Professional Development session:

Threshold Concepts in Entrepreneurship Education and their Implications for Teaching and Learning

October 30, 2024 @ 16:00 CET (10:00 CT)

Abstract & registration at
https://www.siec-isbe.org/upcoming-virtual-meetings.html

Dr Jan-Martin Geiger

Dr Emanuel Mizzi

Dr Lucy Hatt

Overview of Today's Session

- Introductions

- Relevance to Entrepreneurship Education

- What are threshold concepts and how are they characterised?

- A learning process – liminality

- Candidate threshold concepts in entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial thinking

- Applications of threshold concept approach

- Small group discussion

- Invitations to join ISBE-SEIC and ETIC

Entrepreneurship Education

- Requires bridging disciplinary phenomena with learner's perception (Thrane et al 2016, Nabi et al. 2017)

- Hypothesizes entrepreneurial learning as novice-expert transition, but still lacks a conceptualization of this process (Krueger 2017)

- Reveals contradictory findings concerning the effectiveness of courses and curricula (Kautonen et al. 2013, Bae et al. 2014)

  → Both Entrepreneurial Education and Learning are still seen as a "black box" (Lackeus et al. 2015, Liening et al. 2016)

The proposal of Meyer and Land (2003, 2006) of a 'threshold concepts' approach

"akin to passing through a portal" or "conceptual gateway" that opens up "previously inaccessible way[s] of thinking about something" (Meyer and Land, 2005).

Concept that have a transformative effect on student learning.

conceptual gateways

'The world looks different.'

Examples:

opportunity cost & market equilibrium

This metaphor of a threshold concept represented by a portal or 'space' helps us to consider "how the portal initially comes 'into view', how it is approached, negotiated, and perhaps even experienced as a transition in terms of sense of self" (Meyer and Land, 2006, p.19).

1. The key is that they are transformative.

Occasion a significant shift in the perception of a subject

A transfiguration of identity

New understandings are assimilated into our biography, becoming part of who we are, how we see and how we feel.

2. **Irreversible**

Once learned the concept would be very "unlikely to be forgotten, or unlearned only through considerable effort" (Meyer and Land, 2005, p.374).

Why some 'experts' find difficulty in accepting why students do not understand what might seem to them blindingly obvious.

The concept cannot become 'not-understood'.

3. **Integrative**

What formerly appeared to be disparate elements are brought into a coherent relationship.

Become more aware of "the previously hidden interrelatedness" of concepts, beliefs and theories.

TC provide a 'window' that help in understanding the disciplinary dimensions of a subject and its underlying structures.

Mastery of a threshold concept often allows the learner to make connections that were hitherto hidden from view.

Reveal a discipline's underlying 'episteme'.

Educators are disciplinary experts for whom ways of thinking and practising have become tacit.

4. **Bounded**

TC may be bounded in conceptual spaces that have terminal frontiers.

However, it may carry an inherent tendency to invite congealed understandings.

An attitude of questioning the concept itself.

5. Troublesome

There is a likelihood, owing to their powerful transformative effects, that TCs may prove troublesome for students.

Perkins (1999, 2006) describes as 'troublesome knowledge' – knowledge that is conceptually difficult.
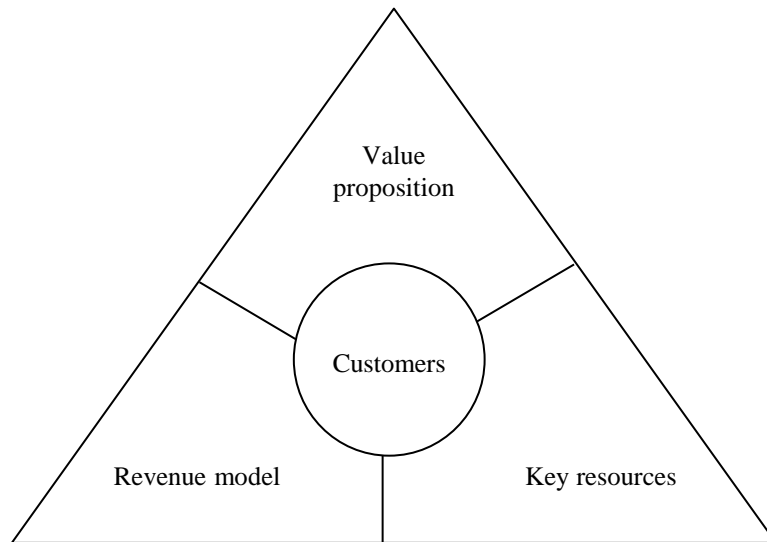
6. **Discursive**

The crossing of a threshold incorporates an enhanced and extended use of language;

Adoption of an extended discourse.

