Foreword

Over the recent years research has focused on teachers' assessment activities as an integral part of classroom activity (Tsagari & Csépes, 2011) while research projects and reforms have been implemented in classroom assessment (Hamp-Lyons, 2016). The growing awareness of the importance of assessment activities as a central part of classroom assessment also came with the initial discussions of Formative Assessment (FA) (Black & Wiliam, 1998a, 2009). Over the years, FA, also the focus of this book, has become an emerging paradigm of its own. Other than its exciting and evolving agenda of research, FA places a great deal of and links assessment with language learning (Airasian, 2001; Black & Wiliam, 1998b, 2009; Harlen, 2012; Torrance, 2012).

Nevertheless, researchers and practitioners in the field have proposed additional terms that echo similar characteristics of FA, e.g. *classroom-based (language) assessment* (Rea-Dickins, 2008; Tsagari & Csépes, 2011; Turner, 2012), *assessment for learning* (Asghar, 2010; Blanchard, 2008; Boyle & Charles, 2010), *learning-oriented assessment* (Pryor & Crossouard, 2008; Tsagari, 2014; Turner & Purpura, 2016), *classroom evaluation* (Crooks, 1988), *diagnostic assessment* (Alderson, 2005), *dynamic assessment* (Lantolf & Poehner, 2008), *alternative assessment* (Inbar-Lourie & Donitsa-Schmidt, 2009), and *interactive assessment* (Hamp-Lyons & Tavares, 2011).

The variety of terms used to describe similar processes of classroom assessment manifests a difficulty in providing a standard definition of FA (Boyle & Charles, 2010; Turner, 2012). Nevertheless, the term 'formative assessment' was first attributed to Scriven (1967) in his attempt to make a distinction between 'formative evaluation' (evaluation taking place during the lesson) and 'summative evaluation' (evaluation taking place at the end of a unit).

Other definitions of FA focus on the modification of instruction to improve teaching and learning, as well as on the provision of feedback (Bloom, Hastings, & Madaus, 1971; Clark, 2010; Frey & Schmidt, 2007; Hattie & Timperley, 2007; etc). Further definitions of FA focus on the purposes and strategies used in its implementation which emphasise the importance of criteria of learning and offering learners formative and constructive feedback (Ioannou & Tsagari, 2022a, 2022b), or focus on questioning and observation (Chin & Teou, 2010; Michaeloudes, 2018) or self-assessment (Bachman & Palmer, 1996) and peer-assessment (Meletiadou & Tsagari, 2022; Tsagari & Meletiadou, 2015). Other FA definitions focus on the changes needed in instruction so that teaching and learning can be improved (e.g. Assessment Reform Group, 2002; Black & Wiliam, 1998a, 2009). This is actually the foundation of FA as all assessment types undertaken should lead to change with a view to better performance.

However, the variety of terms and types of assessment used to describe processes similar to FA, or used even interchangeably with it, the different viewpoints on the origin of the term, and the different definitions of the term 'formative' has created an ambiguity in the area of FA. On the other hand, research in FA has critically expanded, and new, refreshing, and unexplored avenues have made their appearance in the field of language assessment.

For example a number of studies in both general education and FL/L2 learning show that FA is an effective teaching strategy which promotes learning and develops learners' autonomy (Black & Wiliam, 1998a; Ellery, 2008; Stiggins, 2002; Taras, 2008; Tsagari & Michaeloudes, 2012, 2013). More specifically, FA seems to have significant effects on primary education (Carless, 2005; Rea-Dickins, 2006) as well as adult education (Ioannou & Tsagari, 2022a, 2022b).

However, even though FA has proved to be effective, research has found that teachers have some difficulties in implementing FA-related practices. Research on teachers' understanding of FA (Boyle & Charles, 2010; Michaeloudes, 2018; Vogt & Tsagari, 2014) reveals that they are not always clear of what FA actually is. Tsagari (2021) found that teachers have inadequate skills and strategies to design, and implement FA practices (also in Tsagari & Vogt, 2017; Vogt, Tsagari,

& Spanoudis, 2020). Inadequate knowledge may be the reason why teachers are hesitant in using FA (Colby-Kelly & Turner, 2007) and handle FA practices in the same way as summative practices (Ayala et al., 2008). This should be investigated further as teachers' understanding and cognition affect their practices. Therefore, further research in the field of FA seems to be necessary for successful FA implementation.

Against this background, the authors of this book address timely aspects of FA for the research and teaching community in language assessment research, language teaching, and other related areas. The book is based on systematic review of theoretical and research papers in the field of FA that are presented in the discussion of the first two parts as well as in part three as annotated bibliography.

