

MOTIVATING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Understanding the Value of Adult Learning
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The aim of the presentation

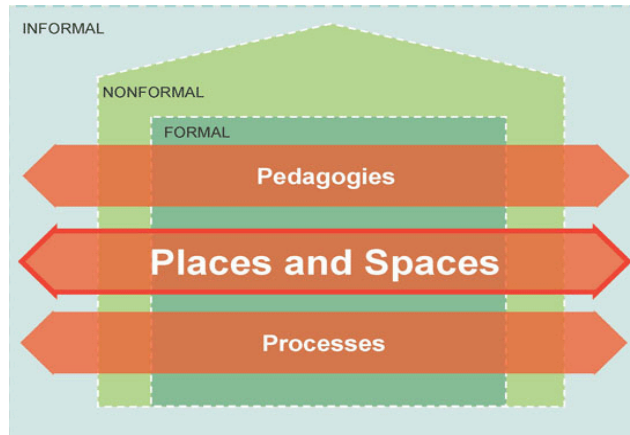
- to gain insight into your 'learning environment thinking'
- to give you concrete pedagogical tools which can be used in evaluating and improving your own learning environments
- to give you ideas of a planning model where the focus is on the learner and learning processes and no longer on the teacher and teaching.



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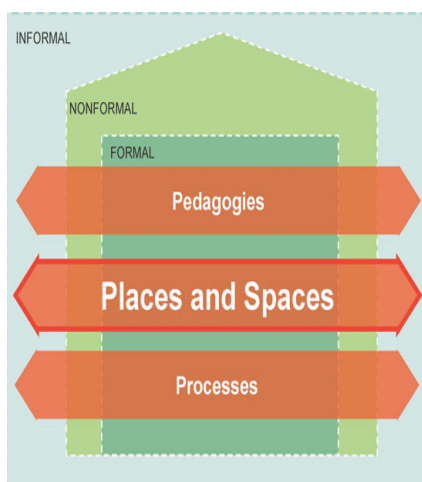
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The framework of learning environment thinking



(see more: InnoSchool, <http://innoschool.tkk.fi/innoarch/>)

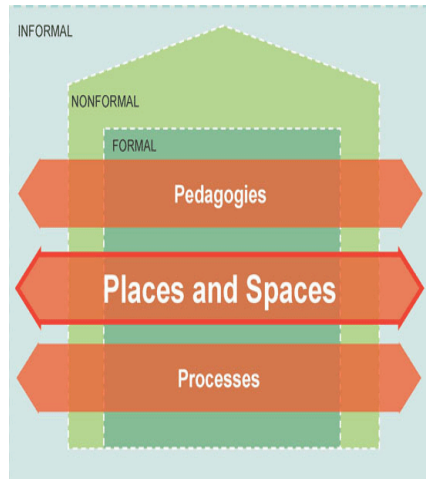
The framework of learning environment thinking



SPACES, PLACES AND ENVIRONMENTS

- Educational interactions occur in a certain environment.

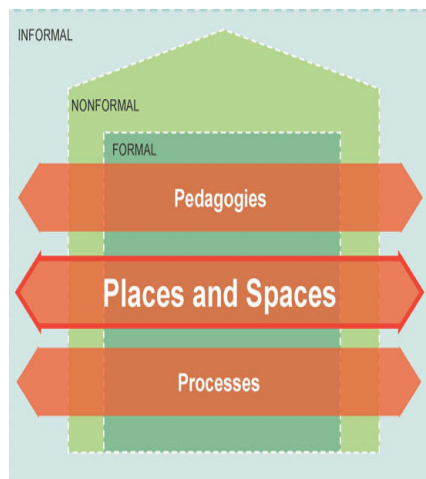
The framework of learning environment thinking



FORMAL, NONFORMAL AND INFORMAL

- LE thinking aims to create learning environments which integrate the formal, nonformal and informal learning.

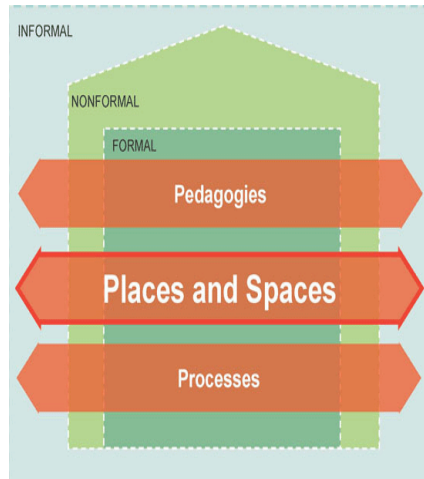
The framework of learning environment thinking



PEDAGOGIES

- The key question in LE thinking is, what kind of pedagogical models and methods support learning in various learning environments?

