



From 'Profile' to EPOSTL: the image of linguistic policies and sustainable development in language teachers' education

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The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages publication favoured the appearance of:

- several portfolios that have been meant to become reliable working instruments for evaluators and teaching practitioners;
- different analysis studies, surveys, debate documents, projects;
- an action-oriented approach;



Teacher education and professional development in Europe still looks for:

- common understanding and principles;
- common challenges;
- a common framework for reflection and self-evaluation.



Multilingualism and profesional development imply:

- a multiplicity of language varieties;
- complex critical thinking;
- focus less on the 'what' and more on the 'why and how'



Professional development in teaching and learning languages, brings together:

- teachers' educators;
- mentors;
- decision-making factors in education;
- students, pupils, parents.



Is there a definition for 'teachers' educators'?

- specialists/methodologists working with pre- and in-service modern languages student teachers/experienced teachers;
- mentors;
- teacher trainers.



The European Profile for Language Teacher Education contains

- valuable information for all trainers, targeting international and mentorship exchanges;
- independent learning strategies, within lifelong learning and new learning environments;
- a better transparency and portability of qualifications;
- a frame of reference that can be adapted to the existing realities and needs of different countries.



From *The European Profile* to *The European Portofolio*, a student teacher can catch:

- a curriculum that integrates academic study and the practical experience of teaching;
- an explicit framework for teaching practice (stage/practicum);
- the value of mentoring understanding;
- the image of an intercultural and multicultural environment;
- a continuous improvement of teaching skills as part of in-service education;
- ongoing education for teacher educators;



The *European Profile for Language Teacher Education*.

- has 4 parts: structure, knowledge and understanding, strategies and skills, values;
- is a resource for European, national and institutional policy makers in the field of teacher education;
- addresses teacher educators who want to introduce trainee teachers to some of the European initiatives in language teacher education;
- is a flexible framework for language trainee teachers and language teachers themselves,
- deals with independent learning strategies, life-long learning and new learning environments;



The '*Profile*' special sections entitled 'Strategies for Implementation and Application' are meant to:

- develop a critical and enquiring approach to teaching and learning modern languages;
- ensure recognition and transferability of teacher education qualifications throughout Europe.



The '*Profile*'/PEFPLM conveys conclusions as:

- education should be seen as a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approach;
- trainee teachers should work creatively and flexibly;
- participation in links with partners, abroad visits, exchanges are very important;
- CLIL programmes are not only important but should be rethought and developed.



The European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages is:

- a reflection tool;
- an assessment instrument for in-service teacher professional development;
- a means to an end and not an end in itself.



EPOSTL has:

- an *informing* function, offering the image of a specific linguistic competence level;
- a *pedagogic* function, offering the image of the individual teaching competence progress and self-evaluation.



