

Exploring the Ecology of Learning, Teaching, Pedagogy & Creativity **Norman Jackson**

Powerpoint slides can be downloaded from

<http://www.normanjackson.co.uk/gmit.html>

The presentation will introduce the idea of learning ecologies and the proposition that in the world outside higher education we continually develop our own ecologies to learning and achieve something significant and deal with complex situations, solve problems and engage with opportunities. An ecological perspective on learning requires teachers to think of themselves as part of a specialised ecosystem within which teaching and learning takes place. Through their pedagogical thinking and practices, their personal pedagogy, HE teachers create ecologies within which students learn and have potential to use their creativity. Learners are involved in these ecologies but they also create their own. An ecological view of higher education takes account of the opportunities students have to create their own ecologies for learning within and outside the academic curriculum.

This talk explores the idea that learning, teaching and creativity are ecological phenomenon and our ecologies for learning are the vehicles for integrating our creative imagination and critical reasoning to create new meaning.

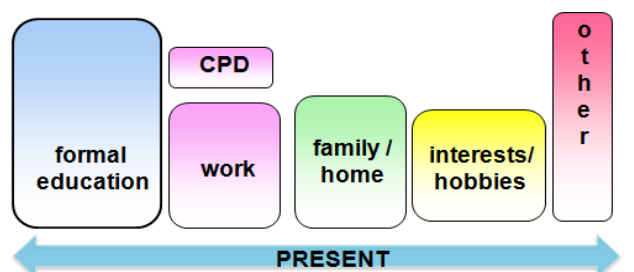
GMIT Google+Forum - for follow-up conversations relating to talk and workshop

<https://plus.google.com/communities/107636045739419069502>

Core concepts

1 Lifewide learning (Jackson et al 2011)

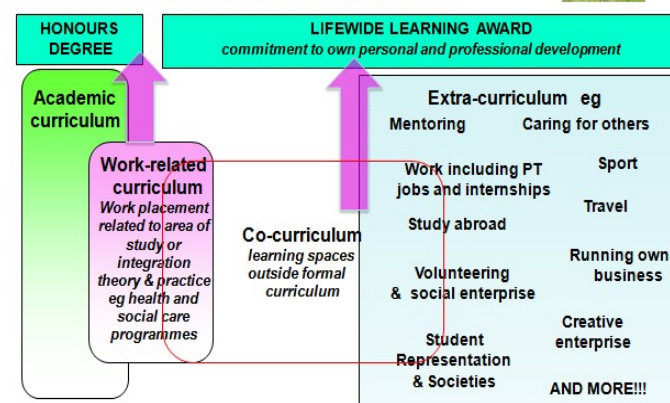
2 Lifewide Curriculum (Jackson 2011)



