

CHALLENGES FOR LANGUAGE EDUCATION AND POLICY

Making Space for People

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SETTING STANDARDS FOR MULTILINGUAL CURRICULA TO TEACH AND TEST FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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Social and Educational Context

As a response to the surge for multilingual citizenry in modern societies, particularly in Europe where the promotion of multilingualism has been proclaimed as a key objective by the European Commission, Greece has been trying to honor the 2002 two-plus-one European Council decision and provide opportunities to students to learn two languages in addition to their mother tongue during their compulsory schooling years. English is the first foreign language offered in the early years of primary school. French and German are offered, as options, as of the last two years of primary school. Students may continue with their second language choice in secondary school, where, before the Greek economic crisis, Italian and Spanish were also offered as electives for foreign language study.

Which foreign languages to include or exclude from the school curriculum has rarely been the result of sociolinguistically informed thinking. It depends on the ad hoc decisions of politicians in the Ministry of Education—replaced as soon as the government changes (every four years, at best). That is, even though questions about language inclusion and exclusion are deeply political and may have economic consequences, the issue is not viewed as a component of coherent language education planning by authorized bodies of experts. Sadly, this phenomenon is not unique to Greece, where, for the first time ever, in 2010 a language education planning project was commissioned to the University of Athens,¹ which is executing a number of other projects also, all aiming at institutionalizing multilingual concerns in language teaching, testing, and assessment. One of these projects is concerned with the development of the multilingual curriculum presented in this chapter. The second one is concerned with a multilingual examination suite, leading to the state certificate for language proficiency known with its Greek acronym KPG (Dendrinou, 2013).² Both of

these have employed the six-level language proficiency scale of the Council of Europe, as it appears in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (henceforth, CEFR, Council of Europe, 2001), and have aligned their descriptors to those of the CEFR, recognizing its value as the only document that provides “objective criteria for describing language proficiency . . . [so as to] facilitate the mutual recognition of qualifications gained in different learning contexts, and accordingly . . . aid European mobility” (CEFR, p. 1). In describing, for the first time ever, leveled language knowledge and communication skills, the CEFR—despite its weaknesses, which have to do with its descriptors of language proficiency being too vague and general—initiated the process of standards setting for language teaching, learning, and assessment.

CEFR also made a valuable contribution by distinguishing between the concept of multilingualism and that of plurilingualism. The latter, as understood and defined by the CEFR, shifts attention away from the twentieth-century influential construct of the ideal native speaker and focuses on the language user who has a repertoire of languages or language varieties, and communicative competences of different types and levels. A language user’s repertoire is viewed as dynamic, in the sense that it develops and changes throughout one’s life. The CEFR’s notion of plurilingual education is also useful because it is viewed as a means to developing the learner’s “ability to perceive and mediate the relationships which exist among languages and cultures” (Council of Europe, 2014).³

The term “plurilingualism” has not been endorsed either by multilingualism studies or by the European Commission. And, although we value the ideas that this term signifies, in this chapter we choose to use the all-inclusive term “multilingualism,” as do many academic texts and policy documents, hoping that the different social meanings that this single term conceals will surface. Some of the meanings wrapped up in the term “multilingualism” are as antithetical as the two that are considered at the end of this chapter: polyglots versus speakers with a multilingual ethos of communication; multilingual versus monolingual approaches for teaching and testing foreign languages. Distinctions such as these are crucial for anyone concerned with the study and/or the social practice of multilingualism, just as it is essential to understand that underneath each antithetical notion of multilingualism are two different views of language: the first is a structuralist view of language as “a closed and finite system that does not enable other languages to ‘smuggle in’” (Shohamy, 2011, p. 418), which is forever turning the spotlight on the formal properties of language. The second is a semiotic view of language as a system of meaning making through language in use. In the latter view of language, social agents use all the resources available to them, be they different modes of communication, languages, language varieties, and different media, to design meanings (cf. Kress, 2009).

It is in this context that the use of multilingual frameworks and curricula, such as the Integrated Foreign Languages Curriculum (henceforth, IFLC), developed in Greece is presented and discussed here.

The significance of the IFLC is that it serves as a framework of objective criteria for all the foreign language courses being offered in school (cf. Spolsky, 1995) and that it offers comparable descriptions of communicative and linguistic performance in different languages, across distinct levels of language proficiency.

