24

Self-assessment as a lens for learning

Roseanna Bourke and Mandia Mentis

Assessment is arguably one of the more complex and controversial issues in an inclusive education system and generally raises heated debate around questions such as: what should be assessed? Who should assess, and be assessed? Why assess? and How to assess? As a process, assessment is most effective when used to support the learning of, and about 'self' in a range of contexts, and can be a motivational force when it challenges the learner about their own learning. However, assessment can also have the opposite effect, disempowering and demotivating; something done to, rather than with the learner. These issues are explored in this chapter where we compare different models of assessment, highlight the value of self-assessment and suggest an approach whereby self-assessment as a lens for learning can contribute to the identity development and self-determination of learners with diverse learning needs.

Learners and learning are framed in different ways depending on the assessment lens through which learning is viewed. It is not only 'what' we look for when assessing learning, but also 'how' we look for it; that is, the particular aspect of learning we assess, and the tools and practices we use to assess it, which determines the picture we get of that learner.

Given the range of models that provide different perspectives on teaching and learning, the *purpose* for assessment and the related *method* of assessment becomes paramount. The 'why assess' and 'how to assess' becomes crucial given that the assessment will result in our viewing learning through different lenses.

Whether assessment is used in a summative or formative nature, both provide us with a different understanding about a student's learning – a different answer to the question why assess (Black & Wiliam, 1998). For example, summative assessment as assessment *of* learning, or end-product assessment, is often used for accountability purposes as it determines a student's level of performance on a task. On the other hand, formative assessment as assessment *for* learning, or ongoing assessment, provides feedback during learning to facilitate and understand learning and improve teaching (Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall, & Wiliam, 2003; Black & Wiliam, 1998; Clarke, Timperley & Hattie, 2003).

Children and young people attend school to experience new learning opportunities. In the same way that every child is a learner, so too is every child their own assessor. However, while participation in school, home and their local community provides ongoing opportunities

and contexts for learning, only certain forms of learning are conventionally assessed or 'measured' in school. These are often summative and focus on the achieved end product. For children with special educational needs, these assessment systems can be demotivating and meaningless (Black & Wiliam, 1998), and can continue to reinforce a deficit theorizing of these children, and thereby hinder learning. Increasingly, it is also being recognized that there are often many cultural, social and other forms of learning that take place in school settings and beyond, that either cannot or are not measured. Therefore, alternative forms of assessment, such as self-assessment, that actively involve the learner, will addresses some of the ways learners can actively participate positively towards assessing *for* their own learning. Self-assessment cannot work when 'done' to the learner. The learner needs to identify the purpose and goal for learning, measure their performance against these goals and reflect on how this contributes to their knowledge of self. This need for a clear sense of purpose when learning, along with a strong sense of self and identity, provides the best foundation for utilizing self-assessment as a tool for learning.

Through self-assessment in multiple contexts, the learner accesses a range of experiences and opportunities to understand and examine themselves, their knowledge, skills and attitudes, in order better toknow themselves. It is with the true sense of self that learners are in a position to self-determine their goals, aspirations, needs and wants. Components of self-determination (that is, choice making skills, self-advocacy skills, positive perceptions of control and efficacy, self-knowledge and awareness) are critical for learners with diverse needs to participate and contribute to the contexts within which they live and learn (Thoma, Nathanson, Baker, & Tamura, 2002; Weymeyer, 1994). In all areas of education, including special education, learners need support to have control and choice over their situations, to take risks, to set goals, and be active participants in problem-solving in their own lives (Agran, Blanchard, & Wehmeyer, 2000). But this pur-

suit for self-determination often goes unvalued. Assessment is usually driven by the teacher, with the student being an inactive passenger in the process, but it could be driven (or at the very least, navigated) by the learner in order to provide more experiences that utilize self-determination skills.

There are various models and practices of assessment, each of which provides us with a different perspective or different lens through which to view learning and achievement. Depending on which lenses of assessment we are looking through, a different picture of ourselves emerge and this contributes to our sense of identity. Assessment is often done *to* us, by others, and depending on the particular assessment approach used, a particular story is told about us, which shapes our sense of who we are. Self-assessment is a way to gain authorship of our own stories – to tell our own tales.

Self-assessment tells us, and others, about ourselves. It is the process of understanding more about who we are, how we interact with others and how we learn. It is a means of gathering information about our skills, values, knowledge, needs, interactions and beliefs. For all learners, and particularly those who experience difficulties in life, the use of self-assessment as a strategy to gain greater self-awareness, contributes to meaningful and intrinsically motivated, rather than imposed, learning goals and associated outcomes. Self-assessment formalizes the process whereby the learner develops a sense of identity. Knowing who we are, and having a strong sense of our own identity in different contexts, is important for all learners to contribute successfully and belong to different learning communities. As Wenger (1998) says, 'the concept of identity serves as a pivot between the social and the individual, so that we can talk of one in the context of the other' (p. 145).