Overall, this volume, characterised by scholarly work in the evolving and expanding field of FA, will become an important resource that broadens the existing approaches undertaken to date. The volume is an important reference source and can become essential reading material for graduate students, teacher trainers, and practitioners in the field of language assessment.

<div style="text-align: right">Dr Dina Tsagari</div>

<div style="text-align: right">Department of Primary and Secondary Teacher Education, Faculty of Education and Internationalisation OsloMet, Oslo, Norway</div>

References

Airasian, P. W. (2001). *Classroom assessment: concepts and applications*. McGraw-Hill.

Alderson, J. C. (2005). *Diagnosing foreign language proficiency: the interface between learning and assessment*. Continuum.

Asghar, A. (2010). Reciprocal peer coaching and its use as a formative assessment strategy for first-year students. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 35*(4), 403-417. https://doi.org/10.1080/02602930902862834

Assessment Reform Group. (2002). *Providing constructive responses to learning. Effective feedback: principles, policy and audit materials*. University of Cambridge.

Ayala, C. C., Shavelson, R. J., Ruiz-Primo, M. A., Brandon, P. R., Yin, Y., Furtak, E. M., Young, D. B., & Tomita, M. K. (2008). From formal embedded assessments to reflective lessons: the development of formative assessment studies. *Applied Measurement in Education, 21*(4), 315-334. https://doi.org/10.1080/08957340802347787

Bachman, L., & Palmer, A. (1996). *Language testing in practice*. Oxford University Press.

Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (1998a). Inside the black box: raising standards through classroom assessment. *Phi Delta Kappa*, *80*(2), 123-148.

Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (1998b). Assessment and classroom learning. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice,* 5(1), 7-74. https://doi.org/10.1080/0969595980050102

Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (2009). Developing the theory of formative assessment. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability*, *21*(1), 5. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11092-008-9068-5

Blanchard, J. (2008). Learning awareness: constructing formative assessment in the classroom, in the school and across schools. *The Curriculum Journal, 19*(3), 137-150. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585170802357454

Bloom, B. S., Hastings, J. T., & Madaus, G. F. (1971). *Handbook on the formative and summative evaluation of student learning*. McGraw-Hill.

Boyle, W. F., & Charles, M. (2010). Leading learning through assessment for learning? *School Leadership & Management, 30*(3), 285-300. https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2010.485184

Carless, D. (2005). Prospects for the implementation of assessment for learning. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice, 12*(1), 39-54. https://doi.org/10.1080/0969594042000333904

Chin, C, & Teou, L.-Y. (2010). Formative assessment: using concept cartoon, pupils' drawings, and group discussions to tackle children's ideas about biological inheritance. *Educational Research, 44*(3), 108-115. https://doi.org/10.1080/00219266.2010.9656206

Clark, I. (2010). Formative assessment: 'there is nothing so practical as a good theory. *Australian Journal of Education, 54*(3), 341-352. https://doi.org/10.1177/000494411005400308

Colby-Kelly, C., & Turner, C. E. (2007). AFL research in the L2 classroom and evidence of usefulness: taking formative assessment to the next level. *The Canadian Modern Language Review/La Revue canadienne des langues vivantes, 64*(1), 9-38. https://doi.org/10.3138/cmlr.64.1.009

Crooks, T. J. (1988). The impact of classroom evaluation practices on students. *Review of Educational Research, 58*(4), 438-448. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543058004438

Ellery, K. (2008). Assessment for learning: a case study using feedback effectively in an essay-style test. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 33*(4), 421-429. https://doi.org/10.1080/02602930701562981

Frey, B. B., & Schmidt, V. L. (2007). Coming to terms with classroom assessment. *Journal of Advanced Academics, 18*(3), 402-423. https://doi.org/10.4219/jaa-2007-495

Hamp-Lyons, L. (2016). Implementing a learning-oriented approach within English language assessment in Hong Kong schools: practices, issues and complexities. In G. Yu & Y. Jin (Eds), *Assessing Chinese learners of English*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Hamp-Lyons, L., & Tavares, N. (2011). Interactive assessment – a dialogic and collaborative approach to assessing learners' oral language. In D. Tsagari & I. Csépes (Eds), *Classroom based language assessment* (pp. 29-46). Peter Lang.

Harlen, W. (2012). On the relationship between assessment for formative and summative purposes. In J. R. Gardner (Ed.), *Assessment and learning* (pp. 87-102). Sage Publications. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446250808.n6

Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research, 77*(1), 81-112.

Inbar-Lourie, O., & Donitsa-Schmidt, S. (2009). Exploring classroom assessment practices: the case of teachers of English as a foreign language. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice, 16*(2), 185-204. https://doi.org/10.1080/09695940903075958

Ioannou S., & Tsagari, D. (2022a). Effects of recasts, metalinguistic feedback, and students' proficiency on the acquisition of Greek perfective past tense. *Languages, 7*(1), 40. https://doi.org/10.3390/languages7010040

Ioannou, S., & Tsagari, D. (2022b). Interactional corrective feedback in beginner level classrooms of Greek as a second language: teachers' practices. *Research Papers in Language Teaching and Learning, 12*(1), 7-25.

