

Challenging formative assessment: disciplinary spaces and identities

John Pryor* and Barbara Crossouard

Sussex School of Education, University of Sussex, Essex House, Falmer BN1 9QQ, UK

What if knowledge is a form of doing, an engagement between a knowing subject and what is known? What if learning is a contextualised performance involving students engaging with prospective and current social identities, and therefore an ontological as well as an epistemological accomplishment? What then becomes of formative assessment within different disciplinary pedagogies? In this paper, we open up the possibility of formative assessment as encompassing a disciplinary meta-discourse within the context of teaching as response. We draw on data from a postgraduate context to illustrate how the identities of teachers and learners may be brought into play. Formative assessment is seen to involve movement across a concrete–procedural–reflective–discursive–existential continuum, and between the convergent and divergent. We suggest that by asserting the centrality of disciplinary knowledge and identities, the frameworks presented may be used heuristically to entice academics into thinking more specifically and organically about pedagogies which are more appropriate to the changing nature of twenty-first-century higher education.

Keywords: formative assessment; higher education pedagogy; identity; disciplinary knowledge

Introduction

For many years, the idea of learning as the acquisition and possession of knowledge has been questioned from a theoretical perspective (e.g. Lyotard 1984; Lave and Wenger 1991), and over the last two decades pedagogic research on higher education (HE) from many different perspectives has shown up its shortcomings in practice (e.g. Prosser and Trigwell 1999; Yorke 2003; Haggis 2006). Yet this notion seems to underlie much university teaching (Biggs 2003). In this paper, we work with a different set of assumptions. What if knowledge is ‘an active engagement between the knowing subject and what is known ... a kind of doing’ (Gill 1993, 68, cited in Delandshere 2002)? What if learning is a contextualised performance involving students engaging with prospective and current social identities, and therefore an ontological as well as an epistemological accomplishment? What if the differential personal risk that this involves is acknowledged? What then becomes of formative assessment within different disciplinary pedagogies? In addressing the challenges raised by these assumptions, drawing from a dataset exploring formative assessment at doctoral level, we offer a theorisation that might support HE teachers in engaging with the complexities of this different understanding of learning.

*Corresponding author. Email: j.b.pryor@sussex.ac.uk

Rationale

The traditional task of the university, to produce knowledge while (re)producing a small cadre of elite intellectuals, has recently fragmented. The multiplicity of purposes it must now address include employability for a diverse group of lifelong learners, professional development, wealth generation, specialised knowledge creation and global competitiveness. Even before the advent of globalised technologies, the nature of knowledge required was called into question (Lyotard 1984). Pedagogies, curricula and forms of assessment deemed successful in the past are no longer adequate and need to be rethought.

In efforts to develop new approaches, HE scholars and academic developers have sought to engage lecturers in a discourse of teaching and learning. This often requires lecturers to break with familiar practice; but it also sometimes imposes universalist notions of learning (e.g. deep learning) which ignore disciplinary contexts and cultures. As Haggis (2006) suggests, we should instead privilege ‘learning how to *do* the learning in *that* subject – how to think, question, search for evidence, accept evidence, and put evidence together to make an argument that is acceptable in that discipline’ (532). This ‘redisciplining’ of HE learning (Jones 2009) aligns it with relational approaches that recognise the situated nature of learning, where it arises within ‘systems of [power] relations’ and involves the construction of identity, or ‘becoming a different person with respect to those systems of relations’ (Lave and Wenger 1991, 53).

Understanding students’ learning as entailing an engagement with identity and a subject discipline has considerable implications for assessment, both summative and formative. Formative assessment, teachers’ and learners’ responses when judgements about academic work are being negotiated (with the intention of improvement), becomes a more complex set of practices (Black and Wiliam 2006). First, a wider gamut of interactions becomes recognisable as ‘pedagogic’ (Bernstein 1996) and, second, these entail complex existential or ontological elements (Lave and Wenger 1991; Biesta 2004; Sfard and Prusak 2005). This complexity can be addressed through the development of theoretical understandings. This paper draws upon in-depth empirical research with 11 students undertaking the early stages of a multidisciplinary doctor of education degree, focusing primarily on research design and methodology. The data, derived from observation of formative assessment in seminars, discourse analysis of online texts and exploration of student perceptions through in-depth interviews, yielded a close focus on the processes of formative assessment. The project built on previous research into formative assessment in other contexts (Torrance and Pryor 2001). Overall, the analysis suggested the importance of issues of student and teacher identity to learning cultures and therefore to the nature and consequences of formative assessment (Crossouard and Pryor 2008). This analysis draws on social theory where identity is a social performance embedded in and constructed through dialogic social processes and practices (Biesta 2004; Hey 2006). It recognises the structuring of learning within disciplinary and institutional fields while also seeking to recognise students’ agency and their prospective agendas.

