



# Assessment as a Social Narrative: Comparing Grading Systems in Slavic and Romance Educational Traditions

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## Abstract

*This paper examines grading systems as social narratives that reflect cultural values, educational traditions, and perceptions of academic achievement. The study compares Slavic and Romance educational contexts, focusing on the relationship between numerical scales, linguistic labels, and institutional forms of assessment. The analysis uses ECTS as a European comparative reference point for examining the challenges of grade comparability across national educational contexts. Comparative tables are used to summarise national grading scales, passing thresholds, school-leaving examinations, university assessment systems, and their correspondence with ECTS classifications. The main focus is on school education, while university grading practices are considered as an additional comparative layer. For instance, the comparison includes the Russian five-point scale and the Italian ten-point school and thirty-point university scales, showing how different educational levels may rely on distinct assessment models within the same national tradition. The analysis demonstrates how different educational systems structure achievement and failure through both numerical scales and verbal descriptors. The linguistic dimension is explored through lexical expressions of assessment, such as Russian “otlichno”, Czech “výborně”, Polish “celujący”, French “très bien”, Italian “ottimo”, and Spanish “sobresaliente”. The analysis further illustrates how grading practices extend beyond education and become embedded in everyday language, cultural narratives, and social perceptions, shaping how merit and competence are interpreted in broader social life. The study argues that assessment functions not only as a pedagogical mechanism but also as a cultural and linguistic system through which societies communicate values, expectations, and notions of educational success.*

**Keywords:** *grading systems, assessment, Slavic countries, Romance countries, language and society*

## 1. Introduction

Assessment is generally viewed as a pedagogical instrument for evaluating learning outcomes, but grades also function as socially recognisable signs. Numerical and verbal categories distinguish among failure, minimally acceptable performance, and excellence, potentially contributing to the social positioning of learners [1, 2].

This paper approaches grading as a social narrative, defined here as an institutionally and culturally established framework through which educational success and failure are interpreted. The approach draws on the theory of social representations [3] and research on their narrative and evaluative organisation [4].

International comparison makes the conventional nature of numerical grades most clearly visible. The same number may represent opposite results in different systems, while apparently similar scales may employ different passing thresholds and verbal categories. Grades therefore need to be interpreted within their educational and institutional contexts rather than through simple numerical equivalence [5]. Numerical grades are well suited for this type of analysis because their apparent simplicity can conceal substantial cultural variation. A number may appear universally interpretable, yet its evaluative meaning is conventional. A grade of 5 can represent excellence in Russia and failure in Czechia or Slovakia, while the meaning of a score of 10 varies considerably depending on the educational context [5, 8, 9]. The verbal labels attached to grades further demonstrate that assessment does more than quantify performance: it classifies achievement through culturally established concepts such as “satisfactory”, “sufficient”, “very good”, or “excellent”.

Grading systems are closely connected to the relationship between language and society. Ordinary evaluative expressions may become institutionalised as formal categories of educational achievement, while educational categories and numerical symbols may in turn acquire broader meanings in everyday



language. Expressions derived from school grades can become metaphors for quality, competence, or even personal identity.

In this sense, a grading system can be viewed as a recurring social narrative because it provides learners with a stable set of categories through which achievement is interpreted. Labels such as “fail”, “satisfactory”, “good”, or “excellent” do not merely record an individual result - they establish positions within an evaluative hierarchy. Through repeated use, these categories become socially recognisable and enter the language through which students, teachers, and families discuss educational achievement. The narrative dimension lies not in an individual story attached to a particular grade, but in the recurring cultural pattern through which an educational system defines failure, adequacy, success, and excellence. The term narrative is used here in a broad socio-cultural sense to describe a recurrent evaluative structure through which educational achievement acquires socially shared meaning.

## 2. Methodology and the ECTS Comparative Context

The research uses a qualitative comparative-documentary approach based on national regulations, Eurydice country profiles, official grading documentation, ECTS materials, lexicographical sources, and previous comparative research.

The systems were compared across a common set of analytical dimensions: numerical range and direction, failure and passing thresholds, verbal descriptors of minimum and maximum achievement, variation across educational levels, and the use of grading expressions beyond formal assessment.

Witte's study served as a reference source for comparing selected aspects of the grading systems included in this analysis [5].

Cross-level comparison is selective rather than exhaustive and is used to illustrate variation between school assessment, school-leaving certification, and higher education. University practices are treated as representative examples and may vary across institutions, programmes, faculties, and individual courses.

