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1918 · 2018

forward together · saam vorentoe · masiye phambili

Shifting pedagogical practices and identities: Lessons learned from the virtual classroom

Profs. Jan Botha, & Liezel Frick, Miné de Klerk and Dr Nompilo Tshuma
LTE Teaching and Learning Seminar | 12 March 2020

1. The case study in the context of the evolving modes of T&L at SU

2. Shifting identities, from four perspectives:

- a) The course facilitator
- b) The e-tutor
- c) The participants
- d) The third space professional

3. Critical reflection



The case study in the context of the evolving modes of T&L at SU



Mostly contact

Mode of delivery

Mostly online



Traditional, contact delivery

Mostly F2F (on-campus).
Can include a blend of different
facilitation approaches and
learning technologies.



'Hybrid Mode' delivery

Calendar 'blocks' of fully
online and synchronous
(contact) learning



Short course delivery modes:

1. Contact/blended
2. Fully online



Fully online
resources:

- OERs
- MOOCs
- Learning
community
webinars, etc.

Academic credit-bearing

Minimum contact time* required
(*synchronous learning, i.e. real time engagement
- F2F or online)

Certificate of
completion/competency

*In some cases:
Recognition of prior learning

No minimum contact time req.



On the impact of the Coronavirus on Higher Education

“There is going to be enormous pressure to start putting courses online. A lot of the attention is going to focus on online platforms, because that’s where the money is (believe me: the online learning and online program management companies are going to try to make enormous sums of money out of this crisis).

But there isn’t enough lead time to make huge, institution-wide changes like that, so the likelihood is that what we’re going to see a lot of classes moved over to video platforms like Zoom, teachers lecturing to physically empty classrooms, and spending a lot more time on student emails.

If there’s one thing institutions should all be prioritising, it is helping profs think through how to shift their courses online if necessary”

(**Alex Usher**, Higher Education Strategy Associates, Canada, 9 March 2020)

<https://myemail.constantcontact.com/One-Thought-to-Start-Your-Day--Coronavirus.html?soid=1103080520043&aid=6VrBV9qhGoM>



The case study

DIES/CREST Online Training Course for Supervisors of Doctoral Candidates at African Universities (2)

Dashboard / My courses / 2019 / Arts and Social Sciences / Centre for Research on Evaluation, Science and Technology (CREST)

DIES/CREST Online Training Course for Supervisors of Doctoral Candidates at African Universities (2) / Start here / Welcoming Video



Welcoming Video

Welcome to the course!

Please watch this video, which provides important information on what you can expect from the course:

