

Examining CEFR-related Professional Learning Interventions for Language Teachers: A Qualitative Meta-Synthesis

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Abstract: Current language teaching and learning reflects an increasingly situated approach, paralleling the tenets of the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR). Although these methods are promoted in language curricula globally, how language educators are being prepared to adopt these approaches is less clear. This project therefore sought to investigate how CEFR-related training interventions are being used internationally with second language (L2+) pre-service and in-service teachers. Here, we provide the results of a qualitative meta-synthesis of literature on professional learning on the CEFR. Seventeen studies met the final inclusion criteria. The existing literature demonstrates how explicit training on the CEFR can support teachers' understanding and positive perception of the framework and align teachers' planning, pedagogy, and assessment practices with contemporary tenets for language teaching and learning. These studies provide insights into the impact, opportunities, and challenges related to engaging L2 teachers in CEFR learning.

Keywords: Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR); European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL); language teacher education; professional learning

Introduction

Language teacher education and professional learning are critical aspects of the ongoing development of language teachers (Borg, 2015), particularly in light of persistent language teacher shortages around the globe (Swanson & Mason, 2018). In addition to knowledge and skills demanded of all educators, language teachers¹⁰ have additional competencies they are required to develop, including language proficiency and pedagogical approaches for teaching in or about the target language. By and large, language classrooms have moved away from grammar-based instruction and decontextualized curriculum expectations towards teaching practices that embody particular sociocultural contexts while learning a language (Johnson, 2015). If “language is also *in, of, and for* the world” (Larsen-Freeman & Freeman, 2008, p. 147, italics original), teacher education and professional learning must reflect content which engages this perspective. Increasingly, the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) is one such driving force in language teaching and learning.

The CEFR (Council of Europe [COE], 2001, 2020) provides a common basis for defining language proficiency for many global languages. With its proficiency-based outlook on language learning, the CEFR is divided into six stages of language proficiency: A1 and A2 (“basic” user stage), B1 and B2 (“independent” user stage), and C1 and C2 (“proficient” user stage). When it was released in 2001, these user stages were further broken down into communicative language activities in five categories: written and oral production, written and oral reception, and oral interaction. The “action-oriented approach” of the CEFR builds on the earlier communicative language approach to language teaching (COE, 2020) by outlining authentic, task based activities to meet “can do” descriptors in the CEFR. The most recent Companion volume continues to build on the foundation of the original, providing new perspectives on the learner as a social agent, elaborating the learning goals to real-world language contexts, and more explicit discussion of online, plurilingual, and pluricultural interactions (North & Piccardo, 2016). Given the relevance and recency of the documents, it is therefore not surprising that the CEFR has been used to shift the philosophy and approaches underpinning many language curricula (COE, 2020). As content and pedagogy will vary according to contextual factors (e.g., the target language, age and level of students, national curriculum, classroom context, etc.), the framework has been adopted and adapted in countries across the globe.

¹⁰ N.B.: Reflecting the various terms used across jurisdictions, we use terms such as ‘pre-service teacher,’ ‘student teacher,’ and ‘teacher candidate’ synonymously to refer to individuals who are yet to graduate as certified teachers. We also use terms like ‘in-service teacher,’ ‘practicing teacher,’ and ‘classroom teacher’ to refer to those working in schools. Unless otherwise specified, the general terms ‘teacher’ and ‘educator’ encompass both groups.

In the specific context of teacher education, the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL) is a pedagogical tool designed by a team of teacher educators at the European Center for Modern Languages for use with pre-service language teachers. It builds on existing documents such as the CEFR as it uses a proficiency approach to didactic knowledge and competency development. Consisting of three main sections to guide pre-service language teachers through their initial teacher education programs, this reflective tool is used to: reflect on knowledge and skills necessary to teach languages, guide reflection on their own competencies and process, and record their experiences for future use (Newby et al., 2007). The “can-do” statements in the EPOSTL are similar to self-assessment descriptors in the CEFR and are intended to be reflected on at progressive points in the initial teacher education program, again highlighting a proficiency approach to language teacher development and a sentiment of lifelong learning.

