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***Conceptions of assessment when the teaching context and learners population matter:
compulsory school versus non-compulsory adult education contexts***

Abstract

This paper presents results of a study on teachers' conceptions of assessment carried out on a sample of 493 teachers of Spanish as Foreign Language from all over the world. At the moment of data collection, the participants were members of an international online teacher community and were teaching at different professional contexts: basic compulsory school, and diverse extra-school teaching contexts, such as language academies and in-company education services. A self-report questionnaire was presented online to the teachers with 40 Likert items capturing their conceptions of assessment and habitual assessment practices. Confirmatory factor analysis was undertaken to contrast the theoretical model of departure. Results reveal a new bifactor model of conceptions of assessment, which we put in contrast with the prevailing literature in the field. More specifically, results point to differences in teachers' conceptions of assessment depending on four aspects: how assessment affects the teaching process, the learning process, the certification of learning results, and the participants' accountability to different audiences, such as colleague teachers, families, and the general society. Our results further put forward that the learners population, whether children-adolescents or adults, influences in teachers' conceptions of assessment. This should lead researchers and practitioners to rethink teachers' conceptions of assessment in a broader context than it has been considered to date.

Keywords: conceptions of assessment, compulsory school, non-formal teaching, teaching context, adult learner

Introduction

The way teachers conceive of assessment purposes and practices is an important issue in education. Changes in assessment practices have proved to be a crucial instrument to promote deeper changes in teaching and learning practices (Barnes, Clarke, & Stephens, 2000; Harlen, 2005; Towndrow, Tan, Yung, & Cohen, 2010; Vandevan, & Killen, 2003; Volante, & Fazio, 2007; Remesal, 2006). However, the success of innovations may be either supported or resisted by the pre-existing beliefs of teachers who are expected to implement those changes (Fives & Buehl, 2012). In this sense, we need to develop instruments that might be used by teacher educators, both in pre-service and in-service programs, to make teachers' conceptions of assessment explicit, thus accessible to reflection and change (DeLuca, Chavez, & Cao, 2013; Stiggins, 1999), in order to develop assessment literacy (DeLuca & Klinger, 2010). Teachers' conceptions of assessment have been an object of inquiry for over a decade within an intensive research program across different cultural contexts, among in-service teachers of primary or secondary schools (e.g., Delandshere & Jones, 1999; Philippou & Christou, 1997; Xu, & Liu, 2009; Brown, 2004a; Remesal, 2011; Coll & Remesal, 2009), and also pre-service student-teachers (e.g., Ogan-Bekiroglu 2009; Wang, Kao, & Lin, 2009; Brown & Remesal, 2012).

In this study, we wanted to extend research to teachers in different contexts other than formal schooling. Foreign language teaching is, traditionally, a subject which transcends the formal, compulsory educational system. Hence, our target population turned to be foreign language teachers. Using a newly developed questionnaire (Remesal & Brown, 2013), it was expected, in accordance with ecological rationality (Rieskamp & Reimer, 2007), that conceptions of assessment would be influenced by teachers' working and policy context. First of all, we present the theoretical background of the inventory and the study. After that, we describe the instrument validation procedures with an international sample of 493 teachers of Spanish as a Foreign Language (SFL/ *ELE*) working both in formal schooling and extra-schooling contexts (compulsory school, extra-school teaching, adult education, and in-company training). We conclude with a discussion of the implications of this study.

Theoretical background

The literature on teachers' conceptions of assessment has identified the tension between two main different purposes and uses of assessment in the compulsory educational system; that is, improvement or formative versus evaluative or summative (Coll & Remesal, 2009). Several researchers refer to the same phenomena using different terms; for instance: testing versus assessment culture (Wolf, Bixby, Glenn, & Gardner, 1991), formative versus summative assessment (Black & Wiliam, 1998), improvement versus accountability (Brown, 2004a; Brown, Hui, Yu, & Kennedy, 2011), or educational regulation versus societal control (Perrenoud, 2001; Remesal, 2011). Although these terms are not necessarily 100% synonymous, researchers agree that within educational systems there are conflicts and tensions between agents, participants, and stakeholders concerning the nature, purpose, and effects of assessment.

Although the literature often presents these two poles as alternative or mutually exclusive views, we defend the dialectical nature of both options and the inherent necessity of both phenomena: the regulation of teaching and learning processes, on the one side, and the external control of and by various educational agents, on the other (Remesal, 2011; Brown, 2004a). However, there might be other factors that need to be considered additionally. There is evidence of different interpretations of what 'improving teaching and learning by means of assessment' might mean in diverse cultural settings, as a result of different school traditions and legislation. For example, in societies characterised strongly by public examinations (e.g., Hong Kong, China, or Egypt) accountability is strongly correlated with improvement (e.g., Brown, Hui, Yu, & Kennedy, 2011; Brown, Kennedy, Fok, Chan, & Yu, 2009; Gebril & Brown, 2014). In other words, this systemic tension does have, in addition, a sociocultural component which affects assessment practices (Remesal, 2007). Results of prior studies coincide in showing that conceptions of assessment tending towards formative practices are more frequently and strongly endorsed in primary schooling (e.g., Brown, 2011; Brown, Lake, & Matters, 2011). In contrast, teachers in secondary education are more likely to regard assessment as an instrument of

societal control or accountability rather than for improving teaching and learning processes in comparison with primary teachers (Remesal, 2011).

Gaps identified in current research: our research question.

Research to date has mainly focused on compulsory, formal systemic school settings at different compulsory levels (Liu, 2008), but we lack information on whether teachers' conceptions might follow similar patterns in other educational contexts. Only recent research tells us about differences between university lecturers and their students in the ways they conceive of assessment (Fletcher, Meyer, Anderson, Johnston, & Rees, 2012).

