

**Fresh contexts and Reflective Practice: Should we reconceptualise reflection in Initial Teacher Education and Training**

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## **Basic Argument**

- (a) The contexts for reflection in initial teacher education have changed rapidly in the last five years.
- (b) The need for reflection remains a critical component for effective practice.
- (c) Reflection-in-Action (Schon 1983) remains constant despite the changing contexts.
- (d) Reflection-on-Action(Schon 1983) needs to be reconceptualised.

## **To what extent are the changing contexts in initial teacher education significant for reflective practice?**

- (a) Within primary education:
- Early Years
  - Every Child Matters/Youth Matters
  - Primary National Strategy
  - Workforce Reform
  - New Technology



## Technology

- Digital natives (millennials) v. digital immigrants (Prensky in Walter, 2006)
- Collaborative and corrected
- Multi-tasking
- Expecting instant responses
- Hurry-along-Curriculum (Dadds 1995) and Hurry-along-Learning

## **To what extent are the changing contexts in initial teacher education significant for reflective practice?**

- (a) Within initial teacher education itself:
- A move away from an over-atomistic approach
  - A re-acceptance of the importance of reflection
  - The proliferation of routes
  - The emergence of 'M' level PGCEs
  - The changing student circumstance, particularly financial circumstance

## **Push and Pull Factors for Reflection**

*Eg.*

- A loosening of the requirements for the NLS and the NNS balanced against ...  
a tougher financial environment for students

*Eg.*

- A move away from an over-atomised approach to standards and requirements balanced against ...  
the impact of technology

*Eg.*

- The emergence of 'M' level PGCEs balanced against ...  
the creation of time and space for reflection

## **Some Theoretical Considerations**

- (a) Reflection
- (b) Intuition
- (c) Ecology



## Reflection

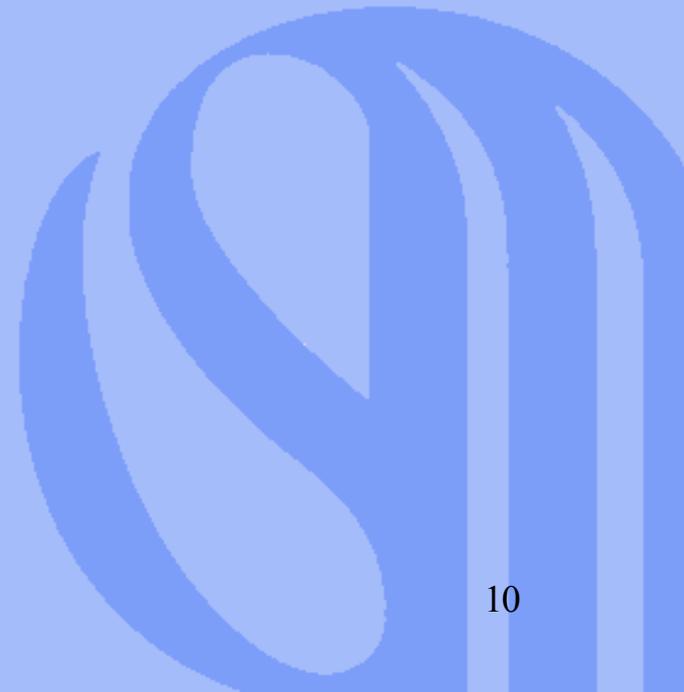
- (a) Reflection-in-action and Reflection-on-action (Schon 1983)
- (b) Reflection-for-action (Eraut 1995)
- (c) Levels of reflection (McIntyre 1993)
  - technical
  - practical
  - critical/emancipatory



## Intuition (Eraut 2000)

- (a) Contexts for intuition
  - problem solving
  - decision making
  - learning
  - assessing situations
- (f) Intuitive processes
  - insight through connecting different areas of knowledge
  - sensing new aspects of the situation
  - recognising familiar patterns
  - rapidly deciding on an option to respond to a changing context

“... When quick decisions or rapid action are required, a large part of the knowledge synthesis process must have already occurred, perhaps over a series of fairly similar occasions.”  
(Eraut 2000, p. 258)



## Ecology

- Multi-dimensionality
- Simultaneity
- Unpredictability (Doyle 1977)
- Activity ambiguity

