APPENDIX 1: Frames and Grids for analysing items

Phase One: Using the CEF - Amsterdam Paper

- **CEF Frame 1**: Based on DIALANG "advisory feedback" tables as included in CEF Appendix C. Different versions of Frame provided for Reading and for Listening and for each CEF level. Wording and text taken directly from CEF.

- **CEF Frame 2**: Revised version to clarify contents of the "conditions and limitations" and "text" boxes in CEF Frame 1. Different versions of Frame provided for Reading and for Listening and for each CEF level. Wording and text taken directly from CEF.

- **Grid 1:** Developed to include features/elements not present in CEF and associated scales. Text and item separated. Two grids provided: one for Reading and one for Listening, text boxes and CEF level to be completed by analyst.

Phase Two: Looking for the Grail - Second Report (Appendix 9)

Grid 2: Developed to include what is perceived to matter for testers. Used to analyse DIALANG Reading and Listening items. Guides to complete text boxes provided. Guides based on

a) CEF (Text source, Domain, What, Topic)
b) Theory (Operation, Discourse type, Text Structure)
c) Expert's own testing experience (Item types, Vocabulary, Grammar, Text length, Number of participants, Text speed, Accent/ standard, Pronunciation, Readability, How often played)

Phase Three: Coming to terms with reality - Third Report (Appendix 11)

Grid 3: Developed on the basis of the problems identified in the analysis of items using Grid 2 and the corresponding guides. Responds to need to have simplified text boxes and selected responses available as far as possible. Text and item assessed separately and assessment of "operation" comes at the end, before estimation of level required.

Web version developed and the content from previous Guides was either included on screen directly or became drop-down menus. Used to analyse compilation of items from different sources and from different languages.

- **Grid 4: The final Grid**

Developed on the basis of analysis of results of Grid 3, bearing in mind content and user-friendliness.

Text and item separated. CEF summary tables provided for ease of reference. Review facilities included to allow for changes in estimation without having to complete full form again.

CEF FRAME 1

READING

Note Any level incorporates content and texts from lower levels

A1

Operation	What	Text	Conditions and limitations
Understand (1)	general idea	very short, simple informational texts	in the most common everyday situations
Follow (2)	familiar names, words and very basic phrases (1)	typically short, simple descriptions, especially if they contain pictures which help to explain the text	with pictures which help to explain the text
Recognise (3)	number, quantities, cost and time	postcards	single phrase at a time
	short simple messages	simple notices, posters, catalogues (1)	re-reading part of text
	very simple sentences (1)		
	concrete simple expressions about personal details and need of a concrete type	short simple written directions (e.g., to go from X to Y)	

A2

Operation	What	Text	Conditions and limitations
Understand (1)	specific information (2)	texts on familiar concrete matter	Restricted mainly to common everyday language and language related to my job
Locate (2)	The probable meaning of unknown words (3)	short, simple texts (1), eg, routine personal and business letters and faxes, most everyday signs and notices in public places, such as streets, restaurants, railway stations, workplace, Yellow Pages, advertisements, prospectuses, menus, reference lists, timetables (2)	Containing highest frequency vocabulary, including some shared international words (1)
Predict (3)	specific predictable information (2)	Simple everyday material such as directions, instructions, hazard warnings	From the context (3)

	Sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g., very basic personal and family information , shopping, local geography, employment) (1)	Regulations, for example safety (1)	When expressed in simple language (1)
		Simple instructions on equipment encountered in everyday life, such as a public telephone (1)	
		Brochures, short newspaper articles describing events	

B1

Operation	What	Text	Conditions and limitations
Understand (1)	straightforward factual language	Straightforward factual texts	restricted to subjects related to my field of interest
Locate (2)	Clearly written general argumentation	Everyday material, e.g., letters, brochures and short official documents	on familiar subjects (7) (1)
Scan (3)	some details	Straightforward newspaper articles (7)	well enough to correspond regularly with a pen friend
Identify (4)	general information needed	Descriptions of events	not necessarily the detail of argumentation (7)
Combine (5)	specific information	Clearly written argumentative texts	To a satisfactory level of comprehension
Extrapolate (6)	Main conclusions	Personal letters	Consisting mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language (1)
Recognise (7)	Main argument	straightforward instructions	
	Line of argument (7)		
	Main points (1)		
	Significant points (7)		
	Descriptions of events, feelings, wishes	one long or several different texts	

B2

Operation	What	Text	Conditions and limitations
Understand (1)	relevant details	correspondence	related to my field of interest
Scan (2)	essential meaning	Longer texts, including specialized articles outside my field (1)	Highly specialized articles within my field
Monitor (3)	Information (4)	Highly specialised articles within my field	difficulty with less common phrases and idioms and with terminology
Obtain (4)	Reference sources	news items (8), articles and reports on contemporary problems with particular viewpoints	large degree of independence
Select (5)	Content and relevance (8)	lengthy complex instructions, including conditions and warnings	Dictionary required for more specialized or unfamiliar texts
Evaluate (6)	contextual clues	Long and complex texts (2)	reread difficult sections
Locate (7)	ideas and opinions	Contemporary literary prose (1)	range and type of text only a minor limitation - can read different types of text at different speeds and in different ways according to purpose and type
Identify (8)	Both concrete and abstract topics (1)		

C1

Operation	What	Text	Conditions and limitations
Understand (1)	Fine points of detail, including implicit attitudes and opinions	Wide range of long, complex texts from social, professional or academic life	understanding of details of complex texts usually only if difficult sections are re-read
Recognise (2)	Implicit meanings		
Identify (3)	Detail	Complex instructions on a new unfamiliar machine or procedure outside my area	occasional use of dictionary (1)
Infer (4)	Attitude, mood and intentions (4)	Any correspondence (1)	Using contextual, lexical and grammatical clues (4) (5)
Predict (5)	What will come next (5)	Long and complex factual and literary texts (1)	
Appreciate (6)	Distinctions of style (6)	Specialised articles and longer technical instructions (1)	Even when they do not relate to my field (1)

C2

Operation	What	Text	Conditions and limitations
Understand (1)	subtleties of style	Wide range of long and complex texts - practically all forms of written language	No limitations mentioned in CEF
Interpret (2)	subtleties of implicit and explicit meaning	Abstract, structurally complex or highly colloquial literary and non-literary writing	
Infer (3)		Virtually everything read, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialsied articles and literary works	
evaluate (critically) (4)			
Appreciate (5)			

LISTENING

A1

Operation	What	Text	Conditions and limitations
understand	Familiar names, simple words General idea Concrete needs ? Numbers, quantities, prices, times Personal details: name, nationality, address, date of birth, age, arrival date,….. Pre-packaged language and formulaic speech Enough to respond> providing personal information, following directions, requests for things	Very simple phrases about myself, my family, people I know, things around me. Examples: everyday expressions, questions, instructions, short and simple directions	Clear, slow and carefully articulated speech. When addressed by a sympathetic speaker (possibly pauses, repetitions,…) Simple, non-idiomatic speech
follow			
recognise	Very simple phrases about myself, my family, people I know, things around me. Examples: everyday expressions, questions, instructions, short and simple directions		

A2

Operation	What	Text	Conditions and limitations
Understand	Common, everyday language Predictable everyday matters Structured situations The main point Essential information The topic Enough to follow	Simple phrases and expressions about things important to me (immediate, concrete needs), sentences, statements Simple, everyday conversations and discussions Social exchanges Invitations, suggestions and apologies Announcements Short recorded passages Everyday matters in the media Examples: messages, routine exchanges, transactions (banks, shops, post offices), directions (on foot and by public transport) , TV and radion news items	Clear, slow and articulated speech Will require the help of sympathetic speakers and/or images Will sometimes ask for repetition or reformulation Highest frequency vocabulary: (personal, family information, shopping, local area, public transport, employment, tourism, free time)
Follow	changes of topic		
Inferring	meaning of unknown words in a structured situation and from overall meaning		

B1

Operation	What	Text	Conditions and limitations
Understand	The meaning of some unknown words, by guessing General meaning and specific details Topic Explicit factual information	Speech on familiar matters and factual information Everyday conversations and discussions Clearly organised and structured texts about facts Programmes in the media and films (interviews, short lectures, news reports) Current affairs Short narratives Detailed directions Messages communicating enquiries, explaining problems Examples:operation instructions, short lectures and talks, simple technical	Clear, standard speech, familiar accent Repetition and clarification may be needed in rapid and extended talk Will require the help of visuals and action Will sometimes ask for repetition of a word or phrase Unprepared

		information	
Follow	Main points	Extended discussion Films	help of visuals and actions
Infer	word and sentence meaning from context		
Guess	from context		
Cope with			
Collate	pieces of information	from different sources	
Is aware of	politeness conventions, customs, usages, attitudes, values and beliefs in target & own community		

B2

Operation	What	Text	Conditions and limitations
Understand	Main ideas and specific information Complex ideas and language Speaker's viewpoints and attitudes (mood)	All kinds of speech on familiar matters and on unfamiliar topics Unclear structure Inadequate structure Idiomatic usage Propositionally and linguistically complex speech Complex text Imaginative text (literature) Concrete and abstract topics Lectures Programmes in the media and films Documentaries, live interviews, plays,.. Examples: technical discussions, reports, live interviews	Standard language and some idiomatic usage, even in reasonably noisy backgrounds, and with several native speakers Normal speed
Identifying	Arguments supporting and opposing points of view		
Synthesize		number of sources	
Summarise	plot, sequence of events	in a film or a play	

C1

Operation	What	Text	Conditions and limitations
Understand	Enough to participate actively in conversations Abstract, complex topics Unfamiliar topics Wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms Changes in style	Spoken language in general Not clearly structured Beyond his field Relationships between ideas not clearly stated Lectures, discussions and debates Public announcements Complex technical information Recorded audio material and films Demanding long texts Third parties discussions and conversations Examples: native speaker conversations, distorted public announcements, Slang and idiomatic usage	Needs to confirm occasional detail when the accent is unfamiliar Non standard language
Identify	finer points of detail including implicit attitudes and relationships between speakers		
Recognise	implicit meaning		
Anticipate	will come next		
Follow	complex interactions between third parties	group discussions	

C2

Operation	What	Text	Conditions and limitations
Understand	Global and detailed meaning without any difficulties Finer shades of meaning and connotative levels Sociocultural and sociolinguistic implications and differences	Any spoken language, live or broadcast	None, provided there is time to get used to what-s unfamiliar
Follow		Specialised lectures and presentations with a high degree of colloquialism, regional usage or unfamiliar terminology.	
Is aware of	Implications of connotations and allusions		

CEF FRAME 2

READING

Note Any level incorporates content and texts from lower levels

A1

Operation	What (=focus and topic theme)	Text	Text features	Strategy	Conditions and limitations
Understand (1)	general idea	very short, simple informational texts	in the most common everyday situations	re-reading part of	
	familiar names, words and very basic phrases (1)	typically short, simple descriptions	with pictures which help to explain the text		
Recognise (3)	number, quantities, cost and time. Single phrase at a time	postcards	very simple sentences (1)		
	Short simple messages	simple notices, posters, catalogues (1)			
	concrete simple expressions about personal details and need of a concrete type	short simple written directions (e.g., to go from X to Y)			

A2

Operation	What (=focus and topic theme)	Text	Text features	Strategy	Conditions and limitations
Understand(1)	specific information (2)	texts on familiar concrete matter	**Content** Familiar, from every day life and concrete	From the context(3)	
Locate (2)	The probable meaning of unknown words (3)	short, simple texts (1), eg, routine personal and business letters and faxes, most everyday signs and notices in public places, such as streets, restaurants, railway stations, workplace, Yellow Pages, advertisements, prospectuses, menus, reference lists, timetables (2)	highest frequency vocabulary, including some shared international words Restricted mainly to common everyday language and language related to my job simple language		
Predict (3)	specific predictable information (2)	Simple everyday material such as directions, instructions, hazard warnings	**Text structure**		
	Areas of most immediate relevance (e.g., very basic personal and family information , shopping, local geography, employment) (1)	Sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance Regulations, for example safety (1)	**Text length** Short texts		
		Simple instructions on equipment encountered in			

		everyday life, such as a public telephone (1)			
		Brochures, short newspaper articles describing events			

B1

Operation	What (=focus and topic theme)	Text	Text features	Strategy	Conditions and limitations
Understand (1)	straightforward factual language	Straightforward factual texts	on subjects related to my field of interest		well enough to correspond regularly with a pen friend
Locate (2)	Clearly written general argumentation	Everyday material, e.g., letters, brochures and short official documents	on familiar subjects (7) (1)		to a satisfactory level of comprehension
Scan (3)	some details	Straightforward newspaper articles (7)	Straightforward factual language		
Identify (4)	general information needed, but not necessarily the detail of argumentation (7)	Descriptions of events	consisting mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language (1)		
Combine (5)	specific information	Clearly written argumentative texts			
Extrapolate (6)	Main conclusions	Personal letters,			
Recognise (7)	Main argument	straightforward instructions			
	Line of argument (7)	one long or several different texts			
	Main points (1)				
	Significant points (7)				
	Descriptions of events, feelings, wishes				

B2

Operation	What (=focus and topic theme)	Text	Text features	Strategy	Conditions and limitations
Understand (1)	relevant details	correspondence	Related to my field of interest	re-read difficult sections	difficulty with less common phrases and idioms and with terminology
Scan (2)	essential meaning	Longer texts, including specialized articles outside my field (1)	range and type of text only a minor limitation	can read different types of text at different speeds and in different ways according to purpose and type	With a large degree of independence
Monitor (3)	Information (4)	Highly specialised articles within my field			Dictionary required for more specialized

					or unfamiliar texts
Obtain (4)	Reference sources	news items (8), articles and reports on contemporary problems with particular viewpoints			
Select (5)	Content and relevance (8)	lengthy complex instructions, including conditions and warnings			
Evaluate (6)	contextual clues	Long and complex texts (2)			
Locate (7)	ideas and opinions	Contemporary literary prose (1)			
Identify (8)	Both concrete and abstract topics (1)				

C1

Operation	What (=focus and topic theme)	Text	Text features	Strategy	Conditions and limitations
Understand (1)	Fine points of detail, including implicit attitudes and opinions	Wide range of long, complex texts from social, professional or academic life	Even when they do not relate to my field (1)	understanding of details of complex texts usually only if difficulty sections are re-read	
Recognise (2)	Implicit meanings				
Identify (3)	Detail	Complex instructions on a new unfamiliar machine or procedure outside my area			occasional use of dictionary (1)
Infer (4)	Attitude, mood and intentions (4)	Any correspondence (1)			
Predict (5)	What will come next (5)	Long and complex factual and literary texts (1)			
Appreciate (6)	Distinctions of style (6)	Specialised articles and longer technical instructions (1)			

C2

Operation	What (=focus and topic theme)	Text	Text features	Strategy	Conditions and limitations
Understand (1)	subtleties of style	Wide range of long and complex texts - practically all forms of written language			No limitations mentioned in CEF
Interpret (2)	subtleties of implicit and explicit meaning	Abstract, structurally complex or highly colloquial literary and non-literary writing			
Infer (3)		Virtually everything read, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialised articles and literary works			
Evaluate (critically) (4)					
Appreciate (5)					

LISTENING

A1

Operation	What: focus + topic/ theme	Text	Text features	Strategy	Conditions and limitations
Understand	General idea Familiar names, simple words Concrete needs ? Numbers, quantities, prices, times Personal details: name, nationality, address, date of birth, age, arrival date,….. Enough to respond> providing personal information, following directions, requests for things	Very simple phrases about myself, my family, people I know, things around me. Examples: everyday expressions, questions, instructions, short and simple directions	Pre-packaged language and formulaic speech		Clear, slow and carefully articulated speech. When addressed by a sympathetic speaker(possibly pauses, repetitions,…) Simple, non-idiomatic speech
Follow					
Recognise	Very simple phrases about myself, my family, people I know, things around me. Examples: everyday expressions, questions, instructions, short and simple directions				

A2

Operation	What: focus + topic/ theme	Text	Text features	Strategy	Conditions and limitations
Understand	Predictable everyday matters Simple, everyday conversations and discussions. Structured situations The main point Essential information The topic Enough to follow Enough to manage	Simple phrases and expressions about things important to me (immediate, concrete needs), sentences, statements Simple, everyday conversations and discussions Social exchanges Invitations, suggestions and apologies Announcements Short recorded passages Everyday matters in the media Examples: messages, routine exchanges, transactions (banks, shops, post offices), directions (on foot and by public transport) , TV and radio news items Simple routine tasks	Common, everyday language Highest frequency vocabulary: (personal, family information, shopping, local area, public transport, employment, tourism, free time) Clear, slow and articulated speech	Will sometimes ask for repetition or reformulation	Will require the help of sympathetic speakers and/or images. Without undue effort(p.79)
Take	simple message (p84)				
Get	Simple information	About travel (p.80)			
Follow	changes of topic in formal discussion changes of topic	Related to his/her field Of factual TV news items. (p.71)			Which is conducted slowly and clearly (p.78)
Identify	The main point	Of TV news items reporting events, accidents, etc			Where the visual supports the commentary (p.71)
Inferring	meaning of unknown words in a structured situation and from overall meaning				

B1

Operation	What	Text	Text features	Strategy	Conditions and limitations
Understand	The meaning of some unknown words, by guessing General meaning and specific details Topic Explicit factual information	Speech on familiar matters and factual information Everyday conversations and discussions Programmes in the media and films (interviews, short lectures, news reports) Current affairs Short narratives Detailed directions Messages communicating enquiries, explaining problems Examples:operation instructions, short lectures and	Highest frequency vocabulary (leisure, education, travel, dealing with authorities) Wide range of language functions Clear, standard speech, familiar accent Clearly organised and structured texts about facts	Will sometimes ask for repetition of a word or phrase Guessing the meaning of some unknown words	Repetition and clarification may be needed in rapid and extended talk Will require the help of visuals and action Unprepared

		talks, simple technical information			
Follow	Main points	Extended discussion Films			help of visuals and actions
Infer	word and sentence meaning from context				
Guess	from context				
Cope with					
Collate	pieces of information	from different sources			
Is aware of	politeness conventions, customs, usages, attitudes, values and beliefs in target & own community				
Enter	Into conversations	On familiar topics			unprepared

B2

Operation	What: focus + topic/ theme	Text	Text features	Strategy	Conditions and limitations
Understand	Main ideas and specific information Complex ideas and language Speaker's viewpoints and attitudes (mood)	All kinds of speech on familiar matters and on unfamiliar topics Imaginative text (literature) Concrete and abstract topics Lectures Programmes in the media and films Documentaries, live interviews, plays,.. Examples: technical discussions, reports, live interviews Detailed instructions reliably (79) Recordings likely to be encountered in social, professional or academic life (p.68)	Unclear structure[contradiction with p.96 CEF: Can understand a clearly structured lecture on familiar subjects Inadequate structure Idiomatic usage Propositionally and linguistically complex speech Complex text Standard language and some idiomatic usage, even in reasonably noisy backgrounds, and with several native speakers Normal speed In standard dialect		
Identifying	Arguments supporting and opposing points of view Speaker viewpoints and attitudes as well as the information content (p.68)				
Keep up	With animated discussion (p.78)				
Synthesize		number of sources			
Summarise	plot, sequence of events	in a film or a play			

C1

Operation	What: focus + topic/ theme	Text	Text features	Strategy	Conditions and limitations
Understand	Enough to participate actively in conversations In detail speech on abstract, complex topics of a specialist nature beyond his/her own field (p.75)	Spoken language in general Lectures, discussions and debates Public announcements Complex technical information A wide range of recorded audio material and films Third parties discussions and conversations Examples: native speaker conversations, distorted public announcements,	speech on abstract, complex topics of a specialist nature beyond his/her own field (p.75) Not clearly structured Relationships between ideas not clearly stated Demanding long texts Slang and idiomatic usage Distorted public announcements Non standard language Wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms Changes in style Unfamiliar topics	Needs to confirm occasional detail when the accent is unfamiliar	
Identify	finer points of detail including implicit attitudes and relationships between speakers				
Recognise	implicit meaning				
Anticipate	will come next				
Follow	complex interactions between third parties	group discussions			
Keep up	With the debate	Even on abstract, unfamiliar topic (p.78)			

C2

Operation	What: focus + topic/ theme	Text	Text features	Strategy	Conditions and limitations
Understand	Global and detailed meaning without any difficulties Finer shades of meaning and connotative levels Sociocultural and sociolinguistic implications and differences	Any spoken language, live or broadcast Even on abstract and complex topics of a specialist nature beyond his/her own field,	Fast native speed Any native speaker Non-standard accent or dialect		None, provided there is time to get used to what-s unfamiliar Given the opportunity to adjust to a non-standard accent or dialect (p.75)
Follow		Specialised lectures and presentations	With a high degree of colloquialism, regional usage or unfamiliar terminology.		

