

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter depicts the background of the study, research questions, the purpose of the study, the scope, and the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of The Study

Many countries throughout the world teach English as a foreign language. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) aims to provide a theoretical and practical framework for developing a foreign language teaching curriculum, materials, and assessment procedures. The CEFR is part of the Council of Europe's ongoing efforts to ensure that all citizens have access to high-quality, inclusive education. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is a framework for arranging curricula, courses, and tests by working backwards from what users/learners need to be able to perform in the language. The creation of a comprehensive descriptive system that contains demonstrative "can do" descriptor scales for as many scheme components as possible (CEFR, 2020).

According to Read (2019), CEFR has become a very powerful framework for the design of language curricula and the assessment of language learning outcomes around the world in the last 15 years. Several countries throughout the world are concerned with establishing worldwide criteria for English language teaching. In their article about CEFR for teachers in Thailand, Franz & Teo, (2017) mentioned that during the previous two decades, Thailand has undergone various English language curriculum modifications, failing to raise Thai students' English language competency across all levels of study. The Thai

Ministry of Education announced in 2014 the implementation of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in conjunction with Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as its most recent strategy to increase the level of English learning and teaching in Thai schools. The underlying motivation for this policy move was the founding of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015 and worries about the economic competitiveness of the Thai labor force.

Furthermore, according to Cope (2014), Japan has developed a localized version of the CEFR known as CERF-J. CERF-J is the result of CEFR acculturation, which has been tailored to the culture and demands of Japanese society. As a result, there are some distinctions between the two curricula. Nonetheless, the CERF-J is an action-oriented framework comprised of multiple-levelled Can-do lists pertaining to the five major linguistic abilities, including hearing, reading, spoken engagement, spoken production, and writing. Moreover, Vietnam and Malaysia also use the CEFR in their key implementation for English language teaching and learning in the country. Vietnam has its own special English curriculum adopted from the CEFR, namely MOET (Maryo, 2021).

Meanwhile, there is no regulation stating that Indonesia officially uses the CEFR for English and other language curricula. Even so, in the 2013 curriculum, it is explained that teachers may develop learning materials as needed. Even though it has not been officially used in the curriculum in Indonesia, CEFR has been used as a reference for making class designs, assessments, and various other learning tools (Maryo, 2021).

As a result, the CEFR evolved and became one of the curricula utilized in

many nations throughout the world. Numerous publications use the CEFR as a foundation, and all adhere to the CEFR's criteria, including student levels, instructional materials, assignments, and examinations. Everything is aligned with the CEFR framework. The CEFR categorizes student skills and competencies into six levels: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, and C2. The test is one of the options for determining a student's level.

According to Min & Aryadoust (2021), language ability is multidimensional and includes three different concepts: (1) standards describe language performance in specific contexts at different proficiency levels; (2) language competence includes lexical and grammatical competence; and (3) language skills comprise listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Based on this, it can be ascertained that a test is indeed needed to determine a person's language level. The tests carried out must comply with applicable standards, then a test design will be needed.

According to Jimenez & Modaffari (2021), standardized test offers the same questions or types of questions to all test takers and is delivered and evaluated in the same manner. Standardized exams, which are designed to yield consistent results, enable comparisons across pupils in a single year and over time.

When it comes to testing design, language testers must contend with two powerful influences. On the one hand, they can base the exam on a model of language skills defined by many applied linguistics academics throughout the years. This is model-driven test development, in which the major shaping factor is the model's belief structure. An alternative is to design a test based on its intended purpose or consequence - some models of language ability may (and, we argue, should) still shape the design of the test, but what determines the test

tasks is the impact they will have: on student learning, curriculum, educational policy, and so on. This is referred to as effect-driven test development (Davidson & Flutcher, 2007).

In testing for CEFR, the most widely used standard papers are those of the Ministries of Education. The goal is to offer a framework for the establishment of evaluations for specific objectives or the harmonization of educational systems. It constitutes an attempt to ensure that the outcomes of all tests may be measured in the same currency', which is assigned a value by the institutions that arrange the exams (Foley, 2019).