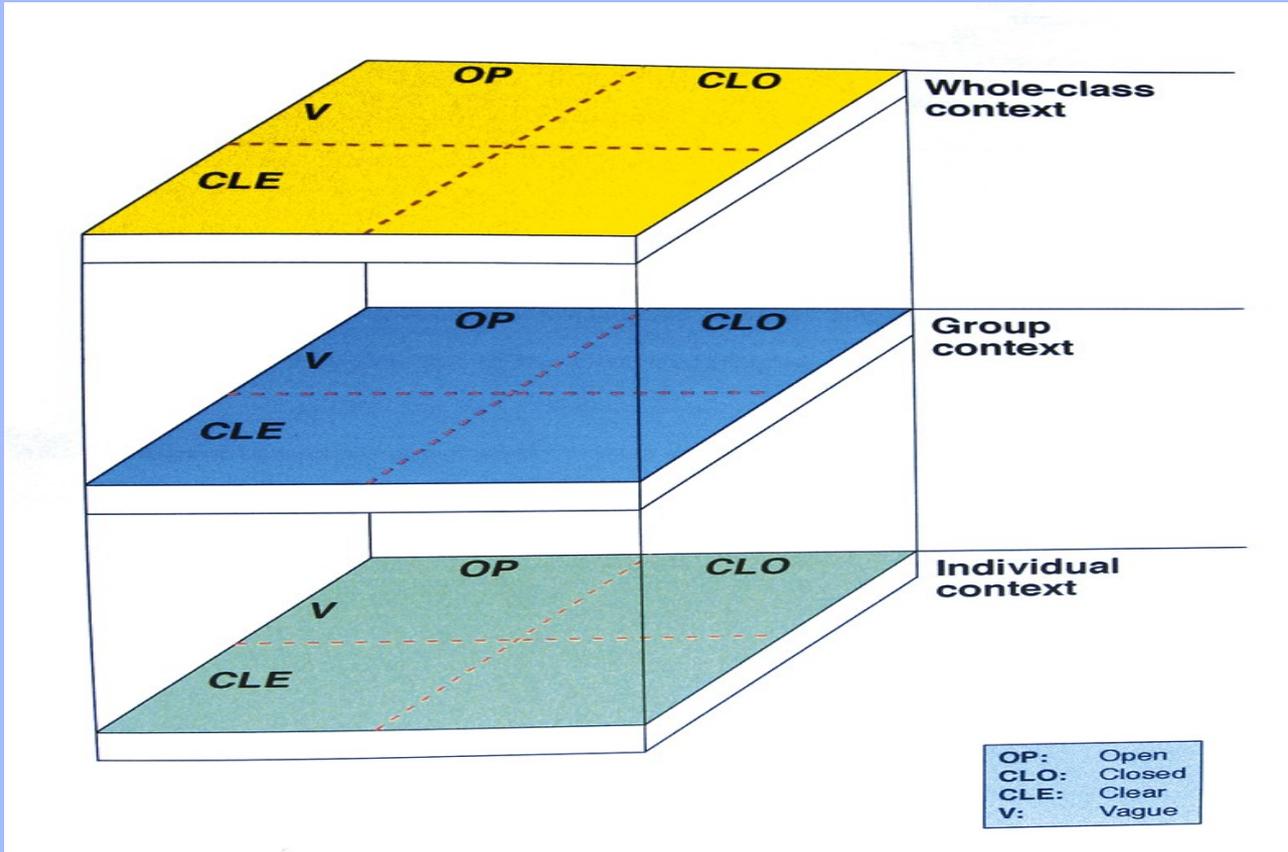


## Dimensions of Activity Ambiguity (i)

	OPEN	CLOSED
C L E A R		
V A G U E		

Simco (1998)

## Dimensions of Activity Ambiguity (ii)



Simco (1998)

## Moving Towards a Proposal (i)

- In ITE students are most focused on level 1 and 2 reflection
- This links with a clear focus on reflection-in-action
- Reflection-in-action is a rapid response to the classroom ecology
- Intuition takes time and experience to create
- For beginning teachers reflection-in-action occurs without intuition
- Effective and spontaneous reflection-in-action is required for survival

## **Moving Towards a Proposal (ii)**

- Reflection-in-action is only marginally related to the impact of changing contexts, with the exception of technology
- Once intuition is built up (over 2-3 years?) the focus turns to reflection-on-action
- The impact of the changing contexts becomes much more profound at this stage

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