



Deconstructing environments of learning

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Deconstructivism



Overview of this paper

- Context – Competences - the only show in town
- Theoretical Framework – what do we mean by competences
- Research design
- *The Murder Machine* - Pádraic H. Pearse
- The possibilities – from Deconstructionism to Social Constructivism

Lisbon Strategy 2000

The European Council defined the objective of the Lisbon strategy as one to ensure that, by 2010, the EU would

become the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion

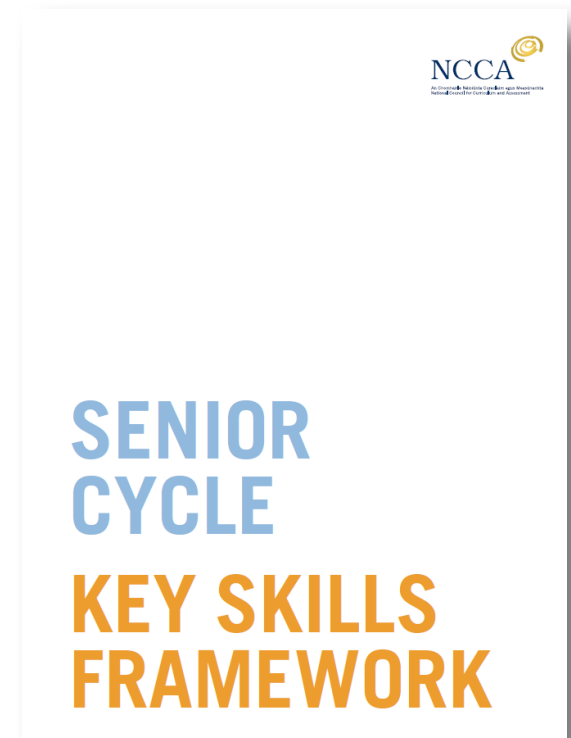
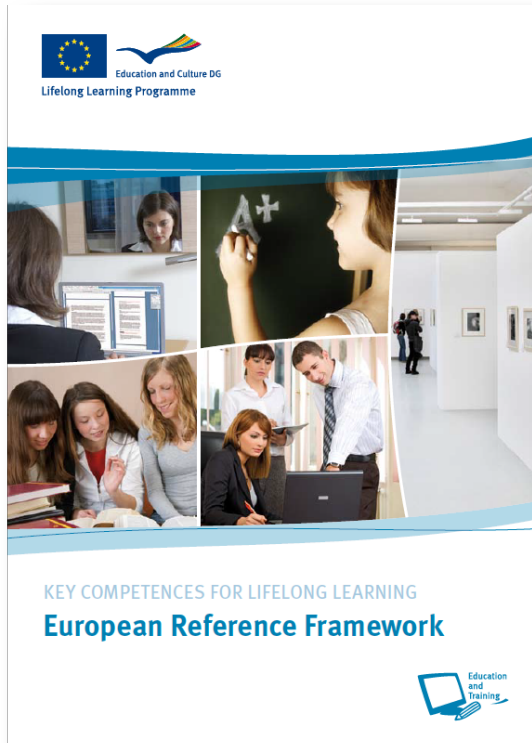
(Council of the European Union, 2000, para.5)

Skills are a pathway to employability and prosperity. With the right skills, people are equipped for good-quality jobs and can fulfil their potential as confident, active citizens. In a fast-changing global economy, skills will to a great extent determine competitiveness and the capacity to drive innovation. They are a pull factor for investment and a catalyst in the virtuous circle of job creation and growth. They are key to social cohesion (European Commission, 2016, p. 2).

The only show in town....

- Open Method Coordination- Benchmarks, PISA, TALLIS.....
 - *keeping up with the “European Jones's*
Gornitzka (2005, p.46)
 - *ideation convergence* (Radaelli, 2003).
- Peer learning clusters - different policy learning styles: *Mutual learning, Competitive learning, Imperialistic learning and Surface learning*
(Lange and Alexiadou, 2010, p.462).

