Agade

TOWARDS
BECOMING A GOOD
ADULT EDUCATOR

Recourse book for adult educators

Edited by Tiina Jääger and John Irons

2006

Contents

Foreword

The Grundtvig 1.1 project entitled A Good Adult Educator in Europe (AGADE), is the extension of the Learning4Sharing, a Nordic-Baltic project. Being acquainted with the results and publications of the preceding project, I was pleased to learn about the new European initiative in 2003.

To my knowledge, this series of initiatives is the first in recent years that aims to introduce innovation in the further training of adult educators at a European level. I would need to study the entire documentation to be able to list all the innovative elements, so let me just mention a few: a modular training framework, approaches based on competences and challenges that practitioners face in their everyday work, learning materials tailored to participants' needs. It is at any rate of utmost significance that an initiative undertaken in a sub-region of Europe was able to broaden out and become a European one through AGADE. Compared to the former scope and relations determined by a range of countries situated between Estonia and Norway, the new project encompasses a wider geographical and cultural dimension via the involvement of Irish, Portuguese and Hungarian partners. This is why I felt delighted and honoured when asked to write the foreword for the AGADE Resource book for adult education practitioners presenting the outcome of the project.

I also appreciate this significant initiative because it has abandoned the traditional theory-oriented training approach that has little to do with practical problems. Or in another aspect, it can be said that diverse adult learning practice created very different training practices and while on the one hand there was diversity, there was often fragmentedness on the other hand as it was difficult to see/find standardisation, a common quality framework or transferability. What is more, the recognition of similar courses was not only problematic in different countries but these courses also mostly lacked European recognition in terms of acquired competences. Through the European accumulation of competences and practitioners' training exchange, AGADE offers a far-reaching perspective.

In a new approach, both the Learning4Sharing and the AGADE projects made an attempt at standardisation without uniformisation in the field of training and further training for adult education practitioners. The AGADE project focuses on curriculum building based on a minimum set of criteria of the competences required of a good adult educator, in accordance with the different roles adult educators need to assume. Also innovative is the mixed programme, including face-to face and distance learning modules, which has been tested and announced as a Grundtvig 3 course. As "the proof of the pudding is the eating", the delivery of the Grundtvig 3 courses will allow for further improvements and refinements to the course design as well as for ongoing adjustment of the challenges posed in a local context.

I am truly convinced that the outcome of the AGADE project will significantly contribute to the development of the initial and continuing training of adult education practitioners in the 25 EU countries and beyond. This is all the more important since the training of practitioners, like that in other fields of adult learning, shows considerable differences. In some of the EU member states the training of adult educators has a long tradition and an institutionalised practice, while in others such training is more occasional or improvised. In the 10 new member states, for instance, the training of adult educators developed while still dominated by and subordinate to outdated ideological values and goals that had been laid down in former decades – elements of which are still present.

All in all, I would claim that, in Europe as a whole, the training and further training of adult education experts and practitioners has become a neglected area, in comparison to other fields of education and training.

It is nevertheless noteworthy that one of the Lisbon Objectives, so often referred to, is related to the common recognition of the fact that the renewal of training and further training of teachers, tutors, facilitators, counsellors, course and training organisers in the entire spectrum of education and training plays a key role, so that better results are achieved and teaching as a profession is re-interpreted and made more attractive. (Refer to Improving the Education of Teachers and Trainers, Progress Report, 2004 WG1. 1/10. 004, European Commission.).

It should be greatly appreciated that this initiative in developing and providing training for adult educators, which began as Nordic-Baltic co-operation and has been continued in the AGADE project, also goes hand in hand with the Education and Training 2010 programme, the backbone of which is educational and training staff development, and that within this, AGADE partners undertook the first vital steps. A good adult educator is and will always be the key for creating quality in adult learning.
I would like to draw the attention of all institutions related to adult education to this resource book and the achievements of the project. I would encourage them to join the network virtually, in spirit or in reality. I myself will do my best within the EAEA membership to ensure that the results of the AGADE project and the Resource book for adult education practitioners are utilised in the quality development of the field of adult education.

Budapest, August 2006
János Sz. Tóth, President of the European Association for the Education of Adults

Introduction

The purpose of this book is to present the results of the project A Good Adult Educator in Europe: AGADE, No 114092 - CP – 1 - 2004 – 1 - EE - GRUNDTVIG – G11, funded by the European Commission.

The two years spent developing the project has been a two-year learning process for us. In the First Chapter you will find an introduction to the project and feedback from the external evaluator Antra Carlsen. The third article - the Agreed Minimum Set of Criteria provides the basis for all the project activities – creating the Further training course for European adult educators ''Towards becoming a Good Adult Educator''.

Chapter Two is the result of two years of intensive discussions and work. It comprises the knowledge and skills that an adult educator needs in order to create and develop a good quality course for adult learners. This concept has been tried out in a test course in Ireland at the National University of Ireland Maynooth. The feedback and advice from the test course participants have also been enclosed in this Resource Book.

We, the project partners, hope that every adult educator can find something innovative and useful for her/his teaching activities in this Recourse Book and that the book will become a good companion for all educatos.

Tiina Jääger
Project coordinator

1.1 Introduction to the project

Tiina Jääger, project coordinator, Estonian Non-formal Adult Education Association

The quality of adult education has been a key topic in national and European level discussions during recent years. A new sub-action has been opened of the Grundtvig 1 programme from 2004 – Grundtvig Training Courses, the purpose of which is "to improve the availability and quality of European training courses". The project A Good Adult Educator in Europe (further referred to as AGADE) www.folkbildning.net/agade/, is a result of this programme.

History

In 2002 a three-year Nordic – Baltic project "Learning 4 Sharing" (further referred to as L4S), www.learning4sharing.nu was completed. This project was supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers. Its goal was to provide a possibility for Baltic adult educators to create training modules for non-formal adult education practitioners. The modules have been elaborated in joint education sessions with the Nordic adult educators, and tested in practice in the Baltic countries. The AGADE project is based on the L4S project experience, but another experience from European countries – from Hungary, Portugal, Ireland and Sweden – has been added during two project years and a European training course for adult educators has been developed.

The project corresponds to needs in Europe expressed by the partner countries as well as those documented in European education policy documents. There is a need to discuss the importance and relevance of the adult educators' training at international level with the European partners and to analyse European Union policies for adult education and training in order to develop a core curriculum for adult educator training in all the countries involved. The core curriculum can then be modified and supplemented according to the needs, policies, history and culture of each country involved.

Using previous experience

The AGADE project intended to make use of the existing and previously developed resources:
The Minimum Set of Criteria, defined within the L4S project as a quality indicator for non-formal adult educator training programmes became the development resource. Partner countries added and edited the criteria according to their own needs and use in the country and as a result of national and international discussion The new Minimum Set of Criteria was created. These Criteria became a basis for curriculum building for adult educators – practitioners.

Experience from another European Grundtvig project - Adult Study Net, further referred to as ASN (www.adultstudy.net) - was used in developing the AGADE project. There is a core-team of moderators/teachers for using the First Class platform in adult learning which was extended to the partner countries during the Project.

Developing new experience

During the project:
- The approach to curriculum building based on the criteria for a good adult educator was tested and improved. During the 1st project year the Minimum Set of Critera for a Good Adult Educator were developed and agreed on.
- The methodology of blended learning (combined learning in classroom and web environment) was acquired and during the 2nd project year face-to-face and www-based (blended learning) education modules were established for adult educators-practitioners
- Know-how of the facilitation methodology for using the First Class platform was acquired.
- Face-to-face and distance learning at the European level was developed, practised and quality-tested. From March 26 – 30, 2006 a test course was held at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth. The participants came from partner countries and not only as learners but also as experts provided feedback and advice on how to develop the AGADE course. The results of the evaluation of the test course were discussed and analysed at an evaluation meeting in Hungary in May 2006.

The future

The aim is to strengthen the adult educators network in Europe through providing a Grundtvig 3 catalogue course with an international team of trainers as the result of the project. The topics of the course will be derived from the different roles of an adult educator and from the minimum set of criteria (key competences) for the adult educator defined within the AGADE project. The themes and teaching philosophy will be based on the new lifelong learning policy debate in Europe. The course will be addressed to adult educators practitioners in the formal and non-formal adult education field. The course will improve the adult educator competences based on the situation and needs analyses carried out during the 1st DL session. The course will consist of face-to-face and 2 DL modules. The language of the course will be English. The course will be offered on at least two occasions.

The target group for the course comprises a group of 25-30 adult educators (teachers, moderators, facilitators, coaches) with at least 3 years of practice/work experience in adult education from European countries.

Highlights

- The principle comprises using the set of minimum criteria of a good adult educator and the description of adult educator roles as the point of departure for curriculum development. The innovative pedagogical approach is developing a combined learning
- European course for adult educators using face-to-face modules and www-based learning (blended learning), integrating the experience of two previous projects (L4Sh and ASN) and adding a European value.

Added European value

The project has promoted a partner discussion on the qualifications / competences of adult education practitioners and the courses of education necessary for developing suitable qualifications. The result of the project (course for adult educators-practitioners) has been tested and edited by the participants from 8 European countries and further incorporated into the European course (Grundtvig 3) for adult educators. The partners have discussed the adult educator qualifications at a European level and have created a core qualification list (A Minimum Set of Criteria). The network of adult educators from 8 different European countries has been developed and will be developed during the Grundtvig 3 catalogue course.

Evaluation

Evaluation has been as important tool for quality development during the two project years. The communication and the project product discussion among the project partners took place on the virtual platform during the period between the meetings. The combination of face-to-face meetings and the on-line communication will allow the project partners to monitor each others' work and implement the necessary changes as regards national activities in due time.
Besides the monitoring and self-evaluation, the project results and products have been evaluated by the evaluator. Evaluation strategy consisted of questionnaires and interactive evaluation during the project meetings and final interviews with project partners.
The evaluator participated in all the four project leader meetings and in the test course. This allowed the evaluator to get to know the project partners and keep updated throughout the whole life-span of the project. Through observation and interactive evaluation the feed-back was received at every stage of the project. Evaluation reports produced after each meeting, provided the necessary information to all the partners for implementing the changes during the next project stage if necessary.

Partners

Eesti Vabaharidusliit (VHL), Estonian Non-formal Adult Education Association (ENAEA)
J.Vilmsi 55
10147 Tallinn
Estonia
Tel. +372 6009 366
Fax. +372 6009 367
Tiina Jääger, coordinator
evhl@vilmsi.ee

Magyar Népfőiskolai Társaság (MNT), Hungarian Folk High School Society (HFHSS)
Puskin utca 12
1088 Budapest
Hungary
Tel. +36 1 411 14 59
Fax. +36 1 411 14 60
Katalin Varga, project leader
katalinv@nepfoiskola.hu

National University of Ireland, The Department Adult and Community Education
Maynooth
Co. Kildare
Ireland
Tel. +353 1 708 3306
Fax. +353 1 708 4687
Brid Connolly, project leader
brid.connolly@nuim.ie

Latvijas Pieaugušo Izglītības Apvienība (LPIA), The Latvian Adult Education Association (LAEA)
Merkela 11
Riga, LV-1050
Latvia
Tel. + 371 7222 411
Fax. +371 7222 411
Ingrida Mikisko, project leader
laea@laea.lv

Lietuvos Suaugusiųjų Švietimo Asociacija (LSSA), Lithuanian Association of Adult Education (LAAE)
Geležinio vilko 12 - 439
Vilnius
Lithuania
Tel. +370 52 619 031
Fax +370 52 312 309
Roma Juozaitiené, project leader
lssavilnius@takas.lt

Universidade do Minho, University of Minho, Unit for Adult Education
Rua Abade da Loureira
4700 – 356 Braga
Portugal
Tel. +351 253 601 284
Fax. +351 253 618 372
Rui Vieira de Castro, project leader
rvcastro@iep.uminho.pt

Studiefrämjandet i Norra Stor-Stockholm/ Study Promotion Association
Box 1316
17226 Sundbyberg
Sweden
Tel.+46 898 19 80
Fax. +46 898 45 82
Bo Wentzel, project leader
bo.wentzel@sfr.se

Voksenopplĺringsforbundet (VOFO), The Norwegian Association for Adult Learning (NAAL)
Boks 9339, Grųnland
0135 Oslo
Norway
Tel. +47 23 13 51 15
Fax. 47 22 33 40 85
Sturla Bjerkaker, project leader
Sturla.Bjerkaker@vofo.no

Antra Carlsen, evaluator
antra.carlsen@cfl.se
Tel. +46 70 22 55 488
Norra Stationgatan 8B
SE-281 48 Hässleholm
Sweden

1.2 **AGADE project as a learning process, evaluation and monitoring as a guidance tool.**

Antra Carlsen, external evaluator, Coordinator of the Nordic Network for Adult Learning, NVL

The whole field of adult learning is changing rapidly, and the change concerns diverse aspects, including the providers as well as learners. The changes are marked by the paradigm shift from teaching to learning, from the almost exclusive value of the exam and test certificates to the importance of competences, from learning within educational institutions to learning at work and in everyday life, from re-schooling to the sustainable process of learning, which is built upon the accreditation of prior learning and high quality tailor-made education.