The Slavic sample includes Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Czechia, Slovakia, Poland, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Bulgaria. The Romance-language sample includes France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Romania, and Moldova. These categories are employed as comparative linguistic and cultural frames rather than as claims that either group represents a single educational model.

The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) provides a useful European reference point for examining grade comparability across national and educational contexts. Primarily designed to enhance transparency, facilitate academic mobility, and support the recognition of learning achievements, ECTS is not used here to convert school grades directly. Instead, its historical development serves as an example of the broader difficulty examined in this paper: grades originating in different educational contexts cannot always be compared through fixed numerical equivalence [6].

Historically, ECTS employed a relative A-E scale for successful performance, supplemented by FX and F for unsuccessful results [7].

**Table 1.** Historical ECTS Grading Scale

| ECTS grade | Position among successful students | Qualitative category               |
|------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| A          | top 10%                            | Excellent                          |
| B          | next 25%                           | Very Good                          |
| C          | next 30%                           | Good                               |
| D          | next 25%                           | Satisfactory                       |
| E          | final 10%                          | Sufficient                         |
| FX         | unsuccessful                       | further work required              |
| F          | unsuccessful                       | considerable further work required |

The percentages for A-E referred only to students who had successfully completed the assessment. FX and F represented unsuccessful performance and were excluded from this 100% distribution. An ECTS grade of A consequently indicated that a student's result belonged to the top 10% of successful results within the relevant reference group. It was a relative rather than an absolute category: *A did not necessarily correspond to a fixed numerical score such as 90% or above*. If exactly 100 students successfully completed a course, approximately 10 would fall into category A, the next 25 into B, the next 30 into C, the next 25 into D, and the final 10 into E [7].



A high grade in a national system could not automatically be assigned an ECTS letter without considering the distribution of successful grades within the relevant reference group. The model therefore already illustrated the difficulty of establishing direct equivalence between different grading traditions.

Since 2009, the former A-E scale has been replaced by grade distribution tables. Under the current approach, institutions retain their national or institutional grading scales and show how frequently particular passing grades occur within a comparable group of students [6, 7]. This shift is important for the present analysis because it moves attention away from assumed equivalence and towards how grades are actually used within a specific educational setting.

Accordingly, the comparative tables below do not assign fixed ECTS equivalents to national grades; correspondence is discussed through grade distributions rather than one-to-one conversion.

### 3. Slavic Grading Systems

**Table 2.** Numerical and Verbal Categories in Slavic Grading Systems

| Country                | School scale                               | Failure                    | Minimum positive achievement | Highest achievement |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| *Russia                | 1-5 but 2-5 in standard summative practice | 2 - neudovletvoritelno     | 3 - udovletvoritelno         | 5 - otlichno        |
| Belarus                | 1-10                                       | 1-2 - low / unsatisfactory | 3-4 - satisfactory           | 9-10 - high         |
| Ukraine                | 1-12                                       | 1-3 - pochatkovyi          | 4-6 - serednii               | 10-12 - vysokyi     |
| Czechia                | 5-1 (5 = min, 1 = max)                     | 5 - nedostatečný           | 4 - dostatečný               | 1 - výborně         |
| Slovakia               | 5-1 (5 = min, 1 = max)                     | 5 - nedostatočný           | 4 - dostatočný               | 1 - výborne         |
| Poland                 | 1-6                                        | 1 - niedostateczny         | 2 - dopuszczający            | 6 - celujący        |
| Slovenia               | 1-5                                        | 1 - nezadostno             | 2 - zadostno                 | 5 - odlično         |
| Croatia                | 1-5                                        | 1 - nedovoljan             | 2 - dovoljan                 | 5 - odličan         |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | predominantly 1-5                          | 1 - nedovoljan             | 2 - dovoljan                 | 5 - odličan         |
| Serbia                 | 1-5                                        | 1 - nedovoljan             | 2 - dovoljan                 | 5 - odličan         |
| Montenegro             | 1-5                                        | 1 - nedovoljan             | 2 - dovoljan                 | 5 - odličan         |
| North Macedonia        | 1-5                                        | 1 - nedovolen              | 2 - dovolen                  | 5 - odličen         |
| Bulgaria               | 2-6                                        | 2 - slab                   | 3 - sreden                   | 6 - otlichen        |

Source: author's compilation based on Eurydice country profiles and selected national and official documentation [8-10, 25-27].

