Exams, sustainable assessment and learner autonomy

Gerardo Valazza

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

Task 1: Over to you!

a) How long is your daily English class?
b) How many classes do you have per week?
c) So, how many hours of English class do you have per week?
d) How many hours of English class do you have per month?
e) So, how many hours of English class do you have per year?
f) Divide that number by 24. How many complete days of English class have you got per year? Make a note of that number!
g) What conclusions can you draw from that figure?

Aims of the Presentation

1) Discuss the relationship between 3 concepts: **learner autonomy**, **sustainable assessment** and **exam preparation**
2) Consider some **practical implications** for the classroom
3) Intrigue teachers to **learn more about sustainable assessment and learner autonomy**
4) Encourage participants to **reflect on and question their day-to-day teaching practice**

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

Autonomy

Task 2: Learner autonomy

a) How would you **define** learner autonomy?
b) What are your **feelings** about learner autonomy?
c) Do you help your students to become autonomous learners in your **day-to-day teaching practice**? If so, how do you do it?

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

Disbelief!

Understanding & Defining Autonomy

The field of autonomy in language learning has become
something of a "secret garden"

Everhard, p. 9, 2015,
in Everhard & Murphy 2015

Understanding & Defining Autonomy

a) Some language teachers apparently remain oblivious to its existence.

b) Some are aware of its existence but are unable to see its relevance to their particular teaching situation.

c) Some are intrigued by its possibilities, but despite their best efforts they are unable to find either the point of entrance or the key to the "garden".

d) Then, there are others who believe they have discovered a point of entry to the promotion of autonomy, but find themselves having to contend with a myriad of problems.

e) ???

Everhard, p. 9, in Everhard & Murphy (2015)

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

Understanding & Defining Autonomy

A myriad of problems arising from:

a) the **learners themselves** and their preconceptions
b) **colleagues** with different perceptions of their role as teachers
c) **management**
d) **other stakeholders**
e) the **curriculum and the system of assessment** imposed
f) finding ways to justify its promotion through **tangible scales of measurement**

Everhard, p. 9, in Everhard & Murphy (2015)

