DIVERSITY IN TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT:

MORE THAN PERIPHERAL KUMBAYA?

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ALTE — Association of Language Testers in Europe

CVCL CENTRO VALUTAZIONE CERTIFICAZIONI LINGUISTICHE
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steunpunt **diversiteit & leren**

INTRODUCTION

- Deficiency, periphal and kumbaya perspective on diversity in education;

- Education systems fail to provide an inclusive environment;

- Particularly when it comes to assessing diverse learners;

- Part one: critical analysis of current diversity policies and practices;

- Part two: illustrate how current assessment practices in education fail to provide a valid picture of pupils' (linguistic) competences.
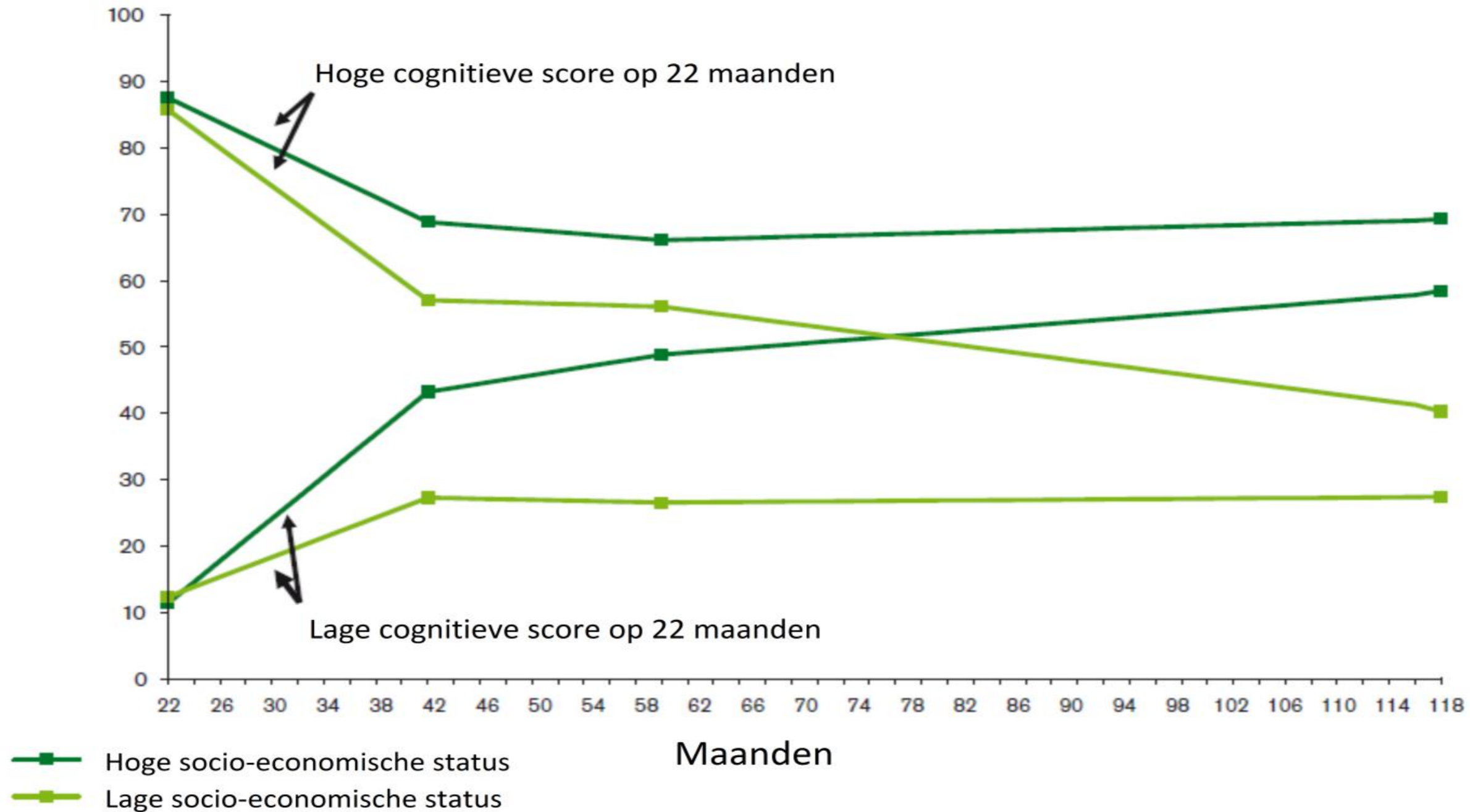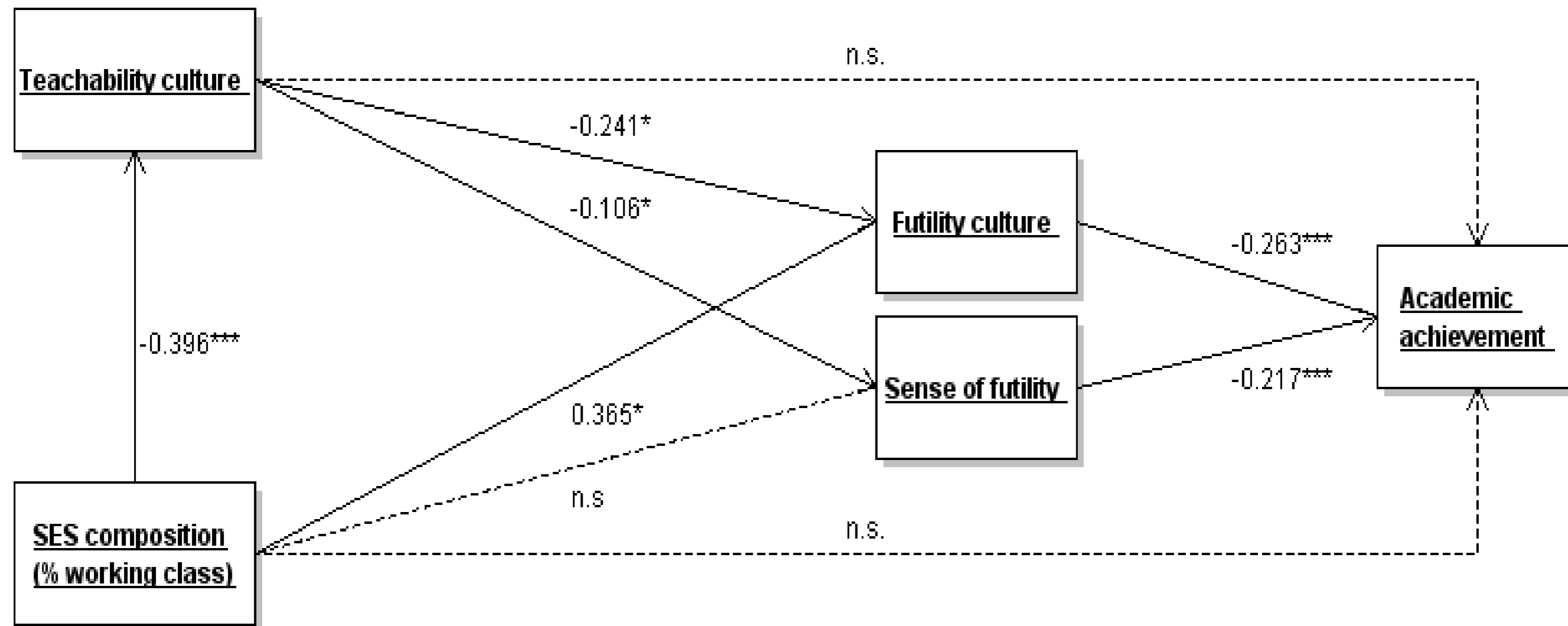
PART ONE

