Engaging students as partners in
global learning

In Conversation about Internationalising and Diversifying the Curriculum in Partnership with Learners

School of Education, Edinburgh University

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Engaging students as partners in global learning

An Australian Learning & Teaching Fellowship (Jan 207-Dec 2018) that aims to:

develop a program of activities that inspires, supports and disseminates innovative approaches to engaging students and staff as partners in global learning

❖ 13 projects in 4 Australian universities (UTAS, UQ, USyd, LaTrobe) in formal curriculum, co-curriculum, abroad and at home

Outline

1. What is 'global learning'? Why engage students as partners in global learning?

2. Some troubling questions

3. Imagining and enacting 'students as partners in global learning'

4. Propositions for (culturally inclusive) global learning

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1. What is global learning? Why important to engage students as partners in GL?

What is global learning?

Global learning is a critical analysis of and an engagement with complex, interdependent global systems and legacies (such as natural, physical, social, cultural, economic, and political) and their implications for people's lives and the earth's sustainability.

Through global learning, students should

1) **become informed**, open-minded, and responsible people who are attentive to diversity across the spectrum of differences,

2) seek to understand **how their actions affect** both local and global communities,

3) **address** the world's most pressing and enduring issues collaboratively and equitably.

(Association of American Colleges & Universities 2015)

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Designing for global learning through internationalisation of the curriculum (IoC)

- *Internationalisation of the curriculum is the incorporation of international, intercultural and global dimensions into the content of the curriculum as well as the learning outcomes, assessment tasks, teaching methods and support services of a program of study*

(Leask 2015)

- IoC is an intentional, purposeful process focused on the assurance of learning outcomes for *all* students

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Why rethink student engagement in global learning through partnerships?

(Internationalized) curricular and co-curricular programs, as designed and taught by staff are experienced and understood differently by different students

(e.g., Absalom & Vadura, 2006; Arkoudis et al, 2010; Leask, 2009; Marginson & Sawir 2011; Pandian et al, 2016)

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Why .... continued

Students from diverse backgrounds can bring unique insights, but there is typically a failure '*to translate their presence into the exceptionally valuable and hitherto unappreciated educational resource it could be*'

(Mestenhauser, 1998, p.20).

SaP is a process through which all participants have *the opportunity to contribute equally, although not necessarily in the same ways*, to the conceptualisation, decision-making, and practice of teaching and learning

(Cook-Sather, Bovill & Felton 2014, p.p. 6-7).

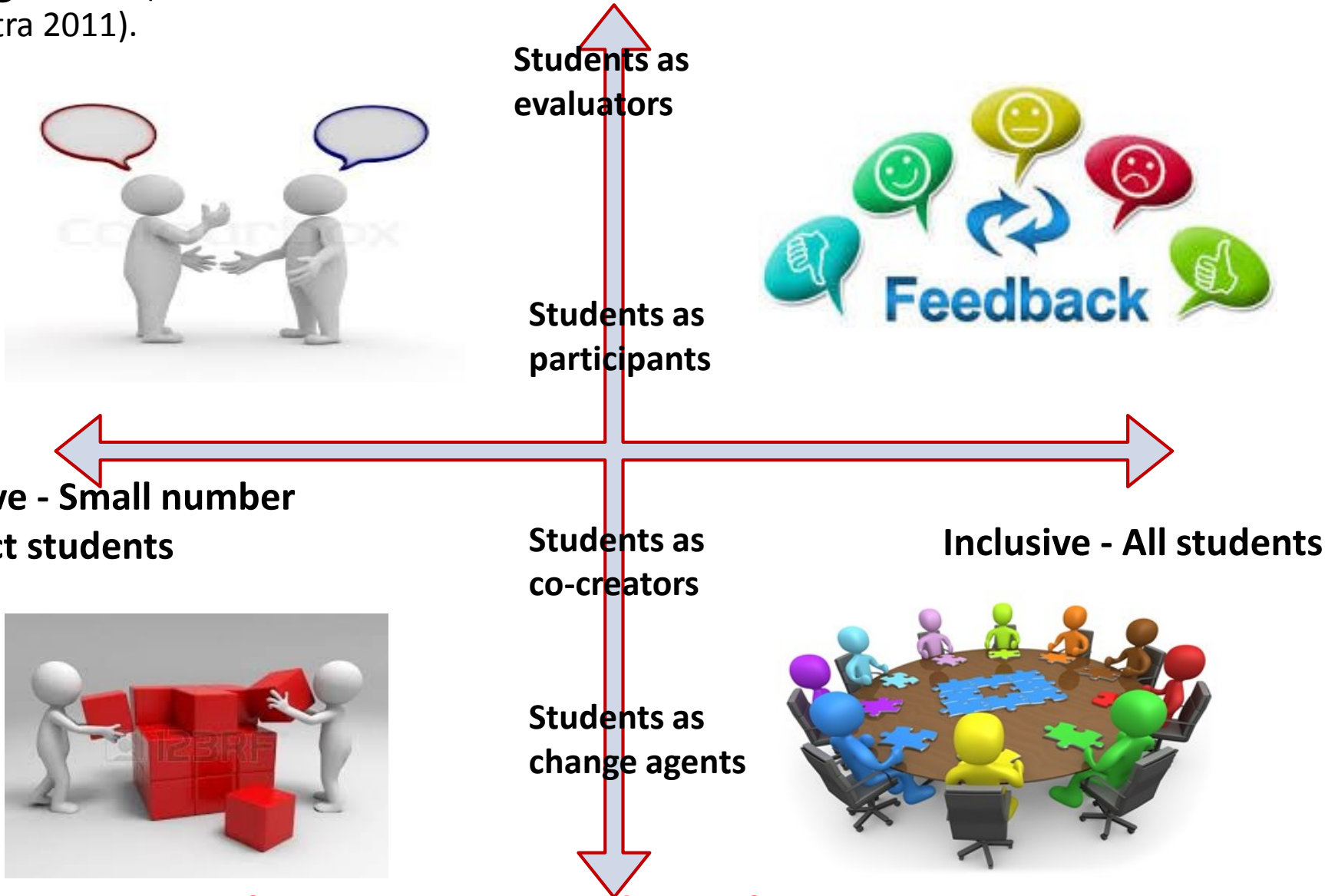**Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom**

