INNOVATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Slovenia Accession Seminar
25 May 2011
Ljubljana, Slovenia

Vanessa Shadoian-Gersing
Centre for Educational Research & Innovation
WHY SUCH FOCUS ON LEARNING AND ON INNOVATION?
Why such interest in learning?

- Knowledge Society
- Strong focus and advance in measuring learning outcomes
- Reaching the limits of educational reform?
- Rapid development of ICT
- Growing research base on learning; “great disconnect” to policy and practice.

Hence, the need to focus on learning and the ‘micro’ level.
Hence also the focus on innovation

- Traditional schooling not delivering well on 21st century agendas. What new learning models promise more success?

- Meeting the evidence-based criteria of effective learning – ‘The Nature of Learning’ - substantial endeavour of innovation and change.
ILE aims to inform practice, leadership and reform through generating analysis of innovative and inspiring configurations of learning for children and young people, by:

1. The Lessons of Research for Redesigning Learning Environments (“Learning Research” Strand)
2. Compiling & Analysing Innovative Configurations of Learning (“Innovative Cases” Strand)
3. Facing the Challenge of Implementation (“Implementation and Change” Strand)

ABSORBING THE LESSONS OF LEARNING RESEARCH

1. Analysing & Designing Learning Environments for the 21st Century
   OECD (Hanna Dumont & David Istance)

2. Historical Developments in the Understanding of Learning
   Erik De Corte

3. The Cognitive Perspective on Learning
   Elsbeth Stern & Michael Schneider

4. The Crucial Role of Emotions & Motivation in Learning
   Monique Boekaerts

5. Developmental & Biological Bases of Learning
   Cristina Hinton & Kurt Fischer

6. Formative Assessment
   Dylan Wiliam

7. Technology and Learning
   Richard Mayer

8. Cooperative Learning & Group-work
   Robert Slavin

9. Inquiry-based Learning
   Brigid Barron & Linda Darling-Hammond

10. The Community and Academic Service Learning
    Andrew Furco

11. The Effects of Family on Learning
    Barbara Schneider, Keesler & Morlock

12. Implementing Innovation: from visions to everyday practice
    Lauren Resnick, James Spillane, Goldman & Rangel

13. Future Directions
    OECD (Istance & Dumont)
Expressed in educational terms...

The ‘principles’ mean that learning environments should be:

- **Learner-centred**: highly focused on learning but not as an alternative to the key role for teachers
- **Structured and well-designed**: needs careful design and high professionalism alongside inquiry & autonomous learning
- **Profoundly personalised**: acutely sensitive to individual and group differences and offering tailored feedback
- **Inclusive**: such sensitivity to individual and group differences means they are fundamentally inclusive
- **Social**: learning is effective in group settings, when learners collaborate, and when there is a connection to community.
CONCEPTUAL AND EMPIRICAL WORK ON ‘INNOVATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS’
ILE project building:

- **Universe** of ILEs: multiple countries and sources (120+ cases so far, aiming at 160+) – 2009 to 2011
- **Inventory** (~35-40) from those submitted by participating systems – in-depth analysis (2010-2011)
- On-line **knowledge base** based on these plus the other ILE analyses (2011 and 2012)
- [plus 2012 publication]
Substantial international interest and participation

Many countries/regions/organisations have “joined” - taking an active role in the ‘Innovation’ and ‘Implementation’ strands

| Austria, Chile, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Israel, Korea, Mexico, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Slovenia, Spain | Belgium (French community), Victoria, South Australia, Australian Capital Territory (Australia), Alberta, British Columbia (Canada), Thüringen (Germany), Nuevo Leon (Mexico), Berne & Ticino (Switzerland), Scotland (UK), Ohio (US); Hong Kong, China | ENSI (Environment and School Initiatives), Cognition Institute (New Zealand), Stupski and Nellie Mae Educational Foundations (US), Innovation Unit (England) |
ILEs in the OECD Compilation are:

- **Reconfigured learning arrangements** at the micro level – real cases not general initiatives

- Departures from most general or vocational education – they are *innovative*

- Serving the learning needs of *children and/or adolescents*

- ‘**Full-time, over time’ mix of learning opportunities and activities**, replicated across different groups in same circumstances

