

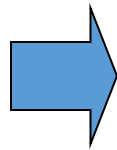


# The CEFR Companion Volume (CEFR/CV) with Old and New Descriptors

## *The new scale for Phonological Control*

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- Rationale for updating the treatment of phonology in the CEFR illustrative scales
- The new scale for phonological control: conceptualization and methodology
- Conclusions: potential for language education and social integration



Rationale for updating the treatment of phonology in the CEFR illustrative scales

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*“teachers are often left to rely on their own intuitions with little direction.”* (Derwin & Munro, 2005: 379)

## Since 2001

- Societal developments: increased diversity
- Developments in second/foreign language education
- **new sensibility** concerning issue of ‘nativeness’ and ‘gatekeeping power’
- **‘Intelligibility’** clearly distinguished from ‘nativeness’ (Levis, 2005) and critical for successful communication in an L2 (Munro & Derwing, 2011).



Phonology control scale: a ‘Grey’ area in the CEFR that needed to be addressed





# A shift in the last 10 years, but...

**Very recently increasing interest in:**

- **pedagogy**
- **assessment**

**However:**

- **Teachers still hesitant**

feel not prepared > taught phonology not how to teach pronunciation (Derwin & Munro, 2015; Burgess & Spencer, 2000)

- **Ghost of the native speaker** > 'unrealistic goal, thus why bother?' (Munro & Derwing, 2011)

- **In existing exams** phonological competence still:

- subsumed under 'speaking' or 'fluency'
- exclusive concentration on some aspects (e.g. stress and pronunciation of words)
- modulation of levels through expressions of quantity (e.g. wide/limited range)

**not yet a serious  
impact** on teacher  
education, material  
development and  
language policy  
documents:

***TIME TO ACT***

## Key factors

- Attention to intelligibility
- Listener factors (familiarity with accent, willingness to communicate, attitude towards L2 speakers)
- Accent less important than intelligibility
- Need to distinguish functional proficiency and phonological competence
- Need for explicit and better pronunciation instruction
- Need for valid assessment criteria to overcome native speaker standard

# Phonology scale in the CEFR 2001

C2	<i>No descriptor available</i>
C1	Can vary intonation and place sentence stress correctly in order to express finer shades of meaning.
B2	Has a clear, <b>natural</b> , pronunciation and intonation.
B1	Pronunciation is clearly intelligible <b>even if a foreign accent is sometimes evident</b> and <b>occasional mispronunciations</b> occur.
A2	<i>Pronunciation is generally clear enough to be understood <b>despite a noticeable foreign accent</b>, but conversational partners will need to ask for repetition from time to time.</i>
A1	<i>Pronunciation of a very limited repertoire of learnt words and phrases can be understood with some effort by native speakers used to dealing with speakers of his/her language group.</i>

## Strengths

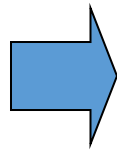
- Thorough **construct** broad enough to capture new directions in SLE/FLE
- Clear and extensive **link with descriptive scheme**
- Pedagogical dimension of phonology (**learnability/teachability**)
- Phonology as an **assessment category**

## Weaknesses

- Existing scale does not capture conceptual apparatus
- Unrealistic on accent, progression (echo of native speaker)
- Mixes diverse factors without indication of progression
- Incomplete (no C2)



- Rationale for updating the treatment of phonology in the CEFR illustrative scales



The new scale for phonological control:  
conceptualization and methodology

- Conclusions: potential for language education and social integration

# Rationale

1. Identify **explicit categories** that inform the scales based (i) on the CEFR construct and (ii) on recent developments in teaching and research;
2. Think through the **internal progression** of phonological competence and delicate relation between pronunciation and proficiency;
3. Provide both a **general** scale and **specific** ones
  - to get a snapshot of phonological competence
  - to identify areas for improvement.

Focus should be on intelligibility not a native speaker norm

However: *“it makes little sense to assess pronunciation on scales of the type that range from not accented, perfectly comprehensible at one endpoint to accented and difficult to understand at the other.”*

(Munro & Derwing, 2000: 305).

