What does "good" look like in language teaching?

A process or an outcome?

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LANGUAGES INTERNATIONAL
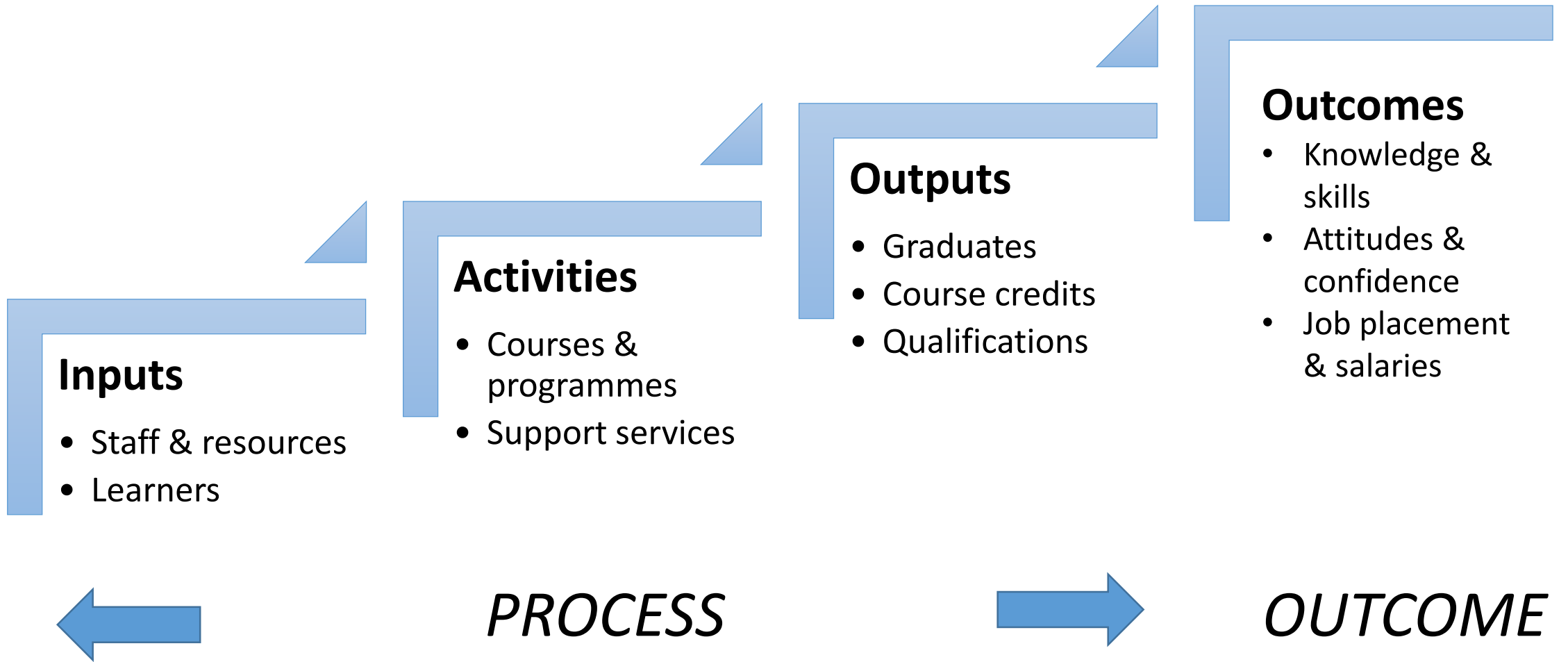
Context: approaches to quality assurance of language teaching organisations

- The standard international approach
  - Inspection/Audit
  - Standards
  - Binary decision

- The NZQA approach
  - Evaluation - EER
  - What has value?
  - Graded decision

What can we evaluate?

Inputs

- Staff & resources
- Learners

Activities

- Courses & programmes
- Support services

Outputs

- Graduates
- Course credits
- Qualifications

Outcomes

- Knowledge & skills
- Attitudes & confidence
- Job placement & salaries

PROCESS → *OUTCOME*

The standard approach to teaching standards

English UK (Accreditation UK)	English Australia (NEAS)	English New Zealand
1. Management 2. Resources and environment 3. Teaching and learning 4. Welfare and student services 5. Care of under-18s	A. Management and administration B. Premises C. Specialist staff D. Student services E. English language programs and assessment F. Educational resources and equipment G. Promotion and Student Recruitment H. Younger Students	1. Staffing, employment and professional development 2. Curriculum and course delivery 3. The student experience 4. Governance and management 5. Promotion and student recruitment

Standard evidence

Teaching and learning

Standard

Teachers will have appropriate qualifications and will be given sufficient support to ensure that their teaching meets the needs of their students. Programmes of learning will be managed for the benefit of students. The teaching observed will meet the requirements

of the Scheme.

