

Faculté de philosophie, arts et lettres

The teaching of foreign languages in Belgium

A comparative study of modern languages curricula in the
French- and Dutch-speaking Community of Belgium

Author: Eloïse Schacht

Supervisor: Prof. Fanny Meunier

Reader(s): Mrs Pauline Degrave

Academic year 2019-2020

Master en langues et lettres modernes, orientation germaniques, à finalité didactique

Acknowledgements

First, I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Doctor Fanny Meunier, for her time, availability and support. Her always relevant feedback, advice and guidance have been most useful in the completion of this MA thesis.

Then, I would also like to express my thanks to Professor Doctor Laurence Mettewie for helping me in the designing of my online survey as well as for her time, feedback, support and availability.

Furthermore, I wish to thank Mrs Julie Van de Vyver (research assistant), Mr Hugues Schacht (prevention advisor for the *W-BE* network) and Mr Stéphane Destrée (teacher) as well as all the different headmasters of the *GO!* network for helping me spread my online survey amongst teachers of the *GO!* and *W-BE* networks. Their help was most needed and welcomed.

I would also like to thank my fellow student and friend Marie Wouters for always supporting me, believing in me and helping me finalize this MA thesis by providing fresh insight and feedback.

Finally, a special thank goes to all the teachers who took part in the online survey and who, during this difficult period, provided me with most needed answers and data to complete this MA thesis.

Table of contents

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
2	THE CONTEXT OF LANGUAGE TEACHING IN BELGIUM	4
2.1	BELGIUM’S POLITICAL CONTEXT	4
2.1.1	<i>General overview of the Belgian political system</i>	<i>4</i>
2.1.2	<i>Belgium, the story of a linguistic conflict</i>	<i>6</i>
2.2	BELGIUM’S EDUCATION SYSTEMS.....	7
2.2.1	<i>General overview</i>	<i>8</i>
2.2.1.1	Historical context.....	8
2.2.1.2	Belgian education systems today	12
2.2.2	<i>The FWB’s education system</i>	<i>13</i>
2.2.2.1	General overview	13
2.2.2.2	Recent developments: <i>Pacte pour un Enseignement d’Excellence</i>	15
2.2.2.3	Language teaching.....	16
2.2.2.4	The curricula	18
2.2.2.5	The benchmark for modern languages	20
2.2.3	<i>Flanders’ education system.....</i>	<i>22</i>
2.2.3.1	General overview	22
2.2.3.2	The <i>Masterplan Hervorming Secundair Onderwijs</i>	24
2.2.3.3	Language teaching.....	28
2.2.3.4	The curricula	29
2.2.3.5	The benchmark for modern languages	30
2.3	THE COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK OF REFERENCE.....	33
2.3.1	<i>What is language use?</i>	<i>34</i>
2.3.2	<i>The different levels of proficiency</i>	<i>35</i>
2.3.3	<i>The CEFR in practice</i>	<i>37</i>
3	METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS	38
3.1	RESEARCH QUESTIONS	38
3.2	METHODOLOGY	39

3.2.1	<i>The comparison of the curricula</i>	40
3.2.2	<i>The curricula in practice</i>	42
3.2.3	<i>The teachers' attitudes</i>	44
4	RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	49
4.1	RESULTS	49
4.1.1	<i>The curricula</i>	49
4.1.1.1	The curricula of the <i>W-BE</i> network	49
4.1.1.2	The curricula of the <i>GO!</i> network	73
4.1.1.3	Comparison	95
4.1.2	<i>The curricula in practice</i>	109
4.1.2.1	In the <i>W-BE</i> network	109
4.1.2.2	In the <i>GO!</i> network	114
4.1.2.3	Comparison	120
4.1.3	<i>The teachers' opinion</i>	125
4.1.3.1	In the <i>W-BE</i> network	126
4.1.3.2	In <i>GO!</i> network	129
4.1.3.3	Comparison	133
4.2	DISCUSSION	134
5	CONCLUSION	141
6	BIBLIOGRAPHY	146

List of abbreviations

ASO: Algemeen Secundair Onderwijs

BSO: Beroepssecundair Onderwijs

CA: Compréhension à l’audition

CECP: Conseil de l’Enseignement des Communes et Provinces

CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference for languages: learning, teaching, assessment

CL: Compréhension à la Lecture

CoCoF: Commission Communautaire Française

CPEONS: Conseil des Pouvoirs organisateurs de l’Enseignement Officiel Neutre Subventionné

DCO: Délégué au Contrat d’Objectif

Dispositif RCD: Dispositif “Remédiation – Consolidation – Dépassement”

DZ: Directeur de Zone

EE: Expression Ecrite

EOEI: Expression Orale En Interaction

EOSI: Expression Orale Sans Interaction

FELSI: Fédération des Etablissements Libres Subventionnés Indépendants

FOPEM: Federatie van Onafhankelijke Pluralistische Emancipatorische Methodescholen

FWB: Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles

GO!: Gemeenschapsonderwijs!

IPCO: raad van Inrichtende machten van het Protestants-Christelijk Onderwijs

KSO: Kunstsecundair onderwijs

LM1: Langue Moderne 1

LM2: Langue Moderne 2

LM3: Langue Moderne 3

OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

OVSG: Onderwijsvereniging van Steden en Gemeenten

PEE: Pacte pour un Enseignement d'Excellence

PISA: Program for International Student Assessment

PO: Pouvoir Organisateur

POV: Provinciaal Onderwijs Vlaanderen

SeGEC: Secrétariat Général de l'Enseignement Catholique

STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

TSO: Technisch Secundair Onderwijs

UAA: Unité d'Acquis d'Apprentissage

VOOP: Vlaams Onderwijs Overlegplatform

W-BE: Wallonie-Bruxelles Enseignement

List of Figures

Figure 1 - Diagram representing the general organization of education (source: enseignement.be).	13
Figure 2 - Organisation of a UAA (Compétences Terminales et Savoirs Requis à l'Issue des Humanités Générales et Technologiques, 2017).	21
Figure 3 - Matrix secundair onderwijs (Lievens, 2018).	26
Figure 4 - CEFR's proficiency levels (Council of Europe, 2001).	36
Figure 5 - Total survey's participants divided in function of their teaching experience (n= 16). ...	45
Figure 6 - Caption of the curricula presented on the W-BE website (source: https://www.w-b-e.be/ressources/ressources-pedagogiques/programmes/).	50
Figure 7 - UAA caption example 1 (source: LM1curriculum, ref. 489/2018/240).	53
Figure 8 - UAA caption example 2 (source: LM1 curriculum, ref. 489/2018/240).	54
Figure 9 - UAA caption example 3 (source: LM1 curriculum, ref. 489/2018/240).	54
Figure 10 - UAA caption example 4 (source LM1 curriculum, ref. 489/2018/240).	55
Figure 11 - UAA caption example 6 (source: LM1 curriculum, ref. 489/2018/240).	55
Figure 12 - UAA caption example 5 (source: LM1 curriculum, ref. 489/2018/240).	55
Figure 13 - Organisation of a UAA (LM1 curriculum, ref. 489/2018/240, p.10).	57
Figure 14 - Example of the organization of the learning content for the curriculum for French (ref. 2012/002, p.16).	74
Figure 15 - Example of the organization of the learning content for the curriculum for French (ref. 20012/002, p.15).	75
Figure 16 - Consideration of skills and knowledge in the curriculum for French of the GO! network.	101
Figure 17 - Consideration of skills and knowledge in the LM1 curriculum for the W-BE network.	101
Figure 18 - How do the teachers of the W-BE network use the curricula when designing their sequence (n=10.)	109
Figure 19 - Clarity of the objectives concerning the curricula of the W-BE network (n=10).	110

Figure 20 - Reachability of the different objectives concerning the curricula of the W-BE network (n=10).	110
Figure 21 - How do the teachers of the GO! network use the curricula when designing their teaching sequence (n=6).	114
Figure 22 - Reachability of the different objectives concerning the curricula of the GO! (n=6).	115
Figure 23 - Clarity of the objectives concerning the curricula of the GO! network (n=6).	115
Figure 24 - How do the teachers of both networks use the curricula when designing their sequence (n=16).	121
Figure 25 - Reachability of the objectives for the curricula of the GO! and the W-BE networks (n=16).	122
Figure 26 - Answer to question 1 concerning attitudes for the W-BE network (n=10).	126
Figure 27 - How are the curricula considered by the teachers of the W-BE network? (n=10)....	127
Figure 28 - Do the teachers of the W-BE consider that the curricula are adapted to the reality (n=10).	128
Figure 29 - Do the teachers of the W-BE network find that the curricula translate in an efficient way what the pupils will need later (n=10).....	128
Figure 30 - Answer to question one concerning the attitudes for the GO! network (n=6).	130
Figure 31 - How do the teachers of the GO! consider the curricula (n=6).	130
Figure 32 - Do the teachers of the GO! network consider that the curricula are adapted to the reality? (n=6).	131
Figure 33 - Do the teachers of the GO! find that the curricula translate in an efficient way what the pupils will need later (n=6).	132

List of Tables

Table 1 – Example of comparative table.....	42
Table 2 - list of the different terms used in the LM1 curriculum.....	56
Table 3 - Example of thematic fields and subfields for the LM1 curriculum.....	64
Table 4 - W-BE LM1 curriculum: objectives per skill and level (pp.16-64).	68
Table 5 - LM1 curriculum learning process objectives, for the level A2+ (pp.16-41).	69
Table 6 - W-BE LM2 curriculum: objectives per skill and level (pp.16-39).	72
Table 7 - Key terms for the GO! curriculum for French	76
Table 8 - Objectives per skill (GO! curriculum for French, ref. 2012/002, pp.9-37).	90
Table 9 - Objective for knowledge and attitudes (GO! curriculum for French, ref 2012/002, pp.38-50).....	90
Table 10 - Differences and similarities between curricula.....	96
Table 11 - terms used in the LM1 curriculum and the curriculum for French.....	97

1 Introduction

Education, and more specifically improving the level of education of young people at all levels, has become a challenge for countries around the world. Since the beginning of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)¹ testing in 2000, countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have been eager to try and improve their education system, in order to get better scores. Belgium is no different; except perhaps for the fact that education in Belgium is regulated and for the most part financed by one of the three communities: Flemish, French and German-speaking, which somehow complexifies the picture. Ever since the 1990s, in the French Community² of Belgium, we have seen an effervescence of new decrees being voted to change and improve the education system. Some of those decrees are for example the 1995 decree for “l’école de la réussite”, the 1997 *Décret Mission*, the 2001 decree “relatif aux socles de compétences”, the 2006 decree “relatif à l’évaluation externe des acquis des élèves” until more recently, the proposition of the *Pacte pour un Enseignement d’Excellence* already resulting in some new decrees concerning for example the extension of the duration of the common curriculum (Cattonar, 2019). In the Flemish Community, we can observe the same tendency. Since the end of the 20th century, Flanders has also produced a rather important number of decrees concerning education such as the 1990 “Lentedecree”, the 2001 decree “betreffende het onderwijs” and all its more recent revisions, the last one being approved on the 27th March 2019, the 2009 decrees “betreffende de kwaliteit van het onderwijs” and “betreffende het secundair na secundair onderwijs en het hoger beroepsonderwijs”, the 2018 decree “betreffende leerlingenbegeleiding in het basisonderwijs, secundair onderwijs en de centra voor leerlingenbegeleiding” and still many others which are not cited here (Vlaamse Ministerie van Onderwijs en Vorming, 2020).

All those decrees voted by those two different Belgian communities show how tightly education and politics are linked, which is especially visible in Belgium. We can indeed observe in our country

¹ <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/aboutpisa/pisa-based-test-for-schools-faq.htm>

² Also named Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles (FWB) as the French Community exercises its powers in the Walloon provinces (except the German-speaking municipalities) and in Brussels.

a division of the political power which could seem simple at first, but which has quite complicated implications for the management of the country. As stipulated in the Belgian constitution, “Belgium is a federal state, composed of communities and regions” (Belgian Federal Government, 2019). This qualification and division of the country implies that different entities share the power of governance and subsequently have the right to make decisions regarding their specific attributed competences. Those different entities are, for the regions: the Flemish Region, the Walloon Region and the Region Brussels-Capital; and for the communities: the Flemish Community, the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles (FWB) and the German-speaking Community. The communities are the entities which are of interest when talking about the education system in Belgium. They are indeed the ones that are competent in making decisions for everything concerning language and culture, which makes them in charge of education (Belgian Federal Government, 2019). Since there are three communities in Belgium, this means that there exist three different education systems in our country.

Since the *Loi du Pacte scolaire* issued by the Federal Government on the 12th of May 1959 which had as a main goal to end the Second School War and set the ground lines for the division of the education system in Belgium (La Ligue de l’Enseignement et de l’Education Permanente asbl, 2019), the different organizations in charge of education inside the same community have been allowed to establish their own curricula, types of evaluations and pedagogical plan (Maroy, 2002: 41-42). Since all different organizations are able to produce their own teaching curricula, one could wonder how different those curricula really are, which led to the work being carried out in the present MA thesis.

Fortunately, inside the same community, a number of guidelines and minimum levels that the pupils have to reach for a specific subject at the end of a specific year or grade are set. Those guidelines for the making of disciplinary curricula are contained in decrees. A decree is a “norme juridique, de valeur égale à la loi fédérale, édictée par l’assemblée parlementaire de certaines entités fédérées” (CRISP, 2020). It is thus a law voted by either communities which is only applicable in the community in which it was voted. In the FWB, the decree setting the basic missions and objectives of the educational system is called the *Décret Mission* and was voted in 1997 (Cattonar, 2019), while in the Flemish Community, the decree setting the basic missions and

objectives for the first grade of secondary education was voted in 1996 and the one for the second and third grade called the *themadecreet* was voted in 2002 (Fannes, Vranckx, Simon & Depaepe, 2013). Before those two decrees, the concept of ‘final objective’ was already defined in the decree of 1991 “betreffende inspectie, dienst voor onderwijsontwikkeling en pedagogische begeleidingsdienstne” (Fannes et al., 2013). Following those decrees, there exists in each community and for each subject and grade/year a document setting the minimum levels, objectives and requirements that a pupil has to reach at the end of his or her education. In the FWB, those different documents are called *Socles de Compétences* and *Compétences terminales et savoirs requis à l’issue des humanités générales et technologiques* and in the Flemish Community, they are called *Eindtermen*.

Since a certain degree of homogeneity can be expected between the different curricula within one community, another question that could arise is whether there are differences or similarities in the curricula between two communities. Looking only at the Flemish Community and the FWB, this dissertation will try to answer that question for the curricula issued by the communities, namely the curricula issued by the *GO!*, the education network of the Flemish Community, and the *W-BE*, the education network of the FWB. More specifically, this research will also focus on one discipline, that of modern languages.

To present the research carried out, this paper is divided in different chapters, each dealing with a specific aspect. Firstly, the broader political context of Belgium will be clarified, to then move on to a more detailed view on the education system in place in the two communities that will be analyzed here, and then to a description of their respective curricula. Secondly, the methodology and the research questions of this thesis will be further explained. Finally, we will take a look at the different results of the research, which will then be discussed in greater details.

2 The context of language teaching in Belgium

2.1 Belgium's political context

Education is always firmly established in the political context of a country, community or region. The political authorities produce decrees and laws establishing the management of an education system, setting for example requirements for various types of graduations and degrees, compulsory schooling or subjects to be taught. In this regard, it seems relevant to have a look at the Belgian political context to better understand the schooling system of the country. In this section, the political system will first be explained before turning to an explanation of the sometimes-difficult political context of Belgium.

2.1.1 General overview of the Belgian political system

Belgium established its independence in 1830, parting herself from the ruling of the Netherlands (Van der Linden & Roets, 2017). Since then and through five State reforms, the Belgian Constitution defines the country as “a federal state composed of communities and regions” (Belgium.be, 2019). As described on the *Belgium.be* website, Belgium has three levels of power: the federal State, three Communities and three Regions. The country is thus managed by those entities, “exerting in an autonomous manner their own competences for matters of their own”.

As explained on *Belgium.be*³ the federal authorities are competent in all matters regarding the common interests of all Belgians. It is the guardian of the shared heritage of the Belgian people, guarantying the unity of the country. It also holds competences with regards to, for example, foreign affairs, national defense, justice, finances and social security but also education for which it sets the minimal requirements for diplomas and the age limits for compulsory schooling. Belgium also being a constitutional and parliamentary monarchy has as its head of state a king, currently king Philippe I. The king is described as a symbol of unity, having the role of a mediator between the different entities and between the Belgian people and the political world. His

³ Even if the website is not cited and repeated after each reference throughout this point, it should still be noted that all the information exposed here can be found there, unless indicated otherwise in the text.

function is mainly to be neutral and discreet on all political matters, as well as being the leader of the army, and the one choosing an 'informateur' and a 'formateur' right after the elections to facilitate the formation of a federal government.

The Communities are grounded in language and culture. There being three official languages in Belgium, there are also three communities, namely the Flemish Community, the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles and the German-speaking Community. The concept of 'community' referring to the people composing it, the Belgian communities are competent in matters such as culture, education, language use, etc. All three Communities have their own parliament, holding the legislative power, and their own government, holding the executive power. The laws voted by a community's parliament are called 'decrees'. One particularity can be noted for the Flemish Community. In this community only, the regional and community parliament form together the Flemish Parliament, which is competent for voting decrees applying to both the Community and the Region. However, the government for the Community and that for the Region implementing those decrees are still two separate institutions.

The Regions are grounded in history and the aspiration of certain entities to more economic autonomy. There are in Belgium 3 Regions: the Flemish Region, the Brussels-Capital Region and the Walloon Region. The Regions have competences regarding everything that has to do with the occupation of the territory, meaning that they are competent to manage matters such as economy, employment, land management and urbanism, transport, environment, etc. As for the Communities, each Region has its own parliament and government, keeping in mind the case of Flanders having only one parliament for both Community and Region.

All these entities form together the political system of Belgium, in charge of managing the country. Although they could be thought as acting as a whole or functioning as complimentary systems for a better management of a country presenting many differences amongst its people, it is not always so. In the next point, we will turn to the context from which this complicated political system emerged in order to better understand it and its implications.

2.1.2 Belgium, the story of a linguistic conflict

For as long as man can remember, Belgium has known an everlasting linguistic conflict between the Dutch-speaking and French-speaking Communities. At the time of Belgium's independence, the three official languages of today already coexisted on the same territory, but the State was then a unitary and unilingual one, where the language of power and administration was French (Van der Linden & Roets, 2017). At the time, language was mainly a marker of social status: French was the language spoken by the upper-class, the elites and the nobility, while Dutch and German were the languages spoken only by the people, those from the lower classes (Dassargues, Perrez & Reuchamps, 2014, cited in Van der Linden & Roets, 2017). It is in that French-dominating context that the Flemish movement was born, in the 1960s.

The Flemish movement emerged in opposition to the French elite, having as main purpose the recognition of Dutch as a second official language (Caluwaerts & Reuchamps, 2015). As could be expected, the French elite was strongly opposed to it, constantly refusing their demands and perceiving it as a threat to the development of Belgium as a single country. This constant refusal led to a strengthening of the movement, which after a first partial recognition in the 1870s finally led in 1898 to the law on equality, recognizing Dutch as an official language (Caluwaerts & Reuchamps, 2015). Later in the 1920s and the 1930s, new language laws were issued, authorizing the use of Dutch in justice, administration and education.

After WWII, Belgium faced a reversal in the roles of the two Communities. The Flemish economy was on the rise while the Walloon economy was sinking (Van der Linden & Roets, 2017). This reversal in economic power led to the emergence of a Walloon nationalist feeling. By the end of the 1980s, the Flemish economy was clearly a leading one for the country, resulting in a reaction of the Walloon elites which then demanded more economical autonomy in order to pass policies which would be adapted to Wallonia's economic situation (Dassargues et al., 2014, cited in Van der Linden & Roets, 2017). This economical division was to be the basis for the creation of the Regions as we know them today. The end result of those conflicts later led in 1962-1963 to the creation of a permanent linguistic border, dividing the country in 3 monolingual areas (Van der Linden & Roets, 2017).

Today, this political system which had originally been put in place in order to appease tensions between the French- and Dutch-speaking parts of the country has contributed to the promotion of this division on a cultural level. Nowadays, Belgium is a multilingual society where different communities live in different areas and which each have their own public sphere, leading some to think of Flanders and Wallonia as two separate societies (Van der Linden & Roets, 2017). Each Community has indeed its own language, its own monolingual television and radio channels, its own politics, etc. Moreover, very few members of a community would for example watch the other Community's channels and even mixed marriages between Flemings and Walloons are reported as being rare (Billiet, Maddens & Frogner, 2006). Over time and through all the different cultural policies that were voted, we have thus seen two cultures emerge, each having their own sensitivities, customs, fashions and even their own sense of identity regarding their affiliation to one or the other community or to Belgium as a country (Billiet, Maddens & Frogner, 2006).

Back to the political, this linguistic conflict has also led to Belgium being mainly a consociational system where all parties are obliged to govern in consultation with one another (Caluwaerts & Reuchamps, 2015). These consociational features were even incorporated in the federalization of the country from the 1970s onwards, precisely as a response to the linguistic split between the French-speaking and Dutch-speaking people. Since then special majority laws have been in place for the formation and governance at the federal level.

We thus see that this Dutch-French linguistic conflict has had many consequences for the building of Belgium as we know her today, having consequences on all governance levels. It is in this context that the education system, being managed on a political level, must be understood as to have a better grasp of why it stands as is.

2.2 Belgium's education systems

As mentioned before, education is a competence attributed to the Communities, therefore Belgium doesn't have one united education system, but three separate ones, one per Community. However, as the main theme of this thesis is a comparison between Flanders and Wallonia, there will not be referenced to the education system in place in the German-speaking Community. In this section, we will thus dig deeper into two of those three systems, i.e. that of the Flemish

Community and that of the Federation Wallonie-Bruxelles. Although before explaining those two systems separately, a general overview will be needed to have a better perception of the systems as a whole.

2.2.1 General overview

When looking into the education systems in Belgium, it would be a mistake not to take into consideration the historical facts that have contributed to the building of those systems as we know them today. We will thus first start with a brief history, looking back at what happened, before looking at what it is today and how it is organized as a whole.

2.2.1.1 Historical context

The education system in place in Belgium is the result of a long and slow evolution starting even before her independence. From the 15th to 17th century, the education of young people was mainly managed by the Church and reserved for the elite of society (Cattonar, 2019). Then, from the 18th century onwards, the State started to be more and more involved in the education system. At Belgium's independence, with article 17 of the Belgian Constitution, the State decided to take a step back by revoking the different measures taken by the Dutch system hindering the freedom of education (Wynants & Paret, 1998). From that point onwards, the system has evolved as a result of compromises to appease diverse societal conflicts.

In the 19th century, the Belgian society starts being divided in three main political pillars: the Catholics, the liberals and the socialists, who each developed their own system to take in charge an individual from birth until death (Wynants & Paret, 1998). Keeping that in mind, we can see the different evolutions of the education system as a result of three main divides: between Church and State, owners and workers and finally between the center and the periphery, including the linguistic conflict (Wynants & Paret, 1998).

Because of the vagueness of article 17 of the Constitution, the different actors of society understood it in different ways. The Church understood it as its emancipation from the State's control, while the liberals read it as a way to remove the people from the Church's influence (Wynants & Paret, 1998). Because of this difference in understanding and the decentralization

that followed the vote of that article, the Church started to have even more influence in the development of society, which of course did not please the liberals (Wynants & Paret, 1998). This was the start of the confrontation between Church and State. The 10th of June 1846 the independence of the temporal power as well as the organization of a public education network was voted by the Congress (Wynants & Paret, 1998). The clergy strongly opposed that law, as it was seen as being supportive of a liberal politic concerning education. On the 15th of June 1881, the State's secondary education network expended. For the Church, those dispositions were unacceptable and marked the start of the first school war (Wynants & Paret, 1998). This first school war finally ended in 1887 when the State committed to subsidizing the primary schools belonging to the 'free' (viz. catholic) networks.

After WWII, education in Belgium faced new problems. Those new problems mainly affected the secondary schools of the free networks. Those schools receiving no financial help from the State started feeling threatened and obligated to ask their pupils to pay school fees in order to survive (Wynants & Paret, 1998). The second school war started in 1954. That war was quite different from the first one as it didn't concern a confrontation between two ideological systems but was more of an institutional issue and concerned secondary and not primary education (Wynants & Paret, 1998). The main demands concerned, on the one hand, the right for the State to create neutral schools at all levels of education and on the other hand, the right for catholic families to choose how to educate their children (Wynants & Paret, 1998). That second school war finally ended with the vote of the *Pacte Scolaire* on the 29th of May 1959, more on which will come later.

A second societal divide also contributed to the building of the education system as we know it today. Wynants & Paret (1998) explain that in the 19th century, due to child labor which was quite common in the lower classes, school education was mainly the privilege of children from the elite. Even if on the 23rd of September 1842, a first law concerning the gratuity of education was voted, the form it took was still quite elitist as it functioned as a kind of grant awarded by the municipalities. In the 20th century, due to an improvement of the living standard, people of the working class started to want to get their children out of the factories and into school. During the 20th century, we thus start to see an evolution in the perception of childhood leading to consider children not as a source of income, but as young people for which parents were responsible and

had to pay for (Wynants & Paret, 1998). In 1914, another law was voted which granted free primary education and a first kind of compulsory education from the age of 6 until the age of 14 (Cattonar, 2019), which allowed for more social mobility at school (Wynants & Paret, 1998). From then on, we started talking about a process of ‘massification’ of education, with children from all different social classes entering school (Cattonar, 2019).

However, as children had to stay at school ever longer due to the education being stretched out and because it was becoming ever more expensive, parents from the working class had difficulties paying for their children’s tuition. This problem was solved in 1959 with the *Pacte Scolaire* which guaranteed free education at all levels (Cattonar, 2019). In 1971, in order to give a complete and equal education to all, a core curriculum was established until the age of 14. School then only became compulsory for all, from the age of 6 until the age of 18 with the law of the 29th of June 1983 (Wynants & Paret, 1998). Since then, compulsory education in Belgium is divided in 2 stages: first from age 6 to 15, where children have to attend school full time, and then from the age of 15 until the age of 18, where we have a partial obligation in which children can either attend a school full time, have a reduced schedule or follow a training course –particularly for vocational orientations– recognized by the public authority (Wynants & Paret, 1998). For the first stage, recent developments have however changed its length. Because of the *Pacte pour un Enseignement d’Excellence*, compulsory education has now been stretched out, starting not from the age of 6 anymore, but from the age of 5 (more information on that will be given in the following sections).

As mentioned previously, the law of the *Pacte Scolaire*, voted on the 29th of May 1959 largely contributed to developing the Belgian education system as we know it today. It contributed to specifying the notion of freedom of education as written in the Belgian Constitution but also recognized the autonomy of the organizing bodies (PO) in determining the curricula, defining their educational objectives, evaluating and certifying their pupils and finally in hiring teachers (Maroy, 2002: 42). It also gave freedom to parents for the decision of enrolling their child in the education network of their choice and guaranteed that the State would financially take care of all networks but also pay the salaries of all teachers and other professionals in education (Cattonar, 2019).

Finally, the last divide that contributed to the development of the Belgian education system into what it is today, is that between the center and the periphery, for which the linguistic conflict played an important role. As this conflict has already been explained in detail in a previous section⁴, it will not be further discussed here. However, some aspects specific to education which have not yet specifically been explained before are worth mentioning.

At her independence, the main teaching language in Belgium was French. Some primary schools in the Dutch-speaking provinces taught in Flemish, but all other primary and secondary schools taught in French, the language of the elite at the time (Wynants & Paret, 1998). The main language used at school was thus French. On the 15th of June 1883, a first law was voted, which established a partial Dutchification of all official secondary establishments in five main domains. French however remained the main language of instruction (Wynants & Paret, 1998). In theory, that law was a good first step in the recognition of the Dutch language, yet in practice there were not enough teachers who were proficient in Dutch, meaning that schools had to find ever more clever ways to bypass this law (Wynants & Paret, 1998).

The Dutchification of education was also not at all welcomed by the French elite. In August 1906, the cardinal Mercier, who was strongly opposed to this Dutchification of education, found a way to stop it. Not ignorant of the revendication made by the Vlaamse Beweging, he actually reinforced bilingualism in the confessional network by setting a consistent regulation which obliged all schools from all networks to use Dutch in the exact same manner. Therefore, he set a minimum base for the teaching of certain subjects in Dutch which actually had as effect to stop the language from becoming the only teaching language in the North of the country (Wynants & Paret, 1998: 77-78). This opposition to the Dutchification of education went on for quite a while before progress started up again.

More or less thirty years later came the start of the linguistic reforms, which marked the beginning of the discussions on Dutch unilingualism for education in Flanders. On the 14th of July 1932, the 'de voertaal is de streektaal' law was voted, which guaranteed that the teaching language was to be the language spoken in the region where the school was located (Wynants & Paret, 1998: 80).

⁴ cf. *Belgium, the story of a linguistic conflict*, p.6

Thirty more years later, the law of the 30th of July 1963 furthered and reinforced Dutch unilingualism. The linguistic tensions between the Dutch-speaking and French-speaking communities finally resulted in the first revision of the Belgian Constitution in 1970, which gave rise to the official recognition of three Communities in Belgium, which were given some competences in the management of their education system (Wynant & Paret, 1998). All in all, the Federal Government however still retained control over education up until the second revision of the Constitution in 1988, which finally resulted on the 1st of January 1989 in the complete communitarization of the education system (Wynant & Paret, 1998: 84). Since then, the Communities are entirely competent in managing their education system on their own, resulting in a separate development of the education system in each Community.

2.2.1.2 Belgian education systems today

Even if the Belgian education system has evolved into different separate systems managed by the Communities, it is worth noting that certain aspects of education still remain a competence of the Federal Government. Those aspects are thus shared by all three Communities. In short, the Federal Government is concerned with setting the age limits for compulsory schooling (beginning and end) as well as defining the minimal requirements in order to obtain the different diplomas and managing the retirement for employees (European Commission, 2019).

Broadly speaking and mainly thanks to the *loi du Pacte scolaire*, the different education systems are also organized in roughly the same manner. We find in the Flemish as well as in the Walloon systems a difference between official education, managed in both cases by the Communities' governments, and the free education which is in both Communities government-aided (European Commission, 2019). Then, those two types of education are also further divided in different education networks, which are themselves managed by their own organizing authority (called 'PO' for 'pouvoir organisateur'). Those POs are then also coordinated and represented by an umbrella organization. Considering all this, the different education networks are public education, government-aided official education, government-aided free confessional education and government-aided free non-confessional education (Cattonar, 2019-2020).

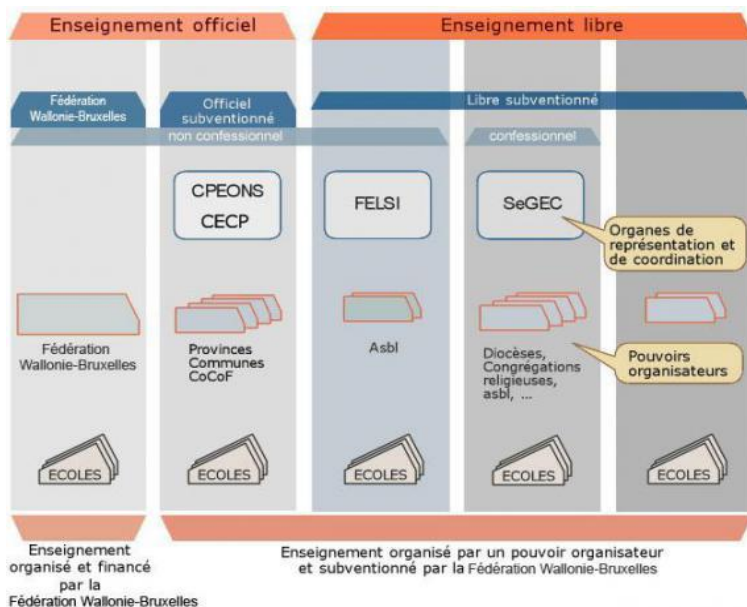
Going further down the educational hierarchy and looking specifically at secondary education, it is in both Flanders and Wallonia, divided in three grades, each consisting of two years (European Commission, 2019). From the second grade onwards, the secondary education is divided into four types: general, technical, artistic and vocational (European Commission, 2019).

For the rest, i.e. the definition of the different types, their organization, the curricula for each grade, type and subject as well as the general management and the different decrees regulating the education systems, they are all separately managed by the different Communities. Therefore, the two following sections will be concerned with describing in more details the Walloon and then the Flemish education systems.

2.2.2 The FWB's education system

As mentioned before, this section will be dedicated to understanding the education system in place in the FWB. First, there will be a general overview of the system as whole. Recent developments due to the *Pacte Pour un Enseignement d'Excellence (PEE)* will then also be explained before turning to language teaching specifically, as it is the main concern of this thesis. Lastly, the curricula and benchmarks for modern languages issued by the French Community will be further explained.

2.2.2.1 General overview



As shown by Figure 1, education in the FWB is organized in several networks. Firstly, we find the official education network, called 'Wallonie-Bruxelles Enseignement' (W-BE). This network was up until recently the one managed entirely by Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles. However, since the decree of the 7th of February 2019, some changes were made in the management of this official network.

Figure 1 - Diagram representing the general organization of education (source: enseignement.be).

This decree, voted as one of the results of the *PEE*, separates the Community's regulatory power and its organizational power for the management of the *W-BE* network. Concretely, it means that the organizational power falls into the hands of a Public Body, making the structure of this official network more similar to the others (Cattonar, 2019). Next to the *W-BE* network, we find the official government-aided network, which is the one managed by the provinces and municipalities. We then also find the government-aided free networks divided into confessional education and non-confessional education.

Each of those networks contains a multitude of schools which are each affiliated to a PO (Organizing body). A PO is "l'autorité publique ou la personne morale qui assume la responsabilité de l'organisation d'une école organisée ou subventionnée par la Communauté française" (Pacte scolaire, 1959: art.2). The POs are for the government-aided official education the provinces, municipalities and the CoCoF. Then, for the government-aided free confessional education, they are any religious non-profit-making organizations, religious congregations, dioceses, etc. Finally, for the government-aided free non-confessional education they are mostly non-religious non-profit-making organizations.

The POs are then coordinated and represented by an organizational and representative body. For the government-aided official network we thus find the CPEONS (Conseil des Pouvoirs organisateurs de l'Enseignement Officiel Neutre Subventionné) and the CECF (Conseil de l'Enseignement de Communes et Provinces), for the government-aided free confessional education we find the SeGEC (Secrétariat Général de l'Enseignement Catholique) and for the government-aided free non-confessional education the FELSI (Fédération des Etablissements Libres Subventionnés Indépendants) (Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, 2020).

In the FWB, the Minister of Education takes in charge education starting from pre-primary grade onwards (European Commission, 2019)⁵. As stipulated in the law of 1971 concerning the general structure and organization of secondary education, the Government of the French Community determines some of the ground rules applicable to all networks. That law of 1971 indeed stipulates that the Government determines the form of education and the mentions attributed

⁵ https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/national-description_en

to the different titles, the modes concerning the organization of education and concerning evaluation or control of the pupil's training or also, amongst others, the conditions for the promotion from one year to the other (art.5, §3).

Finally, the secondary education system takes four forms of education: general, technical, artistic and vocational; as well as two streams: transition and qualification (European Commission, 2019). Then, it is also divided into three different grades: the first grade containing the first and second years, the second grade containing the third and fourth years, and finally the third grade containing the fifth and sixth years. It should also be noted that a fourth grade is also organized for the vocational form of the qualification stream (1971's law, art.2, §4).

2.2.2.2 Recent developments: *Pacte pour un Enseignement d'Excellence*

Since January 2015, the French Community has been busy with an almost total renewal of its education system. January 2015 marked the beginning of the elaboration of the *Pacte pour un Enseignement d'Excellence (PEE)* (de Briey, 2017). This pact has as main objective to improve the quality, equity, performance and efficiency of education in the FWB (Cattonar, 2019). It also wants to modernize education, as well as promote a culture of responsibility and evaluation by investing in the actors in education and the pupils, and by improving the efficiency of the governance (Cattonar, 2019). In order to achieve those goals, the FWB's government intends to focus on five themes: knowledge and skills, governance, the qualification stream, an inclusive school and finally the educational organization and quality of life at school (Cattonar, 2019).

In 2017, the project was approved, and its implementation could begin. The very first decree resulting from the pact was voted on the 12th of September 2018, that is the *décret pilotage* (Cattonar, 2019). This decree is described as one of the pillars of the *PEE* as it sets up a performance contract between the government and the schools and also asserts the control of those performances and objectives through the creation of the DCOs (Délégué au Contrat d'Objectifs) and DZs (Directeur de Zone) (Cattonar, 2019). This decree also establishes the main objectives pursued by the pact (Cattonar, 2019).