Hence, in this study we looked at teachers working in different non-compulsory, adult education teaching contexts, such as after-school language academies or in-company language courses, versus teachers in compulsory schooling or formal higher education, trying to find an answer to the question: *Do teachers' conceptions about assessment in non-compulsory / non-formal adult education teaching contexts differ from those working in the compulsory school system?* This research question is grounded on a two-fold argument. First, there is the effect on teachers' conceptions of systemic policies and practices of assessment in compulsory education (Rasmussen & Friche, 2011; Skedsmo, 2010), whereas non-compulsory education is characterized by highly variegated policies and diversity of systems (e.g., private language schools, universities, corporate work-places, etc.). Second, basic schooling takes place during periods of childhood and adolescence. In contrast, extra-school and non-compulsory adult education contexts usually involve autonomous adults, with noticeable differences in terms of cognitive capacities, motivation, and self-regulation abilities (Gill, 2011; Smoke, 2013).

Theoretical model grounding the study

The theoretical model grounding the questionnaire rests on the definition of *conceptions* as the *organized subjective sum of individual beliefs*, which, in turn, are understood as *assumptions about objects and phenomena that people take as true* (often without intellectual

contrast) (Green, 1971; Pajares, 1992). Beliefs composing one individual's conception of any particular topic differ from each other in being primary or central versus secondary or peripheral. Primary, central beliefs are psychologically strong and resistant to change; whereas secondary and peripheral beliefs are more easily challenged. Furthermore, beliefs are arranged in clusters that may be held quite independently from each other. Green's model is particularly suitable for understanding the sometimes apparent inconsistency between beliefs and behaviour: while we express or espouse a certain belief, our current behaviour might be driven or enacted by another belief or set of beliefs which remain unspoken in the background.

The model was developed in a previous qualitative research and refers to two essential multi-faceted dimensions that shape how assessment is understood and evaluated (Remesal, 2006; Remesal, 2011). The first dimension refers to the focus of assessment: that is, how assessment *separately* may affect (a) teaching, (b) learning, (c) the certification of learning, and (d) the accountability of teaching. The second simultaneous dimension shaping teacher conceptions of assessment has to do with the overall control purpose of assessment: that is, assessment is either an *instrument for the regulation of educational processes* or an *instrument for societal control*. In the first option, assessment is a tool for reflection about teaching practices in the classroom, and/or as a tool for the improvement of students' learning. In the second option, assessment is limited to grading purposes and practices and is used to exercise control over teaching and learning; here teachers are unlikely to show positive attitudes towards assessment as a tool for change.

In contrast with previous models (Brown, 2004a), this model suggests that the beliefs teachers hold on the effects of assessment on teaching are indeed quite often separated from beliefs on how assessment affects learning. In other words, since teachers may conceive of teaching and learning as separated processes, some teachers might have a coherent conception of assessment, with aligned beliefs on assessment affecting both teaching *and* learning; whereas other teachers might as well have incoherent conceptions of assessment, with confronting beliefs on how assessment affects teaching and learning. More importantly, rather than relying

solely on an inter-factor correlation between accountability and improvement to determine the relationship of improvement to accountability, this model takes a bifactor approach in which each item (whether it be about improved teaching or improved student learning) is also jointly predicted by either an evaluative or improvement-oriented perspective. This approach makes more explicit the effect of the external aspects of assessment on the internal educational functions.

As a matter of fact, the results of the original study from which the theoretical model was built (Remesal, 2006) show that a coherent conception of assessment tending towards formative practices is more frequent in primary education, whereas teachers in secondary education are more likely to present incoherent conceptions, closer to regarding assessment as an instrument of societal control. However, this is not a rule of thumb and the complexity of teachers' conceptions of assessment must be considered in relation with other aspects, such as previous education for teaching in primary and secondary school (which usually differs in every country), participation in professional development programs, teaching experiences, and so forth (Liu, 2008; Remesal, 2011).

Research method and design

This study, approved by the corresponding institutional ethical board, used a cross-sectional survey convenience sample of the target population of teachers of foreign language (Spanish in this case), with causal-correlational analysis of self-reported responses to a structured inventory.

The questionnaire

We designed a 40 items self-report questionnaire with a positively packed agreement rating scale (i.e., two negative and four positive options) which has been found to be appropriate in conditions of social desirability (Brown, 2004b). The questionnaire was presented to the members of an international online professional community (i.e., *ComunidadTodoele*, <http://www.todoele.net/>) of teachers of Spanish as Foreign Language (SFL). We had access to

the members of this professional community in exchange of a previous participation in an online seminar organised by the administrators of the community. Invitations to the community members were sent three times in a three month period. Teachers participated voluntarily and for free. They had open online access to the questionnaire from their own computers and took about 30 minutes to complete it. Results of the study would be shared with the community once published, and the researchers' further participation in future seminars was also arranged in compensation of the participation in the study. The questionnaire is available at XXX.

The items were constructed aligned with the theoretical model that grounds the study, which was briefly presented in the previous section (Remesal, 2006). Although the Teacher Conceptions of Assessment inventory (Brown, 2001-2003) already exists, a study with that Spanish university students (Brown & Remesal, 2012) demonstrated that the four-factor intercorrelated structure did not fit well with Spanish participants. Likewise, studies in Cyprus (Brown & Michaelides) and Egypt (Gebril & Brown, 2014) showed that the original statistical model developed in New Zealand did not apply outside of that low-stakes assessment context. These supported the decision to test a different theoretical framework and a new instrument.

Each item was classified as belonging to one of four aspects focused by assessment (i.e., Learning, Teaching, Accountability, and Certifying) as well as one of two purposes of assessment (i.e., formative regulation or societal control) (Appendix A). The learning factor had to do with the motivational, feedback, and regulatory effects assessment has on students, while the teaching factor had to do with the integration of assessment within curriculum and pedagogy. The accountability factor related to the use of assessment to evaluate and examine students, while certifying had to do with the use of assessments to establish standards and award certificates. Formative regulation speaks to the role assessment plays in informing and guiding teachers and learners to more effective learning outcomes, while societal control has to do with the role assessment plays in controlling teachers and students. Within each aspect of assessment half the items were designed to reflect formative and half the controlling role of assessment.

