AGENCY & AUTONOMY
IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Exploring the CEFR's Influence on a Japan's Courses of Study

Saturday 17 May 2025 13:40 (25 minutes)

TITLE

Exploring the CEFR's Influence on a Japan's Course of Study

RELEVANT SIG

CEFR and Language Portfolio

FORMAT

Research-oriented Oral Face-to-face presentation (25 minutes, including Q&A)

Short English description

KEYWORDS

CEFR
action-oriented approach
Course of Study

First-time presenter?

ABSTRACT

The Courses of Study (CS) for secondary schools in Japan underwent significant revisions during 2017–2018, influenced by the CEFR. These revisions introduced objectives articulated as can-do descriptors across five skill areas, with spoken interaction added as a new category. The overarching goal of these changes was to foster students' communicative competence by engaging them in meaningful, active language use.

While these revisions are seen as a progressive step, the adoption of the CEFR's descriptive scales has faced criticism. Some have argued that the philosophical foundations of the CEFR were not fully considered during the adaptation process, raising questions about its compatibility with Japan's educational context.

This presentation focuses on the Course of Study for upper secondary schools, providing an overview of its

key features. It examines the alignment between the CEFR's action-oriented approach and the principles underpinning the CS. Specifically, it draws on Piccardo and North's (2019) identification of three core aspects of the CEFR's action-oriented approach: (a) functional perspective, (b) collaborative co-construction, and (c) action-oriented tasks.

By analyzing the objectives and content of the CS through these lenses, this presentation sheds light on the interplay between the CEFR's framework and Japan's unique educational context.

Author: TAKADA, Tomoko (Seisen University)

Presenter: TAKADA, Tomoko (Seisen University)

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