

## JALT CEFR & LP SIG

Newsletter No. 34 – April 2022

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*Dear members of the CEFR & LP SIG,*

The cherry blossoms are greeting us and we are looking forward to returning to face-to-face classes. This newsletter edition will give updates on events in 2022, and provides some news and ideas for you to consider, and new projects to engage in. Hopefully, in this issue, you will find something that catches your interest.

First and most important is the **Workshop with Neus Figueras** on Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022 on *Aligning current practice to the CEFR: First steps*. Note the date and see on **page 2~**

The meetings of the *Portfolio Roundtable Talk* are captured by Takanori Omura. You can get a gist of the discussion on learner autonomy and the use of the language portfolio. Please come next time and join the meeting. See **page 4~**

**PanSIG 2022** is planned to be held face to face from July 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022 in Nagano <https://pansig.org> with a lot of presentations and the CEFR & LP SIG Forum. See **page 9~**

Please vote on the **Best of JALT nominee for the CEFR & LP SIG**, considering presentations and papers during 2021. The winner will get the *Michele Steele Best of JALT Award* for CEFR & LP SIG. Your voice counts! See more on **page 10~**

**JALT 2022 International Conference** is planned to be face to face from November 11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022 in Fukuoka with the theme *Learning from Students, Educating Teachers—Research and Practice*. See more on **page 12~**

And a short overview of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the Kaken Project See more on **page 13~**

The **CEFR Journal – Practice and Research Volume 5** is underway. The authors are informed already. Final decisions of acceptance will be made after two double-blind reviews. Finally, we received a DOI for the CEFR Journal. See more at <https://cefrjapan.net/journal> and on **page 14~**

If you would like to organize a joint event with the CEFR&LP SIG, please contact one of our officers. We ask all our members to become involved with organizing meetings and mini-conferences and by contributing to our newsletter. We'd love your cooperation to make this happen.

Thank you for being a member of JALT CEFR&LP SIG!  
宜しくお願い致します。

*Gabriela Schmidt and Takanori Omura*

Your coordinator on behalf of all officers.

## Workshop with Dr. Neus Figueras

Date & Time:

**Saturday, May 21st, 2022 15:00 – 17:30, JST**  
(Central European Summer Time 8:00~)

Workshop Theme:

### **Aligning current practice to the CEFR: First steps**

#### **Description of the workshop**

This workshop targets practitioners who wish to intervene and improve current practices following the core concepts and philosophy of the CEFR, and using various scaled descriptors of the CEFR, but who have not initiated action. The workshop will begin with a talk by Dr. Neus Figueras, and then participants will have an opportunity to discuss concerns about their praxis in small groups. Dr. Figueras' talk will be informed in part by her role as a co-author and co-editor of the recent books, *Aligning language education with the CEFR: A handbook* (to appear) and *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Towards a Road Map for Future Research and Development* by Multilingual Matters (2021).



**Dr. Neus Figueras** started her career in 1981 as a teacher of English and in 1996 joined the Catalan Ministry of Education, Spain, where she coordinated the development of foreign language curricula and certificate examinations for adult learners for over 20 years.

She has been involved in a number of international research and development projects related to assessment at different education levels (Dialang, Speakeasy, Ceftrain, Dutch CEFR construct project, EBAFLS) and has given courses and presented in universities in Spain, in various European countries, in Asia and in the USA. She has carried out

consultancy work in assessment (University of Bilkent, Turkey; BIFIE -Centre for Assessment and Innovation-, Austria; University of Saint Petersburg, Russia; Quiyas, Saudi Arabia; British Council, UK and Trinity College London, UK) and in curriculum design (U.N. New York and Geneva).

She collaborates regularly with the Council of Europe on the uses and the dissemination of the CEFR in language testing and assessment and is one of the authors of the Manual for Relating examinations to the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2009).

She is a founding member of EALTA (European Association for Language Testing and Assessment, [www.ealta.eu.org](http://www.ealta.eu.org)), and was the first President (2004-7) of the Association. She is

currently the coordinator of the EALTA CEFR SIG.  
She was granted the International British Council Assessment Award in 2015.  
Her interests include assessment literacy and the development of context relevant assessments.

### Recent publications

**Figueras, N.** and Levy, M. (2022) The action-oriented approach in the CEFR and the CEFR Companion Volume: a change of paradigm(s)? A case study from Spain. In Little, D. and Figueras, N. (Eds) *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Towards a Road Map for Future Research and Development*. Multilingual Matters

**Figueras, N.** and Boyd, Elaine (2021) Mediation as described in the CEFR Companion Volume (CEFR CV) and reflected in an existing oral examination. Collated Papers for the ALTE 7th International Conference, Madrid. Available at <https://www.alte.org/resources/Documents/ALTE%207th%20International%20Conference%20Madrid%20June%202021.pdf>

**Figueras, N.** (2021) Success in language learning: What role can language assessment play? In Gebril, A. (Ed). *Learning-oriented assessment: Putting Theory into Practice* Routledge.

