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European Language Portfolio

The intercultural component and Learning how to learn

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European Language Portfolio

The intercultural component

The ELP and interculturality

According to the *Principles and Guidelines* (Council for Cultural Cooperation 2000), the ELP “reflects the Council of Europe’s concern with ... respect for diversity of cultures and ways of life” and is “a tool to promote plurilingualism and pluriculturalism”. The language passport “describes ... intercultural learning experiences”, while the language biography includes “information on linguistic and cultural experiences gained in and outside formal educational contexts”.

Interculturality in the *Common European Framework*

The *Common European Framework* has this to say about the cultural impact of language learning on the individual:

The learner of a second or foreign language and culture does not cease to be competent in his or her mother tongue and the associated culture. Nor is the new competence kept entirely separate from the old. The learner does not simply acquire two distinct, unrelated ways of acting and communicating. The language learner becomes *plurilingual* and develops *interculturality*. The linguistic and cultural competences in respect of each language are modified by knowledge of the other and contribute to intercultural awareness, skills and know-how. They enable the individual to develop an enriched, more complex personality and an enhanced capacity for further language learning and greater openness to new cultural experiences. (Council of Europe 2001, p.43)

The *CEF* points out that “intercultural awareness includes an awareness of regional and social diversity in ... [the ‘world of origin’ and the ‘world of the target community’]” (ibid., p.103). It argues that “intercultural skills and know-how” include

- the ability to bring the culture of origin and the foreign culture into relation with each other;
- cultural sensitivity and the ability to identify and use a variety of strategies for contact with those from other cultures;
- the capacity to fulfil the role of cultural intermediary between one’s own culture and the foreign culture and to deal effectively with intercultural misunderstanding and conflict situations;
- the ability to overcome stereotyped relationships. (ibid., pp.104f.)

Intercultural competence as part of communicative proficiency in the ELP

Language passport

- At the higher levels of proficiency, the self-assessment grid implies
 - explicit awareness of the socio-pragmatic dimension of linguistic communication (e.g., B2 and C1 *Reading*, C1 and C2 *Spoken interaction*)
 - some familiarity with the linguistically mediated culture of the target language (e.g., B2, C1 and C2 *Reading*, C2 *Writing*)
- At present no provision is made for self-assessment that focuses on non-linguistic socio-cultural practices

Language biography

- At the higher levels, self-assessment checklists have the same intercultural implication as the self-assessment grid in the language passport. In certain cases they may focus in some detail on linguistically mediated culture
- Most existing ELP models aimed at adult learners encourage the owner to write reflectively on intercultural experiences of various kinds, but usually without providing a specific focus

Dossier

- The selection of documents for inclusion in the dossier is the responsibility of the ELP owner and is an aspect of his/her self-assessment
- The extent to which the selection explicitly seeks to illustrate the owner's intercultural competence is likely to be determined by the extent to which intercultural competence has been an explicit issue in his/her L2 learning experience

Intercultural competence considered in its own right¹

When intercultural competence is considered separately from communicative proficiency, two issues arise for the ELP. First, how it should provide for self-assessment of intercultural competence; and second, in what ways intercultural experiences can be captured in (i) the language passport and (ii) the language biography.

In their guide for ELP developers, Schneider and Lenz (2001, p.36) point out that empirically validated descriptors for language learners' intercultural and sociocultural competences do not yet exist. Such descriptors would not be directly related to the levels of communicative proficiency: as Schneider and Lenz note, it is possible to have extended cultural knowledge on the basis of reading translations (*ibid.*). They argue that it would be valuable to have lists of objectives detailing "aspects of sociocultural knowledge (knowledge of history, politics, culture etc.)" and "components of intercultural competence that should be acquired (ability to handle differing norms and culturally induced misunderstanding, ability to prepare for and benefit from stays in regions with different cultures, etc.)". It is worth pointing out that cultural knowledge and intercultural competence are not the same thing. No doubt intercultural competence depends to some extent on relevant cultural knowledge, but it also depends on other factors, including the individual's affective and attitudinal orientation and interpersonal skills (see Council of Europe 2001, pp.104f., quoted on page 3 above).

¹ This section is based on discussions that took place at a seminar on assessing intercultural competence, held at the Centre International d'Études Pédagogiques, Sèvres, 20–21 January 2003. Participants in the seminar were: Jean-Claude Beacco, *Catherine Berger, *Michael Byram, *Linda Cadier, *Robert Crawshaw, *Leah Davcheva, Anne Davidson Lund, Sylvia Duffy, Richard Fay, *David Little, *Ulla Lundgren, Irene Malcolm, *Ana Maria Milheiro-Pires, *Elizabeth Murphy-Lejeune, *Johanna Panthier, *Marie-Laure Poletti, Elisabeth Prechtel, Alan Pulverness, *Aline Gohard Radenkov, *Lies Sercu, Lynda Taylor, John Thorogood, Nick Wadham-Smith, Jane Woodin, *Geneviève Zarate. Those participants whose names are marked with an asterisk were members of the working group whose conclusions have contributed to the proposals in this and the next section.

Even if we had empirically validated scales of intercultural competence, it is not certain that they would lend themselves to self-assessment, since they would necessarily differ from the common reference levels of the *Common European Framework* in one important respect. The common reference levels are defined by descriptors that refer to communicative behaviour: on the whole we know what we are capable of doing and what lies beyond our competence. By contrast, the components of intercultural competence may well be opaque in the absence of reflected intercultural experience: in many circumstances ELP users may not be in a position to judge their own intercultural competence.

Geneviève Zarate has argued against the idea of self-assessment based on checklists and in favour of some flexible means of self-profiling.² This is an attractive notion, but the devising of such a means implies significant further development of the ELP and thus lies beyond the scope of the present proposals. These are concerned with ways of dealing with the intercultural component in the language biography.