High- and low-inference observations

Classroom observation

Knowledge and planning

T23 Teachers will demonstrate sound knowledge and awareness of the use of English and the linguistic systems underlying it, and will provide appropriate models of both spoken and written English

Rationale for the standard approach

- Objective

- Cost effective

- Orientation is to *good enough,* not *how good?*

- Learners themselves are focused on process (Walker 2001)
  - Teacher
  - Atmosphere
  - Pastoral care
  - Feedback systems
  - Service-scape

The problem with process

- In education, outcomes *are* more important
- Particularly where there needs to be economic and political accountablity

The problem with outcomes

Outcome	Criteria for quality	Type of accountability
Aggregated performance of a cohort of individuals	Cohorts of students' achievements against similar cohorts in terms of: - Spread of levels of achievement - Time taken to achieve levels	Accountability of institution for provision of quality learning conditions through comparison of results with other institutions, *other factors being equal* (my emphasis)

From Crabbe 2003

All other things *not* being equal

- Identifying cohorts

- Agreeing on *what* performance outcome to measure

- Agreeing on *how* to measure it

- Agreeing on *measurement*

- Having enough time to reliably and validly measure progress

- Accounting for language learning variability and variation

Standard approaches to describing outcomes

1. "Levels"

    "students progress on average one level every 12 weeks ..., meeting the internationally accepted standard for progression"

    "Around 80 per cent of the longer-term students typically progress to a higher-level class at the end of a term. "

2. CEFR

    "The 5-weekly assessments show that students' achievements   are at or exceed the expected 6-weekly progress rate based on   the CEFR"

3. International exams (IELTS)

LANGUAGES INTERNATIONAL

Variability and time

- Average progress of half an IELTS band (0.598) in a 10-week intensive EAP course (Elder & O Loughlin 2000)

- Standard deviation = 0.545
  - therefore approx. 1 in 6 more than 1
  - approx 1 in 6 no progress

- At IELTS band 6 and above:
  - average is less than half a band;
 - two thirds no progress or regress

Standard variability
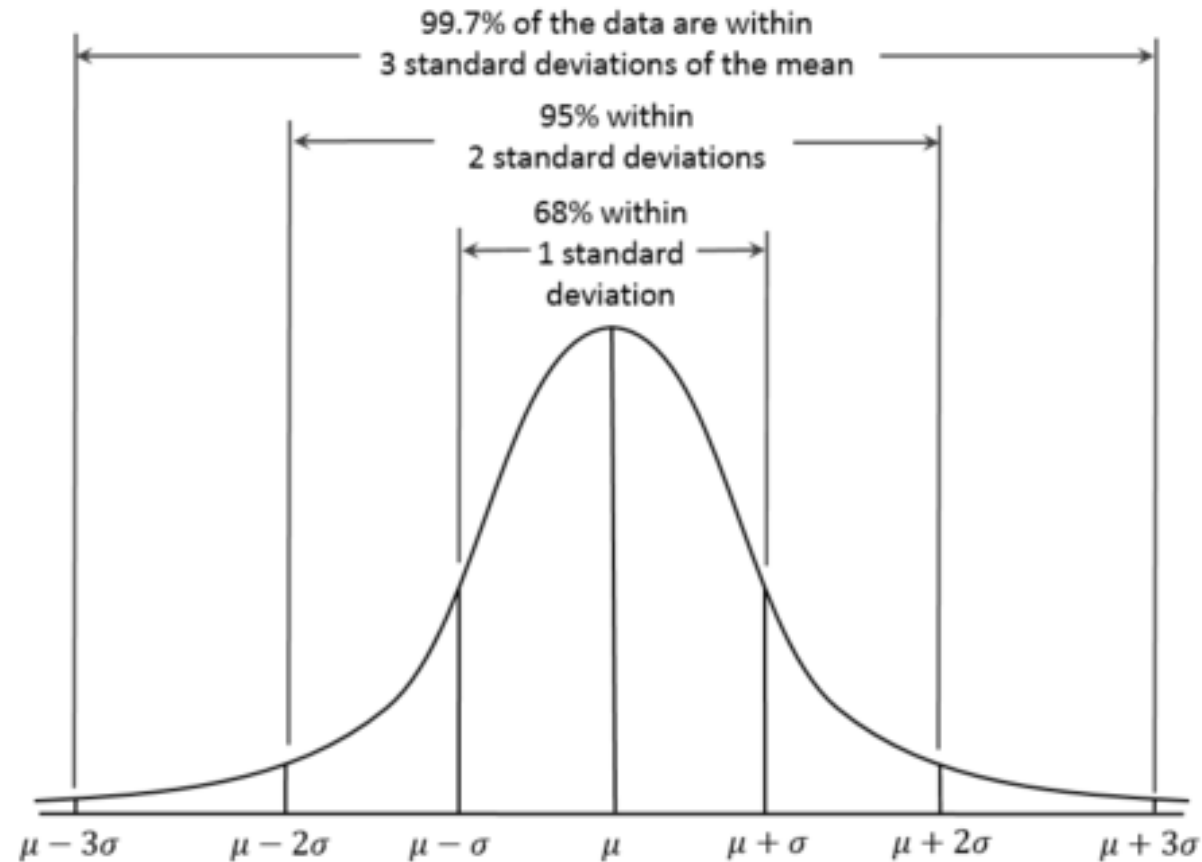
- The new cohort … will potentially alter XXXX's achievement statistics. For example, the city campus students generally move up a level after they have attended for 11-plus weeks and each term thereafter. Given the demographic of the … cohort, despite the best efforts and good teaching, it is unlikely they will match this level of performance. XXXX will need to develop an added measure of performance to capture and reflect the valuable service offered at XXX