Task 3: Which of these is the most difficult problem to deal with?
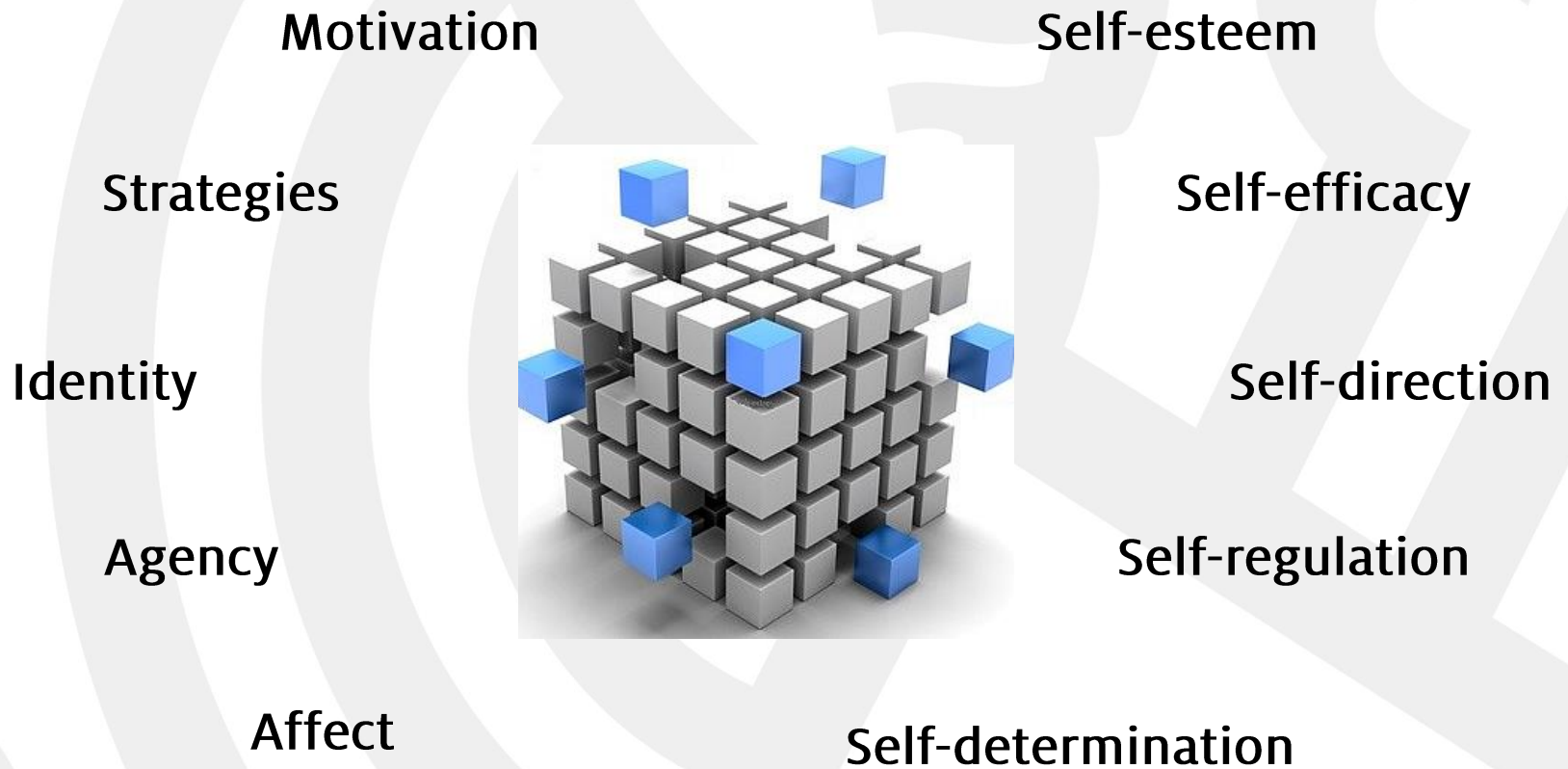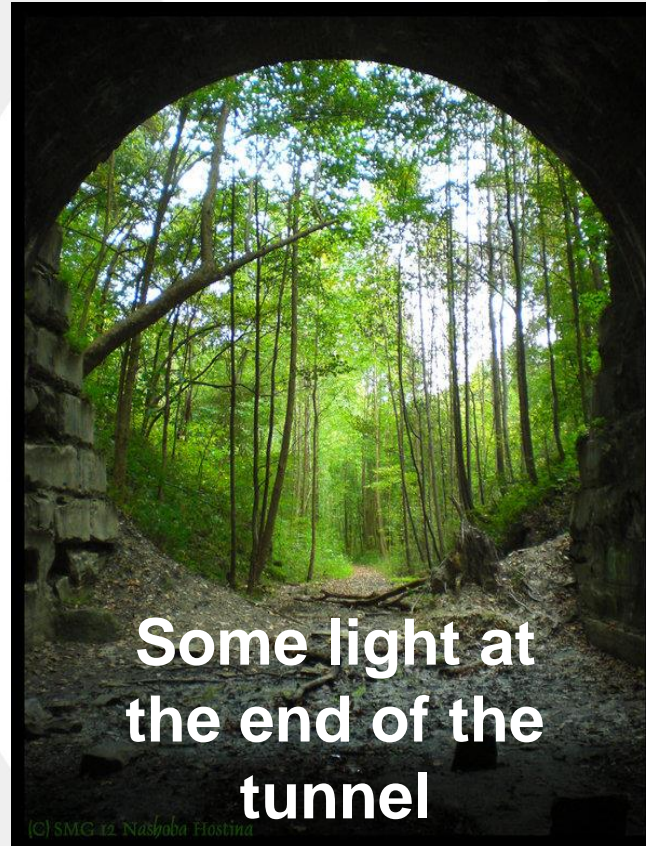
Autonomy: A Wide Array of Definitions

- "A *philosophy* for learning" (Henner-Stanchina & Riley 1978)

- "The ability to *manage* one's own learning" (Holec 1981)

- "This ability is learnt through *knowing* how to make decisions about the self as well as being *allowed* to make those decisions" (Macaro 1997)

- "A *composite* of abilities, attitudes or dispositions" (Benson 2009)

Everhard, p.p. 10-11, in Everhard & Murphy (2015)

ANGLO

Autonomy as being Multidimensional

Motivation

Self-esteem

Strategies

Self-efficacy

Identity

Self-direction

Agency

Self-regulation

Affect

Self-determination

Adapted from Everhard, p. 11, in Everhard & Murphy (2015)

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

But there is some hope!

Some light at the end of the tunnel

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

Degrees of Autonomy

"It is very useful to think in terms of degrees of autonomy. Conceptualizing autonomy in this way helps clarify that autonomy is not something fixed or static, but is constantly changing and fluctuating depending on the activity being pursued, the way it is being pursued and the amount of guidance from the teacher or advisor, from peers and from the technology or materials being used, whether learning is in a classroom context, using self-access resources or at a distance."