In the sections that follow, the methodology and the tools employed for the development of the IFLC are presented and future actions are discussed. As a conclusion, we briefly discuss how a multilingual curriculum such as this may service multilingual approaches to language teaching, testing, and assessment.

The IFLC

The IFLC was developed as a component of the new National School Curriculum by a team of experts commissioned by the Greek Ministry of Education in 2010–2011.⁴ The curriculum document defines the language performance goals, to be achieved at key learning stages, equivalent to the CEFR proficiency levels, in school. Guidelines on to how to deal with the subject matter in the classroom (i.e. which approaches to language teaching, testing, and assessment to use) are provided in a supplementary publication (the “Teacher’s Guide”).⁵

The IFLC, presently being experimentally implemented in 160 schools throughout the country, is a unified, integrated curriculum for both primary and secondary education (Karavas, 2012). It is the first time that foreign languages are treated as a single discipline in school, with a coherent structure and common aims, essentially decoupled from the organization of the rest of the school curriculum in cycles or grades linked to school years. For the implementation of the new curriculum, schools have been encouraged to group students taking one of the languages offered according to their attested proficiency in the language in question. For instance, fifth grade students diagnosed to be at A2 level of proficiency in English may be grouped together with sixth grade students at the same proficiency level. The critical assumption underlying such practice is directly related to the literacies that language learners have developed, irrespective of classroom teaching, and the experience they have had through or with the target language in informal language learning situations, outside formal school courses, in private language centers, during after-school hours, or in their after-school activities (using Internet, watching television programs, etc.). Greek school students’ foreign language proficiency—especially in the most popular foreign languages—differs significantly depending on the language input they have from outside school contexts. Hence, the language proficiency levels are used to explicitly model and systematize language learning, departing from the somewhat vague distinction of language classes conforming to school grades.

The pilot version of the IFLC has entailed systematic efforts by the curriculum developers to specify leveled descriptors of language use in different situational contexts, and more fine-grained linguistic descriptors. The starting point was the KPG examination suite specifications, and the leveled descriptors therein,

organized in terms of communicative language activities (reading and listening comprehension, written and oral production and interaction, written and oral mediation). These descriptors have been empirically trialled for several years through the leveled tasks in test papers, while through a ‘Task Analysis project’, which attempted to model language use in communicative contexts (cf. Kondyli & Lykou, 2009), the KPG descriptors have been directly linked to test tasks. In order to include the KPG descriptors in the IFLC, these had to be revised as learning objectives, using insights from additional resources such as: (1) previous curricula and syllabi for foreign languages; (2) foreign language coursebooks used in Greek state schools; and (3) learner data drawn from the KPG examinations.

With an underlying view of language as a semiotic system that constitutes an endless resource of meaning making, the IFLC has moved beyond an understanding of the linguistic system as a set of rules determining the well-formedness of sentences. Its can-do statements are formulated in functional terms materially configured in different text types or “genres.” The notion of genre (i.e. text as a component of discourse, with generic features) is central in the view of language on which the IFLC rests. Texts are linked to context: the purpose for which each has been produced, the time and space constraints of the social situation to which each pertains, the knowledge, attitudes, and intentions of the participants in a given instance of communication.

Documenting Language Proficiency Descriptors across Languages

The CEFR leveled descriptors attempt to illustrate language use in terms of the user’s control of the properties of language, with statements about the range of vocabulary and the grammatical competences the learner is expected to have at each proficiency level. These statements are intuitive rather than data-driven, and therefore subject to interpretations by teachers and testers. This is, in fact, one of the reasons that the CEFR has been strongly criticized (cf. Carlsen, 2010).

Our own concern, while developing the IFLC, has been to provide criterial features characterizing the communicative performance associated with each proficiency level, so as to facilitate syllabus, materials, and test design. We have responded to this goal by adding grammatical, lexical, textual, and other details to the functional descriptors.

In supplementing the functional descriptors with language details, we have avoided descriptions of language features shaped by a structural view of language, linked with a “separatist,” monolingual ideology⁶—a view that underlies most of the data-driven “language profiles” compiled before and since the publication of the CEFR, in various European languages (cf. the English T-series, Van Ek & Trim, 1991a, 1991b, 2001; the English Profile Programme, Hawkins

& Filipović, 2012, though the latter includes data from learners of English with various L1s). The supplementation has admittedly been a complex endeavor. Using inverse methodological strategies from those underlying the development of generic functional characterizations of language proficiency (such as those provided by the CEFR), the documentation of the IFLC has involved going back to language data from different languages (hence its originality), formulating precise descriptions of distinct competences in each language, aligning them to validate the initial, cross-language, leveled descriptors, and, subsequently, linking them in a system of comparable linguistic features that can form standards for relating teaching, testing, and assessment in more than one foreign language, and can be explicitly and unambiguously incorporated into educational practice.