Self-assessment has the potential to promote learned hopefulness and empowerment. Learned hopefulness as defined by Zimmerman (1990) is 'the process of learning and utilizing problem-solving skills and the achievement of perceived or actual control' (p. 72). It is the process whereby individuals

develop a sense of empowerment. Though developing intrinsic self-assessment skills within a variety of settings, learners become more knowledgeable and confident about their ability to succeeding in solving tasks – and hence move towards gaining an internal locus of control, a sense of empowerment and learned hopefulness.

LOOKING AT LEARNING THROUGH DIFFERENT ASSESSMENT LENSES

Children with diverse learning needs are often required to participate in a range of assessment processes aimed at identifying their areas of strengths and difficulties so that curriculum adaptations can be made. The choice of assessment is often shaped by the teacher's or specialist's perspective of learning, and the assessment results shape the view they have about the learner. Standardized tests, for example, provide very different information about a child's learning than information from a portfolio assessment, or observations of learning in different classrooms or interviews with teachers and parents.

Standardized psychometric tests in the area of special education provide a perspective of learning that can be located within the *Psychometric Model* where often a deficit orientation is taken, and the assumption is that difficulties lie within the learner. Emphasis is placed on diagnosis, prognosis and etiology of the problem. There is less accountability on the part of the teacher and minimal assessment of the curriculum, classroom environment or context, because the innate qualities or deficits of the learner are central to this approach. It is the learner's static knowledge and skills that are tested with the aim of determining the student's deviation from the norm. Therefore, the learner is more likely to learn what she or he cannot do, and what score has been gained in relation to others of a similar age, than any knowledge of themselves in relation to the task. Psychometric tests such as intelligence tests (for example, the WISC-IV) are still widely used in educational set-

tings and yet have changed very little since their first introduction almost 100 years ago. However, there are many problems inherent in the use of psychometric tests that produce static measures such as Intelligence Quotient (IQ) scores including: the lack of a theoretical framework that is supported by empirical data (Bourke & Gregory, 1996; Elliott, 2003; Flanagan & McGrew, 1997), the difficulty translating static scores into meaningful intervention practice in the classroom (Bourke & Gregory, 1996; Feuerstein, Rand, & Hoffman, 1979), the emphasis upon static products rather than cognitive processes and potential to change (Feuerstein, Miller, & Jensen 1981; Sternberg, 1984), and the tendency to disadvantage those from different cultural and language groups from which the tests were normed (Lopez, 1997). Irrespective of the difficulties associated with intelligence tests, the creation of expectations is one of the most limiting aspects of this form of assessment. These tests can be disempowering for the learner in that they create expectations that often unfairly further limit the learner. As Gould (1981) has stated: 'we pass through this world but once. Few tragedies can be more extensive than the stunting of life, few injustices deeper than the denial of an opportunity to strive or even hope, by a limit imposed from without, but falsely identified as lying within' (p. 28).

An alternative to the psychometric lens to viewing intelligence and learning is the *Cognitive Model*, where assessment involves identifying the concepts that learners have acquired through personal experiences and the Piagetian processes of assimilation and accommodation. According to Piaget (1979): 'knowledge is derived from action … To know an object is to act upon it and transform it … To know is therefore to assimilate reality into structures of transformation and these are the structures that intelligence constructs as a direct extension of our actions' (pp. 28–29). Piaget did not take account of context when exploring student learning, although he did argue that the social world has an impact on the individual's development in so far as the individual adapted to

the environment (Piaget, 1929, 1979). Rogoff, Mistry, Göncü, & Mosier (1993) noted that Piaget's work examined the individual development as being general across contexts and that his primary focus 'was on the individual rather than on the aspects of the world that the child struggles to understand or on how the social world contributes to individual development' (Rogoff et al., 1993, p. 5.) Other cognitive theorists have foregrounded a more process-oriented and dynamic approach to cognitive assessment (Lidz, 1991; Sternberg, 1988), which emphasizes metacognitive aspects of learning, and focuses on the interaction between the teacher and learner with a view to maximizing learning potential. Teaching aims at assisting the learner to be aware of their cognitive strategies, to self-regulate and adapt appropriately in order to become autonomous and independent in their learning.