Everhard, p.12, in Everhard & Murphy (2015)

Degrees of Autonomy

"It is very useful to think in terms of **degrees of autonomy**. Conceptualizing autonomy in this way helps clarify that **autonomy is not something fixed or static**, but is **constantly changing and fluctuating depending on the activity** being pursued, the way it is being pursued and the amount of guidance from the teacher or advisor, from peers and from the technology or materials being used, whether learning is in a classroom context, using self-access resources or at a distance."
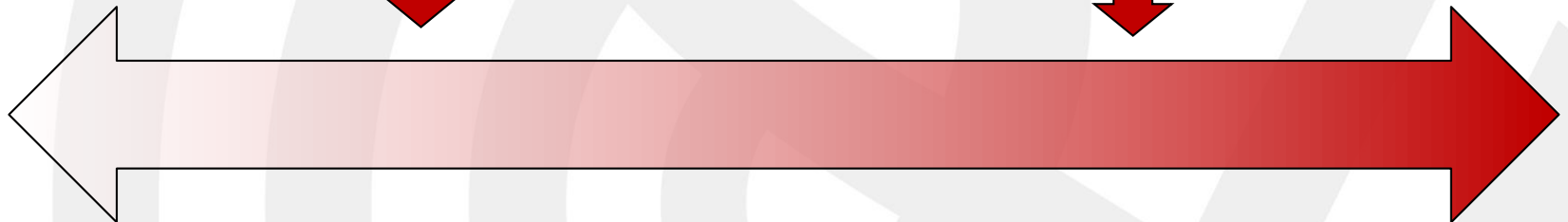
Everhard, p.12, in Everhard & Murphy (2015)

Degrees of Autonomy

Writing

Listening Skills

Heteronomy
Ruled or regulated by others

Autonomy
Ruled or regulated by oneself

Adapted from Everhard, p. 13, in Everhard & Murphy (2015)

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

Assessment

Task 4: Becoming a better teacher

Think of a colleague that you believe has a good capacity to develop as a professional teacher. What are the characteristics that make them so good in this respect?

Working with a colleague, decide on three criteria that you could take into account when measuring a teacher's capacity to develop as a professional teacher:

a) ….

b) ….

c) ….

Task 4: Becoming a better teacher

- Knowing what you are talking about
- Being open-minded

- Being a good communicator
- Adaptability

- Being up to date

Task 4: Becoming a better teacher

	Never	Rarely	Often
Knowing what you are talking about	☐	☐	☐
Being open-minded	☐	☐	☐
Being a good communicator	☐	☐	☐
Adaptability	☐	☐	☐
Being up to date	☐	☐	☐

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

Professional Development & Values

	Never	Rarely	Often
Reflecting critically on a lesson	☐	☐	☐
Showing commitment to professional development	☐	☐	☐
Seeking feedback and reacting positively to it	☐	☐	☐
Observing other colleagues	☐	☐	☐
Being aware of your strengths and weaknesses	☐	☐	☐

http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/teaching-english/cambridge-english-teaching-framework/

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

Task 5: Reflection on Task 4

a) What was the aim of Task 4?
b) Can you make any connections between this task and the classroom?

Sustainable Assessment

"Authentic assessment practices may involve the learner in peer assessment, but particularly in self-assessment, which leads to the awakening and exploitation of inner resources that can be sustained from one task to the next. Such activities are authentic in the sense that they are personally meaningful and can be activated throughout a lifetime of learning and living in a wider community. This is what is also referred to as sustainable assessment, or assessment as learning."

Everhard, p.17, in Everhard & Benson (2015)

Sustainable Assessment

"Authentic assessment practices may involve the learner in peer assessment, but particularly in self-assessment, which leads to the awakening and exploitation of inner resources that can be sustained from one task to the next. Such activities are authentic in the sense that they are personally meaningful and can be activated throughout a lifetime of learning and living in a wider community. This is what is also referred to as sustainable assessment, or assessment as learning."

Everhard, p.17, in Everhard & Benson (2015)

Alternative Forms of Assessment

Summative
Assessment *of* learning

Formative
Assessment *for* learning

Sustainable
Assessment *as* learning

Learner Involvement in Assessment

"In my experience, teachers often object to **self- and peer-assessment**, arguing that students' assessments are apt to be inaccurate and that learners generally prefer to be assessed by teachers. To some degree, however, this misses the point that **the process is more important than the product**."

Benson, p.x, in Everhard & Murphy (2015)

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

Self- and Peer-assessment

1. Learners don't know what they're looking for.

2. Learners can be overly critical or negative of each others' work.

3. Learners aren't capable of using assessment criteria.

4. Learners aren't satisfied if the teacher doesn't mark the work.

- Agree on a set of 'success criteria' at the beginning of the writing process.

- Get learners to use 'two stars and a wish' or 'WWW and EBI'.

- Make assessment criteria clear, and practise applying them to example texts first.

- Mark the work only after the peer/self-assessment; mark the peer/self-assessment as well.

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

Implications for the Classroom?

Using Speaking & Writing Scales

SPEAKING | ASSESSMENT

Cambridge English: First for Schools Speaking Examiners use a more detailed version of the following assessment scales, extracted from the overall Speaking scales on page 83.