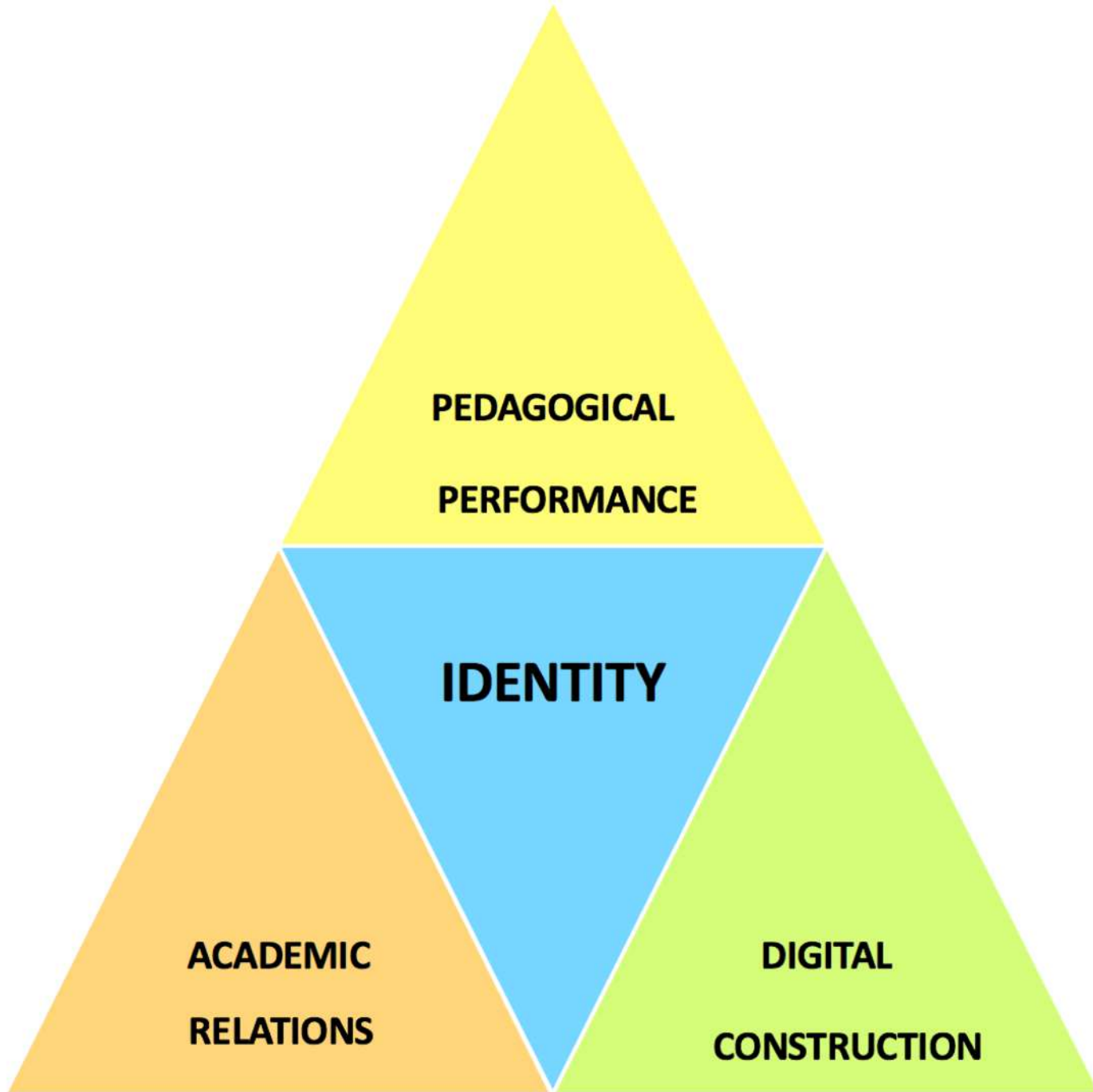
The menu at the left also provides you with the sub-topics discussed in this video as shorter clips. It is expected that you watch the full video, below, or navigate through all the shorter clips.



Shifting identities, from four perspectives:

I. The course facilitator





Shifting identities, from four perspectives:

