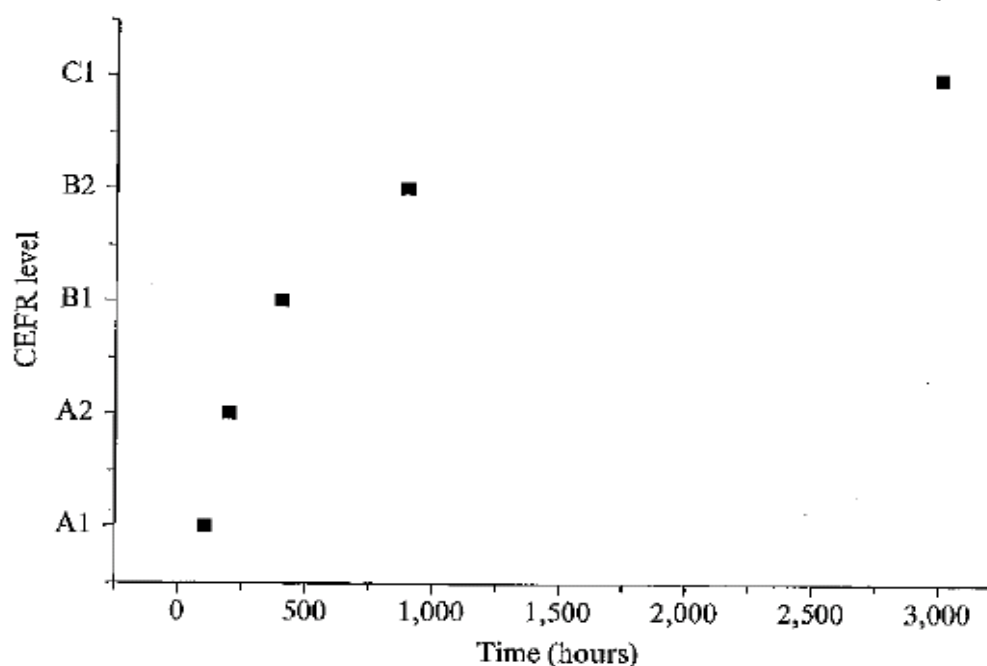


How much Progress is expected on Eurocentres courses?

Firstly consider evidence in the literature. For example:

Figure 3.2 Progress and hours of study in Finland (Takala 2010a:103)



In an attempt to summarise all the information available, John De Jong (personal communication) recently presented ranges of time required to reach different levels. The 400 hours for B1 is optimistic according to his calculations, which suggest a range from 380 hours (fast learners) to 1,386 (slow learners). For C1 the range is from 1,520 hours (fast learners) to 4,490 hours (slow learners) – which neatly straddles Takala’s estimate of an average of 3,000 for his graph.

Source: Brian North (2014) ‘The CEFR in Practice’ English Profile Studies, Cambridge University Press

Progress? An estimate based on immersion, 25 lessons per week:

Entry Level	Time needed to reach next level eg from level 4 to level 5
9 (C1.2)	10-12 weeks
8 (C1.1)	8-10 weeks
7 (B2.2)	8 weeks
6 (B2.1)	6 weeks
5 (B1.2)	4-6 weeks
4 (B1.1)	4-6 weeks
3 (A2)	4 weeks
2 (A1)	4 weeks
1 (A0)	3-4 weeks

- but...this is not a magic formula! It depends on:
 - ✓ student level before course start
 - ✓ student motivation and effort in school and outside
 - ✓ personal factors

It is impossible to give a simple answer to this question. The amount of progress that an individual learner makes in a given length of time is actually subject to a large number of factors which makes it difficult to give precise assurances.

- Some people are naturally good at languages.
- Some people are better at studying than others.
- Some people work harder than others.
- Some languages are closer to a learner's own mother tongue.
- Some languages (e.g. German) are more difficult to learn than others.

A number of factors complicate the relationship of progress to learning time on different kinds of courses:

- (a) **Progress slows down at higher levels:** Beginners tend to make visible progress faster than advanced learners - in other words, progress at higher levels takes longer. For English, beginners often take only 3 weeks to master Level 1, whilst the step between Levels 8 and 9 may take a good two months.
- (b) **AYP learners make slower progress:** Learners staying a long time and studying the same language over several months often reach a plateau in their learning at various points during their stay.
- (c) **Learners on shorter courses make more apparent progress:** Learners on short (2-4 week) intensive courses make a different *kind* of progress to learners on longer (12 week or even 8 week) courses. Learners coming on an intensive course in an acquisition-rich environment like a Eurocentres course get a kind of "landing bonus" in the first two to three weeks as previous knowledge gets re-activated. Progress on one 4-week course is thus more than one third of expected progress on a three-month long-stay course.
- (d) **Learners on long-stay / Exam Courses achieve make more durable progress:** Learners on long-stay courses who have been most effective at combining (i) the structured learning opportunities in the course, (ii) the reinforcement of regular homework and learning center study with (iii) the acquisition opportunities offered by the language environment around them appear to achieve a kind of "take-off" towards the end of the course, as everything gels. This effect can be stronger with a challenging yet realistic exam target. The result is that some learners experience a qualitative leap in their language proficiency. The learning is also likely to be deeper and more stable: still there 3 years later.