



# Online CEF-Based Assessment of Oral Proficiency for Intercultural Professional Communication

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# 1. CEFcult, the sequel

- With CEFcult we want to contribute to the ongoing validation of both CEFR and INCA
  - A modular, customizable web-environment that allows for self-, peer-, and expert assessment, integrating linguistic and intercultural aspects of professional communication in assignments and assessment scales
- Portfolio-based assessment
  - Individuals: eliciting and sustain an *internal conversation*
  - Organisations: talent sourcing, attracting and retaining a multicultural workforce
  - HEi: inform vocational language training programmes

## 2. From WebCEF (2006 – 2009) ...

- WebCEF established a social learning community for *self, peer and expert* assessment in which both productive and interactive performance in a foreign language is video recorded and online displayed to be assessed by means of CEFR-scales:
  - Linguistic competence (oral production and interaction)
  - Sociolinguistic competence
- <http://www.webcef.eu/>

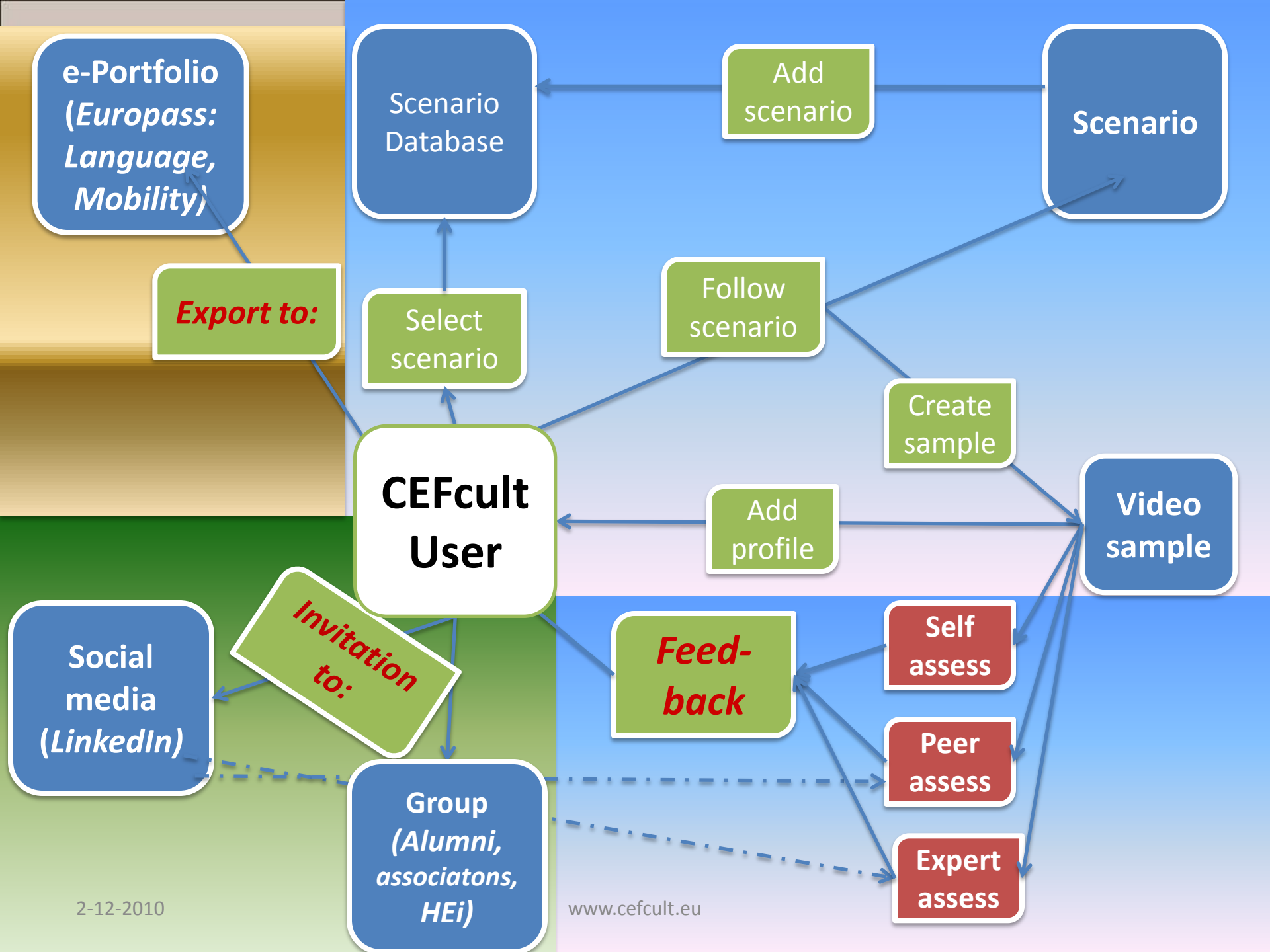


*Collaborative assessment  
of oral language skills  
through the web*

## ... to CEFcult (2009 – 2011)

### *Intercultural Communicative Competence Assessment*

- ✓ Making use of social media & web 2.0: a safe and effective learning environment (curricular, extra-curricular)
- ✓ Allowing a set of communication tasks (scenarios) through which learners can assess their speaking skills for intercultural professional purposes in different European languages
- ✓ Map the road to a tested and viable model for online collaborative assessment among HEi, enterprises and various partnership brokers.



