
Insights on CEFR and Its Implementation in Arabic Language Learning at Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School

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ABSTRACT

The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) provides guidelines for Arabic language teaching aids and curriculum development in language courses. The research investigated pre-service Arabic teachers' perceptions of CEFR in the context of the Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School. A total of 200 fourth- and fifth-year preservice Arabic teachers participated in the study. A mixed method design was used to collect data through a seven-point Likert scale questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The quantitative findings revealed that the participants had a high level of understanding of the CEFR, particularly in the domain of assessment and the development of reference level descriptions. In contrast, qualitative data revealed that Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School preservice teachers had little knowledge of the CEFR, and their understanding of the CEFR was very limited. However, the pre-service teacher of the Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School expressed a positive view regarding the application of CEFR into classroom practice. Overall, these findings suggest that pre-service Arabic teachers have a poor understanding of the conception of the CEFR, suggesting that stakeholders of the Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School should raise awareness regarding the proper implementation of the CEFR and its alignment with the national curriculum.

Keywords: CEFR, Arabic, Islamic Boarding School, Mambaus Sholihin

I. INTRODUCTION

The CEFR has been generally adopted in language learning, teaching, and assessment worldwide, and several studies have examined its effectiveness. For example, Nakatani (2012) investigated whether the use of communication strategies (CS) identified in the CEFR could improve learners' language proficiency in communication tasks (Nakatani, 2012). Another study examined the impact of assessment practices, based on the CEFR descriptor, on learning outcomes in Swedish higher education (Baldwin & Apelgren, 2018). The integration of pronunciation based on CEFR-oriented perspectives for language learners and teachers has also been explored (Topal, 2019). Interestingly, several studies have reported that many teachers have not adopted CEFR into their classroom practice despite its popularity and benefits. Indeed, a study conducted in Turkey showed that teachers do not adapt CEFR problems into their practice (Uri & Abd Aziz, 2018), and another study in Malaysia reported that a significant number of Malaysian teachers did not fully understand how to implement the framework and had limited knowledge of some aspects of the document, including assessment (Sahib & Stapa, 2021).

At the Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School, the Language Department Board introduced the CEFR in 2021 as a practical guidebook for teaching Arabic in the context of the Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School. The goal is to reform traditional Arabic language teaching into Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) to improve Arabic proficiency at all levels of education at the Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School. The hope is that the CEFR will provide a clear framework for the development of school curricula, syllabi, teaching methodologies, and assessments for practitioners. To date, not much has been made to explore the implementation of the CEFR framework. Overall, the study shows some understanding of CEFR principles from their perspective. However, little effort has been made to investigate the point of view of the pre-service Arabic teacher of the Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School on the CEFR and its implementation into classroom practice. Understanding pre-service teachers' existing knowledge of the CEFR will increase awareness of the CEFR among curriculum planners, academics, researchers, and policymakers.

II. LITERATURE OF THE STUDY

UNDERSTANDING OF CEFR

The CEFR plays an important role in Arabic language teaching and learning and is a useful tool for curriculum guidelines, Arabic courses, assessments, and describing language proficiency levels. The CEFR is built on four key principles: teaching and learning, assessment, reference level description, and implementation (Council of Europe, 2001). In the domain of learning and teaching, the document highlights that practitioners should highlight the characteristics of the local context when developing language learning curricula. This framework makes it possible to state that language teaching should focus on the strengths and weaknesses of learners and encourage them to achieve learning objectives. The CEFR relies primarily on two approaches.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and plurilingualism, in classroom teaching and lesson planning. The CLT approach is based on two concepts, task and interaction, and involves successful learning of the target language by conducting meaningful communication in an authentic context. The use of language is considered to have a purpose, which involves the communication of meaning, which is very

important for language users to achieve their goals. In line with this approach, the book explains that language learning will be more effective if the language is used intentionally. Therefore, when using CEFR in classroom teaching and planning practices, teachers or lesson plan writers should develop tasks and interactions based on student needs, motivations, and characteristics. Plurilingualism is another CEFR approach used in language teaching and learning, which focuses on the ability to use more than one language and cultural resources to communicate with people from different contexts (Council of Europe, 2001). Therefore, lesson plans based on a plurilingual approach should emphasize students' experiences in their cultural context. Their culture and teachers should provide more opportunities to learners to improve plurilingual competence.