As a classroom community, our capacity to generate excitement is deeply affected by our interest in each other, in hearing one another's voices, in recognising one another's presence. … There must be an ongoing recognition that everyone influences the classroom dynamic, that everyone contributes. These contributions are resources. Used constructively the enhance the capacity of any class …

bell hooks (1994, p.8; following Freire, 1968)
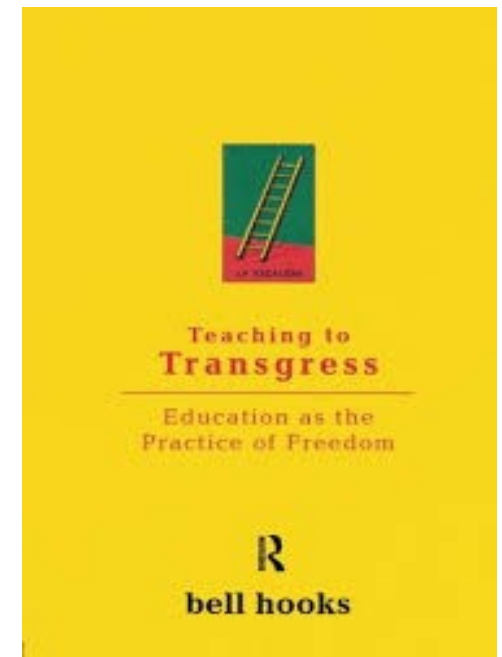
Types of roles – depth of engagement (Dunne & Zandstra 2011).

Access to roles – breadth of engagement

Students as evaluators

Students as participants

Students as co-creators

Students as change agents

Exclusive - Small number of select students

Inclusive - All students

Who **partners, and in what ways**

Who actually participates?
1. Mostly small scale (1-5 students)
2. Risks 'prioritizing voices that are already privileged and engaged'

Systematic literature review of students as partners in higher education. Mercer-Mapstone et al (2017).

2. Some troubling questions …

Questions of **culture**: Is the concept of SaP culturally blind, or culturally bounded? How does it/can it 'translate' across cultures?

Questions of **access and equity**: Is it possible to engage a whole cohort of culturally (and otherwise) diverse students as partners? If so, how? If not …?

Questions of **epistemology**: What is the nature of students' (cultural/linguistic) expertise, and how can (culturally) diverse students and staff learn from each other?

