

# Language evaluation of multilinguals – across educational institutions

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This article focuses on linguistic evaluation of multilingual individuals and asks how the language competences of multilingual individuals are made measurable within three institutional settings: daycare, primary school and language schools for adult learners of Danish. Grounded in the theoretical understanding that an institutional linguistic evaluation is a situated political act, the article's comparative and synchronic perspective is supplemented with a diachronic perspective that illuminates the historical and political background for the linguistic evaluations. The empirical basis for the article is legislation, governing documents and evaluation tools as well as Danish and international literature about language evaluation. On the one hand, the analysis shows a considerable difference between the various linguistic evaluation tools. On the other hand, it appears as a common feature that the evaluations have difficulty dealing with multilingualism and the linguistic repertoire of multilingual individuals. Based on the concept of linguistic repertoire, ethical challenges in current practices are emphasized and the importance of relating language evaluations to the linguistic complexity that currently characterizes many Western societies is highlighted.

**KEYWORDS:** language evaluation; construct; multilingualism; multilingual individuals; linguistic repertoire; ethics