Data presentation and analysis

The label ‘formative’ refers to purpose but at a fairly broad level. Within this we have identified four subsidiary purposes – completing the task in hand, thinking about improvement, making sense of criteria and invoking learner identities. These in turn

reflect different levels of engagement which we have used analytically to make sense of our data. We have chosen a series of examples to illustrate this more differentiated view and have presented them in tabular form. The left-hand column gives examples of tutor discourse in response to student work, from email, online discussion forum and observation data. The right-hand column gives student responses to these practices drawn from interviews. The student responses thus belong to the formative assessment and often constitute an evaluation of the particular discourse practice.

Concrete/procedural

Unsurprisingly there were many examples in the data which reflected engagement with the procedural, practical aspects of doing the task in hand (Table 1). We have categorised these as *concrete/procedural*. Formative assessment such as this was valued as it helped the development of task. However, as we see in Table 1 (point e), the specificity of tutor feedback can also provoke thought about future work.

Reflective/discursive

Here we see the teacher's response involving and encouraging reflection, especially on academic or disciplinary discourses and their social rules. Relating student texts to disciplinary conventions and practices encourages deeper engagement with substantive and methodological concepts in the field, in relation to both the task in hand and future work. Comments sometimes explicitly acknowledge that they reflect the tutor's own perspective and that students' perspectives could differ. They may also address the power relations of the educational context, emphasising their disciplinary character (Table 2).

Discursive/existential

Here we have formative assessment both explicitly referring to and more implicitly invoking student and teacher identities. Students are encouraged to do identity work relating strongly to the disciplinary context and its social rules. Such *discursive/existential* comments were relatively infrequent and not always recognised. However,

Table 1. Concrete/procedural.

Tutor discourse	Student responses
(a) You have an American spelling on page 12.	(d) I've never in my studies got such detailed feedback of any work that I did. He really, really read it very carefully ... I felt that he really engaged in me.
(b) First, it is worthwhile always giving references (talking about the literature without references always enrages academics – apart from anything else it anonymises their work!).	(e) I suppose [in previous courses] I didn't know how to develop because the feedback wasn't specific enough, so this added to my laziness and the cruising through the course... all the courses I've done ... This is the first time that I've actually had to think about what I'm writing and do a draft, a second draft and respond to comments and it took me a while to get used to that ... and I suppose that is what one will have to do in research.
(c) The three questions 9–11 also do not seem to fit in with the strongly disagree system.	

Table 2. Reflective/discursive.

Tutor discourse	Student responses
(a) This strikes me as more of a case study approach ...	(b) They've just been really short little bits that have almost been casually thrown in that's really sent me off on this major line of enquiry or a major line of learning. Like, the tutor said 'this strikes me as more of a case study approach' and I said 'what the hell is case study approach then?' ... Just a tiny little throw-away word that he put in there and it was a big source of important learning for me.
(c) My main problem with your proposal as it stands at the moment is with the focus and the research questions. I am not quite sure where you are getting and think that you will have to formulate your ideas more clearly when you come to write up. As far as I see it ... [continues on substantive research issues].	(d) You thought you were on the right path but he comes up with some ideas that make you think 'oh god I need to consider that, I need to consider that bit ... Yes, how can I talk about this topic without including issues about migration'.
(e) Central concept: There is a notion here of the school being personified ... You can read some insider professional literature that takes the idea for granted; however, within a critical academic discourse you would have to justify it.	(f) I am getting my own head into this debate and have no conclusions yet. Is it OK to raise awareness of the issues concerning the concept but not yet conclude on it? Is this my own educational experience influencing me into thinking I must show that I have answers? Your questions in the methodology section have helped. But this is still an area I am challenged by. (<i>Email response to tutor – tutor response in Table 3, point g</i>)
(g) He encouraged students to 'enter into the cultural world of the reader', to consider 'the power of the reader' and to 'deconstruct' the task criteria to work out 'what is the discourse of this degree'. (<i>Observation notes from face-to-face teaching</i>)	(h) If I can justify though, that's the thing – because if [the tutor] said 'you should do this' and I stuck with my original plan, then I need to come up with some reason why I'm sticking with that original bit because at the end of the day this is an academic bit of work and it's a power issue as well. [The tutor] has power, he reads that, you know.
(i) If you do not bring this in much more centrally to your final write-up, you will not meet the criteria for a pass. Within the academic world what is prized above all is criticality. This involves reflection on your stance and all that is implicated in your methods and the assumptions you bring to the work. Work at doctoral level needs to discuss and problematise such issues.	(j) If somebody like [the tutor] sent an email saying I think you ought to look at this, this, and that, it would be rather foolish not to do so [laughs], I think you'd be putting yourself at fairly great risk [laughs].