TENACIOUS PROBLEMS

- In most countries:
  - Dealing with diversity
  - Creating inclusive education
  - Addressing social inequality and inequity
- Supra-national data:
  - PISA
  - TIMSS
  - PIRLS
  - …
- At systemic/structure and agency level
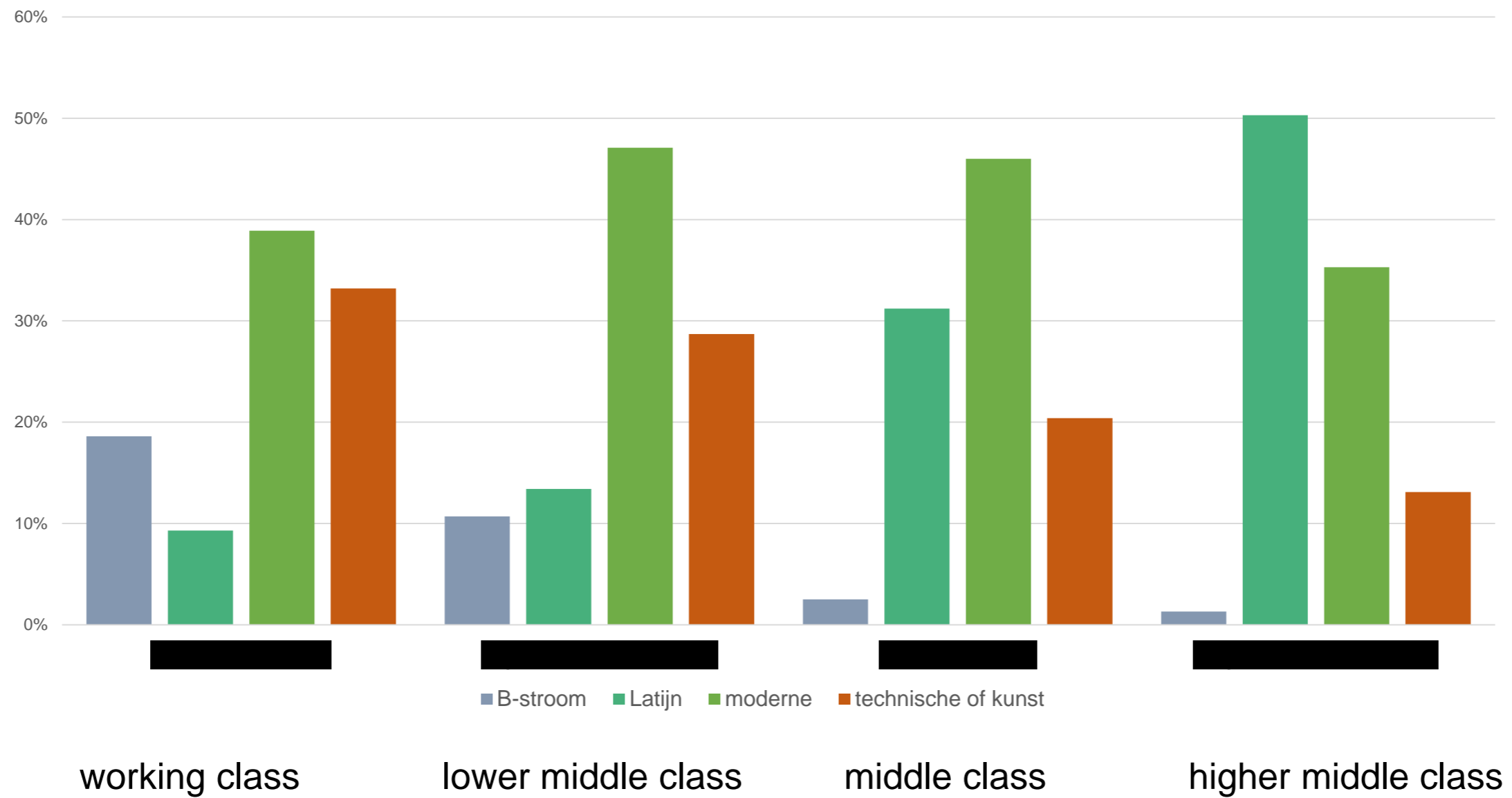
EFFECT OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL (SYSTEMIC)

Teachability and futility: composition effect (systemic)

ADVICE TEACHERS (AGENCY DYNAMICS)