**Figueras, N.** and Puig, F. (2019) La evaluación de Lenguas: ¿De camino hacia el cambio? In López Ferrero, C. and Pujolà, J.T. (Eds) *La didáctica de lenguas de par en par. Diálogo entre teoría y práctica. Homenaje a Ernesto Martín Peris*. Editorial Difusión.

**Figueras, N.** (2019) Developing and Using Tasks for the Assessment of Speaking. In Grandfelt, J. (Ed.) *Assessing Speaking*. APPLES. *Journal of Applied Language Studies*

**Figueras, N.** (2017) Exploring the link between assessment and language awareness: A way forward? In Cots, JM. and Garret, P. (Eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Language Awareness*. Routledge.

**Saturday, May 21st, 2022 15:00 – 17:30, JST**

## **Aligning current practice to the CEFR: First steps**

### **Workshop schedule**

15:00 Welcome, Introduction to the project and the tools

QR code for signup form

15:10 **Talk by Neus Figueras**

15:55 Q&A

16:10 Discussion  
Summary of each group discussion  
Comments, Q & A

17:30 Closing



See more details: <https://cefrijapan.net/events>

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## **Portfolio Roundtable Talk**

### **Working group for Language Portfolio**

#### **in CEFR & LP SIG**

#### **Reports on the Portfolio Roundtable Talk**

### **The third Portfolio Roundtable Talk 2022 Report: The language portfolio and learner autonomy**

**Takanori Omura (Soka University)**

On March 2<sup>nd</sup>, the third Portfolio Roundtable Talk was held online. The number of participants was not large but we could have not only participants in Japan but also participants from other countries making this roundtable highly international. This time two inspiring presentations were given by Prof. Takanori Omura and Prof. Gregory Birch who are engaged in the CEFR&LP SIG's KAKEN project. Despite the small number of participants, the discussion on the theme was deep and made the meeting productive and beneficial for all of us.

#### **Presentation 1 - Prof. Takanori Omura (the writer for this report)**

Title: The relationship between university students' learner autonomy and their attitude towards the electronic portfolio

I am not sure how to report my own presentation from my own perspective because it might become subjective rather than objective. Thus, I'd like to focus on the prime points of my presentation and devote more space on the discussion after this section. This presentation was about one of the small-scale projects that are the core for the CEFR & LP SIG's KAKEN project. I began this small-scale project last year, with some instruments implemented in my classes, collecting data, and the project is still ongoing. During the process, the group meeting (Language Portfolio and Learner Autonomy) and the general meeting related to KAKEN project have made me reflect on my research and modify my research design to improve quality. For instance, my focus was "the effect of an e-portfolio on Learner Autonomy", but I shifted the focus to "The relationship between Learner Autonomy and the students' attitude towards an electronic portfolio" by observing how other people in the project designed their research or the presentations in the second portfolio roundtable. Also, Gregory Birch's feedback was always powerful and encouraged me to improve my research. One of the aims of my research is to investigate the correlation between the degree of learner autonomy and the students' attitude towards the e-portfolio. And, it was so delightful to present my findings which seemed to be interesting enough to draw attention from the participants. As mentioned earlier, this was not the initial focus of my research but fortunately, it turns out that some results in relation to this focus seem to be extremely valuable for discussion. As the surveys include both closed-ended and open-ended questions, and the semi-structured interviews provide the qualitative

data, I can analyze the data from two sides, the quantitative side and the qualitative side. The slides I prepared for the presentation this time might have been a little overwhelming, and I should have skipped some slides that I wanted to discuss due to the time constraint, which was what I had predicted to some degree.

Although I have had experiences presenting the present research in several conferences such as Thailand TESOL, Glo CALL conference, and the CAM TESOL conference, it is always challenging for me to fit the present research, which keeps developing and has a lot of room to be reshaped, in the available presentation time. Nevertheless, that is why my passion for research never fades away. The challenges confronting, interaction with other individuals, and a wealth of feedback from others always makes me feel that I'm still developing, and they can be either fuel or a mental burden depending on how I deal with them.

