



## "STRATEGIES OF NEW FORMAT WRITING CEFR".

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**Yoldosheva Dilbarkhon Saidakhmedovna**

*English teacher ALUWED.*

**Normuminova Nodira Suyarqulovna**

*English teacher ALUWED*

**Abstract:** *This scientific article examines pedagogical and assessment strategies for developing written competencies within the updated Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) framework. Following the publication of the CEFR Companion Volume in 2020, writing is no longer conceptualised merely as grammatical accuracy and lexical range, but as a complex communicative activity encompassing mediation, digital literacy, integrated skills, and contextual adaptability. The article analyses innovative teaching methodologies, formative assessment techniques, curriculum modernisation pathways, and teacher professional development mechanisms designed to respond to these paradigm shifts. Research findings indicate that task-based, process-oriented, and digitally integrated approaches significantly enhance learners' communicative competence compared to traditional product-focused writing instruction. The article provides evidence-based recommendations for language educators, curriculum designers, and policy makers seeking to align writing instruction with contemporary CEFR descriptors.*

**Keywords:** *CEFR, writing skills, new assessment format, mediation, digital literacy, formative assessment, competency-based teaching, language policy.*

### INTRODUCTION

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) has served as the international benchmark for language teaching, learning, and assessment for over two decades. Since its initial publication in 2001, the framework has provided a systematic, action-oriented approach to describing language proficiency across six levels (A1 to C2) [1]. However, the rapid evolution of global communication patterns, digital technologies, and

transnational mobility has necessitated a substantial update to the framework's conceptual foundations and descriptive categories. In response, the Council of Europe published the CEFR Companion Volume in 2020, introducing significant revisions to the descriptors for written production and interaction [2].

The updated framework reconceptualises writing not as an isolated skill focused on grammatical correctness, but as a dynamic, context-sensitive communicative activity. Key



innovations include the explicit integration of mediation competencies, the recognition of digital and multimodal text creation, and the emphasis on collaborative writing processes. These changes carry profound implications for both pedagogy and assessment: traditional writing tasks centred on essay composition or letter writing must now be complemented—or replaced—by activities that reflect authentic communicative purposes, diverse audiences, and real-world digital environments.

Despite the theoretical clarity of the new CEFR descriptors, their practical implementation presents considerable challenges for educators and institutions. Many language programmes continue to rely on product-oriented assessment criteria that prioritise linguistic accuracy over communicative effectiveness, while teachers often lack the methodological training and digital resources required to operationalise the new competencies [3]. Consequently, there is an urgent need for research-informed strategies that bridge the gap between CEFR policy and classroom practice.

The purpose of this article is to analyse and synthesise contemporary strategies for teaching and assessing writing within the new CEFR format. Specifically, the article addresses three research questions: (1) What pedagogical approaches best support the development of CEFR-aligned writing competencies, including mediation and digital literacy? (2) How can formative assessment

practices be designed to reflect the process-oriented and contextual dimensions of the updated framework? (3) What institutional and professional development conditions facilitate the successful implementation of new writing strategies? By addressing these questions, the article aims to provide actionable guidance for language educators, curriculum developers, and policy makers committed to enhancing the relevance and effectiveness of writing instruction in the 21st century.

## Theoretical Foundations and Literature Review

The conceptual shift underpinning the new CEFR writing descriptors is grounded in sociocultural and action-oriented theories of language learning. Whereas earlier frameworks often treated writing as a decontextualised skill to be mastered through repetitive practice, the Companion Volume positions written production and interaction as socially situated activities that serve specific communicative purposes within defined contexts [4]. This perspective draws on Vygotskian notions of mediation, wherein language functions not only as a tool for expression but also as a means of transforming and transmitting knowledge across communities and cultures.

A central innovation in the 2020 update is the formal incorporation of mediation as a distinct language activity. Mediation encompasses a range of competencies, including summarising, paraphrasing, explaining, and adapting content for different audiences and



purposes [5]. In the domain of writing, mediation tasks might involve producing a simplified report based on complex source materials, creating a multilingual brochure for diverse readers, or facilitating online discussions by synthesising multiple viewpoints. These activities require learners to move beyond mere reproduction of linguistic forms and engage in higher-order cognitive processes such as analysis, evaluation, and strategic adaptation.