Questions of **power**: What does a 'partnership' mean, or what might it mean to staff and students (from different cultural linguistic backgrounds)? How is power interpreted? Can we/should we re-negotiate power in these relationships?
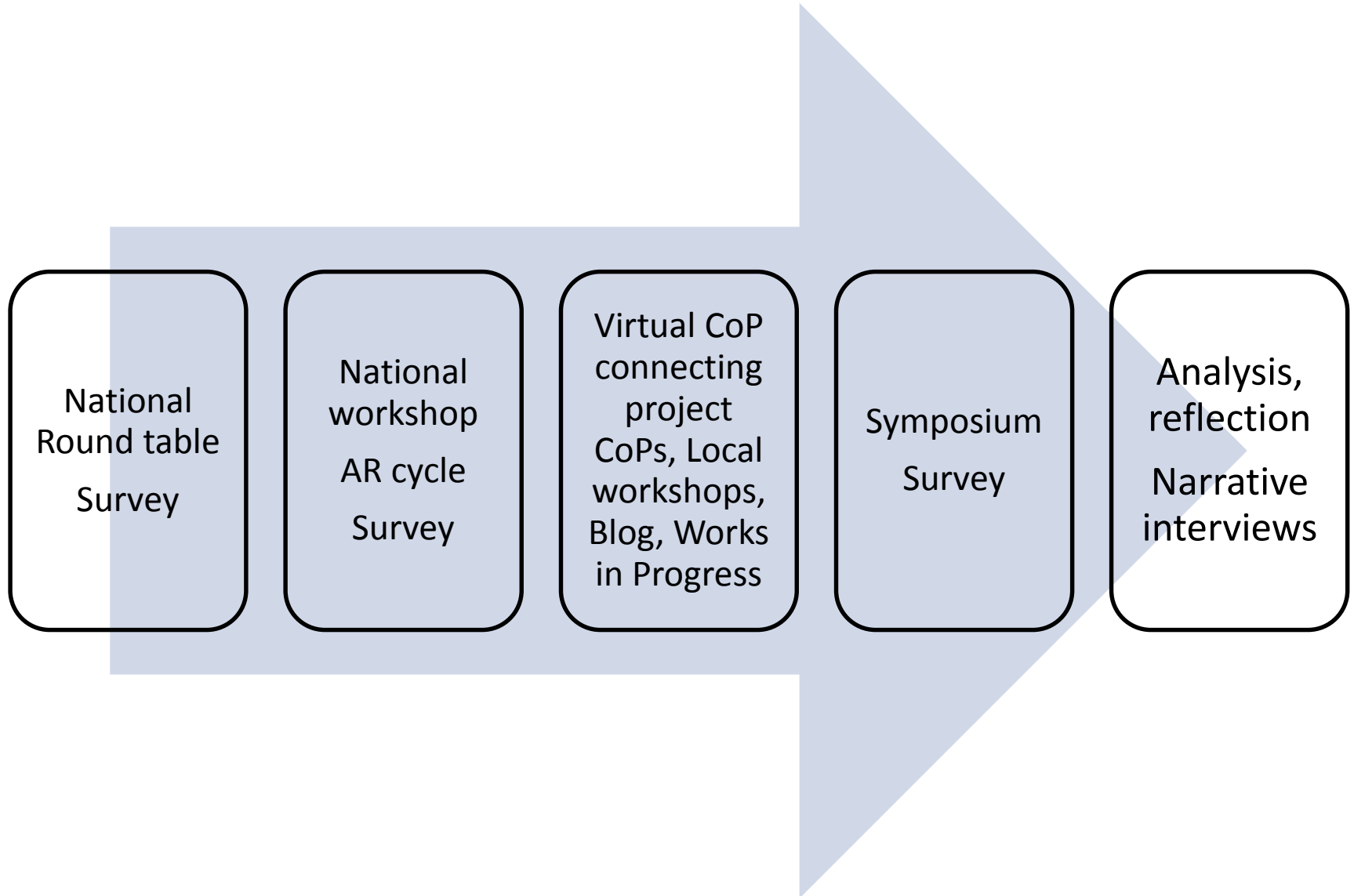
