

Learning-oriented assessment and the development of student learning capacities

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Overview

- Introductory remarks
- Student self-evaluation
- “Learning-oriented assessment”
- Exemplifying its 3 features
- Tensions in these processes
- Implications for practice and future research

Hong Kong



The University of Hong Kong



HKU

THE WORLD
UNIVERSITY
RANKINGS



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THE RANKINGS HOME TOP 200 ANALYSIS ▾ BY REGION ▾

World University Rankings 2010-2011



**HKU ranked Asia's
No.1 University**

QS Asian University Ranking 2010



Times Higher Education Rankings 2010-11

HKU ranked no. 1
in Asia and 21st
in the world.
English medium

Student population (2008-2009):

- 21,652
 - 11,962 (undergraduates)
 - 7,326 (taught postgraduates)
 - 2,364 (research postgraduates)
- 2,068 non-local students

The university comprises **10 faculties**

Faculties

- Faculty of Architecture
- Faculty of Arts
- Faculty of Business and Economics
- Faculty of Dentistry
- Faculty of Education
- Faculty of Engineering
- Faculty of Law
- Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine
- Faculty of Science
- Faculty of Social Sciences



English examination in Dongguan University of Technology Guangdong Province, July 9, 2007. The university authority organized 1200 students to take the examination in a large hall to prevent exam fraud.

From testing to productive student learning: Implementing formative assessment in Confucian-heritage settings

From Testing to Productive Student Learning

Implementing Formative Assessment
in Confucian-Heritage Settings

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Three Wise Men

Self-evaluation (Sadler, 1989)

“The possession of evaluative expertise is a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for improvement”

“Instructional systems which do not make explicit provision for the acquisition of evaluative expertise are deficient”

(Sadler, 1989)





 RoutledgeFalmer
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ENHANCING LEARNING

==== through ====

Self Assessment

David Boud

Sustainable assessment (Boud, 2000)

- Practices which meet students' immediate assessment needs whilst not compromising the knowledge, skills and dispositions they require to develop lifelong learning capacities.



Dialogic feedback

- “Diverse expressions of dissatisfaction with written feedback can be interpreted as symbols of impoverished and fractured dialogue” (Nicol, 2010, p. 503).



- Learning-oriented assessment

(Carless et al, 2006; Carless, 2007)

Learning-oriented assessment

- Loa = assessment which places a primary focus on improving student learning;
- including summative assessment which stimulates productive student learning (Carless et al. 2006; Carless, 2007)
- Tensions in assessment given its multiple functions (double duty, Boud, 2000)

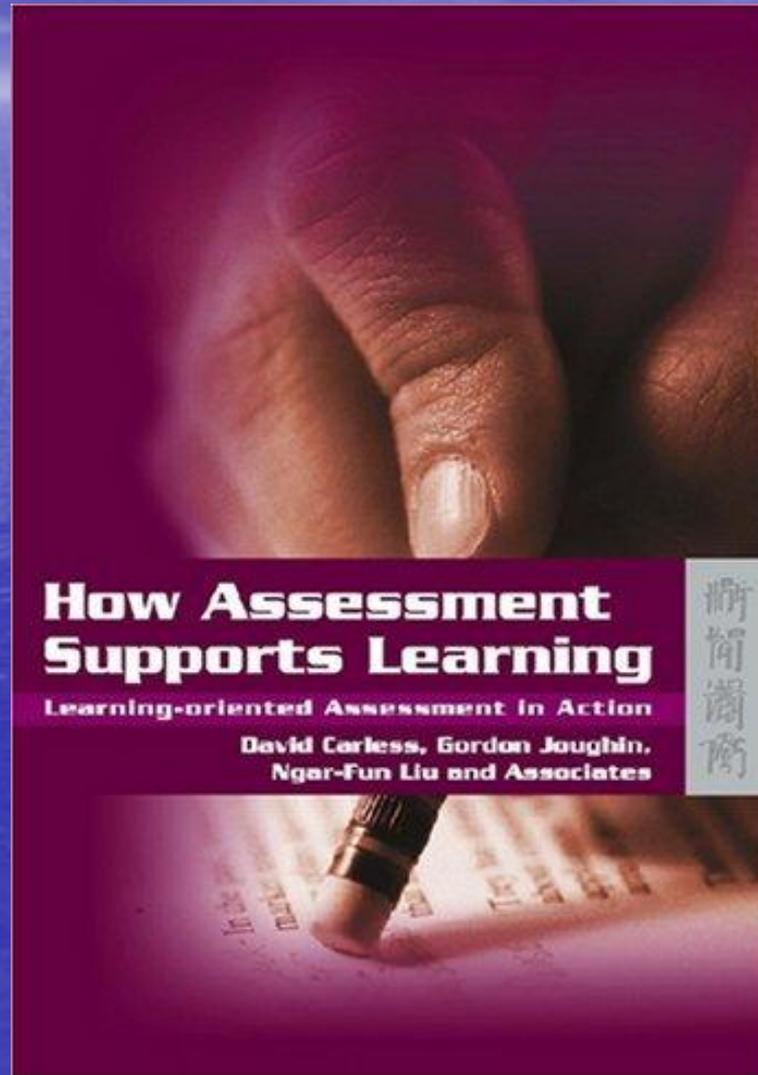
Three Projects

Project 1: LOAP (Learning-oriented assessment project)