B2	Grammar and Vocabulary	Discourse Management	Pronunciation	Interactive Communication
5	Shows a good degree of control of a range of simple and some complex grammatical forms. Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary to give and exchange views on a wide range of familiar topics.	Produces extended stretches of language with very little hesitation. Contributions are relevant and there is a clear organisation of ideas. Uses a range of cohesive devices and discourse markers.	Is intelligible. Intonation is appropriate. Sentence and word stress is accurately placed. Individual sounds are articulated clearly.	Initiates and responds appropriately, linking contributions to those of other speakers. Maintains and develops the interaction and negotiates towards an outcome.
4	Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5.			
3	Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms, and attempts some complex grammatical forms. Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary to give and exchange views on a range of familiar topics.	Produces extended stretches of language despite some hesitation. Contributions are relevant and there is very little repetition. Uses a range of cohesive devices.	Is intelligible. Intonation is generally appropriate. Sentence and word stress is generally accurately placed. Individual sounds are generally articulated clearly.	Initiates and responds appropriately. Maintains and develops the interaction and negotiates towards an outcome with very little support.
2	Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3.			
1	Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms. Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary when talking about everyday situations.	Produces responses which are extended beyond short phrases, despite hesitation. Contributions are mostly relevant, despite some repetition. Uses basic cohesive devices.	Is mostly intelligible, and has some control of phonological features at both utterance and word levels.	Initiates and responds appropriately. Keeps the interaction going with very little prompting and support.
0	Performance below Band 1.			

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

Cambridge English TV Channel

FCE Writing Checklist Lesson

Question 3

Now look at these descriptions of each assessment area. Can you match them with the areas? The first one is done for you.

Content   focuses on the way the text is organised; for example, is the information presented coherently and are the ideas connected with cohesive devices or linking words?

Communicative Achievement   focuses on how appropriate the writing is in terms of genre; for example, what sort of text do you have to produce – a letter, a report, a review, an essay? Each one requires a different format and has a different function.

Organisation   focuses on vocabulary and grammar; for example, how accurate is the text and is there a range of complex and simple structures and vocabulary?

Language   focuses on how well the task has been completed; for example, has all the important information been included in the piece of writing?

http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/Images/cambridge-english-writing-lesson-plan-at-level-b2.pdf

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

FCE Writing Checklist Lesson

Checklist for writing B2

- **Have you included all the essential information in your text?**
  – What do you need to include and how much detail do you need to give?
  – Why are you writing the text and what do you hope to achieve?
  – Have you focused on the topic and the specific questions?

- **What style of text do you need to produce?**
  – What are the style conventions of the text you have to write?
  – Do you need to use a formal, neutral or informal tone?
  – Can you include personal opinions or should you be objective?
  – Who are you writing the text for and what are their expectations?

- **Have you organised your ideas in a logical way?**
  – Do the ideas develop logically so the reader can follow your ideas or

http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/Images/cambridge-english-writing-lesson-plan-at-level-b2.pdf

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

Handbooks and Sample Papers

Cambridge English | **CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH** Language Assessment

Home | Why Cambridge English? ⌄ | Exams ⌄ | Learning English ⌄ | Teaching English ⌃ | News | Events | Help ⌄

Teaching English

Resources for teachers

Cambridge English Teaching Framework

Teaching qualifications and courses

Language for Teaching

CELTA

TKT (Teaching Knowledge Test)

CELT-P

CELT-S

ICELT

Delta

IDLTM

Certificate in EMI Skills

Train the Trainer

Cambridge English Teacher

Cambridge English for examiners

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

Handbooks and Sample Papers

How to search for free resources

Select your options from the dropdown menus below. To start a new search, please click Reset.

| All Qualifications ▼ |
| Select CEFR level ▼ |
| Handbook for Teachers ▼ |
| Select Skill ▼ |

