# Assessing morphological complexity: theoretical, methodological and educational issues Gabriele Pallotti (University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Italy)

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In recent years several studies have discussed the construct of morphological complexity, proposing theoretical and operational definitions and measuring its development over time or its variation across tasks.  
The talk will first review these definitions and measures, critically assessing their merits and shortcomings, with an emphasis on the comparative dimension and cross-linguistic applicability. Some studies will be presented that have used the Morphological Complexity Index (MCI, Pallotti 2015; Pallotti & Brezina 2015) to assess both native and non-native speakers’ texts.  
This will be followed by a discussion on how the assessment of morphological complexity should not be performed in and for itself, but always with an eye on the functional consequences of more or less complex discourse. This has several implications for language teaching and assessment, which should not just aim for ‘more complexity’ but rather consider its optimal, appropriate levels in real-life communication.