student data above show that some recognised this discourse of identity and attributed to it significance for their learning. Of course this aspect can also be present in more implicit forms, such as Table 1 (point e), where a student is prompted to think along these lines by less obviously discursive/existential tutor text (Table 3).

Table 3. Discursive/existential.

Tutor discourse	Student responses
(a) As a teacher at this level I often think the students are far more knowledgeable and on the ball than I am. That's great – they help me to learn. (<i>Discussion forum response to student's unwillingness to engage in peer assessment</i>)	(d) He presented himself in a collaborative way, in terms of one of a member of the group who would be also engaging in this dialogue with us, so he was definitely trying to break down that model of tutor ... dominant tutor authority figure and student.
(b) Post some notes giving your immediate personal reactions to the text, taking account of your identity as a practitioner and researcher. (<i>Discussion forum activity instruction</i>)	(e) I think I'm a more kind of honest and more sort of exploratory. I like the emphasis that the tutor puts on developing an identity as a researcher and a practitioner. He keeps emphasising the reflexive nature of it and that makes it engaging and interesting and it's something that keeps you tied in to the course as well. It's kind of, you know, quite personal, the whole idea of how you develop as a researcher and practitioner. It cuts to the core of who you are and how you approach your job and your colleagues and that, for me, is very interesting.
(c) Think beyond your own project, so think of not only of your own researcher identity, but also as user and reader of research. (<i>Observation notes of tutor instructions in face-to-face workshop devoted to discussing methodological issues arising during research pilot</i>)	(f) [The tutor] talked a lot about finding your position as a researcher and in some ways I'm kind of ... it's reinforcing mine but also giving me the opportunity to perhaps go more qualitative, kind of go, try and go out of my comfort zone.
(g) I am glad to hear that you are challenged by the methodology area – that is the intention. Indeed that is what a professional doctorate is all about. It is about accessing an academic discourse not in order to leave the professional arena behind but rather to put tension on it by challenging the taken-for-granted so as to come back at the professional in a new, more critical and more creative way. It is a kind of dialogue between worlds. ... Moreover, it is not so much a case of being, as of becoming. Thus, uncertainties and difficulties with methodology are not a handicap to progress ... we are looking for you to discuss how thinking about these issues is difficult precisely because the discourse of the professional does not allow much space for reflection on issues of reality, truth and knowledge. (<i>Tutor response to student email in Table 2, point f</i>)	(h) [In my MA] we didn't talk about methodology ... methods we did ... and we did things around the philosophy of education, we did things around content, as opposed to being a researcher, whereas I've now understood where we're coming from on this one, it's more about how you are as a researcher, and I'm enjoying that.

To summarise we further present Table 4. The purposes on the right are mirrored in the more practical intentions on the left. In the middle column, we suggest the questions that arise either tacitly or overtly for students, thus locating the effects of formative assessment with students. The tabular divisions are for ease of reading; the categories are not discrete. The arrows emphasise their fluidity such that they may be in play simultaneously.

