The role of the Romani language in the educational inclusion of Romani children and adolescents: from policy to practice

Guidelines for classroom practice and a pilot project handbook

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1 Introduction

Despite the Council of Europe's decades-long engagement with Romani issues, the educational inclusion of Romani children and adolescents continues to present major challenges to member states. Successive recommendations from the Committee of Ministers are clear about the political principles and social values that should shape policy and equally clear about the outcomes that policy implementation should achieve. They do not, however, concern themselves with those aspects of policy that shape classroom practice.

In 2018–2019 a Council of Europe expert group[1] set out to fill this gap, proposing new ways of managing the educational inclusion of Romani children and adolescents. The group's proposals, which have implications for the educational inclusion of other linguistic and cultural minorities, are based on two principles that are fundamental to the Council of Europe's work in language education: first, that language learners are also language users, social agents with an agenda to fulfil; and second, that language education should take account of all the languages present in a particular educational context and help learners to develop integrated plurilingual repertoires.

The policy document identifies five principles to guide the educational inclusion of Romani children and adolescents:

> _Principle 1 – The educational inclusion of Romani children and adolescents is a fundamental human right that should be given priority by Council of Europe member states._

> _Principle 2 – The educational inclusion of Romani children and adolescents should also benefit non-Romani students._

> _Principle 3 – The highly variable linguistic profiles of Romani communities mean that education systems need to develop flexible approaches to the inclusion of Romani children and adolescents and the teaching of Romani language, culture and history._

> _Principle 4 – Flexibility is more likely to be achieved when the primary focus is on learners and learning rather than on teachers and teaching._

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[1] The members of the expert group were: David Little, coordinator of the ECML's QualiRom Training & Consultancy; Dieter Halwachs, member of COMEX of ECRML; Ján Hero, vice chair of CAHROM; Helena Sadílková, head of Romani Studies Seminar, Charles University Prague; Diana Sima, educational advisor and teacher of Romani; Zuzana Bodnárová, Romani Project, University of Graz.

Principle 5 – Flexibility is also more likely to be achieved when language education focuses on the development of plurilingual repertoires.

The policy document concludes by proposing a four-year Council of Europe pilot project that would apply these principles to school policy and classroom practice in a small number of primary schools in a small number of member states. The present document explains in some detail what would be involved in implementing the five principles, describes the pilot project in terms of impact, outcomes, outputs and activities, sets out guidelines for pilot project management and reporting, and summarizes the pilot project timeline for the first two years. Detailed proposals for the third and fourth years will be drawn up in 2020–2021.

2 From principle to practice

2.1 Principle 1: The educational inclusion of Romani children and adolescents is a fundamental human right that should be given priority by Council of Europe member states

The right to education asserted in the European Convention on Human Rights has been reinforced in recent recommendations from the Committee of Ministers. The preamble to a recommendation issued in 2008 acknowledges "the right to quality language education as an essential part of the fundamental right to education".[2] This paved the way for a 2012 recommendation on ensuring quality education, which begins: "while access to education is in itself an important right, the true value of this right can only be realised if education is of adequate quality".[3] Appendix 6 of this recommendation defines quality education as an education which

a. gives access to learning to all pupils and students, particularly those in vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, adapted to their needs as appropriate;
b. provides a secure and non-violent learning environment in which the rights of all are respected;
c. develops each pupil's and student's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential and encourages them to complete the educational programmes in which they enrol;
d. promotes democracy, respect for human rights and social justice in a learning environment which recognises everyone's learning and social needs;
e. enables pupils and students to develop appropriate competences, self-confidence and critical thinking to help them become responsible citizens and improve their employability;
f. passes on universal and local cultural values to pupils and students while equipping them also to make their own decisions;

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[2] Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)7.
https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=09000016805d2fb1.
[3] Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)13.
https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016805c94fb.

g. certifies outcomes of formal and non-formal learning in a transparent way based on fair assessment enabling acquired knowledge and competences to be recognised for further study, employment and other purposes;

h. relies on qualified teachers who are committed to continuous professional development;

i. is free of corruption.

Of these nine features, four (a, b, c, i) are primary in the sense that they are directly related to the general ethos and thrust of the European Convention on Human Rights. The remaining five (d, e, f, g, h) are secondary in the sense that they presuppose the primary features; between them they carry implications for curriculum content, pedagogical method and assessment procedures. These issues are addressed in relation to Romani in sections 2.4 and 2.5 below.

From a human rights perspective, there are two reasons why the Romani language should play a central role in the education of Romani children and adolescents:

i. a policy of inclusion implies recognition of distinctive Romani identities, and those are partly shaped by the Romani language, either currently or historically;

ii. pupils/students whose home language is a variety of Romani should be encouraged to use the language at school because everyone's home language is his or her primary cognitive tool and default medium of discursive thinking. To forbid the use of home languages is educationally counter-productive because it impairs cognition; arguably, it also infringes a fundamental human right. When Romani is a learner's home language it will be implicated in all his or her learning; this should be made explicit in non-language classes, where the learning of curriculum content can be supported and strengthened if teachers make space for home languages other than the language of schooling. This is discussed further in section 2.5 below.

Some questions to consider:
- How can school principals make clear to teachers, pupils/students, parents and the wider community that their school is committed to a policy of inclusion?
- How can a policy of inclusion make use of pupils' home languages, including Romani?
- What measures should schools take to ensure that they meet the needs of Romani learners?
- How can schools promote democracy, respect for human rights and social justice?

2.2 Principle 2 – The educational inclusion of Romani children and adolescents should also benefit non-Romani students

Educational inclusion is a prerequisite for social inclusion, which in turn is a prerequisite for integration, defined by the Council of Europe as a two-way process.[4] Integration, in other

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[4] See, for example, the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, *Living Together as Equals in Dignity*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2008, https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/source/white%20paper_final_revised_en.pdf.

words, should impact on majority as well as minority communities. It is thus essential to find ways of ensuring that the inclusion of Romani language, culture and history in programmes of schooling extends the linguistic, cultural and historical knowledge and awareness of non-Romani pupils/students. If this does not happen, the teaching of Romani language, history and culture becomes an instrument of segregation rather than integration.

In some contexts, it may be possible for non-Romani pupils/students to learn the Romani language together with their Romani peers. When Romani pupils/students are partly or fully proficient in the language, they should be able to support the language learning efforts of their non-Romani peers. The goal of such arrangements should be inclusion through awareness-raising and mutual respect; high levels of communicative proficiency may well not be achievable by non-Romani students.