"The labour market will demand creatively combined further educational programmes in the future," states Nils Bøtteger-Rasmussen from the Danish Institute of Future Studies in the morning paper MetroXpress moderators, facilitators, coaches) with at least 3 years of practice/work experience in adult education from European countries.

Highlights moderators, facilitators, coaches) with at least 3 years of practice/work experience in adult education from European countries.

Highlights from June 14, 2006. He believes that students should be able to tailor-make their own education, which should consist of different modules from different educational programmes. A success story presents a combination of three-year studies of architecture combined with two years of vocational education in landscape and gardening that have resulted in a successful career and a high level of personal satisfaction. The competence of the employee and the employer's readiness to value the tailor-made education at the same level as a completed higher education degree are the key issues in this case.

If tailor-made education is an increasingly important factor for entering the labour market, the validation of prior learning and being able to chose one's own further learning path is an important factor for staying in the labour market.

The Nordic countries are currently working on the development of the quality indicators within lifelong learning in the perspective of a sustainable learning society. The kick-off conference was held in Oslo, June 8 – 9, 2006, and the Nordic Expert Network will continue its work on the indicator development for at least a year. Among the quality signs (which can be developed into indicators) of a sustainable learning society is the following: the learner can choose the institutions and occasions of learning according to his/her direct needs at work, in education or in the social life; and learning can take place in different mutually cooperating learning arenas with validation being a bridge between them. The conference material and the further work on quality indicators is available at: http://www.nordvux.net/page/33/kvalitetssakring.htm

These are just a few of the current features influencing the field of adult learning and placing new demands on adult educators. Adult educators have a crucial role to play in this process, which has also determined the need for AGADE project.

My role in the project has been that of external evaluator, the main task being to monitor the project progress and suggest improvements in project management to the coordinator, as well as to evaluate the partnership and the usefulness of the project process and products for the partners and in a broader European context. The evaluation task has not yet been completed at the time the manual goes to press, as the manual is one of the project products, and the final evaluation is to be carried out after the completion of all the project tasks.

Therefore my contribution to the manual as an external evaluator is going to be that of looking at the AGADE project as a learning and development process and illustrating it by means of a few examples from the project in the context of the above-mentioned changes in the field of adult learning.

Curriculum development

Curriculum development based on the criteria for a good adult educator has been the main underlying principle for G3 course development in the AGADE project. The fact that the partnership is made up from one half of the partners having worked together previously and recognising this approach and the other half being new partners is a challenge to the project. It is the atmosphere of openness, equality and sharing that has played an important role as a partners pointed out the high quality of the partnership based on trust and mutual understanding. See the diagram.

The partners were asked to judge the communication, cooperation effectiveness according to the following indicators: the partners just exchange info, there is empathy among the partners, they trust and mutually understand each other, which in turn promotes the effectiveness of the work during the meetings and in-between the meetings virtually.

The partners said:

" (..) There was some uncertainty about what it will be like to meet the colleagues from other countries, but this meeting strengthens confidence that the project partners are competent and committed. It was a good feeling that L4Sh former partners work very well together - it is felt to be an asset for working at the European level. (..)

Partnership evaluation 2nd project meeting

Even if the scope of work at the initial stage of the project was not equal (the "new" partners had to do the national criteria development and discussion work, while the "old" partners had to reconsider and improve the criteria), the learning and development experience reported by the partners was important for all.

The skill of realising the current level of competence and building further on this basis is a crucial skill for adult educators and education planners, and this learning experience can be useful for the partners even beyond the AGADE project. A secure and trustful atmosphere is important for a productive meeting among the different levels of experience and motivates finding the appropriate starting level and scope of development in the project work as well as in a learning situation.

Individual learning needs (adjusting scope, time, and place)

The crucial discussion in the project has centred on the degree of flexibility of the course and the level of adjusting the curriculum to the individual needs of the participants. The dilemma between cost efficiency and the needs-based individual path of learning!

The AGADE project has developed a three-stage course organisation, based on experience and theories concerning blended and flexible learning. This is the concept that the AGADE project believes in and offers in Europe with the aid of a European team of trainers. Documenting this decision taken during the 3rd project meeting in Braga and returning to this decision has been an important management tool for the coordinator, but also served as guidance for the partners. Adjustments and improvements have certainly been considered, however, within the agreed framework. The Manual has been produced for this particular course concept and should exemplify the concept. Dialogue is an important learning pedagogical method throughout the course, in FirstClass and during the face-to-face part and also a form of communication in the AGADE project.

The *Learning* map is a tool chosen by the partners that makes it possible to integrate the learner's own experience and to build on one's prior knowledge: to find out one's competence, needs for further learning, to serve as a platform of choosing one's learning path. The partners have also been involved in a similar "mapping process", as the decision was taken to offer a blended learning course which involves innovation in terms of planning and methodology for the partners in relation to their daily work practice in their organisations. Thus, the partners' learning process and the quality of their contribution have also depended upon a careful "mapping" process: selecting the specific competence that should be offered during the European course and building new competence relevant for the course.

Deciding upon an outline of the course and understanding the purpose of each of the parts (as the result of the discussion of the test course evaluation evidence) has been of crucial importance for the partners when planning their input, allowing careful consideration and balance between producing high quality and a relevant further training G3 course in a cost-efficient way.

Blended learning methodology

The partners' opinion about the need for and the purpose of blended learning have been strongly influenced by their professional background and previous experience. The project provided the partners with quite a unique learning opportunity, firstly, to learn using the on-line tool and moderation methodology, and secondly to practise the methodology as an educator.

In the evaluation of the moderators' training course 75% of the respondents reported an attitude change: being more positive towards learning on-line and seeing new possibilities for using the technology in their work. .. *"Recognise an online community as an extra valuable resource.. First class platform is really easily managed and very user-friendly for both, teachers and students.. The platform is a flexible instrument for training and learning.. How very important it is to give people confidence that what they know is enough to take a new challenge! ..I am planning to use the platform for the course: to use it before the face-to-face course and after. "*

However, a similar degree of change of personal practice did not take place during the project lifetime, and about a half of the partners reported readiness and the necessary skills to adapt their education session for blended learning settings. Still, seeing the advantages of the methodology, the participants of the moderators' course (partners) pointed out their own further learning needs and action to be taken, like .. *"Have "conferences" as a norm within taught modules.. Try to practice on a regular basis.. I would like to prepare high quality distance learning materials for AGADE students."*

The test course containing both the distance module and a face-to-face module was evaluated by the participants (see chapter Community drama) and a professional on-line moderator designed the questions concerning blended learning for the educators (partners). The goal of the evaluation was:
- to give the feed-back on the quality of the whole course to the project group,
- to be the source of information on the necessary adjustments that are to be made before the G3 course,
- to indicate the methodology points/areas that have to be included in the manual, described with examples.

The participants as well as the educators (partners) were asked to reflect on the following:
- what benefits do I as an adult educator see in using the distance methodology;
- what contents of my own education practice can I adapt for the face-to-face module and for the distance module (providing a concrete example);
- what are the benefits for the learner (answers based on concrete examples of the contents and setting);
- what are the pre-conditions (teaching, moderation, technique, material – comment by choice using concrete examples from the course) for a good blended learning course.

Analysing the evaluation evidence has been an important learning process for the partners. Even if all the suggested improvements do not become the part of the G3 course prepared by AGADE partners, the partners in 8 countries have a possibility to improve and develop their own education practice. Among most important further learning challenges the following can be mentioned:

- ***The importance and quality of moderation***
  Distance education is a working-alone part of the course but also working with the others on a distance education basis, and it can include tasks that are based on reading, writing, performing exercises, drawing, reflection on something, etc. as well as joining a discussion, sharing reflections, sharing a chat room, etc. These elements need to be clearly scheduled and we should consider always having one or two moderators available and taking part in the discussion, as this creates the sense of community.

  It should also be taken into account that a very good preparation of the technique, material, and pedagogy for the blended learning requires considerably larger resources than would be needed for the face-to-face teaching and learning situation.

- ***The timing and quality of the feed-back***
  Each task carried out by participants needs to have feed-back from the moderators. Immediate response from the tutor/guide (and other teachers) immediately after sending tasks is desired. A positive way of giving feed-back is very important.

- ***The purpose and the scope of on-line learning in a blended learning course***
  It is a challenge, might be inconvenient, but the distance session before the face-to-face session is very valuable. It is possible to create a sense of community in spite of the different locations, through chats, virtual meetings, etc. It allows introducing people to each other in an interesting way so that they feel well acquainted when meeting face-to-face. It helps to understand learners, their different levels and points of view. Distance connection between learners and the teacher should help a better result to be achieved while in the face-to-face part. It also becomes intriguing for the students after virtual acquaintance to meet each other in person.

  Learning on-line offers flexibility as regards time and place. Learn when it suits you, 24 hours a day; learn at work or home; benefits in promoting the access to continuing education of the adult educators because we can use it in our own rhythm. People who could not otherwise meet can interact and work together by distance.

Testing, discussing and reflecting during the AGADE project have definitely been the process that supports the tailor-made education concept, and the learning process has also provided AGADE partners with several useful tools and recommendations in the process.

1.3 The Agreed Minimum Set of Criteria

All the project partners

Introduction

Adult education is never neutral. Educators provide knowledge, organise education and encourage change based on the social, political and cultural situation and priorities in the society and country, whilst also acting in a global world. Adult educators take responsibility for being open to and responsible for personal development and social intervention. Engaging in adult education means interaction, which should be based on the democratic values of exercising freedom with responsibility, the values of tolerance and solidarity. Adult educators should help to identify and value the educational potential in diverse social practices.

During discussions four roles and two groups of criteria for adult educator practitioners were identified. The roles deal with four major adult educator competencies: knowledge area, learning /teaching process organisation skills, attitudes towards learners and the process of education and ability to train learner skills. Sixteen criteria are divided into two groups: the first is for personal development area and the second – for professional development.

1. Personal development area. The set of criteria for this area is of crucial importance as it demands personal maturity in order to teach others or to organize others' learning process. Below is the list of 6 criteria for such a person (this of course is just the minimum criteria list).
2. Professional development area. The remaining 10 criteria are allocated for educational activities. It is important to stress that a good adult educator should posses not only proper classroom teaching (CT) knowledge and skills but also distance education (DE) knowledge and skills.

1.1 Adult Teacher roles:

- **Teacher** – this role is based on the key-word *knowledge* and means that a person behaves as an expert who is a mediator of knowledge. The main task is to create a positive learning environment which supports the formation of self-directed learners.
- **Guide** – this role is based on the key-word *organising* and means that a person acquaints others with new possibilities of development and perspectives of action. This role presupposes the ability to orient learners to work not only towards the final goals but also towards the process. The main task is to look for and encourage the inner motivation of learners.

- **Facilitator** – this role is based on the key-word *attitude* and means that a person leads group-dynamics and helps everybody find their role in a network of relationships, with the main aim to act both effectively and with care.