Straightforward, in-the-moment interaction involving judging work and completing the task is at the top of the diagram. Formative assessment thus makes connections with summative criteria, both immediate and less immediate. While formative assessment must consider longer-term prospective and reflective agendas, it cannot focus exclusively on them, as at any time students' and teachers' interactions are framed by a task in hand which needs to be accomplished. Thus, in terms of frequency, the concrete and reflective elements higher in the table are always liable to predominate. However, even though the lower elements might be explicitly invoked less often during teaching and learning, and often remain tacit, our data suggest that they are powerful for students, and feature strongly in accounts of the learning that is important to them. We are not suggesting that study should or could constantly raise fundamental ontological issues for the learner, nor indeed that the teachers' role in formative assessment should be a protean dance to destabilise student identities. Indeed this might be counterproductive and leave students struggling for coherent thought. Instead we are suggesting that in amongst more mundane responses to student work, the teacher might consider, when suitable spaces appear, opportunistically provoking different levels of response about students' (and teachers') identities. Whitelock, Faulkner, and Miell (2008, 151) present similar data in their account of the promotion of student creativity. They also point to the dialogic nature of reflection and the play of identities through 'the encouragement of risk taking and open-ended exploration of ideas'.

Table 4. The purposes of formative assessment.

Completing the task in hand	↓↑	How can I/we get this done?	Concrete/procedural
Thinking about improvement	↓↑	How can I get this done well?	
	↓↑	How might I do this better?	
	↓↑	How did I do that?	
Making sense of criteria	↓↑	What does better mean?	Reflective/discursive
	↓↑	Who decides that?	
	↓↑	Why do they think it is better?	
	↓↑	How does this relate to power issues?	
Invoking learner identities	↓↑	How am I implicated in this?	Discursive/existential
	↓↑	How does this relate to my identities (past present and future)?	
	↓↑	Who am I? Who do I wish to be?	

Discussion

Problematism

Our critique of the universalising discourses of the scholarship of teaching and learning is in some tension with the organisation of our data into an analytic framework. Conceptual frameworks can stop being heuristic structures and take on a spurious solidity. This is not our intention and we now turn back on it, to relate it to other ideas and restore its fluidity. We do this first by problematising the way teacher and student texts relate to each other represented in the two columns of our first three tables and then by looking at relations between the higher and lower rows of Table 4.

Response as dialogue

Our impetus in investigating formative assessment stems from a conviction of its educational importance, which has been demonstrated in much recent research both in higher education and more generally (Black and Wiliam 1998; Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick 2006). As a set of practices it sits at the intersection of teaching, learning and assessment and is produced both by teachers and learners. Our examples above are presented as teachers' responses to students and students' responses to these responses. Their context is postgraduate education where smaller groups facilitate the idea of response. More globally higher education is often organised in ways that assume that teaching involves 'expounding' what is to be learned and lecturing, even when not within lectures. The massification of higher education creates further pressures that make this model attractive: it is considered efficient in bringing forward information and covering a curriculum. However, its shortcomings as a vehicle for learning are often pointed out (e.g. Yorke 2003; Ashwin 2009). In particular, its assumptions about communication are simplistic, entailing a 'sender-receiver' model of input and output which fails to take account of participants' interpretation and meaning-making processes, assuming that the 'inputs' and 'outputs' are equivalent (Biesta 2004).

On the other hand, across disciplinary boundaries and institutional contexts, most teachers accept that pedagogy includes responding as well as expounding. Thinking of teaching in this way makes the cultural contexts of teaching, learning and assessment more obviously important, as suggested in sociocultural learning theories deriving from Vygotsky (1978). However, as Biesta (2004) points out, despite their greater complexity, many versions of sociocultural theory lack a theory of communication – this remains implicit and unproblematic. This does not apply to our analysis. It acknowledges that texts are dialogic, responsive and referential to each other, but are not dependent on reproduction or repetition. It is recognised that *tiny little throw-away words* can be *big sources of important learning*. Difference, whether at the concrete level of the *detailed feedback* or at the discursive level of *what enrages lecturers*, is what makes meaning possible, rather than being something that should or could be overcome. This does not mean that the results are inevitably positive but rather that possibilities are created. Instead of attempting to erase differences, education exemplified by the texts in our tables is dependent upon the contingent spaces of meaning-making that can only arise in response to otherness.