The inclusion of Romani children and adolescents should not, however, be seen simply as a matter of providing classes in Romani language, history and culture to which non-Romani pupils/students also have access. A policy of educational inclusion implies openness to diversity of ethnicity, culture and language; classrooms should be spaces where all learners can express and in some cases discover their identities. This is the essence of plurilingual education. As already noted in section 2.1, Romani children and adolescents whose home language is a variety of Romani should have opportunities to use that language to support their learning in all areas of the curriculum. This requires understanding and commitment on the part of teachers, but it is not necessary for them to be proficient in Romani or to be supported by a Romani teacher or teaching assistant. It is important to point out that the inclusion of Romani and other minority languages in the discourse of non-language classrooms gives learners from the majority community an experience of multilingualism that is unlikely to be available to them in any other way (see also section 2.5 below).

Some questions to consider:
- In how many ways can non-Romani pupils/students benefit from the presence of Romani pupils/students in their classroom?
- How can non-Romani pupils/students be made aware of Romani language, history and culture?
- In what ways can teachers in mainstream classrooms help Romani pupils/students whose home language is Romani to use that language to support their learning of curriculum content mediated in the language of schooling?

2.3 Principle 3 – The highly variable linguistic profiles of Romani communities mean that education systems need to develop flexible approaches to the inclusion of Romani children and adolescents and the teaching of Romani language, culture and history

Linguistically, Romani communities fall into three broad categories:
- those that have lost the Romani variety spoken by earlier generations;

- those in which older members of the community still use Romani on a daily basis, whereas children and adolescents hear and understand Romani but do not speak it regularly in their daily lives;
- those that have retained a variety of Romani as their domestic and community language.

According to these categories, some Romani pupils/students will be beginners in the language, others will be able to understand the spoken language but lack productive skills, and others again will have a variety of Romani as their home language. Romani pupils/students in a given school may come from different communities that are associated with different varieties of the language. Even if they all come from the same community, more than one of the categories may nevertheless be represented.

Whatever their relation to the Romani language, Romani children and adolescents fall into three broad categories as regards the language of schooling:
- those for whom the language of schooling presents no difficulties;
- those who speak a non-standard variety of the dominant language and thus need help to become proficient in the (standard) language of schooling;
- those who lack proficiency in the language of schooling, perhaps as a result of recent migration.

Thus, education systems must find ways of responding to one or more of the nine possible linguistic profiles shown in Table 1. This potential diversity implies a need for flexibility in education systems, schools and classrooms. According to Principles 4 and 5, flexibility is easier to achieve (i) when the primary focus is on learners and learning rather than teachers and teaching and (ii) when language education seeks to develop learners' plurilingual repertoires rather than treating languages in isolation from one another. These considerations bring us to the core issues of curriculum, learning and teaching.

Table 1: Nine possible linguistic profiles of Romani pupils/students

Language of schooling / Romani	No difficulties	Help needed	No proficiency
No knowledge			
Some knowledge			
Home language			

Some questions to consider:
- How much diversity of home languages is present in your education system, school or classroom?
- How can principals and teachers gather information about the linguistic profiles of their pupils?
- In your education system or school, how do you support Romani pupils/students who (i) need help with the language of schooling or (ii) have no proficiency in the language of schooling?
- How much organizational flexibility is possible in your education system or school regarding composition of classes, timetable, deployment of Romani assistants, etc.?

2.4 Principle 4 – Flexibility is more likely to be achieved when the primary focus is on learners and learning rather than on teachers and teaching

This section is concerned with the first of the two pillars of the Council of Europe's language education policy, its concept of the learner as an autonomous social agent. This concept is fundamental to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR), the *Curriculum Framework for Romani*, and the European Language Portfolio; it explains why the CEFR describes language learning in terms of language use and why "mediation" is an apt metaphor for the activity of language teaching.

2.4.1 Frameworks and portfolios

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages – Language learning has always played a key role in the Council of Europe's mission, for two closely related reasons. First, linguistic diversity is an essential part of Europe's cultural heritage that all citizens should have an opportunity to experience; and second, by learning one another's languages European citizens open up new channels of communication and understanding. In accordance with its commitment to human rights and democratic governance, the Council of Europe has always promoted learner-centred approaches to education. This explains why early modern languages projects were interested in learner autonomy[5] and self-assessment.[6] It also explains why Council of Europe instruments designed to support the development of curricula, teaching materials and assessment instruments focus not on the language to be learned but on the communicative needs of the individual learner. Accordingly, the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR)[7] "views users and learners of a language primarily as 'social agents', i.e. members of society who have tasks … to accomplish",[8] and

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[5] H. Holec, *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 1979.

[6] M. Oskarsson, *Approaches to Self-assessment in Foreign Language Learning*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 1978.

[7] Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Also available from the Council of Europe's website: https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages.

[8] CEFR, p.9.

defines language proficiency in terms of language use. As we shall see (section 2.4.2 below), this view of the language user–learner has important implications for the way in which we think about language learning and teaching.
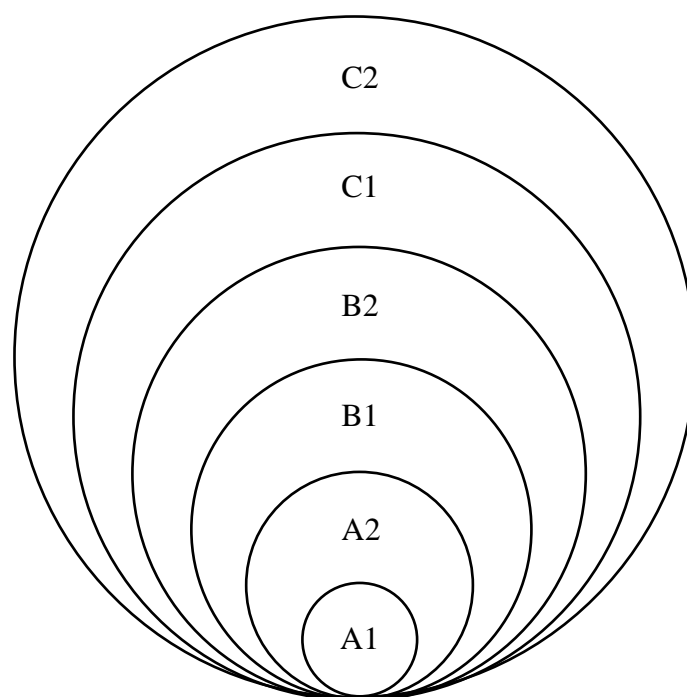

