

# Learning Studies: East and West

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# Topics for Discussion

- Is learning study a way of overcoming the achievement gap?
- Are learning studies best described as design experiments or as a form of action research?
- Is 'the intended object of learning' another way of describing an 'intended learning outcome' (objective).
- Is the development of teachers' pedagogical content knowledge as important as the development of students' understanding through LS.
- The 'Injection Theory' of LS.
- Learning Study as the Pedagogicalization of Learner Centered Education (Marton).<sup>2</sup>

# Achievement Gap

- The achievement gap means that although low achievers may well be improving their test scores the higher achievers are also improving.
- Pang and Lo claim that Learning Studies informed by variation theory often significantly reduce differences in learning outcomes.
- This claim if true should make headlines in the media throughout the western world and beyond as the answer to ‘the prayers’ of policy makers. So why is LS not hitting the headlines?
- The claim is made on the basis of diagnostic pre and post tests whereas media and governments only attend to non diagnostic standardised test results that lack pedagogical sensitivity and validity.
- The challenge for learning studies as Pang and Lo suggest is to publicly demonstrate the universal significance of multiple case studies.

# LS as design experiment

- Two strands: Research and Developmentally oriented LS.
- The DE (str 1). “-- currently acceptable theory is used to design an educational artifact or intervention that is tested, modified, retested and redesigned --- until a version is developed that both achieves the educational aims required for the classroom context, and allows for reflection on the educational processes involved ---” (Gorard et al 2004).
- Str 1 LS in HK appears to be about the testing and development of VT as a pedagogical tool. Therefore it appears to provide a foundation for DEs.
- Pang denies that LSs aim is to design a lesson plan that is effective across all

# Student learning is dependent on teacher learning in the LS.

- Runesson's paper demonstrates that teachers cannot identify the critical features of the object of learning independently of trying to understand their learning difficulties.
- "A professional teacher cannot predict learning, but at least be able to analyse and design learning situations from the point of view of what is necessary for learning and how to make this possible."

# LS as an injection of capabilities

- Mona HolmQvist.
- “One reason that verifies a need to complement a lesson study with a theoretical perspective on learning is the teachers’ possibilities to use the theory when when planning the instruction individually, even if in the future they may have difficulties implementing new learning studies because of lack of time. On the other hand, the learning study model seems to be working as a good method when developing teachers’ understanding of variation theory”.

# Pedagogicalization of LCE (Msondre and Pang)

- “The essence of LCE here is the manner at which a student and teacher are mutually engaged to the object of learning facilitated by teaching and learning strategies, learning resources, as well as classroom assessment practices.”
- THIS OFFERS THE PROSPECT OF TESTING THE CONSISTENCY OF THE PEDAGOGICAL COMPONENTS BUILT INTO LCE WITH EACH OTHER.