- Defined by dynamic *interaction between learners, teachers, content, resources, organisation*
CERI/ILE understanding of the ‘micro’ environment level

**How?**
Leadership, scheduling, groupings, pedagogies, assessments

**Who learns?**
Profile of the learner

**With whom?**
those engaged in teaching and orchestrating learning

**What?**
Learning what:
competences, knowledge, values; formal and non-formal

**Where?**
facilities, space and technology

**Who?**
Learners

**What?**
Content

**Doing?**
Resources

**Leadership, scheduling, groupings, pedagogies, assessments**

**Teachers**

**Organisation**
Using the LE framework to understand innovations

Innovations in the profile of the learners

Innovative approaches to scheduling, groupings, pedagogies, assessment, guidance

Offering new foci for content, competences and knowledge

Innovations regarding those engaged in teaching and orchestrating learning

Innovative uses of infrastructure, space and technology

Organisation

Learners

Content

‘Teachers’

Resources
How far-reaching the innovation?

- Are ILE innovations mainly in one, two, or all of the dimensions?

- Comprehensive (change on 4 or 5 dimensions) – changing many factors at once?

- Broad (3 dimensions)? Or

- Targeted (1-2 dimensions)?
Possible Outline of Next Publication

1 Rethinking the ‘micro level’ (literature review and conceptual analysis)

2 Innovative Learning Environments (Universe analysis)
   • Innovations in:
     o learners
     o ‘teachers’
     o content
     o resource use
     o organisation & as holistic arrangements

3 Dynamics and Effects of ILEs (Inventory analysis)
   • Origins and sustainability of innovation
   • Dynamics of ILEs in detail
   • Nature of learning
   • Impacts and effects

4 Key conclusions and lessons
   • Substantial conclusions including for implementation and policy
IMPLEMENTATION AND CHANGE
Implementing change using the learning environments framework

- Explicit recognition of the ‘learning environment’ provides distinctive framework through which to address implementation...

- .... at the micro level and at the meso and macro levels

- Implementation requires human agency, appropriate concepts of leadership are needed in the framework
Creating relevant and usable knowledge about learning, with feedback

Learning leadership

Learning activities

Content

Resources

‘Teachers’

Learning feedback

Evaluation and assessment: transforming learning information into usable knowledge

Information about learning activities, learners, and outcomes

LEARNING
This framework offers distinctive insights on implementation and effectiveness

- Learning environments - distinct from institutional environments
- Aim to maximise mutual support & consistency between institutional leadership/functioning & learning leadership/functioning
- Aim to meld the classes/learning episodes into a dynamic cohesive learning environment
- Institutional environment may not be a ‘school’ - governance structures should recognise complexity
- Strong environments depend for support and development on other environments – the meso network level
Implementation Strand being built around:

- **Analysis of change strategies** to implement innovative learning environments and the “principles” from the Learning Research strand

Plus

- **Discussion/dissemination events**- promoting change and engaging different stakeholders

- Exploring the potential of “**laboratories of learning change**” in 1-2 volunteer systems; peer group for mutual learning.
NEXT STEPS
ILE Banff Conference

- 2 ½ days, 10-12 October 2011

- Joint OECD/Alberta conference, site host “Canadian Rockies Public Schools District”

- Covering all three strands of the ILE project

- Already-participating systems & coordinators, plus different policy players, innovators, social partners
Still to come…

- Publication: analysis of cases of innovative learning environments
- Knowledge base on ILEs; user-friendly materials
- Theoretical advances on conceptualising the “micro” level
- Seminars & events in different ILE jurisdictions; work on ‘laboratories of learning change’
- Analyses of implementation issues – focus on learning environments
- Report on implementation and change
- Main international conferences, 2011 (Banff, October 2012), 2013 (Santiago, Chile?), after?
Thank you!

The ILE Team

David Istance, david.istance@oecd.org
Mariana Martínez Salgado, mariana.martinezsalgado@oecd.org
Vanessa Shadoian-Gersing, vanessa.shadoian-gersing@oecd.org
Isabel García, isabel.garcia@oecd.org