Despite the influence of the CEFR and EPOSTL, Rehner, Lasan, et al. (2021) suggest that teachers’ professional learning regarding the CEFR remains limited and under researched. Given the prevalence of discussion of the CEFR framework in international literature, we were interested in how CEFR-informed professional learning has or has not been taken up in pre- and in-service language teacher education globally. Thus, we undertook a meta-synthesis to explore research focusing on the implementation of CEFR-related training interventions with either pre- or in-service teachers.

Methodology

The authors conducted a systematic review and qualitative meta-synthesis (Siddaway et al., 2019) in March 2021. Search strings were developed around three categories of keywords: (1) language teachers and language teaching; (2) teacher education and professional development; and, (3) CEFR-related terms. Searches were conducted in two EBSCO databases – Academic Search Complete and Education Source; and in three ProQuest databases - APA PsycInfo, Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), and Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts (LLBA). These databases were chosen to return both education-focused as well as interdisciplinary results. Supplementary searches were conducted in the Web of Science Core Collection, SCOPUS, and Google Scholar. A large amount of CEFR scholarship was also published in French (e.g., Piccardo, 2014). As the research team members are French-English bilingual, equivalent searches were also conducted in French in the Cairn and Erudit databases. Titles in other western European languages (e.g., Spanish, German, Italian) were screened through the use of a translator (deepl.com).

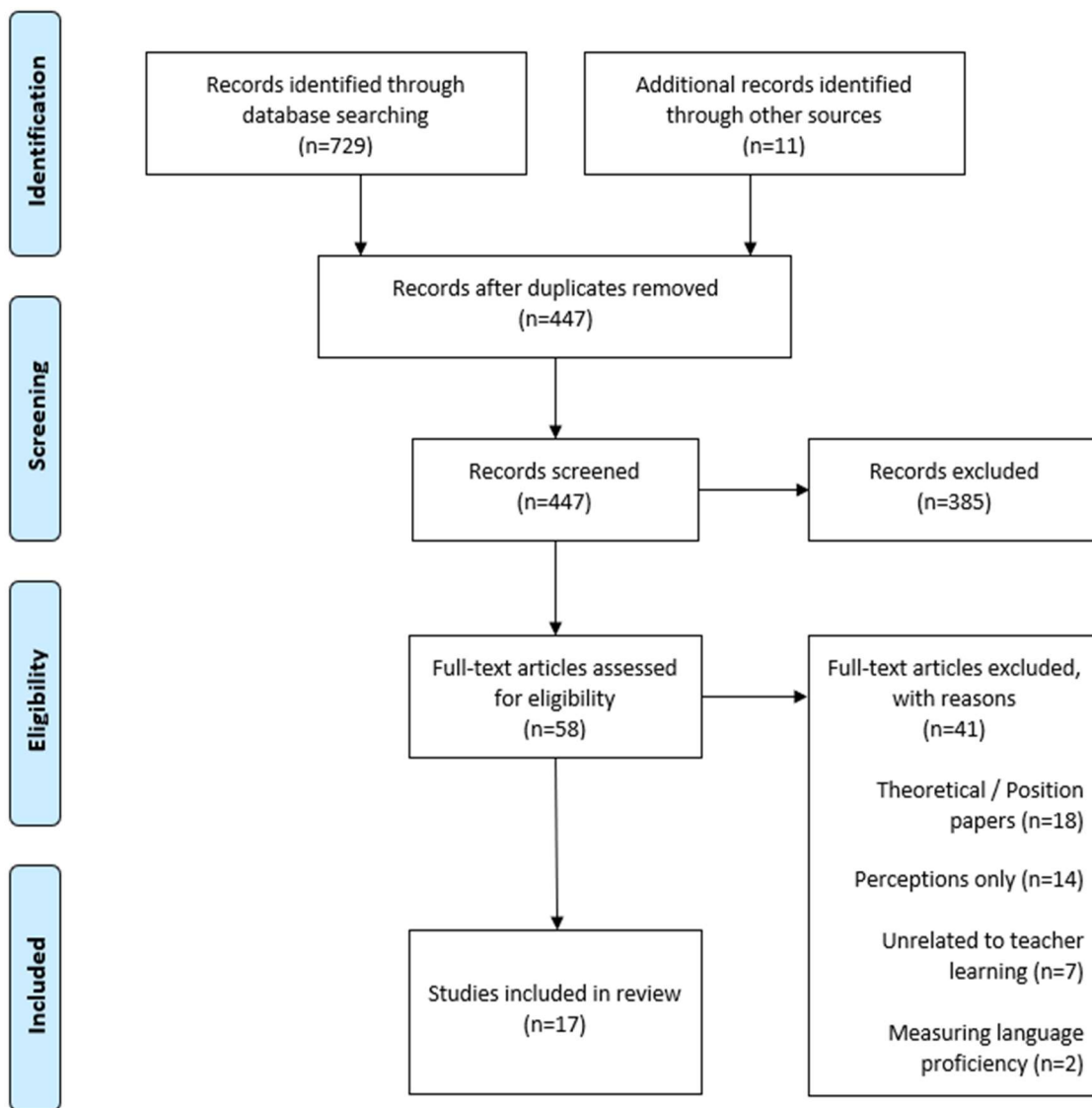
In terms of inclusion and exclusion criteria, articles were included that applied an empirical training intervention related to an aspect/document of the CEFR with pre- or in-service teachers. For example, since the EPOSTL is generally limited to pre-service teacher education, we expanded our search to include other CEFR strategies and training with in-service teachers in order to gain a better understanding of what was happening in the field and how pre-service teachers can best be prepared for their transition. Studies were screened and reviewed independently by the authors using Covidence, an online systematic review software. Discrepancies in voting decisions were jointly reviewed after each phase, with the articles being closely re-examined to render a final decision.

