



Assessment for learning in the classroom

Barriers to implementation and possibilities for teacher professional learning

Article Summary

Assessment for learning (AfL) has been touted as one of the most promising pedagogical approaches for enhancing student learning. Research suggests that engaging students in AfL helps to improve their achievement, develop metacognition and support motivated learning and positive self-perceptions. However, despite these promises, there have been notable barriers impeding teachers' use of AfL in their classrooms. Time and class sizes; conceptual confusions related to AfL; perceived misalignment between system priorities and classroom assessment practices; and a lack of effective models for professional development on assessment have all been cited as critical challenges in promoting the implementation of AfL in classrooms. Given these challenges, in this paper we ask: What would it take to make AfL integration possible and practical within the current context of education? In response to this question, we assert the benefits of using contemporary approaches to teacher professional learning that explicitly address gaps and challenges in AfL implementation. Further, we provide grounding for a programme of research in developing teachers' assessment capacity by first summarising challenges to the integration of AfL and then exploring potential directions for professional learning in this area.

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