Where might TC occur within Entrepreneurship Education?

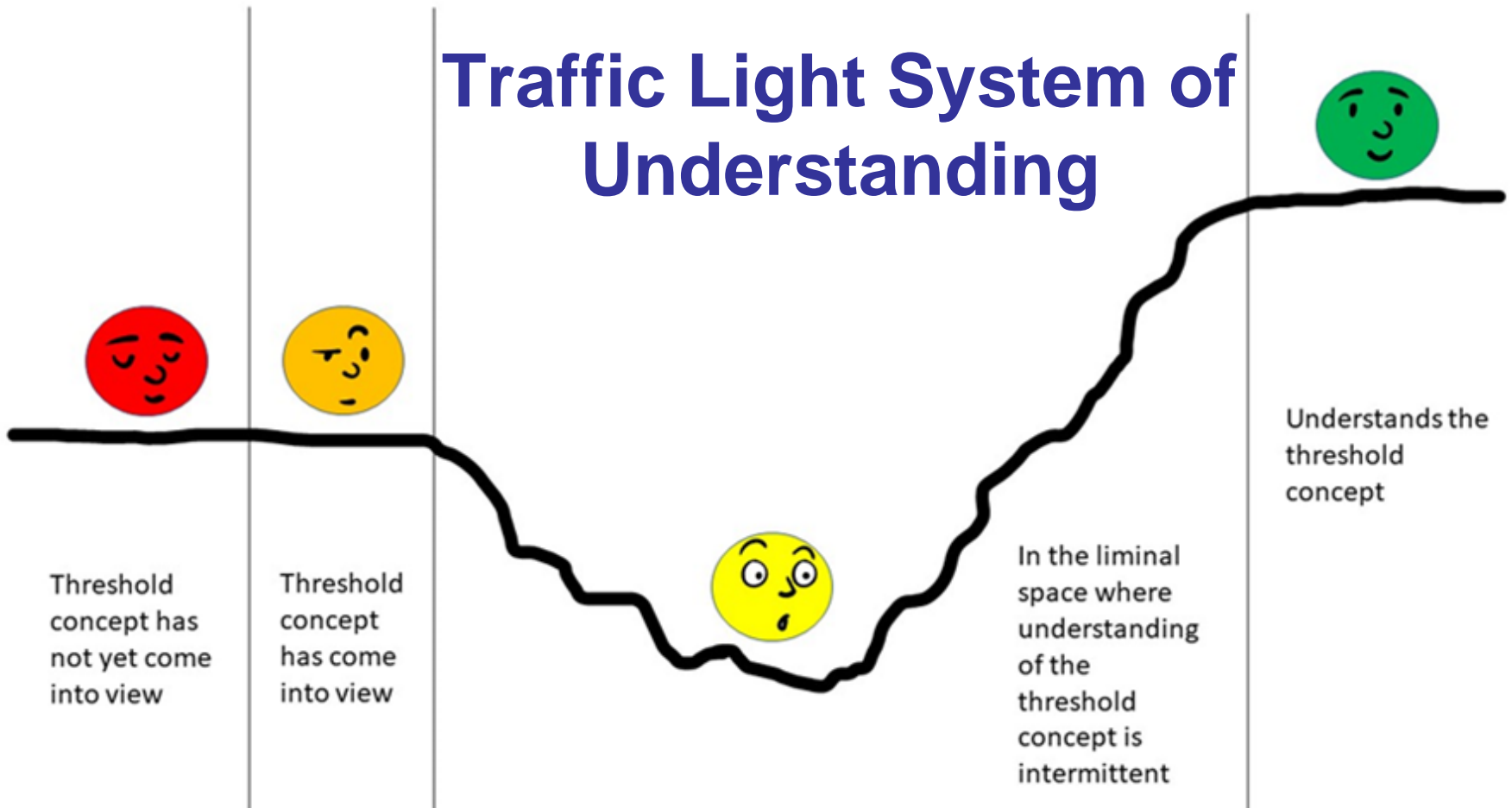## The example of value architectures

Context?
- Profit/ non-profit
- Educational sector
- Healthcare

Role the learner
- Entrepreneur
- Intrapreneur
- Customer

Liminality:

Traffic Light System of Understanding

Threshold concept has not yet come into view

Threshold concept has come into view

In the liminal space where understanding of the threshold concept is intermittent

Understands the threshold concept

Traffic light system for categorizing the development of threshold concept understanding

It is usually not a linear journey - learners oscillate in their levels of learning
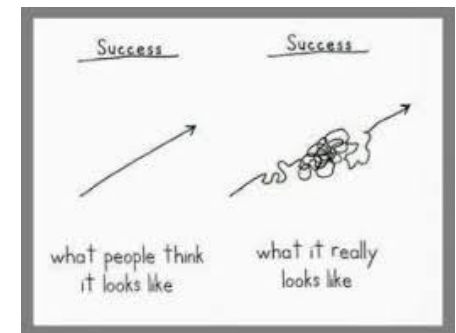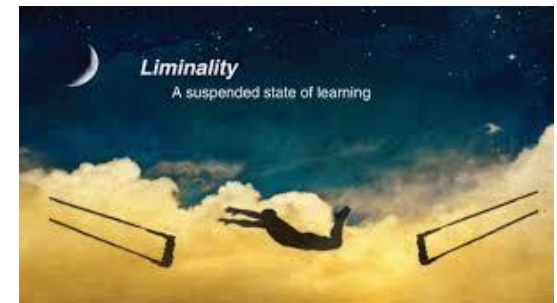
Students' experience with liminality (White et al., 2016, p.59)

Flow Model of the Experience of Liminal Space

Stuck (state) → Getting unstuck (process) → Not stuck (state) → Transformed knowledge
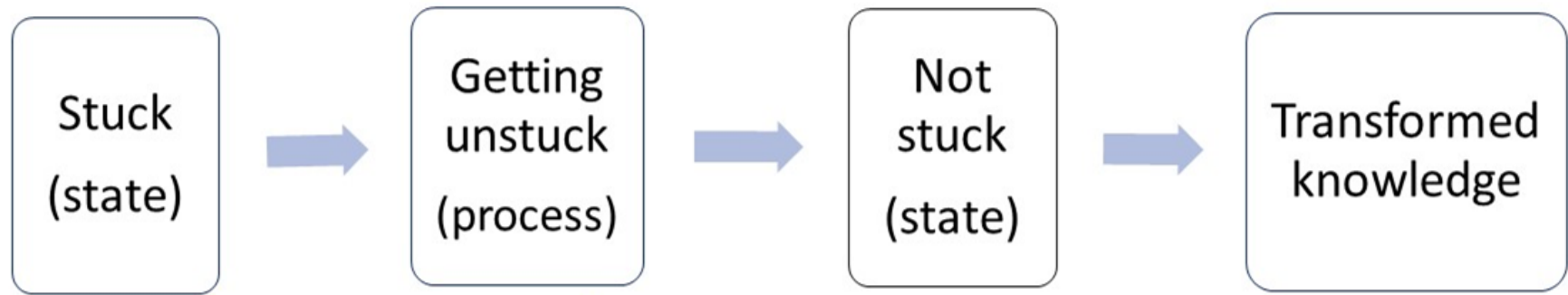
- Problems with class itself
- Concept/language difficulty
  - Student problems
- Student reasons (internal and external)

- Student proposed solution (nothing happened)
- Student solution enacted (success)
- Teacher proposed solution (not internalised)
- Teacher solution enacted (success)

Liminality
A suspended state of learning

Success | Success

what people think it looks like | what it really looks like

Stage 1 Findings - Entrepreneurship Threshold Concepts (according to entrepreneurs)