Figure 1: The six proficiency levels of the CEFR in relation to one another

The CEFR identifies four modes of language use and defines six levels of communicative proficiency. The modes of language use are: reception (listening and reading), production (speaking and writing), interaction (spoken and written), and mediation (spoken and written). The six proficiency levels are arranged in three bands: A1 and A2 ("basic user"), B1 and B2 ("independent user"), and C1 and C2 ("proficient user"). The CEFR's descriptive scheme has two distinct but complementary dimensions: the language activities that the user–learner may need to perform and the competences that enable him or her to engage in language activities. The trajectory of learning hypothesized by the CEFR is expressed in illustrative scales ranging from A1 to C2 for language activities and communicative language competences. Scales consist of "can do" descriptors, a feature that explicitly associates language proficiency with individual agency. The scales for language activities are summarized in the so-called self-assessment grid, reproduced in Appendix 1. (Note that the self-assessment grid makes no distinction between written interaction and written production; also that the CEFR does not provide scales for mediation.)[9]

It is sometimes assumed that the CEFR's six proficiency levels form a linear scale with six

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[9] The distinction between written interaction and written production is restored in the CEFR *Companion Volume* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2018, pp.167–9), which also includes a large number of scales for mediation. The *Companion Volume* is available from the Council of Europe's website: https://rm.coe.int/cefr-companion-volume-with-new-descriptors-2018/1680787989.

equal intervals. This is, however, wrong. If we want to represent the levels and their relation to one another diagrammatically, we should do so as in Figure 1. This mode of representation tells us three things. First, each level above A1 incorporates the level(s) below it. As learners progress from one level to the next they engage with more complex tasks and extend their language competences; they still need to perform the tasks specified for the lower level(s), but now they can perform them with greater flexibility and elaboration thanks to their increased linguistic resources. Secondly, the levels become progressively more substantial, and thus require more learning time, as we move up the scale. Assuming an effective approach to teaching and learning, students who start to learn a foreign language at the beginning of secondary school and have three or four language classes a week, will do well to achieve a fully rounded productive proficiency at level B1 by the time they leave school. Thirdly, proficiency development has a quasi-horizontal as well as a vertical dimension; that is, the growth of proficiency is a matter not only of learning more language but of learning new tasks and new behaviours. It is important to note that, especially at levels B2, C1 and C2, proficiency is defined in relation to the performance of particular tasks in a specific domain of language use, often linked to academic or professional experience and expertise.

European Language Portfolio – The Council of Europe conceived the European Language Portfolio (ELP)[10] as a companion piece to the CEFR. Its purpose is to help learners to manage and document their own language learning, to encourage intercultural awareness, and to support the development of plurilingual repertoires (for a definition, see 2.5.1 below). The ELP has three obligatory components: a language passport that contains a regularly updated summary of the owner's experience of language learning and language use; a language biography that provides a reflective accompaniment to learning; and a dossier where the owner collects samples of his/her work.[11] In keeping with the Council of Europe's concern to promote individual agency and learner autonomy, effective use of the ELP depends on regular goal-setting and self-assessment. For this purpose ELPs contain checklists of "I can" descriptors organized according to the proficiency levels and language activities of the CEFR.

Curriculum Framework for Romani – The Council of Europe's *Curriculum Framework for Romani* (CFR) was launched at a seminar in Strasbourg in 2007 and published in a slightly revised version in 2008.[12] The CEFR was developed to provide "a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks etc. across Europe";[13] although the CFR is a much simpler document than the CEFR, it is designed to fulfil the same functions for Romani. Because the language activities at level B2 coincide with the tasks that most European education systems require students to perform in school-leaving exams, the CFR is based on the first four proficiency levels of the CEFR. Also, it defines

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[10] The Council of Europe maintains an extensive ELP website: https://www.coe.int/en/web/portfolio.
[11] ELP Principles and Guidelines, available from:
https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016804586ba.
[12] The CFR is available from the Council of Europe's website in seven languages (English, Romani, Czech, German, Lovari, North Central Romani, Serbian): https://www.coe.int/en/web/language-policy/romani.
[13] CEFR, p.1.

proficiency only in relation to communicative language activities, using grids modelled on the CEFR's self-assessment grid and related to eleven themes: *Myself and my family*; *The house/caravan and its activities*; *My community*; *Roma crafts and occupations*; *Festivals and celebrations*; *At school*; *Travel and transport*; *Food and clothes*; *Time, seasons and weather*; *Nature and animals*; *Hobbies and the arts*. Most of the grids divide descriptors into two groups: those that refer to communication in general, including classroom communication, and those that refer to language use in Romani communities (the latter descriptors are shaded). By way of illustration, Appendix 2 brings together descriptors for spoken interaction from the CEFR's self-assessment grid and the CFR theme *Myself and my family*.

Romani ELPs – In 2008, the Council of Europe published two versions of the ELP, for learners of Romani aged 6–11 and 11–16, and a handbook for teachers.[14] The checklists of "I can" descriptors in these ELPs are based on the CFR's eleven themes and descriptors.

QualiRom teaching/learning materials – From 2011 to 2013 the QualiRom project, funded by the European Union and hosted by the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML), developed and piloted teaching/learning materials based on the CFR in six Romani varieties/dialect clusters: Arlije, East Slovak, Finnish, Gurbet, Lovara and Kalderaš.[15] Most of the materials are for levels A1 and A2.

> Some questions to consider:
> - If you already have an official curriculum for Romani, is it possible to use the CFR to express the communicative goals of the curriculum in "can do" terms?
> - The CFR is designed to support the learning of Romani by the three categories of Romani learner defined in section 2.3. How could you use it to create learning activities in which students proficient in Romani could work with students who are less proficient or beginners?
> - The Romani ELPs are also designed to meet the needs of all three learner types. This means that they should be used flexibly. For example, beginners should only be given the A1 and A2 checklists, whereas students already fluent in Romani should use the B1 and B2 checklists to support their development as users of Romani for academic purposes.

2.4.2 Language learning as language use

What kind of language learning process are the CFR and the Romani ELPs designed to support? We find an answer to this question in the CEFR's summary of its action-oriented approach to the description of language proficiency (the words and phrases printed in italics refer to the principal components of the CEFR's descriptive scheme):

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[14] Also available from the Council of Europe's website in seven languages: https://www.coe.int/en/web/language-policy/romani.

