

BREAKTHROUGH

An objective at Level A1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR), based on the model employed for the Council of Europe publications Waystage 1990 (A2), Threshold 1990 (B1) and Vantage (B2), revised in the light of CEFR.

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Preface:

It is a commonplace that we all stand on the shoulders of giants. A modern family car, or a jumbo jet airliner, is an intricate, integrated product of engineering design and production, which must run or fly on its own merits. However, if we look at a series of pictures showing the evolution of the car or the plane over the past century, we see how it has proceeded in small steps, as each generation of designers has been able to take the achievements of its predecessors for granted, to be acutely conscious of their defects and to add its own innovations to the story of evolutionary progress.

So it is, too, with the formulation of objectives for language teaching and learning. We can look back over at least 2000 years, back to the Hellenists, bringing a knowledge of Greek as a *koiné* to the Eastern Mediterranean, as well as to the Roman grammarians and rhetoricians, Priscian, Varro, Donatus and others, who left a body of language description and teaching methodology to the teachers of Latin to the medieval world. We are indebted to the great figures of the Renaissance, Reformation and Enlightenment and particularly to the leaders of the Great Reform Movement., now more than a Century ago, which overturned traditional aims and methods, giving us the modern paradigm we still follow.

A more direct debt is owed to my colleagues in the Expert Group set up by Herbert Jocher in 1971 to investigate the feasibility of a European unit-credit scheme for adult language learning, particularly David Wilkins, Anthony Peck and Klaus Bung. The enormous debt owed to Jan van Ek, the architect of the Threshold Level, is clear throughout the work. Less apparent, but essential, has been the supporting and stimulating role of Antonietta de Vigili and Joe Sheils, her successor as Senior Administrator of the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Division. The work of the many colleagues across Europe who contributed to the development of the Common European Framework, particularly my fellow authors Daniel Coste and Brian North has enriched the specification. The debt owed to the pioneers in first level language learning objectives specification emerges clearly from the Introduction. Many more could have been named. Acknowledgement is also called for of the strong moral and material support for this project by the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE),

Last, but by no means least, I am most deeply indebted to my late wife, Marion, for her selfless support over many years, without which none of my contributions to the Modern Languages Projects of the Council of Europe would have been possible. In the present instance, her help with the preparation of the manuscript, coping with my illegible script, and her many suggestions for the improvement of the text and avoidance of infelicities of wording have been invaluable.

John Trim, September 2009

Introduction

2. This will deal with the question of why a Breakthrough Level below Waystage is needed; the different roles of Breakthrough Level in plurilingual development in different contexts; the heterogeneity of the target audience; different groups and their characteristics (age; stage of cognitive and emotional development; previous educational experience, especially of language learning; expected language use; centres of interest and motivation; future perspective); consequences of the heterogeneity for the specification.

1. Threshold Level and Waystage

Breakthrough is the latest addition to the series of specifications of language learning objectives inaugurated by the publication of *The Threshold Level* by the Council of Europe in 1975. *The Threshold Level* was written by J. A. van Ek on the basis of preliminary studies by a group of experts convened by the Council of Europe to investigate the feasibility of a European unit-credit scheme for adult language learning. It set out to characterise the minimal language proficiency that would enable a learner to face the challenges of moving independently as a visitor or temporary resident in an environment where the target language is in daily use, both transacting the business of everyday living and building personal relations. The use of the word 'minimal' was perhaps misleading. The objective is by no means minimalist. To reach the threshold of confident independence is no mean feat, and it was soon realised that a considerable expenditure of time and effort was needed. It was believed at the time that *The Threshold Level* was the lowest level at which it was possible to formulate an objective for global proficiency, when an assembly of specific abilities would cohere into an integrated communicative competence. Up till that point, it was thought, objectives would have to be formulated in other terms, perhaps as modules dealing with a particular domain of use or a particular skill. However, a practical need soon arose in connection with the Anglo-German, broadcast-led multi-media English course *Follow Me*. Experience in the Viennese *Volkshochschulen* had shown that after a one-year course in adult education, average students could cope with some 75% of the Threshold Level content receptively, but only 33% productively. In setting a first year objective, the course designers, L.G. Alexander and M.A. Fitzpatrick, wished to maintain the breadth of coverage of *Threshold Level*, whilst reducing the learning load to what an average adult education student could achieve after following the course for one year. This meant retaining the main functional and notional categories of *Threshold Level*, whilst reducing their exponents by some 50%. The resulting objective, *Waystage* (not seen then as constituting a 'level'), which was elaborated by Alexander, Fitzpatrick and van Ek proved highly successful in practice.

Follow Me was followed world-wide by some 500 million viewers in over 60 countries, playing a significant role in the establishment of English as a universal vehicle of global communication. In 1990, both *Threshold Level* and *Waystage* were revised, following a decade of experience and further theoretical studies. Minor modifications were made to the chapters on functions, general notions and specific notions. Seven new chapters were added on; dealing with texts; reading and listening; writing; sociocultural competence; verbal exchange patterns; compensation strategies; learning to learn; degree of skill. An appendix was added on pronunciation and intonation and a systematic grammatical summary was added. These additions did not mean raising the proficiency level or the learning load. They were intended rather to give readers a more rounded understanding of what was entailed in acquiring a language proficiency at these levels.

With publication of *Waystage 1990*, it appeared that the need for a first level specification of language proficiency was satisfied. It corresponded to Level 1, the lowest level in the system of qualifying public examinations developed by the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE). However, in the 1990s, pressure grew for the addition of a higher level objective, leading to the publication of *Vantage*

Level, by J. A. van Ek and J. L. M. Trim (Cambridge University Press 2001). At the same time, the need came to be felt for the specification of an objective even lower than *Waystage*.

2. LANGCRED

The first use of the term 'Breakthrough' is generally attributed to the LANGCRED Project of the European Commission. This presented a proposed syllabus for a Level 1 Vocational Languages Qualification expected to be of both national (UK) and European currency. It built on the earlier work of the UK Language Lead Body, but took the 'clearer description' given in *Waystage 1990* as its point of departure. It considered, however, that *Waystage* 'goes well beyond the requirements of Level 1' so that 'only a selection of its content will, therefore, be needed'. Since the systematic form of presentation in *Waystage* was not followed, it is not easy to see in which respects, if at all, LANGCRED Level 1 is in fact reduced. Indeed, the introduction of a strong vocational component raises the demand considerably, since the learner was expected to be able to use the vocabulary from the lists of stated duties and tasks agreed for the CEDEFOP Comparability of Vocational Qualifications Project as published in the Journal of the European Communities. On inspection, it is clear that duties such as 'to act independently to receive guests and clients and undertake associated activities' were formulated without regard to the complexity of the linguistic structures used.

3. FINGS

In 1966, five members of the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) formed a consortium to write Breakthrough specifications for each of the less widely taught and used languages (LWTULs) with which they were concerned. The institutions and languages were:

- The University of Jyväskylä (Finnish)
- The Linguistics Institute of Ireland (Irish)
- The University of Bergen (Norwegian)
- The University of Athens (Greek)
- The University of Stockholm (Swedish)

From the initial letters of the five language, the Consortium has been generally known as FINGS.

The Consortium identified four main categories of learner at Breakthrough level:

1. Summer school learners, e.g. from the Greek or Irish diaspora, or people who simply want to learn a little of the language in, say, an intensive course of a month's duration.
2. Erasmus students (i.e. those studying in a university abroad with funding from the European Commission's 'Erasmus' scheme) who wish to gain some knowledge of a less widely used language, but who would not be able to do their studies through the medium of the language.
3. People living/working temporarily in the country, e.g. employees in multi-national companies.
4. Immigrants, both a) educated and b) uneducated.

They further grouped learners into:

- a) those able to read and write in a language using the same alphabet as the target language
- b) those able to read and write, but in a language using a different alphabet from that used for the target language
- c) those unable to read or write in any language.

This recognition of the diversity of the potential Breakthrough constituency is important. Of course, such diversity is found at every level. The Council of Europe achieved coherence by directing *The Threshold*

Level to the needs of one defined audience – adults wishing to achieve autonomy in a foreign environment. It then turned out that that was what most learners at that level wanted. The FINGS analysis raised the question, how far one might be able to compass suitable objectives for some, if not all these audiences in a single description, perhaps by distinguishing a ‘common core’, relevant to all, from options relevant only to some. However, whilst the FINGS Group recognised that teaching methods and length of course would vary, depending on the educational background, motivation and interest of the learner, it does not appear from the specification (English version) of December 1998 that the objective itself was differentiated according to the different audiences envisaged.

With regard to the characterisation of learners who have reached Breakthrough level, the FINGS group state:

‘Breakthrough competence is formulaic to a considerable degree. Essentially Breakthrough learners have a small internalised phrase-book, including in particular short phrases that can be used in a variety of situations (e.g. ‘Yes’. ‘No’. ‘Please’. ‘Thanks’.) and other phrases that can be used in different situations using strategies, some of them non-verbal. They have only a limited capacity to link phrases together or break them up so that their parts may be used in other situations. Similarly, in listening and reading, they cannot understand normal, connected texts, spoken or written. If they understand what is going on, they may be able to recognise isolated words and phrases in normal speech. If not, they will have to get the speaker to slow down, to pronounce words very deliberately, and to repeat things as necessary’.

Consequently, the group decided to depart radically from Threshold and Waystage in two ways..Firstly, they brought themes to the beginning of the specification. ‘There is no presentation of general functions and notions on their own. They are merged with the themes. General functions and notions do not play as central a role at Breakthrough as they do at Waystage and Threshold, where learners will have a capacity to apply general structures to particular situations. This capacity is very limited at Breakthrough, and accordingly, we decided to begin at once with language in its most concrete form, namely a phrase, on a particular topic, in a particular situation, reflecting particular needs of the learner’.

Secondly, they decided to base their description on the use of CAN-DO descriptors, drawing on those in the *Common European Framework of reference for Languages: learning, teaching and assessment* (CEFR), and a parallel project to translate the ALTE CAN-DO statements into the FINGS languages and to calibrate them. In addition, some members of the consortium were involved with the DIALANG project on computer-based self-assessment for language learners, which also focuses attention on what learners can and cannot do at various levels of the Framework.

The socio-cultural component of the specification was incorporated directly into the Themes. ‘One advantage of starting with the list of themes, instead of functions and notions, is that each theme, Personal Identification, House and home, Food and drink, and so on, will have obvious aspects of socio-cultural competence associated with it. And since the list of themes covers all aspects of daily life, there is no important aspect of socio-cultural competence that cannot be associated with some theme or other. Moreover, when languages are associated with one culture only – which is largely the case for the FINGS languages- it is possible to proceed directly from the theme to highly specific cultural materials. For example, we can state values, attitudes and politeness orientation of people or give the actual time that shops shut, or the ethnic composition of the population’.

Finally, a small reference grammar was added. Conscious of two facts, which appear to be inconsistent with their holistic approach, firstly, that it would be of little or no use to learners with low levels of literacy, and secondly, that Breakthrough learners in general would achieve only a very modest syntactic capacity, they stated: ‘Nonetheless, there are formal characteristics of every language that literate

learners, and their teachers, will find useful in their efforts to consolidate and expand even a very small corpus of exponents. These are the features of the language that we focus on in the grammar’.

The adoption of this model perhaps led the Project further away from the ‘threshold level’ series than may have been intended, not only in its formal presentation but also in its fundamental conception. The ‘notional-functional’ approach arose in 1970 as a reaction to proposals for a ‘situational approach’ based on the learning of dialogues situated in a range of everyday settings. Instead, it looked for those elements which were of use in a wider range of events, distinguishing between functions and general notions on the one hand, which were of use in many different situations, and the notions which were tied to specific situations on the other. Only in respect of those specific notions was a thematic organisation considered appropriate, and then almost exclusively in terms of the open word classes in the lexicon. The abandonment of this principle leaves no rational basis for the distinction between what is learnt for use in any situation and what is learnt for use in one particular situation. This brings a number of dangers. among them are:

- missing members of closed lexical sets and high frequency generic vocabulary (e.g. prepositions, ‘thing’ ‘nothing’ etc.)
- overspecification. For instance, the learner ‘can pronounce letters of the alphabet’ and ‘can SPELL his/her name’ but not, it seems his/her address or indeed anything else.
- vagueness , underspecification. For instance, learners ‘can WRITE notes to the neighbour and housekeeper’, ‘can STATE their condition, ailments and feelings’ and ‘can ASK questions about daily routines’, but it is not clear what limitations are placed on that ability. It became clear from different specimen descriptions that very different interpretations of words like ‘simple’, ‘basic’, ‘familiar’, etc. were possible.

Similar considerations apply to the syllabus for the German examinations *Fit in Deutsch*.

4. Fit in Deutsch

Fit in Deutsch is a suite of examinations for juvenile learners conducted by the Goethe=Institut. *Fit in Deutsch I* is stated to be oriented to the description of Level A1 (Breakthrough) in CEFR. It gives in ‘can do’ form the abilities of the successful candidate. A brief general description is taken from Table 6 in Chapter 8.4.3 of the 1998 Revised Version. (This is now Table 1 on p.24 in Chapter 3 of the final version published by CUP), and on the descriptors for skilled activities particularly at Level A1, previously in an Appendix but now attached to the activities concerned. These are presented according to the ‘four skills’: listening comprehension, reading comprehension, speaking and writing. These general indicators are then supplemented by a listing of themes, grammar and vocabulary

In common with other A1 specifications here reviewed, *Fit in Deutsch I* takes *Waystage* as its point of departure, but diverges from the *Threshold Level* model followed in *Waystage* by eliminating functions and general notions from the description and conflating exponents and examples. The consequences of doing so are again considerable, since the functions and general notions are those components of language competence that are generalisable across situations and themes. Linking functions to themes destroys their generalisability within the description. It may be that learners are expected to encounter them in a specific thematic context and then extend them to other contexts autonomously. However, that is to confuse course design (and possibly, but with less justification, testing) with level specification. A generalisable function or general notion must inevitably be introduced to a learner in a particular context, usually together with one or more topic-related specific notions, e.g. ‘please can you pass me the sugar?’. However, the form of polite request ‘*please could + NP + VPinf*’ is not theme– or situation-specific. One can request anyone to do anything, e.g. ‘please can you/I/my friend sit down/explain’, etc. Again, what is passed may be sugar, a screwdriver or a textbook. It is not the act of passing that is specific to a particular

theme or situation. It is what is passed that ties the utterance to cooking or eating food, or to the workplace or to school. In the context of cooking and eating food, the role of 'sugar' is of course by no means confined to requesting, or understanding a request, for it to be passed, e.g. 'You need more sugar', 'No sugar, thank you', 'The sugar is where, please?', etc. I do not think that learners should, or indeed will, simply learn 'please can you pass me the sugar' by heart as an unanalysed whole to be rehearsed and used when the situation arises. They will and should learn it, but as the basis for making further requests and for talking about sugar whenever it is appropriate to do so.

5. Starters and Movers

The 'main suite' of examinations in English as a foreign language (EFL) offered by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) offers certification at five levels. These correspond to the levels 1 – 5 in the ALTE system and to levels A2 – C2 in the system of levels specified in the Common European Framework. Level 1, the Key English Test (KET), is equated with Waystage. Up till recently, UCLES saw no real need or demand for a public examination at an even lower level. In Europe, the teaching of English in schools is almost universal from the age of 11. A qualification at Level A1 would scarcely be valued, since the level attained by school leavers and attested within the educational system of any country would be well above this level. It could not attract a viable market as a terminal qualification.

UCLES has now, however, identified such a market, but only for young learners. For them its value would be primarily motivational, a first step on a ladder leading to the main suite from KET to First Certificate (B2) and, for the more ambitious, on to the Certificate of Proficiency (C2). The current suite of examinations for young learners is 'designed to offer a comprehensive approach to testing the English of primary learners between the ages of 7 and 12'. The aims of the tests, situated at three key levels of assessment: **Starters**, **Movers** and **Flyers**, are to:

- sample relevant and meaningful language use
- measure accurately and fairly
- prevent a positive first impression of international tests
- promote effective learning and teaching
- encourage further learning and teaching

The three tests together 'build a bridge to take young learners of English as a foreign language from beginner to Waystage'. The third level in the series **Cambridge Flyers** is aimed at a typical candidate aged between 9 and 12 years, who has completed some 250 hours of English language tuition. The syllabus for FLYERS is stated to be roughly equivalent to the KET syllabus (which is seen as the equivalent of Waystage) in terms of size, 'but is more limited in terms of contexts covered'. Below Flyers there are two levels. **Cambridge Starters** is the lowest level and is 'designed for children from the age of 7, who have completed about 100 hours of learning'. **Cambridge Movers** is the second level in the series. A typical Movers candidate is likely to be between 8 and 11 years of age and to have completed approximately 175 hours of English language tuition.

The syllabuses for the three levels describe the **topics and notions**, the **structure**, the **lexis** and the **tasks** on which the tests are based. The content specification is clearly influenced by the *Threshold Level* model, but does not follow it. It starts with 'topics', which overlap with T-level/Waystage topic areas, but are selected in accordance with 'relevant research in a number of areas and the specific needs of prospective test users (children, parents and teachers)'. Account has been taken of:

- current approaches to curriculum design and pedagogy for young learners, including

- recent textbooks and other resource materials (e.g. CDROM)
- children's cognitive and first language development
- probable variation between different first language groups and cultures

The choice of topics, their weighting and the selection of vocabulary items with them are designed to cover the centres of interest of pre-pubertal children. For Starters (7–8 years of age) there is a strong emphasis on concrete details of a child's immediate surroundings: body and face (12 items), clothes (14), family, friends and self (47 items, including 10 first names, 'happy birthday' and personal pronouns), food and drink (35 items), the home (34 items), school and classroom, language and tests (50 items), sports and leisure-time activities (39 items). There are also topic items related to young children's picture books, particularly animals ('animal', 'bird', 'fish' and 19 specific animals, many exotic e.g. tiger, crocodile) and colours (10 items). 'Monster' and 'robot', also appear to come from comics and TV rather than reality. This biasing is no doubt appropriate to the age-group concerned. However, the seemingly arbitrary choice of particular words (e.g. personal names) looks more like textbook content than the characterisation of a level of competence. Movers adds some 10 further exotic animals, birds and fish, and introduces 'health' as a topic, but also looks outside the home to local places (13 items), occupations and the world of work (if only to clowns and pirates!), holidays and the world around us (20 items). What is here indicated, is that the specification of a Breakthrough Level has to recognise that the needs and characteristics of learners vary according to age, and also to social and educational background and suchlike variables in addition to the role of the target language in the learner's life. The level specification must be flexible enough to offer options as appropriate. It also appears to indicate that these options may be most necessary with respect to topic-related specific notions and the corresponding vocabulary.

