

THE CEFR COMPANION VOLUME:
A KEY RESOURCE FOR INCLUSIVE
PLURILINGUAL EDUCATION
CEFR ONLINE WORKSHOP SERIES 2022
#4

Title

The action-oriented approach: From theory to
practice

Date & Time

Friday May 6 2022, 16.00 CET

Presenter

Enrica Piccardo

Handout

In this workshop there will be two activities in breakout rooms:

Activity I: Core aspects of the Action-oriented Approach (AoA):

Reflecting upon the core aspects of the AoA with the poster

Activity II: Action-oriented scenarios:

Examining a scenario in detail and then elaborating one from a Scenario Summary

Activity I

Core aspects of the action-oriented approach – and how it differs from the communicative approach

Bearing in mind your pre-reading and the presentation:

1. Reflect upon and discuss **the stepping stones** from the communicative to the action-oriented approach that are shown in the poster.
2. Refer to **the table on the left of the poster** to enrich this discussion.
3. Finally study together the **circular diagram** – from the centre:

- **Light blue:** traditional methodologies and approaches which each contribute to language education over time.

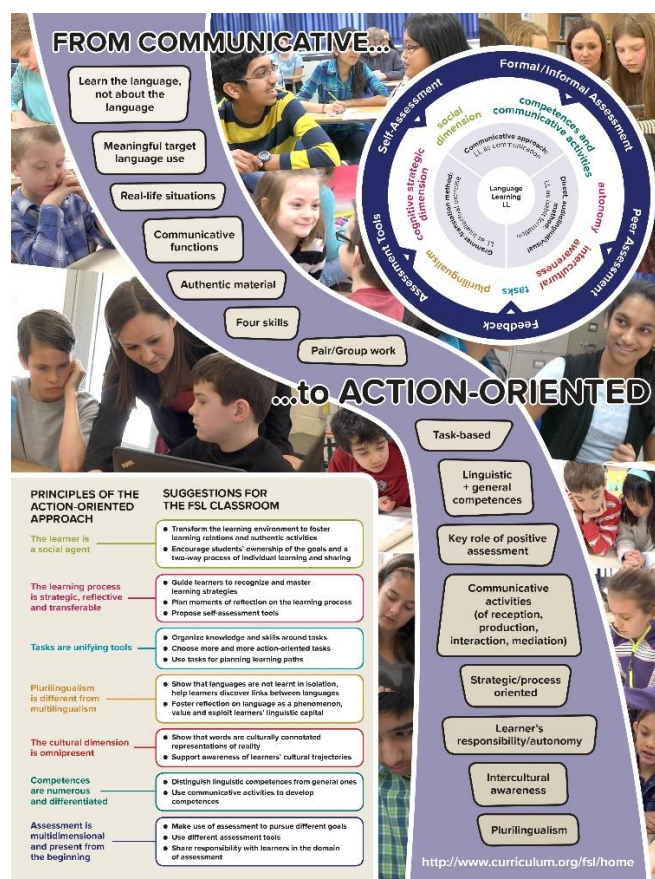
- **White:** Core characteristics of the AoA

- **Dark blue:** Different kinds of assessment are not just an 'add-on';

Why is assessment so important for the entire teaching/learning process?

Why is there a link between assessment and pedagogy in the AoA?

AoA Poster



Activity II

Action-oriented Scenarios

Part A: Examining a scenario

Look at and discuss the scenario: "Traditional Storytelling for the 21st Century"
Essentially an AoA scenario consists of three main parts:

- The scenario summary (including description of the culminating task)
- The steps (different lessons, sub-tasks)
- Associated CEFR-based descriptors – which serve both for planning and for assessment

1. Summary

Storytelling for the 21st Century



In order to encourage younger community members to actively appreciate stories, your local library is asking the community to donate some of their favourite childhood fairy tales. You take a look through your collection and decide that many of your favourites need to be updated because they are not written in English and do not include any modern morals that would interest the younger generation.

To complete this scenario, you will need to write an original English* fairy-tale with modern twists for a 21st century child.