Participants

7500 teachers altogether were invited to respond to the questionnaire. It had a response ratio of about 7%; hence, the sample of 493 respondents has a margin of error of 4.72%. The respondents were Spanish-as-Foreign-Language teachers from all over the world, working in different teaching contexts; that is, either compulsory secondary school or extra-school adult education language teachers. Basic demographic characteristics of the sample are presented in Table 1. The questionnaire was answered mainly by women (79%), which is slightly over the average percentage of female teacher population in European countries in 2012¹ and the female teacher population in the UK specifically (DoE, 2011); middle-aged (47%), and those with >10 years teaching experience (48%). Slightly more than half of the sample (55%) taught adults in different contexts (either language private academies or in-company training), while the rest taught children or adolescents (either in compulsory school –primary to secondary- or in private language academies as an extra-after school subject).

Insert Table 1 about here

In this study teaching experience, practice context, and initial training were considered initial variables of comparison. The majority of the participants (60%) had their initial training in the broad field of languages (e.g., translation, philology, linguistics); only one fourth in education (26%) (e.g., pedagogy, didactics, educational psychology); whereas, just 2% of the sample had initial training in both fields. Finally, 12% of the respondents could be considered ‘intruders’ in the profession since their initial training was apart from either language or education (e.g. graduates in History, Economics, or Engineering, among other).

Analysis

Instead of resorting to exploratory factor analysis, the intended bi-factor model was tested in confirmatory factor analysis. Bifactor models propose that each response is conditioned by two causes, while also modelling the effect of random error. While most bifactor models have a

¹<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.SEC.TCHR.FE.ZS/countries?display=default>

general common factor and independent group factors (Weekers, 2009), the conceptual model proposed here consists of two dimensions (i.e., the Focus of and the Control Purpose of Assessment), each of which has two or more groups. This means that each item is modelled as being caused by both a Focus and a Control Purpose factor (Figure 1).

Insert Figure 1 about here

In line with current practice (Fan & Sivo, 2007; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Marsh, Hau, & Wen, 2004), a multi-criteria approach for acceptable model fit was adapted; models were not rejected if gamma hat and CFI $\geq .90$, root mean square errors of approximation (RMSEA) and standardized root mean residuals (SRMR) $\leq .08$, and χ^2/df ratio was statistically non-significant ($p > .01$). Models that met these criteria were not rejected. All analyses were carried out in AMOS (IBM, 2011) using Pearson product moment correlations.

To determine the effect of teacher demographic characteristics upon conceptions of assessment, a factor mean score was created by bundling all the items predicted by the factor. Factor means were created instead of sums because of the different number of items in each factor. Multiple analyses of variance for the effect of key demographic variables on the eight interactive factor scores were conducted. Additionally, where MANOVA found statistically significant differences in mean scores for a factor, multi-group confirmatory factor analysis was carried out to determine whether the measurement model was statistically equivalent for that demographic variable. A nested, sequential approach first determines whether the model is configurally equivalent, then whether the regression weights are statistically equivalent, before testing the equivalence of item intercepts (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002). Differences in the comparative fit index (CFI) $> .01$ indicate that parameters are not equivalent. Lack of equivalence in the measurement model further reinforces the conclusion that the samples are drawn from different populations (Wu, Li, & Zumbo, 2007).

Results

Confirmatory factor analysis in which each item is predicted by both a focus and a purpose of assessment had acceptable fit ($\chi^2=1040.39$, $df=486$, [$\chi^2/df=2.141$, $p=.14$]; CFI=.81; gamma hat=.94; RMSEA=.048, 90% CI=.044-.052; SRMR=.052). While not every path was statistically significant, the combined weight of paths produced small to large percentages of variance explained (min. 2% to max. 47%; $M=25\%$, $SD=12.5\%$) (see Table 2 in Annex).

The mean scores for each of the factors (Table 3) showed the learning and accountability focus and the formative regulation purpose all received the highest means. However, inspection of the interaction means revealed a somewhat more instructive result. The Formative Regulation focus on learning and teaching had the highest means, while the Societal Control focus on the same two applications had the lowest means. All four Formative Regulation applications had higher means than the Societal Control applications, clearly indicating that the SFL teachers endorsed using assessment to guide pedagogy much more than for societal control reasons. It is noteworthy that the lowest mean (Teaching SC) indicates that the conventional use of student assessment to evaluate the quality of teaching was more-or-less rejected.

Insert Table 3 about here

Multiple analysis of variance of the effect of key demographic variables on conceptions used eight interactive factor mean scores (i.e., Learning-FR, Teaching-FR, Accountability-FR, Certifying-FR, Learning-SC, Teaching-SC, Accountability-SC, and Certifying-SC). The predictor variables used were main effects for initial training and learner population (i.e., either children/adolescents or adults) and interaction between the two predictors. Statistically significant differences were found only for the main effect of working context (Wilks' $\lambda=.96$; $F_{(8,478)}=2.71$, $p=.006$). Inspection of univariate differences for the eight factor scores showed that statistically significant differences existed for only three factors (i.e., Accountability-SC, $p=.006$, $d=.26$; Certifying-SC, $p=.031$, $d=.20$; and Learning-SC, $p<.001$, $d=.38$). In all three cases, teachers in adult contexts gave lower scores, though the differences were small to moderate.

Multi-group confirmatory factor analysis found that after constraining the measurement weights to be the same for the two groups resulted in a difference of $CFI=.011$. This supports the conclusion that the two groups responded to the inventory in different ways and that teachers of Spanish in these two different contexts are samples from two different populations.

Discussion and conclusion

In this study, we wanted to learn about conceptions of assessment of teachers working in non-formal adult educational contexts versus those teaching in the formal and systemic school context, which led us to focus on teachers of Spanish as a foreign language. The results of this study show that, as proposed by the original study (Remesal, 2006), teacher beliefs about assessment are organised in a complex model in which each individual evaluates the focus of assessment effects according to whether it has formative-regulatory or societal-control uses. On the whole, this sample of SFL teachers conceived of assessment primarily in terms of its regulating effects on teaching and learning and hence was strongly positive towards formative assessment purposes. In other words, they agreed mostly that assessment exists to serve the improvement of learning and also teaching. In addition, we identified that those teachers working in non-compulsory adult contexts were less favourable towards the societal control purposes. In contrast, teachers in the formal compulsory schooling context showed a greater acknowledgement of assessment as a societal control tool by means of certifying achievement and showing accountability of teaching. This result might be explained by different elements that we address next.

