

# Building Knowledge within Classroom Mathematics Discussions

Jason K. Belnap

The University of Wisconsin—Oshkosh

## **Abstract**

The growing emphasis on student-centered instruction has generated a variety of instructional forms. The presence of alternate pedagogies does not always indicate quality instruction or guarantee quality student involvement. Ascertaining this requires deeper questions about the nature and extent of both instructional tasks and student contributions to the discourse.

Previously, I used a framework developed by Belnap and Withers, to determine a conversations composition, the nature and extent of participants contributions, and key discussion characteristics in the context of a professional development program (Belnap & Withers, 2010; Belnap, 2010).

This study represents an attempt to adapt this framework to classroom discussions to answer these questions: How are learners contributing to the discussion? What is the nature of those contributions? What role are they playing in the discussion? and What significance and impact do their contributions have on the developing content?