The notions and concepts listed are restricted in number (9 categories) for Starters, expanding to 18 for Movers. They relate closely to general notions, though not consistently. As such they form part of the common core and are much less age-specific. The same is true of grammar and structures.

In general, *Starters* and *Movers* have provided useful indications of the areas in which age-related options may be offered, but it does not appear that the overall descriptive model is to be preferred to the *Threshold Level* type.

6. The ALTE 'Can-do statements

After using careful statistical procedures correlating the self-assessment of large numbers of examination candidates with their examination results, ALTE has found that a substantial number of descriptors fall below its Level 1, which corresponds to Waystage. These have been further differentiated as between –1 and 0. Whilst ALTE states that these levels cannot be so exactly calibrated as those at a higher level, they may perhaps be equated with Breakthrough (A1) and Breakthrough plus (A1+), or with an undifferentiated Breakthrough level.

The ALTE *CAN-DO* descriptors, particularly those which are domain-specific, are particularly concrete and many have been incorporated into this Breakthrough specification. The division between –1 and 0 level abilities is somewhat variable, so both have been incorporated into a single specification. There are some surprising gaps. For instance, a Breakthrough learner confronted with an emergency (A9) should hardly remain silent. At least,(s)he can cry for help! In general, the picture of an early learner which emerges, here as elsewhere, is that of a somewhat passive, reactive personality, content to function at a low cognitive level and somewhat lacking in initiative. The adult, it sometimes seems, is content with the role of an infant. In reality, as in the case of an emergency, CAN DO often has to give way to MUST DO, straining the limits of linguistic resources. Little account is taken of heuristic abilities. The functional range is also rather narrow, concentrating on routine transactions and the exchange of

information. However, it is to be welcomed that, when eating out or staying at a hotel, complaint is given high priority.

Thus, while the ALTE can-do statements have made a valuable contribution to this Breakthrough specification, what they have to offer is one part of an adequate model for the specification as a whole.

8. The Common European Framework (CEFR)

.The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment* (Council of Europe 2001) calibrates language proficiency at a series of six levels, rising from A1 to C2. It does so using descriptors mostly taken from a Swiss project described in CEFR, Appendix B. The descriptors for Level A1, corresponding to Breakthrough, may be summarised as follows:

A language user at Level A has command of limited resources to deal with concrete aspects of the basic requirements of the most common everyday situations: a restricted repertory of holophrases (words, phrases and sentences learnt and used as unanalysed wholes) and the ability to understand and produce short, simple texts. Understanding requires the slow, careful enunciation of standard language forms by the speaker. Speech production is slow, hesitant, with frequent pauses to search for expressions, backtracking, errors, etc. Interaction requires a sympathetic and co-operative interlocutor and the frequent use of repair procedures. Reading is confined to isolated words and short, simple texts, dealing with familiar topics, read a phrase at a time and may require the frequent use of a dictionary. Writing is confined to form-filling and very short, simple (postcard type) texts.

This characterisation of CEF Level A1 is of course somewhat repetitious and very general in character. It allows for wide differences in the interpretation of such words as 'short', 'simple', 'common', 'familiar', 'frequent', 'slow', etc. Their interpretation depends upon strong intuitions of normality, which may well diverge considerably in different educational environments with different traditions. Whilst on the one hand such vagueness makes for flexibility and easier acceptance, these may be won at the expense of comparability of qualifications across systems, which is one of the motives for the common calibration of language proficiency. Wherever possible and appropriate, the CEF descriptors have been incorporated into this Breakthrough specification.

In addition to the proficiency scalings, Chapters 4, 5 and 7 of CEF provide a wider taxonomy than the Threshold Level model. The later chapters of *Breakthrough* have been remodelled in line with this model, while incorporating the content of the corresponding chapters of *Waystage*, though of course *mutatis mutandis*.

8. DIALANG

DIALANG is an assessment system intended for language learners who want to obtain diagnostic information about their proficiency. The DIALANG project has been carried out with the financial support of the European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture (SOCRATES Programme, LINGUA Action D).

The system consists of self-assessment, language tests and feedback, which are all available in

fourteen European languages: Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Icelandic, Irish, Italian, Norwegian, Portuguese, Spanish, and Swedish. DIALANG is delivered via the Internet free of charge.

DIALANG's Assessment Framework and the descriptive scales used for reporting the results to the users are directly based on the Common European Framework (CEF). The self-assessment statements used in DIALANG are also mostly taken from the CEF and adapted whenever necessary to fit the specific needs of the system.

The DIALANG descriptors provided for Level A1, corresponding to Breakthrough, have been consulted throughout.

9. Conclusions

In the light of these developments, the Division of Modern Languages of the Council of Europe commissioned the present author, in consultation with ALTE to proceed to the specification of a Breakthrough Level as an addition to the Waystage - Threshold Level – Vantage Level series. A first draft was submitted to the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe and has been examined and discussed by members of ALTE. It was not published at that time, but is now offered for further discussion as part of the 'English Profile' Project.

After considering carefully the descriptive models adopted in the syllabuses outlined above, it was decided that the Breakthrough specification should be created by reducing the material in Waystage, and that the reduction would be clearer if the same model were kept and the principles governing the reduction were clearly formulated and carried through consistently.

As is stated in the Introduction to *Vantage* (van Ek and Trim 2001, p. 6): 'In all, *Waystage*, *Threshold* and *Vantage* now offer to all practitioners a description of the language needed to assure a learner's ability to deal effectively with the challenges presented by everyday life, presented at three levels rising from a minimal equipment to deal with the higher priority needs, through the minimum needed to deal with the full range of requirements for a visitor or temporary resident, to an enriched equipment adequate to deal effectively with the complexities of daily living. It is, of course, for the individual user to decide how to make use of this descriptive apparatus, in order to define appropriate objectives for a particular set of learners, whilst of course bearing in mind the need to co-ordinate the efforts of different providers in developing a learning/teaching system. Users can supplement the specification if some needs of the constituency are not met, or cut out elements they do not need. Items which are of marginal value to the learners envisaged can be replaced by others. The process can be articulated into more stages if a particular educational system is organised in a 'drip feed' mode, or fewer if there is a full-time intensive programme for experienced and gifted learners. With courses for non-beginners, the description can be used to specify a prior knowledge requirement as well as the objective. Modules can be derived by concentrating on some defined sub-part of the specification, as can partial competence.

'This flexibility is possible because a single model has been used for the successive levels, *Waystage*, *Threshold* and *Vantage*. We trust that all those concerned with planning and implementing language teaching and learning will find it useful in setting objectives which are desirable, appropriate and feasible for the particular learners towards whom they undertake responsibility'.

For these reasons, the functional and notional categories in Chapters 3 and 4 have remained as far as possible unchanged. Occam's razor ('entities are not to be multiplied beyond necessity') has been sharply honed. Redundancy, in the form of alternative exponents for a single category, has been largely eliminated. Whenever a single exponent can be used for a number of categories, it has been preferred to

one specific to a single category. Thus 'Sorry (?)' is offered for 'expressing regret', 'apologising', 'refusing permission' and 'declining an invitation' as well as a range of communication repair functions.

Chapter 5 shows greater changes. The themes have been reorganised under domains: personal, public, vocational and educational, to facilitate the options open to different target groups. Teenagers and adults looking to use the language for practical purposes in general social life will concentrate on the personal and public domains. Others who are strictly job-oriented will concentrate on the public and vocational domains, though they will of course not be able to avoid having to give personal details and will, as language learners be involved, like others, in the educational field. Younger learners will be mostly involved in the personal and educational domains. It is also in Chapter 5 that the theme-based 'Can-do' descriptors have been found to be of the greatest use.

The later chapters have been reorganised from those in *Waystage*, to reflect the wider coverage of the *Common European Framework*. They deal in turn with receptive and productive activities, interaction and mediation, then passing to the inner competences, both general and more closely language-related, which are called upon in all language activities.

The diversity of the target groups, referred to in the FINGS Project, makes it difficult to assess the length of study required to reach Breakthrough. Adult learners with extensive previous language learning experience will do so much more quickly than immigrants from a peasant background with, perhaps, no previous schooling. As a rough approximation, the learning load may be estimated at, say, some 80-100 hours of tuition. It will in any case be clear from the specification itself that there will be considerable variation in what a language learner who has reached this target will in fact be capable of doing with what he or she has learnt.

Chapter 1. The objective

Breakthrough 'is considered the lowest level of generative language use – the point at which the learner can *interact in a simple way, ask and answer simple questions about themselves, where they live, people they know and things they have, initiate and respond to simple statements in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics*, rather than relying on a very finite, rehearsed, lexically organised repertoire of situation-specific phrases' (Council of Europe 2001, p.33).

As appropriate to their age and in accordance with their needs and interests the learners will be able to use the foreign language in a simple way for the following purposes:

I giving and obtaining factual information:

1. personal information (e.g. about name, address, place of origin, date of birth, education, occupation)
2. non-personal information (e.g. about places and how to get there, about the time of day, about various facilities and services, about rules and regulations, about opening hours, about where and what to eat, etc.)

II establishing and maintaining social and professional contacts, particularly:

1. meeting people and, if strangers, making their acquaintance
2. extending invitations and reacting to being invited
3. proposing/arranging a course of action
4. exchanging information, views, feelings, wishes, concerning matters of common interest, particularly those relating to
 - personal life and circumstances
 - living conditions and environment
 - educational/occupational activities and interests
 - leisure activities and social life

III carrying out certain transactions:

1. making arrangements (planning, tickets, reservations, etc.) for
 - travel
 - accommodation
 - appointments
 - leisure activities
2. making purchases
3. ordering food and drink

The learners will be able to carry out the above communicative activities in contacts with:

- native speakers of the foreign language
- other non-native speakers of the foreign language, using the foreign language as a common means of communication

Such contact may occur

- in a country or region where the foreign language is the native language
- in the learner's own country
- in a country or region outside the learner's own country and where the foreign language is not the native language

the learners will primarily be able to function in contacts involving the oral use of the foreign language, mainly face-to-face contacts but also those requiring the use of the telephone or of public media. Secondly, where appropriate, they will be able to understand the gist and/or relevant details of texts written in clear and very simple language and to express themselves in writing. Both the text types to be understood and those to be produced will be specified subsequently.

This description closely parallels that of *Waystage*. The difference between what learners are able to do at *Waystage* and at *Breakthrough* is one of quality rather than range. It lies not so much in the purposes for which the language is used, as in the balance between them according to the age, needs and interests of the learner, in the resources the learner brings to the task and the skill with which these resources are deployed.

Clearly, not all learners will share identical objectives, or follow the same learning path. There are some things all learners will inevitably need to know and to do. These constitute the ‘common core’ of language learning and use. Other things are more specific to particular groups. In a family, the needs and interests of parents are different from those of teenagers, which are different again from those of their younger brothers and sisters. For younger learners, daily family life, play and school set the horizon. For teenagers, interests change and expand into the public domain, as friendships, peer group activities, fashion and entertainment become centres of interest, while the intellectual demands and pressures of schoolwork increase. In adult life, the vocational and public domains grow in importance and diversify, as careers and lifestyles diverge. To provide for such diversity, a statement of learning objectives must either confine its attention to one well-defined target audience, as was the case with *The Threshold Level*, or provide a range of options. Of course, to meet every individual requirement is impossible - social provision must deal with groups of a viable size – fine tuning must be left to the autonomous learner. This Breakthrough specification attempts to deal with major groupings, such as adult learners, say of a less widely used language for practical use, teenage learners and younger learners, for whom Breakthrough is the first step on a long ladder, by offering options. There may be options between domains, or in the weighting of domains, or in the individual items to be selected within a particular class of words (e.g. *kinds of employment*). In this way, we trust that the description may be of relevance and practical help to the widest range of users.

Chapter 2. Components of the specification.

This chapter gives a run-down of the structure of the specification in later chapters and a brief characterisation of the role and nature of each component. It will also deal with the question of flexibility and the relation of core elements to options needed in view of the heterogeneity of the target audience discussed in the Introduction.

The first part of the specification follows closely the model used throughout the *Waystage-Threshold-Vantage* series. The ‘common core’, relevant to all learners no matter what their particular individual interests may be, is presented in the form of *language functions* and *general notions*, which permeate the whole of language in use.

1. Language functions:

. Though languages may be learnt by individual learners for many different reasons, the work of the Council of Europe has been particularly concerned with language for interpersonal communication. The starting point is the purposes for which language is used. CEFR divides its detailed classification of such language functions into microfunctions and macrofunctions. Macrofunctions, such as description,

narration, argumentation, persuasion, etc., 'are categories for the functional use of spoken discourse or written text consisting of a (sometimes extended) sequence of sentences' (Council of Europe 2001: 126. Macrofunctions are not specified in detail at Breakthrough level, since learners are not expected to organise language effectively above the level of short turns in a conversation (but see Chapter 9, section 4). At Waystage, and even more at Threshold or Vantage level, a full range of language functions (micofunctions) is classified, together with their exponents (the language which expresses them). In most cases, it is possible to express function in more ways than one and at higher levels a choice is offered. In this Breakthrough specification, an attempt is made to maintain the full functional range, but to further reduce or eliminate choices, concentrating on the barest minimum of expressions that will suffice for the purpose.

2. General notions

It is sometimes appropriate to express a language function without explicitly stating what it refers to. For instance, we may express agreement by saying 'Yes'. There is no way of telling what is being agreed to. Similarly, if we say 'Sorry!', we are clearly expressing regret or apologising, but for what? Presumably, the speaker thinks that is obvious to the listener, who has just asked whether it is still raining, or whose foot has just been stepped on. More often, perhaps, we need to be more explicit, producing sentences with both a functional and a conceptual (notional) content. General notions are those which are not tied to the concrete details of a particular situation, but provide linguistic categories which form the framework of our intellectual understanding of the world: concepts of space and time, physical quantities and qualities, logical and other relations between entities and events. Such concepts are very often incorporated into the grammar of a language (e.g. verb tenses), or closed word-classes (e.g. prepositions).

3. Specific notions, theme-related can-do statements and vocabulary.

Specific notions are those which deal with the concrete details of a particular situation, used either when dealing with the situation itself or when referring to it as a theme. They are highly relevant, even essential, to anyone needing to deal with or talk about that situation, but not to anyone who does not. Consequently, their expression does not form part of the 'common core' of the language, except in so far as the situation is one concerning all human beings. The exponents of specific notions are for the most part lexical items in the open word classes, above all nouns and verbs. This chapter is organised largely as in *Waystage*. However, the themes are grouped more clearly into domains: personal, public, vocational and educational. Some sub-classification is introduced so as to identify elements likely to be of common interest and to facilitate the exercise of options. More space and better presentation is given to introductory theme-related 'can-do' statements.

Even at the earliest stages of language learning, individuals will need, or wish, to talk about their particular interests, tastes and conditions of life. In this respect some domains and themes will be highly relevant, others peripheral. Consider, for example, the role of the public, vocational and educational domains in the lives of young learners, teenagers and mature adults. With regard to travel, adult learners will need to deal with transactions such as consulting timetables, making reservations, buying tickets, etc., whereas young learners do not need to worry about such things. Within the personal domain, we each have our name, address, nationality, occupation, hobbies and interests, etc., which it is clearly impossible to list *in extenso*. In those areas where personal choice is involved, it seems best to specify the theme, leaving the individual learners to decide whether or not it is of relevance and if so to identify and learn (with the assistance of a teacher, peer group, native speaker, work of reference as appropriate and available) what is required for self-description. At the same time, suggestions are made for some of the most common items in the field concerned. After all, in an exchange of information we need also to understand what other people tell us about themselves. It must of course be acknowledged that this problem is not to be solved by learning any number of lexical items. The learner must be prepared to elicit

and understand (and also provide }explanations (see Chapter 3 Section 6 and the note on the word list below.

4. Receptive tasks, activities, processes and strategies: listening to, and reading, texts.

Chapter 6 has been based on Chapter 4 of the *Common European Framework* (CEFR) and supersedes Chapter 6 of *Waystage*. It specifies what a learner will be able to do in these respects at Breakthrough Level. In doing so it draws on the can-do statements in CEFR and in the non-domain-specific ALTE specifications as well as those of FINGS and others. Text-types and media are listed and what the learner can do in relation to them is specified, including the use of heuristic procedures and reference sources. The chapter deals with the ability of learners at Breakthrough level to deal receptively with the texts, written and spoken, which they may expect to encounter in daily life. It is pointed out that learners cannot require other users of the language to confine themselves to the language which learners at Breakthrough level will already have been taught. In oral interaction face-to-face, the resources set out in chapters 3-5 should enable them to understand an interlocutor using short turns in simple language and speaking slowly and clearly under favourable conditions. They should also be able to use repair strategies and heuristic competences to deal with a limited amount of material outside what they have been taught. Similarly, these competences can be drawn upon to extract the necessary information from public announcements of a simple kind. With written texts (other than scrolling) their resources should enable them to understand basic texts (letters, e-mail, signs and posters, etc.) and to make proper use of a dictionary as required.