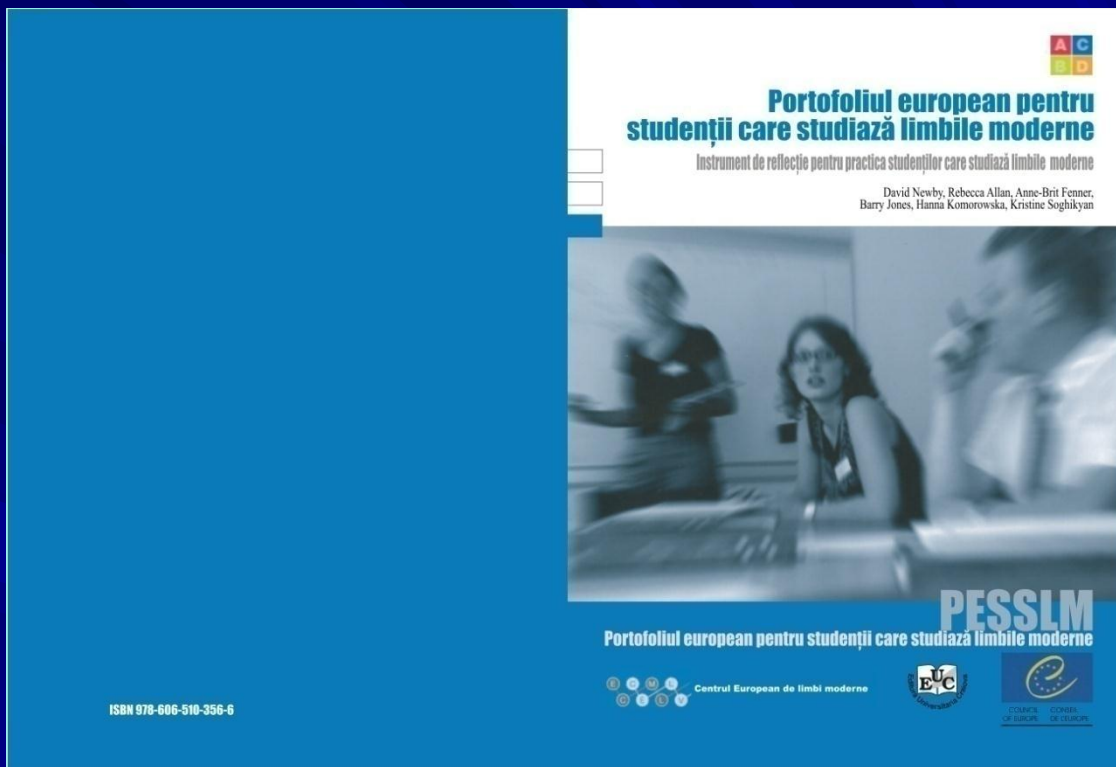
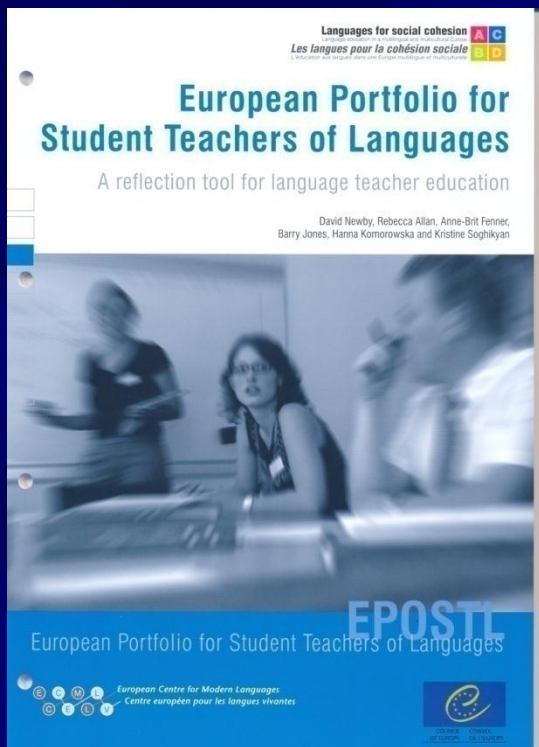
The European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages displays the following sections:

- a *personal statement* section - reflection on general questions related to teaching;
- a *self- assessment* section containing 'can do' descriptors;
- a *dossier* – evidence of progress, examples of relevant activities to teaching;
- a *glossary* of language learning and teaching terms;
- an *index* of terms used in the descriptors;
- a users' *guide* – detailed information about EPOSTL



EPOSTL has:

- 193 *descriptors* of language teaching competences;
- *self-assessment scales* that can help a student teacher/a beginner teacher/an experienced teacher to visualize and chart one's own teaching competences;





An overview of English teaching areas in Romania targets:

- the pre-primary and the primary level (3-10 olds);
- the lower-secondary level (11-14 olds);
- the upper/high-secondary level(15-18 olds);
- the higher education (18-21/23 olds);



The quality of teachers' education in Romania should still imply:

- support for autonomous professional development;
- continuous teaching competences improvement;
- team work in a multicultural setting;
- digital literacy and use of ICT during classes.



The student teacher should be viewed as the sum of:

- language knowledge and pedagogical skills;
- new conceptual ways of classroom management;
- action plans and experiments;
- instructed and trained self-evaluation and reflection;



EPOSTL categorization of descriptors reveals several general categories:

- context;
- methodology;
- resources;
- lesson planning;
- conducting a lesson;
- independent learning;
- assessment of learning.