Russia and Serbia illustrate different lower boundaries within similar grading traditions. In standard Russian summative school assessment, grade 2 is failing and grade 3 is the minimum passing result. Serbia uses the full 1-5 scale: 1, *nedovoljan*, is failing, while 2, *dovoljan*, is already positive [9, 10].

Belarus and Ukraine present another type of variation. Instead of relatively compact five- or six-point systems, they employ broader numerical scales. Belarus uses a ten-point structure, while Ukraine uses twelve points organised into broader achievement levels. The Ukrainian system distinguishes *pochatkovyi* ("initial"), *serednii* ("middle"), *dostatnii* ("sufficient"), and *vysokyi* ("high") levels. Such systems illustrate that fine numerical differentiation may coexist with broader verbal classifications of achievement [8, 25, 26].

Czechia and Slovakia display the clearest reversal of numerical direction within the sample: 1 is the highest and 5 the lowest grade. This convention can also be viewed historically within a broader Central European educational tradition, including developments inherited from the Habsburg educational environment [25].

For someone accustomed to an ascending scale in which a higher number generally indicates a better result, a Czech or Slovak learner celebrating a "1" may initially appear paradoxical. This example shows that a numerical symbol does not possess a universal evaluative meaning - such meaning is created by the educational convention within which it functions.

The Polish 1-6 scale is distinguished by its highest category, *celujący*. The *Wielki słownik języka polskiego* records *ocena celująca* as the highest positive grade. Since *celować* means "to excel" and, in another sense, "to aim", the term may evoke for a contemporary speaker an additional association with accurately reaching or "hitting" a target. This should, however, be treated as a synchronic linguistic association rather than as a literal etymology of the grading term [15].



The South Slavic systems included in the sample show a broadly similar numerical pattern. Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, and North Macedonia predominantly use a 1-5 structure in which 1 represents failure, 2 the minimum positive result, and 5 the highest achievement. Their verbal descriptors also reveal substantial lexical similarity, particularly forms associated with the idea of “sufficiency” at the lower positive boundary and forms related to *odličan* at the upper end. Bulgaria differs numerically by using a 2-6 scale, although its highest descriptor, *otličen*, is linguistically comparable with Russian *otlichno* and other Slavic expressions of excellence [8, 10, 27].

#### 4. Romance-Language Grading Systems

**Table 3.** Numerical and Verbal Categories in Romance-Language Grading Systems

| Country  | School scale / form                                                                      | Failure                                                                    | Minimum positive achievement                                          | Highest achievement                                                      |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| France   | predominantly 0-20                                                                       | below 10/20                                                                | 10/20 - pass                                                          | 20/20; ≥16/20 - très bien; >18/20 - félicitations du jury may be awarded |
| Italy    | primary: verbal categories; secondary: /10                                               | primary: Non sufficiente; secondary: below 6/10                            | primary: Sufficiente; secondary: 6/10                                 | primary: Ottimo; secondary: 10/10                                        |
| Spain    | ESO: official verbal categories; Bachillerato: 0-10                                      | ESO: Insuficiente; Bachillerato: 0-4                                       | ESO: Suficiente; Bachillerato: 5                                      | ESO: Sobresaliente; Bachillerato: 10                                     |
| Portugal | 1st cycle: qualitative categories; later basic education: 1-5; secondary education: 0-20 | 1st cycle: Insuficiente; basic education: 1-2; secondary education: 0-9/20 | 1st cycle: Suficiente; basic education: 3; secondary education: 10/20 | 1st cycle: Muito Bom; basic education: 5; secondary education: 20/20     |
| Romania  | primary: verbal categories; secondary: 1-10                                              | primary: Insuficient; secondary: 1-4                                       | primary: Suficient; secondary: 5                                      | primary: Foarte bine; secondary: 10                                      |
| Moldova  | primary: descriptors; Grade IV selected subjects: 5-10; later stages: numerical grading  | primary: recovery procedure where competencies remain insufficient         | 5 / Suficient in Grade IV selected subjects                           | 10 / Excelent                                                            |

Source: author's compilation based on Eurydice country profiles and national educational documentation [8, 20, 17-19, 22, 23].

Romance-language systems vary substantially in numerical structure and assessment form. The six systems combine numerical scales and verbal categories differently across educational stages, showing that linguistic affiliation alone does not predict a single grading model.

