

Summative Assessment: the Demands of Belgium's Second Language Curricula vs Teachers' Practices

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The Learner

1. Introduction

- PhD in foreign language teaching and acquisition on written corrective feedback
- Comment: not statistically significant data on teachers' practices

2. Definitions

- Curriculum
- Corrective feedback and written corrective feedback
- Summative assessment/testing vs formative assessment/testing

Curricula → how often foreign language secondary school teachers administer summative assessments → teaching writing and use of corrective feedback

3. Belgium's Education System

- Belgium's Linguistic communities



- School years

Age	School	Teacher Studies
6-11	primary school	3-year college degree
12-15	lower secondary school	3-year college degree
16-18	upper secondary school	5-year university degree

- Types of teaching (filières)

French	Leading to...	Number of students
général	college, university (86%)	117 439
technique de transition	job, college, university (14%)	
technique de qualification	job, college	95 198
professionnel	job	

- School networks

	“Free” / private (catholic) teaching	Official teaching	Subsidized official teaching
Who is in charge?	Private association	Ministry of Education	Towns, provinces
% of students (from all levels and types)	60,4	23,6	16,0
Language curriculum	Private curriculum	Official curriculum	(Official curriculum)

4. Working Conditions

- Full-time teacher: 20 50-minute lessons/week + preparation, corrections, meetings...
- Most foreign language classes consist of 4 lessons/week → a full-time teacher teaches at least 5 groups
- No official data on the number of students/classroom; range: 8-21-34 students per classroom → a full-time teacher teaches 80-130 students a week

5. Models of education systems, curricula, teaching how to write and corrective feedback

- C. Foerster: 4 models of education system
 - the Scandinavian model, or the unique school (Denmark, Finland)
 - the Anglo-Saxon model, or the selective type (Ireland, Scotland, Great-Britain)
 - the Germanic model, which is based on differentiation
 - the Latin model, which insists on knowledge acquisition (France, Belgium) → assessment

- the demands of the second language curricula in terms of summative assessment per school year

	Federation Wallonia-Brussels (official teaching)	Private (catholic) teaching
Reading	4	3
Listening	4	3
Speaking	3	3
Writing	4	3
(total)	15	12

- Teaching vs summative testing

	Lessons	Private curriculum	Official curriculum	Reports / Periods	Periods + gr/voc	A practical case
Sept	16				1	
Oct	12			4	5	
Nov	16		4		1	
Dec	(Xmas exams)	4	4	4		
Jan	16				1	
Feb	12				1	
March	16			4	5	
Apr	8				1	
May	12	4	4	4	5	
June	Exams	4	4	4	4	
(total)	108	12	16	20	24	30
		11%	14%	17%	19%	22%

6. Conclusion

- it is hard to say whether the curricula demand too many summative assessments
- teachers seem to administer more summative tests than legally required → less time for explicit teaching and formative assessment
- we need more data to take informed decisions and have teachers think about their testing practices

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR
YOUR ATTENTION

Selective Bibliography

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