[15] Available at http://qualirom.uni-graz.at.

Language use, embracing language learning, comprises the actions performed by persons who as individuals and as social agents develop a range of *competences*, both *general* and in particular *communicative language competences*. They draw on the competences at their disposal in various *contexts* under various *conditions* and under various *constraints* to engage in *language activities* involving *language processes* to produce and/or receive *texts* in relation to *themes* in specific *domains*, activating those *strategies* which seem most appropriate for carrying out the *tasks* to be accomplished. The monitoring of these actions by the participants leads to the reinforcement or modification of their competences.[16]

These three sentences may be elaborated and interpreted as follows:

- By defining language users and language learners as "individuals and social agents", the CEFR establishes three fundamental principles: (i) it is primarily concerned not with language but with the communicative needs of the *individual*, which are subject to infinite variation; (ii) language use always has a purpose – an *agent* is someone who makes things happen as a result of his or her actions; and (iii) a *social* agent acts with other people, which means that language use entails negotiation and collaboration.
- When we use language, we draw on our competences (complexes of knowledge, skills and characteristics) to perform actions. Because we do this as social agents who have tasks to accomplish, language use requires us to take initiatives; as social agents, we are *autonomous* language users.
- Language learning is a variety of language use in the sense that proficiency develops from sustained interaction between our gradually developing competences and the communicative tasks that require us to use the target language. If as social agents we need to be autonomous language *users*, and if language learning is a variety of language use, it follows that we need to be autonomous language *learners* if we are to become autonomous language users.
- Language use, and therefore also language learning, occurs in domains (of which the CEFR identifies four: personal, public, occupational and educational); it is shaped in part by the conditions and constraints characteristic of particular contexts. Our developing proficiency as language user–learners includes a growing capacity to understand and cope with the conditions and constraints that impact on language use in different contexts and domains.
- We perform the actions that comprise language use by engaging in language activities – listening and speaking, reading and writing, interacting in speech and in writing. The meaning of language activities is expressed in their thematic content.
- When we engage in language activities, we necessarily activate language processes and deploy strategies. Language processes and strategies are partly unconscious and involuntary, partly conscious and intentional.

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[16] CEFR, p.9.

- By monitoring our language use, we reinforce, modify and extend our competences. According to the CEFR, monitoring is the strategic component that "deals with updating of mental activities and competences in the course of communication";[17] in this sense it operates mostly below the threshold of conscious awareness. But monitoring is also the intentional, metacognitive process by which we exercise strategic control over the language learning process.[18]

We can sum up this interpretation of the CEFR's action-oriented approach in two propositions: (i) if learners are to develop a proficiency that allows them to act as social agents, the target language should be the principal medium of their learning; and (ii) in formal educational contexts their learning should be organized in ways that encourage them to exercise their agency and develop the metacognitive and metalinguistic skills of monitoring.

Some questions to consider:
- How would you summarize the view of language learning that underlies your official curricula? Is it easy to reconcile with the view expressed in the CEFR?

- To what extent does your education system recognize that pupils/students are social agents with their own agenda?
- What forms of assessment are used in your education system (official exams) and school (teacher assessment/school exams)? In what ways do they support the idea that language learning is a form of language use?

2.4.3 Language teaching as mediation

The CEFR's description of the language learning process implies that teachers should engage their learners in target language use from the very beginning, and that in doing so, they should help them to find ways of exercising their agency (making choices and acting on them). Perhaps the best word for describing this view of the teacher's role is "mediator". We noted in section 2.4.1 that the CEFR does not provide illustrative scales for mediation, about which it says relatively little. But by basing its descriptive scheme not on four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) but on four modes of language use (reception, production, interaction and mediation), the CEFR acknowledges the symbiotic relation between the individual and social dimensions of language use and language learning. This symbiosis justifies the greatly enhanced role assigned to mediation in the *CEFR Companion Volume*, which contains the following illustrative scales:

- Mediation activities

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[17] CEFR, p.92.
[18] D. Little, "Strategic competence considered in relation to strategic control of the language learning process", in H. Holec, D. Little & R. Richterich, *Strategies in Language Learning and Use. Studies towards a Common European Framework of Reference for Language Learning and Teaching*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 1996, pp.9–37.

- o Mediating communication
  - ▪ Facilitating pluricultural space
  - ▪ Acting as an intermediary in informal situations
  - ▪ Facilitating communication in delicate situations and disagreements
- o Mediating concepts
  - ▪ Collaborating in a group
    - • Facilitating collaborative interaction with peers
    - • Collaborating to construct meaning
  - ▪ Leading group work
    - • Managing interaction
    - • Encouraging conceptual talk
- o Mediating a text
  - ▪ Relaying specific information in speech/in writing
  - ▪ Explaining data (e.g. in graphs, diagrams, charts etc.) in speech/in writing
  - ▪ Processing text in speech/in writing
  - ▪ Translating a written text in speech/in writing
  - ▪ Note taking (lectures, seminars, meetings etc.)
  - ▪ Expressing a personal response to creative texts (including literature)
  - ▪ Analysis and criticism of creative texts (including literature)
- • Mediation strategies
  - o Strategies to explain a new concept
    - ▪ Linking to previous knowledge
    - ▪ Breaking down complicated information
    - ▪ Adapting language
  - o Strategies to simplify a text
    - ▪ Amplifying a dense text
    - ▪ Streamlining a text

All of these mediation activities and strategies have a place in classrooms that aim to support the language learning process as defined by the CEFR. To read through the descriptors in these scales is to remind oneself of the range of actions teachers need to perform and the strategies they need to draw on in order to engage their learners in target language use and help them to exercise their agency. At the same time, the descriptors at the lower proficiency levels refer to mediation skills that learners themselves need to develop in order to exercise their social agency in the language classroom. For example, the scale for FACILITATING COLLABORATIVE INTERACTION WITH PEERS includes this descriptor at level C1: "Can show sensitivity to different perspectives within a group, acknowledging contributions and formulating any reservations, disagreements or criticisms in such a way as to avoid or minimize any offence". This is what one expects the teacher to do when organizing, monitoring and evaluating group work. At level A1 the same scale offers this descriptor: "Can invite others' contributions to very simple tasks using short, simple phrases. Can indicate that he/she understands and ask whether others

understand".[19] This is the kind of behaviour learners need to display if group work carried out in the target language is to produce worthwhile learning. Similar examples occur in all the mediation scales.