The rise of digital communication has further transformed the nature of writing. Contemporary texts are increasingly multimodal, incorporating visual, auditory, and interactive elements alongside written language. Digital platforms also enable collaborative writing processes, real-time feedback, and global audience engagement—features that are largely absent from traditional classroom writing tasks [6]. The CEFR Companion Volume acknowledges these developments by including descriptors for online interaction, collaborative text production, and multimodal composition. However, the framework stops short of prescribing specific pedagogical methods, leaving educators to determine how best to integrate digital tools and practices into their teaching.

Research on writing instruction in the CEFR era highlights several promising approaches. Task-based language teaching (TBLT) aligns closely with the action-oriented orientation of the framework, as it engages learners in completing meaningful communicative

tasks that mirror real-world language use [1]. Process writing methodologies, which emphasise planning, drafting, revising, and editing, support the development of metacognitive strategies and self-regulation skills that are essential for effective written communication. Additionally, formative assessment practices—such as peer feedback, self-assessment, and portfolio evaluation—enable learners to monitor their progress and take ownership of their learning journey [3].

Nevertheless, significant gaps remain between theory and practice. Studies indicate that many teachers continue to prioritise grammatical accuracy and lexical sophistication over communicative effectiveness and contextual appropriateness, partly due to the constraints of high-stakes testing regimes [4]. Furthermore, the integration of digital tools and mediation tasks often requires additional training, resources, and institutional support that may not be readily available in all educational contexts [6]. Addressing these challenges demands a coordinated effort involving curriculum reform, teacher education, and assessment innovation.

## Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research design based on systematic literature review and critical analysis of policy documents. The primary data sources include the CEFR Companion Volume (2020), official Council of Europe publications, peer-reviewed journal articles on writing instruction and



assessment published between 2019 and 2026, and reports from international language education organisations. Articles were selected based on their relevance to CEFR-aligned writing strategies, methodological rigour, and applicability to diverse educational contexts.

Data analysis proceeded in three stages. First, key concepts and descriptors related to writing in the CEFR Companion Volume were extracted and categorised according to thematic areas: mediation, digital literacy, collaborative writing, and contextual adaptability. Second, pedagogical and assessment strategies identified in the literature were mapped onto these thematic areas to identify alignments and gaps. Third, implementation challenges and enabling conditions were synthesised to generate practical recommendations for educators and policy makers.

The analytical framework was informed by principles of critical applied linguistics, which emphasise the importance of contextualising language education within broader sociopolitical and technological developments [2]. This perspective enabled the study to examine not only the technical aspects of writing instruction but also the institutional, cultural, and ideological factors that shape its implementation.

Limitations of the study include its reliance on published literature, which may not fully capture grassroots innovations or context-specific adaptations. Additionally, the rapid pace

of technological change means that some digital writing practices discussed in the article may evolve further by the time of publication. Nevertheless, the study provides a timely and comprehensive overview of current strategies for aligning writing instruction with the new CEFR format.

## Results and Discussion

Analysis of the literature reveals five interconnected strategies that effectively support the development of CEFR-aligned writing competencies.

### Strategy 1: Task-Based and Contextualised Writing Activities

Traditional writing tasks often lack authentic purpose and audience, leading to learner disengagement and limited transfer to real-world contexts. Task-based approaches address this limitation by situating writing within meaningful communicative scenarios. For example, instead of writing a generic essay on "environmental protection," learners might produce a policy brief for a local government, a social media campaign for a non-profit organisation, or a multilingual guide for international visitors [1]. Such tasks require learners to consider audience expectations, genre conventions, and communicative goals—key dimensions of the new CEFR descriptors. Research indicates that contextualised tasks enhance motivation, promote strategic competence, and facilitate the integration of multiple language skills [4].

### Strategy 2: Process-Oriented and Formative Assessment Practices



The CEFR Companion Volume emphasises the importance of viewing writing as a process rather than solely a product. Formative assessment strategies support this perspective by providing ongoing feedback throughout the writing cycle. Techniques such as peer review, teacher conferences, reflective journals, and digital annotation tools enable learners to identify strengths, address weaknesses, and refine their texts iteratively [3]. Crucially, assessment criteria should align with CEFR descriptors, focusing not only on linguistic accuracy but also on task achievement, coherence, audience awareness, and strategic adaptation. Portfolio assessment, which collects multiple drafts and reflective commentaries over time, offers a comprehensive means of documenting progress and fostering learner autonomy.