Recording and reflecting on intercultural experiences in the language biography

In its intercultural dimension the ELP assumes that successful L2 learners/users gradually develop awareness of and respect for others and otherness. It also acknowledges that in order to be a competent L2 user it is necessary to go beyond the narrow view of language that has traditionally dominated language teaching. Accordingly, the ELP should stimulate learners to think about cultural difference, reflecting on their experiences in terms of location and intensity. Location factors are: work, study and travel (whether experienced at first hand or mediated through other people and/or the media); intensity factors have to do with frequency, duration, degree of involvement and significance for one's life history and identity.

ELP pages designed to record and encourage reflection on intercultural experiences should take account of the following:

1. Where, with whom and in what context did the experience take place?
2. What kind of experience was it in terms of the intensity factors listed above?
3. What was my response? Did I merely reflect on the experience, or did it prompt me to some kind of action?
4. Why did I respond in the way I did?

Pages need to accommodate entries over time so that they capture the cumulative effect of intercultural experiences and the personal growth that they bring. Pages also need some kind of recursive structure so that the user can comment further on his/her reflection a week or a month or a year later. Instructions to users need to make clear that our response to intercultural experiences can be cognitive and/or affective; also that intercultural encounters are not necessarily or always positive. It may be useful to distinguish between pages that focus on cultural difference/otherness that is linguistically mediated and cultural difference/otherness that is experienced largely or wholly without reference to language.

² At the Sèvres seminar on assessing intercultural competence, 20–21 January 2003.

Annotated examples

All but one of the twenty-one annotated examples that follow are derived from ten validated ELPs which between them cater for language learners from the end of primary through to university/adult. Some pages are designed to capture experience related to one particular language, while others are concerned with intercultural experience in general. Some pages can be used with learners of any age, while others will need to be adapted in one way or another to make them age-appropriate. Many of the pages are designed to be used recursively; most of them will need to be duplicated a number of times if they are to accompany an extended period of language learning/use.

When considering the pages it is worth bearing two points in mind. First, although the intercultural dimension of the ELP is explicitly associated with “respect for diversity of cultures and ways of life” (Council for Cultural Cooperation 2000), we need to be sensitive to cultural similarity as well as cultural difference, to sameness as well as otherness. Only one of the sample pages explicitly takes account of this fact. Secondly, while ELPs designed for adolescent and adult learners tend to associate the intercultural dimension with residence abroad, it should be remembered that by no means all language learners are able to travel. Especially in ELPs for younger learners it may be important to include pages that prepare for rather than report on intercultural encounters.

ELP developers are free to use any of these pages as they stand. However, before importing them into a new ELP they should review them in terms of (i) the above discussion and (ii) the overall design of their own ELP.

References

- Council for Cultural Cooperation, 2000: *European Language Portfolio (ELP): principles and guidelines*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe (DGIV/EDU/LANG (2000) 33). (<http://culture.coe.int/portfolio>)
- Council of Europe, 2001: *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schneider, G., and P. Lenz, 2001: *European Language Portfolio: Guide for developers*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Language Learning and Intercultural Experiences

Language				
I have been learning this language for <i>(enter dates)</i>	1 year ...../...../20.....	2 years ...../...../20.....	3 years ...../...../20.....	over 3 years ...../...../20.....
I have been learning this language	<input type="checkbox"/> at school <input type="checkbox"/> at home <input type="checkbox"/> _____			
I have stayed in a country where this language is spoken for <i>(enter dates)</i>	up to 1 month	up to 3 months	up to 9 months	over 9 months
I stayed in the country	<input type="checkbox"/> to attend a language course <input type="checkbox"/> for a holiday <input type="checkbox"/> _____			
I also have the following intercultural experiences relating to this language _____ _____ _____ _____				
Certificates and diplomas				
Level (A1-B2)	Title of certificate/examination	Awarded by	Year	

IRELAND: Lower and upper secondary

This page contributes to the ELP's reporting function, but by **reflecting on** and **articulating** experiences of learning abroad, the owner's awareness of intercultural learning should be raised.

The owner should be encouraged to note features of intercultural experience such as:

- Personal response to situations and encounters (annoyance, confusion etc.)
- Remedial action taken by the owner or some other person

Things I notice about language and culture

	Language
Material/media/resource	...../...../20.....
Aspects of language/culture I've noticed	
<p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	
Material/media/resource	...../...../20.....
Aspects of language/culture I've noticed	
<p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	
Material/media/resource	...../...../20.....
Aspects of language/culture I've noticed	
<p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	

IRELAND: Lower and upper secondary

This page may be used many times over. It enables the owner to

- articulate impressions, observations or experiences, some of which may be fleeting (for example when watching a film);
- gradually develop intercultural awareness by capturing experience over time

Intercultural experiences

Language:

I have experienced the culture of this language in the following ways (enter dates) **(1)**

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I have been able to use this language in the following situations (enter dates) **(2)**

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I have learnt about the culture of this language in the following ways (enter dates) **(3)**

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IRELAND: Lower and upper secondary

This page should be completed separately for each language the owner knows. It is designed to prompt **reflection** on past experience. The owner considers where and when he/she:

- (1) Experienced cultural diversity
- (2) Used the target language
- (3) Learnt about some aspect of cultural diversity

If the owner puts a date against each observation, he/she can more easily come to understand how knowledge and experience accumulate over time.