When we bring this view of language learning and teaching to bear on the CFR, we immediately encounter a paradox: the language activities described by the CFR mostly focus on communication outside the classroom, in Romani communities and beyond, whereas we have emphasized language use inside the classroom. But this paradox is not difficult to resolve. The content of the language activities undertaken in the classroom is supplied by Romani culture and history and should be explicitly linked to the life of the Romani community of which the learners are members; in this sense the Romani classroom should be an extension of the Romani community. In an approach closely aligned with the CEFR's understanding of language learning as language use, learners gradually develop proficiency in Romani by engaging in two kinds of learning activity that they pursue in parallel. On the one hand they create their own learning materials – word cards, dominoes, picture lotto, board games, etc. – and in this way gradually build up linguistic resources related to the themes of the CFR. On the other hand, they create texts of all kinds – labelled drawings and models, illustrated stories, mini-dramas, audio and video recordings, etc. – that enact the communication potential captured in the CFR.[20] As learning progresses, each learner's ELP gradually expands as a documentary record of his or her learning and a means of mediating between the classroom and the Romani community, its history and culture outside the classroom. The emphasis that the ELP places on goal setting and self-assessment promotes habits of reflection that enable even very young learners to become researchers of the target language and of their own learning.[21] Traditionally, we think of language learning as a matter of acquiring knowledge that we can describe declaratively and use procedurally. No doubt this is part of all successful language learning, but the CEFR's vision encourages us to adopt an altogether broader view. Successful learners of Romani acquire new behaviour potential and new cultural capital, and they do so as members of a community whose membership embraces both the classroom and the world outside. The 2012 recommendation from the Committee of Ministers cited in section 2.1 argues that quality education "promotes democracy, respect for human rights and social justice in a learning environment which recognizes everyone's learning and social needs". When learning and teaching are organized in the way we have described, pupils/students experience these principles at first hand and in microcosm.

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[19] CEFR CV, p.119

[20] A detailed explanation of how to organize the language classroom in this way is provided by D. Little, L. Dam & L. Legenhausen, *Language Learner Autonomy: Theory, Practice and Research*, Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2017.

[21] The Council of Europe's extensive ELP website contains a wealth of guidance and practical examples from which teachers of Romani can draw inspiration: https://www.coe.int/en/web/portfolio.

Some questions to consider:
- What teaching materials do you use to support the learning of Romani? How easy is it to use them together with the CFR and the Romani ELPs?
- From the QualiRom materials select a unit that is appropriate to a group of learners you teach. To what extent does the unit you have chosen complement your existing materials? Could the unit be used to help your Romani learners (i) to produce their own learning materials and (ii) to collaborate in producing text of some kind?

2.5 Principle 5 – Flexibility is also more likely to be achieved when language education focuses on the development of plurilingual repertoires

2.5.1 Plurilingualism and plurilingual education

The concept of plurilingual education is the second pillar of the Council of Europe's language education policy. The first is its view of the language user–learner as a social agent; the second is its concept of plurilingual education. The CEFR distinguishes between multilingualism as the presence of two or more languages in a community and plurilingualism as the individual's capacity to communicate in two or more languages. It also distinguishes between individual multilingualism and plurilingualism, defining individual multilingualism as the knowledge of a number of languages taught, learned and used in isolation from one another (the tradition in most education systems), and plurilingualism as "a communicative competence to which all knowledge and experience of language contributes and in which languages interrelate and interact".[22]

In accordance with this definition, the Council of Europe's concept of plurilingual and intercultural education[23] entails that all the languages present in a given school should contribute to the educational experience of all learners: the language of instruction, which in most countries is also taught as a subject in its own right; modern foreign and classical curriculum languages; and minority languages of all kinds, whether or not they are taught at school. In every lesson, whatever subject is being taught and whatever language is the medium of classroom communication, the plurilingual approach entails that classroom discourse is organized in such a way that all other languages available to the pupils/students can contribute to their understanding and processing of curriculum content and thus support their learning. To date, the concept of plurilingual education has not been widely taken up, but it is especially relevant to the educational inclusion of children and adolescents from linguistic minorities, including Roma who speak a variety of Romani at home and/or are not able to communicate fluently in the language of schooling. In particular, the concept of plurilingual education

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[22] CEFR, p.4.
[23] For further discussion of the concept, see D. Coste, M. Cavalli, A. Crisan & P.-H. van de Ven, "Plurilingual education as a right, Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2009; available at: https://rm.coe.int/plurilingual-and-intercultural-education-as-a-right-this-text-has-been/16805a219d; and M. Cavalli, D. Coste, A. Crisan & P.-H. van de Ven, "Plurilingual education as a project", Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2009; available at: https://rm.coe.int/plurilingual-and-intercultural-education-as-a-project-this-text-has-be/16805a219f.

suggests a way of including minority languages in the life of the classroom without formally teaching them, as the following example from Ireland shows.

> Some questions to consider:
> - Do your official curricula embody the principles of plurilingual education as summarized in this section?
> - In what ways could those principles support the educational inclusion of children and adolescents whose home language is not a variety of the language of schooling?
> - In what ways are the home languages of your pupils present in the life of the school and in the classroom?

2.5.2 Plurilingual education at primary school: a practical example

In recent decades Ireland has experienced unprecedented levels of immigration, which means that the education system faces the challenge of integrating children and adolescents whose home language is neither English nor Irish. A girls' primary school in one of Dublin's western suburbs faces an especially acute version of the challenge: some 80 per cent of its 320 pupils come from immigrant families; most of them have little English when they start school at the age of four and a half; and between them they have more than 50 home languages. Clearly, this level of diversity makes it impossible to offer each immigrant pupil instruction in her home language. The school nevertheless decided that it must find a role for home languages in the life of the school, inside the classroom as well as outside. After all, each pupil's home language is central to her sense of identity, and it is her default inner voice and her primary cognitive tool. To ask her to leave it outside the school gate is thus to infringe a fundamental human right and at the same time to constrain her learning.