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3. Imagining & enacting ethical, inclusive partnerships in global learning?
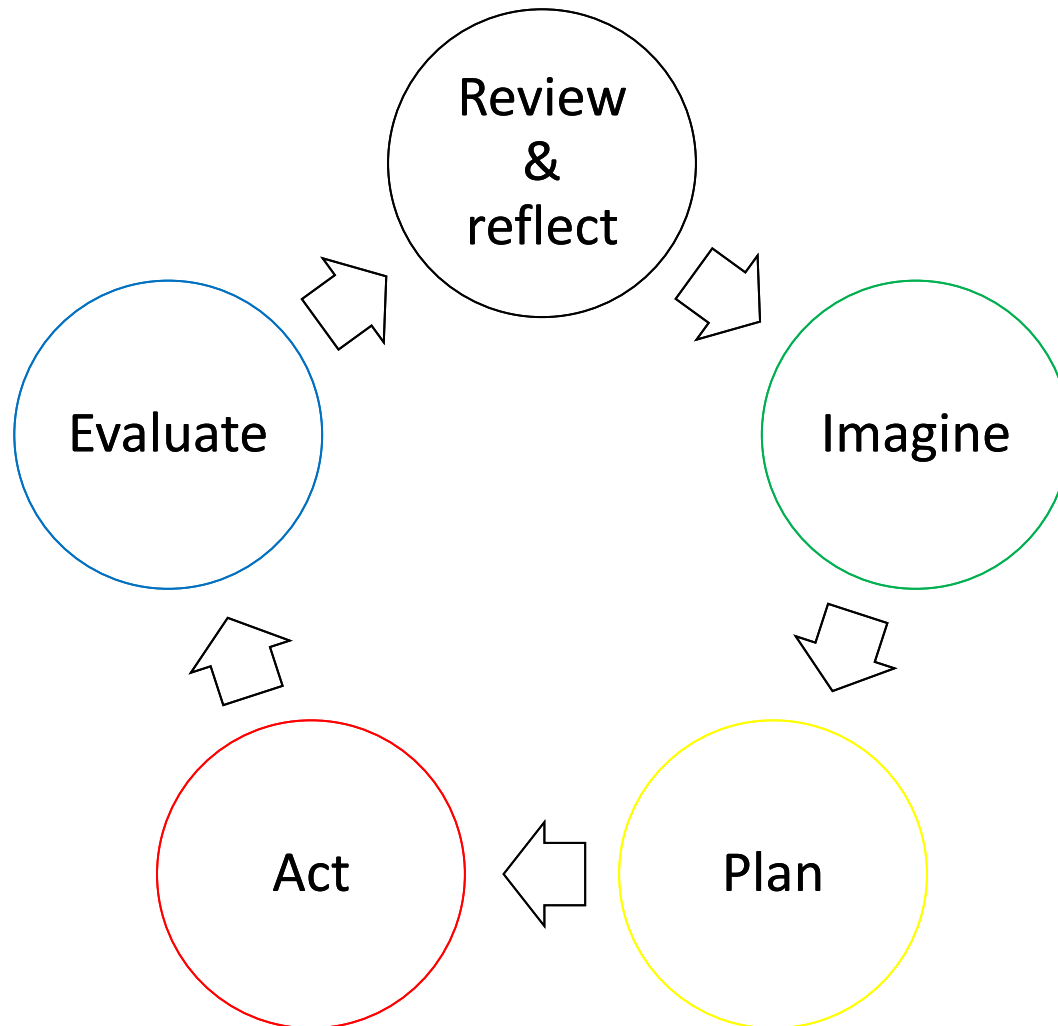
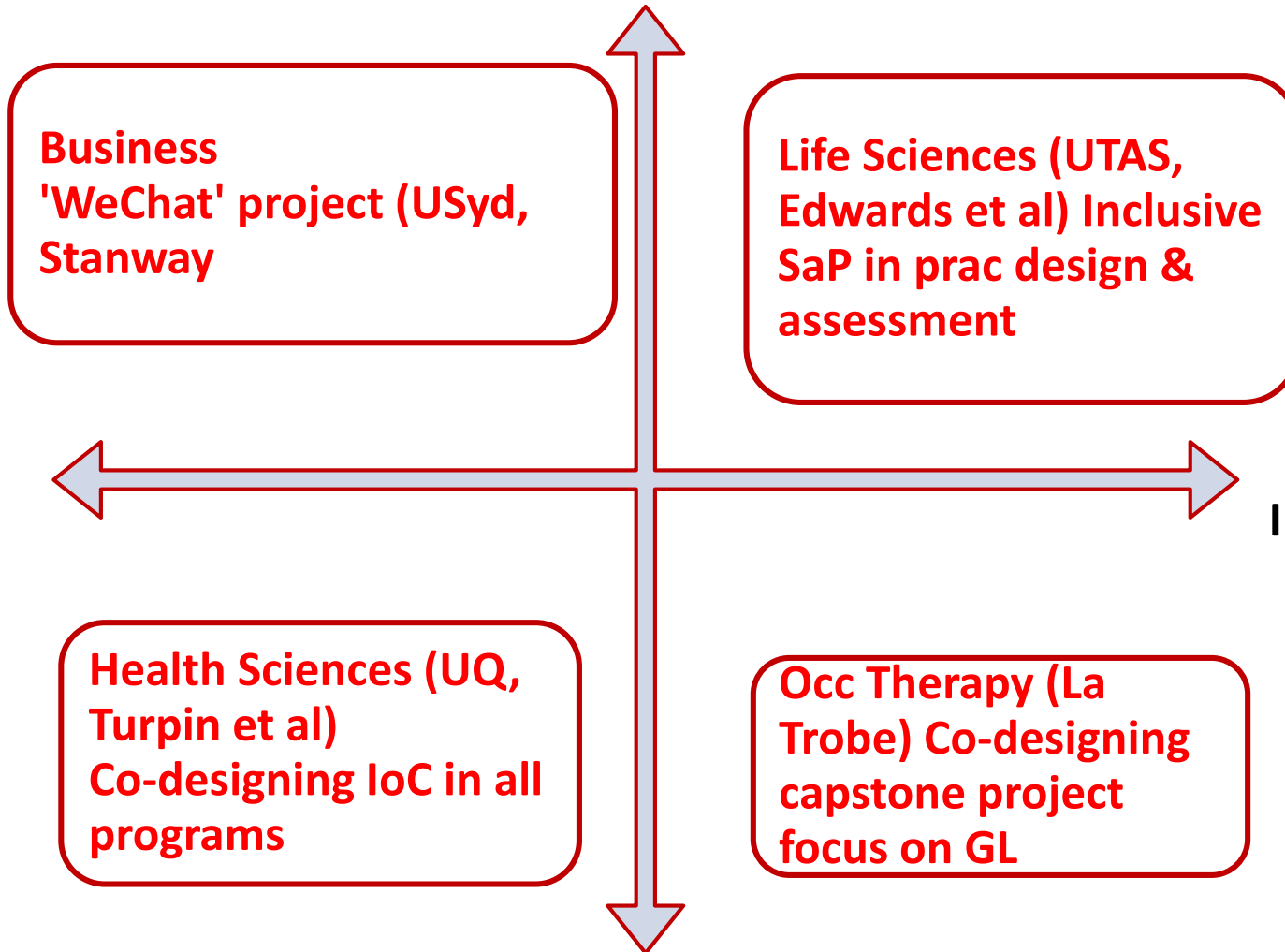# The fellowship process – action research