Study advice to social class background

Legend: B-stroom, Latijn, moderne, technische of kunst

Categories: working class, lower middle class, middle class, higher middle class

Impact of monolingual beliefs (agency dynamics)
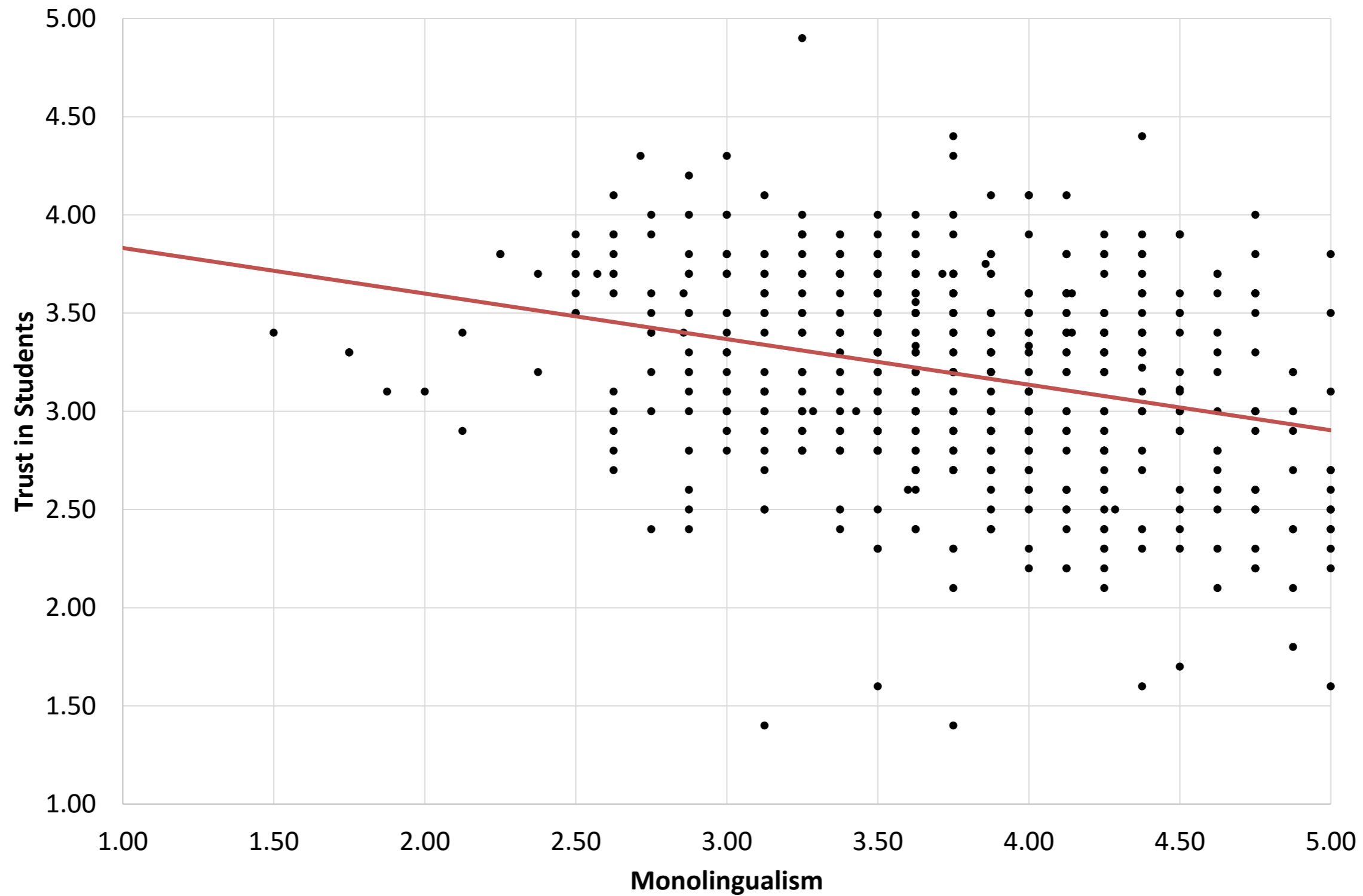
WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

- Normative and non-negotiable educational grammars

- Illegitimacy of certain forms of symbolic capital

- Lack of agency of certain groups

- We cannot and we don't know how to deal with heterogeneity/diversity

- Our fundamental view on diversity and education denies diversity as starting point and basic principle

- We recognize diversity, however, we find it hard to see it as the norm in education

- We recognize diversity, however, only as a condition, as a step towards assimilation. As a result, diversity is being devaluated as an arrear, a problem, a handicap, a deviation, …