The solution the school found was simple: to encourage pupils from immigrant families to use their home language for whatever purposes seemed to them appropriate. In Junior Infants, four- and five-year-old immigrant pupils learn to count, add and play action games in English, Irish (the obligatory second language of the curriculum) and their home languages. From the same early age, they are invited to tell the rest of the class how they perform simple everyday tasks and express key curriculum concepts in their home language. Sometimes they have to ask their parents for the words in question – days of the week, perhaps, or months of the year. As pupils move up the school, they are repeatedly invited to make linguistic comparisons between English, Irish and their home language. In this way their home language is always activated in their minds and their identity is fully implicated in the educational process; at the same time, its use enriches the educational experience of the other pupils. With support from their parents, moreover, immigrant pupils transfer their gradually developing literacy skills from English and Irish to their home language, producing parallel texts in English, Irish and their home language. This provides indigenous Irish students with a strong motivation to think of Irish as their "home language" even though they have no contact with it outside school.

The results of this approach are extremely positive. Immigrant and indigenous Irish pupils alike develop high levels of age-appropriate plurilingual literacy, an unusually sophisticated degree of language awareness, an unusual enthusiasm for speaking and writing Irish, and from an early age, the capacity to undertake ambitious autonomous learning projects with a linguistic focus. For example, a class of seven-year-olds decided to translate the chorus of the song "It's a Small World" into all the languages present in the class and used their time in the school yard to teach one another all the versions; they were then able to sing the chorus in eleven languages. A twelve-year-old pupil taught herself Spanish using two textbooks she found in the school library and various internet resources; when the principal retired, the pupil wrote her a letter of good wishes that was half in Spanish and half in English. The school has no access to special resources; its pupils nevertheless perform above the national average in the standardized tests of maths and English that they take annually from First Class (6+ years old) to Sixth Class (11+ years old).[24]

The way in which this version of plurilingual education is implemented recalls the approach to language learning and teaching described in sections 2.4.2 and 2.4.3. The school treats each of its pupils as a social agent whose capacity for action depends on the language proficiency she brings with her – a capacity that is gradually expanded by the additional languages she learns at school. As is usual in Irish primary classrooms, exposition is embedded in exploratory talk that seeks to maximize comprehension and learning by linking new material to what pupils already know. Because teachers include immigrant pupils' home languages in the discourse of the classroom, those pupils have an additional motivation to exercise their agency: only they have access to their own language, and this gives them the confidence to take more discourse initiatives than might otherwise be the case.

This version of plurilingual education has two obvious lessons for those responsible for the educational inclusion of Romani children and adolescents. The inclusion of all available languages in every lesson ensures the inclusion of the speakers of those languages; at the same time, it gives speakers of the dominant language an unparalleled education in multilingualism.

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[24]   For a detailed study of this approach to plurilingual education, see D. Little and D. Kirwan, *Engaging with Linguistic Diversity: A Study of Educational Inclusion in an Irish Primary School*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019.

Two issues to consider:
- The Irish primary school described in this section has found a highly effective way of managing extreme linguistic diversity. What lessons might its approach to language education have for the educational inclusion of Romani children and adolescents in your context?
- The school had no special resources and it was not part of a funded project. Its distinctive approach to language education evolved as the school sought to answer the question: How can we include pupils whose home language is not the language of schooling and whose cultural background may be very different from that of indigenous Irish pupils?

3 Designing and managing a pilot project

3.1 Why a pilot project?

Section 2 has explained what is involved in implementing the five principles elaborated in the 2019 policy document. It has done so in rather general terms because the Council of Europe recognizes and respects each member state's distinctive educational culture. Successful implementation of Council of Europe recommendations and principles and effective use of its instruments always depends on bringing them into appropriate interaction with national, regional and local contexts. That is the reason for proposing a four-year pilot project, starting in 2020 and ending in 2023.

The project will seek to implement versions of the approach elaborated in section 2 in 2–4 primary schools in 3–4 Council of Europe member states. If possible, the project will include Romani pupils from the three types of community described in section 3:
- those that have lost the Romani variety spoken by earlier generations;
- those in which older members of the community still use Romani on a daily basis, whereas children and adolescents hear and understand Romani but do not speak the language regularly in their daily lives;
- those that have retained a variety of Romani as their domestic and community language.

The issue of Romani students' proficiency in the language of schooling will also be addressed.

The Council of Europe will invite 3 or 4 member states to participate in the first two years of the project. In consultation with the Council of Europe, ministries of education in participating member states will select between 2 and 4 primary schools to participate in the project. Each participating country will appoint a national coordinator to work on the project with the participating schools.

3.2 Impact, outcomes, output and activities

The *impact* of the project will be:

In participating countries

- more effective inclusion of primary-age Romani pupils in participating schools;
- significant innovation in the teaching of Romani language, history and culture to Romani and non-Romani pupils;
- the building of school networks in and between participating countries in order to provide a basis for further development.

More generally:

- enhanced understanding of ways in which the Council of Europe's concept of plurilingual education can be translated into classroom practice that secures the educational inclusion of pupils from linguistic minorities.

The *outcomes* of the project will comprise:

- for participating Romani pupils, an experience of inclusive education in which the Romani language plays a central role;
- for participating non-Romani pupils, an experience of Romani language, history and culture;
- continuing professional development of participating teachers;
- an understanding of the practice of plurilingual education on the part of all participants in the project;
- new ways of including the Romani language in the daily discourse of school, inside and outside the classroom.

The *outputs* of the project will comprise:

- learning activities and teaching materials based on the *Curriculum Framework for Romani* and the European Language Portfolios;
- proposals to revise and/or extend the *Curriculum Framework for Romani*, to revise/adapt the Romani European Language Portfolios, and to revise/extend the QualiRom teaching materials;
- annual reports that contain an analysis and interpretation of classroom activities and learning achievement following the principles of Exploratory Practice;
- an evaluation of the successes and failures of the project in terms of the five principles set out in the policy document and elaborated in section 2 of this document;
- a final report that is presented in the form of a manual of good practice for wider dissemination.

The *activities* of the project will comprise:

- induction workshops/activities in participating schools;
- preparatory workshops for participating teachers;
- pedagogical experimentation in participating classrooms;
- the collection, analysis and interpretation of data collected according to the principles of Exploratory Practice;
- project evaluation by the steering group from the perspective of the five principles set out in the policy document;
- regular events to inform the larger school community, parents, education officials and

other stakeholders about the project and its progress;

- in each year of the project, at least one national workshop that brings together teachers in participating schools to exchange and evaluate their experience;
- at the end of the project, an intergovernmental conference to publicize and disseminate the results of the project.