This links with a C*onstructivist Model*, where the learner builds his or her own structure for understanding concepts. Assessment can thus examine the learner's successive understandings and meaning-making. A *co-constructivist* approach extends this to involve others in the learning process, by focusing on learning which occurs through scaffolded experiences of interacting with more experienced others. The assessment focus shifts from the learner to the interaction between the teacher and learner to show how adaptations can occur in the dynamics of the teaching–learning dyad to achieve interactions that facilitate learning. The salient feature of this form of dynamic assessment is the use of guided learning to determine a learner's potential for change (Campione, 1989; Feuerstein et al., 1979; Skuy & Mentis, 1999). Within this model, assessing the teaching and learning interaction involves such activities as prompting, asking leading questions, modeling, and collaborative problem solving, based on a test–teach–test approach.

The *Humanistic Model* shifts the assessment focuses to the student's social development, self-esteem, independence and interdependence. Wanting to learn and knowing how to learn are seen to be more impor-

tant than measuring factual knowledge. Learning is seen as relating to the learner's motivation, self-direction and need for self-actualization (Maslow 1971). Hierarchy of needs, self-expression and student-centred learning are educational goals, and the orientation of assessment is social and affective rather than scientific or biological. There is the view that within every child there is a natural desire to learn and this approach to assessment acknowledges the student's values about learning (Howie, 1999; McMillan, 2000). Assessment practices within this view of learning would include self-rating scales that generate more awareness of individual needs, values and learning preferences. Artifacts of a student's work complied into an individual portfolio is well suited to the cognitive, constructivist and humanistic models as the artifacts provide ongoing examples of the learner's performance and progress in relation to their identified learning goals and outcomes.

Contemporary approaches within the *Behavioural Model* include the functional behavioural assessment (FBA). In this approach hypotheses are generated about potential antecedents and consequences of a specified aspect of the learner's behaviour, and then conditions are manipulated to test these hypotheses (Miller, Tansey, & Hughes, 1998). This assessment aims at identifying the communicative intent and function of the behaviour, and the purpose it serves for the individual. Because there are multiple reasons for behaviours, a variety of methods can be used to gather information about antecedents, behaviours and consequences. This involves a multimethod approach that can be indirect, such as interviews, checklists and rating scales or direct, such as behavioural observations (Gresham, Watson, & Skinner, 2001). Within this approach to assessment the learner, and learning, is defined in terms of external observable behaviours perhaps at the expense of more internalized, less observable factors.

Linked to this is the view of learning through a *Developmental Model* which fore-

grounds the predetermined stages of develop-
ment within the physical, cognitive and psy-
chosocial domains of a learner's functioning.
This approach places emphasis on experience
and environment in terms of how learners
progress through stages in a sequential, linear
and definite order. The focus of this assess-
ment approach is to determine the child's cur-
rent level of functioning in relation to an
assumed hierarchical structure of learning.
Developmental charts and checklists provide
the information required for assessment and
teaching within this model. For example, the
Carolina Curriculum (Johnson-Martin, Atter-
meier, & Hacker, 1990) outlines assessment
and intervention approaches according to a
developmental sequence in the five domains
of cognition, communication, social adapta-
tion, fine motor, and gross motor.

The *Ecological Model* looks at assessment
through a more holistic lens and focuses on
the various systems within the individual's
environment. In this approach, assessment
does not focus on the child in isolation, but
the basic unit of analysis is the whole ecol-
ogy. This model is most closely associated
with the work of Bronfenbrenner (1979) who
suggests that models of assessment within
special education too often simply focus on
students' deficits without really considering
that the student with special needs is, first and
foremost, a child within a family and a wider
society. In Bronfenbrenner's ecological
model (1979) the child is viewed as being a
participant in a unique and overlapping set of
ecosystems where the learner at the centre is
surrounded by the home, the neighbourhood,
social networks and cultural groups. Assess-
ment involves an evaluation of the learner's
environment, materials, equipment, appropri-
ateness of teaching, goals, and strategies.
More importantly within an ecological
model, it is important to involve an assess-
ment of the interactions and relationships of
the child with others, within and across the
different settings. Therefore, involving teach-
ers, peers and family in the assessment is
emphasized.

**Figure 24.1   The self-assessment
lens for learning**

THE SELF-ASSESSMENT LENS FOR LEARNING

The self-assessment approach outlined in the
next section identifies interconnected tiers of
self-assessment focusing on the sociocultural
context, and identity (see Figure 24.1),. Each
tier informs and is informed by the other.
These consist of:

- a tier which explores the conceptions learners
  have about self-assessment within multiple for-
  mal and informal cultural and social contexts;
  and
- a tier focusing on the role and development of a
  sense of identity and how this can help facilitate
  the process of self-determination and learned
  hopefulness in the learner.