- We thematize (in)equity, diversity

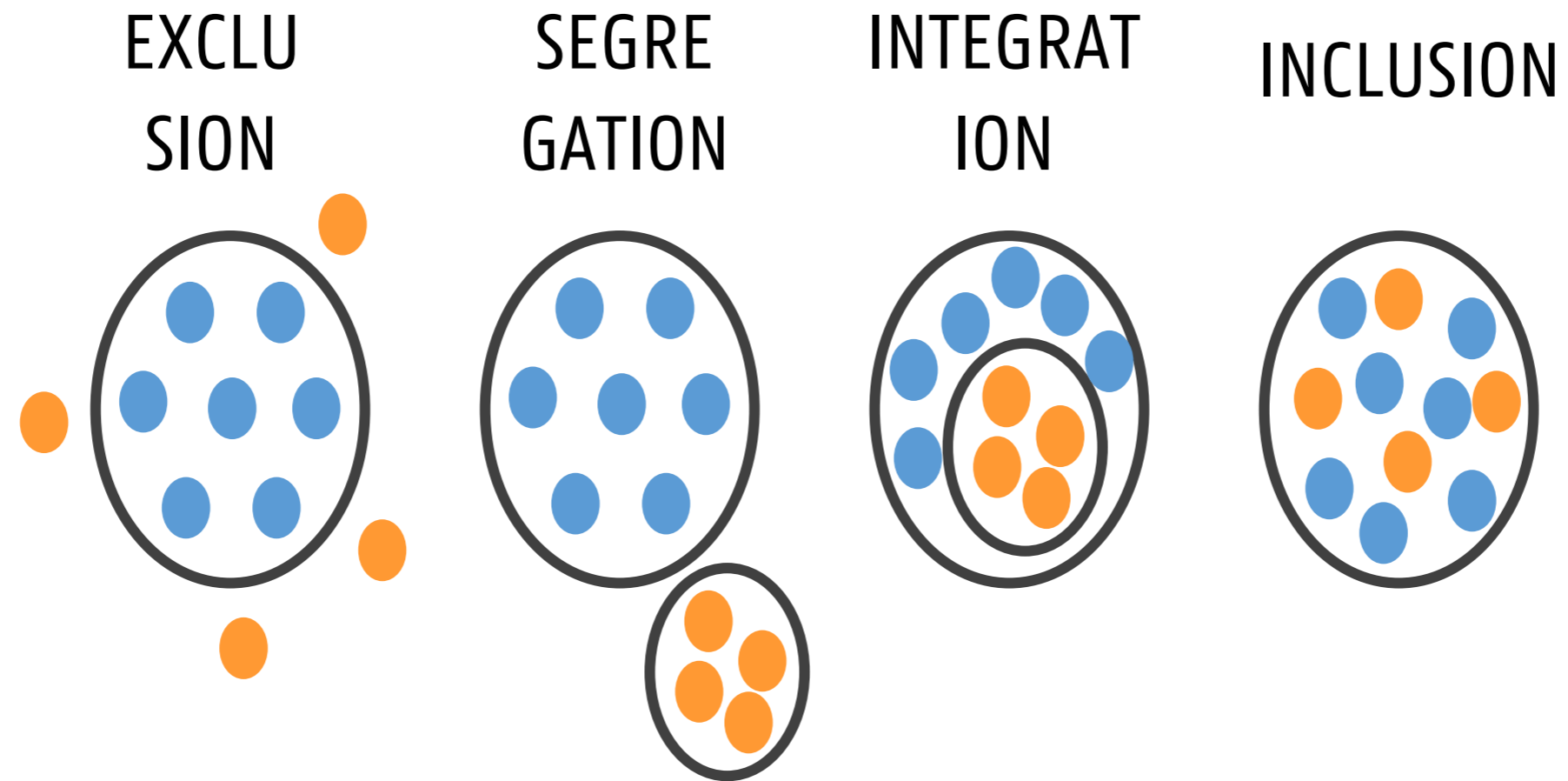Diversity as the norm

2 big challenges for schools and teachers

1. Schools and classrooms become more and more diverse

2. Evolution to more inclusive education

EXCLU SION   SEGRE GATION   INTEGRAT ION   INCLUSION

SYSTEMIC DEFICIENCY AND KUMBAYA RESPONSES

- Divergent differentiation:
  - Remedial teaching programmes;
  - Pull-out classes;
  - Language ability grouping;
  - …

- Exclusive L2 submersion models;

- The multilingual/multicultural day.

FRAGMENTED RESPONSES

- Segregation
- Achievement gap
- Transitions
- SES inequality
- discriminiation
- Poverty
- ASS
- ADHD
- Literacy
- Parental involvement
- Language/ multilingualism
- Accountability
- …

Drastic shift is needed

- A policy for each problem, for each challenge, for each child, …

- « Main task » <-> addressing all these fragmented challenges

- Drastic shift is needed

- To a more inclusive diversity policy which is in the core of education

AN INCLUSIVE DIVERSITY POLICY

- Didactics/pedagogy;

- Language of instruction and multilingualism;

- Beliefs, professional vision and practice;

- Shared responsibility (school – parents – students);

- Reflexivity and professionalisation to exploit diversity as an asset for learning;

- Assessment.

CHANGES

- ***Macro level:***
  - Systemic changes in education: e.g.
    - Break down homogeneous annual grades
    - More structural cooperation within and between schools and tracks
    - Invest in extended schools
  - A (self)accountability model:
    - Not only quantitative measurements; not only cognition
    - Also qualitative; non cognitive and mediating, interaction variables: learning to cooperate; creativity development; critical thinking; innovative thinking; learning from mistakes; learning to share ideas; being able to deal with differences; …
  - Researchers and schools cooperate more in action research

CHANGES

- **Meso level:**
  - Change deficiency school culture
  - Schools develop a sustainable diversity policy
  - Opting for larger classes (team teaching) and interaction between grades
  - Professionalizing (and intensive coaching) of teams
  - Continuous assessment
  - From parental involvement to parent-school cooperation based on equality
  - Structural cooperation with other sectors
  - Monitor beliefs and feelings of competency

CHANGES

- ***Meso level:***
  - Teacher training schools:
    - Incorporate diversity in all subjects and courses and through the whole curriculum
    - Not teaching about but IN diversity
    - Professionalizing teacher trainers
    - Monitor beliefs and feelings of competency of student teachers

CHANGES

- **Micro level:**
    - The classroom breathes diversity;
    - Team teaching: observation of children's competencies (assessment);
    - Exploiting diversity as an asset for learning;
    - Create more powerful learning environments and convergent classroom differentiation;
    - Students as active actors in learning (reciprocal teaching) and assessment;
    - Education is more than knowledge and handbooks;
    - Intercultural competencies, diversity, … is not a subject but is central in all subjects;
    - break stereotypical thinking and behaviour.

