



CEFR Companion Volume implementation toolbox

Video scripts for “Aims and objectives of the VITbox Project”

Slide 2

This presentation will give you an introduction to the ECML Project “CEFR Companion Volume Implementation Toolbox”, or, in short, “the VITbox Project”.

Slide 3

The CEFR Companion Volume was published in 2020 in its final version, and it offers a new vision of language teaching, learning and assessment. This has caused a paradigm shift as it puts a strong focus for example on the action-oriented approach, on mediation, on plurilingual and pluricultural aspects and as it provides a new database of validated illustrative descriptors.

Slide 4

This has motivated the VITbox Team to develop ideas on how to implement the concepts presented in the CEFR Companion Volume at university and in vocational training. The idea is to support institutions, teacher educators and teachers in this process, to enhance innovation in teaching and assessment and in the end to prepare learners better for situations of communication at the workplace, at university and in research, e.g. by working with real-life scenarios.

Slide 5

As you can see from the original project description, the idea of the VITbox Project is to provide digital resources that show how the ideas presented in the CEFR Companion Volume can be implemented in language teaching at university and in vocational training. The resources have been produced for teacher educators and teacher trainers to be used in their trainings, but also for language teachers for self-study purposes. The VITbox resources consist of short videos, text files, checklists, templates and sample classroom material, like tasks, which people can use in their contexts. The material is available in English and French, but examples in other languages, e.g. examples of classroom activities, are also included in the VITbox toolbox, so that teachers or teacher educators focusing on other languages can use it as well. The idea behind the VITbox Project has been to provide a toolbox that is freely available for educators, trainers and teachers, who can then choose from this toolbox the material that they would like to use for their individual purposes and which they can adapt to their individual needs, but which might also motivate them to create their own material.

Slide 6

To summarise, the VITbox Project provides teacher trainers, teacher educators and teachers in university and in vocational language teaching with tools that help them to implement the ideas of the CEFR Companion Volume. These tools help to manage the challenges we encounter currently in language teaching, learning and also assessment. The idea behind it is to implement changes in order to cater for the needs of new generations of learners.



Slide 7

The overarching aims of the VITbox initiative are to implement the ideas of the Council of Europe's CEFR Companion Volume (2020) in language teaching and assessment at university and in vocational training, as already mentioned. This includes the idea of strengthening an action-oriented and task-based approach in teaching and also in assessment in order to manage innovation in university and vocational language teaching and assessment.

Slide 8

By doing so, the VITbox Project aims at contributing to professional development and stimulating more workshops on these topics in the future. The idea is to enhance innovation in areas like needs analysis, curriculum planning, course design and obviously methodology, both in teaching and assessment. Furthermore, this can help to create a community of practice, or an even stronger community of practice, which will strengthen the language teaching and testing profession as a whole. This will help to manage the changes we encounter at the moment.

Slide 9

The VITbox resources offer a toolbox that includes, for example, video clips, text material and links, information on further reading activities, checklists and templates but also tasks and activities in various languages that can be used in teaching and assessment, where they may serve as sample scenarios for the classroom. This material is structured in comprehensive modules covering specific topics. The toolbox is freely available online and can be adapted by teacher educators, trainers or teachers.

Slide 10

As a teacher educator, teacher trainer or as a teacher you can use this toolbox, open it, look at the resources and see what is available, then reflect what might be useful in your context and then use the material as it is or even adapt it because the material might not exactly correspond to your needs and you might find ideas on how to adapt it to your individual context or target group.

Slide 11

The flexibility of the resources developed by the VITbox team allows users to address different target groups: First of all, they can be used by teacher educators in initial teacher training and they will help them to prepare their students for their future job as competent language teachers. Secondly, teacher trainers can use them in professional development programmes and choose specific aspects or themes they want to focus on in their trainings. Thirdly, teachers can use the resources for self-study purposes if they want to go into more detail on specific topics they are interested in.

Slide 12

Here is a list of the modules that have been made available by the VITbox Team. In addition to this introduction you can find a presentation of the innovative aspects of the Companion Volume to the CEFR. Then there is a module on the action-oriented approach and the role of the learner as a social agent in teaching, learning and assessment. Another module discusses the concept of the four modes of communication and their relationship to the four language skills, which serves as an introduction to the modules on interaction and mediation. The module on interaction focuses on written interaction and online interaction. A strong focus will then be on mediation as this is particularly relevant for vocational and university language teaching; this module offers detailed information about mediating concepts and mediation strategies. One module presents ideas for plurilingual approaches and how to integrate pluricultural aspects in the classroom. Another module addresses course planning, focusing on constructive



alignment in teaching, learning and assessment. A final module will provide ideas on how to use the CEFR Companion Volume and the resources made available by the Council of Europe and the ECML in teaching, learning and assessment at university and in vocational training.

These modules don't cover all the aspects of the Companion Volume but the ones the VITbox team has identified as particularly valuable in the context of vocational and university language teaching and assessment.

Slide 13

Now we invite you to take a look at the VITbox website, open the toolbox, have a look inside, look at the resources and then decide which materials you want to use in your training. Here is the link to the website. Looking at the ECML's slogan of the 2020-2023 programme we hope that the VITbox toolbox and its resources will inspire innovation in language teaching and language training, and that it will contribute to enhancing the teaching competences of our teachers.

Slide 14

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact us.