People in the digital age value flexibility. Technology has taken over the globe and all industries; everywhere we go, we see technology being used. Computers are a great technological triumph that has completely changed our lives. Several sectors grew along with technology, steadily changing through time to include technology in their work practices. Technology has advanced to the point that many industries cannot function without it, from healthcare to banking to food service to education (Rajendran & Kaur, 2023). Since the COVID-19 pandemic-related crisis, the number of computer-based learning or E-learning has increased significantly. This is in line with the statement stated by Ibrahim Youssef Alyoussef (2021) in his research article, the need for e-learning is increasing year after year, and the Internet's and technology's rapid development has spurred the education industry to adopt Internet-based learning materials from primary to higher education. In this sense, e-learning refers to a concept in education that uses digital technology and devices to deliver learning materials and encourage distant learning. Apart from the times,

activities carried out online are growing more rapidly since the covid 19 outbreak spread throughout the world. This then affects aspects of education including education. One that has changed is the test method used, namely the online test.

According to (Buckley, Canty, & Seery, 2016), transitioning from or between paper-based and online-mediated assessment, on the other hand, poses a number of challenges and limits, particularly when the assessment architecture's purpose is to elicit levels of cognitive components independent of semantic knowledge. Many different sorts of online tests can be used to determine a person's English capabilities; the test may be chosen based on the person's demands and abilities. There are currently numerous websites that give online tests of various sorts and formats; many websites also offer paid tests, such as IBT, which offers a TOEFL test. However, please keep in mind that online tests are not always paid. Many websites provide free online tests. An online test is one of the most practical methods available today to assess a person's ability. Users of online tests can see the result as soon as they finish the test. Numerous websites offer online exams with reliable results.

However, accuracy becomes a common issue in 'free' English online tests. According to (Hall, 2014), accuracy appears to be a significant factor in English online tests. While some tests claim to be the most accurate, how accuracy is measured is not always apparent. Furthermore, there is an increasing realization that accuracy alone is insufficient to assess English competence, and that exams should go beyond accuracy to assess the ability to utilize English in context. This is taken into account because the questions used should be following certain standards, i.e., these questions must have the same characteristics as the

standards to be met. This issue is frequently encountered on websites offering free English test services, as some believe these websites make the test appear shorter and have fewer questions. Then it is frequently felt that the obtained answers or results are less accurate. There are potential downsides to free tests. One concern is that free tests may not be as reliable or valid as more expensive, traditional assessments. (Mulligan & Ayoub, 2023) stated in their study that free online assessments may be less reliable and valid than traditional assessments due to issues such as test security, test-taker motivation, and a lack of human connection. Additionally, free tests may be subject to biases and limitations in the type of questions and content that can be included.

The CEFR has evolved into a massive curriculum that is utilized in many countries. As a result, the CEFR is now one of the world's acknowledged standards. Several researches have been undertaken to determine the impact of the CEFR on foreign language learning. These studies and research highlight many features of the CEFR, such as its curriculum, framework, and exams, which are all seen to be crucial and influential in the growth of foreign language learners.

Therefore, this research is intended to supplement earlier CEFR research by concentrating on questions from free CEFR examinations available on the internet. This study was conducted in order to broaden the scope of previous research subjects. This research was conducted to determine whether the questions used on website offering free CEFR-based tests follow the indicators or standards made by CEFR. The results of this study will show the characteristics of these questions.

1.2 Research Question

This study was conducted to answer the following questions based on the problem:

1. Are the questions used in the free CEFR-based English online test from English Radar relevant with can-do statements and the CEF-ESTIM Grid?

1.3 Purpose of The Study

This study aimed to identify the various types of questions used in free online-based English tests that use the CEFR as a reference by referring directly to the CEFR indicators and standards.

1.4 Scope of The Study

This research focuses on the characteristics and types of reading and listening questions found in the free CEFR online test. The goal is to assess whether the reading and listening questions used refer to the CEFR indicators and standards.

1.5 Significance of The Study

The writer expected the result of the study can give a useful contribution both theoretically and practically.

1. Theoretically

The findings of this study are expected to have a positive impact on the larger community during the modern era with the advancement of technology in the form of online English tests, particularly those based

on the CEFR. The findings of this study are expected to provide data and references for future research

2. Practically

Furthermore, this research is expected to assist test developers in evaluating if the tests they create are in line with the requirements provided in the CEFR, allowing test developers to explore and build various CEFR test questions. Furthermore, this research is predicted to be beneficial to exam takers. Test takers can determine if the test they are taking meets CEFR requirements.