Information about Language Experience and Cross-cultural Communication

Provide information on each language you learned

<p>Cross-cultural communication experience Contacts with the country, culture, native speakers</p>	<p>Other sources that contributed to your knowledge of society and culture Painting, music, literature, history, mass media etc.</p>
<p>Use of the language in different situations Work, studies, school, leisure time spent with friends</p>	<p>Assignments and projects carried out in foreign languages</p>

RUSSIA: Upper secondary

This page allows the owner to categorize intercultural experiences and by doing so to see the **availability** and **frequency** of such opportunities. By adding the **date of occurrence**, the owner gradually compiles a chronology of his/her learning.

**Language experiences at home and abroad, in school
and outside school, from 9 to 15 years**

Dates and places	Language learning and language experiences in Italy and abroad (1)	Comments on the most important events (2)

UMBRIA: 9 – 15 years

This page allows the owner to keep a **record** of experiences over a number of years. By doing so he/she can see in retrospect **(1) the frequency** with which experiences occurred, **(2) their significance or impact**, and by implication the **development of intercultural awareness** that has taken place over time.

Language and intercultural experience

Here you can put down whether you exchange letters with somebody in a foreign language, notes on foreign stays, foreign jobs. Put here also any foreign language certificates and diplomas you have been awarded.

CZECH REPUBLIC: Upper secondary

This page provides the owner with suggestions and space to make notes about intercultural experiences. It would be helpful to remind the owner to date his/her entries.

The owner must **identify, reflect on** and **analyse** intercultural experiences in order to be able to write about them.

ATTESTATION

Attestation of a language learning stay in a region where the language is spoken

Language

In (country, place)

From: (date)
To:

Type of stay:

- attending a state/private school
- attending a language school
- staying as a guest in a family (perhaps on a holiday exchange programme)
- short-term work experience
- work experience
- other

Comments:

Place/date:

**Signature of school/
institution/family:**

SWITZERLAND: Learners 15 +

The process of attestation with which this page is concerned confirms the importance of experiences gained through visits abroad. It provides a focus for **reflection** on experience.

ATTESTATION

Attestation of playing host to a foreign language speaking guest from a partner school, institution or family

Language spoken by guest

Place of residence of guest

Length of guest's stay from: _____ to: _____

Place of guest's stay: _____

Purpose of guest's stay

- holiday as family guest
- holiday exchange
- as guest in the family while attending a state/private school/language school
- as guest in the family while gaining short-term work experience at:

- as guest in the family while working for:

- other:

Comments:

Place/date:

Signature of school/institution/family:

SWITZERLAND: Learners 15 +

Here attestation is a means of reminding the owner of the important learning gains that can be made by **interacting with speakers of other languages**, whether at home or abroad.

ATTESTATION

Attestation of participation in a sustained correspondence with a foreign-language-speaking pen friend

Mother tongue of pen friend:

Name of pen friend:

Place of residence of pen friend:

Length of correspondence from: _____ to:

Intensity of correspondence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ one letter per month▪ one letter every six months
Type of correspondence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ correspondence between schools or classes▪ correspondence initiated at school and continued privately▪ personal correspondence
Language of correspondence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ only in the language of the pen friend▪ each writing in his/her own language▪ mixed (sometimes in the language of the pen friend, sometimes in own language)

Comments:

Place/date:	Signature of school/institution/penfriend:
_____	_____

SWITZERLAND: Learners 15 +

Here the process of attestation highlights the potential importance of interaction at a distance via a pen-friendship. The owner must **reflect** on the language that dominates in the relationship and the **frequency** and **nature** of the correspondence.

Information about important linguistic and intercultural experiences

This is the place for you to give information about important intercultural experiences and activities which have contributed to widening your knowledge of other countries and the people, society and culture of foreign language areas. The information can be organized as you wish: separated according to language or chronologically.

Intercultural experiences (encounters with the country, culture and speakers of the language)

Other activities which have contributed to a greater knowledge of the society and culture (art, music, literature, history, media etc.)

Practical use of the language in specific situations (work, study, school, free time, with friends and acquaintances)

Important pieces of work and projects in a foreign language.

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SWITZERLAND: Learners 15 +

The page gives the owner **freedom to write about** significant features of his/her experience in learning about another culture. A number of prompts are given to help the owner focus his/her thoughts on the **variety** and **frequency** of intercultural experiences. The prompts also **draw attention to** the different ways in which learners come into contact with different cultures.

Language and intercultural experiences

Country	Travel (√)	Study (√)	Work (√)	Language and intercultural experiences

IRELAND: Adult migrants (A1-A2 level)

This page is designed to activate ELP owners' thoughts about experiences they have had in different countries and with different languages.

Not that the **location** of the experience is identified in terms of context as well as country.

Language and intercultural experiences

The new and interesting things I noticed when travelling or staying in other countries

Country:	Date from:	Staying with friends or family	Travel	Study	Work
Language:	To:	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)
Cultural differences I experienced:					

Country:	Date from:	Staying with friends or family	Travel	Study	Work
Language:	To:	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)
Cultural differences I experienced:					

Country:	Date from:	Staying with friends or family	Travel	Study	Work
Language:	To:	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)
Cultural differences I experienced:					

MILESTONE: Young adult /adult migrants (Ireland, Netherlands, Germany, Finland, Sweden)

This page allows the owner to record successive language/intercultural experiences. It is based on the articulation of **cultural differences** noted by the owner in **different contexts** of engagement with others.

CULTURAL AWARENESS

Here I can record information about cultural behaviour that I notice or learn during the course. I can also note cultural attitudes and behaviour that I don't fully understand at this time.

In the school

Cultural attitudes and behaviour I have noticed and can now understand (1)	Date	Other cultural attitudes and behaviour that I do not fully understand (2)	Date

In the world outside

Cultural attitudes and behaviour I have noticed and can now understand	Date	Other cultural attitudes and behaviour that I do not fully understand	Date

In the workplace

Cultural attitudes and behaviour I have noticed and can now understand	Date	Other cultural attitudes and behaviour that I do not fully understand	Date

MILESTONE: Young adult /adult migrants (Ireland, Netherlands, Germany, Finland, Sweden)

On this page the owner records intercultural events that occur in three different contexts – school, society and workplace – and **(1) are comprehensible** and **(2) still cause uncertainty**. By dating observations the owner captures the chronological development of his/her intercultural awareness and understanding.