5. Productive tasks, activities, processes and strategies: speaking and writing.

Chapter 7 replaces Chapter 7 and Appendix A of *Waystage* in the light of CEFR Chapter 4. It emphasises the differences between reception and production and the effect of different resources, conditions and constraints on what a Breakthrough learner can do in producing spoken and written texts. As compared to many previous specifications, it attempts to indicate not how little, but how much a learner at this level can achieve with severely limited resources.

6. Interaction and mediation.

Chapter 8 supersedes Chapters 9 and 10 of *Waystage* and applies sections 4.4.3 and 4.4.4 of CEFR to Breakthrough Level, including the descriptors for A1 given there and also drawing on other can-do statements as appropriate. It deals with both spoken and written interaction, contrasting both with one-way communication. With regard to mediation, it considers the relation of interpretation to translation and points out that any learner, even a very low level of proficiency, will be sought after for informal assistance. It warns learners against being drawn into taking responsibilities beyond their competence.

7. General and language-related competences.

Chapter 9 draws upon CEF chapter 5 and applies it to Breakthrough Level, including where appropriate the characterisation of Level A1 in the scalings given there. It points out the disproportion between the general competences of a learner at Breakthrough level, which are those of any native speaker of similar age, education and experience, and the language-related competences, which are at a very early stage of development (the 'adult imprisoned in a baby' syndrome) and discusses the consequences for communication.

8. Compensation strategies (communication repair).

Chapter 10 deals briefly with the fact that learners at Breakthrough level must expect problems to arise in communication with only very limited resources and skills, and their need to have available techniques for dealing with them.

9. Degrees of skill

Chapter 11 raises briefly the issues arising from the fact that the different activities involved in communication make different demands on the skills of learners, which at Breakthrough level are still at a very early stage of development. It asks how the resulting 'normal' unequal proficiency profile should be accommodated in a system of levels.

8. Word index for Breakthrough

The word list contains the c.750 words which are to be found in Chapters 3-5, together with c.50 word fields, mostly those in which learners may wish to acquire a personalised vocabulary related to their own particular needs, interests and characteristics in addition to the more common examples entered in the word list itself. For example, if a young person has a pet hamster and plays the cello, *hamster* and *cello* will figure in that person's vocabulary as personal choices from the categories *pets* and *musical instruments*, along with the more common *dogs* and *cats*, or *guitar* and *piano*, which are included in the word list as being useful to all learners. It is not in any case to be expected that the vocabulary of any individual learner at Breakthrough (or any other) level will consist of all and only the words in the list. Any real life contact with the omnipresent English language will have exposed them to words not specified here, which they may well remember, recognise and perhaps use when needed. On the other hand, part of the lexicon, especially the exponents of specific notions in Chapter 5, may not be sufficiently relevant to a learner's particular needs and interests to justify learning them for productive use. This may apply to a whole domain (e.g. the vocational domain for younger learners). Inappropriate items may then be left aside for productive use, whilst perhaps being noted for purely recognition purposes.. Overall, the active lexicon available to a learner at Breakthrough level for both productive and receptive purposes seems likely to amount to some 650-700 headwords. The number available for receptive purposes is likely to be higher, perhaps much higher, depending on age, knowledge of the world, educational level, heuristic skills and previous plurilingual experience - including the presence of loanwords from L2 in L1. As the effect of these factors is not generalisable, no account can be taken of them in this specification, but their importance should not be underestimated. .

Chapter 3. Language functions.

Every utterance has a role in communication, whether it is to state a fact, ask a question, express an opinion, make a request or announce an intention. The fact may relate to the present or the past, and concern home life or a manufacturing process. In any situation a language user needs to be able to state a fact and understand someone else's assertions. For this reason, it is more economical to separate such functional categories and the language which gives them expression from the details of what is being spoken of in any one particular situation

In this Breakthrough specification, language functions are classified under:

1. imparting and seeking factual information
2. expressing and eliciting attitudes
3. getting things done (suasion)
4. socialising
5. structuring discourse
6. communication repair

1. The Learner CAN impart and elicit factual information

1.1 identifying

- (with pointing gesture)
 - (an object) this one, that one, these, those
 - (a person) me, you, him, her, us, them.
- (where pointing impossible)
 - (a person) It + BE + me, you, him, her, us, them
 - (a person or object) It + BE + NP.

1.2 reporting (describing and narrating)

declarative sentences within the learner's grammatical and lexical competences (see 9:2.1)
.NB This limitation applies wherever *declarative sentence* is specified

1.3 correcting

As 1.1 and 1.2, but with contrastive stress

1.4 asking

- a) for confirmation
 - declarative sentences with high-rising intonation*
 - short questions*
 - I, you, he, she, it, we, they + *BE/HAVE/DO/CAN/WILL?*
 - OK?
- b) for information
 - Wh questions:*
 - (time) when?
 - (place) where?
 - (manner) how?
 - (reason) why?
- c) seeking identification
 - Wh questions:*
 - (person) who?

(thing) what?
which (+ one/NP)?

1.5 **answering questions**

a) for confirmation

Yes (+*tag*)

No (+*negative tag*)

b) for information

short answers:

(time and place) *adverbs, prepositional phrases*

(manner) *prepositional phrases*

like this (*with demonstration*)

(reason) because + *declarative sentence*.

c) for identification

as 1.1.

NP

2. **The learner CAN express and find out attitudes**

2.1 **Factual: agreement, etc.**

2.1.1 **expressing agreement with a statement.**

(with positive statements) Yes (+ *nod of the head*).

(with negative statements) No (+*shake of the head*)

2.1.2 **expressing disagreement with a statement**

(Sorry).

(with positive statements) No (+*shake of the head*)

(with negative statements) Yes (+ *nod of the head*).

2.1.3 **enquiring about agreement and disagreement**

OK?

2.1.4 **denying something**

No (+*shake of the head*)

2.2 **Factual: knowledge**

2.2.1 **stating whether one knows or does not know something, someone, or a fact**

I (don't) know (+ *NP*)

I know + *declarative sentence*

2.2.2 **enquiring whether someone knows or does not know something, someone, or a fact**

You know (+ *NP*)?

You know + *declarative sentence*?

2.3 **Factual: modality**

1 **expressing ability and inability**

2.3.1 *NP*+ can ('t) + *VP inf.*

2.3.2 **enquiring about ability and inability**

NP +can + *VP inf*?

2.4 Factual: certainty

2.4.1 expressing how certain one is of something

I am (not) sure.

2.4.2 enquiring how certain someone is of something

(You're) sure?

2.5 Obligation

2.5.1 expressing obligation to do something

I, you, he, she, we, they /*NP* have to + *VPinf*.

expressing one is not obliged to do something

I, you, he, she, we, they/*NP* don't/doesn't have to + *VPinf*.

2.5.2 enquiring whether one is obliged to do something
I, you, he, she, we they + have/has to+ *VPinf.*?

2.6 Permission

2.6.1 giving permission

Yes
You, he, she, they can (+ *VPinf.*)

2.6.2 seeking permission

Can I, he, she, we, they (+ *VPinf.*)?

2.6.3 stating that permission is not given

No
(I'm) sorry
You, he, she, they, can't (+ *VP inf.*)

2.7. Volitional

2.7.1 expressing wants, desires

(something)
I'd like + *NP*, please
(to do something)
I'd like to + *VPinf.*, please
(asking for something)
Can I have + *NP*, please?
(asking to do something)
see 2.14

2.7.2 enquiring about wants, desires

You would like (to do) something?
(to have something)
NP?
(to do something)
You, he, she, they would like to + *VPinf.*?

2.7.3 expressing intention

NP + will (+*VPinf.*)

2.7.4 enquiring about intention

NP = will (+ *VPinf.*)?

2.7.5 expressing preference

I ('d) like + *NP* better/best

2.8 Emotional

2.8.1 expressing and reporting emotional states

I'm/*NP*+*BE* (very) happy/ sad/ glad/ excited/ worried/ afraid

2.8.2 enquiring about emotional states

How are you?

2.8,3 expressing liking

Lovely!

NP + BE (very) nice
I/NP love(s)/ like(s) + NP (very much)

2.8.4 expressing dislike

horrible!

NP + BE + not very nice

I, he, she, we, they hate + NP.

(disgust) Ugh!

- 2.8.5 enquiring about (dis)pleasure, (dis)like**
OK?
Do you like + *NP*?
- 2.8.6 4expressing hope**
I hope + *so/declarative sentence*.
- 2.8.7 expressing satisfaction**
Good!
- 2.8.8 expressing dissatisfaction**
It's not good
- 2.8.9 enquiring about satisfaction**
OK?
- 2.8.10 giving reassurance**
Never mind
There, there
- 2.8.11 expressing disappointment**
What a pity!
- 2.8.12 expressing gratitude**
Thank you (very much)
- 2.9 Moral**
- 2.9.1 apologising**
Sorry!
- 2.9.2 granting forgiveness**
OK
That's all right.
- 2.9.3 expressing approval**
(Very) Good!
- 2.9.4 expressing appreciation**
(Very) good!
(Very) nice!
- 2.9.5 expressing regret**
(*a shake of the head*)
(I'm) (very) sorry.
- 2.9.6 expressing indifference**
(*with a shrug of the shoulders*)
It is not important.
- 3 The learner CAN get things done (suasion)**
- 3.1 suggesting a course of action**

Why not + *VP*?
(including the speaker) Let's (+*VP*)

3.2 agreeing to a suggestion

OK
Yes, why not?
Yes, let's

3.3 requesting others to do something

Please + *VP imperative*
Please can you + *VP infinitive*

3.4 inviting others to do something

Please (+ *VPimp*)
Would you like to + *VPinf*?

3.5 accepting an offer or invitation

Thank you
Yes, please

3.6 declining an offer or invitation

No, thank you
(with *shake of head*) Sorry!

3.7 enquiring whether an invitation or offer is accepted or declined

OK?
Can you (+ *VPinf*)?

3.8 advising others to do something

Why not + *VPinf*?

3.9 warning

(Be) Careful!

3.10 offering assistance

Can I help you?

3.11 requesting assistance

Help!
Can you help me please?

4 The learner CAN socialise

4.1 attracting attention

Hallo!
Excuse me, please

4.2 greeting people

Hallo (+ *name*)!
How are you?

4.3 Responding

Fine, thank you.

4.4 addressing people

(strangers) *no address form*

(deferential or formal, especially in writing) Sir/Madam
(acquaintances) Mr./Mrs./Miss + *family name*
(friends and relations) *first name*.

4.5 introducing someone

(other people) (*address form* +) This is + *name*
(oneself) Hallo! I'm + *name*.

4.6 reacting to being introduced

Hallo!
(formal) How do you do?

4.7 congratulating someone

Congratulations!
Well done!

4.8 proposing a toast

Cheers!

4.9 Taking leave

Goodbye!

5. The learner CAN structure discourse

5.1 opening a conversation

Hallo!
Well,...

5.2 expressing hesitation, looking for words

...er....
...er, what is it,...er.....

5.3 correcting oneself

(*incorrect form*) no, sorry + *corrected form*

5.4 enumerating

(*first item*) and (*second item*) and (*third item*)

5.5 summing up

.....and so.....

5.6 closing

Well, thank you
Goodbye.

5.7 Using the telephone

5.7.1 opening

(if the caller)
Hallo, this is + *name*
(if the person called)
Hallo? (+ *own telephone number/name*)

5.7.2 asking for an extension

number/name + please

5.7.3 requesting or giving notice of a new call

(I will) call back later

5.8 Opening and closing a letter or e-mail

5.8.1 opening

Dear + *address form* (cf. 4.4)

5.8.2 closing

Yours, + *signature on next line*

6. The learner CAN repair snags in communication

6.1 signalling non-understanding

Sorry (?)

6.2 asking for overall repetition

Sorry?
Again, please

6.3 asking for partial repetition

Sorry? (+*WH?*)

6.4 asking for clarification

Sorry? (+*queried word?*)

6.5 asking for confirmation of understanding

(Sorry,) you said + *queried word?*

6.6 asking for a word to be spelt out

Please spell that

6.7 asking for something to be written down

Please write that

6.8 expressing ignorance of an expression

Sorry, I don't know the word

6.9 appealing for assistance

What is + '*native language expression*' in English?

6.10 asking a speaker to slow down

Slowly, please

Chapter 4. General Notions

Introduction

General notions may be thought of as the glue that holds a language together. To change the metaphor, it is the closely spun network of interlinking concepts which make a language an integrated instrument of thought rather than a set of symbols. In English, the linguistic exponents of general notions are for the most part grammatical categories, such as tenses and the singular/plural distinction, or high-frequency closed lexical sets, either with grammatical functions, such as prepositions and articles, or such closed sets as cardinal and ordinal numbers or days of the week and months of the year.

Breakthrough level is conceived as the lowest level at which general notions can be considered to form a coherent system, though still at an early stage of development. An attempt is made here to cover a broad enough range to justify that claim, whilst offering only the minimal and simplest exponents.

General notions for Breakthrough with recommended exponents

1. Existential

1.1 existence, non-existence

there is + *NP*

there is no + *NP*

there is (no) + *NP*?

1.2 presence, absence

(not) here, (not) there

1.3 availability, non-availability

as 1.1

1.4 occurrence, non-occurrence

to happen

2. Spatial

2.1 location

here, there

where?

2.2 relative position

in, on, under, behind, near

2.3 distance

(not) far (from)

how far?

2.4 motion

go, come, stop, start, move, push, pull, fall, drop, lift

sit, stand, lie

2.5 direction

here, away, up, down, left, right

to, from, back, forward

bring, take, send, put

2.6 origin

from

2.7 arrangement

first, then, last

before, after

2.8 dimension

2.8.1 size

(not) big, tall, high, deep

how big, tall, high, deep?

2.8.2 length

inch, foot, yard, mile
centimetre, metre, kilometre
(not) long
how long?

2.8.3 pressure

(not) heavy
how heavy?

2.8.4 weight

ounce, pound, ton
gram(me), kilogram(me)
(not) heavy
how heavy?

2.8.5 volume

pint
litre
(not) much
how much?

2.8.6 space

(not) big
how big?

2.8.7 temperature

degree
(not) hot, (not) cold
how hot?, how cold?

3. Temporal

3.1 points of time

number (1 – 12) + o'clock
number (1 – 12) + number (1 – 59)
what's the time?

3.2 divisions of time

second, minute, hour, day, week, month, year
times of day: morning, afternoon, evening, night
seasons: spring, summer, autumn, winter

3.3 indications of time

yesterday, today, tomorrow
last/this/next + *items in 3.2*
dates: ordinal numbers 1 – 31 + month + year
names of days of week: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday
names of months of year: January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October,
November, December
names of years
at + *time*
on + *day*
in + *month, year*

- 3.4 duration**
for, until, since, by
(not) long
how long?
- 3.5 earliness**
(too)early
- 3.6 lateness**
(too) late
- 3.7 anteriority**
before, earlier
- 3.8 posteriority**
after, later
- 3.9 sequence**
first, then
- 3.10 simultaneity**
at the same time
'continuous' aspect
- 3.11 future reference**
NP + will + VPinf.
soon, later
next + *items in 3.2*
tomorrow, tonight
- 3.12 present reference**
simple present
present continuous
present perfect
now
- 3.13 past reference**
simple past
past continuous
yesterday
ago
last + *items in 3.2*

- 3.14 simple present**
- 3.15 delay**
late
- 3.16 speed**
not) (very) fast
number + miles an hour (written mph)
- 3.17 frequency**
always, never, sometimes
every + *items in 3.2*
- 3.18 continuity**
continuous aspect
perfective aspect
for + *number* + *seconds, years, etc.*
since + *items in 3.3*
- 3.19 intermittence**
sometimes, not always
- 3.20 permanence**
always, never
- 3.21 temporariness**
continuous aspect (as in I am living in London vs. I live in London)
for + *division of time* (see 3.2)
- 3.22 repetitiousness**
again, many times, *number* + times, sometimes
- 3.23 uniqueness**
only one time
- 3.24 commencement**
start
since + *items in 3.3*
- 3.25 cessation**
stop
until, by + *items in 3.3*
- 3.26 stability**
stay, wait
always never
- 3.27 change, transition**
become
- 4. Quantitative**
- 4.1 number**
singular/plural
cardinal numbers 1 – 99, hundred, thousand, million

ordinal numbers: first, second, third, etc., 1st – 1,000,000th

fractions: half, one + *ordinal number*. point (as in one point three five, written 1.35)

- 4.2 quantity**
(not +) all, much, many, enough, any, some
how + much, many?
cup,/bottle/glass/piece + of + *N*
- 4.3 degree**
comparative and superlative of adjectives and adverbs in vocabulary
(not +) very, too, enough, much, quite
- 5. Qualitative**
- 5.1 physical**
- 5.1.1 shape**
round
- 5.1.2 dimension**
see 2.8
- 5.1.3 moisture, humidity**
wet, dry
- 5.1.4 visibility, sight**
see, light, dark, look
- 5.1.5 audibility, hearing**
hear, sound, loud, listen
- 5.1.6 taste and smell**
to taste, to smell
sweet, sour
(not) good
like + *NP*
- 5.1.7 texture**
hard
- 5.1.8 colour**
blue, green, yellow, red, black, white, grey, brown
- 5.1.9 age**
(not) new, young, old
how old?
NP + *BE* + *number* (+ years old)
see also Chapter 6, 1.6 and 1.12
- 5.1.10 physical condition and actions**
well, strong
hurt, dead
hit, kick, kill
- 5.1.11 accessibility**
(not) open