National Round table

Survey

National workshop

AR cycle

Survey

Virtual CoP connecting project CoPs, Local workshops, Blog, Works in Progress

Symposium

Survey

Analysis, reflection

Narrative interviews

Review & reflect

Imagine

Evaluate

Act

Plan

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Examples

Minimal participation - Students as evaluators

Business 'WeChat' project (USyd, Stanway

Life Sciences (UTAS, Edwards et al) Inclusive SaP in prac design & assessment

Exclusive

Inclusive

Health Sciences (UQ, Turpin et al) Co-designing IoC in all programs

Occ Therapy (La Trobe) Co-designing capstone project focus on GL

Maximum participation - Students as co-creators

Impact on project participants

Students

Enjoyment!

Empowerment, ownership of learning, increased agency, self-efficacy

Increased understanding & interest in: GL, lived realities of (culturally) other students, teachers' perspectives/lived realities

Meta-learning & employability

Staff

Enjoyment!

Empowerment & ownership of their teaching/curriculum

Increased understanding & interest in GL/IoC, students' perspectives/lived realities

Increased excitement about, commitment to IoC and to SaP

Also see: Mapstone-Mercer et al 2017 Curran 2017; Cook Sather 2008)

Culture: What happens when people with diverse cultural- linguistic constructs are invited into SaP conversations?
- Reframing SaP values

Developed during an interactive discursive process at HERDSA Conference 2017 (Chang, Crawford, Green, Hong, Theseira, Vu).

Also see Cook-Sather et al 2014, Healey et al 2014

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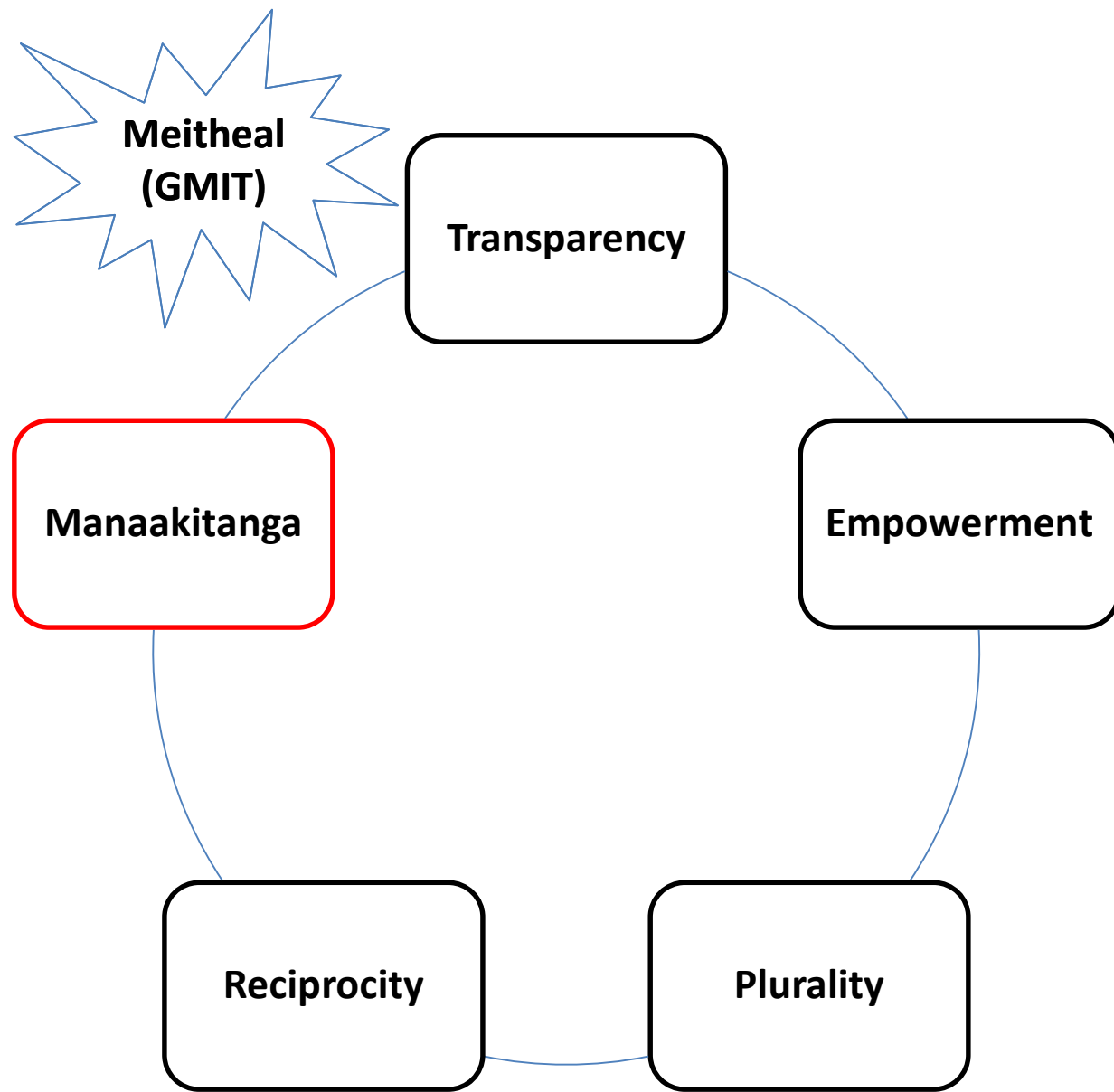
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Meitheal (GMIT)