- **Articulation** (including pronunciation of sounds/phonemes);
- **Prosody** (including intonation, rhythm and stress – word stress/sentence stress – and speech rate/chunking);
- **Accentedness** (accent and deviation from a 'norm');
- **Intelligibility** (i.e. actual understanding of an utterance by a listener) and
- **Comprehensibility** (i.e. listener's perceived difficulty in understanding an utterance).

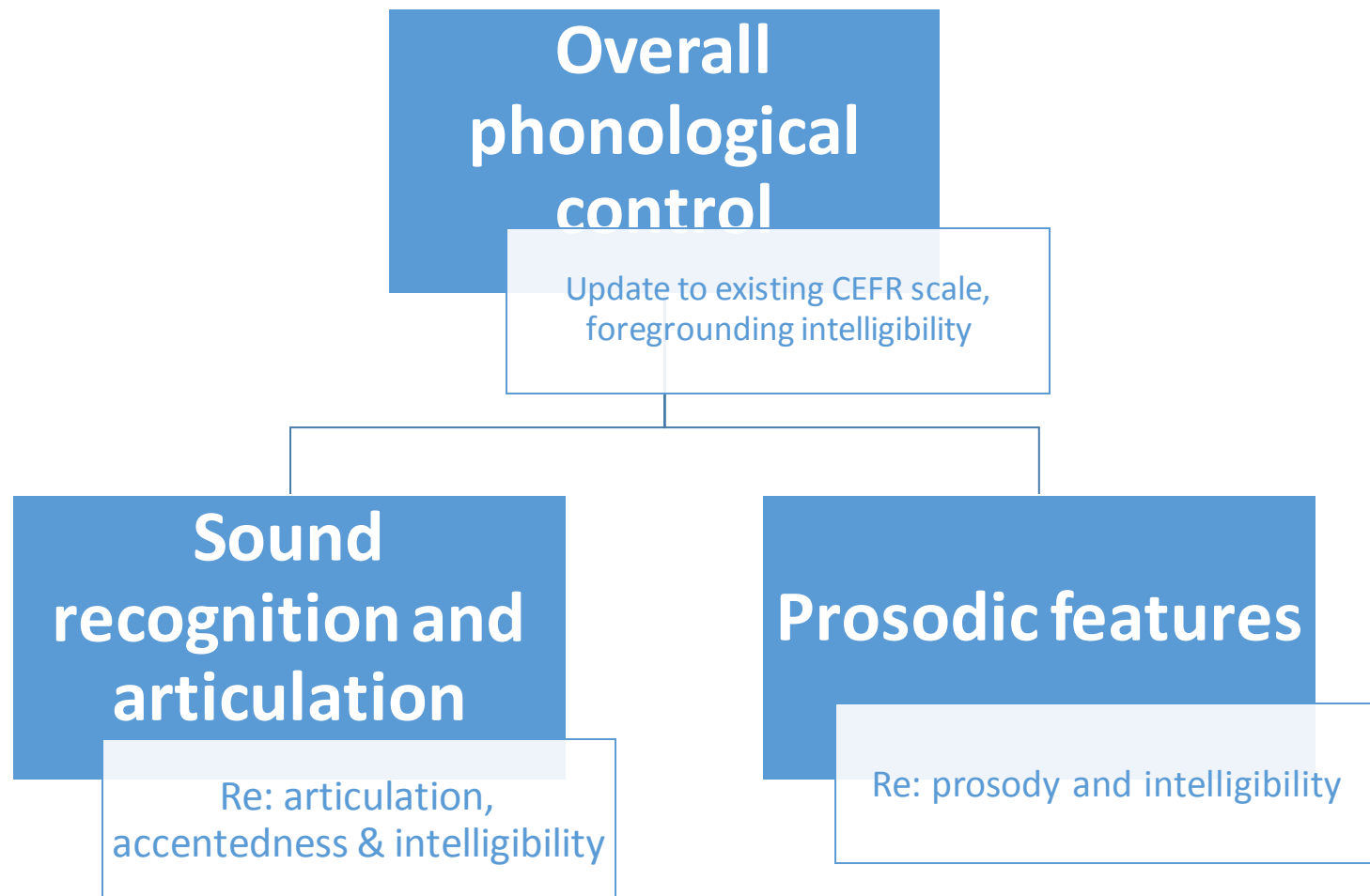
# Concepts used for categories

- **Articulation**
- **Prosody**
- **Accentedness**
- **Intelligibility** (Comprehensibility subsumed under intelligibility).