SELF-ASSESSMENT WITHIN A SOCIOCULTUAL CONTEXT

As outlined above, historically within a tradi-
tional special education model, many assess-

ment strategies have placed greater emphasis on the identification, classification and targeted interventions for children experiencing difficulty learning. The consequences of this approach to assessment have resulted in children becoming unnecessarily demotivated, and further marginalized from their own learning. To involve learners actively in their own assessment process, we must be prepared to accept differences in their goals, aspirations and routes towards achievement. Indeed, we even need to examine what we mean by achievement and what value is attributed by teachers and learners, to different forms of achievement. Therefore, as teachers, we must be prepared to change the way we think about our teaching, which means changing ourselves (Black et al., 2003; Shepard, 2000). While self-assessment is used in schools, it is often teacher directed and initiated, leaving children out of the process. We are therefore not learning from children and, it seems, not prepared to change. Paley (1979, 1999) argued that educators have much to learn from children, but while there is a strong call for involving the student voice in research, students are often left out of the dialogue (Oldfather, 1995; Smith, 1996, 1998). Self-assessment and formative assessment is a means to support learners back into this dialogue. Black and Wiliam (1998) provide strong evidence from an extensive literature review to show that classroom formative assessment is a powerful means to improve student learning. They go on to claim that if formative assessment is to be productive, pupils should be trained in self-assessment so that they can understand the main purposes of their learning and thereby grasp what they need to do to achieve.

Research has shown that self-assessment can encourage pupil motivation by improving communication in the classroom, thereby counteracting to some extent the impersonality of the school (Broadfoot, 1979). The more motivated pupils are, the greater likelihood there is that their involvement, commitment and responsibility for their learning will increase (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Broadfoot, 1979; Weeden, Winter, & Broadfoot, 2002).

Therefore self-assessment implicitly raises pupil status because the students' opinions are valued (Broadfoot, 1979). This in turn improves their reflective thinking skills (Kusnic & Finley, 1993) and ability to apply metacognitive strategies (Pramling, 1996) in their learning. As well as increasing student motivation for learning (Broadfoot, 1979; Ralph, 1995), self-assessment practices have been attributed to students developing a greater sense of control and ownership for their learning (Barnes, 1997; Eaton & Pougiales, 1993; van Kraayenoord & Paris, 1997).

In this relational, dynamic conception, self-assessment is not an individual, isolated or singular activity. It occurs within a context, through interactions with others and is multi-faceted. Mead (1934) argued that when people adjust to different environments or communities they change themselves and, in doing so, they ultimately influence the community in which they live, which in turn changes. Assessment and learning are reciprocal processes and both are embedded within the learner's sociocultural environment.

Children and young people need the support from others to know what and how they learn. While their sense of self and self-knowledge influences how they assess their own responses and outcomes of their learning, the provision of feedback from their peers and from adults shapes their thinking, and provides a mediating influence. If we take the notion that every context is a learning context, and that every setting ultimately serves an educational purpose, then we can begin to question the relevance of external, formal assessment tools to measure learning.

The belief that all children can, and will, learn is central to creating learning opportunities for children with special educational needs. Strategies using self-assessment as a form of learning, as well as to inform learning and teaching, is something all children must be part of. Experiences in assessment, have historically had learners in less than powerful circumstances. For young learners with special educational needs, both a sense of belonging and

control are important. Self-assessment strategies give back some of that power by allowing the learner to identify criteria for assessment and associated measures of success, which can then contribute actively in any related Individual Educational Planning process.

Learners in both naturalistic and school settings have a range of ways of conceptualizing self-assessment. As Bourke (2000) showed, students' conceptions of self-assessment include intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions, and both involve interaction with others. Extrinsic dimensions include those aspects that require feedback by others such as seeking an opinion, getting marks and grades, performing a task modeled by others or using pre-established criteria. Intrinsic conceptions include those that relate to internal validation and purposeful learning such as setting goals for learning and evaluating learning content. Using these forms of self-assessment within appropriate sociocultural contexts results in the strengthening of the learner's sense of self-determination and self-identity. Yet children are seldom asked whether the learning content is desirable, even though they are introduced to more and more complex learning tasks, some of which appear to hold little relevance for them. Until they see the relevance, and connect meaning to these tasks, neither learning nor self-assessment is likely to take priority for the learner. At this intrinsic level of self-assessment, where evaluating the content of learning becomes the focus, students can be aided by having meaning mediated to them (Feuerstein, Rand, & Hoffman, 1979). When through interaction with teachers, parents or more experienced peers, the learner can see the value of the content and come to appreciate it as being highly desirable, necessary or interesting, the learner will actively engage in that learning. In this way, self-assessment is intrinsically linked with both the content and the learner's knowledge of him or herself in relation to that task.