- 2002-2006 based in Hong Kong Institute of Education



“How Assessment Supports Learning”



Collection of practices

- 39 practices from undergraduate education including commentaries and suggestions (Chapter 3 of the book)
- Informed by learning-oriented assessment framework (Chapter 2)

Project 2: SAFE project

- Student Assessment and Feedback Enhancement (SAFE)
- Interviews with teachers about feedback practices
- Focus group interviews with students
- Developmental work with colleagues on diversifying feedback practices

Research Method

10 semi-structured interviews with award winners from each of the ten Faculties of the university

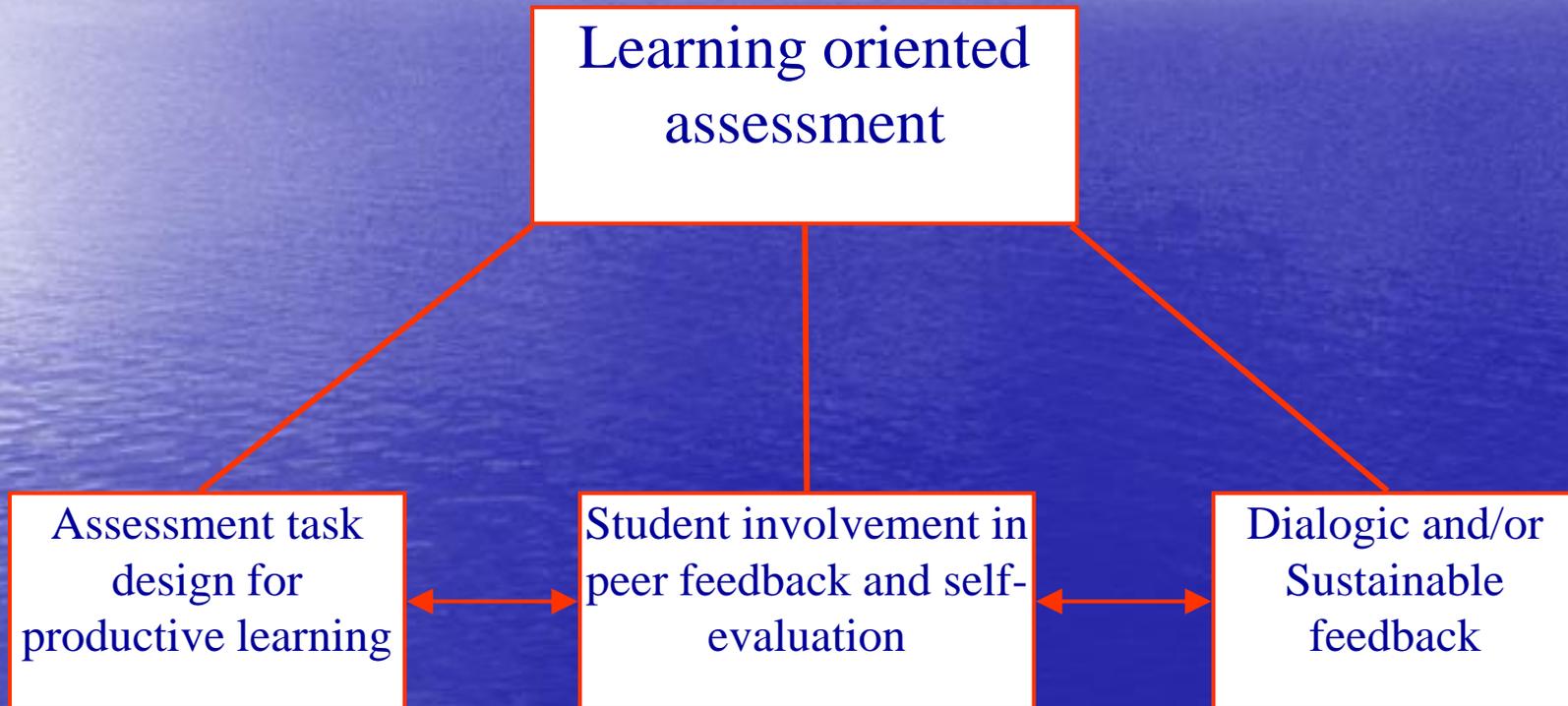


Project 3: IPSET

- Interactive Pedagogy, Self-Evaluation and Trust (IPSET)
- A case study of a “challenging” teacher identified from project 2
- Observations of two undergraduate courses in the Faculty of Business
- Interviews with the teacher and students