### **Discussion**

Dmitri Leontjev (one of the participants) brought up the topic, which was very vital for the theme of this roundtable talk, giving the discussion momentum. How should we define autonomy? Is autonomy where one works on by oneself without others? Don't we as educators make our students believe that learning autonomously is to work alone (which should not be the case)? We should think more of what exactly autonomous learning means, in short, the difference between autonomous learning and independent learning before we tell our students how to learn autonomously. A study about the clarification of autonomous learning and independent learning by Benson, P., and Voller, P. (2014) is a good start on this topic. Andrew Tweed too (one of participants) commented on this topic, "pointing out the difference between autonomous learning (自律学習) and independent learning (自立学習) would help students to understand the nuance between autonomous and independent learning". Viewing the point from this angle is so insightful. Let me introduce a quote from Benson (2013) regarding this topic.

When independence is used as a synonym of autonomy, its opposite is dependence, which implies excessive reliance on the direction of teachers or teaching materials. One problem with the use of this term, however, is that it can also be understood as the opposite of interdependence, which implies working together with teachers and other learners towards shared goals. (p. 15)

This is such an essential topic, which must be appropriate enough to discuss in the future roundtable talk. Then Gregory's comment made our discussion move on to the next topic, which is regarding "reactive autonomy". Littlewood (1999: 75) has distinguished the meanings of "proactive" and "reactive" autonomy based on two levels of self-regulation. Proactive autonomy "regulates the direction of activity as well as the activity itself", while reactive autonomy "regulates the activity once the direction has been set". Moreover, the author explains that reactive autonomy is an idea, which is useful in educational settings to clarify a capacity that "once a direction has been initiated, enables learners to organize their resources autonomously in order to reach their goal". This distinction of two types of autonomy clearly suggests that we should put into consideration that students in the context where they are required to do classroom activities have opportunities to exercise autonomy but it is reactive autonomy. Considering this, the instrument that I have been using might not be suitable for measuring learner autonomy in an accurate way. This is another important point to improve my research in the next cycle, and having a problem pointed out in one's research through discussing with other individuals is a huge advantage of action research. Some questions regarding the e-portfolio asked by Andrew were so helpful for me to think of how to improve the e-portfolio for the next cycle. One of them was about the learning log. In fact, after implementing the e-portfolio in my classes, I found it so difficult to have students stick to

logging their study using the portfolio. Lastly, Motoko Teraoka (one of the participants) asked about the way of using the e-portfolio, which raised a quite meaningful topic for this roundtable. Although it is significantly recognized that an e-portfolio could function to boost learner autonomy in general, the method of e-portfolio use seems to differ among teachers. What is an e-portfolio for? What is the main purpose? How should it be used in the classroom? These are what we would like to discuss and share our thoughts next time.

## **Presentation 2 - Prof. Gregory Birch**

Title: Using an online European Language Portfolio (e-ELP) to promote learner autonomy

This presentation is also about one of the small-scale projects of the KAKEN project. Although both small-scale projects deal with the promotion of learner autonomy with e-portfolio use, each of our research projects seems to be quite different with regards to its approach. Gregory's focus in his research is to investigate how the students "acquire the metacognitive knowledge and the metacognitive skills believed necessary to take control of their learning" according to the abstract. In his presentation, what impressed me the most was that he stressed we should be careful when we define autonomy, which is related to what we discussed earlier and the topic about the difference between autonomous learning and independent learning. I believe that the quote from Benson (2013), which is "autonomy does not mean independence from the teacher", which Gregory has used in his research precisely explains what he wants to convey and his belief. As Gregory and other participants stated, it seems that many people and perhaps many Japanese might not have considered the definition of autonomy in this way. He pointed out that many Japanese students imagine that autonomy is to study by themselves when they hear the word. It's so interesting to realize this fact based on his analysis showing several aspects such as the interview results. In addition, he proposed that there is an unignorable issue in the instrument (i.e. the Autonomous Learning Scale (Macaskill & Taylor, 2010)), in which some questions might lead the students to misconceive learner autonomy. As I use the same scale in my research, his identification of this issue has become an important signal for me to review my methodology as well. It seems true that many Japanese imagine that autonomy is to study alone. However, it leaves us an interesting discussion to dig into, which is "What are the factors that make people regard autonomy as such?", and "Shouldn't we have the cultural background in our mind when we define autonomy?; in other words, "Is there some cultural background that it is totally fine to imagine that autonomy is to study alone?"