Key Skills



SC Key Skills	JC Key Skills	EU Competences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Others • Communicating • Critical and Creative Thinking • Being Personally Effective • Information Processing <p>(NCCA, 2006)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with others • Communicating • Being creative • Managing myself • Managing information and thinking • Staying well • Being numerate • Being literate <p>(NCCA, 2012)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication in mother tongue • Communication in foreign languages • Mathematical competence • Digital competence • Learning to learn • Social and civic competence • Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship • Cultural awareness and expression <p>(EU, 2007)</p>

The ability to think critically and creatively, innovate and adapt to change, to work independently and in a team, and to be a reflective learner are prerequisites for life and the workplace of the 21st century

(NCCA, 2006, p.1)

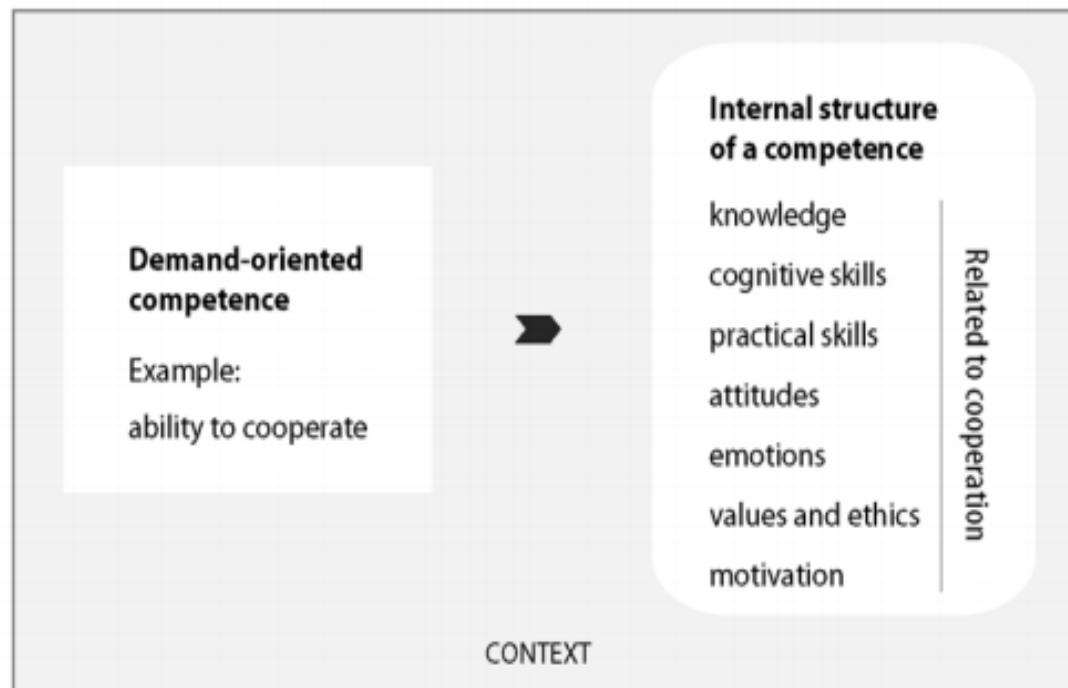
Competence - DeSeCo

- The ability to successfully meet complex demands in a particular context. Competent performance or effective action implies the mobilization of knowledge, cognitive and practical skills, as well as social and behavior components such as attitudes, emotions, and values.

(Rychen and Salganik, 2003, p.43).

