Using the genre of the weather forecast in language teaching: research on classroom practices in French-speaking Belgium

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0. Introduction

The last decades have seen genre pedagogies gradually occupying a central position within the field of second language teaching. Indeed, with the constant arising of new educational methods, the genre-based approach "[is] increasingly being recognised as [a] useful way to help teachers provide targeted instruction to meet the language and writing needs of students" (Tardy, 2011 in Lee, 2012:120). Moreover, genres pedagogies are believed to provide learners with additional dimensions which are not restricted to the learning of linguistic features. According to Lee, such an approach "can introduce students to the social dimension of writing and reveal that lexico-grammatical features are not an end in themselves in the learning-to-write process, but rather a means to an end, enabling students to make meaning for the right audience in an appropriate context." (2012:120). While many researchers have focused on genre and second language writing, fewer have attached particular importance to extra-literary-genres, targeting other language skills. That is especially the case of the genre of the weather forecast. However, prior to the increasing importance of genre-based pedagogies in the field of second language learning, there has been various debates on *what is a genre*? *Do genres have to be taught*? *If so, which ones*?

This dissertation focuses on the genre of the weather forecast and specifically aims to assess its place within the field of second language teaching. The reasons that led to this particular research topic are linked with my modern languages didactic course that I had the opportunity to follow at the University of Liège during the past two years. Indeed, one of the main chapters of the course was dedicated to textual genres. Although I had hardly ever heard of such a concept before, I was surprised by all the advantages that a genre-based pedagogy could offer. However, I must admit that I considered the concept as rather vague and complicated to integrate in a foreign language teaching context at first glance. After discussing the topic with M. Simons, my supervisor, it appeared that writing my dissertation on a textual genre would be both challenging as well as beneficial for my future career as a foreign language teacher. My supervisor then suggested the genre of the weather forecast because this topic had never been focused on in a teaching context within the scientific literature.

As a consequence, this dissertation mainly focusses on two research questions. The first one can be formulated as follows: To which extent is the genre of the weather forecast useful and interesting to be addressed in a foreign language teaching context? After having written this

dissertation, I am more than convinced that integrating the genre of the weather forecast in foreign language courses would enable students to master a varied panel of linguistic, strategic and communicative resources. Moreover, the second research question deals with the place of the genre of the weather forecast in foreign language teaching.

Regarding the structure, this dissertation is divided into four main chapters. In this perspective, Chapter 1 discusses the place of the concept of genre in language teaching within the scientific literature. To this aim, both Anglophone and Francophone researchers will be focused on so as to provide an overview of the concept among various scientists. Chapter 2 will deal with the specific place of the notion of genre within the legal texts of the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels. To this extent, a comparison between the different document will also be made. As to Chapter 3, the specific genre of the weather forecast will be looked at and its internal structure will be analysed. Furthermore, a specific focus will be laid on its realization in both Belgium and France as well as in the United-Kingdom in order to enquiry to which extent these two realizations differ from each other. Finally, Chapter 4 takes the form of a case study designed to assess the specific place of weather forecast in foreign language teachers' practices. In this Chapter, the various steps that were necessary to conduct the research will also be explained. Eventually, the results collected from this study will be disussed.

1. The place of genre in scientific literature in language teaching

The history of genre based-pedagogy has been the product of intense debates regarding how genres should be best approached to be effectively learned in first and second language learning contexts. Indeed, famous names such as Halliday, Swales, Martin, Hyland, Paltridge and many more were very influential since their work contributed to the evolution of the place of genres in schools' curricula.

1.1. English-speaking world: genre in three traditions

In the last decades, teaching genres has been influenced by three main traditions, especially the North American New Rhetoric studies, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and the Australian systemic functional linguistics (SFL), also known as the Sydney School. However, before going deeper in what characterises the tendencies that have marked genre-based pedagogy, understanding the notion of genre seems to be a priority since this thesis is dedicated to a genre in its own right, namely the genre of the weather forecast.

Starting at its etymological root, "[…] the word 'genre' is derived from the French language meaning 'form' or 'type'" (Dirgeyasa, 2016:45). In line with its etymology, *genre* is defined as being "a particular style or **category**[1] of works of art; esp[ecially] a type of literary work characterized by a particular form, style, or purpose" (Oxford English Dictionary). Indeed, within the field of literature, the four main literary genres are drama, poetry, fiction and nonfiction. At a lower level, this notion of genre is to be found when dealing with different types of novels, for example. Genre, in this case, regroups novels presenting common features. For instance, the detective novel, the history novel as well as the adventure novel are in fact only a few examples that illustrate this notion of genre. As will be seen throughout this chapter, the notion of category is central to the definition of genre.

Overtime, the concept of genre has developed and this notion also emerged within the linguistic field. However, its definition does not appear to be a one-sided one. As a matter of fact, "[the term] 'genre' has been much written about, even though, or perhaps because, it is considered to be 'a fuzzy concept'" (Swales 1990: 33 in Kay & Dudley-Evans, 1998:308) "and a controversial one" (Reid 1987 in Kay & Dudley-Evans, 1998:308), particularly in the language learning area.

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[1] My emphasis

Nonetheless, it should be noticed that the purpose of this thesis is not to provide the reader with a comprehensive review of the definitions related to the term 'genre'. Instead, key definitions directly relevant to the topic of this dissertation will be presented and discussed.

1.1.1 English for Specific Purposes

As already mentioned, the place of genre in language learning has been influenced by "[…] three research areas where genre scholarship has taken significantly different paths" (Hyon, 1996:693). As far as English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is concerned, "researchers have focused on the implications of genre theory and analysis for English for academic purposes (EAP) and English for professional communication (EPC)" (Hyon, 1996:698). Since professionals are constantly exposed in their disciplines to texts in a receptive or productive way, these different approaches were aimed to provide professionals, whose first language was not English, with the necessary tools they needed to master "[…] the functions and linguistic conventions of [those] texts" (Hyon, 1996:698). In line with this approach, Paltridge (1993) defines the term 'genre' as follows:

> "Genre is an important concept in professional communication because members of individual professions, or 'discourse communities' (ibid.), will share common purposes of communication, or genres. It is these genres which teachers of professional communication must introduce to their students" (Paltridge, 1993:305)

As illustrated by the definition above, a key notion needs to be noticed, namely "*purposes of communication*". Indeed, as will be seen in the next chapter, this notion is very much present in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and its action-based approach where mastering a language enables student to "[…] accomplish [tasks] in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action" (Council of Europe, 2001:9).

According to Hyland, "ESP genre approaches have perhaps had the most influence on L2 writing instruction worldwide, grounding teaching in a solid research base and drawing strength from an eclectic set of pedagogies and linguistic theories (2003:22)". However, this particular approach to teaching genres has been criticised to be too prescriptive since the learning process only consisted in presenting discourse models to learners, resulting in the fact that students did little more than reproduce the models they were being introduced to. (Hyland, 2003) Indeed, some researchers expressed their concern "about the danger of the [ESL] approach being prescriptive rather than

descriptive, and the possibility of leading students to expect to be told how to write certain types of text" (Kay & Dudley-Evans, 1998:311). In order to counter that argument, teaching methods have been developed so as to maximize learning outcomes in ESP genre-based pedagogy (Bathia, 1993, Flowerdrew, 1993). One of them, known as "the educational, or process, approach to the teaching of professional genres" was put forward by Flowerdrew (1993), "aiming to emphasiz[e] the process of acquiring new genres, rather than the product" (Flowerdrew, 1993:306).

In ESL genre-based pedagogy, a range of similar definitions of genre are encountered. Swales (1990) for example, defines genres as "'a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes" (1990:58). Other researchers, among which Bathia (1993), consider "[g]enres [as] of units of purpose which are called moves (Swales, 1981, 1990; Bhatia, 1993 in Henry 2007:463) and which may be obligatory or optional" (Hasan, 1989 in Henry, 2007:463). Once again, this central notion of (units of) communicative purpose is found in both definitions. In other words, it is precisely these "*purposes of communication*" or "*communicative events*" which determine the notion of genre. The linguistic tools needed to realise the genre, however, are also of great importance. Indeed, Swales emphasized this linguistic interest when he describes genres as "[being] characterized both by their 'communicative purposes' and by various patterns of 'structure, style, content and intended audience'" (1990a:58 in Hyon 1996:695). This concern for language was also found in Flowerdrew, when he considers genres as "language events" (1996:308).

1.1.2   The New Rhetoric approach

Regarding the New Rhetoric approach, many researches have been conducted specifically within the area of L1 teaching, as opposed to ESP scholars whose approach was aimed for non-native speakers of English. In addition, another difference between the two approaches was that less importance was given to form. However, a new important notion was brought to light, especially the concern "[about] the situational contexts in which genres occur" (Hyon, 1996:696).

> "[…] the approach to genre influenced by Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) focuses on the sequential character of different genres and the ways that language is systematically linked to context through patterns of lexico-grammatical features" (Martin, 2012 in Heyland, 2018:2361).

In this line, Coe (2002) also focused on the importance on the relationship between genre and context. In fact, he defines genres ''as the motivated, functional relationship between text type and rhetorical situation'' (Coe, 2002:195 in Hyland, 2018:21).

Moreover, a second key notion, which was more or less similar to the ESP approach, has been highlighted within the works of the New Rhetoricians. Undoubtedly, for those researchers, genres are strongly linked with the concept of "*social purposes*". Indeed, as Hyon states it, "[genre scholars] have placed special emphases on the social purposes, or actions, that these genres fulfil within these situation" (1996:696). This notion of the "*social functions*" (Hyon, 1996:698) of genres is also to be noticed in Miller's article "Genre as Social actions" (1984) when he argues that "a rhetorically sound definition of genre must be centered not on the substance or the form of discourse but on the action it is used to accomplish" (Miller 1984:151 in Hyon, 1996:698). As it was the case for the ESP approach with the concept of "*communicative purposes*", the emphasis on the social dimension is also strongly linked with the action-based approach recommended by the CEFR where learners are seen as "*social agents*" which are "involved in the production and reception of texts and the construction of discourse dealing with particular themes, which enable them to fulfil the tasks facing them under the given conditions and constraints in the situations which arise in the various domains of **social existence**[2]" (Council of Europe, 2001, Synopsis). Similarly, in line with the social dimension and contexts of genres, Devitt argues:

> "With genres understood today as actions in social contexts (based on Carolyn Miller's (1984) oft-cited article and the ensuing North American genre scholarship), genres become embedded in the assumptions, values, and beliefs of the groups in power as any genre emerges, develops, and changes. *To teach a particular genre is to teach that genre's context*." (Devitt, 2004 :338 in Jacquin, 2018 :16)

Moreover, a related view can also be found in Hyland's definition of genres. According to him, "[*g*]*enre*[3] refers to abstract, socially recognised ways of using language. It is based on the assumptions that the features of a similar group of texts depend on the social context of their creation and use […]" (Hyland, 2003:21).

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[2] My emphasis.
[3] Hyland's emphasis.

Indeed, according to this approach, the purpose of genre-based pedagogy goes beyond the idea of mastering "the formal trappings of the genres [students] need to work in" (Bazerman, 1988:320). Instead, he suggests that "to enhance students' understanding of all of the "life" embodied in texts" (Bazerman, 1988:320) is at the core of what the New Rhetoric's approach should be aiming for.

Whereas ESP approach was concerned with specific genres that occur in professional settings, the audience targeted by the New Rhetoricians mainly focuses on university students. Also, the genres discussed in this approach apply to broader and more general fields than it was the case for ESP, especially the academic and literary areas.

1.1.3. Systemic Functional Linguistics

As to the last genre-based approach that will be discussed, known as Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), it has developed in Australia with Michael Halliday as its major representative. As the term "linguistics" suggests, the language dimension in this approach was given much more importance than it was the case for New Rhetoric. Indeed, "[b]roadly speaking, systemic functional linguistics is concerned with the relationship between language and its functions in social settings" (Hyon, 1996:696-697). The importance given to language is also pointed out by Freedman and Medway, noting that "there is far greater emphasis by the Sydney School scholars on explicating textual features, using Hallidayan schemes of linguistic analysis"(1994d:9).

Both language and social dimensions do also occur in Halliday's definition of genre: "[g]enre is a social activity in which language is used to establish and maintain relationship in order to achieve specific goals" (Halliday & Hasan, 1985; Miller, 1984 in Henry, 2007:462).

In addition, the context in which genres occur was also taken into account among SFL researchers since it was believed to affect genres in a way or another. According to Christie and Martin (1997), "the purposeful, interactive, and sequential character of different genres and the ways language is systematically linked to context through patterns of lexico-grammatical and rhetorical features" precisely define the genre-based approach recommended by SFL scholars. The most illustrative example of the importance of the context dimension concerns Halliday's division of the latter according to three parameters, namely "field (what the text is about), tenor (the relation between text producer and text recipient) and mode (the type and purpose of the text— written to be read, written to be spoken, etc.)" (Flowerdrew, 1993:308). According to Halliday, those three parameters combined determine what he calls the register of a language and more specifically "the

discourse structure and choice of linguistic realization" (Flowerdrew, 1993:308). Therefore, in line with the SFL perspective, "[g]enre analysis […] is the study of how the contextual parameters, discourse structure, and language interrelate" (Flowerdrew, 1993:308).

What is more, besides the importance given to language as well as (social) contexts in genres, a third dimension has gained a lot of consideration among SFL scholars, namely the purposeful character of genres. Indeed, this dimension is to be found in Martin (1994) arguing that: "[genre is] a staged, goal-oriented, **purposeful activity** [4] in which speakers engage as members of our culture" (cited in Kay & Dudley-Evans, 1998:58). This definition is to be linked with how genres are described in the ESP approach with the so-called "*purposes of communication*".

In brief, the SFL approach can be summarised as "[…] systematically link[ing] language to its contexts of use, studying how language varies from one context to another and, within that variation, the underlying patterns which organise texts so they are culturally and socially recognised as performing particular functions" (Hyland, 2003:22).

Where the Australian approach greatly differs from the New Rhetoricians, however, lies on the focus that SFL decided to engage regarding foreign language learning. Indeed, the place of genre in L2 teaching was brought into sharp focus by SFL researchers, the aim of which was "to provide students with a knowledge of relevant genres so they can act effectively in their target contexts" (Hyland, 2003:22). To that extent, SFL scholars were the first ones to grow interest in the teaching of genres at other education levels than university, specifically in primary and secondary schools based in Australia. SFL genre-based approach has also focused on "adult migrant English education and workplace training programmes" (Hyon, 1996:699) though its influence on this field was of minor importance. Practically speaking, children and teenagers were introduced to various kind of genres so as to develop their literacy abilities. "In this context the focus is on the social processes, such as *explain*, *describe*, and *argue*, which are viewed as genres in the school context, as they constitute products in their own right" (Kay & Dudley-Evan, 1998:309).

To that extent, the purpose of such an approach for teachers was "to provide both first and second language learners with access to socially valued genres through an explicit grammar of linguistic

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[4] My emphasis.

choices" (Hyland, 2018:2361). Therefore, genres began to be categorized according to the (social) purposes they pursued.

> "[…] researchers tend to characterize genres in terms of broad rhetorical patterns such as *narratives*, *recounts*, *arguments*, and *expositions*[5]. These are referred to as *elemental genres*[6] and are defined by internal linguistic criteria, rather than the regularly occurring activities which we usually think of as genres, such as *job applications*, *film reviews*, and *recipes*[7]. These elemental genres combine to form more complex everyday macro genres[8]" (Hyland, 2018:2361).

Indeed, as will be seen in the next section, the concepts of "*elemental*" and "*macro genres*" are terms that seem to have laid the foundation for Simons' (2018) model of genres (families), illustrating the connections existing between the different levels which underlie the concept of genre.

1.2. The notion of genre within the French-speaking world

As demonstrated in the previous section, the notion of genre has been much written about, involving various attempts to define this (vague) concept as well as trying to set the goals that should be reached by learners confronted to such a genre-based approach.

However, only scientific literature originating from the English-speaking world has been discussed so far. More recently, Simons (2018) has tried to propose an operational definition of genre, based on previous definitions which emanated from both the English-speaking world as well as the Francophone sphere. As a first step in his research, six definitions of genre provided by a range of scholars were analyzed, including Reuter (2013), Schneuwly (2014), Chartrand, Émery-Bruneau & Sénéchal (2015), Maingueneau, (1996/2009), Hyland (2003) and Lee (2001).

The first difference existing between both areas concerns how the notion of genre is defined by the French-speaking linguistis. Indeed, the typology used to clarify the concept varies depending on the researcher concerned. According to Maingueneau, the term "genre" can be referred to as "*genre de texte*" as well as "*genre de discours*" (1996/2009:68). In line with this particularity, Simons (2018:48) opts for the term "*genre textuel*" (textual genre). It should be noted that this

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[5] Hyland's emphasis.
[6] Idem.
[7] Ibidem.
[8] See the notion of *genre families* in the next section.

specific typology will be used throughout this thesis, especially when the (textual) genre of the weather forecast will be discussed (See Chapter 3). As to the Anglo-Saxon researchers, there is no such a difference in typology since every scholar cited in Simons' research used the term "genre", i.e. Hyland (2003:21) and Lee (2001:46).

As Simons also points out, those definitions share common features, some of which have already been discussed in the previous section. As an example, the communicative purposes of genres were often mentioned in the six definitions provided, as it was the case in the ESP and SFL approaches. Indeed, in this context, genres were described as regrouping « des caractéristiques communes d'ordres communicationnel […] » (Chartrand, Émery-Bruneau & Sénéchal, 2015 : 3), or as being « [une] catégorie de nature situationnelle, qui désigne des dispositifs de communication […] », (Maingueneau, 1996/2009 : 68). This dimension also manifests itself in Schneuwly, arguing that genres « [...] permett[e]nt d'agir efficacement dans une classe bien définie de situations de communication » (1994 : 162).

In addition, a second key dimension extracted from the New Rhetoric approach was also to be found among the definitions presented in Simons' research, specifically the importance of the social context which is inherent to the concept of genre. For instance, Maigueneau emphasizes this social dimension claiming that a genre « […] désigne des dispositifs de communication SOCIO[9]-historiquement définis […] » (Maingueneau, 1996/2009 : 68). As Simons identifies it, whenever the social dimension of genres is not explicitly mentioned, the notion of "culture" seems to appear instead. It is especially the case in Chartrand, Émery-Bruneau and Sénéchal when they define the genre as being embedded in a "given culture"; "dans une CULTURE[10] donnée" (2015:3) being their official terms. This cultural aspect was also noticeable in Lee (2001), explaining the term "genre" as being « […] a CULTURALLY[11] recognised artifact, […] CULTURALLY[12] defined. […] Genres are categories established by consensus within a CULTURE[13] [...] ». In Reuter (2003), however, both social and cultural dimensions are to be found in his definition. He indeed describes genre as being "cultural products" which are specific to a "given society" (2013:17).

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[9] Simons' emphasis.
[10] Idem.
[11] Ibidem.
[12] Ibidem.
[13] Ibidem.

A new dimension that has not been discussed in the previous section, however, deals with the importance of the so-called "stability" of the genres. Out of the six definitions concerned in Simons' study, five of them mentioned this dimension. However, as Simons notices it, they differ greatly in their meaning. As a matter of fact, some of the definitions described genres as being "relatively stable" as in Reuter (2013) and Chartrand et al. (2015) meanwhile other researchers focused on the dynamic aspect of genre, especially Maingueneau (1996/2009) as well as Lee (2001). Nonetheless, Schneuwly expressed quite the opposite by arguing that genres are "stable configurations" (1994:162).

The conclusion that should therefore be drawn from this various range of attempts to define the concept of genre is precisely that it features three key dimensions, namely the social and cultural dimensions, the communicative purposes and the time dimension in which genres occur. In line with what has just been discussed, Simons (2018) proposes a definition which includes the three key notions at the same time, which will also be used in this thesis.

> « Le genre textuel est un regroupement de productions langagières, écrites, orales ou *audio-visuelles*[14], relativement stables, qui s'inscrivent dans une société, une culture et une époque données. La maîtrise des caractéristiques d'un genre textuel est un outil qui permet d'agir dans une situation de communication donnée ». (Simons, 2018 : 48)

First and foremost, it should be noticed that Simons was the first researcher to introduce the audio-visual character in his definition of genre. As part of this dissertation, this aspect advocated by Simons is central since the genre that will be dealt with, i.e. the weather forecast, precisely occurs within the audio-visual productions. At a broader level and particularly in the time of the technological age, audio-visual productions are inherently integrated within our society. Moreover, a similar observation can be made in the language teaching field, since more and more technological tools are used by teachers the enrich the material provided to students[15] (Simons, 2018-2019 : 150).

Additionally, the nuanced use of the term "*relativement stables*" by Simons illustrates the fact that genres "reflect community norms and expectations. These norms are not static but change to reflect

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[14] My emphasis.
[15] The most striking example of this is probably to be found regarding the training of the listening skill where the use of the video seems to have replaced the traditional CD used in the classroom.

changing sociocultural needs and contexts" (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995; Martin, Christie, & Rothery, 1987 in Purcell-Gates et al., 2007:11).

Finally, in line with the importance of the social dimension promoted in the New Rhetoric approach, this central aspect is also to be found in Simons' definition of "genre". Indeed, the fact that a genre is described as a tool permitting to act in a given communicative situation is strongly related to the action-based approach recommended by the CEFR (Simons, 2018-2019 : 150). As Simons points out, one should notice, however, that the notion of action does not imply that a genre should systematically be produced by the learner but can also be apprehended in a receptive way.

1.2.1. Familles de tâches en langues modernes[16]

Within the Belgian educational framework, *Les familles de tâche en langues modernes[17]* (FTLM) have exerted a considerable influence in foreign language teaching since its publication in 2007. Indeed, a new notion was introduced to the Belgian educational network, namely the notion of *familles de tâches*. This document's purposes were in fact to provide guidelines in the elaboration of curricula (Simons, 2018:49-50), as well as providing teachers with a useful assessment tool.

As its name suggests, two key notions are central, particularly the notions of *family[18]* and *task[19]*. On the one hand, this document puts the argument forward that tasks sharing common features should grouped into "families", hence the expression *familles de tâches*, which is expressly defined as "grands regroupements d'activités de communication mobilisant les mêmes types de savoirs, savoir-faire et attitudes" (CFB, 2007 : 2). On the other hand, the notion of task, and more precisely complex task, refers to « une activité exigeant une conjugaison de savoirs, de savoir-faire et de stratégies, dont la consigne n'est pas guidée, où l'élève choisit sa démarche de manière autonome et qui, par sa finalisation et sa contextualisation se rapproche de pratiques sociales authentiques » (CFB, 2007 in : Simons, 2018-2019 :147). As Simon observes it, the notion of task is also present

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[16] For a critical reading of the document *Familles de tâches en langues modernes*, see Simons, G. (2018a). De la place des genres textuels dans les familles de tâches en langues modernes. In M. Jacquin, G. Simons & D. Delbrassine (2018). Les genres textuels en langues étrangères : entre théorie et pratique (pp. 37-70).
Berne : Peter Lang

[17] It should be noted that this document can by no means be considered as an official text since it has not been approved by the Belgian Government. However, it can be found on the official website of the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels: www.enseignement.be

[18] Italics are mine.

[19] Idem.

in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CECR), where learners are defined as "social agents [who have tasks] to accomplish in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action" (Council of Europe, 2001:9).

Moreover, the so-called "pratiques sociales authentiques" mentioned in the definition correlates with the CECR, where standard social practices are at the core of the action-based approach recommended by the CECR and by extension, is also crucial to a genre-based approach. (Simons, 2018-2019: 147).

Therefore, the purpose of such a grouping in "tasks families" is stated as follows:

> « […] le regroupement des tâches en familles doit permettre à l'élève qui a appris à exécuter une tâche d'une famille d'en effectuer d'autres -de la même famille- en toute autonomie, puisque les unes comme les autres exigent la mobilisation des mêmes savoirs et savoir-faire, et la mise en œuvre de la même démarche » (CFB, 2007 : 1).

Indeed, the central idea of this document is to attract teachers' attention on the fact that they should provide their students with assessment tasks that are similar to those already trained during the learning process. According to Simons, such an approach is crucial, particularly for reasons of equity among the learners. (Simons, 2012 in Simons 2018:50). However, the word "similar" here does not mean identical but rather refers to tasks that are related, that belong to the same family.

Another important notion in this document needs to be pointed out, namely the notion of "*types de production langagières*" (TPL), which is in fact one of the three possible criteria[20] to group different tasks into "*famille de tâches*". This notion is central since language productions can be classified in six different types, namely descriptive, informative, narrative, argumentative, injunctive and incitative. However, a same *type de production de langagière* can be combined with another type to form a text, hence the expression "*à dominante*" used in the document.