Search   **Reset**

+ **(2) - Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE)**

+ **(1) - Cambridge English: Business Higher (BEC Higher)**

+ **(1) - Cambridge English: Business Preliminary (BEC Preliminary)**

+ **(1) - Cambridge English: Business Vantage (BEC Vantage)**

+ **(1) - Cambridge English: Financial (ICFE)**

+ **(2) - Cambridge English: First (FCE)**

+ **(2) - Cambridge English: First (FCE) for Schools**

Cambridge English Lesson Plans

FCE Writing Checklist Lesson

**CLICK TO DOWNLOAD
THE COMPLETE LESSON PLAN**

Ready-made Lesson Plans

Select Qualification	▾
Select CEFR level	▾
Lesson Plan	▾
Speaking	▾

Search **Reset**

The search options selected will return 79 results

Select Qualification	▾
Select CEFR level	▾
Lesson Plan	▾
Writing	▾

Search **Reset**

The search options selected will return 50 results

Select Qualification	▾
Select CEFR level	▾
Lesson Plan	▾
Listening	▾

Search **Reset**

The search options selected will return 78 results

Select Qualification	▾
Select CEFR level	▾
Lesson Plan	▾
Reading	▾

Search **Reset**

The search options selected will return 57 results

Guides to Assess Writing

CLICK TO DOWNLOAD
THE GUIDE FOR B1 LEVEL

CLICK TO DOWNLOAD
THE GUIDE FOR B2 LEVEL

CLICK TO DOWNLOAD
THE GUIDE FOR C1 LEVEL

CLICK TO DOWNLOAD
THE GUIDE FOR C2 LEVEL

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

Write and Improve

The Digital Teacher

Framework. Evaluate your needs. Take our self-evaluation, see what your digital strengths are, and think about what you want to work on.

→ **Explore the framework**

Training. Develop your digital skills. Find resources to help you try out technology with confidence in your classroom.

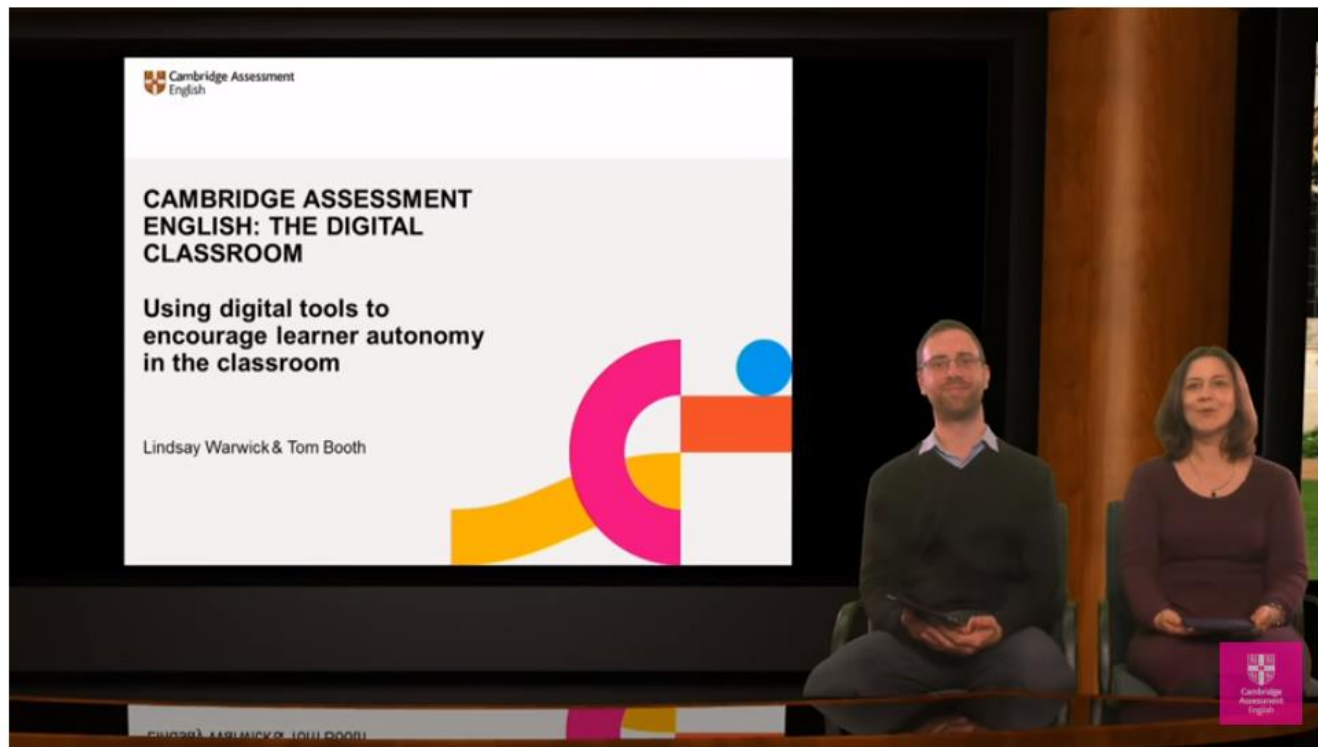→ **View available training**

Product reviews. Choose the right tools. Browse specialist reviews of tools which aid language learning and decide which… products are right for you.

→ **View all reviews**

https://thedigitalteacher.com/

https://thedigitalteacher.com/training/using-digital-tools-to-develop-learner-autonomy-tips

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

Cambridge English Webinars in YouTube

Task 6: Meeting Students' Needs Better


Embedded Formative Assessment - Dylan Wiliam

What are Wiliam's 5 strategies
to help teachers meet learners' needs better?