First, teachers in formal schooling might have a greater awareness of their responsibility towards society and their own pupils or students through having to care for their basic development towards adulthood and responsible citizenship (Green, Johnson, Kim, & Pope, 2007; Johnson, Green, Kim, & Pope, 2008; Pope, Green, Johnson, & Mitchell, 2009). In contrast, teachers in non-compulsory settings may regard this societal control by means of assessment as distant from their professional role (Vella, 1994). Particularly, in the field of

foreign languages, as were the participants in this study, teaching focuses less upon basic knowledge or competences, but more upon individual opportunities for better employment or better accomplishment of personal motives and goals that guide the decision to enrol in a foreign language course (Salido, 2006; Zúñiga, 2009).

Secondly, we have to keep in mind the great distance between children or adolescents as learners in a compulsory context, and adult learners in a free context of self-development. The relationship of power between children or adolescents and the teachers shows a greater gap than that between the adult instructor and the adult learner freely choosing to involve in a learning experience (Lawler, 2003; Pratt, 1992). The adult learner has clearer motives for learning and has usually already developed strong learning strategies. In addition, the adult learner makes a certain economic investment in language courses, which in turn contributes to raised expectations for positive results and, hence, their expectation of greater formative interventions from the teacher (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2012). Furthermore, a wider sympathy and empathy can develop between the adult teacher and the adult learner as equals in life phase (Nesbit, 1998; Pratt, 1992).

These results are coherent with the theoretical model which declares the twofold functional nature of assessment in the basic school system (Remesal, 2011), which by default imposes both, formative and non-formative (i.e., certification and accountability) purposes upon assessment. Within schooling contexts, teachers have to accept that assessment results are also used to evaluate students, monitor teacher effectiveness, and judge school quality. In contrast, it appears that teachers working outside the basic school system might focus more on the classroom context and thus feel a lesser attachment or commitment to evaluative purposes.

It is also noteworthy that the strongly positive view towards formative regulation uses of assessment for teaching and learning is consistent with studies of compulsory education teachers in New Zealand (Brown, 2004a, 2011), Queensland (Brown, Lake, & Matters, 2011), and Hong Kong (Brown, Kennedy, Fok, Chan, & Yu, 2009). Endorsing assessment as a mechanism for improved teaching and student learning does appear to be a universal attitude

among societies in which teacher professionalism is an important facet of education. Like the previous study of pre-service teachers (Brown & Remesal, 2012), this study found the least endorsement for the use of assessment to evaluate schools.

The current bifactor model is quite different to the multidimensional and hierarchical model of the widely used Teachers' Conceptions of Assessment inventory (Brown, 2001-2003). Future research should investigate whether the models can be reconciled into a common framework. Further analysis of the non-equivalent aspects of the measurement model across working contexts is needed to see what further insights can be gained. Nonetheless, this study provides internal validation evidence for the questionnaire and advances our understanding of the contingencies in teachers' belief systems about assessment. Last but not least, it is remarkable that the literature on adult education mostly disregards the issue of assessment (Richey, 1992; Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2012, even recent proposals of adults second language learning do not include the topic (Smoke, 2013); merely contributions in the field of formal higher education and technical training tackles it (Arend, 2009). It is hence time to include assessment into the research program of non-compulsory adult learning contexts. Our study is a first step in this direction, since we identified differences in teachers' conceptions that might be attributable to the educational context.

However, this study has limitations as well. Above of all, there is an important limitation in the sample of participants, the huge variability of the sample, with no control over the particular institutional and cultural context is certainly something to be addressed in future studies. In our study, we valued the voluntary participation and the diversity of ideas over sample control, but we recognise the methodological issue. Also, to continue this line of study, it will be necessary to focus on particular variables, like the sort of professional preparation that the teachers of foreign languages for adults receive to enter the teaching practice. The composition of our hazardous sample did not allow us to make any deeper analysis into this; however, we could find out that there are three main backgrounds: linguistic, pedagogical and non-linguistic/non-pedagogical. It is our hypothesis, that these different training backgrounds

should throw different results of conceptions and practices of assessment. Finally, to make a comprehensive exploration of this new field, it would be necessary to pay attention to the other side of the road: the adult learners and their conceptions of assessment in relation to their own learning experience.

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[to be completed after review]

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Table 1. Demographic characteristics of sample

Category	N	%
<i>Age</i>		
<35	160	32
35-50	233	47
>50	100	20
<i>Sex</i>		
Male	105	21
Female	288	79
<i>Teaching experience</i>		
<2 years	52	11
2-5 years	96	19
5-10 years	110	22
>10 years	235	48
<i>Initial training</i>		
Linguistic-oriented	295	60
Educational-oriented	128	26
Linguistic & educational	10	2
Other	59	12
<i>Student addressees</i>		
Children-adolescents	223	45
Adults	270	55