Parents, teachers and more capable peers might often play the role of 'expert' in confirming that learning has occurred, but unless this learning answers the 'what do I want to learn?' goal, then it is less likely that the

learner will want to persevere with this learning. If a learner gains confirmation of improvements in a writing task when the preferred communication goal is to learn to interact with peers via text messaging, then the facets of learning and assessment have shifted and need to be re-aligned so that both become meaningful. How this might be done involves listening to the learner and examining his or her ideas in a range of contexts. Self-assessment, like self-determination does not occur in isolation. As previously identified, the environments and contexts of the learner play an integral role in either facilitating or hindering the learner's ability to control their environment (Abery, Rudrud, Arndt, Schauben, & Eggebeen, 1995).

For many theorists and practitioners, learning is recognized as occurring in multiple formal and informal situations where the different relationships of the learners to others, and to the information, allows the learner to both transform their own and others' roles, thinking about and participation in the learning. As noted by Rogoff, Matusov, and White (1996) a sociocultural perspective recognizes that learners adopt different roles and responsibilities according to the group in which they are participating. Rogoff et al. take the position that all learning occurs in both cultural and social contexts, with the learner an active member of each context. The premise of a sociocultural view of learning is that cognitive change is seen as a social and interpersonal process (Granott & Gardner, 1994), and is a move away from viewing learning as beginning and ending with the individual (Lave, 1996; Lave & Wenger, 1991). The theory of the learner as an individual within a wider social context was developed by Vygotsky (1978, 1987, 1988) to emphasize the importance of the relationship between thinking and the social organization of instruction. This model of learning therefore has implications for the way we approach the assessment of, and for, learning. The centrality of the learner to the assessment process, taking different roles, is pivotal to supporting ongoing learning.

IDENTITY THROUGH SELF-ASSESSMENT

Self-assessment and identity development are inextricably linked; both occurring through lived experiences and interaction with others within multiple and different sociocultural contexts. Self-assessment and identity development are not solitary or singular activities in isolation, but occur when the learner participates in various social situations. In self-assessment and learning there is an underlying understanding that the 'self' in 'self-assessment' involves self in relation to others, that is, the 'self-in-relation' has meaning only within a complex context of relationships (Barab et al., 1999; Bateson 1972; Wenger 1998). Building an identity, as Wenger (1998) suggests, consists of negotiating the meanings of our experience of membership in social communities. Identity is linked to social membership but, conversely, we are also uniquely individual and we need to guard against social stereotyping. This interplay between the individual and social aspects of identity has significance for all learners – but in particular for those children with special educational needs who often, as a result of generalizations and lowered expectations about their learning needs, become excluded from certain learning contexts which could limit their opportunities not only for further learning, but also for identity development.

If learning, self-assessment and the development of identity occur through participation, in what Brown (1997) refers to as learning communities, Rogoff (2003) describes as enculturation in cultural communities and Wenger (1998) as involvement in communities of practice, then the importance of providing inclusive learning communities for all learners becomes vital. As Leffler and Svedberg (2003) note, learners are not mere passive recipients of knowledge nor independent, solitary thinkers but rather participants in a kind of learning in which interaction with others is the most important element. In other words, children learn about themselves through others, and the messages they receive both implicitly and explicitly, help form that knowledge of self. Knowledge is transformed through meaningful interaction in a particular context, enhancing individual identity development. Through self-assessment, learners come to understand more about their identity – who they are and what they can do, and this occurs through taking on different learning roles in different sociocultural contexts.

Self-assessment then can contribute significantly to self-knowledge, which has been identified as being one of the core characteristics of self-determination (Thoma, Nathanson, Baker, & Tamura, 2002). Self-determination – the ability to make choices and decisions for oneself – is important for all learners, but in particular is widely seen as being a 'best–practice procedure in the education of students with disabilities' (Thoma et al., 2002, p. 242). As Wehmeyer and Schalock (2001) point out, teaching students to become self-sufficient citizens, who can live independently and integrate within a community should be an expected outcome of any education system. Self-assessment can play a vital role in promoting self-determination – the ability of students to know what they want and how to get it. This can be achieved through what Wehmeyer and Schalock (2001) describe as 'self –realizing' where students' 'use a comprehensive, and reasonably accurate, knowledge of themselves and their strengths and limitations and act to capitalize on this knowledge' (p. 2). Algozzine, Browder, Karvonen, Test, and Wood (2001) show that, through assessment activities such as portfolios, self-determination can be *taught*, that it can be *learnt* and that it *makes a difference* in the lives of individuals with disabilities. As Malian and Nevin (2002) point out, it 'can be modeled and generalised across life and educational settings' (p. 73).

