

Redefining Assessment for English-Medium Education

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1

Disclaimer of sorts



Not about language assessment per se; nor really – language assessment literacy...

Not about language assessment for entry requirements

Assumption 1: the disciplinary discourse required for meeting ILOs is insufficient

Assumption 2: Risks involved with GAI are more pronounced in summative assessment settings

2

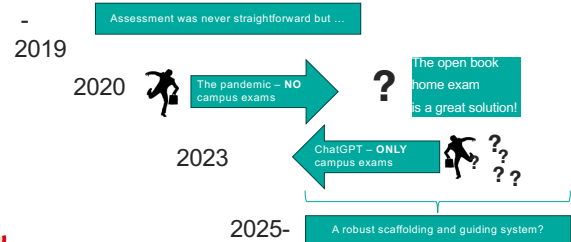
A sense of direction



- Who am I – done ;-)
- Background dimensions
- Assessment basics
- Assessment in EME
- Generative AI aspects
- A Q and 'Q' conversation ;-)

3

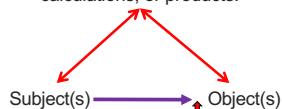
Assessment 'trends' and reactions



4

Assessment is mediated (duh!)

Mediation:
typically texts,
calculations, or products!



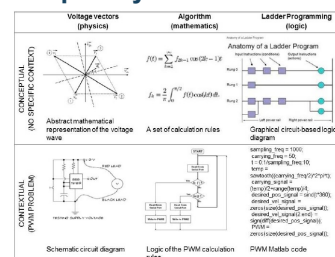
So, if students don't meet learning outcomes, is that because they haven't met the outcomes or because they cannot express their understanding?

There is no 'avatar assessment' ;-)
So, how are they going to get a 'language'?



7

Disciplinary discourses as barriers?



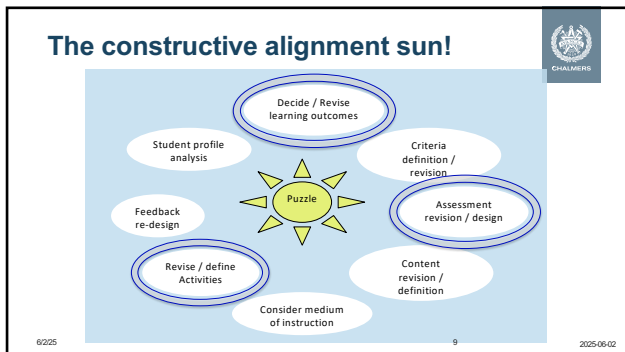
And then they are expected to write and talk about it too!



Wolff, K. (2013). 'Reservoirs' and 'Repertoires': Epistemological and Discursive Complexities in Multidisciplinary Engineering Practice. *Journal of Academic Writing* Vol. 3 No. 1.

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8



9

Assessment and feedback

Students must know:

- 1 Where am I going?
What good performance is (standards)
- 2 How am I doing?
How current performance relates to good performance
- 3 What should I do next?
How to act to close the gap between current and good performance

Sadler, R., D. (1989). Formative assessment and the design of instructional systems. *Instructional Science* 18:119-144.

2025-06-02

11

Six functions of assessment

To capture student time and attention
Generating appropriate student learning activity.
Providing timely feedback to which students pay attention
Helping students to internalize the discipline's standards and notions of quality.

Formative

Marking - generating grades to distinguish between students and enable classification.

Summative

Quality assurance - provision of evidence against which others judge the appropriateness or quality of standards.

Diagnosis?

Continuous?

NOT DONE ENOUGH

DONE TOO MUCH

Graham Gibbs (1989) Using assessment strategically to change the way students learn, in S. Brown & A. Green (eds), *Assessment Matters in Higher Education*, SPRECLIP.

2025-06-02

13

Four types of assessment methods

Table 4.1 Links Among Achievement Targets and Assessment Methods

Target to Be Assessed	Selected response	Extended Written Response	Performance Assessment	Personal Communication
Knowledge Memory	Good match for assessing memory of elements of knowledge	Good match for assessing memory of understanding of relationships among elements of knowledge	Not a good match—too time consuming to cover everything	Can ask open-ended questions, require answers and infer meaning—Not a time-consuming option
Reasoning Proficiency	Good match only for assessing understanding of some patterns of knowledge	Write descriptions of complex problem solutions and provide a rationale for the reasoning proficiency	Can watch students solve problems and infer reasoning proficiency	Can ask student to "talk about" or "write about" or "show" their reasoning
Skills	Not a good match. Can assess mastery of the knowledge prerequisite to skilled performance. Not useful for assessing the skill itself	Good match. Can observe and infer skill performance as they are being performed	Good match. Can observe and infer skill performance as they are being performed	Strong match when skill is not complex and can be observed directly and a good match otherwise
Ability to Create Products	Not a good match. Can assess mastery of knowledge prerequisite to the ability to create quality products. Not useful for assessing the quality of products themselves	Strong match. When the product is written. Not a good match when the product is not written	Good match. Can assess the attributes of the product itself	Not a good match