A relation can therefore be established with the notion of textual genre, even though the concept never appears in the document. Indeed, according to Simons, textual genres should play a considerable role in the grouping of tasks into "families" since each "tâche complexe de communication" is related to a particular genre (Simons, 2018:50). In the first instance, this can

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[20] Aside "*types de production langagière*", tasks can be grouped according to the medium (spoken or written) as well as the nature of the skill targeted in tasks (receptive/productive) and the topics addressed. (CFB, 2007:3).

be explicitly noticed by the similarities existing between the definition of *familles de tâches* and the definition of genre provided by Simons.

> « Le genre textuel est un **regroupement de productions langagières**[21], écrites, orales ou audio-visuelles, relativement stables, qui s'inscrivent dans une société, une culture et une époque données. La maîtrise des caractéristiques d'un genre textuel est un outil qui permet d'agir dans une situation de communication donnée ». (Simons, 2018 :48)

In fact, this « *regroupement de productions langagières* » is very close in meaning to what the FTLM document suggests. Therefore, textual genres could also function as one of the criteria enabling tasks presenting common features to be grouped together, which give rise to "*familles de tâches*" (Simons, 2018:55). According Simons, this grouping in "families" can also be applied to genres (Mas & Turco, 1991 in Simons, 2018:57). He therefore suggests a functional typology linking macro-communicative functions, genres, text types and texts together, which he models as follows:
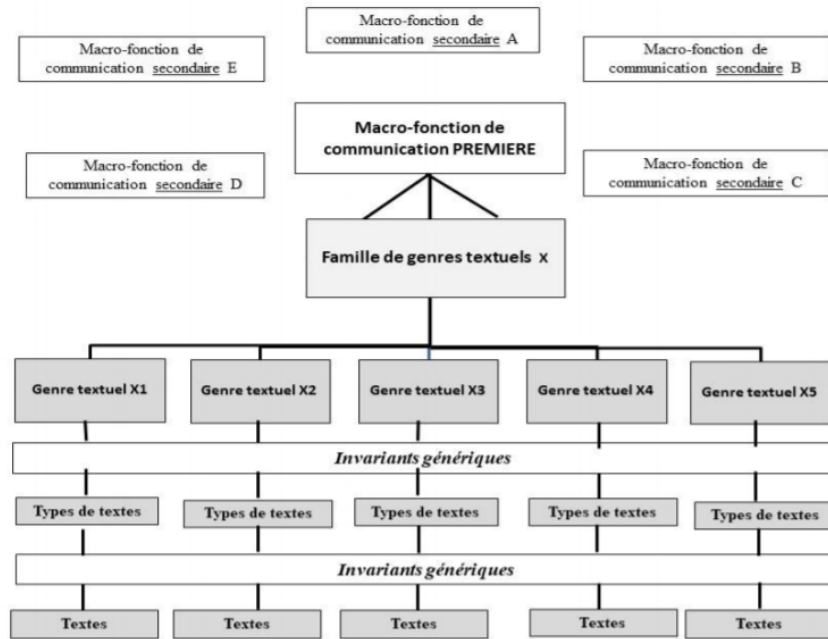
Figure 1 – Modelling of the relationship between "macro-communicative functions", "genre families", "textual genres", "text types" and "texts" (Simons, 2018:57)

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[21] My emphasis

As Simons suggests, genres can be grouped together when they share common features, known as "invariants génériques" (Simons, 2018: 57), forming a "*famille de genres textuels*" in the same way tasks form a so-called "*famille de tâches*" in FTLM. This exact same grouping applies at other levels in the figure, specifically for text types and texts. Indeed, textual genres are precisely composed of text types presenting similar characteristics which, in turn, […] represent groupings of texts which are similar in terms of co-occurrence of linguistic patterns (Paltridge, 1996:237). Therefore, the terms '*genre*' and '*text type*' thus represent different, yet complementary, perspectives on texts. (Paltridge, 1996:237).

This model will constitute the basis for the discussion that will be led about the genre of the weather forecast throughout this dissertation.

2. Textual genres and text types within the legal texts in the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels

This chapter aims to provide an (attempted) overview of the place the concepts of genre and text types occupy within the official documents in education in the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels. To this extent, this chapter will be divided in two subsections, dealing in the first instance with The Common Euopean Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) which has exerted a considerable influence on the educational network since being first published in 2001 (Simons, 2018:141). As a second step, the official Modern Language Programmes and skill-based documents will be discussed.

2.1. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

As its name suggests, The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)[22] is a framework which is described as "provid[ing] a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe" (Council of Europe, 2001:2). First launched in 2001, the CEFR has since then influenced many European countries' educational policies regarding (foreign) language teaching (Simons, 2018:42). Indeed, within the educational network in the French-speaking community of Belgium, two major dimensions of this document were recently adopted, namely "[the] levels of proficiency [A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2] which allow learners' progress to be measured at each stage of learning and on a life-long basis" (Council of Europe, 2001:2) as well as the so-called action-oriented approach, which will later be discussed in this section. Since 2018, a new version of the CEFR has been published, known as the Companion Volume which, amongst other, "presents the extended version of the illustrative descriptors [used to characterize successive levels of proficiency]" (Council of Europe, 2018:23 and Council of Europe, 2001:18).

2.1.1. The action-based approach and the place of genre within it

As mentioned above, when having a closer look at the CEFR, one methodological approach attracts attention by its numerous occurrences in the document. Indeed, even though "it is not the function of the Framework to promote one particular language teaching methodology […]"

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[22] In French, *Cadre Européen Commun de Référence pour les Langues* (CECRL).

(Council of Europe, 2001:142), the CEFR's authors do recommend a particular methodology in the teaching of languages, known as the action-oriented approach, which is described as follows:

> "The approach adopted here, generally speaking, is an action-oriented one in so far as it views users and learners of a language primarily as 'social agents', i.e. members of society who have tasks (not exclusively language-related) to accomplish in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action. While acts of speech occur within language activities, these activities form part of a wider social context, which alone is able to give them their full meaning" (Council of Europe, 2001:9).

As Simons states it (Simons, 2018:46), some key notions of this action-based approach can be extracted. To start with, learners and users of a language are seen to be "*social agents*" who are aimed to "*accomplish tasks in particular circumstances and environments*". These specific tasks are defined as "[…] the actions [that] are performed by one or more individuals strategically using their own specific competences to achieve a given result" (Council of Europe, 2001:10). Indeed, this notion of tasks is also to be found in Rosen where she states that "[l]a notion de tâches à accomplir est en effet au cœur du CECR. Dans cette perspective, le niveau de compétence d'un apprenant est défini en fonction du plus ou moins grand nombre de tâches qu'il est capable de réaliser correctement » (Rosen, 2009 : 488). With this in mind, the central purpose of the action-based approach for learners is clear: « accomplir différentes tâches en vue de s'intégrer à terme dans une communauté autre pour y devenir, autant que faire se peut, un acteur social à part entière » (Rosen, 2009 : 488).

In addition, a second key feature relies on the fact that the different tasks that have to be completed by learners take place "*in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action*" (Council of Europe, 2001:9). As Simons observes it, this notion indeed correlates with standard social practices to which leaners have to be prepared. In other words, the CEFR goes beyond the idea that learners should be able to communicate in given situations. According to Rosen, the authors of the CEFR take it one step further by aiming to help a learner to become « […] un utilisateur efficace de la langue, un citoyen européen à même de s'intégrer dans un autre pays » (Rosen, 2009 : 489).

According to Simons, standard social practices can be assimilated to textual genres. For instance, if a teacher wants to prepare his students for a job interview, the internal distinctive features of the

cover letter as well as the curriculum vitae and the job interview itself would need to be part of the teaching material provided to the students and to be exercised through learning activities. (Simons, 2018: 46). Additionally, "[…] someone working in public relations would need to be competent in the genres of customer-client interview, press conference, oral presentation, press release, publicity brochure, and business report, to give just some examples" (Flowerdrew, 2013:306).

In this regard, following the action-based approach, textual genres should be used to organize didactic sequences (Simons, 2018:46), enabling students not only to learn a language , but also to "increase student[s'] awareness of the social context in which the discourse is written in" (Cornelius & Cotsworth, 2015:19). As Simons suggests, genre-based pedagogy should be used from the early stages of learning so as to acquaint learners with the standard social practices from the targeted country(-ies) they study the language. He therefore encourages teachers to adopt a specific methodology, known as "méthode en spirale" or "méthode spiralaire" which consists of frequently working on a same genre family while at the same time, adding new dimensions to it, sometimes more complex, as students gradually progress in the learning process (Simons in Jacquin & Simons, 2018:46). In other words, this method's purposes are to reuse what has been previously learned and acquired by the learners to take it one step further and to allow for new learnings to occur. Such an approach enables learners to come across similar notions on a repeated basis, giving them the opportunity to consolidate their achievements. (Programme de langues modernes de l'enseignement Libre - 2e et 3e degrés des humanités générales et technologiques, 2018 : 162). To that extent, students would be able to develop and improve their knowledge, as well as "[r]aising [their] awareness of genre[23] [which] appears to have its benefits as learners acquire appropriate social and cultural knowledge that will assist their interaction within a variety of discourse communities" (Cornelius & Cotsworth, 2015:20). It is also worth saying that this particular methodology is largely recommended in the legal texts in the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels.

2.1.2. The place of genre in specific contexts of the CECRL

2.1.2.1. The relationship between genre and text types

As it has just been seen, textual genres occupy an implicit key position within the CECRL and its action-based approach. Practically speaking, an earlier study has been conducted by Simons

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[23] For more about the concept of genre awareness, see Jacquin 2018.

(2018:43) in order to account for the number of occurrences of the terms *genre* and *type de texte /
production / discours* in the CECRL document. One of the conclusions of this research was that
even though the concepts of genre and text types do appear, these notions are never properly
defined. The subsequent figure accurately illustrates the occurrences of the aforementioned terms.

Genre	pp. **18**, **39**, 52 [2x], **56**, **75**, **76** [4x], **78** [2x], **123**, 187
Sous-total :	**14**/192 pp.
Type de texte/ production/discours	pp. **18**, 27, **39**, 57, 58 [x 2], 69, **75**, **76** [9], **78** [3], 94 [2], 107, 112, 113 [3], **123**, 126 [3], 135, 136, 142, 165, 170 [5], 171, 172
Sous-total :	**42**/192pp.
TOTAL :	**56**/192 pp

Figure 2 – Occurrence of the terms "genre" and "type de textes / production / discours" in the CECRL

As shown by this figure, the notion of *types de textes / production / discours* occurs more often
than the notion of *genre*. Indeed, *genre* appears 14 times in 192 pages whereas 42 occurrences
were found for the notion of *type de texte / production / discours*. However, as Simons has
observed it, these two notions often appear to be linked with each other[24]. This association between
the two terms is represented on the figure by the use of bold page numbers. As far as the term
genre is concerned, it is associated 9 times to the term *type*.

Since the combination of the two notions corresponds to more than half of the total occurrences of
the term *genre* (64%), it may thus be interesting to investigate the circumstances in which these
terms occur. To this extent, Simons (2018: 44-45) summarised it by providing an overview of the
different contexts where these notions appear in the CECRL, as shown in Figure 2.

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[24] As will be seen in the next section, this observation does not correlate at all to what is found in the (latest) legal
texts in the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels. It raises thus some concern since these legal documents are precisely
built upon the CECRL.

pages	Citations
18	La compétence pragmatique recouvre l'utilisation fonctionnelle des ressources de la langue (réalisation de fonctions langagières, d'actes de paroles) en s'appuyant sur des scénarios ou des scripts d'échanges interactionnels. Elle renvoie également à la maîtrise du discours, à sa cohésion, au repérage des **types et genres textuels**, des effets d'ironie, de parodie.
39	**4.6.2. Genres et types de textes**
75	C'est ainsi que les **textes** peuvent être classés selon des **types** différents appartenant à des **genres** différents.
76	**4.6.2. Genres et types de textes** **4.6.2.1. Les genres et types de textes** oraux **Les genres et les types de textes** comprennent à l'oral, par exemple… ; **4.6.4.2. Les genres et les types de textes** écrits
78	De même, on appelle « conversation », « débat » ou « entretien » l'interaction communicative des participants, mais la succession des énoncés qu'ils produisent constitue un **texte** d'un certain **type** qui appartient au **genre** correspondant
123	La familiarité de la tâche : la charge cognitive est réduite et le succès de l'exécution d'une tâche facilité par la plus ou moins grande familiarité de l'apprenant avec […] **le type de texte et le genre**[6] […]

Figure 3 – Context overview of the terms "genre" and "type de textes / production / discours" in the CECRL

In order to clarify the nature of the association between "genre" and "types de textes", one of Simons' key observations lies in the fact that the notions of genre and text types are combined together in a relationship implying that one includes the other. In other words, the concept of genre encompasses the notion of text types. In simple terms, a text can be of a particular type, which, in turn, belongs to a particular genre.

2.1.2.2.   The relationship between genre and the proficiency levels in the CECRL

Furthermore, as already mentioned earlier, Simons suggests to integrate genre-based pedagogy at the beginning of the language learning process. However, Simons also noticed that, regarding the proficiency levels provided by the CECRL, the term *genre* only appears when high levels of proficiency are in question, namely B2, C1 and C2 (Simons, 2018:44-45). Indeed, in the descriptors assigned to the level C1 mentioned in the Companion Volume published in 2018, one could read: « [p]eut apprécier dans quelle mesure une œuvre obéit aux conventions du genre » (Council of Europe, 2018 : 222) as well as « [p]eut faciliter la compréhension des informations données dans un texte écrit complexe (par exemple un article scientifique) en le présentant dans un genre et un registre différents » (Council of Europe, 2018 : 251).

However, it should be noted that the highest levels of language competence targeted in the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels are the levels B1+ (productive skills and listening skill) and B2- (reading skill). Therefore, following the CECRL perspective, this would then mean that the notion of genre should not be part of learners' curriculum because of its degree of complexity or should be addressed to learners in their last two years of secondary education (Simons, 2018-2019:143).

Having a closer look at this particularity, it happens to be somewhat in conflict with the action-based approach recommended by the CECRL itself. Indeed, the purpose of this approach is to « accomplir différentes tâches en vue de s'intégrer **à terme**[25] dans une communauté autre pour y devenir, autant que faire se peut, un acteur social à part entière » (Rosen, 2009 : 488). However, the expression « à terme » raises questions with regard to what the action-based approach defines as the real motivations underlying the language learning process. Is the aim of language learning to become a *social actor* only when mastering a high level of competence? Or do teachers have to train their students, i.e. offering them the tools they need to gradually construct their identity as social actors at every single stage of their learning process? In the case of the latter, the genre-based pedagogy has a real significance and an important role to play.

2.2. Textual genres and text types: Modern languages curricula and skill-based documents

2.2.1. Former curricula

As it was the case for the CECRL, Simons (2018) investigated the frequency of the occurrences of the terms *genre (textuel)* as well as *type de texte* or *type de production (langagière)* in legal texts in the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels, including Modern Language Programmes (Programme de langues germanique de la Communauté française (2000), Programme de langues romanes – espagnol/italien – de la Communauté française (2000) et Programme de langues modernes de l'enseignement Libre (2000)), skill-based documents (Socles de compétences en langues modernes [1999] et Compétences terminales et savoirs requis en langues modernes [1999]). One of his numerous observations was that, on top of remaining undefined overall or at least, not explicitly, these terms only occurred occasionally, which may raise questions when these terms

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[25] My emphasis.

are seen to be much more present within the CECRL. Figure 4 precisely shows the number of occurrences per term and per legal document.

	RÉFÉRENTIELS		PROGRAMMES		
	Socles de compétences en langues modernes (1999) [9pp]	Compétences terminales et savoir requis en langues modernes (1999) [11pp]	Programme de langues germaniques de la Communauté française (2000) [234 pp]	Programme de langues romanes – espagnol/ italien – de la Communauté française (2000) [40 pp]	Programme de langues modernes de l'enseignement Libre (2000) [70 pp]
GENRES textuels	/	/	1 x	3 x	1 x
TOTAL : 5/364 pp					
TYPES DE TEXTES/productions (langagières)	/	6 x	17 x	17 x	14 x
TOTAL : 54/364					

Figure 4 – Occurrence of the terms "genre" and "text types" in legal documents in Federation Wallonia-Brussels

As illustrated in Figure 4, (Simons, 2017-2018: 142), the notion of genre is hardly mentioned in the Modern Language Programmes. When the term *genre (textuel)* does appear, it is either part of a listing or included in enumerations. Indeed, in a total of 364 pages, every document combined, the term *genre* manifests itself only 5 times. As to the skill-based documents, however, the concept is strictly absent. Nevertheless, regarding the terms *type de texte* or *type de production (langagière)*, they tend to occur more often, with a total of 54 occurrences out of 364 pages. It should also be noted that none of the terms are ever (properly) defined in any documents.

Additionally, a major difference between the Modern Language Programmes and the Romance languages programme can be pointed out. As far as languages such as Spanish and Italian are concerned, the notion of genre and the terms *types de textes* or *type de productions langagières* seem to occur more often than it is the case for Germanic languages. Simons (2017-2018:143) explains this observation by putting forward the hypothesis that it would probably be linked to the initial academic training followed by the authors of the programmes, namely inspectors and teachers. What differs from their Germanist colleagues is that the Romanists' fields of research are French linguistics and literature, where the notion of genre is undoubtedly crucial in the latter. Therefore, Romanists tend to assign much importance to the notion of genre, which could explain the reason why this concept manifests itself on a wider scale in Roman languages programmes. As

a result, providing this hypothesis is confirmed, the authors' initial academic training would be assumed to have an effect on the programmes' conception, which would mean that an improvement of the official texts is possible by acting upon the teachers' initial training programme.

2.2.2. Recent curricula

The year 2017 has seen a major reform regarding legal texts in education in The Federation of Wallonia-Brussels. Indeed, although they came into effect in 2018, skill-based documents as well as Modern language Programmes were further developed, namely by relying much more upon the CECRL and by integrating new dimensions including the notion of *Unité d'Acquis d'Apprentissage (UAA)* and the CECRL's proficiency levels. In this regard, a new version of the CECRL was also published within the same year.

Before taking a further interest to the place of the notions of genre and text types within the latest legal documents cited above, the new dimensions newly integrated need to be clarified. As far as the notion of *Unité d'Acquis d'Apprentissage (UAA)*[26] is concerned, it refers to the exercise of a specific skill (either receptive or productive), generally combined with one or several communication intentions (Simons, 2018-2019). They are in fact designed to support teachers, helping them to construct coherent courses, the contents of which should be easier to assess. Indeed, as stated in the preface of each skill-based document, the different purposes of such an approach are presented:

> Pour garantir la cohérence et la progression des apprentissages et en faciliter la planification par les équipes d'enseignants, le présent référentiel est présenté selon un découpage en unités d'acquis d'apprentissage (UAA). L'approche par unités d'acquis d'apprentissage permet d'organiser des ensembles cohérents, finalisés et évaluables, en fonction de la spécificité de chaque discipline, de ses domaines et objets propres. Chaque UAA vise la mise en place d'une ou plusieurs compétences disciplinaires. (CTSR HGT[27], avant-propos, p. 1)

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[26] It should be noted that there is no official English equivalent for *Unité d'Acquis d'Apprentissage (UAA)*. Indeed, in the official English translation of the document Socle de compétences (2017), the (translated) term never occurs. However, the term *learning outcome* seems appropriate to designate the notion of *Acquis d'Apprentissage* (AA) in this context.

[27] CTSR HGT is the acronyme for *Compétences terminales et savoir requis (en langues modernes) : Humanités générales et technologiques.*

It is worth nothing that, as opposed to an UAA, a didactic sequence is a succession of learning activities which integrates one or more UAA's. These two terms should therefore not be confused with one another. For the sake of clarity, skill-based documents also provide additional explanations regarding other didactic terms, directly linked with the UAA approach.

As to the CECRL's proficiency levels[28], newly integrated in legal texts, six different levels can be distinguished, "[from] A1 to C2, which can be regrouped into three broad levels: Basic User, Independent User and Proficient User, and that can be further subdivided according to the needs of the local context"[29]. The previous subsection of this dissertation was specifically dedicated to the CECRL and laid the focus on the place given to *genre* in this document.

As already been demonstrated in this section, the concepts of genre and text types do occur more often in the CECRL than it was the case in former Modern language programmes and skill-based documents. One question that may thus arise would be to wonder if the frequency of the terms « *genre* » and « *type de textes* » would tend to increase within the updated version of the legal texts, since one of their distinctive features is to rely upon the CECRL, where these notions are more present.

Originally based on Simons' study (2017), an updated version is proposed here, aiming to provide an answer to the question mentioned above as well as trying to realize in which contexts these terms do occur. There was a total of seven documents used to conduct this research including, on the one hand, skill-based documents (Socle de compétence en langues modernes [2018], Compétence terminales et savoir requis à l'issue des humanités générales et technologiques en langues modernes [2018] and Compétences terminales et savoir requis à l'issue des humanités professionnelles et techniques en langues modernes [2018]) and Modern Language Programmes on the other hand (Programme d'études langues modernes 2e et 3e degrés des humanités générales et technologiques [2019], Programme d'études langues modernes 2e et 3e degrés des humanités professionnelles et techniques [2019], Programme de langues modernes de l'enseignement Libre - 2e et 3e degrés des humanités générales et technologiques [2018] and Programme de langues

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[28] For more details about the CECRL and its levels, see previous subsection.
[29] The CEFR Levels. https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/level-descriptions

modernes de l'enseignement Libre - 2e et 3e degrés des humanités professionnelles et techniques [2017]).

What differs from the previous study, however, refers to the terms *types de documents*, *types de textes* and *types de productions langagières*. Indeed, the last two items are now considered separately. This choice was made for better clarity between the two terms because, as will shortly be seen, the legal texts were not always explicit regarding their use of *types de textes* or *types de productions langagières*. Sometimes, they were found to be synonyms whereas it also appeared that their meaning did not correspond in certain contexts. As to the term *types de documents*, it sometimes appeared to replace the term *types de textes*, the only difference being that *types de documents* occurred when both receptive and productive skills were in question whereas *types de textes* only appeared when the reading skill was discussed.

The following Table summarizes the occurrence(s) of each term per legal document:

	Référentiels			Programmes			
				WBE		Libre	
	Socle de compéten ces en langues modernes (2018) [128pp]	Compétences terminales et savoir requis à l'issue des humanités générales et technologique s en langues modernes (2018) [233pp]	Compétences terminales et savoir requis à l'issue des humanités professionnelles et techniques en langues modernes (2018) [165pp]	Programme d'études langues modernes 2e et 3e degrés des humanités générales et technologiques (2019) [452pp]	Programme d'études langues modernes 2e et 3e degrés des humanités professionnell es et techniques (2019) [382pp]	Programme de langues modernes de l'enseignement Libre - 2e et 3e degrés des humanités générales et technologiques (2018) [166pp]	Programme de langues modernes de l'enseignement Libre - 2e et 3e degrés des humanités professionnelles et techniques (2017) [129pp]
GENRES textuels	/	/	/	/	/	2x	/
TOTAL : **2** /1655 pp							
TYPE(S) de documents	4x	6x	6x	9x	8x	7x	12x
TYPE(S) de productions (langagières)	11x	18x	11x	43x	31x	11x	12x
TYPE(S) de textes	4x	7x	6x	6x	5x	10x	5x
TOTAL : **232** /1655pp							

Table 1:

Occurrence of the terms « genre (textuel) », « types de documents », « types de textes » and « types de productions (langagières) » in updated legal documents in Federation Wallonia-Brussels

2.2.2.1.   The place of the term "genre"

Surprisingly, with regard to the term *genre*, only two occurrences were counted within the same document, as shown in Table 1. This is fewer than what was previously analysed, where a total of

four occurrences were found, spread more or less equally across the legal texts (see Figure 4). In this case, the term occurred in the section "Exemples de situations d'apprentissage" of the Modern Language Programme in question. As an example, this figure shows the context in which the two occurrences of *genre* appeared.

Activité 5 : *travail individuel ou par paires*
Stratégie : anticiper les notions grammaticales.