Table 2. Item statistics by predictor factors

item	Spanish	English	Focus	β	Control	β	SMC	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
	<i>Ante unos malos resultados de un grupo</i>	<i>In face of bad assessment results, the best</i>							
ac01	<i>de alumnos, la mejor opción es bajar el nivel o incluso repetir la evaluación</i>	<i>option is to lower the standards or even to repeat the test</i>	Cert	0.28	SC	0.15	0.10	2.39	1.095
ac02	Una ‘bajada de nivel’ y hacer la ‘vista gorda’ nunca es la solución cuando nos encontramos con malos resultados de evaluación en una clase	Lowering standards and blinking an eye are never the solution to face bad assessment results in a course	Cert	0.24	FR	0.23	0.11	4.06	1.153
ac03	<i>El avance de los alumnos siempre se debe valorar con el mismo rasero para todos, según los objetivos del curso planteados</i>	<i>Students’ learning progress must be always measured with the same scale for everyone, according to the course objectives</i>	Cert	0.53	SC	0.12	0.29	2.81	1.185
ac04	El punto de partida individual es la referencia imprescindible para valorar adecuadamente el avance de cada alumno	The individual starting point is an indispensable reference to properly evaluate the individual student’s progress	Cert	0.07	FR	0.45	0.21	4.23	.849
ac05	<i>Es preferible comunicar los resultados en</i>	<i>It is always better to communicate</i>	Cert	0.53	SC	0.22	0.33	2.54	1.231

item	Spanish	English	Focus	β	Control	β	SMC	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
	<i>forma estrictamente numérica, para evitar malentendidos</i>	<i>assessment results in a numerical form, in order to avoid misunderstandings</i>							
ac06	Las calificaciones numéricas (0-10, 6-1, 1-15,...), o categoriales básicas (A,B,C; aprobado, suspenso...) son, por lo general, poco informativas	Numerical grading or basic categories are, generally speaking, uninformative.	Cert	-0.26	FR	0.18	0.10	3.48	1.123
	<i>Para aprobar, el alumno debe alcanzar un dominio mínimo, indicado en el currículo oficial vigente</i>	<i>In order to pass the course, the students must reach a minimal competence, indicated in the official curriculum</i>							
ac07			Cert	0.56	SC	-0.18	0.35	3.89	.964
	<i>Para aprobar, el alumno debe demostrar que ha avanzado bastante desde su punto de partida al inicio del curso</i>	<i>In order to pass the course, the student must demonstrate a sufficient progress considering his own starting point</i>							
ac08			Cert	0.44	FR	0.07	0.20	3.55	1.033
	<i>La comunicación de resultados siempre debe ser pública para que cada alumno se ubique en el grupo-clase</i>	<i>Communicating assessment results must always happen in public, so every student can locate himself in the class</i>							
ac09			Cert	0.39	SC	0.22	0.20	1.86	1.004

item	Spanish	English	Focus	β	Control	β	SMC	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
	La comunicación de resultados debe ser	Communicating assessment results must							
ac10	siempre privada para evitar comparaciones	always be private, to avoid comparisons among students	Cert	0.03	FR	0.19	0.04	3.55	1.214
ap01	<i>Los ‘exámenes sorpresa’ son un buen elemento motivador para los alumnos</i>	<i>“Surprise exams” are a good motivational tool for students</i>	Lrng	0.32	SC	0.21	0.14	2.15	1.103
ap02	El alumno siempre debe estar informado de la intención evaluativa del profesor	The student must always be informed about the assessment intention of the teacher	Lrng	0.29	FR	0.35	0.21	4.08	1.100
	<i>Es imprescindible que los alumnos se concienzien del nivel que van alcanzando según el baremo establecido</i>	<i>It is indispensable that the students get aware of their learning level according to the standards</i>	Lrng	0.48	SC	-0.47	0.44	4.10	.938
ap04	Es necesario que cada alumno sea consciente de su propio avance desde su propio punto de partida	It is necessary that the students get aware of their own learning improvement, considering their particular starting point	Lrng	0.04	FR	0.61	0.37	4.64	.608
ap05	<i>Evaluar el aprendizaje no les supone a los alumnos una ocasión de aprendizaje</i>	<i>Learning assessment does not imply a new learning chance.</i>	Lrng	0.20	SC	0.49	0.28	1.99	1.149

item	Spanish	English	Focus	β	Control	β	SMC	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
	<i>nueva</i>								
ap06	Cada ocasión de evaluación es también una ocasión de posible nuevo aprendizaje	Each assessment occasion is also a new opportunity for learning	Lrng	-0.02	FR	0.58	0.34	4.45	.733
	<i>Si no hubiera evaluación del aprendizaje</i>	<i>If there was not learning assessment, it</i>							
ap07	<i>sería imposible motivar a los alumnos para estudiar</i>	<i>would be impossible to motivate students to learn</i>	Lrng	0.41	SC	-0.15	0.19	3.05	1.149
	La evaluación vista como amenaza de castigo o promesa de premio no ayuda al aprendizaje	Assessment understood as a threat of punishment or promise of Price does not help to learn	Lrng	-0.03	FR	0.12	0.02	3.98	1.209
	<i>Lo mejor para el alumno tras una evaluación negativa es hacer borrón y cuenta nueva</i>	<i>The student's best option after bad assessment results is to make a clean slate</i>	Lrng	0.40	SC	0.37	0.30	1.91	.997
	Cuando hay malos resultados de evaluación, el alumno debe reflexionar sobre sus errores	If there are bad assessment results, the students must reflect on their mistakes	Lrng	0.24	FR	0.29	0.14	4.26	.937

item	Spanish	English	Focus	β	Control	β	SMC	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
e01	<i>La evaluación del aprendizaje y la enseñanza no se deben mezclar</i>	<i>Learning assessment shouldn't be mixed up with teaching</i>	Tchg	0.47	SC	0.35	0.35	2.12	1.167
e02	La evaluación del aprendizaje y la enseñanza deben ser coherentes la una con la otra	Learning assessment and teaching must be coherent	Tchg	-0.20	FR	0.65	0.45	4.47	.761
e03	<i>La evaluación del aprendizaje supone una pérdida de tiempo y bastante estrés</i>	<i>Assessment implies a loss of time and quite a stress</i>	Tchg	0.13	SC	0.52	0.28	1.72	.960
e04	La evaluación del aprendizaje de los alumnos es la brújula imprescindible de la enseñanza	Learning assessment is the indispensable compass of teaching	Tchg	0.10	FR	0.41	0.18	3.76	1.020
e07	<i>Las actividades de evaluación deben diferenciarse claramente de las actividades de aprendizaje</i>	<i>Assessment activities and learning activities must be clearly differentiated</i>	Tchg	0.50	SC	0.22	0.30	2.46	1.224
e08	Cualquier actividad de aprendizaje puede ser también actividad de evaluación	Any learning activity may be as well used for the purpose of assessment	Tchg	-0.17	FR	0.68	0.11	4.08	1.015