Formative assessment and learning as becoming

Formative assessment aims to support learning, while the primary purpose of summative assessment is to bring institutional recognition to learners' performances. While

much research into formative assessment approaches it from a ‘technical’ perspective, we have been concerned to highlight that the ‘rules of the game’ of the educational context are very much in play in its enactment, and that learners are differently positioned with respect to such rules. We suggest that being attuned to the social practices of the classroom is crucial in students’ engagement – although often this aspect of learning is misrecognised. As well as formative assessment spelling out procedural aspects, we advocated bringing a ‘meta-social’ element to support learners’ awareness of these social aspects.

In explicating this we have used the notions of convergent and divergent assessment, two ideal types of formative assessment developed in previous work (Torrance and Pryor 2001; Pryor and Crossouard 2008). They represent poles on a continuum of practice and cut across the ideas in Table 4. Convergent assessment addresses more directly the successful completion of the task in hand, and whether students can do a specific thing. It relates to normative criteria with a primary concern of the relay of the curriculum (e.g. Table 1, Table 2, points e, i). Divergent assessment involves a more open engagement with what the student can do, addressing the learner’s agenda with a more dialogic, conversational form of language (e.g. Table 3, points a–f). Convergent moves, involving teachers’ authoritative feedback may often be very clearly differentiated from divergent ones, for example those inviting self-assessment. Within western cultural positions, especially in higher education where ‘criticality’ is privileged, ‘divergence’ can often seem more desirable (see, for example Barnett 1997). However, learners’ subjectivities are produced within particular cultural contexts so within each disciplinary context ‘criticality’ is influenced by structural norms, which makes the convergent imperative (Crossouard 2009; Jones 2009). The slipperiness of language, where ostensibly convergent moves cannot be assumed to be interpreted convergently (see Table 1, point e) – and indeed divergent moves can prompt convergent responses. Similar to the way our arrows suggest movement across the categories concrete/procedural and discursive/existential, we suggest that at its best, formative assessment involves movement along the convergent/divergent continuum according to circumstances, where *both* are seen as necessary and important, such that they remain in dialogic relationship and their tensions are unresolved.

The discursive, meta-social elements of Tables 2 and 3 potentially generate awareness of the socially constructed nature of the wider structures impinging upon learning, so that these are open to change, and education is more than a process of enculturation. In postgraduate contexts, these issues of identity and power can become more overtly salient to students and attempts to elicit different student identities (cf. the direct invocations contained in Table 3, point c, and Table 2, point g) were mirrored and in part affected by the performance of different teacher identities such as expert, learner or critic (see, for example, Table 3, points a, d).

This focus on identities within formative assessment represents a shift from a purely epistemological understanding of learning (i.e. knowledge as ‘information’ that can simply be ‘expounded’ or ‘delivered’) to an ontological one. It emphasises its performative nature, whereby knowledge constantly has to be brought into being. Attending to this broader understanding of learning has implications for HE learning environments and the kinds of relational spaces available to students to engage with the different disciplinary cultures that frame their learning. Opportunities for response cannot be assumed to arise spontaneously unless teachers create spaces for them through curricular and other planning (see, for example, Table 1, point e).

Although our data relate to postgraduate contexts, we contend this might be accomplished, though probably with more difficulty, in other HE contexts. First, ‘teaching as response’ requires tasks which accommodate an iterative series of encounters rather than discrete units, so that both the *nature* of the task and its *structuring* allow opportunities for engagement with wider disciplinary and institutional structures. In our research, the assessment task itself (methodological reflections on the process of developing a research proposal and piloting of a research instrument) afforded students opportunities to experience and reflect upon the processes of conducting research.

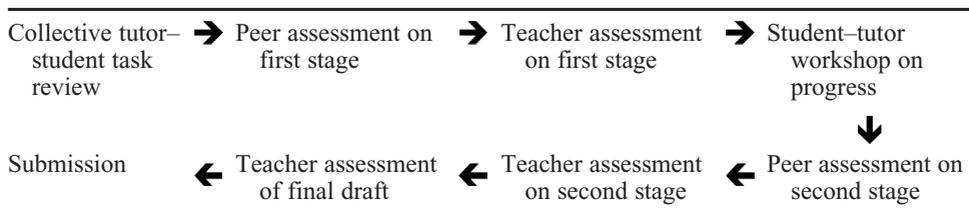
What this looks like in practice will clearly depend on the substantive area, but it is not just a question of how a series of procedures or activities are sequenced. Pedagogic design in this sense is about enabling relational spaces, considering their temporal, spatial and social dimensions, paying attention to the discursive construction of teaching, learning and assessment encounters both at a micro-level and across modular or programme frameworks. The latter may require intervention at the level of curriculum and summative assessment planning.

