

WORKSHEET B

Title The issue of objectivity in assessment	
Objective(s) To reflect on the issue of objectivity linked to own practice and context. To apply the analytical approach outlined on Card A to examples of assessment procedures and/or instruments derived from your own pedagogical context and experience. To discuss and compare with colleagues the outcomes of holistic and analytic assessment/rating of oral and/or written production, using samples from one's own context. To discuss, if possible, the rationale, aims and methods with test takers of different ages.	
Keywords Achievement / Proficiency assessment - Impression / Guided Judgement - Holistic / Analytic - Series / Category Assessment	
Ref to the Guide IV. 4, IV. 7	Ref to the CEF 9.3 (9.3.1, 9.3.8, 9.3.10, 9.3.12) table 2 and 3 of Ch. 3 2.2 4.4 5.2.3.2
To complete this worksheet you need... examples from your own practice	
Task A	
Step 1 († † †) Consider the following ways proposed by the CEFR to reduce subjectivity in tests Subjectivity in assessment can be reduced, and validity and reliability thus increased by taking steps like the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• developing a <i>specification for the content</i> of the assessment, for example based upon a framework of reference common to the context involved• using <i>pooled judgements</i> to select content and/or to rate performances• adopting <i>standard procedures</i> governing how the assessments should be carried out• providing <i>definitive marking keys</i> for indirect tests and basing judgements in direct tests on <i>specific defined criteria</i>• requiring <i>multiple judgements</i> and/or <i>weighting of different factors</i>• undertaking appropriate <i>training</i> in relation to <i>assessment guidelines</i>• checking the quality of the assessment (validity, reliability) by <i>analysing assessment data</i> <p style="text-align: right;">(CEFR, p. 188-89)</p> Use this list as a basis for discussion on your assessment procedures in general and the way you try to reduce subjectivity.	
Step 2 (†) then († †) or († † †)	

- Choose two examples of assessment procedures and/or instruments frequently used in your own practice;
- Analyse the examples by using the following questions: *Why? What? How? When? Who? And...? i.e.* focusing on the fundamental principles of assessment (purpose, construct, methods, time, actors and consequences).

If this is feasible, add a discussion on the different examples with your learners. Encourage them to use the six questions above and to contribute and share as many reflections as possible. Note the learners' thoughts and ideas successively, preferably in a mind map. Summarize together, on a chart, the outcome of the discussions on the basis of the mind map.

- Use the discussion to come to a reflective overview of the rationale behind your assessment practice.

Task B

Step 1 († † †)

- Select some oral and/or written samples of students work.

Step 2 (†)

- Rate the samples individually, using first a holistic and then an analytic approach. Keep the original, holistic rating (i.e. do not modify it based on the analytic rating)

Step 3 († † †)

- Compare and discuss the outcomes and implications of the different ratings, e.g. with regard to feasibility, clarity and consistency.
- If applicable, discuss how you would convert that into a grade.

Task C

Step 1 († †) or († † †)

Category assessment involves a single assessment task, which may well have different phases to generate different discourse, and in which performance is judged in relation to the categories in an assessment grid.

Series assessment involves a series of isolated assessment tasks, which are rated with a simple holistic grade on a labelled scale.

Discuss the two types of assessment and relate it to your own practice. For what purposes can they be used? Which one do you use more often? Why? List possible advantages and disadvantages with the two types. Relate your discussions to the issue of objectivity and subjectivity in language testing and assessment.

Step 2 († †) or († † †)

Bring examples of tasks suitable for series and/or category assessment.

Discuss the examples.

Agree on one or two as the basis for deciding on scales.

Prepare applicable scales with which to assess students' performances (adapt scales and descriptors from section 4.4 + 5.2, table 2 and 3 of Ch. 3).

Step 3 (†) then († † †)



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Taking inspiration from the following example taken from the *Manual for Relating Examinations to the CEFR*¹, assess samples of student work first without any assessment grid, then with the support of the assessment grid you will have prepared.

LEARNER'S NAME _____ Ihr Name/Votre nom: _____

Niveaus/Niveaux: **B, W, W+, T, T+, V, V+, E, M**

1. Initial Impression

Einstufung mit der Globalskala
Classement - échelle globale

2. Detailed Analysis with Grid / Beurteilung mit Raster / Estimation – grille

RANGE Spektrum Étendue	ACCURACY Korrektheit Correction	FLUENCY Flüssigkeit Aisance	INTERACTION Interaktion Interaction	COHERENCE Kohärenz Cohérence

3. Considered Judgement

Abschliessende Einstufung
Classement final

Form B2: Analytic Rating Form

Eurocentres (North 1991/1992)/Swiss Project (Schneider and North 2000)

Step 4 († † †)

Discuss any different results with your colleagues.

Task D († † †)

Clarify the role of alternative pairs of assessment (impression/guided; holistic/analytic; series/category) in the learning process. In particular, discuss the choice of assessing achievement in different categories as a way for better defining the level of proficiency in particular. Paragraphs 2.2 and 9.1.3 can help you clarify the differences between the notions of achievement and of proficiency as they are presented in the CEFR.

¹ Council of Europe. *Relating Language Examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEF), Manual (Preliminary Pilot Version)*. DGIV/EDU/LANG (2003) 5 rev 1