

From Tension to Synergy – The Bilkent Experience

Carole Thomas



OVERVIEW

- Background
- Overview of the COPE Linking Project
- Familiarisation and Standardisation
- Training teachers to evaluate students using the CEFR descriptors
- Questions



BACKGROUND

- Bilkent University School of English Language
- 230 teachers
- Levels – Elementary
 - Pre Intermediate
 - Intermediate
 - Upper Intermediate
 - Pre Faculty



COPE EXAM

- READING
- LISTENING
- LANGUAGE
- WRITING
- SPEAKING



Overview of COPE Linking Project

- *Manual for Relating Language Examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (Council of Europe 2003)
- Familiarisation
- Specification
- Standardisation
- Empirical Validation



FAMILIARISATION & STANDARDISATION

- Familiarisation with the CEFR
- Standardisation using samples calibrated to the CEFR



		TEST (Item Bank)			
		Below B2	B2	Above B2	Total
Criterion Teachers	Below B2	9	2		11
	B2	5	8		13
	Above B2			0	
	Total	14	10		24



Training Teachers

- Rationale
- Work carried out to date
- Looking at the descriptors for writing and reading
- Comparison of teacher judgements with COPE scores



B2

- Can understand the main ideas of complex text both on concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of spontaneity that makes regular contact with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.



OVERALL WRITTEN PRODUCTION

- B2 – Can write clear, detailed text on a variety of subjects related to his/her field of interest, synthesising and evaluating information and arguments from a variety of sources.
- B1 – Can write straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within his field of interest, by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence.



READING FOR INFORMATION AND ARGUMENT

- B2+ Can obtain information, ideas and opinions from highly specialised sources within his/her field. Can understand specialised articles outside his/her field provided he/she can use a dictionary occasionally to confirm his/her interpretation of terminology.
- B2 Can understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints.



		TEST (Item Bank)			
Criterion - teachers		Below B2	B2	Above B2	Total
	Below B2	10	10		20
	B2		22		22
	Above B2			0	0
		10	32	0	42



CONCLUSIONS

- Greater awareness of level expectations
- Speaking a “common language”
- More transparency in testing
- Need to extend this to students
- Consider the ELP as part of assessment?



CONTACT INFORMATION

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