- **Trainer** – this role is based on the key-word *skills* and means that a person is able to influence the shaping of a learner's personality, forcing and providing the learner with the needed skills for self-actualization (Carlsen,2003)

Adult teacher personal development – ethic dimension:

Criteria	Criteria descriptions	Measures	List of possible tools
Self- esteem	appreciating one's worth and competencies being accountable for oneself acting responsibly towards others	• realistic self-image • authenticity • self-confidence • self-presentation • openness to feed-back • desire to cooperate	• self-evaluation tests, group exercises • observation by a colleague
Tolerance	• ability to demonstrate fairness and understanding of people whose way of thinking and opinions differ from one's own • meeting norms of living together	• teaching without discrimination/prejudice • patience • respect differences	• situation exercises • sociological knowledge, field work • group work • observation by a colleague
Responsibility	• being responsible for one's actions • considering the results and effect in advance	• being consistent, seeing consequences • responsible decision • responsibility for the community	• making and analyzing case studies • target group analysis • tests for participants, teacher's self estimation • self-evaluation • document analysis (track of e-communication)
Communication skills	• foster dialogue in the learning process by developing the ability to listen actively and to get learners into learning process through IT in DE classroom • transmit information in oral and written form particularly in e-mail and web format • ability to make oneself understood and to understand others	• ability to build contacts, including those with the help of IT for DE classroom environment • continuous and constructive feedback • meta-communication • listening • interactivity • skills in electronic communication	• situation exercises • self-knowledge and group tests • Interviews, collecting feedback from the target group (questionnaire) • document analysis (track of e-communication)
Empathy	• Responsiveness • understanding others' thoughts and feelings	• emotional identification • social sensitivity • openness • understanding • ability to sense atmosphere	• situation exercises • playful activities • demonstration sessions • observation by colleague(s)
Flexibility	• ability and willingness to change and • achieve the best result taking a permanently changing situation into account	• alternative thinking • ability to adapt learning course to learners' needs • aspirations for development • creativity	• psychological tests with different solutions • case studies that need to be ended • their analyses • videotaping • self-analysis

Adult teacher professional areas for development:
Organising stage – knowledge dimension

Knowledge about how adults learn and understanding the psychology of adults	• knowledge about adult learning specifics • knowledge about difference between pedagogy and andragogy • understanding of adult psychology • ability to use the knowledge to help learners achieve better results in education and to develop their personality	• andragogical knowledge • psychological knowledge • using teachers' and learners' life experiences • using the above knowledge in teaching adults	• observation, diaries, publications
Knowledge of methods in AE and learning	• knowledge and ability to choose different ways of teaching and learning according to the content of learning and participants' interests, abilities and experience	• knowledge of adult learning methods including those used through web for distance education (DE) • ability assessment • assessment of prior knowledge • appropriate choice of efficient (individually tailored and group) methods	• demonstration teaching • observation by colleague(s) • analysis of supervision of learners in e-learning format
Skills in preparing value-based (democratic and humanistic) programmes	• content of learning which emphasises learners' capacities for choice and growth in combination with responsibility, respecting learners' subjective experience and sense of freedom • training programme is a document in which the aim, thematic content, literature and assessment methods are revealed	• system of values • ability to make selections • ability to make decisions • respect for human and learners' rights • adjustment of background to adult learning • respect for adult learning • flexibility, openness • partnership	• knowledge of learners' charts • debates on the rights and responsibilities of learners and teachers • self-assessment • CV analyses • analyses of the program
Planning and organisational skills	• skills to plan your own and participants' activities in the learning process and the ability to implement these plans	• efficient choice and application of methods and implementation tools • target group analysis and evaluation • development of learning plan and materials • development of background support system	• preparation of plans for learning sessions • negotiation between learners and teachers, preparation of parallel curricula • analyses of documents
Good knowledge of the subject	• good orientation in the subject in order to arouse students' interests in it	• efficient passing on of high standard knowledge • continuous professional development • assessment and use of life experiences • knowledge of information resources	• indicators of performance • participation in relevant conferences • publications • testing

Performance stage – skills dimension

Ability to motivate for learning – before, during and after the learning process • ability to	promote participants' personal interest, involvement and activity in the learning process	• presentation of interests • ability to involve learners in the learning process particularly in DE also • being a personal role model • encouragement to reach realistic goals	• situation exercises • family assessment, life story interviews • preparing life plans • number of drop outs/graduates-reasons why (including DE learners as well)
Development of learning environment in accordance with students' needs, focusing on self-directed learning	• learning organised in accordance with learner's individual growth and readiness for new knowledge independently • very often process based on knowing how to learn	• individual and group session with learners, individually tailored methods and emphasis on contents • appropriate variety of teaching and learning approaches are used • development of learning packages to promote individual progression including those used together with IT (for web moderation)	• demonstration teaching • joint analysis of learning materials and methods • analysis of documents (including DE learners documents as well) • observation
Skills to activate learners	• the process of fulfilling learners' potential on the basis of interest and discovery	• individual motivation • use of individual abilities and experience in a perspective • points for feedback and reflection • skills to create positive relationships through dialogue • adjusting problem-based activities	• situation exercises • demonstration teaching • observation • analysis of IT communication problems solving

Evaluating stage – Organisational dimension

Skills in self-reflection and critical thinking	• raise awareness of learning process and its results • stimulate ability for analysis and viewing things and issues from different points of view	• continuous feedback process • critical approach • problem solving thinking • encouraging review of learners' learning and participation	• demonstration teaching • analysis of demonstration teaching of other colleagues • observation by colleague(s) • analysis of supervision of learners in e-learning format
Skills in evaluating and promoting self-evaluation in oneself and students	• development of ability to follow and assess one's achievements in the learning process	• control and harmony of objectivity and subjectivity • continuous self-evaluation • continuous evaluation • continuous self-checking • skills to set clear learning target and test learners' progress against • clear information about learning outcomes and assessment criteria • activity to set self-analysis tasks for learners	• making learners' evaluation • building in self-check exercises with solutions/key • document analysis (including DE learners documents as well) • observation by colleagues

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All national criteria lists from partner countries.

Chapter 2. Building and developing curricula

2.1   Contributions to the Outline of a Training Device for Adult Educators

Rui Vieira de Castro, Paula Guimarčes and Amélia Vitória Sancho, University of Minho, Portugal

Introduction

It is widely problematic to envisage a curriculum for a training device for adult educators which does not automatically include the features of the areas of educational and training intervention, the groups the educators will be working with, the aims associated with the education activities, the profile of the adult educators going through training as well as organisations that are promoting such a training. On the other hand, since adult educators are gradually more often required to act within a variety of areas, groups and educational aims, it does seem pertinent to envisage the construction of a set of main orientations which may represent adult education as a specialised educational practice.

In this text, these orientations are articulated. Therefore, we intend to explore whether it is possible to define a set of main principles which can be related to explicit frames of reference and which expresses an outlook (among others) on adult education that projects one perspective of aims, a methodological path, an understanding of people involved in the education process. The identified principles show that a stance has been taken regarding adult education and the training of adult educators, which implies an ethical and political commitment based on values oriented to the creation of a freer, fairer and more equal society.

If this training device is put into practice, it may make it possible:
* to identify the action lines and the profile of the adult educator as well as the criteria which are defined in the development of the AGADE Project;
* to identify the various areas and practices which characterise the current field of adult education not only in Portugal but in other European Union countries as well;
* to try out modes of socio-educational intervention;
* to discuss the challenges and obstacles which this intervention faces, namely the impact of the State, of the European Union and of globalisation in the development of these educational activities;
* to analyse significant issues for the current practice of an adult educator;
* to know and be able to outline, develop and evaluate modes of socio-educational intervention.

Curricular decisions taken within the frame of education for adult educators must take into account the following set of basic principles which are explained in this paper:
1. a plural understanding of the concept of adult education;
2. the notion of adult education as a process of permanent education;
3. the recognition of adult education as a practice which promotes democracy and cosmopolitism;
4. the value of the educational dimension of social practices;
5. the notion of adult education as a field of diversified social practices, modes and levels of intervention; and 6. the need for education and training devices which promote the articulation between theory and practice.

A plural understanding of the concept of adult education
First principle

The development of the curriculum of a training device for adult educators must be based on a plural understanding of the concept of adult education, according to the definition which resulted from the Nairobi Meeting (UNESCO, 1977):

> *The group of organised processes of education which allow people who are considered adults by the society they are in to develop their skills, to develop their knowledge, to improve their technical and professional skills or to give them a new direction within the double perspective of Man's whole development and of participation in the socio-economic and cultural development in a balanced and independent way. This notion is regardless of the content, level and method of those organised processes of education, whether they are formal or not, whether they extend or substitute the initial education given in schools and universities as well as in technical education.*

The adult educator must thus be able to participate in a wide set of educational initiatives which are influenced by variables such as the nature of the objectives of the educational activities, the features of the subjects involved in those actions – the way those educational activities affect society, the economy and education, as well as the contextual conditions in which these actions are developed.

Hence,

> *The approach to adult education must be based on people's patrimony, culture, values and previous experiences and the various ways of putting those types of approach into practice must facilitate and stimulate every citizen's active participation and expression. (UNESCO, 1998: 16-17)*

A plural definition of adult education allows us to associate three presuppositions (cf. Delors *et al.,* UNESCO, 1998; Canário, 2001, among others):

- the *continuity* and *complementariness* of education, in diachronic terms, valuing other periods of education besides those experienced in school, since we consider that the lifelong involvement in education processes is relevant and that adulthood (and not only childhood and adolescence) is an equally significant education time. For adult education to go on through life, it will have to be considered a right, accompanied by supporting measures, in order to create the following necessary conditions for the people and the communities to face future challenges: an informed and tolerant citizenship, autonomy, the sense of responsibility, the reinforced ability to face the transformations of economy, culture and society, coexistence, tolerance and conscious and creative participation;
- the *diversity* of education regarding formalisation as formal, non-formal and informal actions are outlined, in terms of organizations which promote education (schools and other establishments, such as companies, associations, etc.), and regarding the context, the professional, social, community, group and/or family environment. An efficient interconnection between the formal, non-formal systems and ways of promoting learning and informal education become important in order to achieve the following purposes: to create an educational society striving for social justice and general well-being in which the State plays a relevant role in the interaction, in the creation of opportunities and in the articulation of the links between the traditional teaching and education institutions and the organisations which promote education directly or indirectly, the companies as working places, the civil society organisations, the trade unions, the social movements, among others;
- the *globality* of education, regarding the one involved in education and training. Therefore, education will have to take into account the subject as a whole and the diversity among individuals regarding their gender, age, social group and their social and cultural background, etc. Thus, education must be global in the way educational practices affect the local, national and global areas. In contemporary times, which are shaped by many transformations, adult education plays an essential and specific role in order to provide everyone with the means to respond to an ever-changing world in a constructive way and to provide education which acknowledges adults' rights and duties in the promotion of democracy, of justice, of citizenship, equality and participation.

The notion of adult education as a process of permanent education
Second principle

The creation of a device for adult educators will have to be based on the understanding of adult education as *permanent education* or *lifelong education* (cf. Faure *et al.,* 1972), which implies an educational process within adults' life. This means it cannot be exclusively conceived as a moment of preparation *for* life or *for a stage* in life. *Lifelong education* helps to define adult education as a path in which one "learns how to be". According to this conceptual frame, adult education: i) enables creating conditions for adults to acquire information through scientific, technological, social and cultural development; ii) favours the existence of an attitude of scientific search and constant questioning of the world and of the occurring changes; iii) promotes a critical view on beliefs, convictions, ideologies, habits and customs which cannot be seen as immutable patterns or rules; iv) encourages the acquisition of knowledge and changes in people's behaviour and attitudes (Lengrand, 1989: 8). Education in general and adult education in particular must thus be valued as a political problem and educational processes must be centred on goals (and not necessarily on the means), which means that adult learners are the agents of their own education.

A training device for adult educators will need to promote four main learning topics equally: *learning how to know, learning how to do, learning how to live together with each other, and learning how to be* (Delors *et al.,* 1996:77-103). The educational processes which adults develop throughout their lives may contemplate envisage multidimensional actions. This favours the notion of adult education as a practice which includes *lifelong learning,* as it is known by the European Union (European Commission, 2000) and goes beyond this definition. Though this issue reopens the discussion begun by permanent education (cf. Faure *et al.,* 1972 e Delors *et al.,* 1996) on the challenges and changes faced by Western societies, namely by the European Union, the concept of lifelong learning stresses specific challenges such as the necessary acquisition and renovation of skills by individuals in the knowledge society, the increase of the levels of investment in human resources, the assessment of learning outcomes, the development of efficient teaching and learning methods to satisfy the demands of the job market, the access to information, the supervision of the quality of this supply and the importance of providing adult students with appropriate learning opportunities (European Commission, 2000: 4). Though this may be an interesting view of *lifelong learning,* it is nonetheless reductive, as it gives priority to

the means, to efficiency, quality, competitiveness, productivity and employability. *Lifelong learning* is thus understood as a strategy to reinforce the European dimension of education and training, within a global policy which allows the European Union to be consolidated within the global competitive space in 2010 (cf. European Commission, 2004 and 2005). Despite its relevance, this concept has to be understood as a significant part of a lifelong education approach to education in general and to adult education in specific.

The recognition of adult education as a practice which promotes democracy and cosmopolitism
Third principle

Adult education is currently going through complex times as there are tensions between discourses of democracy and citizenship and discourses which favour *lifelong learning* and professional training as commonly understood by many organisations at a regional, national or international/global level. *Lifelong education* is now clearly less significant, whereas *lifelong learning* is supported by policies which are defined and developed by institutions such as the European Union (see European Commission, 2000; 2004; and 2005; among other documents). The impact of such policies has to be stressed as one has to consider that rules for the development of some programmes and initiatives are quite strict because the funding is involved and becomes an essential concern for all of those involved in the promotion of adult education initiatives. This means that some initiatives such as the Courses of Adult Education and Training and the Recognition, Validation and Certification of Skills that in Portugal are supported by the Directorate of Vocational Training or even those promoted by the Institute of Employment, by companies and the Public Administration or supported by the European Union programmes, including European Union Social Fund, do not allow for diverse understandings of adult education as a plural field of practice, as such applications are based on restricted conceptions of adult learners (socially excluded groups, women, unemployed, etc.), of the structure of initiatives (as courses or other rigidly structured education activities are favoured), etc.