- 5.1.12 cleanness**
(to) clean, dirty
dirt
- 5.1.13 material**
air, water
(made of +) leather, plastic, wood, paper, metal, cloth, glass
- 5.1.14 fullness**
full, to fill, (to) empty
- 5.2 evaluative**
- 5.2.1 value, price**
how much?
(not) cheap
(see also Chapter 5, 8.5)
- 5.2.2 quality**
(not) (very) good, well
- 5.2.3 acceptability**
OK
- 5.2.4 adequacy**
(not) OK,
(not) (*adj*) enough
(not) too +*adj*
- 5.2.5 desirability/undesirability**
nice, to like
(see also Chapter 3, 2.16 – 2.28)
- 5.2.6 correctness/incorrectness**
(not) right
- 5.2.7 capacity/incapacity**
can, can't
- 5.2.8 importance**
(not) important
how important?
- 5.2.9 normality/abnormality**
(un)usual(ly)
- 5.2.10 facility/difficulty**
(not) easy
- 6 Mental**
- 6.1 reflection**
to hope, to know, to think
(see chapter 3, 2.5 – 2.10 and 2.24)
- 6.2 expression**

to say, to ask, to write

7. Relational

7.1 spatial relations

see Chapter 4, 2.2 – 2.3 and 2.5 – 2.7

7.2 temporal relations

see Chapter 4, 3.4 – 3.14

7.3 action-event relations

7.3.1 agency

agent as subject NP (as in: My cat eats fish):

7.3.2 objective

objective as object NP (as in: He eats fish)

7.3.3 dative

to + *NP* (as in: Give the book to me)

7.3.4 instrumental

with + *NP* (as in: He opened the door with his key)

7.3.5 benefactive

for + *NP* (as in: I have bought this for you)

7.3.6 place

see Chapter 4, section 2

7.3.7 time

see Chapter 4, section 3

7.3.8 manner, means

like this (with *demonstration*)

fast, well, hard

how?

with +*NP*

7.4 contrastive relations

7.4.1 equality/inequality

(not) the same (as + *NP*), another

(not) as *adj/adv* as *NP*

7.4.2 contrast

(not) like

comparative degree + than +*NP*

7.5 possessive relations

7.5.1 ownership, possession

possessive adjectives: my, your, his, her, our, their

possessive pronouns: mine, yours, his, hers, ours, theirs

have, give, get

7.6 logical relations

7.6.1 conjunction

and, but

7.6.2 disjunction

or

7.6.3 inclusion/exclusion

with(out)

7.6.4 cause

why?

because of + *NP*

because + *Sentence(S)*

7.6.5 effect

so

7.6.6 reason

why?
because of + *NP*
because + *S*

7.6.7 purpose

to + *VPinf* (as in I did it to help you)

7.6.8 condition

if + *S*

8. Deixis

8.1 definite

8.1.1 non-anaphoric

personal pronouns, subject forms:	I	you	he	she	it	we	they
personal pronouns, non-subject forms:	me	you	him	her	it	us	them
possessive adjectives:	my	your	his	her	its	our	their
possessive pronouns:	mine	yours	his	hers	-	ours	theirs
demonstrative adjectives and pronouns:	this	that	these	those			
definite article	the						
interrogative (WH) pronouns	who?	what?	which?				
interrogative adjectives:	what?	which	+ NP?				
adverbs	here	there	now	then			

8.1.2 anaphoric

personal pronouns, subject forms:	he,	she,	it,	they			
personal pronouns, non-subject forms:	him,	her,	it,	them			
possessive adjectives:	his,	her,	its,	their			
possessive pronouns:	his	hers	-	theirs			
demonstrative adjectives and pronouns:	this	that	these	those			
adverbs:		there	then				
pro-clause:	so	(as in 'Is the food good?')	'I think so')				
definite article:	the						
propword	one	(as in 'I like the red one')					
pro-VP	do (so)	(as in 'He asked me to come in and I did (so)').					

8.2 indefinite

indefinite article	a, an				
indefinite pronouns, personal	somebody	anybody	nobody	everybody	
indefinite pronouns non-personal	something	anything	nothing	everything	
indefinite adverbs: place	somewhere	anywhere	nowhere	everywhere	
indefinite adverbs: time	some times	any time	never	always	
indefinite adverbs: manner	somehow	anyhow	in no way		

8.3 Semi-deictics

Generic nouns may be used in a deictic, more particularly an anaphoric function e.g.

person, people, man, woman, boy, girl, child, animal, plant, thing, stuff, place, time, way (as in: I know Bill well and I like the man)

Chapter 5 Themes and specific notions

Introduction:

Communication takes place in specific situations in major social domains and deals with specific themes. Concepts which are closely linked to the themes characteristically handled in the situations arising in particular domains are termed 'specific notions'. Using the means of expression in Chapters 3 and 4 and the vocabulary given in this chapter, learners CAN state and write down (e.g. in application and registration forms, personal letters and notes) the information indicated in the can-do specification for each successive theme

They CAN elicit and understand similar information from others, using, if necessary, the means for communication repair in Chapter3 section 6

They CAN draw upon the linguistic resources set out in this chapter when carrying out the other functions given in Chapter 3

Since these abilities are of general application, they are stated here once for all and will not be restated for each theme individually.

N.B. Many of the items below, though introduced in connection with a particular theme, are of wider application. Indeed, at Breakthrough level, where learners are encouraged to make the widest use of very limited resources, breadth of application is a strong criterion for lexical selection.

Specific vocabulary items are given in roman typeface, (e.g. birthday). Thematic lexical categories are given in italics (e.g. *names of countries*). In some cases (e.g. *cardinal numbers*) this is done simply for practical reasons; one cannot list a million numbers! In most cases, learners will need to acquire those items relevant to them, however infrequent the words may be in general usage (e.g. 'I come from Vaduz, in Liechtenstein'). Where examples are given, they are the words most likely to be of some relevance to most, if not all learners (e.g. for *animals*, dog, cat)

Domains, themes, can-do statements and specific notions for *Breakthrough* including recommended exponents

A. Personal domain

A.1. Personal identification

Adult learners CAN state and write down (e.g. in application and registration forms, or in personal notes): their name, address, telephone number and e-mail address, nationality, where they are from, what they do for a living, their family, personal relations, likes and dislikes, personal possessions.

They CAN elicit and understand similar information from others, using, if necessary, the means for communication repair in Chapter3 section 6

With assistance if necessary, younger learners CAN state and elicit information regarding: their name, address, family, friends, pets, school and personal possessions. They can spell their name and address and give a telephone number.

A.1.1 Name

personal *names*

first names

nicknames

family names

Mr.

Mrs.

Miss

Ms. (writing only)

*to write

**names of letters of the alphabet*

**to be*

(see also Chapter 4, sections 4.3 – 4.5)

A.1.2 address

to live

street names

number

names of cities

names of countries

A.1.3 telephones, fax and e-mail

telephone

cardinal numbers 0-10

to phone

number

zero

nought, oh (receptive)

fax

e-mail

at (written '@')

dot (written '.')

slash (written '/')

A.1.4 date and place of birth

to be born, birthday

(see Chapter 4, section 3.3 and Chapter 5, section 1.2)

A.1.5 age

(see Chapter 4, section 5.1.9)

A.1.6 sex

male

female

man

woman

boy

girl

A.1.7 marital status

(not) married

A.1.8 nationality

names of nationalities

A.1.9 origin

to be from.....

names of countries

A.1.10 occupation (See also Section C below).

names of occupations

to be a.....(e.g. I am a teacher, my mother is a nurse)

places of work

(to) work (e.g. What is your work? I work in a hospital)

A.1.11 education (see also Section D below)

school
university
student
to study
to learn
to go to (school, university)
names of subjects

A.1.12 family.

family
father
mother
husband
wife
child
son
daughter
brother
sister
cousin

A.1.13 religion

names of religious affiliations (e.g. Christian, Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, Muslim, Hindu, Agnostic, Atheist)
God
faith
to believe

A.1.14 likes and dislikes

See Chapter 3, 2.21 – 2.23;
objects of likes and dislikes to be derived from this and other themes.

A.1.15 character and personal appearance

to be (+ not) (+ very)
to look (+ not) (+ very)
brave
clever
kind
nice
tall
slim
dark
fair

A.2. House, home and environment

Learners CAN refer to the home, its rooms, furnishings, equipment, services, amenities, and to the main features of the environment, its landscape, climate and weather, flora and fauna. They can understand and elicit similar information from other people.

Younger learners CAN name many of the common zoo and domestic animals and their young. They Can describe their own pets and their care. They CAN listen to simple stories about animals, read very simple well-illustrated children's books about animals and watch animal films, videos and TV broadcasts

A.2.1 accommodation, rooms

house
flat
room
floor
bathroom
bedroom
toilet
living-room
kitchen
garage
garden
window
door
wall
(to) rent

A.2.2 furniture, bedclothes

chair
table
bed
bedclothes

A.2.3 services

heat(ing)
light(ing)
switch (on/off)

A.2.4 equipment and amenities

machine
bath
shower
telephone
computer
cooker
fridge

A.2.5 household articles

knife
fork
spoon
plate
cup
bottle
glass
towel
box
clock

A.2.6 environment

town
park
country
field
hill
river
lake

sea(side)

A.2.6 flora and fauna

animal

pet

names of animals(pets, zoo and domestic) e.g. cat, dog, tiger, cow,bird, insect

plant

names of plants e.g. grass, flower, tree, vegetable

A.2.7 Climate and Weather

weather

sun(ny)

rain(y)

fog(gy)

snow(y)

ice, icy

wind(y)

storm(y)

flood

A.3. Daily life

Learners CAN speak about the main features of their daily routines at home and elicit and understand similar information from other people. They can talk about the major seasonal and religious festivals.

A.3.1. At home

home

to get up

to wash

to (un)dress

to go to bed

to have:

a meal

breakfast

lunch

dinner

supper

to clean

to go:

out

to work

to school

shopping

to come home

A.3.2. Seasonal festivals

names of festivals (e.g. Christmas, Easter)

A.4. Free time, entertainment

Learners CAN say when they are free and what they do in their spare time. They can elicit and understand information on these topics from other people.

A.4.1 leisure

to be free (*plus time reference*, see Chapter 4, section 3)
(to go on) holiday (see also Chapter 5, section B.2)
to go out

A.4.2 play and games

to play
toy
doll
draw(ing)
paint(ing)
game
names of games (e.g. ludo, snap, poker)
names of playground equipment (e.g. swing, slide, see-saw)

A.4.3 hobbies and interests

hobby
names of hobbies, e.g. gardening, DIY
names of fields of interest, e.g. the Internet, the arts, sport, politics
walk
to collect
names of collectables, e.g. stamps, dolls, teddy bears

A.4.4 entertainment, media

radio
hi-fi
to listen (to)
television, TV
video
to watch
programme
news
quiz
film
music

A.4.5 intellectual and artistic pursuits

(to) talk
to read
book
art
music
kinds of music (e.g. classical, pop)
names of musical instruments (e.g. guitar, piano)
to sing, song
dance

A.4.6 sports and physical activities

sport
names of sports and games (e.g. football, athletics, chess)
match
to play
to win
to swim

to walk
to run
(to) cycle

A.4.7 press
(news)paper
magazine
story
article
picture
page

A.6 Relations with other people

Learners CAN refer to and establish personal relations, participate in social life and deal with correspondence. They CAN understand simple information, e.g. on dates, names, places, addresses wishes, etc. on postcards, greetings cards, invitations, etc.

A.6.1 social life (see also Chapter 3, section 4)
(boy-/girl-) friend
partner
colleague
guest
to know
to visit
present
party

A.6.2 correspondence (see also Chapter 3, sections 5.10 – 5.11)
to write (to)
to hear (from)
card
letter
fax
e-mail
to send
to get
paper
pen
pencil
envelope
to answer

B. The public domain

B1. Public entertainment: cinema, theatre, spectator sports

Adult and teenage learners CAN take part in public entertainment events, finding out what is on offer, booking and buying tickets, buying programmes, finding their seats, etc. They CAN discuss them later. They CAN recognise relevant information in written texts, such as on posters and in programmes. Younger learners CAN talk about films, etc. they like, have seen or want to see.

cinema
theatre
stadium

kinds of entertainment (e.g. play, film, show, concert, gig)
to watch
ticket
programme
seat

B2 Travel

Adult and teenage learners CAN refer to places, speak about and use travel facilities, such as means of public and private transport, tourist accommodation, luggage and documents. They CAN elicit and understand such information from other people. They CAN give and receive simple directions, written and spoken, as to how to get to places. They CAN gather relevant information from written texts, such as timetables, roadside signs and notices.

Younger learners CAN name, describe and talk about means of transport, journeys they have made, places they like, have been to or would like to visit. They CAN give and follow simple directions, especially if repeated and accompanied by appropriate gestures.

B.2.1 places (see Chapter 4, sections 2.1-2.6 and Chapter 5, sections A.1.2 and A.2.6)

public transport

to go (by)
means of transport (e.g. bus, train, plane, taxi, ship)
ticket
return
to go (+ *place and time references* (cf Chapter 4, sections 2 and 3))
to arrive
station
airport
stop
platform
information

B.2.2 private transport

(bi)cycle
car
to drive
driver
garage
petrol

B.2.3 traffic, directions

street
road
motorway
traffic lights
common road sign texts (e.g. stop!, slow!, accident, road works ahead.)
stop
(turn) left, right
(keep) straight on
park

B.2.4 holidays

tourist
visit

names of sights and buildings of interest

foreign

names of cities

names of countries

names of continents

beach

B.2.5 accommodation

hotel

camp site

tent

to book

single room

double room

key

bill

B.2.6 luggage

luggage

case

bag

B.2.7 documents

passport

insurance

driving licence

B.3. Health and body care

All learners CAN refer to matters of personal well-being, personal hygiene and health. They CAN describe symptoms in simple terms to a doctor or dentist,. Adult learners CAN elicit and understand similar information from other people. They CAN report accidents and use medical services and understand simple information and instructions given by a doctor or nurse, using repair strategies as needed. They CAN read and understand simple written instructions such as those on medicine bottles, tablets, etc.

B.3.1 parts of the body

names of parts of the body (e.g. head, eyes, ears, nose, mouth, tooth, chest, back, stomach, arms, legs, fingers, foot)

B.3.2 personal well-being

to feel

to look

(un)well

better

hungry

thirsty

tired

awake

asleep

(to) sleep

to wake up

B.3.3 hygiene

towel
wash
bath
shower
soap

B.3.4 ailments, accidents

Help!
names of illnesses, e.g. cold, flu
ill(ness)
(to have a) pain/ache (in a body part)
hurt
accident
fire
break
burn
cut
blood

B.3.5 medical services

medicine
tablet
names of medicines, e.g. aspirin, antibiotic.
hospital
clinic
doctor
nurse
dentist
chemist
medicine
names of medicines
glasses
ambulance

B.4. Shopping

Learners CAN refer to and use shopping facilities, refer to and purchase goods, such as foodstuffs, clothes and souvenirs, using repair procedures as needed, and elicit and understand information from others on these matters. They CAN understand store guides (e.g. information on where to find goods, lifts, toilets, etc.). They CAN gather simple information from the labelling of goods (name, price, contents, sell- & use-by dates, instructions for cooking, cleaning, etc).

B.4.1 shopping facilities

shop
(to go) shopping
market
supermarket
store
names of kinds of shop (e.g. bakery, florist's)
names of goods (e.g. bread, book, toy, necklace, hankies)
to pay (for)
to buy

to sell
names of weights and measures (e.g. gramme, kilo, metre)
(see also Chapter 3, sections 2.7 and 3.1 – 3.10)

B.4.2 foodstuffs
(see Chapter 5, section 9.1)

B.4.3 clothes, fashion
(see also Chapter 4, section 2.8.1 and 5.1.7 – 5.1.8)

clothes
names of articles of clothing (e.g. coat, skirt, dress, shirt, trousers, jeans, shoes, stockings)
to put on
to take off
watch

B.4.5 prices and quality of goods (see also Chapter 4, section 5)

cost
to pay
sale
money
note
change
pound (written £)
penny
euro (written €)
cent
names of national currencies (e.g. dollar, franc)
credit card
receipt

B.5 Food and drink

Learners CAN refer to, buy and order various kinds of food and drink and can elicit and understand information from other people on these matters.

B.5.1 types of food and drink
(see also Chapter 4, section 4.2 and Chapter 5, section A.2.5 for eating implements)

food
to eat
to taste
vegetable
names of vegetables
salad
(to)cook(ed)
meat
names of kinds of meat (e.g. pork, beef, lamb)
sausage
fish
names of kinds of fish (e.g. cod, salmon, tuna)
chicken
egg
cheese
soup

salt
pepper
fruit
names of fruits (e.g. apple, orange)
bread
butter
sweet(s)
chocolate
ice(-cream)
(to) drink
names of drinks (e.g. water, milk, lemonade, beer, wine)

B.5.2 eating and drinking out

restaurant
café
pub
menu
bill
self-service
waiter

B.6 Services

Adult learners CAN refer to and use postal, banking, garage, medical, security and emergency services. They CAN elicit and understand information from others on these matters. They CAN read and understand the basic information and instructions on public signs, notices, leaflets and brochures relating to these services.

Younger learners CAN name buildings, jobs and workers in the service area. In post offices, clinics and in contact with police officers, they CAN make simple requests and ask, understand and answer questions relevant to their needs, if given help.

