

Supporting Education in New Zealand for 75 years

Exploring connections between engagement and student voice

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Presentation at PPTA conference, April, 2011

Input from two research projects

- Competent Learners @ 16
- NZCER National Survey of Secondary Schools

Argument in a nutshell

- Pedagogies that take account of student voice in ways that *both* improve learning *and* strengthen engagement could help overcome current opposition from some teachers to the very idea of accessing and using “student voice”

What we will do

- Quickly review what the research says
- Try out a process to explore possible purposes for accessing student voice in the classroom
- Discuss issues and how to address these
- Consider implications of an “improvement” vs a “transformative” framing of change

The challenge

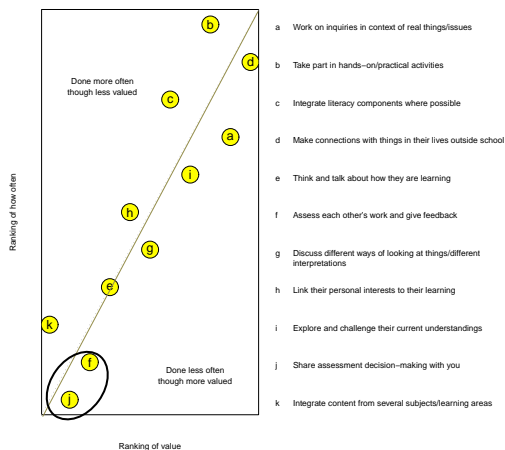
National Survey: teacher responses to the statement *There is too much emphasis on student voice and similar ideas nowadays* (n = 780)

	Agree/strongly agree %	Neutral/Not sure %	Disagree/strongly disagree %
Mathematics, sciences			
Technology, PE, health, transition, careers, special education			
Social sciences, arts, commerce			
English, languages			

Which cluster do you think would agree most strongly? Which would be more likely to disagree? On what basis do you think this?

Learning area cluster	Agree/strongly agree %	Neutral/Not sure %	Disagree/strongly disagree %
Mathematics, sciences	32	40	25
Technology, PE, health, transition, careers, special education	27	33	37
Social sciences, arts, commerce	21	36	42
English, languages	21	26	52

Agreeing with this was also associated with not offering many of the KCs/learning to learn opportunities described in another part of the survey



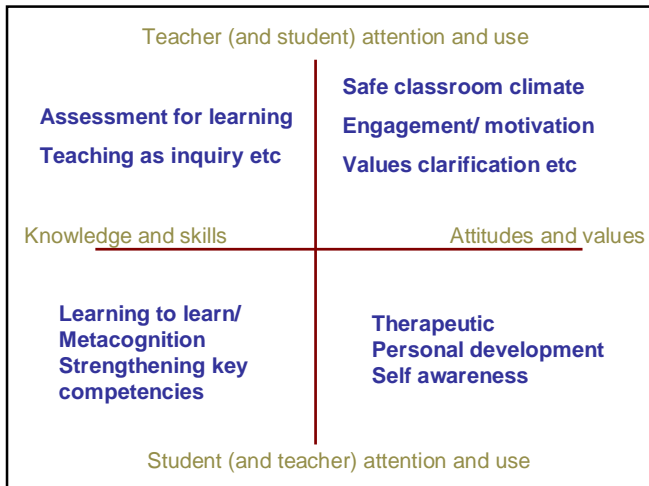
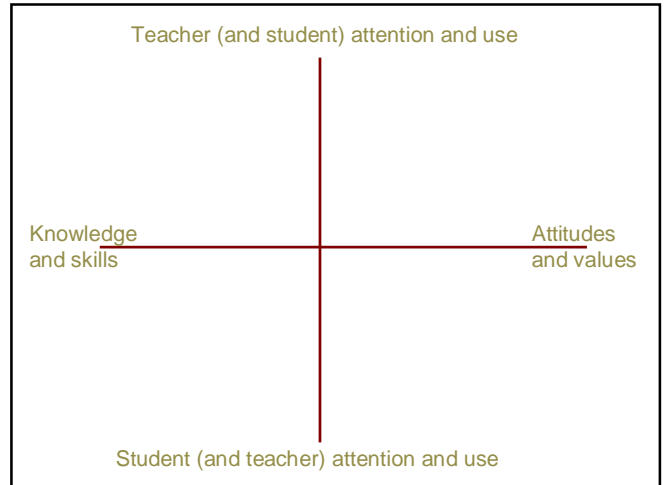
Students co-create their NCEA plan	Teacher responses (n=780) %
Most of the time	3
Quite often	7
Sometimes	20
Never/almost never	64
No response	6

DANZ argued that actively involving students in making informed decisions about their assessment is key to lifting achievement – this currently seems a bridge too far for many teachers – at least for NCEA

And now evidence that making more space for students to be “heard” and to make real decisions in relation to their own learning is engaging for them.

The data is from **Competent Learners @ 16**

Favourite/least favourite subjects are a rough proxy for engagement here ...



One to follow up

Rachel Bolstad's new paper on what she has learned from several recent “student voice” projects

We need to be clear:

- ✓ Our context today has been one of improving current schooling
- ✓ Most student voice scholars want to transform education
- ✓ So my argument is a pragmatic “one step at a time” strategy

Absolum, M., Flockton, L., Hattie, J., Hipkins, R., & Reid, I. (2009). *Directions for Assessment in New Zealand (DANZ)*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.

Bolstad, R. (2011) *From “student voice” to “youth-adult partnerships”*: Lessons from working with young people as partners for educational change. NZCER working paper. http://www.nzcer.org.nz/default.php?products_id=2761

Hipkins, R. (in press) *The Engaging Nature of Teaching for Competency Development*. Chapter for International Handbook on Student Engagement

Hipkins, R. (2010) *Reshaping the secondary school curriculum: building the plane while flying it? Findings from the NZCER National Survey of Secondary Schools 2009*. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

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