
**IMPLICATIONS OF PHENOMENOGRAPHY, VARIATION THEORY AND
LEARNING STUDY ON ASSESSMENT PRACTICES**

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The term ‘phenomenography’ was coined by Marton (1981) to identify an empirical research paradigm dating to the 1970s that aims at describing the qualitatively different ways in which people experience or see the same phenomenon. Different ways of experiencing or seeing are differentiated and logically related to one another in terms of which aspects of the phenomenon are being discerned and attended to simultaneously by the experiencer. Two strands or domains of research have evolved out of the phenomenographic research tradition. The first includes development of the variation theory of learning (Marton & Booth 1997; Marton & Tsui, 2004; Marton & Pang, 2006; Pang & Ki, 2015). The second strand includes the development of learning study practice (cf. Marton 2001), in which teachers work collaboratively to organise learning instances of a particular phenomenon according to the variation and invariance along certain dimensions of variation to bring learning about (e.g. Marton & Tsui 2004; Pang & Lo 2012; Pang & Marton 2003, 2005). Regardless of whether we are concerned with the first or second strand, contemplation of the phenomenographic knowledge is of significant importance to improving education. However, the focus of phenomenographic research thus far is primarily on teaching and learning, with few studies being conducted in the area of assessment. This presentation will explore and discuss the affordance of using phenomenography, variation theory and learning study to inform and improve the assessment practices in education.