RELANG

Relating language examinations to the common European reference levels of language proficiency: *promoting quality assurance in education and facilitating mobility*

Benchmarking & Standard-setting

European Centre for Modern Languages and European Commission cooperation on Innovative Methodologies And Assessment In Language Learning
Linking Procedures in the Manual

- Familiarisation
- Specification
- Standardization and Benchmarking
- Standard setting
- Validation
Claims through Specification and Standardization

• Claimed link to CEFR is based on **specification** only
  – no indication of **score** required for CEFR-level in question

• Claims to be substantiated through **standardisation**
  – item-difficulties judged in relation to CEFR levels.
Group Decisions

• *Benchmarking* and *standard setting* are procedures requiring group decisions
  – to be carefully prepared by appropriate training.
Benchmarking in Direct Tests

- In tests productive skills the judgment on the CEFR level tends to be direct:
  - Assistance needed for raters in giving valid judgments
  - Main tool used for this special type of standard setting: **benchmarking**

- Benchmarking: providing one (or more) typical sample(s) to illustrate performance at a given level
Standard-setting in Indirect Tests

• For tests with numerical score, performance standards to be set
  – Receptive skills (reading, listening)
  – Underlying competences (grammar, vocabulary)
• Performance standard
  – Boundary (cut-off score) between two levels on the scale
• Process to arrive at cut-off score: standard-setting
Basket Method

- Basic question: *At what CEFR level can a test taker already answer the following item correctly?*
  - What is the minimum CEFR level required to give a correct response to this item?
- Panelists to put each item in a “basket” corresponding to one of the relevant CEFR levels
- Candidates at higher levels to give correct response
- Correct response not required at lower levels
Angoff Method

• Basic concept: *minimally acceptable person/borderline person*

• *Borderline person at B1*
  – has the ability to be labelled B1
  – slightest decrease in ability: no longer B1

• Task for panel: keep *borderline person* in mind for all the judgments

• For each item: What is the *probability* that the *borderline person* gives the correct answer?