We thus live in contradictory times: on the one hand, most recent history shows us that in Western contemporary societies such as Portugal, the defence of democracy and citizenship in education has promoted policies which stress the exercise of democratic rights and duties, as well as adults' active participation in public life – these policies have sought to promote social learning, choice and action, the conflict of interests and discussion, participation and emancipation; on the other hand, in the current political and social context of globalisation, within the context of the European Union, there are policies which promote a subordination to the market and which stress competition, efficiency, competence, employability and consumers' *empowerment* (not citizens' *empowerment*) (Lima, 1995: 39).

This contradiction is based on the development of two different and opposing trends that challenge Western societies. Besides the values of democracy and citizenship, those of social justice, freedom and equality have also been considered in the promoted social policies. In a more liberal and humanistic sense, justice is intimately linked to distributive policies and is centred on the needs of people as free and equal citizens who fully participate in society. However, this justice which guarantees citizens the right to social and economic security, education and health, among others, has been threatened by the crisis of the Welfare State and by new types of discrimination and exclusion, as well as by the naturalisation of new forms of social Darwinism (Lima, 1995: 40). Therefore, to face this conflict, Carlos Vilar Estźvčo's argument may be an important reference for the construction of an adult education training device:

> […] citizens must be treated as equals regarding the public intervention in every social sphere, though the class structure may place them in unequal positions in terms of sharing benefits and the distribution of inequalities, hence in terms of justice. […] the issue of justice, mainly seen as 'a fair distribution of social goods', is essential in any society in order to survive as an adult and democratic political community. (2001:11)

The creation of a training device for adult educators will necessarily rely on values of democracy, citizenship, justice, equality and solidarity among equals – values that are essential in the times we are living in (Santos, 1998:9). It will thus be open to question and will seek ways of reinventing and democratising democracy (Lima, 1995 e Santos, 1998). This understanding of democracy emphasises the pluralistic and interdependent development of societies in individual and global terms, the respect for cultural diversity, senses and objectives, social responsibility, the participation in its various aspects, in the promotion of an emancipatory policy based on a cosmopolitan perspective, at a global level as the struggle at a national level seems to be insufficient (cf. Archibugi, 2000), which will enable cosmopolitism, in a trial to articulate the cosmopolitan approach to democracy and education and the dialogical approach (Estevčo, 2004).

The value of the educational dimension of social practices
Fourth principle

It is important to consider that any education project, namely an adult education project, always has a political dimension which must be examined. Any educational action is performed in an arena that includes different perceptions, interests and motivations which may enable emancipatory initiatives, trials for social justice, participation, democracy and transformation of adults' current situation or alienation and submission activities. Therefore, education projects cannot be understood as neutral processes, as they are isolated from the historical conditions of production and from the ideological processes which support them (cf. Giroux, 1983. 86). From this perspective, education must allow the evaluation of structures of possibility (Idem, 1992: 61), for adults to reflect, act, transform their daily life through the promotion of processes aiming at the creation of opportunities which can appropriate and transform reality. The critical awareness of realities, associated to the understanding of the political dimensions of the different forms of knowledge, is the main objective. Educators' and adults' work will not be isolated from the rest of the world and its challenges and tension and education cannot be subordinated to economic rationality in functional terms, if it is instead committed to the human, social, environmental areas which are far-removed from a goal-oriented and alienating thought.

Therefore, it is important for adult education to permit a critical reflection on the social practices in social processes as well as an understanding of how adults see their lives and the types of individual and collective action. These practices, commonly taken for granted, have to be analysed, discussed, deconstructed, problematised and transformed. as they usually contain hidden power and knowledge relations benefiting some of us and harming others.

Thus this training device is to attempt to bring reflection closer to action; to promote dialogue; to contextualise the training action, so that it means something to the educators being trained; to overcome inequalities among those involved in the education processes; to favour the appropriation and transformation of reality; to be aware that education is not a neutral process in political terms. The establishment of the objectives and outcomes of the initiatives is thus an essential stage in trying to deconstruct social and educational practices that are taken for grated and in looking at these practices according to aims that involve educational intentionality. Within this framework, reflective and critical adult education can be conceived as a tool for transforming adults' perspective of the world and of their own lives.

The notion of adult education as a field of diversified social practices, modes and levels of intervention
Fifth principle

Given that adult education comprises a heterogeneous field of practices, it must also include a diversified set of dimensions and intervention areas. Although, as stated by Licínio C. Lima (cf. Lima, 1992: 180), there may be a gap between theoretical thought, scientific production and such practices, i.e. a gap between the conception projects and educational action that have to be contextualised in current societal challenges, adult educators have to consider the diversity of their field and the sparse development of some modes of education. From the perspective of pedagogic initiatives, these premises show the existence of several *modes of education* which not only include teaching (basic, secondary, higher and/or post-graduate, etc.) but also learning, training, vocational training, personal development, leisure times occupation and civic education and intervention, among others. They also suggest: different e*ducation models*, such as those which are based on the transmission of knowledge or on the reproduction of types of behaviour, but also those which focus on questioning knowledge. They include a variety of *participants*, i.e. those seeking new information and certification for economic and professional reasons, and/or those who wish to get involved in social, political, civic or cultural matters, to improve their economic and professional situation, to fill their free time or to participate in political and civic life as a citizen.

This diversity must be seen within a training device of this type, since all the existing educational practices often tend towards formalisation and the reproduction of the school model. Moreover, as mentioned by Rui Canário, school has instituted a socialisation mode which has become hegemonic and given rise to a process of naturalisation which has become evident due to the increase of available courses, particularly after World War II, supported by the traditional school approach. This phenomenon has affected the non-school modes of education based on learning and/or learning through experience and, more specifically, the variety of educational initiatives directed at adults. Hence, there has been a decrease in the diversity of education modes which consider adult experience as not being an obstacle to knowledge (Canário, 2001: 86-87) and an increase in rigid structured initiatives. Within this context, the school feature will have to be extracted from adult education and adults' experience revalued on epistemological grounds, promoting modes of non-formal and informal education and reflecting on knowledge derived from experience.

Consequently, these aspects will have to be taken into account when creating a training device for adult educators, since the regular presence of an integrating, coordinating and mediating educator that has a global perspective of adult education may be important for adults with less experience and perhaps less prepared for educational activities, helping them to analyse their reactions to the various (formal or non-formal) agents and to learn how to select the information they can extract from each experience. This figure will be particularly relevant for adults who have never attended or are less experienced in adult education initiatives, owing to the fact that adult education has modes, various educational elements and spaces that may involve people who have different contexts of life.

Apart from experience, when considering the diversity of practices and types of intervention we cannot forget the various operating levels at which the practices of adult education occur. This diversity includes the agents as well as the organisations, and reveals different operating levels (local, regional, national and international). The initiatives cannot be exclusively considered from "top-down" but also and mainly "bottom-up", where the local dimension intersects the global one. It thus becomes important to develop intervention modes which are seen as public spaces of action and which illustrate dialogicity, i.e. a polyphonic dialogue.

The need for training devices which promote articulation between theory and practice
Sixth principle

A training device for adult educators has to rely on a transdisciplinary approach. This method is based on the choice of a theme and of the various disciplines which characterise it; it must cover various information areas around a real or simulated situation or problem and simultaneously attempt to guarantee a transfer between the knowledge and the cognitive strategies. Reality is complex and an adult education approach needs to take into consideration this complexity, searching for the different insights to analysis and plural understandings of each situation.

Therefore, we feel that curriculum development is a process of the representation, training and transformation of social life within society; the practice of the curriculum and the students' curricular experience must be seen as a whole, in a synthetic and globalising way which goes beyond the more reductive perspectives of the particular specialities and subjects (Kemmis, 1988: 14). The reproduction of contents and skills within a traditional academic and content basis does not seem to fulfil the complexity of living in a contemporary society and an adult educator's training device cannot avoid the confrontation with challenges we face every day.

On the other hand, it is relevant for a curriculum to be able to provide an articulation between theory and practice which simultaneously covers an initial set of theoretical functions as a means to regulate practice and which allows practice to give way to theories. This new approach to the problem paves the way to a wider reflection and the possibility to understand the bond between theory and practice as historically formed, socially and historically built and practised (Idem, Ibidem:44). Theory needs practice to be produced and to be developed; action always has to be supported by a conceptual and theoretical framework, even if people don't realise this fact and act according to assumptions that are taken for granted.

The creation of a training device for adult educators must thus consider a set of data aimed at a global and specific educational plan which reflects the values and orientations of the social framework to which it belongs. In this context, this curriculum stems from the needs of current societies, namely the adults' needs in contemporary society, as well as from the specific practices which we have previously mentioned. But this curriculum must also consider the adults' needs since it needs to be conceived and structured according to the adult (Roldčo & Marques, 2001), apart from the acquired knowledge, the evaluation methods, instruments and management guidelines of the learning process.

In spite of presenting a broadened character and an experimentation pattern of formulation, these principles were conceived on one hand as a basis for the design, development and evaluation of a training device for adult educators and, on the other, for being analysed, discussed, deconstructed and assessed in the implementation of this training device. Therefore, let this paper be a challenge for those involved in the creation of an European Course of Adult Educators, but also for the adult educators engaged in this training and in their field of practice, so that the relevance and meaning of this document may be emphasised or eventually transformed.

Final notes

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2.2   Ten Necessary Steps to Curriculum Formulation

Ivo Eesmaa, Estonian Non-formal Adult Education Association

A curriculum is not a technical document that lays out subject distribution and subjects to be learned and taught, as well as allocating scope and setting objectives. A curriculum is a system of planned activities which should ensure its most effective functioning as a supporter of human learning. The more activities supporting learning the curriculum contains, the more effective it is in supporting the learner's progress. By this, I mean all that provides the learner with an opportunity to do and experience things as much as possible and as diversely as possible. Informal or so-called unintended learning is as important, if not more important. Unintended learning happens on an everyday basis mainly through interaction with other people, but also as a result of the impact of the immediate environment.

The following outlines necessary steps in the formulation of a curriculum in their chronological order. According to the author of this article, it is impossible to achieve the necessary changes without following each of the steps.

It is important for all teachers to be involved in every step!

Step One:
Specify what is it that we want to change. Define terminology. So that for all those involved with the curriculum it will be unambiguous.

Step Two:
Pinpoint the starting point and think over for ourselves, as well as for the others, what might happen if we do not pay the necessary attention to a particular problem.

Step Three:
Create models of the terminology in question for observation as a phenomenon and process, mostly in order to view the changes occurring in the models in their chronological order and logical correlation with other events.

Step Four:
With the aid of the experts and using models created beforehand, determine the present situation and the main contradictions/conflicts that have created the problem.

Step Five:
Find out how the contradiction/conflict in question has come about and changed into a problem with a different meaning and importance. This is how the circumstances fostering and precluding the formation as well as tackling and minimising of the contradiction/conflict will be determined. In laying out the plan for our future work, we will concentrate only on these circumstances.

Step Six:
Visualise the situation in the near or more distant future and imagine the situation that should be attained in the near or more distant future, i.e. specify clearly fixed views on the objective and the direction. The objective is the situation that should be achieved by a particular deadline; while the direction is the course we should follow all the time.

Step Seven:
With the help of the experts, outline the opportunities for a purposeful change of the existing situation.

Step Eight:
Define the subjects through which it is possible to provoke the necessary changes.
Assign to each subject a purpose in the process of the changes. With this in mind, formulate the subject syllabi, as well as lay out their content and scope. Lay out the areas of integration of the syllabi.

Step Nine:
Formulate the criteria according to which it would be possible to draw conclusions and assess ourselves as well as others who participated in the process, to evaluate the activities as well as the outcomes and consequences.

Step Ten:
Specify the means, deadlines, etc. for forwarding information and giving feedback. To determine the quality, we should find out to what extent the curriculum:

a. Satisfies the needs of the learners and the employees of the learners;
b. Corresponds to particular normative concepts;
c. Tallies with the stereotypes of human culture, national culture, and personal culture;
d. Fits the needs likely to arise in the future.

A curriculum formulated in the described way has the following advantages:
*   It creates a system necessary for teachers to understand each other. It also establishes an understanding of the ideals, values and attitudes behind the endeavours, judgements, etc. of the participants in the learning process. The teachers of the course will form a team!
*   It provides an opportunity to organise studies and employ the results in the process of curriculum-related decision-making.
*   It provides an opportunity to organise the necessary training course for the teachers and for teachers to advise each other.
*   The established synergy enables an attainment of the maximum result using a minimum of resources.