item	Spanish	English	Focus	β	Control	β	SMC	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
e09	<i>La evaluación del aprendizaje no debe afectar a otras decisiones docentes (objetivos, contenidos, recursos, métodos...)</i>	<i>Learning assessment must not affect other teaching decisions (objectives, contents, resources, methods...)</i>	Tchg	0.50	SC	0.39	0.40	2.22	1.212
e10	Cada vez que se evalúa el aprendizaje de los alumnos es también ocasión de revisar diversos aspectos de la enseñanza (objetivos, contenidos, recursos, métodos...)	Every time the students' learning is assessed, it is also the time to revise different aspects of teaching (objectives, contents, resources, methods).	Tchg	-0.10	FR	0.29	0.47	4.54	.660
r05	<i>La evaluación del dominio de ELE, pero particularmente la evaluación externa mediante los exámenes oficiales, es imprescindible para tener un control</i>	<i>Assessment of Spanish as Foreign Language, but particularly external assessment by means of official examinations, is indispensable to control.</i>	Acc	0.65	SC	0.00	0.42	2.93	1.070
r06	Los exámenes oficiales de nivel de ELE ayudan a cada ciudadano a demostrar su	Official SFL examinations help each citizen to demonstrate his own competence, for	Acc	0.44	FR	0.22	0.24	3.74	1.019

item	Spanish	English	Focus	β	Control	β	SMC	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
	propia competencia, por ejemplo ante futuros empleadores	instance in front of likely employers							
r07	<i>El docente es el único responsable de elaborar o seleccionar actividades de evaluación y corregirlas posteriormente para los alumnos</i>	<i>The teacher is the only responsible of designing or selecting assessment activities and evaluating them afterwards for the students</i>	Acc	0.42	SC	0.14	0.20	2.87	1.163
r08	Los alumnos son co-partícipes con el docente en todos los pasos de la evaluación, incluyendo la preparación de actividades y la corrección de resultados	Students collaborate with the teacher in every step of the assessment process, including the preparation of activities and evaluating results	Acc	-0.17	FR	0.30	0.12	3.52	1.101
r09	<i>El currículo oficial determina los objetivos inexorables que cada docente debe cumplir</i>	<i>The official curriculum determines the learning goals that every teacher must pursue</i>	Acc	0.67	SC	-0.08	0.46	3.12	1.057
r10	Cada docente debe ajustar su planificación de curso a los alumnos de su grupo	The teacher must adjust his course plan to his group of students	Acc	-0.13	FR	0.47	0.23	4.32	.801

Note. Italics text = Societal Control; SMC=squared multiple correlate showing % variance explained; β =standardised regression weight; Cert = Certifying;

Lrng = Learning; Tchg = Teaching; Acc = Accountability; SC = Societal Control; FR = Formative Regulation;.

Table 3. Mean scores for each factor

Factor	<i>M</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Focus of Assessment</i>			
Learning	3.46	.02	.39
Accountability	3.42	.02	.53
Certifying	3.23	.02	.44
Teaching	3.17	.02	.39
<i>Control Purpose</i>			
Formative regulation (FR)	4.03	.012	.40
Societal control (SC)	2.61	.02	.51
<i>Focus*Control Interaction</i>			
Learning-FR	4.28	.02	.51
Teaching-FR	4.21	.03	.56
Accountability-FR	3.86	.03	.61
Certifying-FR	3.77	.03	.56
Accountability-SC	2.97	.04	.81
Certifying-SC	2.70	.03	.66
Learning-SC	2.64	.03	.57
Teaching-SC	2.13	.04	.78

