

Realizations

Evaluation of French Writing at High School

The group DIEPE (Description Internationale des Enseignements et des Performances en matière d'Écrit) established in 1991 elaborated and lead a project of evaluation of French written in the secondary sector. Two countries, France and Belgium, as well as two Canadian provinces, Quebec and New Brunswick, participated in this evaluation. This research settled three objectives:

- describe and compare the conditions and the practices of the teaching and the learning of the written to the high school in four participating communities;
- express and compare the competence to write for students of the concerned populations;
- communicate the links which exist between the respective skills of the students and the characteristics of their teaching / learning.

The evaluation executed by the group DIEPE was realized in April and in May, 1993 with approximately 7000 14 or 15-years old students and about 1000 teachers of French. The used instrumentation included:

- a writing work marked locally and the results of which were passed on to Micro Centre Pythagore in files produced from one grid of marking containing fifteen elements of information;
- a formal test containing 230 elements of information having each a correct answer;
- a questionnaire of opinion addressing the pupil and containing 75 elements of information;
- a questionnaire of opinion addressing the teachers of French containing 152 elements of information.

Several tasks were realized by Micro Centre Pythagore.

And so with regard to the data collection and the control of their quality, the Canadian firm realized the following activities:

- participate in meetings including the persons in charge of the project;
- assist the international coordinator of the project to determine the sample to retain in every population;
- define databases;
- prepare the software for data entry and validation of the data as well as the user guide of the Information Technology program;
- prepare databases from the information taken in by the national persons in charge;
- assure the quality control of files supplied by the national persons in charge;
- calculate the weights allocated to the students estimated as well as their links with the zones and the pairs of zones necessary for the compilation of the confident internal according to the "Jackknife" technique.

A first level of analysis which included the following activities was executed with the cooperation of university researchers and by Micro Centre Pythagore:

- produce distributions of frequencies for the formal test and both questionnaires of opinion;
- produce an analysis of items by population for the formal test;
- produce a data analysis of the writing works (marking and multiple choices);
- for the formal test, verify the level of interrelation population / contents by means of the technique " K-Means";
- for the formal test, verify the ways by means of the technique "Mantel-Haenszel".

The second level of data analysis contained the following operations:

- establish the parameters of items according to the Items Response Theory;

- calculate factors of adjustment connected with four constituents of the global score in writing (language, communication, text and particular qualities).

The results of this research are recorded in the following document:

Groupe DIEPE, Savoir écrire au secondaire; Étude comparative auprès de quatre populations francophones d'Europe et d'Amérique. Pédagogies en développement; Problématiques et recherches, De Boeck Université, 1995; 273 pages.

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