Another thing that was impressive listening to his presentation was his clear vision of how he is going to revise the intervention and the research plan. He has pointed out some issues and possible solutions in his implementation, and his research plans for the next cycle. For instance, in the goal setting activity, he found that some students didn't complete the form, or even if they completed the form, the process was linear (i.e. They didn't go back to revise previous answers). To tackle these issues, he thinks providing some examples would help students. I believe that this attempt is an element and the true value of action research that we are trying to demonstrate. The overall goal of his research is how the ELP can be improved and revised to further promote learner autonomy and help improve language proficiency. It seems that there are still a number of steps to take; however, I have no doubt he will show us fascinating results in the near future.

## **Discussion**

Dmitri brought up the topic of a positionality that consists of the role of teacher and the role of researcher. This should be one of the debatable topics especially in action research where the educator and the researcher are generally the same person. Obviously, too much bias would ruin the research data and the analysis part, but there are also huge advantages considered, such as the flexibility of research plan and availability of more data. It should be noted that the relationship between the teacher and the students plays a role in order to take these advantages. I think that it is human nature to have a feeling of wanting to help others. In addition, he suggested monitoring the change of the students' expectation of the teacher and the course at the beginning and end of the course, which should be helpful to provide a different viewpoint for the research. It's important to see if the students feel any responsibility for their learning or how much responsibility they feel before and after the implementation, which is directly associated with an element of learner autonomy.

Andrew commented on the Language Learning History, which is one of the instruments in Gregory's research, and suggested how much freedom the teacher should give the students when the teacher allows them to choose some questions to answer. In relation to this issue, he mentioned that the cognitive and linguistic demand deriving from the questions are placed on the students, and these issues often seem to appear when the English proficiency level of students is quite low. Gregory is wisely dealing with this kind of issue mainly by organizing or curating the questions in the Language Learning History that he borrows from Murray (2009) so that his students can recognize what kind of questions they are more easily. As Andrew pointed out, it is extremely difficult to keep a balance between the freedom students can exercise and the constraints teachers impose when we take the researcher's role because we can't force students to do something. Thus, I believe that the rapport between the two sides always matters. Educators always want students to feel freedom to some degree and to feel free to do the tasks instead of being forced to do them by the teacher. We can create the best point where the students are given a certain freedom, and at the same time they can be active and cooperative enough to be helped by the teacher and help themselves if we build the humanistic rapport with the students.

### **Wrap-up**

Maria Gabriela Schmidt (the organizer of this roundtable) wrapped up the meeting with some interesting thoughts. She pointed out that Japanese students are generally educated with the emphasis of "by oneself" in Japanese education. Therefore, the term autonomy is often perceived as a way to study by themselves in Japanese society. She went on to say that cooperation is considered vital in Japan as other nations, but what in fact can be observed here is "concerted interaction", which significantly differs from group interaction in European contexts. Thus, we should always keep this cultural background in mind when discussing autonomy.

### **References**

- Benson, P. (2013). *Teaching and researching: Autonomy in language learning*. Routledge
- Benson, P., & Voller, P. (2014). *Autonomy and independence in language learning*. Routledge.
- Littlewood, W. (1999). Defining and developing autonomy in East Asian contexts. *Applied Linguistics* 20(1): 71–94.
- Macaskill, A., & Taylor, E. (2010). The development of a brief measure of learner autonomy in university students. *Studies in higher education*, 35(3), 351–359.
- Murray, G. (2009). A self-directed learning course. In A. Smith & G. Strong (Eds.) *Adult Language Learners: Context and Innovation*, (61-70). TESOL.

## Useful links

If you are interested in seeing the recording of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and/ or the 2<sup>rd</sup> meeting, please contact the coordinator of the CEFR & LP SIG.

<https://cefrjapan.net/cefr-lp-sig/language-portfolio>

## Language Portfolio in the Classroom - A Round Table Talk

has been held three times so far:

On October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, the CEFR & LP SIG held the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Round Table Talk on the Language Portfolio with an emphasis on the Language Portfolio in the field of foreign language teaching and learning. We shared our interest and approaches. This was a very engaging discussion and exchange of ideas. We planned to continue this kind of working meeting in 2022 and beyond. The dates for future events will be announced on the JALT event calendar and/or our SIG homepage: <https://cefrjapan.net/events> and <https://cefrjapan.net/cefr-lp-sig/language-portfolio>. If you are interested in the talk, you are welcome to join, share and engage.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting was held on January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022 with a focus on giving feedback and was facilitated by Dmitri Leontjev and Mark DeBoer.

The report on the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 by Takanori Omura, you can find in this newsletter.

We plan the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting for being held in April or June. Please stay tuned.

