaz, and Seda Aytuğ for their support during the translation process; Elif Kantarcıoğlu for reading and commenting on the final draft, and Funda Çetgin and Banu Eren for the formatting and typesetting of the final draft. We are also indebted to the MoNE BoE and CoE for the opportunity.

Credit Author Statement

The authors confirm contribution to the paper as follows: S.Ç. conceived and planned the study, worked out all of the technical details, wrote the procedures for translating the CEFR CV into the Turkish language, and managed the submission and revision process. Y.K. was involved in collecting the CEFR CV user testimonials, analyzing and reporting them briefly, and helped supervise the paper. P.İ. documented the helpful notes during the translation process and completed the initial revisions requested by the editor and peer reviewers. D.Ş.Ç. wrote the benefits of working on the translation of the CEFR CV and critically revised the final version of the manuscript. Ş.E.Ç. wrote the background of the study. M.K., B.M., B.K., H.K., A.Ö., and N.G.T. aided in shaping the manuscript

with their feedback. All authors collaborated to critically review the manuscript to ensure both accuracy and integrity, and read and approved its final version.

Conflict of Interest

No potential conflict of interest was declared by the authors.

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