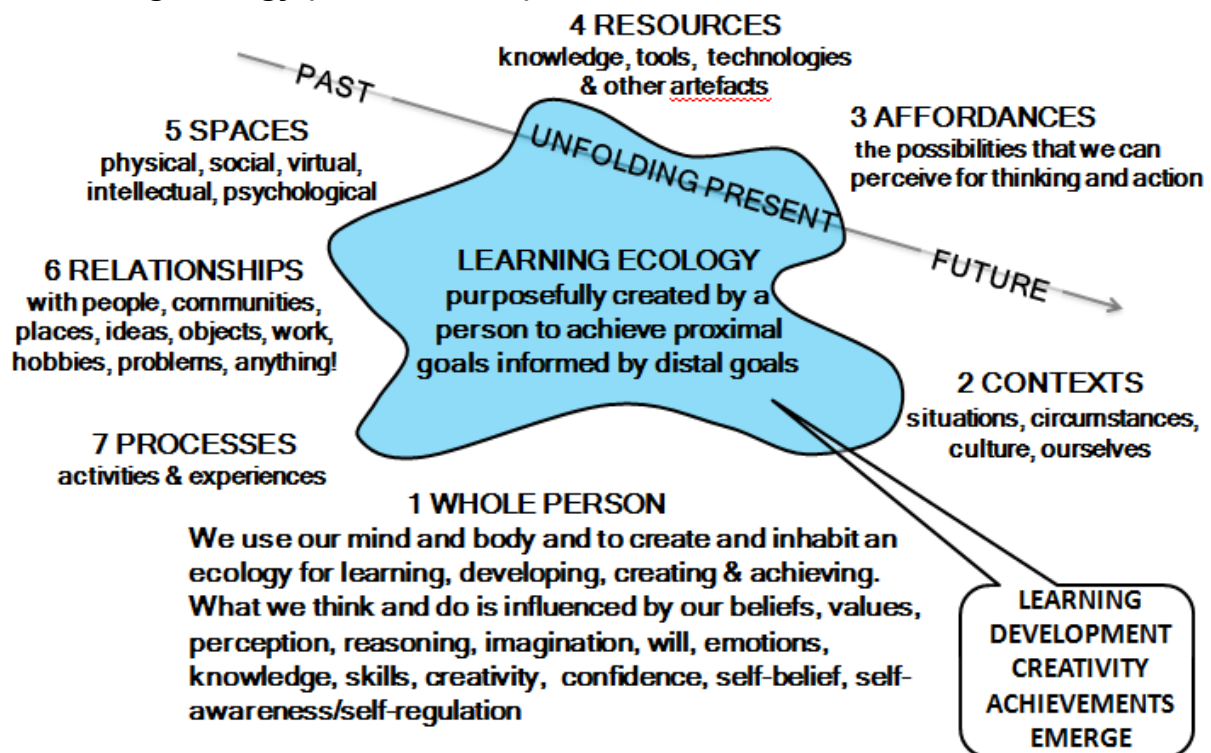
Lifewide learning: All learning and personal development that emerges through activities in the multiple contexts and situations we inhabit contemporaneously at any point in our life, with the aim of fulfilling roles and achieving specific goals, and continuously developing knowledge, understanding, skills, capabilities, dispositions, values and meaning within personal, civic, social and/or employment-related contexts.

Ecologies for learning occur at all scales & in all parts of a students' higher education experience

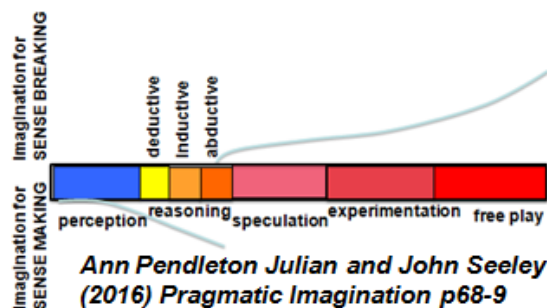
To accommodate all the affordances for learning in a students' life we need to adopt a Lifewide Curriculum



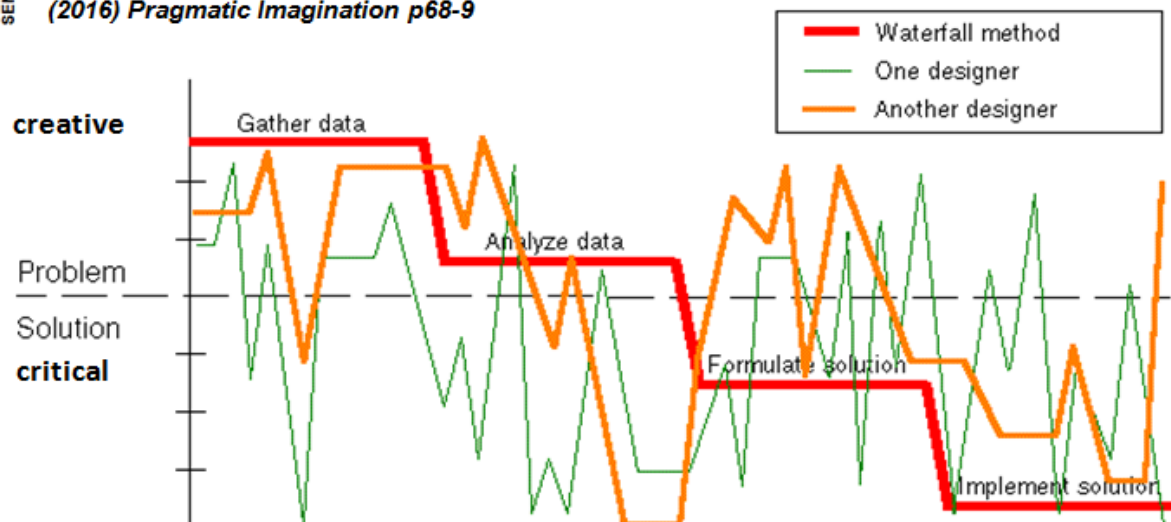
2 Learning ecology (Jackson 2016)



