LTA literacy throughout Europe:
Findings from collaborative research

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Language Testing & Assessment Literacy (LTAL) Survey Objectives

Focus:
Foreign Language Classroom Teachers

Purpose:
(i) explore knowledge-base
(ii) understand needs in LTAL
Language Assessment Literacy
(a definition)

ability to critically evaluate tests, compile and design and monitor assessment procedures, grade and score them on the basis of sound theoretical knowledge
Background to LTAL Survey

Hasselgreen, Carlsen & Helness (2004 & 2005);
Huhta & Hirvelä (2005);
Vogt, Guerin, Sahinkarakas, Tsagari, Pavlou & Affiri (2008);
Tsagari (2009).
Assessment Literacy of Foreign Language Teachers in Europe

- General Information
  - total number of participants: Total 730
  - subjects: mostly English
  - function at the institution: mostly teachers
  - Have you learned something about testing and assessment (theory and practice) during your pre-service or in-service teacher training?

- Training received
  - Preparing classroom tests
  - Using ready-made tests from textbook packages or from other sources
  - Using informal, continuous, non-instructive type of assessment
  - Giving feedback to students based on information from tests/assessment
  - Using the European Language Portfolio, an adaptation of A or some other portfolio

- Training needed
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- Classroom-focused testing and assessment
  - Content and concepts
    - receptive skills (reading/listening)
    - productive skills (speaking/writing)
    - aspects of culture
    - micro/linguistic aspects (grammar/vocabulary)
    - integrated language skills

Current Work-in-Progress

• Builds on our previous research
• Adds
  • Data from Poland
  • Qualitative aspect (interviews)
Participant Countries & Institutions

Macedonia
Italy
Cyprus
Greece
Turkey
Germany
Poland

Total number of teachers surveyed in ENLTA & LTAL Surveys

- ENLTA: 361 (32%)
- LTAL: 781 (68%)

LTAL Questionnaire Structure (1)

Sections: Four in all

General Section
Three multi-item sections on Training (received & needed) in:

Classroom-focused assessment
Purposes of testing
Content & Concepts

LTAL Questionnaire Structure (2)

General Info Section: 8 items
Section 1: 12 items
Section 2: 8 items
Section 3: 16 items

Respondents’ age-range: 21-51+
Three-point Likert-type Scale
(none, basic, advanced)
Reliability: Cronbach alfa coefficient .87
Findings 1: Classroom-based needs

Expressed as % of Total respond. (781)
Findings 2: Testing Purposes - needs

Expressed as % of Total respond. (781)
Findings 3: Contents & Concepts - needs

Expressed as % of Total respond. (781)
Findings 4: Summary for our sample

CLASSROOM-FOCUSED ASSESSMENT

Basic competences re preparing classroom & using ready-made tests

Little or no training re Feedback from test results, peer/self-assessment, using portfolios
Findings 5: Summary for our sample

PRIORIT TRAINING NEEDS:
Classroom-focused
• ELP, Portfolio & Informal Assessment;
• Preparing Classroom Tests (advanced training).

Testing Purposes
• Placing Learners;
• Awarding Certificates.

Contents & Concepts
• Advanced training needed in all areas.
Some Limitations of our Study

Results are based on:

- Respondents’ **perceived** needs
- **Different sample sizes per country**
- ....
Follow-up interviews

- Semi-structured interviews with Germany-based foreign language teachers (n=9)
- Italy-based foreign language teachers (n=10)
Guiding Questions (1)

1. What part did LTA have in your teacher training?
2. Did you feel appropriately prepared for your LTA tasks after pre-service training?
3. Do you know about more recent LTA methods e.g. portfolio assessment, self- or peer-assessment?
4. Have you ever tried them?
5. Have you ever worked with standardised tests (CFE, TOEFL) or have you advised learners in this area?

6. What types of LTA do you use yourself or at your school?
7. Did you have in-service LTA training?
8. If yes, what was the training-focus?
9. How satisfied are you with in-service teacher training offered in LTA?
10. What LTA-training would you like in the short-term?
Follow-up interviews: Tendencies (1)

- Little role of LTA in teacher training, making teachers resort to: "test as you were tested"
- Own initiative necessary to acquire competences
- Insight into more recent forms of LTA do not come from own teaching practice
Follow-up interviews: Tendencies (2)

• No experience with standardised tests

• more conventional LTA-types used (e.g. classroom tests, vocabulary tests, oral quizzes) but presented as more recent type of oral assessment
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION 😊