Is aware of	Implications of connotations and allusions				

GRID 1

READING

Dimensions:
Operation
What
Text
Text features
Conditions and limitations
Item type
Text source
Text type
Text length

LISTENING

		From level in CEF
Operation		
What		
Item type		
Text source		
Discourse type		
Topic		
Number of participants		
Text length		
Speed		
Accent / standard		
Vocabulary		
Pronunciation		
Length of rubrics		
Time to read task		
Length of input text		
How often text played		
Other		

GRID 2

READING

Name of analyst	
Source of Task/item	
Item level claimed	
Item level estimated	
Task level claimed	
Task level estimated	

Dimension	Description	CEF level
1. Operation (Comprehension skill: Guide 1)		
2. What (Guide 2)		
3. Item Type (Guide 3)		
4. Text Source (Guide 4)		
5. Discourse Type (Guide 5)		
6. Domain	Personal, Occupational, Public, Educational	
7. Topic		
8. Text Length (in words)		
9. Vocabulary		
10. Grammar		
11. Part of testlet? Number of items		
12. Time to do total task		
13. Text structure (Guide 6)		
14. Readability (MS Word)		

Comments:

LISTENING

Name of analyst	
Source of Task/Item	
Item level claimed	
Item level estimated	
Task level claimed	
Task level estimated	

Dimension	Description	CEF level
1. Operation (Comprehension skill: Guide 1)		
2. What		
3. Item Type (Guide 3)		
4. Text Source (Guide 4)		
5. Discourse Type (Guide 5)		
6. Domain	Personal, Occupational, Public, Educational	
7. Topic		
8. Text Length (Duration)		
9. Vocabulary		
10. Grammar		
11. Part of testlet? Number of items		
12. Time to do total task		
13. Text structure (Guide 6)		
14. Readability (MS Word)		
15. Number of participants		
16. Text speed		
17. Accent/standard		
18. Pronunciation		
19. How often played		
Other		

Comments:

Grid 2 Guides

a) Comprehension skills (from Sauli Takala)

Main idea(s)
Important details/supporting points/ examples, etc.
Conclusions, inferences, intepretations
Recognising the structure of the text/ recognising connections between text parts

b) From International Comparative Studies (see PIRLS Document, Appendix C, page 87)

PIRLS **Processes of comprehension**	**PISA** **Macro aspects of understanding text**
Focus on and retrieve explicitly stated information	Forming a broad general understanding
Make straightforward inferences	Retrieving information
Interpret and integrate ideas and information	Developing an interpretation
Examine and evaluate content, language and textual elements	Reflecting on the content of a text
	Reflecting on the form of a text

Guide 3 Item types

Response type	1. Test method
Selected response	2. Multiple choice
	3. True False
	4. Multiple matching
	5. Sequencing/ ordering
	6. Citing
Constructed response	7. Short answer question
	8. Cloze (every nth)
	9. Gap-filling (one word)
	10. C-Test
	11. Summary completion
Extended response (creative, etc)	12. Essay
	13. Summary
	14. Report in own words
	15. Justify
	16. Other
Combinations	

Guide 4 Text sources (From CEF, page 49)

Teletext Guarantees Recipes Instructional material Novels, magazines Newspapers Junk mail Brochures Personal letters Broadcast and recorded spoken texts	Business letter Report, memorandum Life and safety notices Instructional manuals Regulations Advertising material Labelling and packaging Job description Sign posting Visiting cards
Public announcements and notices Labels and packaging Leaflets, graffiti Tickets, timetables Notices, regulations Programmes Contracts Menus Sacred texts, sermons, hymns	Textbooks, readers Reference books Blackboard text OP text Computer screen text Videotext Exercise materials Journal articles Abstracts Dictionaries

Other

If source known, please indicate whether

Pedagogic
Abridged
Simplified
Authentic

Guide 5

Classification of Discourse Types (From DIALANG Assessment Specifications)

Discourse types		*Examples (discourse types)*:
Descriptive	impressionistic descriptions	e.g. travel accounts, sports commentaries
	technical descriptions	e.g. presentation of a product
Narrative	stories, jokes, anecdotes	
	reports	e.g. news reports, features, documentaries
Expository	definitions	brief definitions
	explications	broader accounts of (especially) abstract phenomena e.g. lectures, talks
	Outlines	e.g. programme listings on the radio, time-tables
	summaries	e.g. an oral account of the plot of a book summarising minutes of a meeting
	interpretations	e.g. describing a book, an article etc.
Argumentative	comments	by any individual in any situation
	formal argumentation	e.g. formal debate
Instructive	personal instructions	e.g. announcements, ads, propaganda, routine commands

Guide 6

Structure of expository texts, from Bonnie Meyer

Collection / list
Cause–effect
Problem – solution
Compare – contrast
Description

GRID 3

Name of analyst	
Source of task/item	
Item level claimed	
Task level claimed	
Skill Tested (Reading / Listening)	

Dimension	Description	
1. Text source	❑ Teletext ❑ Guarantees ❑ Recipes ❑ Instructional material ❑ Novels, magazines ❑ Newspapers ❑ Junk mail ❑ Brochures ❑ Personal letters ❑ Broadcast and recorded spoken texts	❑ Business letter ❑ Report, memorandum ❑ Life and safety notices ❑ Instructional manuals ❑ Regulations ❑ Advertising material ❑ Labelling and packaging ❑ Job description ❑ Sign posting
	❑ Public announcements and notices ❑ Labels and packaging ❑ Leaflets, graffiti ❑ Tickets, timetables ❑ Notices, regulations ❑ Programmes ❑ Contracts ❑ Menus ❑ Sacred texts, sermons, hymns	❑ Authentic texts (as above) ❑ Textbooks, readers ❑ Reference books ❑ Blackboard text ❑ Computer screen text ❑ Videotext ❑ Exercise materials ❑ Journal articles ❑ Abstracts
	(Listening only)	
	❑ Authentic ❑ Scripted	❑ Public speeches, lectures, presentations, sermons ❑ Rituals (ceremonies, formal religious services) ❑ Entertainment *drama, shows, readings, songs(❑ Sports commentaries (football, cricket, boxing, horse racing, etc) ❑ News broadcasts ❑ Public debates and discussions ❑ Interpersonal dialogues and conversations ❑ Telephone conversations ❑ Job interviews ❑ Written text read aloud ❑ Telephone information (automatic answering devices, weather, traffic conditions, etc) ❑ Weather forecasts (radio and |TV) ❑ Traffic information (radio) ❑ Tourist information (e.g. through portable museum guides) ❑ Publicity texts (radio, TV, supermarkets) ❑ Routine commands (instructions/direction by police, customs officials, airline personnel, etc.
	Also note whether source is: ❑ Authentic ❑ Abridged/adapted/simplified ❑ Pedagogic	

2. Discourse type

Discourse types		Examples (discourse types)
❑ Descriptive	❑ impressionistic descriptions	❑ e.g. travel accounts, sports commentaries
	❑ technical descriptions	❑ e.g. presentation of a product
❑ Narrative	❑ stories, jokes, anecdotes	
	❑ reports	❑ e.g. news reports, features, documentaries
❑ Expository	❑ definitions	❑ brief definitions
	❑ explications	❑ broader accounts of (especially) abstract phenomena e.g. lectures, talks
	❑ Outlines	❑ e.g. programme listings on the radio, time-tables
	❑ Summaries	❑ e.g. an oral account of the plot of a book, summarising minutes of a meeting
	❑ interpretations	❑ e.g. describing a book, an article etc.
❑ Argumentative	❑ Comments	❑ by any individual in any situation
	❑ formal argumentation	❑ e.g. formal debate
❑ Instructive	❑ personal instructions	❑ e.g. announcements, ads, propaganda, routine commands

3. Domain (NB In many situations, more than one domain may be involved)

- ❑ **Personal**: Domain in which the person concerned lives as a private individual, centres on home life with family and friends and engages in individual practices such as reading for pleasure, keeping a personal diary, pursuing a special interest or hobby, etc.
- ❑ **Public**: Domain in which the person concerned acts as a member of the general public or of some organisation and is engaged in transactions of various kinds for a variety of purposes.
- ❑ **Occupational**: Domain in which the person concerned is engaged in his or her job or profession.
- ❑ **Educational**: Domain in which the person concerned is engaged in organised learning, especially but not necessarily within an educational institution.

4. Topic

(select from)

1. Personal identification 2. House and home, environment 3. Daily life 4. Free time, entertainment	4. Free time, entertainment 5.Travel 6. Relations with other people 7. Health and bodycare 8. Education	9. Shopping 10. Food and drink 11. Services 12. Places 13. Language 14. Weather

(select from)

Concrete
Abstract

5. Text Length

in words (reading)
in seconds (listening)

6. Vocabulary

(select from)

1. Only frequent words
2. Mostly frequent words
3. Rather extended
4. Extended

7. Grammar

(select from)

1. Only simple sentences
2. Mostly simple sentences
3. Frequent compound sentences
4. Many complex sentences

8. Readability **(for reading)**

9. Text speed **(for listening)**

(select from)

1. Artificially slow
2. Very slow
3. Slow
4. Normal
5. Rapid

10. Number of participants

(select from)

1. One
2. Two
3. More than two

11. Accent/standard

(select from)

1. Dialect
2. Accent
3. Standard

12. Clarity of articulation

(select from)

1. Artificially articulated
2. Clearly articulated
3. Normally articulated
4. Unclearly articulated

13. How often played

(select from)

played once
played twice
played three times

14. Item types

Response type	Test method
❑ Selected response	❑ Multiple choice
	❑ True False
	❑ Multiple matching
	❑ Sequencing/ ordering
	❑ Citing
❑ Constructed response	❑ Short answer question
	❑ Cloze (every nth)
	❑ Gap-filling (one word)
	❑ C-Test
	❑ Summary completion
❑ Extended response (creative, etc)	❑ Essay
	❑ Summary
	❑ Report in own words
	❑ Justify
	❑ Other

15. Part of testlet?

16. Number of items in testlet

17. Time to do total task

18. Operations

❑ Recognise and Retrieve	❑ Explicit ❑ Implicit	❑ Main idea/gist ❑ Detail ❑ Opinion ❑ Speaker's/Writer's attitude/mood ❑ Conclusion ❑ Communicative Purpose ❑ Text Structure/Connections between parts
❑ Make inferences		
❑ Evaluate		

Item level estimated

(please select)

Below A1
A1
A1/A2
A2
A2/B1
B1
B1/B2
B2
B2/C1
C1
C1/C2
C2
Beyond C2

Task level estimated

(please select)

Below A1
A1
A1/A2
A2
A2/B1
B1
B1/B2
B2
B2/C1
C1
C1/C2
C2
Beyond C2

Submit

GRID 4 The final Grid
URL: www.ling.lancs.ac.uk/cefgrid

Test to be analysed:
Analyst:
Task:
Skill:
Rubrics in L1/Target Language:
Item in L1/Target Language:
Target language of test:
Time to do total task (minutes):

Characteristics of Input Text

Dimension	Description	
1. Text source *(taken from CEF Table 5 pages 48/9)*	**Reading:**	
	❑ Teletext ❑ Guarantees ❑ Recipes ❑ Instructional material ❑ Novels, magazines ❑ Newspapers ❑ Junk mail ❑ Brochures ❑ Personal letters ❑ Broadcast and recorded spoken texts	❑ Business letter ❑ Report, memorandum ❑ Life and safety notices ❑ Instructional manuals ❑ Regulations ❑ Advertising material ❑ Labelling and packaging ❑ Job description ❑ Sign posting
	❑ Public announcements and notices ❑ Labels and packaging ❑ Leaflets, graffiti ❑ Tickets, timetables ❑ Notices, regulations ❑ Programmes ❑ Contracts ❑ Menus ❑ Sacred texts, sermons, hymns	❑ Authentic texts (as above) ❑ Textbooks, readers ❑ Reference books ❑ Blackboard text ❑ Computer screen text ❑ Videotext ❑ Exercise materials ❑ Journal articles ❑ Abstracts

	(Listening only)	
	❑ Genuine ❑ Scripted	❑ Public speeches, lectures, presentations, sermons ❑ Rituals (ceremonies, formal religious services) ❑ Entertainment *drama, shows, readings, songs(❑ Sports commentaries (football, cricket, boxing, horse racing, etc) ❑ News broadcasts ❑ Public debates and discussions ❑ Interpersonal dialogues and conversations ❑ Telephone conversations ❑ Job interviews ❑ Written text read aloud ❑ Telephone information (automatic answering devices, weather, traffic conditions, etc) ❑ Weather forecasts (radio and |TV) ❑ Traffic information (radio) ❑ Tourist information (e.g. through portable museum guides) ❑ Publicity texts (radio, TV, supermarkets) ❑ Routine commands (instructions/direction by police, customs officials, airline personnel, etc.
2. Authenticity	**Input text appears to be** (select from) ❑ Authentic ❑ Abridged/adapted/simplified ❑ Pedagogic	

3 & 4. Discourse type and subtype

3. Type	**4. Subtype**	**Examples (discourse types):**
❑ Descriptive	❑ Impressionistic descriptions	❑ e.g. travel accounts, sports commentaries
	❑ Technical descriptions	❑ e.g. presentation of a product
❑ Narrative	❑ Stories, jokes, anecdotes	
	❑ Reports	❑ e.g. news reports, features, documentaries

❑ Expository	❑ Definitions	❑ brief definitions
	❑ Explications	❑ broader accounts of (especially) abstract phenomena e.g. lectures, talks
	❑ Outlines	❑ e.g. programme listings on the radio, time-tables
	❑ Summaries	❑ e.g. an oral account of the plot of a book, summarising minutes of a meeting
	❑ Interpretations	❑ e.g. describing a book, an article etc.
❑ Argumentative	❑ Comments	❑ by any individual in any situation
	❑ Formal argumentation	❑ e.g. formal debate
❑ Instructive	❑ Personal instructions	❑ e.g. announcements, ads, propaganda, routine commands

5. Domain

- **Personal**: Domain in which the person concerned lives as a private individual, centres on home life with family and friends and engages in individual practices such as reading for pleasure, keeping a personal diary, pursuing a special interest or hobby, etc.

- **Public**: Domain in which the person concerned acts as a member of the general public or of some organisation and is engaged in transactions of various kinds for a variety of purposes.

- **Occupational**: Domain in which the person concerned is engaged in his or her job or profession.

- **Educational**: Domain in which the person concerned is engaged in organised learning, especially but not necessarily within an educational institution.

NB. In many situations, more than one domain may be involved

6. Topic

(source CEF page 52)

(select from)

1. Personal identification
2. House and home, environment
3. Daily life
4. Free time, entertainment
5.Travel
6. Relations with other people
7. Health and bodycare
8. Education
9. Shopping

10. Food and drink
11. Services
12. Places
13. Language
14. Weather

Other

7. Nature of Content

Only concrete content
Mostly concrete content
Fairly extensive abstract content
Mainly abstract content

8. Text Length

in words (reading)
in seconds (listening)

9. Vocabulary

(select from)

1. Only frequent words
2. Mostly frequent words
3. Rather extended
4. Extended

10. Grammar

(select from)

1. Only simple sentences
2. Mostly simple sentences
3. Frequent compound sentences
4. Many complex sentences

11. Text speed **(only for listening)**

(select from)

1. Artificially slow
2. Very slow
3. Slow
4. Normal
5. Fast

12. Number of participants **(only for listening)**

(select from)

1. One
2. Two
3. More than two

13. Accent/standard **(only for listening)**

(select from)

1. Standard pronunciation
2. Slight regional accent
3. Strong regional accent

14. Clarity of articulation **(only for listening)**

(select from)

1. Artificially articulated
2. Clearly articulated
3. Normally articulated
4. Sometimes unclearly articulated

15. How often played **(only for listening)**

(select from)

played once
played twice
played three times
played more than three

View CEF scales

(please select)

By Level
By Activity
By Dialang Can-do
By ALTE levels

Text likely to be comprehensible by learner at CEF level
(please select)

Below A1
A1
A1/A2
A2
A2/B1
B1
B1/B2
B2
B2/C1
C1
C1/C2
C2
Beyond C2

Return to Mainpage	Clear form	Review and submit

Test to be analysed:

Delete Item 1

Analyst:
Task:
Skill:

Details of Input Text

Characteristics of item

Item type

Response type	Test method
❑ Selected response	❑ Multiple choice
	❑ True False
	❑ Multiple matching
	❑ Sequencing/ ordering
	❑ Citing
❑ Constructed response	❑ Short answer question
	❑ Cloze (every nth)
	❑ Gap-filling (one word)
	❑ C-Test
	❑ Summary completion
❑ Extended response (creative, etc)	❑ Essay
	❑ Summary
	❑ Report in own words
	❑ Justify
	❑ Other (please specify) .....

Operations

❑ Recognise and Retrieve	❑ Explicit	❑ Main idea/gist ❑ Detail ❑ Opinion ❑ Speaker's/Writer's attitude/mood ❑ Conclusion ❑ Communicative Purpose ❑ Text Structure/Connections between parts
❑ Make inferences	❑ Implicit	
❑ Evaluate		

View CEF scales

(please select)

- By level
- By activity
- By Dialang Can-do
- By ALTE levels

Item level estimated

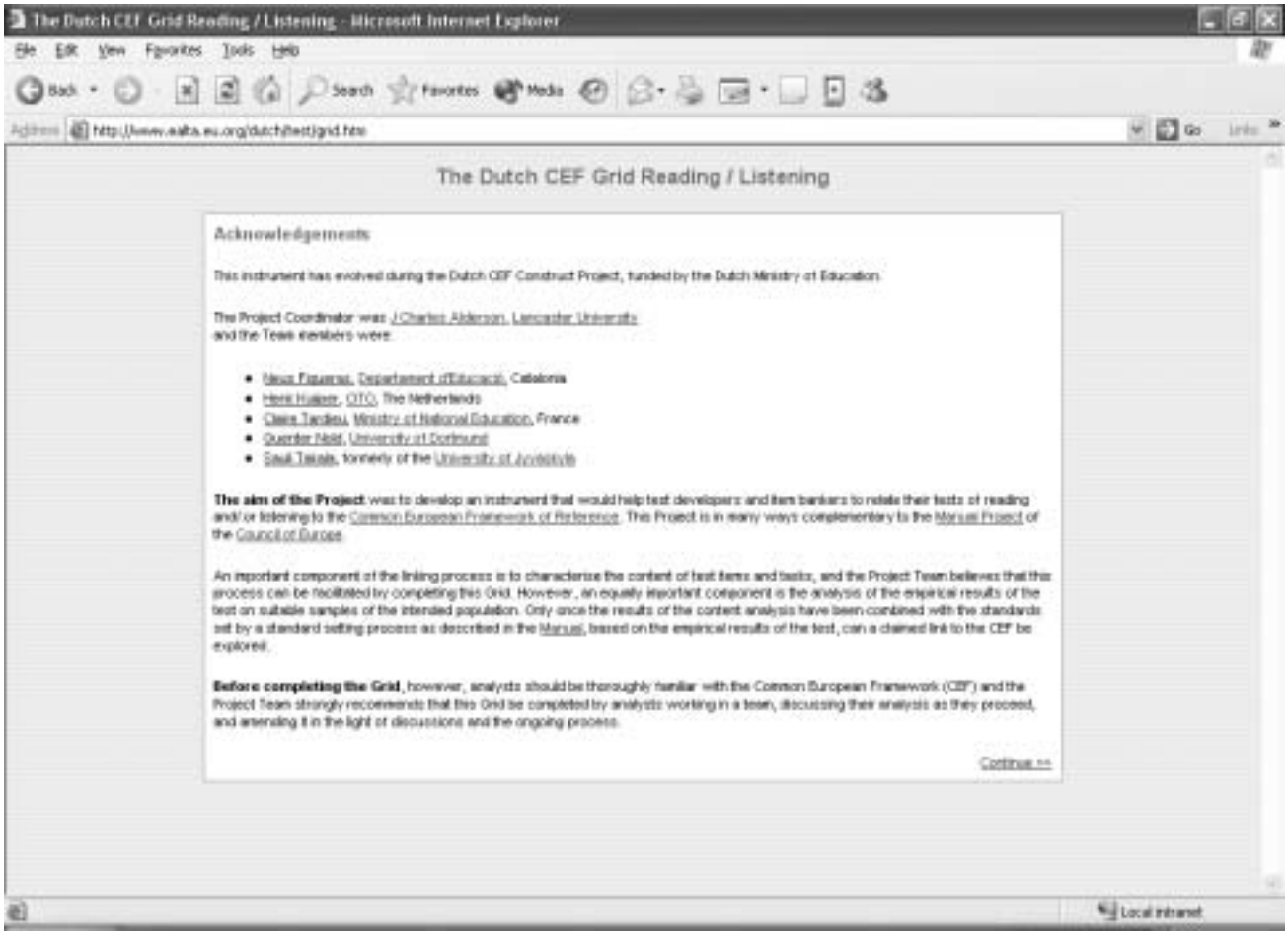
(please select)

- Below A1
- A1
- A1/A2
- A2
- A2/B1
- B1
- B1/B2
- B2
- B2/C1
- C1
- C1/C2
- C2
- Beyond C2

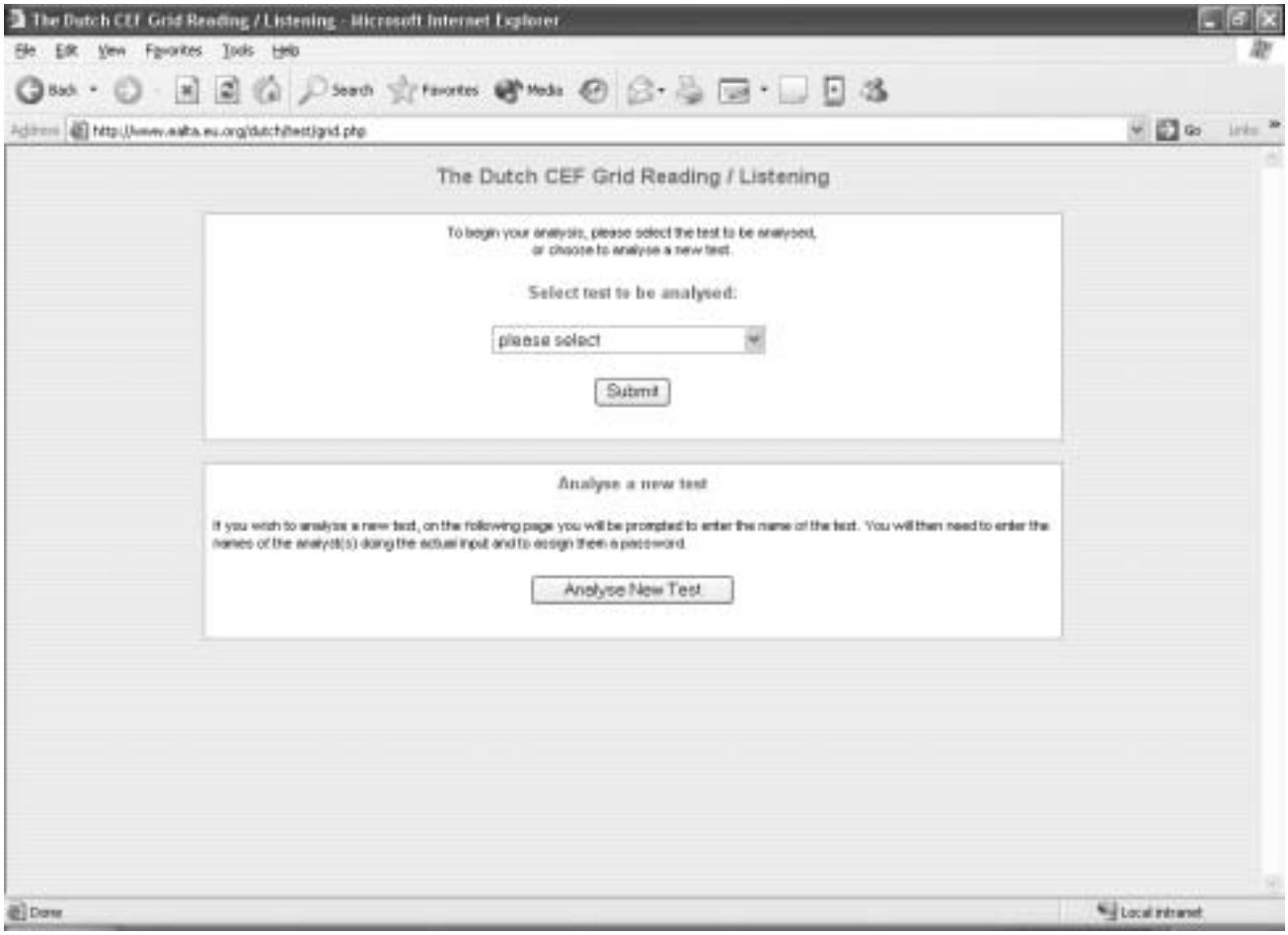
Submit

Screenshots of Grid 4 (www.ling.lancs.ac.uk/cefgrid)