The European Language Portfolio has been at the core of the CEFR. The ELP is connected to learner autonomy, reflective learning, formative assessment and many more areas. The implementation had its ups and downs. Since the launch of the CEFR/CV, however, there has been a steady increase in the number of presentations and papers on language portfolios at conferences. The Round Table Talk invites educators who are interested in the use of a portfolio in foreign language teaching to discuss and share best practices, case studies, and experience with the ELP and language and learning portfolios in general. This Round Table Talks wants to initiate and support a synergetic working group. You are welcome to take part and share and listen and discuss. CEFR & Language Portfolio SIG wants to promote the CEFR and CEFR/CV as well on the second part of its name, the Language Portfolio.





## PanSIG 2022

**PanSIG 2022 will be held on July 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> in Nagano City.**

The theme of the conference is

### **(Re)imagining language education**

For more details visit [pansig2022.edzil.la](https://pansig2022.edzil.la) or <https://pansig.org>

The PanSIG 2022 Conference will take place face-to-face from July 8th to 10th 2022, with fun social events. The venue of the conference is **The University of Nagano (長野県立大学)**.

**Registration will open on May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022.**

**The conference registration will be using** <https://pansig.org> or [pansig2022.edzil.la](https://pansig2022.edzil.la)

The conference theme is *(Re)imagining language education*. What is the future of language education in a post-pandemic world? How will we teach, research, and learn languages? What challenges will learners, researchers and educators meet and overcome? What new connections will be made among learners, educators, and researchers within and beyond our classrooms and communities? The theme connects well with JALT SIGs, and the PanSIG 2022 Conference will be a place where educators, researchers, and learners can re(imagine) our professionalism and academic excellence, thinking about how to help students enhance their learning and share, discuss and engage in research and practice in meaningful ways in the post-pandemic world.

(Please note that the dates for PanSIG 2022 are later than usual. We chose the dates to avoid a schedule conflict with a festival in Nagano, which is taking place over May and June in 2022. This change will mean that PanSIG attendees will be able to find affordable hotels and transportation, which was our biggest concern if we were to try to hold PanSIG during the festival.)

### **CEFR & LP SIG Forum at Pan SIG 2022 Nagano -**

#### **Using the CEFR-focused Action Research Model – Reflections on two years of research**

The JALT CEFR & LP SIG is supporting teacher-researchers through a collaborative Kaken research project entitled “Language Education reform using action research: Putting the CEFR’s educational principles into practice” since 2020. During the Forum, project participants will reflect on their research projects conducted so far using the CEFR-focused Action Research Model (CARM) developed by the SIG. The SIG Forum will be an opportunity to discuss examples from researchers’ intermediate outcomes in relation to the CARM model (= AR / CEFR aspects) as good model case studies. Forum participants are encouraged to engage and reflect on their current practice and consider how the CEFR and CARM might be utilized in their own contexts. The forum will conclude with a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the CARM model and the goals for the final year of the KAKEN project. The forum is open to everyone interested in and intending to conduct research in the field of foreign language teaching and learning especially using Action Research and/or the CEFR – CEFR CV as a tool. The Forum intends to foster sharing and peer-learning.

## Best of JALT Award Nominee

### Michelle Steele Best of JALT Award

#### Best of JALT Award - Since 2021 the Michelle Steele JALT Award

<https://jalt.org/main/best-jalt>

(The [Best of JALT Guidelines](#) are available here.)

The Michele Steele Best of JALT Awards is a program that was started to honor speakers who make JALT events such valuable experiences. Since 2010, we have held a special reception at the JALT International Conference to celebrate the winners of this award. At JALT 2020, the Executive Board of JALT unanimously voted on changing the name of the Best of JALT to The Michele Steele Best of JALT Award for Michele Steele's inspiring and devoted love of honoring JALT members for their outside work. While the award had been around for many years, Michele brought it into a proper limelight by creating a ceremony to be held at the annual international conference. For the past 10 years the award has been given renewed importance and significance for the recipients.

## Best of JALT CEFR LP SIG Awards History

Nominees for 2022 - Who will be next?!? Please vote!

#### Best of JALT CEFR & LP SIG 2021, nominated and received in 2022: N.N.

JALT & CEFR & LP SIG related presentations and publications events in 2021, including PanSIG 2021 and JALT 2021 International Conference Online, all JALT presentations and publications. The nominations are ordered by date. Members of CEFR & LP SIG will be invited to vote in June 2020.