3 Learning ecologies are the vehicles for the integration of perception, ecological and critical thinking (ecological thinking)



Perception, Imagination, Critical Thinking & Creativity in Action



HOW EXPERTS SOLVE PROBLEMS

Horst and Webber (1973) 'Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning'

3

4 Personal pedagogy

Ecological concept of pedagogy

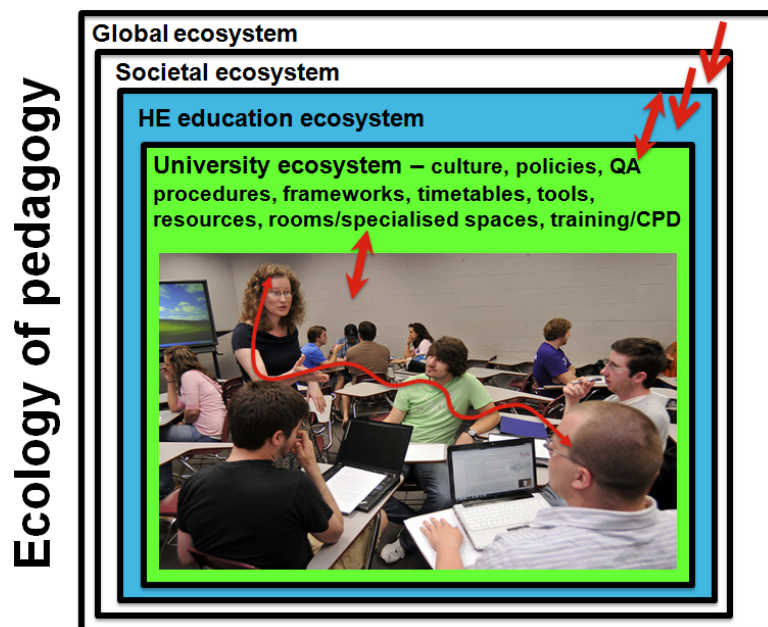
Pedagogy is more than teaching method, more than curriculum, more than assessment practice. It is all these things, but it is also how they are made into patterns of actions, activities and interactions by a particular teacher, with a particular group of students [in a particular context]

The concept of pedagogy encompasses relationships, conversations, learning environments, rules, norms and culture within the wider social context. It takes in the ways in which what teachers and students do is framed and delimited within a specific site, a policy regime and the historical [cultural] context

Thomson, P., Hall, C., Jones, K. and Green, J.S (2012)