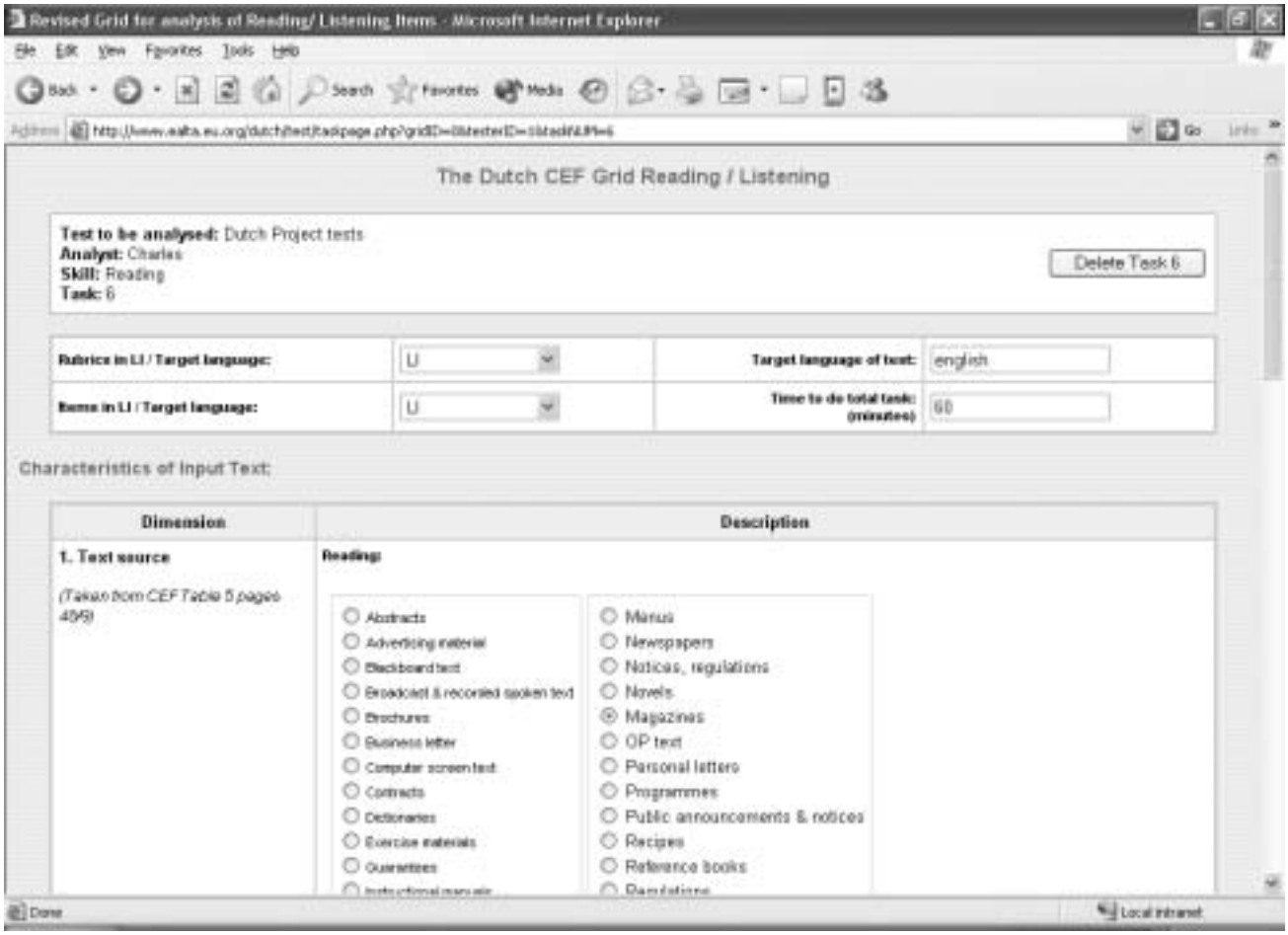
1) The opening page

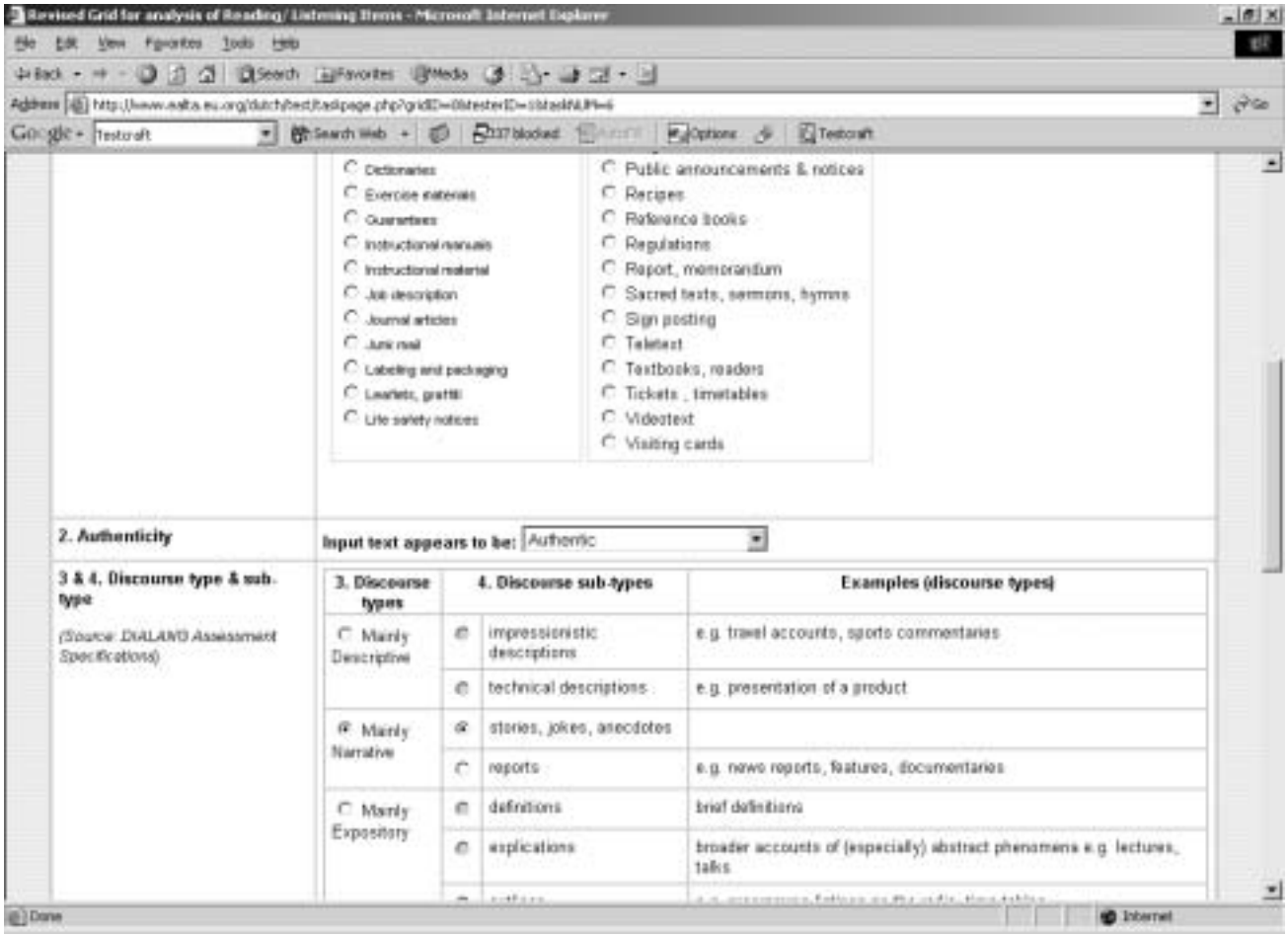


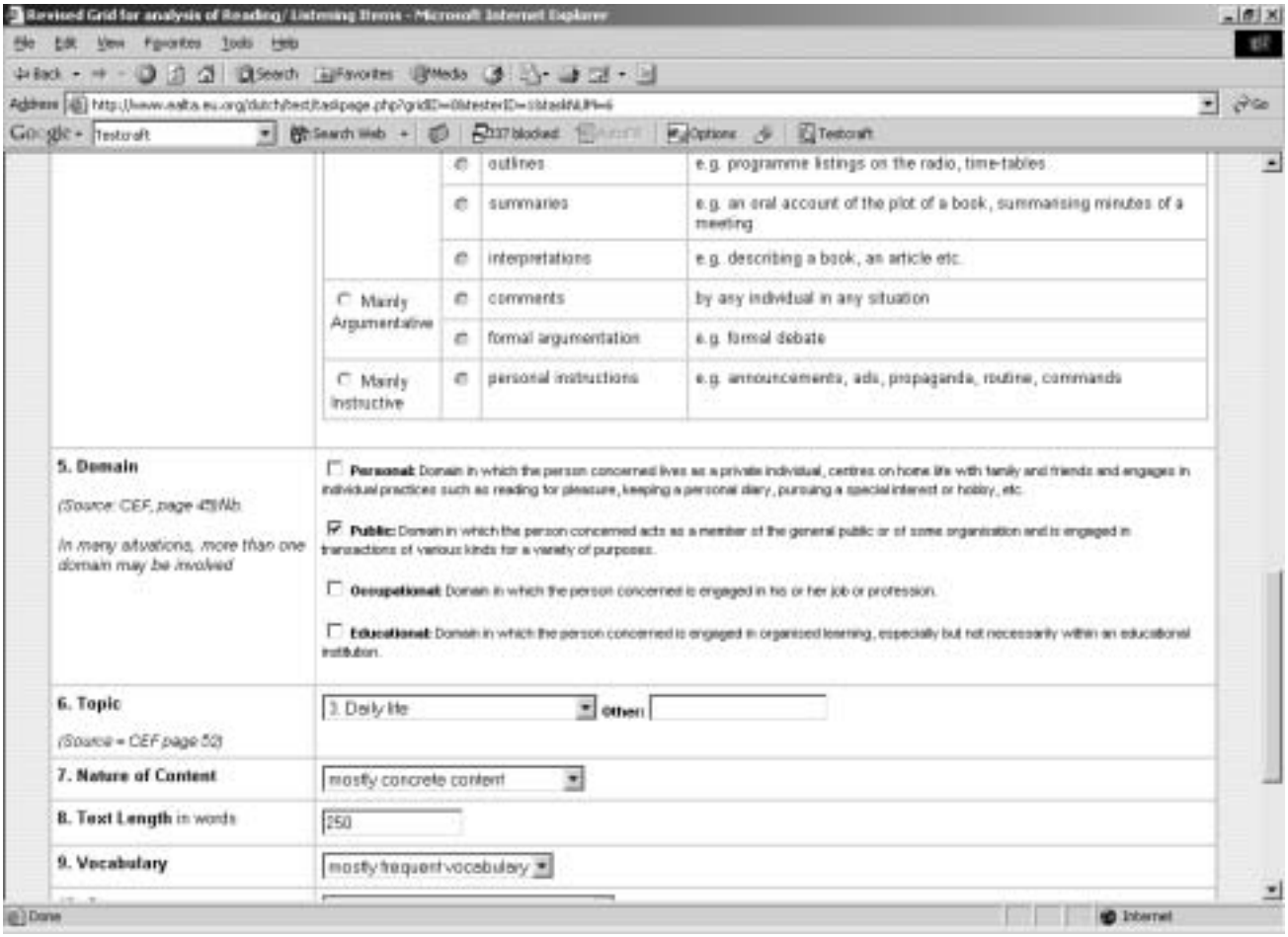
2) Second page

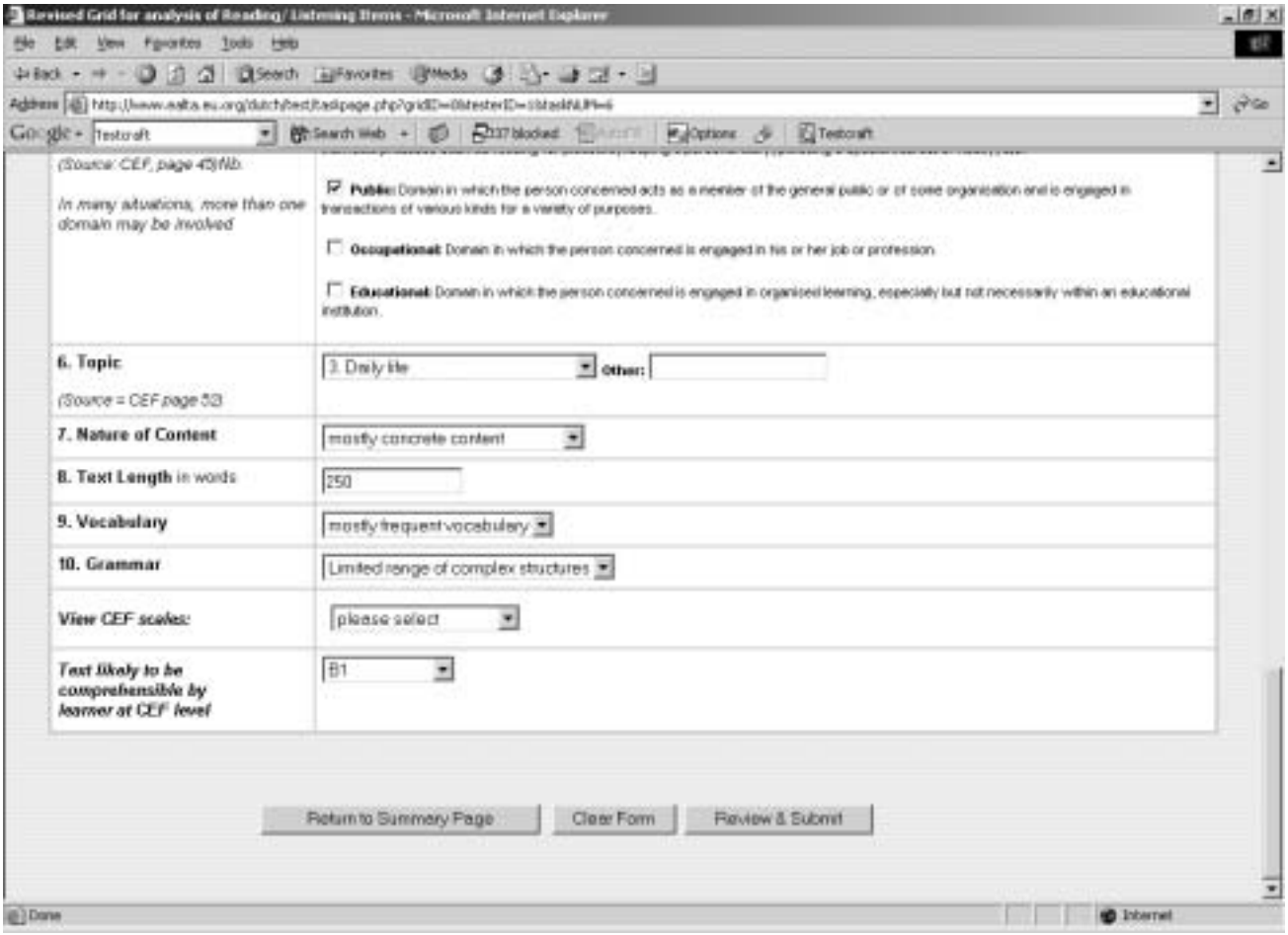


3) Sample Text analysis template

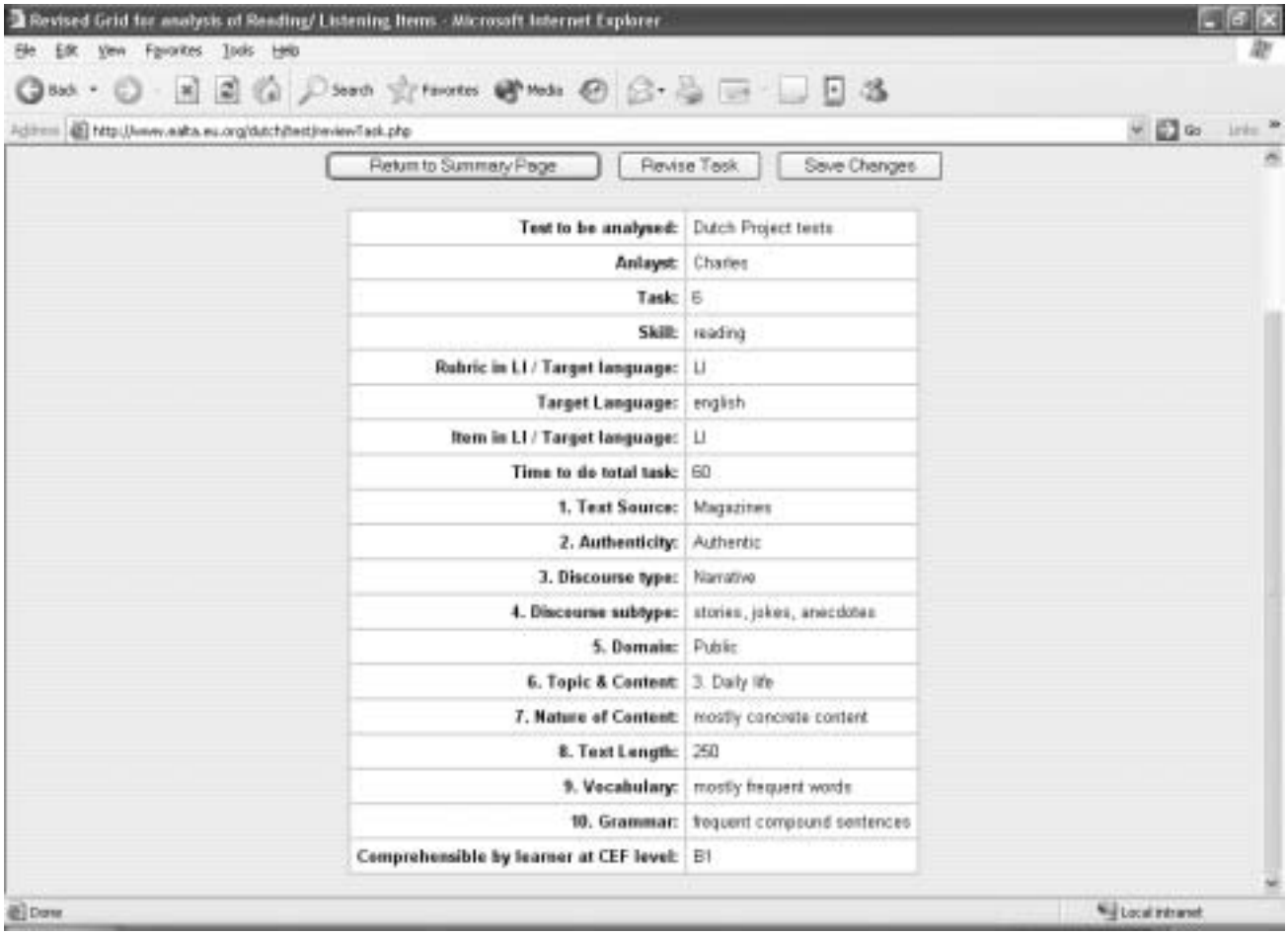



Revised Grid for analysis of Reading/ Listening Items - Microsoft Internet Explorer
File Edit View Favorites Tools Help
Back Search Favorites Media
Address http://www.valts.eu.org/dutch/test/tadpage.php?gridID=0&testerID=1&tadNUM=4
Google Testcraft Search Web 337 blocked Options Testcraft
Dictionaries
Exercise materials
Guarantees
Instructional manuals
Instructional material
Job description
Journal articles
Junk mail
Labeling and packaging
Leaflets, graffiti
Life safety notices
Public announcements & notices
Recipes
Reference books
Regulations
Report, memorandum
Sacred texts, sermons, hymns
Sign posting
Teletext
Textbooks, readers
Tickets , timetables
Videotext
Visiting cards
2. Authenticity
Input text appears to be: Authentic
3 & 4. Discourse type & sub-type
(Source: DIALANG Assessment Specifications)
3. Discourse types
4. Discourse sub-types
Examples (discourse types)
Mainly Descriptive
impressionistic descriptions
e.g. travel accounts, sports commentaries
technical descriptions
e.g. presentation of a product
Mainly Narrative
stories, jokes, anecdotes
reports
e.g. news reports, features, documentaries
Mainly Expository
definitions
brief definitions
explications
broader accounts of (especially) abstract phenomena e.g. lectures, talks
Done
Internet

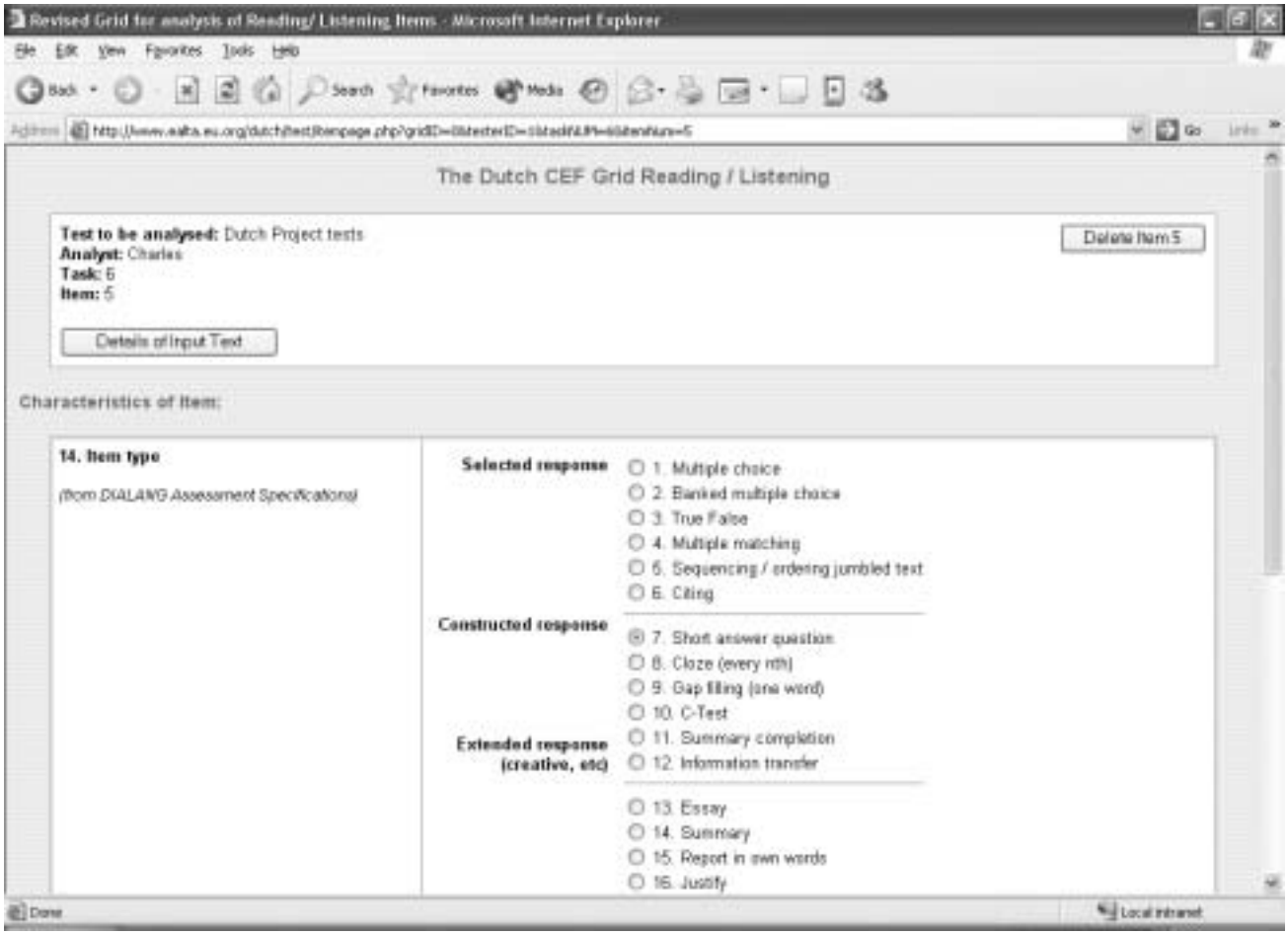

Revised Grid for analysis of Reading/ Listening Items - Microsoft Internet Explorer
File Edit View Favorites Tools Help
Back Search Favorites Media
Address http://www.valts.eu.org/dutch/test/tadpage.php?gridID=0&testerID=1&tadNUM=4
Google Testcraft Search Web 337 blocked Options Testcraft
outlines
e.g. programme listings on the radio, time-tables
summaries
e.g. an oral account of the plot of a book, summarising minutes of a meeting
interpretations
e.g. describing a book, an article etc.
Mainly Argumentative
comments
by any individual in any situation
formal argumentation
e.g. formal debate
Mainly Instructive
personal instructions
e.g. announcements, ads, propaganda, routine, commands
5. Domain
(Source: CEF, page 47)Nb
In many situations, more than one domain may be involved
Personal: Domain in which the person concerned lives as a private individual, centres on home life with family and friends and engages in individual practices such as reading for pleasure, keeping a personal diary, pursuing a special interest or hobby, etc.
Public: Domain in which the person concerned acts as a member of the general public or of some organization and is engaged in transactions of various kinds for a variety of purposes.
Occupational: Domain in which the person concerned is engaged in his or her job or profession.
Educational: Domain in which the person concerned is engaged in organised learning, especially but not necessarily within an educational institution.
6. Topic
(Source = CEF,page 50)
3. Daily life
Other:
7. Nature of Content
mostly concrete content
8. Text Length in words
250
9. Vocabulary
mostly frequent vocabulary
Done
Internet