At the level of collective student–tutor interaction, teaching as response subverts a typical teaching pattern of teacher-initiated discourse to one in which students are required to raise issues from their task-in-hand; for example, in a plenary session students were invited to ‘bring forward methodological issues of relevance to themselves and to the group’, with the tutor then responding to students in ways which are not wholly predictable but are strongly relevant to their concerns (see Table 5).

This is time-intensive, so often questions are addressed first through peer group discussions, with issues from each group then brought into plenary discussion. Thus, interactions are structured to move between peer and plenary discussion, such that plenary interaction becomes a significant site for collective formative assessment on issues relevant across the student group. Interview data suggested this collective formative assessment was valuable, though some respondents’ professional experience within English schooling had sensitised them to associate formative assessment primarily with individualised feedback. In undergraduate settings, students may have similar expectations. This means that the tutor invocation that issues should be relevant ‘to themselves and to the group’ is important in disrupting more individualised understandings of learning fostered in previous educational contexts, though will not be unproblematic. In undergraduate contexts, more typical of HE lecture settings, digital devices may support similar movements between peer and plenary discussions.

The meta-social aspects also involve attention to and illumination of power relations. At the fine-grain level of teacher discourse, we have suggested that different power relations can be invoked through ‘code-switching’ between different pedagogic repertoires reflecting different teacher ‘identities’ (see Table 3, points a, d). Paying

Table 5. Task structuring: each stage of assignment task proposed by tutor across three-month module.



more explicit attention to the authority of a teacher's discourse and their positioning through this may be especially important in considering the relational spaces that are available to students. Teachers' openness and willingness to recognise their own former and current learning may be important – for example, through using their own learning within their pedagogy, recognising aspects of learning that have come from their students, or acknowledging constraints upon their learning. This is a position that shows a willingness to work (in the) gap in their engagement with students in ways that are receptive to their agency and their vulnerabilities (Biesta 2004). It may also involve risk for both teachers and students (Whitelock, Faulkner, and Miell 2008).

Similarly, recognition that these positionalities are conflictual, constructed in opposition to others both within their field and between other fields is also important (Lapping 2006). Rather than assuming the 'positivity' of such identities, meta-discourses might also address the antagonisms that underlie the differential positioning of teachers and their disciplinary cultures – for example, by acknowledging differences in epistemological positions, the social functions served in departmental research or tensions in the role of education in society. Provoking more discussion about the constitutive 'other' against which identity positions are defined could bring them into 'the gap', potentially offering opportunities for agency and for change. Yet again, disciplinary and institutional contexts will shape whether this is seen as desirable or possible.

Conclusion

This paper has opened up the possibility of formative assessment as encompassing a disciplinary meta-discourse which may be enacted through moving constantly across a concrete–procedural–reflective–discursive–existential continuum, between the convergent and divergent. We assert the salience of issues of power and sociological structure in the classroom. Our data were located in an interdisciplinary professional doctorate class. We suggest that although it may have different specificities, it is possible to accomplish this approach in other disciplinary and institutional contexts. Our analysis anticipates that the intersections of disciplinary cultures and their pedagogies both coincide and conflict with student identities. However, associating formative assessment with recognition of this play of power and identity calls forth opportunities for negotiating new understandings, where disciplinary knowledge and practices more overtly confront students' experiences and aspirations.

Formative assessment emerges from our analysis as complex, despite our use of heuristic frameworks. However, this complexity arises from the ontological element which our data suggest is associated with powerful learning. We see formative assessment of this kind as offering a way to get to what really matters to the learner, in contrast to other current teaching and learning discourses. Despite this complexity, we suggest that asserting the centrality of disciplinary knowledge and identities within formative assessment may entice academics into thinking more specifically and organically about appropriate pedagogies. Its necessary complications may give rise to resistance, but are offset by its heuristic form. The learning space is essentially less predictable but therefore opens up possibilities of learner and teacher agency. Embracing this conceptualisation may be seen as subversive of lecturers' field position and antagonistic to 'fixed' academic identities and disciplinary knowledge bases. Nevertheless, the justification for embracing such complexities lies in its practicality in addressing the inequity and obsolescence described at the start of the paper.