Lantolf, J. P., & Poehner, M. E. (2008). Dynamic assessment. In E. Shohamy & N. H. Hornberger (Eds), *Encyclopedia of language and education* (pp. 273-284). Springer.

Meletiadou, E., & Tsagari, D. (2022). Exploring teachers' perceptions of the use of peer assessment in external exam-dominated writing classes. *Languages, 7*(1), 16. https://doi.org/10.3390/languages7010016

Michaeloudes, G. (2018). Formative assessment in EFL primary schools in Cyprus. PhD thesis. University of Cyprus.

Pryor, J., & Crossouard, B. (2008). A socio-cultural theorisation of formative assessment. *Oxford Review of Education, 34*(1), 1-20.

Rea-Dickins, P. (2006). Currents and eddies in the discourse of assessment: a learning-focused interpretation. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 16*(2), 163-188. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1473-4192.2006.00112.x

Rea-Dickins, P. (2008). Classroom based assessment. In E. Shohamy & N. H. Hornberger (Eds), *Encyclopedia of language and education* (pp. 1-15). Springer.

Scriven, M. (1967). The methodology of evaluation. In R. Tyler, R. Gagne & M. Scriven (Eds), *Perspectives of curriculum evaluation* (pp. 39-83). Rand McNally.

Stiggins, R. J. (2002). Assessment crisis: the absence of assessment FOR learning. *Phi Delta Kappan, 83*(10), 758-765. https://doi.org/10.1177/003172170208301010

Taras, M. (2008). Issues of power and equity in two models of self-assessment. *Teaching in Higher Education, 13*(1), 81-92. https://doi.org/10.1080/13562510701794076

Torrance, H. (2012). Formative assessment at the crossroads: conformative, deformative and transformative assessment. *Oxford Review of Education, 38*(3), 323-342.

Tsagari, D. (2014). Unplanned LOA in EFL classrooms: findings from an empirical study. *Paper presented at Roundtable on Learning-Oriented Assessment in Language Classrooms and Large-Scale Assessment Contexts, 10-12 October 2014, at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York.*

Tsagari, D. (2021). Gauging the assessment literacy levels of English teachers in Norway. *The European Journal of Applied Linguistics and TEFL, 10*(1), 161-191.

Tsagari, D., & Csépes, I. (2011). (Eds). *Classroom-based language assessment.* Peter Lang.

Tsagari, D., & Meletiadou, E. (2015). Peer assessment of adolescent learners' writing performance. *Writing & Pedagogy, 7*(2), 305-328. https://doi.org/10.1558/wap.v7i2-3.26457

Tsagari, D., & Michaeloudes, G. (2012). Formative assessment practices in private language schools in Cyprus. In D. Tsagari (Ed.), *Research on English as a foreign language in cyprus* (vol. II, pp. 246-265)*.* University of Nicosia Press.

Tsagari, D., & Michaeloudes, G. (2013). Formative assessment patterns in CLIL primary schools in Cyprus. In D. Tsagari, S. Papadima-Sophocleous & S. Ioannou-Georgiou (Eds), *International experiences in language testing and assessment* (pp. 75-93). Peter Lang.

Tsagari, D., & Vogt, K. (2017). Assessment literacy of foreign language teachers around Europe: research, challenges and future prospects. *Papers in Language Testing and Assessment, 6*(1), 41-63.

Turner, C. E., & Purpura, J. E. (2016). Learning-oriented assessment in second and foreign language classrooms. In D. Tsagari & J. Banerjee (Eds), *Handbook of second language assessment* (pp. 255-273). DeGruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781614513827-018

Turner, C. E. (2012). Classroom assessment. In G. Fulcher & F. Davidson (Eds), *The Routledge handbook of language testing* (pp. 65-78). Routledge.

Vogt, K., & Tsagari, D. (2014). Assessment literacy of foreign language teachers: findings of a European study. *Language Assessment Quarterly, 11*(4), 374-402. https://doi.org/10.1080/15434303.2014.960046

Vogt, K., Tsagari, D., & Spanoudis, G. (2020). What do teachers think they want? A comparative study of in-service language teachers' beliefs on LAL training needs. *Language Assessment Quarterly, 17*(4), 386-409. https://doi.org/10.1080/15434303.2020.1781128

Formative assessment in second language learning: a systematic review and an annotated bibliography
Written by Skevi Vassiliou, Salomi Papadima-Sophocleous, and Christina Nicole Giannikas