The framework of learning environment thinking



PROCESSES

- LE thinking concerns the teachers' and learners' pedagogical processes that take place in various learning environments.

What is a learning environment?



What is a learning environment? Preconceptions

A learning environment as

- **Physical places** for learning
- **Social interactions and mental processes** in learning
- **Facilitating factors** of learning
- **Pedagogical methods and processes**
- **The learner's personal interpretations**



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What is a learning environment? Definitions

- The LE is understood as factors that define the context of a learner's studying and learning.
- **It is always the individual making decisions about the use of the offered possibilities of LE.**
 - The personal LE refers to the choices resulting from the individual's decision-making.
- While LE refers to something that is external to the learner, it is not always easy to draw the line between the environment's externals and the learner's internals.
 - The values and goals are part of the LE, but they are there to be absorbed by the learner.

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What is a learning environment? Dimensions

The physical space

- is the architecture of learning in classrooms, in webs, in workplaces, in libraries, etc.



What is a learning environment? Dimensions

Mental and psychological space

- means the attitudes, motives, fears and hopes, and the vitality of the learner.



What is a learning environment? Dimensions

Social space

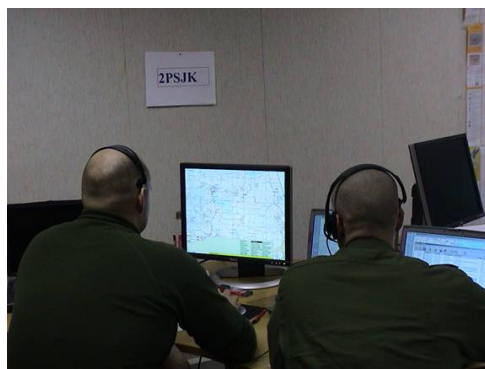
- composes of the communities, teams, groups, etc.
- the key concepts are collaboration and cooperation, membership and group identity



What is a learning environment? Dimensions

The cognitive space

- is the content of learning (skills and knowledge) and the cognitive processes used in constructing knowledge and new meanings of it.



What is a good learning environment? Criteria - preconceptions



A good learning environment was defined from the following perspectives:

- the aim of the education
- the participation of the student
- students' diverse needs
- the qualities of the pedagogical models and methods
- the qualities of the physical spaces
- the qualities of the social interactions

What is a good learning environment? The basis for planning LE

A profound conception of man, knowledge and learning

- Shared understanding at collective level (in curriculum)
- Explicated understanding at personal level (as a part of teacher's practical knowledge)

The aims of education and specific subject

- Competencies
- Thinking processes and skills

The characteristics of the students as individuals and as a learning community (a group)

The dimensions of human being

- Cognitive or intellectual skills
- Physical dimension
- Emotional dimension
- Social dimension

The concept of man, knowledge and learning in curriculum (Omnia)

3. TOIMINTAA OHJAAVA IHMISKÄSITYS, TIETO- JA OPPIMISKÄSITYS

Opiskelijat ovat aktiivisia toimijoita, jotka haluavat oppia ja kehittyä sekä tehdä yksilöllisiä valintoja opinnoissaan. Opiskelijat eroavat toisistaan iältään, koulutustaustaltaan, kehitysvaiheeltaan sekä oppimisvalmiuksiltaan. Nämä asiat otetaan huomioon koulutuksen suunnittelussa, ohjauksessa, toteutuksessa ja arvioinnissa.

Työskentelytapoja valittaessa otetaan huomioon opiskelijan oppimisen tavoitteet ja oppimistyyli.

Opiskelijan tavoitteena on saavuttaa hyvä ammattiosaaminen. Ammatillinen osaaminen näkyy sujuvana toimintana, käytännön taitoina ja kykynä ratkaista ongelmia työtilanteissa. Ammatillinen koulutus antaa edellytykset elinikäiseen oppimiseen. Tärkeää on oman osaamisensa arviointitaito, itsenäinen ongelmanratkaisukyky sekä kyky suhtautua tietoon kriittisesti ja oppia jatkuvasti uutta kokemusta hyödyntäen.

Opiskelija on itse vastuussa oppimisestaan. Opettajalla on pedagoginen ja opetettavan asian sisällöllinen asiantuntemus. Hän toimii myös opiskelijan ohjaajana ja tukijana. Ammatillisen kasvun rinnalla tuetaan nuoren opiskelijan kasvua aikuisuuteen.

What is a good learning environment?

The basis for planning LE

Why the institute's educational philosophies are important?

- What kinds of learning environments are created on basis of different learning theories?
- What kinds of pedagogical methods support the learning processes needed in professional development?

What is a good learning environment?

