

Delivering reform in a high stakes context: from content based assessment to communicative and competence-based assessment

Carol Spöttl, Kathrin Eberharter, Franz Holzknecht,
Benjamin Kremmel, Matthias Zehentner
Language Testing Research Group Innsbruck

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Background

2004 New CEFR-based curriculum for modern foreign languages in Austria: **PARADIGM SHIFT & NEED FOR NEW EXAM**

2007 SRP project at University of Innsbruck to develop standardized CEFR-linked national school-leaving exam (*Matura*)

4 languages

4 skills

2 secondary school types: academic

Chapter describes situation prior to exam reform and history of reform project

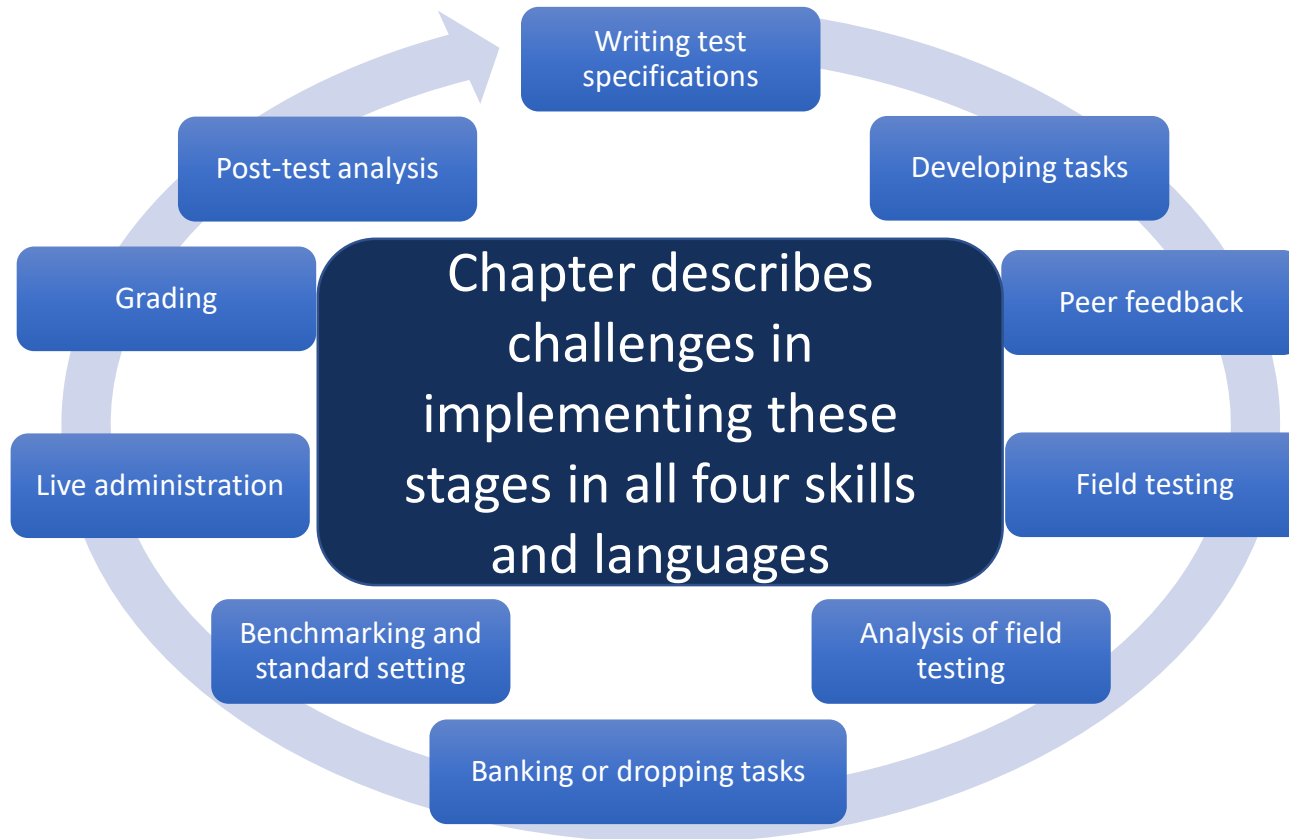
Impact extended to other subjects (L1 German and Maths)

2010 Austrian government passes education bill

2015 First compulsory live administration for all languages and skills (except speaking): ~30,000 test takers per year

(Spöttl, Kremmel, Holzknicht & Alderson, 2016)

Innovation: Initial test development cycle



Innovation

- Trained 135 AHS/BHS teachers as items writers and 60 stakeholders as standard setting judges
- Home-grown solution with outside international expertise and training
- Introduced communicative CEFR-linked task types for all skills
- Delivered assessment scales for writing and speaking and nation wide training sessions
- Provided benchmarks and justifications for writing and speaking
- Set up a professionalized best practice model of test development and delivery