Quel(s) genre(s) de messages vas-tu transmettre à ton ami ?	Pour chaque type de message, de quelles notions grammaticales penses-tu avoir besoin ? *(Tu peux en citer plusieurs pour un même genre de message)*
Narratif	
Descriptif	
Injonctif (ordre)	
explicatif	

Figure 5 – Context where the term "genre" appears in the only legal document in Federation Wallonia-Brussels

As illustrated in Figure 6, what draws attention refers to the fact that the term *genre* is here used in the sense of *type de production langagière* rather than in the sense of a textual genre in its literal meaning. Despite the fact that it may be related to genres, the term *types de production langagière* is associated with one of the *familles de tâches'* grouping criteria, where, as it has already been seen, genres can play a crucial role.[30] Indeed, language productions can be of six different types, namely descriptive, informative, narrative, argumentative, injunctive or incitative.[31]

As Simons states it (Simons, 2018-2019:156), the notion of *types de production langagière* in the *familles de tâches* document needs to be clarified as it may lead to confusion among the teachers and therefore turn out to be counterproductive.

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[30] For more information about the place of genre in *Familles de taches en langues modernes*, see Chapter 1.
[31] It should be noted that the boundary between the nature of the examples provided in the *familles de tâches* document to illustrate the term *types de production langagière* and the concept of textual genre is relatively unclear. This may explain the reason why the term *genre* is here used to refer to *types de production langagière* instead.

As a result, even though the generic notion is almost completely absent from legal texts in the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels, when the concept does occur, it is found to be rather vague or even seen to be confused with another notion, *types de productions langagières* in this case.

It should also be pointed out that, as the updated version of the legal documents were largely built on the CECRL where the notion of genre does appear, it remains unclear why this concept does not manifest itself more significantly and in its literal meaning. Consequently, the question that has to be addressed is precisely by which means could teachers integrate this generic notion in their course if the reference documents themselves do not provide a clear and operational distinction between the different concepts.

2.2.2.2.   The place of the term "type(s) de documents"

As far as the term *type(s) de documents* is concerned, a total of sixteen occurrences are observed, spread across the skill-based documents. As to the programmes, the concepts appears thirty-six times. This term is used when referring to the requirements learners should meet to acquire a certain language level in a **receptive** skill (listening skill or reading skill). The following Table illustrates (some of) the contexts in which this term appears in the legal documents we are interested in. Depending on the legal document dealt with, the proficiency level targeted may change. It should be noted that learners are expected to acquire a B2 (-) level in reading skill[32] and a B1 (+) level in listening skill[33] at the end of their secondary education for the first foreign language they choose to study.

Legal document	pp.	Quotes
CTSR HGT	14	UAA - Écouter pour (s') informer et/ou (faire) agir Pour rencontrer les attendus au terme du niveau A1+, l'élève devra être capable de réaliser des tâches relatives aux différents **types de documents** suivants, éventuellement combinés : <table><tr><td>**Types de documents**</td><td>**Pour (s') informer**</td><td>**Pour (faire) agir**</td></tr><tr><td>narratif</td><td>X</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>descriptif</td><td>X</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>injonctif, incitatif, prescriptif</td><td></td><td>X</td></tr><tr><td>argumentatif</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>
Programme WBE – 2ᵉ et 3ᵉ degrés – HGT	23	Il est important d'introduire de la variété dans les tâches, non seulement pour motiver les élèves mais aussi pour couvrir tous les **types de documents**/supports

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[32] Compétences terminales et savoir requis à l'issue des humanités générales et technologiques en langues modernes, p.13.
[33] Idem.

		listés dans le référentiel. Les exemples contenus dans les UAA seront une source d'inspiration pour le professeur.
Programme du Libre – 2ᵉ et 3ᵉ degrés – HPT	20	Dans la description des attendus de chaque UAA, sont listés **les types de documents** et types de supports auxquels l'élève doit impérativement être confronté. Toutefois cela ne signifie pas que chaque type de support doit être abordé dans chacun des **types de documents**. […] En travaillant les autres **types de documents** (descriptif et/ou explicatif selon les niveaux visés), l'élève sera amené à transférer ces stratégies en fonction du support proposé.
Programme du Libre – 2ᵉ et 3ᵉ degrés – HPT	68	Tableau générique des démarches à mettre en œuvre en vue de réaliser une tâche inhérente à toute situation de communication (en apprentissage et/ou en évaluation) Situations de communication réceptives : Identifier le **type de documents** proposés.
Programme du Libre – 2ᵉ et 3ᵉ degrés – HGT	29	UAA Compréhension à l'audition – Niveaux A2- et A2+ (+ Processus cognitifs liés à la réception) Écouter pour (s')informer et/ou (faire) agir […] Pour rencontrer les attendus au terme du niveau A2, l'élève devra être capable de comprendre des informations/instructions essentielles : sur la base des différents **types de documents** suivants, éventuellement combinés

Types de documents	Pour (s') informer	Pour (faire) agir
narratif	X	
descriptif	X	
injonctif, incitatif, prescriptif		X
explicatif	X	
argumentatif		

Table 2:

Occurrences of the term "type(s) de documents" in legal texts in the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels

As illustrated in Table 2, the term *type(s) de documents* is seen to occur more frequently than it was the case for the term *genre*. Additionally, in this context, *type(s) de documents* can be considered as being the counterpart for *type(s) de productions langagières* for the receptive skills since the latter appears in the exact same context as does *type(s) de documents*, the only difference being that *type(s) de productions langagières* is restrictively used for the productive skills, as will shortly be seen.

2.2.2.3. The place of the term "type(s) de productions langagières"

Regarding the term *type(s) de productions langagières*, it is found to occur on a much wider scale. Indeed, with a total of 137 occurrences, it represents more than half of all the occurrences (59.05%), each term taken together (*genre (textuel)*, *type(s) de documents*, *type(s) de productions langagières*, *type(s) de textes*). The occurrences of *type(s) de productions langagières* are spread more or less equally across every document.

Legal document	pp.	Quotes
Socle de compétence en langues modernes	30	UAA - Parler sans interaction pour (s')informer Pour rencontrer les attendus au terme du niveau A1+, l'élève devra être capable de réaliser des tâches relatives aux différents **types de productions** suivants éventuellement combinés : {{TABLE_A}}
CTSR HGT	135	UAA - Ecrire pour (s')informer, faire agir et exprimer des opinions, des sentiments Pour rencontrer les attendus au terme du niveau B1, l'élève devra être capable 1. de réaliser des tâches relatives aux différents **types de productions** suivants, éventuellement combinés : {{TABLE_B}}
Programme WBE – 2ᵉ et 3ᵉ degrés – HGT	29	Il est important d'introduire de la variété dans les tâches, non seulement pour motiver les élèves mais surtout pour couvrir tous **les types de productions** listés dans le référentiel. Les exemples contenus dans les UAA seront une source d'inspiration pour le professeur.
Programme WBE – 2ᵉ et 3ᵉ degrés – HPT	164	Démarche métacognitive (évaluation formative) • de manière prospective : identifier les ressources stratégiques nécessaires - et dire en quoi elles vont être nécessaires – à la réalisation de la tâche en tenant compte : - des caractéristiques du **type de production** orale attendue […] • de manière rétrospective : citer les ressources linguistiques et les ressources stratégiques nécessaires - et dire en quoi elles ont été nécessaires - à la réalisation de la tâche en tenant compte : - des caractéristiques du **type de production** orale attendue […]
Programme du Libre – 2ᵉ et 3ᵉ degrés – HPT	68	Tableau générique des démarches à mettre en œuvre en vue de réaliser une tâche inhérente à toute situation de communication (en apprentissage et/ou en évaluation) Situations de communication productives : Identifier le **type de productions** attendues.

Table A (within Socle de compétence, p. 30):

Types de productions	Pour (s') informer	Pour (faire) agir
narratif		
descriptif	X	
injonctif, incitatif, prescriptif		X
explicatif		
argumentatif		

Table B (within CTSR HGT, p. 135):

Types de productions	Pour (s') informer	Pour (faire) agir	Pour exprimer ce que l'on ressent
narratif	X		X
descriptif	X		X
injonctif, incitatif, prescriptif		X	
explicatif	X		X
argumentatif		X	X

Table 3:

Occurrences of the term "type(s) de productions langagières" in legal texts in the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels

As exposed in this Table, it should not be denied that the meaning of the term *type(s) de productions langagières* is indeed really close to *type(s) de documents* in this context. However,

no additional information is provided to help the reader distinguish both notions, except for the fact that the former is mainly used to describe the expected language proficiency at a certain level regarding productive skills (writing skill and speaking skill) whereas the latter only appears in contexts where receptive skills are in question. Furthermore, as it was the case for the concepts of *genre* and *type(s) de documents*, the term *type(s) de productions langagières* is never defined.

2.2.2.4. The place of the term "type(s) de textes"

As to the term *type(s) de textes*, it appeared 43 times, which is less than the term *type(s) de productions langagières*. The document which features the most occurrences is a Modern language programme, namely « Programme de langues modernes de l'enseignement Libre - 2e et 3e degrés des humanités générales et technologiques » (2018).

Legal document	pp.	Quotes
Programme du Libre – 2ᵉ et 3ᵉ degrés – HGT	64	Prendre en compte les paramètres incontournables […] **Type de textes** à comprendre ou à produire : narratif, descriptif, injonctif/incitatif/prescriptif, explicatif, argumentatif selon le niveau.
Socle de compétence en langues modernes	76	UAA - Lire pour (s')informer et/ou (faire) agir Pour rencontrer les attendus au terme du niveau A2, l'élève devra être capable 1. de réaliser des tâches relatives aux différents **types de textes** suivants, éventuellement combinés : <table><tr><td>**Types de textes** à dominante textuelle / iconographique</td><td>**Pour (s') informer**</td><td>**Pour (faire) agir**</td></tr><tr><td>narratif</td><td>X</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>descriptif</td><td>X</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>injonctif, incitatif, prescriptif</td><td></td><td>X</td></tr><tr><td>explicatif</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>argumentatif</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>
CTSR HGT	126	UAA - Lire pour (s')informer et/ou (faire) agir et/ou comprendre des opinions et/ou des sentiments Pour rencontrer les attendus au terme du niveau B1, l'élève devra être capable 1. de réaliser des tâches relatives aux différents **types de textes** suivants, éventuellement combinés : <table><tr><td>**Types de textes**</td><td>**Pour (s') informer**</td><td>**Pour (faire) agir**</td><td>**Pour exprimer ce que l'on ressent**</td></tr><tr><td>narratif</td><td>X</td><td></td><td>X</td></tr><tr><td>descriptif</td><td>X</td><td></td><td>X</td></tr><tr><td>injonctif, incitatif, prescriptif</td><td></td><td>X</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>explicatif</td><td>X</td><td></td><td>X</td></tr><tr><td>argumentatif</td><td></td><td>X</td><td>X</td></tr></table>
Programme du Libre – 2ᵉ et 3ᵉ degrés – HPT	48	UAA Compréhension à la lecture – Niveaux A2- et A2+ Pour rencontrer les attendus au terme du niveau A2, l'élève devra être capable de comprendre des informations/instructions […] sur la base des différents **types de textes** suivants, éventuellement combinés.

Table 4:

Occurrences of the term "type(s) de textes" in legal documents in the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels

Regarding Table 4, the same observations made for the terms *type(s) de documents* and *type(s) de productions langagières* can be applied to the term *type(s) de textes*. Indeed, at first glance, *type(s) de textes* could be associated with the meaning of the two other concepts, since it is seen to appear within the same contexts in the legal documents. There is however a marked tendency for *type(s) de textes* to appear when the reading skill is discussed. As shown in Table 4, this was the case for three of the four examples provided. If an exhaustive list of this term's contexts of occurrence had to be dressed, similar findings would have been noted. Nevertheless, there is one example when *type(s) de textes* is not exclusively linked to the reading skill. In fact, it appears in only one document, namely « Programme de langues modernes de l'enseignement Libre - 2e et 3e degrés des humanités générales et technologiques » (2018), where *type(s) de textes* seems to include both *type(s) de documents* and *type(s) de productions langagières*.

It is also worth saying that the phrase "*à dominante textuelle / iconographique*" reminds us of the *famille de tâches* document where the expression is associated with the notion of *types de productions langagières*, which means that a text can indeed combine more than one *type de productions langagières* at the same time.

2.3.   Conclusion

As it has been demonstrated in this section, the notion of (textual) genre is nearly absent of the legal texts in education in the Federation Wallonia-Brussels. Even though some other terms that can be linked with the concept of genre are seen to occur more often, they are never properly defined, making it impossible to establish such a relationship between genre and *types de documents*, *types de productions langagières* or *types de textes*, as opposed to what can be found in the CECRL.

Despite the fact that these notions are not explicitly defined in the CECRL either, they do appear on a wider scale than it is the case for Modern Language Programmes and skill-based documents. Furthermore, the frequent association between "*genre*" and "*types de textes*" in the CECRL enables to provide an attempted schematisation of the two concepts, being that the term *genre* functions as an umbrella term that includes both text types and texts.

Nevertheless, some contradictions have also been pointed out during the critical reading of the legal texts presented in this chapter. The first one concerns the notion of genre, only represented

in high levels of language competence in the CECRL. An optimization of this document would possibly be necessary, especially by including the concept of genre among every proficiency level. In this regard, a methodology known as "méthode en spirale" would be appropriate to address the notion of genre (Simons, 2018-2019:144) and would be of great benefit to learners.

Another inconsistency should be noticed regarding the Modern Language Programmes and skill-based documents. Indeed, since the updated versions of these documents were largely inspired by the CECRL, especially by advocating the action-oriented approach in their documents, the concept of genre and text types would be expected to be integrated on a wider scale.

Finally, since an explicit definition of all the concepts used in this chapter is nowhere to be found in legal texts in the Federation Wallonia-Brussels nor in the CECRL, clear explanations should be provided to ensure that teachers would be in full possession of the methodological guidelines well needed for an effective teaching of genres.

3. The genre of the weather forecast in language teaching

After taking the theoretical framework of the genres into consideration as well as having provided the reader with an operational definition of the concept, this dissertation will focus on one particular genre, i.e. the genre of the weather forecast. This chapter will first provide the reader with the reasons accounting for the choice of this specific genre as well as why it could be interesting to integrate this genre in foreign language classrooms.

Section 3.2. will then attempt to define the latter by having a closer look at the field of the scientific literature and the place devoted to this specific genre within the area. As a second step, the genre of the weather forecast will be further defined and explained by making use of a functional typology suggested by Simons (2018) and presented in Chapter 1, aiming to describe the different relationships existing within the concept of genre.

In this dissertation, the focus will specifically be placed on the text type of the weather forecast appearing on the television and its realization both in Belgium and France as well as in the United-Kingdom. To this aim, Section 3.3. will provide a general outline of the (evolution of the) text type and its internal structure will also be analyzed so as to attract foreign language teachers' attention on the fact that this dimension is an essential step in the acquisition of new genres and has to be seen as an integral part of the learning process. Similarly, Section 3.4. will be devoted to the analysis of various texts representing the genre of the weather forecast in the United-Kingdom and observe to which extent this genre differs from what can be found in Belgium and France.

Furthermore, specific attention will be directed to the place of the genre of the weather forecast in language teaching, especially within the French-speaking community of Belgium. In this perspective, Section 3.5. will put a particular emphasis on the legal documents of the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels. Additionally, in order to provide the reader with a more pragmatic approach, a range of textbooks specialized in foreign language teaching will also be taken into account with the purpose of analyzing the place dedicated to this genre.

It should be noted that a great deal of this chapter is based on Simons' « *De l'intérêt de la dimension générique pour l'enseignement des langues étrangères. Illustration à partir de la « carte d'identité générique » du bulletin météorologique* » (2018).

3.1.   Choice of this particular genre

Despite the fact that not much (if anything) has been written within the scientific literature on the use of this specific genre in (foreign) language teaching, the weather forecast still appears to be a recurring theme, often approached by teachers for the heterogeneity of the lexical and grammatical resources provided by this genre.

As far as the lexical resources are concerned, this genre belongs to various lexical fields that are included in skill-based documents[34], notably:

a.   Daily life (in particular: name days, often mentioned at the end of the weather forecast)
b.   Hobbies and leisure (activities related to a particular type of weather)
c.   Weather and climate (weather forecasting, weather phenomena, weather descriptors)
d.   Division of time (time units, dates, seasons, hours)

It can thus be seen that the genre of the weather forecast has a great versatile aspect regarding its lexical dimension. However, another lexical field of a major importance in this genre concerns the *geography*. Despite the fact that it does not explicitly appear within the twelve lexical fields mentioned in the skill-based documents, mastering (some elements of) the geography is central in order to be able to use this genre effectively, as much at the receptive level as at the productive level. To give some examples, being able to situate a city on a map as well as making effective use of the cardinal points are genuinely essential. Furthermore, having some knowledge about the geography of the targeted country enables students to learn more about its cultural aspects. Indeed, developing students' awareness about the cultural aspects of the targeted country(-ies) is undoubtedly as important as learning a language in itself.

Additionally, the weather forecast also provides the opportunity for teachers to attract their students' attention on the differences existing in pronunciation or accents between several countries. For example, as far as Dutch is concerned, it may be interesting to compare some weather forecasts from Belgium and from the Netherlands and see what characterizes both language variations. In the same view, England and the United-States could also be compared or

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[34] i.e. Socle de compétence en langues modernes [2018], Compétence terminales et savoir requis à l'issue des humanités générales et technologiques en langues modernes [2018] and Compétences terminales et savoir requis à l'issue des humanités professionnelles et techniques en langues modernes [2018].

England and Scotland, in order to show the differences at the micro-level within the United-Kingdom.

As to the grammatical resources, the genre of the weather forecast allows for numerous opportunities to practice the different tenses existing in a language. Indeed, the future tense as well as the conditional are often seen to be used in a weather forecasting. Similarly, the comparative and the superlative are also used very frequently, usually to compare the weather of the previous/following days. Additionally, modal auxiliaries also happen to be used a lot during weather forecasts. It is indeed the case to express probabilities or possibilities about future weather conditions. As will be seen later, diverse language functions come under consideration when addressing the genre of the weather forecast, including to introduce yourself, to greet somebody or to take the leave of somebody for instance.

Aiming to deal with this genre also allows teachers to develop their students' communication strategies. When facing a language issue for instance, learners can be empowered with the use of so-called "compensation strategies" which consist of finding other (linguistic) ways to convey their message such as the use of synonyms or paraphrases. Such strategies are undeniably beneficial for students, not only regarding the genre of the weather forecast in itself but concerning the whole process of language learning. Learners are indeed very likely to find themselves abroad for any reason whatsoever and being able to make effective use of compensation strategies would be of great help.

Didactically speaking, many teaching activities could be carried out according to the language skill targeted. Indeed, the genre of the weather forecast is suitable for training either the receptive skills (listening skill and reading skill) or productive skills (speaking skill (with or without interaction) and writing skill), making it particularly relevant to function as the main topic of didactic sequences to which each teaching activity would be connected, the sum of which would result in covering the genre of the weather forecast.

Beyond the school context, the weather forecast is a genre that is anchored within the society and which appears on various media, some of which include the television, the radio, the newspaper or the internet. Nowadays, this genre can be consulted at any time since it is now available on most smartphones or tablets, directly accessible from the home screen. Since students are thus exposed to this genre on an everyday basis, it must be assumed that they have a well-built knowledge of

the genre in their mother tongue, a crucial prerequisite that teachers should be aware of when aiming to teach a specific genre in a foreign language.

3.2.   Definition of the genre of the weather forecast

This section aims to provide an overview of the place of the genre of the weather forecast within the scientific literature. Moreover, a functional typology of the genre of the weather forecast will also be provided through the use of Simons' model of the relationship between "*macro-communicative functions*", "*genre families*", "*textual genres*", "*text types*" and "*texts*" presented in Chapter 1 (see Figure 1). Methodologically speaking, the aforementioned terms will first be defined so as to avoid any misunderstanding or confusion regarding the terminology that will be used throughout this section.

Moreover, in line with the genre's lexical and grammatical inputs outlined in section 3.1., an attempted inventory of the resources needed to produce a weather forecast in a foreign language will be presented to conclude this section.

3.2.1.   Within the scientific literature

The weather forecast is considered by many authors as being a genre on its own. Indeed, Mauroux (2016) bases herself on the definition of *genre* provided by the *Oxford Advanced Learners' dictionary* to characterize the weather forecast as belonging to this category, specifically because of its "three very recognizable features" (2016: 3). In her article, Mauroux focuses on the text type of the weather forecast broadcast on TV and further describes it as "a specific oral discourse type which functions within a fairly set framework involving a number of recurrent features, including a well-defined lexical field and recognizable prosodic patterns" (2016: Abstract). More specifically, Mauroux also emphasises the style particularity of this text type within the discourse. To this extent, she therefore considers the weather forecast as being "a pre-established discourse situation involving a technical presentation with a generally neutral standpoint, […] mak[ing] use of a specific lexical field both to refer to the weather and to structure the discourse [as well as having] recognizable prosodic patterns" (2016: 4).

Sandré (2013), however, introduces another dimension to the definition of the genre of the weather forecast. She identifies it in terms of having a very specific purpose, which she states as follows: « Certains genres ont un but très précis (le bulletin météo par exemple, qui a obligation de donner

des indications météorologiques sur les jours à venir) » (Sandré, 2013 : 30 in Mauroux, 2016 : 5). This notion of "purpose" is also to be found in Wichmann (2000) under the term "goal-oriented" and is also mentioned in Silber-Varod and Kessous (2008) when they indicate that "[t]he goal of the speaker is to convey the maximum amount of information in a minimum amount of time and in the most comprehensible way possible" (Silber-Varod & Kessous 2008:265 in Mauroux, 2016 : 6). Besides, Corbin opts for a more pragmatic definition of the text type, which he characterizes as : « il s'agit de la nouvelle par excellence, de celle qui permet d'engager la conversation, de briser la glace, au besoin d'éviter les sujets qui fâchent, de celle qui peut aisément jouer le rôle d'indicateur social et géographique des interlocuteurs » (2011 : 1).

What should be retained from the definitions discussed above is that the genre of the weather forecast is often associated and even confused with one of its text types, i.e. the weather forecast broadcast on the television. Despite the fact this dissertation will precisely focus on this specific text type, a distinction between the different concepts underlying the notion of genre still needs to be provided. To this aim, the genre of the weather forecast will be further defined through the use of a functional typology, as will be seen in the next sub-section.

3.2.2. Functional typology of the genre – the weather forecast
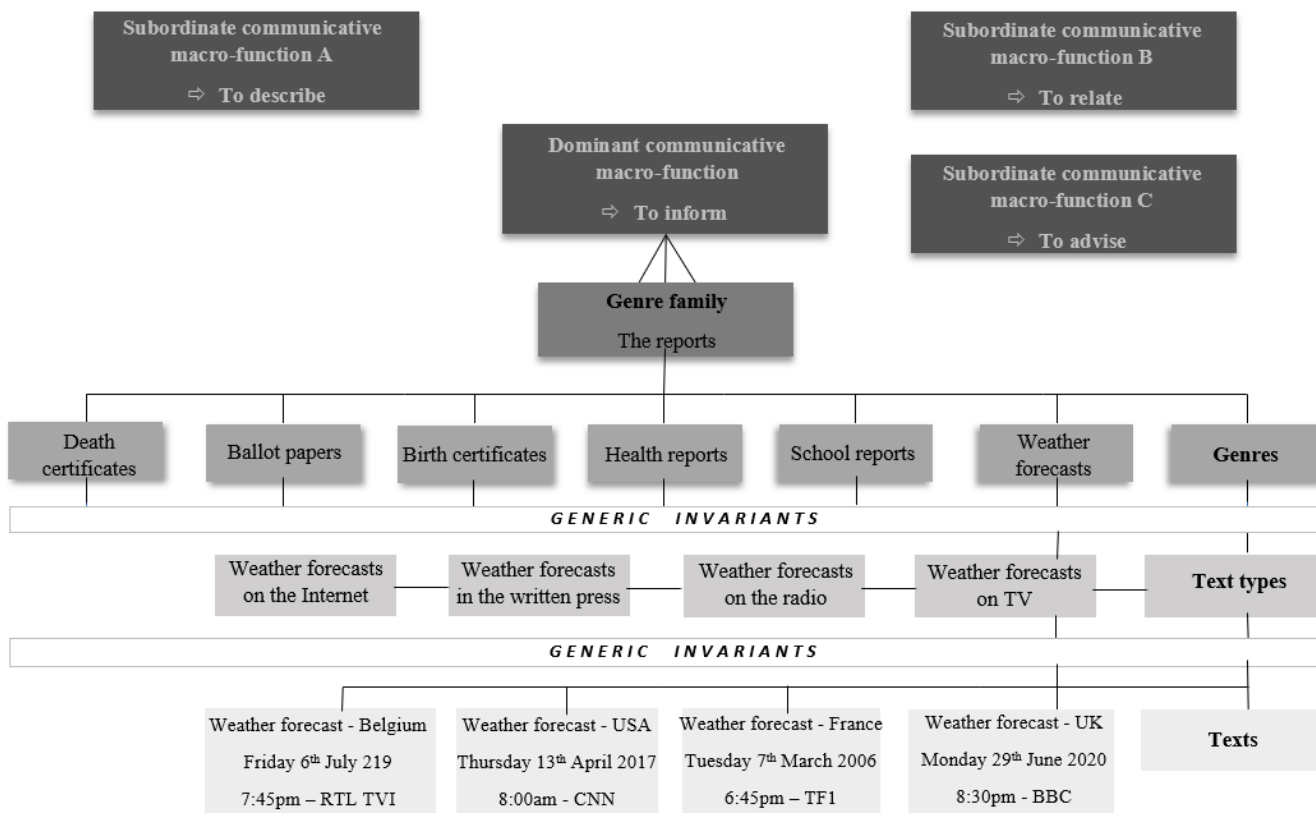
Figure 6 – Functional typology of the genre of the weather forecast

3.2.2.1.   Usefulness of this typology

The functional typology used in Figure 5 to illustrate the genre of the weather forecast appears to be very useful when aiming to teach this particular genre. Indeed, it enables teachers to have a comprehensive overview of *what* they are going to teach as well as accurately think beforehand about the material that will be provided to students. Additionally, such a typology permits a clear distinction between the different generic levels so as to equip foreign language teachers with explicit structures, helping them to become aware of the content that has *already* been covered in class as opposed to elements that should still be covered in readiness for the assessment task(s) they plan to submit their students to. To that extent, an in-depth inventory of the linguistic resources mobilized within each learning activity is also of a considerable importance.

