



Norm-referenced assessments

Anne Bayetto

Flinders University

anne.bayetto@flinders.edu.au

Assessment

- **Assessment isn't about what students don't know**
 - **It's about whether students have learned what teachers have taught**
 - **It's about what students need to know next**
 - **The greatest power of assessment information lies in its capacity to help me see how to be a better teacher** (Tomlinson)

Beliefs and data

- **'S/he's doing much better' is not data**
 - Tell me how you know this is the case
 - What does 'much better' look like?
- **Assessment processes used are often idiosyncratic**
 - Historical
 - IR
 - Assessments are in the building

What's the research and commentary telling us?

- Teachers do well judging students at risk
- They don't do very well judging students' progress
 - If teachers are teaching as hard as they can they tend to think students are making adequate progress (Good)
- Too much assumptive teaching

Two types of assessment processes

- **Near-point assessments**

- Can students reproduce what was specifically taught?**

- **Teacher developed assessments**

- **Far-point assessments**

- Can students apply, in different contexts/formats, what has been taught?**

Standardised norm-referenced assessments

- Test of power/potential aptitude on selected items
- Score compared against norm/trial group
- Precise directions for administration, scoring and interpretation of results
- Developed by administering assessment, using trained supervisors, **in a standard way**
- Scores distributed on normal curve

Non-standardised norm-referenced assessments

- Test of power/potential aptitude on selected items
- Score compared against norm/trial group
- Precise directions for administration, scoring and interpretation of results
- Developed by distributing assessment to educators, having them administer the assessment and sending back raw data for marking and interpretation
 - Or educators mark it themselves and send back the results
- Scores distributed on normal curve

When selecting a norm referenced assessment, consider...

- **Composition of norm/trial group**
 - Curriculum used
 - Age/year level
 - Method of participant selection
 - Geographic region/Location of residence
 - Socio-economic background
 - Home language
 - Types of disability
 - Size of norm group
- **Year of publication**
- **Time of year: Standardisation**

Standard Error of Measurement (SEM)

- **Indicator of technical quality of an assessment tool**
 - **Band of confidence/wobble factor around a score**
 - **Assists with interpretation of results**

Issue

- **Teachers must collect their own evidence and data**
 - **Not support teachers/paraprofessionals**
- **Teachers must be able to talk about the data and what was observed**
 - **Why? Because if they don't know it, they don't own it**