2.3　Life as a Patchwork. Reflecting on Adult Educators' Learning Experiences

Paula Guimarčes, Amélia Vitória Sancho and Raquel Oliveira, University of Minho, Portugal

The purpose of this text is to understand the conceptions of learning experiences that adult educators have while working and to explore these conceptions towards their training as practitioners. The main assumptions underpinning this paper are the importance for adult educators of experience in the workplace and informal learning. Informal learning is an open, indeterminate, flexible and not necessarily organised process that favours rapid adjustments to changes. As it is not a linear process, it is frequently interrupted, resumed and discontinued according to requirements, constraints, arbitrary and contingent possibilities, which depend on the existence of an opportunity to learn and the capacity of the adult educator to seize it and to change behaviour and attitudes (Pain, 1990). However, as informal learning is more significant to practitioners, owing to its importance in secondary socialisation (Berger & Luckman, 1975), formal learning, understood as the explicit knowledge developed in a structured and formalised learning setting, and non-formal learning, seen as a less structured way of learning, are also approached in this paper, as we consider that these forms can also be relevant for adult educators' training.

The discussion contained in this text is organised in two different parts. The first relies on reflecting on and understanding the stories of the learners who joined the the test-course of the A Good Adult Educator in Europe project (AGADE) from eight countries of the European Union[*1]. As these narratives were "detachment fragments" of professional lives told by a "constellation of voices" (Clarke, 2003: 42), they were analysed as a life-patchwork, an interpretation that would frame quite distinct learning experiences. In a second part, the contribution of this training method to the formation of adult educators is critically examined by comparing two different voices, from the trainers and a trainee, all involved in the mentioned test-course.

[*1] These stories were written in English by many adults who didn't have this idiom as their mother tongue. We believe that this fact iinfluenced the structure and the content of the narratives though it did not change their sense.

Reflecting on and understanding narratives
Telling stories: description of work achieved by learners

The collected stories were the outcome of a training task proposed to learners in the first part of the AGADE test-course that took place on a distance education basis. For this purpose, learners had to perform the exercise entitled Sharing relevant learning – life stories (Module 1 - Sharing Experiences, Knowledge and Perspectives: Building a training map), by which they were asked to share relevant learning experiences as adult educators. Therefore, the challenge was to write three texts (maximum of 4000 words each) in which three different learning events were told about stories which occurred after concluding the adult educators' training and that would be relevant to understanding how learners had become adult educators.

Some suggestions were given to learners. Stories could be related to: a) The moment when learners did the most relevant learning in terms of being adult educators; b) The colleague, the tutor, the friend, etc. with whom learners studied; c) The mistake that made learners learn; d) The problem that learners faced as adult educators that made them learn; d) The example means of which learners gained knowledge; e) What learners learned with a trainee, a student, etc; f) New information and communication technologies that made learners learn; g) New rules that made learners learn; h) New tasks that learners had to perform that made them learn; i) A chance that made learners learn; j) The right question at the right time that made learners learn;

k) The situation in which learners learned with their colleagues; l) The moment when learners learned via their or somebody else's learning mistake.

Initially, this task was oriented to the *individualisation* of a narrative by the self-reflection on a relevant learning event. Secondly, writing a narrative led to its detachment due to the effort of *imposing a distance* between experience and reflection upon what had been learned.

Learning in the workplace. Specificities of organisational contexts and work identities

The collected stories[*2] show the plurality of adult education as a field of practice, as they referred to different kinds of experiences, involving several actors engaged in quite distinct situations. Some narratives included teachers, trainers, coordinators of education departments, as well as students, adults, young people or children. Events told occurred in very different organisations, like schools, public high schools, non-governmental organisations, enterprises, State-funded institutions, in fluid contexts like research projects on adult education or included in activities that somehow were related to adult education.

This plurality was expressed by the diversity of workplaces in which adult educators develop their professional activities and of their learning experiences. Thus, adult educators seem to perform a wide range of jobs and tasks. Some narratives refer to learners who did learn relevant things as educators or teachers, others as adult educators, managers, researchers or even students when accomplishing further formal and non-formal education courses. However, there seem to be gaps in terms of the distribution of tasks among adult educators, whether these learners are trainers, local development agents, teachers, etc. For instance, some tasks were more likely to be developed by teachers and trainers, as learning experiences mainly referred to events which happened in a classroom. Others were implemented by coordinators and/or people in charge of departments or adult education initiatives, namely these related to administration and management of initiatives. Therefore, it seems that job differentiation among these adult educators was mainly linked to the area of their professional area intervention, as this had a major influence on learning experiences.

Professional settings are characterised by complexity and specificities and offer potential learning situations via which learners can develop themselves. In this sense, the workplace is an arena for secondary socialisation as the reproduction of rules is not only achieved but new ways of acting are also created and recreated according to adult educators' aims and strategies. Adult educators' aims and strategies become then more coherent with their world of practice. There is then the internalisation of institutional sub-worlds whose extension and nature are determined by the complexity of the division of labour and the distribution of social knowledge (Berger & Luckman, 1975: 158).

Learners' professional behaviour and attitudes were therefore also shaped by workplace rules due to the nature and structure of work in organisations of contemporary societies, rules that had existed for a long time or even changed recently, favouring the existence of identities that are simultaneously professional and work identities (cf. Jarvis, 1992: 187-189). As adult education is a large field of practice in an initial phase of development (see UNESCO 1977 and 1998), it seems that it was the kind of work developed by learners that was more evident in terms of identities' construction, a task that is very different in itself according to the social, cultural, economic and political contexts in which people, organisations and projects are engaged. On the one hand, learners seemed to be involved in different organisational contexts and perform several tasks in a field of practice characterised by heterogeneity and sometimes a lack of congruence. On the other hand, owing to the diversity of roles and learning experiences, one can stress that a single adult educator identity couldn't be found; rather, there were multiple identities as a result of the specificities of the workplace.

These multiple identities seem to be the cause and the result of the lack of social acknowledgement that adult educators face in particular countries. The need to recognise adult educators as professionals has been emphasised on several occasions (for the analysis of the Portuguese case see Lima et al. 1988; Silva & Rothes, 1998; and Pinto, Matos & Rothes, 1998; Guimarães, Silva & Sancho, 1998; among others). In spite of current analysis and existing recommendations, this lack is still a fact and it affects many professionals not only in terms of professional relationships with organisations in which these practitioners are working, but also due to their profile and material conditions which have a considerable impact on difficulties in the recognition of individual competences and in finding reference frames for occupations skills. To a certain extent, this was expressed by the fact that learners considered themselves quite differently. For instance, some said that they were educators, teachers and adult educators; yet there were also craftsmen/women, designers, managers and coordinators among the test-course learners. For the few who considered themselves adult educators, this awareness dated back almost to when they were born, as their parents were teachers; however for many, being an adult educator was an option that happened late in life and a few became adult educators by chance.

[*2] The collected data was provided by 12 learners who told 30 different stories regarding learning. This paper includes the most meaningful narratives told according to the purpose of our analysis and at least one story narrated by each participant.

Different levels of skilled performance

The second impression was that learners showed different levels of skilled performance which had a significant impact on their formation as adult educators . According to Benner (1984), a first level of skilled performance is a move from reliance on abstract principles to the use of past concrete experience as a paradigm. This fact is quite expressive if we consider stories told by people with few years of experience in a specific field of practice. For instance, it helps us to understand the difference between the impact of formal education on the way people learn at the beginning of a professional career, and on the way those who have worked for a long time for whom patterns of analysis that emerge from diverse learning experiences seem to be more significant in the way they look at their work and their lives.

According to these different levels of skilled performance, making sense of experiences by telling a story can reveal different aspects in which adult educators are living. Therefore, from data collected, some narratives showed concerns and preoccupations about what they have learned at university and from life experience; they also stressed some recent events, aspects or dimensions of a specific situation. This contemporary dimension of learning and the lack of further reflective experience were evident in the following narrative in which doubts, questions as well as anger are expressed.

> According to what I have learned at university, to be a good adult educator we should not have a distant relationship with participants of an adult education initiative. We must be close, similar and we should break the wall that usually exists between the educator on the one side and the student/trainee on the other one, considering that this is the only means to set up the favourable conditions for the learning process.
>
> This perspective made me feel that I should be close, kind and affective with all people that I deal with.
>
> (…) Sometimes adults behave as if they were children, they require more than what they need in fact, they claim for small and insignificant aspects, they feel too "comfortable". What I think is that the main idea with people is that things are as they are, that we don't have to figure out or to catch all that we feel or think is not always right; experience showed me that my own way of relating with them sometimes leads to bad results, such as being abused for my willingness to help. This makes me feel exhausted and without energy, not only because of their demands, but also because I don't have enough emotional distance from them. That is something that makes me too worried about and concentrated on them. Nothing happens (good or bad) without my concern and dedication being involved, which is very destructive for my well-being and vigour. This is a process of change which I am undergoing. (Story 3 P)

The second level of skilled performance is a change in the learner's perception of the demand situation, in which the situation is seen less and less as a compilation of equally relevant bits, and more and more as a complete whole in which only certain parts are relevant. That fact can be identified by the content of stories and the way people tell them. The single fact, the emphasis on descriptions give way to more comprehensive narratives in which the answer to the question "why" is quite meaningful.

> (…) At the beginning of our life we follow examples, our mother's one. We will be able to speak, walk following her. Hence parents have a great responsibility because they always have to provide good role models. Later in the education system being a behaviour model becomes very important.….. We make models and follow them in the future too. Responsibility is much greater for teachers, because they have to provide good examples to many children, unlike parents. One learns throughout life. Thus, they follow examples and always want to be a role model. In the adult education system the educator has to provide good examples and has to educate people. This is a little difficult, because there are mostly individuals. The High Folk School in Balatonszepezd on the Balaton-upland wants the people living in disadvantaged villages to return to the labour market as successful employees. Adult educators in our case often meet people whom they have to educate not only in academic terms but for real life too. We have to set a trustworthy pattern for them. We have to care about our clothing, talking, behaviour and so on. During our training I met an educator who didn't come on time, her clothing was dirty and she didn't talk to us as colleagues. I was sad, I never followed her example. (Story 8)

The third level is the passage from detached observer to involved performer. The performer no longer stands outside the situation but is involved in the situation (Benner, 1984: 13). This level that can be emphasised by the practitioners' involvement is quite relevant for adult education as a field of practice. If it is agreed that adult education is supported by different kinds of traditions (see for instance Finger & Asún, 2001), the involvement in the developed work is an important aspect for adult educators. In collected data, this involvement was evident in some stories that reflected on general aspects of professional life, like wide evaluations of the impact of learning in adult educators and the importance of being involved, in the sense that learning experiences seem to form a self-critical whole for adult educators' formation.

Perhaps, I could say that some people gave me a particular lesson or some particular things or events created situations which can be considered as a learning environment or learning context or preconditions for learning to happen. What I want to argue is that all these things, to my mind, are pre-conditions for a learning experience to happen and learning to take place. At this point, I would also like to clarify that learning is an outcome which changes our previous thinking on some issues which influence and change our former practice. When learning takes place, we start thinking about some things in a different way that we used to up to a certain moment, or we behave differently from what we used to in certain situations. Then when and how does it happen? These changes occur when we reflect about the people we met, the questions they asked or the information they gave us, when we think and try to understand why certain situations or events happened to us. Second, we have to analyse them and draw self-critical conclusions, i.e., first of all, admit things about ourselves which we had not admitted or had not been aware of. And after admitting them, we must start changing our thinking and behaviour.

Thus, in my opinion, the essence of all learning – its main source, main path and condition is critical self-reflection followed by practice. (Story 11 A)

Learning in different times, spaces and contexts

The engagement and involvement, being professionals at different stages of skilled performances, can express the adult educators' *theory-in-use*, understood as a relatively stable element in the flow of interpretations and accounts for the identity and continuity of organisations that binds together norms, strategies, assumptions and detailed rules of action (Argyris & Schön, 1978). However, internal but also external events produce learning experiences that are pressures to change to the *theory-in-use* of each learner. The collected narratives are about events that changed the way learners looked at their professional lives and the way they envisaged their practice.

This way, a relevant number of collected stories refer to events that force people to react fast supported by *implicit and tacit knowledge*. According to Schön (1983:50), the mentioned moments relate to the need of making sense of things, as "There is some puzzling, or troubling, or interesting phenomenon with which the individual is trying to deal. As he tries to make sense of it, he also reflects on the understandings which have been implicit in his action, understandings which he surfaces, criticizes, restructures, and embodies in further action." Therefore, stories stress knowing-on-action in more complex situations. According to Schön (Idib: 26) "We may reflect on action, thinking back on what we have done in order to discover how our knowing-in-action may have contributed to an unexpected outcome. We may do so after the fact, in tranquillity, or we may pause in the midst of the action to make what Hannah Arendt calls a 'stop-and-think'."

Knowing-on-action is one of the processes supporting informal learning that may occur in several settings, but it is not classroom-based or highly structured, and control of the learning rests primarily in the hands of the learner (cf. Marsick & Watkins, 1990:12). Foley argues that "This sort of learning occurs when people consciously try to learn form their experience. It involves individual or group reflection and discussion, but does not involve formal instruction." (Foley, 2004: 4-5). Thus, informal learning challenges traditional knowledge bases (Dybbroe & Ollagnier, 2003: 16).