Language:

Activities carried out

Books I have read
(titles, authors, number of pages)

Journals I have consulted
(titles, frequency, media)

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Films viewed in the original version or plays in the language
(type, title, actors)

Exchanges with speakers of this language
(by correspondence, telephone, e-mail ...)

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FRANCE: Adolescents and adults

By using the **prompts** provided – books, journals, films, plays and exchanges – the owner can discover the **range** and **diversity** of interaction that he/she has already had with the target language culture. It would be helpful to encourage the owner to date entries.

Language:

Activities carried out

Presentations carried out in the language

(subjects, audience, media used)

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Participation in conferences or publications

(themes, media used, type of presentation, nature of your contribution)

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Participation in language clubs

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Other

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FRANCE: Adolescents and adults

Here **prompts** are used again to raise the owner's **awareness** of the different situations in which intercultural experience may be gained. The owner is required to **reflect** on his/her experiences under the headings provided.

Exchanges and study visits

Take some time to reflect on what you expect from specific aspects of your exchange (e.g. school, host family, leisure time, personal development, etc.).

<p>One month after your arrival write a brief description of an interesting, puzzling, irritating or otherwise striking event which has happened to you. Next, try to interpret or explain the experience. [Date: _____]</p>	<p>Re-read your journal after 2/3 weeks and write about your experience and about how you reacted to it at the time. What do you think now of your reaction? Has your opinion changed? Can you explain why? [Date: _____]</p>
<p>(Continue on the back if you need more space)</p>	<p>(Continue on the back if you need more space)</p>

This page was devised by Michael Byram to help students to reflect on the cultural dimension of an exchange or study visit

Although the page is very simply designed, it has the **recursive structure** that is essential if the process of reflection is to be sustained over time.

Periods of residence, study or work experience abroad

If possible write each entry in the language to which it refers

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CercleS: University students

This page allows the owner to record experiences abroad.

ELP owners should be encouraged to include the following information in their accounts:

- **Where** the experience took place (street, café, workplace etc.)
- **How** the owner felt as a result of the experience (offended, embarrassed, etc.)
- **How** the owner or other person reacted to the event (explained, apologized, etc.)
- The **result** or **importance** of the event for the owner
- Whether he/she is now **confident** about dealing with such a situation in the future

Ways in which I have engaged with the culture(s) associated with the second/foreign language(s) I know

Use this page to keep a record of the cultural engagement that arises from your second/foreign language learning and use – for example, with film, theatre and dance; art and architecture; newspapers and magazines; radio and television; novels and poetry; fashion; cuisine (1). Note down cultural similarities and differences that have struck you. If possible write each entry in the language to which it refers (2).

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CercleS: University students

This page **raises the owner’s awareness** of the ways in which he/she can engage directly with the culture of the target language country or society **(1)** .The owner is encouraged to make **comparisons** between the target language culture and the mother tongue culture **(2)**.

Attestation

Language learning experience and language use in a region where the language is officially spoken.

Please check where applicable

- Language instruction (class or private instruction)
- Autonomous language learning (Tandem, multimedia learning center, distance learning, etc.)
- Participation in an exchange programme
- University studies or professional training in the language
- Short-term work experience
- Extended work experience
- Holidays
- Guest in a family or other social group
- Other

Family name _____ First name _____

Target foreign language _____

Dates from _____ To _____

Place _____

Institution/Company/Person _____

Information about the language learning experience (e.g. content, goals, frequency)

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Comments

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Place, date _____

Attested by (Institution/Person) _____

Signature (or stamp of school of institution) _____

ELC: University learners

This page **attests experiences** gained from residence abroad. The structure of the page shapes the information given and the accompanying reflective process.

My significant intercultural experiences

Report on meetings and experiences with other cultures in your own land or abroad that have contributed to broadening your intercultural understanding of another language area. Give a few relevant examples.

Think about:

surprises, misunderstandings, differences, and what was interesting, difficult, enriching

- About encounters and contacts with speakers of another language in everyday situations, while studying, while working, and in your spare time
- About films, books and media
- About the history and intellectual life of the other culture

What have you learned about the other culture or about yourself? How have these experiences influenced your attitude toward culture and language?

ELC: University students

This page encourages the owner to **reflect** on previous intercultural experience in order to identify the **significant features** of the experiences. The owner then considers those significant features in relation to him/herself and articulates the **consequences of the experiences**.

My mobility stay

Note here, using especially relevant examples, your experience and reflection on the Checklists for mobility and intercultural competence before, during and after your stay. Through this, you can develop your ability for intercultural communication and become more aware of the various stages of adaptation that you go through during a mobility stay.

Report on your experiences regularly and include the dates each time

How do I prepare myself for a mobility stay? Which aspects of the Checklists that could be important for a successful mobility stay was I already aware of before my stay?

How have my attitudes and reactions to the statements in the Checklists changes during my stay? Which examples can I give in connection with my preconceptions, expectations, and attitudes that have surprised, interested or displeased me:

- in the country, with people, about the language?
- in everyday life and while studying?
- in relation to my feelings?
- concerning my behaviour and my contacts?

Since my return have my attitudes changed regarding the statements in the Checklists?

ELC: University students

This page is used in conjunction with checklists that itemize the demands made by a period of residence abroad and the personal competences required of students. By examining the checklists, the student is made **aware** of the challenge he/she will face in living abroad and of his/her **strengths and weaknesses** in relation to this challenge.