- **Phase 1:** Analysis of strengths & weaknesses of existing concept & scale; rationale for review
- **Phase 2:** Review of literature and other scales, operationalization of concepts
- **Phase 3:** Creation of scale (draft > revision > internal workshop > feedback > revision)
- **Phase 4:** Consultation with experts > preparation for validation
  - **Phase 5:** Qualitative validation 250 informants (assigning to categories, evaluating descriptor quality)
  - **Phase 6:** Quantitative validation 272 informants (assigning to levels, assessing 3 video recordings/different languages)

# New Phonological Control Analytic Scale

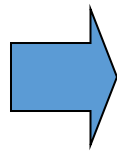


# New Phonological Control Analytic Scale

## PHONOLOGICAL CONTROL

	OVERALL PHONOLOGICAL CONTROL	SOUND ARTICULATION	PROSODIC FEATURES
C2	Can employ the full range of phonological features in the target language with a high level of control – including prosodic features such as word and sentence stress, rhythm and intonation – so that the finer points of his/her message are clear and precise. Intelligibility and effective conveyance of and enhancement of meaning are not affected in any way by features of accent that may be retained from other language(s).	Can articulate virtually all the sounds of the target language with clarity and precision.	Can exploit prosodic features (e.g. stress, rhythm and intonation) appropriately and effectively in order to convey finer shades of meaning (e.g. to differentiate and emphasise).
C1	Can employ the full range of phonological features in the target language with sufficient control to ensure intelligibility throughout. Can articulate virtually all the sounds of the	Can articulate virtually all of the sounds of the target language with a high degree of control. He/she can usually self-correct if he/she noticeably mispronounces a sound.	Can produce smooth, intelligible spoken discourse with only occasional lapses in control of stress, rhythm and/or intonation, which do not affect intelligibility or effectiveness.
B2	<b>OVERALL PHONOLOGICAL CONTROL</b> <b>B1:</b> Pronunciation is generally intelligible; can approximate intonation and stress at both utterance and word levels. However, accent is usually influenced by other language(s) he/she speaks.	<b>SOUND RECOGNITION AND ARTICULATION:</b> <b>B1:</b> <i>Is generally intelligible throughout, despite regular mispronunciation of individual sounds and words he/she is less familiar with.</i>	<b>PROSODIC FEATURES</b> <b>B1:</b> <i>Can convey his/her message in an intelligible way in spite of a strong influence on stress, intonation and/or rhythm from other language(s) he/she speaks.</i>
B1		Can understand intelligible pronunciation of individual sounds and words he/she is less familiar with.	Can understand strong influence of stress, intonation and/or rhythm from other language(s) he/she speaks.
A2		Pronunciation is generally intelligible; can approximate intonation and stress at both utterance and word levels. However, accent is usually influenced by other language(s) he/she speaks.	Can understand intelligible pronunciation of individual sounds and words he/she is less familiar with.

- Rationale for updating the treatment of phonology in the CEFR illustrative scales
- The new scale for phonological control: conceptualization and methodology



Conclusions: potential for language education and social integration



- Providing transparency and possibility of discriminating levels
- Orienting teacher education
- Informing curricula, supporting teachers
- Breaking the gatekeeping function of the 'native speaker'
- No dependent relationship between language proficiency & phonological control (particularly important in relation to adult migrants) > therefore no inclusion in Tables 1, 2, or 3

merci grazie grácias tesşekkürler  
 danke faleminderit obrigada  
 thank you efcharisto