Transparency

Empowerment

Manaakitanga

Plurality

Reciprocity
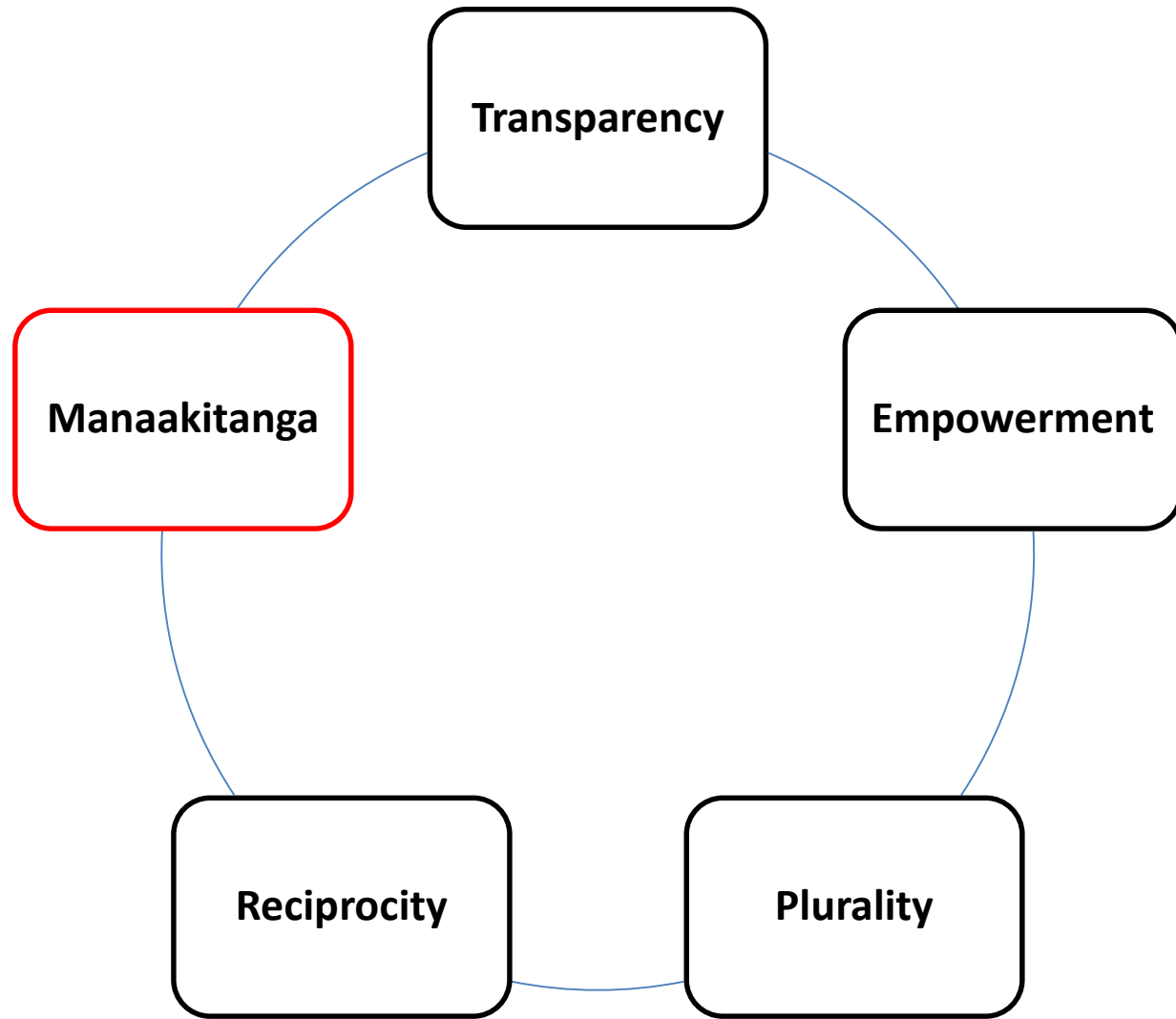
Further reflections on culture & pedagogy