CONCLUSION PART ONE

- ***Sustainable equity and diversity education policy:***

  - Diversity as the norm
  - Diversity is (in) the core of good education (not a theme)
  - Value and exploit diversity (more than kumbaya)
  - Cooperation with external partners
  - Inclusive, high quality and sustained languages policy
  - Shared responsibility: pupils-parents-teachers
  - Continuous professionalization
  - Monitoring teachers' beliefs/stereotypes, noticing, reasoning and didactic practices
  - Strong, valid, fair en just assessment policy

PART TWO

LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY & ASSESSMENT

- Current assessment practices

- Monolingual assessments causes misunderstanding

- Towards an inclusive diversity policy: teaching and assessment should go hand in hand
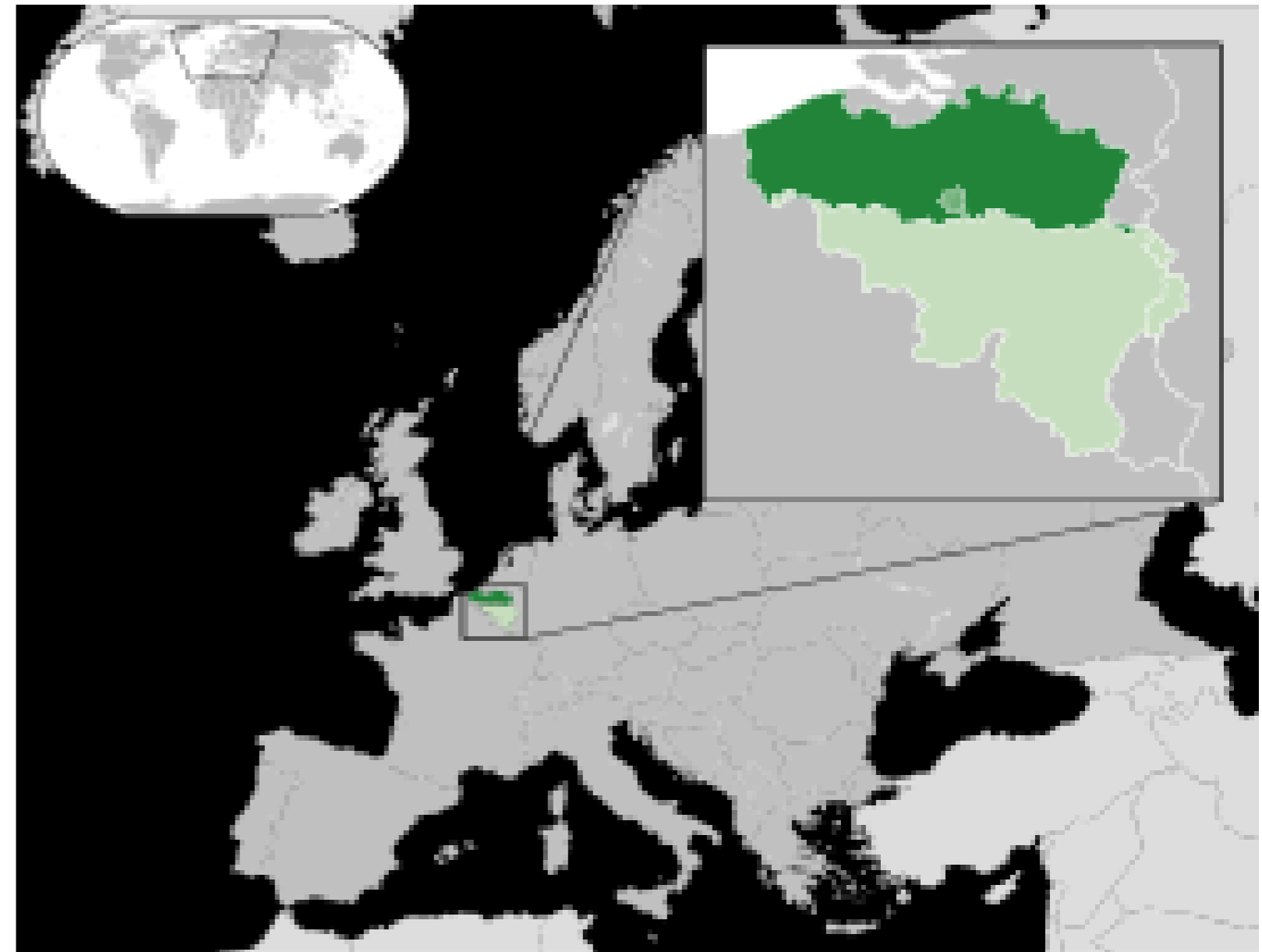
ASSESSMENT ACCOMMODATIONS

"Any change to standardised testing conditions

intended to make the test more fair and accessible

for an individual or subgroup

that does not change the construct being measured"

(Educational Testing Service, 2009).

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RESEARCH CONTEXT

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CONTEXT

- Flanders: the northern part of Belgium

- On average, 18% of students
  speak another language at home
  than the language of instruction (LOS)

- Diversity in migration backgrounds

- Freedom of education

- Until now: Absence of nationwide standardized tests

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ASSESSMENT OF MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS

	DU/A-	DU/A+	BIL/A-	BIL/A+	
L1 pupils	45	44	/	/	89
Multilingual pupils	445	450	64	69	1028
TOTAL	490	494	64	69	1117

DU = Dutch / BIL = Bilingual

A- = no accommodations / A+ = accommodations

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PUPILS' PERSPECTIVES

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MULTILINGUAL PUPILS' VOICES ON FAIRNESS

Because then (…)
if they can't do Dutch well (…)
you don't get those aids and the teacher doesn't even know if he can do it well,
(…) and if he eventually does need those aids but he doesn't get them,
then actually he would have worse scores.
With those aids he may get better scores.

De Backer, F., Baele, J., Van Avermaet, P., & Slembrouck, S. (2019). Pupils' Perceptions on Accommodations in Multilingual Assessment of Science. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, *16*(4-5), 426-446.

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MULTILINGUAL PUPILS' VOICES ON FAIRNESS

I think I would find it okay because Mohsin can actually already get to know some difficult words. And then he can already learn more and more. And know everything more and faster and so he can actually join in a bit more with us.

De Backer, F., Slembrouck, S., & Van Avermaet, P. (2019). Assessment accommodations for multilingual learners: pupils' perceptions of fairness. Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 40(9), 833-846.

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MULTILINGUAL PUPILS' TEST TAKING STRATEGIES

Respondent (R): Yes, because of that I could answer. In Dutch, I didn't understand some words so I looked at the Turkish questions and so I could answer.

Interviewer (I): And if there were no difficult words, did you look at the Turkish questions as well?