B.6.1 post (see also Chapter 5, section A.6.2)

post office
mail
parcel

B.6.2 telephone, fax and e-mail (see Chapter 3, sections 5.7 – 5.9 and Chapter 5, section A.1.3)

B.6.4 bank (see also Chapter 5, section B.4.5)

bank
change
note
(traveller's) cheque
(to) cash

B.6.5 police

police
(police) officer

police station
to steal
to lose

B.6.6 medical services
(see Chapter 5, section B.3)

B.6.7 garage, breakdown services

garage
names of parts of car
problem
(not) to work
broken
to repair
to tow

B.6.8 petrol station
(see also chapter 4, section 2.8.5)

petrol
oil
full
to check
to wash

C. The vocational domain

Within the limits of this specification, and using repair and discovery strategies as needed, adult learners CAN refer to their employment, status and duties and elicit similar information from others. They CAN state simple work-related service requirements in speech and writing and understand simple replies. They CAN understand simple instructions and take and pass on simple messages face-to-face or by telephone and leave messages for others. They CAN extract relevant information from a short report on a familiar matter, provided that it is clearly expressed in simple language, the contents are predictable and enough time is given. They CAN understand the general meaning of a presentation made at a meeting, conference or demonstration, if the language is simple and backed up by visuals or video. They CAN ask for clarification and understand a simple, brief, clear reply. They CAN express an opinion in simple terms, if the question/issue has been put clearly. They CAN understand a short product description within their own area of work, provided that this is expressed in simple language and does not contain unpredictable detail. They CAN understand written instructions in notices, in pamphlets, manuals, etc., concerned with safety, security, working practices, operation of machinery, etc.

Subject to the same conditions and constraints, teenage learners CAN refer to the world of work, enquire as to possible future career possibilities and understand simple presentations and replies to enquiries. Younger learners CAN identify some common places of work (e.g. office, hospital, school, farm, factory) and professions (e.g. doctor, nurse, policeman, farmer). They CAN name the profession and place of work of other family members.

places of work (e.g. office, hospital, factory)
names of professions (e.g. lawyer, engineer, accountant)
kinds of job (e.g. cleaner, porter, driver, mechanic, builder)
work grades and status (e.g. boss, manager, worker)
occupational titles (e.g. sales executive, personal assistant)

names of tools and machines (e.g. spanner, hammer, boiler, computer)

names of departments (e.g. stores, personnel, accounts)

names of companies

business

trade

industry

service

work

job

to make

build(ing)

to run (e.g. a business)

colleague

mate

customer

client

train(ing)

employ

sack

unemployed

security

safety

danger!

first aid

welfare

report

memo

salary

wage

earn(ings)

overtime

fee

trade union

strike

D. The educational domain

Within the scope of this specification, using repair and discovery procedures where needed, teenage students and adult learners CAN follow a course of instruction in the language concerned up to the level here described, given that the teacher presents the material clearly and simply. In particular, they CAN understand and, if necessary, check and take down basic details of arrangements such as lecture, class and exam times, dates and room numbers given orally by teachers, or from classroom boards, notice boards or hand-outs. They CAN read and copy down notes written by teachers and lecturers, giving instructions on assignments, equipment, reading lists, tutorial times, etc. They CAN understand textbooks and other

teaching materials as well as examination rubrics aimed at this level, following instructions and understanding key points. They CAN follow the main gist of an article and follow argumentation if couched in simple language. They CAN make notes for their own later reference or for a fellow-student. They CAN take a limited part in a seminar or tutorial, provided this is conducted sympathetically, using simple language. In a language class, they can answer questions put to them clearly and simply by the teacher and participate effectively in group and pair work with other students at a similar level. They can refer to foreign language ability and deal with problems of understanding and expression. (see Chapter 3, sections 6.1 – 6.10, Chapter 4, sections 5.2.7 and 5.2.10 and 6.2 and Chapters 6-9)

Young learners (7 – 11) CAN understand and respond appropriately to the language used by the teacher in classroom management (e.g. greetings, instructions, indications of corrections, corrections, encouragement). They CAN identify features of the school environment and equipment and objects used in the classroom. They CAN ask simple questions relating to needs (for pencil, paper, etc., to go to the toilet, etc.) and understand answers given slowly, simply and clearly, if need be using simple repair strategies. They CAN read classroom notices, labels and captions. They CAN copy sentences from the classroom board. They CAN follow simple movement commands and participate in playground activities.

types of institution (e.g. school, college, university)

names of curricular subjects (e.g. maths, languages, science, history)

parts of educational buildings (e.g. study, classroom, toilet, library, hall, corridor, playground)

basic study terminology (e.g. sum, prove, grammar, experiment, explain)

classroom equipment (e.g. board, screen, desk, computer, projector)

personal equipment (e.g. pen, pencil, paper, rubber, ruler, textbook, workbook, laptop, CD)

educational roles (e.g. teacher, lecturer, tutor, student, pupil)

study

learn

read

write

listen

ask

answer

question

copy

draw

paint

class

teach

lecture

lesson

homework

test

mark

tick

cross (out)

mistake

correct

Chapter 6 Dealing with texts: receptive activities, processes and strategies;

listening and reading.

Listening.

As listeners, learners at Breakthrough level CAN recognise and distinguish by ear the expressions, words and sentences contained in the Breakthrough specification. They CAN also distinguish phonemically distinct words, such as proper names of people, (e.g. Jeanie, Ginny, Jenny; Jane, Jan, John, Joan, Jonah) place names, etc. They CAN recognise basic intonation patterns, such as that distinguishing a question from a statement. e.g. He lives in Paris?/He lives in Paris. They are, however, very dependent on the conditions. Speech must be clear, free from broad dialectal deviation from standard forms or from extreme phonetic reduction, relatively slow and deliberate (up to 80 words per minute). In public places, the message should also be transmitted at a level well above the ambient noise level and free from significant interference from other sound sources. Subject to these conditions and constraints, learners CAN extract the gist and key information items from simple public announcements such as those at stations, airports, police and traffic instructions, etc. Unfortunately, these conditions are not so often met!

They CAN also, under such favourable conditions, extract the gist and relevant specific information from longer texts, such as news bulletins, plays, films, given that there is strong visual support, and CAN understand talks, stories, etc. given that the structures and vocabulary are within the limits of the Breakthrough specification and frequent pauses, repetitions, rephrasings, etc. slow down the flow of information and give the listener plenty of time to absorb the message.

When the conditions are adverse (e.g. high noise, interference, stress, distractions, etc.) and/or the text produced is at a higher level of complexity, with a wider vocabulary, etc., the ability of Breakthrough level listeners to understand a message is extremely limited, but they are still able to use listening strategies so as to bring other elements of their plurilingual competence to bear, such as recognising cognate forms from the mother tongue or other languages previously learnt or simply picking out words and hypothesising topics and meaning from their sequence, using knowledge of the world. However, a Breakthrough listener's ability to do so is highly variable according to training and experience. It imposes considerable effort and strain and will often be abandoned, especially if the learner is tired. Successful communication often means a struggle to make the most of inadequate means and the ability of learners, even at an early stage, to do so and to learn from the experience should be encouraged and developed.

Reading.

Language learners at Breakthrough level will normally be literate. Written texts (e.g. a textbook, workbook) will normally be used in courses leading to Breakthrough, and written texts will normally form part of testing and self-evaluation at this level.

Such learners CAN identify the letters of the alphabet in use in the country concerned, in upper and lower case and in printed and cursive forms, given that the handwriting is clear and well-formed. They CAN also recognise numbers and the most common logographic signs (representing words rather than sounds, e.g. €, £, +, =, &) as well as basic typefaces (e.g. roman, italic, bold).

Learners at Breakthrough level CAN read public signs consisting of one or two of the words given in Chapters 3 – 5 above, such as:
road signs, roadside notices, filling station signs, etc.

country, city and street names.

shop names and kinds of shop (e.g. baker's, butcher's, greengrocer's)
names of goods in shop windows, in department stores and in supermarkets.

Given that the information is clearly and simply presented and that adequate time is available, adult and older teenage learners CAN extract the gist and essential information from:

timetables
newspaper weather reports and forecasts, sports fixtures and results, exchange rates, etc.
tourist brochures and leaflets
guides to hotels, etc. facilities
telephone directories and instructions
labelling of goods giving prices, contents and instructions for use
bills, invoices and receipts
posters giving details of concerts, shows and public events
safety and security notices and warnings
instructions on vending machines, cash points, domestic machinery, etc.

They CAN read short hand written notes (e.g. Gone out, Back at 5.p.m.)

They CAN follow the gist of longer texts such as news items and short stories, given the time to use reading strategies such as exploiting knowledge of the world and of the subject matter concerned, as well as of discourse structure; recognising cognate words, loan words from a known language; hypothesising meaning from context; consulting a bilingual dictionary if available. In consulting a dictionary they are aware of the problems posed by polysemy (several meanings for one word form), false friends, etc.

The ability of Breakthrough learners to deal with texts above that level depends greatly on the language(s) learners already know, their language learning experience, their knowledge of the world, their problem solving skills, etc. Whilst it is impossible to build this ability into a Breakthrough specification, its existence should not be ignored or underestimated. To develop such skills is an important aspect of language teaching and learning at all levels.

Chapter 7 Productive tasks, activities, processes and strategies: speaking and writing.

Speaking.

Learners at Breakthrough level CAN pronounce words, expressions and statements in their repertory intelligibly, differentiating phonetically distinct words so as to avoid misunderstandings. They CAN use rising and falling intonation patterns to signal questions as opposed to statements and exclamations (e.g. He's coming? from He's coming!) They CAN place stress on the correct syllables of polysyllabic words in their repertory. They CAN follow the indications of pronunciation in a dictionary they habitually use.

Breakthrough learners will normally speak when interacting face-to-face with one or more partners (see Chapter 8). However, they can record a short message on a familiar topic on an answerphone or voicemail system. They CAN deliver a very short, rehearsed statement (e.g. to introduce a speaker or propose a toast). They CAN deliver a brief speech on a familiar topic to a sympathetic audience, using the language specified in Chapters 3 – 5, provided they are given time to prepare, especially if they can read aloud a prepared written text. They CAN read aloud a written text produced for them by a proficient user of the language, if it is clearly written in simple language within their repertory and given time for advance preparation.

Writing.

Learners at Breakthrough level CAN write recognisably the letters of the alphabet in use in the country concerned and combine them, together with punctuation marks and the proper spacing, to form words and sentences. They CAN copy out a written text. They CAN take down in writing a dictated or recorded message within the limits of their repertory. They CAN write a brief message on a familiar topic in a familiar domain, using the language resources set out in Chapters 3 – 5. They can take very simple notes for later consultation.

Given time for preparation and consultation of sources and reference works, Breakthrough learners CAN produce somewhat longer texts, consisting of a sequence of simple sentences, for example, to give information of a personal character (see Chapter 5, section A) or to give information or advice in an area in which they are professionally competent (see Chapter 5, section C). In doing so they make use of such writing strategies as the following:

They CAN make use of a relevant existing text produced by a proficient user (including, but not confined to phrase books) by making slight grammatical changes and replacing words in the text by appropriate items in their own vocabulary.

They CAN consult a bilingual dictionary and are aware of the need to check carefully to avoid 'false friends' and such dangers as: choosing the wrong word in the case of polysemy in the source language, translating idioms literally, etc.

Clearly, the ability of Breakthrough learners to use such strategies varies widely, depending on their knowledge of the world and on their previous experience of language learning and use.

Chapter 8 Interaction and mediation

Chapters 6 and 7 have dealt with listening, reading, speaking and writing as isolated activities, in which no immediate reaction from another person is expected. This is normally the case with reading and writing. When we read a published book or a newspaper, the text is before us and the person who has written it is far away. Indeed, we may never know anything about the author or even who has written what.. We are in no position to ask for clarification, challenge the author with a different opinion or interpretation, etc. When we are listening to a lecture or a broadcast radio or TV programme, we cannot interrupt to ask questions or to make our own comments. Complementarily, if we are lecturing or making a public announcement, we make it to an audience and try to take their needs and characteristics into account, but cannot ask them to intervene or help us.

Interaction differs in that the participants alternate in productive and receptive roles. In many ways, the text of a correspondence or a conversation as a whole is more than just the sum of the individual contributions.

Spoken interaction.

Within the limits of this specification, using the linguistic resources set out in Chapters 3, 4 and 5, learners at Breakthrough level CAN interact in a simple way, given that the interlocutor is willing and able to co-operate in repair procedures (see Chapter 3, section 6). They CAN ask and answer questions, initiate and respond to simple statements in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics. They CAN understand and respond to utterances delivered directly to them in clear, slow speech, and follow short, simple directions. They CAN participate in a conversation and in informal discussion among friends, following with understanding the gist of what is said in a relatively quiet atmosphere with a low

level of noise and interference from other conversations. They CAN make brief contributions, given that interlocutors are patient and co-operative, and somewhat longer ones if they are prepared to accept and compensate for the hesitations, word-finding problems, false starts, slips of the tongue and grammatical lapses, which are inevitable when a speaker is straining limited and unconsolidated linguistic resources to express meaning without prior preparation and rehearsal. At an interview, they CAN understand simple, direct questions spoken very slowly (80 words per minute) in direct, non-idiomatic speech about personal and vocational details and clearly in a close approximation to a standard accent, and respond with simple, direct answers, given that the interviewer is patient and co-operative.

In general, it should be remembered that in all cases of unequal communicative interaction, as between a near-beginner and a proficient language user, the responsibility for successful communication rests to a great extent with the stronger, better-equipped partner.

Written interaction.

Learners at Breakthrough level CAN conduct a correspondence with a partner, giving and eliciting personal information. Given a model to follow, they CAN write a simple letter of enquiry about holiday travel and accommodation, understand replies, raise and answer queries, give and follow instructions within the limits of the Breakthrough specification and using language resources set out in Chapters 3 – 5. Much, perhaps most, interaction can involve both speech and writing. For instance, learners CAN understand the headings asking for personal information on hotel registration forms, asking the counter clerk for clarification where necessary and understanding the answers. They CAN then complete the form with the personal information required and check that the answers are in order. Similarly, on leaving the hotel, they can greet the counter clerk, ask for the bill, read it, check the charges, raise queries and understand the answers or amendments before paying and taking leave.

Younger learners are not called upon to manage travel arrangements in these ways. They CAN conduct a correspondence with a pen-friend, exchanging personal information and likes and dislikes (pets, hobbies, school, etc.). They CAN understand notes accompanying gifts and write simple letters of thanks. They CAN send greetings cards, etc. with a brief message.

Interaction strategies

When participating in communicative interactions, Breakthrough level learners CAN use interaction strategies. In particular, they CAN use repair procedures and use the language produced by the interlocutor as a template for an answer (e.g. Interlocutor – ‘It is very cold today, isn’t it?’ Learner-‘Yes it is. Very cold’). Such simple expressions, signalling understanding and agreement, are a normal part of everyday conversation. They are well within the scope of Breakthrough and help to establish solidarity and seal personal relations.

Mediation.

In mediation, a language user acts as an intermediary between interlocutors who, for one reason or another, are unable to communicate directly. This is in most cases due to each not knowing the language of the other. Formal translation and interpretation are highly skilled activities far beyond the capabilities of learners at Breakthrough level. However, any language learners, even at an early stage and with extremely limited resources, may find themselves in a situation where they are able, and usually expected, to use their knowledge and skills to help others to communicate with each other.

Spoken mediation: informal interpretation.

In the *personal domain*, Breakthrough learners CAN assist friends, family and foreign guests to exchange information in the areas set out in Chapter 5, section A. On family holidays, or when giving hospitality to foreign visitors, they CAN help others to cope with transactions in the *public domain*, such as buying tickets, ordering meals and understanding public notices on posters, road signs, etc. Both adult learners and young learners can perform these services. In addition, adult learners CAN render assistance in the *vocational domain*, using the simple language at their disposal to welcome clients and customers from abroad, show them round, help them with getting a meal or refreshments at the canteen, etc. They should not allow colleagues or superiors to expect services beyond their actual very limited competence. Young learners CAN help others without any knowledge of the language concerned during school exchanges and visits to buy souvenirs, make friends, etc.

Breakthrough level learners are particularly likely to be called upon for such services if they have the ability to use, in no matter how simple a manner, one of the less widely studied languages.

Written mediation.

It is *most inadvisable* for learners at Breakthrough level to undertake to translate any written document with legal or commercial consequences. That is a task which *must* be left to properly qualified experts. Breakthrough level learners CAN write an informal note for a friend or relation in their mother tongue, giving the gist of a newspaper report or a personal letter written in the language they are studying, but should always make clear their very limited knowledge of the language and disclaim responsibility for its accuracy.

Chapter 9. General and language-related competences

In order to carry out the tasks and activities required to deal with the communicative situations in which they are involved, users and learners draw upon a number of competences developed in the course of their previous experience. In return, participation in communicative events (including, of course, those events specifically designed to promote language learning) results in the further development of the learner's competences, for both immediate and long-term use.

All human competences contribute in one way or another to the language user's ability to communicate and may be regarded as aspects of communicative competence

Clearly, learners approaching a new language bring to the task their existing competences, which will vary widely according to their age, experience and education. These and other factors will influence not only the speed and efficiency of their learning, but also the use they can make of the linguistic resources they have acquired. This principle will apply at every level.

Competences may be general or more closely language-related.

9.1 General competences

General competences are those which may be called upon for actions of all kinds including but by no means confined to those actions and interactions involving the use of language.

9.1.1 Knowledge of the world

Mature human beings have a highly developed and finely articulated model of the world and its workings,

closely correlated with the vocabulary and grammar of their mother tongue. Indeed, both develop in relation to each other.. The basic features of this model are fully developed during early childhood, but it is further developed through education and experience during adolescence and indeed throughout adult life. Second and foreign language teaching is often able to assume that learners have already acquired a knowledge of the world sufficient for the purpose. This is, however, not by any means always the case.

Knowledge of the world embraces:

- the locations, institutions and organisations, persons, objects, events, processes and operations which characterise different domains. Of particular importance to the learner of a particular language is factual knowledge concerning the country or countries in which the language is spoken such as its major geographical, environmental, demographic, economic and political features (*Landeskunde*).
- classes of entities (concrete/abstract, animate/inanimate, etc.) and their properties and relations (temporal, spatial, associative, analytic, logical, cause/effect, etc.) as set out, for instance, in Chapter 4 above

Breakthrough, representing the product of the earliest learning of a language, does not require a knowledge of the world beyond that general knowledge which even a normal seven-year-old child should have acquired. However, the receptive abilities of older learners will be considerably affected by the extent and direction of their knowledge, especially in respect of their vocational and hobby interests.