France and Portugal both use twenty-point assessment at upper-secondary level, while Portugal also uses qualitative categories in the first cycle and a 1-5 scale in later basic education [8, 18].

Italy also shows stage-based variation. Primary assessment uses verbal categories from *Non sufficiente* to *Ottimo*, while secondary schooling commonly uses a ten-point scale. University assessment is considered separately in Section 5.1 [19].

Spain provides a useful stage-based contrast. In compulsory secondary education (ESO), official assessment results are expressed through *Insuficiente*, *Suficiente*, *Bien*, *Notable*, and *Sobresaliente*. In Bachillerato, results are recorded numerically on a 0-10 scale, with grades below 5 considered failing. This shows that verbal and numerical forms of assessment may operate differently at successive stages within the same national system [17].

Romanian primary assessment employs *insuficient*, *suficient*, *bine*, and *foarte bine*, while secondary education uses a 1-10 numerical scale [23].

Moldova illustrates the limits of a purely linguistic classification. Romanian places it linguistically within the Romance-language group, while the institutional history of Moldovan education also connects it to the post-Soviet educational space. From the 2026-2027 school year, primary assessment continues to use performance descriptors and qualitative categories, while Grade IV reintroduces numerical grades from 5 to 10 in Romanian language and literature, foreign language, and mathematics [20]. The reform



combines descriptor-based and numerical assessment within primary education itself. Moldova thus illustrates how linguistic affiliation, educational history, and ongoing educational reform may intersect within a single assessment system.

Across the nineteen systems, several broad patterns can be distinguished. First, most systems use an ascending numerical logic in which a higher number indicates a stronger result, although the upper limit varies considerably from 5 or 6 to 10, 12, or 20. Second, Czechia and Slovakia represent an inverse numerical model in which the lowest number indicates the highest achievement. Third, broader numerical systems such as those of Belarus and Ukraine combine fine numerical differentiation with wider verbal achievement levels. Finally, different scales may coexist across educational levels within a single national system, a pattern examined further below through Russia and Italy. Together, these patterns show that numerical range, numerical direction, and verbal categorisation vary independently across systems.

## 5. Comparative, Linguistic and Cultural Analysis

### 5.1 Cross-Level and Certification Contexts

The comparison becomes more complex when different stages of education are considered. National grading traditions do not necessarily rely on the same numerical scale at school, in school-leaving examinations, and at university. Russia and Italy provide two clear examples of such cross-level variation.

**Table 4.** Selected Cross-Level Examples of Assessment

| Country | School assessment                                       | School-leaving / certification context                                                                                               | University assessment                                                                                                                                         |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Russia  | predominantly grades 2-5 in formal summative assessment | ЕГЭ - the Unified State Examination uses a separate point-based system, with most subject results reported on a 100-point test scale | traditional numerical and verbal grading categories are widely used in higher education, alongside pass/fail assessment                                       |
| Italy   | primary: verbal categories;<br>secondary: /10           | the final upper-secondary Esame di Stato is expressed on a 100-point scale, with 60/100 required to pass                             | university examinations are generally graded out of 30, with 18/30 as the passing threshold; final degree results are commonly expressed on a scale up to 110 |

Source: author's compilation based on Eurydice and national educational documentation [8, 9, 19-21, 24].

University grading should not be treated as uniform at national level: practices may vary by institution, programme, faculty, and course. The scales presented here are representative rather than universal. Even so, Russia and Italy demonstrate a clear cross-level pattern: assessment scales may change between school grading, school-leaving examinations, and higher education.

This variation also complicates international grade comparison. Because ECTS does not assign fixed equivalents to national grades, interpretation requires attention to educational level, passing threshold, and institutional use [6, 7]. A numerically high result cannot be interpreted accurately without knowing the stage and assessment conventions involved.

### 5.2 From Grade Conversion to Grade Interpretation

International comparison involves at least two distinct tasks: numerical conversion and cultural interpretation. Numerical conversion asks which grade in one system most closely corresponds to a grade in another. Cultural interpretation asks a different question: what does that grade mean and communicate within the educational community in which it is used? These two processes cannot always be reduced to one another.

For instance, identifying the formal position of a Russian 5, Italian 10, or Ukrainian 12 is relatively straightforward because all three represent very high school achievement. Yet this correspondence does not make the grades culturally identical. Their verbal labels, their positions within the surrounding scales, and the expressions that have developed around them belong to different linguistic traditions. Similarly,



the minimum positive result may occupy a comparable institutional position across systems while being described through different concepts, such as Russian *udovletvoritelno* ("satisfactory") and Italian *sufficiente* ("sufficient").