R: Oh no, just the Dutch ones.
I: So how did you solve it, where did you look first?
R: First I looked at the question and then–
I: And in what language did you look at the question?
R: First I looked at the Dutch ones. And then, if I didn't understand, I looked at the Turkish questions.

EFFECTIVENESS OF ACCOMMODATIONS

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EFFECTIVENESS OF ACCOMMODATIONS

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1. No significant differences between accommodated and non-accommodated groups

2. However, frequency of use of oral accommodations in both LOS and L1 was low

   → Test takers are not familiar with accommodations

3. Interesting interaction effect between L1 proficiency and frequency of accommodation use

   → The more proficient in L1 **and** the more students made use of the read-aloud accommodations, the higher their science test scores

ACCURACY OF TEACHER EXPECTATIONS

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Diverse student groups

Teacher
expectation

Teacher
judgements

High-stakes decisions

ACCURACY OF TEACHER EXPECTATIONS

N = 53

RQ 1. What are teacher expectations of multilingual students' science achievement compared to L1 students?

- Teachers' expectations tend to be higher for L1 Dutch speakers than for students from other linguistic backgrounds.
- Teachers' expectancy of excellent scores is lowest for students with Turkish backgrounds (9%), followed by students from other linguistic backgrounds (18%) and for students with Polish backgrounds (20%).

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ACCURACY OF TEACHER EXPECTATIONS

RQ2. Is there a difference between accuracy of teacher expectations of multilingual students compared to accuracy of teacher expectations of L1 speakers of the language of schooling (LOS)?
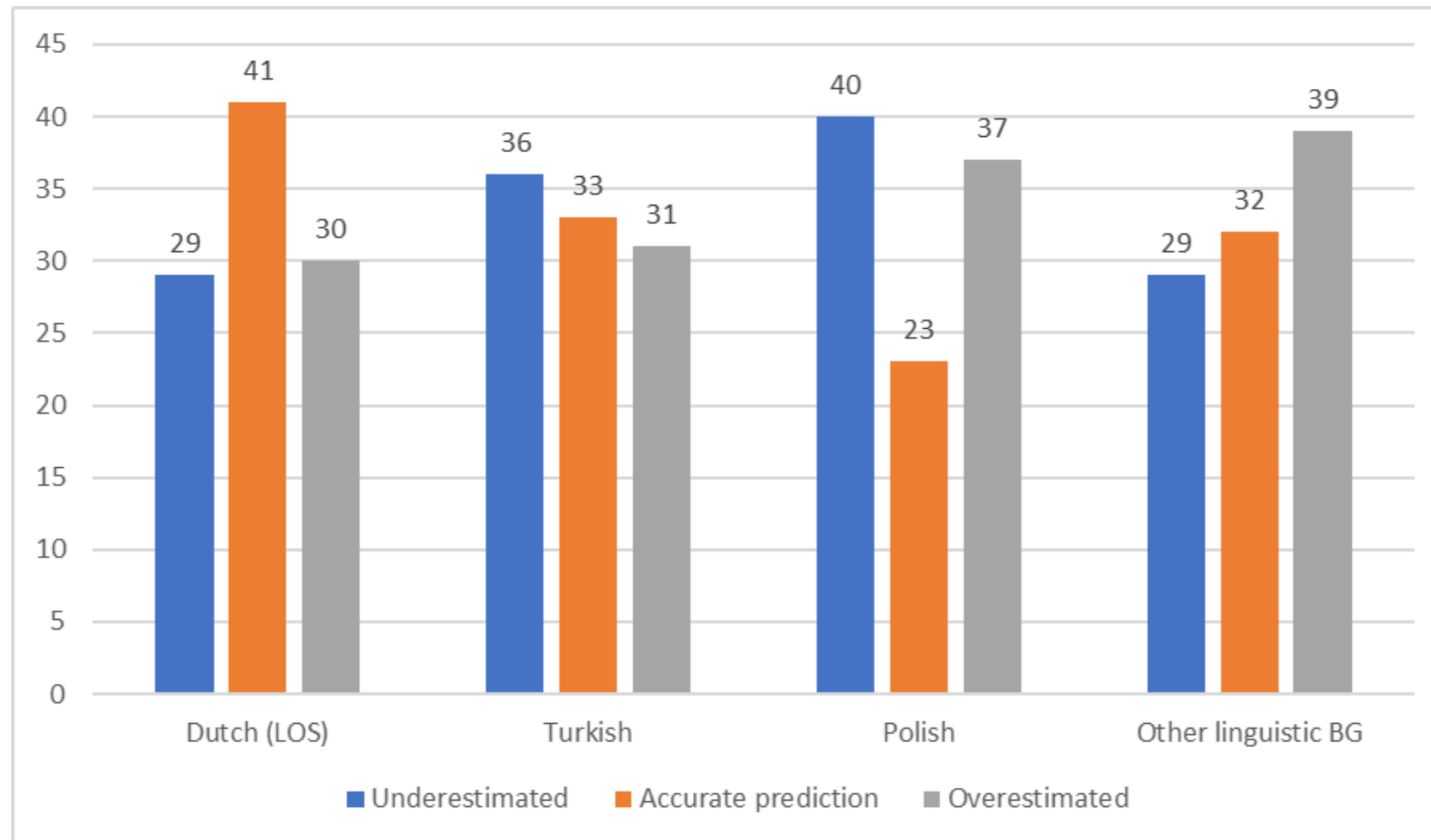
ACCURACY OF TEACHER EXPECTATIONS

RQ3 – Does multilingual students' use of an accommodated test change the accuracy of teacher expectations?