**This scenario was initially created for a German class in Canada, later adapted and used for other languages in Canada and in Italy.*

2. Steps

Storytelling for the 21st Century

STEP 1: THE IMPORTANCE OF STORIES

During your childhood and thereafter, you've probably read or listened to fairy tales. Which stories did you enjoy the most, and why? Why do you think those stories are important? What lessons did you or other children learn from these stories? Tell the class about one of the traditional fairy tales that you remember from your childhood.

In this step, you will use what you already know about stories to see if you and your group can rearrange the scrambled story pieces together. Try to use your knowledge of time signals (e.g. First, Then, Finally) and other narrative clues to help you logically arrange the pieces. Now, listen to the recording of the story to see whether your story is in the correct order. Now listen to the recording again while silently reading the text. Highlight the time order signals and other common grammatical structures like tense and conjunctions that you commonly find in stories. For homework, try to dig up some of your favourite childhood fairytales. Bring one of these to class, regardless of the language it's in.

STEP 2: MY FAVOURITE FAIRYTALE

In this step, you will share your favourite childhood fairytale with your classmates. As you read a part of your story aloud, you can use gestures, your voice, and the pictures in the book to help the group understand the story. After each one of your classmates reads their story, can you and your other group members summarize the plot? You can use a dictionary to help you understand any unfamiliar words. Also, write a list of narrative features from two fairy tales written in two different languages. Which features do the stories share? Which features are different? You can use 'Ingredients of a Typical Fairytale' handout for this activity. At the end of this step, make sure to share your findings with your classmates.

You can also upload your fairytale to the Make a Post form, [click here](#).

STEP 3: RETELLING A STORY

Now that you have analyzed the narrative and linguistic features of a fairytale, in this step you will learn some vocabulary and grammar to eventually help you write your own story. In your groups, choose a story that we have already read in the class, and retell that story using these grammatical features. As homework, see if you can find a few more grammatical features commonly found in fairytales.

STEP 4: RETHINKING IMPORTANT MESSAGES

Using the handout your teacher provides, take some time to reflect on the common morals and character traits found in fairytales. Which of these lessons are useful? How might these messages need to be updated for the 21st century? Write down your findings in your notebook and then discuss the similarities and differences you and other groups of students have discovered. What changes could you make to these existing stories? For homework, start thinking about which messages you would develop in your story, which would be appropriate to children today and also would help them look at things from different viewpoints. Also, reflect what typical storytelling features you would use to tell your story.

STEP 5: WRITING OUR STORIES

Now that you have come with new ideas (new moral messages, vocabulary and language features in storytelling), you are ready to write the first draft of your fairytale. To help you, you

can refer to the stories and handouts that you have discussed so far in this lesson, and use online dictionaries whenever you want to find or get clarified vocabulary or language features. You can continue with your drafts at home and bring a completed draft for the peer-editing session taking place next class.

STEP 6: CAN YOU HELP ME WITH MY STORY?

In this step, you will use the Peer Editing sheet to give and receive feedback on your fairytales. Working with a partner, provide each other with some comments and suggestions. Once you receive feedback, spend the rest of the class editing your drafts in order to further refine your story.

STEP 7: CULMINATING TASK – TRADITIONAL STORYTELLING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY CHILD

The time has come to share our stories with the community. Before you do so, you'll have a chance to practice telling your story in smaller groups. Try to use appropriate intonation, facial expression, gesture, and any other movements that can help you convey the meaning of your story and make it more exciting for your audience. When you finally feel ready, gather in a circle to hear your classmates' 21st century fairytales!

You can also upload your story to the Make a Post form, [click here](#).

3. Descriptors

Storytelling for the 21st Century

the "What"

Communicative activities expressed through CAN DO statements

- Can understand the main points and important details in *fairy tales*, provided the speaker speaks slowly and clearly
- Can give or seek personal views and opinions in discussing common storylines, character traits and morals
- Can write straightforward connected fairy-tales on a range of familiar subjects within *his/her field of interest*, by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence
- Can give a prepared straightforward presentation on *his/her own fairy tale* which is clear enough to be followed without difficulty most of the time, and in which the main points are explained with reasonable precision