The principle of assessment relates to the selection or development of appropriate and feasible material to measure the ability of language learners. First, test developers must tailor the CEFR to their needs and define the purpose of the test. The CEFR can help determine test objectives by providing four common language proficiency domains: personal, public, occupational and educational (Council of Europe, 2001). The

next step is to create a relationship with the CEFR. Indeed, the book also recommends that test results refer to the CEFR reference level description. Thus, the test developer must demonstrate that the test results can be interpreted appropriately based on the CEFR reference level (North & Jones, 2009). The third step is the production of tests.

Importantly, the relationship with the CEFR must be maintained throughout the test development process (Council of Europe, 2001) And tests should also be examined by experts to identify criteria and edit test items to ensure that they can be adapted to local contexts. The final step of test development is the assessment standards. (North & Jones, 2009) states that test results must demonstrate CEFR proficiency levels, which require specific processes to maintain the standard over time. For example, tests should be based on the clear and comprehensive 'Can-Do' scale contained in the CEFR and standardisation training should be provided to ensure a single and shared interpretation of the grading scale.

Finally, experts should monitor the ratings to ensure that they do not differ from the standards in question. The CEFR reference level description aims to provide transparency to language teaching and is

designed to build a wide range of teaching courses that support plurilingual teaching (Council of Europe, 2001). The use of reference level descriptions is based on two principles. First, reference level descriptions are tools for language stakeholders to support curriculum design or test specifications. Secondly, reference level descriptions can be used in a variety of ways and, therefore, language users must decide a priori about various factors, such as the learner's proficiency level, age and educational background, first language, and reasons for learning Arabic. Reference level descriptions can also identify what language materials should be included for teaching and testing at each CEFR level. In addition, language practitioners and curriculum planners can adapt published reference level descriptions into their own contexts.

The framework also provides a comprehensive descriptive scheme of language competence and a set of general reference levels (A1-C2) in an illustrative descriptor scale to identify learners' linguistic abilities. The CEFR has become a reference level of language competency standard on a global scale and is used to develop methods of teaching, learning, and language testing (Morrow, 2004). The CEFR is based on an action-oriented approach that

focuses on activities and communicative language strategies. A Can-Do descriptor is also included that demonstrates learners' proficiency in five skills of listening, reading, writing, oral interaction, and oral production at six levels, ranging from A1 (for beginners) to C2 (for those who have mastered the language). Several studies on the implementation of the CEFR have been conducted in the context of Arabic as a foreign language or second language. Sebagai contoh, Topal (2019) examines how pronunciation can be integrated into language learning using CEFR-oriented perspectives (Topal, 2019), and Apelgren & Baldwin (2018) investigated the effect of CEFR descriptors on assessment and learning outcomes in a university setting in Sweden (Baldwin & Apelgren, 2018). Other studies have also investigated practitioners' perceptions or attitudes towards the CEFR (Kır & Sülü, 2014). Overall, these studies show that teachers rarely use the CEFR framework in their Arabic teaching.

Moreover, even Arabic teachers who have partially adopted a framework for assessing language proficiency still need more guidance on how to use the CEFR to design tests and curricula and how to implement the framework into their teaching strategies (Le, 2018). Another study

investigating Uzbek teachers' perceptions of the usefulness and impact of the CEFR found that, overall, these teachers had positive perceptions about the implementation of the CEFR in Uzbekistan (Musoeva, 2018). A similar study conducted by Díez-Bedmar & Byram (2019) assessed the beliefs and perceptions of teachers in Spain towards the CEFR (Díez-Bedmar & Byram, 2019). It found that although most participants had positive perceptions about the impact of CEFR, some teachers also had limited knowledge about CEFR (Díez-Bedmar & Byram, 2019). A recent study by Tosun & Glover (2020) studied eight Turkish teachers' knowledge of CEFR and looked at how teachers implement CEFR and ELP in Turkey (Tosun & Glover, 2020). The findings of this study revealed the participants' understanding that the CEFR is an important and useful guideline for language teaching classes. However, teachers also state that they know very little about the CEFR because they do not get CEFR training in all domains.