Consequently, using a functional typology should reduce the frequently observed tendency for teachers to assess their students on material that has not been (explicitly) taught in class or, in the case of a textual genre, on texts that only present skin-deep connections with those analyzed during the learning process on the grounds that they belong to the same textual genre, or genre family (Simons, 2018-2019:174). In other words, such a typology thus enables teachers to select relevant tasks of the same generic level to which students were trained throughout the learning process.

In line with what has just been said, students will also benefit from the model presented above since it will allow them to have a precise account of the lexical and grammatical resources they need to master. Schneuwly and Dolz (1997) even take it one step further by arguing that if teachers define their class contents precisely, it will thus impact learners' acquisition of a genre in a positive way.

> « La définition aussi précise que possible des dimensions enseignables d'un genre facilite l'appropriation de celui-ci comme outil et rend possible le développement de capacités langagières diverses qui y sont associées. L'objet de travail étant, en partie du moins, décrit et explicité, il devient accessible à tous dans les pratiques langagières d'apprentissage. » (Schneuwly & Dolz, 1997 : 39 in Simons, 2018-2019 : 174)

Indeed, as Simons (2018-2019) also points out, the need for teachers to exactly know how far they want to go into the teaching of a specific genre as well as its generic and linguistic resources is essential for an effective and equitable instruction.

3.2.2.2.   Communicative macro-functions

As its name suggests, communicative macro-functions, also known as macro-intentions, explicitly refer to a speaker/writer intention(s) when using a (foreign) language (Simons, 2018:5). In simple terms, some of the existing communicative macro-intentions can be summarized as follows: to argue, to inform, to describe, to narrate, … Generally, when conveying a message, a dominant or primary communicative macro-function is typically assigned, followed by other subordinate or secondary communicative macro-intentions.

As far as the genre of the weather forecast is concerned, the dominant communicative macro-function is undoubtedly to *inform* the audience. However, with the purpose of informing, the weathercaster will also make use of other communicative macro-intentions, i.e. to *describe* what the weather will be like in the following days, to *relate* the weather conditions of the past few days, to *advise* the audience ("*Make sure to drink enough water during this heatwave*") but also to *discourage* ("*Avoid going out on Tuesday as the wind will blow very hard*").

3.2.2.2.1.   Communicative micro-functions

At a lower level, communicative micro-functions refer to the materialization of linguistic forms to express one particular (macro)-function (Conseil de l'Europe, 2001 : 98). According to the CECRL, micro-functions differ from macro-functions in a quantitative way. Indeed, the former would tend to occur within generally short and simple statements whereas the latter would seem to appear in more complex and long declarations. However, it should be noted that the distinction between the two terms is not as clear as it seems. A similar observation can be found in Bardière (2016):

> « […] Pourtant, l'item « *explication* », logé par les auteurs dans les macro-fonctions pourrait, dans bien des cas, pouvoir se résumer à UNE réponse à une demande d'information. « *Donner et demander des informations[35]* », est rangé, quant à lui, sans justification apparente, dans la catégorie

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[35] Italics are Bardière's.

des micro-fonctions. […] La démarcation établie entre micro-fonctions et macro-fonctions ne s'impose donc pas, loin s'en faut, comme une évidence. » (Badière, 2016 : 47).

Nevertheless, since the aim of this thesis is not to provide a comprehensive review of the two concepts, the definition of communicative micro-functions will be restrained to its most basic stage, to wit, the explanation provided by the CECRL known as « des catégories servant à définir l'utilisation fonctionnelle d'énoncés […] » (Conseil de l'Europe, 2001 : 98).

In the case of the genre of the weather forecast, such communicative micro-functions may be: to *greet* the viewers, to *expose* the forecast for the next day, to *present* the weather conditions for the rest of the week, to *announce* when the next weather forecast will take place as well as the following evening programmes, and to *take leave* of the audience.

3.2.2.3. Genre family

Genre families, or *macro-genres* to use Hyland's terminology (Hyland, 2018:2361) are composed of several textual genres that are grouped together because of sharing some common features, known as "generic invariants" (Mas & Turco, 1991 in Simons, 2018:5). As it is the case for the genre family of the *journals* illustrated in Simons (2018:5), this family is composed of the newspapers, the television news, the radio news, the (school) diaries,… which function separately as textual genres on their own but are gathered into a family because they present related characteristics.

Similarly, the genre of the weather forecast belongs to the genre family of the bulletins/reports. This genre family indeed includes several textual genres. For instance:

- school reports
- medical bulletins
- birth certificates
- death certificates
- pay slips
- news bulletins
- weather forecasts
- ballot papers
- membership forms

- order forms

- …

As a matter of fact, these genres belong to the same family precisely because some similarities between them can be noticed. What unifies those genres, for instance, is that their dominant communicative macro-function is to *inform*. They therefore manifest a range of generic invariants, some which are described below. Indeed, between the different genres mentioned above, three main characteristics can be pointed out, namely:

a) They share the same communicative macro-function, i.e. to inform;
b) These bulletins are not interactive, although they can sometimes trigger an (inter)action[36] to use Simons' terms (2018-2019: 157);
c) The format in which they are realized (spoken or written) is codified.

Nevertheless, despite being related to each other, these genres originating from the same family also present significant differences among each other and should therefore be divided into subgenre families according to various criteria. To that extent, the textual genres mentioned above could be classified depending on the communicative macro-intention pursued. Consequently, genres such as news bulletins and weather forecasts could be grouped together to form the subgenre family of the "*public bulletins*" since their main criterion is to inform a rather large targeted public or audience, i.e. viewers, listeners, readers, ... Within this subfamily, however, a further distinction could be made between bulletins belonging to the category of the media (weather forecasts and news bulletins) on the one hand, and bulletins functioning as legal and official documents for the State, on the other hand. In this perspective, genres as birth and death certificates as well as ballot papers would be illustrative examples of such a family. With regard to this last example, it should be noted that even though ballot papers are secret (in their first instance at least), they are eventually revealed to the population and contribute to elect someone officially from a legal point of view, hence the place of this genre within the "public bulletins".

As opposed to the "public bulletins", the subgenre family of the "*private bulletins*" could also be created with genres intended for private individuals. Some examples of such genres could be

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[36] Concerning the school report for instance, it leads inevitably to an interaction between the student and his/her parents. Additionally, it may also provoke the parents' discontentment and thus lead to an interaction between them and the teacher(s) or the school.

medical bulletins, school reports, pay slips, order forms and membership forms. Despite the fact that these genres do constitute official documents as it is the case for all types of bulletins, their main criterion is not to inform a large public, as opposed to "public bulletins". Indeed, their purpose is well to inform but to a reduced targeted audience. As it is the case for the five genres mentioned above, those documents are intended to be received by one individual since each bulletin of that kind concerns one person at a time. It should be noticed, however, that even though the genres belonging to the family of the bulletins are characterized by not being interactive in nature[37], an implicit form of interaction can still be assumed in the case of the "private bulletins". Indeed, as far as the order form is concerned, it can be seen as a (written) interaction between the company and the person buying goods from that company. To the same extent, a school report is a form of interaction between the school, the student and the parents as much as the medical bulletin implies an implicit interaction between the doctor and the patient.

As shown in the discussion above, the criterion of interaction is not easy to define. Indeed, one question that may arise would be to wonder in which contexts exactly an interaction is considered to take place with the case of the bulletins. Indeed, if a similar categorizing had to be made with the different genres that compose the genre family of the bulletins according to criterion of the interaction, the distinction between the genres as well as the subgenre families would appear to be delicate and confusing. As Simons states it, genre families and textual genres are sometimes challenging to be distinguished from each other and the possible groupings in subgenre families may vary according to the criterion used (Simons, 2018-2019:158).

3.2.2.4.   Textual genre

As it has just been demonstrated, the genre of the weather forecast belongs to the genre family of the bulletins. As presented in the model illustrating the functional typology of this genre (see Figure 5), it can be seen that the genre of the weather forecast functions as the product of several communicative macro-functions that are linked together. Indeed, the dominant communicative macro-function of this genre is *to inform* the audience. Nonetheless, this informative intention pursued by the weathercaster is only realised through the use of other (subordinate) communicative macro-functions. As a matter of fact, in weather forecasts, the act of informing is performed

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[37] Indeed, as mentioned earlier, the purpose of a bulletin is to inform. Generally, when a bulletin is received by a person, it is not common to reply, making it not interactive as such. However, as previously noted, it may lead to an inter(action) between both parties.

through the use of *description* (describing forecasts for the next day and for the rest of the week) as well as through *relating* (weather conditions of the past days, for instance). Similarly, other communicative macro-intentions are also present within weather forecasts, i.e. to *advise* or to *discourage*. As it is the case for the macro-function *to inform*, the macro-intention *to advise* also manifests itself through the use of the aforementioned subordinate macro-functions. Consequently, since several communicative macro-functions (main and subordinate) come under consideration to compose the genre of the weather forecast, the latter can thus be defined as being a *hybrid genre*.

However, as opposed to the case of the advertisement illustrated in Simons (2018-2019:158) for which the lexical fields vary according to the product targeted, the lexical fields underlying the genre of the weather forecast do not vary[38], making this specific genre accessible for foreign language teachers to address with their students.

In the same way a genre family is composed of "generic invariants", a textual genre does also share common features which account for its specificity. In the case of the genre of the weather forecast, the following characteristics can be listed:

- Description of the weather forecasts for the next day;
- Description of the weather forecasts for the rest of the week;
- Information about sunrise and sunset;
- At least one targeted country;
- Text codified

In terms of the language that characterizes the genre of the weather forecast, some generic invariants can also be found, namely:

- Use of different tenses (present, past, future, conditional)
- Use of comparatives (Tuesday will be warm*er than* Wednesday, *cloudier* skies should appear etc.);
- Use of superlatives (Monday will be the *hottest* day etc.);
- Presence of numerals (for temperatures, wind speed, rainfall etc.);

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[38] This will not mean, however, that the specific vocabulary words used in weather forecasts are identical at all times. Indeed, the terms employed do inevitably vary according to the weather conditions that are dealt with in a particular context for instance. Despite this variation occurring *within* the lexical fields, they remain exactly the same no matter what type of weather forecast is being addressed.

-   Frequent use of adjectives (*strong* wind, *bright* sunshine, *heavy* precipitation, *warm* weather, *foggy* day, *blue* sky, *moderate* breeze, *mild* night etc.);

-   Frequent use of adverbs (*partly* cloudy, *extremely* hot, *potentially* windy etc.);

-   Use of properly structured sentences.

3.2.2.5.   Text types

At a lower level, different types of texts can compose a textual genre. In other words, and according to Paltridge (1996) cited in Bieber and Lee, "text types […] represent groupings of texts which are similar in terms of co-occurrence of linguistic patterns" (in Simons, 2018-2019:160). For Flowerdrew (1993), however, text types correspond to "[i]ndividual variation in the realization of particular genres is a result of variation in [some] contextual parameters[39]" (1993:308). As far as Simons (2018-2019) is concerned, the definition provided by Bieber and Lee is taken to a step further. Indeed, as opposed to the latter, Simons does not restrict himself to the linguistic parameter functioning as the only criterion to group text types together. He therefore suggests other criteria to be taken into account along with the linguistic criterion, which are listed below. It should be noted that the examples provided in Simons (2018-2019:159) appearing into brackets were illustrating the genre of the property advertisement and were thus replaced with relevant examples to the genre of the weather forecast. As mentioned above, such groupings of text types occur through the use of specific criteria, which can be summarized as such:

-   The medium (television, radio, Internet, written press)
-   The format (newspaper, website, TV channel, radio frequency)
-   The target country[40]
-   The nature and quantity of the visual elements (maps, pictures, charts)
-   The linguistic elements (textual macro structure, grammar, lexicon, language functions…)

As far as the genre of the weather forecast is concerned, different types of texts can be identified. Indeed, a weather forecast can appear either on TV, the Internet, in a newspaper or can also be listened to on the radio. According to the criterion of the format, text types can be further divided. For instance, if the genre of the weather forecast would be restricted to text types only appearing

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[39] These specific contextual parameters that Flowerdrew is referring to concern Halliday's division of the context in which a genre occurs into three variables namely, *field*, *tenor* and *mode*. (See Section 1.1.3. in Chapter 1)
[40] Originally "target product" in Simons (2018-2019:159).

on TV, there would still remain a possibility to categorize these text types according to the TV channel on which they are broadcast, or the moment of the day.

Text types belonging to this specific genre could also be classified according to other parameters including the target country. Indeed, some weather forecasts tend to focus on one country only whereas others take several countries into account or even give an overview of the temperatures and weather conditions of a whole continent. As far as the criterion of the nature and quantity of the visual elements is concerned, text types may once again vary. Regarding the weather forecast broadcast on the radio for example, there is no such visual elements whatsoever as opposed to those appearing on television, on the Internet or in the newspaper. With regard to the text type broadcast on TV, it seems to be the type of text using visual elements the most. Indeed, weather forecasts in the newspapers for instance have a specific place dedicated to the text as well as the visual elements. Therefore, visual elements are frequently limited compared to other media such as the television or the Internet. Concerning the latter, as websites fully dedicated to the weather forecast can be found, the quantity of visual elements is not restricted[41].

3.2.2.6.   Texts

According to Rasier (2019-2020), a text is not only defined by its formal or structural characteristics and has to be regarded as presenting functional aspects. Indeed, Rasier puts forward an interesting perspective where the text is seen as being interactive, both in written *and* spoken language. He therefore argues that "wat een tekst tot een tekst maakt, dat is vooral de interactie tussen (1) de zender en (2) de ontvanger in (3) een bepaalde context of situatie" (2019-2020). In line with this approach, Simons emphasizes the fact that a text corresponds to « la matérialisation linguistique et/ou iconographique d'un type de texte appartenant à un genre textuel particulier » (2018 : 6). Two key notions have to be pointed out from these two definitions. On the one hand, as opposed to the common assumption that considers a text as being only restricted to its written or printed format, Simons and Rasier agree to take the definition of a text to a step further, claiming that the latter can manifest itself in different formats, i.e. written, spoken or iconographical. On the other hand, the notion of interaction is central when aiming to define a text from a genre-based approach.

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[41] Or at least less restricted than it is the case for newspapers.

In the context of the classroom, since genres, text types and texts are inextricably linked together, the notion of interaction does also occur at the level of the text, taking the form of a so-called interaction between the social contexts in which the text is produced and the learners who "receive" the specific text. In simple terms, a text corresponds to the specific document submitted by the teacher to its students that will be worked on during the learning process. (Simons, 2018 : 6).

Regarding the genre of the weather forecast as illustrated in Figure 5, a range of various texts can be found according to the text type dealt with. As far as the text type "weather forecast on TV" is concerned, the nature of the texts[42] may vary according to specific parameters such as the TV channel on which they are broadcast as well as the moment of day.

3.3. The realization of the text type "weather forecast on TV" – Belgium

As already mentioned, this dissertation focuses on text type of the weather forecast broadcast on the television. First and foremost, a general overview of the text type will be provided as well as an historical perspective of how weather forecasts evolved through the years. Then, focus will be placed on the internal structure of the weather forecast as it is realized in Belgium and its relevance in (foreign) language teaching. To this aim, a range of three Belgian weather forecasts will also be analysed with the purpose to emphasize the fact that several texts originating from the same text type can also slightly differ from each other.

3.3.1. General presentation of the text type

The weather forecast as it appears on the television is often considered to be the "not-to-be-missed" meeting of the day by the viewers and is even considered as the programme with the highest ratings according to Corbin (2013). However, before being at the cutting edge of the technologies, the weather forecast has been the product of numerous (technical, technological, societal) evolutions and changes[43] both in form and content (Dhéliat, TF1, n.d.). Indeed, regarding content, the "Institut Royal Météorologique de Belgique" (IRM) refers to the official and federal institution which conduct scientific research in the field of meteorology and which also provides the information needed by the weathercasters to present the weather forecast. Nevertheless, forecasts have not always been that precise and reliable as it is the case nowadays. Indeed, in an interview dedicated to the French TV channel TF1, Evelyne Dhéliat explained the evolution of the weather forecasts

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[42] It should be noted that the examples provided in Figure 5 do not represent an exhaustive list.
[43] This is however still the case nowadays.

appearing on the television. She indeed emphasizes the fact that many tools did not appear before the year 2000 such as weather warning maps along with the concept of air mass (cold and warm air mass) that are also displayed on maps showed to the audience in this TV programme. As far as the form is concerned, Dhéliat underlines that presenting a weather forecast consists of a team work above all between producers, technicians, graphic designers and weathercasters. For instance, the advent of touchscreens used during weather forecasts is also relatively new and permits to "travel" easily across the continent and to account for the temperatures as well as weather conditions that concern other countries.

Furthermore, the weather forecast as it is known nowadays corresponds in fact to the final product of a close collaboration between the scientific forecasters and the weather presenter, which was not necessarily the case in earlier times. According to Meuraillon (2015), the first weather forecasts to be broadcast on TV were entrusted to rigorous scientists who deluged their public with considerable amount of information using specialised meteorological terminology. In the early sixties and especially in Belgium, weather forecasts only consisted in the projection of maps with a musical background and without any presenters (Meuraillon, 2015). However, from the seventies onwards, the use of magnetic weather maps presented by weathercasters, becoming more and more popular among their viewers, marked the end of the previous tendency. This period has also been marked by Barbara Edwards, a British meteorologist who became the first woman to present the weather forecast on the BBC in 1974[44] and who made use of these specific magnetic maps. With the rise and development of numerical models used for weather forecasting in the early 2000, this technological evolution also impacted the way weather forecasts were broadcast on the television (Winston et al., 2018) as well as the nature of the job of weathercasters, which seems to be more and more demanding.

According to Dhéliat, several skills need to be mastered by the presenter of the weather forecast. On the one hand, the aptitude to condense the information provided by the meteorologists is essential as well as being able to have a clear overview of the (weather) situation. More importantly, the ability to popularise the information received by the scientists is considered as being the most important quality of an effective weathercaster. In order to ensure an effective

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[44] Source: History of the BBC: Barbara Edwards - The BBC's first women weather forecaster (https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01phhvd)

transmission of the information to its audience, a weather presenter has to enjoy an appropriate enunciation as well as a dynamic speech. From a practical point of view, the ability to read aloud from a script seems also to be of great importance. In a study conducted by Silber-Varod and Kressoux (2008), they describe the TV weather forecast as "[a] planned speech where a skilled reader reads out a previously constructed text" (2008:265). However, as Mauroux (2016) points out in her article, this is not systematically the case in every weather forecast as there is also a part of unpredicted and spontaneous dimension to it. Indeed, Crystal (1995) argued in the late nineties that "the visual material is prepared in advance, but during the broadcast the spoken commentary is spontaneous" (Crytsal, 1995:296 in Mauroux, 2016:9). According to Mauroux (2016), this relationship between the presenter and the text is directly linked to their level of competence. She therefore states that it is "one of the major differences between professional forecasters who speak from their notes (they have of course prepared the forecast themselves) and non-professionals reading a script." (2016:10).[45]

On the other hand, along with the linguistic competence, a successful presentation goes hand in hand with an adequate body language. The famous green screen is a well-picked example that precisely illustrates this competence. Indeed, being able to direct your hands properly in order to situate a city or to point out an interesting element on the map is of great significance. Moreover, having a good posture as well as standing straight while smiling at the same time are capacities that have to be considered as formal requirements.

3.3.2. Internal structure of the text type

According to Simons (2018), foreign language teachers rarely take the internal structure of a genre into consideration when addressing this notion in their classroom. However, this generic dimension is often seen to appear within the teaching material provided to the students as well as in the assessment tasks submitted to the learners without being explicitly approached. This observation made by Simons (2017-2018) turns out to be very unequal and not profitable to students. Indeed, since the generic dimension composes some assessment tasks on which students are evaluated but does not constitute an explicit teaching, it is thus assumed that each student has already been initiated to the genres addressed in schools' curricula, which is rather utopic and

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[45] However, in the classroom context and especially in the case of a speaking assessment task, it would be the teacher's responsibility to determine the students' relation to the written text.

illusory. For all these reasons, the internal structures of genres need to be subject to an explicit teaching in (foreign) language classrooms.

Having a closer look at the specific elements that compose a weather forecast, the very first component of such a text type refers to what *announces* that the weather forecast is about to take place, i.e. the jingle. This element is indeed to be found in every weather forecast, making it an "invariant element" of its internal structure. Following the jingle, it is then the weathercaster's turn to appear on TV, who usually first takes the time to greet his audience before taking over the television studio set to start informing the viewers about the weather conditions they should expect in the very near future. Depending on the moment the weather forecast is broadcast, it is usually common for weather presenters to provide a brief summary of the weather conditions in which the audience has spent the day. However, this will of course not be the case when dealing with a morning weather forecast.

This introduction section is often followed by the presentation of the weather forecasts for either the upcoming night or the next day along with their temperatures and particularities. In addition, the weather conditions of the upcoming days will then be discussed, generally displayed on the screen according to a three-day basis as a first step and then extended to a six-day basis. Extra information about the latter alongside with temperatures can occasionally be displayed about specific towns or villages, chosen randomly and differing from one day to the other. Sometimes, the order in which the presenter outlines the forecasts is reversed, depending on the specific weather forecast dealt with. Moreover, it is also common for weathercasters to proceed without following the pattern explained above. As it is especially the case for weather forecasts broadcast on the Belgian TV channel RTBF, they are structured according to several main sections, namely "temperatures", "rainfall" etc. in which a different range of days are taken into account by the weather presenter.

After having informed the audience about the forecasts that are going to form the pattern of the following days, some additional sections may be added in the structure of some weather forecasts. For instance, name days are often announced at the end of the programme as well as additional information about the sunrise and sunset of the next day. Depending on the moment of the year, specialized weather forecasts can also be provided, notably the beach weather or mountain weather

as well as the international weather forecast, which is often broadcast as a programme on its own alongside the "general" weather forecast.

Usually, the announcement of the next weather forecast by the presenter brings an end to the current programme. Besides, it is now also common for weathercasters to introduce the upcoming television programme to their audience. As Simons (2018) suggests, this tendency is more and more frequent since the disappearance of the so-called announcers on television channels whose task was, as the name suggests, to *announce* the TV show of the day. Finally, the use of a jingle officially concludes the weather forecast.

All these elements composing a weather forecast can thus be categorized according to their predictability within the TV programme, which is summarized in Table 5:

Invariant elements	Variant elements
- Jingle announcing the weather forecast - Greeting - Presentation of the forecasts for the next day - Presentation of the forecasts for the upcoming days - Taking the leave - Announcement of the next weather forecast - Jingle marking the end of the weather forecast	- Weather conditions of the current day - Weather forecasts for the upcoming night - One or more additional sections at the end of the weather forecast: ⇨ Name days ⇨ Solar electricity index ⇨ UV index ⇨ Snow reports ⇨ Beach weather ⇨ Mountain weather ⇨ Holidays weather forecast ⇨ International weather forecast ⇨ … - Linguistic realization of the announcement of the next weather forecast - Announcement of the upcoming TV programme

Table 5:

Internal structure of the text type – Weather forecast on the television (based on Simons, 2018)

3.3.3. Texts analysis

In this sub-section, three weather forecasts from the French-speaking world (especially from Belgium and France) will be analysed with the purpose to point out their similarities as well as their differences. In order to provide a heterogeneity in the choice of the weather forecasts, all three of them are from different TV channels.