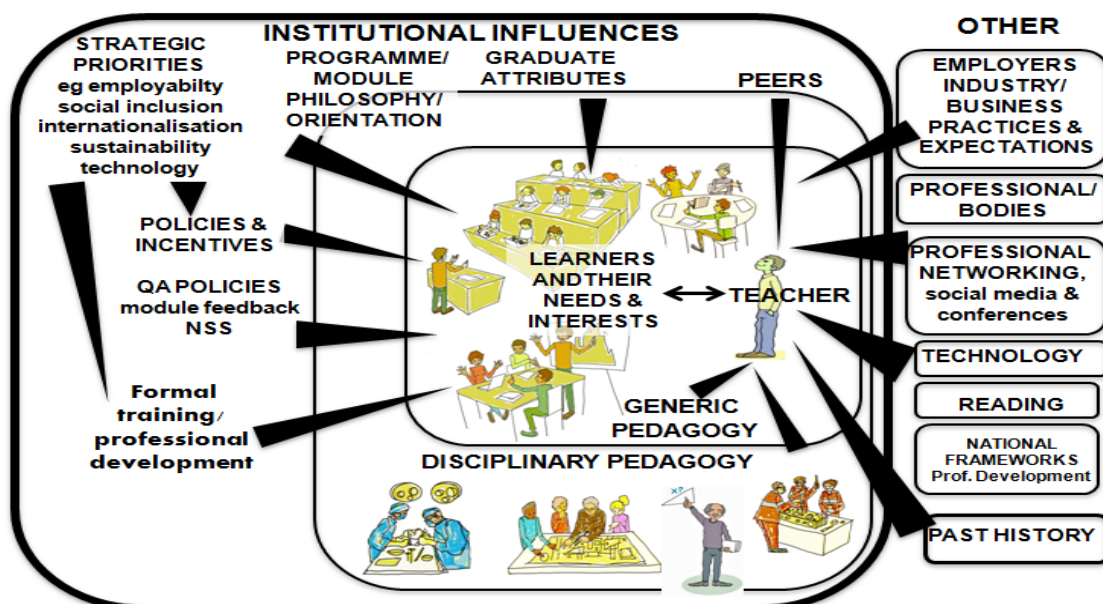
The Signature Pedagogies Project Final Report. Available at:

http://creativitycultureeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/Signature_Pedagogies_Final_Report_April_2012.pdf



Within a university, teachers create ecologies within which students learn, develop, create & achieve. These learning ecologies are shaped by their beliefs, values & pedagogical knowledge & skills

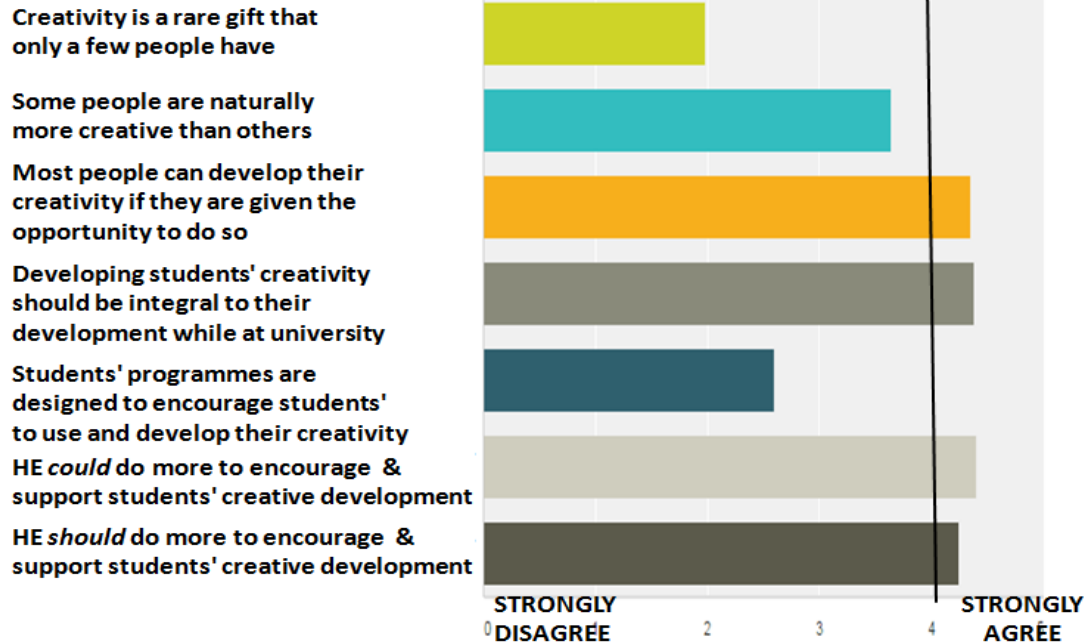
Possible influences on a teacher's pedagogical thinking & practice