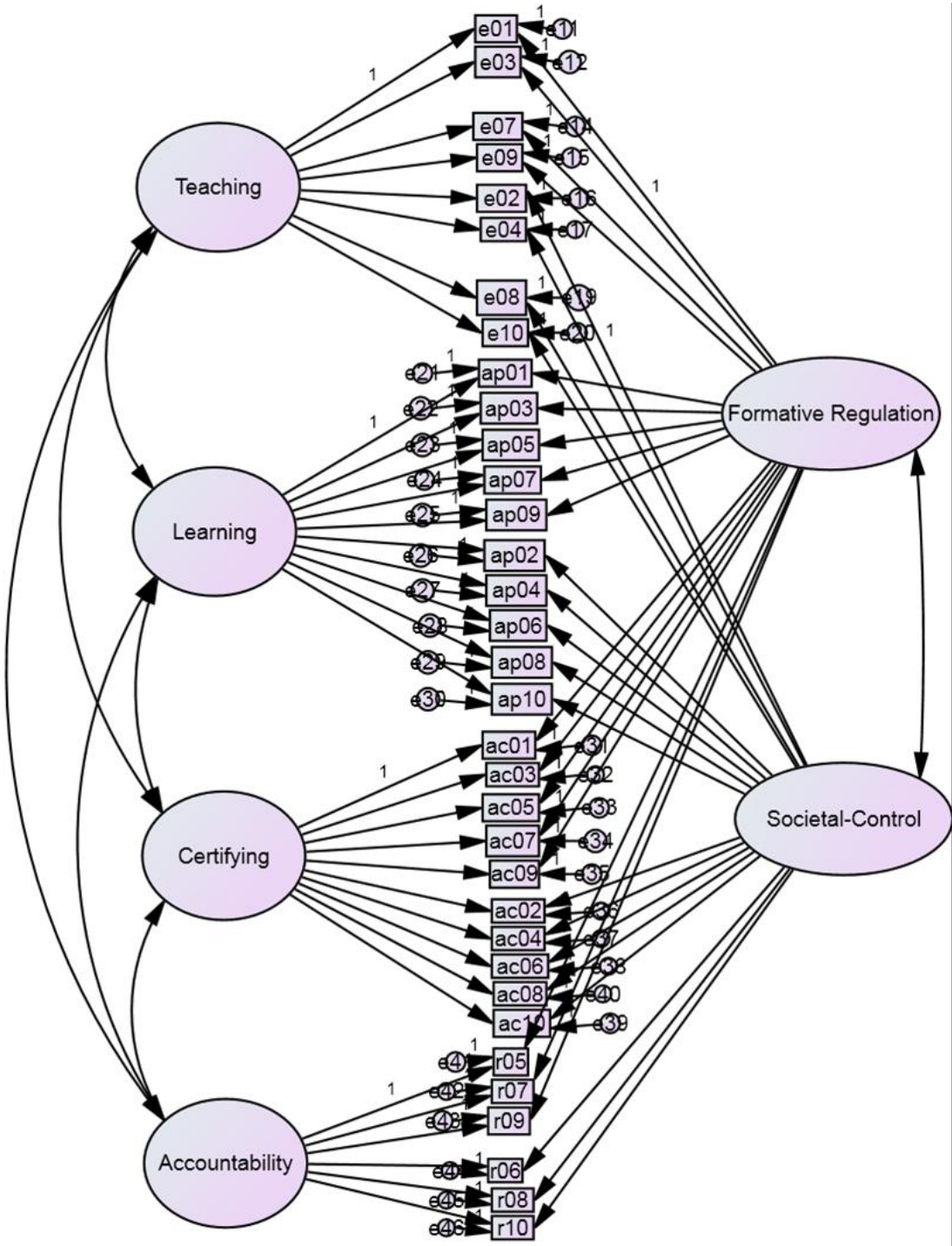


Figure 1. Bifactoral measurement model of 493 Spanish as a Foreign Language (SFL) teachers' responses to inventory

Table 1

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Category	N	%
<i>Age</i>		
<35	160	32
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Children-adolescents	223	45
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Table 2

Table 2. Item statistics by predictor factors

item	Spanish	English	Focus	β	Control	β	SMC	M	SD
	<i>Ante unos malos resultados de un grupo de</i>	<i>In face of bad assessment results, the best option</i>							
ac01	<i>alumnos, la mejor opción es bajar el nivel o incluso repetir la evaluación</i>	<i>is to lower the standards or even to repeat the test</i>	Cert	0.28	SC	0.15	0.10	2.39	1.095
	Una ‘bajada de nivel’ y hacer la ‘vista gorda’ nunca es la solución cuando nos encontramos con malos resultados de evaluación en una clase	Lowering standards and blinking an eye are never the solution to face bad assessment results in a course	Cert	0.24	FR	0.23	0.11	4.06	1.153
	<i>El avance de los alumnos siempre se debe</i>	<i>Students’ learning progress must be always</i>							
ac03	<i>valorar con el mismo rasero para todos, según los objetivos del curso planteados</i>	<i>measured with the same scale for everyone, according to the course objectives</i>	Cert	0.53	SC	0.12	0.29	2.81	1.185
	El punto de partida individual es la referencia imprescindible para valorar adecuadamente el avance de cada alumno	The individual starting point is an indispensable reference to properly evaluate the individual student’s progress	Cert	0.07	FR	0.45	0.21	4.23	.849
	<i>Es preferible comunicar los resultados en</i>	<i>It is always better to communicate assessment</i>							
ac05	<i>forma estrictamente numérica, para evitar malentendidos</i>	<i>results in a numerical form, in order to avoid misunderstandings</i>	Cert	0.53	SC	0.22	0.33	2.54	1.231

item	Spanish	English	Focus	β	Control	β	SMC	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
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ac07	<i>Para aprobar, el alumno debe alcanzar un dominio mínimo, indicado en el currículo oficial vigente</i>	<i>In order to pass the course, the students must reach a minimal competence, indicated in the official curriculum</i>	Cert	0.56	SC	-0.18	0.35	3.89	.964
ac08	Para aprobar, el alumno debe demostrar que ha avanzado bastante desde su punto de partida al inicio del curso	In order to pass the course, the student must demonstrate a sufficient progress considering his own starting point	Cert	0.44	FR	0.07	0.20	3.55	1.033
ac09	<i>La comunicación de resultados siempre debe ser pública para que cada alumno se ubique en el grupo-clase</i>	<i>Communicating assessment results must always happen in public, so every student can locate himself in the class</i>	Cert	0.39	SC	0.22	0.20	1.86	1.004
ac10	La comunicación de resultados debe ser siempre privada para evitar comparaciones	Communicating assessment results must always be private, to avoid comparisons among students	Cert	0.03	FR	0.19	0.04	3.55	1.214
ap01	<i>Los ‘exámenes sorpresa’ son un buen elemento motivador para los alumnos</i>	<i>“Surprise exams” are a good motivational tool for students</i>	Lrng	0.32	SC	0.21	0.14	2.15	1.103
ap02	El alumno siempre debe estar informado de la intención evaluativa del profesor	The student must always be informed about the assessment intention of the teacher	Lrng	0.29	FR	0.35	0.21	4.08	1.100