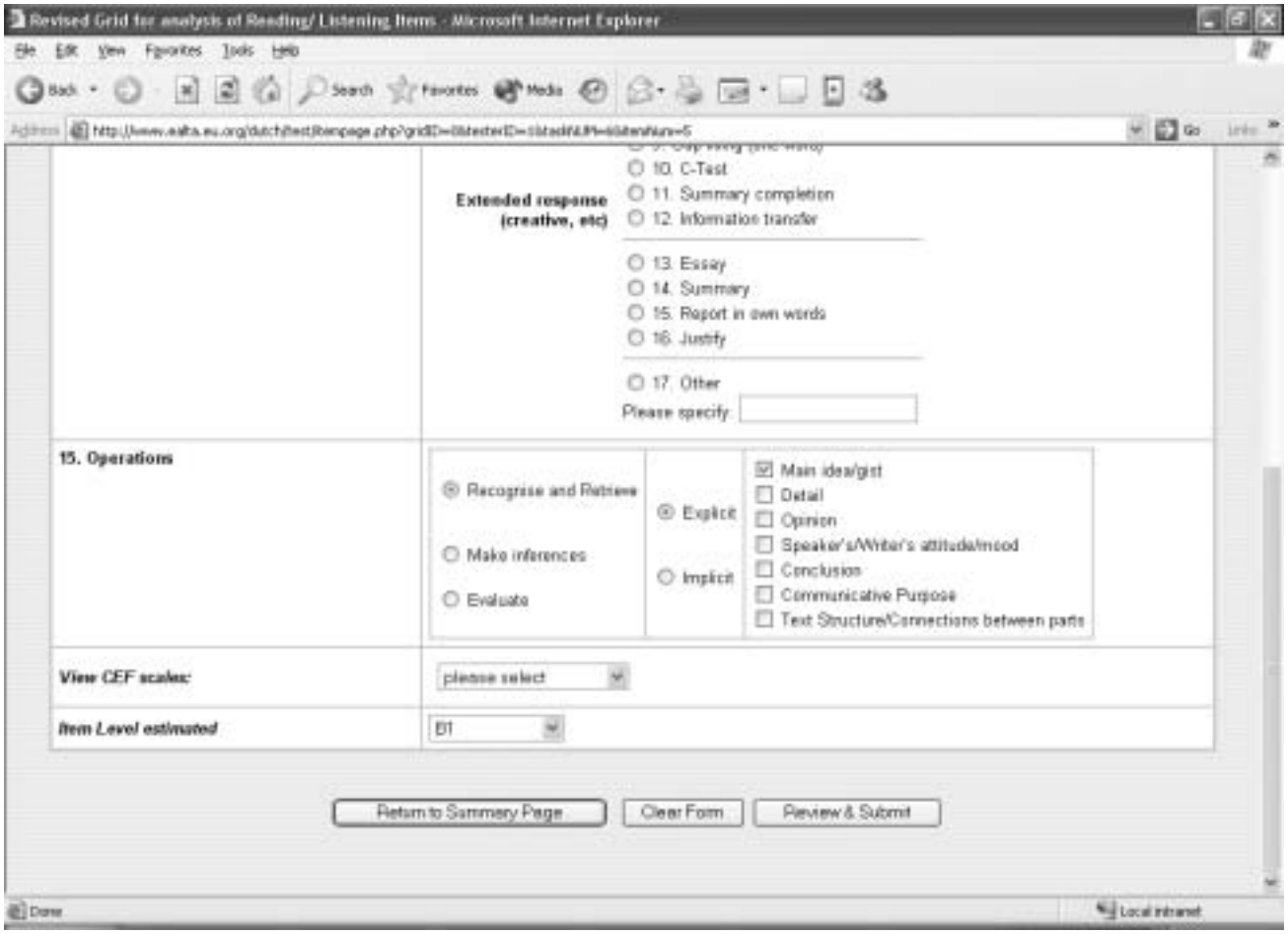

Revised Grid for analysis of Reading/ Listening Items - Microsoft Internet Explorer
File Edit View Favorites Tools Help
Back Search Favorites Media
Address http://www.valts.eu.org/dutch/test/testpage.php?gridID=0&testerID=1&taskNUM=6
Google Testcraft Search Web 337 blocked Options Testcraft
(Source: CEF, page 45)Nb.
In many situations, more than one domain may be involved
Public: Domain in which the person concerned acts as a member of the general public or of some organisation and is engaged in transactions of various kinds for a variety of purposes.
Occupational: Domain in which the person concerned is engaged in his or her job or profession.
Educational: Domain in which the person concerned is engaged in organised learning, especially but not necessarily within an educational institution.
6. Topic
(Source = CEF page 53)
3. Daily life
Other:
7. Nature of Content
mostly concrete content
8. Text Length in words
250
9. Vocabulary
mostly frequent vocabulary
10. Grammar
Limited range of complex structures
View CEF scales:
please select
Text likely to be comprehensible by learner at CEF level
B1
Return to Summary Page
Clear Form
Review & Submit
Done
Internet

4) Sample completed analysis of Text, for Review

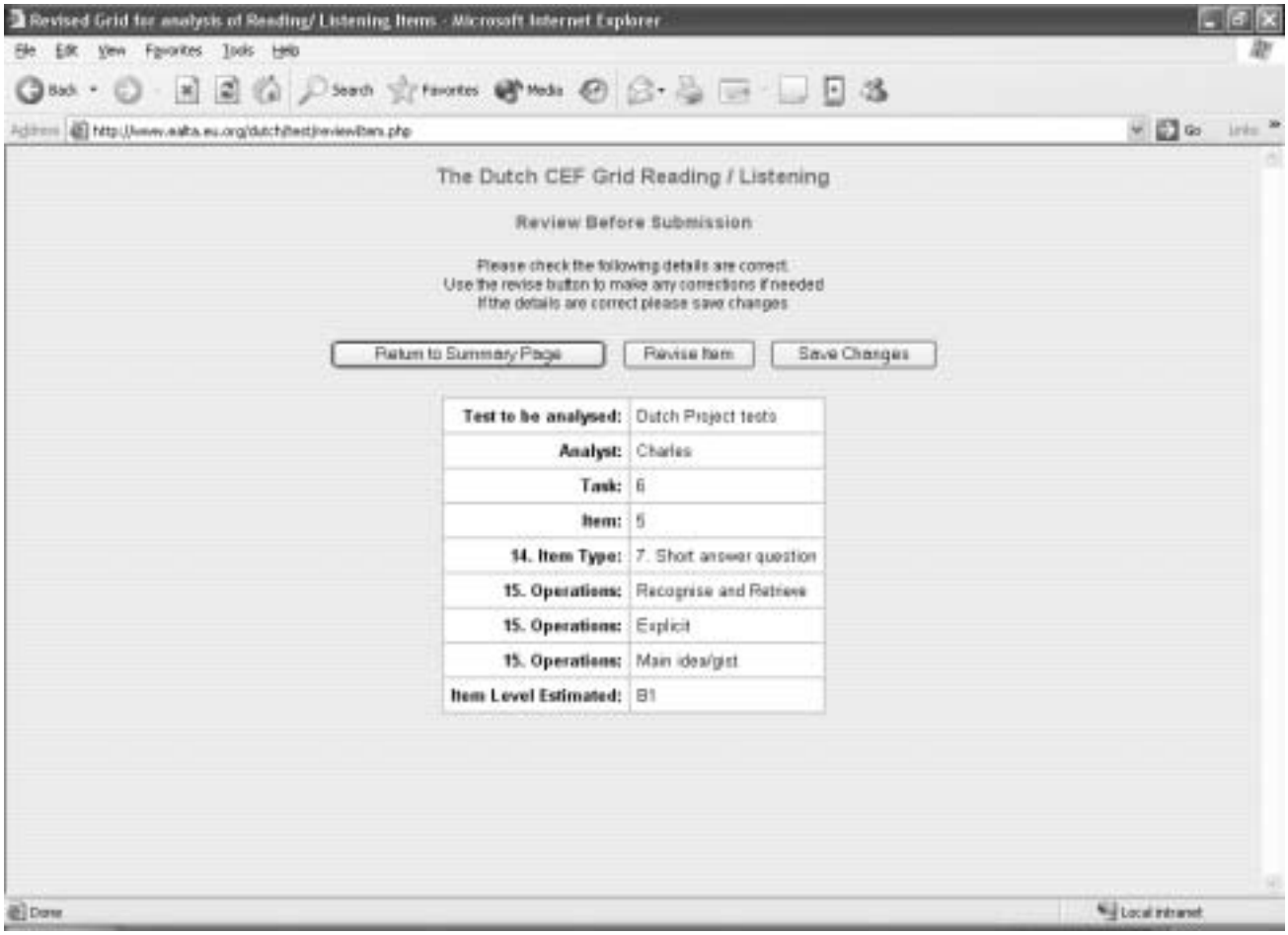


5) Sample item analysis template

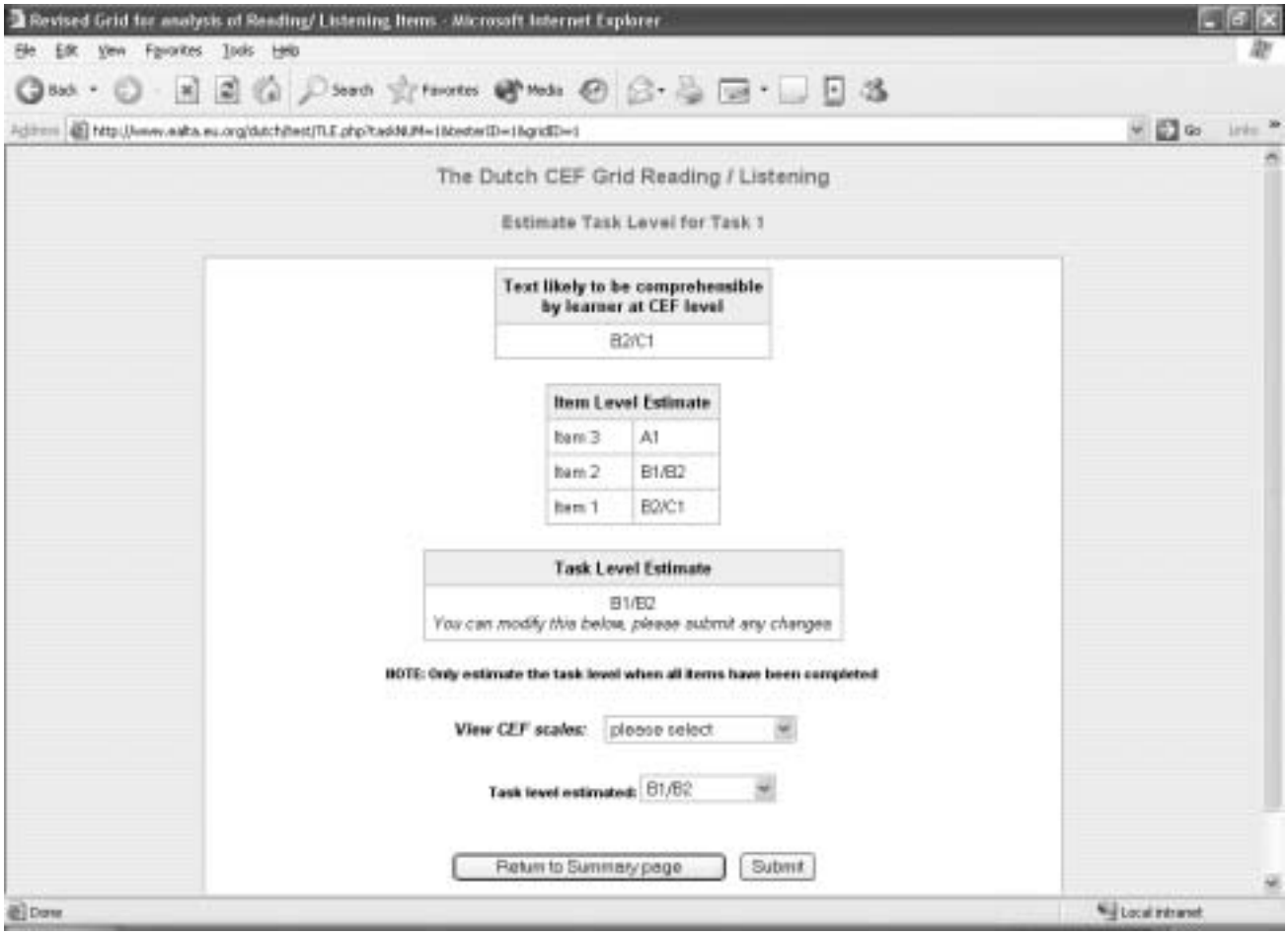



Revised Grid for analysis of Reading/ Listening Items - Microsoft Internet Explorer
File Edit View Favorites Tools Help
Back Search Favorites Media
Go
Extended response (creative, etc)
10. C-Test
11. Summary completion
12. Information transfer
13. Essay
14. Summary
15. Report in own words
16. Justify
17. Other
Please specify
15. Operations
Recognise and Retrieve
Make inferences
Evaluate
Explicit
Implicit
Main idea/gist
Detail
Opinion
Speaker's/Writer's attitude/mood
Conclusion
Communicative Purpose
Text Structure/Connections between parts
View CEF scales:
please select
Item Level estimated
B1
Return to Summary Page
Clear Form
Review & Submit
Done
Local intranet

6) Sample analysis of an item, for Review



7) Sample Review of CEF levels for Text, Task and Item



APPENDIX 2: Schedule and process

December 4th - 7th, 2003. 1st Project Meeting in Lancaster.

Phase One: December, 2003 - early February, 2004.

Contact Dutch Ministry re letter to examining bodies.
Letter finally sent end January, too late for returns by Amsterdam meeting.
Application of draft Frames to test items for trialling for applicability
Critical inspection and revision of draft Frames of analysis.
Joint production of Amsterdam paper
Meeting Amsterdam with Second Language Acquisition experts, 13-14.02.04

February 12-16.02.04 2nd Project Meeting, Amsterdam and Arnhem.

Problems with CEF identified
Agreed to supplement Grid with non-CEF content
Revision of Frames into Grid, testing on a few test items and further revisions
Plan for data analysis using Grid
Contact with examining bodies planned

Phase Two: mid February - mid May, 2004

Presentation of work of Project to Arnhem conference on Dutch Survey Project
Application of Revised Grids and Guides to DIALANG Reading and Listening items, Dutch HAVO test tasks for listening and reading, and Finnish Matriculation exam
Analysis of results of application of Grid to DIALANG items
Draft report of analysis
Email discussion and revision of report
Presentation of work of Project to Council of Europe meeting , Strasbourg (16.4.04)
Presentation of work of Project to Hungarian European Standards meeting, Szeged (23.4.04)
Finalisation of Second Report
Discussion of conclusions to Second Report and proposals for revision of Grids
Presentation of work of Project to EALTA conference, Slovenia, May 2004

Phase Three: mid May - end July

Meeting in Slovenia to finalise revision of Grid 3 (JCA, NF, GN). 17.05.04
Development of Web-based Grid 3 in Lancaster, field testing and revision
Compilation and anonymising of tasks for analysis, by Project Coordinator
Analysis of anonymous Reading and Listening tasks using Grid 3 by five analysts
Analysis, using framework of Grid 3, of available test specifications

3rd Project Meeting, Barcelona, June 10-13th, 2004

Correction and discussion of data input via Grid 3 to database
Discussion of results and proposals for revision of analyses of test specifications
Analysis of tests produced in France, using Grid 3
Analysis of Catalan tests of French and German using Grid 3

Discussion of final revisions to Grid
Compilation of results of analysis of specifications
Revision and submission of analyses of test specifications
Revision of Grid 3 in light of analysts' recommendations
Field testing and further development of Grid 4
Drafting of Third Progress Report
Meeting in Lancaster to produce and edit Final Report (JCA, NF, ST) 9-11.7.04
Circulation and discussion of draft Final Report
Final editing of Final Report
Submission of Final Report

APPENDIX 3: CEF scales by level: Reading

A1

Can understand familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. (p24)
I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues. (p26)
Can understand very short, simple texts a single phrase at a time, picking up familiar names, words and basic phrases and rereading as required.(p69)
Can understand short, simple messages on postcards.(p69)
Can recognise familiar names, words and very basic phrases on simple notices in the most common everyday situations.(p70)
Can get an idea of the content of simpler informational material and short simple descriptions, especially if there is visual support(p70)
Can follow short, simple written directions (e.g. to go from X to Y).(p71)
No descriptor available for identifying cues and inferring (p72)

Has a very basic range of simple expressions about personal details and needs of a concrete type. (p110)
Has a basic vocabulary repertoire of isolated words and phrases related to particular concrete situations.(p112)

DIALANG
I can understand the general idea of simple informational texts and short simple descriptions, especially if they contain pictures which help to explain the text.
I can understand very short, simple texts, putting together familiar names, words and basic phrases, by for example rereading parts of the text.
I can follow short, simple written instructions, especially if they contain pictures.
I can recognise familiar names, words and very simple phrases on simple notices in the most common everyday situations.
I can understand short, simple messages, e.g. on postcards.(C1 p231)

At this level people can understand very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues. (p235)

ALTE
CAN understand basic notices, instructions or information
CAN understand simple notices and information, for example in airports, on store guides and on menus. CAN understand simple instructions on medicines and simple directions to places.
CAN understand short reports or product descriptions on familiar matters, if these are expressed in simple language and the contents are predictable.
CAN read basic notices and instructions.

A2

Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). (p24)
I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables and I can understand short simple personal letters. (p26)
A2.1 Can understand short, simple texts containing the highest frequency vocabulary, including a proportion of shared international vocabulary items.(p69)
A2.2 Can understand short, simple texts containing the highest frequency vocabulary, including a proportion of shared international vocabulary items.(p69)
A2.1 Can understand short simple personal letters.(p69)
A2.2 Can understand basic types of standard routine letters and faxes (enquiries, orders, letters of confirmation etc.) on familiar topics.(p69)
Can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus, reference lists and timetables. Can locate specific information in lists and isolate the information required (e.g. use the 'Yellow Pages' to find a service or tradesman). Can understand everyday signs and notices: in public places, such as streets, restaurants, railway stations; in workplaces, such as directions, instructions, hazard warnings.(p70)
Can identify specific information in simpler written material he/she encounters such as letters, brochures and short newspaper articles describing events(p70)
A2.1 Can understand simple instructions on equipment encountered in everyday life – such as a public telephone.(p70)
A2.2 Can understand regulations, for example safety, when expressed in simple language.
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.(p72)

A2.1 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 formulae 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.(p110)

A2.2 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 (p110).
A2.1 Has a sufficient vocabulary for the expression of basic communicative needs. Has a sufficient vocabulary for coping with simple survival needs.(p112)
A2.2 Has sufficient vocabulary to conduct routine, everyday transactions involving familiar situations and topics.(p110)

DIALANG
I can understand short, simple texts containing the most common words, including some shared international words.
I can understand short, simple texts written in common everyday language.
I can understand short simple texts related to my job.
I can find specific information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, brochures, menus and timetables.

I can identify specific information in simple written material such as letters, brochures and short newspaper articles describing events.
I can understand short simple personal letters.
I can understand standard routine letters and faxes on familiar topics.
I can understand simple instructions on equipment encountered in everyday life – such as a public telephone.
I can understand everyday signs and notices in public places, such as streets, restaurants, railway stations and in workplaces.(C1 p231)

At this level people can understand very short, simple texts. They can find specific information they are looking for in simple everyday texts such as advertisements, leaflets, menus and timetables and they can understand short simple personal letters. (p235)

ALTE
CAN understand straightforward information within a known area, such as on products and signs and simple textbooks or reports on familiar matters.
CAN understand straightforward information, for example labels on food, standard menus, road signs and messages on automatic cash machines.
CAN understand most short reports or manuals of a predictable nature within his/her own area of expertise, provided enough time is given.
CAN understand the general meaning of a simplified textbook or article, reading very slowly.

B1

Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. . (p24)
I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters. (p26)
Can read straightforward factual texts on subjects related to his/her field and interest with a satisfactory level of comprehension. (p69)
Can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters well enough to correspond regularly with a pen friend. (p69)
B1.1 Can find and understand relevant information in everyday material, such as letters, brochures and short official documents (p70)
B1.2 Can scan longer texts in order to locate desired information, and gather information from different parts of a text, or from different texts in order to fulfil a specific task.(p70)
B1.1 Can recognise significant points in straightforward newspaper articles on familiar subjects (p70)
B1.2 Can identify the main conclusions in clearly signalled argumentative texts. Can recognise the line of argument in the treatment of the issue presented, though not necessarily in detail. (p70)
Can understand clearly written, straightforward instructions for a piece of equipment. (p70)
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. (p72)

B1.1 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 events, but lexical limitations cause repetition and even difficulty with formulation at times. (p110)
B1.2 Has a sufficient range of language to describe unpredictable situations, explain the main points in an idea or problem with reasonable precision and express thoughts on abstract or cultural topics such as music and films (p110)
Has a sufficient 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.

DIALANG
I can understand straightforward texts on subjects related to my fields of interest.
I can find and understand general information I need in everyday material, such as letters, brochures and short official documents.
I can search one long or several short texts to locate specific information I need to help me complete a task.
I can recognise significant points in straightforward newspaper articles on familiar subjects.
I can identify the main conclusions in clearly written argumentative texts.
I can recognise the general line of argument in a text but not necessarily in detail.
I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters well enough to correspond with a friend or acquaintance.
I can understand clearly written straightforward instructions for a piece of equipment. (C1 p231)

At this level people can understand texts that contain everyday or job-related language. They can understand personal letters in which the writer describes events, feelings and wishes. (p235)

ALTE
CAN understand routine information and articles, and the general meaning of non-routine information within a familiar area.
CAN understand factual articles in newspapers, routine letters from hotels and letters expressing personal opinions.
CAN understand the general meaning of non-routine letters and theoretical articles within own work area.
CAN understand basic instructions and messages, for example computer library catalogues, with some help.

B2

Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. . (p24)
I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or iewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose. (p27)
Can read with a large degree of independence, adapting style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes, and using appropriate reference sources selectively. Has a broad active reading vocabulary, but may experience some difficulty with low frequency idioms.(p69)
Can read correspondence relating to his/her field of interest and readily grasp the essential meaning.(p69)
Can scan quickly through long and complex texts, locating relevant details. Can quickly identify the content and relevance of news items, articles and reports on a wide range of professional topics, deciding whether closer study is worthwhile.(p70)
B2.1 Can understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints.(p70)
B2.2 Can obtain information, ideas and opinions from highly specialised sources within his/her field.
Can understand specialised articles outside his/her field, provided he/she can use a dictionary occasionally to confirm his/her interpretation of terminology.(p70)
Can understand lengthy, complex instructions in his field, including details on conditions and warnings, provided he/she can reread difficult sections.(p70)
Can use a variety of strategies to achieve comprehension, including listening for main points; checking comprehension by using contextual clues.(p70)

B2.1 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. (p110)
B2.,2 Can express him/herself clearly and without much sign of having to restrict what he/she wants to say.(p110)
Has a good range of 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 (p112).

DIALANG
I can read correspondence relating to my fields of interest and easily understand the essential meaning.
I can understand specialised articles outside my field, provided I can use a dictionary to confirm terminology.
I can read many kinds of texts quite easily at different speeds and in different ways according to my purpose in reading and the type of text.
I have a broad reading vocabulary, but I sometimes experience difficulty with less common words and phrases.
I can quickly identify the content and relevance of news items, articles and reports on a wide range of professional topics, deciding whether closer study is worthwhile.
I can understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints. (C1, p231)

At this level people can understand articles and reports about contemporary issues when the writer takes a particular position on a problem or expresses a particular viewpoint. They can understand most short stories and popular novels. (p235)

ALTE
CAN scan texts for relevant information, and understand detailed instructions or advice.
CAN understand detailed information, for example a wide range of culinary terms on a restaurant menu, and terms and abbreviations in accommodation advertisements.
CAN understand most correspondence, reports and factual product literature he/she is likely to come across.
CAN scan tests for relevant information and grasp main point of text.

C1

Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. (p24)
I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field. (p27)
Can understand in detail lengthy, complex texts, whether or not they relate to his/her own area of speciality, provided he/she can reread difficult sections.(p69)
Can understand any correspondence given the occasional use of a dictionary.(p69)
As B2, viz Can scan quickly through long and complex texts, locating relevant details. Can quickly identify the content and relevance of news items, articles and reports on a wide range of professional topics, deciding whether closer study is worthwhile.(p70)
Can understand in detail a wide range of lengthy, complex texts likely to be encountered in social, professional or academic life, identifying finer points of detail including attitudes and implied as well as stated opinions.(p70)
Can understand in detail lengthy, complex instructions on a new machine or procedure, whether or not the instructions relate to his/her own area of speciality, provided he/she can reread difficult sections.(p70)
Is skilled at using contextual, grammatical and lexical cues to infer attitude, mood and intentions and anticipate what will come next.(p72)

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.(p110)
Has a good command of a broad lexical repertoire allowing gaps to be readily overcome with circumlocutions; little obvious searching for expressions or avoidance strategies. Good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms (p112)

DIALANG
I can understand any correspondence with an occasional use of dictionary.
I can understand in detail long, complex instructions on a new machine or procedure even outside my own area of speciality if I can reread difficult sections. (C1 p231)

At this level people can understand long and complex factual and literary texts as well as differences in style. They can understand “specialised” language in articles and technical instructions, even if these are not in their field. (p235)

ALTE
CAN read quickly enough to cope with an academic course, to read the media for information or to understand non-standard correspondence
CAN understand complex opinions/ arguments as expressed in serious newspapers.
CAN understand correspondence expressed in non-standard language.
CAN read quickly enough to cope with the demands of an academic course.