Of the 447 studies that were screened, 17 manuscripts met the final eligibility criteria. The vast majority of articles (n=385) were initially excluded because they were either theoretical reflections on the CEFR more generally in the field of education, or about the use of the CEFR with (student) language learners. In the later review phases, articles were excluded that were not empirical (n=18), studied teachers’ perceptions of the CEFR (n=14), did not engage teacher learning about the CEFR (n=7), or that used the CEFR to measure teachers’ language proficiency (n=2). See Figure 1 below.

Within those articles that were included: eight were related to the EPOSTL, while others were linked more generally to the CEFR: Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), language examiner training (e.g., the DELF), and other action-oriented language teaching approaches. While these latter approaches are not derived from the CEFR, they have gained greater legitimacy and attention as a result of the uptake of the CEFR (Melo-Pfeifer, 2015). Additionally, the studies here positioned these strategies in relation to the CEFR, and were deemed acceptable for inclusion.

Figure 1

PRISMA flowchart (after Shamseer et al., 2015)



Articles were coded via multiple rounds of an emergent, inductive analysis process (Saldaña, 2014). First, descriptive codes were generated based on the documents, methods, participants, and outcomes within each article. Codes were then compared, clustered, and categorized through discussion, notes, and reflection among the authors; a digital codebook was developed and maintained as codes were assigned, merged, or refined (Saldaña, 2009). In later phases, the properties of these categories were reviewed, and areas of convergence and divergence were explored in and among the codes and categories. The results of this analysis are presented below.

Findings

We present our findings in two parts. First, in order to situate the synthesis in the broader field, we briefly examine four categories of articles related to the CEFR that were excluded during the full-text review. Broadly, these included:

1. Theoretical works, position papers, and studies with implications for teacher education/training with the CEFR (e.g., Bournot-Trites et al., 2020, Topal, 2019)
2. Stakeholder perceptions of the CEFR (e.g., Vandergrift, 2015; Yakışık & Gürocak, 2018);
3. Evaluating language teacher abilities with the CEFR (e.g., Argudo et al., 2018; Sešek, 2007);
4. Analyses of teachers using the CEFR, without a training intervention (e.g., Moonen et al., 2013)

Although they were excluded, these papers were useful for understanding the scope of CEFR-related research in teacher professional learning. In the second part, we turn to the results of the meta-synthesis, analyzing the results of publications on empirical, CEFR-related teacher training.

Theoretical: The vast majority of articles were theoretical or positional papers, rather than empirical studies. Of this grouping, five articles focused on the EPOSTL and how it can be included in teacher education. Authors highlighted the need for a reflective tool, in this case the EPOSTL, in language teacher education to: develop teacher autonomy (Burkert & Schweinhorst, 2008; Newby, 2012; Ní Dhiorbháin, 2019), serve as a self-assessment tool (Newby, 2012; Ní Dhiorbháin, 2019; Schaubert, 2015), promote ongoing learning for language teachers (Pegulescu, 2020), and make connections between theory and pedagogical competencies (Newby, 2012; Ní Dhiorbháin, 2019; Schaubert, 2015). Piccardo's (2014) guide to using the CEFR, or reflections on the multifaceted nature of assessment in the CEFR (Piccardo, 2012), provided similar insights into the CEFR. This thought leadership and recommendations, while helpful, did not fit our criteria to be included in this synthesis.