9.1.2 Sociocultural knowledge

Strictly speaking, knowledge of the society and culture of the community or communities in which a language is spoken is one aspect of knowledge of the world. It is, however, of sufficient importance to the language learner to merit special attention, especially since unlike many other aspects of knowledge it is likely to lie outside the learner's previous experience and may well be distorted by stereotypes.

The features distinctively characteristic of a particular European society and its culture may relate, for example, to:

1. *everyday living*, e.g.
 - food and drink, meal times, table manners;
 - public holidays;
 - working hours and practices;
 - leisure activities (hobbies, games and sports, reading habits, entertainment, media).
2. *living conditions*, e.g.
 - living standards (with regional, class and ethnic variations);
 - housing conditions;
 - welfare arrangements.
3. *interpersonal relations*, (including relations of power and solidarity), e.g. with respect to:
 - class structure of society and relations between classes;
 - relations between sexes (gender, intimacy);
 - family structures and relations;

- relations between generations;
- relations in work situations;
- relations between public and police, officials, etc.;
- race and community relations;
- relations among political and religious groupings.

4. *values, beliefs and attitudes* in relation to such factors as:

- social class.
- occupational groups (academic, management, public service, skilled and manual workforces);
- wealth (income and inherited);
- regional cultures;
- security;
- institutions;
- tradition and social change;
- history; especially iconic historical personages and events
- minorities (ethnic, religious);
- national identity;
- foreign countries, states, peoples;
- politics;
- arts (music, visual arts, literature, drama, popular music and song);
- religion;
- humour.

5. *non-verbal communication*

Paralinguistics and body language (see CEFR p.88-90) are of particular importance to learners at Breakthrough level in supplementing and reinforcing their limited knowledge and skill in the early stages of learning and using a new language. Knowledge of the conventions governing such behaviour form part of the user's/learner's sociocultural competence. Learners at Breakthrough level are aware of, and CAN use the most common conventionalised form of non-verbal communication, such as:

nodding and shaking the head

pointing

shaking hands

kissing

clapping

smiling

frowning

embracing

6. *social conventions*, e.g. with regard to giving and receiving hospitality, such as:

punctuality;

presents;

dress;

refreshments, drinks, meals;

behavioural and conversational conventions and taboos;

length of stay;

leave-taking.

7. *ritual behaviour* in such areas as:
 - religious observances and rites;
 - birth, marriage, death
 - audience and spectator behaviour at public performances and ceremonies;
 - celebrations, festivals, dances, discos, etc.

At Breakthrough level, the learners' knowledge of the socio-cultural aspects of the target language is still at an early stage of development; the concepts expressed are mostly sufficiently general to be widespread, though not universal, at least in a European context. Learners of English as a means of communication on a global scale are, however, well aware that different conventions may be followed by an interlocutor from a different cultural background and are prepared to deal with any resulting incomprehension or misinterpretation (see 9.1.3 below).

9.1.3 Intercultural awareness and skills

Knowledge, awareness and understanding of the relation (similarities and distinctive differences) between the 'world of origin' and the 'world of the target community' produce an intercultural awareness. It is of course important to note that intercultural awareness includes an awareness of regional and social diversity in both worlds. It is also enriched by awareness of a wider range of cultures than those carried by the learner's L1 and L2. This wider awareness helps to place both in context. Learners at Breakthrough level will of course vary widely in the range of their previous experience of cultural diversity. For instance, those who are adding a limited competence in a less-widely taught language to an already extensive plurilingual competence will be in a very different position from young learners for whom this is a first acquaintance with any language different from that of their immediate environment. In addition to objective knowledge, intercultural awareness covers an awareness of how each community appears from the perspective of the other, often in the form of national stereotypes.

At Breakthrough level, learners are aware of cultural diversity and the need to avoid giving offence. They are aware of the most common causes of offence in the dominant culture associated with the target language. They CAN use repair procedures to remove misunderstandings, should they occur, and CAN learn from the experience. They are also open to the influence of other ways of organising social life, other systems of values and beliefs as expressed in the target language and willing to modify attitudes based on prejudice and stereotyping when confronted with the reality of a different culture.

Learners of English will of course be aware of its unique status as a language of global communication. For many, perhaps most, it will be used mainly for communication with other non-native speakers. For this reason, the language is less closely identified with the culture of its native speakers - which is in any case polycentric. The cultural norms of Britain, Ireland, Australia and the USA differ from each other and all display great internal diversity. There is no longer (if indeed there ever was) any one social norm to which all educated speakers are expected to conform. On the other hand, extreme localised dialectal and socio-cultural distinctions continue to shrink, as individuals in all places and classes of society are exposed, through travel, internal mobility, media, etc., to an ever wider range of influences. As a result of this process, individuals are no longer locked into a single monolithic culture, but become plurilingual and pluricultural, aware of and responding to a variety of cultures other than their own culture of origin. The extent to which learners at Breakthrough level will already be plurilingual and polycultural will vary greatly. In the case of English, as the language becomes more widely a part of basic education in many parts of the world, most learners at Breakthrough level are likely to be young learners or educationally disadvantaged adults (such as immigrant workers and family members from developing countries with a rural background) In both cases, such learners may have had little or no exposure to languages and cultures outside their own immediate environment and therefore find greater problems in taking account

of cultural differences from speakers of English from other countries. However, on reaching Breakthrough level, all learners should be aware of cultural differences in and affecting language use and avoid taking offence or misinterpreting unexpected actions, reactions and language usage on the part of interlocutors from other cultural backgrounds, They should be able and willing to learn from such experiences, which on a global scale are largely unpredictable. At Breakthrough level, their ability to adjust their own language behaviour must be very limited, but they should be conscious that interlocutors from other cultural backgrounds may well follow different conventions with regard to such features of language use (including paralinguistics and body language) as: the expression of agreement and disagreement; making requests; making, accepting and declining offers; referring to bodily functions, relations between persons of different generation, sex, class, hierarchical status, etc. and the like. they will also be aware that their own use of English will in some ways, even at this level, express their own cultural values, beliefs, attitudes and presuppositions and that these may give rise to misunderstandings or give offence, with which they must be prepared to deal.

9.1.4 'Existential' competence

The communicative activity of users/learners is affected not only by their knowledge, understanding and skills, but also by selfhood factors connected with their individual personalities, characterised by the attitudes, motivations, values, beliefs, cognitive styles and personality types which contribute to their personal identity.

At Breakthrough level, learners CAN use their limited language resources while remaining true to their own personality type, values and beliefs. yet open to the educational influence of new experience.

9.1.5 'Heuristic' competence: learning to learn

'Heuristic' is defined in Chambers' Dictionary as 'the method in education by which the pupil is set to find out things for himself'. 'Heuristic competence' is used here for the ability of a learner to develop and employ learning and study skills and especially to learn autonomously and to operate discovery procedures, not only in the formal education process, but also in making sense of language beyond what has been formally learned. It is now widely accepted that it is part of the responsibility of an educational system to develop such skills in learners, so as to prepare them for life-long learning. Autonomous learning requires the fostering of attitudes and the progressive development of study/discovery skills over a substantial period of time. It is not perhaps to be expected of very young learners, though some experience in Scandinavia has shown that skilled and inspiring teaching can achieve remarkable results in this respect, even at primary school level. However, post-pubertal learners who have attained Breakthrough level may be expected to have developed some degree of heuristic competence . The extent to which they have done so will vary greatly according to their level of educational development and the attitudes, methods and skills of their teachers, as well as any previous experience of language learning. It seems reasonable to expect the following of all adult and teenage learners:

Learners at Breakthrough level CAN understand and use instructional materials designed for use at this level

They CAN carry out homework tasks set by their teachers

They CAN understand the nature and purpose of tasks set.

They CAN understand the nature and cause of corrected errors or, if not, elicit the information from others (e.g. teacher, fellow students, native informants).

They CAN use techniques of memorisation and know which work best for them.

They CAN integrate the lexical and grammatical resources detailed in Chapters 3,4 and 5 as needed to deal with new situations.

They CAN consult and use works of reference, such as monolingual and bilingual dictionaries
 They CAN identify, learn and use items in the word fields italicised in Chapter 5 which are relevant to themselves (nationality, job, hobby, etc.)
 They CAN experiment with language use and learn from mistakes.
 They CAN observe and learn from the language produced by proficient users (in speech or in written texts), asking questions about usage they do not understand.
 They ARE AWARE of their own characteristics, strengths and weaknesses as language learners.
 They CAN operate self-assessment procedures devised by others (e.g. DIALANG)
 They CAN set themselves appropriate learning objectives in the light of their communication needs, their present level and the available resources, and choose appropriate methods and materials
 They CAN hold and maintain a record of language learning such as the European Language Portfolio
 they CAN bring their knowledge of the world and of other languages (including their L1) to bear on the understanding of texts (written and spoken) containing unfamiliar material..

9.2 Communicative language competences

For the realisation of communicative intentions, users/learners bring to bear their general capacities as detailed above together with a more specifically language-related communicative competence, which as treated here has the following components:

- linguistic competences;
- sociolinguistic competence;
- discourse competence.

9.2.1 Linguistic competences

Here, the term ‘Linguistic competences’ is used to refer to a learner’s knowledge of and ability to use the formal resources of a language. At Breakthrough level, learners’ linguistic competences are at a very early stage of development. They have a small vocabulary and are able to form only very simple sentences. Their ability to do even this is still fragile and somewhat erratic, subject to hesitations, false starts, incorrect forms, etc. It is a matter of judgment on the part of learners and teachers what balance to draw between range, fluency and accuracy, since developing each is likely to be at the expense of the others. Here, we distinguish:

- lexical competence;
- grammatical competence;
- phonological competence.
- orthographic and orthoepic competence

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9.2.1.1 Lexical competence

‘Lexical competence’ refers to a learner’s knowledge of and ability to use the vocabulary (words and fixed expressions) of a language. At Breakthrough level, learners CAN use the vocabulary given in Chapters 3-5 in the uses and meanings given there. It should be remembered that many words, particularly the most common words, have many meanings and uses. It is a mistake to think that, having learnt a word in one meaning in one context, a learner now ‘knows’ that word wherever and whenever it occurs. For instance ‘about’ may mean ‘surrounding’, ‘approximately’, ‘concerning’, ‘in the opposite direction’, etc. These meanings are not predictable one from another and are not necessarily translatable by the same word in another language. In addition, learners at Breakthrough level CAN use the

vocabulary they have identified as relevant to them in the areas italicised in Chapter 5. They CAN also recognise and understand some words they have not previously learnt, when they are clearly cognate with, or compounds of, words they know in the same or another language, and are presented in contexts where their meaning is apparent in the light of the learner's knowledge of the world (e.g. English 'myology' French '*myologie*,' German.'*Myologie*'). They are aware that L2 (e.g.English or French) loan-words in their L1 may well have a changed meaning from that in the language from which they were borrowed.

9.2.1.2 Grammatical competence.

The grammar of a language may be seen as the set of principles governing the combination of words into sentences. Grammatical competence is the ability to understand and express meaning by producing and recognising well-formed phrases and sentences in accordance with these principles (as opposed to memorising and reproducing them as fixed formulae). The basic function of the grammar of any language is to enable a user to make infinite use of finite resources, the question of formal accuracy being of secondary importance. The principle adopted for deriving *Breakthrough* by a minimalist reduction of *Waystage* has been to enable a learner to make maximal use of minimal resources.

This principle is in conflict, or at least a 'creative tension' with the 'phrase-book' approach, which offers a repertory of holistic utterances selected to perform highly specific communicative functions in highly specific situations, e.g. 'The offside brake light is functioning intermittently. Please check the wiring for a faulty connection'. Phrase-books issued by motoring organisations may well contain such expressions, for reference by motorists who may not know the language concerned at all, but who read the corresponding entry in their own language and either point to the translation or pronounce it according to a pseudo-phonetic transcription or a pronunciation key.

However, to base language learning, even at the most elementary level, on such an approach would not be cost-effective. The load on memory is very high, far in excess of the magic figure '7' usually considered the limit for memorisation of a random string of arbitrary signs. The communicative yield is likely to be very low. It depends on the frequency and probability of occurrence of that particular event in relation to the infinite variety of human situations. In contrast, an approach based on 'the maximal use of minimal means', with cost-effectiveness as its main criterion, will seek to select items with a low learning-load, usable in the widest range of situations, weighted (where specificity is necessary) in favour of those situations which are commonest and most predictable.

Grammar therefore plays an important part in the definition of *Breakthrough*, as do the closed word classes., which have a significant grammatical function. A possible grammatical specification for *Breakthrough*, covering the recommended exponents of the categories set out in Chapters 3 and 4 follows. The specification relates to English. It is not necessarily applicable to any other language, though the principles on which it is based may have wider application.

1. Sentences.

- 1.1 The use of sentences by learners will be restricted to main clauses and sentence words (e.g. 'Yes', 'no', 'sorry').
- 1.2 Sentences used by learners will generally consist of a single main clause (e.g. 'I like apples. They are very nice') consisting of a noun phrase (NP) and a verb phrase (VP).
- 1.3 'Yes/no' questions are asked by using the declarative sentence (or short utterance) with a high-rising intonation {e.g. 'Yiu are from France?' rather than: 'Are you from France?'}.
- 1.4 'WH' questions are asked by inserting the WH word in the appropriate position in a declarative sentence (e.g. 'You live where?' rather than 'Where do you live?') or alone (e.g. Why?)
- 1.5 Learners are able to use compound sentences with main clauses conjoined by 'and' and 'but' (e.g.

- 'I was born in France and I live in Italy')
- 1.6 Learners are able to use a few complex sentences, but only where embedding does not affect the form of the sentence embedded. (e.g. 'I think he is from France').
 - 1.7 Learners are able to use gerunds with simple adjuncts (e.g. 'I like living in the country').
 - 1.8 Learners are able to use, in place of full sentences, short utterances, e.g. questions and answers, consisting of a single word or phrase. (e.g. 'Why not?' 'Red', 'That one') where the context makes the reference clear.

2 Phrases

2.1 Noun phrases. (NP)

NP may consist of:

- 2.1.1 a proper noun (e.g. 'Joan', 'Germany')
- 2.1.2 an abstract or uncountable noun (e.g. 'art', 'milk')
- 2.1.3 a pronoun (e.g. 'you', 'somebody')
- 2.1.4 a gerund (V + ing) (e.g. 'eating', 'swimming')
- 2.1.5 determiner (article; demonstrative, possessive, indefinite or interrogative adjective) + noun (N). (e.g. 'a pen', 'this boy', 'my wife', 'some wine', 'which book').
- 2.1.6 determiner + (adverb) adjective (adj) + N (e.g. 'that very hard bed').

2.2 Verb phrase (VP)

- 2.2.1 Verb (V) intransitive (e.g. 'They walk')
- 2.2.2 V transitive + NP (e.g. 'He eats fish')
- 2.2.3 V + adv (e.g. 'They work well')
- 2.2.4 BE + adj (e.g. 'This is good')
- 2.2.5 BE + NP (e.g. 'They are nice people')
- 2.2.6 BE + V present participle (+ NP) (e.g. 'She is watching TV')
- 2.2.7 BE + V past participle (+ NP) (e.g. 'The radio is broken')
- 2.2.8 HAVE + past participle (+ NP) (e.g. 'She has gone out')
- 2.2.9 BE/HAVE/DO/modal + not (+ V) (e.g. 'He is not intelligent', 'It has not come')
- 2.2.10 DO + not + Vinf (e.g. 'I do not smoke')
- 2.2.11 Modal Verb + Vinf (e.g. 'He can help you')

2.3 Adjectival phrase

- 2.3.1 adjective (e.g. 'good')
- 2.3.2 adverb of degree + adjective (e.g. 'very good', 'more intelligent')

2.4 Adverbial phrase

- 2.4.1 adverb (e.g. 'fast')
- 2.4.2 adjective + ly (e.g. 'nicely')
- 2.4.3 adverb of degree + adverb (e.g. 'very fast', 'more intelligently')
- 2.4.4 preposition + NP (e.g. 'near London', 'in our new house').

3 word forms (morphology)

Learners can use and understand the following word forms:

3.1 **noun forms:** singular, plural and possessive (e.g. 'My mother likes Mary's children')

3.2 **pronominal forms:**

personal (subject)	I	you	he	she	it	we	they
personal (object)	me	you	him	her	it	us	them
possessive	mine	yours	his	hers	ours	theirs	
demonstrative	this, that, these, those						
interrogative	who? what? which?						

3.3 **adjectival forms:**

simple (e.g. 'He is old')

comparative: adj + -er (monosyllables and some two-syllabled words, e.g. 'faster', 'heavier')

superlative: adj + est (and some two-syllabled words e.g. 'fastest', 'heaviest')

interrogative: which?

possessive: my your his her its our their

3.4 **verb forms:**

a) for all verbs:

simple present, affirmative and negative

simple past, affirmative and negative

b) for all verbs except for the modal auxiliaries *can* and *will*:

infinitive

imperative

present participle

present continuous, affirmative and negative

past continuous, affirmative and negative

3.5 **word-formation**

Learners are able to understand and then remember and use (but not invent) words formed from those within their vocabulary by adding the following affixes:

prefixes: un – (e.g. 'unwell'), mis – (e.g. 'misspell'), re- (e.g. 're-use')

suffixes: -ness (e.g. 'loudness'), -hood (e.g. 'manhood'), -like (e.g. ('childlike')), -ish (e.g. 'oldish'), -ly (e.g. 'loudly').