5 strategies to make your teaching more responsive to the students' needs

1. Sharing the learning intentions with your students
2. Before you teach anything, finding out what the students already know.
3. Giving feedback that moves learning forward

4. Learners should help each other learn – they should be learning resources for one another
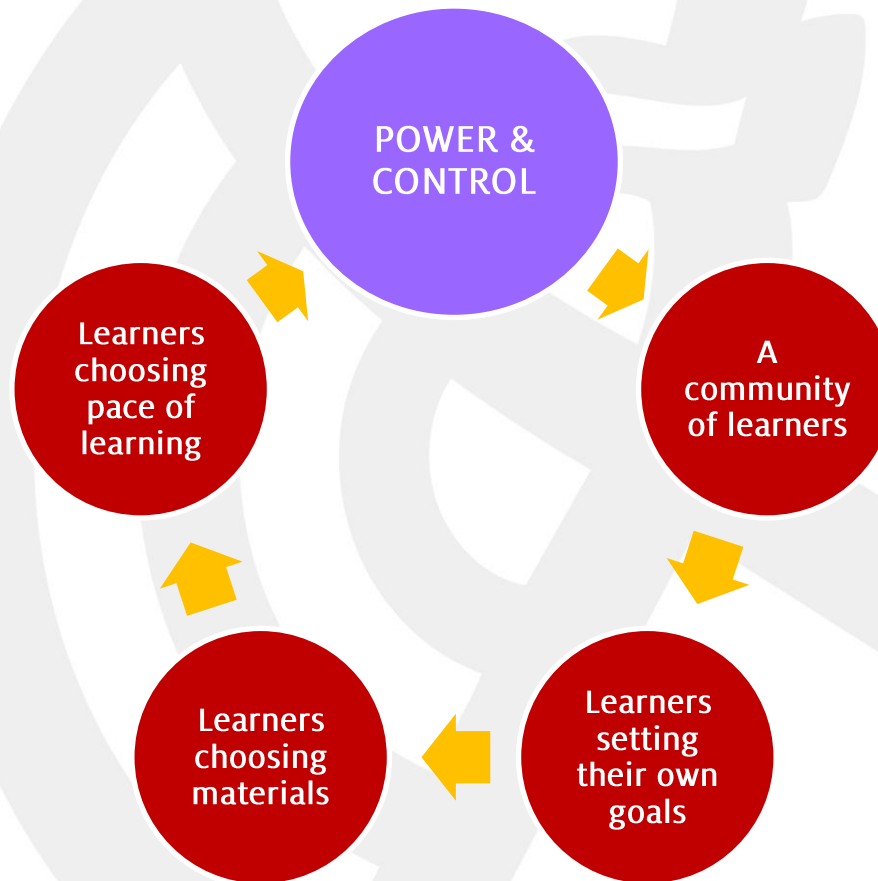5. **Activating students as owners of their own learning**

Taken from "Embedded formative assessment" by Dylan Wiliam

Three Approaches to Learning & Teaching
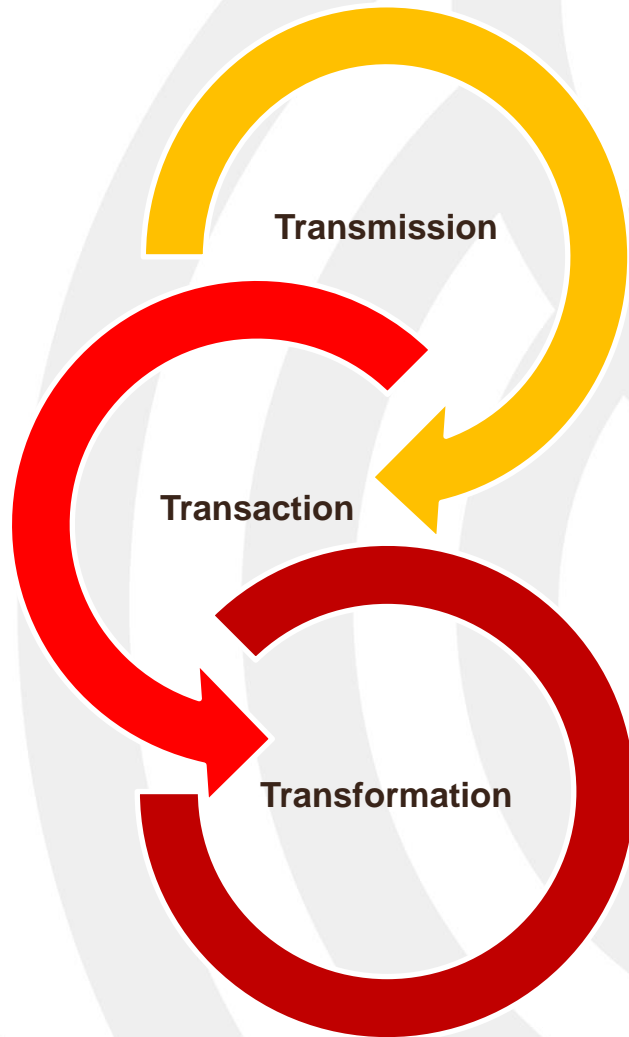
Adapted from Everhard, p.19, in Everhard & Benson (2015)