The section that follows describes the development of a database to address this task, containing detailed descriptions of elements of communicative performance across levels of language proficiency and across languages offered in Greek state schools.

A Multilingual Database with Descriptions of Elements of Communicative Performance

The IFLC presents language content based on data retrieved from various existent sources, not on intuition. To handle the amount of information available, we developed a database containing detailed descriptions of elements approximating the linguistic and communicative competences across foreign languages included in the Greek school curriculum (i.e. English, French, German, Italian, and Spanish).

The IFLC database is organized in terms of the six-level scale of language proficiency and currently includes the following language components:

1. the IFLC reference level descriptors (can-do statements);
2. the language functions that the learner is expected to perform, at different proficiency levels;
3. the grammar (grammatical patterns) that the learner is expected to use (produce) and comprehend at different levels;
4. the lexis (lexical units) that the learner is expected to use (produce) and comprehend at different levels; and
5. the text types that the learner is expected to produce and comprehend when communicating with a language, at different proficiency levels.

Each of the above components, except for the first, corresponds to one type of language competence, i.e. the functional, grammatical, lexical, and discourse competence. The latter is associated with a range of text types, identified in terms of the sociocultural contexts to which they pertain, determining their linguistic properties. This is essentially in accordance with the priority acknowledged by

the theory of language underlying the IFLC to the notion of text as material configuration of discourse. Note that the discourse competence also involves the representation of more fine-grained linguistic elements, such as the thematic organization of discourse (given versus new information), coherence and cohesion in texts, textual characteristics related to style and register, etc. At the moment, this sort of information is not systematically represented in the database entries.

Linguistic information was selected from a variety of relevant resources to inform our database. Specifically, we used: (1) descriptions of competences for each language from “profile books”;⁷ (2) descriptions of language elements, extracted from foreign language coursebooks currently in use in Greek state (primary and secondary) schools; and (3) descriptions from the KPG specifications.

Elements in each of the database components are described in terms of a common set of metadata: (1) the language with which they are associated, with the exception of the level descriptors common to all languages; (2) the language proficiency level to which they pertain; (3) the communicative activity with which they are associated (comprehension, production, interaction, or mediation); (4) the channel of communication (written or spoken) to which they refer; (5) the source from which they are acquired (profile book, foreign language coursebook, KPG specifications); and (6) the school grade to which they pertain, applicable only to elements drawn from coursebooks. A schematic representation of the structure of the database is shown in Table 2.5 in the Appendix (though for reasons of readability, not all metadata describing the database entries are presented in this table).

In the next subsection, details regarding the representation of competences documenting the language proficiency descriptors of the IFLC are provided.

The Representation of Language Competences

Given the range of different sources and languages from which our data were acquired, a complication that had to be tackled, before the database was populated, is related to the description of language competences. Different sources of data usually describe similar or fairly similar things in somewhat or very different terms, depending on the approach to language they adopt or the organization of linguistic knowledge they implement. A significant part of this project involved the representation of linguistic knowledge for each language, separately, and the alignment (i.e. mapping) of data emerging from different sources and paradigms, so that the linguistic knowledge associated with each proficiency level is eventually represented in a unified manner, across all languages. A common representation model for each database component has emerged from these mappings.

Language competences are generally represented in terms of linguistic *types* (i.e. descriptions that abstract over instances of language use). The database types are organized hierarchically, with more specific inheriting from abstract ones. The

concept of inheritance corresponds to a basic *is-a* ontological relation (i.e. if a category *y* inherits from a category *x*, it is designated to have equally or more specific characteristics than category *x*). Language functions are uniformly (i.e. for all languages) described in terms of a small set of broadly specified communication acts and several more-fine-grained macro-functions and micro-functions inheriting from the former. In the current version of the ontology, macro-functions are optionally associated with micro-functions. We acknowledge that this is not the final version of the ontology, as more data will be added in the database, acquired from additional resources. Yet, the ontology of language functions is designed to be fairly simple, incorporating three levels of specificity, as exemplified by the database entries shown in Table 2.1.