From the collected data, we find these distinct forms of learning in stories that refer to *informal learning* as a result of: i) mistakes or problems faced by people. In these cases the need and urgency to solve a specific problem is the most significant aspect of the learning process; ii) interpersonal relations with a mentor, colleagues, students, etc. as far as learning from interpersonal relations is concerned; iii) achieving new tasks that need to be performed quickly and which require a fast and efficient answer from the learners, involving the acquisition of new knowledge supported by observation, imitation and adaptation by being able to perform according to the rules and by being able to do; iv) the confrontation between formal knowledge and practice; and v) mislearning/miseducation.

Mistakes and problem-solving: learning experiences with a relevant impact

Several stories refer to mistakes and the need of solving problems faced in professional life. Some related to trials and errors in what is defined by Schön (1987: 27) in the following way: "In the midst of action, I invented procedures to solve the problem, discovered further unpleasant surprises, and make further corrective inventions, including the several minor ones necessary to carry out the idea of using string to measure diagonals." These experiences are seen by learners as mistakes, some more unpleasant than others, in what is believed by many to be one of the more efficient ways of learning.

In the early years of my professional life I had to develop as a trainer a module on adult education pedagogy. There were several trainers; we had previously agreed on the contents and pedagogic strategies. I worked hard on my contents, the methods I would work with in training sessions and I was quite happy about the result.

I started the course and, just after having started, trainees asked me several questions related to the structure of the course, the aims, the other trainers, etc. They were not happy about what was going on in the course, about what was being taught. I thought that they were not very clear in their demands; they wanted something different but I didn't understand what it was.

I then tried to adapt my knowledge, what I knew, to what trainees said they wanted to learn. In these sessions I thought about something different and tried to have some work done with trainees. Of course, as I didn't have enough time to think about it and how to do it, I believe that it was a total disaster. I wanted to say things which were not previously prepared, thought, agreed upon by my other colleagues and which were not even in the programme. Trainees were not really interested in what I was saying because it didn't make sense with the rest of the contents. The trainees' evaluation of my module was not good at all.

I believe that this was a mistake which taught me it is important to listen to others' demands and complaints, but one must not forget that the work that all trainers were developing was previously agreed upon and it made sense as a whole in itself. (Story 6 T)

Other narratives present a confrontation of expectations, owing to conflicts occurring as a result of different understandings of a moment, an initiative or a task and other stories to problem-solving, doing something adequately or not.

The second (learning moment) was when I was working for a pharmaceutical company and I had to train groups of pharmacists in the working of a new IT system. They had very different expectations of what the training would be like – I had set the training to be interactive and explorative and they expected to be fed the information! (Story 1 J)

When I was doing my apprenticeship I had to organise an afternoon meal for children of a poor neighbourhood in Porto. I decided to give these children food that I wanted them to have (milk with chocolate, nice scones) and not what they were used to eating (they hardly ate twice a day and when they had some food it was bread without butter and milk without chocolate). The fact was that they didn't eat at all what I prepared for them. I was astonished. But they were not used to the kind of food I was used to. What I have learned is that you have to listen to people, know them in order to satisfy their preferences. (Story 7 A)

Some narratives related to experiences based on observation of a problematic situation and on learning that occurred when adult educators realised that the invented solution was an interesting one.

In another job I had, in a cultural organisation, we once arranged an annual meeting that included a complex and slightly chaotic development process. We wanted all the representatives to be present at the meeting, approx. 150, took part in this process, but in such a way that they were both heard as individuals and as representatives of a group. A couple of consultants used to working with organisational development were in charge of the process. I was quite impressed by their ability to lead the process without anarchy being the final result. (Story 2 L)

The problem that I would like to share with the participants of the AGADE course happened to me 10 years ago. When I started my career at the institute I had neither experience nor knowledge in adult education. But I had to work and face this problem every day. I would very often hear complaints from adult learners who were taught like children and who felt treated as pupils of a school. And I got interested in the issue of "how adults should be taught". (Story 9 Z)

Learning with others: the importance of sharing

A relevant number of stories refer to learning with colleagues, with a student or a mentor, namely to moments when sharing experiences and knowledge happen. Learning with others may also be something that somebody says is the right way of doing something or a way that we have seen others doing something, as it may happen with learning with a mentor, but we can also consider that it may be learning that something should never be done or learning from the bad example.

Once I worked in a school for psychiatric patients. One of my colleagues was working with art therapy methods and I listened carefully to everything she said in order to get interesting ideas for my own teaching. (Story 2 M)

There are a few situations where I have learned a lot from my colleagues. The first was when I was working in the Language Department of a third level college in Northern Spain. All the teachers were from different countries, taught different languages and used different methods. All we had in common was that we were all teaching adults – it was a great experience as we all thought and helped each other with our work. (Story 1 F)

Since I started to work at the Unit for Adult education I have been working with a very famous professor of Sociology of Education, someone that was for a long time the Head of the Unit. I learned my work here with him (with Vitoria as well), the way I deal with things, the way I look at subjects and problems but also relevant issues in adult education, namely: whose side I am on, who profits from education and who loses from it, etc. I believe that in most decisions I have to take I always think about what he would do before deciding anything. He is a kind of a mentor to me. Even if I decide differently, his words are relevant to me because I believe that he is direct, objective, fair and usually sees things that are "behind the curtain" in terms of who is going to get something good from an event or initiative and who is going to be harmed. (Story 6 U)

Learning from new tasks: the urgent need to make sense of things

Learning by doing was also emphasised by learners, namely learning in new professional situations by the need to develop fast and in an appropriate way tasks of a different job or work context. In some of these stories the anxiety of learning is relevant as a new professional situation is simultaneously challenging and stressful.

I was new in a company designing and building trade fair stands and exhibitions. My boss told me to start making a logo for a group of exhibitors. I had never done anything like that before and felt quite at a loss. However, I started thinking and drawing and eventually presented my idea to the people who had commissioned the logo. It turned out that they wanted something very different. In a sense it is possible to say that I learnt by making a mistake, but I was still quite pleased, because I thought my logo was rather good, even if it was not used. I had shown myself that I could do something I thought I could not do. (Story 2 I)

Being a mediator of an Adult Education and Training Course I was asked to perform some "logistics" tasks concerning the implementation and the development of the course. These tasks involved filling out forms and documents to be sent to the General Department for Vocational Education and Training (within the Ministry of Education) and to the programme which finances this type of initiatives. Simultaneously, I had to conduct all the procedures according to the Quality Process which was implemented by the cooperative. I had to learn how to do all this in the right way and I had to become aware of a new brand of adult education language like: "client" instead of "adult", "output" instead of "goal"; and many others… (Story 5 S)

Some time ago I was a manager of an adult development department and had a Danish-Finnish partnership project. For me this project was a door to andragogy. Participation in the project helped me understand that adults can learn everything if they are motivated to learn and if the right method of teaching is used. Adults, myself included, acquire our own knowledge. My best teachers are children, students, my grandmother, my teachers and different life situations. I have my roles of a teacher as a bearer of culture, a public figure, an organiser, a researcher, a facilitator. That needs every sort of competence for me: willingness to take risks, ability to concentrate, ability to synthesise, intensity of ego, flexibility, tolerance, empathy, etc. (Story 4 Q)

One can't follow one's chosen career. The reasons can be external, which show off the life. In my case I studied at a university of agrarian studies, because I couldn't find a job for me in this scope. I had to live my life according to rules and it was not easy. So the first rule was for me that I had to do a lot in order to change/ chance my future plans, ideas. To settle this problem wasn't so easy in the region where I live (in the surrounding district/area of Lake Balaton). I like to look after children (I have made many ceramics with them) so it was the basic initiative to go on with our foundation. Today we can state with pleasure that we succeeded in finding a job which suits me. After having established our foundation I have had to face more new rules than ever before and I have had to learn to adapt myself to these new conditions. The first rule for me is the fact that I can rely only on myself if I want to be sure about having tasks really arranged. The second rule is that everything has to be checked. The third rule is that money changes people. The fourth rule is that things which are natural to me may be not natural to other people. A sad rule is the fifth, that a lot of people expect success without having to do anything for it. The sixth rule is that most of people aren't able to use empirical knowledge for positive actions. These are rules based on my own experiences after beginning real LIFE, after finishing studies during which we were protected by teachers and schools and family from the above-mentioned experiences. (Story 12 B)

Confrontation between formal knowledge and practice: the disenchanted discovery

One of the collected stories was about the confrontation between formal education and learning developed in professional life, namely in the implementation of work tasks. This conflict between theory and practice is considered by some authors as an essential aspect of the training process of such professionals as teachers, nurses, doctors, architects, among others (see Argyris & Schön, 1996; Schön, 1983). It can also be seen as a fundamental event if it is supported by analysis, discussion and critical reflection of the learning experiences being developed; which means it is important in the formation of a reflective practitioner, although on many occasions involving a moment of disenchantment, as practice often differs considerably from what was learned in formal settings.

Looking back at the starting point of my profession, I can see clearly the importance attributed to the participation of adults in each task and decision we take, the relevance of participating actively in the kind of exercises and subjects we discuss.

In fact, I thought that it was enough to arrive and say "We all agree that you are the most important part of this course, so it's up to you to decide and make the most important decisions." This perspective made me feel that I had the key to the success of an adult education course. What I soon discovered was that it wasn't sufficient to agree with or to defend this point of view theoretically. I had a long way to go. (Story 3 O)

Learning from puzzling events: the influence of incidents

The collected data was also the result of *reflection-in-action*, in the course of a job, that goes together with reflection on the material at hand, which Donald Schön calls *knowing-in-action* (1983) understood as "(…) the sorts of knowledge how we reveal in our intelligent action – publicly observable, physical performances like riding a bicycle and private operations like instant analysis of a balance sheet. In both cases knowing is in action. We reveal it by spontaneous, skilful execution of the performance; and we are characteristically unable to make it verbally explicit" (Schön, 1987: 25). Another type is the knowledge how, acquired through experience, through repeated trials, failing, succeeding, wasting time and effort, getting a feel for a problem, learning when to go by the book and when to break the rules that make learning relevant for learners, especially incidental learning that is so frequent and relevant to professionals, namely adult educators. Incidental learning occurs in specific events, occasional or not, involving things that happen that were not expected and were relevant due to the surprise and puzzling impact they had on learners. In this sense it is a by-product of some activity, such as task accomplishment, interpersonal interaction, sensing the organisational culture, trial-and-error experimentation (cf. Marsick & Watkins, 1990:12). This type of learning occurs while people perform something and it is incidental to the activity in which the person is involved, often tacit and not seen as learning, at least not at the time of its occurrence (Foley, 2004: 5). Therefore, "(…) incidental learning is learning that occurs almost coincidentally with action or non-action; it is something for which there can be no preplanning and that must be reactive to, and reflective on, an unintended experience." (Jarvis, 1992: 181).

The collected stories refer to unexpected events, namely when different expectations among learners understood as adult educators are in conflict. These expectations are related mainly to concerns when joining an adult education initiative, mostly when students expect a school model. The situations that stories refer to show the need for aims, pedagogic methods and outcomes to be clear.

The first (problem) was during my first formal job as a teacher in Mexico with one of my evening classes. It was an intermediate class of learners, but each learner had very different needs and expectations about the class – it was difficult to manage all of these expectations in preparing class materials and working in groups and I found myself using psychology tools a lot!! (Story 1 E)

The second was when I was working for a pharmaceutical company and I had to train groups of pharmacists in the working of a new IT system. They had very different expectations of what the training would be like – I had set the training to be interactive and explorative and they expected to be fed the information! (Story 1 J)

Learning in formal and non-formal education settings

Among the collected narratives, some refer to formal education settings and the importance of learning while adult educators were developing their initial training in formal educational settings. Therefore, formal education "(…) is the form of adult learn-

ing which we are most familiar with. Its distinguishing characteristics are that it is organised by professional educators, there is a defined curriculum, and it often leads to a qualification. It includes study in educational institutions such as universities and technical and further education colleges, and sequenced training sessions in workplaces" (Foley, 2004: 4). This form of explicit knowledge can be found in text-books, but can also be shared in classes, seminars, etc. It commonly leads to learning as a result of a specific event, a problem, a specific occasion to learn that is intended to provide learning.

Some of the stories collected are of learning developed in formal education settings although it must be stressed that these are not the most widely mentioned learning experiences.