Other decrees have since then also been voted like the decree of the 6th of February 2019, establishing the autonomy of the official education network, the decree of the 20th of February

2019 concerning free schooling, and the decree of the 13th of March 2019 concerning the new organization of the teaching profession (Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, 2020). A final important decree that was voted on the 2nd of May 2019 is the one concerning the “code qui balise le nouveau tronc commun” (DA-Pacte, 2019).

This decree, which is to be implemented on September of the next school year 2020-2021 for children entering their first year of nursery school, has as main objective the lengthening of the core curriculum up to 15 years old (third year of secondary school) and the complete reorganization of that core curriculum around seven domains: languages, artistic expression, technique and science, human and social science, physical activities, creativity and finally learning to learn (de Briey, 2017). For this purpose, representatives of the government have been put in charge of creating new benchmarks (called ‘référentiels’) for the creation of the different curricula. After a final gathering on the 7th of February 2020, an agreement was decided concerning nine new benchmarks which will define in detail what is expected of the pupils in the domains composing the new core curriculum (La Ligue de l’Enseignement et de l’Education permanente asbl, 2020). The implementation of those new benchmarks which were to be finalized by the end of March 2020 will result in new curricula. Those will have to be ready by September 2020 for preschool education, then September 2021 for the first couple of years of primary education to finally be used in the last year of the core curriculum, i.e. the 3rd year of secondary education, by September 2028 (La Ligue de l’Enseignement et de l’Education permanente asbl, 2020).

2.2.2.3 Language teaching

Language teaching in Belgium is important considering the linguistic plurality of the country. For quite a while, studies have pointed to pupils’ motivation (or lack thereof) or to various types of attitudes towards language learning and have also analyzed pupils’ competence in foreign languages (see: Mettewie, 2015; Van der Wouten & Caspers, 2008; Perrez, 2005; Baelen, Hilgsmann & Rasier, 2008; etc.). Baeten & Verdoodt (1984), for example, compared the language skills of pupils in their last year of secondary education in all three Belgian linguistic communities and showed differences in the mastery of foreign languages between pupils in the different

Communities. The organization of language classes is thus conscientiously taken into account in the organization of the education system and is part of the core curriculum at all levels of the secondary education (law organizing the secondary education, 1971).

In the French Community, pupils entering their first year of secondary education are compelled to have a first modern language class (LM1) for four hours/week. That LM1 can be chosen between three languages: German, English or Dutch (Lebrun, 2003). It is however often recommended to continue the foreign language that they were taught in primary school, even if it does not constitute an obligation. An exception to this rule would be for the schools of the French Community in Brussels, where pupils are obliged to have Dutch as their LM1 at all levels of their secondary education (law organizing the secondary education, 1971: art. 4bis, §5). The organization of language teaching for the second and third grade is then described in the law of the 19th July 1971 concerning the organization of secondary education.

For the two years of the second grade, pupils from all forms and streams of education are compelled to follow a LM1 class for four hours a week and can then also choose to follow a second modern language (LM2) class, also for four hours a week (art. 4bis, §3). For that LM2, pupils can choose between English, Dutch, German, Spanish, Italian or Arab, in function of what languages are organized in the schools in which they are enrolled (Lebrun, 2003). There are, however, exceptions to this organization. In Brussels, pupils can have only two hours a week of their LM1 but are then compelled to have a LM2 for four hours a week (art. 4bis, §3). In Wallonia, pupils can be exempted from following a LM1, after decision of the class council, but are then compelled to follow a LM2 class for four hours a week (art. 4bis, §3).

Finally, for the two years of the third grade, pupils are compelled to follow a modern language class –be it a combination of a LM1, LM2 or LM3– for four hours a week (art. 4bis, §4). A LM1 class is compulsory at the rate of two or four hours a week and they can then choose a LM2 and/or LM3 for four hours a week (art. 4bis, §4). That third modern language can be either English, Dutch, German, Spanish, Italian, Arab or Russian, in function of the school's offer (Lebrun, 2003). Pupils can also, if they so choose, follow a fourth modern language class as an additional activity (art. 4bis, §4). Like for the second grade, a pupil can also be exempted of following a LM1 after decision

of the class council and with the obligation of following a LM2 or LM3 class for four hours a week (art. 4bis, §4).

The manner in which those languages are to be taught, the required levels to be reached at each state of secondary education and the specific objectives of language teaching are then described by the different benchmarks issued by the FWB's Government and the different curricula issued by the different POs of the different education networks. Those will be discussed in the following points.

2.2.2.4 The curricula

In the FWB, the general objectives for education are, since the *Décret Mission* voted on the 24th of July 1997, centralized for all the different education networks. That decree defines for each steps of a pupil's education the skills and knowledge to be learned in terms of 'competences' (Maroy, 2002), a competence to be understood as an "aptitude à mettre en oeuvre [et] un ensemble organisé de savoirs, savoir-faire et d'attitudes permettant d'accomplir un certain nombre de tâches" (*Décret Mission*, 1997: art.5: 1°). Moreover, it serves to standardize the creation and content of the different curricula which are to be based on benchmarks (Maroy, 2002).

In the French Community, those benchmarks are respectively called *Socles de Compétences* and *Compétences Terminales et Savoirs Requis*. The former is the "référentiel présentant de manière structure les compétences de base à exercer jusqu'au terme des huit premières années de l'enseignement obligatoire et celles qui sont à maîtriser à la fin de chacune des étapes de celles-ci" (art. 5: 2°) and is thus applicable from nursery school up until the end of the first grade of secondary education. The latter is the "référentiel présentant de manière structure les compétences dont la maîtrise à un niveau détermine est attendue à la fin de l'enseignement secondaire" (art. 5: 3°) and is thus applicable for the second and third grade of secondary education. About the benchmarks, it is said in the *Décret Mission* that the FWB's Government is in charge of determining them, but also specifies that they will then have to be approved by the Parliament (art. 16 & art. 25).

Concerning the different curricula for the different subjects, the decree specifies that the different POs are competent in their creation, also stipulating that they can delegate the task to their respective organizing and representative body (art. 17, §4 & art. 27, §4). The *Décret Mission* also requires the different actors to adapt the definition of their curricula and pedagogical project following eleven basic guidelines described in art. 9. One of those is for example that they have to adapt it to the interest in knowing other languages than French and in communicating in those other languages (art. 9: 4°). Once a PO has written a curriculum, it has to be approved, in one way or another, by the Community's Government before being implemented.

For the official education network organized by the Community itself, the Government establishes the curricula after consulting with the 'Commission de pilotage', the council for fundamental or secondary education and the unions representing the teaching staff (art. 17, §1 & art. 27, §1). For all the other government-aided education networks, the curricula have to be submitted to the Government that, after consulting with those same parties, will (or not) approve them (art. 17, §2 & art. 27, §3). Furthermore, a 'Commission des programmes' is also in charge of verifying if the curricula enable the pupils to achieve the objectives of the *Socles de Compétences* (art. 17, §3) and a 'Commission des programmes des Humanités générales et technologiques' is in charge of verifying if the curricula enable the pupils to achieve the objectives set in the *Compétences Terminales et Savoirs requis* (art. 27, §3). Those two committees are, however, not competent in making any comments on the pedagogical methods of the different curricula (art. 17, §3 & art. 27, §3).

Specifically looking at the benchmarks for modern languages, the FWB's Government recently issued new ones. During the year 2005, after the release of the results of the survey made by SurveyLang, showing that French-speaking Belgium and England were the only ones in the European Union not to use the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (CEFR) in the design of their benchmarks for modern languages (Meunier, Meurice, Van de Vyver & Wattiez, 2018), the FWB indeed decided in 2013 to rewrite all benchmarks for modern languages in secondary education. These new benchmarks were finalized in 2015 and officially approved in 2017 (Meunier et al., 2018).

For the *Socles de Compétences* they are to be implemented for the 1st year of secondary education since the 1st of September 2018, and for the 2nd year since the 1st September of this school year (Fédération Walloni-Bruxelles, 2020). The new *Compétences Terminales et Savoirs Recquis à l'Issue des Humanités Générales et Technologiques* is in place in the 3rd year since the 1st of September 2018, and in the 4th year since the 1st of September of this school year. For the third grade they will have to be applicable on the 1st of September 2020 for the 5th year, and on the 1st of September 2021 for the 6th year (Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, 2020). The creation of those new benchmarks implied a modification of all curricula for modern languages. As of this year, there exist new curricula for modern languages only up until the second grade of secondary education, i.e. up until the 4th year. The new curricula for the third grade will have to be put in place for the beginning of the next school year.

2.2.2.5 The benchmark for modern languages

As the main concern of this thesis will be to examine the curricula for the second grade, we will now examine more closely the benchmark of the *Compétences Terminales et Savoirs Recquis à l'Issue des Humanités Générales et Technologiques* for modern languages.

This benchmark groups together the two last grades of secondary education in one, and “in accordance with the approach adopted by the Common European Framework of Reference [...] gives priority to communication” (Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, 2017: 8) (more on the CEFR will be said later). It thus incorporates the CEFR in different ways. Firstly, it is subdivided not into objectives per year or grade, but into objectives in order to reach one of the different levels described in the CEFR. For each grade and depending on whether the language is a LM1 or a LM2, the benchmark sets a specific level which is to be attained. Then, and still following the CEFR’s example, it subdivides those levels in five skills: reading comprehension, listening comprehension, writing, speaking with interaction and speaking without interaction. Finally, it also integrates the CEFR by taking into consideration the different components that accompany the learning of a language. It thus articulates itself around, of course, the linguistic components of a language, then the sociolinguistic components and the pragmatic components.

Next to those objectives and the ones set by the *Décret Mission*, it also specifies four more general objectives to be reached with the learning of foreign languages. Those objectives are “to become aware of your own culture and situate it against others”, “the knowledge of modern languages as a factor of European and worldwide integration”, “the development of a positive attitude towards cultural interaction” and finally “the intercultural mediation to strengthen the ties between communities” (Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, 2017: 8).

Looking at the organization of the benchmark, it is cut into ‘unités d’acquis d’apprentissage’ (UAA) which are defined as being “un ensemble cohérent d’acquis d’apprentissage susceptible d’être évalué” (Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, 2017: 3), further defining an ‘acquis d’apprenstissage’ as “ce qu’un élève sait, comprend, est capable de réaliser au terme d’un processus d’apprentissage” (Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, 2017: 3).

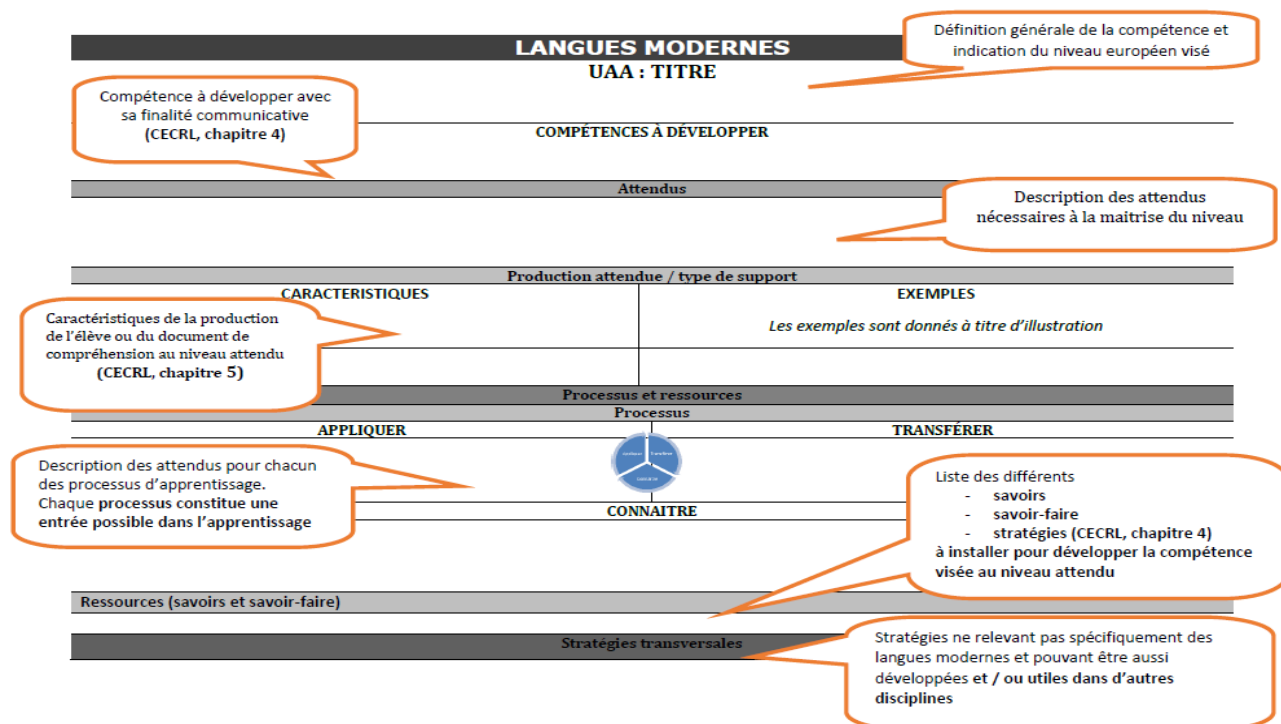


Figure 2 - Organisation of a UAA (Compétences Terminales et Savoirs Requis à l'Issue des Humanités Générales et Technologiques, 2017).

A UAA is then organized as showed by Figure 2 hereabove. The title, including the definition and the level of that UAA, is then further defined in terms of the skill which is to be developed for this specific UAA. Then comes a description of what is to be expected for the specific level, followed

by what the pupil is supposed to be able to produce at such level. It then goes on describing the learning process by dividing it into three main domains: apply, transfer and know. Finally, it ends with what knowledge and strategies are to be developed at this stage of the pupil's linguistic abilities.

2.2.3 Flanders' education system

So far, the education system in place in the FWB has been explained, but as this MA thesis deals with both the French- and Dutch-speaking communities, we will now turn to the education system in place in Flanders. As was the case the previous section, there will first be a general overview of the Flemish system as a whole, as well as an explanation on the *Masterplan* which contributed to the modernization of secondary education in many different ways. We will then turn to language teaching specifically and, lastly, the curricula and benchmarks for modern languages issued by the Flemish Community will be further explained.

2.2.3.1 General overview

Since the revision of the constitution in July 1988, the Flemish Community has become competent in managing education on her own. As mentioned previously, since that revision, the Flemish and the Walloon education systems have been evolving separately. Just like for the FWB, the Flemish Community then issued a certain number of decrees describing more precisely how their education system was to be organized.

One of the very first decrees, and a rather important one, was the so-called *ARGO* decree, issued on the 19th of December 1988, specifying how the education system was to be managed. This decree specified three main concepts serving as the guidelines for the management of the Flemish system, and which are still being used today in all the main decisions regarding education policies, namely: 'democratization', 'empowerment' and finally 'decentralization' (Fannes, Vranckx, Simon & Depaepe, 2013). This decree first resulted in the Flemish Community transferring its power of organization to an independent committee, i.e. the *Autonome Raad* but also implied that the Flemish Community intended to give more competences for the

management of education to the local authorities, such as the *schoolraden*⁶ (Fannes et al., 2013). A later revision of this decree in 1998 also specified that the system would have a tripolar structure composed of the *Raad van het Gemeenschapsonderwijs*, the *regionale scholengroepen* and the *schoolraden* (Fannes et al., 2013).

Just like in the FWB, and mainly due to the *Pacte Scolaire* of 1959, the Flemish education system is also divided in different networks. Although, the Flemish Community officially recognizes only three networks, as indicated on the Community's website *Vlaanderen.be*⁷. The different networks are divided into two main networks: the official and the free education networks. The official network is then subdivided into two other networks: the governmental network, called *GO!*, and the government-aided official network. The free network is formally called the government-aided free network.

Also due to the *Pacte Scolaire*, those networks are managed by different POs. The *GO!*, which is the Flemish Community's network, is run by an independent organization and not by the government itself (since the decree of 1988), namely the 'Raad van het Gemeenschapsonderwijs'. The reason for the creation of this independent body was mainly to avoid the double role of the 'Vlaamse Ministerie van Onderwijs en Vorming' (Ministry of education) in managing education as a whole as well as managing the government's network (Fannes et al., 2013). Next to that first official network, we find the government-aided official network, which is made up of the provinces' and municipalities' education network. Here, we find two different POs: the 'Onderwijsvereniging van Steden en Gemeenten' (OVSG) for the municipalities and the 'Provinciaal Onderwijs Vlaanderen' (POV) for the provinces. Finally, the government-aided free network brings together different juridical or physical individuals and/or private organizations in one and the same network. The largest group composing this network is formed by the Catholic education, which has as PO the 'Katholiek Onderwijs Vlaanderen'. Next to Catholic education we also find other types of confessional schools such as Protestant, Islamic or Jewish schools, managed for example by the 'Raad van Inrichtende Machten van het Protestants-Christelijk

⁶ School boards

⁷ All this information over the organization of the different Flemish networks can be found on the Community's website, at the URL <https://www.vlaanderen.be/onderwijs-en-vorming/organisatie-van-het-onderwijs/structuur/officieel-en-vrij-onderwijs-onderwijsnetten-en-koepels#onderwijsnetten-en-koepels>

Onderwijs' (IPCO). We then also find other POs for non-confessional education such as the 'Federatie van Onafhankelijke Pluralistische Emancipatorische Methodescholen' (FOPEM), the 'Federatie Steinerscholen' or the 'Vlaams Onderwijs OverlegPlatform' (VOOP).

Now looking more specifically at the organization of secondary education only, it is, according to the Flemish Community's website for education, regulated by the *Codex Secundair Onderwijs* as well as the decree of the 19th of July 2002 concerning secondary education (Het Vlaams Ministerie van Onderwijs en Vorming, 2019). Those two decrees form the basis for the organization, the management and the structure of all of the different forms that secondary education can take. In addition to those, the different *Regeerakkoords* also have a rather important impact on how the education system is structured and managed. The most recent one was the *Regeerakkoord Vlaamse Regering 2014-2019*, voted on the 23rd of July 2014 and which had a rather important impact on education in general but also on secondary education specifically. Those 'governing agreements' touch more than just the field of education as they form a sort of guidebook for the Flemish Government to follow in his management of the Community; for education, this *Regeerakkoord* was of importance as it voted the complete modernization of secondary education through the implementation of the *Masterplan* (Vlaamse Regering, 2014: 99).

2.2.3.2 The *Masterplan Hervorming Secundair Onderwijs*

In September 2010, following the results of Monard's report *Kwaliteit en kansen voor elke leerling. Een visie op de vernieuwing van het secundair onderwijs*, Minister Pascal Smet introduced the discussion note entitled *Mensen doen schitteren* (Fannes et al., 2013). This discussion note finally resulted (on the 4th of June 2013) in the voting of the *Masterplan Hervorming Secundair Onderwijs*, which had as its main goal the review and modernization of secondary education regarding its organization, structure and management. In accordance with this proposed modernization, several decrees have since then been voted and implemented, effectively changing in one way or another secondary education in Flanders.

Lievens (2018 & 2019) points to some decrees that have been voted since then and which are, for example: the 9th March 2018 decree concerning part-time education in the arts, the 30th March 2018 decree concerning dual learning or the 14th December 2018 decree concerning the

educational objectives for the first grade of secondary education. The *Masterplan* also had as consequence the revision of some existing decrees such as the *inschrijvingsdecreet* concerning the enrolment of pupils in the first year of secondary school, or the so-called *M-decreet* concerning pupils with specific educational needs; finally, some changes have also been made to the training and education of future teachers. More importantly still, the *Masterplan* also had an impact on the *codex secundair onderwijs* and effectively changed the way the different forms of secondary education are now organized in Flanders.

The 20th April 2018 decree amended the *codex secundair onderwijs* on several points, changing the way secondary education is now structured. For the sake of clarity, we will first discuss what has not changed in order to have a first idea as to how secondary education is organized and we will then go on filling the gaps left with the amendments and changes that have been brought to its structure and form. In the *codex secundair onderwijs*, we can see that secondary education in the Flemish Community is also organized in mainly three grades, each containing two years, with also the possibility of a fourth grade specifically for vocational secondary education (viz. beroepssecundair onderwijs, or BSO) (art. 124). The decree for the amendment of the *codex secundair onderwijs* also specifies that secondary education is organized in three grades, but adds that for the third grade, a third year is possible for the education form referred to as ‘secundair-na-secundair’, abbreviated Se-n-Se (art. 10). This education form is specifically reserved for the technical secondary education (technisch secundair onderwijs, or TSO) and secondary education in the arts (kuntssecundair onderwijs, or KSO) and is strongly job-oriented⁸. It offers to the pupils the possibility to specialize in one specific area or subject such as architecture, home design, economy and modern languages, Latin, horse riding and care, tourism, and many others⁹.

The biggest change brought by the decree for the amendment of the *codex secundair onderwijs* of the 28th of March 2018 is probably the reorganization of the educational offer as well as the overall organization of the full-time secondary education (Bourgeois & Crevits, 2018). For the first grade, the Flemish Government wished to strengthen its exploratory function through the

⁸ More information can be found on the website *Vlaanderen.be* at the URL: <https://www.vlaanderen.be/onderwijs-en-vorming/secundair-onderwijs/secundair-na-secundair-se-n-se>

⁹ A complete list of the educational offer of the Se-n-Se can be found at the URL: <https://data-onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/onderwijsaanbod/structuur.aspx?hs=311&s=R&sl=15>

improvement of the core curriculum as well as adding the possibility for differentiation (Lievens, 2018). To this end, they added periods to the pupils' schedules, dedicated to the core curriculum. The first grade, divided in two streams of education (viz. stream-A and stream-B), is thus now composed of: for the first year A- and B-stream, 27/32 periods/week of common classes; for the second year A-stream, 25/32 periods/week of common classes and finally for the second year B-stream, 20/32 periods/week, the rest of the schedule to be filled in with other options or packets (Lievens, 2018). A 'pakket' is defined by the decree amending the *codex secundair onderwijs* as "een of meerdere vakken waarmee de doelen van de overeenstemmende basisoptie worden gerealiseerd"¹⁰ (art. 2: 3°).

For the second and third grade, the reorganization was even more consequent than simply adding periods dedicated to the core curriculum. The Flemish Government decided here to update the entire educational offer and reorganize the different possible course programs as a sort of matrix (as showed by Figure 3), actually resulting in a diminution of the previously-existing educational offer (Lievens, 2018). As indicated in the decree voted on the 28th of March 2018, this Matrix had to be implemented on the 1st of September 2019.

	FINALITEIT DOORSTROOM		DUBBELE FINALITEIT	FINALITEIT ARBEIDSMARKT	
	DOMEIN- OVERSCHRUIJEND ASO	DOMEIN- GEBONDEN TSO/KSO	TSO/KSO	(D)BSO	BUSO (ov 3)
TAAL & CULTUUR					
STEM					
KUNST & CREATIE					
LAND- & TUINBOUW					
ECONOMIE & ORGANISATIE					
MAATSCHAPPIJ & WELZIJN					
SPORT					
VOEDING & HORECA					

Figure 3 - Matrix secundair onderwijs (Lievens, 2018).

¹⁰ Eng.: "one or more courses for which the objectives of the corresponding option are achieved."

Initially, one of the objectives of the *masterplan* was to completely dissolve the division of the system in four forms, i.e. in general secondary education (ASO¹¹), technical secondary education (TSO¹²), vocational secondary education (BSO¹³) and secondary education in the arts (KSO¹⁴). However, this measure was eventually abandoned and these four forms were integrated in the new matrix as a third dimension (Lievens, 2018). The implementation of this new matrix implies a rather big change in the organization of secondary education as it specifies that the course programs are now divided and organized in three dimensions: the ‘finaliteit’ dimension, the ‘studiedomein’ dimension and finally, the already-mentioned dimension concerning the form of education. The first dimension, the vertical one, represents the different orientations called ‘finaliteit’. A ‘finaliteit’ is defined by the 28th March 2018 decree amending the *codex secundair onderwijs* as a “begrip dat aangeeft waarop studierichtingen prioritair voorbereiden, namelijk op het hoger onderwijs, op de arbeidsmarkt of op beide”¹⁵ (art. 2: 3°). This new matrix thus counts three ‘finaliteiten’, namely the ‘doorstroom finaliteit’, preparing for higher education, the ‘dubbele finaliteit’, preparing for both higher education and the labor market and finally the ‘arbeidsmarkt finaliteit’, preparing for the labor market only (Lievens, 2018). Next to this vertical dimension, we find the horizontal dimension representing the different education domains. A ‘studiedomein’ is defined by the 28th March 2018 decree as “een inhoudelijk samenhangend thematisch geheel van studierichtingen die van abstract tot praktisch geordend zijn”¹⁶. There are in total eight ‘studiedomeinen’ as indicated in the matrix: language and culture, Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), art and creation, agriculture and horticulture, economy and enterprise, society and welfare, sport and finally, alimentation and food service industry (Lievens, 2018).

For schools, the implementation of this matrix has also had a rather important effect as it meant that from then on, they had to be organized in function of those related domains and orientations,

¹¹ Algemeen secundair onderwijs

¹² Technisch secundair onderwijs

¹³ Beroepssecundair onderwijs

¹⁴ Kunstssecundair onderwijs

¹⁵ Engl.: “concept that indicates for what educational orientations primarily prepare, namely higher education, the labor market or both.”

¹⁶ Engl.: “a substantially coherent thematic set of course programs which is arranged from abstract to practical.”

and not only in function of the education form anymore (Lievens, 2018). Three different types of school have thus arisen and Lievens (2018) explains that these are:

- 'domeinscholen', which are mainly organized following the horizontal dimension of the matrix, meaning that they offer at least one course program for each finaliteit,
- 'campusscholen', which are organized after both the horizontal and vertical dimensions of the matrix, meaning that they offer a course program in at least two domains for each finaliteit,
- 'verticaalscholen' which are, as their name indicates, organized following the vertical dimension of the matrix, meaning that they offer a course program in only one and the same finaliteit and form of education.

2.2.3.3 Language teaching

As already mentioned previously when explaining the FWB's system, language teaching is of utmost importance in Belgium, considering the plurality of languages found in our country. The importance of knowing several languages is even written in the Flemish benchmarks for modern languages, considering our multicultural society and the always growing globalization¹⁷. In Flanders, depending on the type of education the pupils find themselves in, the compulsory subjects will be slightly different. However, for most of their secondary education, pupils will have to follow at least one modern language class as part of their core curriculum. What is interesting to mention is that, for most educational types, French is considered as first modern language (Peters, Noreillie & Puimège, 2020). It should also be noted that in the *codex secundair onderwijs*, the different subjects constituting the 'basisvorming' are still divided in forms of education, even with the implementation of the new matrix.

When we first look at the first grade of secondary education, we can see that French is part of the core curriculum, even if it is different in function of the streams. Pupils of the first year A-stream are obliged to have a French class, and possibly an English class, while pupils in the B-stream only have to have French, with no possibility for English as part of the core curriculum (*codex secundair*

¹⁷ <https://www.onderwijsdoelen.be/uitgangspunten/4721>

onderwijs, art. 153). During their second year in the A-stream, pupils have to have French as well as English as part of their core curriculum, while for pupils in the B-stream the only compulsory language is still French (*codex secundair onderwijs*, art. 154).

Then, for the second grade, it is stated in the *codex secundair onderwijs* that pupils in the ASO have to have French and English as compulsory modern language classes, in the TSO and KSO French or English, and for the BSO no modern language class is described as being part of the core curriculum, even it constitutes an possible option (art. 156). Finally, for the third grade, and as stipulated in art. 157 of the *codex secundair onderwijs*, pupils in the ASO have to have French as first modern language and can then choose between English and German. Then, pupils in the TSO and KSO have to have either French or English as compulsory language classes, while in the BSO, they are not obliged to have a modern language class as part of their core curriculum, even if again, it can be chosen as a possible option.

Going deeper into the organization of modern languages classes for the second and third grade in the ASO form of education, it is also stipulated in the *lessentabel 2019-2020* that in the second grade and as part of the common education, pupils have to have three periods/week of French and three periods of English. While during the third grade, pupils will still have three periods/week of French, but only two periods/week of either English or German as part of their core curriculum.

2.2.3.4 The curricula

As Verckens et al. (2009) mention in their critical analysis of official documents concerning education, the Flemish government wishes to have a role of coordination and facilitation in order to give as much autonomy as possible to the different school networks. The Flemish Government has to follow the *Pacte Scolaire*, just as the FWB Government does, as this is a law that was voted at a federal level. In the *Pacte Scolaire*, it is clearly stipulated that each PO is, for example, free to design his own curricula (Fannes et al., 2013: 59). This liberty of the POs to develop their own curricula is also stated in the *codex secundair onderwijs* where it is stated that these curricula are also a way for the education inspectorate to check the quality of a school (art. 147/3: §1). In that same article 147/3 it is however stipulated that even if the POs and networks are competent in designing their own curricula, they also have the obligation to follow the benchmarks to the letter.

The Flemish Government thus keeps all those networks more or less united and guarantees equitable and equal education to all pupils in Flanders by setting up frames and inspection procedures to make sure that the POs follow those basic regulations (Verckens et al., 2009: 28). As a result, all the different curricula of the different school networks in the Flemish Community have to be approved by the government before being implemented (*codex secundair onderwijs*, art. 147/3: §1). What this means practically is that the final objectives of education are determined by the Flemish Government, but the manner in which they are met are for the networks and POs to determine (Fannes et al., 2013).

More specifically, for the curricula of the *GO!*, the 'Raad van het Gemeenschapsonderwijs' is in charge of developing the curricula used in the official education network, as it is that body which is in charge of the whole network. For the different modern languages curricula, they are divided by grade and language. It thus means that there is, a curriculum for French for the first grade, another one for the second grade and a third one for the third grade, but also three other curricula for English, and three for each of the other modern languages curricula.

For the first grade, and due to the revision of the *eindtermen*, new curricula have been set up for the present academic year (Lievens, 2019), however for the second and third grade, the latest version of the modern languages curricula has been implemented since 2012, after the decree of the 8th of Mai 2009 concerning the quality of education (Fannes et al., 2013).

Considering that the curricula have to strive for the objectives stated in the benchmarks, we will turn to a description of those benchmarks, called *eindtermen*, in the next section. More specifically, we will talk about the benchmarks for modern languages for the second grade, as this is the grade which is of interest for this MA thesis.

2.2.3.5 The benchmark for modern languages

As already explained before, the benchmarks represent the way a community's government can ensure that all the curricula of the different networks share the same main goals, at least in terms of the final objectives of education. In the Flemish Community, those benchmarks are called *ontwikkelingsdoelen* for nursery and primary education and *eindtermen* for secondary education (Fannes et al., 2013). More precisely, the Flemish *eindtermen* are defined in the *codex secundair*

onderwijs as “minimumdoelen die het Vlaams Parlement noodzakkelijk en bereikbaar acht voor een bepaalde leerlingenpopulatie”¹⁸ and it sets the “minimum kennis, inzicht, vaardigheden en attitudes [die] elke school de maatschappelijke opdracht heeft om [...] te bereiken”¹⁹ (art. 139: §1). The Vlaamse Ministerie van Onderwijs en Vorming is responsible for the design of those benchmarks and there exist several of them in function of the grade, form of education and subject. The *codex secundair onderwijs* indeed stipulates that they are separately determined for the first grade of the A-stream, the first grade of the B-stream, the second grade in function of the ‘finaliteit’ and the third grade in function of the ‘finaliteit’ (art. 139: §3).

For modern languages more specifically, the one which is of interest here is that specifically designed for the second grade ASO, called *Eindtermen: Moderne Vreemde Talen Frans-Engels* and which can be found, amongst others, on the website *onderwijsdoelen.be*²⁰. Firstly, it can be observed that the benchmark is divided into six main points. The first five are related to the description of the different skills and what the pupils are to be able to do with those different skills, i.e. first the receptive skills: listening and reading; and then the productive skills: speaking, speaking in interaction, and writing. The last point is dedicated to the description of linguistic knowledge and attitudes. For the knowledge part of that last point, the benchmark makes a difference between the necessary knowledge pupils have to reach in French and the knowledge specifically concerning English.

Next to this description of the different skills, knowledge and attitudes, we can also find attached to this benchmark a link redirecting to another web page, viz. *uitgangspunten*²¹, explaining,

¹⁸ Engl.: “minimum objectives which the Flemish Parliament deems necessary and reachable for a specific learners population”

¹⁹ Engl.: “minimum knowledge, insight, skills and attitudes that each school has the public duty to reach”

²⁰ No other pdf or paper version was found. It appears to be only available in the format used on the website with the URL: https://www.onderwijsdoelen.be/resultaten?intro=secundair-onderwijs&filters=onderwijsniveau%255B0%255D%255Bid%255D%3D0767c5a44ffdc8a05697bbe5b2021167fb49cf6e%26onderwijsniveau%255B0%255D%255Btitel%255D%3DSecundair%2520onderwijs%26onderwijsniveau%255B0%255D%255Bwaarde%255D%3DSecundair%2520onderwijs%26onderwijssoort%255B0%255D%255Bid%255D%3Dd614031b440b32c6f1441ccde2cdc6620b9f2977%26onderwijssoort%255B0%255D%255Btitel%255D%3DSecundair%2520onderwijs%2520%253E%2520Secundair%26onderwijssoort%255B0%255D%255Bwaarde%255D%3DSecundair%26so_graad%255B0%255D%255Bid%255D%3D4a3baa9f1d45654512ad68bffa369060cbdd06%26so_graad%255B0%255D%255Btitel%255D%3DSecundair%2520onderwijs%2520%253E%2520Secundair%2520%253E%2520de%2520graad%26so_graad%255B0%255D%255Bwaarde%255D%3D2de%2520graad

²¹ Engl.: key points

amongst others, the general objectives or the different levels to be reached at the different stages of education²². This document is divided into five main points. The first point is called 'situering' and basically serves as an introduction to the benchmark and a reminder of the linguistic context and the importance of learning languages. The second point, called 'accenten bij de eintermen en ontwikkelingsdoelen MVT', describes the general objectives of the benchmarks for the different levels of education as well as briefly explains what the compulsory language classes are at the different stages of a pupil's education. Then comes the 'funderende doelstellingen op basis van een leerlijn' in which explanations are provided on how all the benchmarks for modern languages are built in conjunction with one another and how they form a continuous learning trajectory, going from the beginning of primary education, up until the end of secondary education.

The fourth point in this document is probably the longest and most important one. Called 'structureren eindtermen/ontwikkelingsdoelen', it explains how the different benchmarks for modern languages are structured. There, information is provided on the five different skills, the language task –which is defined as what someone does with a language–, types of texts which are to be used in a modern language class, the characteristics of those texts and also a detailed description of what a pupil is supposed to be able to do with a language –divided by receptive and productive skills as well as four different processing levels. Further it also defines the attitudes and strategies as well as the linguistic knowledge a pupil has to have regarding vocabulary and grammar. Finally, this point ends with an explanation on the importance of culture in a language class.

The fifth and final point of this text concerns the incorporation of the CEFR into the different benchmarks. It is in this point that the importance of the CEFR is explained, as well as the different levels that it sets. More than just explaining the CEFR and its different levels, this point also stipulates what level of the CEFR a pupil is supposed to reach in function of his grade and the education form he finds himself in. For the second grade ASO, we can thus see that pupils are supposed to reach, at the end of the second grade, a A2/B1-level for listening and reading, a B1-

²² This can be found at the URL: <https://www.onderwijsdoelen.be/uitgangspunten/4721>

level for speaking without interaction, speaking in interaction and writing, and have an overall B1-level.

2.3 The Common European Framework of Reference

In 2001, the *European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment* (CEFR) was released (Council of Europe, 2001). That text from the Council of Europe had three main objectives (Lallement & Pierret, 2007: 9):

1. *“parvenir à une plus grande unité parmi ses membres [...] par l’adoption d’une démarche commune dans le domaine culturel”*
2. *“[...] préserver la culture [...] et favoriser la mobilité, la compréhension réciproque et la coopération en Europe.”*
3. *“éliminer les préjugés et la discrimination.”*

It is thus clear through the reading of those objectives that the CEFR sees language learning as a way to provide a unifying framework for the learning of modern languages in the different European countries and cultures. However, it still mainly stays a learning tool which proposes teaching methods, establishes levels of proficiency thanks to different criteria, defines language acts and skills required to communicate in a foreign language and also provides pointers for the evaluation of such skills (Lallement & Pierret, 2007).