This distinction helps explain why the comparison of grades resembles translation rather than simple conversion [5]. What is transferred between educational systems is not only a numerical value but also information about the status and meaning of that value within its original context. The historical development of ECTS can be interpreted in the same direction: the move towards grade distributions effectively acknowledges that formal equivalence alone is insufficient when grades are used differently across educational environments.

A notable cross-linguistic pattern appears at the boundary between failure and success. Czech *dostatečný*, Slovak *dostatočný*, Serbian and Croatian *dovoljan*, Slovenian *zadostno*, Italian *sufficiente*, Spanish and Portuguese *suficiente*, and Romanian *suficient* all foreground the semantic idea of being "sufficient" or "enough". Despite belonging to different language families, these terms conceptualise the minimum positive result through a remarkably similar notion: the learner has reached the threshold required for successful performance.

Russian *udovletvoritelno* ("satisfactory") frames the same boundary somewhat differently. The term indicates that established requirements have been satisfied, but it remains a restrained positive evaluation [25]. A result described as *udovletvoritelno* is acceptable but explicitly below *khoroшо* ("good"). In this respect, the Russian descriptor foregrounds the satisfaction of requirements, whereas *dostatečný*, *dovoljan*, and *sufficiente* more directly communicate that the achieved result is "enough".

The two groups of descriptors may occupy comparable institutional positions while expressing those positions through somewhat different semantic concepts: satisfaction of requirements on the one hand and sufficiency on the other. It would, however, be inappropriate to infer from lexical evidence alone that learners necessarily experience one formulation as more positive or psychologically "friendlier". Establishing such differences in perception would require separate empirical research involving participants from the respective educational contexts.

The upper end of grading scales is equally revealing from a linguistic perspective. High achievement is expressed through Russian *otlichno*, Czech and Slovak *v ýborně*, South Slavic *odličan*, Bulgarian *otlichen*, Italian *ottimo*, Spanish *sobresaliente*, Portuguese *Muito Bom*, and Romanian *foarte bine*. Although these descriptors occupy comparable positions at the upper end of their respective systems, they do not rely on identical lexical concepts.

French illustrates a different lexical strategy within the Romance-language group. In the official *baccalauréat* distinction system, *très bien* is used for very high results, while *très bien avec les félicitations du jury* marks the highest distinction rather than *excellent* [22]. Portuguese primary assessment similarly uses *Muito Bom* as its highest qualitative category. French *très bien* and Portuguese *Muito Bom* therefore express high achievement through intensified forms of "good", whereas Spanish *Sobresaliente* and Italian *Ottimo* rely on different lexical strategies [18, 22].

Polish *celujący* is distinctive in this respect. Whereas many systems rely on relatively direct equivalents of "excellent", "very good", or "outstanding", the Polish scale places *celujący* above *bardzo dobry*. Its linguistic form provides an especially marked way of representing exceptional achievement and demonstrates how the upper boundary of a grading scale may acquire a culturally distinctive lexical identity [15].

### 5.3 Grading Beyond the Classroom

The social character of grading becomes clear when educational categories extend into everyday language.

In Russian, the grade 5 is culturally associated with the highest school result. Expressions such as *znať na pyaterku* ("to know something at the level of a five") or *sdelat' na pyat'* ("to do something at the level of a five") extend the educational symbolism of 5 into a broader metaphor of high quality even when no formal assessment is involved [25].

Czech provides an almost mirror-image example. Since 1 represents the highest Czech grade, *jednička* may colloquially denote not only a school mark but also a person or object considered the best in a particular category, while *být jednička* means "to be the best" [15]. Russian "five" and Czech "one" therefore communicate comparable positive meanings through numerically opposite symbols.

Polish provides another example of the persistence of educational symbolism. Although 6, *celujący*, is the highest official school grade, the expression *na piątkę* remains established in everyday language



with the meaning "very well" [15]. The contrast between the formal maximum of 6 and the continued positive symbolism of 5 shows that everyday evaluative language does not necessarily mirror the full structure of the current grading scale.

Comparable extensions of grading expressions can be found in Russian and Italian evaluative language. In Russian classrooms, informal forms such as 5+ and 5- may provide finer distinctions within the formal scale [25]. Italian *dieci e lode* ("ten with praise"), historically used for the maximum school mark, has likewise survived figuratively as a formula of strong approval outside education [16]. Both examples show how numerical assessment can generate additional evaluative expressions.