e-Portfolio  
(Europass:  
Language,  
Mobility)

Export to:

Scenario  
Database

Add  
scenario

Scenario

Select  
scenario

Follow  
scenario

Create  
sample

**CEFcult  
User**

Add  
profile

Video  
sample

Social  
media  
(LinkedIn)

Invitation  
to:

Feed-  
back

Self  
assess

Group  
(Alumni,  
associatons,  
HEi)

Peer  
assess

Expert  
assess

### 3. Bridging CEFR and INCA

- INCA a criterion based assessment model, links Byram’s framework for *Intercultural Communicative Competence* to the learning needs of the industry (2001-2004)
- Outcome: judgment to what extent the 6 INCA criteria which include value systems, are developed and put into action (Full – Intermediate - Basic)
  - *Respect for otherness*
  - *Ambiguity tolerance*
  - *Knowledge discovery*
  - *Empathy*
  - *Behavioral flexibility*
  - *Communicative Awareness*
- Challenge: “*INCA tasks and grid are tentative* “



# - INCA based scenarios



## Working in a multinational team. Dialogue

Task 1 - "Finding information"

Scenario progress  
Total 10 tasks



### Annotations

applies to entire sample

save new comment

reset form

- Simulations designed in a way to guarantee fairness, reliability and accuracy
- Work-sample approach: a selected real-world task transformed into assessment task
- Challenge: lack of definition in INCA descriptors

00:00:13 1 of 1

add start point    add end point

clear go clear

### Knowledge discovery

Original descriptors		Custom descriptors
<input type="radio"/>	<b>Level 3 Full</b>	Has a deep knowledge of other cultures. Develops his knowledge through systematic research-like activities and direct questioning and can, where this is sought, offer advice and support to others in work situations.
<input type="radio"/>	<b>Level 2 Intermediate</b>	Has recourse to some information sources in anticipation of everyday encounters with the other cultures, and modifies and builds on information so acquired, in the light of actual experience. Is motivated by curiosity to develop his knowledge of his own culture as perceived by others.
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<b>Level 1 Basic</b>	Draws on random general knowledge and minimal factual research about other cultures. Learns by discovery and is willing to modify perceptions but not yet systematic.
<input type="radio"/>	<b>clear selection</b>	

### Summary

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# - ODIS, Intercultural Competence Assessment-approach

The rating of performances poses additional challenges due to different value systems. Recommended process:

- **O**bserve
- **D**escribe
- **I**nterpret
- **S**uspend your judgment, check other perspectives before
- E**valuating

*(S.Ting Toomey)*

e.g. *'I am honest':*

- *Considered a quality in low context cultures: 'we say what we mean, we mean what we say'*
- *Considered 'blunt' in high context cultures where a meaning is stated in an indirect way*