3.3.3.1. Text 1 – Weather forecast Belgium RTL TVI (3/07 - 19h45)

Figure 7 – Example 1 https://www.rtlplay.be/meteo-p_8653/meteo-03-08-20-c_12662107

3.3.3.2. Text 2 – Weather forecast France TF1 (3/07 - 21h00)

Figure 8 – Example 2 https://www.tf1.fr/tf1/meteo/videos/replay-du-3-aout-2020-20h50-42968310.html
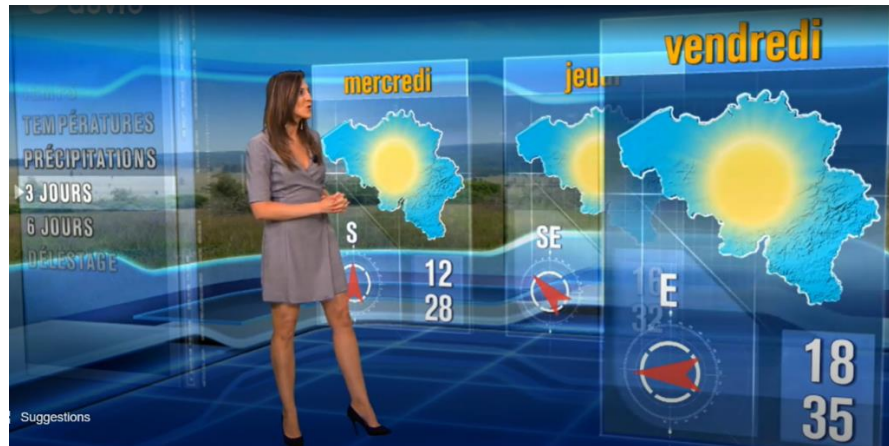
Figure 9 – Example 3 https://www.rtbf.be/auvio/detail_meteo-20h00?id=2664992

3.3.3.4. Comparison of the three texts

Similarities	Differences
- Context of the weather forecast (3rd August 2020, evening) - Jingle (beginning and ending) - Greeting - Forecasts for the next day (weather conditions) - Temperatures expected for the next day - Forecasts and temperatures for the rest of the week - Name days - Use of visual elements during the presentation - Taking the leave	- Tv channel: RTL-TVI (Ex 1); TF1 (Ex 2); RTBF (Ex 3) - Forecasts for the upcoming night: no (Ex2); yes (Ex1 and Ex3) - Temperatures expected for the upcoming night: no (Ex 2); yes (Ex1 and Ex3) - Summary of the weather of the current day: no summary (Ex3); summary (Ex 1 and Ex2) - Forecasts in Europe: no (Ex 2 and Ex 3); yes (Ex 1) - Air quality: no information (Ex 1 and Ex 2); Ex 3 - Announcement of the evening programme: no (Ex1 and Ex3); « Dans quelques instants, vous avez rendez-vous avec Camping Paradis » (Ex 2) - Announcement of the next weather forecast: no (Ex2); « Je vous retrouve déjà

	dès demain. » (Ex 1); « Je vous donne rendez-vous demain ! » (Ex3) - Advice given by the presenter: « Faites le plein de fraicheur tant que vous le pouvez ! » (Ex2); « Soyez très vigilants ! » (Ex2)

Table 6:

Comparative table between three texts belonging to the text type "weather forecast on TV"

As it has been demonstrated in Table 6, despite the fact that these three texts belong to the same text type, i.e. "weather forecast on TV", it should be noted that they still differ from each other according to certain elements. However, a basic structure can still be found among the three texts composed of the jingle, the greeting towards the audience, the forecasts and temperatures for the next day as well as for the rest of the week and taking the leave of the audience, which are indeed the core elements that are to be found within a weather forecast.

In the context of the classroom and especially when aiming to teach this particular genre, a specific attention would have to be devoted to its internal structure and its key stages in order to make students aware of the core elements as well as possible individual variation within a same text type. In other words, genres and text types "are thus not fixed, rule-governed patterns, but rather prototypes […]" (Flowerdrew, 1993:308). Indeed, the focus on the internal structure would therefore be particularly relevant in the case of a speaking assessment task where students would be asked to *produce* and *present* a weather forecast. In this perspective, it would thus be assumed that several criteria appearing on the teacher's evaluation grid would be specifically related to the genre itself and more precisely to (the respect of) its structure, along with more general assessment criteria including content and language for instance. In line with this presupposition, not providing students with an explicit teaching about the scenario of the target text type would mean to assess them on something they would not have been introduced to, which reveals to be unfair and counterproductive. Thereupon, Lee (2012) concluded from his study that such "genre-specific assessment criteria enables teachers to unify teaching and assessment by making sure that they teach according to the assessment criteria and share learning goals with students" (2012:122). As far as Flowerdrew (1993) is concerned, he also highlighted the importance of this dimension by advocating learning activities where students would make us of a "flow-chart analysis of structural

formula, highlighting possible variations" (1993:310) to consider the internal structure of the target genre or text type. It should therefore be understood that attracting learners' attention on the internal structure of a specific text type has not to be considered as superfluous, but could also function at the service of the language learning process (Simons, 2018-2019).

3.4. Realization UK

This subsection provides an analysis and a comparison of three texts belonging to the text type "weather forecast on TV in the United-Kingdom". Even though the purpose of this dissertation is not restricted to the teaching of English, the aim here is to show to which extent weather forecasts originating from different standard social practices than Belgium and France differ from the ones discussed above.

3.4.1. Text 4 - UK BBC (3/08/2020 – 6:25pm, 2'28)

Figure 10 – Example 4 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oV9gaoD7iNo
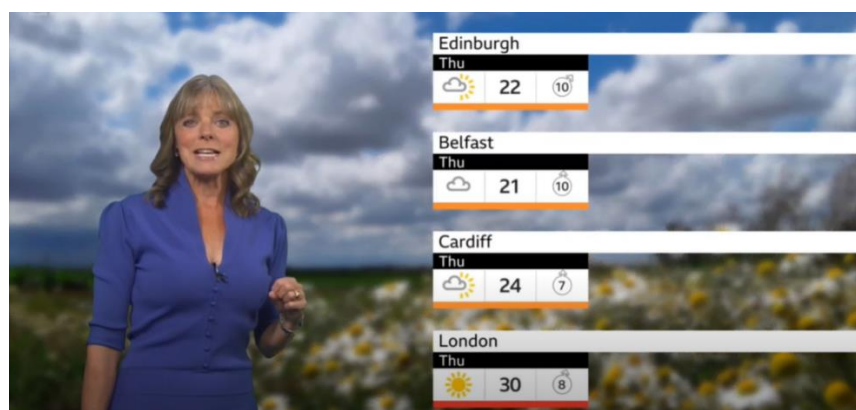
3.4.2. Text 5 – UK BBC (4/08/2020 – 7:15am, 2'21)

Figure 11 – Example 5 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XbGRF8twjxg

3.4.3.   Text 6 – UK BBC (5/08/2020 – 7:15am, 2'20)

Figure 12 – Example 6 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yTWzsfGXHy0

3.4.4.   Comparison of the three texts

Similarities	Differences
- Specific time frame of the programme (around 2'25 on average)	- Context: morning weather forecast (Ex5 and 6); evening weather forecast (Ex4)
- No jingle (beginning)	- Beginning of the weather forecast: pictures of specific cities illustrating the weather conditions (Ex5); reminder of last week's temperatures (Ex4); forecasts for the current day's afternoon and night (Ex6)
- Greeting	
- Presentation of the weather forecasts for the next day (divided in two sections: 'morning' and 'afternoon') followed by the temperatures	
- Presentation of the weather forecasts for two days later (divided in two sections: 'morning' and 'afternoon') followed by the temperatures	- Summary of the current day's weather: yes (Ex4); no (Ex5 and Ex6)
- In general: presentation of the weather conditions first (map showing flows and pressures) and then temperatures (map of the UK)	- No additional sections (air quality, beach weather, international weather forecast)
	- Taking the leave of the audience: "Bye bye" (Ex5); presenter's smile to mark the end of the weather forecast (Ex 4 and Ex6)
- End of the weather forecast: display of the temperatures for the capital cities of the UK (no maps), i.e. Edinburgh, Belfast,	

	Cardiff and London for the two upcoming days - No announcement of the next weather forecast - No announcement of the evening programme - No jingle (end)	

Table 7:

Comparative table between three texts belonging to the text type "weather forecast on TV in the UK"

3.4.5. Comparison Belgium-UK

What should be retained from the analysis of the weather forecasts originating from both the French- and English-speaking world is that they do not systematically differ in terms of their core structure. Indeed, the key elements that are to be found in both types of weather forecasts are the greeting and the forecasts and temperatures for the next few days following the programme's broadcast. However, where the weather forecasts do differ from each other concerns their edge structure. Among the analysed weather forecasts from the United-Kingdom, it appears that the additional sections occurring in weather forecasts from Belgium and France did not manifest themselves in the former, i.e. international weather forecast, beach weather etc.

In this perspective, along with weather forecasts' internal structure, the language used in such programmes is also a factor that is worth being taken into consideration, especially in the classroom context. Concerning the genre of the weather forecast in the United-Kingdom, specific recurring structures used by the presenters can be observed. To start with, a relatively frequent tendency consisted in the use of non-finite verbs in sentences like "*Some heavier bursts to start with*" (example 4) or "*Some higher gusts to expect through this afternoon*" (example 5) as well as constructions omitting the verb to be in examples as "*Temperatures ranging from 15 in Lerwick to 25 in London*" (example 6), "*And the winds possibly strengthening to gale force gusts at times*" (example 4) or "*clouds spilling ahead of it but mainly dry*" (example 5). Regarding the lexicon, as it has also been demonstrated in a corpus study conducted by Mauroux (2016), the vocabulary used in weather forecasts consist of words belonging to the lexical field of the weather on the one hand, but also more specialized terms such as "*isobars*" (example 4 and 6) or "*front(s)*" (example 4, 5 and 6) on the other hand. Mauroux (2016) also points out the recurrent use of specific

collocations, namely "*scattered showers*" (example 4), "*spell of sunshine*" (example 5) etc. Additionally, according to Mauroux (2016), "[f]or non-native speakers, however, this clearly constitutes a comprehension barrier because they do not make these associations, and in any case the words are unfamiliar to them" (2016:17). This is thus an interesting observation that takes its full significance in foreign language teaching contexts when aiming to teach the genre of the weather forecast. As a matter of fact, this genre reveals to be rather demanding on various aspects, i.e. linguistic but also discourse-wise.

> Indeed, weather forecasts as a "genre" present two potential difficulties. First, the information content is by definition repetitive and varied at the same time, because the forecaster refers to the same weather conditions or to the same places at different times or on different days. Indeed, weather forecasts as a "genre" present two potential difficulties. This can be confusing for any listener. Second, […], forecasters have a very quick pace. (Mauroux, 2016:24)

However, as Simons suggests (2018), it is nonetheless possible to equip students of an intermediate level with useful tools to make them attain the purpose of performing a generic production of the text type.

Notwithstanding all the observations and comparisons made between the different realisations of the TV weather forecast, they do not have to be considered as defining features since only a very small number of weather forecasts were being looked into in this dissertation. That being said, it is always interesting to see to which extent a same text type originating from a specific (linguistic) background can differ from another. In a foreign language teaching context, confronting the students to another realisation of the genre or text type they are used to in their mother tongue and society is also part of the teacher's challenge when providing a genre-based pedagogy (Simons 2018-2019). Moreover, as stated by Simons, drawing students' attention to the realisation of a particular genre in their mother tongue can also function as the first step in the process of acquiring a new genre.

> Relevons que l'évocation du GT tel qu'il est réalisé dans la culture de scolarisation nous paraît quand même intéressant avant d'aborder le GT dans la LE, car celle-ci permet de réactiver des notions génériques translinguistiques et transculturelles et développe une approche comparative des GT. (Simons, 2018-2019 : 174)

In the case of the genre of the weather forecast, however, this genre enjoys the particularity of being well-known among a (linguistic) community, facilitating its access and by extension, may therefore also play a role in its acquisition.

3.5. Carte d'état des ressources du BM (Simons)

Teaching a particular genre requires a precise knowledge of the content that is going to be worked on. Indeed, as mentioned earlier, « [l]a définition aussi précise que possible des dimensions enseignables d'un genre facilite l'appropriation de celui-ci comme outil et rend possible le développement de capacités langagières diverses qui y sont associées » (Schneuwly & Dolz, 1997: 39). As far as foreign language teachers are concerned, the (linguistic) resources mobilized either in text types or texts have to be taken into consideration and constitute a crucial step before selecting to which learning material students are going to be submitted (Simons, 2018:8). Depending on the final assessment task targeted, these (linguistic) resources may vary.

In the case of the genre of the weather forecast, numerous teaching activities and assessment tasks may be conceived in various language skills (receptive and productive). Having a closer look at the productive skills and notably the speaking skill, an example of assessment task can easily be imagined for this language competence. In this perspective, after having analysed several weather forecasts broadcast on the television as well as their internal structure, students may be asked to *present* a weather forecast at the end of the learning process. To this aim, a range of linguistic resources as well as non-linguistic resources have to be mastered. Table 7, based on Simons (2018), therefore provides an outline of the target abilities required for an effective production and presentation of a weather forecast.

Skills	- Write a codified text - Read the written text aloud: ⇨ On television: reading of the script ⇨ At school: using a visual support
Lexicon	- Lexical field: the weather ⇨ basic vocabulary ⇨ more specific vocabulary related to the weather forecast - Other lexical fields: the days of the week and the parts of the day
Grammar	a) Tenses: - The future - The conditional - (The present perfect)

	b) Comparatives and superlatives
Communicative macro-functions	- Dominant communicative macro-function: to inform - Subordinate communicative macro-functions: to advise, to dissuade, to describe, to relate.
Communicative micro-functions	- To welcome/to greet - To present/to expose - To take the leave of somebody - To announce
Cultural aspects	- Geographical notions of the target country(-ies): being able to situate (main) cities and regions on a map. - Geographical notions of other countries for the presentation of additional sections (beach weather, snow reports, international weather forecast)[46]
Pronunciation	- Intonation of the sentence (prosody) - Word stress - …
Facial expression and body language	- Smiling - To stand upright - To be able to indicate elements on a map/screen *precisely*
Visual element(s)	- Design of the visual supports - Use of these supports during the presentation
Timing	- Respect of the time constraint
Strategies	- To be able to cope with a language issue - …

Table 8:

Resources required to present a TV weather forecast in the target foreign language (based on Simons, 2018)

As illustrated by Table 8, it cannot be denied that the genre of the weather forecast allows for all communicative skills to be integrated within the generic dimension (linguistic, sociolinguistic, sociocultural, discursive and strategic). As a result, it could undoubtedly function as an organizing element of any didactic sequences and by extension, of the foreign language teaching process in general instead of being considered as a peripheral element (Simons, 2018).

3.6. Limits of the text type in foreign language teaching

Despite all the numerous resources provided by the weather forecast when its generic dimension is approached, the text type of the weather forecast broadcast on the television has its own limits. Indeed, as will be further discussed in Section 3.7 and Chapter 4, there is no such generic approach

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[46] Less frequent in UK weather forecasts.

to be found about the genre of the WF itself in the (English) textbooks. As a result, since there is no methodological advice for teachers on how to address this dimension in class, there might exist a sort of reluctance towards teaching through this genre-based approach.

Furthermore, as it has been established in Chapter 2, learners of a foreign language are considered as being "social agents who have tasks to accomplish" according to the CEFR. In line with this view, the text type of the TV weather forecast might thus appear as "unrealistic" through the eyes of the teachers and to lack of credibility, putting the argument forward that students would be very unlikely to be confronted to the task of a presenting a weather forecast in the foreign language. However, the reader should bear in mind that genres should not systematically be produced but can also function as a useful tool to train the receptive skills for instance, as stated by Maingeneau (2016): « les genres sont des institutions de parole socio-historiquement définies qui fonctionnent comme des ensembles de normes pour la production comme pour la réception » (cited in Simons, 2018 : 48).

In line with this view, the usefulness of the text type might also not be perceived by students. Indeed, living in this technological age enables the weather forecast to be accessed straight away from a smartphone, displaying symbols and temperatures that are sometimes more efficient than the weathercaster's long speech and use of technical terms.

Additionally, despite the fact that this text type can easily be found on various platforms, i.e. TV channels, Internet etc., selecting the appropriate documents to exactly suit the students' needs as well as the goals pursued by the didactic sequence also represents an additional challenge for foreign language teachers since they will have to pay attention to various criteria, including the specificity of the terminology, the fact that the weather forecast selected is comprehensible for students or the fact that the grammatical structures in which the teacher is interested are to be found in a numerous amount for instance.

3.7.   Place du genre du BM in language teaching in French-speaking Belgium

Having provided a definition of the genre of the weather forecast as well as a specific interest in its internal structure along with its realization in Belgium, France and the United-Kingdom, this section will lay to focus to the place of the genre in the field of foreign language teaching within the French-community of Belgium. To this aim, the legal texts of the Federation Wallonia-Brussels

will once again be taken into account. Additionally, a further attention will be devoted to the place of this genre in foreign language textbooks.

3.7.1. In skill-based documents

As already mentioned earlier, the lexical field referring to the weather belongs to one of the 14 thematic areas advocated by the Council of Europe (2001). Starting with the skill-based document *Socle de compétences en langues modernes* (2018), it can be seen that the weather forecast is part of the required skills mentioned at the end of primary education as well as at the end of the second year of secondary education. More precisely, the lexical field of the weather has to be at least approached once by pupils in primary education. As far as the first two years of secondary education are concerned, the lexical field of the weather has to be extended and completed by the acquisition of the basic descriptors of the latter. Therefore, it can be pointed out that the requirements that are to be found under the thematic field "Weather and climate" in this document are restricted to the lexical dimension of the weather, i.e. being able to describe or to understand a description of the weather through the use of basic adjectives or verbs directly related to the former.

As to the document Compétences terminales et savoirs requis en langues modernes – Humanités générales et technologiques (2018), however, the notion of the weather *forecast*[47] appears for the first time in the document under the requirements that have to be fulfilled by the end of the 4th year. However, according to the document, this dimension should only be addressed in receptive skills at this stage, i.e. listening and reading skills. Regarding the requirements to be attained by the end of secondary education in foreign languages, the field of the weather forecast has to be extended to the productive skills, i.e. speaking and writing skills. Furthermore, the specific subfield of meteorological phenomena as well as their consequences should also be approached. An additional dimension which is not present in the document but appears in Compétences terminales et savoirs requis en langues modernes – Humanités professionnelles et techniques (2018) concerns the clothes and accessories linked to the weather conditions, a subfield advised to be approached at least once in the 3rd and 4th year for a language course composed of four periods a week or in the 5th and 6th year in the case of two periods a week.

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[47] My emphasis.

However, it should be noted that the generic dimension of the weather forecast is never mentioned in any skill-based documents, which goes along with what has been demonstrated in Chapter 1, namely the absence of the notion of genre in legal texts in the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels. Nonetheless, it has to be pointed out that the generic dimension of the weather forecast does integrate all the sub-thematic areas mentioned in the lexical field "Weather and climate" at the different key stages of secondary education in skilled-based documents within Belgium's French-speaking community. This has been particularly demonstrated thanks to Table 8. Therefore, the integration of this generic dimension can be worth being taken into consideration.

3.7.2. In foreign language textbooks

As it has been demonstrated for the case of the curricula and legal texts in the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels, the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* has also greatly influenced the way textbooks were conceived (Simons, 2018-2019). Indeed, one of the main contributions of the CEFR concerns the integration of the proficiency levels advocated by the latter into the different textbooks. As a consequence, among the relatively recent textbooks, a numerous amount of them are explicitly referring to those proficiency levels, especially on their front cover (Simons 2018-2019). Additionally, it has also been shown in Chapter 2 that the generic dimension, however not explicitly defined, is present within the CEFR. Therefore, since recent textbooks are believed to rely upon the CEFR to a certain extent, the following study thus aims to observe the place of genre of the weather forecast within textbooks designed for foreign language teaching as well as examining which specific levels see this generic dimension occurs the most.

3.7.2.1. *Choice of textbooks*

As part of this study, a total number of sixty-three textbooks have been analysed with the purpose to investigate to which extent the generic dimension of the weather forecast can be found among them. Despite the fact that the purpose of this thesis is not restricted to the teaching of English as a foreign language, the textbooks corpora used to conduct this research were essentially composed of English textbooks. This choice can be justified through the fact that all the textbooks analysed were based at the Alpha Germaniques library of the University of Liège, where textbooks designed for English learning are to be found in a more considerable amount than it is the case for the other languages (Dutch, Spanish, German and Italian). Consequently, it would thus be assumed that the great variety of English textbooks would best account for a broad report on the place of the weather

forecast's generic dimension. However, the findings of this research should by no means be generalised to all foreign language textbooks where other patterns and tendencies could be observed regarding the place of the genre of the weather forecast.

3.7.2.2. Textbooks' selection method

The sixty-three textbooks were chosen randomly with the aim to provide an analysis based on a multi-faceted range of textbooks. Owing to lack of a time, however, the research only focused on *Students' books* rather than *Workbooks* and *Teachers' books*. Additionally, the publication date was also taken into account, namely by concentrating on textbooks published after the year 2000. Regarding the textbooks' language levels targeted by this research, the analysis was not restricted to any particular level and they were all taken into account. Indeed, practically speaking, seven of them were aimed for beginner or starter English learners, 10 were classified as 'elementary', 13 were labelled 'pre-intermediate', 15 belonged to the intermediate level, 11 were 'upper-intermediate' and 7 were intended for advanced learners. Despite the fact that having a Master's degree in didactics in Belgium determine the years in secondary school in which teachers give their lessons to a certain extent, the choice of including every language level was made because foreign language teachers are sometimes required to teach a second or a third foreign language and are therefore confronted to learners having a lower level of language competence. Furthermore, the specific language levels in which the genre of the weather forecast occurs were also of great importance to this research since one of its purposes was to observe if the generic dimension tended to be addressed at one particular language level.

3.7.2.3. Research questions

This research was specifically conducted through the use of three research questions, namely:

a. Is the generic dimension of the weather forecast approached in textbooks?
b. If so, are there learning activities designed to facilitate the appropriation of the genre?
c. At which language level does this generic dimension occur?

The purposes of these research questions are indeed to see if textbooks do advocate a genre-based approach and to what extent textbooks' authors are using the generic dimension in the various teaching activities aimed for foreign language teachers.

3.7.2.4. Results

Out of sixty-three textbooks, the general theme of the weather and climate occurred in twenty textbooks. However, the specific theme of the weather forecast was only explicitly mentioned among seven textbooks, including two starter textbooks, three elementary, one intermediate and one upper-intermediate. Among these textbooks, the generic dimension of the weather forecast was mostly used to train the receptive skills (reading and listening skills) and was used fewer times as part of the productive skills, i.e. speaking skill and writing skill. It should be noted, however, that even though the generic dimension of the weather forecast was present among several textbooks, it did always occur in an implicit way and functioned as a learning activity used to train a specific skill, lexicon or grammar rather than being an activity designed to acquire the genre in question. In other words, the internal structure of the weather forecast was never made explicit among the textbooks analysed. Indeed, only one learning activity was directly linked with the genre of the weather forecast but once again, the generic dimension was not explicitly mentioned.

3.7.2.4.1. Starter textbook

Regarding the starter textbooks, two books illustrated the theme of the weather forecast, namely *English in mind 1* and *Up to you, level 1.* As far as *English in mind 1* is concerned, the weather forecast appears in Unit 10 called "Don't give up!" and takes the form of a listening comprehension where learners are confronted to a transcript composed of missing words they had to fill in. In this case, the weather forecast is used to train the listening skill as well as the lexicon related to the basic descriptors of the weather forecast. This exercise is then followed by a speaking task where students are asked to work in pairs and "write three sentences to describe what the weather will be like tomorrow". The generic dimension is thus present since learners are confronted to a weather forecast as such, but this dimension is not used in the purpose of acquiring the genre.

With reference to *Up to you - level 1*, the weather forecast also manifests itself in Unit 19 and takes the form of a listening comprehension designed to practise student's vocabulary. As opposed to *English in mind 1*, however, there is no transcript to fill in but some geographical elements to replace on a map of Europe provided in the textbook. Here again, a lexical approach is opted for rather than a genre-based approach.