5 Creativity in higher education - The Wicked Problem of Creativity in Higher Education

Teacher beliefs

HE teacher beliefs about creativity #lthechat n=40



What being creative means in eight disciplines

Based on surveys within each community (Jackson & Shaw 2006)

Being imaginative – ability to think generatively & associatively

Being original / inventive - new ideas which add value

Being able to adapt/improvise (re-creation)

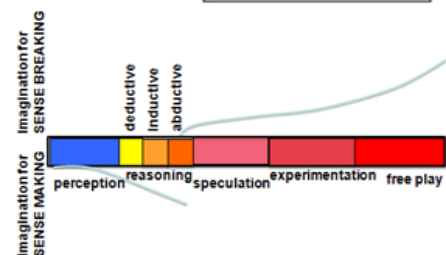
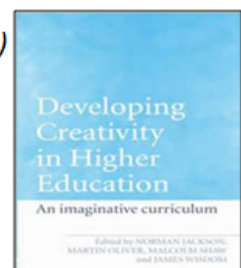
Being curious having an enquiring disposition – having the desire to find out

Being able to think synthetically and relationally – connect in novel ways, work with incomplete data, recognise patterns

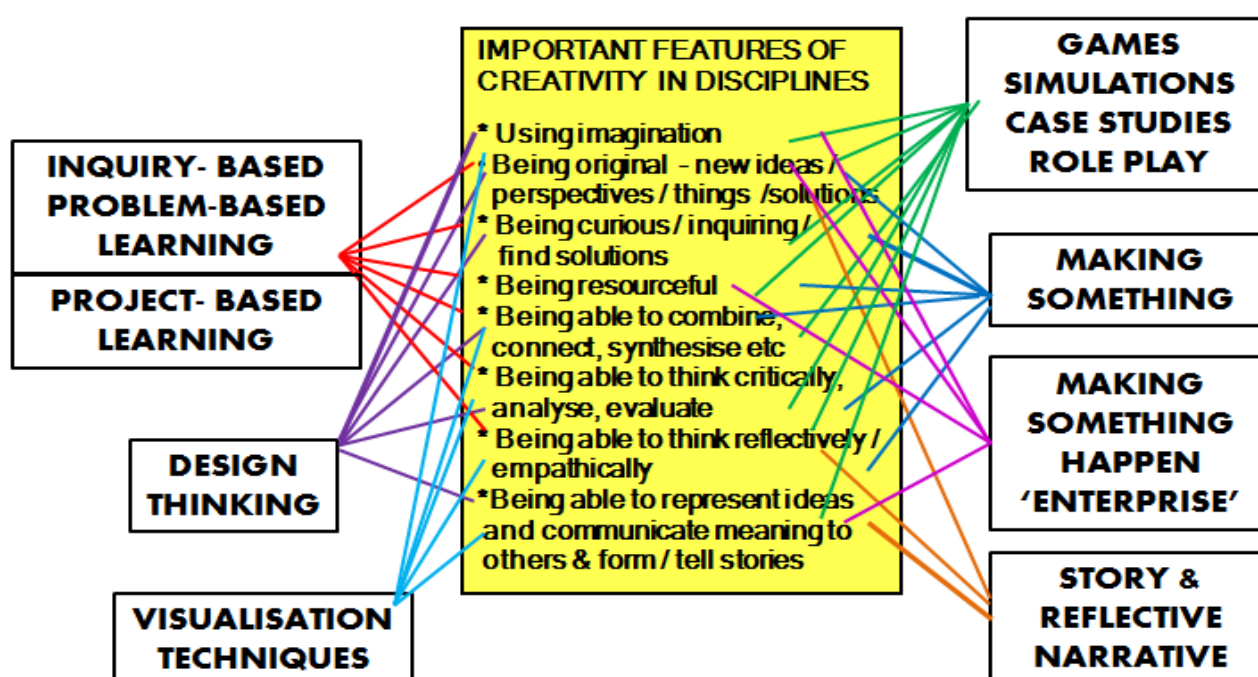
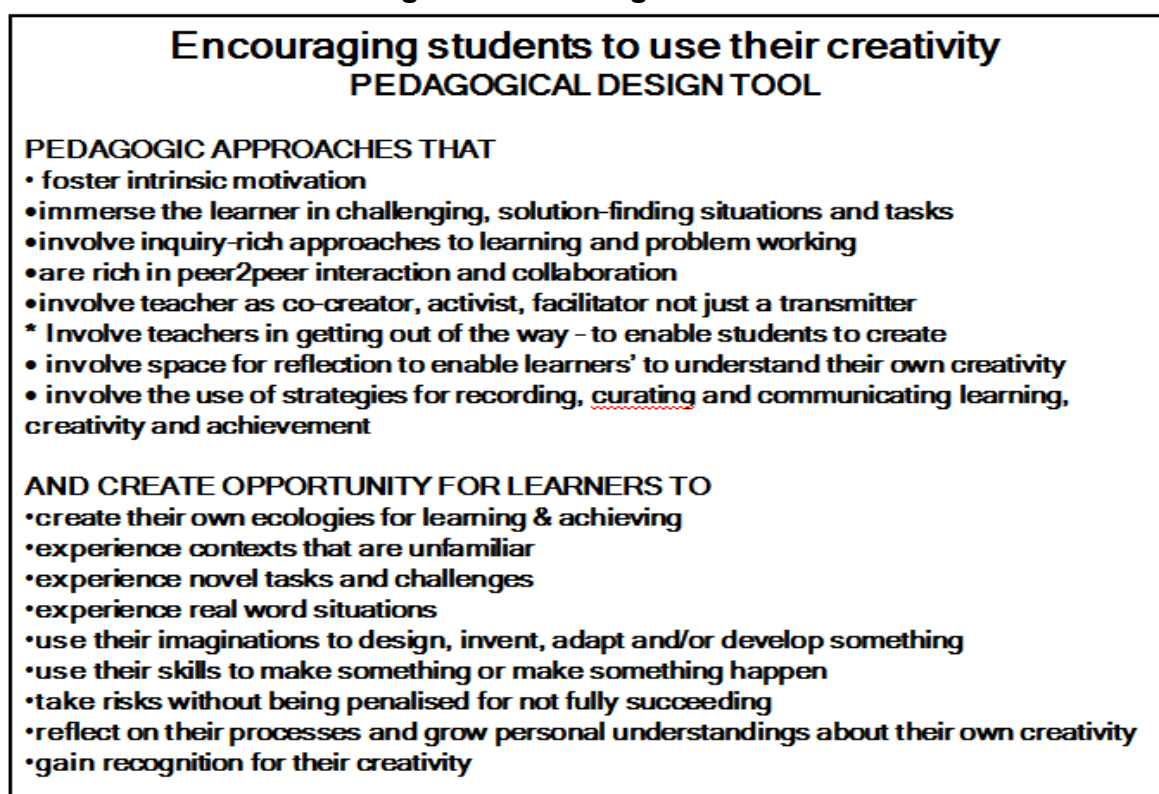
Being able to think critically to evaluate ideas

Being resourceful – finding and making use of what is available

Being able to communicate in ways that help people comprehend and if necessary, see things differently



Pedagogical thinking and practices that encourage students' to use their creativity and create their own ecologies for learning and achievement



Further resources relating to creativity in higher education

Creative Academic community website includes articles and a magazine free to download. You can register your interest on the home page <http://www.creativeacademic.uk/>

#creativeHE Google+ Forum <https://plus.google.com/communities/110898703741307769041>

Creative Pedagogies project <http://www.creativeacademic.uk/creative-pedagogies.html>