Contents

Tables and Figures vii

1 The Emergence of a New Vision 1
   1.1 From Practice to Theory to Practice 1
   1.2 The Evolving Landscape of Language Education: From Communication to Action 9
   1.3 Laying the Foundations for Methodological Innovation 13

2 The Notion of Competence: An Overview 26
   2.1 Competence: Evolution of an Elusive Notion 27
   2.2 Competence in Linguistics and Applied Linguistics 28
   2.3 Competence in the World of Education and Work 35
   2.4 Competences in the CEFR and in the AoA 46

3 Towards an Action-oriented Approach: Theoretical Underpinnings 57
   3.1 In Search of a Theory of Language Education: The First Steps 57
   3.2 From Mental Gym to Habit Formation: The Enduring Impact of Behaviourism 58
   3.3 The Cognitive Perspective 60
   3.4 Language as Meaning Potential 63
   3.5 Language as Communication 67
   3.6 Language as Socialisation: Sociocultural/Socio-constructivist Theories 73
   3.7 Expanding the Field: Emotions, Plurilingualism and Creativity 78
   3.8 Beyond Language Education: Other Theories 84
   3.9 Affordances, Ecological Models and Complexity Theory 96

4 Preparing the AoA: Developments in Language Teaching Methodology 111
   4.1 Evolution of Methodologies: From a Pendulum to a River 112
   4.2 From Methods to Approaches and Beyond 122
5 The Common European Framework of Reference and its Companion Volume: A Paradigm Shift 149
5.1 The CEFR as a Policy Document 149
5.2 The Innovation Potential of the CEFR in Language Education: From the CEFR to the CEFR Companion Volume 163
5.3 The AoA: A Paradigm Change in Methodology 188

6 Towards a Dynamic Vision of Language Education: Plurality and Creativity 195
6.1 Change, Unbalance and Creativity 195
6.2 A New Vision of Culture 200
6.3 Plurilingualism 212
6.4 Mediation: From a Static View of Language to a Dynamic View of (Co)-Construction of Meaning 230
6.5 Mediation, Plurilingualism/Pluriculturalism and Inclusive Education for All 239

7 The Action-oriented Approach 244
7.1 The AoA: An All Embracing Perspective 244
7.2 From Theory to Practice: Working with a Scenario 263

8 Conclusion 275

Appendix 1: LINCDIRE Action-oriented Scenario Template 284
Appendix 2: CASLT Scenario Template 290
Appendix 3: Eaquals Scenario Template 292

References 295
Index 333