C2

Can understand with ease virtually everything read. (p24)
I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, Including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialised articles and literary works. (p27)
Can understand and interpret critically virtually all forms of the written language including abstract, structurally complex, or highly colloquial literary and non-literary writings. Can understand a wide range of long and complex texts, appreciating subtle distinctions of style and implicit as well as explicit meaning. (P69)
As C1, viz Can understand any correspondence given the occasional use of a dictionary.(p69)
As B2, viz Can scan quickly through long and complex texts, locating relevant details. Can quickly identify the content and relevance of news items, articles and reports on a wide range of professional topics, deciding whether closer study is worthwhile.(p70)
As C1, viz Can understand in detail a wide range of lengthy, complex texts likely to be encountered in social, professional or academic life, identifying finer points of detail including attitudes and implied as well as stated opinions.(p70)
As C1, viz Can understand in detail lengthy, complex instructions on a new machine or procedure, whether or not the instructions relate to his/her own area of speciality, provided he/she can reread difficult sections.(p70)
As C1, viz Is skilled at using contextual, grammatical and lexical cues to infer attitude, mood and intentions and anticipate what will come next. (p70)

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.(p110)
Has a good command of a very broad lexical repertoire including idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms; shows awareness of connotative levels of meaning.(p112)

DIALANG
I can understand and interpret practically all forms of written language including abstract, structurally complex, or highly colloquial literary and non-literary writings. (C1, p231)

At this level people can read, without any problems, almost all forms of text, including texts which are abstract and contain difficult words and grammar. For example: manuals, articles on special subjects, and literary texts. (p235)

ALTE
CAN understand documents, correspondence and reports, including the finer points of complex texts.
CAN (when looking for accommodation) understand a tenancy agreement in detail, for example technical details and the main legal implications.
CAN understand reports and articles likely to be encountered during his/her work, including complex ideas expressed in complex language.
CAN access all sources of information quickly and reliably.

C3 Elaborated descriptive scales used in advisory feedback of DIALANG

READING						
	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
What types of text I understand	Very short, simple texts, typically short, simple descriptions, especially if they contain pictures. Short, simple written instructions e.g. short simple postcards, simple notices.	Texts on familiar, concrete matters. Short, simple texts e.g. routine personal and business letters and faxes, most everyday signs and notices, Yellow Pages, advertisements.	Straightforward factual texts on subjects related to my field of interest. Everyday material, e.g. letters, brochures and short official documents. Straightforward newspaper articles on familiar subjects and descriptions of events. Clearly written argumentative texts. Personal letters expressing feelings and wishes. Clearly written, straightforward instructions for a piece of equipment.	Correspondence relating to my field of interest. Longer texts, including specialised articles outside my field and highly specialised sources within my field. Articles and reports on contemporary problems with particular viewpoints.	Wide range of long, complex texts from social, professional or academic life. Complex instructions on a new unfamiliar machine or procedure outside my area. .	Wide range of long and complex texts – practically all forms of written language. Abstract, structurally complex, or highly colloquial literary and non-literary writings.
What I understand	Familiar names, words, basic phrases.	Understand short, simple texts. Find specific information in simple everyday material.	Understand straightforward factual language. Understand clearly written general argumentation (but not necessarily all details). Understand straightforward instructions. Find general information I need in everyday material. Locate specific information by searching one long or several different texts.	Understanding aided by broad active reading vocabulary, difficulty with less common phrases and idioms and with terminology. Understand the essential meaning of correspondence in my field, and specialized articles outside my field (with dictionary). Obtain information, ideas and opinions from highly specialised sources within my field. Locate relevant details in long texts	Identify fine points of detail including attitudes and opinions which are not explicitly stated. Understand in detail complex texts, including fine points of detail, attitudes and opinions (see conditions and limitations).	Understand subtleties of style and meaning which are both implicitly and explicitly stated.
Conditions and limitations	Single phrase at a time, re-reading part of text.	Restricted mainly to common everyday language and language related to my job.	Ability to identify main conclusions and follow argument restricted to straightforward texts.	Range and types of text only a minor limitation – can read different types of text at different speeds and in different ways according to purpose and type. Dictionary required for more specialized or unfamiliar texts	Understanding of details of complex texts usually only if difficult sections are re-read. Occasional use of dictionary.	Few limitations – can understand and interpret practically all forms of written language.

APPENDIX 4: CEF scales by level: Listening

A1

Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. (p24)
I can recognise familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly. (p26)
Can follow speech which is very slow and carefully articulated, with long pauses for him/her to assimilate meaning.(p66)
UNDERSTANDING CONVERSATION BETWEEN NATIVE SPEAKERS: No descriptor available (p66)
LISTENING AS A MEMBER OF A LIVE AUDIENCE: No descriptor available (p67)
Can understand instructions addressed carefully and slowly to him/her and follow short, simple directions. (p67)
LISTENING TO AUDIO MEDIA AND RECORDINGS: No descriptor available (p68)
WATCHING TV AND FILM: No descriptor available (p71)
IDENTIFYING CUES AND INFERRING (Spoken): No descriptor available (p72)
NOTE-TAKING (LECTURES, SEMINARS, ETC.): No descriptor available (p96)

Has a very basic range of simple expressions about personal details and needs of a concrete type. (p110)
Has a basic vocabulary repertoire of isolated words and phrases related to particular concrete situations. (p112)

DIALANG
I can understand everyday expressions dealing with simple and concrete everyday needs, in clear, slow and repeated speech.
I can follow speech which is very slow and carefully articulated, with long pauses for me to get the meaning.
I can understand questions and instructions and follow short, simple directions.
I can understand numbers, prices and times. (p233/4)

At this level, people can understand very simple phrases about themselves, people they know and things around them, when people speak slowly and clearly. (p235)

ALTE
CAN understand basic instructions or take part in a basic factual conversation on a predictable topic.
CAN ask simple questions of a factual nature and understand answers expressed in simple language.
CAN take and pass on simple messages of a routine kind, such as ‘Friday meeting 10 a.m.’
CAN understand basic instructions on class times, dates and room numbers, and on assignments to be carried out.

A2

Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). (p24)
I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local area, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements. (p26)
A2.1 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 speech is clearly and slowly articulated.
A2.2 Can understand enough to be able to meet needs of a concrete type provided speech is clearly and slowly articulated (p66)
Can generally identify the topic of discussion around him/her, when it is conducted slowly and clearly. (p66)
LISTENING AS A MEMBER OF A LIVE AUDIENCE: No descriptor available (p67)
Can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements. Can understand simple directions relating to how to get from X to Y, by foot or public transport. (p67)
Can understand and extract the essential information from short, recorded passages dealing with predictable everyday matters which are delivered slowly and clearly. (p68)
A2.1 Can follow changes of topic of factual TV news items, and form an idea of the main content
A2.2 Can identify the main point of TV news items reporting events, accidents etc. where the visual supports the commentary. (p71)
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. (p72)
NOTE-TAKING (LECTURES, SEMINARS, ETC.): No descriptor available (p96)

A2.1 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 formulae 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.
A2.2 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. (p110)
A2.1 Has a sufficient vocabulary for the expression of basic communicative needs. Has a sufficient vocabulary for coping with simple survival needs.
A2.2 Has sufficient vocabulary to conduct routine, everyday transactions involving familiar situations and topics. (p112)

DIALANG
I can understand enough to manage simple, routine exchanges without too much effort.
I can generally identify the topic of discussion around me which is conducted slowly and clearly.
I can generally understand clear, standard speech on familiar matters, although in a real life situation I might have to ask for repetition or reformulation.
I can understand enough to be able to meet concrete needs in everyday life provided speech is clear and slow.
I can understand phrases and expressions related to immediate needs.
I can handle simple business in shops, post offices or banks.

I can understand simple directions relating to how to get from X to Y, by foot or public transport.
I can understand the essential information from short recorded passages dealing with predictable everyday matters which are spoken slowly and clearly.
I can identify the main point of TV news items reporting events, accidents, etc, where the visual material supports the commentary.
I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements. (p233/4)

At this level, people can understand expressions and the most common words about things which are important to them, e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, their jobs. They can get the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements. (p235)

ALTE
CAN express simple opinions or requirements in a familiar context.
CAN express likes and dislikes in familiar contexts using simple language such as 'I (don't) like . . .'
CAN state simple requirements within own job area, such as 'I want to order 25 of . . .'
CAN express simple opinions using expressions such as 'I don't agree'.

B1

Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. (p24)
I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear. (p26)
B1.1 Can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure etc., including short narratives.
B1.2 Can understand straightforward factual information about common everyday or job related topics, identifying both general messages and specific details, provided speech is clearly articulated in a generally familiar accent (p66)
Can generally follow the main points of extended discussion around him/her, provided speech is clearly articulated in standard dialect (p66).
B1.1 Can follow in outline straightforward short talks on familiar topics provided these are delivered in clearly articulated standard speech
B1.2 Can follow a lecture or talk within his/her own field, provided the subject matter is familiar and the presentation straightforward and clearly structured..(p67)
Can understand simple technical information, such as operating instructions for everyday equipment. Can follow detailed directions. (p67)
B1.1 Can understand the main points of radio news bulletins and simpler recorded material about familiar subjects delivered relatively slowly and clearly.
B1.2 Can understand the information content of the majority of recorded or broadcast audio material on topics of personal interest delivered in clear standard speech. (p68)
B1.1 Can follow many films in which visuals and action carry much of the storyline, and which are delivered clearly in straightforward language. Can catch the main points in TV programmes on familiar topics when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.
B1.2 Can understand a large part of many TV programmes on topics of personal interest such as interviews, short lectures, and news reports when the delivery is relatively slow and clear. (p71)
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 (p72).
B1.1 Can take notes as a list of key points during a straightforward lecture, provided the topic is familiar, and the talk is both formulated in simple language and delivered in clearly articulated standard speech.
B1.2 Can take notes during a lecture which are precise enough for his/her own use at a later date, provided the topic is within his/her field of interest and the talk is clear and well-structured. (p96)

B1.1 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 events, but lexical limitations cause repetition and even difficulty with formulation at times
B1.2 Has a sufficient range of language to describe unpredictable situations, explain the main points in an idea or problem with reasonable precision and express thoughts on abstract or cultural topics such as music and films.. (p110)
Has a sufficient 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 (p112).

DIALANG
I can guess the meaning of occasional unknown words from the context and understand sentence meaning if the topic discussed is familiar.
I can generally follow the main points of extended discussion around me, provided speech is clear and in standard language.
I can follow clear speech in everyday conversation, though in a real life situation I will sometimes have to ask for repetition of particular words and phrases.
I can understand straightforward factual information about common everyday or job-related topics, identifying both general messages and specific details, provided speech is clear and generally familiar accent is used.
I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters which occur regularly.
I can follow a lecture or a talk within my own field, provided the subject matter is familiar and the presentation straightforward and clearly organised.
I can understand simple technical information, such as operation instructions for everyday equipment.
I can understand the information content of the majority of recorded or broadcast audio material about familiar subjects spoken relatively slowly and clearly.
I can follow many films in which visuals and action carry much of the storyline, and in which the story is straightforward and the language clear.
I can catch the main points in broadcasts on familiar topics and topics of personal interest when the language is relatively slow and clear. .(p233/4)

At this level, people can understand the main points of clear ‘standard’ speech on familiar matters connected with work, school, leisure etc. In TV and radio current-affairs programmes or programmes of personal or professional interest, they can understand the main points provided the speech is relatively slow and clear. (p235)

ALTE
CAN express opinions on abstract/ cultural matters in a limited way or offer advice within a known area, and understand instructions or public announcements.
CAN express opinions on abstract/ cultural matters in a limited way and pick up nuances of meaning/opinion.
CAN offer advice to clients within own job area on simple matters.
CAN understand instructions on classes and assignments given by a teacher or lecturer.

B2

Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. (p24)
I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect. (p27)
B2.1 Can understand the main ideas of propositionally and linguistically complex speech on both concrete and abstract topics delivered in a standard dialect, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can follow extended speech and complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar, and the direction of the talk is sign-posted by explicit markers.
B2.2 Can understand standard spoken language, live or broadcast, on both familiar and unfamiliar topics normally encountered in personal, social, academic or vocational life. Only extreme background noise, inadequate discourse structure and/or idiomatic usage influences the ability to understand (p66).
B2.1 Can with some effort catch much of what is said around him/her, but may find it difficult to participate effectively in discussion with several native speakers who do not modify their language in any way.
B2.2 Can keep up with an animated conversation between native speakers.(p66)
Can follow the essentials of lectures, talks and reports and other forms of academic/professional presentation which are propositionally and linguistically complex (p67).
Can understand announcements and messages on concrete and abstract topics spoken in standard dialect at normal speed. (p67)
B2.1 Can understand most radio documentaries and most other recorded or broadcast audio material delivered in standard dialect and can identify the speaker's mood, tone etc.
B2.2 Can understand recordings in standard dialect likely to be encountered in social, professional or academic life and identify speaker viewpoints and attitudes as well as the information content. (p68)
Can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. Can understand documentaries, live interviews, talk shows, plays and the majority of films in standard dialect. (p71)
Can use a variety of strategies to achieve comprehension, including listening for main points; checking comprehension by using contextual clues. (p72)
Can understand a clearly structured lecture on a familiar subject, and can take notes on points which strike him/her as important, even though he/she tends to concentrate on the words themselves and therefore to miss some information. (p96)

B2.1 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.
B2.2 Can express him/herself clearly and without much sign of having to restrict what he/she wants to say. (p110)
Has a good range of 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. (p112)

DIALANG
I can understand in detail what is said to me in the standard spoken language. I can do this even when there is some noise in the background.
I can understand standard spoken language, live or broadcast, on both familiar and unfamiliar topics normally encountered in personal, academic or vocational life. Only extreme background noise, unclear structure and/or idiomatic usage causes some problems.

I can understand the main ideas of complex speech on both concrete and abstract topics delivered in a standard language including technical discussions in my field of specialisation.
I can follow extended speech and complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar, and the direction of the talk is clearly stated by the speaker.
I can follow the essentials of lectures, talks and reports and other forms of presentation which use complex ideas and language.
I can understand announcements and messages on concrete and abstract topics spoken in standard language at normal speed.
I can understand most radio documentaries and most other recorded or broadcast audio material delivered in standard language and can identify the speaker's mood, tone, etc.
I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes such as documentaries, live interviews, talk shows, plays and the majority of films in standard language.
I can follow a lecture or talk within my own field, provided the presentation is clear. (p233/4)

At this level, people can understand longer stretches of speech and lectures and follow complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. They can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. (p235)

ALTE
CAN follow or give a talk on a familiar topic or keep up a conversation on a fairly wide range of topics.
CAN keep up a conversation on a fairly wide range of topics, such as personal and professional experiences, events currently in the news.
CAN take and pass on most messages that are likely to require attention during a normal working day.
CAN give a clear presentation on a familiar topic, and answer predictable or factual questions.

C1

Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. (p24)
I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort. (p27)
Can understand enough to follow extended speech on abstract and complex topics beyond his/her own field, though he/she may need to confirm occasional details, especially if the accent is unfamiliar. Can recognise a wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms, appreciating register shifts. Can follow extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. (p66)
Can easily follow complex interactions between third parties in group discussion and debate, even on abstract, complex unfamiliar topics(p66)
Can follow most lectures, discussions and debates with relative ease. (p67)
Can extract specific information from poor quality, audibly distorted public announcements, e.g. in a station, sports stadium etc. Can understand complex technical information, such as operating instructions, specifications for familiar products and services (p67).]
Can understand a wide range of recorded and broadcast audio material, including some non-standard usage, and identify finer points of detail including implicit attitudes and relationships between speakers (p68).
Can follow films employing a considerable degree of slang and idiomatic usage (p71).
Is skilled at using contextual, grammatical and lexical cues to infer attitude, mood and intentions and anticipate what will come next (p72).
Can take detailed notes during a lecture on topics in his/her field of interest, recording the information so accurately and so close to the original that the notes could also be useful to other people. (p96)

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. (p110)
Has a good command of a broad lexical repertoire allowing gaps to be readily overcome with circumlocutions; little obvious searching for expressions or avoidance strategies. Good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. (p112)

DIALANG
I can keep up with an animated conversation between native speakers.
I can understand enough to follow extended speech on abstract and complex topics beyond my own field, though I may need to confirm occasional details, especially if the accent is unfamiliar.
I can recognise a wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms and recognise changes in style.
I can follow extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships between ideas are only implied and not stated explicitly.
I can follow most lectures, discussions and debates with relative ease.
I can extract specific information from poor quality public announcements.
I can understand complex technical information, such as operating instructions, specifications for familiar products and services.
I can understand a wide range of recorded audio material, including some non-standard language, and identify finer points of detail, including implicit attitudes and relationships between speakers.
I can follow films which contain a considerable degree of slang and idiomatic usage. . (p233/4)

At this level, people can understand spoken language even when it is not clearly structured and when ideas and thoughts are not expressed in an explicit way. They can understand television programmes and films without too much effort. (p235)

ALTE
CAN contribute effectively to meetings and seminars within own area of work or keep up a casual conversation with a good degree of fluency, coping with abstract expressions.
CAN keep up conversations of a casual nature for an extended period of time and discuss abstract/cultural topics with a good degree of fluency and range of expression.
CAN contribute effectively to meetings and seminars within own area of work and argue for or against a case.
CAN follow abstract argumentation, for example the balancing of alternatives and the drawing of a conclusion.

C2

Can understand with ease virtually everything heard. (p24)
I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided I have some time to get familiar with the accent. (p27)
Has no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, delivered at fast native speed.(p66)
As C1, viz, Can easily follow complex interactions between third parties in group discussion and debate, even on abstract, complex unfamiliar topics (p66)
Can follow specialised lectures and presentations employing a high degree of colloquialism, regional usage or unfamiliar terminology. (p67)
AsC1, viz, Can extract specific information from poor quality, audibly distorted public announcements, e.g. in a station, sports stadium etc. Can understand complex technical information, such as operating instructions, specifications for familiar products and services. (p67)
As C1, viz Can understand a wide range of recorded and broadcast audio material, including some non-standard usage, and identify finer points of detail including implicit attitudes and relationships between speakers.(p68)
As C1, viz Can follow films employing a considerable degree of slang and idiomatic usage.(p71)
As C1, viz Is skilled at using contextual, grammatical and lexical cues to infer attitude, mood and intentions and anticipate what will come next. (p72)
Is aware of the implications and allusions of what is said and can make notes on them as well as on the actual words used by the speaker. (p96)

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. (p110)
Has a good command of a very broad lexical repertoire including idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms; shows awareness of connotative levels of meaning.(p112)

DIALANG
I can follow specialised lectures and presentations which use a high degree of colloquialism, regional usage or unfamiliar terminology. (p233/4)

At this level, people can understand any kind of spoken language, both when they hear it live and in the media. They also understand a native speaker who speaks fast if they have some time to get used to the accent. (p235)

ALTE
CAN advise on or talk about complex or sensitive issues, understanding colloquial references and dealing confidently with hostile questions.
CAN talk about complex or sensitive issues without awkwardness.
CAN advise on/handle complex delicate or contentious issues, such as legal or financial matters, to the extent that he/she has the necessary specialist knowledge.
CAN understand jokes, colloquial asides and cultural allusions.

Elaborated descriptive scales used in advisory feedback of DIALANG

LISTENING						
	A1	**A2**	**B1**	**B2**	**C1**	**C2**
What types of text I understand	Very simple phrases about myself, people I know and things around me. Questions, instructions and directions. Examples: everyday expressions, questions, instructions, short and simple directions.	Simple phrases and expressions about things important to me. Simple, everyday conversations and discussions. Everyday matters in the media. Examples: messages, routine exchanges, directions, TV and radio news items.	Speech on familiar matters and factual information. Everyday conversations and discussions. Programmes in the media and films. Examples: operation instructions, short lectures and talks.	All kinds of speech on familiar matters. Lectures. Programmes in the media and films. Examples: technical discussions, reports, live interviews.	Spoken language in general. Lectures, discussions and debates. Public announcements. Complex technical information. Recorded audio material and films. Examples: native-speaker conversations.	Any spoken language, live or broadcast. Specialised lectures and presentations.
What I understand	Names and simple words. General idea. Enough to respond: providing personal info, following directions.	Common everyday language. Simple, everyday conversations and discussions. The main point. Enough to follow.	The meaning of some unknown words, by guessing. General meaning and specific details.	Main ideas and specific information. Complex ideas and language. Speaker's viewpoints and attitudes.	Enough to participate actively in conversations. Abstract and complex topics. Implicit attitudes and relationships between speakers.	Global and detailed understanding without any difficulties.
Conditions and limitations	Clear, slow and carefully articulated speech. When addressed by a sympathetic speaker.	Clear and slow speech. Will require the help of sympathetic speakers and/or images. Will sometimes ask for repetition or reformulation.	Clear, standard speech. Will require the help of visuals and action. Will sometimes ask for repetition of a word or phrase.	Standard language and some idiomatic usage, even in reasonably noisy backgrounds.	Need to confirm occasional details when the accent is unfamiliar. in conversations.	None, provided there is time to get used to what is unfamiliar.

APPENDIX 7

Letter from Dutch Ministry of Education to examination providers

Dear colleagues,

The Dutch Ministry of Education is funding a project which is tasked to develop a document which will provide guidance to item writers, test developers and item bank creators on how items for the testing of reading and listening abilities can or should relate to the different levels of the Common European Framework. This is one of two projects which are paving the way for a larger project which will seek to develop a European item bank, available for examination boards and testing authorities who wish to relate their exams and tests to the CEF. (The second project is a survey of assessment policy and practice in Europe.)

The European item bank will not be an item bank from which national examinations and tests for foreign languages are expected to derive their items, but rather it will serve as a means to link national examinations and tests to the CEF by using calibrated anchor items and thus making their results more transparent to a range of different stakeholders.

The current project is mainly but not exclusively aimed at examinations and tests delivered at the end of compulsory education but is intended to cover tests developed at all six levels of the CEF. I should stress that the result of our project is intended to be a service for examination and test providers to help them build arguments for claims about the relation between their examinations and the CEF, by providing them with guidelines for reading and listening items and tasks. Its aim is emphatically not to set up some kind of external quality control system.

The main aim of this project is to examine in detail the CEF and related documents to address the following questions:

Do we have an instrument to help us construct tests based on the CEF? Are the CEF scales, together with the detailed descriptions of language use contained in the document, sufficient to construct tests based on the CEF? If not, what is needed to develop such an instrument, and what should the document be like?

A team of language testing experts has been convened, in order to identify potentially relevant documents, and to examine them for insights that could lead to the construction of a set of guidelines for test developers on how to construct both items and tests at the various levels of the CEF.

Initially, the team is examining the CEF itself to identify precisely where the potential gaps are. They then hope to consult the experience of a range of testing and examination authorities by analysing the specifications and guidelines that such bodies use to write items and construct tests at the different levels of the CEF. The identification of common features at each level, and discussion of the reasons for and significance of differences across Europe within any given level should lead to the construction of a practical instrument with theoretical underpinning.

We are very much hoping that your organisation will be willing to cooperate, along with other examining authorities, by making your test specifications and some related sample items available to the Project, since we believe that cooperation can only be of mutual benefit.

We recognize, of course, that many of the documents that it is important to examine are likely to be confidential or of commercial value. Rest assured that we will respect the confidentiality of any documentation or test items that you send us, and will fully acknowledge any cooperation. The Project does not necessarily need the most detailed specifications - which might well be highly confidential - but more general guidelines for item writers could be quite acceptable. Access to previous, rather than current, versions of specifications might be an alternative possibility.