III. METHOD

This study used a type of qualitative descriptive research. This type of research is used to evaluate the application of CEFR Standards in Arabic language learning at the Mambaus Sholihin Islamic boarding school

using the book of *Arabiyah Baina Ladaik* as teaching material and to identify factors that influence the application of the CEFR Standards.

SUBJECTS OF STUDY

The subjects of the study were Arabic teachers and students at the Mambaus Sholihin Islamic boarding school who were involved in learning Arabic using the Arabic book *Baina Ladaik* as teaching material. The participants were 200 preservice teachers of the Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School majoring in Arabic in the academic year 2022 – 2023. Participants were selected using convenience sampling techniques. All participants (32 men and 168 women) were aged between 20 and 25 and studied in the fourth and fifth years. Fourth and fifth year students of the Arabic major were chosen because the CEFR document falls under their two compulsory subjects – Educational Measurement and Evaluation and Arabic Language Curriculum.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire was developed based on CEFR documents in the Mambaus Sholihin and Arabic Islamic Boarding School versions to answer research questions. The questionnaire includes three sections and uses a seven-point Likert scale to explore the

views of pre-service Arabic teachers. The first section collects participants' demographic information, including gender, age, year of study, and knowledge of the CEFR. The second part examines participants' insights into the CEFR. It focuses on three elements: 1) principles for teaching and learning (items 1 to 7), 2) principles for assessment (items 8 to 13), and 3) principles for the development and application of reference levels (items 14 to 20). Respondents were asked to rate items on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). The third part is open-ended questions. They asked the participants to share their opinions on the application of CEFR in classroom practice. The questionnaire was validated using Cronbach's Alpha, which gives a reliability coefficient of 0.951. The questionnaire was also validated by seven experts and piloted before the main study.

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Fifteen participants were randomly selected for semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interview explored how pre-service Arabic teachers felt about implementing the CEFR in their teaching practice. The duration of the interview was 15-20 minutes and was conducted after they completed the questionnaire. Interviews are

also recorded and transcribed for content analysis. After the interview, the transcript is verified by the interviewee and the researcher. Then, the transcripts are encoded and categorized into four CEFR themes, including principles for teaching and learning, principles for assessment, principles for the development and application of reference levels, and implementation in practice.

RESEARCH PROCEDURE

A total of 200 participants were recruited to fill out a 20-item survey questionnaire. Then, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 randomly selected participants to collect in-depth data on CEFR implementation in Arabic classrooms. Mixed method design was used to collect quantitative and qualitative data in the current study to better identify participants' attitudes and to provide comparisons between quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2012). In addition, the use of triangulation ensures the validity, reliability, and understanding of the research.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data were collected using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Responses to 20 questionnaire items were analyzed using the IBM SPSS

Statistics program. Content analysis was used to categorize audio transcriptions of interviews into four themes. Then, to ensure accurate transcripts of interviewees, interviews were emailed to the participants to validate their responses. Transcripts are also verified by peer teachers who have background knowledge of CEFR.

IV. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The results of demographic information were divided into four sections: gender, year of study, age, and knowledge of the CEFR. Of the 200 participants, 84% were women and 16% were men and all participants were between the ages of 20 to 25. The respondents studied in the fourth (57%) or fifth (43%) year. The results also revealed that 67% of respondents were aware of CEFR documents and 33% were not.

In response to RQ1, as shown in Table 1, quantitative findings revealed that preservice teachers had a moderate level of understanding of CEFR teaching and learning principles, with an average score of 4.26 or 60.85% (SD = 0.42). The highest average (5.60 or 80%) was observed for the statement "CEFR is a guideline for developing Arabic language teaching". This shows that most participants understand that the CEFR document is a guideline for developing Arabic language teaching. The

results also revealed that the participants agreed that the CEFR is an important document for curriculum design in Arabic language teaching, with an average score of 5.51 or 78.71%. However, the participants disagreed with the statement that the framework could improve Arabic for communication (mean = 2.36).