Returning to the activity after the period of residence abroad, the student uses the checklists again to **review** the changes that have taken place in his/her attitudes, understanding, competence etc. and provides **examples** to illustrate these changes.

European Language Portfolio

Learning how to learn

The ELP and learning how to learn

According to the *Principles and Guidelines* (Council for Cultural Cooperation 2000), the ELP “reflects the Council of Europe’s concern with ... the development of the language learner [and] the development of the capacity for independent language learning”. The ELP is “a tool to promote learner autonomy” and has “a pedagogic function to guide and support the learner in the process of language learning”. The language passport “allows for self-assessment”, while the language biography “facilitates the learner’s involvement in planning, reflecting upon and assessing his or her learning process and progress”.

Learning how to learn and the *Common European Framework*

According to the *Common European Framework* (Council of Europe 2001, pp.11f.), the general competences of an individual comprise:

- *knowledge* – declarative knowledge resulting from experience and from more formal learning;
- *skills* and *know-how* – which depend more on procedures than on declarative knowledge;
- *existential competence* – “the sum of the individual characteristics, personality traits and attitudes which concern, for example, self-image and one’s view of others and willingness to engage with other people in social interaction”;
- *ability to learn* – which “mobilises existential competence, declarative knowledge and skills, and draws on various types of competence”.

In its most general sense, *savoir-apprendre* is the ability to observe and participate in new experiences and to incorporate new knowledge into existing knowledge, modifying the latter where necessary. Language learning abilities are developed in the course of the experience of learning. They enable the learner to deal more effectively and independently with new language learning challenges, to see what options exist and to make better use of opportunities. Ability to learn has several components, such as language and communication awareness; general phonetic skills; study skills; and heuristic skills. (ibid., pp.106f.)

The CEF notes five ways in which “learners may (be expected/required to) develop their *study skills* and *heuristic skills* and their acceptance of *responsibility for their own learning* [...]”:

- a) simply as a ‘spin-off’ from language learning and teaching, without any special planning or provision;
- b) by progressively transferring responsibility for learning from the teacher to the pupils/students and encouraging them to reflect on their learning and to share this experience with other learners;
- c) by systematically raising the learners’ awareness of the learning/teaching processes in which they are participating;
- d) by engaging learners as participants in experimentation with different methodological options;
- e) by getting learners to recognise their own cognitive style and to develop their own learning strategies accordingly.” (ibid., p.149)

Items b) – e) in this list describe ways of developing and exploiting the pedagogical function of the ELP.

Learning to learn and self-assessment

Self-assessment is fundamental to the ELP. The self-assessment grid in the language passport provides an overview of L2 proficiency that can be updated at regular intervals, for example, at the end of a school year or a university semester, or after a period of residence abroad. It thus serves a summative function similar to an end-of-year or end-of-course examination. The goal-setting and self-assessment checklists in the language biography, on the other hand, serve a formative function, since they are designed to accompany learning from day to day, week to week and month to month.

The twofold self-assessment function of the ELP provides a formal framework for pedagogical approaches that explicitly pursue the development of learner autonomy: learning to learn and learning to assess oneself are two sides of the same coin. The sample pages that follow propose various ways of helping learners to record and reflect on the development of their learning skills.

Annotated examples

The twenty-three annotated examples that follow are derived from nine validated ELPs that between them cater for language learners from primary level through to university/adult. Some pages focus on learning to learn a particular language, while others are concerned with learning to learn languages in general. Some pages can quite easily be adapted to make them suitable for use by age groups other than the one they were designed for. Many of the pages are designed to be used recursively; most of them will need to be duplicated a number of times if they are to accompany an extended period of language learning/use.

ELP developers are free to use these pages as they stand. However, before importing them into a new ELP they should review them in terms of (i) the above discussion and (ii) the overall design of their own ELP.

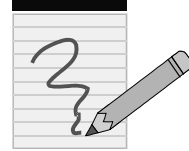
References

- Council for Cultural Cooperation, 2000: *European Language Portfolio (ELP): principles and guidelines*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe (DGIV/EDU/LANG (2000) 33). (<http://culture.coe.int/portfolio>)
- Council of Europe, 2001: *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

What I want to learn in English (1)

.....

Draw a picture!



IRELAND: Primary migrant

(1) Supports **reflection** on existing knowledge and **identification** of personal learning needs. Begins to **raise awareness** of the individual nature of language learning. In a very simple way, passes some of the **responsibility** for decision making to the learner.

Now I can talk about

Draw a picture!



My new words (1) (2)

IRELAND: Primary migrant

- (1) Encourages **reflection** on learning and the **articulation** of newly learnt items.
- (2) Supports the development of **personal strategies** for collecting and organizing new lexical items.

My general aims and reflections		
Language		...../...../20.....
I am learning this language because (1)		

In this language I want to be able to (2)		



Things I like doing in language class (3)		

Things I am good at (4)		

Things I find difficult (4)		

IRELAND: Lower and upper secondary

- (1) Supports **reflection** on reason(s) for learning and, by implication, the ‘macro’ objectives of language learning.
- (2) Provides a focus for **target-setting**.
- (3) Helps owner to identify personal **cognitive style**.
- (4) **Raises awareness** of personal strengths and weaknesses in terms of both learning and language.

