

FALA FRAMEWORK: A LEARNING PROGRESSION FOR NOVICE TEACHERS' USE OF FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

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Formative assessment has been identified as one way that teachers can gather critical information about a student's level of understanding in order to make informed instructional adaptations that meet the needs of all students (NCTM, 2000; Shepard et al., 2005). Over several decades, research has shown the potential of formative assessment to effectively improve student achievement (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Kingston & Nash, 2011). Despite its potential, issues in preparing teachers to implement formative assessment practices has kept its potential from being realized (Schoenfeld, 2015) and many teachers have limited understanding of its use (Shepard et al., 2005).

In order to better understand how to prepare teachers to use formative assessment, a trajectory describing how teachers develop formative assessment knowledge and practice is needed. The Formative Assessment Levels of Appropriation (FALA) framework evolved from a larger qualitative research study on the evolution of formative assessment knowledge and practice of novice teachers from teacher preparation through their third year of teaching. Grounded in activity theory, the FALA framework describes the levels of appropriation (Grossman et al., 1998) for the five aspects of formative assessment defined by Black & Wiliam (2009). Table 1 provides an example of the framework for one aspect of formative assessment—clarifying intentions and criteria for success.

Table 1: Levels of Appropriation for Clarifying Intentions and Criteria for Success

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
No conceptual understanding and/or not used in the classroom	Identifies learning goals/criteria by name, but does not understand purpose of learning goals/criteria (e.g., equates with standards) and does not engage students with them.	Understands that learning goals/criteria as targets for performance and may share them with students, but does not impact student learning and instructional decisions.	Understands learning goals/criteria and their relationship to student learning progressions. Makes connections to instructional decisions but may have limited experience applying to practice.	Understands the purpose of learning goals/criteria in shaping student learning and frequently makes instructional adaptations based on student progression towards learning goals. Evidence of student engagement with goals/criteria.

To create each level of appropriation, a typological analysis approach (Hatch, 2002) was used to code course data over three semesters of a course on the use of formative assessment for teaching mathematics. The data was first chunked by individual assignment posts and coded by its reference to one of the five aspects. Next, data for each aspect was read through and examples of the five levels were coded based on Grossman & Smagorinsky's (1998) general definitions of each level of appropriation. All levels were re-read and summarized as one to two sentence generalizations. A secondary coder worked with the primary researcher on coding a sample of the data until an inter-rater reliability level of 81% as met (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

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