The representation of linguistic data in terms of typed descriptions and ontological relations thereof is suitable for modeling the gradual development of linguistic knowledge in learning contexts. Each linguistic type is associated with a certain level, language, communicative activity, and channel of communication. More fine-grained types are generally associated with lower proficiency levels than abstract ones. For instance, the linguistic instantiations of the micro-function “expressing a wish for luck” are expected to be fully developed at a learning stage preceding the development of instantiations of the macro-function “expressing a wish.” Cases where an abstract type is developed before a more specific one are cross-checked across languages and have been identified either as inconsistencies emerging from the different sources of information or as special cases that are justified and have been accommodated in the organization of linguistic knowledge across languages. This kind of ontological organization enables the essential consistency checks that will ensure the reliability of the data stored in the database and its metadata, which will eventually be used to feed back the development of prescriptive guidelines for the teacher (and the learner) and the development of syllabi and teaching materials. Additionally, ontologies of linguistic types are intended to support the formulation of generalizations over associations of individual language descriptions (i.e. database entries). Lexical and grammatical elements, for instance, can be linked with specific types of language functions (macro-functions, micro-functions); communication acts, as shown in Table 2.1, will readily abstract over such associations. This kind of abstraction will facilitate the development of learning sequences for a certain language or for more than one language. Learning sequences are envisaged to systematically build on the learner’s knowledge and competences, which are gradually acquired in the foreign language(s).

The grammatical knowledge at distinct levels of language proficiency is also represented in terms of ontological structures, including super-types and several subtypes, common for all languages. Contrary to language functions, which essentially encode pragmatic aspects of linguistic communication and are language-independent, grammatical patterns are language-specific (i.e. each sub-type is associated with the description of a grammatical pattern pertaining to one of the

TABLE 2.1 Extract from the ontology of language functions

| <i>Communication act</i> | <i>Macro-function</i> | <i>Micro-function</i> | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Information exchange | Answering a question | Giving information about the place of an event or action | |
| | | Giving information about the time of an event or action | |
| | | Giving information about the degree related to an event or action | |
| | | Giving information about the manner related to an event or action | |
| | | Confirming | |
| | | Refuting | |
| | | Giving a positive answer | |
| | | Giving a negative answer | |
| | | Stating ignorance | |
| | | Doubting | Doubting a negative assurance Doubting a positive assurance |
| Reassuring | | | |
| Claiming | Presenting an event or action as possible Presenting an event or action as certain | | |
| Use of conventions | Answering the phone | Introducing oneself Asking who is on the other end of the line Asking for someone to hold on | |
| | Expressing a wish | Expressing farewell wishes Expressing a wish for luck Expressing a wish for success Expressing a wish for getting well | |
| | Giving one's regards | | |
| | Apologizing | Expressing formal apology Expressing informal apology | |
| | Discourse organization | Introducing a subject | |
| | | Discussing a subject | Enumerating Narrating Describing Categorizing Comparing |
| Changing the subject | | | |
| Participating actively in discussion as listener | | Calling for attention Requesting a change of subject Summarizing a point to check if he or she has understood Correcting | |
| Going back to a topic previously discussed | | | |

five languages currently included in the database). The description of grammatical types is based on part-of-speech labels and patterns of use. We have opted to keep the representation simple and theory-independent, so that it can straightforwardly map onto descriptions incorporating different kinds of theoretical assumptions (e.g. adopted by specific coursebooks or other learning materials). Descriptions of grammatical patterns are allowed to inherit from more than one super-type or sub-type, conforming to a *multiple inheritance* ontological schema. For example, the pattern instantiated by the English phrase “It has been noted that . . .” inherits from the types “verb-tense-the use of present perfect” and “verb-voice-passive voice” for English, depicted in Table 2.2. More abstract, inclusive types are expected to be fully developed at higher proficiency levels than types associated with patterns combining them.

Similarly, the lexical knowledge is uniformly organized in taxonomies that are based on general thematic domains and more fine-grained subdomains, as exemplified in Table 2.3. Language-specific lexical types include words of different parts of speech, evoking a coherent meaning and appearing in related linguistic contexts.

Finally, the text types with which the language learner is expected to communicate are summarized in ontologies such as the one shown in Table 2.4. The parameters of the communicative context in which a text is assumed to function are included in fine-grained descriptions (subtypes) inheriting from general text types (super-types). Note that text types (and language functions) may be associated with particular language activities (comprehension, production, interaction, mediation) and channels of communication (written, oral), whereas grammatical and lexical types are most often underspecified as regards the values of this metadata.