Concerning language learning and teaching, the CEFR is organized around two objectives. First it wants to encourage the different people and organizations involved in language teaching to ask themselves questions about what it means to learn a language, such as “what do we do during spoken interaction?”, “how do we learn a language?” or “how do we determine our goals?” (Lallement & Pierret, 2007: 10). Then, its second objective is to allow for an easier way of exchanging information between teachers and learners. This concretely means that teachers have to ask themselves certain questions in order for their pupils to know what is actually expected of them, such questions are, for example, “what will the pupil need to use the language for?”, “what does he have to learn to be able to learn the language?”, “who is he?” or “how long does he have to learn?” (Lallement & Pierret, 2007: 10). Through the wording of these objectives, the CEFR

shows that it does not only encourages people to learn foreign languages, but also and mainly that it helps learners and teachers to communicate with each other in order for the pupils to know what they are supposed to be able to do with/in the language. It also shows that the CEFR really intends on people reflecting on what happens when learning a language, what it means to learn a language, and what we learn a language for (Lallement & Pierret, 2007). In order to reach those objectives, the CEFR thus defined, described and determined what a learner has to be able to do (communication), what he should know, what sort of attitudes are recommended or expected, what language use is, and how the different proficiency levels can be characterized (Lallement & Pierret, 2007).

2.3.1 What is language use?

The CEFR adopted an action-oriented ('can do') approach which sees language use as "[comprising] the actions performed by persons who as individuals and as social agents develop a range of competences, both general and in particular communicative language competences." (Council of Europe, 2001: 9). Looking deeper into what a "general competence" is, the CEFR defines it as a combination of knowledge, skills, existential skills and the pupils' ability to learn. Firstly, knowledge is defined as "knowledge resulting from experience [...] and from more formal learning" (Council of Europe, 2001: 11). Here, knowledge is thus to be understood as a general knowledge of the world. Then, skills are to be understood as "the ability to carry out procedures" (Council of Europe, 2001: 11) and existential skills are "the sum of the individual characteristics, personality traits and attitudes which concerns [...] willingness to engage with other people in social interaction" (Council of Europe, 2001: 11-12). Finally, someone's ability to learn is formally defined as the ability to "[mobilize] existential competence, declarative knowledge and skills" as well as "knowing how, or being disposed to discover "otherness"" (Council of Europe, 2001: 12).

The other kind of competence which is described as being of interest by the CEFR when learning languages is the "communicative language competence". Following their definition, this competence is composed of three components, i.e. a linguistic component, a sociolinguistic component and a pragmatic one. The linguistic component is defined as including "lexical, phonological, syntactical knowledge and skills and other dimensions of language as system, independently of the sociolinguistic value of its variations and the pragmatic functions of its

realisations” (Council of Europe, 2001: 13). Concretely speaking, it thus refers to the linguistic knowledge of a learner concerning the foreign language he is learning. Then, the sociolinguistic component of this competence is defined as “[referring] to the sociocultural conditions of language use” and thus takes into consideration all the different social conventions to take into consideration when using a language such as “rules of politeness, norms governing relations between generations, sexes, classes and social groups [etc.]” (Council of Europe, 2001: 13). The pragmatic component then finally refers to “the functional use of linguistic resources [...], drawing on scenarios or scripts of interactional exchanges” and they also specify that “it also concerns the mastery of discourse, cohesion and coherence, the identification of text types and forms, irony and parody” (Council of Europe, 2001: 13).

The combination of those two types of competences, the general one and the communicative language one, form together language use. The CEFR then also refers to the difference between productive language use and receptive language use, and it then also describes the types of domains in which language can be used, namely the personal, public, occupational, and educational domains (Lallement & Pierret, 2007). The public domain “refers to everything connected with ordinary social interaction” and the personal one “compromises family relations and individual social practices”, while the occupational domain is concerned with “a person’s activities and relations in the exercise of his or her occupation” and the educational one specifically refers to “the learning/training context [...] where the aim is to acquire specific knowledge or skills” (Council of Europe, 2001: 15). The components of the two kinds of competences, as well as all the other components of this action-oriented approach are then further used by the CEFR to describe what the learners have to learn and be able to do with a foreign language to reach a certain level of proficiency.

2.3.2 The different levels of proficiency

One of the best-known contributions of the CEFR is that it has set different proficiency levels, commonly called: A1 and A2, B1 and B2, C1 and C2. Those different levels are particularly useful to measure the proficiency as well as the progression of a pupil in the mastery of a foreign language (Lallement & Pierret, 2007: 9). The determination of those different proficiency levels has proven particularly useful for the teaching of a language and it has also helped the CEFR reach

its objective of clearly stating what is expected of a learner (Council of Europe, 2001). The CEFR also presents those proficiency levels as useful in the learning of a language as it is a progressive and continuous activity and, for teaching purposes, it is thus useful to be able to separate the different steppingstones to be reached by a pupil at different points in time of his learning of a foreign language. The definitions of those different levels are also presented as a tool for educational inspection but also as a way of facilitating the collaboration between the different “educational sectors and institutions offering language services” (Council of Europe, 2001: 17).

Even if the CEFR supports the positive and practical applications of such proficiency levels, it does not forget to note that the learning process of a language is still mainly personal and continuous, meaning that not everyone will achieve the same proficiency at the same time, nor will everyone learn the different aspects and components of a language at the same pace (Council of Europe, 2001: 17). It also specifies that those levels represent a vertical dimension and that the learning of a language is also to be understood on an horizontal dimension as “learners acquire the proficiency to perform in a wider range of communicative activities [and] is not merely a question of moving up a vertical scale” (Council of Europe, 2001: 17). They thus warn us to be careful in considering those levels “as if they were a linear measurement scale like a ruler” (Council of Europe, 2001: 17). Concretely those levels can be summed up as showed on Figure 4:

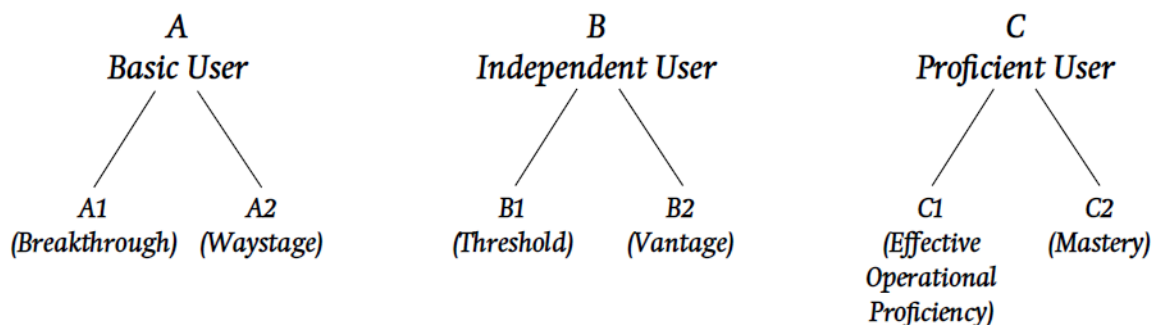


Figure 4 - CEFR's proficiency levels (Council of Europe, 2001).

The CEFR then precisely defines what a learner is supposed to be able to do with a language when he has reached one of those six different levels in different ways. It firstly sets a general explanation, to then go on and explain more in detail what is expected of the learners reaching the different levels for the different skills, i.e. for listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken

production and writing (see appendix 1). As its goal is not only the teaching or learning of a language, but also the assessment of language learning, the CEFR then also provides tools for how to use the levels scale in assessing a learner's production.

2.3.3 The CEFR in practice

In practice the CEFR has three main applications: it serves as basis for the designing of foreign language curricula, it can be used to organize language certification and assessment and finally, it is also used to set up self-directed language learning (Lallement & Pierret, 2007).

What will be analyzed in the present MA thesis is its application in designing modern language curricula in the French as well as in the Flemish Community. It has already been previously noted that both communities make use of the CEFR in their benchmarks (and take it into consideration in the curricula), even if the Flemish Community has been using it for a bit longer than the FWB, as indicated by the survey realized in 2005 by SurveyLang, which indicated that the FWB, alongside England, were the only European countries not to use the CEFR (Meunier, Meurice, Van de Vyver & Wattiez, 2018). The CEFR includes text types, themes, guidelines and many other useful tools and concepts which can be used in the teaching, learning and assessment of a foreign language in the academic context (Lallement & Pierret, 2007).

3 Methodology and research questions

3.1 Research questions

As previously mentioned, this MA thesis aims to provide a comparison between the teaching of foreign languages in two of the three communities of Belgium, i.e. the French-speaking Community and the Dutch-speaking Community. The stress will be specifically put on the different curricula issued by those two communities and the comparison will focus on three main research questions.

First, the curricula for modern languages themselves will be studied. They will be analyzed thoroughly in order to answer this first research question:

- 1) To what extent do the language teaching curricula issued by the Dutch-speaking and French-speaking Community of Belgium differ?

For this first research question, the differences between the different curricula, as well as the similarities, will be analyzed. Just by looking at the organization of the education system in Belgium, we can already find both differences and similarities between the two communities (all of which have been explained in detail in the previous chapter). It can thus be expected that in the curricula for modern languages, both communities use similar concepts, such as for example, those mentioned in the CEFR, as they both claim to use it as a reference in the building of their benchmarks²³. However, it can also be expected that the curricula of the two communities might differ on several points. The education systems of the communities have evolved separately since the communitarization of education (Wynants & Paret, 1998) and it is thus likely that they will not organize the teaching of modern languages in the exact same manner.

After having looked at the curricula on a theoretical level, a second question more practically oriented will be asked. It concerns the examination of how the curricula are used in practice. Here,

²³ See *Compétences terminales et savoirs requis à l'issue des humanités générales et technologiques: langues modernes* and *uitgangspunten* at <https://www.onderwijsdoelen.be/uitgangspunten/4721>.

the way the teachers effectively use the curricula will thus be analyzed through this second research question which sounds as follows:

2) How are the curricula used by the teachers in their teaching activities?

Further, and since this is mainly a comparative study, a comparison will be made between the teachers in the *GO!* network for the Flemish Community and the teachers in the *W-BE* network for the French-speaking Community. The sub-question which will here be answered will be: “to what extent does the manner in which the curricula are used differ from one community to the other?”.

For the third and final question, we will turn to the actors involved in language teaching, i.e. the teachers. It seems relevant when analyzing the different curricula to also look at how those curricula are received by those who are compelled to use and follow them. The final research question of this MA thesis will thus be formulated as follows:

3) What are the modern language teachers’ attitudes towards the curricula?

Just as for the second question, the attitudes of the teachers of the two communities will be compared. Hence, a sub-question will be answered: “to what extent do the teachers’ attitudes differ in function of the community in which they teach?”.

Those three research questions, and their corresponding sub-questions, will serve as guidelines for the research presented in this MA thesis. All in all, the final objective is thus to analyze the different curricula to uncover the implications of the presence of different education systems in place in a single country –namely, Belgium– for the teaching of a single subject: modern languages. Another goal to be reached will also be to examine how those curricula, serving as educational regulations, are received by those having to use them: the teachers.

3.2 Methodology

To carry out this MA thesis and answer the research questions, a specific methodology was used. This section further explains and details the specificities of how the different curricula were analyzed, as well as how the data concerning the language teachers was collected. As a different

methodology was used in function of the research question, this section will be divided in three parts, one for each question.

3.2.1 The comparison of the curricula

To answer the first research question concerning the comparison of the different curricula, a qualitative approach was adopted since to compare a curriculum with another is mainly a matter of careful reading and qualitative analysis. In order to facilitate this qualitative analysis, and the subsequent comparison, the different curricula were examined based on a set of pre-defined criteria. After thorough consideration, the following criteria were defined:

- 1) The general organization of the curriculum: presence of a table of contents, introduction, key concepts covered in the introduction, structure/organization of the curriculum (by skills, knowledge, levels, a combination, other), etc.
- 2) Key terms: what the key terms of the curriculum are and how they are explained and/or defined.
- 3) 'User's manual': presence of an explanatory note on how to use the curriculum and/or what is to be found in it.
- 4) Skills: the weight, place and role given to the different skills.
- 5) Knowledge: the weight, place and role given to knowledge.
- 6) Values: explanation on the values and philosophy of the network.
- 7) Assessment: what kind of assessment is proposed and what is to be tested for evaluations leading to certification vs. formative evaluations.
- 8) Themes: what the proposed themes are and what their nature is (compulsory, optional, recommended, a combination).
- 9) Expected threshold level: what level is expected overall, for each skill and for knowledge.
- 10) Examples: are there examples of exercises, sequences or other?
- 11) Language learning framework/methods: how language teaching and learning is framed in terms of methodology/teaching approach.
- 12) Objectives: what they are and if they are clearly stated or not.
- 13) Attention drawn to culture: what place, weight and role is given to culture.
- 14) CEFR: how the CEFR is used in the different curricula and to what extent.

Before going any further, it is necessary to mention which curricula were used for this study. As the main objective of this MA thesis is to compare the curricula for modern languages in the Flemish Community and the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, it was necessary that those curricula would be the equivalent of each other. Therefore, they were taken from equivalent education networks. They are all used in the official education network, meaning the one being managed in both communities by the government, or an entity directly connected to the government. As such, the two networks in which the analyzed curricula were taken are the network *Onderwijs van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap (GO!)* for the Flemish Community, and the network *Wallonie-Bruxelles Enseignement (W-BE)* for the FWB. Then, equivalent forms of education were chosen. In that respect, the general form of secondary education of the transition stream was chosen for the *W-BE* network, and the general secondary education, or ASO, was chosen for the *GO!* network. Not only had the different curricula to be from equivalent networks and forms of education, but an equivalent grade was also to be chosen. Since in the FWB the new benchmarks issued in 2017 are only being applied this year to the whole of the second grade and will only start to be used in the third grade next academic year, it was decided to consider for this MA thesis the curricula for modern languages for the second grade only, in both communities.

For each community, two curricula were thus chosen. Indeed, in the FWB, two kinds of modern languages are distinguished: the first modern language (LM1) and the second modern language (LM2). It was thus decided to take into consideration both curricula for LM1 and LM2, which group together three Germanic languages: English, Dutch and German. It could also be noted that the LM2 curriculum is also used for Spanish and Italian in addition to those three Germanic languages. Those curricula are respectively referred to as:

- 1) *Langues Modernes : Outil d'accompagnement du référentiel "compétences terminales et savoirs requis à l'issue des humanités générales et technologiques" (2^{ème} degré de l'enseignement général et technique de transition, langue moderne 1) (ref.: 489/2018/240) .*
- 2) *Langues Modernes : Outil d'accompagnement du référentiel "compétences terminales et savoirs requis à l'issue des humanités générales et technologiques" (2^{ème} degré de*

l'enseignement général et technique de transition, langue moderne 2) (ref.: 490/2018/240).

In the Flemish Community, however, such a distinction between LM1 and LM2 does not exist per se. Although, it is compulsory to learn French as modern language before English. We could thus consider French as a LM1 and English as a LM2. The two curricula chosen for the *GO!* were thus that for French and that for English. Those two curricula are respectively referred to as:

- 1) *Leerplan secundair onderwijs: AV Frans, basisvorming, alle richtingen. ASO, 2^{de} graad, eerste en tweede leerjaar (leerplan n° 2012/002).*
- 2) *Leerplan secundair onderwijs: AV Engels, basisvorming. ASO, 2^{de} graad, eerste en tweede leerjaar (leerplan n° 2012/003).*

Turning now to the analysis and comparison of the curricula, all four curricula were first analyzed separately based on the previously cited criteria. After completing that individual analysis, the curricula were compared with each other in a table summarizing the criteria and observations made for each curricula. The table was set as indicated by the example hereunder.

Criteria	LM1 – French		LM2 – English	
	<i>W-BE</i>	<i>GO!</i>	<i>W-BE</i>	<i>GO!</i>
Crit. 1				
Crit. 2				
Etc.				

Table 1 – Example of comparative table.

3.2.2 The curricula in practice

Originally, to be able to analyze how the curricula were put in practice, classroom observations had been planned (to observe some teachers in their classroom and also have a look at the material they provided to their pupils). These observations would have made it possible to see how the teachers individually translated the different curricula into the reality of their classroom. However, that idea had to be abandoned. On the 17th of March 2020, the Federal Government of Belgium announced the beginning of strict lock-down regulations to face the worldwide covid-19 crisis. Until the 3rd of May 2020 included, those regulations were firmly applied, resulting in an

impossibility for class-observation for this MA thesis, as all secondary schools in the country were closed.

Considering this crisis, an alternative approach had to be adopted to be able to answer this second question. It was thus decided to use interviews with some of the teachers which had left their contact information at the end of the online survey. This approach is mainly qualitative (and case study like) as it relies primarily on interviews with only a few teachers. As such, part of the answer to this second research question will thus have to be treated carefully and the answer considered as a tentative, given the context. Next to these interviews, some questions of the survey were also used to answer the second research question, namely question 11 concerning the way the teachers claim to use the curricula when building their sequences as well as question 12 and 14 concerning the reachability of the objectives²⁴. The treatment of those questions allowed for a more quantitative approach in the comparison between communities.

In total, 1 participant accepted to be interviewed for the *W-BE* network, and 2 for the *GO!* network. All three interviewees were also participants to the online survey and the interviews happened via email. The participants had to send back the document with the interview questions after having answered them²⁵. I also exchanged through emails with one participant for the *GO!* in order to get further precisions about her answers. The interviews were done either in French or in Dutch. For each question, the participants were asked to answer for the LM1 and LM2 separately in the *W-BE* network, if they taught both; and to answer for French and English separately in the *GO!* network, if they taught both. Concerning their teaching experience, the interviewee for the *W-BE* network has been teaching for 6 years, while the two interviewees for the *GO!* network have been teaching for respectively 30 and 16 years.

Concerning the questions of this interview, they all focused on the building of their sequence. The questions were written in such a way that allowed to indirectly see how and whether the teachers used (or not) the curricula in the building of the sequence they were teaching before the lock down. Questions were for example: “what is the theme of your sequence” or “what type of

²⁴ See appendix 2

²⁵ See appendix 3 for completed interviews

exercises is mostly present in your sequence”²⁶. All questions thus related somehow to one specific aspect of the curricula.

First, the answers of these interviews were compared with the curricula they were supposed to be following to see to what extent they effectively followed or not the curricula. For example, the theme of the sequence of an interviewee was checked against the themes of the curriculum the teacher was supposed to be using. That way, it was thus possible to see whether or not it was a theme from the curriculum. A comparison was also made between the way they actually built their sequence and the way they claimed to do it in their answer to question 11 in the online survey.

Then, all answers which were collected in the online survey concerning the objectives but also the way the participants claimed to use the curricula were also analyzed separately for both networks. Finally, that analysis of the different answers –from the interviews and the online survey– were summarized and, when the form of the question allowed it, compared with each other thanks to the statistical program: SPSS²⁷.

3.2.3 The teachers’ attitudes

In order to be able to answer the third question, a survey was uploaded online. This survey had as goal to collect answers from the teachers belonging to the official networks in both communities and using the analyzed curricula. The survey was widely spread through Facebook but also through e-mails directly sent to language teachers and headmasters belonging to the official networks. The survey was first made available online on the 3rd of March 2020 and stayed on up until the 30th of April included. It was thus available for a period of 58 days. Although more than a hundred e-mails were sent and the survey was spread on Facebook on several occasions, very few answers came back. This unique situation caused by the covid-19 crisis has probably impacted the number of received answers. Figure 5 shows a summary of the total number of participants in both communities in function of their teaching experience.

²⁶ See appendix 2 to see all the interview questions.

²⁷ See appendix 3 for the detail of the statistical analysis

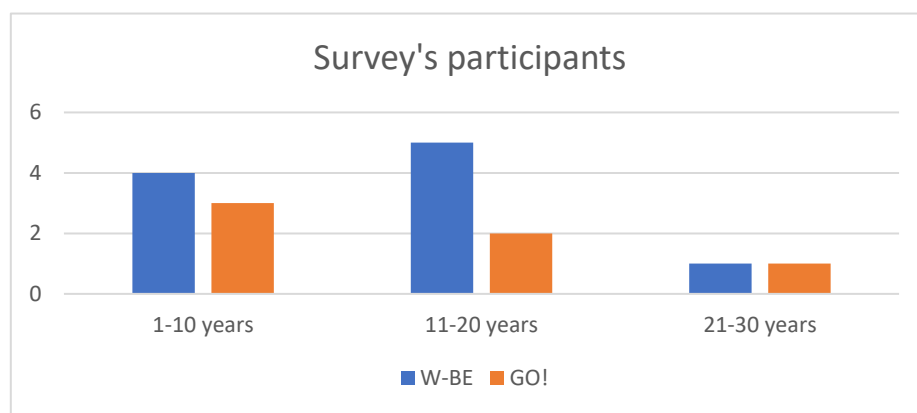


Figure 5 - Total survey's participants divided in function of their teaching experience (n= 16).

In total 6 participants answered the online survey for the Flemish Community and 10 participants answered for the FWB, bringing the total number of participants to 16. Concerning the participants for the *W-BE* network, none of them have ever taught in another network, while for the participants in the *GO!* 3 of them have taught in another network before entering the official network of education. For all participants, from the *W-BE* or the *GO!*, none have ever taught in any network of the other community.

The analysis of these data will be both quantitative and qualitative. There is scope for quantitative analysis, on the one hand, because most questions of the survey were multiple-choice questions and thus allowed the use of statistics to analyze the collected answers. To allow the analysis and comparison of this data, all answers were both treated separately and grouped in function of whether they represented a more negative or positive attitude towards the curriculum. There were in total four questions that aimed to evaluate the attitudes of the teachers. Also note that next to those clearly negative or positive attitude, a question allowed to answer “more or less agree”, and another was an open question where some participants answered “yes and no”. These answers will thus be treated as a more neutral attitude, reflecting no clear tendency towards either poles. The collected data was then statistically analyzed using the computer program SPSS²⁸. The possible answers to the four questions were thus classified as follow:

- Answers reflecting a positive attitude:
 - Question 1

²⁸ See appendix 3 for the detail of the statistical analysis

- Totally agree/agree that the curriculum is well organized.
 - Totally agree/agree that they find their way around easily in the curriculum.
 - Totally agree/agree that the terms used in the curriculum are clear.
 - Totally agree/agree that the way the curriculum is organized is logical.
 - Totally agree/agree that the curriculum helps them build their teaching sequences.
 - Totally agree/agree that the curriculum as is today, is a good tool for language teaching.
- Question 2
 - They consider the curriculum as a basis/help for the designing of their teaching sequences.
- Question 3
 - They consider that the curriculum is adapted for:
 - The reality of the class context.
 - The pupils' reality.
 - The pupils' future reality.
 - The reality of the present school context.
- Question 4
 - They find that the curriculum translates in an efficient way the knowledge and skills which the pupils will later need.
- Answers reflecting a negative attitude:
 - Question 1
 - They disagree/totally disagree that the curriculum is well organized.
 - They disagree/totally disagree that they find their way around the curriculum easily.
 - They disagree/totally disagree that the terms used in the curriculum are clear.
 - They disagree/totally disagree that the way the curriculum is organized is logical.

- They disagree/totally disagree that the curriculum helps them build their teaching sequences.
 - They disagree/totally disagree that the curriculum as is today, is a good tool for language teaching.
- Question 2
 - They consider the curriculum as a legal obligation
 - They consider the curriculum as a restriction/a brake to what they would like to do in their teaching sequences.
- Question 3
 - They find that the curriculum is not adapted to:
 - The reality of the class context.
 - The pupils' reality.
 - The pupils' future reality.
 - The reality of the present school context.
- Question 4
 - They find that the curriculum does not translates in an efficient way the knowledge and skills which the pupils will later need.

Qualitative analysis, on the other hand, was also possible because participants were sometimes invited to provide further comments regarding their answers. Those answers will thus be treated qualitatively and will serve as additional comments for the statistical analysis of the rest of the data.

The survey was offered in both French and Dutch, in function of the community in which it was spread. There are thus two versions of the survey, one for each community, but both versions included the exact same questions. That way, the comparison between the answers from teachers in the Flemish Community and those from the FWB was possible and easily done. All the questions that were asked in this survey can be found in Appendix 2, in French and Dutch as well as a translation in English. Mainly, those questions dealt with what the teachers thought of the curricula, in order to get a better idea of what their attitudes towards those curricula were. The

participants were however never directly asked their opinion on the curricula as a whole. There was three main types of questions in this survey:

- 1) Open questions or extra space for additional comments,
- 2) Multiple choice questions, where participants had to answer through choosing between different propositions,
- 3) 5 points scale questions, where the participants had to rate statements to show whether they agreed with them or not.

4 Results and discussion

In this section, we turn to the analysis of the different curricula and teachers' attitudes. This chapter will be divided into two main sections: first, a section to present the results of the different analyses and research done and then a second section where those results are further discussed.

4.1 Results

As three kinds of research were done, this section will thus be divided into three main parts. The first point will focus on the analysis of the four curricula studied for this MA thesis. Right after the analysis of those curricula will come a description of how those curricula are put into practice by the teachers. Finally, we will continue with the practical analysis and present the results of the online survey on teachers' attitudes towards those curricula.

4.1.1 The curricula

It has already been mentioned on several occasions that this MA thesis aims to compare the curricula for modern languages in the Flemish Community and the FWB. However, before comparing the curricula from the two communities, it is necessary to describe them separately in order to have a better idea as to how those curricula are designed. We will thus first turn to the description of the curricula for modern languages in the FWB and then turn to the Flemish Community. Those curricula will then be compared to each other.

4.1.1.1 The curricula of the *W-BE* network

For this MA thesis, two of the *W-BE* network's curricula were analyzed, namely the ones for LM1 and LM2, in the general form of secondary education of the transition stream, for the second grade. Before turning to the description of those two curricula, some preliminary comments could be made. First, a comment could be made on where to find the curricula. All of the curricula for the network can be found on the *W-BE* website but concerning the curricula for modern

languages specifically, a confusion could be possible. Both the old and the new versions of those curricula can be found on the website, with no indication on which is the one to be used.

Intitulé	Référence	Niveau	Forme	Degré	Télécharger
<u>Langues germaniques</u>	42/2000/240	Secondaire	Général	2ème degré	<u>42-2000-240</u>
<u>Langues germaniques (langues modernes II)</u>	42/2000/240	Secondaire	Général	2ème degré	<u>42-2000-240</u>
<u>Langues modernes II (Langues romanes - ESPAGNOL)</u>	59-1/2000/240	Secondaire	Général	2ème degré	<u>59-1-2000-240</u>
<u>Langues modernes II (Langues romanes - ITALIEN)</u>	59-2/2000/240	Secondaire	Général	2ème degré	<u>59-2-2000-240</u>
Langues anciennes	476/2016/240	Secondaire	Général	2ème degré	<u>476 2016 240.pdf</u>
Langue moderne 1 : outil d'accompagnement du Référentiel « Compétences terminales et savoirs requis à l'issue des Humanités générales et technologiques »	489/2018/240	Secondaire	Humanités générales et technologiques	2ème degré	<u>Outil accompagnement du nouveau référentiel 2e degré HGT_LM1.pdf</u>
Langue moderne 2 : outil d'accompagnement du référentiel « Compétences terminales et savoirs requis à l'issue des Humanités générales et technologiques »	490/2018/240	Secondaire	Humanités générales et technologiques	2ème degré	<u>outil accompagnement du nouveau référentiel 2e degré HGT_LM2.pdf</u>

Figure 6 - Caption of the curricula presented on the W-BE website (source: <https://www.w-b-e.be/ressources/ressources-pedagogiques/programmes/>).

Figure 6 represents a caption of what is to be found on the W-BE website when looking for the curricula for modern languages of the second grade of secondary education, for the general form of education. On this caption we can see that both the old curricula (underlined in yellow) and the new curricula (framed in red) are presented. On this webpage where those curricula can be found, no indication is given as to which should be the one to be used. It is thus easy to mistakenly use the curricula named *langues germaniques*, instead of scrolling down further to find the curricula named *outil d'accompagnement*.

Concerning this choice of denomination of the document, it is probably due to the fact that the analyzed documents are to be used “en attendant la mise en application du programme élaboré sur la base du [...] référentiel [pour les compétences terminales et savoirs requis à l'issue des humanités générales et technologiques]”, as mentioned in the introduction of those ‘curricula’²⁹, (p. 3). Due to this explanation on the fact that the analyzed document represent a helping tool while waiting for the curricula, it could be deduced that they do not constitute an actual

²⁹ See curriculum for modern languages with ref. 489/2018/240, p.3 and the curriculum with ref. 490/2018/240, p.3

curriculum. However, for practical reasons the term used to refer to the here-analyzed documents will be ‘curriculum’, even if it is apparently not presented as such.

A second comment could also be made on the layout of the curricula, more specifically that for the LM1. That curriculum presents several layout problems, such as a table which is cut in two, a page which is left blank in the same section without any apparent reason and another more specific and problematic layout issue where, in a UAA, a table describing the skill for the expected level is hidden by another table describing the skill for a level which is not to be reached at the end of the second grade.

That said, we will now be turning to the actual description of the curricula. For clarity’s sake however, the two curricula will be described separately, based on the fourteen chosen criteria³⁰. Let us thus first turn to a detailed description of the LM1 curriculum. For this description, all the criteria will simply be taken back hereunder and described one by one.

1) The general organization of the curriculum

Concretely, the LM1 curriculum is organized in several main sections. We can thus first find:

- An interactive table of content (interactive for the pdf version),
- An introduction,
- A word about the values of the networks,
- A word on the new benchmarks,
- A section describing the different levels to be reached for all the different forms and grades of secondary education,
- The description of what is to be learned in terms of ‘Unité d’aquis d’apprentissage’ (UAA),
- A section dedicated to the thematic fields,
- The grammatical resources,
- The linguistic functions,
- The strategic resources,
- A section about transversal strategies,

³⁰ See *Methodology*

- A description of the general characteristics for the teaching supports (written or oral discourse),
- Tools to help with the planification of a UAA,
- A section on assessment,
- A teaching sequence sample.

Here, the content of the introduction as well as the organization of the learning content by UAA will be further discussed. The other sections will be discussed later on, with the help of the other criteria, specifically referring to their content.

The introduction explains that this curriculum was specifically written for the modern language classes taught in the second grade of ordinary secondary education. It also explains that the goal of the curriculum is to help the teachers with the assimilation of the new benchmarks *Compétences terminales et savoirs requis à l'issue des humanités générales et technologiques*. This curriculum is thus here presented not as an actual curriculum but as a tool. It then goes on listing the content of the curriculum, also detailing the different parts which were directly taken from the benchmark and integrated as such.

The organization of the learning content by UAA is announced in the curriculum as the biggest change in comparison to the old curriculum for modern languages. It is thus useful to describe it here as thoroughly as possible as it constitutes the most important section of the entire curriculum. As indicated by the introduction, this part was taken directly from the benchmark and included in the curriculum. Before turning to the description of each UAA, the curriculum first shows a table showing the expected level for each UAA. The different UAA are then organized by level and skills. There thus exist five UAA for the A2-level, namely:

- “Ecouter pour (s’)informer et/ou (faire) agir,
- Lire pour (s’)informer et/ou (faire) agir,
- Parler en interaction pour (s’)informer et/ou (faire) agir,
- Parler sans interaction pour (s’)informer et/ou (faire) agir,

- Ecrire pour (s')informer et/ou (faire) agir”³¹.

As well as there exist five UAA for the B1-level, namely:

- “Ecouter pour (s')informer et/ou (faire) agir et/ou comprendre des opinions et/ou des sentiments,
- Lire pour (s')informer et/ou (faire) agir et/ou comprendre des opinions et/ou des sentiments,
- Parler en interaction pour (s')informer et/ou (faire) agir et/ou exprimer des opinions et/ou des sentiments,
- Parler sans interaction pour (s')informer et/ou (faire) agir et/ou exprimer des opinions et/ou des sentiments,
- Ecrire pour (s')informer et/ou (faire) agir et/ou exprimer des opinions et/ou des sentiments”³².

After this, all the different UAA are organized in the exact same manner, with only the content which (sometimes) changes. A UAA is thus divided as follows:

1. Two tables (one for the level minus, and another for the level plus) where the skill is described in function of the expected level, including the general characteristics concerning predictability, the realm in which the pupil could have to use the language, the topical scope and finally, the formulation of the support (only for the receptive skills and not for the productive skills). (see Figure 7)

Compétence à développer en compréhension à l'audition au niveau A2- Conformément aux différents descripteurs du CECRL (chapitres 4 et 5)		
Comprendre des informations/instructions essentielles • dans un message oral court, simple et clair répondant aux caractéristiques générales du niveau listées dans le tableau figurant ci-contre • pour (s')informer et/ou (faire) agir • dans des situations qui font sens pour l'élève	Caractéristiques générales	
	Prévisibilité	contenu prévisible
	Sphère	• sphère personnelle et familiale • vie quotidienne • sujets concrets directement liés aux intérêts de l'élève et de ses proches
	Étendue des sujets	environnement proche (ce qui nous concerne de très près, mes proches et moi)
	Formulation	sans équivoque (pas de jeux de mots, pas de second degré)

Compétence à développer en compréhension à l'audition au niveau A2+ Conformément aux différents descripteurs du CECRL (chapitres 4 et 5)		
Comprendre des informations/instructions essentielles • dans un message oral court, simple et clair répondant aux caractéristiques générales du niveau listées dans le tableau figurant ci-contre • pour (s')informer et/ou (faire) agir • dans des situations qui font sens pour l'élève	Caractéristiques générales	
	Prévisibilité	contenu prévisible
	Sphère	• sphère personnelle, familiale et sociale de base • vie quotidienne • sujets concrets, habituels
	Étendue des sujets	environnement proche (ce qui me concerne, ce qui concerne les autres)
	Formulation	sans équivoque (pas de jeux de mots, pas de second degré)

Figure 7 - UAA caption example 1 (source: LM1curriculum, ref. 489/2018/240).

³¹ See curriculum for modern languages with ref. 489/2018/240, pp. 15-37

³² See curriculum for modern languages with ref. 489/2018/240, pp. 41-62

2. A summary table presenting the different types of texts (five in total) the pupils have to be able to understand or produce and to what end (ex.: read a descriptive text in order to get information or give information). Note that for reading and writing, the use of a dictionary is also mentioned here. (see Figure 8)

Types de documents	Pour (s')informer	Pour (faire) agir	Pour comprendre ce que le locuteur ressent
narratif	X		Pas ciblé spécifiquement au niveau A2 mais information brève sur ce que l'on ressent au travers d'un des documents cochés ci-contre
descriptif	X		
injonctif, incitatif, prescriptif		X	
explicatif	X		
argumentatif			

Figure 8 - UAA caption example 2 (source: LM1 curriculum, ref. 489/2018/240).

3. A table summarizing the characteristics of the texts to be produced or understood. (See Figure 10 on the next page).
4. A table grouping explanations on the learning process “apply-transfer-know”. (See Figure 11 on the next page).
5. A table summarizing the different resources, namely the lexical and grammatical resources as well as the strategies and the phonological or graphic resources, depending on the nature of the text (note that for writing, no graphic resources are mentioned). For the lexical and grammatical resources as well as for the strategies, the table also refers to other sections where those specific resources are more detailed. (see Figure 12 on the next page).
6. A final table for the transversal strategies, which simply refers to another section of the curriculum. It thus neither details nor explains anything in the UAA itself. (See Figure 9)

STRATÉGIES TRANSVERSALES
(se référer aux tableaux détaillés au point J)

Figure 9 - UAA caption example 3 (source: LM1 curriculum, ref. 489/2018/240).

The specific content of all those different points will be further discussed in the appropriate criterion.

FORMES DE SUPPORTS	
Supports sonores	
CARACTÉRISTIQUES	EXEMPLES Les exemples sont donnés à titre d'illustration
Le message doit être - standardisé (formulation habituelle et prévisible en fonction du lieu) - et/ou spontané (formulation personnalisée en fonction du contexte) - et/ou structuré (les informations suivent un ordre logique) - émis dans de bonnes conditions sonores peut être - porté par plusieurs intervenants - répété devrait être idéalement produit par un natif (ou, à défaut, par une personne assimilée à un natif)	À visée informative - court récit - conversation - message sur boîte vocale - interview - annonce publique ou privée - chanson - audioguide À visée actionnelle/injonctive - annonce - instruction, consigne - itinéraire - message sur boîte vocale
Au niveau de la forme, le message doit être - court - simple - authentique ou simplifié/adapté de sources authentiques	
Au niveau linguistique, le message doit être - constitué - A2- de vocabulaire très fréquent et/ou	

Figure 10 - UAA caption example 4 (source LM1 curriculum, ref. 489/2018/240).