- (1) Takanori Omura: *How to Enhance Japanese University Students' Self-Esteem. - An Attempt on Self-Affirmation in Written Form* (PanSIG, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021)
- (2) Shaun Allen: *Exploring CEFR Scales, Using a Popular Mnemonic Tool*. Presentation at Share my CEFR tool (June 12, 2021) and featured article (NL no. 30, 2021, p.9-17)
- (3) Colin Rundle *Applying CEFR Illustrative Descriptors in the Classroom* (AR Workshop, Aug 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021)
- (4) Rebecca Schmidt *Using CEFR/CV Mediation Illustrators to navigate meaning in a CLIL classroom: First steps of action and reflection* (AR Workshop, Aug 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021)
- (5) Gregory Birch *Using an online European Language Portfolio (e-ELP) to promote learner autonomy* (AR Workshop, Aug 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021)
- (6) Nicole Sonobe *CEFR-informed Textbook Selection* (AR Workshop, Aug 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021)
- (7) Engel Villareal *Implementing a CEFR-informed Writing Course for Junior and Senior High School in Japan* (JALT 2021, CEFR & LP SIG Forum, Nov. 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021)
- (8) Vincent Petrin *Getting Creative in Academic Writing: A Flash Fiction E-publication* (JALT 2021, Online, Nov. 14<sup>th</sup>)
- (9) Richard Sugg, Jordan Svien, Tyler Montgomery: *Improving the BETs: Searching for*

*Validity and Online Feasibility* (JALT 2021, Online, on demand)

(10) Ian Randall: *Linking a Storytelling Course to the CEFR CV* (JALT 2021, Online, Nov. 14<sup>th</sup>)

(11) Colin Rundle; Tetsuko Fukawa; Koki Tomita; Forrest Nelson: *A CEFR Alignment Project: Instructor Adaptations and Implementation* (JALT 2021, Online, Nov. 14<sup>th</sup>)

There may be more presentations and publications eligible. The final voting will take place in June 2022, to be voted on by members of CEFR & LP SIG. If there is a presentation or publication in JALT (chapters, SIGs) related contents-wise to the CEFR and Language Portfolio SIG you might consider to be included in the voting for Best of JALT please feel free to bring it up and contact the coordinator or any other officer. Members will get an email with the link for voting in June 2022.

### **Nominated and received Best of JALT Awards of CEFR & LP / FLP SIG**

**Best of JALT CEFR & LP SIG 2020, nominated and received in 2021: Jean-Pierre Richard** for his presentation “TOEIC L&R and CEFR-J Can-Do Self-Assessment Scores” at JALT International conference 2020 Online, on November 21st (Saturday) at 11:55 - 12:20 (room 13).

This replication study of Runnels (2016) investigated relationships between TOEIC L&R and CEFR-J can-do self-assessment scores. Participants (N = 54) completed an online-form with the CEFR-J statements. First, CEFR-J levels performed as predicted, with no mismatching but some overlapping of ability levels. Second, weak-to-moderate correlations between TOEIC Reading and reading self-assessment scores were found, and none-to-weak for listening. The results and the implications of these findings, and in relationship to Runnels, are discussed.

**Best of JALT CEFR & LP SIG 2019, nominated and received in 2020: Colin Thompson & Tim Woolstencroft** (Josai International University) for their Presentation “Designing a CEFR-informed Curriculum” at JALT International conference 2019 on November 2nd, 2019 (Nagoya).

This presentation reports on attempts to design a CEFR-based curriculum for a four-skills English language course at a Japanese university. The aim of the presentation was to show what CEFR stands for, the methodology it advocates and how teachers can plan curricula based around its assessment criteria. The presentation showed how the CEFR can provide an important and beneficial framework for language teaching in Japan.

Reasoning: The presentation was out-standing, extraordinary and very beneficial, giving a good example of implementing the CEFR in a curriculum. The presentation had a good audience.

**Best of JALT CEFR & LP SIG 2018, nominated and received in 2019: Tim Wilson** for his poster presentation “CEFR-Based Curriculum at a Japanese University” at JALT International Conference 2018 on Saturday, November 24<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM. His paper presented the progress of an ongoing study of how a CEFR-based curriculum at a private Japanese university was being implemented. It explored how English is being taught in a new basic English language-learning program called Step-Up English, which runs parallel to the CEFR scale (A1-A2), and is a goal-oriented, performance-based approach to language teaching with a clear set of learning objectives and ‘can do’ statements.

**Best of JALT CEFR & LP (FLP) SIG 2017, nominated and received in 2018: Yukie Saito** for her contribution "Developing a portfolio for English as a tool for global communication" (pp.292-302) in the edited volume "Critical, Constructive Assessment of CEFR-informed Language Teaching in Japan and Beyond", published in September 2017 by Cambridge University Press.

Her article is an extra-ordinary example of good practice in the field of CEFR and foreign language education, and how to bring theory into practice, to engage students.