This may be too low resolution but is an indication that our assessment toolbox is not fully used!

Selected response
Multiple-choice, true/false; matching, fill-in

Extended written response
Constructing a longer written answer typically on exams (including maths...). Often requiring criteria

Performance assessment
Observing students in action or their products (including writing as product)

Personal communication
Oral exams, interviews, observations, journals/logs

Source: Adapted from Graham Gibbs' Assessment for Learning, 4th ed. © 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2020, 2022, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 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3826, 3827, 3828, 3829, 3830, 3831, 3832, 3833, 3834, 3835, 3836, 383

Sitting down to assess student portfolio

'Fiction for Engineers'

1. share a literary discussion in terms of narratological terms and definitions
2. justify a reading with an interpretation and close references to the primary text and to secondary sources
3. re-assess the role, function, and impact of technology, culture, and society



These are creative students with advanced readings!

The very first thing I penned was a subject-verb agreement mistake!

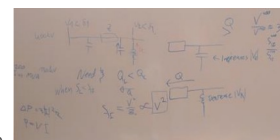


17

Example from a micro-study

Excerpt 1 –first year MSc-students:

Student 1: "depending on the purpose. For example if it's a step-up transformers, if you step up the voltage, you step up the current. But loading means like you are changing the loads that you control. Like for example our houses –you're applying more circuits, or more tv:s... or stuff like that."



Lecturer comment about the passage: "If the voltage is stepped up, the current is reduced. In this way, the transformer keeps the power more or less the same on both sides. **It could be misunderstanding or uncarefulspeaking, or both.**"

The difficulty of distinguishing the problem. Language and content go together! Where does that leave us?



Gustafsson, Rempling & Chen. 2017. Internalising a threshold concept - what languages and channels are called for? Proceedings från 6:e UTVECKLINGSKONFERENSEN för Sveriges ingenjörsutbildningar: 87-93

18

Not a review of the literature

You might still agree with authors like Dimova & Kling (2022), Hultgren et al. (2022) and Bannister (2024), that EMI and assessment is not sufficiently investigated.

Two years apart, the studies have different foci; yet they largely converge:

EMI-assessment has been focused on summative assessment

What and who to assess, when and how?

The need for functional baseline testing.

Has anyone really kept an eye on the learning outcomes?

Collaboration and staff development!

Dimova, S. and Kling, J. (2022). Emerging assessment needs and solutions in EMI in higher education. *Journal of English-Medium Instruction*, 1(2). 137-152. <https://doi.org/10.1075/jemi.00002.edi>

Hultgren, A. K., N. Owen, P. Shrestha, M. Kuteeva and Š. Mežek. (2022). Assessment and English as a medium of instruction: Challenges and opportunities. *Journal of English-Medium Instruction* 1(1): 105 – 123. <https://doi.org/10.1075/jemi.21019.hul>

Bannister, P. (2024). English medium instruction educator language assessment literacy and the test of generative AI in online higher education. *Journal of Research in Applied Linguistics*, 15(2), 55-72. <https://doi.org/10.22059/jral.2024.45862.3214>. 2025-06-02

19

Another recurring issue ...

Specific and high-resolution case studies of teachers and assessment in EMI-settings tend to share in their emphasis on a few recurring issues of far-reaching consequences:

There seem to be / There is a risk that there are double standards of assessment

Language assessment that is not supported in criteria or syllabi

[And the other way around too btw]

Implicit expectations in EMI

Teachers not-scaffolded to address language; hence it loses weight

[A problem if there is a learning outcome for it only?]

Gronchi, M. (2024). Language assessment in EMI: unravelling the implicit-explicit dichotomy. *Educational Linguistics*, 3(2): 238–257. <https://doi.org/10.1515/edulino-2023-0011>

Otto, A. and J. L. Estrada-Chinchón. (2021). Analysing EMI Assessment in Higher education. *Revista Tempos e Espaços em Educação*, 14(33), e15475. <http://dx.doi.org/10.20952/revtee.v14i33.15475>

20

My concerns...