PROCESSUS	
APPLIQUER	TRANSFÉRER
Dans une situation de communication liée à une tâche contextualisée - porteuse de sens pour l'élève - proche de situations/tâches entraînées - au niveau du type de support - au niveau des ressources stratégiques à mobiliser l'élève devra résoudre la tâche - par la mise en œuvre de stratégies d'écoute - par la mobilisation de ressources linguistiques préalablement installées - en sélectionnant les informations/instructions pertinentes par rapport à la situation de communication - et/ou - mettant en lien les éléments constitutifs du message pour en dégager les informations/instructions essentielles	Dans une situation de communication liée à une tâche contextualisée - porteuse de sens pour l'élève - nouvelle mais apparentée à des situations/tâches entraînées - articulant différents types de situations /tâches entraînées l'élève devra résoudre la tâche - par la sélection et la mise en œuvre de stratégies d'écoute - par la mobilisation de ressources linguistiques préalablement installées - en mettant en lien les informations/instructions pertinentes par rapport à la situation de communication
CONNAÎTRE	
Démarche métacognitive (évaluation formative) - de manière prospective : identifier les ressources stratégiques nécessaires - et dire en quoi elles vont être nécessaires - pour reconnaître - le type de document - les éléments constitutifs du message (le cas échéant : acteurs, objets, actions, indicateurs temporels, lieux) - de manière rétrospective : citer les ressources linguistiques et les ressources stratégiques nécessaires - et dire en quoi elles ont été nécessaires - à l'identification - du type de document - des éléments constitutifs du message (le cas échéant : acteurs, objets, actions, indicateurs temporels, lieux)	

Figure 12 - UAA caption example 5 (source: LM1 curriculum, ref. 489/2018/240).

RESSOURCES (SAVOIRS ET SAVOIR-FAIRE)
LEXICALES Vocabulaire Répertoire lexical suffisant - en lien avec les champs thématiques abordés (se référer au tableau détaillé au point F) - répondant aux caractéristiques décrites dans la section «compétence à développer» (voir plus haut) Fonctions langagières pour comprendre quelque'un qui veut : - établir des contacts sociaux (s')informer (faire) agir - exprimer ce qui est ressenti, de manière simple (se référer au tableau détaillé au point H) GRAMMATICALES Au niveau A2, la structure de référence est la phrase simple. Répertoire grammatical utile (se référer aux tableaux détaillés par langue au point G) - pour identifier les personnes et les objets - pour les caractéristiques des personnes et des objets - pour situer dans le temps - pour situer dans l'espace - pour comprendre des demandes d'information - pour comprendre de l'information - pour identifier l'intention communicative - pour repérer l'articulation logique - pour repérer l'articulation chronologique - pour agir PHONOLOGIQUES - pour identifier l'intention communicative : l'intonation - pour dégager le sens du message : délimiter les sons en unités sémantiques (mots, groupes de mots, expressions...) STRATÉGIQUES (se référer aux tableaux détaillés au point I)

Figure 11 - UAA caption example 6 (source: LM1 curriculum, ref. 489/2018/240).

2) Key terms

The LM1 curriculum uses numerous terms which are quite specific to the teaching or learning of a language and which could thus be considered as ‘key’ terms. However, an explanation or a definition for these terms is not systematically found in the document. By ‘definition’ is meant a clear statement expressing the essential nature of the term or clearly stating the meaning of the term, while by ‘explanation’ is meant that the term is made understandable without clearly stating the meaning of that term.

The way the different terms are explained or defined (when they are) also varies. As there are no index or sections dedicated specifically to the explanation or definition of all those different terms, they are thus explained or defined in different ways and in different parts of the curriculum. Table 2 gives a summary of all the terms, grouped in function of how they are explained or defined in the curriculum.

	In a specific point/section	In the text (between brackets)	none
Explanation	• Séquence d'apprentissage • Connaître • Appliquer • Transférer • Évaluation formative • Évaluation sommative • L'attendu • Initiation/réception • Moment clé d'apprentissage • Ressources stratégiques	• Savoirs • Savoir-faire • Enseignement formel • Structuration formelle • Composante sociolinguistique • Composante pragmatique	• Tâche • Compétence • Composante linguistique • Champ thématique • Fonction langagière • Ressources grammaticales • Stratégie de communication • Compétences réceptives
Definition	• UAA • Acquis d'apprentissage • Auto-évaluation • Dispositif RCD • (Statut de) l'erreur • Objet de l'évaluation • Critère • Indicateur • Niveau de maîtrise attendu • Performance • Stratégies transversales • Ressources		

Table 2 - list of the different terms used in the LM1 curriculum

3) 'User's manual'

In this curriculum, it is clearly stated what can be found in it as well as how it should be used (or at least in parts). In the introduction, all the chapters of the curriculum are listed. Moreover, what has changed between the old and new curricula is also presented, giving further explanation on the content of this LM1 curriculum.

Concerning an explanatory note on how to use the curriculum, one could argue that there is no note on how to use it as **whole**. However, there is a section dedicated to explaining how to read a UAA. A figure, very similar to the one found in the benchmark³³, can indeed be found in the curriculum (p.10), which details how a UAA is designed and what the different parts of a UAA represent. Hereunder stands that figure.

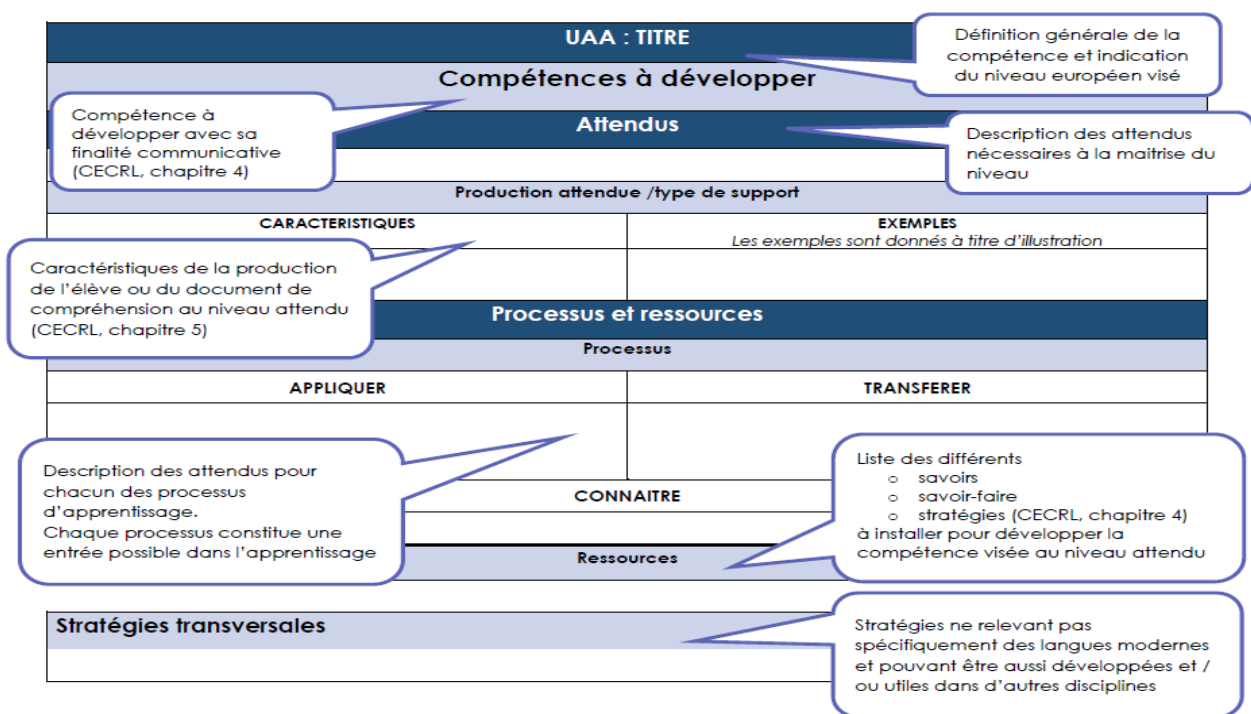


Figure 13 - Organisation of a UAA (LM1 curriculum, ref. 489/2018/240, p.10).

³³ See earlier in: *The benchmarks for foreign languages*, p.21

4) Skills

A clear statement concerning the role, place and weight given to the different skills was not found in the curriculum. Those can however be deduced through carefully reading this LM1 curriculum. Even if this part is analyzed through my own perception, I think that other readers would agree with my point of view.

In my opinion, it is clear that the different skills are central and thus have an important role, place and weight in the curriculum. First, they occupy a central place as they are present in the title of each UAA. A UAA is indeed organized around a specific skill, which gives way to UAA titles such as “écouter pour (s’)informer et/ou (faire) agir” (p.15). Secondly, it could be said that the different skills make up most of the content of a UAA, and thus most of the learning content. The general and specific characteristics of a skill are detailed in each UAA, which also then details the characteristics of the text to be used or produced for the skill. The content of a skill is thus here stated in detail.

Finally, the role they play could be said to be important, yet secondary. It is indeed clear through the reading of the curriculum that the goal is not the mastering of the skills themselves, but what the pupil will be able to do with these skills. Each UAA thus details to what end the pupil will have to learn to listen, read, speak and write. By reading the A2-level UAA for listening for example, we can understand that the pupil will have to, amongst other things, be able to listen to and understand a descriptive text in order to inform others or get information for himself. The final objective here will thus be to inform or get informed and in order to achieve this objective, the pupil will have to be able to understand a spoken descriptive discourse. A skill is thus presented as a mean to a communicative end.

Next to the five linguistic skills we directly think of when we talk about language skills, another skill should be mentioned. The transversal strategies are indeed not described as skills in the curriculum, but they still clearly fit best the definition of skill than that of knowledge. Those strategies are defined as strategies not specific to the learning of languages but which can be developed and also used in other subjects. It is thus not something that a pupil has to know, but something, or rather several things, that the pupil should be able to do. A transversal strategy is

thus, for example, “adopting a positive listening attitude” (p. 113), “checking the clarity of his production” (p. 115) or “manifesting his wish to communicate” (p.116). The place, role and weight of this sort of skill is however closer to those of knowledge than those of the other five linguistic skills. As explained in a previous criterion, the transversal strategies are mentioned as part of a UAA, do not constitute a UAA themselves. They are then further explained in a separate section, where the strategies are divided in function of the five linguistic skills. This specific skill has thus a secondary role compared to that of the linguistic skills.

5) Knowledge

If we compare the role, place and weight of knowledge against that of skills, it could be argued that it occupies a secondary place. As for the skills, it is not clearly stated in the curriculum itself how knowledge is considered, but through careful reading, that consideration can be deduced.

First, it is necessary to mention that knowledge is not only composed of vocabulary and grammar. Knowledge is indeed made up of different ‘resources’. There are four different kinds of resources: first, the lexical and then the grammatical resources, third the phonological or graphic resources (depending on the skill) and finally the strategic resources. A first comment could be made concerning this reference to knowledge in terms of ‘resource’. If one looks up the word in a dictionary, they could find a definition such as “something that is available to use or that can be used for support or help”³⁴. The essence of the term itself already refers to something that is not central, that is not a goal in itself, but that can be used in order to realize something else. Through the choice of that terminology to refer to knowledge, the designers of the curriculum thus imply its background position in comparison to the different skills.

Another indication that could be used to support this idea that knowledge comes second to skills is the way they are integrated in a UAA, and thus integrated into a skill and not presented on the same level. One could have indeed imagined that a UAA could have been entirely dedicated to grammar or vocabulary for example, then effectively putting skills and knowledge on an equal

³⁴ <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/resource>

footing, organization-wise at least. It is however not the case here, as all resources are summarized together in a table at the end of a UAA.

Concerning the lexical resources, they are the first one mentioned in that part of the UAA dedicated to the enunciation of the different resources and are divided in two parts: one for the vocabulary and one for the linguistic functions. About the vocabulary, very little is said except that it has to be related to the theme and in accordance with the general characteristics of the UAA's skill. Then, for the linguistic functions, it is stated that it has to be mobilized in order to understand something or someone, or in order to do something with the language. It is then written that to get more information on this point, one should refer to another section of the curriculum (namely *section H*). For the speaking and writing skills, the social markers are also mentioned as well as the characteristic of a genre, specifically for the writing skill.

Turning to the presence of the grammatical resources embedded in the UAA, it is first stated that, for the A2-level, the structure of reference is the simple sentence. For the B1-level, it is said that pupils have to learn the grammatical elements constituting standard language. It is then mentioned that for a more complete view on what pupils should learn concerning grammar, we should refer to *section G*, later in the curriculum. There are however some precisions on what grammatical structures encountered or learned should be used for, such as, amongst others, to identify people and objects, situate in time and space or yet understand and/or ask for information.

Explanation on phonological or graphic resources is rather limited, as it basically only specifies that the pupils should for example be able to set different sound units apart to understand the meaning of a discourse, identify or express communicative intention through intonation, be intelligible when s/he speaks or yet recognize logographic features such as comma's or exclamation points (note that this resource is only for reading, and not for the writing skill). Finally, the place given to strategic resources inside a UAA is even more limited than the rest as it simply consists in a reference to a later section, *section I*.

When looking into the division and attention drawn to those different resources, we could also see that they do not seem to be all considered on an equal footing. Phonological and graphic

resources for example seem to be rather secondary to all the other elements constituting knowledge. They are indeed mentioned rather shortly and no further section is dedicated to it, whereas specific sections are devoted to the other three resources. Vocabulary itself, i.e. the actual learning of words, also seems to be rather secondary when compared to the rest of knowledge as very little is said about this part of the lexical resources. However, concerning the level of detail, explanations as well as the manner in which precisions are given about the three other resources, i.e. for grammar, linguistic functions and strategies, it can be observed that they are rather similar. As such, we could thus consider that those three are considered equally.

All three are indeed explained with the help of tables, in which the different aspects for each resource are detailed and divided by level. The strategies are then also divided by skills, while for grammar, a further distinction is also made between languages. The different grammatical aspects of a language are rather well detailed as most of the grammatical rules are presented. It is also stated how and for which level one grammatical rule should be learned. For example, for Dutch, the teaching of the basic forms of possessives is part of a key learning moment and should thus be formally expressed at the A2-level, while for the same level, the accentuated forms of possessives should only be approached without being formally taught. Another example, for English this time, is the form and use of the passive tense which should be approached at the A2+-level and formally taught later at the B1-level.

The linguistic functions and strategies are detailed similarly and extensively, and an indication is also given concerning the level. For the linguistic functions it is further explained that all previously learned function have to be reviewed at all levels. We can thus for example see that a pupil whose goal is to reach the A2-level has to be able to use those linguistic functions in order to act, and more specifically to warn someone. What a linguistic function actually consists in is however not explained, and, in opposition to grammar where the goal in itself is the mastering of a grammatical rule, the linguistic functions are strongly communication-oriented.

In conclusion, we could say that knowledge occupies a secondary place as it has a more supportive role for the execution of the different skills. However, it could also be argued that, given the level of details accorded to the explanation of knowledge's different constituents, it weighs rather

heavily. Though, I will still argue that, given the division in UAA and the place and role accorded to skills, it still weighs less than skills in the ultimate communicative goal of this curriculum.

6) Values

In the LM1 curriculum, a section is entirely dedicated to the explanation of the network's values, namely *section B* (pp. 4-5). The values of the two official networks are given, suggesting that next to the *W-BE* network, the official government-aided education network also uses this curriculum for the teaching of modern languages. We can thus read both the values of the *W-BE* network and the ones of the official government-aided network. Even if they are placed next to each other and are to be found in the same curriculum, they are still organized differently. Both values are thus separated and differ slightly from each other in form and content. For the purpose of this MA thesis, we will only look into the values of the *W-BE* network.

The values explained here are the general values and goals of the network and are thus not specific to language learning and teaching. Summed up, we can read in this section that the *W-BE* network's values are centered around the education of critical beings and responsible citizens, open to the world and the different cultures and also ready to take active part in society. In other words, the network's principal values could be formulated as being organized around openness, critical thinking, objectivity and intellectual honesty and rigor, solidarity, freedom of thought and speech, individual development and finally, intellectual and social emancipation.

7) Assessment

The description of how a LM1 class is to be assessed is explained in a rather general manner. The division in this section is not organized solely by types of assessment but in six points explaining the different concepts linked to assessment in general. An introduction explains that the section will be dedicated to the explanation of different concepts linked to evaluation. Then comes a point where the different kinds of assessments are defined, followed by a note on the status of mistake and another point on scoring. The two final points are dedicated to describing the frequency of summative evaluation and explaining what an assessment grid consists in.

In the second point, the two main kinds of assessment are defined as being formative and summative. Concerning formative evaluation, it is described as an evaluation which has as main goal to give feedback to both teachers and pupils. For the teacher, formative evaluation is depicted as a way to reflect on his/her teaching practices. For the pupil, it is given as a way to regulate his/her learning. It is indeed stated that this kind of evaluation highlights his/her achievements and successes but also allows to identify his/her difficulties and give him/her ways to overcome them. When considered as such, it is also stated that formative evaluation represents a motivational factor as well as an element promoting self-confidence. This definition does however not explain what exactly has to be assessed in such evaluations. The only information in this respect is given in the fourth point concerning scoring where it is stated that teachers can only test the learning process in formative evaluations, as this process is solely concerned with the explanation and justification of the resources used for a task. That process is described in each UAA.

Regarding summative assessment, it is presented as an indicator on the extent to which a pupil has come to master the different skills and knowledge. It is also described as the tool to be used by the class council to certify and make decisions at the end of a year or grade. On the frequency of summative evaluation, it is said that each UAA should be evaluated in this way at least once during the entire grade, while making sure that all communicative intentions are covered. Concerning what the content of this kind of assessment, no obligation is mentioned. It is however clearly stated that at the end of a teaching sequence, neither all the skills trained nor all the processes learned have to be evaluated. In the part on scoring, and contrary to what one could expect, it is also mentioned that knowledge can be the object of a summative evaluation.

8) Themes

This LM1 curriculum devotes a specific section to all the different thematic fields to be seen during the second grade. At the beginning of this *section F* (pp.67-76), it is clearly specified that all thematic fields have to be taught at each grade of secondary education. The curriculum thus proposes different themes as mandatory for the teaching of modern languages.

The themes are organized in twelve thematic fields, namely: personal characterization, habitat and environment, day-to-day life, hobbies, travels, relationships with others, health and well-being, teaching and learning, purchase and services, food and drinks, weather and climate and finally, time division. Those twelve main thematic fields are then further divided into different subfields, also making a difference between the themes which have to be deepened and those which only have to be approached during the second grade. It is then also specified that all already taught subfields have to be reviewed in all later stages of education. The subfields taught in the first grade of secondary education are thus also mentioned in this section of the curriculum. Table 3 gives examples of the different thematic fields, subfields and whether those subfields have to be deepened or approached.

Thematic fields		Subfields	
		To be deepened	To be approached
Personal characterization		- Physical characteristics - Jobs - Character's traits - Strengths, weaknesses and aptitudes - Clothing	- Feelings - Cultural identity - Titles and denominations
Day-to-day life		Festivities and traditions	- Pocket money - Student jobs
Hobbies	Cultural activities	Locations, participants and objects linked to cultural activities	Locations, participants and objects linked to forms of artistic expression
	Hobbies and sports	Locations, participants and objects linked to sport and hobbies	/
	ICT and media	Tools and activities linked to ICT and the media	/
Etc.			

Table 3 - Example of thematic fields and subfields for the LM1 curriculum.

9) Expected threshold level

The curriculum uses the CEFR to set and describe the level(s) to be reached by the end and during the second grade of secondary education. Even if this specific curriculum is for the second grade for the general form of education in the transition stream, tables summarize all the different levels for all grades and also for all the different educational forms (pp.13-14).

For the second grade more specifically, the overall level as well as the specific levels for all the different skills at the end of the second grade is B1-. We thus find in the curriculum both, an overall level, and a specification for the skills (even if those levels remain the same, i.e. B1-). That precision is found in the summary mentioned earlier but another summarizing table is also found right after, on p.14. That table summarizes again the levels to be reached for the different skills but is however slightly different as it indicates two different levels, that of A2+ and that of B1-. Even if it is not clearly stated, we can still deduce that the A2+-level is expected at the end of the first year of the second grade and the level B1- at the end of the second year of the second grade.

A last precision about the level is also found in the different UAA. Even if the expected levels are respectively A2+ and B1-, we can find in each UAA an explanation on levels which are, strictly speaking, not relevant for the grade. The UAA are thus divided between those for the A2-level and those of the B1-level. Then, inside the description of the UAA for the A2-level, we find a description of both the levels A2- and A2+, and same for the UAA for the B1-level.

10) Examples

In this LM1 curriculum, numerous examples are included. First of all, there are different examples in each UAA to illustrate what kinds of texts can be used for a receptive skill or what kinds of texts or discourses can be produced for the three productive skills.

Next to those examples used to illustrate different text types for instance, there are also two sections of the curriculum which are strictly dedicated to presenting samples of how to concretely use the different UAA. *Section L* (pp.119-132), which is called *outil d'aide à la planification des UAA, des champs thématiques, des fonctions langagières et des ressources grammaticales*, presents four rather complete examples of tables on how to use the curriculum in order to plan your

teaching sequence. Example one illustrates a planification for the different UAA for the level A1+, and then example two presents a way to plan the different thematic fields and subfields, also for the level A1+. The third example is entirely dedicated to showing how the grammatical resources can be planned for an English class and finally, the fourth example concerns the planification of the linguistic functions, in function of the different skills for the A1+-level.

Finally, the very last section of the curriculum (*section N*, pp.138-153) provides a complete teaching sequence on 'gezond zijn en blijven'. In that sequence sample one can thus find examples of exercises for skills and knowledge, for the kinds of sheets to give to your pupils but also two examples of summative evaluations: one for writing and the other for reading. Next to the pupils' material, the sample also illustrates how that specific sequence would be planned thanks to a table giving information about the objectives of the sequence, the input and output, the resources and finally the evaluations.

11) Language learning framework/methods

When reading the curriculum, it becomes clear that language is seen as a communication tool and that everything concerning language should be learned and approached keeping that in mind. Even if that general objective is not stated as such, it becomes quite clear simply through the reading of, for example, the titles of the UAA. It is written that the pupils have to read in order to inform, or talk in order to act. That communicative goal thus seems of outmost importance for the network. However, concerning a specific methodology or approach for the teaching of modern languages, nothing is said. It is for example not stated how vocabulary or grammar should be brought to the pupils nor how or when to use the target language as language of instruction.

12) Objectives

The different objectives concerning the learning of a modern language are not clearly stated. By 'not clearly stated' is meant that they are not literally presented as 'objectives'. However, the different UAA could still be interpreted as representing general objectives for each skill and level. The wording of the UAA's titles seem to be fit for that interpretation. Although they are each time formulated for each skill, those general objectives remain the same. For the A2-level, it could thus be said that a pupil has to be able to use any of the five skills in order to get or give information

as well as act or make someone act. For the B1-level, the objective is the same, with the precision that the pupil also has to be able to either understand or express opinions and feelings.

Then, and if we read the figure explaining how to read a UAA (p.10), the very first table describing what a pupil has to be able to do at a specific level for a specific skill is described as an 'attendu'. In the UAA themselves, the description given does not specify that it is indeed an 'objective'. However, we could argue that what is expected does constitute an objective even if it is not literally called an objective. We could thus amend the statement that started the description of this criterion by saying that even if objectives are not literally and clearly stated as such, what is expected of the pupils is still clearly written. Those expectations for the different skills and levels are summarized in Table 4.

Next to those expectations, the description of the different components that constitute the 'learning process' part of a UAA is also stated as something that is expected. That learning process is made out of three components: apply, transfer and know. In each UAA, the curriculum describes what is expected of the pupils for each of those components. Those different expectations are summarized in Table 5. Note that those objectives are the same for both levels, A2+ and B1-, the only difference being for the EOEl and EOSI, where it is specified for the B1- level that those spoken productions have to be respectively in interaction and without interaction.

	A2+	B1-
CA	Understand essential information/instruction in a clear, short and simple spoken discourse which answers to the general characteristics, in order to inform/be informed and/or act/make someone act, in situations which are meaningful to the pupil.	Unknown due to a lay-out problem
CL	Same than for CA but for reading (i.e. the understanding of a written discourse).	Understand the global relevant elements as well as the relevant details of a written discourse which answers to the general characteristics, in order to inform/be informed and/or act/make someone act and/or understand opinions and/or feelings, in situations which are meaningful to the pupil.
EOEI	Produce a short and simple spoken discourse in interaction, which answers to the general characteristics, in order to inform/be informed and/or act/make someone act, in situations which are meaningful to the pupil.	Produce a spoken discourse in interaction, which answers to the general characteristics, in order to inform/be informed and/or act/make someone act and/or understand opinions and/or feelings, in situations which are meaningful to the pupil.
EOSI	Same than for EOSI, but without interaction.	Same than for EOSI, but without interaction
EE	Same than for EOSI/EOEI, but for a written text (i.e. produce a short and simple written discourse)	Produce a simply formulated written text, which answers to the general characteristics, in order to inform/be informed and/or act/make someone act and/or understand opinions and/or feelings, in situations which are meaningful to the pupil.

Table 4 - W-BE LM1 curriculum: objectives per skill and level (pp.16-64).

	Apply	Transfer	Know
CA	In a contextualized and communication-oriented task, meaningful to the pupil and close to the trained tasks/contexts: • Apply listening strategies and use linguistic resources • By selecting the relevant information/instructions and link the different elements to get those relevant information/instructions	In a contextualized and communication-oriented task, meaningful to the pupil and new but based on already trained situations/tasks: • Select and apply listening strategies and use linguistic resources • By linking the relevant information/instructions in function of the communicative situation	• Before: identify the relevant strategic resources and say how they will be useful to identify the text type and its constituting elements • After: cite the relevant strategic and linguistic resources and say why they were relevant to identify the text type and its constituting elements
CL	Same than for CA, but with reading strategies	Same than for CA, but with reading strategies	Same than for CA
EOEI	In a contextualized and communication-oriented task, meaningful to the pupil and close to the trained tasks/contexts: • Apply speaking strategies and use linguistic resources • By producing a spoken discourse in function of the communicative situation	In a contextualized and communication-oriented task, meaningful to the pupil and new but based on already trained situations/tasks: • Select and apply speaking strategies and use linguistic resources • By producing a spoken discourse in function of the communicative situation	• Before: identify the relevant strategic resources and say how they will be useful for the task by identifying the characteristics of the expected spoken production and its constituting elements • After: cite the relevant strategic and linguistic resources and say why they were relevant for the task by identifying the characteristics of the expected spoken production and its constituting elements
EOSI	Same than for EOEI	Same than for EOEI	Same than for EOEI
EE	Same than for EOEI, but for writing strategies	Same than for EOEI, but for writing strategies	Same than for EOEI, but for a written production and its constituting elements

Table 5 - LM1 curriculum learning process objectives, for the level A2+ (pp.16-41).

13) Attention drawn to culture

Concerning culture, I found that very little attention was drawn to it throughout this LM1 curriculum. Even if it is mentioned in the values of the network that they want the pupils to be open to the world and the different cultures, there is very little mention of it in the document. First of all, there is no mention of culture in any of the UAA, no matter the skill or the level. The only time attention is drawn to culture is in some of the thematic fields in that specific section. It is indeed mentioned as subfield for the thematic fields of personal characterization (cultural identity), day-to-day life (festivities and traditions), hobbies (cultural activities) and travels (cultural activities linked to holidays). However, due to the way those subfields are worded, it is unclear whether those reference to culture have to be to the pupil's own culture or to the target language's culture. Except for the thematic field 'travels' where the reference to culture probably has to be linked to the destination, the other fields do not allow for such a deduction, as it could be linked to either the pupil's own culture or the one of the target language.

14) CEFR

Before starting with the description of this criteria for the LM1 curriculum, it should be noted that the analysis of the presence and incorporation of the CEFR into the curriculum is strictly based on how it is referred to and/or cited in the curriculum itself. In order to described to what extent the CEFR is actually present in the curriculum (for the themes or methodology for example), further research would be needed, comparing the curriculum to the CEFR itself.

In the LM1 curriculum, the CEFR, or at least some concepts of the CEFR, seem to have been included and used throughout the entire document. First, it is cited at the beginning, in the section dedicated to explaining how this curriculum differ from the previous one (pp. 6-11). This section indeed explains how the new benchmarks differ, thus making this curriculum differ too. There, it is said that the curriculum makes use of the level-scale put in place by the CEFR, and shortly describes it by simply giving away all those different levels. It then goes on explaining that they also used the five skills defined in the CEFR as well as incorporating the linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic components to the content of the curriculum.

Not only are those different aspects of the CEFR cited in this section of the curriculum, but it is also explained what those aspects will be useful for. First, the CEFR is described as a tool to help target and describe the expected proficiency level. Secondly, it helps situate the learner on a level-scale reputed in the whole of Europe and finally it helps improving the status of evaluation by redefining the status of errors. On that last point, the status of error is further explained in the section of the curriculum dedicated to assessment. Furthermore, in each UAA, it is also indicated that the description of the skill and its general characteristics per level is faithful to the descriptors used by the CEFR.

All in all, we can see that this curriculum indeed uses the CEFR and refers to it in several parts. Even if, as previously mentioned, further research would be needed in order to check if the CEFR is effectively used in the way it is claimed to be used, it can still be seen that one aspect of the CEFR is widely used throughout the curriculum, that is the proficiency levels. The main contribution of the CEFR to this curriculum indeed seems to be the description of each skill in function of the level.

*

So far, we have focused on an extended description of the LM1 curriculum published and used in the *W-BE* network. However, this MA thesis aims to compare two curricula for modern languages on each side of the linguistic boarder. Therefore, we will now be turning to the LM2 curriculum. The description of this curriculum will be somewhat shorter as the way it is organized is exactly the same and most of the sections' content is actually also similar to that of the LM1 curriculum. The only variations observed concern three criteria: the themes, the expected threshold level and the objectives.

1. Themes

Concerning the themes, they are also organized by thematic fields, further divided into subfields. They are also twelve of them, like in the LM1 curriculum, and the thematic fields are the same. The only difference here concerns the manner in which they have to be taught. Considering that the LM2 starts to be taught in the second grade, none of the themes have been seen before which thus means that all themes only have to be approached but not deepened.

2. Expected threshold level

As the second grade constitutes the start of the teaching of the LM2, the expected level is lower than for the LM1. The overall level as well as the levels for the different skills which is expected at the end of the second grade is thus here the level A2+. It is then also explained, like in the LM1 curriculum, in a more detailed table where two levels are stated: A1+ and A2+. We then guess that the level A1+ has to be reached at the end of the first year of the second grade and the level A2+ at the end of the second year of the second grade. For the rest, it is the exact same as for the LM1 curriculum.

3. Objectives

Considering that the threshold level for a LM2 is lower than the one for a LM1, it can be expected that the objectives are slightly different. Even if they do differ, they are still presented and stated in the exact same manner than for the LM1. We thus find objectives for the level A1+ and then for the level A2+. As the level A2+ is also a level presented in the LM1 curriculum, the objectives are the same and will not be repeated. We will thus here turn to describe the objectives for the level A1+ only. Table 6 summarizes those objectives concerning the skills in function of the level. For the objectives concerning the learning process, those are the same than as described in the LM1 curriculum.

	A1+
CA	Understand instructions and information of a really short, really simple and clear spoken text which answers to the general characteristics, in order to inform or be informed and/or act or make someone act, in situations meaningful to the pupil.
CL	Same than for CA, but for a written text.
EOEI	Produce a really short and simple spoken discourse which answers to the general characteristics, in interaction, in order to inform or be informed and/or to act or make someone act, in situations meaningful to the pupil.
EOSI	Same than for EOEI, but without interaction
EE	Write words, really common expressions and isolated simple sentences, in order to produce a written discourse which answers to the general characteristics, in order to inform or be informed, in situations meaningful to the pupil.

Table 6 - W-BE LM2 curriculum: objectives per skill and level (pp.16-39).

4.1.1.2 The curricula of the *GO!* network

Just as for the curricula of the *W-BE* network, two curricula were analyzed for the *GO!* network. The first curriculum was that for the first modern language, i.e. French, and the second curriculum was that for the second modern language, i.e. English. Those two curricula will be described separately, with the help of the fourteen previously determined criteria, which will be discussed one by one for each curriculum. We will first turn to the description of the curriculum for French, and then to the description of the curriculum for English.

1) The general organization of the curriculum

The curriculum for French is organized in several sections, which consist in:

1. A table of content (interactive for the electric version),
2. An explanation on the 'vision' of the network concerning language learning,
3. A sort of introduction, which we will describe further down in this criterion,
4. A section stating the general objectives,
5. A section where all the learning content is described,
6. A section dedicated to didactic and pedagogical recommendations,
7. A section concerning assessment,
8. An explanation on the needed material for language teaching,
9. A Bibliography, simply stating that the bibliography is to be found in the online class for French on Smartschool.

For this criterion, only two of those sections will be further discussed: the introductive part of the curriculum and then the general organization of the learning content. The content of the other sections will be discussed later, in the appropriate criteria.

Concerning the introduction, it could be noted that there is no introduction to this curriculum which is stated as such (neither 'introductie' nor 'inleinding' sections were found). However, I think that we might consider the section *Beginsituatie* (p.3) as an introduction. First, it is there stated that this curriculum presents the learning content for the entire grade and that it is the responsibility of the teacher to divide that learning content between the two years constituting

the second grade. Then, it also introduces the situation of the pupils entering the second grade and which will be concerned with the teaching of this learning content. It thus specifies for the teachers the context in which they will be teaching. For example, in this section it is stated that the pupils for whom this curriculum will be used come from the first grade A-stream and that the learning content of the second grade constitutes a continuum between that first grade and the third grade. Then, it also mentions that the teachers should consider the different learning backgrounds of the pupils, as well as the fact that they do not all receive the same amount of input for French outside of the school context. Finally, this introduction stipulates that even though the French class has to be taught for three hours/week, a fourth hour is possible in function of whether the school wishes to organize it or not.

Then, the section *Opbouw van de leerplansjablon* (pp.5-50) is where the learning content of the curriculum is presented. Concretely, the learning content is organized by skill and knowledge or attitude. We thus first find all five skills as separate points, then the knowledge (also as a separate point), a part presenting the attitudes and finally, a note on what can be taught during the extra hour. Each of those points is then organized in function of the different objectives to reach at the end of the second grade. Those objectives are numbered, coded and specific to each skill, knowledge and attitudes. Then, a table is found under each of those objectives where the learning content is explained thanks to the description of the different text types to be used or produced.

Note that for some objectives, that part is either absent or empty (it is for example always empty

LEZEN

Onderstaande leerplandoelstellingen moeten steeds gelezen worden samen met de decretaal vastgelegde tekstkenmerken die als bladwijzer op pagina 8 van dit leerplan terug te vinden zijn.

LEERPLANDOELSTELLING 9: <i>de leerlingen kunnen op beschrijvend niveau het onderwerp bepalen in informatieve, prescriptieve, narratieve, argumentatieve en artistiek-literaire teksten</i>		ET 9
Leerinhoud	Specifieke pedagogisch-didactische wenken en mogelijke concretisering	
Informatieve teksten zoals schema, tabel, krantenartikel/-rubriek, affiche, nieuwstiem, mededeling, folder, verslag, etiketten en verpakkingen, formulier, brief, e-mail, interview, recensie, webpagina, hypertexten, naslagwerken Prescriptieve teksten zoals instructies (m.b.t. klasgebeuren en evaluatie), opschrift, waarschuwing, gebruiksaanwijzing, reglement, recept, advertentie, handleiding, publieke aankondiging, reclameboodschap, enquête Narratieve teksten zoals reportage, scenario, relaas, interview, verhaal, reisverhaal, anekdote, "fait divers", een mop, een blog Argumentatieve teksten zoals pamflet, lezersbrief, een opinie-	Voorbeeld: de leerlingen krijgen een e-mailbericht met een leeg onderwerpveld. Zij bedenken zelf een onderwerp dat het best past bij het bericht. Voorbeeld: de leerlingen noteren het onderwerp zoals een instructie voor het sorteren van afval, een recept voor een slaatje, een strip over een detective ...	

for the objectives concerning the attitudes and knowledge). Next to that learning content, we also find a column with possible concretizations, basically presenting examples in order to illustrate how to put the objective in practice. Figure 14 gives an example of how an objective for reading comprehension is presented.

Figure 14 - Example of the organization of the learning content for the curriculum for French (ref. 2012/002, p.16).

For each skill, we also find a specific objective concerning the strategies, as well as a reference to the knowledge and attitudes objectives to be mobilized for the skill. Still concerning the different skills only, and after all the objectives have been stated, a table summarizing possible ways for differentiation is also to be found (see Figure 15).

Wenken om te differentiëren in de mate van ondersteuning/hulp bij luistertaken⁸

beginsituatie	groei naar zelfredzaamheid	ondersteuning	luisterbeurten	opdracht
weinig voorkennis	veel sturing/hulp van de leraar noodzakelijk	uitgebreid beeldmateriaal, bij de luistertekst en bij de opdracht	verschillende malen in stukjes	gesloten enkel tekstafhankelijk ⁹
voldoende voorkennis	beperkt sturing nodig	beeldmateriaal talige bouwstenen	enkele malen	halfopen ook tekstonafhankelijk
veel voorkennis	geen extra sturing nodig de leerling kan zelfstandig de nodige strategieën inzetten om de taalkaak uit te voeren	kan de taalkaak ook uitvoeren zonder extra visuele en/of talige ondersteuning	2 x maximum	open ook tekstonafhankelijk

Figure 15 - Example of the organization of the learning content for the curriculum for French (ref. 20012/002, p.15).