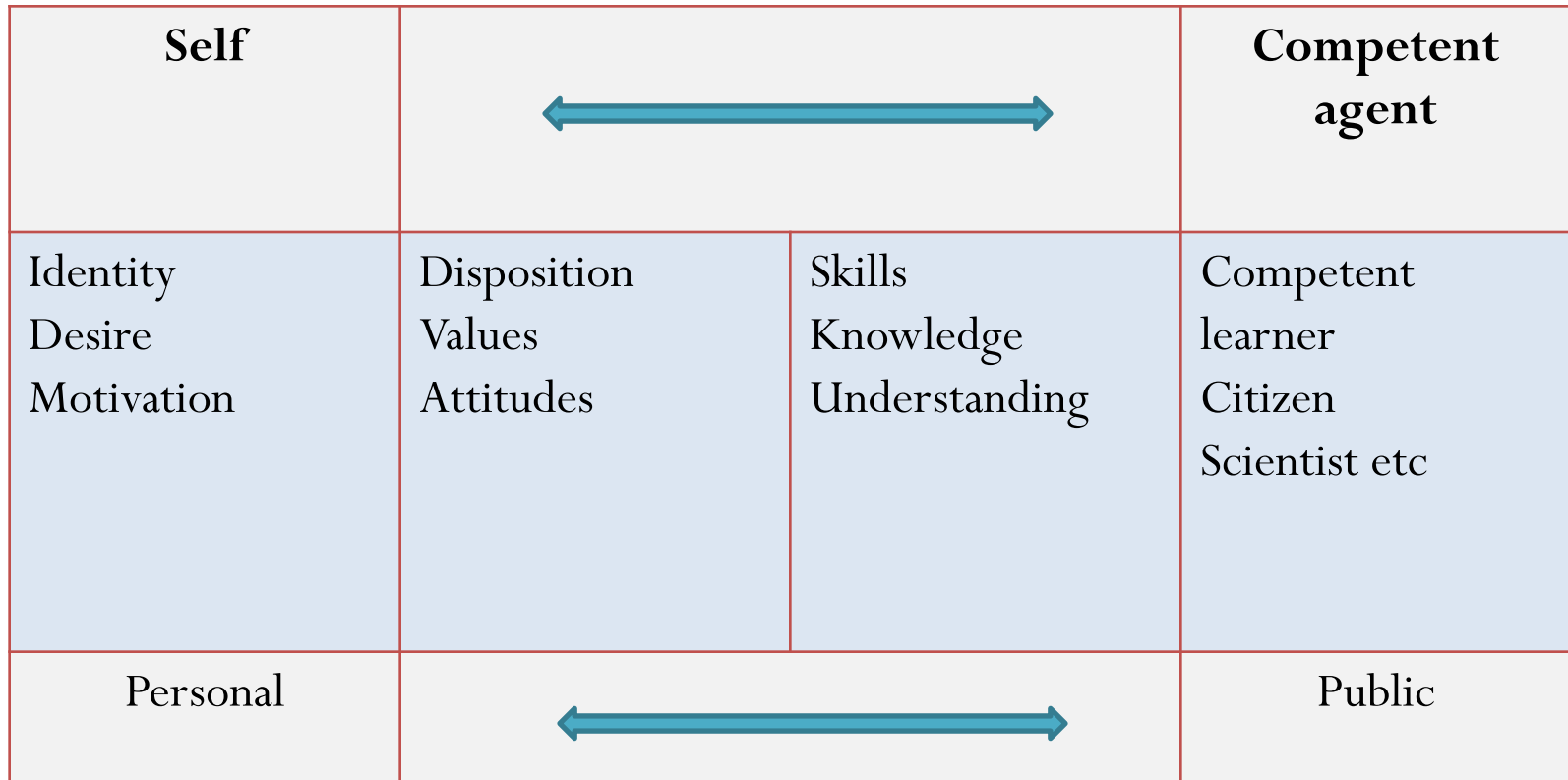
The internal structure of the competence ability to cooperate.

The demand defines the internal structure of a competence



Source: Definition and Selection of Competencies: Theoretical and Conceptual Foundations 2002, p9.

Competence as movement between personal and public.



Source: Deakin-Crick 2008, p314

Research question

- What is the impact of the implementation of a key skills approach, to students' attitudes and beliefs about learning and their learning environment?