Three articles in this category highlighted the CEFR in various contexts: as a standardized qualification for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in primary school (Scott-Monkhouse, 2012) and EFL teachers of adults (Topal, 2019); as a guideline for pronunciation (Topal, 2019); and, as an approach that can be used in K-12 education, initial teacher education, and postsecondary language learning (Arnott et al., 2017). These articles concluded with calls for using CEFR-informed tools in professional development and training of language teachers (Scott-Monkhouse, 2012; Topal, 2019), and for researchers to look at use of the CEFR in local contexts (Arnott et al., 2017). This paper aims to further identify how these calls can be examined in teacher education programs specifically.

Perceptions: Since its launch, numerous studies have explored the perceptions of various educational stakeholders – e.g., parents, students, teachers, policymakers – of the CEFR (e.g., Díez-Bedmar & Byram, 2019; Mirici & Hergüner, 2015; Vandergrift, 2015). While there is often a positive shift towards CEFR-oriented pedagogy in language teaching, less is known about how pre-service teachers are receiving such training in their initial teacher education programs or how in-service teachers' professional development experiences are preparing them to implement CEFR approaches in their practice.

CEFR for Testing Language Proficiency: Another area of focus in the articles reviewed is the evaluation of teachers' linguistic competence based on the CEFR levels. In Argudo et al. (2018), for example, the CEFR was used to measure where teachers may fall short of expected linguistic competence (e.g., B2 level) required for effective instruction, highlighting gaps in language teacher preparation programs in developing teachers' language abilities. Similarly, in their study of Slovenian English-language teachers, Sešek (2007) evaluated the teachers' language competence through the frame of the CEFR in order to highlight areas for further development. Thus, while teacher candidates may complete admission assessments and take language proficiency courses before and during their initial teacher education, this does not guarantee teachers will have the necessary linguistic *and* pedagogical skills to implement CEFR-informed teaching upon graduation (see Jack & Nyman, 2019).

CEFR without Specific Training Intervention: This category outlines articles that reported on teachers using the CEFR or related practices in their classrooms without an official training intervention, including reflections and observations of how CEFR-informed pedagogy is or is not being taken up in the classroom. Moonen et al. (2013) surveyed and interviewed foreign language teachers in the Netherlands about the extent to which they use CEFR practices and associated assessments in their classrooms. Most participants had positive views and a basic understanding of the CEFR, though how it was introduced to the schools and how professional development is given to in-service teachers is unknown. Similarly, in an investigation of judgment accuracy, Fleckenstein et al. (2018) studied how German secondary EFL teachers graded their students' CEFR level but explicitly noted the teachers "have not received explicit training on using the CEFR and they rely on only a fraction of the framework" (p. 91). Like these latter authors, we recognize that more can be done to intentionally address the CEFR in teacher education, guided by research-informed professional development.

We therefore turn to the included articles, and provide an analysis of how international research has approached interventions related to CEFR principles and associated pedagogical strategies in the classroom.

Meta-Synthesis

The results highlight a variety of approaches to working with the CEFR in teacher learning interventions. We provide a brief overview of descriptive trends, before analyzing the individual studies in greater detail.

The articles were published between 2011 and 2021, using data collected from EU countries (e.g., Austria, Croatia, Slovakia, Spain), and non-EU countries (e.g., Canada, Kazakhstan, Thailand, Turkey). One study collected data from multiple countries, both EU and beyond, as part of an Erasmus+ project (Mirici, 2019). Twelve studies used mixed methods, four were qualitative, and one was quantitative. The studies varied dramatically in the number of participants, with studies working with 1 to 124 teachers, and in some cases other stakeholders (e.g., course instructors) in addition. Eight articles worked with pre-service teachers, and nine worked with in-service teachers. Only the Canadian articles worked with language teachers that were not specializing in English as a foreign/additional language, working instead with French as a second language educators. The synthesis below is divided into the two main groups: studies about the CEFR broadly, and studies about the EPOSTL.