2) Key terms

In this curriculum for French, no index summarizing all the terms is presented. Key terms are explained or defined in different sections and in different ways. However, many terms are still defined or explained in the introductory comment of the section *Opbouw van de leerplansjablon* and in a point of that section called *Hoe de leerplandoelstellingen correct lezen en gebruiken* which is entirely dedicated to the explanation and definition of all those key terms. Next to the terms in that section, we also find some other terms in later sections such as the one devoted to the explanation of the pedagogical and didactic recommendations or in the section on assessment. Throughout the curriculum, the different key terms are explained or defined as part of the text, in the text (in between brackets), as footnotes or it also happens that they are neither defined nor explained at all. Table 7 summarizes all the terms found in the curriculum, specifying whether they are explained or defined, and how that definition or explanation is given.

	Part of the text	In a footnote	Between brackets	None
Definition	• Teksten • Kopiërend niveau • Beschrijvend niveau • Structurerend niveau • Beoordelend niveau • Strategie • Attitudes • Open Leercentrum (OLC) • ICT-integratie • Vakoverschrijdende eindtermen (VOET)	• Can do statements • Leerstijl	/	• Voertaal • Doeltaal • OVUR-schema • Differentiatie/differentiëren
Explanation	• De vijf vaardigheden • Taaltaken • Tekstsoorten (5) • Tekstkenmerken • Moeilijkheidsgraad • Verwerkingsniveau • Kennis • Dagelijks werk • Examens	/	• Communicatie-strategieën • doeltaalgebruik	

Table 7 - Key terms for the GO! curriculum for French

3) 'User's manual'

If we only take the titles of the sections as reference, we could observe that one section is actually called 'how to read and use'. However, that section does not exactly indicate how the curriculum should be used and is mainly dedicated to explaining the different key terms which will be useful for the reading of the learning content. Moreover, there is no introductory note on what is to be found in the curriculum (which would typically be found in an introduction). We could thus argue that the curriculum does not present any kinds of 'user's manual'.

4) Skills

It was rather difficult to appreciate the role, weight and place that the different skills occupy in this curriculum. I indeed had to refer to different parts of the curriculum, as well as the way it is organized to try and make it come to the foreground. Per se, this analysis thus represents a personal interpretation, which can still be considered valid and for which one might agree with when reading the curriculum.

Even if, through the reading of the objectives, the mastering of the skill seems to constitute a goal in itself, the rest of the curriculum does not seem to draw that much attention to those five skills. Unlike knowledge, it does for example not constitute an objective when we read the overall objectives on the curriculum (p.4). It is however stated in those objectives that language is considered as a communication tool and it is also later on specified that the different skills are to be taught as much as possible as 'built-in' into the teaching of the language (p.5). On their role we could thus argue that even if each skill is presented as being an objective in itself, their main role is to allow for interactive communication.

Then, when we look at how the learning content is organized, they are put on the same level as knowledge. Further, in the chapter dedicated to explaining the preferred methodology, the different skills are also put on the same footing as knowledge. Moreover, two skills, namely speaking in interaction and speaking without interaction, are brought back together and discussed as one. It could thus be argued that the different skills do not occupy a more central place in the curriculum than the rest of the learning content.

Concerning their weight, it was noticed that the different skills are not all valued equally. In the chapter dedicated to methodology, it is stated that receptive skills come before productive skills and that without understanding, there is no communication possible. However, the curriculum does not refer to both receptive skills, but instead stresses the importance of listening as the most important one. It is indeed stated that listening “[moet] een enorme aandacht [...] krijgen” (p.52). In their argumentation, they support the idea that without listening, communication would not be possible. In their opinion, that specific skill must thus be given “considerable attention”. The other receptive skill is still described as an “onmisbare vaardigheid” (p.55), an “unmistakable” skill thus. It is stated that in the world we live in today, reading is a helpful tool in order to “acquire knowledge” but also to “enrich” ourselves “intellectually and culturally” (p.55). Such adjectives as “essential” and “unmistakable” are not used to describe the two other productive skills. That could thus support the argument that receptive skills weighs more heavily in this curriculum than the productive skills do.

5) Knowledge

Concerning knowledge, it is specified in the curriculum how it should be addressed, or at least how grammar should be addressed. It is indeed clearly stated that even if attention must be drawn to language structure, and more precisely grammar, it can however never constitute a goal in itself (p.65). That statement could however be seen as being in contradiction with one of the overall objectives saying that “leerlingen beheersen de nodige ondersteunende kennis [...] voor het uitvoeren van een taaltaak” (p.4). Still, in the wording of that objective, the word “supporting” is used, implying the secondary role of knowledge. It is then later on stipulated that grammar represents a functional helping tool which has as goal to support communication (p.65). Therefore, the pupils have to be confronted to the different grammatical structures in function of the context in which they will need to understand and/or produce them. The teachers thus have to focus more on the situation in which the grammatical structures are used than on the grammatical structures themselves. The curriculum indeed stipulates that grammar cannot be the focus of a task (p.65).

The presentation of the recommendations for the teaching of vocabulary is less prescriptive than for grammar, as it is only specified that it should be brought in context. Through the reading of the curriculum, we can indeed observe that less attention is drawn to vocabulary. In the description of the objectives for knowledge, vocabulary is only explained linked to examples of some lexical fields. Even though those lexical fields seem clearly defined, they do however not constitute an obligation due to the word “zoals” (“like”) which implies that those lexical fields only have an illustrative function. The vocabulary load is also not specified whereas all needed grammatical rules are supposedly stated. Grammatical structures and rules are indeed described in two sub-objectives which are themselves explained in function of what a grammatical structure should be used for.

When looking at the organization of the curriculum, it can be observed that knowledge is put on the same footing as the different skills and that it is also described in the same manner. Knowledge has thus its own objectives even though a reference to those knowledge objectives is made in the description of each skills. In the curriculum, it is also stated that knowledge should always be weaved into the different skills. It indeed stipulates that vocabulary and grammar should not be taught and exercised on their own but that different elements should be combined in one task. For clarification, the curriculum then also gives examples of how to incorporate knowledge in function of the four different skills (speaking in and without interaction are indeed here presented as one and the same skill).

Comparing the place, weight and role of knowledge to the different skills, it could thus be said that the place of knowledge is slightly less important as well as the weight it carries as the objectives dedicated to explaining it are less numerous. It could however also be argued that knowledge and skills weigh evenly when it comes to their role, as both represent a helping tool for communication.

6) Values

The *GO!* network states its values in two different parts of the curriculum: first in the part called *Visie* (p.2) and then in *Algemene doelstellingen* (p.4). In those two points we each time find an

explanation on their values in general, but also specifically linked to language learning and teaching.

The section *Visie* explains how their values on language teaching is in line with that of the European vision. They first argue that in the specific Belgian linguistic context, multilingualism is of outmost importance. They then stipulates that, like the European vision, their stance on language teaching is centered around a practical, active and communicative approach. They also explain that they strive to form “taalvaardige jongeren, die plezier beleven aan de communicatie met anderstaligen en aan taal leren”³⁵ (p.2). Finally, they also underline the importance of openness, empathy, tolerance, intellectual curiosity and critical thinking (p.2).

In *Algemene doelstellingen*, the network’s educational project is explained in more details: first in general and then linked to language teaching. Overall, their goal is to form free beings who are intellectually curious and who will strive for life-long learning (p.4). It then goes on describing that the network also wants to form the pupils in order to help them become dynamic beings in a dynamic society, willing to communicate with an open mind and who also enjoy communicating and learning languages. The curriculum also strives for them to interact with interest and respect for the culture of the foreign language’s community (p.4), thus linking their values to language teaching specifically.

If we were to summarize those two points in a few words, we could argue that the values of the network are: openness, communication, respect and interest for other cultures, tolerance, empathy, learning pleasure, life-long learning, intellectual curiosity and critical thinking.

7) Assessment

The section dedicated to assessment in the curriculum is organized in two main points: *Algemene principes* and *Wenken bij evaluatie* (pp.72-73). It is in the second point that two types of evaluations are explained: *dagelijks werk*, which represent the formative evaluations, and *examens* which represent assessment leading to certification. It is here clearly stated what constitute each kind of evaluations and in both cases it is clearly mentioned that the pupils have

³⁵ Engl.: “skilled young people who enjoy communicating with speakers of another language and learning a language”

to be informed of all the modalities of the different kinds of assessment (be it the yearly planning for the formative assessment or the way skills are to be tested in an exam).

For the formative evaluations, it is specified that they are composed of the evaluation of skills, knowledge and attitudes and it then gives examples of how those components can be evaluated. It is also specified that the total number of evaluations constituting formative assessment has to be spread out over the entire school year and that the 'vakgroep' has to determine this planning in consultation with the teachers. The curriculum also stipulates that the goal of formative assessment is to help the teachers determine where the pupils stand in their learning process and what level they reached concerning skills and knowledge. As such, they explain that it is a tool that can be used to reflect on one's own teaching methods and that it can also be used to give indications as to what kind of remediations should be used for which pupil. It is then also specified that this kind of evaluation can be quantified using points, symbols or oral feedback.

For the part on examination leading to certification, the curriculum explains that exams are what constitutes summative evaluation and that it integrates the testing of both knowledge and skills. At each exam period, all skills have to be tested and the exams are supposed to evaluate one or many curriculum objectives. The pedagogical goal of this kind of evaluation is here described as identical to that of formative assessment, i.e. to show where the pupil stands in terms of knowledge and skills and also that it can serve as a tool to determine the appropriate remediation. It finally ends by specifying that the examination of the exams' results is a good tool to examine the quality of education.

8) Themes

In the curriculum no chapter, section or specific point is dedicated to presenting what themes or thematic fields should be used for the teaching of French. The single point which could be interpreted as enumerating themes is found in the lexical part concerning the objectives for knowledge. There, eight examples of lexical fields are indeed presented. Those could be understood as themes and are, namely: personal information, daily life and school life, relationship to others, food and drinks, time, place and nature, weather, shopping and finally services and jobs. However, they do not constitute an obligation and only serve to illustrate how

vocabulary can be learned. We could thus argue that this curriculum for French presents no compulsory, optional nor recommended themes, but simply presents examples of themes for the sake of vocabulary learning.

9) Expected threshold level

The only specification concerning the expected level is found at the beginning of the curriculum, in the section *Algemene doelstellingen* (p.4). There, only one level is mentioned, that is an overall level to reach by the end of the second grade. That level is B1 and is explained in accordance with the level description of the CEFR. No other level is specified for the different skills. Using the definition of the CEFR, the curriculum describes what the pupils are supposed to be able to do in the different skills at that proficiency level.

10) Examples

We can find multiple examples at multiple places in the curriculum. They mainly serve to illustrate statements or the types of exercises which are possible and would meet the different objectives. They are also used to give ideas of how to combine skills and knowledge or provide food for thought concerning the possible criteria for assessment.

We thus first find examples in each description of the different skills concerning the different sorts of texts and how they can be used for the realization of a specific objective. Then, there are also examples for the knowledge objectives concerning the different grammar points that can be seen to match the recommended communicative intention but also to illustrate the different lexical fields. Finally, we also find examples on how to integrate the learning of knowledge into the four different skills.

Later in the curriculum there are further examples on, for instance, how to use French as language of instruction, how to create creative exercises for tasks specifically though for reading at home or yet, how to evaluate or exercise the different skills. We then also find for each skill ten tips on how to apply the didactic and pedagogical recommendations of the curriculum. Finally, in the assessment part of the curriculum, we find examples of what types of questions can be asked for a summative assessment and how teachers can evaluate their pupils in a formative way. Next to

those examples in the curriculum itself, there are also some references to the online French class on Smartschool where further examples can be found.

11) Language learning framework/methods

In this curriculum, an entire section is dedicated to the explanation of pedagogical and didactic recommendations for the teaching of French in the second grade (pp.51-70). That section explains:

- How to use French as language of instruction,
- The importance of each skill but also how to approach each skill, what to do with each skill and how to exercise and test the different skills,
- How to approach grammar and vocabulary,
- How, why and when to use differentiation,
- What the language classroom should be like,
- How to integrate ICT.

Each point is explained in a rather detailed manner, but only a shorter summary of the greater principles of those different pedagogical and didactic recommendations will be presented here.

First, concerning the language of instruction, the curriculum argues that French has to be used as much as possible by the teacher based on the statements that:

- The more someone is in contact with a language, the better they will be able to become proficient in that language,
- The use of the target language by the teacher will reduce reluctance and fear of speaking,
- When the target language is used by the teacher in the classroom, it is not a simple school subject anymore but becomes a mean of communication.

Even if they encourage the use of French, with, for example, the help of visual support and reformulation, they also mention the fact that it would not be efficient to only use the target language. They thus specify that Dutch can be used for certain aspects, such as checking the comprehension of a text or teaching difficult grammatical structures. In general, French has to be

used in a minimal functional way as they argue that the most important that the pupils associate the French language to the French class, classroom and teacher.

Secondly, the explanation of the recommendations for the different skills are basically always done in the same manner, with sometimes some variations. For each skill, they begin by stating the importance of that skill and why it should be taken into consideration for the French class. It then goes on explaining for each individual skill:

- What to listen to and who to listen to, what to read and reading at home as well as what kinds of speaking/writing exercises to do.
- How to approach listening, reading and speaking and how to exercise writing, with an explanation in three phases: before, during and after the task.
- How to evaluate and exercise listening, reading, speaking and writing.
- Ten tips for listening, reading, speaking and writing³⁶.

The second and third elements are the ones which are here of interest. Concerning listening the curriculum states that it wants the pupils to be able to exercise listening in the same manner than they would listen to something in reality, meaning without trying to understand every word but only the relevant information and with a communicative intention. The teachers are also encouraged to make the pupils listen to authentic texts in order to allow for maximum contact with the target language. It is then recommended that they use listening exercises in all the different learning stages of a class, linking them to other skills such as writing or speaking. Concerning the specific methodology, they recommend approaching listening tasks in three phases:

1. Before: to awaken interest, contextualize and give a clear listening goal (as it is said that it will affect how the pupil will listen)
2. During: exercise the different strategies such as skimming, scanning and intensive listening, let pupils hypothesize and encourage them to recognize known elements

³⁶ Note that for the writing skill, one point was added concerning the new French spelling conventions.

3. After: check the realization of the listening goal

Concerning reading, the teaching approach is basically the same. The pupils have to read authentic material and train to read in French as they would have to read in reality, i.e. to get informed, to broaden/deepen their knowledge or yet to relax. It is also said that it is important to teach pupils reading strategies and train them not to block on an unknown word or on a sentence they don't understand, in order to become independent readers. Like for listening, it is stated that the reading goal of the task is important as it will frame the way the pupils will read. The reading task is then also divided into three phases. As those phases are exactly the same than for listening, only adapted to reading tasks, they will not be repeated.

Concerning speaking in interaction and without interaction, they are both considered as one, even though speaking in interaction is clearly favored. It is indeed stated that the training of the speaking skill is best realized through working in small groups and through interactive tasks. It is also specified that, given the limited hours per week dedicated to the French class, it is important to make sure to create a safe environment where the pupils would not be scared to talk in French and where they would get as many chances as possible to talk. Like for the two receptive skills, they divide the teaching methodology in three phases:

1. Before: prepare for the speaking task with the help of listening/reading tasks or canvas for dialogues and reflect on what register the pupils will have to use.
2. During: make use of already learned vocabulary and other idiomatic expressions in context, use different contexts for the different tasks in order to train the use of different registers and explicitly teach to use non-verbal communication while speaking as well as other strategies in order to not fall back on Dutch.
3. After: give feedback to the pupils and also invite them to reflect on their production and then further the task with the help of listening or reading tasks or a writing exercise.

Just as for the rest of the skills, the writing skill is also to be taught as pupils would have to write in reality. The pupils thus have to be confronted to real-life contexts and write for real readers, as

those kinds of tasks are said to be more motivating for the pupils. As for all the other skills, the methodology is presented in three phases:

1. Before: set a writing goal to incite motivation, make the pupils realize what kind of texts they will have to write (its conventions, the lay-out, etc.), invite to not prepare for writing in Dutch but to directly do it in French, set and explain the criteria and finally, invite the pupils to see the writing task as a problem-solution task (for whom am I writing, why, for what purpose, etc.).
2. During: invite the pupils to use the different strategies involved in writing in an efficient manner (such as looking up words in the dictionary, using writing models or step-by-step plans, etc.) in order to stay focus on the writing task but also focus on the lay-out.
3. After: invite the pupils to reread their text in order to spot and correct the mistakes, give them feedback in a way which will invite them to correct their own mistakes, invite the pupils to reflect on how the writing task went (what was good and what could have been better, the strategies they had to use, etc.) and finally further the task by linking it to exercises involving other skills, such as speaking or listening.

Regarding vocabulary and grammar, the recommended approach has already been described in the criterion concerning knowledge. Basically, the curriculum explains that the different grammatical structures as well as the new vocabulary have to be brought to the pupils' attention and taught to them in context and integrated into tasks involving the different skills.

Finally, after explaining the recommendations concerning the teaching of the different components of a language, the curriculum gives further explanation on differentiation and how to integrate ICT into a language course. However, since those two points are not specifically concerned with how language learning is framed, it simply and very briefly be summarized. The fact that place is specifically devoted to differentiation could indicate the will of the curriculum to be as inclusive as possible and take all the learning differences and difficulties of a pupil into account. Then, the reference to ICT-integration could also indicate that the curriculum takes into consideration the societal need to form pupils which are competent in using new technologies.

All in all, the language learning framework could be summarized as follows: the curriculum strives for a teaching of languages which is as close as possible to how language is used in reality. That implies that they strive for teachers to propose real-life situations in their tasks, use authentic material but also and above all, link all the different skills together and integrate the learning of vocabulary and grammar into the training of the different skills.

12) Objectives

As already previously mentioned, the whole learning content is organized by objectives. Next to that we can also find general objectives for the teaching of foreign languages and finally, the 'Vakoverschrijdende eindtermen' (VOET) which represent objectives not linked to a specific subject, but which are transversal to different subjects. We can thus argue that the curriculum's objectives are indeed clearly stated, and that there are a lot of them.

First concerning the general objectives (p.4), they are described as being applicable for modern languages in general and to all grades. Those objectives stated that the pupils have to:

- Use language as an interactive communication tool, in and outside the classroom,
- Adapt language use to the goal of the task,
- Have the needed supportive knowledge to realize the language tasks,
- Master the needed strategies to realize the task,
- Enjoy learning languages and having intercultural contact.

Next to those general objectives, there are specific objectives which are used as a way of describing the learning content for each skill (pp.9-37). In total, there are 38 objectives linked to skills; those are summarized in Table 8. Next to those 38 objectives concerning the different skills, 9 objectives are also dedicated to knowledge and attitudes (pp.38-50). Those objectives are summarized in Table 9.

Concerning the VOET, those objectives encompass rather large goals, which are applicable in all school subjects and are thus not specific to language teaching, but aim to form active citizens and give key competences in order to allow the pupils to build their own personal life and live in society (pp.70-71). Those objectives are stated as:

- The 27 competences (described in the *eindtermen*) constituting the core curriculum
- Applicable in 7 domains:
 - Physical health and security
 - Mental health
 - Development of social relationships
 - Environment and sustainable development
 - Political and judicial cohabitation
 - Socio-economical cohabitation
 - Socio-cultural cohabitation
- Learning to learn
- Technical and technological training

Skills	objectives
Listening	1. Pupils can, in a descriptive way and for informative, prescriptive, narrative, argumentative and literary texts: • Determine the subject and the main ideas, • Follow the train of thought, • Select information, • Recognize references to the culture specific to the region of the target language. 2. Pupils can, in a structured way and for informative and narrative texts: • Clearly structure information. 3. Pupils can, in a critical way and for informative, prescriptive, narrative, argumentative and literary texts: • Form an opinion about what they listened to. 4. Pupils can use the needed strategies.
Reading	Same than for listening, with one addition: • Pupils can, in a descriptive way and for informative, prescriptive, narrative, argumentative and literary texts, recognize the structure and cohesion of the text.
Speaking without interaction	1. Pupils can convey, in a descriptive way, information taken from informative, prescriptive, narrative and literary texts. 2. Pupils can relate, in a descriptive way, what they read or heard in an informative or narrative text. 3. Pupils can summarize, in a structured way, informative, narrative and literary texts read beforehand. 4. Pupils can report, in a structured way, a memory, an event or a situation. 5. Pupils can give a presentation, in a structured way and with the help of a format. 6. Pupils can shortly clarify an appreciation, in a critical way. 7. Pupils can comment, in a critical way, informative and narrative texts. 8. Pupils can use the needed strategies.
Speaking in interaction	1. Pupils can perform, in a conversational situation, the tasks described for the listening and reading skills. 2. Pupils can begin, maintain and end a simple conversation. 3. Pupils can use the needed strategies.
Writing	1. Pupils can, in a descriptive way: • Simply paraphrase a previously read text, • Communicate in writing, • Describe a memory, an event or a situation, • Use daily mores and courtesy for social contact, • Formulate a spontaneous opinion about informative, prescriptive or narrative texts. 2. Pupils can, in a structured way:

	• Summarize information found in previously read informative and narrative texts, • Write a report with the help of a format, • Communicate in a simple a digital way.
	3. Pupils can express an opinion, in a critical way and in an informative text.
	4. Pupils can use the needed strategies.

Table 8 - Objectives per skill (GO! curriculum for French, ref. 2012/002, pp.9-37).

	Objectives
Knowledge	1. Pupils can, while realizing their tasks, functionally use the grammatical and lexical items: • To name people, animals and things, • To make statements, • With the help of lexical knowledge taken from different lexical fields. 2. Pupils reflect on language and language use in the different linguistic situations in order to broaden their functional and supportive knowledge by: • Recognizing and analyzing the different forms and structures taught in class, • Observing how forms and structures function through the discovery and formulation of rules, • Discovering similarities and differences between languages and use their knowledge of other languages. 3. Pupils can discern similarities and differences in the way of life between their own culture and the one of the target language.
Attitudes	1. Pupils are ready to dare listen, read, speak, converse and write in French. 2. Pupils strive for linguistic care. 3. Pupils value the presence of foreign languages in their environment (in and out of the classroom) as well as the sociocultural world of the target language speakers. 4. Pupils are open to similarities and differences between their own culture and the one of the region of the target language speakers. 5. Pupils are open to the esthetic components of a text.

Table 9 - Objective for knowledge and attitudes (GO! curriculum for French, ref 2012/002, pp.38-50).

13) Attention drawn to culture

This curriculum for French seems to draw some attention to culture. We can indeed observe that culture constitutes the point of interest of several objectives. Enjoyment of intercultural contact is first stated as a general objective and then culture is also cited at least once for each skill (except for the speaking in interaction and writing skills) as it says that pupils have to recognize references to the target language's culture. Culture is then also clearly stated as an objective for knowledge and for attitudes. They are indeed supposed to be able to distinguish between similarities and differences concerning their own culture and the one of the target language as well as being openminded towards those similarities and differences.

Next to being stated as an objective, culture, intercultural contact and open-mindedness are also cited several times in the description of their values and vision concerning language teaching. It is thus arguable that culture of the target language is indeed taken into consideration and incorporated into the curriculum. However, concerning its weight, role or place it still seems to be considered as secondary to the actual mastering of the target language.

14) CEFR

As already mentioned when describing the LM1 curriculum of the *W-BE* network, this analysis of the integration of the CEFR into the *GO!* curriculum for French will be solely based on when it is cited and how it is said to be integrated by the curriculum itself. In order to analyze in more detail to what extent the CEFR is indeed taken into consideration further analysis comparing the CEFR itself to the curriculum would be needed.

All in all, we can observe when reading the curriculum that the CEFR is mentioned only once when stating the expected level (p.4). It is then also used to provide a description of what is expected of a learner at this level concerning his mastering of the language. Next to the level, the five skills described in the CEFR are also used in the learning content of the curriculum. In the very first point of the curriculum (*Visie*, p.2), it is also mentioned that the vision of the *GO!* concerning foreign languages aligns with that of Europe. Apart from those two references, there are no further mentions of the CEFR in the rest of the curriculum.

So far, we have described the *GO!* curriculum for French only, we will thus now turn to describing the curriculum for English, which is here being considered as a LM2. As both curricula were published by and for the *GO!* network, it was expected that some similarities would be observed between them. Hence, only the criteria which differ from one curriculum to the other will be discussed here. Also note that sometimes, the content differs only because this curriculum was designed specifically for English and the other analyzed curriculum specifically for French. However, when such a difference does not constitute a major change in the description of a criterion, it will not be discussed again.

1) The general organization of the curriculum

Concerning the general organization of the curriculum for English, some differences were noted compared to that for French. This curriculum is also organized in several sections, but some of them are slightly different and the lay-out can also sometimes be different. The sections are:

1. A table of content (interactive for the electric version),
2. An explanation on the 'vision' of the network concerning language learning,
3. A sort of introduction, which we will describe further in this criterion,
4. A section stating the general objectives,
5. A section where all the learning content is described,
6. A section dedicated to didactic and pedagogical recommendations,
7. An explanation on the needed material for language teaching,
8. A section concerning assessment,
9. A Bibliography, simply stating that one can find it in the online class for English on Smartschool.

Several of those points differ not only in their organization, but also in their content. Here, the two points concerning the introduction and the general organization of the learning content will be discussed. The content of the other sections will be described in the corresponding criteria.

Like for the curriculum for French, no introduction is provided as such. The section serving as introduction thus conveys the same notions than in the curriculum for French, only it is here specific to English and not French. This means that the same kind of situations and the same kinds of elements are presented, only the content was specifically adapted to the status of English as well as to the possible contact with the language that the pupils might have outside of the school context.

Concerning the learning content, the general organization also stays the same as for the curriculum for French but the description is more precise. In this curriculum for English we indeed find before the presentation of the objectives for each skill, a note on the difficulty of a task and how to regulate it by playing on different elements of the task. Then, in each of all the different objectives of the curriculum, it is clearly specified what constitutes something new, what is to be deepened as well as what was taken from the first grade A-stream curriculum and which thus forms a learning continuum.

2) 'User's manual'

There is in this curriculum for English what could be seen as a 'user's manual', or at least as a helping tool on how to read the different conventions used in the description of the objectives. Before the presentation of the learning content there is indeed a 'legend' (p.8), a sort of caption, explaining for example that if a term is underlined it means that it was taken back from the curriculum for the first grade A-stream or yet that if an objective constitutes something new, the mention "NIEUW IN DE TWEEDE GRAAD" was added next to it.

Next to this, the section which serves to explain the different terms is not called "how to read" as in the curriculum for French and could thus for this curriculum for English not be mistakenly interpreted as an explanation on how to use the curriculum.

3) Skills

Concerning the weight, place and role given to the different skills, we cannot observe in this curriculum for English, in opposition to how it was presented in the curriculum for French, if a skill is more important than another. The section in which that was explained in the curriculum for

French is indeed absent in the curriculum for English. However, the same observations can be made concerning the organization and presentation of the different skills in this specific curriculum. Also, as it is the curriculum for English of the *GO!*, it would be logical that their view on the importance of the different skills stayed the same as it was described in the curriculum for French.

4) Knowledge

Concerning knowledge, the same comment could be made than concerning the different skills. Only one addition in the section *Visie* (p.2) could lead us to think that they consider grammar as particularly important. It is indeed clearly stated there that even if communication is essential, pupils should learn to speak and write correctly. Therefore, it is arguable that in this curriculum, a particular attention is drawn to grammatical accuracy. It could thus here be argued that in this curriculum for English, grammar weighs more heavily than in the curriculum for French. It is however stated in the presentation of the knowledge objectives that it should always be learned in context.

5) Values

The only difference between the curriculum for French and this curriculum for English is that there are here no mention of the values of the network as a whole, or in general, but only linked to the teaching of modern languages. The message which is taken across concerning language teaching however stays the same than the one in the curriculum for French, sometimes specifically adapted to fit the status of English.

6) Assessment

In this curriculum for English, the assessment section (p.58) is organized in four different points: first a word on the goal of assessment, then 'procesevaluatie', 'productevaluatie' and finally a word on grading. Before going any further, it could be noted that in the first point on the goal of evaluation, it is stated that as evaluations represent an assessment of the work of both the teachers and the pupils, they are considered as a way to guarantee the quality of a school. This

statement could constitute one of the value of the network, which wasn't stated before and which is 'quality'.

The next parts on 'proces-' and 'productevaluatie' are the one which interest us the most in this criterion. 'Procesevaluatie' is the kind of evaluation which could represent what we have been calling formative assessment. The role of formative assessment is here more or less the same than for the curriculum for French, except for the fact that they are considered as a feedback also to the pupils themselves and not solely as a feedback to the teacher about the pupils. What can be evaluated for this kind of assessment is however still basically the same than what was explained before concerning the curriculum for French and will thus here not be repeated.

What is interesting is the specification for 'productevaluatie' which is explained in less details but which is yet more inclusive of different kinds of tests. Here, what we have been calling assessment leading to certification does not solely include exams but also 'recall-tests', for example. On the goal of this kind of assessment, it stays the same as explained for the curriculum for French, meaning that it is to evaluate the achievement of the different learning objectives in all the different skills and for which all the elements constituting knowledge are taken into account.

7) Language learning framework/methods

In this curriculum for English, there is a point which is entirely dedicated to the explanation of the teaching methodology and language learning framework, like in the curriculum for French. However, here, they simply refer to the online English class on Smartschool. No formal observation could thus be made as I had no access to the online classroom. Still, it could be argued that, since it stays the same education network, the recommended teaching methodology and approach to language learning would also be the same than the one presented in the curriculum for French.

4.1.1.3 Comparison

The analysis of those four curricula revealed both similarities and differences. Table 10 gives a summary of what could be observed concerning the different criteria. The mention '+' means that more similarities were observed between the curricula of the *GO!* and those of the *W-BE*

networks and the mention ‘-’ refers to the fact that more differences were observed between the curricula of the two networks. As both cases were observed, the criteria where similarities were observed have been grouped together and the criteria where clear differences were observed have also been grouped. The two cases will thus be discussed separately.

	General organization	Key terms	user' s manual	Skills	Knowledge	Values	Assessment	Themes	Expected threshold level	Examples	Language learning framework/methods	Objectives	Attention drawn to culture	CEFR
LM1/French	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	+
LM2/English	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	+

Table 10 - Differences and similarities between curricula.

Similarities (LM1/French)

As table 10 shows, the LM1 curriculum and the curriculum for French are more similar than different for the criteria concerning the key terms, the values of the networks, the expected threshold level and the CEFR.

1. Key terms

It was observed that the curricula of both networks use the same techniques to define or explain the different key terms. Both indeed do not have an index where all the terminology is summarized. Then both also explain or define those terms either in a separate section or in other parts of the curriculum, as part of the text or between brackets in the text. In both cases some terms were also neither explained nor defined. The only difference was that the curriculum for

French also made use of footnotes to further explain the different terms and that some terms which were not defined nor explained in that specific section at the beginning of the curriculum were explained or defined in another section as part of the text and not between brackets.

Then concerning the terms themselves, even if the LM1 curriculum seems to use more terms than the curriculum for French, some terms are still the same in both curricula. Table 11 shows which terms were used in both curricula and which were not.

Similar terms in both curricula	Terms only present in one curriculum	
- Formative evaluation / “dagelijks werk” - Summative evaluation / “examens” - Strategic resources / strategies - Text sort (+ the 5 different text sorts) - Skills (+ the 5 different skills) - Text characteristics “Savoirs” / “kennis” - Communication strategies “Savoir-faire” / “can-do statements” (Language) task - dispositif RCD / differentiatie/differentiëren	- UAA - acquis d’apprentissage - auto-évaluation (statut de) l’erreur - objet de l’évaluation - critère, indicateur - niveau de maîtrise attendu - performance - strategie transversal	- ressources - sequence d’apprentissage - connaître, appliquer, transférer - l’attendu - moment clé d’apprentissage - initiation/reception - enseignement formel - structuration formelle - composante linguistique/sociolinguistique/pragmatique - function langagière
	- Verwerkingsniveau (+ the 4 different levels) - Attitudes - OCL - ICT - VOET - Moeilijkheidsgraad	- Leerstijl - Doeltaalgebruik - Voertaal - Doeltaal - OVUR-schema

Table 11 - terms used in the LM1 curriculum and the curriculum for French

2. Values of the network

Concerning the values of the networks, it could be observed that they are overall similar. Even if the *GO!* curriculum explains its take on language learning specifically, both networks also explain their view on education in general. It is also clear that the overall values they convey are the same, even if one network sometimes makes further distinctions. Both the *GO!* and the *W-BE* networks refer to the development of the pupils into active citizens of society. They then also strive for openness to other cultures, where the *GO!* however goes further by specifying respect, tolerance, interest and empathy. Both networks stand for the development of free beings and the *W-BE* network also specifies freedom of speech and thought. Moreover, they both want to develop the pupils' critical thinking and encourage individual development.

The networks then also differ on some of their values. Where the *W-BE* network promotes objectivity and intellectual rigor and honesty, the *GO!* network prefers intellectual curiosity. Furthermore, when the *GO!* network wants to encourage life-long learning and learning pleasure, no such values are conveyed by the *W-BE* network and when the latter encourages solidarity and social emancipation, the former does not. Finally, the *GO!* network also specifies his view on language learning specifically and thus mentions that they strive for pleasure to communicate in another language and with the speakers of that foreign languages, while that aspect is absent from the *W-BE* curriculum.

All in all, we can see that the networks show both similarities and differences in their values. One network is sometimes more specific than the other or one tackles a value not mentioned by the other. However, it appears that they overall both strive for the development of free, critical and openminded beings to take active part in society.

3. Expected threshold level

Concerning the level, both networks make use of the CEFR to determine it. Even though the *W-BE* network is more specific in the description of the level, they both want the pupils to achieve an overall B1 level at the end of the second grade for the first modern language. The *W-BE* network however takes into consideration further differences inside that level, requiring the level B1-. It further specifies the levels per skills (which still remain the same as the overall level) and

the expected level at the end of the first year of the second grade (A2+). Those kinds of specifications are absent from the curriculum of the *GO!* network.

4. CEFR

Both networks seem to use the CEFR in their respective curriculum to describe the expected level. They thus both make use of the level-scale presented in the CEFR. They also both specify that they use the five skills proposed by the CEFR. The number of references however differs from one curriculum to the next. Where the *GO!* network makes only one reference to the CEFR at the beginning of the curriculum for French in order to determine and describe the level, the *W-BE* network refers to the CEFR in a deeper manner at the beginning of its curriculum as it claims to also integrate the three components of language learning (linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic) into the learning content. The *W-BE* network then refers to the CEFR throughout the entire curriculum as it is used in each UAA to describe the general characteristics of the skill for the level, as well as to divide the grammatical points and other such references. Summed up, we could argue that both curricula use the CEFR in the same manner, even if they don't refer to it in the same way.

Differences (LM1/French)

Despite the similarities that were previously observed, we can notice that more criteria were different. There are indeed here 10 criteria to be discussed whereas there were only 4 for the similarities. The criteria where more differences than similarities were observed between the LM1 curriculum of the *W-BE* network and the curriculum for French of the *GO!* network are: the general organization, the presence of a 'user's manual', skills, knowledge, assessment, themes, the language learning framework/methods, the objectives and finally the attention drawn to culture.

1. The general organization of the curriculum

It is clear when looking at both curricula that they are radically differently organized. First of all, the curriculum of the *GO!* network seems more 'finished' than the curriculum of the *W-BE* network. The curriculum for French has indeed no lay-out problems, and there exist only one for

the grade in this form of education, whereas some problematic lay-out issues were observed for the LM1 curriculum and it also still coexists with its predecessor. Then, the two curricula are not only different regarding the organization of the learning content but also concerning the introduction (other differences were also noticed, but those will be discussed in the appropriate criteria).

When looking at the introduction, the content as well as the title used to refer to it are different. On the one hand, the *GO!* network presents it as a 'starting point' and explains not the content of the curriculum but the situations in which the pupils for whom this curriculum was made find themselves in. On the other hand, the *W-BE* network presents it as an 'introduction' and uses it to introduce the content of the curriculum.

When it comes to the organization of the learning content, it is clearly different. Where the *GO!* network organizes it per skill, knowledge and attitudes to further subdivide it into different objectives, the curriculum of the *W-BE* network is organized by UAA, which represent an organization of the learning content by both level and skill.