item	Spanish	English	Focus	β	Control	β	SMC	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
ap03	<i>Es imprescindible que los alumnos se conciencien del nivel que van alcanzando según el baremo establecido</i>	<i>It is indispensable that the students get aware of their learning level according to the standards</i>	Lrng	0.48	SC	-0.47	0.44	4.10	.938
ap04	Es necesario que cada alumno sea consciente de su propio avance desde su propio punto de partida	It is necessary that the students get aware of their own learning improvement, considering their particular starting point	Lrng	0.04	FR	0.61	0.37	4.64	.608
ap05	<i>Evaluar el aprendizaje no les supone a los alumnos una ocasión de aprendizaje nueva</i>	<i>Learning assessment does not imply a new learning chance.</i>	Lrng	0.20	SC	0.49	0.28	1.99	1.149
ap06	Cada ocasión de evaluación es también una ocasión de posible nuevo aprendizaje	Each assessment occasion is also a new opportunity for learning	Lrng	-0.02	FR	0.58	0.34	4.45	.733
ap07	<i>Si no hubiera evaluación del aprendizaje sería imposible motivar a los alumnos para estudiar</i>	<i>If there was not learning assessment, it would be impossible to motivate students to learn</i>	Lrng	0.41	SC	-0.15	0.19	3.05	1.149
ap08	La evaluación vista como amenaza de castigo o promesa de premio no ayuda al aprendizaje	Assessment understood as a threat of punishment or promise of Price does not help to learn	Lrng	-0.03	FR	0.12	0.02	3.98	1.209
ap09	<i>Lo mejor para el alumno tras una evaluación negativa es hacer borrón y cuenta nueva</i>	<i>The student's best option after bad assessment results is to make a clean slate</i>	Lrng	0.40	SC	0.37	0.30	1.91	.997
ap10	Cuando hay malos resultados de evaluación, el alumno debe reflexionar sobre sus errores	If there are bad assessment results, the students must reflect on their mistakes	Lrng	0.24	FR	0.29	0.14	4.26	.937
e01	<i>La evaluación del aprendizaje y la enseñanza</i>	<i>Learning assessment shouldn't be mixed up with</i>	Tchg	0.47	SC	0.35	0.35	2.12	1.167

item	Spanish	English	Focus	β	Control	β	SMC	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
	<i>no se deben mezclar</i>	<i>teaching</i>							
e02	La evaluación del aprendizaje y la enseñanza deben ser coherentes la una con la otra	Learning assessment and teaching must be coherent	Tchg	-0.20	FR	0.65	0.45	4.47	.761
e03	<i>La evaluación del aprendizaje supone una pérdida de tiempo y bastante estrés</i>	<i>Assessment implies a loss of time and quite a stress</i>	Tchg	0.13	SC	0.52	0.28	1.72	.960
e04	La evaluación del aprendizaje de los alumnos es la brújula imprescindible de la enseñanza	Learning assessment is the indispensable compass of teaching	Tchg	0.10	FR	0.41	0.18	3.76	1.020
e07	<i>Las actividades de evaluación deben diferenciarse claramente de las actividades de aprendizaje</i>	<i>Assessment activities and learning activities must be clearly differentiated</i>	Tchg	0.50	SC	0.22	0.30	2.46	1.224
e08	Cualquier actividad de aprendizaje puede ser también actividad de evaluación	Any learning activity may be as well used for the purpose of assessment	Tchg	-0.17	FR	0.68	0.11	4.08	1.015
e09	<i>La evaluación del aprendizaje no debe afectar a otras decisiones docentes (objetivos, contenidos, recursos, métodos...)</i>	<i>Learning assessment must not affect other teaching decisions (objectives, contents, resources, methods...)</i>	Tchg	0.50	SC	0.39	0.40	2.22	1.212
e10	Cada vez que se evalúa el aprendizaje de los alumnos es también ocasión de revisar diversos aspectos de la enseñanza (objetivos, contenidos, recursos, métodos...)	Every time the students' learning is assessed, it is also the time to revise different aspects of teaching (objectives, contents, resources, methods).	Tchg	-0.10	FR	0.29	0.47	4.54	.660

item	Spanish	English	Focus	β	Control	β	SMC	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
r05	<i>La evaluación del dominio de ELE, pero particularmente la evaluación externa mediante los exámenes oficiales, es imprescindible para tener un control</i>	<i>Assessment of Spanish as Foreign Language, but particularly external assessment by means of official examinations, is indispensable to control.</i>	Acc	0.65	SC	0.00	0.42	2.93	1.070
r06	Los exámenes oficiales de nivel de ELE ayudan a cada ciudadano a demostrar su propia competencia, por ejemplo ante futuros empleadores	Official SFL examinations help each citizen to demonstrate his own competence, for instance in front of likely employers	Acc	0.44	FR	0.22	0.24	3.74	1.019
r07	<i>El docente es el único responsable de elaborar o seleccionar actividades de evaluación y corregirlas posteriormente para los alumnos</i>	<i>The teacher is the only responsible of designing or selecting assessment activities and evaluating them afterwards for the students</i>	Acc	0.42	SC	0.14	0.20	2.87	1.163
r08	Los alumnos son co-partícipes con el docente en todos los pasos de la evaluación, incluyendo la preparación de actividades y la corrección de resultados	Students collaborate with the teacher in every step of the assessment process, including the preparation of activities and evaluating results	Acc	-0.17	FR	0.30	0.12	3.52	1.101
r09	<i>El currículo oficial determina los objetivos inexorables que cada docente debe cumplir</i>	<i>The official curriculum determines the learning goals that every teacher must pursue</i>	Acc	0.67	SC	-0.08	0.46	3.12	1.057
r10	Cada docente debe ajustar su planificación de curso a los alumnos de su grupo	The teacher must adjust his course plan to his group of students	Acc	-0.13	FR	0.47	0.23	4.32	.801

Note. Italics text = Societal Control; SMC=squared multiple correlate showing % variance explained; β =standardised regression weight; Cert = Certifying; Lrng = Learning; Tchg = Teaching; Acc = Accountability; SC = Societal Control; FR = Formative Regulation;.

Table 3

Table 3. Mean scores for each factor

Factor	<i>M</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Focus of Assessment</i>			
Learning	3.46	.02	.39
Accountability	3.42	.02	.53
Certifying	3.23	.02	.44
Teaching	3.17	.02	.39
<i>Control Purpose</i>			
Formative regulation (FR)	4.03	.012	.40
Societal control (SC)	2.61	.02	.51
<i>Focus*Control Interaction</i>			
Learning-FR	4.28	.02	.51
Teaching-FR	4.21	.03	.56
Accountability-FR	3.86	.03	.61
Certifying-FR	3.77	.03	.56
Accountability-SC	2.97	.04	.81
Certifying-SC	2.70	.03	.66
Learning-SC	2.64	.03	.57
Teaching-SC	2.13	.04	.78