TABLE 2.2 Extract from the ontology of grammatical types

| <i>Super-type</i> | <i>Sub-type</i> | <i>Sub-type</i> | <i>Language-specific pattern</i> |
|-------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Noun | Common noun | Inflectional feature: number | Common noun appearing only in plural: trousers, scissors, tights, people (English) |
| Noun | Common noun | Inflectional feature: case | Akkusativ (German) |
| Noun | Common noun | Derivational feature: suffix | Derivation of common noun from adjective: suffix <i>ité</i> (French) |
| Noun | Proper noun | Inflectional feature: number | Family name: <i>los</i> + surname (Spanish) |
| Verb | | Inflectional feature: tense | The use of present perfect (English) |
| Verb | | Inflectional feature: voice | The use of passive voice (English) |

TABLE 2.3 Extract from the ontology of thematically organized lexical types

| <i>Super-type</i> | <i>Sub-type</i> | <i>Language-specific lexical type</i> |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Economy and industry | Agriculture | sembrar, cosechar, cultivo, explotación, producción, recolección, fruto (Spanish) |
| Personal relationships | Social life | friend, partner, colleague, guest, to know, to visit, party, present (English) |
| Geography and environment | Environment | ambiente, deserto, difendere, ghiacciaio, inquinamento, naturale/artificiale, proteggere, salvare (Italian) |
| Geography and environment | Human environment | casa, centro, chiesa, città, fabbrica, industria, parco, piazza, strada, via (Italian) |
| Education | Examinations and certificates | Prüfung, Klassenarbeit, Schularbeit (German) |

TABLE 2.4 Extract from the ontology of text types

| <i>Super-type</i> | <i>Sub-type</i> |
|-------------------|--|
| E-mail | E-mail for personal communication Professional e-mail Job request e-mail |
| Poster | Poster for public show Poster for concert |
| Form | Airplane landing form Hotel check-in form |

The alignment of linguistic types collected from different sources of data, for different languages, in order to come up with the common representational framework discussed above was not a trivial task. It was treated as a modular task (i.e. common ontologies have initially emerged from mappings of the data from the Profiles for French, German, Spanish, Italian, and English).⁸ These ontologies have been employed for description of the contents of foreign language coursebooks. They have been slightly modified and, in some cases, enriched to accommodate such a heterogeneous body of language data retrieved from a variety of coursebooks, written by different authors, espousing disparate language learning and teaching approaches. Finally, the revised ontologies have been mapped onto the descriptions acquired from the KPG specifications, referring to the language functions, grammatical and lexical patterns, and types of texts assessed at each proficiency level in the KPG exams.

Setting Standards for Multilingual Curricula and Multilingual Practices

The database described in the previous section has been designed as the essential methodological apparatus for organizing comparable descriptions of language competences, across foreign languages and across the six-level scale of language proficiency adopted by the IFLC. The description of language components in terms of a common set of metadata and aligned ontologies enables the documentation of the leveled descriptors of the IFLC and can support comparisons and links between the teaching and assessment specifications for different languages. For instance, the set of language functions documenting a certain level for English can be juxtaposed with the set of functions at the same level for another language. Such comparisons are essential for revealing the commonalities and/or differences in teaching and learning languages, and are also crucial for evaluating and refining the IFLC descriptors, so that they determine language proficiency in a precise, unified manner for all languages.⁹ In this sense, our work is of particular relevance for the CEFR as well. To our knowledge, it is the first time that an attempt is made to produce explicit, detailed descriptions of a comprehensive set of linguistic data linked with language proficiency levels, in more than one foreign language. These data, associated with the metadata for their organization and filtering, may lend support to slight or more extensive modifications of the CEFR, cross-language descriptors.

In a related vein, comparisons and links between data collected from various, complementary sources comprise an essential step toward setting clear and validated benchmarks for the knowledge pertaining to the distinct levels of language proficiency, for each language, separately.¹⁰ For each language in the database, comprehensive sets of descriptions of linguistic elements, across levels, are derived from the profiles, the coursebooks, and the KPG specifications, and they are mapped onto the reference level descriptors. This process is aimed at producing calibrated language-specific specifications and revealing possible inconsistencies between the originally formulated IFLC descriptors and the actual data.