For your information, the project is coordinated by Professor Charles Alderson, UK and the team members are
Dr Neus Figueras, Spain
Professor Sauli Takala, Finland,
Professor Claire Tardieu, France
Dr Henk Kuijper, The Netherlands
Professor Guenter Nold, Germany

I would be very grateful if you could let me know as soon as possible if you are willing to collaborate. The document should be sent to Charles Alderson by the end of February, 2004, in order that they can be available for the Project team to work on in March.

With many thanks in advance

Yours sincerely

APPENDIX 8

Materials requested and received

Matriculation Examination in Finland: Description received and analysis of Reading items by Sauli Takala, plus report to Helsinki seminar 2002 by Felianka Kaftandjieva & Sauli Takala

CITO tests:
Engels nieuwe stijl: Examen HAVO (Hoger Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs) 2000, plus analysis by Team. No specifications

DESI (German-English-Student Assessment-International):
Introduction, and Listening and Reading tests). First analysis by Guenter Nold.
Analysis of specifications by Nold and Rossa, with specifications, A1+-B2

Catalan Department of Examinations:
Certificat d'aptitud • comprensió escrita + Comprensió Oral
Certificat de cicle elemental • comprensió escrita + Comprensió Oral
For English, French and German, including statistical report.

Finnish National Board of Education 1995:
The framework of The Finnish National Foreign Language Certificate
For English Reading, A1 – C2

University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate:
Materials for the Guidance of Test Item Writers (1994-95);
Sample items for English Reading presented to Council of Europe Manual project;
Handbooks for KET, PET, FCE, CAE, CPE (publicly available on the Web - www.cambridge-esol.org)
Confidential Guidelines for Item Writers for KET, FCE, CPE

Alliance Française:
Diplome de Langue (D.L.);
Certificat d'Études de Français Pratique I (CEFP I);
Certificat d'Études de Français Pratique II (CEFP II)
Tasks for French Reading and Listening (no specifications)

WBT (Weiterbildungs-Testsysteme GmbH):
European Language Certificates: Certificates in English and French, Mock examination 1 plus audio tapes
Document in EN and FR entitled "Learning objectives and test format"
Zertifikat Deutsch: Lernziele und Testformat
Paper and CD Modelltest 1

Scottish Qualifications Authority:
National Qualifications - Standard Grade. Revised Arrangements in Modern Languages (French, German, Italian, Russian, Spanish and Urdu) September 2003.
Principles of Setting and Vetting

APPENDIX 10

The development of the Grid

At the Amsterdam conference, it was proposed that we develop a Grid involving a greater subdivision of texts as follows:

- Text type (factual, persuasive, argumentative)
- Text source (radio, daily life, public announcement)
- Text length
- Text 'interaction' (monologue, dialogue, multiple speakers)
- Text difficulty characteristics. This dimension could be operationalised by aspects from the CEF like:
    - Speed (listening)
    - The standard-non standard dimension (listening)
    - Vocabulary (from very simple to complex)
    - Pronunciation (from clear and fully articulated to casual speech) (listening)
    - Maybe something dealing with signal-noise ratio (listening)

The initial proposals presented in the paper presented at the Amsterdam conference were subsequently modified in discussions at the Arnhem meeting. The dimensions in the first column of the draft Reading Grid in the Amsterdam paper are presented in the first column in Table 1 below and the proposed revised Grid for Analysis of Reading items was rather fuller, as shown in the second column:

Table 1 The development of the Reading Grid

Initial draft Grid	**Revised Grid**
	Name of analyst
	Source of Task/item
	Item level claimed
	Item level estimated
	Task level claimed
	Task level estimated
Dimensions:	Dimensions:
Operation	1. Operation (Comprehension skill: Guide 1)
What	2. What (Revised Frame: Guide 2)
Text	3. Item Type (Guide 3)
Text features	4. Text Source (Guide 4)
Conditions and limitations	5. Discourse Type (Dialang Table : Guide 5)
Item type	6. Domain
Text source	7. Topic
Text type	8. Text Length (in words)
Text length	9. Vocabulary
	10. Grammar

	11. Part of testlet? Number of items
	12. Time to do total task
	13. Text structure (Guide 6)
	14. Readability (MS Word)

(NB: The shaded area in Column 1 represents new dimensions not included in the CEF scales)

Removed from the first proposal were the dimensions of Text; Text features; Text type; Conditions and Limitations. Elements added, apart from the initial data re the analyst, the item being analysed and its claimed and estimated level, included: Discourse Type; Domain; Topic; Vocabulary; Grammar; Text structure; Part of testlet? Number of items; Time to do total task; Readability.

An initial draft of the Listening Grid was rather similar but was modified after application, as presented in Figure 3 in the Amsterdam paper, and then modified in the revised Grid during the Arnhem meeting. The three versions are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2 The development of the Listening Grid

Original proposal	**Figure 3**	**Revised Grid**
Operation	Operation	1. Operation (Comprehension skill: Guide 1)
What	What	2. What (re-Revised Frame: Guide 7)
Item type	Item type	3. Item Type (Guide 3)
Text source	Text source	4. Text Source (Guide 4)
Text type	Discourse type	5. Discourse Type (Guide 5)
Text 'interaction'	Topic	6. Domain
Text length	Number of participants	7. Topic
Speed	Text length	8. Text Length (Duration)
Accent / standard	Speed	9. Vocabulary
Vocabulary	Accent / standard	10. Grammar
Pronunciation	Vocabulary	11. Part of testlet? Number of items
	Pronunciation	12. Time to do total task
	Length of rubrics	13. Text structure (Guide 6)
	Time to read task	14. Readability (MS Word)
	Length of input text	15. Number of participants

	How often text played	16. Text speed
	Other	17. Accent/standard
		18. Pronunciation
		19. How often played
		Other

The initial Listening Grid was already somewhat more sophisticated than the Reading Grid. However, one element was removed, and that was “Time to read task”. Elements added, partly to parallel the Revised Reading Grid, included Domain; Grammar; Text Structure; Readability; Part of testlet/ number of items; and Time to do total task.

In both cases, a number of “Guides” were also provided, to illustrate or exemplify the various analytic dimensions in the Grids, or to provide a multiple-choice list of features which could be selected during the analysis. These are presented in Appendix 1 to this Final Report, associated with Grid 2.

In the light of the results of the use of Grid 2, and the ensuing discussion and proposals, Grid 2 was revised again in May, 2004, the final version being compiled at the EALTA conference in Kranjska Gora by three Project members and sent to the other three for comment and final adjustments. A Web version was then produced in Lancaster, to enable data entry direct into a database, with drop-down menus or radio buttons to replace the separate Guides that had accompanied the paper-based Grid 2. This reduced the subjectivity of interpretation by analysts, and made the work more objective in the sense that analysts did not have to formulate their own description of the elements in the various dimensions, insofar as these had not been specified in the Guides. It also greatly reduced the task of the Coordinator, who had had to cut and paste entries from each analyst's copy of Grid 2 into a Master Grid before analysis of the results could begin.

A comparison of Grid 2 and Grid 3 is shown in Table 3 below. "Text Structure" was deleted as it had been too difficult to complete and was not felt to add useful information; the label "Text type" was changed to "Discourse type", to make it more clearly distinct from "Text source"; "What" and "Operation" were merged into one dimension, labelled "Operations".

The organisation of the dimensions was made more logical, with those dimensions corresponding to the Text coming first, followed by those relating to each Item, with the Operations coming last, since it was felt that completing this required the greatest familiarity with the interaction between the task and the text. Only once all elements of Grid 3 had been completed were analysts required to estimate the level of the Item and the Task.

The six Guides accompanying Grid 2 had been developed into a proposed ten Guides, since it was felt important to reduce the number of subjective decisions and wordings that analysts had had to make using Grid 2. These revised guides were then incorporated into the Web-based Grid 3 in the form of drop-down menus or radio buttons. Analysts merely had to click on an element for it to be entered in the database, thereby removing the need to input descriptions.

Table 3: Comparison of Grids 2 and 3

Grid 2	**Open/ list**	**Grid 3**	**Open/ list**
Name of analyst	Open	*Name of analyst*	List
Source of Task/item	Open	*Task number*	List
Item level claimed	Open	*Item number*	List
Item level estimated	Open	*Item level claimed*	List
Task level claimed	Open	*Task level claimed*	List
Task level estimated	Open	*Skill Tested (Reading / Listening)*	List
Dimensions:		**Dimensions**	
1. Operation (Comprehension skill: Guide 1)	List	1. Text source	List
2. What (Revised Frame: Guide 2)	List	2. Discourse type	List
3. Item Type (Guide 3)	List	3. Domain	List
4. Text Source (Guide 4)	List	4. Topic	List
5. Discourse Type (Dialang Table : Guide 5)	List	5. Text length	Open
6. Domain	List	6. Vocabulary	List
7. Topic	Open	7. Grammar	List
8. Text Length (in words) (seconds)	Open	8. Readability (only for reading)	Open
9. Vocabulary	Open	9. Text speed (only for listening)	List
10. Grammar	Open	10. Number of participants	List
11. Part of testlet? Number of items	Open	11. Accent/standard	List
12. Time to do total task	Open	12. Clarity of articulation	List
13. Text structure (Guide 6)	List	13. How often played	List
14. Readability (MS Word)	Open	14. Item type	List
15. Number of participants (Listening)	Open	15. Part of testlet?	List
16. Text speed (Listening)	Open	16. Number of items	List
17. Accent/standard (Listening)	Open	17. Time to do task	Open
18. Pronunciation (Listening)	Open	18. Operations	List
19. How often played (Listening)	Open		
Other (listening only		***Item level estimated***	List
		Task level estimated	List

A number of the elements for a dimension within the Guide were revised in the light of the experience of analysing the DIALANG items with Grid 2 and Guides.

The most radical change was made to "Operations" (see Table 4 below), which now consisted of three separate subdivisions, one incorporating the old Operation, a sub-dimension of Explicit/ Implicit information, and a third subdivision corresponding roughly to the former "What", which had been based on the Revised Frame.

The original Guide to "Operations" (Guide 1) contained two possible taxonomies of reading / listening skills for analysts to select from, or to paraphrase as they saw fit. These are reproduced below:

Guide 1

a) Comprehension skills (from Sauli Takala)

Main idea(s)
Important details/supporting points/ examples, etc.
Conclusions, inferences, intepretations
Recognising the structure of the text/ recognising connections between text parts

b) From International Comparative Studies (see PIRLS Document, Appendix C, page 87)

PIRLS Processes of comprehension	PISA Macro aspects of understanding text
Focus on and retrieve explicitly stated information	Forming a broad general understanding
Make straightforward inferences	Retrieving information
Interpret and integrate ideas and information	Developing an interpretation
Examine and evaluate content, language and textual elements	Reflecting on the content of a text
	Reflecting on the form of a text

As there was felt to be considerable overlap and indeterminacy here, it was agreed to simplify the verbs and add "What", as indeed occurs in these taxonomies.

The Guide to "What" (Guide 2) simply directed analysts to the column "What" in the Revised Frames for Reading and Listening, but allowed analysts to use their own words as well if so desired.

Given the consensus that it was desirable to reduce the amount of free entry, and that the original skills of Guide 1 above in fact included "What" as well as the operations as expressed by a verb, "What" and "Operation" were combined into one three-part Dimension, where analysts chose one element from each of the three columns, as shown below:

Table 4: Operations in the "Final Grid"

❑ Recognise and Retrieve	❑ Explicit	❑ Main idea/gist ❑ Detail ❑ Opinion ❑ Speaker's/Writer's attitude/mood ❑ Conclusion ❑ Communicative Purpose ❑ Text Structure/Connections between parts
❑ Make inferences	❑ Implicit	
❑ Evaluate		

This would then result in statements like "Recognise and retrieve main idea/ gist" or "Make inferences (about) implicit opinion", and so on.

The original elements in "Text Sources" (Guide 4) in Grid 2 were as follows:

Table 5: Guide 4 Text sources (From CEF, page 49)

Teletext Guarantees Recipes Instructional material Novels, magazines Newspapers Junk mail Brochures Personal letters Broadcast and recorded spoken texts	Business letter Report, memorandum Life and safety notices Instructional manuals Regulations Advertising material Labelling and packaging Job description Sign posting Visiting cards
Public announcements and notices Labels and packaging Leaflets, graffiti Tickets, timetables Notices, regulations Programmes Contracts Menus Sacred texts, sermons, hymns	Textbooks, readers Reference books Blackboard text OP text Computer screen text Videotext Exercise materials Journal articles Abstracts Dictionaries

Other If source known, please indicate whether Pedagogic Abridged Simplified Authentic

These were retained in Grid 3 (but the four boxes were labelled, as per CEF page 49, by Domain), with the sole addition in the Educational Domain of "Authentic text".

However, no parallel Guide had been produced for Listening, resulting in considerable disagreement in the analysis of Listening items, and so Grid 3 added a set of "Text Sources" for Listening, together with a request to indicate whether the texts were genuine or scripted, and to note whether the text was authentic, abridged/ adapted/ simplified or pedagogic.

(Listening only)	
❑ Authentic ❑ Scripted	❑ Public speeches, lectures, presentations, sermons ❑ Rituals (ceremonies, formal religious services) ❑ Entertainment (drama, shows, readings, songs) ❑ Sports commentaries (football, cricket, boxing, horse racing, etc) ❑ News broadcasts ❑ Public debates and discussions ❑ Interpersonal dialogues and conversations ❑ Telephone conversations ❑ Job interviews ❑ Written text read aloud ❑ Telephone information (automatic answering devices, weather, traffic conditions, etc) ❑ Weather forecasts (radio and TV) ❑ Traffic information (radio) ❑ Tourist information (e.g. through portable museum guides) ❑ Publicity texts (radio, TV, supermarkets) ❑ Routine commands (instructions/direction by police, customs officials, airline personnel, etc.

Under "Topic", which was an open class in Grid 2, 14 elements were taken from Threshold, namely

- Personal identification
- House, home and environment
- Daily life
- Free time, entertainment
- Travel
- Relations with other people
- Health and body care
- Education
- Shopping
- Food and Drink
- Services
- Places
- Language
- Weather

The world of work was added as the 15th element

Analysts were additionally asked to specify whether the content was

- only concrete content
- mostly concrete content
- fairly extensive abstract content
- mainly abstract.

"Discourse type" remained as previously, but "Vocabulary" was changed from an open category into a list:

- Only frequent words
- Mostly frequent words

- Rather extended
- Extended

"Grammar" also changed from an open category to a closed list:
- Only simple sentences
- Mostly simple sentences
- Frequent compound sentences
- Many complex sentences.

"Number of participants" was changed from an open class to a closed list,
- One
- Two
- More than Two

as were "Accent/ Standard"
- accent
- standard

and

"Clarity of articulation":
- artificially articulated
- clearly articulated
- normally articluated
- unclearly articulated

"How often played" was also changed to a simple closed list
- Once
- Twice
- Three times
- More than three times

The categories "Item level estimated", "Task level estimated", consisted in Grid 3 of a long list:

Below A1, A1, A1/A2, A2, A2/B1, B1, B1/B2, B2, B2/C1, C1, C1/C2, C2, Beyond C2.

APPENDIX 11: Results of Application of Grid 3 to Items and Texts (Phase Three)

Once Grid 3 had been developed and field tested, the Project Team applied the Grid to the analysis of more test items and tasks. It had been recommended at the end of Phase Two (see Appendix 9) that it was important to analyse test tasks based on texts that were longer than the DIALANG items, including testlets, and a range of different item types. It was also felt important to select tasks and items from a range of different sources, whose CEF levels were known to the compiler, but not to the analysts (unlike the application of Grid 2, where the source and level of items were known to all analysts). Additionally, it was considered important for all analysts to complete all analyses, as a further test of the transparency and applicability of Grid 3, and therefore all items selected had to be in English. Accordingly, the Project Coordinator selected tasks from the following sources, whose items had been empirically analysed and related to the CEF:

Cambridge ESOL: PET (=B1); FCE (=B2); CPE (=C2). Sample tasks in publicly available Handbooks.
The Catalan Official Schools of Languages Exams: Elemental (=B1); Aptitud (=B2).
Finnish Matriculation Examinations: Mixed levels.

Two testlets were selected from each level available, anonymised, placed in random order and then compiled into a booklet of 77 items, in 16 tasks (Finnish 6, Catalan 4, Cambridge 6) as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Composition of Test Booklet

Task/ Item	Finnish Matriculation Exam	Catalan Official Language Schools	Cambridge ESOL	CEF Level
Task 1/ Item 1	X			B2
Task 2/ Items 2-6			X	A2
Task 3/ Items 7-10		X		B1
Task 4/ Item 11	X			C1
Task 5/ Items 12-15	X			A2, 2 x C2, B1
Task 6/ Items 16-22			X	C2
Task 7/ Items 23-31		X		B2
Task 8/ Items 32-38			X	B2
Task 9/ Item 39	X			B1
Task 10/ Items 40-46			X	A2
Task 11/ Items 47-51		X		B1
Task 12/ Items 52-58			X	C2
Task 13/ Item 59	X			C1
Task 14/ Items 60-66			X	B2
Task 15/ Items 67-76		X		B2
Task 16/ Item 77	X			B2

Each analyst (n=5) was asked to complete Grid 3 by June 7th, without discussing results with colleagues. However, it was clear on inspecting results that some data had been incorrectly input,

partly because the web pages did not have a facility for Review and Revise, and so the first part of the 3rd Project Meeting in Barcelona was devoted to correcting data input errors, before the data was submitted to analysis.

Results of Analysis

Annex 1 shows simple frequency counts of categories by analyst, regardless of item being analysed, or its level. In most cases (Item type, Text source, Topic, Vocabulary, Grammar, Operation, Level) the differences are striking, and in no case is there substantial agreement. Clearly, different analysts interpret the various categories differently. Although more fine-grained analysis is necessary to see where exactly these differences occurred, it is clear that individual input to a Grid will result in disagreement and discrepancy, and therefore it is essential that Grid users receive familiarisation and training in the use of the Grid, as well as examples of exponents of any category where possible. The provision of such (agreed) examples is, however, well beyond the remit of this Project. Nevertheless, and despite this level of disagreement, it is already clear that completion of the Grid by individuals or groups could facilitate useful comparisons of results and discussions of the reasons for the different perceptions. This in itself could lead to enhanced understanding of the CEF and the categories in the Grid.

Estimation of CEF levels

Table 2 Means and standard deviations of Analysts' estimations of Item CEF levels

	Mean	Standard deviation
Analyst 1	6.46	1.963
Analyst 2	7.64	2.364
Analyst 3	5.76	1.877
Analyst 4	6.30	2.360
Analyst 5	5.74	2.187
Overall mean	6.38	

CEF levels were recoded on a scale of 1 - 13: Below A1 = 1, Beyond C2 = 13. B1 = 6.

Table 2 shows differences of estimations of levels among the analysts, with Analysts 3 and 5 rating items significantly lower than Analysts 1,2 and 4. Nevertheless, with the exception of Analyst 2, the average of the analysts centres around level B1.

Table 3 below reports the results of correlations among the five analysts of their judgement as to CEF level of the various items and tasks.

Table 3 Intercorrelation of item levels, by analyst
Spearman rho correlation

	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
R1	1.000	.488	.640	.583	.531
R2	.488	1.000	.469	.651	.780
R3	.640	.469	1.000	.691	.685
R4	.583	.651	.691	1.000	.744
R5	.531	.780	.685	.744	1.000

It is encouraging that there is considerable agreement among some analysts (R2 and R5 at .78, R5 with R4 at .74).

Table 4 shows the correlations between each analyst's estimation of **Item** CEF Level (n=77), and the officially claimed CEF Level of the Item.

Table 4 Correlation between analysts and CEF level of Items (Spearman rho)

	ITEM CEF LEVEL
R1	.669
R2	.654
R3	.592
R4	.611
R5	.745

Table 5 shows the correlation between each analyst's estimate of **Task** level (n=16) and the claimed Task CEF level.

Table 5 Correlation between analysts and CEF level of Task (Spearman rho)

	TASK
R1	.624
R2	NS
R3	.704
R4	.565
R5	.853

The intercorrelations among analysts for Task level are shown in Table 6

Table 6 Intercorrelations of analysts for CEF level of Task (Spearman rho)

	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
R1	1.000	.527	.509	.572	NS
R2	.527	1.000	NS	.549	.618
R3	.509	NS	1.000	.541	.594
R4	.572	.549	.541	1.000	.660
R5	NS	.618	.594	.660	1.000

Although significant, these intercorrelations are only modest, and show clearly the need for training, team discussion and team decisions when inputting data.

Analysis of Grid Dimensions

Some dimensions of the Grid apply to the Input Text (such as authenticity, text source, etc) and others apply to the items (such as Item type, Operations). In what follows, we take each dimension and compare it with the CEF level, either for Item or for Text/ Task, as appropriate. Although Chi-squares were calculated to test the strength of associations between dimensions and CEF levels, most did not meet the necessary levels of expected cell frequencies and so results can only be seen as tentative. Nevertheless, the Project team considered that they enable the development of initial hypotheses about relationships, which would have to be falsified in further research using a much larger number of items and tasks.

a) Analyses by Item

Item type

Table 7 shows that there is no significant relationship between item type and CEF level. This is hardly surprising given the lack of variety of test methods used in this sample of tasks. In any case, it is unlikely that test methods will vary by CEF.

Table 7 Item type by CEF Level

		ITEM LEVEL					Total
		A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
ITEM TYPE	More than one mode	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Multiple choice	7	3	10	1	9	30
	Multiple matching	6	8	25	1	6	46
Total		13	11	35	2	16	77

Item level estimated

When the modal value of the item level estimated by analysts is compared with the claimed CEF level, there is a highly significant association (Table 4 above also showed a significant correlation between analysts and CEF level). However, almost half of the items had more than one mode - ie analysts disagreed perhaps more here than with the other analytic dimensions. There was notable agreement at B2, but C2 had less agreement, and bizarrely, at least two analysts appear to have considered an A2 item to be C1.

Table 8 Item level estimated versus claimed

		ITEM LEVEL					Total
		A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
ITEM LEVEL ESTIMATED	More than one mode	6	1	14	2	8	31
	A2	5	1	0	0	0	6
	B1	1	4	4	0	0	9
	B1/B2	0	4	7	0	0	11
	B2	0	1	10	0	2	13
	B2/C1	0	0	0	0	2	2
	C1	1	0	0	0	4	5
Total		13	11	35	2	16	77

Operations

Analysing operations was complex, because analysts selected from three different columns in order to characterise an "operation", and they could choose more than one element in the final column.

These then had to be combined in order to be able to arrive at an accurate summary of their views. Since calculating the mode was very complex as a result, it was decided to do the analysis for each analyst separately.

a) Analyst 1. The commonest categorisation was Evaluate implicit text structure/ connections between parts, which occurred mainly at B1, B2 and C2 but proportionately most at B1.

Table 9 Analyst 1's categorisation of Operations

		Item level					Total
		A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
Analyst 1	Evaluate Explicit Text Structure/Connections between parts	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Evaluate Implicit Text Structure/Connections between parts	1	8	9	0	7	25
	Make inferences Explicit Detail	1	0	1	0	0	2
	Make inferences Implicit Detail	4	1	15	1	1	22
	Make inferences Implicit Main idea/gist	0	1	7	1	7	16
	Make inferences Implicit Opinion	0	0	1	0	1	2
	Recognise and Retrieve Explicit Detail	2	1	1	0	0	4
	Recognise and Retrieve Explicit Main idea/gist	5	0	0	0	0	5
Total		13	11	35	2	16	77

b) Analyst 2. The commonest operation was Recognise and retrieve explicit main idea/ gist, which occurred mainly at B2 and C2.

Table 10 Analyst 2's categorisation of Operations

		Item level					Total
		A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
Analyst 2	Make inferences Explicit Detail	0	5	6	0	6	17
	Make inferences Explicit Main idea/gist	0	1	1	0	1	3
	Make inferences Implicit Detail	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Make inferences Implicit Main idea/gist	0	0	2	0	0	2
	Recognise and Retrieve Explicit Conclusion	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Recognise and Retrieve Explicit Detail	3	3	2	0	0	8
	Recognise and Retrieve Explicit Main idea/gist	6	1	15	2	7	31
	Recognise and Retrieve Implicit Conclusion	2	0	0	0	0	2

	Recognise and Retrieve Implicit Main idea/gist	1	1	8	0	1	11
	Recognise and Retrieve Implicit Opinion	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total		13	11	35	2	16	77

c) Analyst 3. The commonest operation was Recognise and retrieve explicit detail.