EPOSTL in Romania has been used as a 'pre' and 'while' language training instrument which presents:

- a set of necessary teaching competences;
- a number of practical guidelines;
- the validation of a theoretical model;
- the way of maximizing the teaching potential for the best practice in ELT;



University methodologists as well as Romanian mentors admitted that EPOSTL focused on:

- a quality assurance of the assessment practice;
- a language teacher's continuous professional development;
- a student teacher as an ELT research practitioner;



EPOSTL is still viewed as a change and an implementation instrument, taking into account:

- a network of interrelated factors (universities, school inspectorates, schools);
- the role of evaluation in English language teaching;
- language student teachers' interests;
- social and cultural contexts of learning;



The innovative nature of this document meant:

- a change in both pre-service and in-service teachers of languages' training design;
- a joined-up thinking regarding the language teaching competences;
- appropriate and specific languages teaching evaluation procedures;



Along recent academic/school years in Romania, EPOSTL/PESSLM has been used in:

- pre-service teacher education by the University of Bucharest, the University “Dimitrie Cantemir” in Bucharest, the University “Vasile Alecsandri”, in Bacău, the “ Transilvania University” in Braşov;
- school teaching practice (120 schools in the pre-university education);
- in-service language teacher education (by 210 mentors);



Dissemination activities regarding EPOSTL took place mainly:

- at a national level (mentors' conferences, RATE conferences, workshops);
- at an institutional level (universities and Teaching Staff Houses, as well as in schools)



Further EPOSTL-related materials and activities relevant to EPOSTL

- teaching practice documents (lesson plans, teaching competences descriptors);
- masters' dissertations;



Using EPOSTLE/PESSLM, a double aim can be attained:

- make student teachers of languages more independent in their learning and less dependent on the mentor(s);
- give student teachers a sense of self-worth and achievement;



Making EPOSTL/PESSLM better known will:

- lead to the creation of a university supply network which will shape independent (future) teachers;
- create a distance education training course support;
- re-build a theory of change and a frame as a starting point for continuing professional development;



How should student teachers of languages understand EPOSTL/PESSLM? (from a Romanian mentor's point of view)

- as a useful guide and a self-evaluation instrument at the beginning of the teaching career;
- a didactic handbook, displaying a *glossary of the most necessary terms* in language teaching and learning;



- the self –evaluation is facilitated;
- student teachers' teaching competences are measured according to clearer criteria





- EPOSTL/
PESSLM bridges
the dialogue
between
student teachers,
their tutors and
mentors;





EPOSTL

PERSONAL STATEMENT



1. As learners of language in school, you already have had a lot of contact with teaching. What aspects – teacher's qualities, practices etc. – of your own language teaching might influence how you wish or do not wish to teach?

Experiences of being taught

Positive:

We were allowed to vote on the topics we wanted to deal with each semester.

Negative:

My teacher hardly ever spoke English during the lessons.

(Try to analyse why these points were unsuccessful and improve the points you have mentioned.)

2. a) What aspects of teaching are you most likely to be taken to

- b) What aspects of teaching are you least likely to be taken to

4. How do you discuss?

1. Cooperation
2. Good



P S S L M

AUTO-EVALUATION



I can create a supportive atmosphere that invites learners to take part in the speaking activities/
Pot să creez o atmosferă încurajatoare care să-i invite pe elevi să participe



I can understand the requirements set in national and local curricula./ *Pot să înțeleg cerințele curriculum-ului național și local*



I can understand and integrate the content of European documents(ex: CECR, PEL) as appropriate in my teaching/ *Pot să înțeleg și să integrez conținutul.....*





European Centre for Modern Languages
Centre Européen pour les Langues Vivantes

EPOSTL





Having translated both the '*Profile*' and EPOSTL in Romanian, I could:

- understand better the *context* (the teaching process), the way teaching drivers act and what the end-users do;
- work more constructively with partners and colleagues (university methodologists, language inspectors and mentors);
- encourage language learning and training opportunities as well as collaborative efforts;



Both the 'Profile' and EPOSTL are not promoting a particular methodology, they demonstrate how:

- teaching can support learning;
- a student teacher of languages can become an effective/efficient language teacher;
- being a teacher of languages is a complex job;



CONCLUSIONS on the 'Profile' and EPOSTL

- they allow a student teacher of languages time for planning, design & implementation;
- they train student teachers of languages how to be transparent in their evaluation/self-evaluation and build consensus, trust and engagement;
- they make evaluation itself a learning process;
- they monitor progress on a regular basis;
- they favour harmonising personal planning with curricular objectives, according to the teaching needs.