2. The e-tutor



Online
facilitation

Prompting
Acknowledging
Connecting

Training new
etutors

Context and
sensitivity

Non-
homogenous

Meta-level

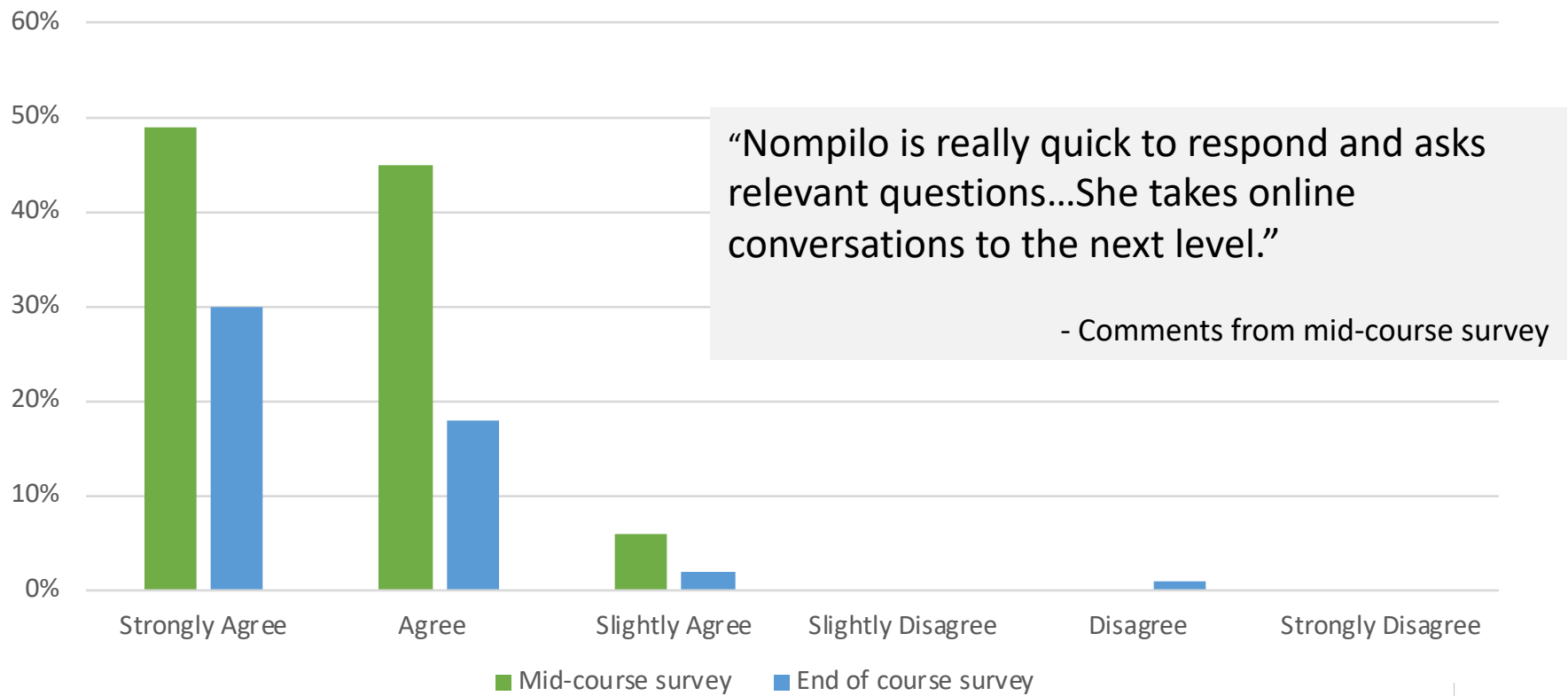
Writerly
identity

Identity
creation &
performance

My multiple
identities



Participant response to statement:
The tutors enhance my learning experience



Shifting identities, from four perspectives:

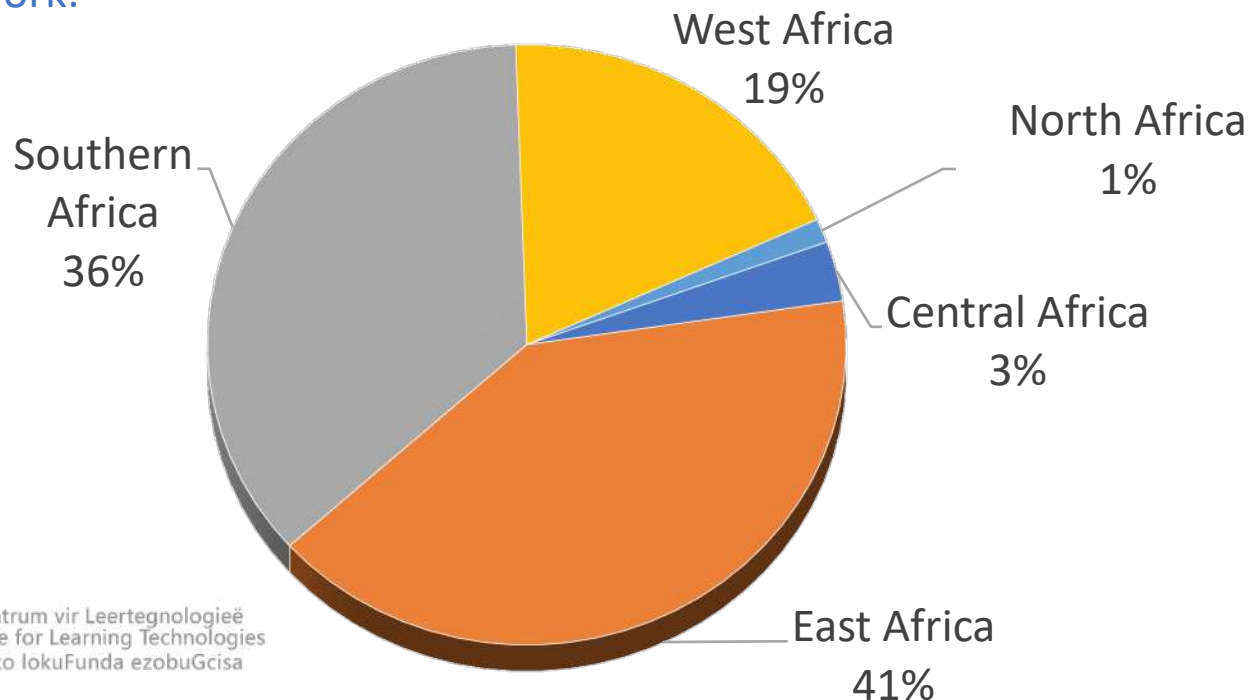
3. The participants



Who are the participants?