### Strategy 3: Integration of Digital Tools and Multimodal Composition

Digital technologies expand the possibilities for written communication by enabling multimodal expression, collaborative authoring, and global dissemination. Educators can leverage word processors, cloud-based platforms, blogging tools, and multimedia software to create authentic writing experiences that mirror contemporary communication practices [6]. For instance, learners might co-author a wiki article, produce a video script with subtitles, or design an interactive infographic with accompanying text. Such activities develop not only linguistic competence

but also digital literacy, critical thinking, and collaborative skills. However, successful integration requires careful scaffolding, clear learning objectives, and attention to issues of access and equity.

### Strategy 4: Explicit Instruction in Mediation Competencies

Mediation represents a paradigm shift in language education, requiring learners to act as intercultural brokers who adapt and transmit information across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Writing tasks that develop mediation skills might include summarising complex texts for different audiences, translating key messages across languages, or facilitating online discussions by synthesising diverse perspectives [5]. Explicit instruction in mediation strategies—such as paraphrasing, simplifying, contextualising, and evaluating sources—equips learners with the cognitive and linguistic tools needed for effective intercultural communication. Teachers can model these strategies through think-aloud protocols, guided practice, and reflective debriefing.

### Strategy 5: Professional Development and Institutional Support

Implementing new writing strategies requires more than individual teacher initiative; it demands systemic support at the institutional and policy levels. Professional development programmes should equip educators with the knowledge and skills to design CEFR-aligned tasks, apply formative assessment techniques, and integrate digital tools



effectively [2]. Institutional policies should encourage curriculum innovation, provide access to technological resources, and recognise the value of process-oriented assessment. Furthermore, high-stakes testing regimes must evolve to reflect the multidimensional competencies outlined in the CEFR Companion Volume, lest they undermine classroom innovations [4]. Collaborative networks among teachers, researchers, and policy makers can facilitate knowledge exchange and collective problem-solving.

Despite the promise of these strategies, several challenges persist. Resource constraints, particularly in underfunded educational systems, may limit access to digital tools and professional development opportunities. Cultural expectations regarding writing instruction—such as the emphasis on grammatical accuracy in some contexts—may conflict with the communicative orientation of the new CEFR descriptors. Additionally, the assessment of complex competencies like mediation and digital literacy poses methodological difficulties, as traditional rubrics may not adequately capture the nuanced dimensions of performance [3]. Addressing these challenges requires sustained investment, adaptive leadership, and a willingness to experiment with alternative assessment models.

## Conclusion

The updated CEFR framework represents a significant advancement in the conceptualisation of writing as a

dynamic, context-sensitive, and socially embedded communicative activity. By integrating mediation competencies, recognising digital and multimodal text creation, and emphasising process-oriented assessment, the Companion Volume provides a robust foundation for enhancing the relevance and effectiveness of writing instruction in the 21st century.

This article has identified five key strategies for operationalising the new CEFR writing descriptors: task-based and contextualised activities, process-oriented formative assessment, integration of digital tools, explicit mediation instruction, and systemic professional development. Research evidence suggests that these approaches, when implemented coherently and supported by appropriate institutional conditions, can significantly enhance learners' communicative competence, digital literacy, and intercultural awareness.

However, successful implementation requires more than methodological innovation; it demands a fundamental rethinking of the purposes and practices of writing instruction. Educators must move beyond the transmission of linguistic forms to foster the strategic, adaptive, and reflective capacities that enable learners to navigate complex communicative landscapes. Policy makers must align assessment systems with the multidimensional competencies outlined in the CEFR, ensuring that high-stakes tests reinforce rather than undermine classroom innovations.



Future research should investigate the long-term impact of CEFR-aligned writing strategies on learner outcomes, explore the potential of artificial intelligence and learning analytics to support formative assessment, and examine the transferability of these

approaches across diverse linguistic and cultural contexts. By continuing to bridge theory and practice, the language education community can ensure that writing instruction remains responsive to the evolving demands of global communication.

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