"I can create value" Self-Efficacy	Self-efficacy is about thinking "I can do this" whilst being (*highly) self-aware, self-controlled and conscious of one's own strengths and weaknesses. It is about accepting mistakes as part of learning, and always being interested in knowing more. *later removed*
"I see opportunities" Opportunity	Opportunity is about seeing commercial potential where others do not. It is associated with intuition, making patterns and connections. It implies future orientation and a focus on possibilities for improvement.
"I understand the risks" Risk	Risk is regarded as a sign of a potential opportunity, something to be understood - even sought out - rather than necessarily avoided. It implies quick wits, requires discernment and is not reckless.
"I know what's important" Focus	Focus is about making choices, having a clear vision and passionately driving towards it. It implies effective prioritisation, appropriate delegation and never switching off. Focus means intense, single-minded determination.
"I take action" Impact	Impact is about making things happen and taking action (*on a grand scale) combined with a sense of urgency and a desire to make a difference. It requires courage and implies a degree of compulsion. *later removed*

Hatt, L. (2018), "Threshold concepts in entrepreneurship – the entrepreneurs' perspective", *Education + Training*, Vol. 60 No. 2, pp. 155-167. https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-08-2017-0119

Entrepreneurship Threshold Concept	Descriptor
Entrepreneurial Agency	When an individual sees the world through the lens of Entrepreneurial Agency, they see value creation as a self-organizing, proactive and self-regulating individual.
Context is Opportunity	When an individual sees Context is Opportunity, they see all contexts as rich in opportunities for value creation.
Context is Resource	When an individual sees Context is Resource, they see all contexts as rich in resources for value creation.
Risk is Missed Opportunity	When an individual sees Risk is Missed Opportunity, they see risk as a potential indicator of an opportunity for value creation.
Value is determined by the Customer	When an individual understands that Value is determined by the Customer, they see the customers' perspective as superordinate in determining the best opportunities for value creation.
Entrepreneurship is a Practice	When an individual understands that Entrepreneurship is a Practice, they appreciate the iterative, developmental and fulfilling nature of the process of value creation.

Hatt, L. & Jarman, D. (2021). Toolkit for Identifying and Mapping Threshold Concepts of Entrepreneurship Across University Entrepreneurship Education Programmes #EERPF at https://www.etctoolkit.org.uk/eerpf-project-outcomes-eeuk-funded/identifying-and-mapping-threshold-concepts-of-entrepreneurship-across-university-entrepreneurship-education-programmes-eerpf/

CfIE Threshold Concepts in Entrepreneurial Thinking

CfIE Threshold Concepts in Entrepreneurial Thinking

1

Entrepreneurship is a Practice:
Practitioners understand that entrepreneurship is a practice that anyone can adopt in any context to create new value. It is a way of doing things, a way of thinking and practicing or a way of seeing the world, that manifests as creation of value in response to opportunities and challenges.

2

Your Context is Your Opportunity to Create Value:
Practitioners habitually and constantly create and recognise opportunities within their own context to create value. Practitioners are habitually resourceful and make use of what they find to realise and exploit opportunities to create value.

3

Value is Defined by Others:
Practitioners understand only other people can define the value of what they have created, and others demonstrate the value they place on what is being offered by being prepared to give something tangible or intangible in exchange for it (money, time, goodwill etc).

4

Iterative Experimentation:
Embracing small failures as a means of maximising opportunities to learn from mistakes as well as success. Just as the process of scientific experimentation generates data whatever the outcome of the experiment, iterative experimentation in this context is less emotive and outcomes are not deemed necessarily to be "successes" or "failures".

5

Recognises Their Agency:
Practitioners recognise that they always have some agency to create value, or that it is at least beneficial to assume that they do and should take ownership of their actions.

6

Taking Action:
Practitioners know that intention must be translated into action for value to be created. Intention PLUS will is all-important to create or exploit an opportunity for value.

7

Knowledge is Always Partial and Often Ambiguous:
Practitioners understand that you can still act even if the situation is not perfect, ideal, or even favourable – but that the process of taking action is likely to lead to new situations, learnings, and ultimately opportunities.

Example Animation

https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLkynuSXxruYGGvr7dwBYnBaWEho8yDC6_&si=X2URpDc6jkXxz-O6