> I have to say that it was my training to be an English teacher (teaching English as a foreign language – TEFL) that helped me understand group work, group dynamics and working with adult learners. (Story 1 A)

> The most recent situation is in my current role as an administrator in the Department. Part of my work involves the administration of postgraduate courses but I am also attending some courses which give me a good insight into the experience of students and staff alike. This has really helped me learn a lot about adult and community education. (Story 1 H)

Some narratives relate to forms of non-formal education as apprenticeship, 'on the job training', informal training and work-based experience and learning, but also training courses, seminars, congresses, etc. as such as the result of the involvement in research and development projects, etc. Being less structured than formal education, "This sort of learning occurs when people see a need for some sort of systematic instruction, but in a one-off or sporadic way. Examples include workers being trained to operate a new machine, or environmental activists undertaking non-violent direct-action training" (Foley, 2004: 4).

> I refer to the participation in some congresses in which other colleagues share their experiences and it makes me analyse my own experience, understanding what happens and also discerning that some experiences are similar, what makes me relax a bit, by admitting that I am not the only one thinking or having a specific kind of reactions, problems and situations. (Story 3 Q)

> One learns from somebody or from certain situations throughout life. Within the adult education I learnt many things from trainers, psychologists of Folk High School. Last autumn I joined further trainings of 60 hours, in which we learned group building, learning methods, citizen's knowledge, adult teaching and the way we could pass on this knowledge. This training was really good because we got the same exercises and solved them and later on I used them in my work. We got a full view of the feelings of people, what they may get from each exercise. We became ready to teach, because we learned to handle the questions, problems from our experiences. This teaching staff remains together, it takes care of this connection. It is necessary in this bustling world, where we just pass each other by. One doesn't have the time to take care of others. For me some exercises weren't new, because at university I also studied personality improvement. Here we solve similar exercises, which I like very much. I feel at ease with these. We learn a lot of things, not only from the trainers, teachers, but from each other too, such as: Listening to the other/paying attention to the other; empathy; helpfulness; being together, cooperation; development of exercise solving. So we take lighter situations of life and solve things lightly. (Story 12 A)

Miseducation/mislearning: when learning is not based on democratic values

Apart from stories that refer to good learning or in which learners took a positive aspect from experience, some refer to what can be called mislearning or miseducation. According to Foley (2004: 5-6) "If there is education there is also miseducation. Educators like to distinguish between propaganda and education, seeing the former as closed, manipulative and oppressive, and the latter as open, democratic and emancipating. While distinction has its uses, adult educators also need to become aware of propaganda as a powerful and commonly used form of distorted and distorting education. Propaganda works on simplification: it appeals to fear, hatred, anger and envy. The available resources for corporate and government propaganda, and the scale of it, often make the efforts of adult educators appear puny."

Narratives involving miseducation/mislearning were not identified as such by the learners. However, in the analysis included in this paper we would like to stress that some of these stories referred to such situations in which democratic values are questioned and from which learners get contrast knowledge that may be less useful or less relevant for the practice of an adult educator, like narratives that consider students a hindrance for adult educators' practice, stories of not being able to deal with students' resistance to formal education processes or stories that stress the need to accept rules that did not agree with their principles.

Adults are more sceptical of the way to be educated. They want to decide what they want to learn, who they want to work with and who they want to have as a teacher. They sometimes want to be served by the teacher and are often lazy?! (Story 10 A 3)

As a young and inexperienced teacher, I worked in a school in the far North of Norway. We were three newly graduated teachers who started to work at the same time, joining the staff of three: the director, his wife and one more teacher. I remember very well asking the more experienced teacher for advice, but just getting a cold shoulder: if you have problems teaching, you should solve them yourself! This attitude was something that all we newcomers had to learn to live with. (Story 2 N)

Some remarks

The analysis presented in this paper stresses the relevance of biographical narratives in practitioners' formation by giving learners the access to the dynamics between their own lives and experience and opening the way to a better understanding of the conditions for learning in adult life (Dominicé, 2000: 178). This discussion also reveals the impact of *informal learning and* of learning in professional settings, namely in the workplace. This learning is characterised by diversity owing to the specificities of organisational settings, times, spaces and contexts in which it happens, having a meaningful influence on experiences that seem to be quite distinct when we listen to each learner, involving the existence of different levels of skilled performance among adult educators and distinct learning styles. This heterogeneity shows that *informal learning* occurs and it happens in many situations, stressing individual patterns of learning or social and collective shapes. If some narratives stress accordance among formal knowledge, adult educators' *theory-in-use* and practice as in some occasions *knowledge how* seems to be adequate to problems faced, many others emphasise the contradictions between explicit knowledge, developed in formal education settings, and knowledge resulting from practice. These tensions were clear in mistakes made by adult educators, difficulties in solving problems faced in professional daily lives, the need to achieve new tasks that result from the wideness of adult education as a field of practice and job differentiation, the confrontation between formal knowledge and practice, miseducation/mislearning and critical incidents.

Narratives collected in the AGADE test-course were small parts of a larger piece; they are fragments of learning in life. The analytical patchwork that we tried to achieve in this paper is based on two assumptions. The first one is the impact of incertitude and unpredictability in workplaces and the fact that practice in many situations can be quite distant from the ideal and normative educational patterns learned in formal education. Consequently, the second assumption is related to limitations that practitioners feel in reproducing formal knowledge in their daily practice and to the impossibility to create new forms of acting, more or less reflected and according to the aims of professional organisations and of practitioners themselves when unexpected incidents happen.

Therefore, the workplace has a learning dimension that emphasises the development of several kinds of skills and forms of knowledge, namely *knowledge-in-action*. These new forms of knowledge that are outcomes of *knowledge-in-action* often are situated and may be hardly transferable to other contexts. As a result, the reproduction and reinvention of social and professional practices may be translated in contradictions among practitioners' discourses, adult educators' theoretic knowledge, norms of organizations in which they perform their tasks. This fact does not usually receive engaged approaches in adult educators' training and this was the reason for including this approach in the development of the AGADE test-course by which practitioners shared life stories that are to be understood as vehicles through which they can reflect on their educational experiences.

Understanding critically the contribution of this training method to the formation of adult educators

Senses of a dialogue

The training approach adopted in the AGADE test-course module "Sharing Experiences, Knowledge and Perspectives: Building a training map" was an adaptation of the educational biography method (see Dominicé, 2000) as it was aimed at telling meaningful learning events and their impact on practitioners. This method is based on the idea that it offers a way for an adult education practitioner to incorporate an exploratory inquiry project into a larger educational programme for adults. In this sense it offers an opportunity of acknowledging why and how people learn using reflection on informal learning. It represents a different way of learning and opens up new possibilities of knowledge built on narratives spurred from social situations that were later on interpreted and assessed according to some instrumental categories that represent foundations of educational, professional and social identity. Basically it is also an adult educators' training as a way of running counter to the zeitgeist which goes "(…) against the problematic trend among the protagonists of contemporary adult education who see themselves no longer as educational actors, but as organizers of a 'therapeutic event'" (Alheit, 1995: 59). The collection of these stories on relevant learning events was made on a distance education basis and it was followed by the discussion about their content among trainees and trainers over one day of training, trying to identify some categories that would allow a general interpretation. These two steps, distinct moments of the same dialogue on adult education and practice, were intended to be an attempt to perform biographical coaching in the sense that it involved "(…) the joint discovery by teacher and learner of biographical opportunities for shaping social, occupational and political existence more autonomously." (Idib: 68). Later on, a trainer and a trainee sought to critically examine how learning that happens unexpectedly shapes their ways of considering adult education and their work as adult educators. As a result, this paper includes two distinct voices of the same dialogue, revealing different senses given to an approach.

A piece of a patchwork: fragments of trainers' experience

We have been involved in adult educators' training for some years. Training programmes are mostly of two different types. The first type is a training programme based on a "therapeutic paradigm" of adult education conceived according to practitioners' needs; and these that stress adults' experience and learning events occurred in daily professionals' lives. Although we tend to agree that people always learn something in training programmes, this knowledge is in many occasions built upon what an educational situation should be. Therefore, the normative approach of such courses undervalues experience and by decreasing practice they make little use of knowledge developed in the course of action and on action. This seems to me a waste of knowledge, of new knowledge related to new challenges adult education and adult educators are facing nowadays.

The second type of training programme focuses on the discussion of different issues, relevant themes on education, adult education, andragogy and pedagogy, sociology, psychology, among others. These tend to emphasise content and the reflection on subjects. The theoretical level of analysis often doesn't allow for links between theory and practice. If this form of building knowledge is of utmost importance, practitioners often tend to have difficulties in identifying the relevance of such outcomes for their practice.

Apart from these we should also stress that learners see training on many occasions as a space for interaction, not being lonely, for sharing moments of an endless day in which most of the time people are alone. This socialisation aspect seems to be very relevant and it is strongly emphasised by those who join training initiatives.

We believe that these kinds of training are important for adult educators. However, we am convinced that there is a need for using this knowledge to reflect critically on daily problems, on the way adult educators perceive their job and role in adult education. This would be a different view on education, based on interpretation and re-interpretation of experience and learning, where learning becomes a collective process by the enlargement of discussion among other adult educators. The idea is to become more reflective and also more critical about what happens to practitioners and to adult education in contemporary times.

Of course, it is not always easy. We have tried this approach on a few occasions and you need to have people convinced of the efficiency of this method. That is not easy, as other types of training courses represent the mainstream tendency of adult educators' training.

Another piece to a patchwork: fragments of a participant's experience

I was asked to join the AGADE test-course by the Unit for Adult Education of the University of Minho as one of the two Portuguese participants. Though I did not know exactly what it meant to join this course, I accepted the challenge anyway. That is the meaning of challenge: a leap into the dark! What I knew was that the course combined two different ways of working: distance education (1st and 3rd moments) and face-to-face education (2nd moment). And that was good, I thought,

it would give me the opportunity to try new things. I had never experienced e-learning, but there is a first time for everything.

I must say that the curriculum topics presented were not so new to me; nevertheless, I considered them good and useful. It is my own belief that it doesn't matter how many times we talk about them, because there is always one perspective left behind and we can now continue picking it up and discussing it. And AGADE was a European course, so we would certainly have many perspectives to share!

The course started and I encountered the first module – sharing experiences, knowledge and perspectives: building a training map. Interesting, I thought. Sharing was one of my biggest expectations! But building a training map, what is that? Better to try to figure it out… Well, sharing is a good start for building something with good foundations, with solid roots. And in that sense I have started to see (even though in a foggy way!) some kind of a link in this title. The basis of this course would be the experiences, the knowledge and the perspectives that each and every one of us had as adult educators practitioners – we would be sharing them, discussing and reflecting upon them, and having a start in that experience we would be building up new knowledge and getting acquainted with different perspectives. So, adopting the construction image, we would be digging and building up a path, a road that would lead us somewhere, a destination… But, where would it be? And why were we being asked to build maps and not roads? To draw maps don't we need to know the roads first? Where are they located, what is their extension, where do they start, where do they finish, where do they lead and so on? I still don't know where I am heading…

Some clarity came my way when the requirement of the first task arrived and surely due to the fact, that at the same time, a programme was sent to us by the moderators who were responsible for this module. This fact, unique in the context of the whole course, is something which I think deserves to be praised and definitely needs to be followed in courses to come from the other moderators, because the participants thus know, from the outset, what is expected to happen, what the aim is, which ways to do it, what roles to be assumed and so on. In that sense, that document made me understand why I was being asked to build a map instead of a road! Yes, because the road had already been built! And by trying to map it I would be reflecting on my past experience as an adult educator. That was it – the purpose wasn't to build a map for others to follow, but a map which I would look at and easily identify myself with. A kind of a photograph of my path as an adult educator! Eureka!

Once I figured it out, the task would surely be easy to do. I couldn't be more wrong! Telling stories about my life, shouldn't this be easy for me? I am Portuguese; we like to speak about our lives to everyone, everywhere, anytime! Yes, but this was not just about telling stories… I was asked to identify relevant learning experiences. So, I had to look back, making the terrible effort of being an external observer, and identify moments, events, times or spaces in which I had experienced relevant knowledge to become an adult educator. Can you believe that these moderators were asking me to do this? In order to make the task easier (I think that was the intention…) they gave us thirteen topics that could work as guides of identification. The good thing was that we had only to relate to three of them! I tried to postpone this task as long as I could, but I also knew that the face-to-face part of this module would only work out if participants gave their contributions. Wasn't sharing one of my expectations? And then 'D-day' arrived! I performed the task the best way as I could; I picked up three points and wrote about my own experiences. I thought it was good at that time, but now I am not so sure I did it the best way. Maybe I could have gone deeply into the events; maybe I should have problematised the situations more and the different forces that led to them; and certainly there are bad things that made me learn, mistakes, problems, even though it isn't easy for me to identify and relate to them still. At the end I had the feeling of mission accomplished! And it wasn't so scary after all!