3.7.2.4.2. Elementary textbooks

Among the three elementary textbooks, namely *New horizons 2*, *Good news*, Palier 1, 2ème année and *Up to you, level 2*, it appeared that the weather forecast was not at all approached in the same way.

Concerning *New Horizons 2*, the generic dimension is totally absent from the textbook since there is no actual weather forecast available to listen to, to read or to produce. However, in Unit 6 called "The weather", a map of the United-Kingdom as well as Ireland can be found which students have to observe as a first step. In addition, they are asked to answer a range of questions about the weather illustrated on the map. It should be noted that students do not have to produce the answers since they are to be found in a box under the map in question. Therefore, this exercise only consisted in replacing the answer into the correct place. Moreover, other similar tasks related to the weather forecast are also to be found within the textbook.

With regards to *Good news*, Palier 1, 2ème année, the generic dimension of the weather forecast is well present, although not made explicit, in the different tasks proposed by the textbook in Unit 4. After providing the different grammar rules to express the future (especially *will* and *won't*) and related grammatical exercises, pupils are asked to play the role of the weatherman by drawing five weather symbols as well as their temperatures on a sheet and explaining them to rest of the class using the grammatical rules they have just seen. The purpose of this lighter version of a weather forecast is for the students to practise their grammatical skill, namely being able to make forecasts using the modal auxiliary verbs *will* and *won't*. For the rest of the class, however, the aim is to find those symbols through the description provided by the classmate since they do not have a visual access to the symbols in question. As a result, when students are not speaking in front of the class, a listening task is thus suggested by the textbook. Although the generic dimension of the weather forecast can be found in the speaking task students have to produce, there is however no information regarding its internal structure. Consequently, it can thus be assumed that students are asked to produce a weather forecast without being explicitly initiated to it, which appears to be problematic.

As far as *Up to you - level 2* is concerned, the textbook provides a range of lexical learning activities related to the weather forecast in Unit 6. Practically speaking, students are asked to read the newspaper weather forecast provided in their textbook about the United-Kingdom and Ireland.

There are, however, no questions related to the text. Instead, students are confronted to a "word find"-exercise and have to find as many hidden words as possible. The following exercises related to the reading comprehension are also lexical and consist of the description of several pictures depicting specific weather conditions. Moreover, a second activity is also proposed, this time referring to a listening task where students have to listen to a weather forecast presented by the BBC. As it is was the case for the reading comprehension, the exercises that follow the listening task are not directly related to the content of the latter but rather focuses on vocabulary exercises.

3.7.2.4.3. Pre-intermediate textbooks

There was no weather forecast to be found in any pre-intermediate textbooks used for this research. It raises thus some questions since the weather forecast was seen to appear at all the other levels, except for advanced textbooks.

3.7.2.4.4. Intermediate textbooks

Out of the fifteen intermediate textbooks analysed, only one mentioned the weather forecast. Indeed, the *New Headway Intermediate* suggests in Unit 5 a range of learning activities directly related to the theme and two of them are especially worth being focused on. The first one consists of a listening task in which a weather forecasted is divided into four different parts (A to D). Students are thus asked to work in four distinct groups and to take notes while they are listening to the part that has been assigned to them. Then, students are encouraged to take part in an exercise known as "information gap" which consists in an activity where students are missing a specific information and have to talk to each other to find it, which is indeed the aim pursued by the task since students from group A do not have the information from group B for instance.

In addition, this activity is followed by a writing task combined with a speaking one. This time, students have to work in pairs and answer the following questions: "What's the weather like where you are today?", "What do you think it will be like tomorrow?". On the basis of these questions, learners are asked to write a weather forecast as well as presenting it to the rest of the class. As it was the case with *Good news*, no information/explanations can be found regarding the internal structure of the genre. As it has been previously established in this chapter, this dimension is however crucial in the process of acquiring a new genre. If the learning material provided by the textbook is only taken into account, it might be thought that learners are encouraged to produce a weather forecast in two productive skills from scratch.

3.7.2.4.5. Upper-intermediate textbook

The last textbook that will be discussed refers to *American English File 4* and Unit 4A will particularly be focused on. In this case, the task suggested by the textbook related to the weather forecast takes the form of a short film in which a famous American meteorologist and weathercaster ("Mister G") is being presented. The video focuses on "Mister G" at the start of his career as a weatherman as well as on the evolution of the weather forecast from its earlier times until the year 2014. The exercise provided by the textbook consists of a transcript where some words are missing and have to be filled in by the students. Moreover, the activity is mostly designed to practise the students' listening skill since the missing words are not directly related to the thematic field of the weather forecast. Furthermore, as some theory and exercises focussing on the future perfect and continuous are to be found in other activities following the listening comprehension, the latter may thus also function as an introduction to those specific grammar points. However, even though the generic dimension is well present within the listening comprehension, it not used in the purpose acquiring the genre itself.

3.7.2.4.6. Advanced textbooks

The weather forecast was not mentioned in any advanced textbooks that were analysed. The general theme of the weather was well present, but was often associated with climatic events such as global warming for instance[48], rather than the weather forecast in itself.

3.7.3. Conclusion

As this section has demonstrated, the generic dimension of the weather forecast never occurs within the legal texts of the Federation Wallonia-Brussels and is hardly present in the foreign language textbooks that have been analysed for the purpose of this dissertation.

Concerning the legal documents, the absence of the generic dimension does not appear to be really surprising since similar conclusions were drawn in Chapter 1 regarding the broad concept of genre. However, from what has been observed concerning the thematic field of the weather forecast, all the requirements mentioned in the legal texts at the different key stages are also to be found explicitly in Table 8, where all the resources needed to produce a weather forecast are summarised. One might thus argue that integrating the generic dimension to approach the theme of the weather

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[48] This was particularly the case in the *New English File Advanced* and the *American English File 5*.

forecast would thus enable students to meet those requirements provided by the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels. Additionally, teaching the weather forecast from a generic perspective goes even beyond the purpose of acquiring the expected levels of language competence since it allows students to be exposed to some cultural elements as well as to train several (linguistic) strategies at the same time, which are undoubtedly also part of the teachers' role when they teach a foreign language.

Moreover, as far as the textbooks are concerned, it should be noted that the general theme of the weather is more or less present since it appeared in twenty textbooks out of sixty-three analysed textbooks. However, the specific theme of the weather forecast occurs on a much limited scale since only seven of them mentioned the latter. With regard to the research question investigating the language level(s) in which the generic dimension of the weather forecast occurs, this study has shown that this theme is addressed on various levels, except for the pre-intermediate and advanced level. Additionally, a general observation was that the weather forecast was frequently used to train the receptive skills (listening skill and reading skill) but frequently took the form of a listening comprehension in which a weather forecast was presented. It should be noted, however, that the listening task always functioned as a tool to practise lexicon, grammar or the listening skill in itself. It was thus never used to train or to focus on the generic dimension of the weather forecast. Furthermore, it also appeared that the weather forecast was used to train the productive skills (speaking skill and writing skill) as it was particularly the case in *English in Mind 1*, *Good News* and *New Headway Intermediate*. In most cases, it seems that the speaking and writing tasks suggested by the textbooks did not provide students with the opportunity to base themselves on a clear and solid structure so as to be able to produce a weather forecast effectively. From these observations, it can thus be concluded that the learning activities were not designed to facilitate the appropriation of the genre.

Finally, another recurring observation was that, when this generic dimension did occur, this was however never made explicit by the textbook. It can thus be assumed that the approach advocated by textbooks is by no means a genre-based approach but rather focus on the lexical and grammatical purposes, which answers the first research question of this study. Nevertheless, some learning activities seemed to be useful tools to attract students' attention on the generic dimension of the weather forecast and particularly its internal structure. These activities would therefore

function as a basis to raise students' awareness about the genre in question. In line with this perspective, these resources would thus improve on their efficiency if they were adapted by the foreign language teachers to suit their own purposes when approaching the genre of the weather forecast. It should be noted that a combination of learning activities found in textbooks as well as a personal input from the teacher's behalf would tend to be encouraged to provide a variety of the learning material used in class and to ensure an efficient acquisition of the genre in question.

4. Case study: Classroom practices in French-speaking Belgium

4.1. Context

As it has been established in Chapter 2, modern languages curricula and skill-based documents in the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels do not mention the generic dimension in the foreign language teaching process. Despite the fact no research has already been conducted concerning the genre of the weather forecast in language teaching, the latter presents many opportunities to approach and train various resources (lexical, grammatical, strategic), as demonstrated in Chapter 3. For that reason, one may however wonder the actual place of this generic dimension in current foreign language teachers' practices in their classroom. Such concern may take the form of two central questions which can be formulated as follows: Do foreign language teachers use the genre of the weather forecast in their classrooms? What are the concrete teaching methods used to teach this particular genre? This study will thus precisely focus on these questions that will be leading this analysis.

4.2. Research questions

With the purpose to provide an effective overview on teacher's practices regarding the genre we are interested in, the two leading questions mentioned above can be further divided into four research questions, namely:

1. Is the genre of the weather forecast approached by foreign language teachers? Why (not)?
2. How do foreign language teachers use the genre of the weather forecast in their classroom?
3. What are the goals pursued by teaching this particular genre according to foreign language teachers?
4. At which level of language competence is the genre of the weather forecast most used?

4.3. Hypotheses

On the basis of the four research questions provided and relying on the several conclusions drawn from the previous chapters of this dissertation, several hypotheses can be put forward:

(1) The weather forecast might be a recurring theme among foreign language teachers but its generic dimension might be underused.

Indeed, as demonstrated in Chapter 3, the weather forecast is part of the 14 thematic fields to be found in the legal texts advocated by the Federation Wallonia-Brussels as well as in the CEFR. Therefore, this specific theme would be expected to regularly occur in foreign language teachers' lessons. However, as Simons (2018) points out, foreign language teachers' initial training do not provide them with a broad and sufficient knowledge about non-literary genres. What is more, skill-based documents and modern languages curricula do not provide any guidelines either concerning the potential use of a genre-based approach among the foreign language classrooms. As a consequence, since teachers are not accustomed enough to the concept of genres and lack of methodological tools to help them integrate this dimension in their courses, it could thus result in the fact that the generic dimension of the weather forecast may not be taken into consideration when teaching this particular genre.

(2) Since the generic dimension of the weather forecast might not appear in teachers' practices, the purposes pursued might be exclusively lexical and/or grammatical.

As already mentioned, the generic dimension might be underused among foreign language teachers' practices due to several factors. One of them can also be related to teachers' preconceptions on the notion of genre. Indeed, this dimension if often perceived as being superfluous as well as functioning as an additional aspect to the language learning process (Simons, 2018), with priority being given to the five main language skills and the linguistic ones. Therefore, since foreign language teachers' didactic sequences integrating the theme of the weather forecast are not assumed to be built on a genre-based approach, foreign language teachers would tend to consider the weather forecast as an opportunity to exclusively pursue lexical and/or grammatical purposes.

(3) As (the genre of) the weather forecast might appear to be rather basic at first glance, it would thus tend to be approached by foreign language teachers at a pre-intermediate or intermediate language level.

According to Simons (2018), the genre of the weather forecast is often approached by foreign language teachers in the fourth year of secondary school, which is equivalent to the level A2. However, this observation goes against what seems to be prescribed in the CEFR, which appears to consider the genre-based approach suitable for higher levels of language competence, namely B2 or even C2. Nevertheless, as it has been demonstrated in Chapter 3, the genre of the weather

forecast reveals to be quite a complex and demanding genre, especially because of its numerous resources that have to be mobilised at the same time (lexicon, grammar, language functions, body language, time constraint, etc.). Consequently, since foreign language teachers' may not take the generic dimension into account in their courses, the weather forecast would be restricted to the teaching of specific vocabulary or grammar point such as the future tense for instance, which might tend to be approached at lower levels of language competence.

4.4. Methodology

As said earlier, this study focuses on the place of the genre of the weather forecast in foreign language teachers' practices. This section thus aims to outline the different steps that were necessary to conduct this research such as the setting up of the different tools through which the study could be carried out.

4.4.1. Survey Sample

The survey was intended to all the current foreign language teachers from the French-community of Belgium in primary and secondary education. With the aim to maximize the participation rate, the study was not restricted to a specific educational network. Moreover, since the main goal of this study was to provide an overview of the teachers' practices in the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels, the choice of restricting the research to one particular educational network would have appeared to be irrelevant. However, the survey was not destined for retired foreign language teachers considering that they might not represent the accurate reflect of the current teaching practices in the field of foreign languages. Nevertheless, it could be interesting to integrate them for purposes of further research about the evolution of teachers' practices regarding the generic dimension in their classroom.

4.4.2. Online survey

The survey took the form of an online questionnaire. The choice for that particular medium can be motivated by several factors. First and foremost, prior to elaboration of the questionnaire, a meeting was organized with other didactic students whose dissertation's supervisor was Professor Germain Simons. While presenting in turn the different purposes of our research, it appeared that four of us had to carry out a survey so as to collect foreign language teachers' opinions about our own subject matter as well as to know more about their practices. Professor Simons therefore suggested that elaborating a joint questionnaire would seem to be a wise choice. Indeed,

proceeding in this way was believed to facilitate the task for foreign language teachers when they would be requested to participate in our survey. Consequently, creating an online version of the questionnaire turned out to be appealing both for us since we were required to work together on elaborating the latter as well as for the teachers targeted by the study, enabling them to have access to the four questionnaires using one platform only. Moreover, another factor that influenced our decision to opt for an online questionnaire refers to the presentation given by Audrey Renson, a PhD student at the University of Liège in the field of language teaching, about the construction of such a questionnaire. She therefore provided us with useful recommendations in order to formulate our questions efficiently as well as to reach a high participation rate.

With regard to scientific literature, a number of researchers also advocate the use of (online) questionnaires, namely Hap (1990), Oppenheim (1996), Javeau (1972), Dörnyei (2002) or Krosnick (2009). Dörnyei's work particularly focuses on questionnaires intended for second languages research, which he describes as "*versatile[49]*, which means that they can be used successfully with a variety of people in a variety of situations targeting a variety of topics" (2003:10). One of the many advantages that Dörnyei puts forwards refers to the effortless, inexpensive and not very time-consuming character of questionnaires for reseachers. Indeed, "[b]y administering a questionnaire to a group of people, one can collect a huge amount of information in less than an hour, and the personal investment required will be a fraction of what would have been needed for, say, interviewing the same number of people" (2003:9). As a result, the use of an online questionnaire to conduct our research seems to be the most appropriate medium.

4.4.3. Constructing the questionnaire[50]

As a second step, a software had to be chosen to construct and administrate the questionnaire and we decided to do so by opting for *Google Forms*. First of all, the four of us were already accustomed to this type of software, which facilitated the setting-up phase of the questionnaire. Additionally, *Google Forms* is free of cost as opposed to other types of online survey which charge a certain amount after a specific number of replies are reached per month or per week for instance. One of the many advantages of *Google Forms* is that it provides the researcher(s) with a complete analysis of the data. As a result, the respondents' answers are directly converted to either graphs

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[49] Dörnyei's emphasis.
[50] It should be noted that a paper version of the online questionnaire is available to consult in Appendix G.

or charts showing the percentage for each reply given or chosen. Furthermore, this type of questionnaire also allows for what is known as branching, a specific technique used in questionnaires to ensure that the respondents are confronted to questions that only apply to them. Indeed, according to the responses given for some questions, the software is programmed to redirect the respondent to other questions specifically designed for them in order that the latter do not have to go through the entire questionnaire. For instance, if a foreign language teacher responded that she/he does not use the genre of the weather forecast, she/he would be redirected to the question dealing with the specific reasons of this non-use of the genre. Nevertheless, we experienced difficulties regarding the setting up of this technique within the questionnaire since it was not possible to do so on a question-by-question basis. Instead, we had to divide the questionnaire into specific sections which covered a certain number of questions since *Google Forms* only allows branching for entire sections and not questions. Consequently, it happened that a section had to be created for only one specific question, which was not always very convenient.

Moreover, the language in which the questionnaire was created and designed was French, mainly for the fact that it could not be assumed that all the foreign languages teachers had some knowledge of English. What is more, since the survey was restricted to the French community of Belgium, using the French language was believed to more appropriate.

4.4.3.1. Structure of the questionnaire

Practically speaking, the entire questionnaire was divided into three main parts. The first part took the form of a general introduction to the questionnaire, where the main goals of our research were presented. In addition, the second part was dealing with specific questions relating to the respondents' profile, followed by the four questionnaires which constitute the third part. At the end of each questionnaire, a section was designed to thank to respondent for participating in the study and an opportunity was given to leave their contact information if they showed particular interested to the research topic and if they agreed on being contacted with the aim to gather extra information on their practices.

4.4.3.1.1. General introduction

As far as the introduction is concerned, we first took the time to briefly introduce ourselves to the respondents as well as our different research topics. Then, on the advice of M. Simons, each of us presented in turn the main goals of our research and some of us even took the opportunity to

provide the respondents with a definition of a concept, specifically if our research was dealing with a particular concept. This was indeed my case since my study was related to the genre of the weather forecast. As it has been demonstrated in the previous chapters, the notion of genre is hardly mentioned in the legal texts in the Federation Wallonia-Brussels and is never defined. It seemed therefore appropriate to provide an operational definition of the concept to ensure that the respondents had an explicit and unambiguous perception of the latter before starting the questionnaire. The introduction was concluded with an emphasis on the fact that the questionnaire was completely anonymous and that there were no right or wrong answers. We thus insisted on the importance of truthful points of view and answers.

4.4.3.1.1. Respondents' profile

That part was specifically designed in order to collect information about the respondents' professional background. There was a total of nine questions among which foreign language teachers had to specify their scientific and pedagogical degree as well as the number of years of teaching. Furthermore, they were also asked to indicate the level of education, i.e. primary, secondary and/or higher, and the education network in which they are teaching. An additional question focused on the type(s) of foreign language(s) taught, i.e. first foreign language, second and/or third, as well as the specific level targeted by the language(s) during the academic year 2019-2020. In addition, since the questionnaire was intended for all foreign language teachers, the respondents also had to state which specific language(s) they were teaching, i.e. Dutch, English, German, Italian, Spanish. If the language that they teach was not listed, there was still a possibility to mention another language. Moreover, it should be noted that for the sets of questions mentioned above, the respondents were always able to tick several boxes in order for them to report their current situation as precisely as possible.

Eventually, these questions were followed by the opportunity for the respondents to choose to which questionnaire(s) they wanted to answer. For instance, if a foreign language teacher decided to answer exclusively to the questionnaire dealing with the genre weather forecast, she/he was immediately directed to this specific section. The same pattern was also in use for the other questionnaires so as to avoid scrolling down for a long time before finding the questionnaire the respondent wanted to deal with.

4.4.3.1.2. Questionnaire on the genre of the weather forecast

This questionnaire consisted in a total of twenty-seven questions, the purpose of which was to learn about teachers' practices as well as the methods they use to integrate (or not) the generic dimension of the weather forecast in their courses.

On the advice of both M. Simons and Audrey Renson, specific attention has been paid to wording and phrasing of the questions. Indeed, I put a lot of effort to avoid long and complex questions as well as ambiguous ones. I also had to be very careful in terms of the message conveyed by the question, specifically in order to avoid questions that contained more than one idea since it would result in a discomfort for the respondent and on top of that, the replies would appear to be problematic when it comes to the analysis phase. Similarly, the order in which the questions were displayed was also a crucial aspect that had to be seriously taken into account to ensure that a question did not influence the answer to another. Another focal point was to ensure that the questions did not contain any negative item both in the question itself as well as in the proposed answers. As Dörnyei (2002) argues "[t]he term 'negatively worded item' means that it focuses on negative rather than positive aspects of the target, and we should note that it is all too easy to fall into the trap of trying to express this negative aspect by using some sort of a negative construction" (2002:56). However, I must admit that I did use negative worded items in question 27, where respondents who did not use the genre of the weather forecast were asked to scale different suggested reasons accounting for their non-use of the genre according to a Likert-scale. To this aim, some suggestions included negative elements.

Overall, my questionnaire was composed of several types of questions including open-ended as well as close-ended questions, though they appear on a much wider scale than it was the case for the former. This can be justified by the fact that open-ended questions appear to be rather complex when it comes to the data analysis. However, formulating some questions using an open-ended type still appeared to be relevant "for the simple reason that we do not know the range of possible answers and therefore cannot provide pre-prepared response categories" (Dörnyei, 2002:47). As to the close-ended questions, they often took the forms of yes-no questions in my questionnaire or were used to distinguish two specific responses. It is important to point out that the majority of the close-ended questions which did not belong to the category of yes-no questions were supplemented with a third possibility, known as "Other", where the respondent benefitted from adding another

response if the latter differed from the two answers already listed. Moreover, I also made use of multiple-choice questions which are considered as being "relatively straightforward [as well as] mak[ing] them more reader-friendly" according to Dörnyei (2002:43). In addition, multiple-choice items are believed to be "easier to answer if the response options have a natural order; otherwise they should be arranged in a random or alphabetical order" (Dörnyei, 2002:43). Other sets of questions were designed according to a four-point Likert-scale where respondents had to choose to which extent they agreed or not to the proposed statement, i.e. strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree. However, it should be noted that there was no item suggesting a neutral point of view. As Dörnyei (2002) states it, "[n]eutral items (e. g., "I think Hungarians are all right") do not work well on a Likert scale because they do not evoke salient evaluative reactions […]" (2002:37). Consequently, this choice was made in order to avoid the frequently observed tendency for respondents to avoid taking a stance by selecting a neutral response. Finally, the last type of question used in my questionnaire was a combination of rank order items and the Likert-scale, except that the nature of the original items was changed to suit the specific question's purpose. In other words, this type of question took the form of several statements that needed to be scaled according to the level of importance that the respondent attached to the latter i.e. very important, important, not important, not at all important. This only concerned one question in the questionnaire, namely question 22.

4.4.3.1.2.1. Questions' purposes

With regard to the goals pursued by each question, it should be noted that the questions can be grouped into specific categories. To start with, it was primordial to first ask the respondents if they used the genre of the weather forecast in their classrooms. If the answer to that question was "no", the respondents were straight away redirected to the end of the questionnaire, namely question 27, where they were asked to scale different statements that could accounted for their non-use of the genre. If the respondents answered "yes" to the first question, they could then continue the initial questionnaire. Question 2 enquired about the goal(s) pursued by teaching the weather forecast, namely lexical, grammatical and/or functional, in order to see if a specific tendency could be revealed according to the foreign language teachers' answers. In addition, question 3 examined if the weather forecast was taught at a particular level in the school curriculum. To this aim, foreign language teachers had to indicate in which year they approach the weather forecast as well as the course in which they do so.

These general questions were followed by more specific ones regarding the methodology used to teach this particular genre during the learning process. Indeed, questions 4 to 8 expressed an interest to the importance given to particular elements including for instance the realisation of visual elements, the internal structure of the genre, the teaching of some geographical notions as well as the reappropriation of the genre. The purpose underlying such questions was to see if these elements mentioned above were subjected to an explicit teaching or, on the contrary, if foreign language teachers did not attach special importance to the latter.

Additionally, another category of questions included questions 9 to 12, which specially dealt with the nature of the final task proposed in a didactic sequence integrating the genre of the weather forecast. In this perspective, the respondents were asked as a first step if the weather forecast was part of the final task proposed to the students. If foreign language teachers replied negatively, they were directed to question 13. If their answer was positive, further questions were aimed to specify the nature of the final task, i.e. receptive or productive, as well as the specific skill(s) targeted by such a task. Other questions belonging to the same category were designed to examine the content of the final task. In other words, the aim here was to see if the final task suggested by teachers took the form of a classic weather forecast broadcast on the television or a parody of the initial genre. According to the answers given, this would have to be linked with the other questions regarding the learning process in order to examine whether students submitted to a task involving a parody had been subjected to a prior explicit teaching about the original genre's internal structure and characteristics.

The following category focused on the assessment process of the genre of the weather forecast and included questions 13 to 22. In this category, foreign language teachers were first asked whether the weather forecast was part of an assessment task. If it was not the case, the questionnaire came to an end for them since the rest of the questions focused on the assessment process in itself or the results observed by teachers with regard to the students' skills after taking the assessment task. Questions 14 to 16 focused on the nature of the assessment task as well as the skill(s) targeted by the latter whereas questions 17 to 22 concentrated on the place of the genre's internal structure within the assessment criteria. For instance, especially in question 22, foreign language teachers were asked to scale different criteria according to their importance in an assessment grid. The purpose behind this question was indeed to realise if some of the assessment criteria were linked

with the internal structure of the genre and if it was the case, whether these elements were approached (or not) during the learning process.