Table 1. Principles for teaching and learning (n = 200)

Item	Pernyataan	mean	%	S.D.
1	CEFR adalah pedoman untuk mengembangkan pengajaran bahasa Arab.	5.60	80.00	1.15
2	CEFR adalah dokumen penting untuk desain kurikulum dalam pengajaran bahasa Arab.	5.51	78.71	1.13
3	CEFR adalah buku panduan yang digunakan untuk merancang bahan ajar.	5.37	76.71	1.14
4	CEFR dapat digunakan untuk meningkatkan bahasa Arab untuk komunikasi.	2.36	33.71	1.05
5	CEFR harus disesuaikan dengan kurikulum bahasa Arab setempat dalam setiap konteks.	5.35	76.42	1.19
6	CEFR adalah buku pegangan yang digunakan untuk membantu pelajar dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab.	2.67	38.14	1.17
7	Kegiatan pembelajaran bahasa Arab harus fokus pada plurilingualisme.	2.97	42.42	1.43
Total		4.26	60.85	0.42

In contrast, qualitative data revealed that the participants had only partial knowledge of the CEFR, particularly in the

domains of learning and teaching. Indeed, many participants realized that the CEFR was used as a guideline for Arabic language assessment but not for learning and teaching. This is illustrated in the following statement:

Saya tidak pernah tahu sebelumnya bahwa CEFR digunakan untuk belajar dan mengajar bahasa Arab. Saya belum mengambil kursus tentang kerangka kerja, dan dosen jarang menyebutkan CEFR di kelas. Namun demikian, saya memahami bahwa kerangka kerja ini digunakan untuk penilaian kecakapan bahasa Arab. (David)

Saya tidak pernah menganggap kerangka kerja sebagai pedoman untuk pengajaran dan pembelajaran. Saya hanya tahu bahwa CEFR adalah kriteria untuk mengukur kemahiran bahasa. (Firman)

The findings suggest that the university curriculum introduces the CEFR framework in terms of assessing Arabic proficiency and focuses solely on teaching methodology, lesson planning, and learning materials, rather than adapting CEFR descriptions to set learning goals and outcomes. These results are consistent with previous research reporting that language teachers rarely use CEFR in practice (Franz & Teo, 2018). This may be because the implementation of the CEFR has not been fully enforced and, moreover, the CEFR was only introduced at the Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School in 2020. Overall, the qualitative findings suggest that preservice teachers

have little knowledge of the CEFR as a teaching and learning aid. Thus, the current results are partly consistent with previous research that Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School Arabic teachers' understanding of CEFR is lacking, especially in knowledge related to aspects of learning and teaching.

Participants' understanding of the assessment domains within the CEFR framework is presented in Table 2. Most participants revealed a high level of insight into CEFR assessment principles, with an average of 5.16 or 73.71% (S.D. = 0.71). Notably, participants agreed that the purpose of test development depends on the implementation of the CEFR in each context (mean = 5.37). The results also showed that 76% of respondents agreed that the development of language evaluation should align with CEFR descriptions. While participants generally agreed with most of the statements in this section, the lowest scoring statement (with an average of 4.96) related to Arabic test scoring was verified by experts. Nevertheless, 70% of participants agreed with this statement.

Table 2. Assessment principle (n = 200)

Item	Pernyataan	mean	%	S.D.
8	Tujuan pengembangan tes tergantung pada implementasi CEFR dalam setiap konteks.	5.37	76.71	1.05
9	Pengembangan evaluasi bahasa harus selaras dengan deskripsi CEFR.	5.32	76.00	1.11
10	Penilaian tes bahasa Arab harus didasarkan pada dokumen CEFR.	5.03	71.85	1.15
11	Penilaian tes bahasa Arab harus diverifikasi oleh para ahli.	4.96	70.85	1.05
12	Desain tes harus konsisten dan bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kemahiran bahasa.	5.14	73.42	1.03
13	Hasil tes dapat digunakan untuk mengidentifikasi kemahiran bahasa Arab.	5.15	73.57	1.10
Total		5.16	73.71	0.71

Although quantitative findings reveal a high level of understanding in aspects of CEFR assessment, qualitative data suggest that preservice teachers have inadequate knowledge of the assessment domain. The participants reported that the CEFR was a criterion for language assessment, but they lacked the training to design test scoring. The following statements support this claim::

Saya memahami bahwa CEFR adalah kriteria untuk mengukur kecakapan bahasa Arab dari pemula A1 hingga C2. Namun, saya belum dilatih untuk merancang penilaian tes berdasarkan CEFR. (Sekar)

This suggests that pre-service teachers have only partial knowledge and little understanding of the CEFR assessment domain. These findings contrast with previous research showing that Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School Arabic teachers have a complete understanding of the CEFR in the field of assessment. This may be because participants from both studies had different levels of education. Indeed, participants in the current study were pre-service teachers who likely had more opportunities to adopt CEFR assessments in their pedagogical practice.