Mediation

- Can summarize in writing the main points made in *fairytales from different cultures*, using simple formulation
- Can collaborate in simple shared tasks and work towards a common goal in a group by asking and answering straightforward questions (*e.g. identifying common linguistic and narrative features*)

the "How"

Communicative competences expressed through CAN DO statements

Linguistic (grammar/vocabulary/phonology)

- Can use language to get by, with sufficient vocabulary to express him/herself with some hesitation and circumlocutions on topics such as fairy-tales

- Pronunciation is generally intelligible; can approximate intonation and stress at both utterance and word levels
- Spelling, punctuation and layout are accurate enough to be followed most of the time

Pragmatic and sociolinguistic (functional/discourse, register/contextual appropriacy):

- Can form longer sentences and link them together using a limited number of cohesive devices, e.g. in a story
- Shows awareness of the conventional structure of *fairy-tales* when communicating his/her ideas
- Can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions

Sociocultural (proximity convention, directness/indirectness):

- Can understand customs, attitudes, values and beliefs prevalent in the community concerned
- Can discuss in simple terms the way his/her own culturally-determined actions may be perceived differently by people from other cultures
- Can adopt conventions for formal presentations (e.g., *oral storytelling*)

Plurilingual/Pluricultural dimension

- Can use what he/she has understood in one language to understand the topic and main message of a story in another language
- Can deduce the message of a text by exploiting what he/she has understood from texts on the same theme written in different languages (e.g. *linguistic and sociocultural features common to the fairy-tale narrative style*)

Activity II

Action-oriented Scenarios

Part B: Elaborating a scenario from the Summary

With your partners:

- Select one of the four scenario summaries on the next page (notice the recommended levels)
- Elaborate possible steps that lead up to the culminating task described in the summary
- Now select some relevant descriptors.

Go to the CEFR Website <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/home>, scroll down a little, and at the bottom of the box on the right, find and download the “**CEFR descriptors (Searchable)**.” This is an Excel.

In the Excel:

- Select just the level(s) that is/are recommended for the scenario you have chosen. *Click on the little arrow next to Level. You will get a drop down menu with options like in the screenshot below, Deselect All, and then select the level(s)* (Pre-A1 is at the end of the drop down list)

No	CEFR Descriptor Scheme (updated)	Mode of communication	Activity, strategy or competence	Scale	Level	Descriptor
1						
2	1	Communicative language activities	Reception	Oral comprehension	Overall oral com	Can understand with ease virtually an fast natural speed.
3	2	Communicative language activities	Reception	Oral comprehension	Overall oral com	Can understand enough to follow ext their own field, though they may need unfamiliar.
4	3	Communicative language activities	Reception	Oral comprehension	Overall oral com	Can recognise a wide range of idioms shifts.
5	4	Communicative language activities	Reception	Oral comprehension	Overall oral com	Can follow extended discourse even only implied and not signalled explic
6	5	Communicative language activities	Reception	Oral comprehension	Overall oral com	Can understand standard language or unfamiliar topics normally encounter extreme [auditory/visual] background usage influence the ability to underst
7	6	Communicative language activities	Reception	Oral comprehension	Overall oral com	Can understand the main ideas of pro concrete and abstract topics delivere technical discussions in their field of s
8	7	Communicative language activities	Reception	Oral comprehension	Overall oral com	Can follow extended discourse and c familiar, and the direction of the argu
9	8	Communicative language activities	Reception	Oral comprehension	Overall oral com	Can understand straightforward factu topics, identifying both general mess in a generally familiar variety.

- Then, depending on the nature of the culminating task in the scenario, select **3-4 descriptors for communicative language activities** that describe what students WILL BE ABLE TO DO with the language. Remember that communicative language activities include reception, production, interaction and mediation.
 - Click on the little arrow next to Mode of Communication. Please deselect All, and then select the mode you want.*

- *Do the same for Scale: deselect All, and then select just scales that seem relevant.*
- *At this point you will have a shorter list of descriptors on the right. Copy and paste this list to a Word file.*
- Repeat for the other relevant modes
- Finally, highlight the few descriptors that you want to use.