Ultimately, the documented level descriptors can straightforwardly be transferred and incorporated into educational practice, forming the basis for the development of syllabi and materials, the contents of which will not be based on intuition—thus prone to arbitrary changes and reformulations. Elements from each of the specified language components, sharing common metadata values (level, language, communicative activity, etc.), can be associated with one another and with corresponding level descriptors. Individual can-do statements or sets of can-do statements can be linked with particular language functions, grammatical and lexical elements and types of texts by which they can be reified in certain language or languages, at certain proficiency levels and communicative context. Such associations can form the basis for the development of language teaching—learning units, addressing objectively specified learning outcomes in a single or, more interestingly, in more than one foreign language.

Implications of a Multilingual Curriculum on Foreign Language Teaching and Learning

Multilingual competence is conceptualized presently not as parallel monolingualisms, but as interlingualism and translanguaging, requiring intercultural competence, defined by Byram (2003) as the ability to critically reflect on one's cultural identity and values, and to use his or her awareness of the complex relationships between language, society, and cultural meanings. As such, it is most likely to find a fertile ground for its development in standards-based multilingual curricula—curricula whose descriptors of communicative and linguistic performance are documented in different languages and serve as a basis for multilingual pedagogical approaches and classroom practices. The discussion of such pedagogy, which is still in the making, and its implications for testing are not within the scope of this chapter. Suffice it to say presently that it entails a new paradigm of foreign language education to replace the tradition established by foreign language teaching and learning didactics: a language education project that might adopt a multi-literacies perspective (cf. Kalantzis & Cope, 2012) to motivate learners to perform communicative tasks using all the resources available to them (different languages, language varieties, discourses, registers, genres, and semiotic modes). Ultimately, the goal is the meaning-making process when in intercession with others whose social and cultural experiences may be similar or different.

The new paradigm of foreign language education, based on multilingual curricula, may bear some resemblance to bi/multilingual and bi/multicultural education programs, but it is clearly distinct. While the latter often involve the home/community languages of students for whom the program is designed, the former generally involves only languages that are foreign to all students. In this case, the target language is the object of knowledge, whereas in bi/multilingual programs, the target language(s) are a means through which knowledge is accessed. The latter actually constitute projects that aspire to produce bilinguals or polyglots (e.g. dual language or two-way language immersion, first-language-first, or the multilingual program of the European School), and they are implemented in schools populated with students of different ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, deliberately mixed together for as many school subjects and activities as possible, offered in different languages.

It is the former type of programs with which we are concerned in our work: foreign language programs for students developing school literacy in the official language, and also learning two languages in addition to their mother tongue (which may be the same or different than the official language). In these programs, the aim should be to help students learn to do different things in different languages—not necessarily equally well in all languages—and to develop a multilingual ethos of communication (Dendrinou, 2001). This seems to necessitate the explicit aim of interlingual communication (i.e. communication involving the interplay of languages), defined by Dendrinou (2012) as “performance which

entails the use of different semiotic resources from more than one language, more than one code and/or semiotic mode when this is required for successful communication” (p. 49).

So long as language (education) policy remains monoglossic (cf. Shohamy, 2006), and language curricula remain monolingual, we cannot easily replace foreign language teaching programs by multi-literacy education. Pedagogic practices will remain as they have been in programs where the teaching and learning of languages is a project of developing parallel monolingualisms.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been to describe an ongoing project developing a multilingual curriculum, which we believe lends itself to a significant shift from monolingual to multilingual foreign language education. As the project continues, the IFLC database will be informed by additional, empirical data, extracted from the KPG corpus, which contains graded scripts produced by candidates participating in the national foreign language examinations. This is another research project being carried out at the Research Centre for Language Teaching, Testing and Assessment (RCeL) of the University of Athens, addressing the linguistic profile of the Greek learner of foreign languages and intending to furnish detailed descriptions of how a specific group of learners (i.e. learners whose common language is Greek) perform in the three European languages documented (cf. Gotsoulia, 2012; Gotsoulia & Dendrinos, 2011). These descriptions, which draw upon actual language data produced by candidates in the KPG exams, will substantially complement the descriptions from the aforementioned sources of data. They will add the insight of what the learner actually does with language, in practice, emphasizing the characteristics of language use, including erroneous usages of linguistic elements. The multilingual database documenting the curriculum level descriptors ideally will serve as a tool for syllabus design, and development of novel teaching/learning material.