Although the term 'students as partners' is quite new, it seems to me that the ideas that underpin it are much older. Throughout my schooling in China, I was rarely given opportunities to have a say on what I wanted and should learn. I never thought about it because our educational system is not designed to question the authorities. It did not seem to foster critical thinking. Most importantly, it was: 'Pass the exam!'

Does this mean that international – or at least Chinese students – will be reluctant to 'buy' the idea of SaP? No!

When I think back on my education in China, I realise that I was always an active participant. I took positions, such as teachers' student advisor [in my maths class] proving feedback about how the class went and suggesting what exercises could be helpful, based on the pace of the learning… In becoming involved in SaP practices in Australia, I have understood that my school maths teacher was actually practicing an advanced teaching strategy; that is, giving students the chance to produce knowledge rather than just consume it.

Coco Bu, Engaging students as partners in global learning blog
https://blogs.utas.edu.au/engaging-students/

Types of roles – **depth** of engagement (Dunne & Zandstra 2011).

5 projects

Access to roles – **breadth** of engagement

Students as evaluators

1 project

Students as participants

Feedback

Exclusive - Small number of select students

5 projects

Students as co-creators

2 projects

Students as change agents

Inclusive - All students

Access and equity? Who partnered, and in what ways

Fostering inclusive partnerships

SaP is ethical when **all are granted equality of opportunity to participate** (Bryson et al 2016)

We can intentionally create inclusive spaces in two ways

- In projects with selected students - target/include under-represented groups;
- Whole cohort - recognise and address different capacities to engage; e.g., allowing for different levels of risk, scaffolding

Always ensure meaningful incentives, reward and recognition

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Questions of **epistemology**

We've [lecturer and students] come to [GL] a bit more of an equal I think, because I'm learning as much from them as what they're learning from me. Whereas if it was in a research context, there's still all of my background - not to be arrogant or anything - but I'd have the depth of knowledge that they [students] wouldn't necessarily have.

Whereas with this, I'm learning as well - we are all students in some respects. Their interpretations [of intercultural experiences during a field trip to Sri Lanka] might be quite different to mine as well. So it feels like mutual discovery. From an educational point of view, my understanding has broadened out. Before this, internationalisation of the curriculum was a bit of a term – it had no depth to me. I've got a little bit more of a sense that there's a whole stack that I don't know.

Lecturer, Science

Power and identity
- a lecturer's perspective

It throws the notion of what it means to be a student or a lecturer [faculty] on its head. For me, it's been a real shift – a paradigm shift. Once I was focused on the learning outcomes and knowing the best way to get there was my job. Now I see there are so many ways to get there. It is a negotiated process. I see myself as a negotiator, a facilitator of affable conversations. I have come to realise that there is no one right way to be a student or lecturer. There are multiple ways. Working in partnership has allowed me to say 'this is who I am' and the students to do the same

Green, *Engaging students as partners in global learning* (unpublished)

**Power and identity** - a student's perspective

We are no longer students just sitting in a lecture listening to the lecturer and doing the assignments assigned to us. We have autonomy and staff have autonomy too. We are solving problems together. It is a challenge. We need to work out how to navigate the partnership so we don't overtake each other and so we can all contribute to our maximum capacities.