LISTENING TO THE LEARNER

The student's perspective in assessing their own learning provides another dimension for teachers to understand individual student learning; in the same way student voice has

been explored in educational research to understand the phenomena of learning (Bourke, 2000; Gipps & Tunstall, 1998; Johnston & Nicholls, 1995; Lincoln, 1995; Pollard, 1996; Pramling, 1996). Through seeking, understanding and then using children's perspective, educators are better placed to facilitate improved conditions for their assessment and learning. If educators use self-assessment strategies, as an integral part of the students' learning process, it enables the use and analysis of another form of data to ensure assumptions are not made about what learners think and about how they make sense of the world and their learning. As Smith (1996) has noted 'even where people claim to be working on children's behalf there is little attempt to understand their ways of seeing the world' (p. 10).

Traditionally educators do not actively hear the voice of the child when discussing and planning their assessment and learning. Having an understanding of how children self-assess and develop self-knowledge will provide a framework for educators to listen to the learner. When children are asked about their experiences of knowing when and how they have learned, the way these learners use self-knowledge and self-assessment to evaluate their learning outcomes and set future learning goals is evident (Bourke, 2000). Many young learners require their knowledge of 'self' to be mediated by others. This extrinsic information is the first step towards learners actively shaping a sense of their self. Next, the child starts to focus on the 'amount' of learning – the 'how much' in relation to either their own learning or others. This feedback during the early years of schooling is usually in the form of verbal feedback and some identifier such as a star or stamp or sticker, and later is quantified in terms of a mark or grade. Through this process learners develop an awareness that certain learning outcomes have importance and are given priority through the school assessment system.

However, as learners become more confident in their own sense of self, their own identity, self-assessment moves to include more intrinsic elements where instead of using criteria externally set, the learner identifies internal learning goals. Through outlining their learning outcomes and goals, the student has a set direction, purpose and value in these goals, and is motivated to persevere. Often the outcomes are identified and measured differently to those specified by a teacher, simply because the learner has a greater understanding of themselves in relation to the assigned task. This conception of self-assessment relies on the learner's own sense of self-identity, or their own perceptions of their self. Therefore, what is important to them becomes the value assigned to their learning. Until learners see the relevance and connect meaning to the tasks they perform, neither learning nor self-assessment is likely to take priority for the learner. Evaluating the content of learning becomes the final stage of self-assessment and when that content is seen as highly desirable, necessary or interesting, the learner will actively engage in the learning. In this way, self-assessment is intrinsically linked with both the content and the learner's knowledge of him or herself in relation to that task. As educators we need to become cognizant of the elements of self-assessment that learners engage in so that we can support them back into the dialogue about their learning goals and aspirations.

This chapter has outlined the way different assessment approaches foreground different aspects of learning; and how self-assessment can provide a valuable lens through which to view and support further learning. Ultimately however, irrespective of the assessment approach used, it is the individual learner and their developing sense of self that needs to be the main focus. Self-assessment within a sociocultural context can facilitate the development of a sense of identity, which in turn can promote the self-determination and learned hopefulness for learners. Through knowing themselves, learners are in a stronger position to actively participate in decisions, goals, and aspirations about their own learning needs.

Self-assessment is a deliberate, intentional, and supportive process to facilitate student

learning, and to acknowledge the learner as taking a key role in their own assessment and learning. It legitimizes the multiple contexts the learner experiences and challenges the notion that school-based education is the only form of learning we can measure. For learners with special educational needs, self-determination is an important outcome. A successful transition from a school context into the community, enables them to take an active part in decisions about themselves, their futures and their goals.

If we are actively supporting learners to be active participants in the learning process, they must also take an active and participatory role in their own assessment. All assessment methods can be enhanced through incorporating a self-reflective component, which creates scaffolded opportunities for learners to gain a sense of their own ability, creativity and general sense-of-self in relation to the task. Without such knowledge, learners will continually be reliant on external forms of assessment to gain any sense of their own ability or aptitude in relation to both new and old activities. Is that what we really want?

REFERENCES

Abery, B., Rudrud, L., Arndt, K., Schauben, L., & Eggebeen, A. (1995). Evaluating a multicomponent program for enhancing the self-determination of youth with disabilities. *Intervention in School and Clinic.*, *30*(3), 170–179.

Agran, M., Blanchard, C., & Wehmeyer, M. L. (2000). Promoting transition goals and self-determination through student self-directed learning: The self-determined learning model of instruction. *Education and Training in Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, 2000* ,*35*(4), 351–364.