CEFR

In a small-scale study by Cuadrado-Moreno and Reyes-Fernandez (2012), the authors provided CEFR training to one Spanish, secondary EFL teacher. The teacher was then asked to rate 191 samples of students' written work against CEFR descriptors. Using quantitative analysis, this exploratory study suggested that the teacher was able to accurately assess the works with "highly reliable" scores (p. 302), and improved her understanding of how to evaluate students' writing competence by using the CEFR levels.

Drawing from a larger sample, Faez, Majhanovich, et al. (2011) and Faez, Taylor, et al. (2011) introduced 93 Canadian teachers to the CEFR and related resources, geared specifically to adopting an action-oriented approach, and tasked teachers with integrating these criteria in their classrooms. A pre-post survey design investigated the teachers' perceptions and experience orienting their teaching to these materials and focusing on language use. Findings showed increasingly positive attitudes from the teachers towards the CEFR, and the participants estimated that their students' performance was improved by task-based activities.

Several studies in the area of CEFR professional development were conducted by Rehner (2017, 2018) and colleagues (Rehner, Popovich, & Lasan, 2021; Rehner, Lasan, et al. 2021). In these exploratory studies, Rehner (2017, 2018) surveyed in-service teachers who had received CEFR-related training and found that such training could be a helpful professional learning experience for French as a Second Language (FSL) teachers in particular. As Canadian FSL curricula change to be more CEFR- and action-oriented, Rehner noted that teacher training needs to reflect these pedagogical changes. Expanding these studies, Rehner, Popovich, et al. (2021) and Rehner, Lasan, & Popovich. (2021) reported on the impact of CEFR-informed teacher training on in-service teachers and the use of the DELF test among K-12 students in Ontario. The teachers noted that, as a result of the DELF training, their practice has shifted toward an action-oriented

approach in their planning, delivery, and assessment, moving away from grammar-based instruction. The study also reported students' strengths in reading, writing, and phonological accuracy, as well as shortcomings in their vocabulary range and morphosyntactic accuracy, under the new model. With this knowledge, the teachers were better able to plan and assess students' linguistic competencies to inform their learning.

Piccardo (2013) studied how professional development about the CEFR impacted "teachers' perceptions of the potential of the CEFR" (p. 386). She acknowledged that the CEFR and related documents are conceptually dense, and as such teachers need specific professional development on the topic relative to assessment practices. This study introduced the CEFR to 11 FSL teachers with various levels of teaching experience and familiarity with the framework. Findings indicated that this four-phase approach could be a way for teachers to reflect on their own teaching practices and consider alternative assessment methods.

Phaisannan et al. (2019) worked with 36 pre-service Thai EFL teachers, helping them to adopt a CEFR-informed Task-Based Language Learning (TBLL) approach to pedagogy. The participants practiced interviewing and giving each other feedback in English, in order to demonstrate a task-based activity. The authors reported that the activity encouraged the participants to use English in achieving a communication goal, and fostered positive perceptions of the approach in their future teaching. Interestingly, the article noted that the course instructor was also new to TBLL, and could slip back into traditional teaching methods during the sequence. This insight raises implications for the teaching of CEFR-informed practice in teacher education – as it is not only the teacher candidates who must be familiar with the approach – but their instructors and other mentors must also model these strategies.

Together, these studies largely pointed to how CEFR training can support in-service language teachers. While Phaisannan et al. (2019) provided some insights into the pre-service context, this area is more commonly engaged through work with the EPOSTL.

EPOSTL

In the studies below, the EPOSTL was integrated into language teaching methodology courses. Most used a pre/post-test design (e.g., Cimermanová, 2018) to evaluate student teachers' growth, or compared the perceived abilities of a control group of teacher candidates against an experimental group which worked with the EPOSTL (e.g., Seitova, 2017).