2. 'User's manual'

The presence of a 'user's manual' for the curriculum as a whole was absent from both curricula. However, where the curriculum for French doesn't give any kind of indications on how to read the learning content, the LM1 curriculum still presents a figure to give indications as to how a UAA should be read and understood. On the one hand, the curriculum of the *W-BE* network also presents the content of the curriculum in the introduction and specifies which sections were taken as such from the benchmarks and on the other hand, the *GO!* curriculum does not. As neither an indication on what is to be found in the curriculum nor an explanation on how to read the learning content was found in the curriculum of the *GO!* network, this criterion thus represents a difference between the two networks.

3. Skills and knowledge

The two criteria concerning skills and knowledge will here be discussed together, as it is not so much the manner in which they are considered when taken separately which differs, but rather how both are considered in comparison to each other which is slightly yet notably different.

When considering skills only, we can see that, in both curricula, they occupy more or less the same place. They indeed represent a primary way of dividing the learning content and they are each time described as means of communication –note that they also represent a goal in themselves for the *GO!* network–. Then when considering knowledge only, we can observe that it is in both cases incorporated into the description of the skills and described in a rather detailed manner. In both curricula, we could also observe that grammar seemed to weigh more heavily than the other components of knowledge.

However, the consideration and description of knowledge is in both curricula rather different. Whereas the LM1 curriculum presents it as a resource for each skill separately and explains it first in each UAA in function of those skills and also describes it later by proficiency level, the curriculum for French presents it on the same footing as the skills, as having its own objectives and as representing not a support for the different skills but for communication itself. The consideration of both networks could be summarized as indicated on Figure 16 for the *GO!* network and on Figure 17 for the *W-BE* network.



Figure 16 - Consideration of skills and knowledge in the curriculum for French of the *GO!* network.



Figure 17 - Consideration of skills and knowledge in the LM1 curriculum for the *W-BE* network.

For the *W-BE* network, knowledge seems to be considered as supporting the different skills, which are themselves a mean of communication, while for the *GO!* network, skills and knowledge seem to be both considered on the same footing and as both supporting communication. That difference in consideration is probably why in the *GO!* curriculum, the grammatical rules are given in function of what they are used for, while the *W-BE* network presents the grammatical structures as grammatical points to be seen or deepened in function of the level.

Then, as knowledge is not considered equally in the two curricula, it could also be argued that knowledge weighs more in the curriculum of the *GO!* network than in that of the *W-BE* network, even if in both cases it isn't put above proficiency in the different skills. Finally, a comment could be made on the consideration of strategies, which also differs from one network to the other. On the one hand, the *W-BE* network considers strategies as part of knowledge and on the other hand, they are considered by the *GO!* network as an objective in the description of the skills themselves.

4. Assessment

Concerning assessment, some differences were observed in the manner in which they are referred to, in their content and also in how they are considered. On how both kinds of assessment are referred to in the curricula, what we have been calling formative assessment is simply referred to as 'daily' work in the curriculum for French, while it is indeed called formative evaluation in the LM1 curriculum. For assessment leading to certification, exams are presented as the only constituent of that kind of assessment for the *GO!* network, while it is referred to as summative evaluation for the *W-BE* network.

About formative assessment, a first difference could be observed about the manner in which it is considered. Even if in both cases it is said to represent a tool for the teacher to reflect on his/her teaching methods, when talking about what it represents for the pupils, the point of view shifts. For the *W-BE* network, formative assessment represents a way for the pupil to regulate his/her own learning and be aware of his/her successes and difficulties in order to overcome them. For the *GO!* network however, formative assessment represents a tool for the teacher to evaluate where the pupil stands in his/her learning process, evaluate what proficiency level they have reached and give indications as to what remediation should be put in place for which pupil. It

could thus be argued that for the *W-BE* network, pupils are the actors of their own learning process, while for the *GO!* network, the teachers are responsible for the pupils' learning process. In both cases, formative evaluation represents a feedback but for the *W-BE* network it is a feedback for both pupils and teachers, while for the *GO!* it is a feedback for the teachers only.

Concerning assessment leading to certification, the two networks also view it in a different manner. On the one hand, the *W-BE* network presents it as a way to evaluate how the pupil has come to master the different skills and knowledge as well as a tool for the class council to make decisions at the end of a year or grade. On the other hand, the *GO!* network considers that it has the same goal as formative evaluation but also that it is a way to evaluate the quality of education. On what is to be tested here, the curriculum for French stipulates that both skills and knowledge can be tested and that at each exam period, at least one objective per skill for all five skills has to be tested. In the LM1 curriculum, it is also said that skills and knowledge can be tested in a summative evaluation and that each UAA as well as all the different communicative intentions have to be tested at least once over the entire grade. Finally, even though communication seems to be important for both networks, it is observable that it is to be evaluated only for the *W-BE* network and that it isn't stated as being part of assessment leading to certification for the *GO!* network.

5. Themes

The comparison of this criteria about the themes is rather quickly made. In the curriculum of the *W-BE* network, twelve thematic fields and all the related subfields are stated as being mandatory, to be taught over the entire grade and reviewed at all stages of education. In the curriculum of the *GO!* however, no such mention was found. There is indeed in that curriculum no recommendation nor obligation concerning the themes. The only time it could be thought that the curriculum refers to different themes is when it gives examples of lexical fields for the teaching of vocabulary in context. Those presented lexical fields were, due to the wording of the objective, only presented as examples. This criterion thus represents a clear difference between the two networks.

6. Examples

Concerning the presence of examples we can see that in both cases, the curricula use examples to illustrate the kinds of texts which can be used for the different skills or to give ideas about possible tasks. Moreover, in the curriculum of the *GO!* network, tips are also given to the teachers about how to put into practice the different pedagogical and didactic recommendations. Despite the fact that both curricula use of examples in an illustrative way, it could still be argued that the curriculum of the *W-BE* network includes them in a more extensive way than the curriculum of the *GO!* network. The former indeed dedicates two entire sections solely to giving examples on how to use the curriculum in practice. First, it dedicates an entire section to help with the planning of a UAA in four different manners and then it gives a sequence sample, including two summative evaluations and a summarizing table containing, for instance, the objectives of the sequence. Finally, in the section about assessment, the LM1 curriculum also exemplifies how to theoretically organize an assessment grid. We can thus observe that the *W-BE* network dedicates more space in its curriculum to giving examples than the *GO!* network.

7. Language learning framework/methods

If it is true that both curricula seem to approach language teaching in a communicative manner, the specific methodology of the two networks could not be compared. It was indeed not stated at all what approach should be used for the teaching a modern language in the curriculum of the *W-BE* network, while an entire section was specifically dedicated to it in the curriculum of the *GO!* network. There not being any pedagogical or didactic recommendations in the LM1 curriculum is probably due to the fact that this document does not actually represent a curriculum but rather a 'helping tool' in the reading of the benchmarks. That difference in status between the two curricula could explain why no methodology is presented in the curriculum of the *W-BE* network, while it is clearly stated in the curriculum of the *GO!* network.

8. Objectives

The objectives of the two curricula are rather radically different. First of all, they are not explicitly stated as objectives in the curriculum of the *W-BE* network, while they are clearly stated as such

in the curriculum of the *GO!* network. Then, the way they are formulated, their number and their content are also rather different.

First, the *GO!* network formulates them clearly each time, for each skill, as well as for knowledge and attitudes. Those different objectives are then also numbered. In the curriculum of the *W-BE* network however, those objectives are not as clearly stated each time as they are only referred to as expectations in the figure explaining how to read a UAA and it is then not clearly stated in the different UAA themselves what is an objective and what is not. In the curriculum of the *GO!* network, we also find clearly stated overall objectives for modern languages in general at the beginning, as well as a note on transversal objectives to be considered not only for the teaching of modern languages but for the teaching of any school subjects. Even though for the *W-BE* network, the title of each UAA could be interpreted as representing general objectives, it is still not clearly stated that they are general objectives.

Concerning the objectives' content, we can see that those formulated by the *GO!* network are more detailed than the ones of the *W-BE* network which simply states what a pupil should be able to do with the skill in a very general manner. Where the *W-BE* network for example states for the speaking without interaction skill that at the end of the grade pupils should be able to produce a spoken discourse, in order to inform/be informed and/or act/make someone act and/or understand opinions and/or feelings, in situations which are meaningful to the pupil. For the same skill, the *GO!* network formulates several objectives such as the pupils should be able to:

- Convey information taken from informative, prescriptive, narrative and literary texts, in a descriptive way,
- Relate what they read or heard in an informative or narrative text,
- Summarize informative, narrative and literary texts read beforehand, in a structured way,
- Report a memory, an event or a situation,
- Give a presentation with the help of a format,
- Etc.

Those two examples clearly show that the degree of details concerning the description of the objectives is much more developed in the *GO!* network than in the *W-BE* network. That same

observation can be done not only for the skills, but overall, when it comes to describing and comparing the different objectives.

Finally, in the wording of the objectives, we can see that the *W-BE* network considers more the communicative intentions than the *GO!* network does. The former indeed includes it in the different objectives of a UAA, while the latter sets the different objectives concerning skills, knowledge or attitudes apart from the communicative intention, which constitutes another objective in itself and is presented in the general objectives common to all modern language curricula.

9. Attention drawn to culture

Even though both networks seem to value and encourage openness to other cultures in the education of the pupils, they seem to not draw as much attention to it in their respective curriculum. The curriculum for French of the *GO!* network indeed seems to dedicate more space to culture than the LM1 curriculum of the *W-BE* network. The only place where we could argue that the latter does draw some attention to culture is when it enumerates the different thematic fields. However it is not clear whether it has to be the pupils' own culture or the foreign language speakers' culture. Moreover, the amount of attention that has to be dedicated to culture is not clearly stated, making that cultural aspect of language fade into the background of the different themes. In the curriculum of the *GO!* network however, four specific objectives are dedicated to the foreign language speakers' culture. In the curriculum for French, culture is thus part of the learning content. The *W-BE* network making no such statements stands out, when compared to the *GO!*, as according less importance to the foreign language speakers' culture.

*

So far, the differences and similarities between the LM1 curriculum of the *W-BE* network and the curriculum for French of the *GO!* network have been discussed. This MA thesis however aims to compare two curricula on each side of the linguistic border. Therefore, there are still two curricula to be compared, namely the LM2 curriculum of the *W-BE* network and the curriculum for English of the *GO!* network. As those two curricula were respectively similar to either the LM1 curriculum or the curriculum for French, the comments that could be made concerning their comparison are

also similar to those already made. However, for the curriculum for English and the LM2 curriculum, four criteria have to be considered differently than for the curriculum for French and the LM1 curriculum. The criteria concerning the presence of a 'user's manual' and assessment indeed show in this case more similarities than differences and the criteria concerning the values and the expected threshold level show more differences than similarities.

Similarities (LM2/English)

1. 'User's manual'

Both the curriculum for English and the LM2 curriculum don't present a 'user's manual' on how to use the curriculum as a **whole**. However, both curricula present a sort of tool to help with the reading of the learning content. On the one hand, the LM2 curriculum presents a figure where it explains how a UAA is built and how to read it, and on the other hand, the curriculum for English presents a "legend" at the beginning of the learning content to explain what the different lay-out conventions mean. In that respect, the curriculum for English thus also presents a tool in order to help the reader understand how to read the different objectives of the learning content, even though the method differs from that used by the LM2 curriculum. Nevertheless, the LM2 curriculum also clearly states what is to be found in the document, whereas the curriculum for English does not.

2. Assessment

Concerning assessment, even though the content of the evaluations stays the same than what was exposed for the curriculum for French and the LM1 curriculum, there are two slight differences which could be noticed between the curriculum for English and the curriculum for French. There is indeed one change in terminology in the curriculum for English which makes that curriculum slightly more similar to the LM2 curriculum. In the latter we find two kinds of assessment, namely formative assessment and summative assessment, and in the former, we also find those two kinds of assessment called "procesevaluatie" and "productevaluatie". In the terminology used, the two curricula are thus more similar as "productevaluatie" doesn't solely include exams anymore, making that part more similar to summative assessment in the LM2 curriculum.

Then, the view on the role of formative assessment shifts and does not only constitute a feedback for the teacher anymore, but it also a tool for the pupils to situate themselves in their learning process. On that point, the curriculum for English thus also becomes more similar to the view on assessment of the LM2 curriculum, as the pupils are presented as being more active in their learning process.

Differences (LM2/English)

1. Values

As the LM2 curriculum and the curriculum for English are still published and designed by respectively the same networks, it is expected that their respective values stay the same than the ones presented in the LM1 curriculum and the curriculum for French. However, the way in which they are presented differs. The values in the LM2 curriculum of the *W-BE* network are presented in the exact same manner than the way it is presented in the LM1 curriculum but concerning the curriculum for English of the *GO!* network, that presentation is different. In this curriculum, the general values of the network are indeed not stated at all, and the only reference to their values is the one which is specifically made for the teaching of modern languages in general. If we were to have only analyzed those two curricula, the general values of the *GO!* would thus not have been known. As such, it is not the content which makes those two curricula more different than similar, but simply the fact that in one case the values are clearly stated (i.e. in the LM2 curriculum) and in the other they are not (i.e. in the curriculum for English).

2. Expected threshold level

What could be observed here is simply that the expected overall threshold level for a LM2 is lower in the *W-BE* network than it is in the *GO!* network. In the LM2 curriculum the expected level at for the second grade is A2+, while at the end of the second grade for English in the *GO!* network, it is B1. Concerning the presentation of the different levels, the comments are the same than those made for the comparison between the LM1 curriculum and the curriculum for French. The LM2 curriculum thus specifies the levels per skill –even though it stays the same for each skill– and then details two different levels, namely A1+ and A2+, which we guess are to be reached by the end of the first year of the second grade and by the end of the second year of the second

grade. In the curriculum for English, the expected level is given only for the end of the grade, and only in general and not specifically detailed for each skill.

4.1.2 The curricula in practice

So far, the different curricula have been described and compared in a theoretical manner. However, it is also interesting to analyze how languages are effectively taught in practice. In this part, we will thus investigate the practical side of the different curricula for the two networks. The way the teachers actually use or follow the different curricula will thus be discussed, as well as the actual reachability of the different objectives which are presented on each side of the linguistic border. First, the curricula of the *W-BE* network will be examined, to be followed by a discussion of the curricula of the *GO!* network. Finally, a comparison will be made between the two.

4.1.2.1 In the *W-BE* network

For this part, two kinds of analysis were done: first an analysis of the questions of the online survey relating to the practical application of the curricula and then an analysis of the interview done per email with one of the teachers who answered the online survey. Before turning to the analysis of that interview, we will first discuss the answers collected thanks to the online survey.

A first question concerned how the teachers claimed to use the curricula for modern languages when designing their teaching sequence. Figure 18 summarizes the collected answers. There were in total 10 participants who answered this question, for which they could select more than one answer.

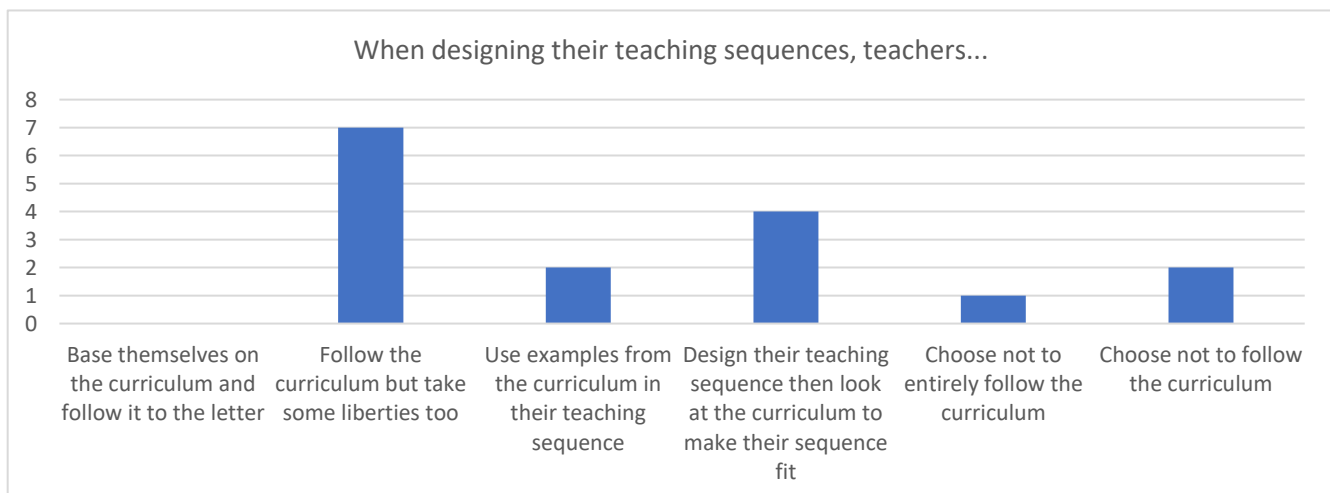


Figure 18 - How do the teachers of the *W-BE* network use the curricula when designing their sequence (n=10.)

Figure 18 clearly shows that most of the respondents claim to follow the curricula but still take some liberties and that none of them actually claims to follow it to the letter. A minority also claims to use examples from the curricula in their teaching sequence. However, as this statement only got 2 answers, it could be argued that this does not seem to be a common practice amongst the respondents. 4 respondents also pointed out that they first designed their sequence before trying to make it fit to the curriculum. Finally, only 3 participants claimed to not entirely follow/not follow the curriculum when designing their teaching sequence. Those results could suggest that, in general, the teachers still base themselves on the curricula as much as possible when designing their sequence and thus try to put it in practice as it is written, even if they still allow themselves to take liberties regarding the application of the curricula's learning content.

A second and a third question aimed to appreciate whether the objectives of the curricula were clear and reachable in reality for the different aspects of language learning. Figure 19 shows the degree of clarity of those objectives and Figure 20 shows whether those objectives are thought of as reachable or not.

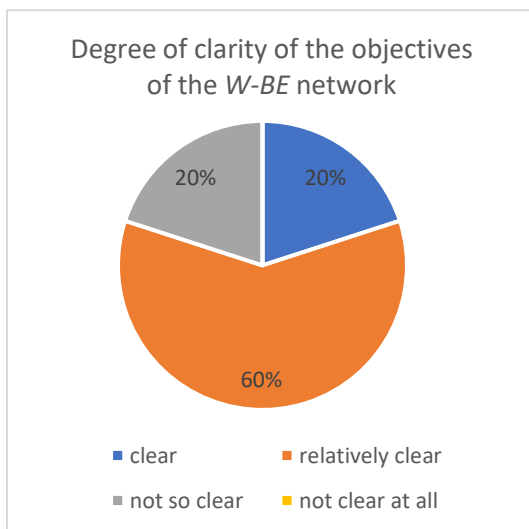


Figure 19 - Clarity of the objectives concerning the curricula of the W-BE network (n=10).

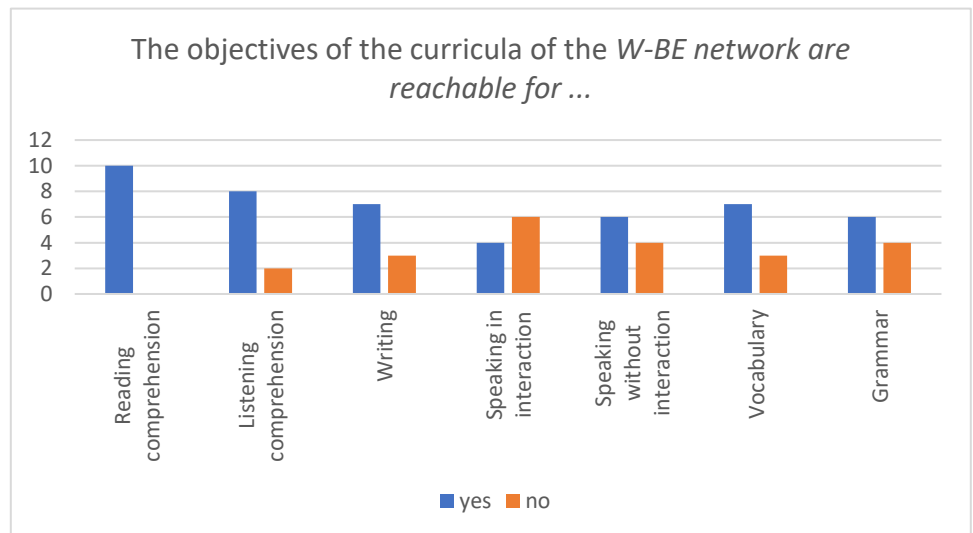


Figure 20 - Reachability of the different objectives concerning the curricula of the W-BE network (n=10).

Figure 19 shows that even though the objectives are not clearly stated as such each time in the curricula, they still seem clear or at least relatively clear to a majority of the respondent, as only 2 answered that they found the objectives of the curricula not so clear. Concerning their reachability, it is also clear that a majority of the respondent considers the objectives as reachable

for almost all the different components of language teaching. A t test confirmed this tendency by showing that there was in average a significant difference between the positive and negative answers ($p=0.04 < 0.05$). This would suggest that the objectives are thought of as, in average, reachable. The objectives for the receptive skills as well as the writing skill and the vocabulary seem to pose no challenge, while the participants did not display an as clear agreement concerning the objectives for speaking without interaction and grammar, even though a small majority still finds them reachable. Concerning knowledge only, a participant also underlined that more attention could be drawn to grammar and vocabulary. The only skill for which the objectives are thought of by a majority as unreachable is the speaking in interaction skill. On that, a participant explains that the “configuration of the classrooms hardly allows for that much spoken interaction”. Except for that skill, we could still argue that, in general, the objectives of the curricula seem realistic enough, as they are in majority thought of as reachable.

Now turning to the interview, the goal was to analyze whether teachers actually applied the curricula in the designing of their sequence. The answers gotten on the only interview done for this MA thesis will thus serve that purpose as they were compared with the different points of the curriculum to which the questions referred. The interviewee stated using the LM2 curriculum to teach English in the second grade, more particularly in the fourth year. In the survey, she claimed to follow the curriculum –even if she also took some liberties about it– and also to use examples from the curriculum. She also considered the objectives as clear and reachable, except for grammar.

Concerning the theme, the interviewee stated that her chosen theme followed the thematic field about health presented in the curriculum. When looking at her other answers concerning the final objective of her teaching sequence as well as the lexical fields which she teaches, we can indeed agree that her teaching sequence falls into the thematic field “health and well-being” described in the LM2 curriculum. The lexical fields are indeed that of sickness and body parts which both constitute sub-fields of the general thematic field “health and well-being”. It could be noted that “sickness” is not stated as such in the different sub-fields, but some of those sub-fields can still relate to a general state of sickness, i.e. the sub-fields concerning “health condition” and “pains, symptoms, advice and common remedies”. On that last subfield, the final objective formulated

by the interviewee as “write a guide to your correspondent on remedies in function of the sickness” indeed shows that she follows the thematic field of the curriculum to which she refers.

Concerning this final objective, it can also be argued that it does follow the objectives of the LM2 curriculum concerning the writing skill for several reasons. First, that objective clearly has a communicative end which is to inform your correspondent on a certain topic. Second, as the addressee of the situation is the pupil’s own correspondent, it answers to the characteristic stating that the writing task has to be related to the personal sphere or basic relationships of the pupil. The chosen subject is also concrete and concerns the close environment of the pupil. Third, the chosen communicative situation has to be meaningful to the pupil and it could be argued that a pupil could have to research and convey information about a certain sickness and how to cure it to a friend if that friend was sick. Therefore, I would argue that the final objective also answers that criterion. Finally, and as already stated, that objective was thought with respect to one of the thematic fields presented in the LM2 curriculum.

Concerning knowledge, it is arguable that the interviewee also follows the LM2 curriculum. The lexical fields chosen are, as recommended in the curriculum, related to the chosen thematic field. About grammar, the interviewee answered that she was teaching the present perfect in that sequence. As she teaches in the fourth grade, the level is thus A2+. When we take a look at the table summarizing all the different grammatical structures in the LM2 curriculum, we can indeed observe that the present perfect is considered at that level for English as a “key learning moment”. She thus follows, quite to the letter, that LM2 curriculum.

About her answers concerning evaluation, the actual content could not be compared with the curriculum. It does indeed not state what should or should not be evaluated for formative assessment and only states that not all skills nor all components of the learning process have to be evaluated at the end of a sequence for summative evaluation. As the interviewee final evaluation concerns only one reading task and one writing task, we could thus say that she follows the indications of the curriculum. On the content of her formative evaluations, she answered that she planned 5 tests: 1 for grammar, 3 for vocabulary and 1 for writing. The only comment that

could be made is that, for the formative evaluations, knowledge seems to be the main point of focus, while she focuses more on skills for the summative evaluations.

What could however be compared with the LM2 curriculum is the take the interviewee has on the goal of formative or summative evaluation. Concerning formative evaluation, it was observable that her point of view was different than the one presented in the curriculum. Whereas the curriculum states that formative assessment serves to give feedback to the teacher and the pupil on where s/he stands in his/her learning process, the interviewee answered that she considered formative evaluation as a way for the pupils to train to express themselves. However, concerning summative evaluation, she answered that the goal was to see if the pupils had acquired the required knowledge and were able to use the learning content of the teaching sequence. That view is aligned with what the curriculum states about summative evaluation.

Concerning culture, we had previously observed that the curriculum made no reference to culture in other thematic fields than the ones concerning personal characterization, day-to-day life, hobbies and travels. The interviewee however answered that she still devoted time to culture in her sequence as she saw the English health system. It thus seems that even though the curriculum does not explicitly instruct to draw attention to culture, the interviewed teacher still decided to integrate it into her teaching sequence.

The kinds of exercises which the interviewee answered to use in her sequence could not be compared with the LM2 curriculum as it does not present any pedagogical or didactic recommendations concerning the teaching of a modern language. In her answer, she stated using drill exercises for grammar as well as a context-tasks and that the exercises for the different skills were always done using context-tasks. Concerning vocabulary, she only said that her sequence contained vocabulary exercises but did not specify what kinds.

In conclusion, if we take into consideration that interview as well as the different answers to the questions in the online survey, we could argue that the curricula seem to be rather well followed by the teachers in practice. Concerning the objectives of the curricula, the participants to the online survey seem to agree that they are rather clear and overall reachable, especially for the

receptive skills, even if a majority thinks that the objectives for speaking in interaction are not actually adapted to the context of the class, and are thus not reachable.

4.1.2.2 In the *GO!* network

As for the study of the application of the *W-BE* curricula, two kinds of analysis for the curricula of the *GO!* network were realized. The analysis of the different relevant questions of the online survey will first be presented, followed by that of the two interviews made with two of the participants to the online survey.

Figure 21 first shows how the participants to the online survey claimed to use the curricula when designing their teaching sequence. It is observable that most of the respondents claim to follow the curricula even though they take liberties about it. A majority also claims to use examples from the curricula in the designing of their teaching sequence. Then, two participants said that they did not follow the curricula and two others that they first designed their teaching sequence and look at the curricula afterwards to make their sequence fit. Still, overall, most teachers seem to follow the curricula.

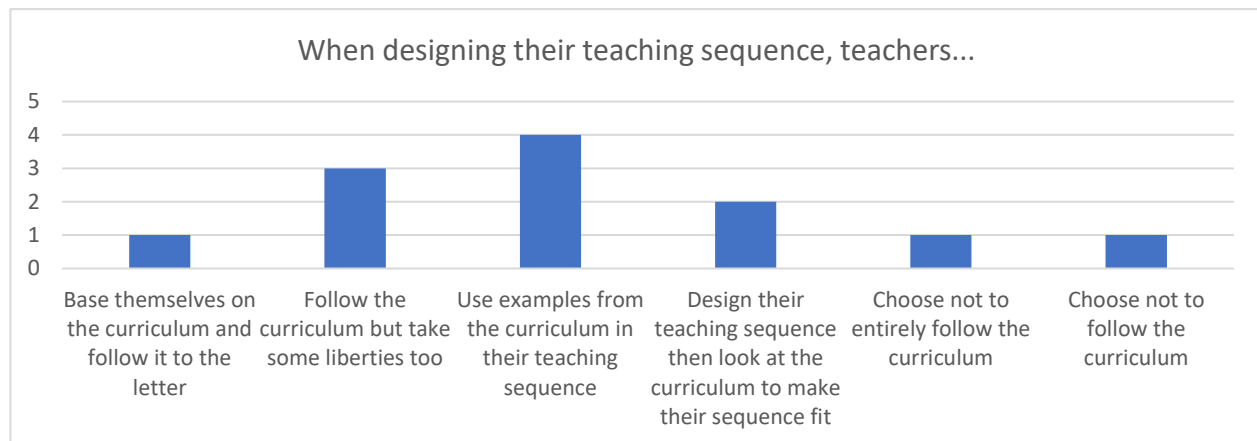


Figure 21 - How do the teachers of the *GO!* network use the curricula when designing their teaching sequence ($n=6$).

Concerning the objectives, Figure 22 and Figure 23 show whether or not the participants found the objectives clear and reachable. Figure 22 indicates that there is no clear division between the participants regarding whether the objectives are considered as being clear or not, although the objectives are clearly stated in the curricula. There is indeed 50% of the respondents who

answered that the objectives were not so clear and another 50% who also answered that the objectives were either clear or relatively clear.

The same observation could be made concerning the reachability of those objectives. A t test also confirmed that tendency showing that there were significantly no more positive than negative answers ($p=0.08 > 0.05$). With respect to the reading, listening, writing and speaking without interaction skills, there is indeed no clear division. For the four skills, 3 participants answered that the objectives were reachable and 3 answered that they were not. For the rest, i.e. speaking with interaction, grammar and vocabulary, a majority still considers those objectives as reachable. We could thus argue that a majority of the participants deemed them as adapted to the reality. However, some respondents clarified their answers which in most cases pointed to one problem: the number of hours per week (3 for French and 2 for English). They here however probably referred to the curricula for the third grade and not for the second grade, as in the second grade both languages are granted the same periods per week and it is thus here not relevant.

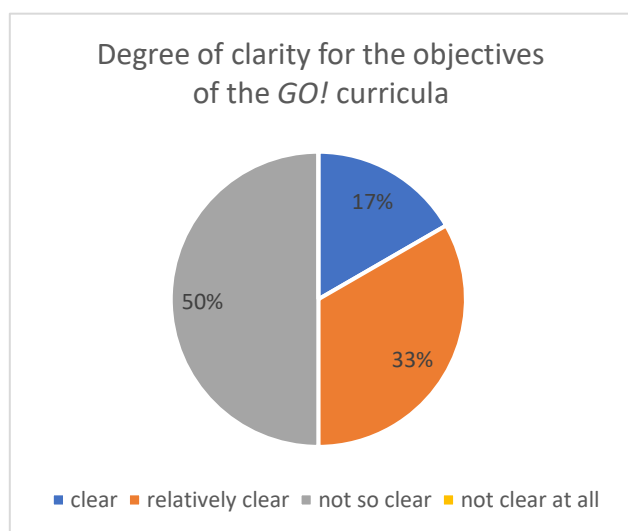


Figure 23 - Clarity of the objectives concerning the curricula of the GO! network (n=6).

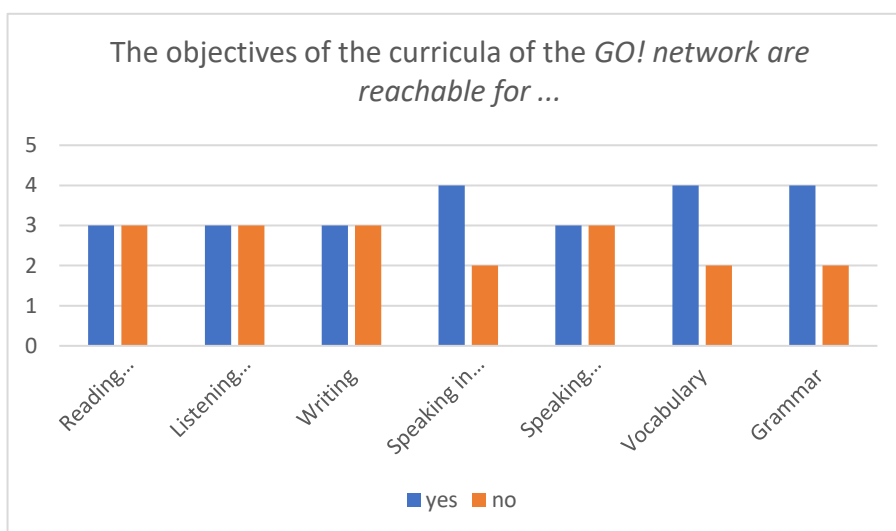


Figure 22 - Reachability of the different objectives concerning the curricula of the GO! (n=6).

Let us now turn to the analysis of the two interviews made amongst the participants to the online survey. As for the *W-BE* network, the goal of those interviews was to observe whether the curricula were indeed followed as claimed. There were two interviews for the *GO!* network which were done with two participants who had a quite opposite take on the curricula. Interviewee 1

indeed claimed that none of the objectives were reachable, except for grammar and vocabulary while Interviewee 2 claimed that all of them were reachable. In the online survey, Interviewee 2 was also much more positive concerning the curricula in her answers than Interviewee 1 who answered negatively to almost all questions. Both however claimed to follow the curricula even if they also claimed to take some liberties about it. Both interviewees also answered that they taught English in the second year of the second grade and Interviewee 1 specified that she also taught English in the third grade.

First concerning the theme, as none is actually mentioned in the curriculum for English, it was not possible to analyze whether or not the interviewees followed the curriculum. Interviewee 1 mentioned two themes, namely “literature and Shakespeare” and “civil rights in America”, while Interviewee 2 mentioned one theme, namely “crime and punishment”. A follow-up question was asked to Interviewee 2 about how she had chosen her theme, as themes are not mentioned in the curriculum. She answered that they determined the different themes with the ‘vakgroep’ in order to make sure that there was no overlap concerning themes between the different years. She then specified that the theme “crime and punishment” had been inspired by the school shootings in America. From that answer we could thus hypothesize that the themes are chosen by the school councils and that they try to choose them in function of the current events and so that they do not repeat themselves over the years.

Concerning the objective(s) of their sequence, none of the two interviewees clearly answered, which made it impossible to see whether they followed the objectives mentioned in the curriculum for English. Interviewee 1 however still specified that it was unthinkable to start summarizing all the objectives of her sequence, but also answered that they concerned all five skills and knowledge. That non-answer could point out to the fact that there does not seem to be only one big final objective in her teaching sequence but several ones. That comment in itself could make us argue that the interviewee follows the objectives of the curriculum, as the curriculum for English also lacks one final objective but instead presents several ones. We could thus hypothesize that the interviewees took several of them to incorporate them into their teaching sequences.

Regarding the different skills, both interviewees answered that they were all trained during their sequence. That could match the vision of the network, which in its presentation of the different pedagogical and didactic recommendations made known on several occasions that all skills had to be trained as integrated and linked to each other³⁷. However, the question was precisely asking if one skill was more central than another in their teaching sequence, as one skill seemed to be considered above the others in the curriculum, namely the listening skill³⁸. The teachers seem here not to agree with the curriculum as they did not say that they considered one skill above the other.

About knowledge, the answers of the two interviewees were quite different. For grammar, Interviewee 1 explained that she wasn't seeing any grammatical point in her teaching sequence and that it was taught apart. That represents a big difference to how grammar is recommended to be taught in the curriculum. The network indeed clearly specifies that grammar has to be taught and trained as integrated into the rest of the learning content. On that, she answered that she used to do it that way but that it was not efficient and that the pupils retained the grammar rules less when they were taught as integrated into the rest. Interviewee 2 however said that she was seeing the grammatical point on reported speech, which matches the recommended grammatical structures mentioned in the curriculum for English which have to be seen during the second grade. It is there indeed stated in one objective that the pupils have to master the different grammatical structures in order to report, with as example, the grammatical structure of reported speech (p.48). For vocabulary, they both answered that new words were brought in via different kinds of texts, thus matching the view of the network for which vocabulary has to be brought and taught in context. They did however not specify the lexical fields.

Now turning to evaluation, the answers gotten were rather similar. In both cases, the interviewees stated that there were no final evaluations at the end of their sequence. Their take on 'productevalutie' thus here slightly differs from the one described in the curriculum for English but is however close to the one of the curriculum for French. They indeed considered only exams

³⁷ Note that this is not stated in the curriculum for English, but the curriculum for French. It was however hypothesized that since both curricula were issued by the same network, the same pedagogical recommendations were probably made.

³⁸ Idem

as final evaluations. Interviewee 2 specified that the tests on knowledge could constitute a final evaluation as they summed up the vocabulary of the sequence and that grammar was evaluated first apart and then as integrated into a skill. She still however insisted on the fact that, in her school, more attention is drawn to proficiency in the different skills. Finally, they both said that the sum of the daily work was used as 'final evaluation' for their sequence. For formative assessment, both interviewees answered that all skills were tested during the sequence as well as knowledge. One said that she had more or less 4 tests planned and the other 5. As they both stated to test every aspect of language learning, that could mean that some of those aspects are tested as integrated into each other, what would match the recommendations of the curriculum.

