

# ILEs and teacher practice

Sydney, 2nd November 2016

## Research question - How do teachers perceive and define ILEs?

### What were we looking for?

The workshop focused on participants visualizing the physical and experiential elements of the learning spaces they are in.

### What did we do?

Participants used craft materials to create elements of the learning space. Working in groups, participants also labelled and organized these physical and experiential elements on a spectrum of emotions, as well as discussed difficulties or negative aspects of these elements and ways to improve them. The workshop ended with a discussion of some of the challenges and possible solutions teachers face using these elements in their learning spaces.

### What did teachers tell us?

In summary, physical elements that participants felt 'pleased' and 'optimistic' about could be grouped into:

1. Flexible and mobile furniture;
2. Writeable surfaces;
3. Information Communication Technologies (ICT); and
4. Designated specialist teaching spaces.

However, some participants also felt 'disappointed' and 'frustrated' that these learning spaces result in a loss of control or flexibility, difficulties getting the right fit of teachers for collaboration, and students creating cliques or falling through the cracks.

Challenges can be categorised into school, teacher, student, parent/community and physical barriers. For instance, teacher barriers include lack of knowledge of ILEs and changing teacher practices and mindsets.

*"[ILEs] allow for more collaboration, facilitates differentiation, engages the learner and staff, reinvigorates the passion for teaching and learning, ability to risk take, and trial different approaches"*

-Principal, Sydney

### What does this mean for the project?

If we start with the assumption that a learning environment can be categorized into physical and experiential classroom elements, findings from this workshop seem to suggest that a learning environment that is innovative can be defined as adaptable spaces with ubiquitous resources and technologies, which can evolve and change to support transitions between different types of student-centred learning. Participants identified changing teacher practices through transforming teacher mind sets and resistance as a barrier to effective use of innovative learning spaces.



Visualizing classroom elements and interactions using post-it notes and crafts allowed us compare different teaching strategies applied in different learning environments.



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