- Employed by or affiliated to a university in Africa,
- Holders of doctoral degrees
- Current / future supervisors or co-supervisors of doctoral students

Where they
work:



Example I: Participants as “policy-makers”

- **A valuable source of information on supervision at African universities**
 - 25 789 posts (in the first cohort)
 - 225 capstone assignments submitted (3 cohorts)
- **Roles of participants (learners) during the course**
 - Supervisor: Advisor, Guide, Standard setter, Quality controller, Providing support (including pastoral support), Administration
 - Research leader, research collaborator, project manager, ethics reviewer, examiner, co-author
 - Policy-maker
- **Discussion forum: “Contextualise the *Salzburg Principles for Doctoral Education* to speak to the conditions, challenges and opportunities of doctoral education in Africa”**
- 214 discussion threads (some with up to 17 inputs) on the ten Salzburg Principles

Salzburg Principle I: The advancement of knowledge through original research

“The core component of doctoral training is the advancement of knowledge through original research. At the same time it is recognised that doctoral training must increasingly meet the needs of an employment market that is wider than academia.”

The participants argued that the policy statement must be adapted to reflect -

- An African flavour
- Align with the conditions and needs of Africa
- Cultural aspects
 - Autonomy and independence (adult learner self-directedness)
- Contingencies of the PhD graduate and the world of work (inside and outside academia) in African countries

Examples of participants' views (policy suggestions)

On research autonomy and foreign funding

Research agendas, and therefore PhD training programs, are largely driven by donor interests; yet donor interests often mis-align with contextual needs in African universities and the wider economy

On cultural aspects and independent research

*The Eurocentric conceptualisation of self-directedness may differ from that of the African perspective and state of being. Therefore, the requirement of **independent research** (in its broadest sense) may have to be investigated and rephrased in order to accommodate those who have been **socialised from an early age to respect and be submissive in their thinking** to those who are seen as more knowledgeable and therefore superior*

Example 2: Participants supervising draft research proposals (group work)

Group Work: *Analysis of a research proposal*

Each online group is assigned a different research proposal and has respond to the questions listed below. Please navigate to your online **group space** ([click here](#)), where your allocated research proposal has been uploaded.

You are expected to (a) share your comments on the doctoral proposal with your group, (b) work together as a group to improve the draft proposal, (c) share the result of your group's discussions with the whole class, and (d) share your comments on any lessons learnt regarding the supervision of the (draft) research proposal

Shifting identities, from four perspectives:

4. Third space professionals



Course Theme 2:

The Supervisor and the Doctoral Student

Quick Preview of Module 3:

ROLES AND
RESPONSIBILITIES OF
SUPERVISOR AND
STUDENT

Step 1 |

What can I expect from this module?

Step 2 |

Video introduction to this module

Please watch the brief video. You can also download and read the **video transcript** [here](#).



Step 3 |

Theme 1: Who are you? (Part 1)

Step 4 |

Theme 1: Who are you? (Part 2)



Quick access
to forum

Discussion Forum: My Research Identity

After completing the Theme 1 tutorial, you can return to the group discussion forum, [here](#).

Step 5 |

Theme 2: You and your student



Quick access
to forum

Discussion Forum: Lesson Task

After completing the Theme 2 tutorial, you can return to the group

Video on 'Locating Research'

Please watch this short video on 'Locating Research', and then complete the 'Reading Map Activity' after the video:



Live Webinar

[Click here for details](#)

Webinar Date: 30 May 2019

Time: 10h00

Facilitator: Liezel Frick



[Click here to enter the webinar](#)