Concerning the vision on how language is to be taught and approached, Interviewee 2 specified in a follow-up question that grammar was first tested apart and then integrated into a skill. She then also answered that in her tests she did both: test skills apart and also combined to each other. She indeed said that sometimes a test would consist of the pupils reading an article to answer some content-questions (reading comprehension), then summarizing it (writing skill) and finally giving a short presentation about the information they summarized (speaking without interaction). Doing that, she thus completely aligns with the vision of the network which states that the different skills should be trained apart but then also furthered thanks to other exercises comprising other skills.

About the goal of the different kinds of assessment, Interviewee 1 considered that the goal of a final evaluation was to see who had come to master the learning content to be able to go to the next year. Interviewee 2 however explained that, in her opinion, a final evaluation was not useful as she mainly worked with permanent evaluation. As the different skills as well as grammar are tested several times in several different ways, that final evaluation was not needed because she already had enough information thanks to all those different tests. She still hypothesized that the purpose of a final evaluation could be to evaluate whether or not the different objectives had been reached. Those two answers could thus show that they indeed follow the vision of the curriculum while taking some liberties, as the goal of assessment leading to certification described here contains both the vision of the network and a vision which is not mentioned in the curriculum

but which they develop in their respective schools. They did also not specify that final assessment was a way to assess the quality of a school, that goal thus being specific to the network only.

For formative assessment, they both seem to have more or less the same opinion. Interviewee 1 said that the goal was to see who had come to master the learning content and what needed to be reviewed and Interviewee 2 stated that it was to see where the pupil stood concerning the learning content in order to see what the difficulties were to then be able to use differentiation. Both opinions are thus similar to each other and also aligned to what the curriculum exposes concerning formative assessment.

Regarding culture, Interviewee 1 simply stated to largely draw attention to it, while Interviewee 2 explained that she referred to the American culture, its history and the current affairs. The precision of Interviewee 2 could be interpreted as also being a rather large take on culture since her chosen theme is “crime and punishment”. For this point, we could thus argue that they do consider the curriculum as they take culture into consideration, and since the objectives on culture are rather largely stated, that extensive consideration of culture fits in with the curriculum.

Concerning the kinds of exercises, Interviewee 1 said simply said that she did all kinds of exercises. Interviewee 2 was more precise and specified that her teaching sequence included fill-in exercises, listening and reading exercises, interviews and discussions as speaking exercises but also that she analyzed poems, exercised the written expression of the pupils’ own opinion, did tasks to train them to look up information on the internet and finally, crossword puzzles and recap exercises. About the speaking task, we can see when we look at the proposed exercises in the curriculum for French that she takes back examples of tasks listed in the section on the recommended methodology³⁹ (p.59). About the analysis of poems, we can also read in that same curriculum and in the same section (p.55) that that kind of texts is also one which can be used to train the reading skill. Then, the expression of the pupils’ own opinion in a writing task is one of the objectives of the curriculum for English. Finally, through training the pupils to look up

³⁹ we previously specified that even if not mentioned in the curriculum for English itself, the teaching recommendations were probably the same as in the curriculum for French as they were both issued by the same network.

information on the internet, she integrates ICT into her sequence, which matches the recommendations of the *GO!* network.

In conclusion, we could say that the interviewed participants did indeed follow the curricula when designing their teaching sequence, even if their vision sometimes differed, which could explain why they said that they also took some liberties. That could also validate the answers gotten in the online survey where a majority claimed to follow the while still taking some liberties about it. Then, the analysis of the interviews also showed that Interviewee 2 did make use of several of the examples mentioned in the curriculum. That could coincide with the results of the online survey which showed that a majority of the respondents claimed to use exercises from the curricula in the designing of their teaching sequence. Finally, concerning the objectives, the interviews could not clarify whether those were clear or not and whether they were applied properly in their teaching sequences as neither of the two interviewees clearly answered that question, Interviewee 1 simply stating that there were too many to summarize them.

4.1.2.3 Comparison

As this MA thesis' purpose is to compare the teaching of modern languages between the *GO!* and the *W-BE* network, a comparison was here also made concerning how the different curricula were used by the teachers on both sides of the linguistic border. First, the answers to the relevant online survey questions will be compared, followed by a comparison of the different interviews.

Concerning the comparison of how the curricula claimed to be used by the participants and as the total number of participants was not the same for the two networks ($n=10$ for the *W-BE* network and $n=6$ for the *GO!* network), the number of the collected answers was converted into percentages to allow for a better comparison. Figure 24 thus shows the number of answers for each statement in percentages. On this figure we can see that there is no big difference in how the teachers of each network use their respective curricula when designing their teaching sequences. The t test which was realized to compare those answers also showed that there were in average no significant differences between the answers of the participants for both networks ($p=0.48 > 0.05$). The only difference that could be observed when describing the collected data is

that it seems that the teachers of the *GO!* network use more examples of their curricula than the teachers of the *W-BE* network.

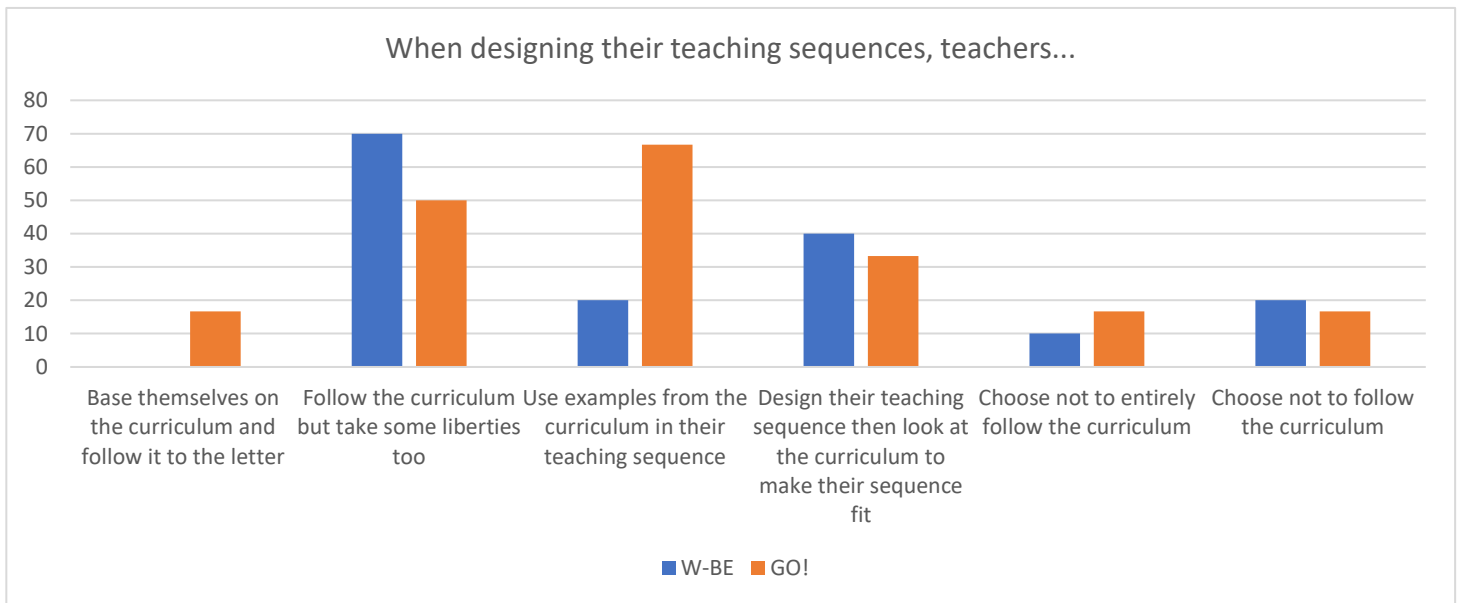


Figure 24 - How do the teachers of both networks use the curricula when designing their sequence (n=16).

When looking at whether the objectives of the curricula were clear or not, we could argue that the objectives of the curricula of the *W-BE* network seemed clearer than those of the curricula of the *GO!* network. For the *W-BE* network 70% of the participants indeed stated that the objectives were either clear or rather clear to them, while 50% of the participants for the *GO!* network considered that the objectives were clear or rather clear.

Concerning their reachability, Figure 25 shows an overview of the different answers gotten. Their number was converted into percentages to allow for comparison. A t test realized on the data collected for this question clarified that the difference between the two networks for the yes-answers as well as for the no-answers was not significantly different ($p=0.27 > 0.05$). In average, we could thus argue that the objectives for both networks are considered as reachable. We can however on Figure 25 see that some differences can be observed for different aspects when taken individually. It is indeed clear that the teachers of the *GO!* network seem to show a less clear-cut opinion than the teachers of the *W-BE* network. For the *GO!* network, the participants indeed seemed to only clearly set the objectives as reachable for vocabulary, grammar and speaking in interaction. On that last skill, a difference can also be noticed as a majority of the teachers of the

W-BE network considered the objective for that skill as unreachable, whereas the teachers of the *GO!* network seemed to consider it as reachable.

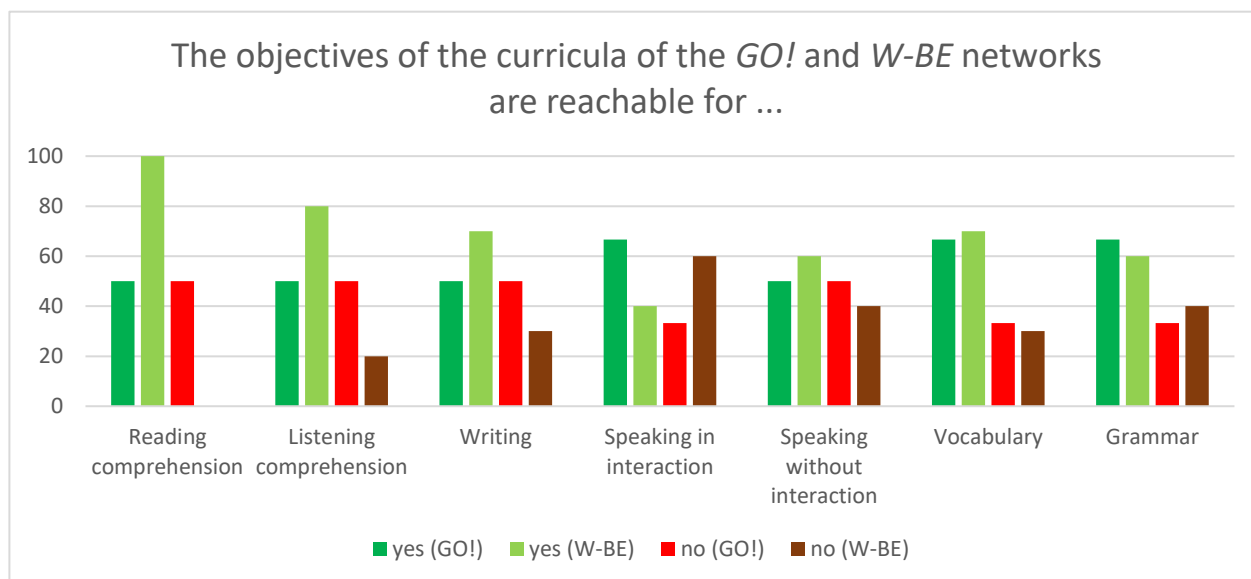


Figure 25 - Reachability of the objectives for the curricula of the *GO!* and the *W-BE* networks ($n=16$).

Regarding the interviews, the analysis showed that the interviewees on both sides of the linguistic border followed their respective curriculum yet took some liberties in its application or had a different take on some of its aspects. This analysis also revealed a different take on language teaching. First concerning the themes, it could be argued that all interviewees followed their respective curriculum. For the teacher of the *W-BE* network, her sequence was indeed designed around the thematic field of “health and well-being” presented in the LM2 curriculum, while for the teachers of the *GO!* network, they chose their own themes, as none is presented in the curriculum for English and we could thus not say that they differ from the curriculum. One difference could however be noticed. On the one hand, the LM2 curriculum states that the different thematic fields have to be repeated and reviewed at all stages of education, meaning that all the presented themes are supposed to be seen each year or at least, in each grade. On the other hand, Interviewee 2 for the *GO!* network explained that they chose the different themes with the ‘vakgroep’ in order to make sure that there was no overlap between the years. The themes are thus here specifically chosen to not be repeated over the years or grades.

Concerning the final objective(s) of their sequences, the interviewee for the *W-BE* network did indeed apply and follow the recommendations of the curriculum by stating a final objective encompassing all requirements of the LM2 curriculum. However, none of the two interviewees for the *GO!* network answered that question, Interviewee 1 stating that there were way too many objectives for her to start summarizing them. This could thus show a difference between the two teaching methods of the two communities. In the *W-BE* network, only one objective has to be met at the end of a sequence, while in the *GO!* network, a teaching sequence groups together several objectives.

Regarding knowledge, a comparison between the two is hard to make. The interviewees for the *GO!* did indeed not state a lexical field, making it impossible to compare it with the application of the lexical field stated by the interviewee for the *W-BE* network. About grammar, if we compare the interviewee for the *W-BE* network and Interviewee 2 for the *GO!* network, we could see that both of them applied quite literally their respective curriculum by integrating in their sequences the recommended grammatical structures. If we compare the former with Interviewee 1 for the *GO!* network, we could say that they differ as the latter did not integrate a grammatical point in her sequence and that grammatical structures were taught apart. That would mean that the teacher of the *W-BE* network did follow her curriculum, while the teacher of the *GO!* network did not follow it. The comparison between the two networks is thus not so clear.

With respect to the teaching of the different skills, we could see that all three interviewed teachers did follow their respective curriculum. The following of their respective curriculum does however not mean that they all approach language teaching in the same manner. While the two teachers of the *GO!* integrate all skills in their teaching sequence and put those different skills in relation to each other, the teacher of the *W-BE* network only focused on two skills, namely the reading and the writing skills.

Concerning evaluation, the interviewees showed both similarities and differences in their methods. First, all of them planned more or less 5 formative tests. The content of their tests, however, was slightly different. While the teacher of the *W-BE* network seemed to focus more on knowledge for her formative tests, the teachers of the *GO!* network seemed to include all skills

and knowledge in their tests. Interviewee 2 also stated that her tests were sometimes about one skill only or tested grammar apart, and sometimes she integrated three skills in one test or integrated grammar into a skill to test it. The teacher for the *W-BE* network seemed to test knowledge and skills apart and only tested one skill (writing) as a formative evaluation. We could thus argue that, even if their formative tests are made differently, they all applied their respective curriculum. Concerning the goal of formative assessment, while the teachers of the *GO!* network seem to be aligned with the point of view of their curriculum, the teacher for the *W-BE* network seems to differ from the LM2 curriculum. The teachers for the *GO!* network indeed saw it as a way to evaluate whether the pupils had come to master the learning content in order to spot difficulties and better determine differentiation and the teacher of the *W-BE* network saw it as a way to train her pupils to express themselves.

With respect to final evaluation, the opinion on both sides of the linguistic border was rather different yet to some extent aligned with their respective curriculum. In the *W-BE* network, the teacher indeed planned two final evaluations, one for the writing skill and one reading comprehension, while the teachers of the *GO!* network planned none. The latter both stated that they worked with permanent evaluation and that a final evaluation at the end of the sequence was not needed. Interviewee 1 however still considered the two exams for modern languages as final evaluations, which could thus be aligned with how assessment leading to certification is viewed in the curriculum for French but not with how it is viewed in the curriculum for English. We could thus argue that here the curriculum is followed by the teacher of the *W-BE* network but not by the teachers of the *GO!* network. Concerning the goal of those final assessments however, all interviewees seem to agree that it is to evaluate whether or not the pupil has come to acquire the learning content. The teacher for the *W-BE* network then specified that it is also used to see if they can use the acquired knowledge and the teachers of the *GO!* network specified that the goal was also to see if the pupils had reached the different objectives of the curriculum and if they could go over to the next year. Here, all three interviewees thus seem to align with the view of their respective curriculum.

Concerning culture, it is not specified in the LM2 curriculum to what extent culture should be addressed, the teacher thus took the lead and decided to include in her sequence the British

health system. In the curriculum for English, specific objectives are dedicated to culture and it seems that the teachers of the *GO!* network well included culture in their teaching sequences and as Interviewee 1 said, in a rather extensive way. Interviewee 2 also specified that concerning culture she saw the American culture, its history and current events, while her theme only concerned “crime and punishments”. With regards to her theme, we could thus argue that she tackles culture in a rather extensive manner, while the teacher of the *W-BE* network seems to stay closer to her theme in her approach of culture.

Finally, a question of the interview concerned the kinds of exercises which were thought of by the different teachers for their sequences in order to see if they applied the recommendations of their respective curriculum. However, for the *W-BE* network, no specific methodology was presented and we could only guess through the reading of the curriculum that it had to be taught in context, with a communicative end and close to the pupils’ reality. Therefore and because of the content of the interviewee’s answer, it could not be assessed whether or not she followed any recommended methodology. For the *GO!* network, we could however well observe that the teachers followed the recommended methodology in the exercises they proposed. Still, concerning the different exercises, it could be noticed that on both sides, the interviewees included drill-exercises as well as context-task for grammar, vocabulary exercises and also exercised the different skills. More could not be said thereover due to the lack of details given in the interview with the teacher for the *W-BE* network.

In conclusion, we could simply argue that the teachers on both sides of the linguistic border seem to follow their respective curricula in the designing and teaching of their sequence and to consider the objectives as overall reachable. Some differences could be observed in the application of the curricula which were however mainly due to the content of the curricula themselves and not due to teachers not following their respective curricula.

4.1.3 The teachers’ opinion

In the online survey, four questions were dedicated to the evaluation of the teacher’s attitudes towards their respective curricula. In this section, the answers gotten to those questions will be presented. First the attitudes of the respondents for the *W-BE* network will be discussed followed

by the analysis of the teachers' attitudes for the *GO!* network. Finally, the results will be compared to each other in order to assess whether or not the attitudes differ from one community to the other.

4.1.3.1 In the *W-BE* network

For the first question, the respondents were asked to grade different statements to show whether they agreed with them or not. Figure 26 shows the answers gotten on that question. The first thing that can be noticed is that there were in average more participants with no clear-cut opinions as the dominant answer was “more or less agree”. However, a t test revealed that there were no significant differences between the average of the more-or-less answers and the agree/totally agree answers ($p=0.07 > 0.05$) nor the disagree/totally disagree answers ($p=0.34 > 0.05$). What can also be observed is that the average for the positive answers and the average for the negative answers was exactly the same ($\bar{x} = 2.83$). Those results combined could point out to the expression of a rather neutral attitude towards the curricula. One more comment could however be made: two statements showed more negative answers than positive ones. The curriculum is indeed not considered as a good tool for the teaching of modern languages by a majority, nor does it help the teachers build their sequences.

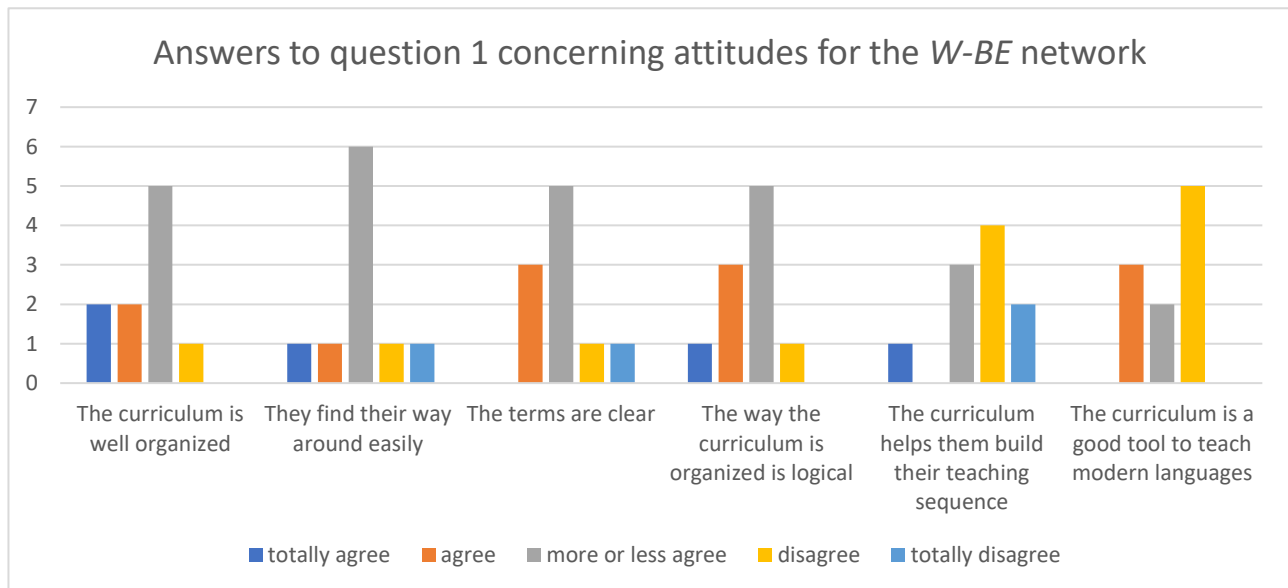


Figure 26 - Answer to question 1 concerning attitudes for the *W-BE* network ($n=10$).

A second question asked the participants how they considered the curricula. For this question, more than one answer was possible. Figure 27 clearly shows that a great majority of the respondents considered that the curricula constituted a legal obligation, as 9 of the 10 participants chose that option. The division between the two other possibilities is however not clear, as they both contain the same number of answers. Nevertheless, it can be argued that the curricula are here considered in a rather negative manner as the option “the curriculum is a legal obligation” could display a negative attitudes towards the curricula.

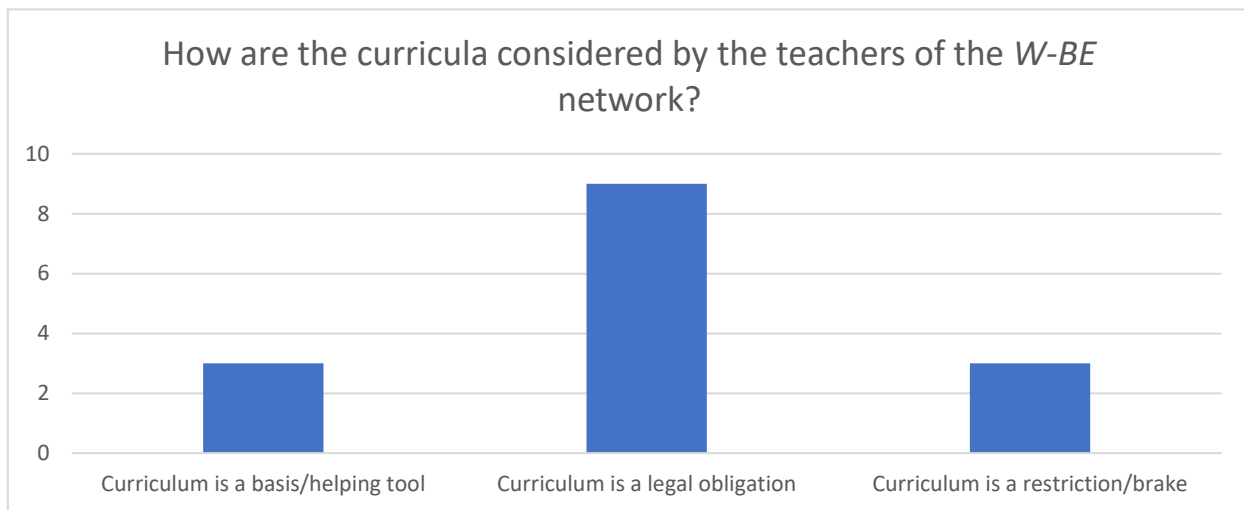


Figure 27 - How are the curricula considered by the teachers of the W-BE network? (n=10).

A third question was to ask the teachers whether they considered that the curricula were adapted or not to different situations. Figure 28 shows that the respondents did not consider the curricula to be adapted when it concerned the pupils’ reality. Moreover, almost all participants (9/10) agreed that the curricula are not adapted to the pupils’ future reality. Concerning the school or class context, the opinions were less clear-cut than for the pupils’ reality. Overall, there was in average more negative answers than positive ones but a t test revealed that there was no significant difference between the yes-answers and the no-answers ($p=0.34 > 0.05$). More qualitatively though, the comments that some of the teachers left concerning that question all showed rather negative attitudes towards the curricula. Comments referred to the fact that the curricula were not adapted for an active pedagogy, that the expected level was too low, that it

was too theoretical and demanding yet incomplete and that some thematic fields were interesting for neither the pupils nor the teachers. No positive comments were collected.

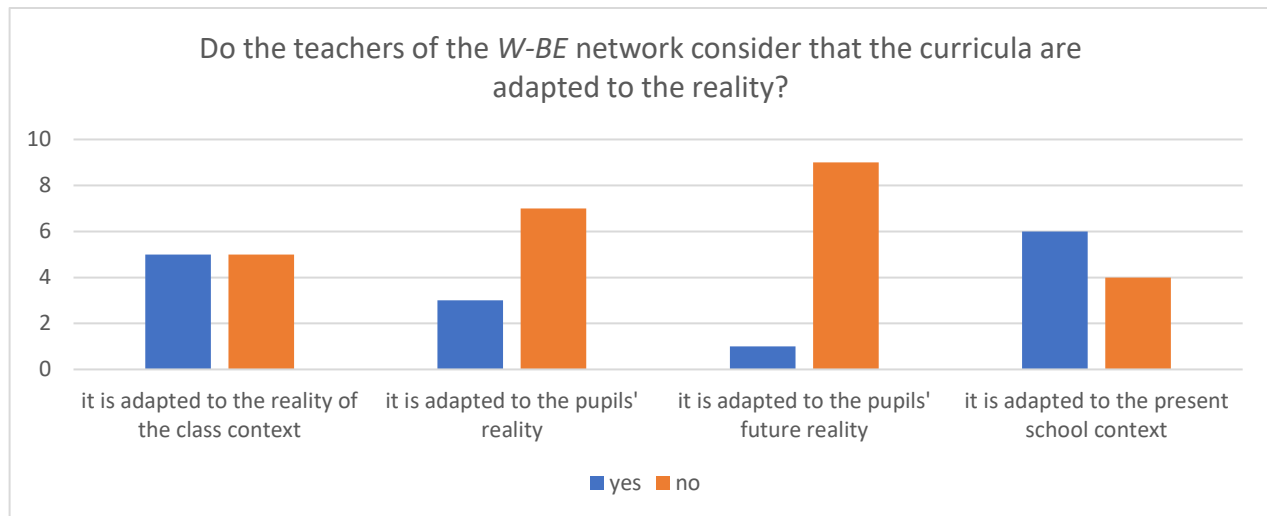


Figure 28 - Do the teachers of the *W-BE* consider that the curricula are adapted to the reality (n=10).

A final question aimed to determine whether the curricula translated in an efficient way what the pupils would need later on in their life. That question was an open question but the answers were coded and grouped together in function of whether they could constitute a yes-answer, a no-answer or a more-or-less answer. Figure 29 gives a summary of that regrouping of the different answers.

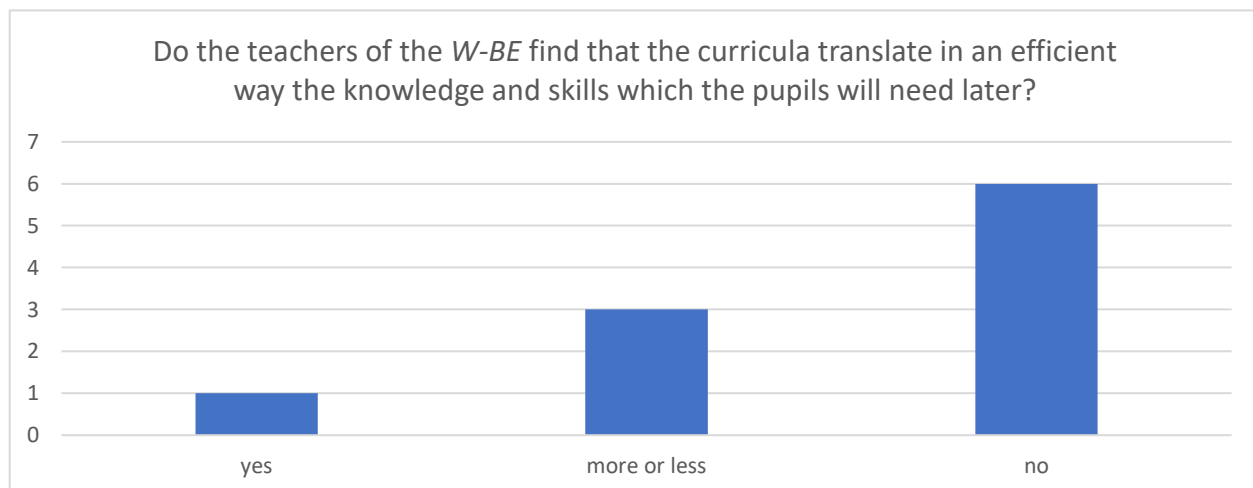


Figure 29 - Do the teachers of the *W-BE* network find that the curricula translate in an efficient way what the pupils will need later (n=10).

This figure shows that a majority of the participants considered that the curricula did not translate in an efficient way what the pupils would need later as 6 out of 10 teachers answered “no”. They indeed stated that the curricula were too heavy regarding the load of learning content, that some of that learning content was useless and that what was asked was too unreal and theoretical. They also pointed out that the heterogeneity of the class was not taken into consideration and that the reality of the class made it impossible to practice in an efficient way the speaking skills. Finally, some pointed out that the level was too low, while others said that the curricula were too demanding but that too little attention was drawn to vocabulary and grammar for the pupils to be able to correctly produce texts. Some participants who were classified as “more or less” pointed out that in theory it did translate it in an efficient way, but not in practice while other said that it was good for a private context but not for a professional one.

Overall, when all answers suggesting a positive attitude and all answers suggesting a negative attitude were grouped together, no clear-cut tendency towards the former or the latter could be observed. The realized t test indeed showed that there were no significant differences between the two kinds of answers ($p=0.07 > 0.05$). We could thus not conclude that the teachers of the *W-BE* network displayed a clear negative or positive attitude towards the curricula. Their attitude seems to be overall rather neutral, except when it comes to the curricula being adapted to the reality as they answered mostly negatively. Finally, it should also be noted that for all the statistical tests realized, the effect size was systematically above 0.14, meaning that the size of the sample had a large effect on the statistical results presented here. Further study should thus be conducted with a larger sample to measure in a more efficient manner the attitudes of the teachers towards the curricula.

4.1.3.2 In *GO!* network

Concerning the first question where participants were asked to grade different statements, figure 30 shows that few participants answered “more or less” and that in most cases they either

answered “agree” or “disagree”/“totally disagree”. None of the participants indeed “totally agreed” with any of the statements.

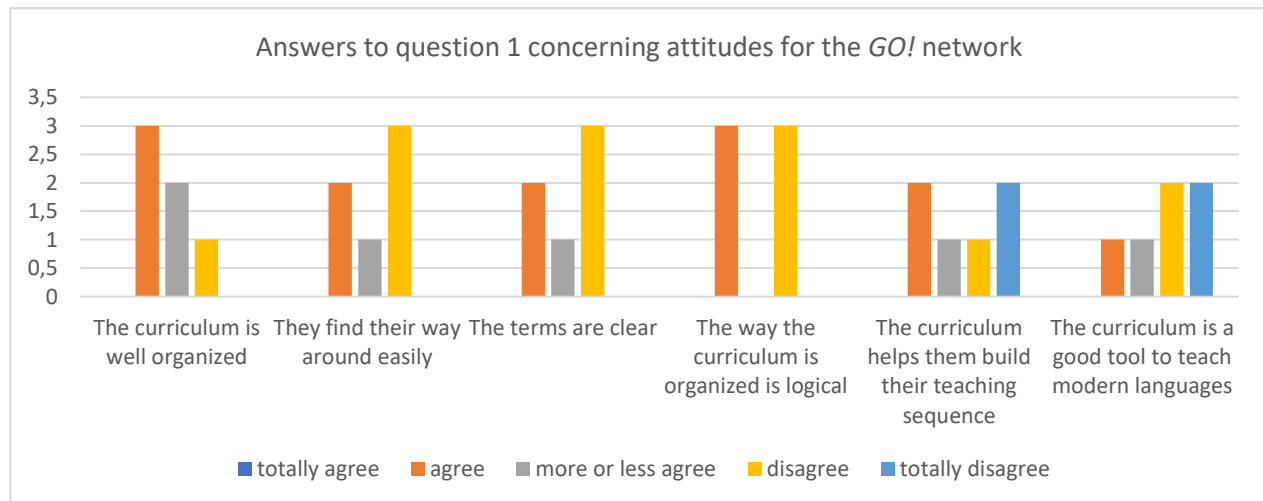


Figure 30 - Answer to question one concerning the attitudes for the GO! network (n=6).

Concerning the division between negative and positive answers, we can however see that no clear-cut opinion is observable. There is indeed an average of 2.17 positive answers for an average of 2.83 negative answers. A t test confirmed this tendency showing that there exist no significant differences between the two kinds of answers ($p=0.36 > 0.05$). The only statement for which a clear-cut opinion could be observed concerns the one stating that the curricula are a good tool for the teaching of modern languages. 4 of the 6 participants indeed either disagreed or totally disagreed with that statement. For the rest, no clear tendency was observable.

The second question regarding how the participants considered the curricula, showed a much more clear-cut negative position. Figure 31 indeed shows that a majority of the participants considered the curricula as a legal obligation as well as a restriction/brake to what they wanted to do. We could thus here argue that they display a more negative attitude.

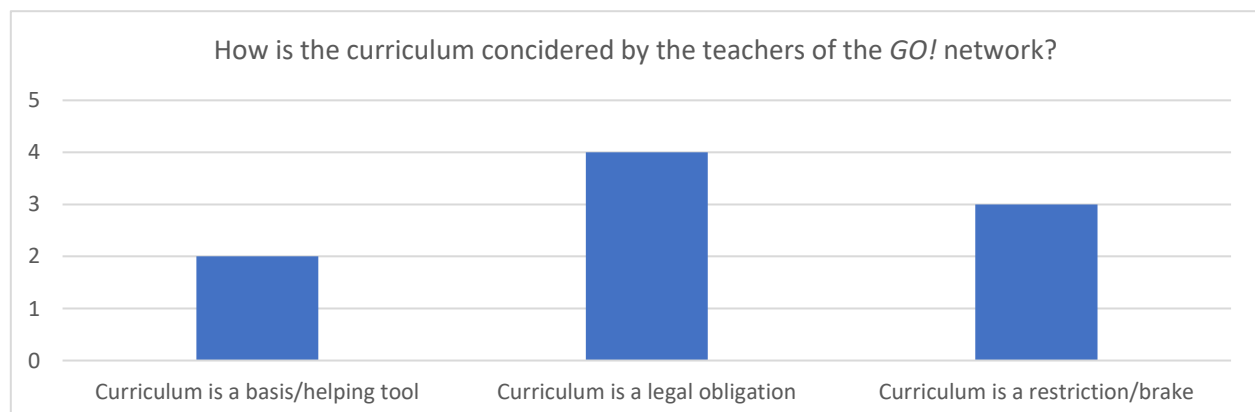


Figure 31 - How do the teachers of the GO! consider the curricula (n=6).

Concerning the third question regarding the teachers' attitudes, Figure 32 clearly shows that a majority of the participants does not consider that the curricula are adapted to the reality as the majority of the answers for each statement was "no". A t test also revealed that this difference between the yes-answers and the no-answers was significant ($p=0.01 < 0.05$). It could thus here be argued that the teachers displayed a significantly more negative attitude towards the curricula. Some of the respondents commented that the curricula were too heavy regarding the learning content and that it was not adapted to be actually taught in class as they did not have enough hours per week to teach the numerous objectives. They also noted that even if those objectives were all achievable, none of them were realistic. One participant who sat in the curricula commission also explained that she did not understand why they had to have one curriculum for each language and not simply one for all modern languages. She argues that a general curriculum would leave more space for the teachers to adapt it themselves. On that note however, a participant answered yes to all the different statements, saying that the curricula were broad enough to let the teachers themselves choose different themes and thus make the curricula fit to reality.