Mehlmauer-Larcher (2012) introduced the EPOSTL to 124 pre-service English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers to help demonstrate their progress throughout the program, and to prompt critical, structured reflection. The EPOSTL was used before their practicum (to understand EPOSTL descriptors), during the practicum (implementing and discussing lesson plans based on the criteria), and after the practicum (to encourage reflective dialogue). However, a lack of teaching experience makes realistic self-assessment difficult. Similar results were reported by Cimermanová (2018), whose work with 57 pre-service EFL teachers, and four supervising teachers, reported the benefits of the EPOSTL as a self-assessment tool. The student teachers used the EPOSTL through three practicum placements, and indicated gains in their self-efficacy and perceived pedagogical abilities (e.g., using resources, language methodology, lesson planning, etc.).

Cindrić et al. (2015) also integrated EPOSTL into an EFL methodology course. The authors surveyed 77 EFL pre-service teachers across different years of the teacher education program, but reported mixed results from these student teachers' perceptions of the usefulness of the EPOSTL. The analysis indicated that the most consistently positive results came from the fifth year students, the most experienced of the sample; students in earlier years, possibly due to their lack of exposure to practice teaching, did not necessarily see the connection between the EPOSTL and their developing competencies as language educators. Strakova (2016) also found mixed results when engaging pre-service teachers in the EPOSTL. While the participants generally reported positive feelings, "more than 60% trainees ... ignored [the] EPOSTL" before their practicum experience and "only looked at the descriptors when it was over" (p. 77). The value of the document became clear for some after the practice teaching was complete, which may indicate that the

benefits might not be apparent at first. As such, the author suggested that pre-service teachers should be thoroughly introduced to the EPOSTL before they are expected to use it.

Çakir and Balçikanli (2012) conducted a pre- and post-course survey on the use of the EPOSTL, with results from 25 pre-service EFL teachers and four post-secondary instructors. The pre-service teachers believed the EPOSTL to be an effective part of teacher education, reporting that it helped them: see their growth and areas for improvement; develop new goals; prompt critical reflection; and become more autonomous. The instructors also saw the EPOSTL as a useful tool for developing teacher candidates' critical reflection and self-awareness; promoting autonomy; helping them connect disparate parts of language teaching methodology; and seeing the 'broader picture' among courses in the overall program curriculum. Similar results were reported by Seitova (2017) and Seitova et al. (2019), who found a statistical difference between a control and experimental group in their self-assessment of teaching competencies among EFL teacher candidates. The authors noted the EPOSTL is a valuable tool to critically consider their teaching, and for prompting and guiding ongoing professional learning.

Finally, Mirici (2019) explored the use of the E-EPOSTL, an online version of the EPOSTL, with 40 pre-service EFL teachers and 10 course instructors in several countries across Europe. The integration of the E-EPOSTL "provided students with an input to broaden their understanding of learning and teaching English in different ways, to collaborate with friends, to respect different opinions from other colleagues, and to become autonomous and self directed learners" (p. 109). The project summary called for the inclusion of the (E-)EPOSTL for developing EFL teaching practices around action-oriented approaches. The digital version of the tool allows for easier access and portability of the reflection documents (Mirici, 2019), which raises interesting possibilities for teacher education in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic (although these were not taken up in these articles).

Discussion

Whether integrated into teaching methodology courses, or provided in professional development workshops, these studies highlight the opportunities and challenges related to CEFR-related learning for language educators; they are outlined below.

The EPOSTL is a good introduction to the notion of teachers as lifelong learners; the "can do" statements are not meant to all be completed by the end of initial teacher education. In teacher training programs, using the EPOSTL can and should be used to promote ongoing competency development and instill habits of reflective, professional practice that is essential for educators (Newby et al. 2007). Pre-service teachers indicated varying levels of usefulness for the tool - potentially indicating that it was not thoroughly or thoughtfully introduced, or the outcomes of working with the EPOSTL were not congruent with the rest of the initial teacher education program. Consistency and cohesion within and among language teacher education programs, including linking course content to approaches of lifelong learning and reflective practice, would create a better environment for introducing CEFR-related interventions.

In order for introductions to the CEFR to be implemented in a meaningful way, initial teacher education instructors, particularly those who teach language teaching methodology courses, must be familiar with the CEFR and the associated pedagogical practices, such as action-oriented approaches and task-based language learning. Of greater importance is that teacher educators employ these methods in their initial teacher education classrooms to model the pedagogical practices the pre-service teachers will then use in their own classroom. Based on the studies synthesized above, inclusion of the CEFR appears to be an add-on or a simply a feature when learning about language teaching, rather than a fundamental philosophical and pedagogical orientation to language teaching as a whole. There appears to be a disconnect between teaching about the CEFR and using CEFR-informed practices as the base for pedagogical approaches to language teaching.