Finally, the last category was composed of questions 23 to 26. These questions were mainly designed to evaluate the students' potential progress at the end of the didactic sequence on the genre of the weather forecast in terms of grammar, lexicon or language functions.

4.4.3.2. Pre-testing phase

In Ellard and Rogers' *Ten Commandments of Question Writing* (1993, cited in Dörnyei, 2002:56), one commandment is dedicated to the pre-testing phase. After several proofreadings by our supervisor M. Simons and various revisions of the questionnaire, the latter had to be pretested by several foreign language teachers in order to assess its comprehensiveness as well as its effectiveness.

The pilot test was conducted to twelve participants including eight foreign language teachers in secondary education, three assistants of the Department of Modern Languages Didactics of the University of Liège and one PhD student from the same Department. Although the general feedback of the questionnaire was positive overall, some adjustments had to made both regarding form and content and especially concerned the phrasing of some questions. Table 9 provides an overview of the modifications that have been made in order to improve the questionnaire.

Before pre-test	After pre-test
<u>Title</u> *L'enseignement des langues* <u>Introduction</u> *Temps de réponse : 15 minutes maximum par questionnaire.* <u>Questionnaire – The genre of the weather forecast</u> 22. Quels critères se retrouvent dans votre grille d'évaluation ? (Choisissez 5 critères et classez-les par odre d'importance/ de poids dans la grille d'évaluation, du plus important = 1 au moins important = 5). o Respect du scénario (jingle, salutations, temps qu'il a fait, prédictions pour les jours à venir, conseils, ...) o Respect du timing (comme lors d'un bulletin météo classique) o Bonne mémorisation du texte o Capacité à lire le texte, mais discrètement o Bonne utilisation de support(s) visuel(s)	<u>Title</u> *Questionnaire à destination des enseignant·e·s de langues en Belgique francophone* <u>Introduction</u> *Chaque questionnaire ne dure qu'une dizaine de minutes.* <u>Questionnaire – The genre of the weather forecast</u> 22. Quelle importance accordez-vous à ces critères dans une grille d'évaluation ? Pour chaque critère, cochez la case qui correspond le mieux à votre point de vue. <table><tr><td>Critères</td><td>Très important</td><td>Important</td><td>Pas Important</td><td>Pas du tout important</td></tr></table>

o Expression faciale, attitude corporelle, gestuelle adéquates o Débit naturel o Bonne prononciation o Intonation adaptée au contenu 27. Vous n'aborder pas le bulletin météo en classe car… Cochez la case qui correspond le mieux à votre point de vue.	27. Additional suggestion known as « Other »

Table 9:

Modifications made to the questionnaire after the pre-testing phase

On advice of Audrey Renson, Phd student in the Department of Modern Languages Didactics, some changes were made to the title as well to the wording of the introduction so as to create a specific interest in the respondent and to avoid discouraging them by explicitly mentioning the taking part in all the questionnaires would take up to an hour. With regard to my personal questionnaire, some questions were reformulated for the sake of clarity and to facilitate the analysis of the data. This was specifically the case of question 22 and 27.

4.4.3.3.   Final version of the questionnaire

As already mentioned, my questionnaire included a total of 27 questions that could be grouped into different categories (see Section 4.4.3.1.2.1). In addition, various types of questions were used, the purposes of which are explained in Section 4.4.3.1.2.

4.4.3.4.   Method of data collection

Once the green light received to put the whole questionnaire online, we made it accessible to foreign language teachers through the use of several platforms. First of all, sharing the link on social media seemed to be the easiest option. As far as I am concerned, I also took the time to contact the teachers personally by email in order to invite them to participate in my study and to share it with their colleagues. In addition, M. Simons, my supervisor, and the three assistants from the Department of Modern Languages Didactics were also of great help since they offered to share the questionnaire with their wide network of trainee supervisors who train the didactic students of the University of Liège. Thanks to their significant assistance, we were able to collect more than forty replies in less than twenty-four hours.

The study took place over a few months, namely from the end of April until the beginning of August. However, I must admit that I did not collect a lot of answers after the end of June since

the months of July and August compose the summer break, in which teachers do not go to school anymore. Consequently, the data collection actually took place over three months, including April, May and June 2020.

4.4.3.5. Participants

As mentioned in Section 4.4.1., my survey was intended for all the current foreign language teachers in both primary and secondary education in the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels. However, I did not include teachers working in tertiary education destined for adults because I wanted to focus exclusively on teachers' practices regarding the genre of the weather forecast in secondary education and in the last two years of primary education.

A detailed analysis of my survey sample will be provided in Section 4.5.

4.5. Findings and discussion

This section aims to present an overview of the collected data from my survey. In this perspective, the findings will be divided into two categories, namely the respondents' profile as well as the questionnaire on the genre of the weather forecast.

4.5.1. Respondents' profile

As far as the demographic data are concerned, the results showed that a total of 61 foreign language teachers took part in our study. Among the 61 respondents, the majority of them are experienced teachers since 19.7% (12 teachers) have a teaching experience of 11 to 15 years. A second tendency also manifested itself which demonstrated that 32.8% of the teachers, divided in two equal groups of 16.4%, had a teaching experience ranging from 16 to 20 years or were teaching for 31 years or more. The least represented category, however, corresponded to teachers who have been teaching for less than 5 years as well as teachers having 26 to 30 years of teaching experience. Both groups represented 9.8%.

With regard to the respondents' scientific and pedagogical degree, the data showed that more than the half of them (57.4%) hold a Master's degree in Germanic languages, among which 50.8% have a degree formerly known as *Licence en langues et lettres germaniques*. In addition, 23% graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Germanic languages. Concerning foreign language teachers' pedagogical degree, a marked tendency was revealed for the Belgian teaching qualification known

as AESS[51] (62.3%) designed for the last three years of secondary education, followed by the AESI-qualification (21.3%), intended for the first three years of secondary education. Among teachers holding the AESS, 47.5% had studied Germanic languages whereas 6.6% had studied Romance languages.

Regarding the education network in which foreign language teachers work, a huge majority of the respondents are employed in the free subsidized denominational network (70.5%) and 29.5% work for the official organized network. However, only a small part of the respondents is teaching in the official subsidized network (3.3%). A similar tendency is also seen to apply for the free subsidized non-denominational network (3.3%).

As to the education type in which foreign language teachers teach, the figures demonstrated that a substantial majority of the respondents give lessons in "général" (90.2%). Besides, 41% also teach in "technique de qualification", 23% work in "technique de transition" and 9.8% in "professionnel". Two other respondents worked in different education types than the ones already listed, with one respondent working in "DASPA[52]" (1.6%) and one in "promotion sociale" (1.6%).

With respect to the level of education in which the respondents work, a significant part of the survey sample work in the last three years of secondary education (77%) whereas almost 25% teach in the first three years. A minority of the respondents teach either in primary education (6.6%), at the university (3.3%), in "promotion sociale" (1.6%) or in a firm (1.6%).

Finally, the most frequently taught language among the respondents was English (83.6%), followed by Dutch (60.7%), German (18%), Spanish (13.1%), Italian (1.6%) and French as foreign language (1.6%).

It is important to note that for the majority of the questions discussed above, except for the question dealing with teaching experience, the respondents were allowed to opt for more than one option.

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[51] AESS is the acronym for Agrégation de l'Enseignement Secondaire Supérieur.
[52] DASPA is the acronym for Dispositif d'Accueil et de Scolarisation des élèves primo-arrivants.

4.5.2. Teachers' practices regarding the genre of the weather forecast

In this sub-section, the 27 questions dealing with the genre of the weather forecast will be discussed separately. Additionally, each question will be supplemented with a graph or chart when necessary, in order to illustrate the data collected.

▪ Q1: Do you teach the weather forecast?

Among 60 replies, 78% of the foreign language teachers (47) claimed that they address the theme of the weather forecast in their classroom(s) as opposed to 22% (13) who do not use it in class. One might thus think that this theme can be considered as being recurring among the respondents.

▪ Q2: What are the goals pursued when teaching the weather forecast?
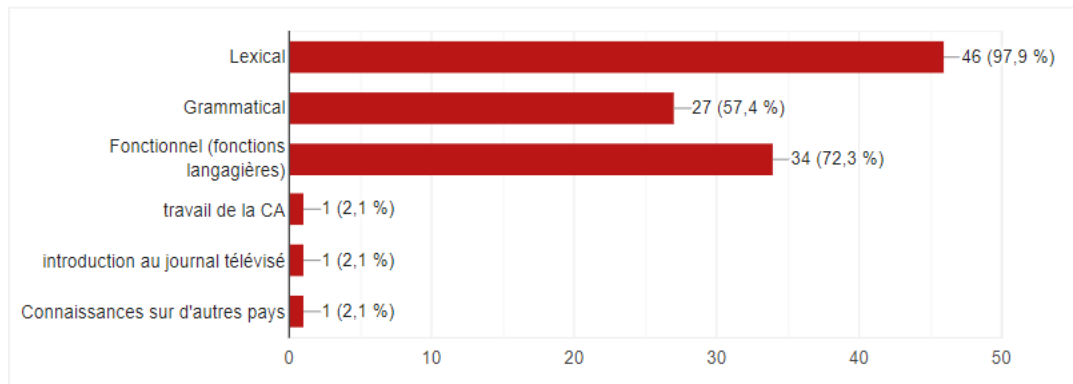
Figure 13 – Answer to Q2: "What are the goals pursued when teaching the weather forecast?"

As demonstrated in Figure 14, the main purpose of a didactic sequence designed on the theme of the weather forecast is lexical according to the respondents. Indeed, with a total of 47 replies for this specific question, more than 97.9% of the respondents regard the weather forecast as an opportunity to practise the lexicon in the first instance. In addition, 72.3% also consider this theme useful to exercise different language functions. Surprisingly, the grammatical purpose was only mentioned by 57.4% of the foreign language teachers. As it has been demonstrated in Table 8, the weather forecast allows for various tenses to be trained, especially the future tense. Therefore, I was thus expecting a more significant part of the respondents to opt for the grammatical purpose. It should be noticed, however, that the respondents could choose several options.

Despite the fact that first three options were already listed, the respondents had the opportunity to add another suggestion. This was the case for three teachers who respectively added an additional option among which the practise of the listening skill (1.6%), the opportunity to learn about other

countries or the introduction to the television news. With regard to the latter, it should be pointed out that the television news is a genre on its own. Although it shares some similarities with the genre of the weather forecast, these two genres must not be confused with one another. Consequently, even though one reply does not reflect the survey sample of my study, it can still lead us to think that the concept of genre appears to be rather vague or misunderstood by the teachers.

- Q3: In which year(s) and in which level(s) do you approach the weather forecast?
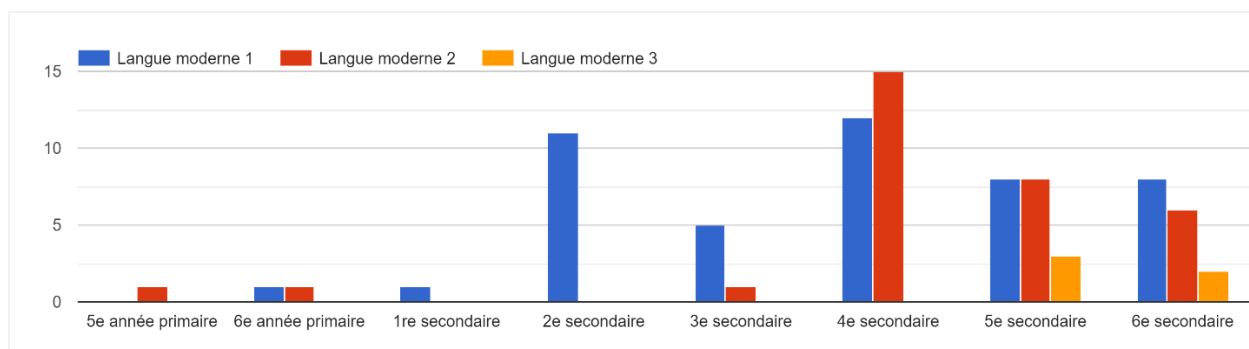
Figure 14 – Answer to Q3: In which year(s) and in which level(s) do you approach the weather forecast?

Figure 14 illustrates when specifically, the theme of the weather forecast tends to be approached between the 5th grade in primary school and the last year of secondary education. As far as the latter is concerned, it can be seen that the two years in which the weather forecast is addressed the most concern the 4th year (chosen 27 teachers) followed by the 2nd year (11 teachers). Since it is not possible for second year's students to study a second foreign language in the French-community of Belgium, this explains why the weather forecast only appears in a first foreign language context. As far as the 4th year is concerned, the weather forecast tends to be approached in a second foreign language context (15 teachers) but is still addressed in a first foreign language context (12 teachers). Concerning the last two years of secondary education, the weather forecast seems to be addressed more or less to the same extent in both years and is also approached in a third foreign language context. These observations seem to correlate to a certain extent with what can be found in the textbooks, where the weather forecast appears to be addressed the most in an intermediate language level.

Regarding primary education and the first year of secondary education, however, the weather forecast appears to be approached on a much limited scale with only one teacher opting for those

categories. However, it can be observed on the graph that the weather forecast appears in a second foreign language context in both the 5th and 6th grade of primary school. As already mentioned, since it is not possible for students to study a second foreign language before the 3rd year of secondary school, it can be assumed that some of the teachers misunderstood what the terms "langue moderne 1", langue moderne 2" and "langue moderne 3" actually meant. Even though these terms appeared to be clear at first glance, they should probably have been explained beforehand.

- Q4: Do you approach the weather forecast by starting the didactic sequence with a parody of the latter? That is, a scenario created in order to entertain the audience.

The results showed that the great majority of foreign language teachers (89.6%) do not address the weather forecast by starting their course with a parody of the latter. Nevertheless, the figure demonstrates that 10.4% are using this technique. If a parody of the genre functions as the starting point of the course, it might be assumed that the students would not have been initiated to the elements composing the internal structure of the initial genre. As a consequence, students may thus believe that the parodied genre's characteristics reflect the original genre, which could result as being counterproductive (Simons, 2018).

- Q5: During the didactic sequence, do you teach your students how to create the visual support used in a classic TV weather forecast?

A very marked tendency manifested itself for that question. Indeed, among 48 answers, a significant majority of the respondents (83.3%) answered that they did not teach their students how to create a visual support. Nevertheless, it should have been interested to enquiry about the specific reasons accounting for that choice. However, several hypotheses might be put forward. One of them could be that foreign language teachers might believe that this sort of task is not part of their job since they need to focus on the linguistic dimension of their course. Provided this hypothesis was confirmed, it would then appear to be rather problematic when it comes to students' assessment, especially if they have to *produce* a TV weather forecast for which they have to create a visual support. To this extent, if a criterion dealing with the latter appeared in the assessment grid, the teacher would then evaluate her/his students on something they were not taught.

- Q6: During the didactic sequence, do you teach your students some geographical notions of Belgium?

Concerning this question, the data showed no clear-cut position. Indeed, the results were shared equally among the 48 replies, with 50% of the foreign language teachers stating that they do not teach some geographical elements of Belgium whereas 50% answered positively.

In this case, it would have been interesting to have asked to respondent to precise the language they teach in their answer. Indeed, it would then have been possible to enquiry about the fact that teachers do not include the geography of Belgium because it is not the target country or because they see it as being useless. Similarly, concerning the teachers including some geographical notions in the didactic sequence, is this explained by the fact that Belgium is the target country from which students study the language? Or do teachers choose to focus on Belgium even if the foreign language is not Dutch?

- Q7: During the didactic sequence, do you teach some geographical notions of the target country from which students study the language?

As opposed to the last question, the foreign language teachers had a more consistent opinion, with 72.9% who answered positively whereas 27.1% mentioned that they do not teach some geographical notions of the target country from which students study the language.

- Q8: During the didactic sequence, do you teach your students about the internal structure of the genre of the weather forecast? That is, the main steps that compose the latter, i.e. the jingle, the weather of the current day, weather forecasts for the upcoming days etc.

The collected data for that particular question illustrated that a majority of the respondents (54.2%) do not take the internal structure into account during the learning process whereas 45.8% mentioned they do. The difference is however not significant since the majority concerned 26 teachers as opposed to 22 teachers, included in the 45.8%.

As it has been demonstrated in Chapter 2, the notion of genre is absent from the legal texts of the Federation Wallonia-Brussels upon which foreign language teachers are supposed to rely. Similarly, as mentioned in Chapter 3, foreign language textbooks do not include the notion of genre explicitly either. Therefore, such a tendency does not appear to be surprising because foreign

language teachers do not actually possess any clear structures on which they could base themselves to approach the generic dimension in their courses.

- Q9: Do the weather forecast function as the final task of the didactic sequence?

Most teachers answered "yes" to that particular question. Among the 47 replies, this majority represents 61.7% (29 teachers). For 38.3% (18 teachers), however, this was not the case.

- Q10: If you answered "yes" to the previous question, what form does the weather forecast take in the final task?
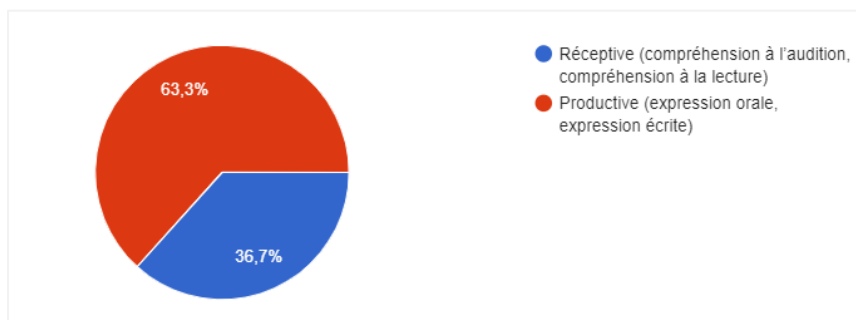
Figure 15 – Answer to Q10: "If you answered 'yes' to the previous question, what form does the weather forecast take in the final task?"

Here, the 29 participants had the choice between two options, namely "receptive" or "productive" and were not allowed to add any extra option. As shown in Figure 15, an important part of the foreign language teachers (63.3%) mentioned that they ask their students to produce a weather forecast whereas the remaining part (36.7%) tends to opt for receptive final tasks.

Nonetheless, these findings do not appear to correlate with the conclusions made from the analysis carried out in the textbooks. Indeed, the study has shown that among the various tasks proposed in (English) textbooks, the tasks dealing with the genre of the weather forecast frequently took the form of receptive skills and were especially designed to train the listening skill.

- Q11: If you answered "productive" to the previous question, what is the language skill targeted by the final task?
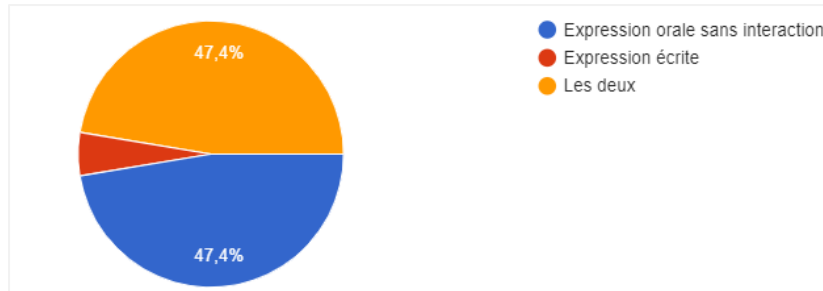
Figure 16 - Answer to Q11: "If you answered 'productive' to the previous question, what is the language skill targeted by the final task?

Among the 19 answers given, 9 respondents (47.4%) mentioned that their final task took the form of a speaking skill without interaction. In the same way, 47.4% (9) opted for the suggestion including both speaking skill and writing skill. However, only one respondent (5.3%) chose the writing skill.

- Q12: With regard to the final task, the weather forecast that the students have to produce is…
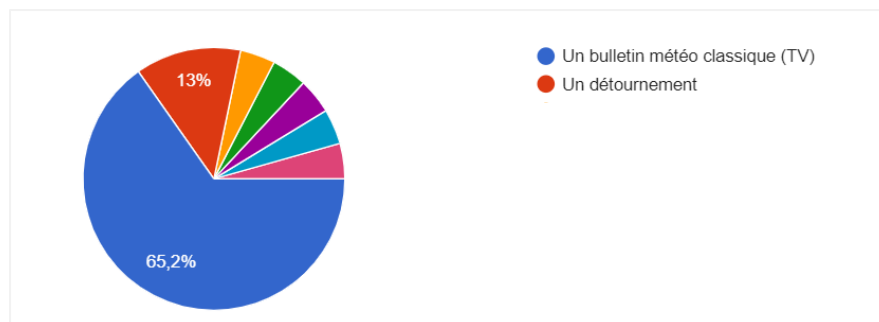
Figure 17 - Answer to Q12: "With regard to the final task, the weather forecast that the students have to produce is..."

As illustrated by Figure 17, there were two options already listed for this question, namely "a classic weather forecast", chosen by the majority of the respondents (65.2%), and "a parody" for which 13% of the foreign language teachers opted. Besides, the participants had the opportunity that add another suggestion. Among these suggestions, teachers mentioned more than once the fact that students should be able to discuss a specific choice of activity according to the weather forecast or to describe the latter on the day of a planned activity. Another teacher also suggested that the final task consists in a description of Belgium's climate based on a specific season. It should be noted that, among the additional suggestions listed, the generic dimension of the weather forecast moves progressively away of the final task.

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- Q13: Do you evaluate the weather forecast?

Out of 42 replies, 73.8% of the foreign language teachers (31) claimed that they assess the weather forecast whereas 26.2% (11) answered negatively.

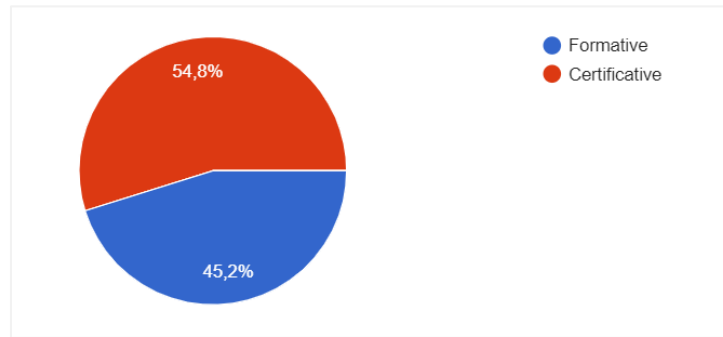- Q14: If you answered "yes" to the previous question, in which perspective?

Figure 18 - Answer to Q14: "If you answered 'yes' to the previous question, in which perspective?"

Even though the difference between the two listed items was not significant, a majority of the respondents (54.8%) seemed to opt for the "certificative" option rather than the "formative" one (45.2%).

- Q15: Do you assess the weather forecast on the receptive level, the productive level or both?
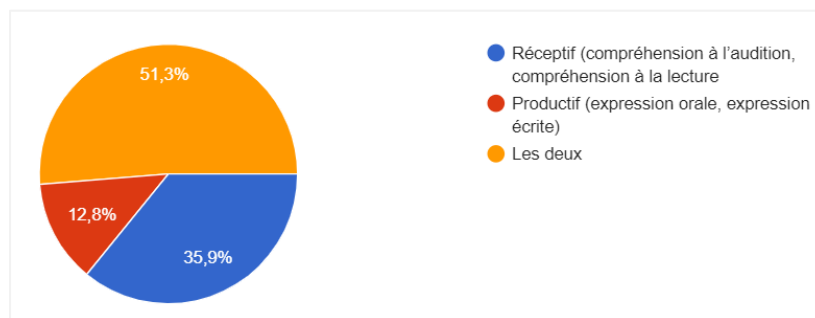
Figure 19 – Answer to Q15: "Do you assess the weather forecast on the receptive level, the productive level or both?"

A total of 39 replies were collected for this question. As it can be seen on Figure 15, more than half of the respondents (20) state that they evaluate the weather forecast on both levels as opposed to 35.9% who assess the latter on the receptive level only and 12.8% only focussing on the productive level.

However, a slight change of tendency can be noticed compared to the foreign language teachers' practices in terms of final task, where the respondents tend to choose productive final tasks rather than receptive ones.