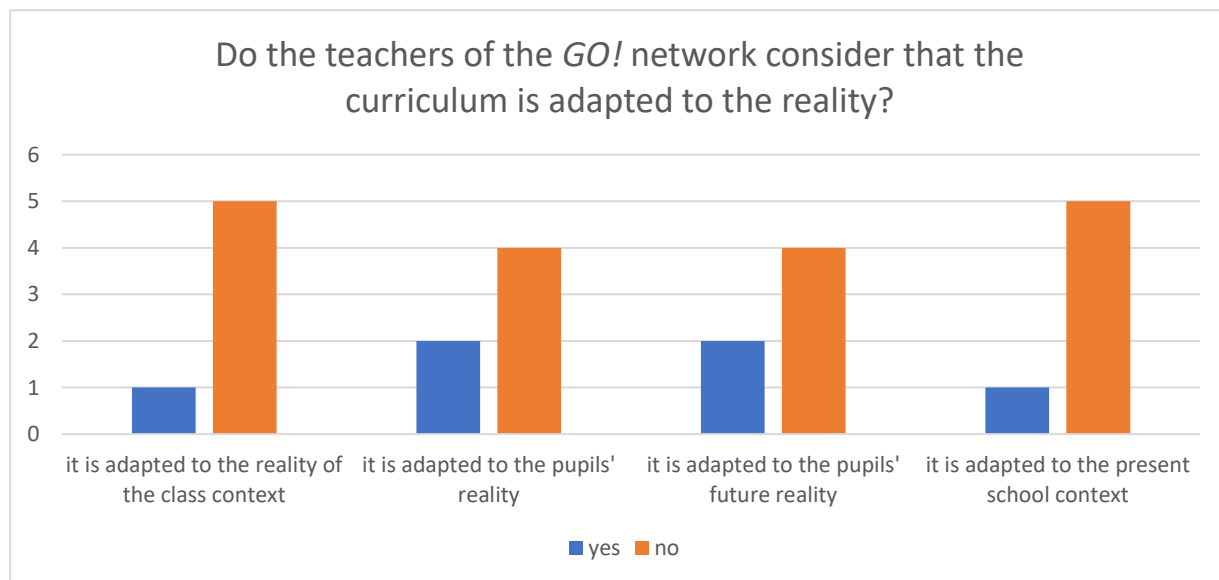


Figure 32 - Do the teachers of the GO! network consider that the curricula are adapted to the reality? (n=6).

Finally, the answers gotten on the last open question were coded and grouped together in function of whether they could constitute a yes-answer, a no-answer or a more-or-less answer. A summary of those answers is displayed by Figure 33. In this figure it is observable that a majority of the respondents considered that the curricula did not translate in an efficient way what the pupils would need later on in their life. The four participants who answered “no” remarkeded that the curricula were too vague and that the formulation was unclear. They also pointed out the fact that it was too broad and general and that it was not enough linked to reality. One respondent also answered that what was to be evaluated did not actually evaluate whether the pupil would be able to use the language in the real world. The one participant who answered “more or less” explained that the recommended tasks’ examples in the curricula were not always real and said: “who will have to put back together in the right order cut fragments of a text?” She however found that the writing tasks were more similar to how the pupils would have to use the language in reality.

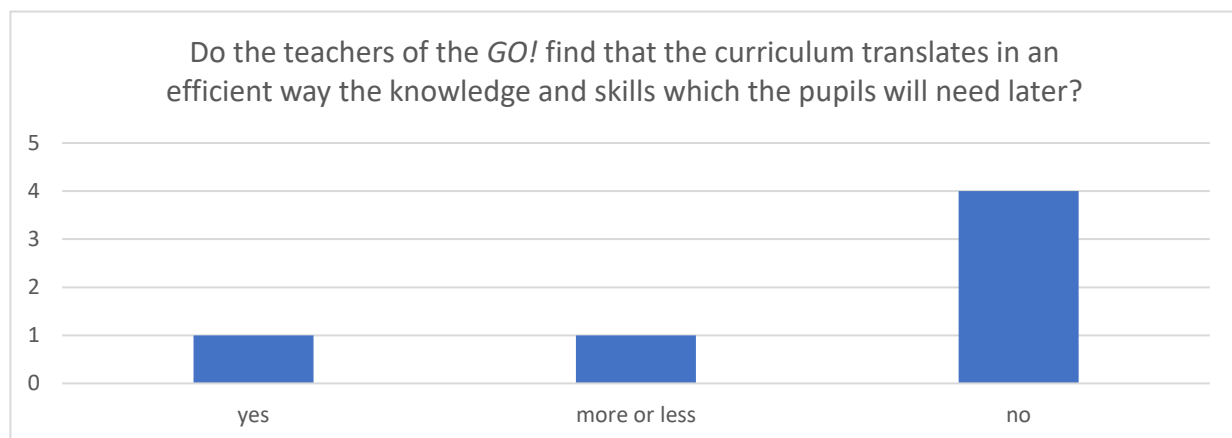


Figure 33 - Do the teachers of the GO! find that the curricula translate in an efficient way what the pupils will need later (n=6).

To conclude, when grouping together all answers suggesting a negative attitude and all answers suggesting a positive attitude, we could see that the participants displayed a significantly more negative attitude towards the curricula. There were indeed in average 11.75 answers suggesting a negative attitude against an average of 5.50 answers suggesting a positive attitude. A t test confirmed that the difference between the two was significant ($p = 0.048 < 0.05$). However, it should be mentioned that, regarding the statistical analyses realized here, the effect size was for all tests always above 0.14. This suggests a large effect of the size of the sample on the obtained

results. Further analysis with a larger sample would thus be necessary to confirm this analysis of the teachers' attitudes towards the curricula.

4.1.3.3 Comparison

An overall comparison between the participants for the *GO!* network and those for the *W-BE* network revealed that there was not a significant difference showing that they displayed either a more positive attitude on one side of the linguistic border ($p=0.23 > 0.05$) or a more negative attitude ($p=0.14 > 0.05$). Even if the attitudes were significantly more negative on the Flemish side and that no significant results were observable on the Walloon side, we could thus argue that there are no actual differences in how the teachers consider their respective curricula. It should however be noted that the effect size was for both statistical analyses above 0.14, suggesting that the size of the sample had a large effect on the result. Further research should thus be conducted with a larger sample.

When taken individually, the answers to the four questions regarding attitudes could support that overall result. The answers for the first question showed no clear-cut opinion on both sides, except concerning the fact that the curricula were not considered as a good tool to teach modern languages by a majority of the respondents from both networks. The second question also showed that the curricula were seen in a rather negative manner as they were in both networks considered by a majority as a legal obligation. Finally, the answers for the fourth question showed that on both sides of the linguistic border, the participants thought that the curricula did not translate in an efficient way the needed knowledge and competences that the pupils would later need.

For the third question however, some differences could be observed. While the teachers for the *W-BE* network considered that the curricula were not adapted solely when it came to the pupils' reality, the teachers of the *GO!* network seemed to all agree that the curricula were not adapted for none of the contexts proposed. that difference could suggest that while the curricula of the *GO!* network seemed to be considered as also not adapted to the school or class context, the curricula of the *W-BE* network seemed to be considered as adapted to that specific context.

4.2 Discussion

In this chapter we have been exposing the results of the different analyses that have been realized to try and answer the different research questions of this MA thesis and compare the teaching of modern languages between the Flemish Community and the FWB. The analyses have revealed that similarities between the *GO!* network and the *W-BE* network exist. For example in their curricula, they both use the CEFR overall in the same manner and the terminology was also similar as well as similarly explained and/or defined. However, the two networks were still mainly different on several points, at least when looking at the curricula only. When we analyzed the manner in which they were put in practice by the teachers or their attitudes towards their respective curricula, we could indeed observe that they were more similar than different, even if some differences were still observed.

One main difference which could first be noted concerns the place, weight and role of skills and knowledge. In its curricula, the *GO!* network indeed seems to consider those two components of language more on the same footing than the *W-BE* network does. While skills and knowledge both represented a support for communication for the *GO!* network, knowledge was considered as a support for skills, which were then themselves considered as a support for communication for the *W-BE* network. Knowledge thus seems to have a more important role for the *GO!* network than it does for the *W-BE* network. That difference in consideration brought the two networks to formulate their objectives differently but also pass on different teaching approaches. All skills and knowledge are indeed more integrated into each other in the curricula of the *GO!* network while it seems like they are taught more apart in the curricula of the *W-BE* network. That part was also observable in how the interviewed teachers answered to teach and evaluate the learning content of their respective curricula.

The teachers of the *GO!* network indeed seem to integrate all skills into one teaching sequence and integrate the skills into each other when testing them while the teacher of the *W-BE* network seems to focus on only two skills in her sequence and exercise the different skills and grammar more apart. All interviewees still exercised grammar apart and then as integrated in a context task. For testing however, while one teacher of the *GO!* also tested grammar specifically as

integrated into a skill, the teacher of the *W-BE* network seemed to test grammar separately and not as integrated into a skill. Concerning formative testing, knowledge also seemed to be the primary point of focus for the teacher of the *W-BE* network, as 4 out of 5 of her formative tests were about either grammar or vocabulary and only one concerned the writing skill, while the teachers of the *GO!* network claimed to test all skills and knowledge in the more or less 5 tests they had planned.

The differences observed concerning the kind of formative testing that was done in the two networks could maybe be linked to the fact that while the interviewee for the *W-BE* network had two final tests planned for the reading skill and the writing skill, the teachers of the *GO!* network both worked with permanent evaluation and thus had no final evaluations planned. About the goal of assessment, even if both networks seemed to have more or less the same take on formative evaluation, i.e. that its main goal constitutes feedback for the teachers and the pupils, the teachers did not have the same opinions. The teachers of the *W-BE* network indeed did not follow the point of view of her curriculum as she considered that it was only a way for her pupils to train. The teachers of the *GO!* network however seemed to follow the point of view exposed in their curriculum as they considered that it formed a way to see where the pupils stood in their learning process in order to better differentiate afterwards.

Regarding final evaluation however, the teachers seem to follow their respective curricula, even though it was observed that for the *GO!* network, the teachers claiming to teach English seemed to agree with the point of view expressed in the curriculum for French and not for English as they considered that solely exams represented a final evaluation. For the teacher of the *W-BE* network, final evaluation took place at the end of the sequence, which is thus aligned with the recommendation of the LM2 curriculum. She indeed tested two UAA for one theme with one communicative intention at the end of her sequence as recommended in the curriculum. The curricula of the *GO!* network recommend testing the different objectives for each skill as final evaluation, which could explain why the teachers decided to test everything as formative evaluations and not in only one or two final evaluations. The load of learning content was indeed considered by many participants of the online survey for the *GO!* network as too heavy for the class hours granted to the teaching of modern languages.

Concerning those objectives, the *GO!* curricula present a total of 46 objectives for all skills, knowledge and attitudes together plus five general objectives for all modern languages, while the *W-BE* curricula each present UAA as objectives for the teaching of the modern languages, 5 for each level and thus 10 for an entire grade. Those UAA are then further explained in terms of expectations. That difference in the number of objectives could be explained by the fact that they are, in the *GO!* curricula, precisely and clearly stated each time, while they are not so clearly stated and represent rather general objectives in the curricula of the *W-BE* network. However, the fact that they are not as clearly stated as they are in the *GO!* curricula does not seem to present a problem for the teachers of the *W-BE* network, as 70% of the participants considered them as clear, while the more clearly stated objectives of the *GO!* network seemed to be clear to only half of the participants.

The difference concerning the number of objectives in the curricula themselves could also explain why the interviewee of the *W-BE* network presented only one clear final objective for her sequence, while the teachers of the *GO!* network did not answer, one claiming that there were too many objectives in her sequence to start summarizing them. That could indicate a difference in language teaching framework where it seems to be approached more as a whole in the *W-BE* network and more fragmented in the *GO!* network. That would however constitute an opposition to what the *GO!* network recommends in the section about the teaching methodology where it stipulates that all skills and knowledge are to be taught as integrated to each other. That could maybe also explain the confusion of the teachers concerning the clarity of the stated objectives.

The lack of presence of an explanation on how to read the learning content in the curriculum for French could also explain the fact that the participants of the *GO!* did not display a clear-cut opinion on the clarity of the curricula. Some indeed pointed out that the formulation of the objectives was not clear enough, while that was not a problem for the teachers using the *W-BE* curricula where an explanation on how to read a UAA was present. Such explanation was indeed not found in the curriculum for French and as it was stated by some participants as not clear in general, the short caption at the beginning of the learning content in the curriculum for English seems not to be sufficient. The presence of more specific examples of practical applications of

the curriculum for the *W-BE* network could also be a reason for better clarity concerning the realization of the objectives, as more were present in the *W-BE* curricula than in the *GO!* curricula.

Concerning the teaching framework, it could not be completely compared as there were no teaching recommendations made in the *W-BE* curricula, while an entire section was dedicated to it in the *GO!* curricula. What could be observed thereabout is that while the *W-BE* network includes the communicative intention in all its objectives, the *GO!* network presents it only once in the general objectives, and the rest of the stated objectives do not integrate a communicative intention. That could point out to the fact that even if the communicative end still seemed to be considered in both networks, it seems more important to the *W-BE* network than to the *GO!* network. The *GO!* network still seems to consider as important the training of the different skills in context and as they would be used in reality.

In spite of the fact that reality of usage, real context and communicative intention all seem to be to some extent important for both networks, that does not seem to be actually achievable when putting the different curricula in practice. Most teachers on both sides indeed agreed on the fact that their respective curricula did not translate in an efficient manner what the pupils would need later on in their life, nor that it was adapted to the pupils' present or future reality. The presented methodology and curricula seem to also be considered as neither a good teaching tool nor a help for the teaching of modern languages on both sides of the linguistic border. The teachers of the *W-BE* network for example explained that the mandatory themes presented in their curricula were not all relevant nor interesting for neither the teachers nor the pupils, while that did not seem to be the problem for the teachers of the *GO!* network as no themes are presented in its curricula. One of the interviewed teachers indeed specified that they could choose the themes themselves, allowing them to fit it to the current events and make sure that they were not repeated over the years, while the themes in the *W-BE* curricula have to be reviewed over the years. The problem that was mentioned for the *GO!* network was mainly the heaviness of the learning content of the curricula versus the lack of time as well as the fact that the curricula were too theoretical. On that point, the teachers of the *W-BE* network also thought that their curricula were too heavy and theoretical, even if in both communities, the objectives were overall thought as being reachable. Except for the speaking in interaction skill on the Walloon side which was

mostly thought of as unreachable due to the reality of the class which did not allow to train that skill efficiently. That thought seemed to be shared by the teachers on the Flemish side who, even if they thought they were overall reachable in theory, claimed to not have the practical resources to actually meet them all.

Concerning the objectives, the teachers of the *W-BE* network also stated that their reachability was due to the fact that the level was too low. That could indeed be observed in the presented threshold level of the different curricula. Even if the level is similar for the LM1 and French, as they are respectively B1- and B1, the final level for the LM2 was clearly lower than for English. Pupils indeed have to reach the level A2+ for a LM2, whereas pupils learning English in the Flemish Community have to reach the level B1, as for French. That difference in level seem to be known by many participants on the Walloon side. A final question in the online survey indeed asked the participants whether they had an opinion on language teaching in the other community. Even if the participants for the *GO!* network all answered that they did not know enough about the subject to express an opinion about it, all answers from the participants for the *W-BE* network turned around the fact that they thought that the level was higher in the Flemish Community than in the FWB. A majority of the participants indeed thought that the pupils in the Flemish Community had a better proficiency level than in the FWB. One participant also seemed to think that English was privileged and another indicated that her children went to school in Flanders and that the level for English specifically was higher, which is in fact true when we consider the recommended level in the LM2 curriculum versus the curriculum for English.

Now turning to the values of the two networks, we could observe that even though they seem to have the same overall objective, the two networks still differ on some points. The *GO!* network is more specific than the *W-BE* network as it specified its values specifically in relation to the teaching of modern languages. It thus explains that it wants to develop in the pupils the pleasure to communicate in other languages and with native speakers of that language. Learning pleasure, as well as life-long learning and intellectual curiosity also seem to be values specific to the *GO!* network, while the *W-BE* network seems to insist more on developing objectivity as well as intellectual rigor and honesty. The *W-BE* network also seems to consider social and intellectual emancipation as well as solidarity as important, whereas the *GO!* network insists more on

empathy. What also seems more important to one network than to the other is the quality of education. The *GO!* network indeed stipulates that one of the goals of final assessment is to evaluate the quality of a school. That could point out to the fact that quality is more important but also more controlled in the *GO!* network than it is in the *W-BE* network. Despite those differences, both networks still seem to want to form free, critical and openminded beings, ready to take active part in society. Both networks also insist on being open to the world and other cultures.

Even if they both put culture in their values, not as much attention is drawn to it in their respective curricula. In the curricula of the *W-BE* network, very little attention seems to be drawn to culture as integrated to the learning content, whereas 4 objectives are dedicated to culture in the *GO!* curricula. That difference concerning the importance of culture could also be observed in the practical application of the different curricula. The interviewee for the *W-BE* network seemed to address culture in a less extensive manner than the teachers of the *GO!* network. Even if culture is not really mentioned in the LM2 curriculum and that the interviewed teacher still decided to include it in her teaching sequence, she stays rather close to her chosen theme to tackle that cultural side of language. The interviewed teachers of the *GO!* network gave the impression to tackle it in a more extensive manner. Interviewee 2 did indeed not stay that close to her chosen theme when she mentioned what she was teaching concerning culture as she approached it in a broader manner.

Finally, no clear-cut attitudes could be observed on the Walloon side of the linguistic border which might be interpreted as the Walloon teachers either displaying a more neutral attitude or being rather indifferent to their curricula. On the Flemish side, the teachers clearly showed an overall negative attitude towards their curricula. However, no significant differences were observed between the attitudes of the teachers in both communities. On both sides, they indeed thought of the curricula mainly as a legal obligation, as adapted to neither the present nor the future reality of the pupils and finally, as not being a good tool for the teaching of modern languages. We could thus argue that even if the two curricula present two different ways of approaching language teaching (the *GO!* network presenting a more detailed and less communication oriented approach and the *W-BE* network presenting a more general and communication oriented

approach), none of the two are considered as effective by the teachers using those curricula, mainly because those curricula are too far from reality, too demanding and too theoretical.

5 Conclusion

The aim of this MA thesis was to provide a reflection on the implications of the presence of several education systems in a same country (Belgium), for one specific school subject (modern languages) and by analyzing the curricula and their application in two communities, namely the Flemish Community and the FWB. Research had already been done on this subject, but the FWB recently issued new benchmarks for the teaching of modern languages, which had not been studied yet. Moreover, the two communities have, in the last few years, been busy with a complete modernization of their secondary education system. Those two aspects made it relevant to carry out research in this field. The analysis and comparison realized during this study allowed us to draw conclusions regarding the teaching of modern languages on both sides of the linguistic border.

Since the communitarization of education in Belgium in 1989, the education systems of the two communities in charge of managing the two here-analyzed networks have been evolving separately (Wynant & Paret, 1998). It was thus expected that differences between the two networks would be observed. By analyzing the LM1 curriculum and the LM2 curriculum of the *W-BE* network, and the curriculum for French as well as that for English of the *GO!* network, that hypothesis was confirmed. Even though the networks showed some similarities in their approach of language teaching (e.g. integration of the CEFR, terminology or overall values) they showed more often clear differences.

Before turning to the analysis of the curricula themselves, differences could already be observed in the general organization of language teaching in both communities. First of all, the different curricula are all designed for an entire grade on each side of the linguistic border, however, while they are specific to only one language in the Flemish Community, they are organized by LM1/2/3 in the FWB, thus encompassing several languages in one curriculum. Then, where the teaching of modern languages legally has to be devoted 4 hours per week in the FWB, in the Flemish Community, it only has to be devoted 3 hours per week for French and English in the second grade and 3 hours per week for French versus 2 hours per week for English in the third grade. Finally,

even though modern language classes are part of the core curriculum on both sides of the linguistic border, their organization is different. In the FWB as well as in the Flemish Community and for the general form of education, a LM1/French is mandatory at the beginning of secondary education. However, a LM2 is only an option starting from the second grade onwards in the FWB, while English is a mandatory subject from the second year of the first grade A-stream onwards in the Flemish Community. That difference in organization could explain the difference in the expected level observed between the LM2 curriculum and the curriculum for English, where the level was lower for the *W-BE* network than for the *GO!* network.

Between the curricula, two major differences were noticed: the consideration of knowledge and skills and their role for communication, as well as the importance of the final communicative goal. Concerning the former, it could be observed that even if in both cases, knowledge had to be taught as integrated into the skills, the consideration of knowledge was different between the networks. For the *GO!* network, knowledge was considered on the same footing as the different skills when it came to their role for supporting communication, while for the *W-BE* network, knowledge was considered as a support for the different skills which were themselves considered as a support for communication. When compared, it is thus arguable that knowledge occupies a more important place in its supporting role for communication in the *GO!* network than it does in the *W-BE* network. Regarding skills only, a difference could also be observed between networks. In the presentation of its teaching recommendations, the *GO!* network appears to want to integrate the teaching of the different skills into each other, as it specifies that each task training one skill should be furthered with tasks incorporating other skills. For the *W-BE* network no such teaching recommendations were made and the simple reading of the different UAA left the reader with the impression that the different skills were considered separately. That tendency was also observed in practice: the teachers of the *GO!* tended to teach and test all skills as integrated into each other, while the teacher of the *W-BE* tended to focus on two skills and teach and test them separately. Concerning the final communicative goal, it was observed that, although it seems important for both networks, that importance does not show in the same manner. While for the *W-BE* network, the communicative intention seems to be **the** ultimate goal of language teaching and learning, it seems to be less important for the *GO!* network, which

considers as more important the embedding of language tasks in contexts which are as close as possible to reality.

In my opinion, those two main differences caused many of the other differences observed between the curricula, mainly concerning the formulation of the different objectives and their implications. On the one hand, the important consideration of the communicative intention for the *W-BE* network showed through the formulation of its objectives, as those always integrated a communicative end. On the other hand, the *GO!* network formulated objectives for skills and knowledge without integrating a communicative goal, leading the *GO!* network to formulate objectives in which skills and knowledge represent a goal in themselves, while they do not for the *W-BE* network. That difference in consideration is also a possible cause for the difference in number of objectives between the two networks. Since the *W-BE* network considers the communicative intention as more important, less (precise) objectives are formulated for the different skills because that communicative end represents the general goal a teacher has to strive for. However, in the *GO!* network, they state the communicative goal as a general objective for all modern languages and thus do not embed it in the formulation of all the other objectives, which are thus more numerous and specific in order to give the teachers more precise guidelines for the teaching of knowledge and skills.

Then, it was observed that this difference in the formulation of the objectives has rather large implications in the designing of the teachers' sequences. It was indeed observed in this study that the teachers on both sides of the linguistic border tended to follow their respective curricula, thus resulting in differences in the way modern languages are taught. In the *W-BE* network, the teaching sequences indeed seemed to be organized around one general final objective, testing one or two UAA in particular, whereas the teaching sequences of the *GO!* network seemed to contain many different objectives and not a general final one, probably also explaining why the teachers of the *GO!* preferred working with permanent evaluation and did not have any final evaluations planned at the end of their teaching sequence. The only final evaluation for those teachers was considered to be the exams, which take place twice a year.

When looking into the practical implementation of the different curricula, it was also noticed that the curricula of the *W-BE* network, even if less precise and more general, seemed to be clearer to the teachers than the curricula of the *GO!* for its teachers. That could be explained through the presence of samples exemplifying the practical applications of the different concepts as well as the presence of a 'user's manual' explaining how to read the learning content which are both present in the *W-BE* curricula but not in the *GO!* curricula. Although another explanation could be found in the contradictions present in the curricula of the *GO!* network that were brought to light. It indeed states that final assessment has to test the different objectives, all of which being skill- or knowledge-specific, while also recommending that all skills and knowledge should be taught and tested as integrated to each other. They would thus recommend teaching modern languages as integrated yet certify it in a separate manner, leaving teachers of the *GO!* without a clear final objective but several ones. Considering this, we could thus argue that the teaching of modern languages is approached in a broader manner in the *W-BE* network and a more fragmented one in the *GO!* network.

Finally, this MA thesis brought to light the fact that even though both networks theoretically accord importance to reality when teaching a modern language, that was not achievable by applying their respective curricula. An analysis of the teachers' attitudes on both sides of the linguistic border indeed revealed that, even though it was observed that the curricula were mainly different for each network, the attitudes towards those curricula were not different from one network to the next. All participants to the online survey indeed indicated that their respective curricula were too theoretical and demanding, as the respondents indicated that they did not have the necessary practical resources (classes too big and/or not enough time). Most of them also thought of their respective curricula as a legal obligation only, said that it was not a good tool for the teaching of modern languages and that it was adapted to neither the pupils' present nor future reality. Some participants for the *W-BE* network also pointed out the fact that some themes were interesting to neither the teachers nor the pupils, while they are still all mandatory and have to be reviewed over the years. While the number of participants limits the generalizability of the results (further research would be needed to confirm those results), this

study provides new insight on whether the proposed approaches of the networks are considered as efficient by the ones having to implement the different curricula.

In the light of those results, it could be recommended that the *W-BE* network could maybe change the status of its different themes to allow the teachers to choose it themselves, which could make the teaching of modern languages more interesting and closer to reality or to current events. That could also be beneficial to the network as it would allow them to realize their objective to teach modern language as close to reality as possible. It was indeed pointed out by a teacher of the *GO!* network, where no themes are presented in the curricula, that this freedom of choice was appreciated and allowed her to be closer to reality in her approach of language teaching. On both sides, reflection to reduce the teaching load could also be necessary as that problem was pointed out by many teachers. Finally, I would recommend considering culture to a larger extent, as although it constitutes an objective for the CEFR, the benchmarks of the FWB and those of the Flemish Community, it is very little considered in the different curricula and even absent from the *W-BE* curricula.

To conclude, this MA thesis confirmed that the presence of different and independent education systems in Belgium resulted in different teaching contexts concerning modern languages in the FWB and the Flemish Community. Despite the different teaching approaches presented by the two communities, the teachers still seemed to consider their respective curricula in the same manner. That same consideration of the different curricula could lead us to think that neither networks propose adapted curricula which would actually be a good tool for the teaching of modern languages. Further research would be needed to investigate that practical application part of the different curricula as the sample for this study was rather limited. It would also be interesting to investigate other networks to see whether this tendency is confirmed or if variations between networks inside a same community can also be observed. All in all, this research provided a first insight into those newly presented curricula for modern languages and could constitute a good starting point for further research in that field.

6 Bibliography

Agentschap voor Hoger Onderwijs, Volwassenonderwijs, Kwalificaties en Studietoelagen (2020).

Secundair onderwijs, 2^{de} graad, aso: Moderne vreemde talen Frans-Engels, Eindterm.
Onderwijsdoelen.be. Retrieved from

https://www.onderwijsdoelen.be/resultaten?intro=secundair-onderwijs&filters=onderwijsniveau%255B0%255D%255Bid%255D%3D0767c5a44ffdc8a05697bbe5b2021167fb49cf6e%26onderwijsniveau%255B0%255D%255Btitel%255D%3DSecundair%2520onderwijs%26onderwijsniveau%255B0%255D%255Bwaarde%255D%3DSecundair%2520onderwijs%26onderwijssoort%255B0%255D%255Bid%255D%3Dd614031b440b32c6f1441ccde2cdc6620b9f2977%26onderwijssoort%255B0%255D%255Btitel%255D%3DSecundair%2520onderwijs%2520%253E%2520Secundair%26onderwijssoort%255B0%255D%255Bwaarde%255D%3DSecundair%26so_graad%255B0%255D%255Bid%255D%3D4a3baa9f1d45654512ad68bffa369060cbdd06%26so_graad%255B0%255D%255Btitel%255D%3DSecundair%2520onderwijs%2520%253E%2520Secundair%2520%253E%25202de%2520graad%26so_graad%255B0%255D%255Bwaarde%255D%3D2de%2520graad.

Agentschap voor Hoger Onderwijs, Volwassenonderwijs, Kwalificaties en Studietoelagen (2020).

Uitgangspunten. *Onderwijsdoelen.be*. Retrieved from
<https://www.onderwijsdoelen.be/uitgangspunten/4721>.

Baelen, M., Hiligsmann, P. & L. Rasier (2008). De assimilatie van stem in de tussentaal van Franstalige leerders van het Nederlands. *N/F* 8, pp. 9-29.

Baeten, R. & A. Verdoodt (1984). Les besoins en langues modernes/étrangères en Belgique et leur enseignement. *Courrier hebdomadaire du CRISP*, 1026-1027(1), pp. 1-39.

Belgian Federal Government (2019). About Belgium: Government. Retrieved from
https://www.belgium.be/en/about_belgium/government.

Billiet, J., Maddens, B. & A.-P. Frogner (2006). Does Belgium (still) Exist? Difference in Political Culture between Flemings and Walloons. *West European Politics*, 5(29), pp. 912-932.

- Bourgeois, G., Minister-president van de Vlaamse Regering & H. Crevits, Vlaamse Minister van Onderwijs (2018). *Besluit van de Vlaamse Regering houdende sommige maatregelen betreffende de modernisering van het secundair onderwijs*, 1st July 2018.
- Caluwaerts, D. & M. Reuchamps (2015). Combining Federalism with Consociationalism: Is Belgian Consociational Federalism Digging its own Grave?. *Ethnopolitics*, 14(3), pp. 277-295.
- Cattonar, B. (2019). *L'institution scolaire et son contexte, LAGRE2120: le système éducatif en Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles*. Course notes 1 [PowerPoint presentation].
- Council of Europe (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- CRISP (2020). Vocabulaire Politique. Retrieved from <http://www.vocabulairepolitique.be/decret/>.
- DA-PACTE (2019, May 3). *Le code qui balise le nouveau tronc commun définitivement approuvé par le parlement*. Retrieved from <http://www.pactedexcellence.be/index.php/2019/05/03/le-code-qui-balise-le-nouveau-tronc-commun-definitivement-approuve-par-le-parlement/>.
- De Briey, L. (2017). *Pacte pour un enseignement d'excellence: direction*. Bruxelles: Fédération Walloni-Bruxelles.
- Décret définissant les missions prioritaires de l'enseignement fondamental et de l'enseignement secondaire et organisant les structures propres à les atteindre* (1997, July 24). Centre de documentation administrative du Secrétariat général, updated on the 18th of December 2017.
- European Commission (2019, April 26). *National education systems*. Retrieved from https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/national-description_en.
- Fannes, P., Vranckx, B., Simon, F. & M. Depaepe (2013). L'enseignement en Communauté flamande (1988-2013). *Courrier Hebdomadaire du CRISP*, 2186-2187.

Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles (2020). *L'organisation générale de l'enseignement*. Retrieved from <http://www.enseignement.be/index.php?page=25568&navi=2667>.

Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles (2020). *Référentiels de compétences*. Retrieved from <http://enseignement.be/index.php?page=0&navi=190>.

Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles (2017). *Compétences terminales et savoirs requis à l'issue des humanités générales et technologiques: langues modernes*.

Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles (2020). *Le Webmagazine du Pacte*. Retrieved from <http://pactedexcellence.be/index.php/1089-2/>.

Gecodificeerde decreten betreffende het secundair onderwijs (Codex Secundair Onderwijs), 17th of December 2010.

GO! Onderwijs van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap (2019). *Lessentabellen, algemeen secundair onderwijs, tweede en derde graad*, academic year 2019-2020.

GO! Onderwijs van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap (2012). *Leerplan secundair onderwijs: AV Frans, basisvorming, alle richtingen. ASO, 2^{de} graad, eerste en tweede leerjaar*. Leerplan n° 2012/002.

GO! Onderwijs van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap (2012). *Leerplan secundair onderwijs: AV Engels, basisvorming. ASO, 2^{de} graad, eerste en tweede leerjaar*. Leerplan n° 2012/003.

Het Vlaams Ministerie van Onderwijs en Vorming (2019, February 5). *Structuur en organisatie van het voltijds secundair onderwijs*. Retrieved from <https://data-onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/edulex/document.aspx?docid=9418#4>.

La Ligue de l'Enseignement et de l'Education permanente asbl (2019). *Le pacte scolaire – Loi du 29 mai 1959*. Retrieved from <https://ligue-enseignement.be/le-pacte-scolaire/>.

La ligue de l'Enseignement et de l'Education permanente asbl (2020). *Nouveaux référentiels en finalisation*. Retrieved from <https://ligue-enseignement.be/nouveaux-referentiels-en-finalisation/>.

- Lallement, B. & N. Pierret (2007). *L'essentiel du CECR pour les langues. Le cadre européen commun de référence pour les langues* (2ème édition). Paris: Hachette Education.
- Lebrun, S. (2003, January 7). Langues à l'école: imposées ou au choix, un peu ou beaucoup. *La Libre*, Retrieved from <https://www.lalibre.be/actu/belgique/langues-a-l-ecole-imposees-ou-au-choix-un-peu-ou-beaucoup-51b87c53e4b0de6db9a823e9>.
- Lievens, J. (2018). Kroniek onderwijsrecht 2018 (2): het onderwijs uit de steigers. *Tijdschrift voor Bestuurswetenschappen en Publiek Recht*, 2018(8), pp. 465-480.
- Lievens, J. (2019). Kroniek onderwijsrecht 2019: het einde van de rit. *Tijdschrift voor Bestuurswetenschappen en Publiek Recht*, 2019(7), pp. 398-413.
- Loi relative à la structure générale et à l'organisation de l'enseignement secondaire* (1971, July 19). Centre de documentation administrative du Secrétariat général, updated on the 1st of September 2019.
- Loi modifiant certaines dispositions de la législation de l'enseignement* (1959, May 29). Centre de documentation administrative du Secrétariat général, updated on the 4th of October 2019.
- Maroy, C. (2002, September 1). Quelle autonomie professionnelle pour les enseignants? *Revue internationale de l'éducation de sèvres*, 41-50.
- Mettewie, L. (2015). Apprendre la langue de « l'Autre » en Belgique : la dimension affective comme frein à l'apprentissage. *Le Langage et l'Homme*, L(2), pp.23-42
- Meunier, F., Meurice, A., Van de Vyver, J. & R. Wattiez (2018). Favoriser les pratiques orales en classes de langues modernes. In J. Plumet, C. Mousset, P. Smets & P. Soutmans, *Continuités et ruptures dans l'apprentissage. Des constats aux pistes d'action*. Louvain-La-Neuve: Presses Universitaires de Louvain, pp. 23-42.
- Perrez, J. (2005). Het gebruik van contrastieve connectieven door Franstalige leerders van het Nederlands. In P. Hilgsmann, G. Janssens & J. Vromans (eds.), *Woord voor Woord, Zin voor Zin, Liber Amicorum voor Siegfried Theissen*. Gand: Koninklijke Academie voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde, pp. 261-276.

Peters, E., Noreillie, A.-S. & E. Puimège (2020). Frans eerste vreemde taal en Engels tweede vreemde taal? Of toch niet? Een blik op de Engelse en Franse taalvaardigheid van jongeren in Vlaanderen. In W. Coudenys (red.), *Taal en de Wereld*. Leuven: Universitaire Pers Leuven.

Service Général de l'Enseignement organisé par la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles & Conseil des Pouvoirs Organisateurs de l'Enseignement Neutre Subventionné (2018). *Langues Modernes: Outil d'accompagnement du référentiel "compétences terminales et savoirs requis à l'issue des humanités générales et technologiques" (2^{ème} degré de l'enseignement général et technique de transition, langue moderne 1)*. Reference: 489/2018/240.

Service Général de l'Enseignement organisé par la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles & Conseil des Pouvoirs Organisateurs de l'Enseignement Neutre Subventionné (2018). *Langues Modernes: Outil d'accompagnement du référentiel "compétences terminales et savoirs requis à l'issue des humanités générales et technologiques" (2^{ème} degré de l'enseignement général et technique de transition, langue moderne 2)*. Reference: 490/2018/240.

Service Public Fédéral Belge (2019). La Belgique: Service Public. Retrieved from https://www.belgium.be/fr/la_belgique.

Van der Linden, N. & A. Roets (2017). Insights into the Belgian Linguistic Conflict from a (social) Psychological Perspective: Introduction to the Special Issue. *Psychologica Belgica*, 57(3), pp. 1-12.

Van der Wouden, T. & J. Caspers (2008). Partikels als leerprobleem in het Nederlands als tweede taal. *Internationale Neerlandistiek*, 46(3), pp. 33-45.

Verckens, A., Simons, M. & G. Kelchtermans (2009). Welke overheid voor welk onderwijs? Een kritische studie van Vlaamse beleidsdocumenten. *Pedagogische studiën*, 86, pp. 21-40.

Vlaamse Ministerie van Onderwijs en Vorming (2020). Onderwijsdecreten: parlementaire documenten. Retrieved from <https://onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/nl/decretenbundels>.

Vlaamse Regering (2014). *Regeerakkoord Vlaamse Regering 2014-2019*.

Wynants, P. & M. Paret (1998). Ecole et clivages aux XIX^e et XX^e siècles. In D. Grootaers (ed.), *Histoire de l'enseignement en Belgique*. Brussels: edition du CRISP, pp. 14-85.

UNIVERSITÉ CATHOLIQUE DE LOUVAIN
Faculté de philosophie, arts et lettres

Place Blaise Pascal, 1 bte L3.03.11, 1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgique | www.uclouvain.be/fial