Green, *Engaging students as partners in global learning* (unpublished)

4. Propositions for (culturally inclusive) global learning
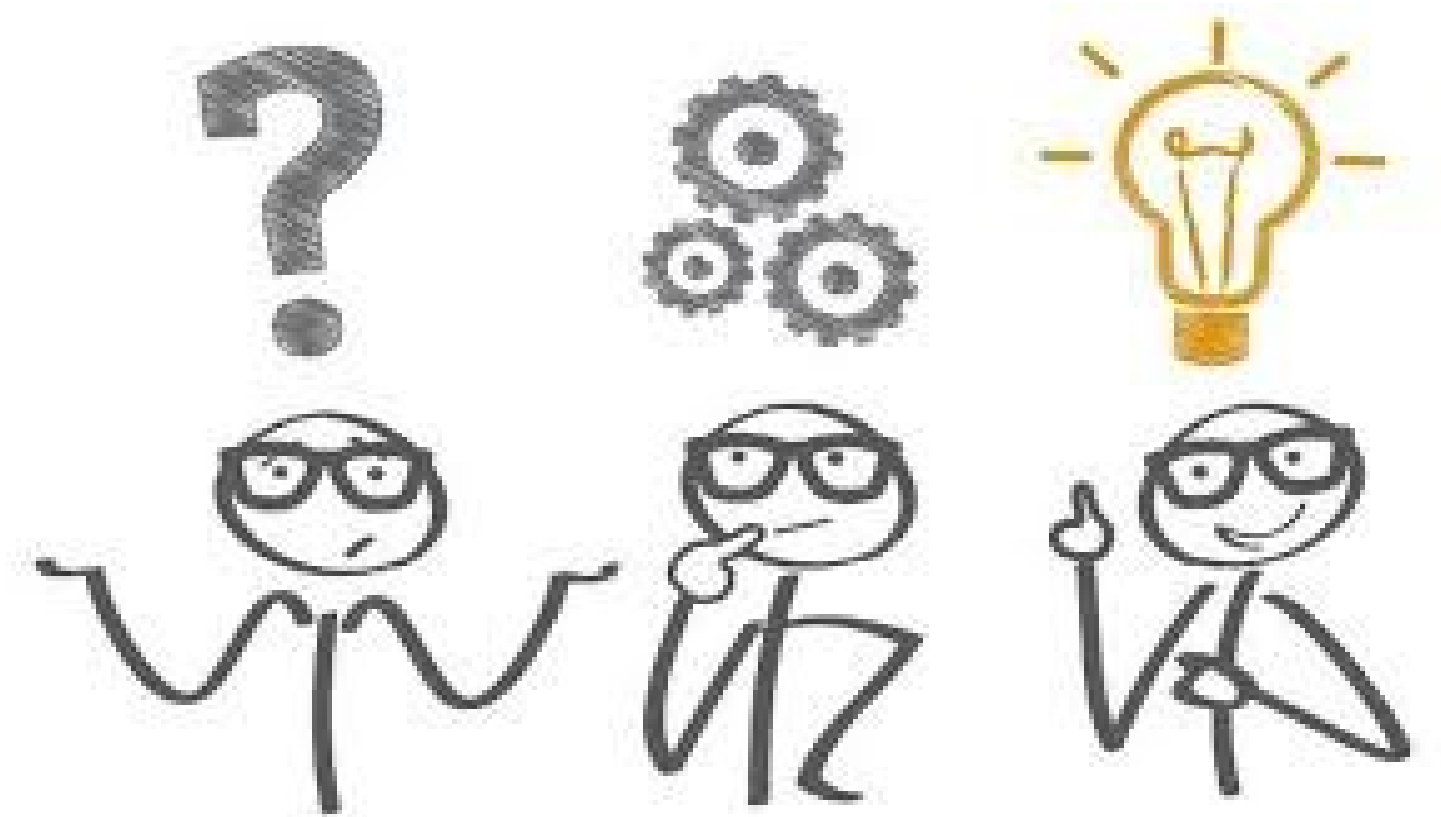
What makes partnerships in global learning work?

1. Fostering inclusive partnerships

2. Nurturing power sharing relationships through dialogue and reflection – recognising different expertise

3. Accepting partnership as a process with uncertain outcomes

4. Engaging in ethical partnerships – 'SaP as ethic of reciprocity' – ensuring all receive meaningful recognition & reward

5. Enacting partnership for transformation – individual, disciplinary, institutional

   - (Matthews 2017; also Bryson et al 2016; Cook-Sather & Felton 2017)

What makes partnerships in global learning work?

6. Recognising our cultural ignorance (Singh 2010)

7. Creating 'cultural safety' (Williams 1999) in 'brave spaces' (Cook-Sather 2017)

8. Welcoming, sharing and playing with new cultural-linguistic constructs (e.g., 'manaakitanga')

9. Discussing and co-developing shared values and expectations through disciplined, 'affable' conversations (Appiah 2007)

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Further information

Fellowship Website http://www.utas.edu.au/engaging-students

Fellowship Blog – new contributions welcome - https://blogs.utas.edu.au/engaging-students/

Contact Wendy Green for further details w.j.green@utas.edu.au

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