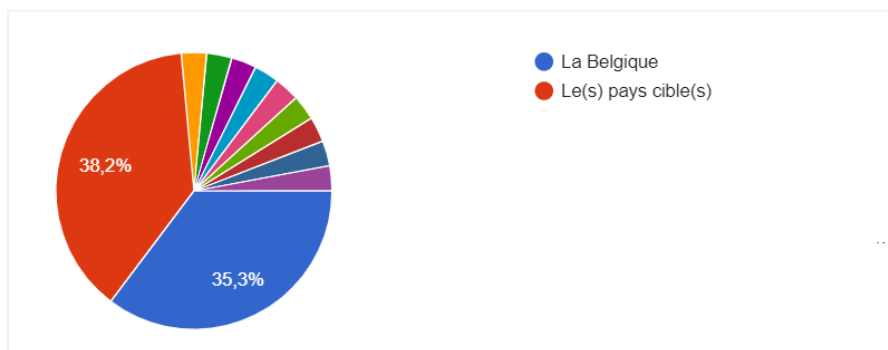▪ Q16: With regard to the assessment task, the weather forecast that the students have to produce focus on…

Figure 20 - Answer to Q16: "With regard to the assessment task, the weather forecast that the students have to produce focus on…"

As it was the case for question 12, two options were already listed, namely "La Belgique", represented by 35.3% of the respondents, and "Le(s) pays cible(s)", chosen by 38.2%. Besides, if none of those suggestions corresponded to the foreign language teacher, a third option called "Other" was displayed on the screen. Among the suggested options, foreign language teachers often mentioned that the students were allowed to choose the target country on which they wanted to produce the weather forecast. In this instance, it might thus be assumed that students have to master some geographical notions of the country that they choose, otherwise this task may appear to be rather complex. Furthermore, one teacher also stated that the country was not an important element in such a task.

The two main tendencies illustrated in Figure 20 seem however to correlate with the previous observations made in question 12, where a majority of foreign language teachers appear to attach some importance to the geography of the target country. Indeed, this tendency is also instantiated by the majority (38.2%) in this question.

▪ Q17: With regard to the assessment task, do the students have to create a visual element?

A total of 34 replies were collected for this question. As far as the majority of the respondents is concerned, 70.6% of them (24 teachers) answered negatively to the question. For 29.4% of the participants (10 teachers), however, they mentioned that their students had to create a visual support.

- Q18: If you answered "yes" to the previous question, what form?

| affiche, powerpoint s'ils maîtrisent |
| Au choix: panneaux, images, power point... |
| Poster ou power point ou audio |
| Carte |
| Ils peuvent car ils doivent répondre à une lettre à un correspondant=> ils savent que la présentation peut etre valorisée sous forme de bonur |
| support de leur choix |
| Panneau, ordi ... |
| Ils peuvent produire une carte (même basique) du pays abordé. |

Figure 21 - Answer to Q18: "If you answered 'yes' to the previous question, what form?"

As illustrated in Figure 21, the visual support that students have to create can be of various types and the same types are often mentioned by the foreign language teachers, namely the use of PowerPoint or posters. It should be noted that the explicit use of maps is only mentioned twice by the respondents, which may seem surprising since the use of maps is an integral part of a weather forecast.

- Q19: With regard to the assessment task, do the students have to learn their text by heart?

According to 73.5% of the respondents (26), the students are not asked to learn their text by heart whereas it is however the case for 26.5% of the foreign language teachers (9).

- Q20: If you answered "yes" to the previous question, for what reason(s)?

Figure 22 – Answers to Q20: "If you answered 'yes' to the previous question, for what reason(s)?

What can be retained from all these answers given in Figure 22 is that the argument dealing with the standard social practices is never mentioned. Indeed, as it has been previously established throughout this dissertation, learning a genre is also learning about the specific (social) context in which this genre occurs (Devitt, 2004). In the case of the genre of the weather forecast, the text is never, or in rare situations, studied by heart by the weathercasters. In most cases, the text is read from a script. Consequently, by asking the students to study their text by heart, the task to which they are submitted may appear to be more demanding than it is the case in standard social practices.

- Q21: If you answered "no" to question 19, for what reason(s)?

Figure 23 - Answers to Q21: "If you answered 'no' to question 19, for what reason(s)?"

In this case, it can be seen that some of the teachers used the argument of the standard social practices to justify their answer. However, similar observations can be made compared to question 20. Indeed, some teachers mentioned that they impose some elements or provide them at the last minute, which results in the fact the students have not much time to prepare. With regard to standard social practices, however, weathercasters are rarely presenting their forecast without a minimum amount of preparation beforehand. Despite the fact that some information may change a few minutes before presenting, it may be unlikely for a weather presenter to discover the information at the moment of the presentation. Consequently, students are sometimes subject to tasks that are actually more complex than it is the case in everyday life.

- Q22: How important to you is the place of the following criteria in an assessment grid? For each criterion, tick the box that best reflects your point of view.
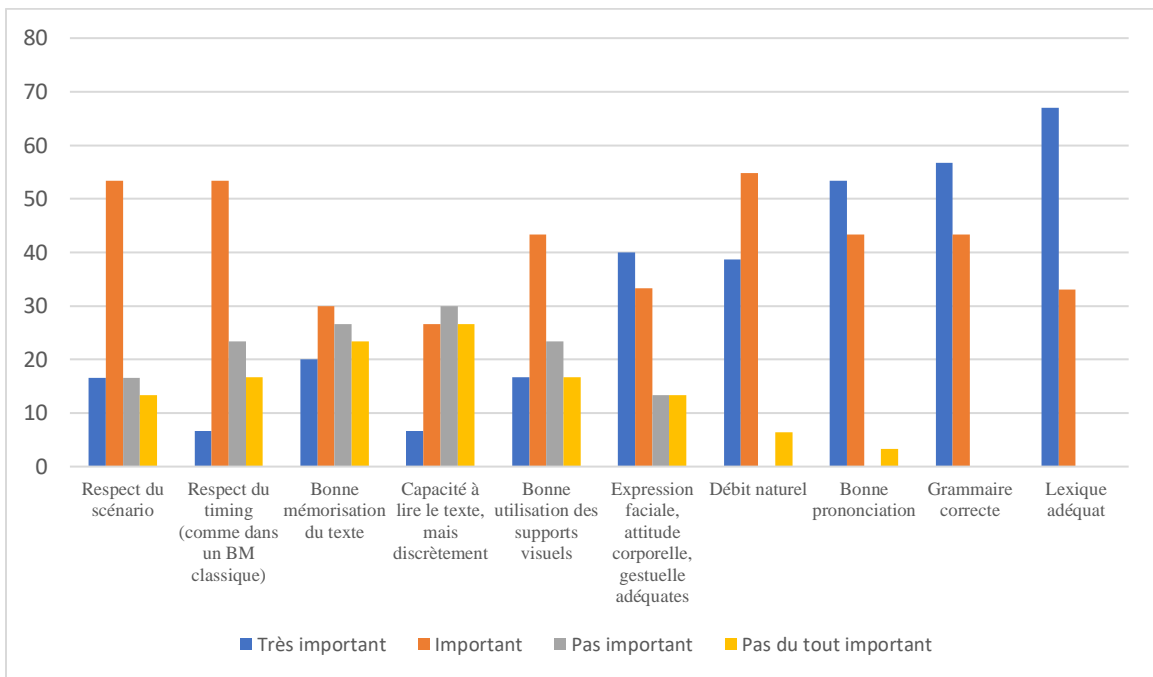

Figure 24 - Answers to Q22: "How important to you is the place of the following criteria in an assessment grid?"
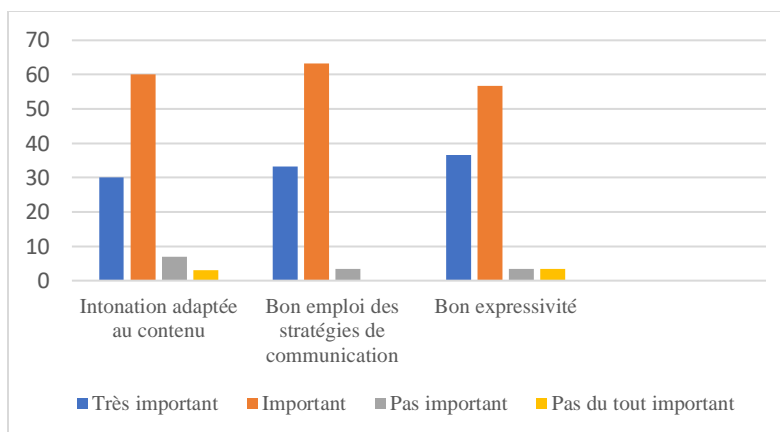
Figure 25 – Answers to Q22: "How important to you is the place of the following criteria in an assessment grid?" (part 2)

As shown both in Figures 24 and 24 bis, foreign language teachers tend to attach more importance to the linguistic criteria rather than the criteria dealing with the internal structure of the genre. Indeed, the grammar (57%), the lexicon (67%) and the pronunciation (54%) for instance are considered as highly important among foreign language teachers. Additionally, students' pace of speech was also a popular criterion among the respondents, who consider the latter as being significant (55%).

However, among the 30 surveyed teachers, it should be noticed that two criteria concerning the internal structure of the genre were seen as being valuable in an assessment grid, namely the respect of the pattern of a weather forecast as well as the compliance with the ability of students to comply with a time constraint, as it is the case in real weather forecasts. These two items were respectively assessed to be important by 54% of the respondents.

Concerning the two criteria considered as not being important in assessment grid among the respondents, foreign language teachers mentioned the ability to read the text discreetly as well as the memorising of the text. For example, 27% of the teachers thought that the former was not at all important compared 23% for the latter.

Overall, it can lead us to think that the generic dimension of the weather forecast is seen as being less valuable than it is the case for linguistic criteria. This might be explained once again by the fact that foreign language teachers seem not be accustomed enough to the notion of genre and as already mentioned, may lack of clear and explicit methodological tools to integrate the latter in their course.

- Q23: When I observe my students' final productions, I notice that most of them have acquired the lexical resources thanks to the didactic sequence on the weather forecast.

Figure 26 – Answer to Q23: "When I observe my students' final productions, I notice that most of them have acquired the lexical resources thanks to the didactic sequence on the weather forecast."
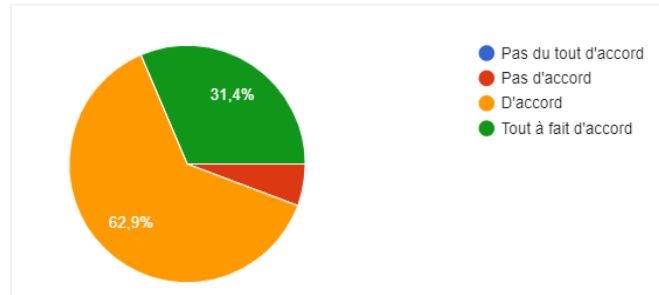
As said earlier, questions 23 to 26 were designed to assess to which extent foreign language teachers agreed with the suggested statements concerning the students' potential progress at the end of the didactic sequence on the genre of the weather forecast.

As far as the lexicon is concerned, a striking majority of the respondents (94.3%) agreed on the fact that students developed their lexical skills and acquired the resources proper to the lexical field of the weather forecast at the end of the didactic sequence. This observation may be linked to question 2 where it has been demonstrated that foreign language teachers mostly pursue lexical purposes when teaching the weather forecast. As a result, this might explain why such a great deal of the respondents chose the options "Agree" (62.9%) and "Strongly agree" (31.4%).

- Q24: When I observe my students' final productions, I notice that most of them have acquired the grammatical resources thanks to the didactic sequence on the weather forecast.

Figure 27 – Answer to Q24: "When I observe my students' final productions, I notice that most of them have acquired the grammatical resources thanks to the didactic sequence on the weather forecast."
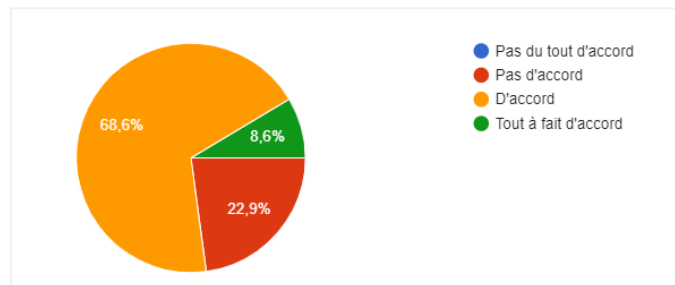
Concerning students' acquisition of grammatical resources, there is a marked tendency for teachers to confirm the statement. Indeed, out of 35 replies, 27 teachers (77,2%) stated that students do acquire grammatical structures thanks to a didactic sequence on the weather forecast. However, a minority has the opposite point of view since 22.9% (8 teachers) believe that students do not benefit from a didactic sequence dealing with the weather forecast to acquire grammatical resources.

- Q25: When I observe my students' final productions, I notice that most of them have acquired the language functions thanks to the didactic sequence on the weather forecast.

Figure 28 – Answer to Q25: "When I observe my students' final productions, I notice that most of them have acquired the language functions thanks to the didactic sequence on the weather forecast."
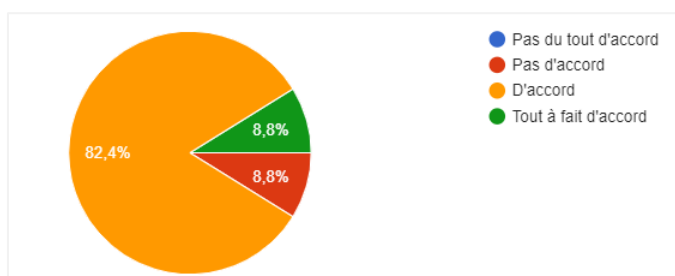
Here again, the tendency appears to be one-sided. 91.2% (31 teachers) of the respondents confirmed that their students acquired the language functions thanks to a course designed on the theme of the weather forecast as opposed to 8.8% (3 teachers) who did not agree to the suggested statement.

- Q26: When I observe my students' final productions, I notice that most of them have acquired the major headings of a weather forecast thanks to the didactic sequence.

Figure 29 – Answer to Q26: "When I observe my students' final productions, I notice that most of them have acquired the major headings of a weather forecast thanks to the didactic sequence."
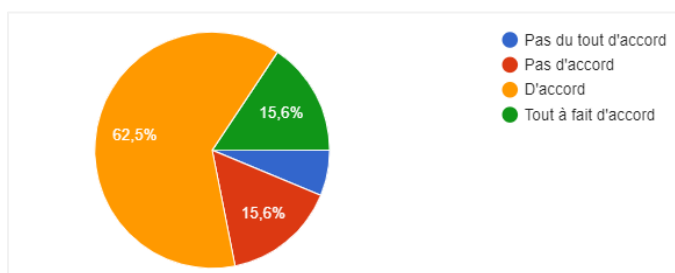
In this case, a majority of foreign language teachers (78.1%) notices that such a didactic sequence dealing with the weather forecast helps students to acquire some elements of its internal structure. Surprisingly, this does not correlate with the results found in question 8, where more than half of the respondents stated they did not teach the internal structure of the weather forecast to their students. Therefore, one might wonder how students could acquire such a structure if this had not been taught in class.

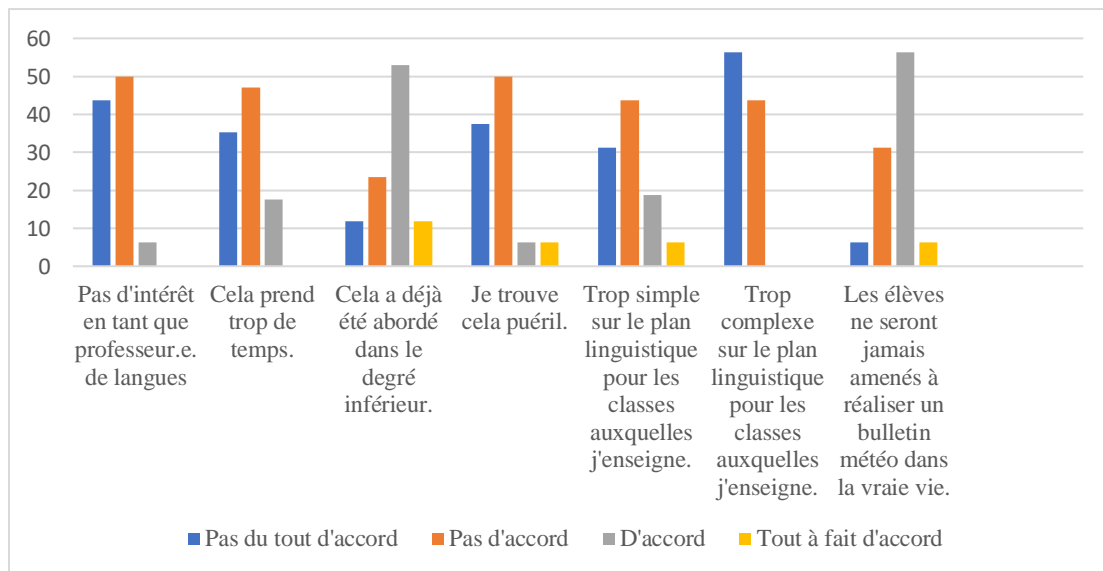- Q27: You do not address the theme of the weather forecast in class because…

Figure 30 - Answer to Q27: "You do not address the theme of the weather forecast in class because…"

In this question, foreign language teachers who do not use the weather forecast in their classroom were asked to scale to which extent they agreed to the suggested statements. Overall, it seems that one of the two main reasons accounting for the teachers' non-use of the genre has to do with the fact that this theme is believed to have already been approached in the first three years of secondary education. However, it might be argued that it is not because a particular theme has already been addressed that foreign language teachers cannot use this opportunity to take it to a step further and to adapt the theme to suit their particular needs as wells their students'. As already mentioned earlier in this dissertation, "l'approche en spirale" allows for teachers to address a specific theme on several occasions, giving them the opportunity to refine its content and to supplement the latter by other textual genres belonging to the same genre family (Simons, 2018).

The second main tendency deals with the fact that students will never be asked to produce or present a weather forecast in the future. Justifiably, this argument appears to be relevant when one takes the CEFR into consideration. Indeed, at first glance, using the genre of the weather forecast does not seem to meet the ideas conveyed by the action-based approach advocated in the document. To this extent, being able to present a weather forecast does not make a learner into a social actor as such for instance. However, in terms of the utility of the language, it has been demonstrated in Table 8 that this genre was at the heart of various resources whether grammatical, lexical, strategic and many more, which makes the genre of the weather forecast more than relevant. Moreover, genres do not systematically have to be produced and many teaching activities or assessment tasks could also be designed in order to train the receptive skills.

4.6.   Conclusion

As already mentioned, the purpose of this study was to evaluate the place devoted to the genre of the weather forecast in teachers' classrooms. To this aim, the research was driven by four research questions, namely:

1. Is the genre of the weather forecast approached by foreign language teachers? Why (not)?
2. How do foreign language teachers use the genre of the weather forecast in their classroom?
3. What are the goals pursued by teaching this particular genre according to foreign language teachers?
4. At which level of language competence is the genre of the weather forecast most used?

As far as the first research question is concerned, the hypothesis that I formulated consisted in the fact that the generic dimension of the weather forecast might be underused in teachers' practices for several reasons that I listed in Section 4.3. The results showed however that some foreign language teachers did integrate this generic dimension in their course. This observation was especially illustrated in question 8 where nearly half of the respondents (45.8%) mentioned that the internal structure of the weather forecast was subject to an explicit teaching during the learning process. Even though it was not the case for the majority of the participants, it can thus be seen that the generic dimension is well present, however not to a significant extent. Consequently, the second part of the hypothesis is then confirmed.

The first part of the hypothesis mentioned that the weather forecast might be a recurring theme among foreign language teachers. As it has been demonstrated in question 1.78% of the surveyed teachers claimed that they were using the weather forecast in their course. As a result, the first part of the hypothesis can be said to be confirmed.

With regard to the second research question, the collected data demonstrated a variation in the different methods used to approach the weather forecast. Indeed, some teachers were seen to attach a specific importance to some elements while the same elements appeared not to be taken into account by others. One example that illustrated this variation was the attention paid to the geographical notions during the learning process. Indeed, the integration (or not) of the latter into teachers' courses varied from teacher to teacher. Similar observations could also be made regarding other elements such as the importance attached to the visual support etc.

Concerning the third research question, the hypothesis put forward referred to the fact that since the generic dimension was believed to be underused by foreign language teachers, the acquisition of the genre would thus not function as one of the learning process' purposes. In this perspective, teachers might thus pursue lexical and/or grammatical purposes. The results confirmed this hypothesis since 97.9% of the respondents mentioned that they pursue a lexical purpose when teaching the weather forecast. Similarly, 72.3% also added the importance of language functions and 57.4% mentioned the grammatical purpose.

Finally, the last research question concerned the particular level(s) at which the weather forecast is approached. I expected the latter to be addressed at a pre-intermediate or intermediate level assuming that the teachers' non-use of the generic dimension in their course would make them consider the weather forecast as a basic and simple theme. However, although the results showed that the latter is approached in more or less each year from the 5th grade in primary school to the 6th year in secondary school, the weather forecast tended to be specifically addressed in the 2nd and 4th year of secondary school, which can respectively be considered as pre-intermediate and intermediate levels. Nevertheless, foreign language teachers also appeared to approach this theme in the last two years of secondary education. Consequently, these observations do not seem to entirely correlate with the conclusions drawn from the textbooks analysis, where the study had shown that the weather forecast was addressed on various levels, except for the pre-intermediate and advanced level.

To conclude this case study, it is important to note that the results can by no means by generalized due to the restricted character of the survey sample. Furthermore, the majority of the respondents are trainee supervisors who work in close relationship with the University of Liège. Consequently, it cannot be assumed that they reflect all the foreign language teachers' practices from the French-community of Belgium. Besides, a great deal of the participants come from the Province of Liège, which therefore cannot be considered as reflecting the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels either.

Moreover, this research also showed some limitations. Indeed, despite the fact that a joint questionnaire had many advantages, it would have been interested to conduct this research on my own. Among the several disadvantages, one of them referred to the section dealing with the respondents' professional background which was common to the four of us. However, this prevented me of having a detailed analysis of the foreign language teachers who exclusively took part in my questionnaire. Furthermore, partly due to the COVID-19 sanitary crisis, the study was only composed of declarative as well as prescriptive data. It would thus have been relevant to observe the teachers in their work environment to supplement my research with practical data so as to avoid the risk of the existing gap between teachers' own beliefs about their practices and what they actually do in their classroom. Additionally, a classroom experimentation about the genre of the weather forecast would certainly have been appropriate to test various teaching methods in order to verify their relative effectiveness.

5. Conclusion

This dissertation aimed to asses the place of the genre of the weather forecast in foreign language teaching as well as to provide an answer to the question: To which extent is the genre of the weather forecast useful and interesting to be addressed in a foreign language teaching context? To the best of my knowledge, no previous work had already focused on this research topic before. I therefore tried to provide some insight on this particular topic throughout my dissertation.

To this aim, it appeared that providing the reader with an overview of the place of the genre in language teaching within the scientific literature as well as defining the concept was an essential step before further investigating other dimensions of the topic. Furthermore, it has been proved in Chapter 1 that the various definitions of the notion of genre provided by the scientific literature shared some similarities which thus resulted in providing an operational definition of the concept.

The second chapter has pointed out the absence of the generic dimension in the legal documents of the Federation of Wallonia-Brussels, especially modern languages curricula and skill-based documents. Moreover, the absence of an explicit definition of the concept of genre in the CEFR does not provide foreign language teachers with sufficient knowledge or tools to integrate this dimension into their courses.

Chapter 3 focused specifically on the genre of the weather forecast and provided the reader with a detailed analysis of the generic structure of the latter. Throughout the analysis of various TV-weather forecast, it has been demonstrated that this text type was a great opportunity for students to train various language skills and contribute to the acquisition of several resources. As far as the place of the genre of the weather forecast in English textbooks is concerned, it appeared that the generic dimension was rarely taken into account in the learning activities suggested to the students. When the generic dimension did appear however, it was never made explicit by the textbook in question, and always functioned a tool to train another language skill.

Finally, the case study demonstrated that the notion of genre was underused by foreign language teachers and that they attached more importance to the lexical and grammatical dimensions of the weather forecast rather than the generic one. However, this generic dimension was still integrated among some of the respondents, which proves that the latter is considered as being an important dimension in foreign language teaching contexts. This research also

demonstrated that the genre of the weather forecast was approached at various moments in the students' school curriculum, namely in the 2nd and 4th year of secondary education which can be considered as pre-intermediate and intermediate language level. However, the weather forecast also seemed to be approached in higher levels of language competence with is opposed to what was advocated by the CEFR. It can therefore be assumed that textual genres and especially the genre of the weather forecast can be programmed and approached at various levels of language competence and that students do not need an advanced level to be able to benefit from such a genre-based approach.

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