**Best of JALT FLP SIG 2016, nominated and received in 2017: Jack Bower** for his presentation "Using the ADDIE model to plan and construct a CEFR-based curriculum: Focus on the analysis phase" at the CriConCef conference of FLP SIG in Osaka in March 2016.

Sorry for the missed opportunity in 2015!

**Best of JALT FLP SIG 2014, nominated and received in 2015 Sergio Mazzarelli** for his presentation "Video recording and Moodle to aid the ELP in presentation-based courses" at the CriConCef Conference of FLP SIG in Nagoya, Chukyo University on May 31, 2014.

Best of JALT FLP SIG, Best of JALT CEFR & LP SIG			
Presentation, paper	nominated and received at JALT	Title	Name
2014	2015	<i>Video recording and Moodle to aid the ELP in presentation-based courses</i> (presentation)	Sergio Mazzarelli
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2016	2017	<i>Using the ADDIE model to plan and construct a CEFR-based curriculum: Focus on the analysis phase</i> conference (presentation) at the CriConCef	Jack Bower
2017	2018	<i>Developing a portfolio for English as a tool for global communication</i> (paper)	Yukie Saito
2018	2019	<i>CEFR-Based Curriculum at a Japanese University</i> (presentation)	Timothy Wilson
2019	2020	<i>Designing a CEFR-informed Curriculum</i> (presentation)	Colin Thompson & Tim Woolstencroft
2020	2021	<i>TOEIC L&amp;R and CEFR-J Can-Do Self-Assessment Scores</i>	Jean-Pierre Joseph Richard
2021	2022	TBA	TBA

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## JALT 2022 International Conference

☆ **November 11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022 in Fukuoka**

Please see the updated information and more details at <https://jalt.org/>

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How to get involved

## AR and CEFR Kaken research project

In April 2020, we were granted the third JSPS Grant-in-Aid research project (no. 20K00759) directly involving the SIG, and the fifth involving SIG members, on

### **Foreign Language Education Reform through Action Research Putting CEFR educational principles into practice**

「アクションリサーチの手法を用いた言語教育改善:CEFR の教育理念を参考にして」

The JALT CEFR & LP SIG is looking for researchers to participate in our latest KAKEN JSPS research project.

**The aim of this project is to support numerous small-scale action research (AR) projects related to foreign language teaching in Japan and beyond, in which practitioners reflect on and find ways to improve their teaching practice using the CEFR as a reference tool.**

Each AR team will be provided with support and guidance to ensure that their research is conducted in a systematic way in relation to the AR literature and reflective of CEFR principles. The teams will be grouped thematically around five central themes:

- Designing a curriculum and / or course
- Materials Development
- Assessment
- Learner autonomy and the European Language Portfolio
- Classroom Implementation.

These categories roughly follow the chapters of the CEFR & LP SIG's latest publication, *CEFR-informed Learning, Teaching and Assessment: A Practical Guide* (Nagai et al. 2020). The book authors and SIG officers will offer support and guidance in their respective areas of expertise while undertaking their own research projects. Each team will also be provided with a succinct review of the AR literature, and an action research framework to guide their research efforts. Ultimately, we plan to publish these case studies in either an edited volume or our in-house journal: *CEFR JOURNAL - Research and Practice*.

Schedule of the research project:

**2020: Work with CEFR & LP SIG members to identify research foci and to plan AR projects.**

**2021: Carry out action research / Collect and analyze data.**

**2022: Reflect on AR projects and write research up for publication.**

This project is related to the JSPS Kaken project no. 20K00759 「アクションリサーチの手法を用いた言語教育改善: CEFR の教育理念を参考にして」. Taking part in it, presenting and/ or publishing will be acknowledged by including your name in the yearly reports and in the final report of the Kaken as research collaborators (研究協力者) during the research period (2020 - 2022). The names of research collaborators will appear in the final report of the ongoing Kaken project, as shown in the previous Kaken project report (see Kaken database

<https://kaken.nii.ac.jp/en/grant/KAKENHI-PROJECT-16K02835/>).

JALT and the CEFR & LP SIG are included explicitly in the research proposal. Being a member is favorable but not mandatory for taking part in the project. As this is a JSPS Kaken project, the outcome aims to contribute substantially to foreign language education (English or other languages) in Japan. The language for presentations and publications should be either English or Japanese. If you are interested in participating, please contact the research team.