Downloading Learning Material

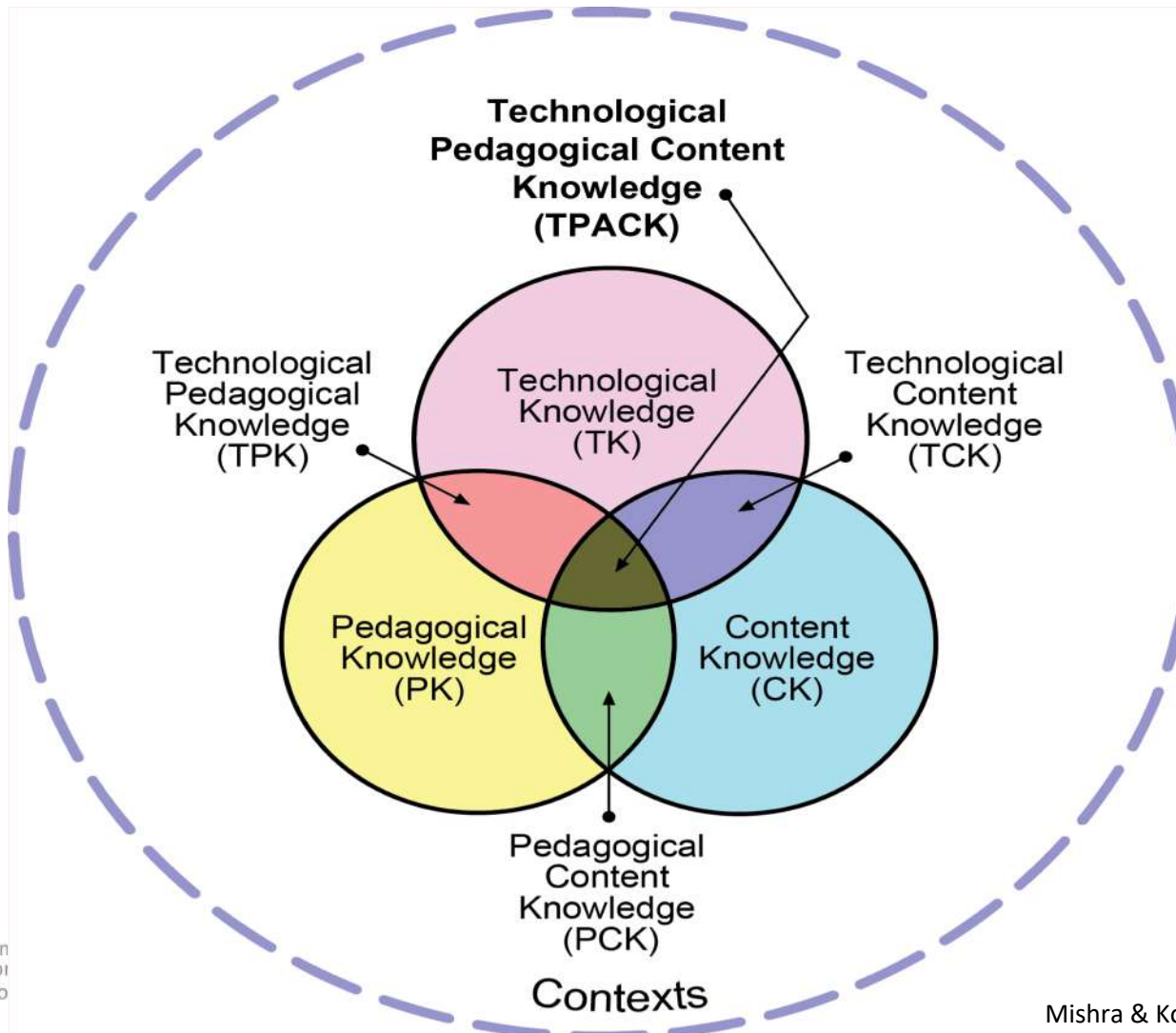


Download: Folder with offline learning material
(Learning material can be downloaded from 3 June 2019)