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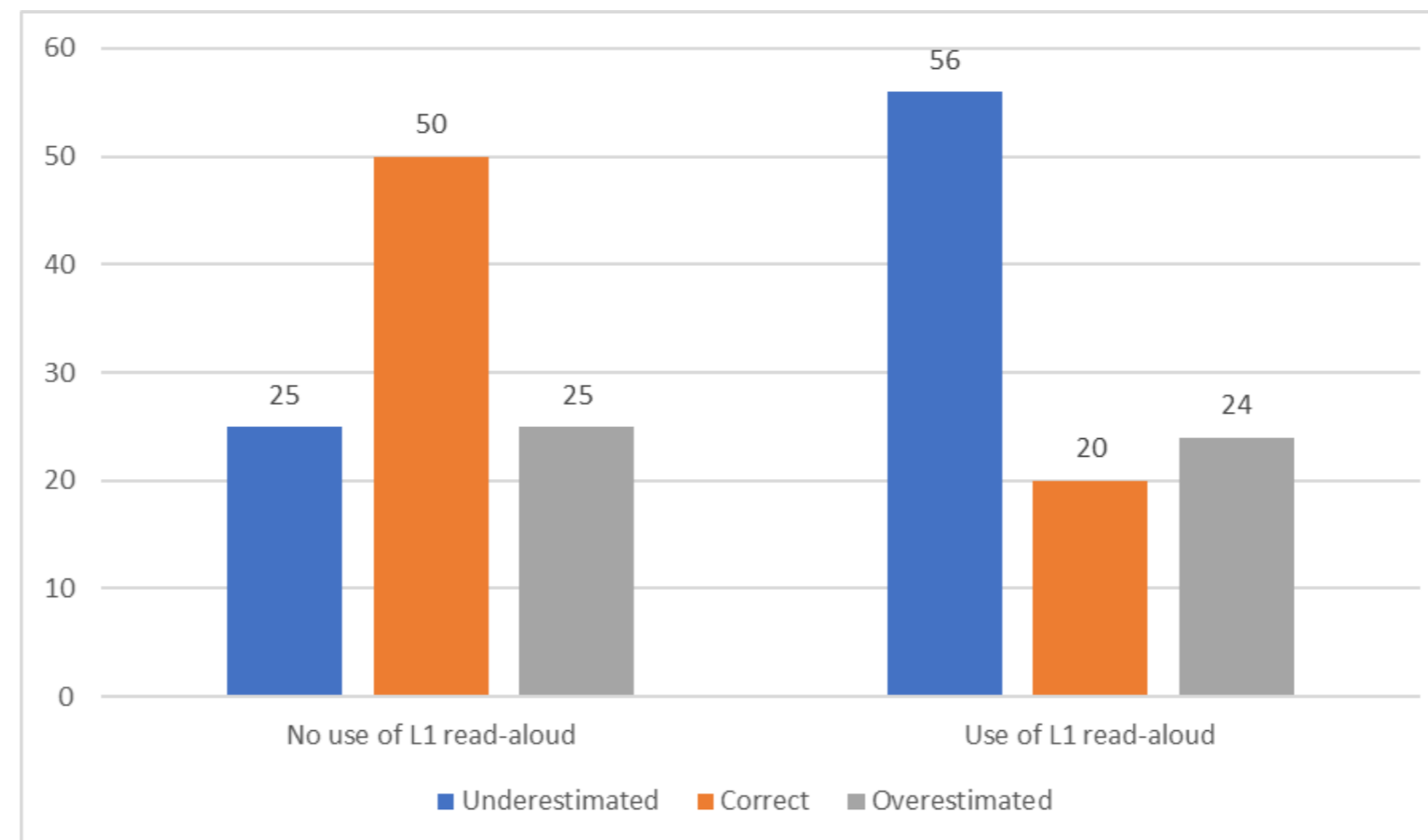
ACCURACY OF TEACHER EXPECTATIONS

BIL/A+

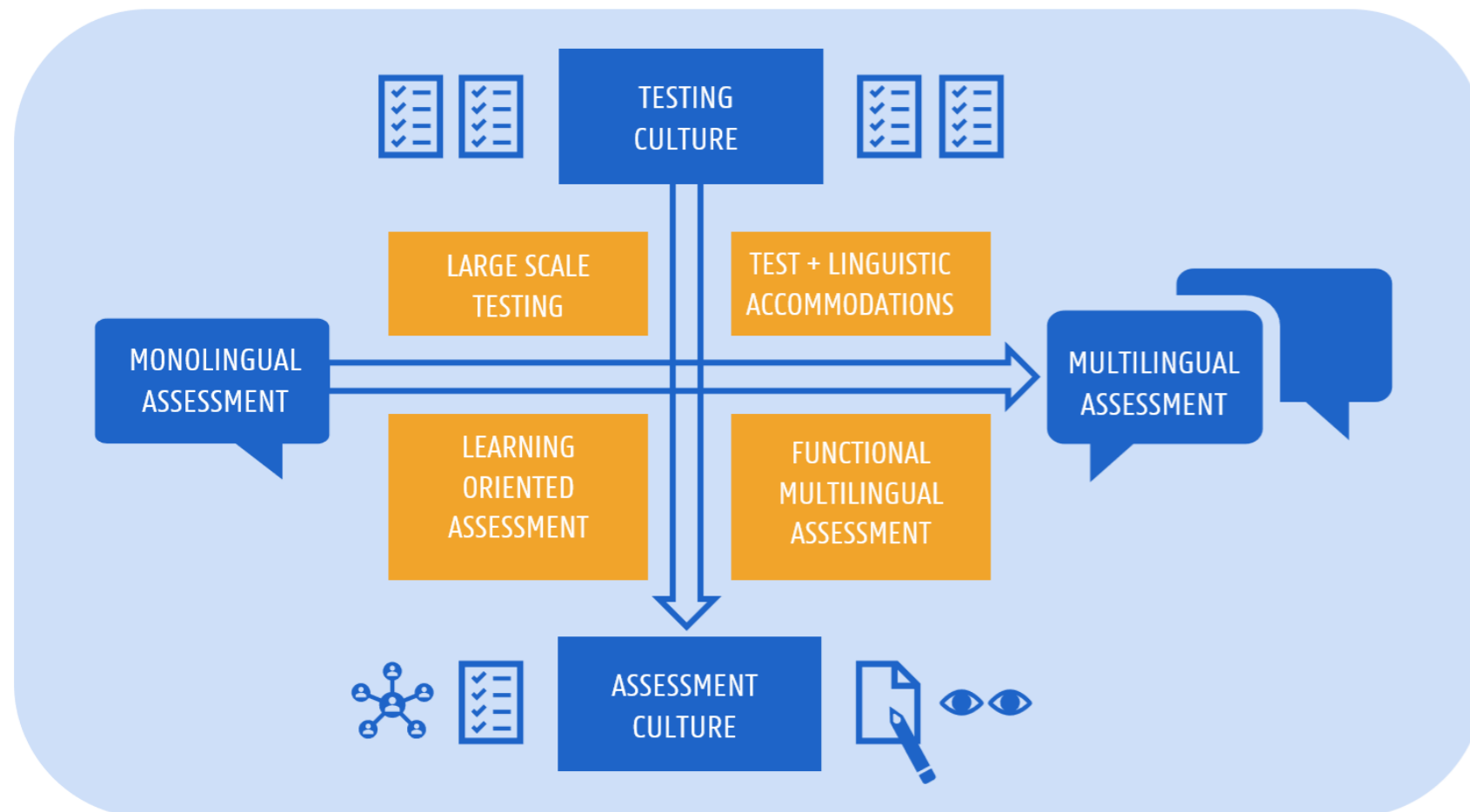Only category with an extreme case of underestimation