As shown in Table 3, based on quantitative data, participants showed a high level of understanding regarding the use of reference level descriptions. Overall, the participants agreed with the statement, with an average average of 4.92 or 70.28% (SD = 0.63). More than 70% of participants indicated that descriptions should bring transparency to Arabic teaching and should encourage Arabic learning across all four skills (mean = 5.14). The statement with the lowest score was related to developing reference level descriptions to describe what learners knew and their abilities at each level (mean = 4.73).

Table 3. Principles for the use of reference level descriptions (n = 200)

Item	Pernyataan	mean	%	S.D.
14	Mengembangkan deskripsi tingkat referensi CEFR membawa transparansi dalam pengajaran bahasa Arab.	5.14	73.42	1.20
15	Pengembangan deskripsi tingkat referensi harus menggambarkan apa yang diketahui peserta didik dan kemampuan mereka di setiap tingkat.	4.73	67.57	1.09
16	Pengembangan deskripsi tingkat referensi CEFR harus menunjuk kemampuan peserta didik terkait dengan indikator dalam kurikulum nasional.	4.99	71.28	1.01
17	Deskripsi tingkat referensi CEFR harus bertujuan untuk meningkatkan bahasa Arab keempat keterampilan (mendengarkan, berbicara, membaca, menulis).	5.07	72.42	1.12
18	Deskripsi tingkat referensi CEFR perlu mengidentifikasi apa yang dapat dilakukan peserta didik di setiap tingkat.	5.01	71.57	1.03
19	Deskripsi tingkat referensi CEFR harus menjelaskan apa yang dapat dicapai peserta didik dalam keterampilan apa pun.	4.76	68.00	1.02
20	Deskripsi tingkat referensi CEFR dapat menjadi pedoman untuk evaluasi bahasa Arab.	4.75	67.85	1.12
Total		4.92	70.28	0.63

However, again, qualitative data analysis does not support quantitative findings. Indeed, analysis of the content of the interviews revealed that the participants were not aware of the CEFR description. The following excerpts support this claim::

Saya tidak tahu apa-apa tentang deskripsi referensi CEFR. (sunni)

Saya belum pernah mendengar tentang deskripsi CEFR sebelumnya. (Aziz)

Saya tidak tahu tentang deskripsi CEFR. (Eva)

These citations indicate that pre-service Arabic teachers have an inadequate understanding of CEFR reference level descriptions. The reasons for this may be twofold. First, student teachers may not be familiar with the framework. Second, the participants are not full-time teachers; therefore they do not have adequate time or opportunity to practice CEFR. These results were consistent which found that teachers were not confident to adjust the framework in the classroom because they did not know how to integrate descriptions into their language test assessments. Thus, these results indicate that student teachers require additional CEFR training, especially in the area of using reference level descriptions.

To test whether Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School preservice teachers applied CEFR into practice, interview data were analyzed and categorized into three themes; learning and teaching, assessment, and use of reference level descriptions. In the field of learning and teaching, most participants reported that they were unaware of an action-oriented approach, and only two participants used the CEFR in their learning and teaching practices. These participants stated that they had adopted a partial framework for setting learning goals

and outcomes that highlight communication. This failed implementation of the CEFR in the classroom can be explained by the lack of knowledge of pre-service Arabic teachers about the use of action-oriented and plurilingual approaches, which means they feel uncomfortable (and, possibly, incapable) using the CEFR in their classroom practice. In addition, Arabic courses provided in the education system of the Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School have traditionally relied on grammar-translation teaching methods. Therefore, pre-service teachers may not have the opportunity to adapt and use the CEFR approach. This is illustrated in the following statement:

Saya telah menggunakan deskripsi untuk menetapkan tujuan pembelajaran dalam rencana pelajaran saya. Saya pikir berguna bagi saya untuk merancang kegiatan pembelajaran. (Soni)

Saya telah mendengar tentang pendekatan berorientasi CEFR beberapa kali. Saya juga mencoba menyesuaikan pendekatan untuk merancang kegiatan pembelajaran di kelas saya karena saya mengajar kursus tambahan, Bahasa Arab untuk komunikasi. Meskipun demikian, saya tidak tahu banyak tentang pendekatan ini. (Dakir)

Overall, the results showed that student teachers had a poor understanding of the CEFR in its approach to learning and teaching because they were inexperienced with the document. These results are in line with some researchers who state that

teachers do not have enough support to implement the CEFR in Arabic classrooms. This shows that Arabic language teaching in the context of the Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School still focuses on traditional teaching rather than communicati teachingf.

The results also revealed that the participants considered the CEFR as a criterion for test scoring. However, they could not provide additional details and did not implement the CEFR to measure the performance of Arabic tests in the classroom. Furthermore, the participants reported that they never adopted the description to design the test scoring. This may be because student teachers are not trained on how to design tests based on CEFR principles, as shown in the excerpt below:

Saya mendengar dosen saya menyebutkan dokumen CEFR berkali-kali, tetapi saya tidak masuk ke dalam kerangka kerja karena tidak ada kelas untuk pelatihan tentang CEFR. Untuk pemahaman saya, ini hanya digunakan untuk mengukur penilaian tes bahasa Arab. (Nina)

This quote shows that, despite understanding the CEFR assessment, the participants were unable to apply it in an authentic context. Indeed, the current results suggest that the participants can understand the principle of assessment but practice less in real settings. Therefore, pre-service Arabic teachers may require further

training on assessment languages in relation to the CEFR.

The CEFR reference level description emphasizes the use of the Can-Do descriptor used to describe language proficiency in five skills – listening, reading, writing, oral interaction, and oral production – on six scales (Council of Europe, 2001). Interviews reveal that student teachers have partially adopted the description in practice, as shown in the excerpt below:

Deskripsi dapat digunakan untuk mengidentifikasi apa yang dapat dilakukan pelajar bahasa dalam setiap keterampilan. Meskipun saya dapat berkonsultasi secara singkat dengan ide deskriptor Can-Do, saya tidak menerapkan konsep tersebut ke dalam praktik. (Nadia)

This quote illustrates that the participants had no knowledge of Can-Do descriptors, possibly due to an inadequate understanding of CEFR reference level descriptions. In addition, as mentioned earlier, the participants were not full-time teachers; therefore, they may not have adequate time or opportunity to practice CEFR. Therefore, these results also indicate that student teachers require additional CEFR training in the area of use of reference level descriptions. In conclusion, qualitative analysis revealed that the pre-service Arabic teacher of Mambaus Sholihin Islamic

Boarding School only partially implemented the CEFR and had insufficient knowledge of the implementation of the CEFR. The findings suggest that student teachers have limited opportunities to adapt the CEFR in pedagogical practice, especially since they are not in-service teachers.

V. CONCLUSION

The current study investigates Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School pre-service Arabic teacher's insights on the CEFR and explores the implementation of the CEFR in classroom practice. Overall, quantitative results revealed that preservice Arabic participants had moderate CEFR knowledge. Knowledge of the assessment domain is greater than knowledge in the domain of description, reference level and teaching and learning approaches. Regarding the assessment domain, Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School pre-service teachers demonstrated a high level of CEFR comprehension. However, qualitative data analysis revealed that pre-service Arabic teachers appear to have only partial knowledge of the CEFR, including in the assessment domain. Indeed, pre-service Arabic teachers understand the CEFR but cannot apply any domain in an authentic context. This may be because they have an incomplete understanding of the framework

or have no experience in applying the principles of the framework in a real teaching context. This finding is partly consistent with previous research that Arabic teachers of the Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School lack understanding of CEFR, particularly aspects of learning and teaching. In addition, the participants did not apply reference level descriptions to design Can Do descriptors for their pedagogical practice. Thus, the results of the current study suggest that CEFR training should be incorporated into university courses and curricula for student teachers.

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