

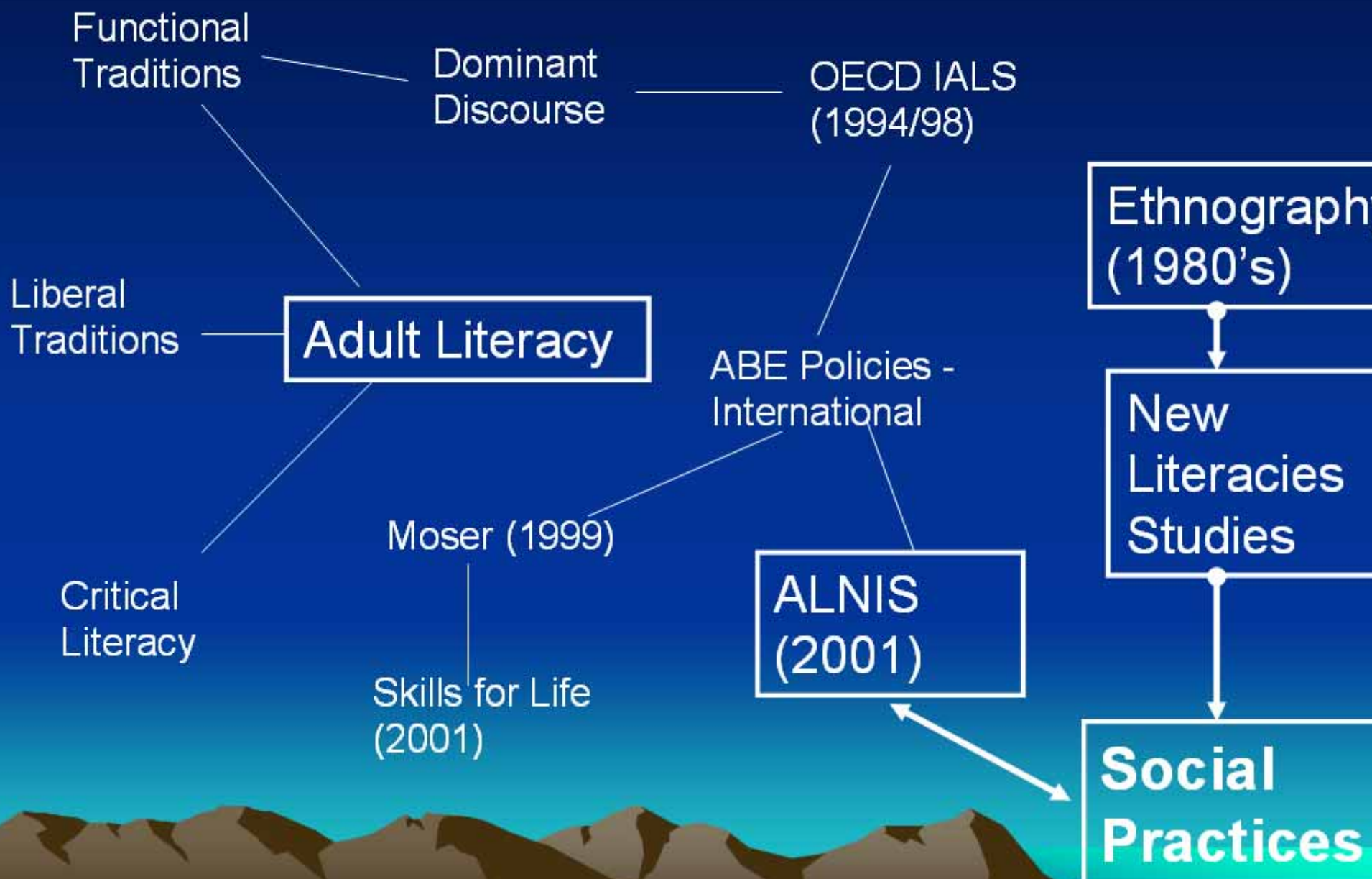




The Grit in the Oyster – TQAL for Pearls of Practice

ACA Conference October 2008





A radical shift in our understanding

‘... an understanding of literacy and numeracy as complex capabilities rather than a single set of skills...It moves us away from earlier notions of literacy as purely educational or functional skills towards a focus on real life practices.’

(Scottish Executive: Literacies in the Community Pack 2000 p. 5)



The Scottish Context

- Learning Connections is the government agency – training, research and resources
- Adult literacies work routinely organised by full-time staff
-largely delivered by part-time or volunteer staff
- Most people undertake ITALL
- Approx half have a university level qualification in subjects other than literacy



The job

- To devise and deliver a Pilot TQAL course around 4 learning centres inclusive of..
 - Practice tutor training
 - Face to face teaching
 - Practice based learning
 - On-line learning



Four Modules

Variety of
assessment
formats

Each
module
30 SCQF
credits
at level 9

- Learning Worlds
- Making Mental Models
- Expanding Our Repertoire
- The Enabling Net

investigating...modelling...sharing...experimenting...
reflecting

Practice Tutor Development

- builds on learners' prior knowledge
 - learning is a social activity
 - not just facts but the big picture
- expertise acquired through practice
 - scaffolding develops fluency

