

PANEL DISCUSSION 2

STANDARDS IN INTERNATIONAL CERTIFICATION

Facilitators: Jacky Newbrook (ESOL Cambridge), Ovidiu Aniculaese (Cambridge oral examiner, Romania), Zsofia Horvath (TOEFL-TOEIC, Hungary)

The discussion started with a general evaluation of Romanian standards in TEFL, which were appreciated as overall high, but lacking international recognition.

After describing traditional TEFL standards in Romania as focusing on teaching reading, writing and literature, the panel went on to contrast that with the Common European Framework of Reference, finding the latter richer in descriptors.

Participants agreed that adopting the CEFR is necessary for the general public, who want to reach job opportunities abroad as well as certify their English skills in Romania and especially for teachers and students of English to be able to set clear goals and objectives at each step of their teaching/learning.

There was a focus on the acute need for teachers to get informed about the CEFR, international exams and training, either through the Internet or by dissemination from colleagues.

The participants agreed on the need to adjust the preparation and content of the Romanian school-leaving exam in English to the CEFR (level B2 for regular students who do two hours per week and C1 for intensive class students). The need to be realistic about the level of our students was stressed.

Some participants argued that the ministry of education is already adopting the CEFR to syllabi and approved textbooks, but many teachers remain uninformed and uninvolved.