Grades may also become labels for people. Russian *otlichnik* ("high-achieving student"), *troechnik* ("student who usually receives grade 3"), and *dvoechnik* ("student who usually receives the failing grade 2") transform recurring assessment results into socially recognisable learner categories [25]. Research on educational identity likewise suggests that repeated practices of assessment and categorisation may contribute to how learners are positioned within educational communities [1, 2].

Importantly, the relationship between grading and everyday evaluative language is reciprocal. Verbal expressions used to describe quality and achievement may become institutionalised as official educational categories, as in French *très bien*, Italian *ottimo*, Spanish *sobresaliente*, and Portuguese *Muito Bom*. At the same time, the process also operates in the opposite direction: numerical grades and expressions originating in educational assessment may enter everyday language and acquire broader meanings, as in Russian *na pyaterku*, Czech *jednička*, Polish *na piątkę*, and Italian *dieci e lode*. Grading terminology both draws on existing evaluative language and contributes new symbols and expressions to it.

This movement between institutional and everyday evaluation is central to the interpretation of assessment as a social narrative. A grading system does not remain confined to a school record or examination result: it produces recurring cultural categories through which speakers may describe failure, adequacy, quality, competence, success, and excellence.

At the same time, the comparison shows considerable variation within both the "Slavic" and "Romance" groups. Some of the strongest linguistic similarities cross the boundary between them. Czech *dostatečný*, for example, is semantically close to Italian *sufficiente* and Portuguese *suficiente*. The terms "Slavic" and "Romance" are best understood as comparative linguistic and cultural frames rather than as rigid educational types.

#### **5.4 Limitations and Directions for Further Research**

The present comparison is exploratory and documentary in nature. It identifies structural and linguistic parallels across grading systems but does not establish how individual students, teachers, or parents subjectively interpret particular numerical or verbal categories. Statements concerning the possible emotional or social effects of terms such as "satisfactory" and "sufficient" should be treated as hypotheses for further investigation rather than as demonstrated psychological effects.

Another limitation concerns the coexistence of traditional grades with other reporting formats. Percentage-based scores, point systems, and other forms of assessment may be used alongside national grades or verbal descriptors. The tables above focus on established grading categories rather than attempting to represent every assessment format used in each educational context.

Future research could combine documentary comparison with interviews or questionnaires involving learners from several educational traditions. Corpus-based analysis could examine the frequency and contexts in which grading expressions are used metaphorically outside education. University assessment also requires more systematic investigation. Because grading practices may differ between institutions, faculties, programmes, and fields of study within the same country, a broader study could compare not only national frameworks but also institutional practices and their relationship to international academic mobility systems such as ECTS. School-leaving examinations could likewise be examined in greater detail as an intermediate level between ordinary school assessment and higher education.

The translation of grading terminology in academic transcripts, diploma supplements, international applications, and other contexts of educational mobility also warrants further study. These settings make the intersection between numerical equivalence and linguistic interpretation especially visible.

## **6. Conclusion**



The comparison of nineteen national contexts demonstrates considerable diversity in the numerical and linguistic organisation of assessment. Similar numbers may represent different levels of achievement, while comparable positions within grading systems may be expressed through different verbal categories. Similarities also cross the boundary between Slavic and Romance-language systems, confirming that these labels are more useful as comparative linguistic and cultural frames than as rigid educational types.

Numerical direction, range, verbal categorisation, and educational level should be treated as distinct dimensions of grading systems. Russia and Italy show that a single national tradition may employ different assessment scales across school education, school-leaving examinations, and higher education. The development of ECTS further highlights the importance of institutional context and grade distributions rather than fixed one-to-one equivalence.

The linguistic dimension reveals an equally complex pattern. Categories such as *udovletvoritelno*, *dostatečný*, *dovoljan*, *celujący*, *très bien*, *ottimo*, and *sobresaliente* represent different ways of expressing sufficiency and excellence. Grading terminology also moves between institutional and everyday language, as illustrated by Russian *na pyaterku*, Czech *jednička*, Polish *na piątkę*, and Italian *dieci e lode*.

Assessment can be understood not only as a pedagogical mechanism but also as a social narrative of achievement: a numerical, institutional, and linguistic framework through which societies define and communicate ideas of failure, sufficiency, success, and excellence.

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