Could count as an example of a 'false negative'

Do false negatives among multilingual
learners stay under the radar too often?

FUNCTIONAL MULTILINGUAL ASSESSMENT

TOWARDS A SHIFT ON TWO AXES

Fair and valid assessments for multilingual learners need a **transition on *both* axes**

- Assessment accommodations alone: continue to rely on monolingual constructs of language However, useful lessons:
  - **No one-size-fits-all approach**
  - **Familiarity** is a key issue to address

- LOA alone: teachers do not succeed in accurately predicting ML students' competences

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OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES
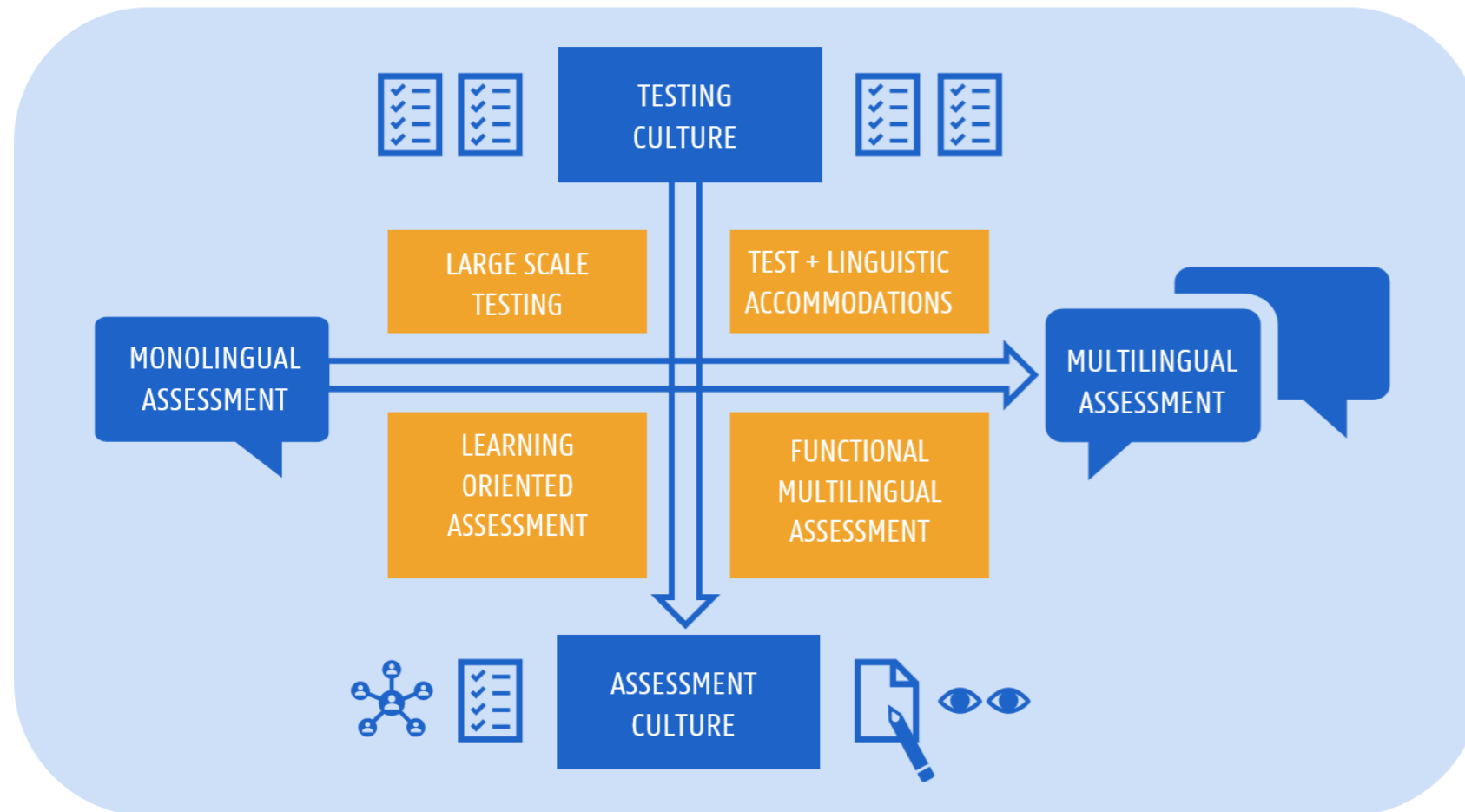
1. Dynamic model to talk about assessment

2. The role of language (Language vs other tests)

3. Practicality issues

4. Shift in teachers and students' mindset
   - Empowering students to make their own (accommodation) choices
   - Fighting stereotypes, implicit biases

"...if you are not like everybody else, then you are abnormal, if you are abnormal, then you are sick. These three categories, not being like everybody else, not being normal and being sick are in fact very different but have been reduced to the same thing"
Michel Foucault

THANK YOU

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