The research

- Quasi-experimental non-equivalent control group design

	Pre-test	Intervention	Post-test
IS1	✓	✓	✓
IS2	✓	✓	✓
CS1	✓		✓
CS2	✓		✓

At T1 – learning environment

- Culture of learning is passive

She'd go through it with you and make sure you got it in your brain, you know understand what's going on and, like, just help you all the time (IS2_T1_S11)

stick in your head (CS2_T1_S4)

stay in your head (IS1_T1_S1),

tells you what has to be done (IS2_T1_S7)

Competence development?

Writing things down, writing out notes, like, even if I have notes, I still have to write them out again and, like, if I have notes printed off I can't learn them off, I can't learn out of books, I have to learn from my own writing so, like, I just do a lot of writing and then it goes into my head (IS2_T1_S2).

Instrumental learning

*If the teacher says something important I will write it down, or if she is reading from the book I will underline the important parts that she is reading out for me to learn later, because if there are big chunks **most of it you do not really need**, like; you just need the important bits out of it, so I underline the things I need to know (CS2_T1_S2).*

T2: Learning environment – impact on identity, desire and motivation

We had the course done since I think Christmas or November ... we have been doing a lot of exam questions which is what you are supposed to do. But [another subject] is still not finished the teacher is rushing it and all stressed, we don't have enough papers done.... it is all so stressful (IS2_T2_S6).

Very stressful but I love it, like I don't want it to end, like I don't want to leave school, I just love the school, I love the atmosphere in the school, I love the teachers in the school, like they are all supportive for you and they are all going to be there for you and help you, through everything that you need, they give a hundred per cent of their time into what we do and throughout these exams (IS2_T2_S1).

Skills development – Dispositions, values, attitudes

Time keeping, organisational skills, team work, leadership, self-motivation, like, to get yourself to do things, that will probably help when I go to college because we won't have teachers to keep saying this has to be in the next week (IS2_T2_S8).

Probably just team work skills ... we have been working a lot more as a team, I noticed in sixth year there is a lot more things where we are working together, not on your own, even in French class we work together in teams (IS2_T2_S3).