Notes

1. The project is being carried out by a team of expert linguists and language educators working at the Research Centre for Language Teaching, Testing and Assessment (RCeL) of the University of Athens (www.rcel.enl.uoa.gr/).
2. For information in English about the KPG exams, visit <http://rcel.enl.uoa.gr/kpg>.
3. Council of Europe (Language Policy Unit): www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Division_en.asp.
4. It was developed by a team of 25 language specialists, applied linguists, researchers, and language teachers, directed by Bessie Dendrinos, who gave birth to the idea that a multilingual curriculum replace the curricula used up to the present—a different one for each of the languages offered in state schools.
5. The curriculum document appears only in Greek at <http://rcel.enl.uoa.gr/xenesglosses>. At the same site, one may also find the Teacher’s Guide, which also appears in Greek only.

| Lang Source | Language Component | | | | | | | | | | | | IFLC Level Descriptors | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| | Language Functions | | | | Grammar | | | | Lexis | | | | | Text Types | | | | | | | |
| | EN | FR | GE | IT | SP | EN | FR | GE | IT | SP | EN | FR | | GE | IT | SP | EN | FR | GE | IT | SP |
| A1 | F-EN- A1- Prof | F- FR- A1- Prof | F- GE- A1- Prof | F- IT- A1- Prof | F- SP- A1- Prof | G- EN- A1- Prof | G- FR- A1- Prof | G- GE- A1- Prof | G- IT- A1- Prof | G- SP- A1- Prof | L- EN- A1- Prof | L- FR- A1- Prof | L- GE- A1- Prof | L- IT- A1- Prof | L- SP- A1- Prof | TT- EN- A1- Prof | TT- FR- A1- Prof | TT- GE- A1- Prof | TT- IT- A1- Prof | TT- SP- A1- Prof | Common for all languages per level |
| A2 | F-EN- A2- Prof | F- FR- A2- Prof | F- GE- A2- Prof | F- IT- A2- Prof | F- SP- A2- Prof | G- EN- A2- Prof | G- FR- A2- Prof | G- GE- A2- Prof | G- IT- A2- Prof | G- SP- A2- Prof | L- EN- A2- Prof | L- FR- A2- Prof | L- GE- A2- Prof | L- IT- A2- Prof | L- SP- A2- Prof | TT- EN- A2- Prof | TT- FR- A2- Prof | TT- GE- A2- Prof | TT- IT- A2- Prof | TT- SP- A2- Prof | |
| B1 | F-EN- B1- Prof | F- FR- B1- Prof | F- GE- B1- Prof | F- IT- B1- Prof | F- SP- B1- Prof | G- EN- B1- Prof | G- FR- B1- Prof | G- GE- B1- Prof | G- IT- B1- Prof | G- SP- B1- Prof | L- EN- B1- Prof | L- FR- B1- Prof | L- GE- B1- Prof | L- IT- B1- Prof | L- SP- B1- Prof | TT- EN- B1- Prof | TT- FR- B1- Prof | TT- GE- B1- Prof | TT- IT- B1- Prof | TT- SP- B1- Prof | |
| B2 | F-EN- B2- Prof | F- FR- B2- Prof | F- GE- B2- Prof | F- IT- B2- Prof | F- SP- B2- Prof | G- EN- B2- Prof | G- FR- B2- Prof | G- GE- B2- Prof | G- IT- B2- Prof | G- SP- B2- Prof | L- EN- B2- Prof | L- FR- B2- Prof | L- GE- B2- Prof | L- IT- B2- Prof | L- SP- B2- Prof | TT- EN- B2- Prof | TT- FR- B2- Prof | TT- GE- B2- Prof | TT- IT- B2- Prof | TT- SP- B2- Prof | |
| C1 | F-EN- C1- Prof | F- FR- C1- Prof | F- GE- C1- Prof | F- IT- C1- Prof | F- SP- C1- Prof | G- EN- C1- Prof | G- FR- C1- Prof | G- GE- C1- Prof | G- IT- C1- Prof | G- SP- C1- Prof | L- EN- C1- Prof | L- FR- C1- Prof | L- GE- C1- Prof | L- IT- C1- Prof | L- SP- C1- Prof | TT- EN- C1- Prof | TT- FR- C1- Prof | TT- GE- C1- Prof | TT- IT- C1- Prof | TT- SP- C1- Prof | |
| C2 | F-EN- C2- Prof | F- FR- C2- Prof | F- GE- C2- Prof | F- IT- C2- Prof | F- SP- C2- Prof | G- EN- C2- Prof | G- FR- C2- Prof | G- GE- C2- Prof | G- IT- C2- Prof | G- SP- C2- Prof | L- EN- C2- Prof | L- FR- C2- Prof | L- GE- C2- Prof | L- IT- C2- Prof | L- SP- C2- Prof | TT- EN- C2- Prof | TT- FR- C2- Prof | TT- GE- C2- Prof | TT- IT- C2- Prof | TT- SP- C2- Prof | |
| A1 | F-EN- A1-CB | F- FR- A1- CB | F- GE- A1- CB | F- IT- A1- CB | F- SP- A1- CB | G- EN- A1- CB | G- FR- A1- CB | G- GE- A1- CB | G- IT- A1- CB | G- SP- A1- CB | L- EN- A1- CB | L- FR- A1- CB | L- GE- A1- CB | L- IT- A1- CB | L- SP- A1- CB | TT- EN- A1- CB | TT- FR- A1- CB | TT- GE- A1- CB | TT- IT- A1- CB | TT- SP- A1- CB | |
| A2 | F-EN- A2-CB | F- FR- A2- CB | F- GE- A2- CB | F- IT- A2- CB | F- SP- A2- CB | G- EN- A2- CB | G- FR- A2- CB | G- GE- A2- CB | G- IT- A2- CB | G- SP- A2- CB | L- EN- A2- CB | L- FR- A2- CB | L- GE- A2- CB | L- IT- A2- CB | L- SP- A2- CB | TT- EN- A2- CB | TT- FR- A2- CB | TT- GE- A2- CB | TT- IT- A2- CB | TT- SP- A2- CB | |
| B1 | F-EN- B1-CB | F- FR- B1- CB | F- GE- B1- CB | F- IT- B1- CB | F- SP- B1- CB | G- EN- B1- CB | G- FR- B1- CB | G- GE- B1- CB | G- IT- B1- CB | G- SP- B1- CB | L- EN- B1- CB | L- FR- B1- CB | L- GE- B1- CB | L- IT- B1- CB | L- SP- B1- CB | TT- EN- B1- CB | TT- FR- B1- CB | TT- GE- B1- CB | TT- IT- B1- CB | TT- SP- B1- CB | |
| B2 | F-EN- B2-CB | F- FR- B2- CB | F- GE- B2- CB | F- IT- B2- CB | F- SP- B2- CB | G- EN- B2- CB | G- FR- B2- CB | G- GE- B2- CB | G- IT- B2- CB | G- SP- B2- CB | L- EN- B2- CB | L- FR- B2- CB | L- GE- B2- CB | L- IT- B2- CB | L- SP- B2- CB | TT- EN- B2- CB | TT- FR- B2- CB | TT- GE- B2- CB | TT- IT- B2- CB | TT- SP- B2- CB | |