Notes on contributors

John Pryor is a reader in education at the University of Sussex, where he works within the Centre for Higher Education and Equity Research and the Centre for International Education.

Barbara Crossouard is a visiting research fellow within the Centre for Higher Education and Equity Research, University of Sussex. Her main research interests are higher and doctoral education pedagogy and assessment.

References

- Ashwin, P. 2009. *Analysing teaching–learning interactions in higher education: Accounting for structure and agency*. London: Continuum.
- Barnett, R. 1997. *Higher education: A critical business*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Bernstein, B. 1996. *Pedagogy, symbolic control and identity: Theory, research, critique*. London: Taylor & Francis.
- Biesta, G. 2004. ‘Mind the Gap’ communication and the educational relation. In *No education without relation*, ed. C. Bingham and A.M. Sidorkin, 11–22. New York: Peter Lang.
- Biggs, J. 2003. *Teaching for quality learning at university*. 2nd ed. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Black, P., and D. Wiliam. 1998. Assessment and classroom learning. *Assessment in Education* 5, no. 1: 7–73.
- Black, P., and D. Wiliam. 2006. Developing a theory of formative assessment. In *Assessment and learning*, ed. J. Gardner, 81–100. London: Sage.
- Crossouard, B. 2009. A sociocultural reflection on collaborative challenges and formative assessment in the state of Jersey. *Research Papers in Education* 24, no. 1: 24–77.
- Crossouard, B., and J. Pryor. 2008. Becoming researchers: A sociocultural perspective on assessment, learning and the construction of identity in a professional doctorate. *Pedagogy, Culture and Society* 16, no. 3: 221–37.
- Delandshere, G. 2002. Assessment as inquiry. *Teachers College Record* 104, no. 7: 1461–84.
- Gill, J. 1993. *Learning to learn: Toward a philosophy of education*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press.
- Haggis, T. 2006. Pedagogies for diversity: Retaining critical challenge amidst fears of ‘dumbing down’. *Studies in Higher Education* 31, no. 5: 521–35.
- Hey, V. 2006. The politics of performative resignification: Translating Judith Butler’s theoretical discourse and its potential for a sociology of education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 27, no. 4: 439–57.
- Jones, A. 2009. Redisciplining generic attributes: The disciplinary context in focus. *Studies in Higher Education* 34, no. 1: 85–100.
- Lapping, C. 2006. Recodifications of academic positions and reiterations of desire: Change but continuity in gendered subjectivities. *Studies in Higher Education* 31, no. 4: 423–37.
- Lave, J., and E. Wenger. 1991. *Situated learning. Legitimate peripheral participation*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Lyotard, J. 1984. *The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Nicol, D.J., and D. Macfarlane-Dick. 2006. Formative assessment and self-regulated learning: A model and seven principles of good feedback practice. *Studies in Higher Education* 31, no. 2: 199–218.
- Prosser, M., and K. Trigwell. 1999. *Understanding learning and teaching: The experience in higher education*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Pryor, J., and B. Crossouard. 2008. A sociocultural theorisation of formative assessment. *Oxford Review of Education* 34, no. 1: 1–20.
- Sfard, A., and A. Prusak. 2005. Telling identities: In search of an analytic tool for investigating learning as a culturally shaped activity. *Educational Researcher* 34, no. 4: 14–22.
- Torrance, H., and J. Pryor. 2001. Developing formative assessment in the classroom: Using action research to explore and modify theory. *British Educational Research Journal* 26, no. 5: 615–31.
- Vygotsky, L. 1978. *Mind in society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- Whitelock, D., D. Faulkner, and D. Miell. 2008. Promoting creativity in PhD supervision: Tensions and dilemmas. *Thinking Skills and Creativity* 3, no. 2: 143–53.
- Yorke, M. 2003. Formative assessment in higher education: Moves towards theory and the enhancement of pedagogic practice. *Higher Education* 45, no. 4: 477–501.

Copyright of Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education is the property of Routledge and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.