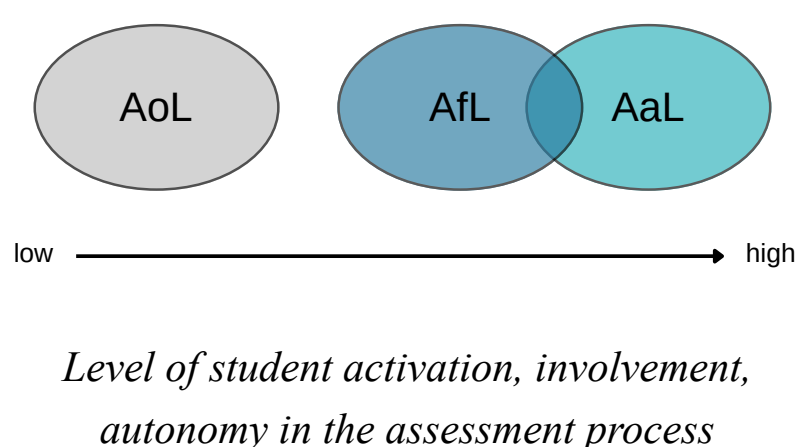




# Classroom assessment: teachers' conceptions and practices... Is there always consistency?

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## INTRODUCTION



Teachers' assessment practices have a significant impact on student learning outcomes (Black & William, 1998; Hattie, 2009). Understanding teachers' approaches to assessment and their perceived obstacles to the implementation of student-centred assessment strategies can help shed light on teacher training and professional development needs (Brown, 2004), in order to improve teaching effectiveness.

It is useful to distinguish between approaches that influence student learning skills to varying degrees: *Assessment of Learning* (AoL), *Assessment for Learning* (AfL), and *Assessment as Learning* (AaL). We can place these three approaches along a continuum where the level of student activation, involvement, autonomy, and responsibility within the assessment process ranges from a minimum (AoL) to a maximum (AaL). At the second pole of this continuum, the focus is on the development of students' ability to self-regulate their learning and the development of their evaluative judgement (Boud, 2000; Earl, 2016), which are fundamental to making them lifelong learners.

## AIMS

- 1 To investigate which assessment conceptions and strategies are most agreed upon/used by teachers.
- 2 To verify whether conceptions of AfL and AaL are aligned with related practices.
- 3 To understand the difficulties that teachers face in implementing assessment practices that support full engagement of students (AaL).

## METHODS

### Research approach

Mixed method with convergent design, "questionnaire variant" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

### Target population and procedures

- ▶ Primary and secondary school teachers.
- ▶ An email invitation to participate in the survey was sent to all Italian primary and secondary schools (convenience sampling). The survey was conducted online, via Google Form, started on 14 May 2022 and ended on 31 July 2022.

### Instrument

Quantitative/qualitative questionnaire

- ▶ Quantitative part: *Teachers' Assessment Conceptions Scale* (6-point Likert scale, from 1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree); *Teachers' Assessment Strategies Scale* (6-point Likert scale, from 1 = never to 6 = every time). The construction and validation of the scales is part of the research project.
- ▶ Qualitative part: open questions about the difficulties of implementing student-centred assessment practices.

## PRELIMINARY RESULTS

### SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

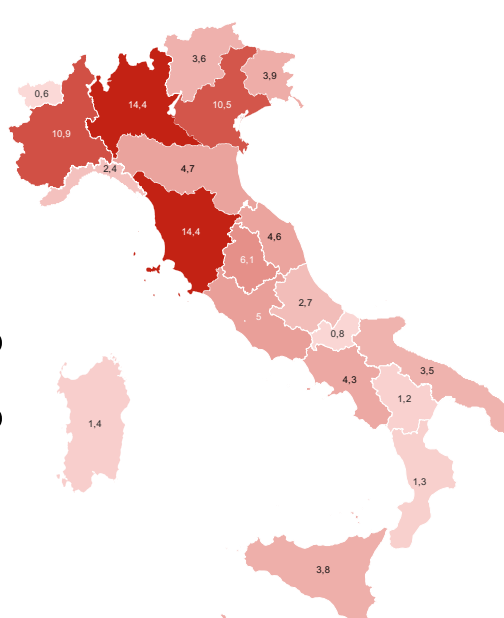
N = 1545

M<sub>age</sub> = 47.9 SD<sub>age</sub> = 10.1

82.4% 16.9% N.S. 0.7%



Primary school: 36.2%  
Lower secondary school: 27.9%  
Upper secondary school: 35.9%