A Transformation Approach

Adapted from Everhard, p.19, in Everhard & Benson (2015)

A Transformation Approach

Adapted from Everhard, p.19, in Everhard & Benson (2015)

A Transformation Approach

Adapted from Everhard, p.19, in Everhard & Benson (2015)
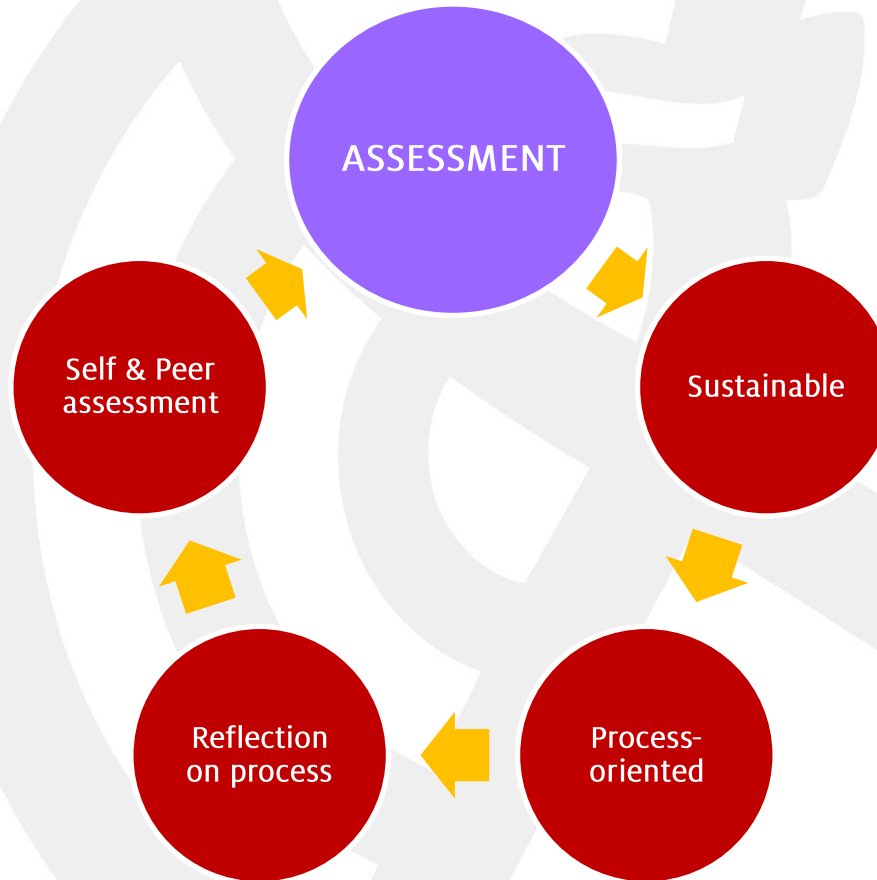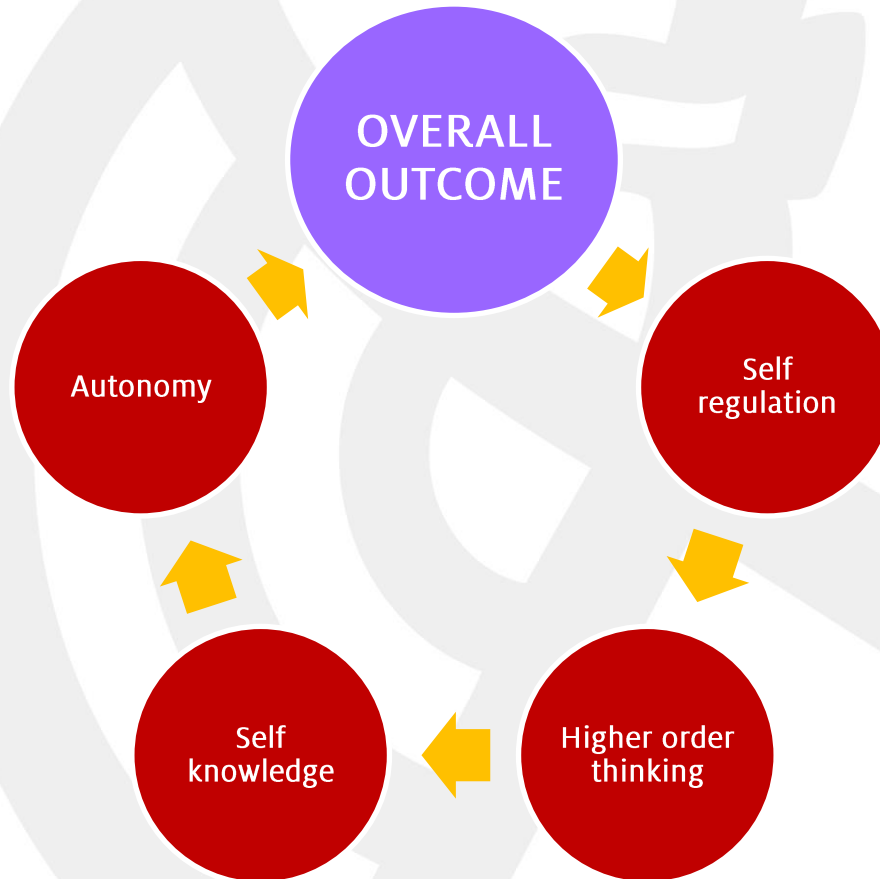
Learner Involvement in Assessment