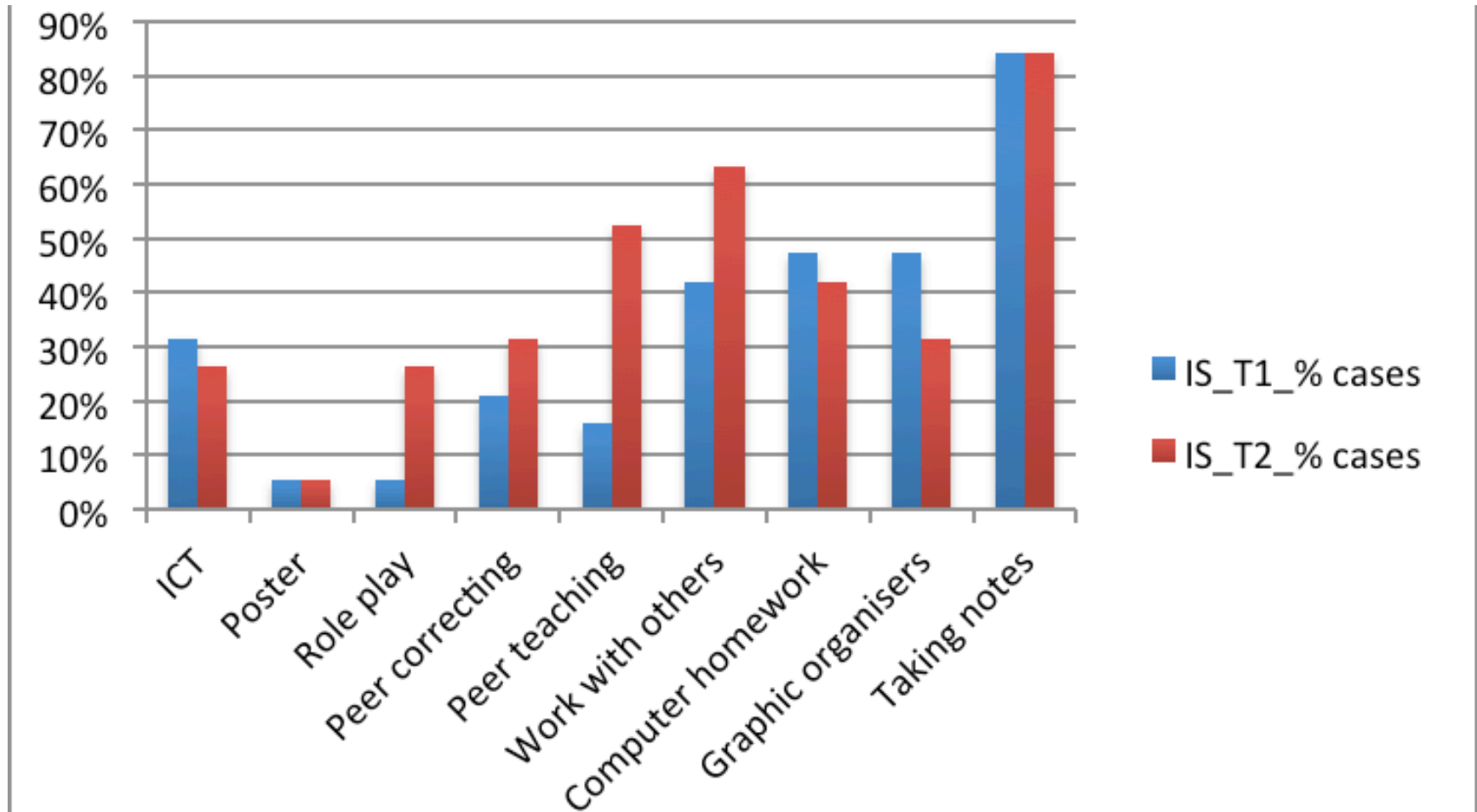
Being organised!

Time management skills and organising skills because if you want to do your Leaving Cert you have to be organised, you have boxes of pages for one subject so you kind of have to be organised (CS2_T2_S1).

Skills, knowledge, understanding

- *Communication skills and, like, self-esteem, now I can make my own notes instead of relying on the teachers... I can socialise better with the other students and teachers and have good communication (IS1_T2_S11).*
- *The skill I developed is to be able to research topics really well and how to do evaluations (IS2_T2_S12)*
- *The teacher gives out literally what you need to know in the chapter in like two A4 pages, it is a lot easier than reading fifteen pages, so you just read the notes (CS2_T2_S8).*

Reported use of different methodologies



Disposition

As Dewey (1933) observed:

Knowledge of methods alone will not suffice: there must be the desire, the will, to employ them. This desire is an affair of personal disposition (p.30).

Discussion points

- Role of non-cognitive component in skill development: attitudes, emotions, values, ethics, motivation
- Student epistemic agency?
- We need learning that is meaningful for the learner, purposeful and worth something
- Teacher agency?

Policy implications

- *Name and hope* (Reid, 2006)
- *Layer-over* (Hipkins and McDowall, 2013)

Curriculum forms people – identity, values, dispositions

Curriculum develops knowledge and cognitive capacities (Lynn Yates, 2017)

Questions



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Students resisting change

- It is very challenging because there is a lot of stuff that is just thrown at you and it is not digesting the stuff and taking it in rather than actually understanding it but it is just learning things off. I was on the bus just learning my aistes [Irish word for essays] for my Irish, just off by heart, just reproducing back down on the day. I did not know what I was saying but I was just writing, and I got my marks for it, whereas I know there is not enough time because it is a two year course, there is not enough time for people to actually understand the stuff and know and do well in it as well but, em, the Leaving Cert is learning basically for me (IS2_T2_S6).