Practitioner Development

- builds on learners' prior knowledge
 - learning is a social activity
 - not just facts but the big picture
- expertise acquired through practice
 - scaffolding develops fluency

Adult Literacies Work

- builds on learners' prior knowledge
 - learning is a social activity
 - not just facts but the big picture
- expertise acquired through practice
 - scaffolding develops fluency

Curriculum Design Principles

Learning in communities of inquiry

Collaborative

Knowledge in 'design' mode

Empowers participants to take responsibility for their own learning

Responsive to current and emerging priorities in Adult Literacies

Action learning

Programme designed to use a blended approach with a wide range of strategies and techniques

Emphasis on critically reflective practice

Modelling of learning and teaching approaches

'Threshold Concepts' may be considered to be akin to passing through a portal or conceptual gateway that opens up previously inaccessible way[s] of thinking about something"

(Meyer and Land 2006)



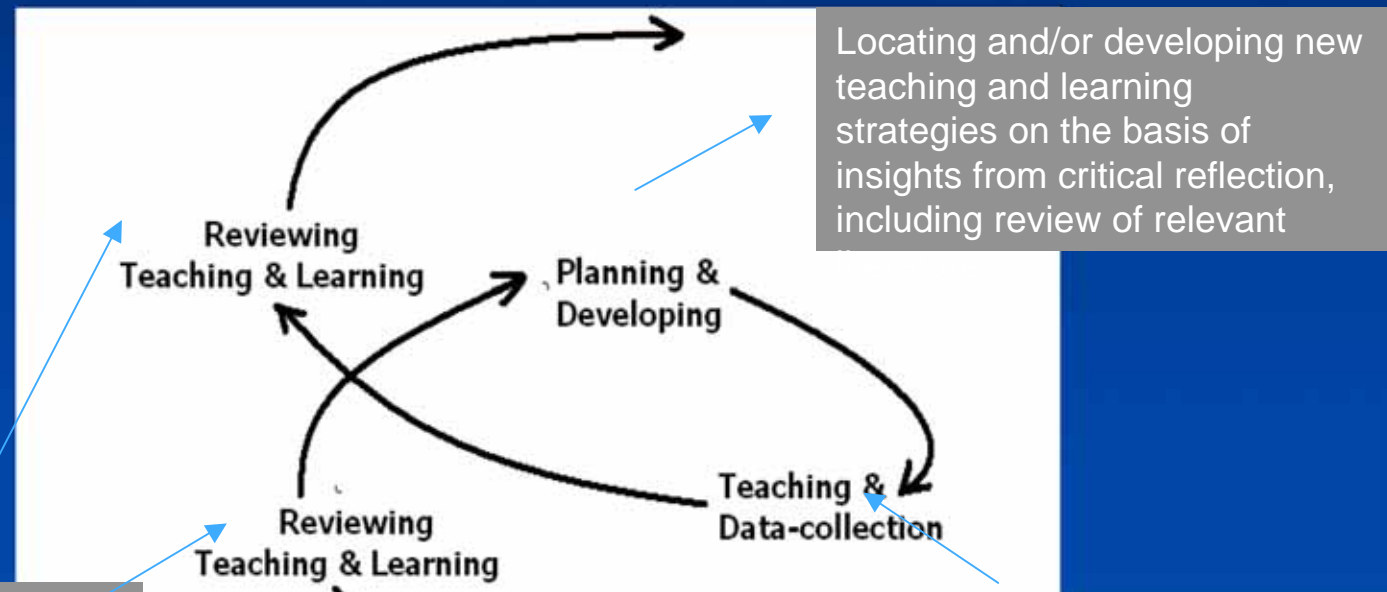
Threshold concepts?

- Active learning through action enquiry and research
- Learning through critical reflection on practice
- Learning as collaboration – the Community of Practice
- Learning using VLE and Web 2 tools



Action Enquiry Cycle

The aim of Action Enquiry is to learn about practice from practice



Locating and/or developing new teaching and learning strategies on the basis of insights from critical reflection, including review of relevant

Reflect critically on current approaches to teaching and learning, identifying areas of concern. Consult current research and theoretical literature for insights to inform planning for development.

Implement new strategies; collect data about the experience from a variety of perspectives

Undertaking an Action Enquiry

- Can learner's writing skills improve by using ICT, especially mobile phones?
- By developing an interest in creating messages on mobile phones, will this improve and/or encourage learner's writing skills?

Tina Beales TQAL Module 3

Experimenting in practice... Phone literacy - Knowing your phone



Tina Beales TQAL Module 3

Findings from my Action Enquiry

Through the learners' eyes...

Many learners expressed a sense of pride in being able to text to their tutor and friends, receive messages back and read them. All of them said their confidence about writing had increased. Some people said they liked making their book about their own phone. They made the point that because they had created it, they could read it.