9.2.1.3 Phonological competence

Phonological competence involves a knowledge of, and skill in the perception and production of:

- the sound-units (phonemes) of the language and their realisation in particular contexts (allophones);
- the phonetic features which distinguish phonemes (distinctive features, e.g. voicing, rounding, nasality, plosion);
- the phonetic composition of words (syllable structure, the sequence of phonemes, word stress,

- word tones); ,
- sentence phonetics (prosody): sentence stress and rhythm
- intonation
- phonetic reduction
 - vowel reduction in unstressed syllables of polysyllabic words
 - strong and weak forms of articles *a, an, the*, verbs *be, have can, will*, prepositions *at, from*, conjunctions *and, but*
 - assimilation
 - elision

Phonological (or phonetic) competence is an area in which the distinction between Breakthrough as, on the one hand, an initial learning objective and, on the other, the lowest level for the assessment of competence is particularly strongly marked. Most mature speakers are unaware of the processes involved in the production and perception of speech. Habituation is at its strongest and mother tongue interference in the production and perception of the sounds of a foreign language is more clearly marked than elsewhere. In fact, interference may be so strong as to render speech virtually unintelligible. Such performance will certainly be evaluated at the lowest available level, but can hardly be adopted as an objective for achievement after an initial phase of learning.

In arriving at an appropriate objective, the principle of cost-benefit must be borne in mind. There is no place for utopianism or purism. Learners and their teachers (and examiners, if a certificate is offered at this level) must consider:

- how important is it for the learner to perceive what is said accurately?
- how important is it for the learner to be perceived accurately?
- what are the learner's future perspectives?
- how much teaching time and learning effort are involved in reaching a given effectiveness in production and perception?

The answers to these questions may well vary widely from one part of the Breakthrough constituency to another. A learner for whom Breakthrough is the first rung on a long ladder will perhaps attach importance to getting this aspect of language learning right at an early stage, so as not to have to think about it later. On the other hand, a learner who wishes to pick up a very basic ability to cope with everyday living as quickly as possible may find other things more urgent. Clarity of diction is more important for a learner who expects to make public announcements (e.g. in airports and railway stations) than for one who simply wants to converse with friends and family. Younger learners will be more likely to learn by simple imitation than older persons, who may need to understand the target sound system in order to break ingrained habits. For them, a programme of phonetic training involving the use of phonetic transcription, ear training and articulation drilling may well be more acceptable at an early stage of learning than later, when the sound pattern of a new language is a challenging novelty, than later, when attention is concentrated on the expression of meaning. However, in this perspective, phonetic awareness is seen as a means to an end, not an end in itself, and is therefore not specified as a criterion for Breakthrough level. What follows may perhaps be seen as a suitable objective for an average learner – if such exists!

At Breakthrough level, learners CAN identify the words and sentences they hear, given that they are produced clearly and slowly in a familiar (e.g. standard) accent. They CAN repeat and store in memory new words they hear, given that they are clearly produced and that they can ask for repetition.

They CAN produce words and sentences in such a way that listeners are able to identify them without misperception.

They CAN perceive and produce stress on the correct syllable in a word, and stressed words in a sentence. They CAN perceive and produce falling and rising sentence intonation when used with the same wording, especially to distinguish between a statement and a question.

They CAN perceive and use the strong and weak forms of words as appropriate to a very slow rate of utterance.

9.2.1.4 Orthographic and orthoepic competence.

Orthographic competence is the knowledge of, and ability to use, the correct spelling of words. At Breakthrough level, learners CAN spell correctly words within their vocabulary and write them legibly using upper and lower case cursive and printed forms as appropriate. They CAN make proper use of punctuation marks and observe word, sentence and paragraph spacing. On hearing a new word, they CAN ask for and note down its written form.

Orthoepic competence is the knowledge of, and ability to use, the correct pronunciation of written forms. At Breakthrough level, learners CAN read aloud a prepared text within the limits of this specification with intelligible pronunciation, stress and intonation. They CAN understand and follow the indications of pronunciation in any dictionary they normally consult.

9.3 Sociolinguistic competence.

Sociolinguistic competence is the knowledge of, and ability to use, language appropriate to the social dimension of language use.

At Breakthrough level, while learners do not yet command a range of synonymous expressions to understand or express differences of a purely sociolinguistic character, they CAN use greetings and some address forms appropriately, introduce themselves and others and take their leave. They are aware of and CAN observe conventions for turn taking, given that their interlocutor(s) are patient and sympathetic when they are slow to respond. They are aware of and CAN use expressions such as 'please', 'thank you', 'sorry', in accordance with the most important politeness conventions of the community concerned. They are aware of the (sometimes frequent) use of expletives by some speakers. No productive use of expletives is recommended at Breakthrough level, since their inappropriate use may be ludicrous or offensive.

9.4. Discourse competence

Discourse competence as treated here is the ability of a user/learner:

a) to arrange sentences in sequence so as to produce coherent stretches of language. At Breakthrough level, learners have very limited linguistic resources, not yet fully established, which enable them to form very simple sentences. To produce coherent sequences of such sentences imposes a greater load on their processing abilities.

At Breakthrough level, learners CAN produce coherent sequences of simple sentences, given that they are given time to do so. This is of course easier when writing alone, say composing a letter, than when under pressure to maintain the interest of one or more listeners, of whom patience and goodwill are asked.

b) to take turns and contribute effectively to a well-structured communicative interaction with one or more interlocutors. Learners at Breakthrough level CAN contribute short, simple turns effectively to a

well- structured, largely predictable interaction (as when shopping, buying tickets, etc.) with one or more interlocutors, given their patience and goodwill. Communication is a meeting of minds. Fluent conversation develops a partnership between interlocutors. It depends to a large extent on the ability of each partner to empathise with the other, to envisage what the other is thinking and to forecast what he or she may say next. this ability is now often termed 'theory of mind' (TOM). The process is of course made more difficult when a speaker's knowledge of the language is very limited, as is the case with learners at Breakthrough level. In such cases of unequal communication, it is for the more experienced partner to accept greater responsibility for the success of the communication, forecasting and interpreting the partner's attempts to express his or her communicative intent and in turn speaking in such a way as to be easily understood. This involves clarity of diction, a slower speech rate, longer pauses between sense groups and avoidance of the hints, allusions and opaque or abbreviated metaphors that would be used in conversation between native speakers. The process is, however, made easier by the existence of *verbal exchange patterns*, often highly routinised and known to the generality of the speech community. Some verbal exchange patterns are very simple, such as a pairing of question and answer, or of a request, offer or invitation with its acceptance or refusal, or of a statement with an expression of agreement or disagreement. Triplets, in which the first speaker responds to the partner's reply, are common, even usual (e.g. 'How are you?' - 'Fine, thank you.' - 'Good'). Other social interactions are more complex, passing through a number of stages. CEFR presents a general scheme for co-operative action:

'For instance, in more complex goal-oriented co-operative transactions, language is used as necessary to:

- form the working group and establish relations among participants;
- establish common knowledge of the relevant features of the current situation and arrive at a common reading;
- identify what could and ought to be changed;
- establish common agreement on goals and on the action required to meet them;
- agree roles in carrying out the action;
- manage the practical actions involved by e.g.:
 - identifying and dealing with problems which arise;
 - co-ordinating and sequencing contributions;
 - mutual encouragement;
 - recognising the achievement of sub-goals;
- recognise the final achievement of the task;
- evaluate the transaction;
- complete and terminate the transaction.

'The total process can be represented schematically. An example is the general schema offered for the purchase of goods or services in *Threshold Level 1990*, Chapter 8:

General Schema for purchase of goods or services.

1. Moving to place of transaction
 - 1.1 Finding the way to the shop, store, supermarket, restaurant, station, hotel, etc.
 - 1.2 Finding the way to the counter, department, table, ticket office, reception, etc.
2. Establishing contact
 - 2.1 Exchanging greetings with the shopkeeper/assistant/waiter/receptionist, etc.
 - 2.1.1 assistant greets
 - 2.1.2 customer greets

3. Selecting goods/services
 - 3.1 identifying category of goods/services required
 - 3.1.1 seeking information
 - 3.1.2 giving information
 - 3.2 identifying options
 - 3.3 discussing pros and cons of options (e.g. quality, price, colour, size of goods)
 - 3.3.1 seeking information
 - 3.3.2 giving information
 - 3.3.3 seeking advice
 - 3.3.4 giving advice
 - 3.3.5 asking for preference
 - 3.3.6 expressing preference etc.
 - 3.4 identifying particular goods required
 - 3.5 examining goods
 - 3.6 agreeing to purchase

4. Exchanging goods for payment
 - 4.1 agreeing prices of items
 - 4.2 agreeing addition of total
 - 4.3 receiving/handing over payment
 - 4.4 receiving/handing over goods (and receipt)
 - 4.5 exchanging thanks
 - 4.5.1 assistant thanks
 - 4.5.2 customer thanks

5. Leave-taking
 - 5.1 expressing (mutual) satisfaction
 - 5.1.1 assistant expresses satisfaction
 - 5.1.2 customer expresses satisfaction
 - 5.2 exchanging interpersonal comment (e.g. weather, local gossip)
 - 5.3 exchanging parting greetings
 - 5.3.1 assistant greets
 - 5.3.2 customer greets

'NB It should be noted that, as with similar schemata, the availability of this schema to shoppers and shop assistants does not mean that on every occasion this form is used. Especially under modern conditions, language is often used more sparingly, particularly to deal with problems that arise in an otherwise depersonalised and semi-automated transaction, or to humanise it ' (Council of Europe 2001:127) ..

It may at first sight appear that schemata of this complexity are beyond the scope of a learner at Breakthrough level. On inspection it will be found that Chapters 3, 4 and 5 provide the necessary simple exponents for all, or almost all, the individual turns. It may seem obvious, but is perhaps worth stating, that the communicative competence of any language learner, at Breakthrough level no less than at any other, is to be judged not merely by the ability to understand and produce the particular items listed as exponents of functional and notional categories, but rather by the ability to use them effectively in structured social interaction. In accordance with the principle of 'maximum use of minimal means', a learner at Breakthrough level CAN follow through a number of basic, routinised social interactions in accordance with the corresponding interaction schemata.

Chapter 10 Compensation strategies (communication repair)

A basic principle of an action-oriented, communicative approach to language learning is that, from the outset, learners should be prepared to use the limited means of expression they have acquired to the maximum effect and be willing to engage in communicative interaction with other users of the language. This inevitably means that learners at Breakthrough level will very frequently find themselves confronting problems in communication, which need to be overcome if the interaction is not to break down. For instance, as speakers or writers, they:

1. may be unable to recall a word or expression which they 'know' and would immediately recognise if used to them;
2. may wish to express a concept for which they know the expression in their L1, but have not yet encountered it in the L2

As listeners, they:

1. may be faced with interlocutors speaking at a faster rate than they can process, using an unfamiliar dialect or a colloquial register with opaque idioms or strong phonetic reduction, or using words, expressions or complex syntactic structures outside their experience;
 2. may need to understand public announcements under adverse conditions such as noise, distortion and interference, or which contain unfamiliar material or is read in an unfamiliar dialect
- As readers, they may need to read and understand letters, brochures, posters, public signs, newspaper headlines, etc., poorly written or printed, or containing unfamiliar words or syntactic constructions.

To deal with such situations, using as appropriate the expressions listed in Chapter 3, Section 6, as well as their heuristic competence (see Chapter 9, Section 1.5) they CAN elicit help from a sympathetic and more competent language user in:

1. identifying and understanding unfamiliar words and utterances used to them;
2. expressing their own communicative intent;
3. understanding written texts (e.g. letters, e-mails, brochures, public signs, announcements and notices)

Chapter 11 Degree of skill

Language communication is a highly skilled activity, involving a wide range of skills. At the phonetic level, the skills concerned include: a) the perception of sounds, especially phonemically distinct speech sounds, as well as sound qualities such as pitch, length and loudness and b) the movements of the organs of speech which produce these sounds and sound qualities. In L1, these skills become fixed habits, withdrawn from conscious attention. The same is true with regard to the forms of words (lexicon and morphology) and, to a large extent, basic grammatical constructions. This strong habituation of low-level skills allows the mind to concentrate attention on the higher level skills involved in the negotiation of meaning: receptively on the understanding and interpretation of discourse, and productively on the formulation and organisation of text. When learning another language subsequently, the learner can call upon these habituated skills, which will often facilitate its use. However, when L1 and L2 are not isomorphic, the skills cannot be transferred and the development of new ones may be hampered by L1 interference. This may be so strong as to lead to misunderstandings and even incomprehensibility. Since the habituation of low-level skills takes place in L2 also, it cannot be assumed that progress in the low-level skills will run parallel to that in other aspects of language development. Difficult issues are raised regarding educational priorities and the relation between the use of level descriptions for setting objectives and assessing proficiency (see Chapter 9, Section 2.1.3). It is probably best to state that a learner at Breakthrough level has the degree of skill required to communicate intelligibly, given a fully co-operative interlocutor, whilst recognising that many educators may wish to set a higher target for early language learning in respect of phonetic skills. With regard to the 'four skills': listening, speaking, reading

and writing, unequal skills development is to be expected. Recognition is easier than recall and real-time operations are more demanding than those where the time available is more flexible. Accordingly, productive activities (speaking, writing) are more demanding than receptive skills (listening, reading), and real-time activities (listening, speaking) than the less time-constrained activities (reading, writing), which are also facilitated by the availability of heuristic skills. At any level, including Breakthrough, more can be expected of the learner regarding the less demanding activities than the more demanding ones and under less exacting conditions than more exacting ones. The question then arises, whether this inequality should be built into a 'normal' profiling of learners at each level or not, leaving the learner then to be assessed as having attained a higher level in the less demanding activities than those which are more so. that is a decision which has, of course, to be made for the system as a whole rather than at each level independently.

Word Index for Breakthrough

This list contains the words found as exponents of the categories developed in chapters 3,4 and 5. It should **not** be taken in isolation as a 'recommended' vocabulary at CEFR level A1. or as a requirement for the attainment of Breakthrough level. The heterogeneity of learners means that words relevant to the lives and needs of some will not be so for others. Young learners will not only have different interests from adults, but will also be at different stages of cognitive development, have a more limited knowledge of the world and carry less social responsibility. They will not be expected to move as independent agents in an alien environment. These differences will profoundly affect the language appropriate to their needs, interests and motivations.

a, an	4: 8.2
accident	5: B.2.3, B.3.4
accountant	5: C
accounts	5: C
ache	5: B.3.4
afraid	3: 2.8.1
after	4: 2.7, 3.8
afternoon	4: 3.2
again	3: 6.2, 4: 3.22
Agnostic	5: A.1.13
ago	4: 3.13
agree	3: 2.1.2, 2.1.3
ahead	5: B.2.3
air	4: 5.1.13
airport	5: B.2.1
all right	3: 2.9.2
all	4: 4.2
always	4: 3.17, 3.19, 3.20, 3.26, 8.2
ambulance	5: B.3.5
and	3: 5.4, 5.5, 4: 7.6.1
animal	4: 8.3, 5: A.2.7
another	4: 7.4.1
answer	5: A.5.2, 5: D
antibiotic	5: B.3.5

any	4: 4.2, 8.2
anybody	4: 8.2
anyhow	4: 8.2
anything	4: 8.2
anywhere	4: 8.2
apple	5: B.5.1
April	4: 3.2
arms	5: B.3.1
arrive	5: B.2.1
art	5: A.4.5
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arts	5: A.4.3
as	4: 7.4.1
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asleep	5: B.3.2
aspirin	5: B.3.5
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Atheist	5: A.1.13
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away	4: 2.5
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bag	5: B.2.6
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bar	5: B.5.2
bath	5: A.2.4
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bathroom	5: A.2.1
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beach	5: B.2.4
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better	3: 2.7.5, 5:B.3.2
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bird	5: A.2.7
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blood	5: B.3.4
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boss	5: C
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break	5: B.3.4
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build(ing)	5: C
builder	5: C
bus	5: B.2.1
business	5: C
but	4: 7.6.1
butter	5: B.5.1
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card	5: A.5.2
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Catholic	5: A.1.13
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Christmas	5: A.3.2
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Easter	5: A.3.2
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egg	5: B.5.1
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e-mail	5: A.1.3
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er	3: 5.2
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explain	5: D
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fair	5: A.1.14
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fall	4: 2.4
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flat	5: A.2.1
flood	5: A.2.8
floor	5: A.2.1
florist's	5: B.4.1
flower	5: A.2.7
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fog(gy)	5: A.2.8
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football	5: A.4.6
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fork	5: A.2.5
franc	5: B.4.4
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gram(me)	4: 2.8.4, 5:B.4.1
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green	4: 5.1.8
grey	4: 5.1.8
guest	5: A.5.1
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hankies	5: B.4.1
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here	4: 1.2, 2.1, 2.5, 7.5.1, 8.1.1, 8.1.2
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high	4: 2.8.1
hill	5: A.2.6
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Hindu	5: A.1.13
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holiday	5: A.4.1
home	5: A.3.1
homework	5: D
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horrible	3: 2.8.1
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hotel	5: B.2.5
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hurt	4: 5.1.10, 5: B.3.4
husband	5: A.1.12
I	3: 1.2, 4: 8.1.1
ice	5: A.2.8
ice-cream	5: B.5.1
icy	5: A.2.8
if	4: 7.6.8
ill	5: B.3.4
illness	5: B.3.4
important	4: 5.2.8
in	4: 2.2, 3.3, 8.2
inch	4: 2.8.2
industry	5: C
information	5: B.2.1
insect	5: A.2.7
insurance	5: B.2.7
Internet	5: A.4.3
is	4: 1.1
it	3: 1.1, 1.2, 4: 8.1.1, 8.1.2
its	4: 7.5.1, 8.1.1, 8.1.2