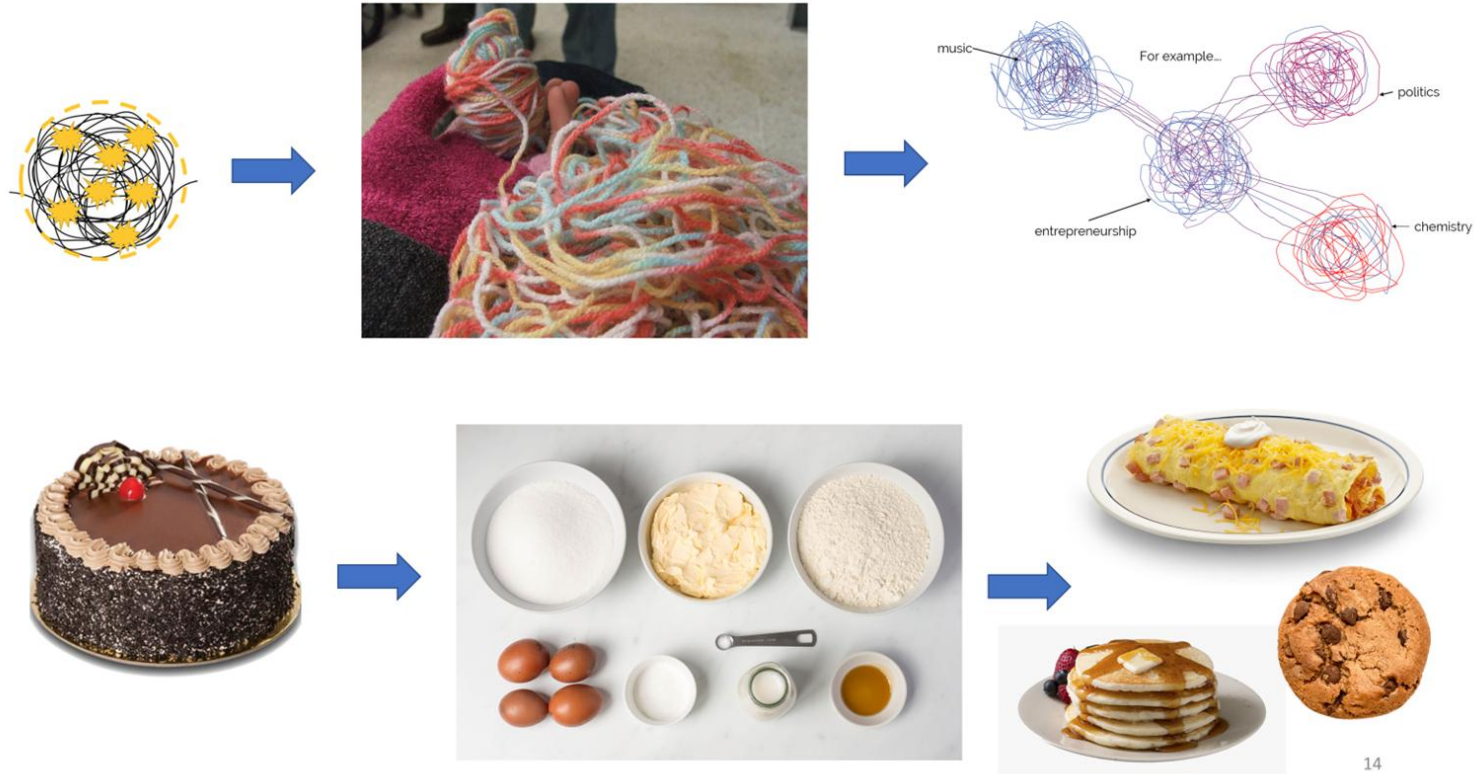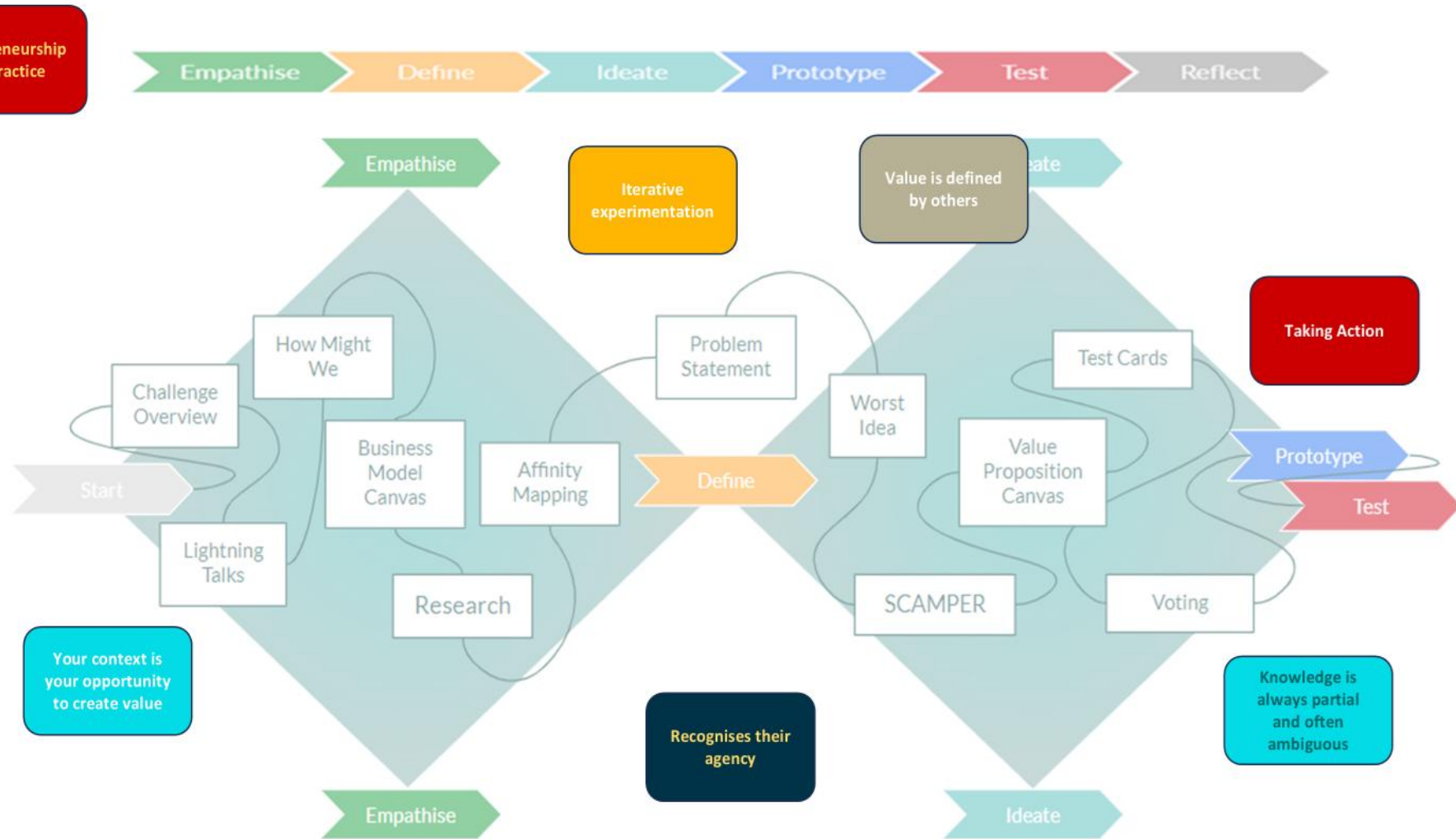Your Context is Your Opportunity to Create Value