TABLE 2.5 Appendix: The structure and data of the IFLC database

6. The reason we understand a structural view as “separatist” and a manifestation of monolingual ideology is because it focuses on the formal properties of language—unique to each language—rather than on contextualized language use and the meaning-making process (involving interrelated languages, semiotic systems, genres, and registers). The latter is a view of language that is more consistent with the multilingual ideology that the IFLC is based on, documenting its leveled descriptors with linguistic features not from a single language but from various languages, aided by corpus data informing the documentation process.
7. The following profile books have been used: Van Ek and Trim (1991a, 1991b, 2001) (for English), Instituto Cervantes (2006) (for Spanish), Spinelli and Francesca (2010) (for Italian), Beacco, Bouquet, and Porquier (2004), Beacco and Porquier (2007, 2008), Beacco et al. (2011) (for French), and Glaboniat, Müller, Rusch, Schmitz, and Wertenschlag (2005) (for German).
8. The English T-series has served as the basis for the compilation of the profiles for the rest of the languages considered. Each of the latter implements more or less significant modifications or improvements to the level descriptions developed by Jan Van Ek and John Trim (first published in 1991).
9. This kind of cross-language comparison is depicted in Table 2.5 with shaded cells, across the columns corresponding to the different languages, for language functions drawn from Profile books, at A1 level. Similar relationships between languages can be studied for each language component and each source of data, separately, at each level of proficiency.
10. In Table 2.5 this kind of comparison is exemplified with shaded cells, across the different sources of data, for language functions at A1 level, in English.

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