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## Introduction

Assessment has always been part of the educational lives of the global population. This is also the case with the field of language learning. In the long history of language learning, the majority of language assessment experiences have been related to testing, and more precisely to the testing of language acquisition. Inevitably, most research publications up until early 2022 have been recording testing (e.g. [Chalhoub-Deville, 2001](#); [Fulcher, 2015](#); [Fulcher & Harding, 2022](#); [O’Sullivan, 2012](#); [Spolsky, 2016](#)). It is undeniable that testing has been accompanied by feelings of anxiety, stress, and fear of failure. It is only in recent years that Formative Assessment (FA) and assessment for learning ([Rea-Dickins & Gardner, 2000](#); [Tzagari & Vogt, 2017](#)) were given attention. This form of assessment is usually accompanied by feelings of learning, reflection, improvement, satisfaction, and achievement, and it is worth exploring and integrating into the language learning and assessment process. Despite the increased interest in language FA over the last 20 years (e.g. [Rea-Dickins & Gardner, 2000](#); [Tzagari & Michaeloudes, 2013](#); [Vogt & Tzagari, 2014](#)), most research publications in the long history of language assessment focus mainly on Summative Assessment (SA), testing, and high stakes examinations and their different aspects (validity, reliability, washback, impact, etc. – see e.g. [Hamp-Lyons, 1997](#); [O’Sullivan, 2015, 2016](#)). While acknowledging the importance of assessment, which has mainly been in the form of testing, we, the authors of this book, recognise the need to also give due attention to the history of FA in language learning. Within this frame of mind, this book moves towards this direction and attempts to provide researchers, undergraduate and postgraduate students, language practitioners, policymakers, and other stakeholders with more information and data accumulated in recent years, and more precisely between 2000 and 2020, so as to have a holistic overview of language FA research and more extensive knowledge of this domain ([Rea-Dickins & Gardner, 2000](#); [Tzagari & Michaeloudes, 2013](#); [Vogt & Tzagari, 2014](#)).

An initial search revealed that there is substantial activity by researchers and language practitioners all over the world. However, there is no Systematic Review (SR) or Annotated Bibliography (AB) that is dedicated to the recording, describing, and evaluating of the historical background of implementations of FA in Second Language (L2)/Foreign Language (FL) learning. Most such publications are more generic on the contribution of FA and not related to FA in L2/FL; some literature reviews were found as parts of research papers dedicated to L2. This first finding was part of an MA in computer assisted language learning dissertation written by Skevi [Vassiliou \(2019\)](#) and supervised by Dr Salomi Papadima-Sophocleous (first supervisor) and Dr Christina Giannikas (second supervisor). The idea for the topic of this dissertation derived from the module on computer assisted language assessment and testing taught by Dr Salomi Papadima-Sophocleous. This collaboration led to the co-authoring of this book, which started at the end of 2019 and was completed in 2022.

As the title suggests, the book tells the story of FA in two ways, the one complementing the other: the first one is in the form of an SR and the second one is in the form of a descriptive and evaluative AB of L2 FA, from the very first published work on the subject in 2000 to 2020. While the SR gives the story of language FA in chronological order and gives an overview of different aspects, the AB gives more details for each research work.

The main purposes of this book are: (1) to provide researchers, practitioners, and other stakeholders interested in language FA a substantial background in the area, (2) to describe how this topic has been approached by researchers worldwide over the 20 years under review, (3) to contribute to the development of critical thinking about the topic, (4) to help in establishing the relevance and quality of the annotated material on the topic, and (5) to facilitate language formative researchers as well as practitioners to form an overview of the research in the area during the specific period under study.

The first part synthesises different studies related to language FA, from 2000 to 2020. It shares insights into the types of publications researched, the research purposes, the type of research designs, the research methods and data collection

tools used in the studies, the research outcomes, the languages, types of participants and educational levels represented in the publications, the types of FA applications, the language learning focus formatively assessed, the learning theories and teaching methods used to FA in LL, and the geographic distribution of these studies.

The second part consists of a series of bibliographical citations and entries. This descriptive and evaluative AB of language FA is organised in chronological order from 2000 to 2020; it shows step-by-step progress through the years; it is based on a list of inclusion/exclusion criteria and a list of evaluative criteria; it includes 104 annotations; it presents research that has been conducted each year. Each annotation describes and evaluates the content of each publication.

This book complements the literature so far written on language assessment in general. It focuses on FA, which comparatively to research conducted for SA in LL, requires further investigation. It comes to fill the gap that exists by giving an overview of the research in language FA activities in the last 20 years since FA started making an appearance within the language learning context.

The first step towards that was to have an overview of what constitutes FA in general, and in LL in particular, and establish the characteristics of an SR and an AB.

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## Introduction

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Published by Research-publishing.net, a not-for-profit association  
Voillans, France, [info@research-publishing.net](mailto:info@research-publishing.net)

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**Formative assessment in second language learning: a systematic review and an annotated bibliography**  
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**Publication date: 2022/11/21**

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Typeset by Research-publishing.net  
Cover design and photo by © Raphaël Savina ([raphael@savina.net](mailto:raphael@savina.net))

ISBN13: 978-2-38372-013-3 (Ebook, PDF, colour)

ISBN13: 978-2-38372-014-0 (Ebook, EPUB, colour)

ISBN13: 978-2-38372-012-6 (Paperback - Print on demand, black and white)

Print on demand technology is a high-quality, innovative and ecological printing method; with which the book is never 'out of stock' or 'out of print'.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data.

A cataloguing record for this book is available from the British Library.

**Legal deposit, France:** Bibliothèque Nationale de France - Dépôt légal: 2022 novembre.

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