3.3 Project management

The project will be managed by a steering group nominated by the Council of Europe. The steering group will meet at least twice in each year of the project. Members of the steering group will contribute to the induction of participating schools and teachers by contributing to seminars in the participating countries. The working language of the steering group will be English; seminars in participating countries will be conducted in the national language, which means that translation and interpretation will be needed.

3.4 Methods, ethos and dynamic of the project

In the teaching of Romani, the project will use the *Curriculum Framework for Romani*, the Romani versions of the European Language Portfolio, and the QualiRom teaching materials to develop classroom approaches that assign a central role to interactive use of the Romani language. The project will also seek to implement the Council of Europe's plurilingual approach, taking account of all languages present in the participating schools: language(s) of instruction, curriculum languages, and the home languages of students from minority communities, including Romani. It is anticipated that the project will identify areas of the CFR that need revision and/or further elaboration; that participating teachers and learners will adapt the Romani ELP for learners aged 6–11 to suit their needs and preferences; and that use of the QualiRom materials will also lead to adaptation and further development.

At a conference held in 1989 under the auspices of the Advisory Council for the Education of Romany and other Travellers, the speakers applied the perspectives of Action Research to the educational inclusion of Romani and Traveller children and adolescents in their national contexts.[25] They chose this approach because Action Research focuses on a particular context of teaching and learning, and they recognized that every educational context is unique and demands a tailor-made response to the challenges it poses; they also recognized that Action Research can offer lessons for other and different contexts. The participatory nature of Action Research – teachers, school management and researchers working together – extends beyond the site of teaching and learning to the social context in which a given educational institution is embedded, engaging the community, NGOs and policy makers.

The proposed project will also be shaped by a strongly participatory ethos, but its methods will go beyond Action Research in two important respects. First, learners will be included as

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[25] Advisory Council for the Education of Romany and other Travellers, *The Education of Gypsy and Traveller Children: Action-research and Coordination*, Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, 1993.

partners in the exploration and evaluation of innovative procedures. The reason for this is set out in the account we give of learning and teaching sections 2.4.2 and 2.4.3. The Council of Europe's concept of the language user–learner as a social agent points to the interactive, collaborative nature of successful language learning; while the greatly enhanced role played by mediation in the CEFR *Companion Volume* carries important implications for the teacher's role and reminds us that effective language classrooms are sites of collaboration between teachers and learners. Secondly, whereas Action Research typically sets out to *identify problems and find solutions*, the project will seek to *understand* what is involved in implementing the principles elaborated in section 2 in ways that emphasize the *agency* of learners as well as teachers. The ELP as process and product will support the search for understanding, which will be a fully integrated part of classroom practice rather than an additional duty imposed on participating teachers. Given these considerations, the project will be guided by the approach to participatory research known as Exploratory Practice, whose guiding principles have been summarized as follows: "Learners are both unique individuals and social beings who are capable of taking learning seriously, of taking independent decisions, and of developing as practitioners of learning."[26] This view of learners is fully harmonious with the view elaborated in section 2.4.2 above.

In Exploratory Practice, teachers and learners work together to understand the activities they are engaged in, following their own agendas. Their first priority is not to bring about change but to use normal pedagogical practices as investigative tools, so that working for understanding is part of teaching and learning, not something extra. In this way, Exploratory Practice does not lead to "burn out" but is indefinitely sustainable in its contribution to teaching and learning and to individual and collective personal development.[27]

3.5 *Participants in the project: roles and responsibilities*

3.5.1 *Steering group*

- The steering group will be appointed by the Council of Europe
  - Membership:
    - David Little, coordinator of the ECML's QualiRom Training & Consultancy
    - Dieter Halwachs, member of COMEX of ECRML (substitute: Zuzana Bodnárová, Romani Project, University of Graz
    - Ján Hero, vice chair of CAHROM
    - Helena Sadílková, head of Romani Studies Seminar, Charles University Prague
    - Diana Sima, educational advisor and teacher of Romani
    - Eben Friedman, former policy advisor to the Roma Education Fund
    - National coordinators

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[26] D. Allwright & J. Hanks, *The Developing Language Learner: An Introduction to Exploratory Practice*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, p. 15.

[27] This paragraph is adapted from D. Allwright, "Exploratory Practice: Rethinking practitioner research in language teaching", *Language Teaching Research* 7.2, 2003, pp. 127–8.

- ▪ Council of Europe secretariat
- Responsibilities
  - To manage the project on behalf of the Council of Europe, meeting at least twice a year in Strasbourg
  - In the preparation phase, to contribute to the induction of schools and teachers into the project
  - In the three school years of the project, to contribute to the ongoing support provided for participating schools and teachers
  - To receive regular reports from national coordinators
  - To prepare annual reports on the progress of the project
  - To evaluate the project from the perspective of the five principles set down in the 2019 policy document

3.5.2   Ministries of Education in participating countries

- Responsibilities
  - In consultation with the Council of Europe, to select 2–4 schools to participate in the project
  - To appoint a national coordinator for the project
  - To provide the national coordinator with support (remuneration and expenses) as agreed with the Council of Europe
  - To provide for regular exchange of information on the progress of the project between the ministry and the national coordinator
  - To provide appropriate additional remuneration for participating teachers/teaching assistants
  - To fund the translation into the national language of documents and materials required by the project
  - To fund at least one meeting each year of all teachers/teaching assistants participating in the project (travelling and accommodation expenses if relevant)

3.5.3   National coordinators

- Profile
  - Appointed by Ministries of Education, national coordinators will be language education professionals with relevant classroom experience
  - They will also have experience of working with Romani communities
  - They will be full members of the project steering group
- Responsibilities
  - To attend meetings of the steering group in Strasbourg
  - To support participating schools and teachers via
    - ▪ regular school visits
    - ▪ workshops for all participating schools/teachers

- In close cooperation with participating schools, to organize events designed to raise awareness of the project among parents and the wider community
- To regularly collect data (examples of classroom projects, pupils' work, etc.) from participating classrooms
- To report on the progress of the project at each steering group meeting