Setting goals and thinking about learning	
	Language
...../...../ 20.....	 My next target (1)
...../...../ 20.....	How well did I achieve it (2)
...../...../ 20.....	What have I learnt about myself or about learning? (3)
...../...../ 20.....	 My next target (4)
...../...../ 20.....	How well did I achieve it? (5)
...../...../ 20.....	What have I learnt about myself or about learning? (6)

IRELAND: Lower and upper secondary

- (1) The learner takes **responsibility** for identifying new learning targets.
- (2) **Reflection** on learning and **self-assessment**.
- (3) **Reflection** on learning, personal **cognitive style**, use of **strategies**.
- (4) Awareness of **existing knowledge** is used as the basis for identifying the next target.
- (5) **Self-assessment** in relation to specified target.
- (6) **Reflection** on the **learning experience** in order to identify, for example, personal learning traits, cognitive style, effective use of strategies, etc.

How I solve communication problems

	Language
Problem (1)	...../...../20.....
Solution (2)	
Problem (3)	...../...../20.....
Solution	
Problem	...../...../20.....
Solution	

IRELAND: Lower and upper secondary

(1) **Reflection** on learning and performance via **articulation** of a communication problem.
 (2) Using experience and **experimentation** to find a possible solution.
 (3) The recursive nature of learning is emphasized in the repetition of the activity: **reflection** on the same or a new problem; finding another possible solution.

Methods I use to learn languages	
	Language
What I do and why it helps me (1)	...../...../20.....
.....	
What I do and why it helps me	...../...../20.....
.....	
What I do and why it helps me	...../...../20.....
.....	
What I do and why it helps me	...../...../20.....
.....	
What I do and why it helps me	...../...../20.....
.....	

IRELAND: Lower and upper secondary

(1) Reflection and analysis of personal cognitive style.

The repetition of this activity, with a place to note the date of reflection, allows the owner to:

- record his/her **reflections** over a long period of time;
- review his/her **development of learning awareness** over time;
- gradually identify, with increasing accuracy, the **appropriate learning approaches and strategies** for his/her **cognitive style**.

My plans

What I want to achieve, what I want to improve, what I want to learn in a foreign language.

Think about what you are good at and what you need to work harder on **(1) (2)**.

Write down what you want to achieve **(3)**, e.g. *to be able to write a one-page letter about myself, to be able to write an answer to an advertisement, to be able to fill in a questionnaire or an application form in a foreign language, to learn to quickly search for the information in a text and on the Internet.*

CZECH REPUBLIC: Upper secondary

This page brings together:

- (1) Reflection** on individual strengths and weakness, which includes
- (2) Self-assessment**
- (3) Target-setting**

The open structure of the page is constrained by prompts designed to help the owner to identify and articulate learning targets.

My objectives

Formulate the objectives and plans for language learning; the pages can be organised individually.

What do I want to learn? **(1)** How do I want to learn? **(2)**

Why do I want to learn a language, what do I need to be able to do in it, and how would I like to go about it? Am I learning the language for my job, for travel, or for study? Is it more important for me to understand, to read literature or to write? Do I want to attend a course, learn in a tandem partnership, or have a stay in a foreign language area? **(3)**

SWITZERLAND: Learners 15 +

This open page begins with **target setting (1)** and the identification of personal **learning styles/strategies (2)**. The learner proceeds to **(3) reflect on** his/her reasons for learning and priorities in learning.

Learning

When I want to learn something new I like to: (1)

	Yes √	No X	Don't know ?
Hear it first, then say it			
Say it again and again to myself			
Use it in class with my teacher			
Use it with other people in my class			
Use it outside class			
Write it in my notes			
Use a tape and listen to it again and again			

My favourite ways of learning are: (2)

IRELAND: Adult migrant (A1 level)

- (1) Simple prompts are provided as a means of stimulating **reflection on learning**. The language used in the prompts is basic and refers to concrete learning activities.
- (2) Learners use the prompts provided and, where possible, their own **reflection to articulate** their personal learning approaches.

Learning

I learn best by: (1)

	Yes	No	Don't know ?
Hearing new information, then repeating it			
Repeating it to myself again and again			
Using it in a real situation as soon as possible			
Writing and memorizing it from my notes			
Recording it on a tape and listening to it at home			
Writing it in my notes and reviewing my notes from time to time			

My favourite learning activities are: (2)

IRELAND: Adult migrant (A2 level)

The prompts on this page assume a somewhat higher level of proficiency than the prompts on the previous page. They support

- (1) **Reflection** on the owner's personal **cognitive style**
- (2) Specification of personal **learning approaches/strategies**.

Learning

The most effective learning activities for me, in order of effectiveness are:
(1 = most effective, 10 = least effective) (1) (2)

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

My strategies for preparing a writing task are: (3)

My strategies for preparing an oral interaction or presentation are: (3)

IRELAND: Adult migrant (B1-B2 level)

Following **reflection** at regular intervals, learners rank their personal learning approaches. This helps them to

- (1) identify their personal cognitive style;
- (2) track the development of their cognitive awareness over time;
- (3) develop their ability to **analyse** task demands and apply appropriate **personal strategies** in performing the task.

Learning outside the classroom

Good ways I have found to **learn** or **use** my target language outside class
(e.g. *cinema, sports, reading ...*)

Situation (1)	Language I can learn or use in this situation (2)

IRELAND: Adult migrant

This page promotes:

- (1) **reflection** on language use in different contexts;
- (2) articulation of **personal strategies** based on existing knowledge and **awareness of appropriate language use.**

My learning diary

Date: from _____ to _____

In the past week I have learnt: (1)

Topics _____

New vocabulary _____

Speaking _____

Reading _____

Writing _____

I now know about : (2) _____

I need to work more on: (2) _____

My next learning goal: (3) _____

Date: _____

IRELAND: Adult migrant

This learning diary promotes:

- (1) Reflection
- (2) Self-assessment
- (3) Target-setting

Maintaining a dated record allows the learner to review:

- progress in language learning;
- the development of his/her learning skills;
- the growth of his/her awareness of learning;
- the effectiveness of different approaches and methods.

THIS COURSE

Here I think about and record what I expect from this course, from my teacher and from myself.