Algozzine, B., Browder, D., Karvonen, M., Test, D., & Wood, W. (2001). Efffects of interventions to promote self-determination for individuals with disabilities, *Review of Educational Research*, *71*(2), 219–277.

Barab, S., Cherkes-Julkowski, M., Swenson, R., Garrett, S., Shaw, R., & Young, M. (1999). Principles of self-organization: Learning as participation in autocatakinetic systems. *Journal of the Learning Sciences*, *8*(3&4), 349–390.

Barnes, R. (1997). High expectations and pupil feedback. *Educational Practice and Theory*, *19*(2), 5–15.

Bateson, G. (1972). *Steps to an ecology of mind.* London: Granada.

Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (1998). Inside the black box. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *80*(2), 139–148.

Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshall, B., & Wiliam, D. (2003). *Assessment for learning. Putting it into practice.* Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Bourke, R. (2000). *Students' conceptions of learning and self-assessment in context.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Massey University, New Zealand.

Bourke, R., & Gregory, J. (1996). Get smart: Take intelligence out of testing. *The Psychological Bulletin*, *90*, 22–30.

Broadfoot, P. (1979). Communication in the classroom: A study of the role of assessment in motivation. *Educational Review*, *31*(1), 3–10.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Brown, A. L. (1997). Transforming schools into communities of thinking and learning about serious matters. *American Psychologist*, *52*(4), 399–413.

Campione, J. (1989). Assisted assessment: A taxonomy of approaches and an outline of strengths and weaknesses. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *22*, 151–165.

Clarke, S., Timperley, H. & Hattie, J. (2003), *Unlocking formative assessment practical strategies for enhancing students' learning in the primary and intermediate classroom.* New Zealand ed. Wellington: Hodden Moa Beckett Publishers Ltd.

Eaton, M., & Pougiales, R. (1993). Work, reflection, and community: Conditions that support writing self-evaluations. In J. MacGregor (Ed.) Student Self-evaluations: Fostering Reflective Learning. *New directions for teaching and learning*, *56*, Winter, 47–63.

Elliott, J. (2003) Dynamic assessment in settings: Realising potential. *Educational Review*, *55*(1) 15–32.

Feuerstein, R., Miller, R., & Jensen, M.R. (1981). Can evolving techniques better measure cognitive change? *The Journal of Special Education*, *15*(2), 201–270.

Feuerstein, R., Rand, Y., & Hoffman, M. B. (1979) *The dynamic assessment of retarded performers: The learning potential assessment device, theory, instruments and techniques.* Baltimore, MD: University Park Press.

Flanagan, D. P., & McGrew, K. S. (1997). A cross-battery approach to assessing and interpreting cognitive abilities: Narrowing the gap between practice and cognitive science. In D. P. Flanagan, J. L. Genshaft & P. L. Harrison (Eds.), *Contemporary intellectual assessment: Theories, tests and issues.* New York, Guilford Press.

Gipps, C., & Tunstall, P. (1998). Effort, ability and the teacher: Young children's explanations for success and failure. *Oxford Review of Education*, *24*(2), 149–165.

Gould, S. J. (1981). *The mismeasure of man.* Harmondsworth: Pelican Books.

Granott, N., & Gardner, H. (1994). When minds meet. In R. J. Sternberg & R. K. Wagner (Eds.), *Mind in context. Interactionist perspectives on human intelligence* (pp. 171–201). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gresham, F. M., Watson, T. S., & Skinner, C, H. (2001). Functional behavioral assessment: Principles, procedures, and future directions. School Psychology Review, *30*(2), 156–172

Howie, D. (1999). Models and morals: Meanings underpinning the scientific study of special educational needs. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, *46*(1), 10–24.

Johnson-Martin, N., Attermeier, S., & Hacker, B. (1990). T*he Carolina curriculum for preschoolers with special needs.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

Johnston, P. H., & Nicholls, J. G. (1995). Voices we want to hear and voices we don't. *Theory into Practice*, *34*(2), 94–100.

Kusnic, E., & Finley, M. L. (1993). Student self-evaluation: An introduction and rationale. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, *56*, Winter, 5–13.

Lave, J. (1996). Teaching, as learning, in practice. *Mind, Culture, and Activity: An International Journal*, *3*(3), 149–164.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Leffler, E. and Svedberg, G. (2003). Enterprise in Swedish rural schools: Capacity building through learning networks. *Queensland Journal of Educational Research*, *19*(2), 83–99.

Lidz, C. S. (1991). *Practitioner's guide to dynamic assessment.* New York: Guilford Press.