Table 11 Analyst 3's categorisation of Operations

		Item level					Total
		A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
Analyst 3	Evaluate Explicit Detail	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Evaluate Implicit Opinion	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Make inferences Explicit Conclusion	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Make inferences Explicit Detail	1	3	3	0	1	8
	Make inferences Explicit Main idea/gist	1	0	2	0	0	3
	Make inferences Explicit Text Structure/Connections between parts	1	1	1	0	7	10
	Make inferences Implicit Detail	0	0	2	0	0	2
	Make inferences Implicit Main idea/gist	0	0	6	1	0	7
	Make inferences Implicit Text Structure/Connections between parts	0	2	0	0	0	2
	Recognise and Retrieve Explicit Detail	3	2	11	0	3	19
	Recognise and Retrieve Explicit Main idea/gist	5	0	3	0	1	9
	Recognise and Retrieve Explicit Opinion	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Recognise and Retrieve Explicit Text Structure/Connections between parts	0	2	1	0	0	3
	Recognise and Retrieve Implicit Detail	2	0	0	0	0	2
	Recognise and Retrieve Implicit Main idea/gist	0	1	3	1	2	7
	Recognise and Retrieve Implicit Opinion	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total		13	11	35	2	16	77

d) Analyst 4. The commonest operation was Evaluate implicit text structure/ connections between parts (as for Analyst 1).

Table 12 Analyst 4's categorisation of Operations

		Item level					Total
		A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
Analyst 4	Evaluate Explicit Main idea/gist	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Evaluate Explicit Text Structure/Connections between parts	0	0	9	0	0	9
	Evaluate Implicit Detail	1	0	1	0	2	4
	Evaluate Implicit Main idea/gist	0	0	4	0	0	4
	Evaluate Implicit Speaker's/Writer's attitude/mood	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Evaluate Implicit Text Structure/Connections between parts	0	2	1	0	7	10
	Make inferences Explicit Detail	1	1	1	0	3	6
	Make inferences Explicit Main idea/gist	0	0	4	1	0	5
	Make inferences Explicit Text Structure/Connections between parts	1	2	3	0	0	6
	Make inferences Implicit Detail	3	0	3	0	3	9
	Make inferences Implicit Main idea/gist	0	1	4	0	1	6
	Make inferences Implicit Text Structure/Connections between parts	0	2	1	0	0	3
	Recognise and Retrieve Explicit Detail	3	1	0	0	0	4
	Recognise and Retrieve Explicit Main idea/gist	4	0	0	0	0	4
	Recognise and Retrieve Explicit Text Structure/Connections between parts	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Recognise and Retrieve Implicit Detail	0	0	2	0	0	2
	Recognise and Retrieve Implicit Main idea/gist	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Recognise and Retrieve Implicit Text Structure/Connections between parts	0	1	0	0	0	1
Total		13	11	35	2	16	77

e) Analyst 5. The commonest operation was Recognise and retrieve explicit detail, as with Analyst 3.

Table 13 Analyst 5's categorisation of Operations

		Item level					Total
		A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
Analyst 5	Make inferences Explicit Main idea/gist	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Make inferences Explicit Text Structure/Connections between parts	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Make inferences Implicit Main idea/gist	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Make inferences Implicit Opinion	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Make inferences Implicit Text Structure/Connections between parts	0	4	0	0	7	11
	Recognise and Retrieve Explicit Detail	6	3	7	0	2	18
	Recognise and Retrieve Explicit Main idea/gist	5	0	7	2	1	15
	Recognise and Retrieve Explicit Text Structure/Connections between parts	1	4	8	0	0	13
	Recognise and Retrieve Implicit Detail	0	0	0	0	4	4
	Recognise and Retrieve Implicit Main idea/gist	1	0	11	0	0	12
Total		13	11	35	2	16	77

In an attempt to find overall patterns, we examined the different numbers of operations which different analysts identified when analysing items (Table 14).

Table 14 Number of operations by analyst

Analyst	Number of different operations
1	8
2	10
3	16
4	18
5	10

This suggests that assigning an operation to an item, despite using a closed classification system, is still a rather subjective task and training and discussion is essential, if high agreement is to be achieved on Operation.

Although individual analysts assigned quite different numbers of operations to items, it is nevertheless of interest to cross tabulate level (conflating six CEF levels into 3 bands A, B and C) and the 3 main categories of operations: recognise, infer and evaluate, over all items and analysts.

Table 15 Operation (verb) by broad CEF level

Operation	CEF A	CEF B	CEF C	Total
Recognise	50	102	28	180
Infer	13	91	44	148
Evaluate	2	37	18	57
Total	65	230	90	385

Chi-square at 33.97 is significant (df =8, p<.01), with a clear pattern in the expected direction - more "recognition" at A, less at C; more "inferencing" at C and less at A; "evaluate" does not form a clear pattern.

Similarly, it is possible to cross tabulate level (conflating six CEF levels into 3 bands A, B and C) and the 2 categories of information: explicit and implicit, over all items and analysts.

Table 16 Explicit/ Implicit by broad CEF level

Operation	CEF A	CEF B	CEF C	Total
Explicit	50	123	38	211
Implicit	15	107	52	174
Total	65	230	90	385

Chi-Square is highly significant at 18.76 (df=4, p<.01), with "Explicit" being notably greater than expected at CEF Level A and "Implicit" greater at CEF Level C. The converse is also true: "Implicit" being less than expected at CEF Level A and "Explicit" being less than expected at CEF Level C.

In sum, there are clearly substantial differences among analysts as to which operations they identify in the various items. This is in line with findings in the literature on reading in a foreign language (see Alderson 2000) but it presents considerable difficulties for those who wish to claim that CEF levels can be distinguished by operations or "skills", and it reinforces the finding that it is in fact rather difficult to reach agreement on what operations are required by any given item, at any CEF level.

However, Tables 15 and 16 seem to indicate a tendency that at lower levels items are more focused on retrieving explicit information from texts, while at higher levels inferring from and evaluating texts become more prominent, and items tend to deal more with implicit information. Thus, some hope is provided by rather coarser-grained analyses at three CEF levels, reinforcing the desirability of further research using larger samples of texts and items in order to explore possible relations, especially if the analysts are trained in advance and discuss their analyses among themselves before reaching final decisions.

b) Analyses by task

Table 17 Agreement on Authenticity

Task number	CEF Level	Mode: Authenticity	% agreement
Task 5		Authentic	100%
Task 2	A2	More than one mode	40%
Task 10	A2	Pedagogic	60%

Task 3	B1	Authentic	100%
Task 9	B1	Authentic	80%
Task 11	B1	Abridged/adapted/simplified	80%
Task 1	B2	Authentic	80%
Task 7	B2	Authentic	100%
Task 8	B2	Authentic	100%
Task 14	B2	Authentic	60%
Task 15	B2	Authentic	100%
Task 16	B2	Authentic	80%
Task 4	C1	Authentic	80%
Task 13	C1	Authentic	100%
Task 6	C2	Authentic	60%
Task 12	C2	Authentic	100%

When the text alone is considered, there is no association between Authenticity and CEF level.

Table 18 Authenticity by CEF

		TASK LEVEL						Total
			A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
Authenticity	More than one mode	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Abridged/adapted/simplified	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Authentic	1	0	2	6	2	2	13
	Pedagogic	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total		1	2	3	6	2	2	16

Domain

Table 19 Agreement on Domain

Task number	CEF Level	Mode: Domain	% agreement
Task 5		Public	80%
Task 2	A2	Public	100%
Task 10	A2	Personal	80%
Task 3	B1	Personal	80%
Task 9	B1	Personal	60%
Task 11	B1	Personal	100%
Task 1	B2	Public	80%
Task 7	B2	Personal	100%
Task 8	B2	Occupational	100%
Task 14	B2	Personal	60%
Task 15	B2	Public	100%
Task 16	B2	Public	60%
Task 4	C1	Occupational	80%
Task 13	C1	Public	100%
Task 6	C2	Occupational	60%
Task 12	C2	Occupational	60%

There was no clear association by Domain although there is a tendency for Occupational to be associated with the higher levels

Table 20 Domain By CEF

		TASK LEVEL						Total
			A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
Domain	Occupational	0	0	0	1	1	2	4
	Personal	0	1	3	2	0	0	6
	Public	1	1	0	3	1	0	6
Total		1	2	3	6	2	2	16

Vocabulary

Table 21 Agreement on Vocabulary

Task number	CEF Level	Mode: Vocabulary	% agreement
Task 5		extended	80%
Task 2	A2	only frequent words	100%
Task 10	A2	only frequent words	80%
Task 3	B1	rather extended	60%
Task 9	B1	More than one mode	40%
Task 11	B1	mostly frequent words	80%
Task 1	B2	rather extended	80%
Task 7	B2	More than one mode	40%
Task 8	B2	mostly frequent words	60%
Task 14	B2	rather extended	60%
Task 15	B2	rather extended	60%
Task 16	B2	rather extended	60%
Task 4	C1	rather extended	80%
Task 13	C1	rather extended	80%
Task 6	C2	extended	60%
Task 12	C2	extended	80%

There is a significant association between vocabulary and CEF level ($p<.05$). At higher levels texts contain more extended vocabulary, which is in line with the descriptions in the CEF-scales.

Table 22 Vocabulary by CEF

		TASK LEVEL						Total
			A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
Vocabulary	More than one mode	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
	extended	1	0	0	0	0	2	3
	mostly frequent words	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
	only frequent words	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
	rather extended	0	0	1	4	2	0	7
Total		1	2	3	6	2	2	16

Grammar

Table 23 Agreement on Gramar

Task number	CEF Level	Mode: Grammar	% agreement
Task 5		many complex	60%
Task 2	A2	only simple	100%
Task 10	A2	mostly simple	100%
Task 3	B1	frequent compound	80%
Task 9	B1	frequent compound	80%
Task 11	B1	mostly simple	60%
Task 1	B2	frequent compound	40%
Task 7	B2	frequent compound	60%
Task 8	B2	frequent compound	60%
Task 14	B2	frequent compound	60%
Task 15	B2	More than one mode	40%
Task 16	B2	frequent compound	60%
Task 4	C1	many complex	60%
Task 13	C1	More than one mode	40%
Task 6	C2	More than one mode	40%
Task 12	C2	frequent compound	60%

There is no significant association with Grammar, although there is some evidence that at higher levels sentence structure is more complex than at lower levels, in accordance with the CEF scales.

Table 24 Grammar by CEF

		TASK LEVEL						Total
			A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
Grammar	More than one mode	0	0	0	1	1	1	3
	frequent compound sentences	0	0	2	5	0	1	8
	many complex sentences	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
	mostly simple sentences	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
	only simple sentences	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total		1	2	3	6	2	2	16

Text Source

Table 25 Agreement on Text Source

Task number	CEF Level	Mode: Text source	% agreement
Task 5		Newspapers	80%
Task 2	A2	Public announcements	80%
Task 10	A2	More than one mode	40%
Task 3	B1	Newspapers	80%
Task 9	B1	Newspapers	80%
Task 11	B1	More than one mode	40%
Task 1	B2	Newspapers	100%
Task 7	B2	Novels, magazines	80%

Task 8	B2	Novels, magazines	60%
Task 14	B2	Newspapers	80%
Task 15	B2	Newspapers	60%
Task 16	B2	Novels, magazines	60%
Task 4	C1	Newspapers	100%
Task 13	C1	Novels, magazines	60%
Task 6	C2	Novels, magazines	100%
Task 12	C2	Novels, magazines	80%

There was no obvious association between text source and CEF level of the task.

Table 26 Text Source By CEF

		TASK LEVEL						Total
			A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
TEXT SOURCE	More than one mode	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
	Newspapers	1	0	2	3	1	0	7
	Novels, magazines	0	0	0	3	1	2	6
	Public announcements, notices	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total		1	2	3	6	2	2	16

Broad discourse type

Table 27 Agreement on Broad Discourse Type

Task number	CEF Level	Mode: Discourse type	% agreement
Task 5		Argumentative	60%
Task 2	A2	Instructive	80%
Task 10	A2	Narrative	100%
Task 3	B1	Narrative	80%
Task 9	B1	Narrative	60%
Task 11	B1	Narrative	60%
Task 1	B2	Argumentative	60%
Task 7	B2	Descriptive	60%
Task 8	B2	Narrative	100%
Task 14	B2	Narrative	60%
Task 15	B2	Narrative	100%
Task 16	B2	Argumentative	100%
Task 4	C1	Narrative	60%
Task 13	C1	Argumentative	60%
Task 6	C2	Narrative	100%
Task 12	C2	Expository	100%

There is no clear association between broadly defined discourse type and CEF level.

Table 28 Discourse Type By CEF

		TASK LEVEL						Total
			A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
Discourse Type	Argumentative	1	0	0	2	1	0	4
	Descriptive	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Expository	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Instructive	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Narrative	0	1	3	3	1	1	9
Total		1	2	3	6	2	2	16

Discourse type (narrow)

Table 29 Agreement on Narrow Discourse Type

Task number	CEF Level	Mode: Narrow discourse type	% agreement
Task 5		comments	40%
Task 2	A2	personal	80%
Task 10	A2	stories, jokes, anecdotes	100%
Task 3	B1	reports	80%
Task 9	B1	reports	40%
Task 11	B1	reports	60%
Task 1	B2	comments	60%
Task 7	B2	impressionistic descriptions	60%
Task 8	B2	reports	60%
Task 14	B2	More than one mode	40%
Task 15	B2	reports	100%
Task 16	B2	comments	100%
Task 4	C1	reports	60%
Task 13	C1	comments	60%
Task 6	C2	stories, jokes, anecdotes	80%
Task 12	C2	explications	100%

There appears to be no association between discourse type, narrowly defined, and CEF level.

Table 30 Narrow Discourse Type By CEF

		TASK LEVEL						Total
			A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
Narrow discourse type	comments	1	0	0	2	1	0	4
	explications	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	impressionistic descriptions	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	More than one mode	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	personal instructions	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	reports	0	0	3	2	1	0	6
	stories, jokes, anecdotes	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
Total		1	2	3	6	2	2	16

Topic

Table 31 Agreement on Topic

Task number	CEF Level	Mode: Topic	% agreement
Task 5		More than one mode	20% (=0)
Task 2	A2	More than one mode	40%
Task 10	A2	Daily life	80%
Task 3	B1	Health and bodycare	60%
Task 9	B1	Free time, entertainment	100%
Task 11	B1	Travel	40%
Task 1	B2	More than one mode	40%
Task 7	B2	Travel	60%
Task 8	B2	The world of work	80%
Task 14	B2	Free time, entertainment	100%
Task 15	B2	The world of work	40%
Task 16	B2	Daily life	60%
Task 4	C1	The world of work	60%
Task 13	C1	The world of work	100%
Task 6	C2	The world of work	60%
Task 12	C2	Free time, entertainment	60%

Topic had no clear association with CEF level, although there was a tendency for the world of work to predominate at the higher levels.

Table 32 Topic By CEF

		TASK LEVEL						Total
			A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
TOPIC	More than one mode	1	1	0	1	0	0	3
	15. The world of work	0	0	0	2	2	1	5
	3. Daily life	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
	4. Free time, entertainment	0	0	1	1	0	1	3
	5.Travel	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
	Health and bodycare	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Total		1	2	3	6	2	2	16

Concrete/ Abstract

Table 33 Agreement on Concrete/ Abstract

Task number	CEF Level	Mode: Concrete/ abstract	% agreement
Task 5		fairly extensive abstract	60%
Task 2	A2	only concrete	100%
Task 10	A2	only concrete	80%
Task 3	B1	mostly concrete	60%
Task 9	B1	More than one mode	40%
Task 11	B1	mostly concrete	60%

Task 1	B2	mainly abstract	60%
Task 7	B2	mostly concrete	100%
Task 8	B2	mostly concrete	60%
Task 14	B2	mostly concrete	60%
Task 15	B2	fairly extensive abstract	60%
Task 16	B2	mainly abstract	60%
Task 4	C1	More than one mode	40%
Task 13	C1	fairly extensive abstract	80%
Task 6	C2	mostly concrete	80%
Task 12	C2	fairly extensive abstract	60%

There was no significant association between whether a text was concrete or abstract and its CEF level.

Table 34 Degree of Abstractness By CEF

		TASK LEVEL						Total
			A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
ABSTRACT/CONCRETE	More than one mode	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
	fairly extensive abstract content	1	0	0	1	1	1	4
	mainly abstract content	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
	mostly concrete content	0	0	2	3	0	1	6
	only concrete content	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Total		1	2	3	6	2	2	16

Mean agreement among analysts

Table 35 shows the mean agreement among analysts by dimension

Table 35 Mean agreement by dimension

Dimension	Mean agreement	Standard Deviation
Authenticity	82.5%	19.15
Domain	81.25%	17.08
Broad Discourse Type	77.5%	19.15
Text Source	73.75%	18.93
Narrow Discouirse Type	70%	21.91
Vocabulary	68.75%	16.28
Concrete/ Abstract	66.25%	17.46
Grammar	62.5%	19.15
Topic	62.5%	24.08
Task level estimated	46.25%	12.04

There is considerable variation in agreement across dimensions, with high levels of agreement for Authenticity, Domain and Discourse Type, but lower for Vocabulary and Grammar, and surprisingly low for Topic. Once more, these results argue strongly for analysts to discuss their analyses and reach agreement before inputting to the Grid.

Table 36 Comparison with Phase Two agreement on related dimensions

Dimension	Mean agreement, Phase 3	Mean agreement, Phase 2
Domain	81.25%	57.6%
Broad Discourse Type	77.5%	64.7%
Text Source	73.75%	78.8%
Vocabulary	68.75%	50.6%
Grammar	62.5%	52.9%
Topic	62.5%	77.6%

These results are quite interesting. There was a notable difference between Phase Three and Phase Two in terms of agreement on Domain, although the four domains remained the same. What changed was that the domains were glossed, using the terminology in the CEF, in the Phase Three exercise. That seems greatly to have enhanced agreement.

The broad discourse type achieved higher agreement in Phase Three, although the terms were identical to Phase Two. Conceivably the experience of using the Grid may have resulted in greater understanding. Alternatively the texts used might have been more clearly of one or the other discourse type.

Text source had similar agreement in the two Phases, and the list of options was very similar in both Phases (in a Guide in Phase Two, in a list in Phase Three).

Vocabulary resulted in more agreement when there was a list to select options from in Phase Three, as did Grammar.

Topic had less agreement in Phase Three, although in Phase Three analysts selected from a list rather than using their own words (the use of their own words demanded some interpretation by the compiler of the data which was not necessary in Phase Three. A generous interpretation by the compiler may have led to an overestimation of agreement in Phase Two.)

Facts: Number of words in text

If we simply count the number of words in the input text, we get a crosstabulation as below, which shows no association between text length and CEF level.

Table 37 Text Length By CEF

		TASK LEVEL						Total
			A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
NO. WORDS	35	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	39	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	41	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	46	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	63	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	83	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	182	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	295	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	355	1	0	0	0	0	0	1

	445	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	506	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	515	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	665	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	684	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	721	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	962	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total		1	2	3	6	2	2	16

Even if we group text length into 5 groups (0-100, 101-300, 301-500, 501-700, 701-1000), we fail to find a clear association between text length and CEF level.

Table 38 Number of words grouped by Task Level

		TASK LEVEL						Total
			A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
Number of words grouped	0-100	0	1	1	2	2	0	6
	101-200	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
	201-300	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
	301-400	0	0	0	3	0	1	4
	401-500	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Total		1	2	3	6	2	2	16

However, if one casts the frequencies as percentages (Table 39 below), an interesting tendency emerges. This suggests that (although we only are dealing with 16 tasks and there is therefore a substantial sampling effect) we could formulate the hypothesis that texts tend to be longer when levels raise. The C1 tasks run against this tendency, but this could easily be a result of the small sample.

Table 39 Number of words grouped (percentages)

		TASK LEVEL						Total
			A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
Number of words grouped	0-100	0	50%	33.3 %	33.3 %	100 %	0	6
	101-200	0	50%	33.3 %	0	0	0	2
	201-300	1	0	33.3 %	0	0	0	2
	301-400	0	0	0	50%	0	50 %	4
	401-500	0	0	0	16.6 %	0	50 %	2
Total		1	2	3	6	2	2	16

Facts: Mean length of task/ item

In some task types, such as matching, "items" are quite long, whereas in others, they might be quite short. It therefore seemed worth calculating the mean length of a task, by taking the total number of

words, including the rubric and all items, and dividing by the number of items to correct for single-item tasks. This was then collapsed into 4 groups: 0-50, 51-100, 101-150 and 151-200. However, we failed to show a significant asssociation between mean length of task, and CEF level.

Table 40 Mean Length of Task By CEF

		TASK LEVEL						Total
			A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
Mean number of words grouped	0-50	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	51-100	0	1	2	4	1	0	8
	101-150	1	0	0	2	1	0	4
	151-200	0	0	1	0	0	2	3
Total		1	2	3	6	2	2	16

The same argumentation could be used for mean length of task, if we recast the table using percentages

Table 41 Mean length of task by CEF in percentages

		TASK LEVEL						Total
			A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
Mean number of words grouped	0-50	0	50 %	0	0	0	0	1
	51-100	0	50 %	66.7 %	66.7 %	50%	0	8
	101-150	1	0	0	33.3 %	50%	0	4
	151-200	0	0	33.3 %	0	0	100 %	3
Total		1	2	3	6	2	2	16

Summary of findings

The primary aim of using the Grid with these tasks was to pilot the Grid and to adjust it in the light of the experience. Although Grid 3 was applied to 77 items belonging to 16 tasks, it must be stressed that more extensive research using the Grid is needed before solid conclusions can be reached about the relationship, or lack of it, between the dimensions of the Grid and CEF levels. Our results can only be considered to be suggestive, given the limited data and time available for this Project.

Nevertheless, the Grid is a promising instrument for the description of test items and tasks in terms of the CEF. Inter-rater agreement is at times quite promising, but can clearly be improved by training. The relation between the dimensions in the Grid, and individual CEF levels is, however, not yet very promising. Relatively few dimensions showed any significant association. However, based on the limited range of tasks and items analysed in this Project, one could hypothesise that variables like vocabulary, number of words in texts and tasks, operations and domain may well be related to CEF levels. Text source, discourse type and authenticity are less likely to have a clear relation with CEF levels. However, the collection of much more extensive data is recommended as a priority for future research, to confirm or disconfirm these hypotheses.