Alternative 1: benchmark *internally,*

Leaving Qu'aire Feedback, Japan, Auckland
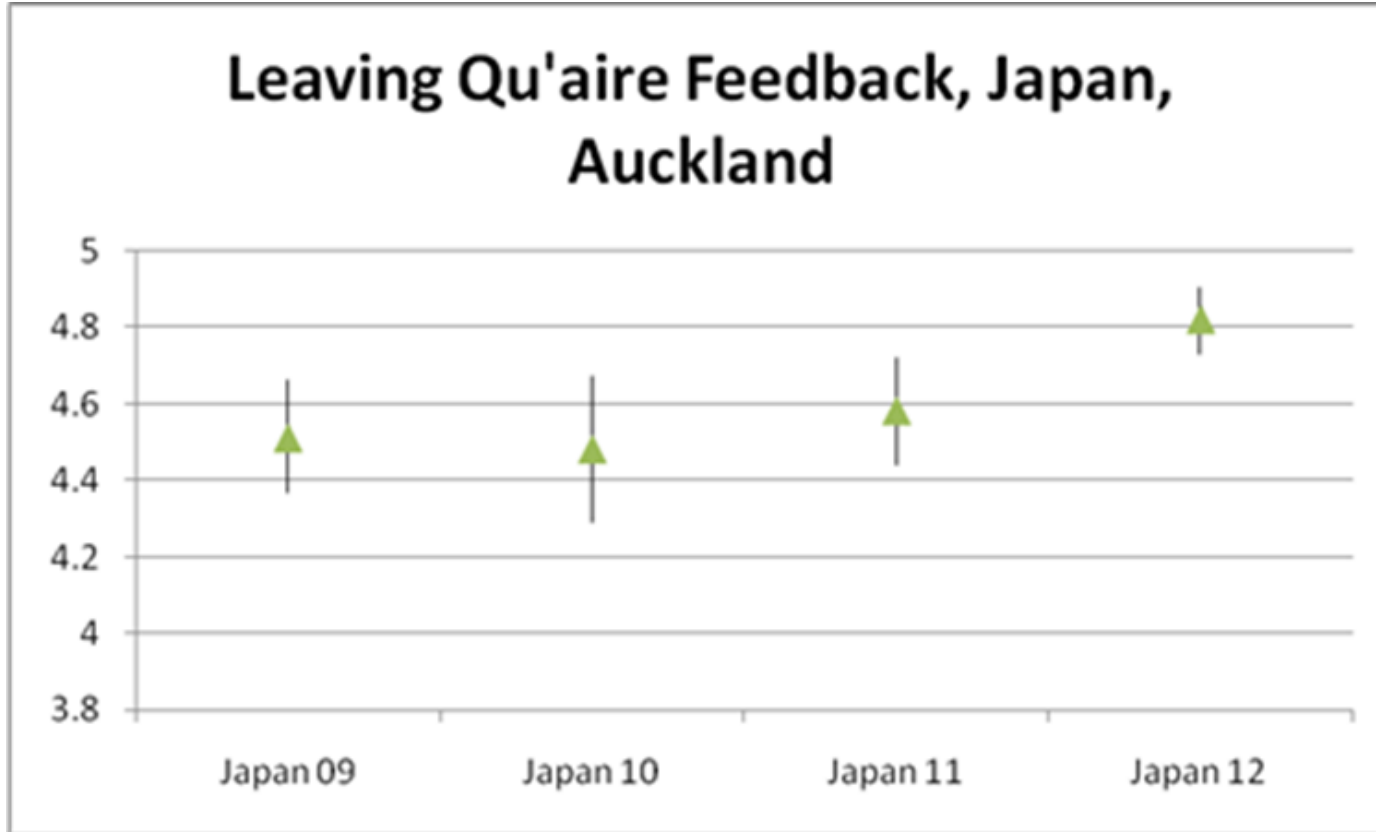
Alternative 2: focus on process

- Crabbe 2003: "Learning opportunities"

  - *"an activity that is likely to lead to an increase in language knowledge or skill"*

  - A generic descriptive unit allowing teaching practice to be described, analysed and evaluated

Opportunities grouped around performance (Crabbe)

Performance

- Input
- Interaction
- Output

Enhancing performance

- Rehearsal
- Feedback

Understanding performance

- Language awareness
- Learning awareness