Hultgren et al., as well as Gronchi, do mention that we ... are / seem to be / risk measuring ELF-students against L1 or maybe quasi-ERPP standards.

I find this practice problematic in my own context and with the faculty I train; so, I hope we can open that up for conversation!

Connected to that concern is what appears to be a wide-spread problem (partly mentioned by both Hultgren et al., and Gronchi [and others]), that EMI assessment is insufficiently related to learning outcomes in terms of language as disciplinary discourse. Is it EMI-assessment or ICLHE-assessment basically?

Collaboration is called for (but 'we' often can't afford that in today's anemic universities)

6/25

21

2025-06-02

21

Funnily enough, that brings us to EMI-assessment facing generative AI.

22

Again, an eclectic selection ...

1. The problem of relying on summative assessment with GAI
2. The problem of university standards without consideration for multilingual students
3. GAI-reliance perpetuates deficiency approaches



- ✓ Re-focus on negotiation and dialogue
- ✓ The need for greater emphasis on process
 - ✓ (formative assessment in ILO-relevant activities)
- ✓ Engage with and critique GAI-products

23

2025-06-02

23

Two potentially 'recognisable' cases

Two accounts for approaches in 2024:

We can design assessment in numerous ways to make GAI-tools insufficient the task

We can engage with GAI in (some?) of our assessment activities and make sure students remain responsible for the content and monitor the process.

Both focus on AI-resistant assessment. Both are functional. Both will need continuous revision. We likely need the combination.

Neither seem to mention the training for the assessment. What learning activities are we using that prepare students (Cf. Ou et al., 2024)

Khalf, Z. (2024). Rethinking Educational Assessment in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: Insights From Recent Training Workshops. In *Fostering Inclusive Education With AI and Emerging Technologies*. IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-7255-5.ch005>

Nadeem, M., Farag, W., A., and Helal, M. (2024). Rethinking Assessment Methodologies in the Era of Artificial Intelligence: Expanding Beyond ChatGPT's Scope. *MSCC 2024*. IEEE.

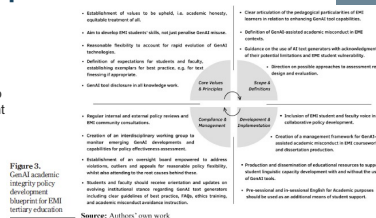
Ou, A. W., Khuder, B., Franzetti, S., and Negretti, R. (2024). Conceptualising and cultivating Critical GAI Literacy in doctoral academic writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 66 : 101166

2025-06-02

24

EMI, GAI and policies?

As long as students and teachers are unsure about the rules, then problems will pile up during learning and assessment



Bannister, P., Alcalde Peñalver, E., and Uribeita, A. S. (2024). Transnational higher education cultures and generative AI: a nominal group study for policy development in English medium instruction. *Journal for Multicultural Education* 18:1/2, pp. 173-191. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JME-10-2023-0102>

2025-06-02

25

My concerns...

- 'AI-resistant' assessment as counter-productive in some contexts?
- Many articles and arguments about GAI fail to really exemplify critical AI awareness or competence
- The (benign) paradox that GAI-tools generate more work with assessment.
- My limited reading experience of GAI-assessment publications by STEM-faculty.
- The study of EMI syllabi and language learning outcomes and those of ICLHE syllabi.
- The absence of updated syllabi for ILOs that include GAI literacy
- The absence of the debate about sustainability, ethics, and democracy [but perhaps not today's focus]

26

2025-06-02

26

Let's talk instead!
I planted a few questions along the way, but yours are more important...

My plants!

1. How far are we willing to extend the distinction between ICLHE- and EMI-assessment?
2. The problem of assessing ELF-students against L1-standards basically?
3. 'AI-resistant' assessment as counter-productive in some contexts?
4. Many articles and arguments about GAI fail to really exemplify critical AI awareness or competence
5. The (benign) paradox that GAI-tools generate more work with assessment.
6. My limited reading experience of GAI-assessment publications by STEM-faculty.
7. The study of EMI syllabi and language learning outcomes and those of ICLHE syllabi.
8. The absence of updated syllabi for ILOs that include GAI literacy
9. The absence of the debate about sustainability, ethics, and democracy [but perhaps not today's focus]

28

2025-06-02

28



29