What I expect from this course	Date

What I expect from the teacher	Date

What I expect from myself	Date

MILESTONE: Young adult /adult migrant (Ireland, Netherlands, Germany, Finland, Sweden)

This page entails **reflection** on and **articulation** of the owner's perceptions of the **roles** and **responsibilities** of both learner and teacher.

This page allows the learner to:

- develop greater **awareness** of the process of **learning**;
- assume greater **responsibility** for the learning process;
- **assess** his/her individual effort and engagement during learning.

LEARNING CONTRACT

The learning contract records agreement between the teacher and me.

1	<hr/> <hr/>	Date <hr/>
----------	-------------	----------------------

2	<hr/> <hr/>	Date <hr/>
----------	-------------	----------------------

3	<hr/> <hr/>	Date <hr/>
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4	<hr/> <hr/>	Date <hr/>
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5	<hr/> <hr/>	Date <hr/>
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6	<hr/> <hr/>	Date <hr/>
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MILESTONE: Young adult /adult migrant (Ireland, Netherlands, Germany, Finland, Sweden)

This individual learning contract evolves during the process of learning. It is the result of **discovery, reflection** and the **development of greater awareness** on the part of the learner. As the learner gains more understanding of the process in which he/she is engaged, he/she takes more **responsibility** for his/her learning and enters into an ongoing agreement with the teacher.

THE WAYS I LEARN BEST

Here I think about and record the ways I learn best and I describe my learning approaches for different purposes.

What I have to learn (1)	How I learn this best (2)	Notes
Example: New vocabulary	Write it in my notes Use a tape to hear it again and again	I need to learn more specialized vocabulary for work

My favourite time and place for learning is:

MILESTONE: Young adult /adult migrant (Ireland, Netherlands, Germany, Finland, Sweden)

This page requires the learner to:

- (1) **identify** and **analyse** his/her learning needs
- (2) **reflect** on previous experience, which allows the learner to specify the most effective strategies to meet those learning needs.

GOALS AND SELF-ASSESSMENT

Here I can record my learning goals and learning experiences, then assess whether I have achieved these goals and decide how to proceed.

Date (1)	My learning goal:
How will I know if I have reached my goal? (2)	
My learning experience (3)	
Self-assessment: Have I reached my goal? Indicate on the line	YES _____ NO
Date of self-assessment (1)	
If my goal has not been achieved, what I must do now to achieve it (4)	

Date	My learning goal:
How will I know if I have reached my goal?	
My learning experience	
Self-assessment: Have I reached my goal? Indicate on the line	YES _____ NO
Date of self-assessment	
If my goal has not been achieved, what I must do now to achieve it	

MILESTONE: Young adult /adult migrant (Ireland, Netherlands, Germany, Finland, Sweden)

Setting individual learning targets is fundamental to the development of learner autonomy. The important features of this page are:

- (1) the insertion of a **date** so that the learner has a clear and precise record of targets and achievements;
- (2) **reflection** on how to **assess** learning achievement;
- (3) **reflection** on the **process** of learning;
- (4) new **target** set on the basis of existing achievement and knowledge.

Language learning experiences that I particularly value and/or that made a strong impression on me

If possible write each entry in the language to which it refers

.....

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CercleS: University students

This page encourages **reflection** on previous learning in order to identify language-learning experiences that were important, effective, memorable or influential for the owner.

My next language learning target

Language	
Learning target (1) <i>(Use the self-assessment grid in the language passport and the checklists in the appendix to formulate your next learning target as precisely as possible.)</i>	
How much time can I devote each day/week to achieving my target? (2)	
When shall I begin? (3)	When do I plan to finish? (3)
How do I intend to achieve my target? (4) <i>For example, can I work alone or do I need to work with other people?</i>	
What learning materials do I need? (4)	
How shall I know whether or not I have achieved my target? (5) <i>(For example, can I take a test or set and correct a test for myself? Or shall I need to ask my teacher, another learner or a native speaker to assess me? Or can I depend entirely on my own judgement?)</i>	
Review of learning progress on or near my target date: (6) <i>Have I achieved my target? In working towards my target have I learnt anything new about (i) the target language or (ii) language learning? What am I going to do with what I have learned?</i>	

CercleS: University students

Concerned with setting learning targets, this page combines the following features:

- (1) Encouragement to the learner to use the CEF as a basis for setting new targets
- (2) Consideration of the influence of **available time** on the achievement of a target
- (3) Dates for **self-monitoring**
- (4) Decisions about **working methods**
- (5) **Assessment** of learning
- (6) **Reflection** on learning

Goal-setting and Self-assessment Checklist

Language: _____

Skill:  LISTENING

This is a checklist of **LISTENING** skills drawn from the illustrative scales in the Common European Framework. Use this checklist (a) to set personal learning goals and (b) to record your progress in achieving these goals. Decide what evaluative criteria you want to use in the three righthand columns, and enter dates to record your progress. For example:

I can do this *with a lot of help, **with a little help, *** on my own

I can do this *with a lot of effort, **under normal circumstances, ***easily in any context

Evaluative criteria: * _____ ** _____ *** _____

Level A1	My next goal	*	**	***
I can understand basic words and phrases about myself and my family when people speak slowly and clearly				
I can understand simple instructions, directions and comments				
I can understand the names of everyday objects in my immediate environment				
I can understand basic greetings and routine phrases (e.g., please, thank you)				
I can understand simple questions about myself when people speak slowly and clearly				
I can understand numbers and prices				
I can understand days of the week and months of the year				
I can understand times and dates				

Level A2	My next goal	*	**	***
I can understand what people say to me in simple everyday conversation when they speak slowly and clearly				
I can understand everyday words and phrases relating to areas of immediate personal relevance (e.g., family, student life, local environment, employment)				
I can understand everyday words and phrases relating to areas of personal interest (e.g., hobbies, social life, holidays, music, TV, films, travel)				
I can grasp the essential elements of clear simple messages and recorded announcements (e.g., on the telephone, at the railway station)				
I can understand simple phrases, questions and information relating to basic personal needs (e.g., shopping, eating out, going to the doctor)				
I can follow simple directions (e.g., how to get from X to Y) by foot or public transport				
I can usually identify the topic of conversation around me when people speak slowly and clearly				
I can follow changes of topic in factual TV news items and form an idea of the main content				
I can identify the main point of TV news items reporting events, accidents, etc., if there is visual support				

CercleS: University student

This page provides an examples of **goal-setting** and **self-assessment** checklists based on the illustrative scales of the CEF.