January	4: 3.2
jeans	5: B.4.3
job	5: C
July	4: 3.2
keep	5: B.2.3
key	5: B.2.5
kick	4: 5.1.10
kill	4: 5.1.10
kilo	5: B.4.1
kilo(gram)	4: 2.8.4
kilometre	4: 2.8.2
kind	5: A.1.14
kitchen	5: A.2.1
knife	5: A.2.5
know	3: 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 6.8, 4: 6.1, 5:A.5.1
lake	5: A.2.6
lamb	5: B.5.1
languages	5: D
laptop	5: D
last	4: 2.7, 3.13, 3.3
late	4: 3.6, 3.15
later	3: 5.7.3, 4: 3.8, 3.11
lawyer	5: C
learn	5: A.1.11, D
leather	4: 5.1.13
lecture	5: D
lecturer	5: D
left	4: 2.5, 5:B.2.3
legs	5: B.3.1
lemonade	5: B.5.1
lesson	5: D
let's	3: 3.1
letter	5: A.1.1, 5.2, B.6.1
lever	5: A.1.14
library	5: D
lie	4: 2.4
lift	4: 2.4
light	4: 5.1.4
light(ing)	5: A.2.3
like	3: 1.3, 2.7.1, 2.7.2, 2.7.5, 2.8.1, 2.8.2, 2.8.3, 3.3, 4: 5.1.6, 5.2.5, 7.3.8, 7.4.2
listen	
listen	4: 5.1.5, 5: A.4.44, D
litre	4: 2.8.5
live	5: A.1.1
living-room	5: A.2.1
long	4: 2.8.2, 3.4
look	4: 5.1.4, 5:A.1.14, B.3.2
lose	5: B.6.4
loud	4: 5.1.5
lovely	3: 2.8.1
ludo	5: A.4.2
luggage	5: B.2.6
lunch	5: A.3.1

machine	5: A.2.4
Madam	3: 4.4
magazine	5: A.4.7
mail	5: B.6.1
make	5: C
male	5: A.1.6
man	4: 8.3, 5:A.1.3
manager	5: C
many	4: 3.22, 4.2
March	4: 3.2
mark	5: D
market	5: B.4.1
married	5: A.1.6
match	5: A.4.6
mate	5: C
maths	5: D
matter	3: 2.9.6
May	4: 3.2
me	3: 1.1, 4: 8.1.1
meal	5: A.3.1
meat	5: B.5.1
mechanic	5: C
medicine	5: B.3.5
memo	5: C
menu	5: B.5.2
metal	4: 5.1.13
metre	4: 2.8.2
metre	5: B.4.1
mile	4: 2.8.2
miles	4: 3.16
milk	5: B.5.1
mind	3: 2.8.10
mine	4: 7.5.1, 8.1.1
minute	4: 3.2
Miss	3: 4.4, 5:A.1.1
mistake	5: D
money	5: B.4.4
Monday	4: 3.2
month	4: 3.2
morning	4: 3.2
mother	5: A.1.12
motorway	5: B.2.3
mouth	5: B.3.1
move	4: 2.4
Mr.	3: 4.4, 5:A.1.1
Mrs.	3: 4.4, 5:A.1.1
Ms.	5: A.1.1
much	3: 2.8.1, 4: 2.8.5, 4.2, 4.3, 5.2.1
music	5: A.4.5
Muslim	5: A.1.13
my	4: 7.5.1, 8.1.1
near	4: 2.2
necklace	5: B.4.1
never	3: 2.8.10 4: 3.17, 3.20, 3.26, 8.2

new	4: 5.1.9
news(paper)	5: A.4.4, A.4.7
next	4: 3.3, 3.11
nice	3: 2.8.1, 2.8.2, 2.9.4, 4: 5.2.5, 5:A.1.14
night	4: 3.2
no	3: 1.3, 2.1.1, 2.1.4, 2.6.3, 5.3, 4: 1.1, 8.2
nobody	4: 8.2
nose	5: B.3.1
not	4: 1.2, 4.2
note	5: B.4.4, B.6.3
nothing	4: 8.2
nought	5: A.1.3
November	4: 3.2
now	4: 3.12, 8.1.1
nowhere	4: 8.2
number	5: A.1.3
nurse	5: B.3.5
o'clock	4: 3.1
October	4: 3.2
of	4: 4.2
office	5: C
officer	5: B.6.4
oh	5: A.1.3
oil	5: B.6.7
OK	3: 1.2, 2.8.3, 2.8.7, 2.9.2, 3.7, 4: 5.2.3, 5.2.4,
old	4: 5.1.9
on	4: 2.2, 3.3, 5:B.2.3
one	3: 1.1, 1.2, 4: 3.23, 4.1, 8.1.2
only	4: 3.23
open	4: 5.1.11
or	4: 7.6.2
orange	5: B.5.1
Orthodox	5: A.1.13
ounce	4: 2.8.4
our	4: 7.5.1, 8.1.1
ours	4: 7.5.1, 8.1.1
out	5: A.3.1, A.4.1
overtime	5: C
page	5: A.4.7
pain	5: B.3.4
paint	5: D
paint(ing)	5: A.4.2
paper	4: 5.1.13, 5:A.5.2, D
parcel	5: B.6.1
park	5: A.2.6, B.2.3
partner	5: A.1.5
party	5: A.5.1
passport	5: B.2.7
pay	5: B.4.1, B.4.4
pen	5: A.5.2, D
pencil	5: A.5.2, D
penny	5: B.4.4
people	4: 8.3
pepper	5: B.5.1

person	4: 8.3
personal	5: C
personnel	5: C
pet	5: A.2.7
petrol	5: B.2.2, B.6.7
phone	5: A.1.3
piano	5: A.4.5
picture	5: A.4.7
piece	4: 4.2
pint	4: 2.8.5
pity	3: 2.8.11, 2.9.5
place	4: 8.3
plane	5: B.2.1
plant	4: 8.3, 5:A.2.7
plastic	4: 5.1.13
plate	5: A.2.5
platform	5: B.2.1
play	5: A.4.2, A.4.6, B.1
playground	5: D
please	3: 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.11, 5.7.2
pleased	3: 2.8.1
point	4: 4.1
poker	5: A.4.2
police	5: B.6.4
politics	5: A.4.3
pop	5: A.4.5
pork	5: B.5.1
porter	5: C
post office	5: B.6.1
pound (£)	5: B.4.4
pound(lb)	4: 2.8.4,
present	5: A.5.1
problem	5: B.6.6
programme	5: A.4.4, B.1
projector	5: D
Protestant	5: A.1.13
prove	5: D
pub	5: B.5.2
pull	4: 2.4
pupil	5: D
push	4: 2.4
put on	5: B.4.3
put	4: 2.5
question	5: D
quite	4: 4.3
quiz	5: A.4.4
radio	5: A.4.4
rain(y)	5: A.2.8
read	5: A.4.5, 5:D
receipt	5: B.4.4
red	4: 5.1.8
rent	5: A.2.1
repair	5: B.6.6
report	5: C
restaurant	5: B.5.2

return	5: B.2.1
right	3: 2.1, 4: 2.5, 5.2.6, 5: B.2.3
river	5: A.2.6
road	5: B.2.3
room	5: A.2.1, B.2.5
round	4: 5.1.1
rubber	5: D
ruler	5: D
run	5: A.4.6, C
sack	5: C
sad	3: 2.5.1
safety	5: C
salad	5: B.5.1
salary	5: C
sale	5: B.4.4
sales	5: C
salmon	5: B.5.1
salt	5: B.5.1
same	4: 3.10, 7.4.1
Saturday	4: 3.2
sausage	5: B.5.1
say	4: 6.2
school	5: A.1.11, A.3.1, 5: D
science	5: D
screen	5: D
sea(side)	5: A.2.6
see-saw	5: A.4.2
seat	5: B.1
second	4: 3.2
security	5: C
see	4: 5.1.4
self-service	5: B.5.2
sell	5: B.4.1
send	4: 2.5, 5: A.5.2
September	4: 3.2
service	5: C
she	3: 1.2, 4: 8.1.1, 8.1.2
ship	5: B.2.1
shirt	5: B.4.3
shoes	5: B.4.3
shop	5: B.4.1
shopping	5: A.3.1, B.4.1
show	5: B.1
shower	5: A.2.4, B.3.3
since	4: 3.18, 3.24, 3.4
sing	5: A.4.5
single	5: B.2.5
Sir	3: 4.4
sister	5: A.1.12
sit	4: 2.4
site	5: B.2.5
skirt	5: B.4.3
slash (written '/')	5: A.1.3
sleep	5: B.3.2
slide	5: A.4.2

slim	5: A.1.14
slow	5: B.2.3
slowly	3: 6.10
smell	4: 5.1.6
snap	5: A.4.2
snow(y)	5: A.2.8
so	3: 5.5, 4: 7.6.5, 8.1.2
soap	5: B.3.3
some	4: 4.2
somebody	4: 8.2
somehow	4: 8.2
something	4: 8.2
sometimes	4: 3.17, 3.19, 3.22, 8.2
somewhere	4: 8.2
son	5: A.1.12
song	5: A.4.5
soon	4: 3.11
sorry	3: 2.1.2, 2.6.3, 2.9.1, 3.5, 5.3, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 6.4, 6.5
sound	4: 5.1.5
soup	5: B.5.1
sour	4: 5.1.6
spanner	5: C
spell	3: 6.6
spoon	5: A.2.5
sport	5: A.4.3, A.4.6
spring	4: 3.2
stadium	5: B.1
stand	4: 2.4
start	4: 3.24
station	5: B.2.1, B.6.4
stay	4: 3.26
steal	5: B.6.4
stockings	5: B.4.3
stomach	5: B.3.1
stop	4: 2.4, 3.25, 5: B.2.1, B.2.3
store	5: B.4.1
stores	5: C
storm(y)	5: A.2.8
story	5: A.4.7
straight	5: B.2.3
street	5: B.2.3
strike	5: C
strong	4: 5.1.10
student	5: A.1.11, D
study	5: A.1.11, D
stuff	4: 8.3
sum	5: D
summer	4: 3.2
sun(ny)	5: A.2.8
Sunday	4: 3.2
supermarket	5: B.4.1
supper	5: A.3.1
sure	3: 2.4.1, 2.4.2
sweet	4: 5.1.6
sweet(s)	5: B.5.1
swim	5: A.4.6

swing	5: A.4.2
switch (on/off)	5: A.2.3
table	5: A.2.2
tablet	5: B.3.5
take off	5: B.4.3
take	4: 2.5
talk	5: A.4.5
tall	4: 2.8.1, 5: A.1.14
taste	
taste	4: 5.1.6, 5: B.5.1
taxi	5: B.2.1
teach	5: D
teacher	5: D
telephone	5: A.1.3, A.2.4
television, TV	5: A.4.3
tent	5: B.2.5
test	5: D
textbook	5: D
than	4: 7.4.2
thank	3: 2.8.12, 3.5, 3.6, 4.3, 5.6
that	3: 1.1, 6.2, 4: 8.1.1, 8.1.2
the	4: 8.1.1, 8.1.2
theatre	5: B.1
their	4: 7.5.1, 8.1.1, , 8.1.2
theirs	4: 7.5.1, 8.1.1, 8.1.2
them	3: 1.1, 4: 8.1.1, 8.1.2
then	4: 2.7, 3.9, 8.1.1, 8.1.2
there	3: 2.8.10, 4: 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 8.1.1, 8.1.2
these	3: 1.1, 4: 8.1.1, 8.1.2
they	3: 1.2, 4: 8.1.1, 8.1.2
thing	4: 8.3
think	4: 6.1
thirsty	5: B.3.2
this	3: 1.1, 1.34.5, 5.7.1: 4: 3.3, 7.3.8, 8.8.1, 8.1.2
those	3: 1.1, 4: 8.1.1, 8.1.2
throw	4: 5.1.10
Thursday	4: 3.2
tick	5: D
ticket	5: B.1, B.2.1
tiger	5: A.2.7
time	4: 3.1, 3.10, 3.22, 3.23, 8.3
tired	5: B.3.2
to	4: 2.5, 7.3.3, 7.6.7
today	4: 3.3, 3.11
toilet	5: A.2.1, D
tomorrow	4: 3.3, 3.11
ton	4: 2.8.4
tonight	4: 3.11
too	4: 3.5, 3.6, 4.3
tooth	5: B.3.1
tourist	5: B.2.4
tow	5: B.6.6
towel	5: A.2.5, B.3.3
town	5: A.2.6
toy	5: A.4.2, B.4.1

trade union	5: C
trade	5: C
traffic lights	5: B.2.3
train	5: B.2.1
train(ing)	5: C
tram	5: B.2.1
tree	5: A.2.7
trousers	5: B.4.3
true	3: 2.1.4
Tuesday	4: 3.2
tuna	5: B.5.1
turn	5: B.2.3
tutor	5: D
ugh!	3: 2.8.1
under	4: 2.2
undress	5: A.3.1
unemployed	5: C
university	5: A.1.11, D
until	4: 3.4, 3.25
unwell	5: B.3.2
up	4: 2.5
us	3: 1.1, 4: 8.1.1
usual	4: 5.2.9
vegetable	5: A.2.7, B.5.1
very	3: 2.8.1, 4: 4.3
video	5: A.4.4
violin	5: A.4.5, A.5.1
visit	5: B.2.4
wage	5: C
wait	4: 3.26
waiter	5: B.5.2
wake up	5: B.3.2
walk	5: A.4.3, A.4.6
wall	5: A.2.1
wash	5: A.3.1, B.3.3, B.6.7
watch	5: A.4.4, B.1, 5:B.4.3
water	4: 5.1.13, 5:B.5.1
way	4: 8.2, 8.3
we	3: 1.2, 4: 8.1.1
weather	5: A.2.8
Wednesday	4: 3.2
week	4: 3.2
welfare	5: C
well done!	3: 4.7
well	3: 5.1, 5.6, 4: 5.1.10, 5.2.2, 7.3.8, 5:B.3.2
wet	4: 5.1.3
what	3: 1.2, 5.2; 4: 3.1, 8.1.1
when	3: 1.2
where	3: 1.2, 4: 2.1
which	3: 1.2, 4: 8.1.1
white	4: 5.1.8
who	3: 1.2, 4: 8.1.1
why not	3: 3.1, 3.7
why	3: 1.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.8, 4: 7.6.4, 7.6.6
wife	5: A.1.12

will	3: 1.2, 2.7.3, 2.7.4, 4: 3.11
win	5: A.4.6
wind(y)	5: A.2.8
window	5: A.2.1
wine	5: B.5.1
winter	4: 3.2
with	4: 7.3.4, 7.6.3
without	4: 7.6.3
woman	4: 8.3, 5: A.1.3
wood	4: 5.1.13
word	3: 6.8
work	5: A.1.10, A.3.1, B.6.6, C
workbook	5: D
worker	5: C
works	5: B.2.3
worried	3: 2.8.1
write	3: 6.6, 4: 6.2, 5: A.1.1, A.5.2, D
yard	4: 2.8.2
year	4: 3.2
yellow	4: 5.1.8
yes	3: 1.3, 2.1, 2.6.1
yesterday	4: 3.3, 3.13
you	3: 1.1, 1.2, 4: 8.1.1
young	4: 5.1.9
your	4: 7.5.1, 8.1.1
yours	3: 5.8.2, 4: 7.5.1, 8.1.1
zero	5: A.1.3

Open word-fields for biographical selection

The following thematic areas are identified in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 as ones in which each individual learner may wish to build up a personalised vocabulary in accordance with his or her particular characteristics, needs and interests. Items suggested there as likely to be of more general interest are included in the word list above.

<i>basic study terminology</i>	5: D
<i>classroom equipment</i>	5: D
<i>common road sign texts</i>	5: B.2.3
<i>educational roles</i>	5: D
<i>family names</i>	5: A.1.1
<i>first names</i>	5: A.1.1
<i>kinds of entertainment</i>	5: B.1
<i>kinds of fish</i>	5: B.5.1
<i>kinds of music</i>	5: A.4.5
<i>means of transport</i>	5: B.2.1
<i>names of animals(pets, zoo and domestic)</i>	5: A.2.7
<i>names of articles of clothing</i>	5: B.4.3
<i>names of cities</i>	5: B.2.4
<i>names of collectables</i>	5: A.4.3
<i>names of companies</i>	5: C

<i>names of continents</i>	5: B.2.4
<i>names of countries</i>	5: A.1.9, B.2.4
<i>names of curricular subjects</i>	5: D
<i>names of departments</i>	5: C
<i>names of drinks</i>	5: B.5.1
<i>names of festivals</i>	5: A.3.2
<i>names of fields of interest</i>	5: A.4.3
<i>names of fruits</i>	5: B.5.1
<i>names of goods</i>	5: B.4.1
<i>names of hobbies</i>	5: A.4.3
<i>names of illnesses</i>	5: B.3.4
<i>names of kinds of meat</i>	5: B.5.1
<i>names of kinds of shop</i>	5: B.4.1
<i>names of medicines</i>	5: B.3.5
<i>names of musical instruments</i>	5: A.4.5
<i>names of nationalities</i>	5: A.1.8
<i>names of national currencies</i>	5: B.4.4.
<i>names of occupations</i>	5: A.1.11
<i>names of parts of car</i>	5: B.6.6
<i>names of parts of the body</i>	5: B.3.1
<i>names of plants</i>	5: A.2.7
<i>names of playground equipment</i>	5: A.4.2
<i>names of professions kinds of job</i>	5: C
<i>names of religious affiliations</i>	5: A.1.13
<i>names of sights and buildings of interest</i>	5: B.2.4
<i>names of sports and games</i>	5: A.4.2, A.4.6
<i>names of subjects</i>	5: A.1.11, D
<i>names of tools and machines</i>	5: C
<i>names of vegetables</i>	5: B.5.1
<i>names of weights and measures</i>	5: B.4.1
<i>names of years</i>	4: 3.3
<i>nicknames</i>	5: A.1.1
<i>occupational titles</i>	5: C
<i>parts of educational buildings</i>	5: D
<i>personal equipment</i>	5: D
<i>places of work</i>	5: C
<i>street names</i>	5: A.1.2
<i>types of institution</i>	5: D
<i>work grades and status</i>	5: C