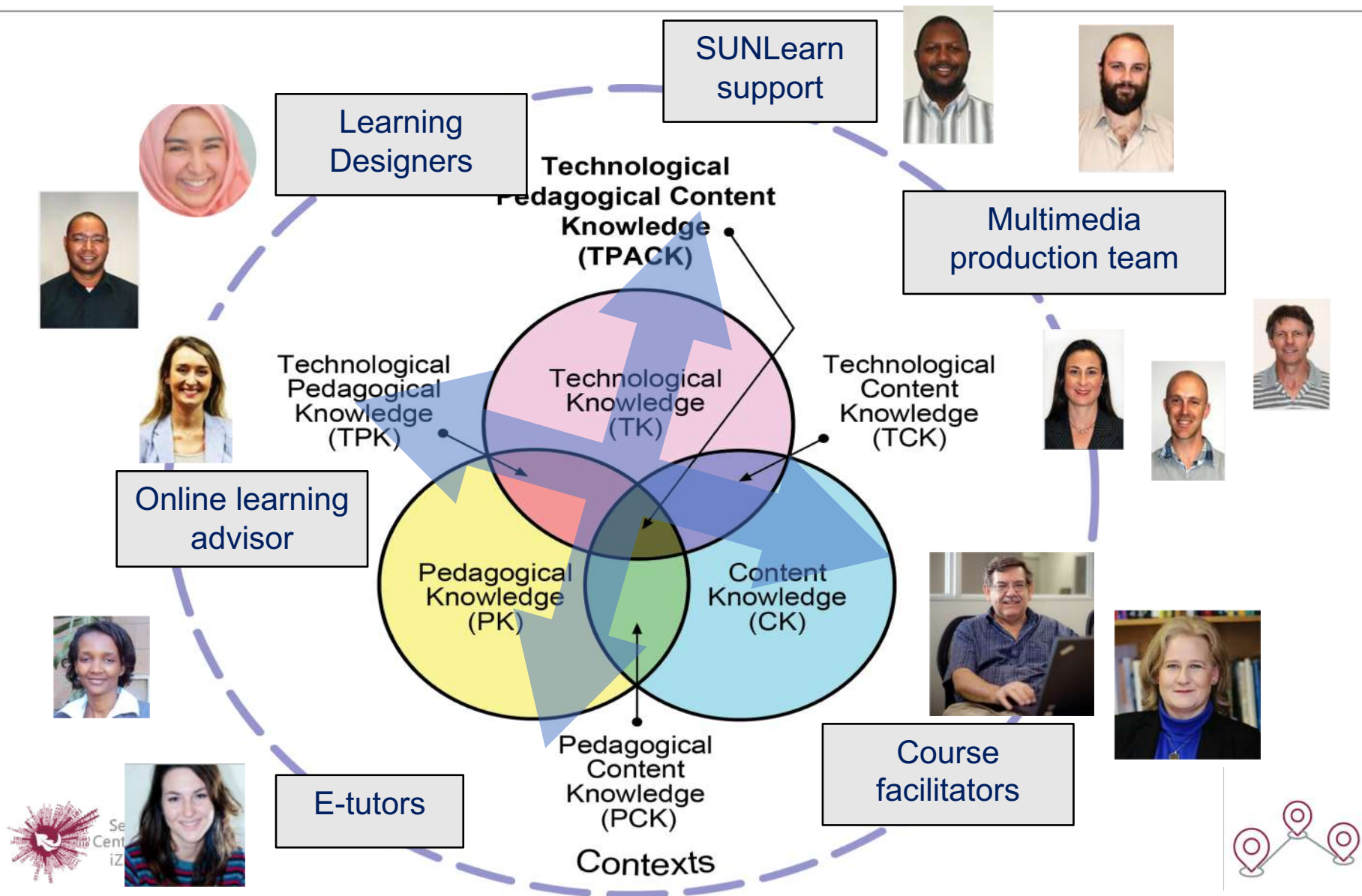
The Design Ecosystem

Role players



The Design Ecosystem

Role players



Conclusion: Critical reflection



- Braving the complexities of the virtual classroom **does affect our notion of identity** – as lecturers, students or professional academic support staff.
- *It requires:*
 - **Ongoing dialogue and trust** between role players (enabled by institutional support)
 - The **courage to cross boundaries** (*between our own technical/pedagogical/content knowledge*).
 - A willingness to *continually* apply a **critical lense to our own practice**.
- ‘Material and practical considerations in online learning design are, not divorced from *pedagogical* considerations.’
 - **Pedagogical intent** needs to be made very explicit (for any online activity).
 - Even the smallest design decisions need to be (as far as possible) **responsive to the students’ context**.
 - Beware the **metrics trap**.
- ‘Online’ does not necessarily ensure a better or worse learning experience. The virtual classroom can, however, become an incubation space to deepen our understanding of our notion of T&L.



Thank you | Enkosi | Dankie



Feedback