For more details, see the special project homepage: <https://cefrjapan.net/kaken-5>

Contact: jalt.cefrlp.sig {admark} gmail.com

The proposal reads in Japanese as follows:

「本研究では、本申請研究代表者と分担者が所属する全国語学教育学会(これ以降、JALT)のCEFR-LP 研究会 (CEFR&LP SIG) の会員と協働し、アクションリサーチの手法を用い、CEFR の教育理念に基づいた言語教育改善を支援する持続可能なシステムと体制を構築する。そのために、以下のことを行う。

- 1) CEFR の教育理念に照らして、現在多くの教員が抱える課題を調査し、特定する。
- 2) アクションリサーチの手法を明確にした上で、(1)で明らかになる課題を解決するための複数のアクションリサーチを行う。
- 3) アクションリサーチの手法を用いた、CEFR の理念を柱とした言語教育改善を支援する持続可能なシステムと体制を整える。」

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## CEFR Journal – Research and Practice

The CEFR Journal launched in May 2019 is developing well and making steady progress. We launched the first issue in May 2019 and now **Volume 4 was published in December 2021** with Fergus O'Dwyer as the editor in chief.

### Table of Contents for Volume 4:

Volume 4-1, page 5-24: *The CEFR Companion Volume - What's new and what might it imply for teaching/learning and for assessment?*, Brian North (CEFR and CEFR/CV co-author)

Volume 4-2, page 25-42: *Mediation in practice in an ESAP course: Versions of the Medical English student conference*, Magdalini Liantou (University of Jyväskylä) and Eva Braidwood (University of Oulu)

Volume 4-3, page 43-65: *Foreign Language Education Reform through Action Research - Putting CEFR educational principles into practice*, Gregory Charles Birch (Seisen Jogakuin College), Jack Victor Bower (Tezukayama University), Noriko Nagai (Ibaraki University) and Maria Gabriela Schmidt (Nihon University)

And good news: *CEFR Journal – Research and Practice* has now a **DOI** and each volume and each article respectively: 10.37546/JALTSIG.CEFR. See <https://cefrjapan.net/journal>

We have a range of articles spanning the globe. Thanks to substantial submissions and an international review and proofreading team, we try to provide substantial peer-support to

authors. Volume 5 is under way and we already contacted the authors who have submitted abstracts.

We are growing fast, and we are looking for JALT and CEFR & LP SIG members to get involved in

**reviewing**  
and  
**proof-reading**



By doing so, you will be included in the editing and proofreading team of the journal!

**Join in!**

The journal is available here: <https://cefrjapan.net/journal>.

We are already looking forward to **Volume 6** with a Call for Proposals and accept proposals by **February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023**.

The editorial team

Fergus O'Dwyer, Maria Gabriela Schmidt, Morten Hunke, Alexander Imig

“The CEFR and the international CEFR-movement represent an achievement of the emerging world society. Built on a foundation of long-range language policy by the Council of Europe, the CEFR was a European project first. But since then, the project has turned out to be a success story beyond Europe as well, as the volume of Byram and Parmenter (2012) impressively demonstrated. The perspective of their book is, however, in two respects rather narrow: 1) The case studies of countries offer only a brief outline for these particular countries, which of course cannot be avoided in a mere single volume. 2) The role of networks of teachers and researchers is only touched upon. A systematic analysis of networks could not be carried out within the limited framework of the book. Inquiring into both aspects is in fact the ‘raison d’être’ of the CEFR Journal. The first and second volumes of this journal illustrate amply that practitioners in the field of language learning, teaching, and assessment also successfully act as researchers and offer valuable insights into approaches utilizing the CEFR in different organizations.”

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### Calls, planning, and events in 2022 and further on - At a glance

Date	Event	Notes
	<b>2022</b>	
May 21 <sup>st</sup> , 2022	<b>Workshop with Neus Figueras</b>	Online
July 8 <sup>th</sup> – 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	<b>JALT PanSIG 2022</b>	Nagano
November 2022	<b>JALT 2022</b>	Fukuoka
May 2023	<b>JALT PanSIG 2023</b>	Kyoto

Kaken research project - Call for research collaborators continues

Call for submission: CEFR Journal – Research and Practice - Volume 6  
by February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023

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For the most updated version of the events, please visit

**<https://cefrjapan.net/events>**

#### Links

CEFR & LP SIG: <https://cefrjapan.net>

CEFR Journal: <https://cefrjapan.net/journal>

JALT: <https://jalt.org/>

Language Portfolio for Japanese University, bilingual (English/Japanese):

<https://cefrjapan.net/cefr-lp-sig/language-portfolio>

Call for submission CEFR & LP SIG Newsletter no. 35 by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022

The next NEWSLETTER #35 is planned for July 2022

\*\*\*\*\* Call for submissions by June 30<sup>th</sup>! \*\*\*\*\*