3.5.4 Participating schools

- Profile
  - Selected by the Ministry of Education in consultation with the Council of Europe, participating schools will include among their pupil cohort Romani children from one or more of the following:
    - communities that have lost the Romani variety spoken by earlier generations
    - communities in which older members still use Romani on a daily basis, whereas children and adolescents hear and understand Romani but do not speak it regularly in their daily lives
    - communities that have retained a variety of Romani as their domestic and community language
- Responsibilities
  - To provide all reasonable support for the project and participating teachers/teaching assistants (participating schools will receive additional funding calculated on a basis still to be determined)
  - The school principal may delegate responsibility for project coordination to a participating teacher
  - To ensure that the whole school is aware of the project and its goals and to give it publicity (posters, examples of pupils' work etc.) throughout the school
  - To explore ways of implementing the Council of Europe's plurilingual approach in classrooms characterized by linguistic diversity
  - To create opportunities for non-Romani pupils to develop an awareness of Romani language, culture and history
  - To make the wider community aware of the project and to involve them in project activities as appropriate

3.5.5 Participating teachers/teaching assistants

- Profile
  - Teachers/teaching assistants who perform one or both of the following functions:
    - Teach Romani in different settings
    - Provide support for Romani pupils in mainstream classes
- Responsibilities
  - To seek to implement in their teaching the principles set out in the 2019 policy document and elaborated in section 2 of this document, in particular
    - To involve their pupils in modes of classroom interaction that are designed to

encourage initiative and the exercise of agency
- To adopt approaches to classroom management that enable them to collect data of various kinds without taking on an additional burden

3.6 Project timeline and activities, 2020–2021

3.6.1 2020 January–June: preparation of the project

- 2020 January–February: Recruitment of participating countries by the Council of Europe secretariat
  - In the first two years a maximum of four countries will join the project, with 2–4 schools in each
  - In the first instance, three countries that have already expressed an interest will be targeted: Albania, Slovakia and Slovenia
- 2020 March–April: The ministry of education in each participating country recruits a national coordinator and participating primary schools
- 2020 February–March: Meeting of the expert group as currently constituted
  - Issues to be discussed/decided:
    - Activities proposed for 2020–2021 in light of the available budget
    - What contribution can each member of the steering group make to the activities of the project? Clearly, language education is at the centre, but we should also inform participants about Council of Europe policies in general and towards Roma in particular. We should also provide participants with information about the language varieties and history of the Romani populations in their country
    - The programme for the three-day meeting of the enlarged steering group (i.e. including national coordinators) to be held in April, May or June: (i) presentation of the project, its goals and working methods (to include wider Council of Europe policy dimensions); (ii) presentation of the situation of Roma in participating countries and their profile in participating schools; (iii) preliminary consideration of the ways in which participating schools can work towards the goals of the project; (iv) preliminary planning of the Strasbourg launch of the project and the induction of participating schools and teachers; (v) schedule of project activities to the end of 2021
    - Should the project have a website? If so, what should it contain and who should have permission to upload files? One possibility would be to use the ECML's QualiRom Training & Consultancy website, which would make project information and materials generally available (https://www.ecml.at/TrainingConsultancy/QualiRom/Events/tabid/2957/language/en-GB/Default.aspx)
    - Whether they are made available on a project website or distributed by national coordinators, short PowerPoint presentations on different dimensions of the project should be prepared by members of the steering group and translated into the national languages of the participating countries. How many of these should there be and who should create them?
    - Further consideration of possible links with the Council of Europe's INSCHOOL project
- 2020 April–June: meeting of the enlarged steering group (i.e. with national coordinators)

– Agenda to be agreed by the current steering group (see above)

3.6.2   2020 September–December: launch of the project

- 2020 September–October: Launch of the project via a two-day meeting in Strasbourg; attendees to include at least one representative of each participating school.
- 2020 November–December: launch of national projects via two-day national events, to be attended by one or more members of the steering group

3.6.3   2021: implementation of the project, Year 1

- 2021 January–June: implementation of the project in participating schools; visits to schools by national coordinators (and perhaps by members of the steering group) as decided at the first meeting of the enlarged steering group
- 2021 January–March: meeting of extended steering group in Strasbourg to review progress to date and draw up plans for the third and fourth years of the project
- 2021 September–December: further implementation of project in participating schools

Appendix 1: CEFR self-assessment grid

		A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
U N D E R S T A N D I N G	**Listening**	I can understand familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.	I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g., very basic personal and family information, shopping, local area, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.	I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.	I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.	I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort.	I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided I have some time to get familiar with the accent.
	Reading	I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues.	I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables and I can understand short simple personal letters.	I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters.	I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.	I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.	I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialised articles and literary works.
S P E A K I N G	**Spoken Interaction**	I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.	I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.	I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g., family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).	I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.	I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers.	I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.
	Spoken Production	I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.	I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job.	I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.	I can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.
W R I T I N G	**Writing**	I can write a short, simple postcard, for example sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.	I can write short, simple notes and messages. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.	I can write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.	I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.	I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues. I can select a style appropriate to the reader in mind.	I can write clear, smoothly-flowing text in an appropriate style. I can write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points. I can write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.

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Appendix 2: Descriptors for spoken interaction from the CEFR's self-assessment grid and the CFR

	A1	A2	B1	B2
CEFR self-assessment grid	I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.	I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.	I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g., family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).	I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.
CFR – Myself and my family	Can respond nonverbally (e.g., with a nod or shake of the head) or with single-word or very brief answers to basic questions about his/her likes or dislikes (e.g., Do you like … ?). Can greet the teacher, other adults and pupils in an appropriate way and say goodbye. Can indicate immediate personal needs (e.g., to go to the toilet).	Can reply with confidence to familiar questions about his/her name, age, number of brothers and sisters, etc. Can initiate conversation on a familiar topic (e.g., what he/she did at the weekend).	Can tell the teacher about what he/she did at home/on holiday/at the weekend etc. Can ask for clarification when necessary.	Can express worries or concerns to the teacher, another adult or some other responsible person. Can understand and participate fully in conversations about everyday life, family activities, interests, current issues, expressing clearly his/her own views and opinions.
	Can answer basic questions about his/her group, family name, age, and family members when supported by prompts. Can greet and say goodbye and say thank you to other Roma children and adults using appropriate forms of salutation.	Can reply with confidence to family or community members when asked familiar questions about his/her name, age, number of brothers and sisters, names of family members etc. Can use greetings naturally and appropriately.	Can ask and respond to questions on a wide range of familiar topics (family, home, parents' activities, interests, etc.). Can tell parents or other family members about what he/she did in school. Can talk about what he/she has learnt from parents and other older family members,	Can give parents a detailed account of what has taken place in school and describe his/her successes and achievements. In interaction with native speakers, can ask and answer questions spontaneously and fluently.