Examples of Using TC's in Ent Thinking

Hatt, L. (2023). "Dropping the E-words – An introduction to Threshold Concepts in Entrepreneurial Thinking and their benefits to educators seeking to integrate enterprise and entrepreneurship in their curriculum to enhance employability" HEA Employability Symposium, Manchester, 25th April.

To theoretically underpin a design sprint

Hatt, L.; Davidson, J. and Carrion-Weiss, J. (2023), "Design Thinking as Pedagogy in Practice",
International Journal of Management and Applied Research, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 160-176.
https://doi.org/10.18646/2056.102.23-013

Small Group Task

In your group, reflect on what you've heard today.

- Share aspects from today's presentation that have struck you - what will you be taking away from the session?
- Reflect on challenges you're facing in education - how might the threshold concept approach help you make sense of them?

After/during the plenary debrief:
Individually write in the chat your key learning from today's session
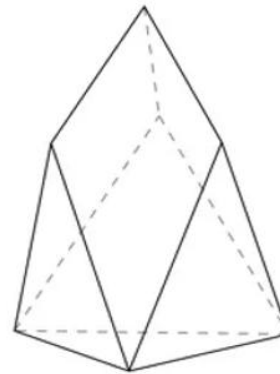
Thank you.

Next steps …

- Join SIEC-ISBE
- Join ETIC

ETIC

Entrepreneurship
Threshold Concepts
International
Collaboration