Introduction to the Symposium 2015

On behalf of the grant-aided research project «Comprehensive Study on Language Education Methods and Cross-linguistic Proficiency Evaluation Methods for Asian Languages» and of its host institution, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, it is a great honor for me to extend our sincere gratitude to all the participants here, dear colleagues and professors, for attending to our Symposium 2015 held under the title «Expansion of CEFR into non-EU countries: perspectives and problems».

Starting as a local system for language proficiency evaluation in early 2000's, CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) is becoming now one of the richest assets for the language education policies as well as for language learners' linguistic and cultural formation. With this revolutionary turning point in the history of language education, we are facing at present time a bifurcation between a kind of localized Common Frameworks of Reference or as a universal scaling method applicable to many types of language and socio-cultural backgrounds in a near future.

In fact this symposium's theme is derived from the present situation where the "local European" evaluation framework has been developing its range, adjusting itself into other local, preexisting systems in non-EU language areas of the world. In conception of this colloquium, I had been personally inspired by various works published by Professor Michael Byram of Durham University, with whom I got acquaintance at the International Symposium held by National University of Singapore in 2012. In his recent books, he insists on the important aspects of language teaching and language learning as inter-cultural acts executed between two participant parties.

Today's symposium is structured with three different approaches to the one and same subject. A set of three presentations made by the eminent lectures here that are connected with each other can be seen either as a single work or as three individual reflections. The critical thinking on the significance of dialogical and cultural interaction of language learning, developed by Professor Catherine Matsuo, from Fukuoka University, is followed by a concrete case study in the Hungarian context and beyond, made by Professor Monika Szirmai, from Hiroshima International University. Our symposium has been really honored by the participation of Professor Mijin Won, from Yonsei University, Seoul, one of the leading scholars in Korean language teaching in her country, who has expanded our CEFR-focused discussion into Asian context.

With special thanks to the Institute of Linguistic Research of Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, as one of the organizers of this meeting I would like to express my belief that this collaborative trilogy would surely let us proceed to a fruitful scientific and practical output in the linguistic and language education research.

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