Using Brookfield's Four Lenses for critically reflective practice

Our
autobiographies



Learners'
eyes



Colleagues'
experience



Theoretical
literature





PEAR shaped



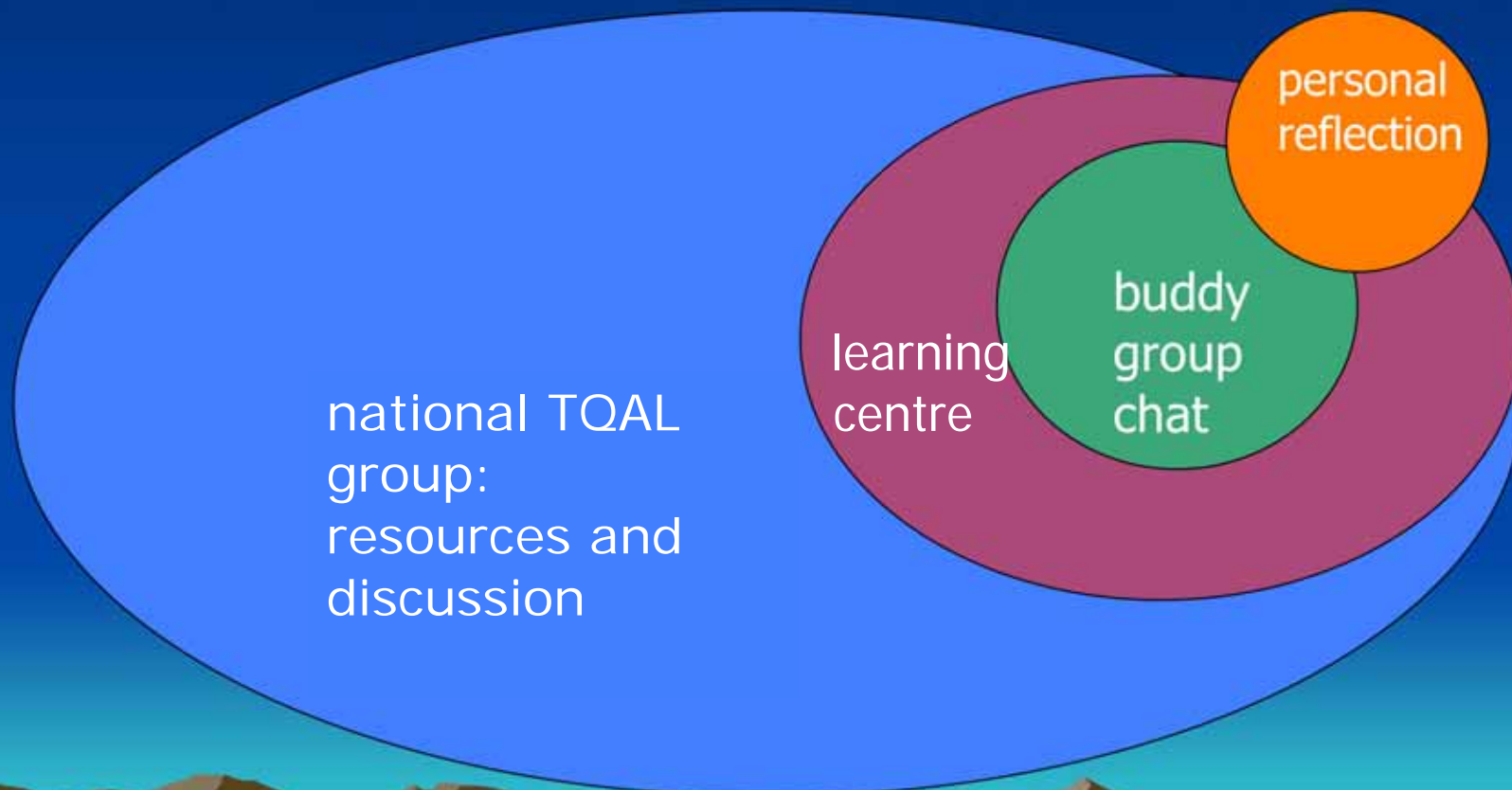
participatory

exploratory

active

reflexive

The online environment



The VLE and the Four Modules



In a Social Practice Frame The Adult Literacies Tutor:

- appreciates the complexity of everyday literacies
- engages with the realities of communities
- is in touch with change
- is ecologically aware
- is critically aware of power relations
- is a social actor, aware of their own embeddedness
- engages ethically with others
- is responsive and improvisational
- acts as a broker between informal and formal learning
- challenges the institutional well-ground learning

Learning to read
the world as well
as the word.

Freire



'We ask learners to go outside their comfort zones in their learning - without this it is difficult to progress - so why should we not be pushed outside ours? And it's good to see how this feels (on reflection of course!) and be reminded of how valuable it is to face challenges.'



•As 'professionals' I feel we need to keep stretching the boundaries, doing the requirements of the job but always, always broadening this out to include a critical analysis of what we are doing, why and in whose interest - if we don't challenge these and put forward alternative visions then we are not active participants in anything, we are merely deliverers of governmental economic policy and we limit not only what we do but what literacies are!

• *Student Comment*



A L L M E N

A P E B A 2 T A P

||| SD