Then select 3-4 suitable descriptors in the same way for:



- communicative language competences
- plurilingual//pluricultural competences

If you have time, discuss how you might adapt these descriptors to produce: a checklist for a 'Çan Do Quiz' of simplified descriptors for student self-assessment

Would you adapt/simplify the descriptors for the students? If so, how?

See the appendix for an example – relating to the *Traditional Storytelling for the 21st Century* that you looked at before.

Scenario summaries

 	<p>How are you feeling?</p> <p>You have been selected as your class representative! You have been asked to offer advice to your friends and community members about what to do when they have strong feelings in a new situation. Your task is to find out how other students or family members feel in different situations and prepare advice to give to your friends. Also, you will have to prepare a poster with advice that will help everybody feel better, which will be put up on the wall of the class.</p> <p>Spanish Version: ¿Cómo te sientes?</p>
--	--



Lost in a New Town

You are participating in an exchange program to Germany and you have lost your group after the city tour. Now you are trying to find your way back to the youth hostel, but unfortunately, your cellphone is out of battery. You cannot check online or call a friend. However, you do have a paper map and can ask someone on the street for help.

German Version:

In einer neuen Stadt verlaufen

Bulgarian Version:

Изгубен в нов град



Our Community Cookbook

Some parents in your community have complained that their children are too picky with their food. They're looking for interesting and tasty recipes to try out and have asked your class for help compiling a new community cookbook. You and your classmates have decided to contribute recipes from different cultures and countries around the world. For this task, each student will create one entry in the cookbook based on their family's favourite recipe. When the cookbook is completed, you will put it all together and bring a copy home to your family.



The Time Machine

Your class has found a time machine! The whole class will vote on which three places to go, but there are some limitations:

You can only go up to 100 years in the past and you can only travel to a place where someone that is in the machine (i.e., someone within your class) has lived.

Spanish Version:

La máquina del tiempo

APPENDIX SELF-ASSESSMENT QUIZ: TRADITIONAL STORYTELLING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

1. I can understand the main points and important details in stories when the speaker speaks slowly and clearly.¹
 - Yes
 - With Help
 - Not Yet
2. I can write a straightforward connected fairy-tale on familiar subjects, by connecting smaller elements into a linear sequence.¹
 - Yes
 - With Help
 - Not Yet
3. I can give or ask for views and opinions about common storylines, character traits and morals.¹
 - Yes
 - With Help
 - Not Yet
4. I can give a prepared straightforward presentation on a familiar topic that is clear and the main points are well-explained.¹
 - Yes
 - With Help
 - Not Yet
5. I can talk about fairy-tales, but I need more vocabulary and grammar to avoid repeating myself.¹
 - Yes
 - With Help
 - Not Yet
6. I can use the conventional structure of fairy-tales, when communicating my ideas.¹
 - Yes
 - With Help
 - Not Yet
7. I can adopt conventions for formal presentations (e.g., oral storytelling).¹
 - Yes
 - With Help
 - Not Yet
8. I can use what I have understood in one language to understand the topic and main message of a story in another language.¹
 - Yes
 - With Help
 - Not Yet

9. I can deduce the message of a text by using what I have understood from texts on the same theme written in different languages (e.g. language and cultural similarities common to the narrative style).¹
- Yes
 - With Help
 - Not Yet
10. I can explain features of my own culture to members of another culture or explain features of the other culture to members of my own culture.¹
- Yes
 - With Help
 - Not Yet
11. I can identify areas of confusion or concern and use available resources, including notes in my binder, dictionaries, the teacher and peers, to resolve the confusion.¹
- Yes
 - With Help
 - Not Yet
12. I can assess my own level of comfort with new structures and vocabulary and make use of reference tools and exercises to enhance their comfort level before attempted the main task.¹
- Yes
 - With Help
 - Not Yet
13. I can summarise in writing the main points made in fairytales from different cultures, if I can use a dictionary.¹
- Yes
 - With Help
 - Not Yet
14. I can collaborate in simple, shared tasks and work towards a common goal in a group by asking and answering straightforward questions (e.g., identifying common language and narrative features).
- Yes
 - With Help
 - Not Yet
15. I can simply paraphrase short written passages, using the original order of the text.¹
- Yes
 - With Help
 - Not Yet