Three Components of Learning-oriented assessment

Learning oriented assessment framework



1. Task design principles

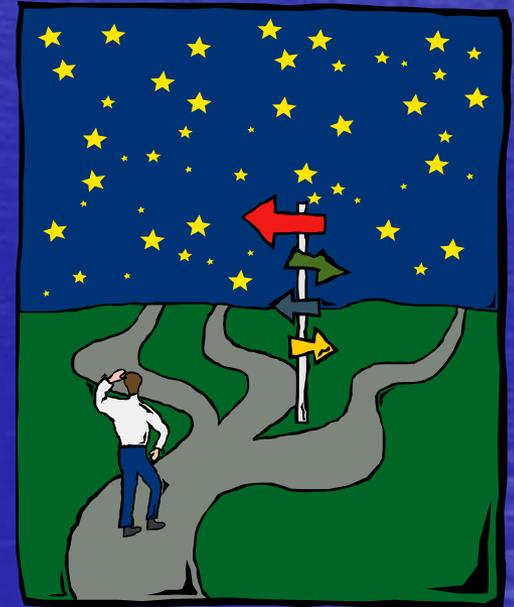
- Assessment tasks should
 - capture sufficient study time and effort (Gibbs, 2006)
 - distribute student effort evenly across topics and weeks (Gibbs, 2006)
 - stimulate complex learning (Knight, 2006).

Example: course assessment

- Case, class and blog discussion (40%)
- Individual written case assignments (30%)
- Group project: (30%)
 - Oral presentation
 - Written report 1 week later

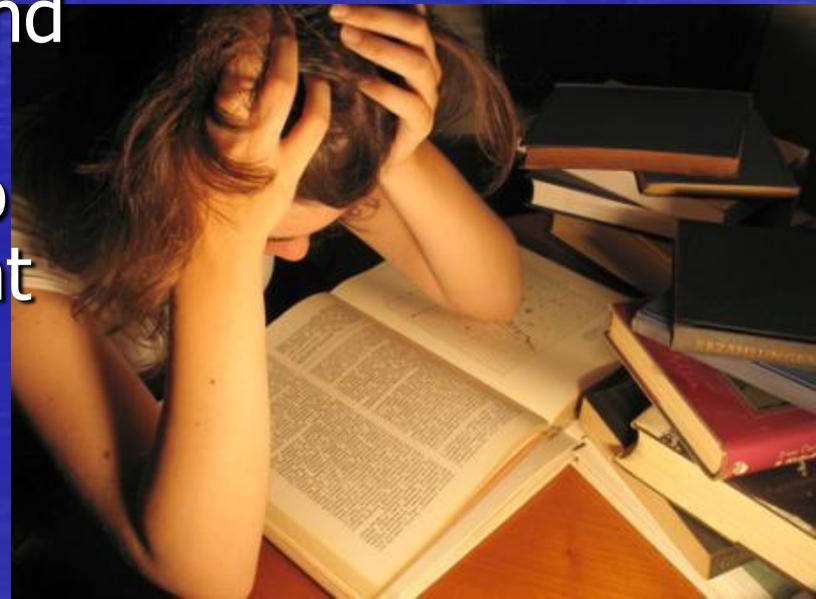
Tensions in assessment design

- Reliability vs productive learning
- Individual vs group
- Judgement vs measurement
- Pre-set transparent criteria vs emergent opaque criteria



Teacher views on assessment

- “I don’t believe in exams, I think that is the worst thing a university can do, they encourage students to see education as just a product. Exams remove the whole process of learning and discovery”.
- “The job of the teacher is to come up with an assessment method apart from exams”



Student views on assessment tasks

- “I like the assessment approach because it promotes my critical and analytical thinking skills”
- “Your grade depends on his feeling, what he thinks of you”
- “I am more advantaged by exams and I tend to get good grades in exams. I know how to prepare for them, but for class participation you can't really prepare”

Student views on blog

- “Having some marks allocated to it, gives some life to the blog”
- “I am worried about my grade, so I actively participate in the blog”
- “A student set up a facebook group, because the blog will expire and he wanted to go on discussing with people interested in the topics”.
- Grading of blog: participation or insight?