## - Pilot Leuven 'Screening interview' 1<sup>st</sup> experiences (October, November, December 2010)

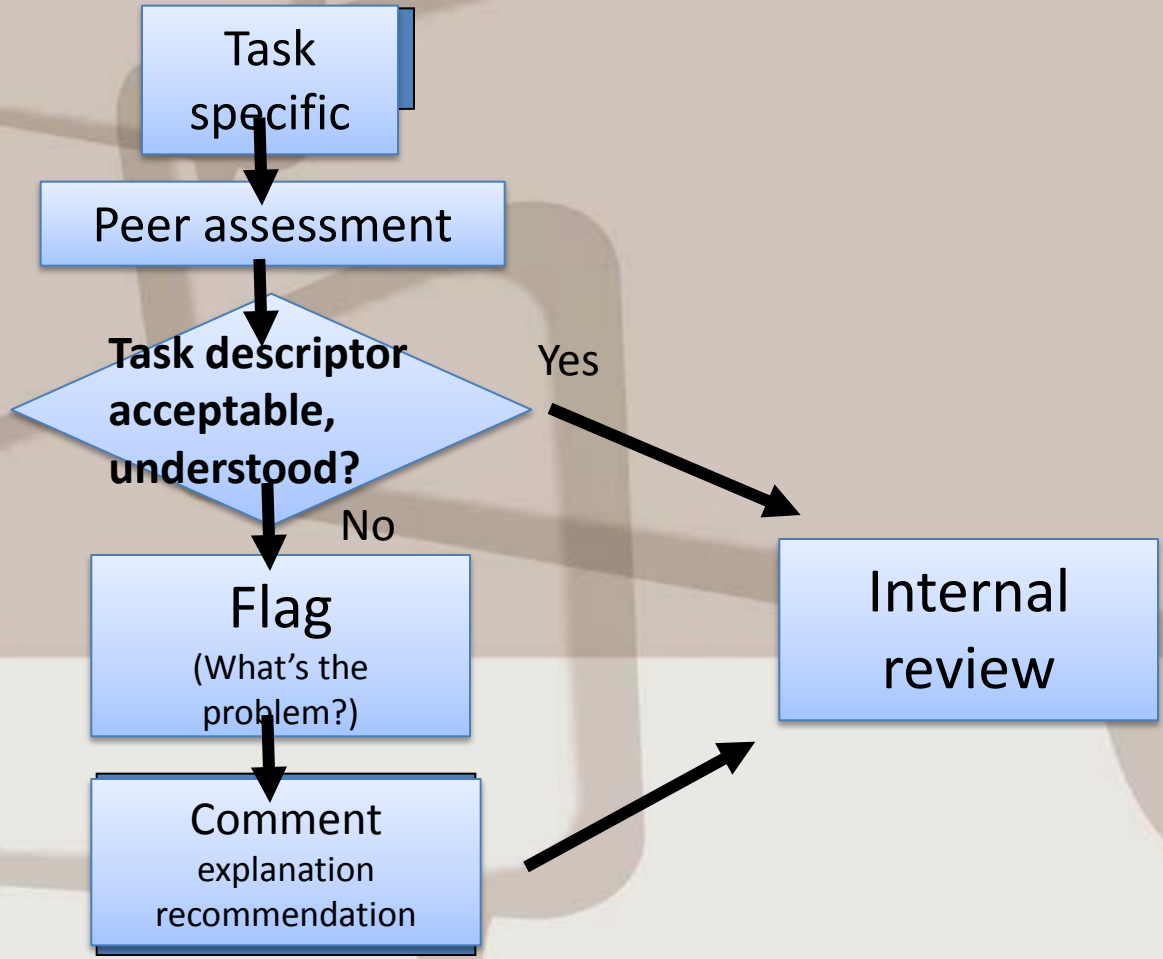
### Positives

- Descriptors are written generically, can be used with many tasks
- Corresponding rating criteria determined through collaboration of language assessment specialists and (lay) stakeholders from the workplace
- Expert raters from the world of work tend to apply scales consistently, resulting in more reliable measurement.

### Critical

- Summative work-sample testing mainly indicates a degree of overall communication competency, much less in detail
- Performances may meet INCA criteria in two or more categories, making it difficult to select the one best description
- Peer reviews (student community) do not provide specific feedback to test takers about the strengths and weaknesses of their performance.

# - Task specific descriptor writing & review cycle



# 4. A Tested Model

## Specification

- Complement INCA descriptors (too abstract) with task-specific descriptors
- Experiment with INCA scales for the most meaningful feedback
- Outcomes: development of graphic profile, bank of scales

## Standard Setting

- Standardisation of judgments (evaluation): getting the levels right? Evaluating the difficulty of INCA pilots with regard to CEFR descriptors
- Deciding on further steps: benchmarking, ...

## Validation

- Test validity - Standard setting validity
- Writing a living 'CEFcult Technical manual' containing recommended usage and flexible implementation guidelines

# 5. A Viable Model

## ***e-Portfolio* based assessment:**

- 1) The emergence of new global actors will make our world more colorful and more polyvalent. There is a need for foreign languages learning, inter-personal & inter-cultural monitoring and development tools in a safe, respectful environment.
- 2) Existing ICC-assessment tools mostly address criterions and references for individual competence development; not enough the organizational needs and seldom those of development partnerships (N-S).
- 3) E-Portfolio tools must go mainstream, embedded in the internal learning and monitoring processes of companies, organizations and higher education institutions.

## Knowledge Sharing on PhD in professional circles

presenting and discussing at international and local simposia.

Integration of eportfolio and international benchmarking.

Integration of assessment platforms (WebCEF & CEFcult)

### Profile Information

- **Email Address:** yfimia@gmail.com



### My new plan

Completion date	Title	Completed
November 2010	Install Mahara in new PC	
January 2011	XII Simposio Internacional de Comunicación Social	

2 tasks

### Mahara & Moodle integration



### Europass curriculum vitae



#### Europass Curriculum Vitae

##### Personal information

Surname(s) First name(s)

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**Fimia Yoilan**

(Cuba)

yfimia@gmail.com

##### Work experience

##### Education and training

##### Personal skills and competences

Mother tongue(s)

Other language(s)

Self-assessment

**Spanish / Castilian**

**Understanding**

# References

- Peter Lenz and Raphael Berthele, **Assessment in Plurilingual and Intercultural Education**. Paper Policy Forum 'The right of learners to quality and equity in education – The role of linguistic and intercultural competences', *Geneva, Switzerland, 2-4 November 2010*
- Elisabeth Prechtl and Anne Davidson Lund, **Assessing and developing intercultural competence. Perspectives from the INCA Project** in Handbook of Intercultural Communication, Section 5, ch.22, p.467-490(2007) eBook ISBN: 978-3-11-019858-4
- John De Jong & Glyn Jones , Getting the levels right: deriving item writer guidelines from CEFR descriptors (Pearson, Item Writer Guidance-extract )
- [www.cefcult.eu](http://www.cefcult.eu) - [www.incaproject.org](http://www.incaproject.org) - <http://www.webcef.eu/>
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