*"If assessment regimes close down **opportunities for decision-making** in the classroom, **learner involvement in assessment** may be one way of opening them up again."*

Benson, p.x, in Everhard & Benson (2015)

Sustainable Assessment

"It moves beyond the summative to the formative, beyond the teacher-centred to the learner-centred and away from learning which perpetuates dependence on others and a state of heteronomy to **learning which promotes cooperative interdependence, relatedness (or affiliation), autonomy and, consequently, enduring and sustainable lifelong learning skills**."

Everhard, p.17, in Everhard & Benson (2015)

Aims of the Presentation

1) Discuss the relationship between 3 concepts: **learner autonomy**, **sustainable assessment** and **exam preparation**
2) Consider some **practical implications** for the classroom
3) Intrigue teachers to **learn more about sustainable assessment and learner autonomy**
4) Encourage participants to **reflect on and question their day-to-day teaching practice**

Concluding Remarks

Tracking learning	Evaluating progress	Measuring development
Choosing & using resources	Spotlighting strategies	Developing a learning plan
Starting with expectations	Goal-setting & Diagnostics	

Morrison & Navarro, 2014

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

Concluding Remarks

Tracking learning	Evaluating progress	Measuring development
Choosing & using resources	Spotlighting strategies	Developing a learning plan
Starting with expectations	Goal-setting & Diagnostics	

Morrison & Navarro, 2014

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

Concluding Remarks

An Expert Teacher:

Consistently reflects critically on teaching, regularly taking action as a result, and actively seeks feedback from a range of sources, is highly aware of their own beliefs about teaching and learning, recognises areas where there is a mismatch between their own beliefs and good practice, and has a good understanding of the theoretical rationale for their pedagogical decisions.

http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/teaching-english/cambridge-english-teaching-framework/

Concluding Remarks

An Expert Teacher:

*Consistently **reflects critically on teaching, regularly taking action as a result**, and actively seeks feedback from a range of sources, is highly aware of their own beliefs about teaching and learning, **recognises areas where there is a mismatch between their own beliefs and good practice**, and has a good understanding of the theoretical rationale for their pedagogical decisions.*

http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/teaching-english/cambridge-english-teaching-framework/

Concluding Remarks

Every journey begins with the first step.

Thank You

Gerardo Valazza, MEd ELT, Dip TEFLA
gvalazza@anglo.edu.uy
https://angloseminars.wordpress.com
Instituto Cultural Anglo-Uruguayo

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

Bibliography

- Benson, P. (2015). Foreword. In C.J. Everhard & L. Murphy (Eds.), *Assessment and autonomy in language learning* (pp. viii-xi). Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Cambridge Assessment English official website available at www.CambridgeEnglish.org.

- Cambridge English Assessment YouTube channel available at https://www.youtube.com/user/cambridgeenglishtv.

- Cambridge English Write and Improve available at https://writeandimprove.com/.

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre

Bibliography

- Everhard, C.J. (2015). The assessment-autonomy relationship. In C.J. Everhard & L. Murphy (Eds.), *Assessment and autonomy in language learning* (pp. 8-34). Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Everhard, C.J. & Murphy, L. (2015). Introduction. In C.J. Everhard & L. Murphy (Eds.), *Assessment and autonomy in language learning* (pp. 1-7). Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Morrison, B. & Navarro, D. (2014). *The autonomy approach: Language learning in the classroom and beyond.* Peaslake, UK: Delta Publishing.

- Wiliam, D. (2011). *Embedded Formative Assessment.* Bloomington: Solution Tree Press

ANGLO

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Authorised Platinum Centre