Learning oriented summative assessment

- Summative assessment needs to be characterized by experiment and innovation ...to give space to individuality
- For students to embrace the challenge of risk, uncertainty and emotional response (Barnett, 2007)

2. Student involvement

- Participation in peer feedback and self-evaluation
- A process of engaging with quality in the discipline

Classroom atmosphere

- “He is very successful in building an interactive relationship between him and the students”
- “The whole intimacy of the course gives you an environment where you can give feedback more easily. One thing which creates intimacy is the interactive teaching in which every single person really gives something during the class”



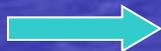


Dialogic Feedback

Peer feedback and student self-evaluation of oral presentations



I video-tape each student for five minutes ... We show the video right after the presentation ... Usually I get them to reflect first, "How do you think you did?" And then we give them feedback. I think they find it phenomenally useful because they are able to give insightful analysis on their own performance. ... pictures don't lie ... it's effective, because they see the truth.



Challenge students intellectually and emotionally to develop their oral presentation skills

Student data: video activity

- “You have the feedback directly after the presentation and you can see how you are doing through other people’s eyes”
- “When I look at others presenting, I actually start noticing the things to avoid”
- “For myself, I really appreciate it, but sometimes I think it is a waste of time”.



Tensions

- Time-consuming to view multiple presentations
- Challenge of process versus delivering course content



3. Feedback

- “Good feedback causes thinking.”

(Black & Wiliam, 2003, p.631).



Feedback definitions

- Feedback:

“All dialogue to support learning in both formal and informal situations” (Askew & Lodge, 2000, p. 1)

- Sustainable Feedback:

“Dialogic processes and activities which can support and inform the student on the current task, whilst also developing the ability to self-regulate performance on future tasks” (Carless et al., 2011)

Sustainability in feedback

- Sustainability lies in the ability of students to improve the quality of their work independently of the tutor

Features of sustainable feedback

- Involving students in dialogues about learning
- Facilitating feedback processes through which students are stimulated to develop capacities in monitoring and evaluating their own learning
- Assessment task design: facilitating engagement over time in which feedback is used to enhance performance on multiple stages of assignments

Interactive class dialogue

- "Sometimes his feedback is like a catalyst to promote the process, to direct the discussion from one student to another. Often he was challenging people to think more. He will ask the same student many why questions. It is feedback showing that the teacher is interested in your answer and wants to explore your answer more".

Tensions in interactive teaching

- “Sometimes I don’t know what we are learning because he is talking about very psychological or philosophical things, sometimes I don’t really know what that has to do with the topic of the course”

Efficiency of feedback?

- “The frequency of feedback is a good thing because usually you may get some specific or general feedback at some point, so **the hit ratio is a lot better.**”

Effective Feedback

- Is dialogic rather than uni-directional
- Raises awareness of quality and standards
- Involves a judicious combination of peers, self and lecturers
- Encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning



Implications



The goal



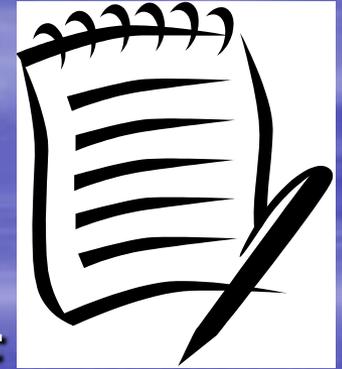
- Students further developing their ability to self-monitor their own work;
- ... so that they are sensitive to and primed to make use of (what little) feedback we are able to provide;
- ... and more aware of what is good work in the discipline

Implications for practice (1)

- Design learning activities which help students to understand the nature and characteristics of quality work
- **Activities:** e.g. engagement with exemplars, and associated assessment criteria



Implications for practice (2)



- Discuss with students the purposes of feedback and their role in using productively (the limited) feedback they receive
- **Activities:** Students write on their assignment cover sheet, the areas on which they would most like to receive feedback (e.g. Bloxham & Campbell, 2010)

Tensions in developing student self-evaluative capacities

- Tensions between staff views of the desirability of stimulating students to develop self-evaluative skills vs some student unwillingness
- How far are we willing to challenge students?
- “You ask too many questions, but you don’t tell us the answers”. (student comment)



Principled & pragmatic

- Articulate to students that developing enhanced self-evaluative capacities leads to better quality learning
- ... And leads to higher grades. Do this and your GPA will rise



- **Ongoing work**

- Student self-evaluative capacities
- Sustainable feedback
- Trust

Student self-evaluation

- How do students develop their self-evaluative learning capacities?
- What can we learn from how high achieving students monitor and improve their work and study behaviors?

Draft revised definition of sustainable feedback

- Active involvement in dialogic activities in which students generate and use feedback from peers, self or others, as part of an ongoing process of developing capacities as an autonomous self-regulating learner

The role of trust

- “I am a provocateur, bringing them into the arena and involving them cognitively and **emotionally** ... It takes a while for them to get to know why you’re doing things and then they’re going to become more and more **trusting**”
- Trust as a key facilitating or inhibiting factor in learning-oriented assessment (Carless, 2009)