The basis for planning LE

The four overlapping “lenses” to use when creating and developing learning environments:

- **Learner-centered** - environments focus on the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students bring to the learning situation
- **Knowledge-centered** - environments focus on content that is organized around big ideas or core concepts
- **Assessment-centered** - environments help students' thinking to become more visible so that both they and their teachers may assess and revise their understanding
- **Community-centered** - environments capitalize on local expertise to create a sense of collaboration among students

The evaluation of your learning environment!

Workplace as a learning environment



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The challenges in developing on-the-job learning

- **On-the-job learning is often not highly conscious, not intentional and not well planned, because it is opportunistic and closely integrated with work activities.**
 - Therefore, it is difficult to determine how learning processes take place.
 - On-the-job learning cannot be guided or developed unless the learning processes are not identified.
- **Workers may not be aware of their learning processes.**
 - learning can be studied only retrospectively, by looking back from learning outcomes.
- **The learning outcomes are typically unexpected.**
 - They may therefore be described as byproducts, discoveries, coincidences or (sudden) realizations.
 - The learner may also remain unaware of certain changes when, for example, reflection does not occur.

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Workplace as a LE

Key questions in developing workplace LE:

- How the workers themselves feel about learning in various workplaces which are organised in different ways?
- What kind of views people hold of their workplaces and developing there?
- What are the individual's point of departure for learning at work?
- What kind learning environment is the workplace?

Heikkilä Kirsi 2006.

Workplace as a LE

The opportunities and ways of learning

The nature of the work and the way it is organised have a significant effect on the opportunities arising for learning at work

- A Tayloristic workplace: few stimuli as a LE; workers did not themselves perceive opportunities for learning.
- A flat hierarchy based on project work, individual responsibility and a creative group work: ample and continuous opportunities for learning.

The ways of on-the-job learning differ significantly

- Learning by experience, trial and error, independent information acquisition, combining theory and experience, solving problems together.

Heikkilä Kirsi 2006.

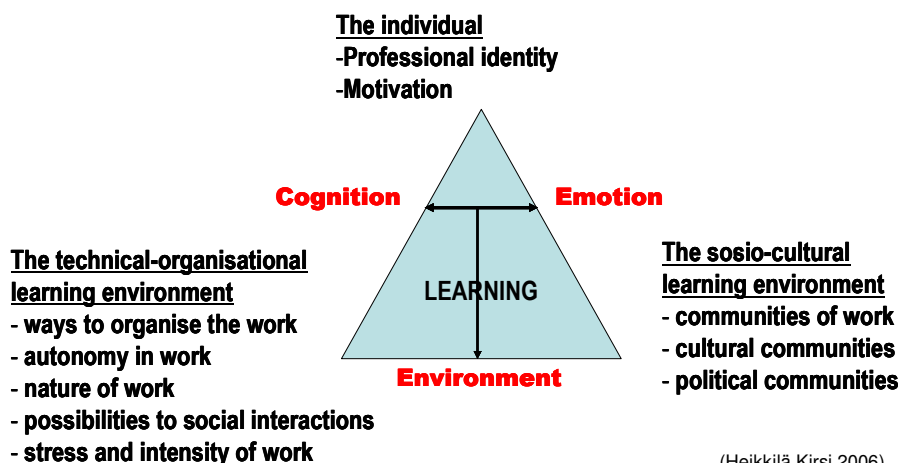
Workplace as a LE

The significance of learning is personal

- Broadening one's job description,
- Learning new things;
- Achieving an autonomous position as a worker;
- Taking constant care of one's professional skills and development;
- Coping with heavy work;
- Taking on board new conceptual tools;
- Creating something new.

Heikkilä Kirsi 2006.

What are the dimensions of the workplace learning environment?



(Heikkilä Kirsi 2006)

Summary: What are the challenges when improving your learning environments?

Over-expectations and misunderstandings connected to LEs?

THE EXTREME WAYS OF PEDAGOGICAL THINKING

- Extreme emphasis of individualism vs. community

THE “EITHER-OR-THINKING”

- E.g., the digital learning environments vs. physical institutional or on-the-job environments
- Virtual interaction vs. face-to-face interaction

ONE SINGLE PEDAGOGICAL METHOD IS NOT A RECIPE

- One single environment or method is better than an other.
- Media have no intrinsic effectiveness, only affordances.

Literature

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The pictures of the learning environments are from the following www-pages:

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Maanpuolustuskorkeakoulu. <http://www.mpkk.fi>
Matkapäiväkirjani. edgelvi.vuodatus.net/
Merivoimat. <http://tietokannat.mil.fi>
Omnia. <http://www.omnia.fi>
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Verkkopaja. <http://blogs.helsinki.fi/verkkopaja/>
Ympäristökasvatus Keski-Suomessa.
<http://www.ksymparistokasvatus.fi>