EPOSTL made possible a new project ACTOSTL

- ACTFL = American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
- NCATE = National Foreign Language Standards Collaborative
- CAEP = Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation
- ECML = European Centre for Modern Languages



ACTOSTL has aimed:

- to highlight examples of good practice in teaching for purposes of determining high-leverage teaching practices;
- to focus on effective development of communicative and cultural competencies and assessment, identified in both frameworks;
- to develop student teachers of languages and initial teachers' abilities to observe and evaluate language teaching practices;



ACTOSTL observation sheet focuses on:

- teaching planning;
- teaching and class management;
- evidence of culture;
- learning assessment.



OBSERVATION SHEET

Using the *ACTFL/NCATE (CAEP) Teacher Standards* and *EPOSTL* descriptors of teacher competences to define excellence in language teaching (ACTOSTL)

Please provide the following details:

In which country is your observation taking place? __
What language is being taught in the classes you observe? __
(Please fill out a separate sheet for each language)

Tick one of the following:

- a. I am a student teacher ____
- b. I am a newly qualified teacher undergoing my induction/probation period __
- c. I have 0-3 years of teaching experience.
- d. I have more than three years of teaching experience.

If you need instructions on how to fill out the observation sheet, click here ([hyperlink to infoletter](#)).

Note that:

- You do not need to give feedback on all 22 competences in the observation sheet! Select those which are of particular interest or relevance to you.
- It is possible to enter up to four items under each competence. You do not need to fill in all four spaces.

A. ACTFL/CAEP Standard 3 (Planning)

1. The teacher structures the lesson plan in a coherent and varied sequence of content.



2. The teacher ensures smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups, and the whole class.



3. The teacher varies and balances activities to include a variety of skills and competences.



4. The teacher takes into account different levels of ability or educational needs.





B. ACTFL/CAEP Standard 4 (Teaching)

5. The teacher settles a group of learners into a room and gains their attention at the beginning of a lesson.

- ↳
- ↳
- ↳
- ↳

6. The teacher creates a supportive atmosphere that invites learners to take part in speaking activities.

- ↳
- ↳
- ↳
- ↳

7. The teacher provides grammar exercises and activities which support oral and written communication.

- ↳
- ↳
- ↳
- ↳

8. The teacher provides a variety of activities which help learners to learn vocabulary.

- ↳
- ↳
- ↳
- ↳

9. The teacher relates the content to learners' knowledge and previous language learning experiences.

- ↳
- ↳
- ↳
- ↳

10. The teacher keeps and maximizes the attention of learners during a lesson.

- ↳
- ↳
- ↳
- ↳

11. The teacher helps learners to develop appropriate learning strategies.

- ↳
- ↳
- ↳
- ↳

12. The teacher encourages learner participation whenever possible.

- ↳
- ↳



©

d.

13. The teacher takes on different roles according to the needs of the learners and requirements of the activity (resource person, mediator, supervisor, etc.)

a.

b.

c.

d.

14. The teacher uses various strategies when learners do not understand the target language.

a.

b.

c.

d.

15. The teacher supports learners to use the target language in their activities.

a.

b.

c.

d.

16. The teacher finishes off a lesson in a focused way.

a.

b.

c.

d.

C. ACTFL/CAEP Standard 2 (Evidence of Culture)

17. The teacher uses texts, source materials, and activities to make learners aware of stereotyped views.

a.

b.

c.

d.

18. The teacher uses materials and activities which make learners aware of similarities and differences in sociocultural "norms of behavior."

a.

b.

c.

d.

19. The teacher uses a variety of materials and activities which help learners to reflect on the concept of "otherness" and understand different value systems.

a.

b.

c.

d.



D. ACTFL/CAEP Standard 5 (Assessing)

20. *The teacher deals with errors that occur in class in a way which supports learning processes and communication.*



21. *The teacher monitors and assesses learners' participation and performance.*



22. *The teacher uses appropriate assessment procedures to chart and monitor a learner's progress (reports, checklists, grades, etc.)*



What have you learnt from carrying out the observation tasks? Please write any comments you may have in this space.



References:

- Newby, D. (ed.), 2012: *Insights into the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Tagliante, Christine, 2005: *L'évaluation et le Cadre européen commun*, nouvelle édition, CLE International, coll. Techniques et pratiques de classe, Paris



Thank you!