Lincoln, Y. S. (1995). In search of students' voices. *Theory into Practice*, *34*(2), 88–93.

Lopez, E. C. (1997). The cognitive assessment of limited English proficient and bilingual children. In D. P. Flanagan, J. L.Genshalt & P. L. Harrison (Eds.), *Contemporary intellectual assessment: Theories, tests and issues.* New York: Guilford Press.

Malian, E., & Nevin, A (2002). A review of self-determination literature implications for practitioners. *Remedial and Special Education*, *23*(2), 68–74.

Maslow, A. H. (1971). *The farther reaches of human nature.* New York: Viking Press.

McMillan, J. H. (2000). Fundamental assessment principles for teachers and school administrators. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, *7*(8). Retrieved November 12, 2005, from http://PAREonline.net/getvn.asp?v=7&n=8

Mead, G. H. (1934). *Mind, self, and society.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Miller, J.A., Tansey, M., & Hughes, T. L. (1998). Functional behavioral assessment. The link between problem behavior and effective intervention in schools. *Current Issues in Education* [Online], *1*(5). Available at: http://cie.asu.edu/volume1/number5/index.html

Oldfather, P. (1995). Songs 'come back most to them': Students' experiences as researchers. *Theory into Practice*, *34*(2), 131–137.

Paley, V. G. (1979). *White teacher.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Paley, V. G. (1999). *The kindness of children.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Piaget, J. (1929). *The child's conception of the world.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.

Piaget, J. (1979). *Science of education and the psychology of the child.* New York: Penguin. (Original work published 1969.)

Pollard, A. (with Filer, A). (1996). *The social world of children's learning.* London: Cassell.

Pramling, I. (1996). Understanding and empowering the child as learner. In D. R. Olson & N. Torrance (Eds.), *The handbook of education and human development* (pp. 565–592). Oxford: Blackwell.

Ralph, E. G. (1995). Are self-assessments accurate? Evaluating novices' teaching via triangulation. *Research in Education*, *53,* 41–51.

Rogoff, B. (2003). *The cultural nature of human development.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Rogoff, B., Matusov, M., & White, C. (1996). Models of teaching and learning: Participation in a community of learners. In D. R. Olson & N. Torrance (Eds.), *The handbook of education and human development* (pp. 388–414). Oxford: Blackwell.

Rogoff, B., Mistry, J., Göncü, A., & Mosier, C. (1993). Guided participation in cultural activity by toddlers and caregivers. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, *58*(7, Serial no. 236).

Shepard, L. (2000). The role of assessment in a learning culture. *Educational Researcher*, *29*(7), 4–14.

Skuy, M. and Mentis, M. (Eds. in collaboration with Rueven Feuerstein). (1999). *Bridging Learning In and Out of the Classroom.* Los Angeles, CA: SkyLight Training and Publishing Inc.

Smith, A. (1996). *Incorporating children's perspectives into research in New Zealand.* Unpublished manuscript, Children's Issues Centre, University of Otago.

Smith, A. (1998). *Understanding children's development* (4th ed.). Wellington: Bridget Williams Books.

Sternberg, R. J. (1984). What should intelligence tests test? Implications for a triarchic theory of intelligence for intelligence testing. *Educational Researcher*, *13*(1), 5–15.

Sternberg, R. (1988). The triarchic mind: A new theory of human intelligence. New York: Viking.

Thoma, C, A., Nathanson, R., Baker, S. R., & Tamura, R. (2002). Self-determination: What do special educa-

tors know and where do they learn it? *Remedial and Special Education*, *23*(4), 242–247.

Van Kraayenoord, C. E., & Paris, S. G. (1997). Australian students' self-appraisal of their work samples and academic progress. *Elementary School Journal*, *97*(5), 523–537.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind and society.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1987). *The collected works of L S. Vygotsky.* R. W. Rieber & A. S. Carton (Eds.). New York: Plenum Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1988). The genesis of higher mental functions. In K. Richardson & S. Sheldon (Eds.), *Cognitive development to adolescence* (pp. 61–80). London: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Weeden, P., Winter, J., & Broadfoot, P, (2002). *Assessment: What's in it for schools?* London: Routledge.

Wehmeyer, M. (1994). Self-determination as an educational outcomes. *Impact*, *6*(4), 6–7.

Wehmeyer, M., & Schalock, R. (2001). Self-determination and quality of life: Implications for special education services and supports. *Focus on Exceptional Children*, April, 1–6.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Zimmerman, M.A. (1990). Toward a theory of learned hopefulness: A structural model analysis of participation and empowerment. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *24*, 71–86.