Learning how to learn

The four checklists that follow focus on different aspects of the language learning process. They are designed to help you identify your existing strengths as a language learner and set personal targets for developing your learning skills. The checklists should be reviewed at intervals (perhaps each time you achieve a learning target; certainly once every term or semester). Use a combination of ticks and dates to plot your progress. You will probably find it helpful to discuss some elements in the checklists with your teacher and/or with other learners

ATTITUDE AND MOTIVATION

Can I ...

	Never (✓)	Sometimes (✓)	Always (✓)	New target (✓)	Target achieved (date)
<i>analyse and discuss my motivation for learning?</i>					
<i>think positively about different learning tasks?</i>					
<i>use effective strategies to concentrate on learning tasks?</i>					
<i>adopt a positive attitude to tasks that I do not enjoy?</i>					
<i>make effective use of my weekly timetable</i>					

GENERAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Can I ...

	Never (✓)	Sometimes (✓)	Always (✓)	New target (✓)	Target achieved (date)
<i>identify my strengths and weaknesses in the target language generally?</i>					
<i>identify my learning strengths and weaknesses?</i>					
<i>analyse the language and learning demands of a particular learning assignment?</i>					
<i>set short-term learning objectives?</i>					
<i>identify suitable media/materials for learning?</i>					
<i>plan a timescale for my learning objectives?</i>					
<i>assess my progress in relation to these objectives?</i>					
<i>use reference materials effectively (dictionary, grammar etc.)?</i>					
<i>use effective strategies to learn and memorize new information?</i>					

Learning how to learn

FORMAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Can I ...

	Never (✓)	Sometimes (✓)	Always (✓)	New Target (✓)	Target achieved (date)
<i>identify key words and concepts?</i>					
<i>take effective notes from texts and lectures?</i>					
<i>categorize new vocabulary?</i>					
<i>organize learning materials by topic, theme etc.?</i>					
<i>make a schematic plan of or "mind-map" an oral or written presentation?</i>					
<i>analyse and edit a first written draft?</i>					
<i>use corrections to advance my learning?</i>					
<i>practise pronunciation and intonation with good results?</i>					

COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES

Can I ...

	Never (✓)	Sometimes (✓)	Always (✓)	New target (✓)	Target achieved (date)
<i>learn from working with others?</i>					
<i>contribute to a working group?</i>					
<i>carry out my responsibilities in a working group?</i>					
<i>help to identify and assign particular roles in a working group?</i>					

CercleS: University students

This and the preceding page provide examples of checklists designed to prompt learners to **reflect** on their learning skills, strategies and abilities.

My language learning biography

Here give a description of your language learning experiences for the languages you know. This information may be useful to other people (e.g. teachers, employers), and will provide a basis on which you may plan your future learning activities.

Which languages have I learned?

- Languages that I learned at school or in courses (Give the duration, number of hours, goals, content, teaching methods, textbooks, and where appropriate the kinds of examination.)
- Languages that I grew up with
- Language areas where I have lived
- Use of language while working, in training, studying, travelling, and in my circle of acquaintances
- Language contact through television, radio, the cinema, art, music, books, the press, the Internet, etc.

How have I experienced learning?

- How have I learned well and with pleasure? What was particularly important and enriching? **(1)**
- In the framework of language learning and the languages I have learned or am learning, what has demotivated me?

The worksheets can be presented chronologically like a curriculum vitae, or separated according to language. Please give the number of years of learning and where possible also the dates.

ELC: University students

This page emphasizes the **plurilingual** principle of the ELP. It also raises the learner's awareness of the number of languages he/she has engaged with in different ways and at different levels of proficiency.

The articulation of success in language learning **(1)** can be used as the basis for the identification of **personal learning strategies** and the setting of new **learning targets**.

My learning journal

Document your learning step by step for each of the languages you are currently learning. This process enables you to become more aware of learning objectives and learning paths and to develop learning strategies. After the learning activity, you should return to the goals you set for yourself in order to check on your learning success. This should improve your capacity to learn on your own.

Date	My learning goal (1) At the end of this period of learning, what exactly would I like to be able to do in the language?	Learning activities (2) What do I do to reach my goal?	Goal achieved Yes/No (with date) (3)	Evaluation of my work (3) What was positive about my work and what did not work so well?	Reinforcing learning (2) What do I do to go over what I have learned and to reinforce it?
<div data-bbox="558 651 1650 1192" style="border: 2px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p>ELC: University students</p> <p>This learning journal supports the learner in systematic and ongoing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Goal-setting (2) Reflection (3) Self-assessment <p>If used regularly, the journal provides an accurate record of the process of learning. By dating* each entry the learner can see whether goals have been over-ambitious, whether some aspects of learning take longer than others, and so on.</p> <p>Reflection on reinforcing learning emphasizes the recursive nature of learning and allows learners to decide how to use their existing knowledge and skills in pursuit of their next learning goal.</p> </div>					