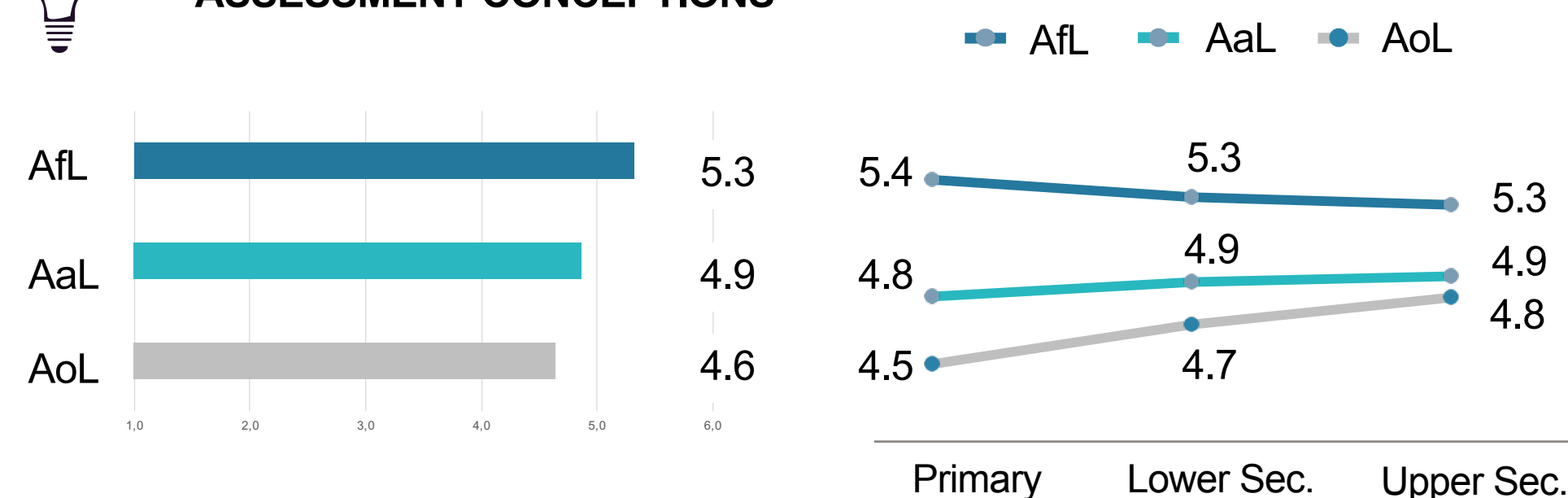


### References

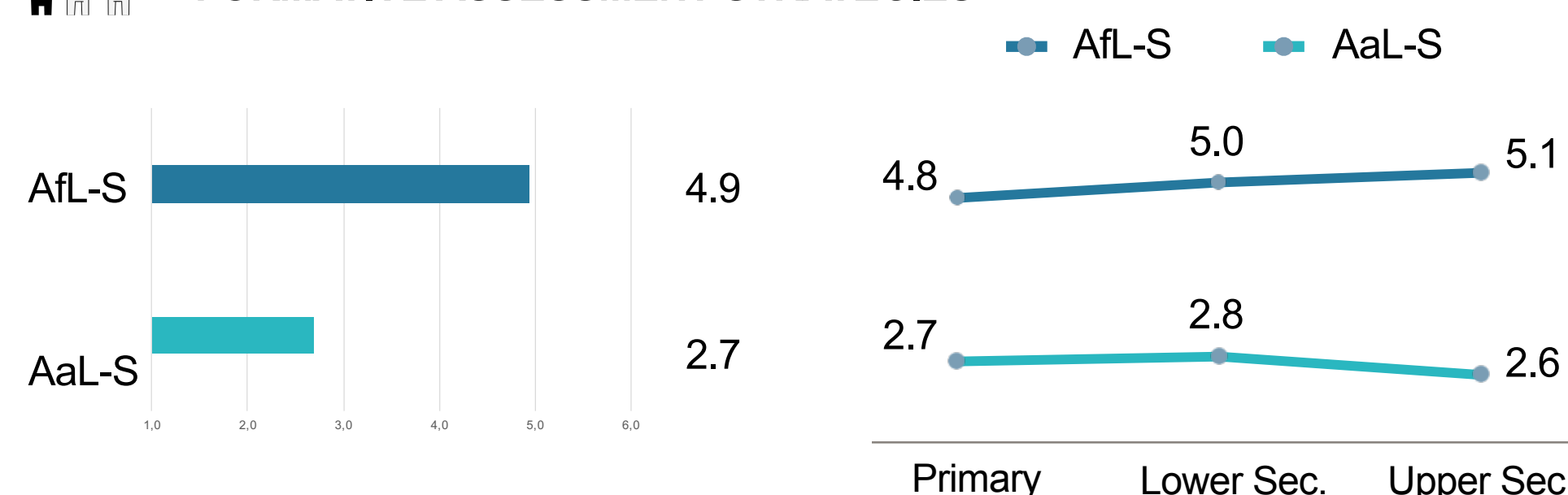
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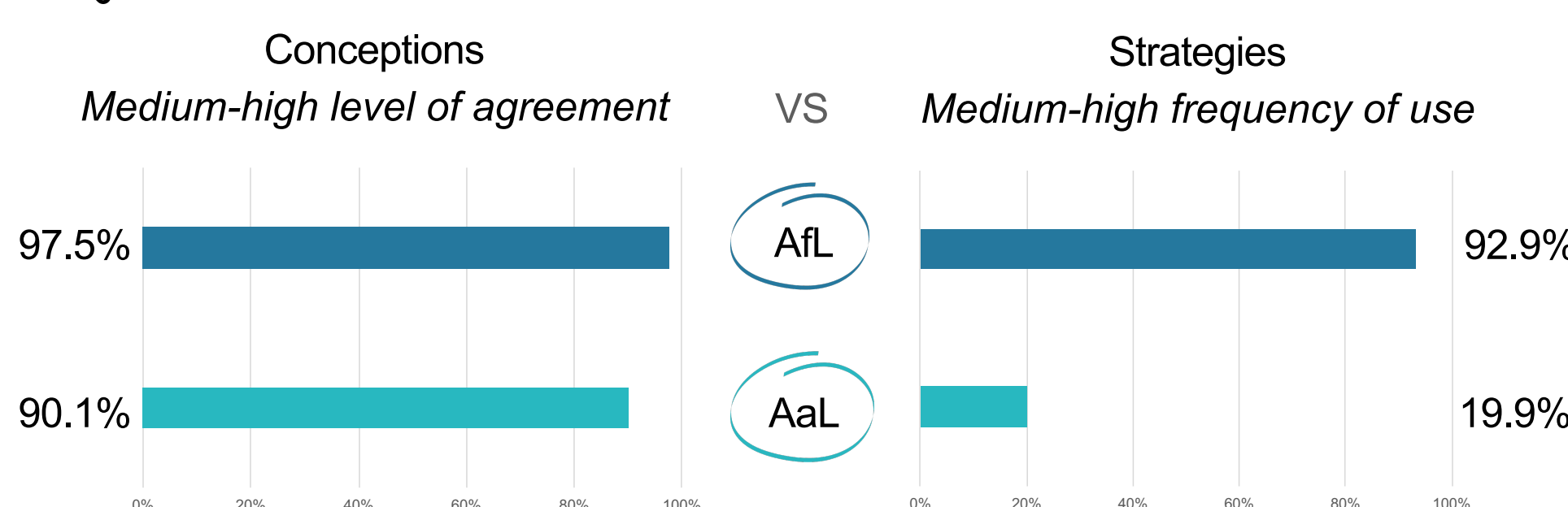
### ASSESSMENT CONCEPTIONS



### FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES



### COMPARING FORMATIVE CONCEPTIONS AND STRATEGIES



## DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

- ▶ Teachers agree with a formative approach to assessment, in particular, with an assessment approach that not only has the purpose of promoting student learning (AfL), but also has the purpose of improving metacognitive and self-regulation learning skills (AaL). On the other hand, there is also broad agreement on the purpose of assessment as a verification of results (AoL).
- ▶ Teachers often use assessment strategies consistent with the AfL approach (e.g. feedback and sharing of learning objectives), while very rarely do they use assessment strategies involving full activation, involvement, and autonomy in the assessment process on the part of the students (e.g. revision of their own work, creation of assessment grids), consistent with the AaL approach.
- ▶ Concepts and practices of AfL appear to be aligned, while there is a mismatch between the sharing of AaL goals and the implementation of related assessment strategies.
- ▶ Why this lack of consistency? It is important to gather the opinions of teachers in order to respond to any training or other needs to overcome this gap.

## FUTURE WORK

In the next steps of the investigation, qualitative data will be analysed to answer the third research objective: understanding the critical issues and obstacles that teachers face in implementing student-centred assessment practices.



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