This synthesis reveals a possible division in CEFR literature: there was a tendency to focus on examining pedagogical *or* linguistic competence when discussing the preparation of language teachers. In the examined articles, the two factors were not often considered together as essential components of language teachers' competency. This is surprising given the ways in which both language teaching and learning are implicated

in the framing of the CEFR (COE, 2020). It may be that the individual publications have chosen to highlight one of these two sides, yet this remains an important question for future research.

The CEFR emphasizes an action-oriented approach as a broad, flexible structure allowing for the CEFR to guide language curricula worldwide to fit differing sociocultural circumstances (Moonen et al., 2013). As curricula change, however, it is teaching practice that determines how and if these approaches are realized in the classroom. The interventions synthesized above do not provide much insight on how CEFR or related training initiatives are targeting teachers. We contend that less is known empirically about how CEFR-related training is used as a professional learning tool. It is not clear how or when this type of training is being offered, nor the magnitude by which it is being implemented in language classrooms. While the EPOSTL studies were conducted with pre-service teachers, the authors did not follow participants into their professional practice after graduation. Without studies investigating the transition to the field, it is not clear whether introducing CEFR-related interventions earlier could be helpful in molding early career language teachers' pedagogical practices with action-oriented approaches to meet current classroom demands.

Limitations

As with all meta-syntheses, the results are limited by the search strategies and inclusion criteria. While the search design and initial tests were developed with the support of a data librarian, potentially relevant studies may not have been captured in the search terms and databases. Further, titles and abstracts that did not clearly speak to the inclusion criteria may have been incorrectly removed in the screening process. Though many articles were published in English, the authors were unable to engage with articles published in languages such as Turkish, although some existing literature reviews (e.g., Çağlar Başol & Sarıçoban, 2019) were able to provide insights into some of these documents. To account for ambiguity and differing approaches to scholarly writing, we opted to be more generous with our considerations in the initial stages of review. Furthermore, differences in the design of teacher education programs, and approaches to professional development, across international contexts may also limit how CEFR-related training interventions are discussed in the empirical literature. Repeated readings and triangulation among the team members were required throughout the process to check assumptions and interpretations of the studies (Chrastina, 2018).

Conclusion & Recommendations

The results of this meta-synthesis support existing claims that there is limited empirical research on how teachers are formally trained to implement CEFR and related principles in their language classrooms (Diez-Bedmar & Byram, 2019; Rehner, Lasan, et al., 2021). Some studies (e.g., Faez, Taylor, et al., 2011, Moonen et al., 2013) have forayed into the use of CEFR in the classroom, but this topic has not received its due attention in empirical research discussions.

Overall, these studies highlight that professional learning about the CEFR can support teachers' understanding and positive perception of the CEFR and its tenets for language teaching and learning. Aligning teachers' planning, pedagogy, and assessment practices with the CEFR can allow them to improve their evaluation of student language performances. These training opportunities can, and indeed should, be woven into both pre-service teacher education (e.g., integration in methodology courses), and in-service professional learning (e.g., workshops). Studies like Piccardo (2013) suggest possible models and frameworks for implementing these experiences in real-world applications, while Cindrić and colleagues (2015) point to potential pitfalls and barriers to engaging teachers in this work. Together, these studies provide a helpful foundation for future research and training interventions.

However, the existing literature shows a tendency to focus on either examining pedagogy or language proficiency, not the two together. As these two facets of language teachers are inextricably linked (Salvatori & MacFarlane, 2009), future studies could therefore look at these aspects in tandem. Further, we recommend exploring the potential benefit of CEFR training in bridging the gap between teacher education and the transition to the workforce as a possible means to help educators transition into the profession. This may also address language teacher recruitment and retention issues (Jack & Nyman, 2019; Swanson & Mason, 2018). Finally, the voices of other stakeholders who are a part of language teacher education are underrepresented,

as well as the perspectives of language educators outside of EFL. Future research should consider perspectives from associate teachers (those who mentor teacher candidates during their practicum), curriculum developers, and course instructors, notably of language teaching methodology courses.

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