Annex 1

Frequency count of categories used, by analyst

Item type		A1	A2	A3	A4	A5
	Multiple choice	30	36	36	30	23
	Multiple matching	47	30	37	47	36
	Cloze			2		
	C-test			2		
	Sequence/ordering		16			11
	True/False					7
Text source	Newspapers	14	34	40	9	57
	Novels, magazines	51	38	24	48	15
	Textbooks, readers	7				
	Public announcements, notices	5	5	4		
	Notes, regulations			1	1	7
	Personal instructions			5		
	Journal articles			1		
	Advertising material			1		
	Broadcast, recorded spoken text				15	
Text source	Authentic	60	77	59	53	60
	Adapted, abridged, simplified	10		13	13	10
	Pedagogic	7		5	11	7
Discourse type	Argumentative	7	11	5	3	6
	Descriptive	12	0	9	0	21
	Expository	8	8	8	14	7
	Instructive	5	5	5	0	5
	Narrative	45	53	50	60	38
Discourse type	Comments	7	7	4	3	6
	Formal argumentation	0	4	0	0	0
	Impressionistic descriptions	7	14	4	3	21
	Technical descriptions	0	0	0	0	1
	Definitions	0	0	0	0	0
	Explications	8	7	8	12	8
	Outlines	0	0	0	0	0
	Summaries	0	0	0	0	0
	Interpretations	0	1	0	1	0
	Personal instructions	5	5	5	0	5
	Stories, jokes, anecdotes	6	31	14	37	14
	Reports	38	22	36	24	23
Domain	Personal	32	20	26	40	32
	Public	25	33	25	19	23
	Occupational	6	23	23	17	22
	Educational	14	0	1	1	0
Topic	Personal identification	0	0	0	0	0
	House and home, environment	0	1	5	0	0
	Daily life	26	5	14	14	8
	Free time, entertainment	18	19	25	16	17
	Travel	9	6	9	15	6
	Relations with other people	2	11	3	10	0

	Health and bodycare	**4**	**4**	**5**	**2**	**0**
	Education	**14**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**
	Shopping	**0**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
	Food and drink	**0**	**5**	**0**	**0**	**0**
	Services	**2**	**0**	**5**	**0**	**0**
	Places	**0**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**11**
	Language	**0**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**0**
	Weather	**0**	**4**	**0**	**0**	**1**
	World of work	**16**	**21**	**9**	**19**	**33**
	Only concrete content	**12**	**4**	**42**	**12**	**7**
	Mostly concrete content	**46**	**35**	**20**	**27**	**43**
	Mainly abstract content	**0**	**17**	**1**	**6**	**12**
	Fairly extensive abstract content	**14**	**20**	**14**	**32**	**15**
Vocabulary	**Only frequent words**	**11**	**4**	**16**	**12**	**6**
	Mostly frequent words	**19**	**9**	**36**	**16**	**14**
	Rather extended vocabulary	**22**	**18**	**19**	**32**	**40**
	Extended vocabulary	**24**	**46**	**6**	**17**	**17**
Grammar	**Only simple sentences**	**5**	**4**	**6**	**5**	**6**
	Mostly simple sentences	**16**	**9**	**9**	**45**	**41**
	Frequent compound sentences	**34**	**41**	**54**	**20**	**24**
	Many complex sentences	**22**	**22**	**8**	**7**	**5**
Operation	**Recognise and retrieve**	**10**	**54**	**42**	**13**	**62**
	Make inferences	**41**	**19**	**33**	**35**	**15**
	Evaluate	**25**	**0**	**1**	**29**	**0**
Operation	**Explicit**	**12**	**60**	**55**	**36**	**48**
	Implicit	**65**	**17**	**22**	**31**	**29**
Operation	**Main idea/gist**	**21**	**47**	**26**	**21**	**29**
	Details	**28**	**26**	**32**	**25**	**22**
	Opinion	**2**	**1**	**3**	**0**	**1**
	Text structure	**26**	**0**	**15**	**30**	**25**
	Conclusion	**0**	**3**	**1**	**0**	**0**
Item level	**A1**	**0**	**0**	**4**	**5**	**0**
	A1/A2	**0**	**0**	**0**	**7**	**6**
	A2	**12**	**7**	**7**	**0**	**10**
	A2/B1	**0**	**5**	**1**	**0**	**6**
	B1	**15**	**7**	**16**	**13**	**8**
	B1/B2	**2**	**0**	**24**	**9**	**20**
	B2	**30**	**12**	**12**	**19**	**8**
	B2/C1	**0**	**12**	**5**	**7**	**8**
	C1	**18**	**21**	**11**	**17**	**7**
	C1/C2	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**4**
	C2	**0**	**11**	**0**	**0**	**0**

APPENDIX 12: Analysis of test specifications

The tests whose specifications and related documents were examined were:

Cambridge ESOL: PET, FCE, CPE (including confidential documents), KET, CAE (publicly available documents only)
Catalan Schools of Languages Levels B1 and B2 (Elemental and Aptitud) - all languages
Profile Tests Dutch as a Second Language
Finnish National Certificates: All languages
Certificats de français
Zertifikat Deutsch

Results of Analysis of Test Specifications

Reading

Characteristics of input text.

Text source

An analysis of the specifications shows differences in the use of terminology. Different exam boards refer to text source sometimes as discourse type, sometimes as text function, sometimes as genre, and the labelling is sometimes not systematic across levels of the same examinations either.

The list of text sources provided in Grid 3 (from Table 5 in the CEF) seems to cover the sources mentioned in the specifications analysed, although in some cases there is more detail (phone book, zip code book, sales slips….). Such detail can be very useful as exemplification and points to the need to provide specific, context-related examples for the text sources listed in Grid 3.

No set of specifications mentions a relation between text source and level, although it seems that shorter and more standardised texts belong to lower levels.

Authenticity

Text authenticity is not mentioned or understood in a systematic way.

Discourse type and subtype

Differences in terminology are also obvious under this dimension, as they were in Text source. The understanding of what discourse type stands for is varied. There seems to be some agreement in the use of “descriptive” or “narrative”, but at the same time, some sets of specifications include labels such as “discursive”, “conversational”, “opinion texts”, “inciting to action” or “accompanying social relations” with no straightforward meaning or interpretation.

The DIALANG table included in Grid 3 seems to cover far more than what the specifications analysed do. Analysis also showed that exam boards use texts which combine more than one discourse type, which is contemplated in the Grid by the use of “mainly”. The differences discussed

above in interpretation of what discourse type stands for suggest that the exemplifications included in the table are useful and may even need be supplemented.

Difficulty level in relation to discourse type is not stated in the specifications analysed.

Domain

Only two sets of specifications explicitly state domain, and this is not done consistently across the levels. Domain is again labelled by the different exam boards differently, in one case being referred to as " topics from candidates' daily life/educational/vocational experience"

The four CEF categories included in Grid 3 cover what specifications consulted cover in terms of domain, and it is useful to be able to choose more than one, as some specifications state that they test "general language".

Topic

The lists of topics provided in the different sets of specifications vary in length and detail, and different labelling of the same content is also apparent. One set of specifications includes "body, health, fitness", and "natural environment" whereas another refers to "health, medicine and exercise" and "the natural world". Some examination boards include mentions of "restricted" or "unsuitable" topics on a "separate list" or hint at the fact that such lists exist. It is not clear whether this "restriction" or unsuitability relates to level, possible source or bias.

The list of 14 topics from the CEF given in Grid 3 seems to cover most of the terms listed in the specifications analysed, although the most striking absence is "work". Grid 3 provides a text box where users can include "other" topics. Ideally, the most common terms entered in this "other" box may eventually complete the present list of only 14 topics.

Degree of abstractness

There is no explicit mention in the specifications of the degree of "abstractness" of text topics, which has been included as a dimension in Grid 3, although at higher levels topics such as "the arts", "archaeology" or "psychology" coexist with "health/fitness" and "entertainment/leisure" . This dimension, mentioned in the CEF and also considered useful by the Project team, may prove useful to estimate the difficulty of the input text.

The different sets of specifications do not mention either whether some topics are more difficult than others, although at the lower levels the topics included are more related to the personal domain in what could be considered "everyday" matters.

Text length

Some of the specifications analysed state number of words, but some are not very specific in terms of text length. Vague terms such as "variable according to task", "no longer than" or "fairly short" are used, and text length is also described in terms of "half an A4 page ". This vagueness is also used when comparing levels " the basic level differs clearly from the other two levels in terms of text length", which is then not given.

There seems to be a progression in terms of overall number of words from lower to higher levels, and the use of a Grid to systematically include number of words may prove useful to see whether length and difficulty level are related. .

Readability

Readibility is not specified in any set of specifications. Although there are no readability formulae specific for non-native speakers, research available on readability indices points to possible relations between difficulty and readability. It is somewhat surprising that no institution has taken this into account.

Vocabulary

Some sets of specifications include "exhaustive" vocabulary lists, and in some cases only allow 5% of the words in the input text to fall outside the list. Other sets of specifications are more general and merely state that the vocabulary is "non specific" or "accessible", or "highly frequent".

There is no explicit mention of a progression in the difficulty of vocabulary according to level in the specifications analysed, and less is said in relation to vocabulary at the higher levels than at the lower ones. In global and not always explicit ways the descriptions of vocabulary imply the use of a more restricted lexis at the lower levels, while restrictions at the higher levels are less or not mentioned at all.

Grid 3 contemplates four possible options (extended, rather extended, mostly frequent words and only frequent words) which were found useful in the analysis of the items.

Grammar

Very little is included for this dimension in the specifications analysed . At lower levels some institutions provide a detailed list of verbs, modals, adverbs….. One institution includes "intentions of speech" to categorise language rather than description of grammar. Another institution describes grammar only in terms of sentence structure. Like vocabulary, the relation with levels is mostly implicit. More restrictions are formulated at the lower levels than at the higher ones, indicating that grammatical restrictions for the input texts become less at higher levels

The four categories provided in Grid 3 for this dimension aim to provide a general and at the same time standardised way of describing the grammar in input texts, and seems sufficient for the purpose of helping identify level.

Characteristics of the items

Item type

The specifications show a variety of item types, which are all covered by the various item types contemplated in Grid 3.

There is no mention of item type in relation to difficulty or level, but fill-in tasks and gap-filling, together with short constructed answers, tend to be used at higher levels.

Two of the specifications analysed recommend using a variety of item types in the test.

Operations

This dimension is dealt with very differently in the different specifications analysed.
Some institutions talk about comprehension skills, others about comprehension strategies, and "type of comprehension" and "type of reading" are also referred to. There is no clear distinction between the understanding of the input text and the understanding needed to respond to a particular item. This results in various lists with many points in common.

The table provided for "operations" in Grid 3 seems to cover most of the elements in the lists in the different sets of specifications.

Listening

Characteristics of input text

Text source

The analysis of the specifications for listening also shows differences in the use of terminology. Different exam boards refer to text source sometimes as discourse type sometimes as text function " offering; asking for help", sometimes as genre, sometimes including "clues" on what aspects to use for item construction " (value) judgements appearing in common advertisement messages in supermarkets..." and the labelling is not systematic across exams/levels either.

The list of text sources provided in Grid 3 (from Table 5 in the CEF) seems to cover the sources mentioned in the specifications analysed, although in some cases additional detail is provided: "announcements at railway stations, pop concerts,.." which can be useful as exemplifications and suggest the need to provide specific, context-related examples for the text sources listed in Grid 3.

There are comments in some specifications about level of difficulty in relation to text source: "telephone conversations are very difficult to understand at this level (A1 and A2", and examples of content of such conversations which is acceptable or "possible" at this level.

Authenticity

One institution mentions explicitly that text is scripted at B1 and at lower levels, and "reworked or re-recorded" to ensure sound quality. Another mentions that texts are "authentic" and "real recordings" at B1 and B2. .

Discourse type and subtype

Exam boards refer to "Reading" directly under this dimension, do not include information at all or copy exactly the same list/s provided for Reading.

The same comments provided for Reading therefore apply, see above.

Domain

Exam boards refer to “Reading” directly under this dimension, do not include information at all or copy exactly the same list/s provided for Reading.

The same comments provided for Reading therefore apply, see above.

Topic

Exam boards refer to “Reading” directly under this dimension, do not include information at all or copy exactly the same list/s provided for Reading.

The same comments provided for Reading above therefore apply, see above.

Text length

Very little information is provided, and is quite vague. “Short” texts or “longer texts” are mentioned from which global information will have to be understood. One institution mentions number of words, as the text is scripted, together with the maximum duration in terms of seconds/minutes. One institution states that the total duration of recorded text cannot exceed 15 minutes.

There seems to be a general tendency not to exceed 4 minutes duration for any one text.

Differences in text length across levels become less obvious at higher levels.

Vocabulary

Some specifications include the need for repetition and paraphrasing to facilitate coping with less familiar situations. Others refer to “item writers’professional judgement”.

Most specifications refer to long lists, as for Reading. The same comments included for Reading are relevant for Listening.

Grammar

No comments are made which provide different information from Reading. See above

Text speed

Specifications contain very little information or concrete detail about speed. When it is mentioned, references such as “the speakers speak at a normal pace” or “can be varied according to the test level”, or “rather slower than the natural speed....” are found.

At C2, there is mention of “natural speed”.

Number of participants

One set of specifications states how " Monologues" and "Dialogues" can be used, and another "short exchanges". All institutions include two speakers even at level A1. More than two speakers are only mentioned at C1 and above.

The options provided in Grid 3 seem therefore to be sufficient.

Accent/standard

Surprisingly, most institutions do not specifically state differences across levels, and one can even find that "only slight moderate accent" is allowed across all the levels. There is some mention of "variety of accents" or "range of accents" at C levels, but they are always included in relation to "standard varieties" of English native speakers.

Clarity of articulation

This dimension is seldom mentioned in the specifications analysed, and it is then related to the clarity of sound, rather than articulation. "studio recordings" are mentioned under this dimension, referring to "clarity".

How often played

Two times seems to be the norm at all levels. Some boards make a distinction between playing the text once, unless details are asked and then the text is played twice.

One institution always plays the text only once.

Characteristics of the items

The specifications analysed do not provide different information for listening in relation to item characteristics from the one provided for Reading, not even for the dimension "operations". See above for comments.

Additional comments

Number of items in testlet

The number of items varies across levels and institutions. One institution has a maximum of 10 items per testlet, ideally 5, but another has testlets with up to 18 items at C2 level.

Time to do total task

The differences in time vary across levels and institutions from an A1 reading test which takes 35 minutes to a C2 reading test which takes 90 minutes. Time to do task is not necessarily related to text length or number of items. Reading tasks are always longedr than listening tasks within the same level and across levels.

Dimensions related to input text and items for reading included in the specifications analysed and missing in Grid 3

Perspective (whether texts are objective or factual)

One of the institutions included within "text source" this category as a text feature to be taken into account when considering difficulty. This category may be of interest when analysing the operations that a test taker needs to engage when responding to an item.

Text structure and cohesion

Grid 3 includes grammatical and vocabulary dimensions, but does not take into consideration the overall text structure, how meaning is expressed in a text and how the different sentences and paragraph organisation contribute to getting it across, which one of the specifications analysed did. Texts with clear structure are said to be favoured in lower levels.

References to sociocultural knowledge, connotations

Grid 3 does not contain any mention of the understanding of references to sociocultural knowledge and connotations, which is mentioned in one set of specifications, and which can affect difficulty level.

Those dimensions found missing in Grid 3 could perhaps also be considered to be part of the "operations" table in the item analysis section. Since labelling "operations" was one of the most demanding and difficult tasks for the Project team, further research is needed to identify which of the above "missing"dimensions can be incorporated into the "operations" table and with what wording.

Summary

The specifications analysed do not seem to be based on a theoretical construct, on how the language to be tested is understood. It looks as if some specifications have been written focusing on the details of exam format and length for a particular level, without seriously considering language proficiency as a whole. This is probably why there is a lack of systematic and clear use of terminology , and also the reason for the lack of unity of style and approach across levels.

Most importantly for this Project, there is very little information on how different dimensions may affect difficulty, or how the dimensions may vary across CEF levels..

A common understanding of the specifications by item writers seems to rely in most cases on exemplification (prior exams) and expertise. This suggests the need – in addition to item writer training – to provide illustrative examples for the Grids produced in order to guarantee a common understanding of whatever terms or labels are used.

APPENDIX 14

Applying the GRID to the EFL listening tests in DESI

Günter Nold & Henning Rossa

1. Context of assessment in DESI

The results of large-scale student assessment studies such as PISA have triggered heated discussions especially in countries where the levels of achievement were contrary to expectations or socially unacceptable. In Germany DESI (German-English-Student-Assessment-International)[1] is a project that raises similar issues in the field of mother tongue and English as a foreign language education.

It is the main aim of DESI to provide the Ministries of Education in the states of the Federal Republic of Germany with information about the level of achievement that students have in English and the active use of German at grade 9 in the German school system. The language tests cover the whole range of oral and written competences. In the meantime a total of 11.000 students from all types of schools have been tested twice - at the beginning and at the end of grade 9. In a second step DESI will also include other European countries; currently Austria is piloting the DESI tasks.
In line with this general aim, the project is focused on an investigation of the receptive and productive written and oral competences of students in English and German as school subjects at grade 9. Moreover, it also investigates the educational network of possible causes and effects that are involved in the development of the language competences.

In this respect it is relevant to highlight the relationship between German as a native language and English as a foreign language, and to point out the pedagogical, political and possible intervention implications that might result from this research. With respect to the importance of English as the lingua franca of the modern world and of German as the native language of most people in Germany, the research project focuses on an investigation of English as the most important first foreign language and German as most students' native language. Furthermore, as it is a central objective of the teaching of English to enable students to take part in transnational communication, the DESI consortium sets great store by the analysis of how intercultural competence can be developed in addition to language competences, and directs the attention to the conditions that contribute to such a competence.

The DESI tests of English as a foreign language assess several competences that are central to current models of language ability, but it needs to be stressed that the structure of these competences as reflected in the test constructs are shaped by the fact that they are acquired in an L2 instruction setting. Since DESI is both an assessment and an evaluation study, the constructs draw both on theoretical models as put forth by Bachman and Palmer (1996) and laid out in the Council of Europe's *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* and the specifications for the instruction setting to be evaluated: the curricula of the German states (*Bundesländer*) that determine which aspects of communicative and intercultural

[1] DESI is a *Kultusministerkonferenz* study, designed and carried out by an interdisciplinary consortium (Wolfgang Eichler, Andreas Helmke, Rainer H. Lehmann, Günter Nold, Hans-Günter Rolff, Konrad Schröder, Günther Thomè, Heiner Willenberg) and a number of additional contributors, coordinated by DIPF Frankfurt [speaker: Eckhard Klieme] (cf. http://www.dipf.de/desi)

competence are taught and learnt in German schools and lay out the ways in which language learning should take place in the classroom. Furthermore, in line with current curricular trends in Germany it is also intended to link the English listening and reading comprehension tests to the levels of the CEF.

2. The listening construct in DESI

Following Buck (2001) and Rost (2002) the listening construct in DESI was developed in an attempt to combine a competence-based approach and a task-based approach. Buck suggests using both as sources in construct definition:

> This approach is most appropriate when we think that the consistencies in listening performance are partly due to some underlying knowledge and ability, partly due to situational factors, and partly due to the interaction between them. In other words, we see performance in terms of underlying language competence, but this is influenced by contextual factors. […] this is probably a theoretically more defensible position than either the competence-based or task-based approach.
> (Buck 2001, 109)

The contextual factors Buck mentions are linked to the target-language use situation and the tasks that seek to reflect that situation. In DESI, the target-language use situation can be defined by looking at the ways German pupils are supposed to develop and use their listening skills in the classroom, according to the states' curricula. In effect, the one key word that dominates all 16 states' curricula is *text*. Essentially, pupils are expected to develop listening ability by listening to and understanding different types of texts, which are delivered by different speakers and present a number of British and North-American accents. Given the aim of evaluating the success of teaching and learning practices in developing listening ability in a foreign language, it seems logical, then, to emulate the target-language use situation in German schools and the kinds of tasks connected to it in developing the DESI listening tests.

Adapting Buck's "default listening construct" (Buck 2001, 114) to the assessment and evaluation context in DESI, the listening tests (the combination of different test tasks) assess the ability…

- to process short and extended samples of spoken language in real time
- to understand the linguistic information that is unambiguously included on the local (detail) and global (main idea) levels of the text
- to make inferences which are clearly implicated by the passage

In line with the *Common European Framework of Reference* the construct views listening as a communicative activity which language users are engaged in for the sake of different purposes such as understanding detail, understanding gist and listening selectively for specific information. These purposes are reflected in the construct and the respective test tasks. At the same time the construct acknowledges the fact that the listening skills pupils use in the EFL classroom primarily serve the purpose of following classroom discourse, which may at times resemble authentic native speaker interaction but normally deals with adapted, simplified and scripted input.

3. Listening Comprehension Tests in DESI

Dimensions	
1. Text source	Interpersonal dialogues and conversations, radio reports and narratives: Scripted texts
2. Discourse type	Mainly Narrative: includes stories and reports
3. Domain	Personal (pursuing a hobby, planning and managing every day decisions), public (travel, social events), occupational (e.g. being a translator for the Lord of the Rings script) and educational (e.g. being a student of linguistics)
4. Topic	Daily life, free time, entertainment, travel, relations with other people, shopping, food and drink, places, language: mostly concrete content
5. Text length	From 10 seconds up to 2 minutes (testlets)
6. Vocabulary	Varies from frequent to extended vocabulary.
7. Grammar	Varies from simple structures to a limited range of complex structures.
8. Readability	Not applicable
9. Text speed	Generally normal speed. In cases where two speakers are involved text speed varies considerably, especially in scripted dialogues, when some phrases are produced at the speech rate of natural interaction, which is considerably higher.
10. Number of partici-pants	Dialogues consist of two distinct voices, male and female. Longer texts have one speaker.
11. Accent/standard	In some texts a moderate accent (General Canadian) is prominent.
12. Clarity of articulation	Usually quite clear. At times, especially in dialogues, slightly unclear articulation due to elisions.
13. How often played	All texts are played twice.
14. Item type	multiple choice
15. Part of testlet?	There are testlets of 7-10 test items plus short dialogues with one test item each.
16. Number of items	Each student is presented with one testlet and 8 dialogues.
17. Time to do task	20 minutes including instructions.
18. Operation	Listening comprehension skills tested: • Recognizing and retrieving explicit and implicit information to understand main ideas and details • Making inferences about explicit and implicit information to understand main ideas and details • inferring the speaker's attitudes /emotions Comprehension strategies: • listening for gist • listening for detail

	• selective listening • inferential listening
Task levels estimated	A1+ - B2 (estimation based on description of test construct, analysis of level descriptions, internal expert analysis and interpretation of cut-off points developed in connection with IRT-scaling of items)

4. Scaling, levels and descriptors

In building a competence model for listening DESI continues in the vein of the integrative technique already employed in creating the test construct. The two aspects that are integrated into the competence model are expert ratings of the test tasks in a scheme of task characteristics defined a priori and the difficulty parameters of the test items revealed in IRT-scaling. These two elements are combined in a linear regression model to determine those characteristics that strongly contribute, in combination, to item difficulty, the dependent variable. The following three task characteristics in combination were found to contribute to predicted item difficulty in a way that allows using them and the combinations of their respective values to decide on cut-off points between different levels of competence.

Task characteristics	Values	Definition
TC1: Item: Focus on Content	0	Item focuses on concrete aspects in every day contexts
	1	Item focuses on abstract aspects in every day contexts (e.g. emotions, attitudes)
	2	Item focuses on abstract aspects such as text structure
TC2: Comprehension: Purposes	0	Understanding linguistically and contextually simple detail to construct local understanding
	1	Integrating two aspects of the content to construct global understanding Understanding linguistically and contextually complex detail to construct local understanding
	2	Integrating several aspects of the content which are scattered across the entire text to construct global understanding Understanding linguistically and contextually very complex detail to construct local understanding
TC3: Comprehension: Information Processing	0	Recognising and retrieving information which is explicitly stated in the text
	1	Recognising and retrieving information which is implicitly stated in the text Understanding paraphrases in the item which refer to explicitly stated information in the text
	2	Making inferences about information which is implicitly stated in the text

Two task characteristics that describe the linguistic level of the tasks (vocabulary and grammatical structures) and text speed were additionally included in translating combinations of task characteristics and their values (e.g. TC1: **0**, TC2: **2**, TC3: **1**) into competence level descriptors. The levels deduced from the item analysis are the following:

Level	Descriptors
1	Can understand short, concrete information from contexts of every day communication provided that information is presented explicitly in very simple language and speech is clearly and slowly articulated.
2	Can understand short, concrete information from contexts of every day communication even when that information is presented in complex language and text is spoken at normal speed with articulation that is familiar though at times a little unclear. Can integrate few concrete details to understand the main idea of a passage. Can understand concrete information and recognise unambiguous paraphrases of this information.
3	Can develop an understanding of concrete and abstract information that allows inferring missing information or information stated only implicitly.
4	Can understand abstract information (e.g. text structures) even when that information is presented in very complex language and text is sometimes spoken at fast native speed with articulation that is familiar though at times a little unclear. Can integrate extended samples of speech while listening to understand the main idea of a text even when the information is scattered across the entire text.

The levels above are clearly work in progress, and currently attempts are being made to relate the levels and the items associated with them to the levels of the *Common European Framework of Reference* systematically.

5. Literature Consulted

Bachman, Lyle F. & Palmer, Adrian. 1996. *Language Testing in Practice*. Oxford: OUP.
Buck, Gary. 2001. *Assessing Listening*. Cambridge: CUP.
Council of Europe. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment.* **http://culture2.coe.int/portfolio//documents/0521803136txt.pdf** [accessed July 11, 2004]
Rost, Michael. 2002. *Teaching and Researching Listening*. London: Pearson Education.