After this first distance learning part it was time for the face-to-face course and once again the first day was dedicated to the module on sharing experiences, knowledge and perspectives. I was curious about it. What would the moderators do with our stories? Would they just give feedback to us? Would they say what was good and what was bad? Would we work in groups or individually? What activities would we do during the day? Would we draw maps? Well, I guess we got a little bit of everything. What I liked most was the general idea behind the picking up of a single learning experience and from there going to a general understanding of a reflective practitioner. Nevertheless, I do feel that this type of activity would work out better if the participants were more familiar with each other. I believe that in order to be reflective within a group we need to know the members better; a minimum of common ground and understanding is necessary. And here we were all strangers coming from all these different places in Europe with funny names that no one could understand. I do consider that this was a barrier to the good development of this course and of this module in particular. Take for instance the building of a training map; it is my own belief that a considerable part of the participants and almost all the rest of the moderators still don't understand what building a training map meant. I am not a hundred percent sure if I have figured it out correctly, but this makes sense to me. And I do look at this activity and I do see relevance in it. If we are talking here about a course aimed at adult educators as practitioners, working in the field for at least three years, we surely expect them to get a hold on the curricu-

lum. We do not expect them to sit for seven or eight hours in a room listening to a moderator talking about ideal ways of doing the thing when we, the practitioners, know that there are not ideal situations, that there are not ideal courses, or curriculum, or trainees, or students, or whatever. There is in fact the best way of doing the best thing with the best means available in that particular context at that particular moment. And in order to achieve the best practice we need to be critical, we need to be reflective, we need to be able to identify the different scenarios and conscientiously choose one of them!

So, I do think that sharing experiences, knowledge and perspectives shouldn't be a module within this type of course; instead, it should be the pedagogical approach to it and the building of a training map would be the outcome of it. That way this type of course had to be definitely drawn upon the participants' past as adult educators. Group sharing and discussion would enable us to come out of our stories, facilitating the external observation and ultimately transform it in individual learning. At this point, one can say, that isn't a simple thing to do! I can only leave you one question: who said that being an adult educator was an easy job to do?

Concluding remarks

Despite limitations of the training method, the ambiguities and divergences that are evident from the two voices of this dialogue, approaching life-stories in adult educators' training aims at empowering practitioners in becoming more reflective. The clinical knowledge (Dominicé, 2000: 174) produced through the dialogue between agents such as trainers and participants about their lives and learning experiences provides conditions for mutual reflection and interpretation. In one sense this represents a way of discovering the value of experiential social learning as it is centred in the learner (and not in contents) that is a significant part of a larger social context. This way will open conditions for understanding individual and collective conditions of learning, but it also allows the re-invention of social transformation. As a matter of fact, according to Pierrer Dominicé (Idib.: 190), learning supported by the *biographical approach*, "(…) requires the courage to change", not only in terms of shift in the perspective to knowledge construction, in what epistemology is concerned, but also in terms of the contribution of adult educators' formation and in the creation of conditions for successful life-long learning.

Final notes

Participants of the AGADE test-course (both moderators and trainees) that joined the module "Sharing Experiences, Knowledge and Perspectives: Building a training map" were Tiina Jääger, Gunilla Rommér, Merete Vian Norum, Clodagh Kelly, Laura Kahju, Sonja-Hedman-Folke, Trine Thommessen, Katalin Varga, Agnese Stalte, Shauna Busto Gilligan, Rozalia Turoczy, Ilze Gabrane, Sandra Lace, Brid Connolly, Eníd Tóth, Attila Böröcz, Heidi Munthe-Kaas, Fátima Marques, Ivo Eesmaa, Ingrida Mikisko, Bo Wentzel, Tiina Viir, Aurimas Juozaitis, Roma Juozaitiene, Inga Milisiunaite, Vilija Valaityte, Reet Valgmaa, Brian Desmond and Sturla Bjerkaker as well as Amélia Vitória Sancho, Raquel Oliveira and Paula Guimarčes.

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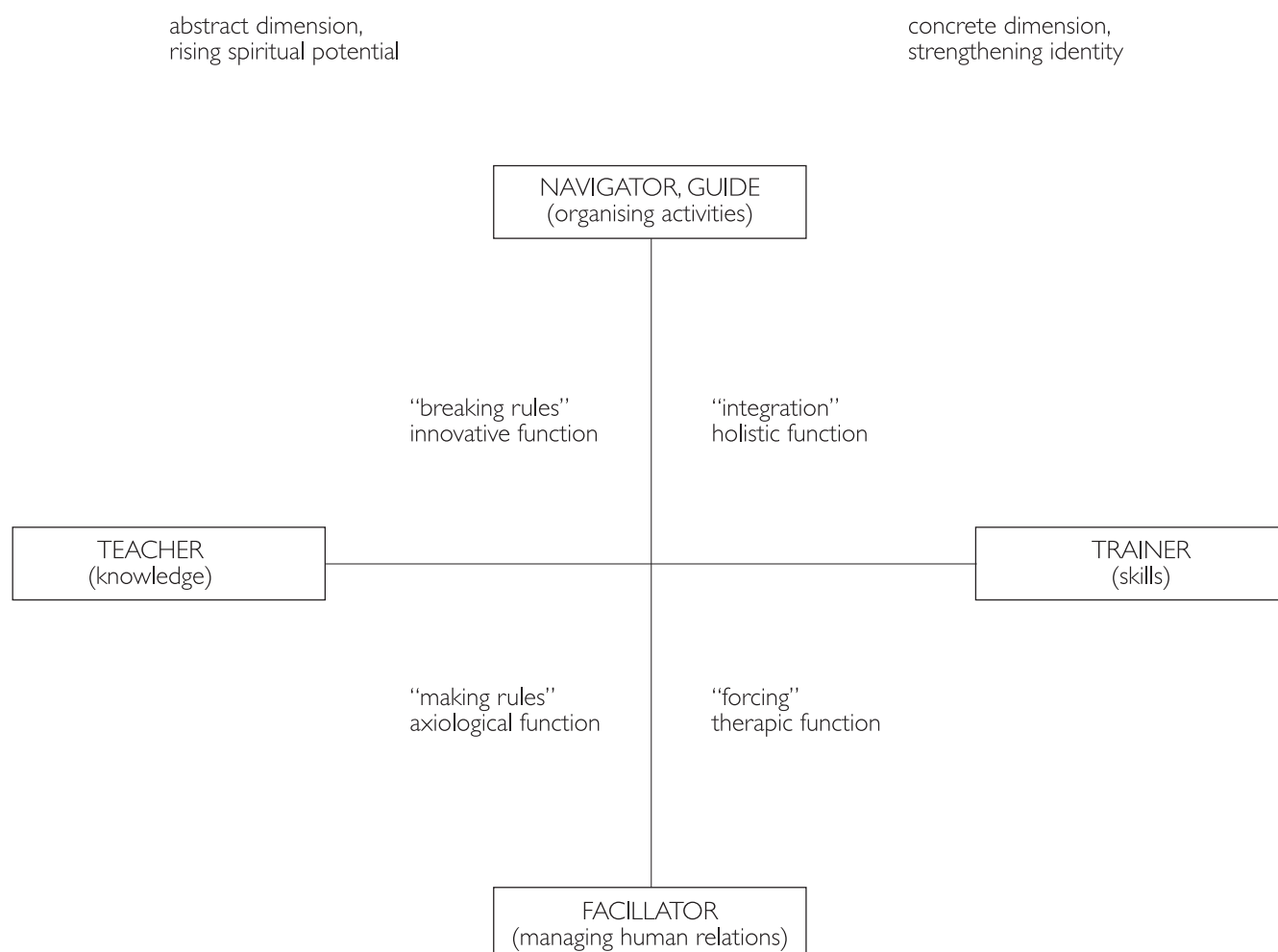
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## 2.4   Adult Educators and the problem of self-directedness

Reet Valgmaa, Estonian Open Education Association

An educator is not like a captain of a ship nowadays – the only one who knows where the study-group is going and why. He/she is rather more a guide of travellers who knows the landscape and abilities of his/her travel-mates, who is able to support everybody in personal decisions and choices to assure successful arrival at the destination-point. In other words – (adult) self-directed learners are always looking for the answer to the question *why* do we have to learn it and why the whole process is shaped like this and not some other way. The question *why* can be answered in two ways – instrumentally or teleologically. The instrumental answer is very pragmatic one (we learn something *for* …); the teleological answer is always value-based (we learn something, *because we value it as important*). Learning in human society must never be based primarily on instrumentality (as it unfortunately tends to be in ultraliberal and pragmatically oriented societies); otherwise we risk weakening the very basis of society – many things have to be learned simply because we are human beings and human beings are social creatures, living in groups based on identity of values and symbols. It means a responsibility to understand and respect the environment in the broadest sense of word.

So, the question *why* is central and challenging in learning/teaching and connected directly with understanding of the role of educator. Traditionally, we see it as a rather rigid frame, because we are used to think in dualities – theory and practice, methods and didactics, teaching (knowledge) and training (skills) etc. But in practice there are no such frames and borderlines. There is only the choice of a leading behavioural model of the teacher, based on his experiences and empathy. Learning is a very intimate and socio cultural process. Therefore the primary task of an educator is to start from each learner's individual obstacles on the way towards understanding. For example, if a adult educator understands that the learner is afraid of looking foolish in the eyes of others, he/she has to start from changing the climate in the group; if the topic seems boring, he/she has find the possibilities to evaluate it as an intellectual adventure; if somebody does not know how to, he/she has to find learner's inner resources to build new skills on them etc. So, even in the teaching of adults there are very few situations when the educator can concentrate only or primarily on his most obvious role – spreading information and new knowledge and developing skills. We see the adult educator's behavioural models as following (Bjerkaker, Sturla; Carlsen, A.; Juozaitiene, R.; Koke, T.; Valgmaa, R., 2003):

abstract dimension,
rising spiritual potential

concrete dimension,
strengthening identity

NAVIGATOR, GUIDE
(organising activities)

"breaking rules"
innovative function

"integration"
holistic function

TEACHER
(knowledge)

TRAINER
(skills)

"making rules"
axiological function

"forcing"
therapic function

FACILLATOR
(managing human relations)

In academic studies we see very often so called "sandwich-model", where seminars, practice and lectures are organised in concrete time-frames (for example plans for 1st or 4th year), but in adult education it is wiser to apply the famous model of experiential learning what is consisting of: concrete experience, observation and reflection, abstract conceptualization, generalization and active experimentation (Kolb,1984) and by G.Gibbs and T. Habeshaw that means linking theory to practice in a way which leads to learning by doing (Gibbs;Habeshaw, 2001):
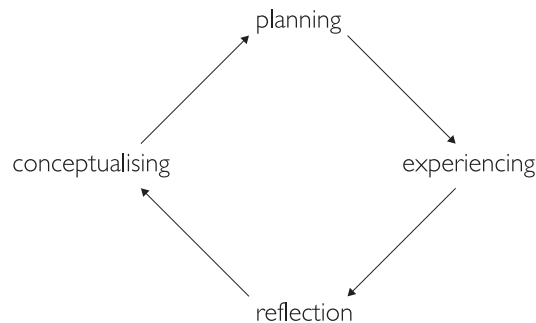
This model is very easily applicable, because we can start whenever it is needed. For example, starting from conceptualising (lectures, seminars, individual work with literature), we move to planning (the tutoring of learners according to individual projects) and experiencing (learner keeps diary, makes movie, writes paper or uses some other ways to record his experience). The circle finishes with reflection (systematisation of data, different evaluation methods etc.). But we can (or sometimes must) start from experiencing, move to reflection and then finish with conceptualising and new planning. But is it enough if our aim is to develop self-directedness in participants? In adult education the process of learning has many loops:
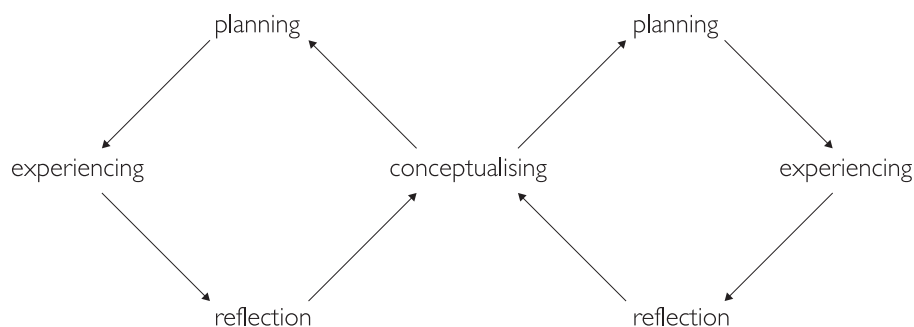
When in the 1st loop the adult educator is leader (if necessary, even a provocateur), in the 2nd loop the initiative goes over to the learner, who must start to plan him/herself now. Therefore the educator must be very competent not only in his/her subject but also in the management and analysis of social processes (in the group and in society in general). In other words, he also must answer the question *why* and *how*.

Let us see now how the circle of experiential learning can be analysed in the light of our behavioural models of the adult educator :

abstract dimension,
rising spiritual potential

concrete dimension,
strengthening identity
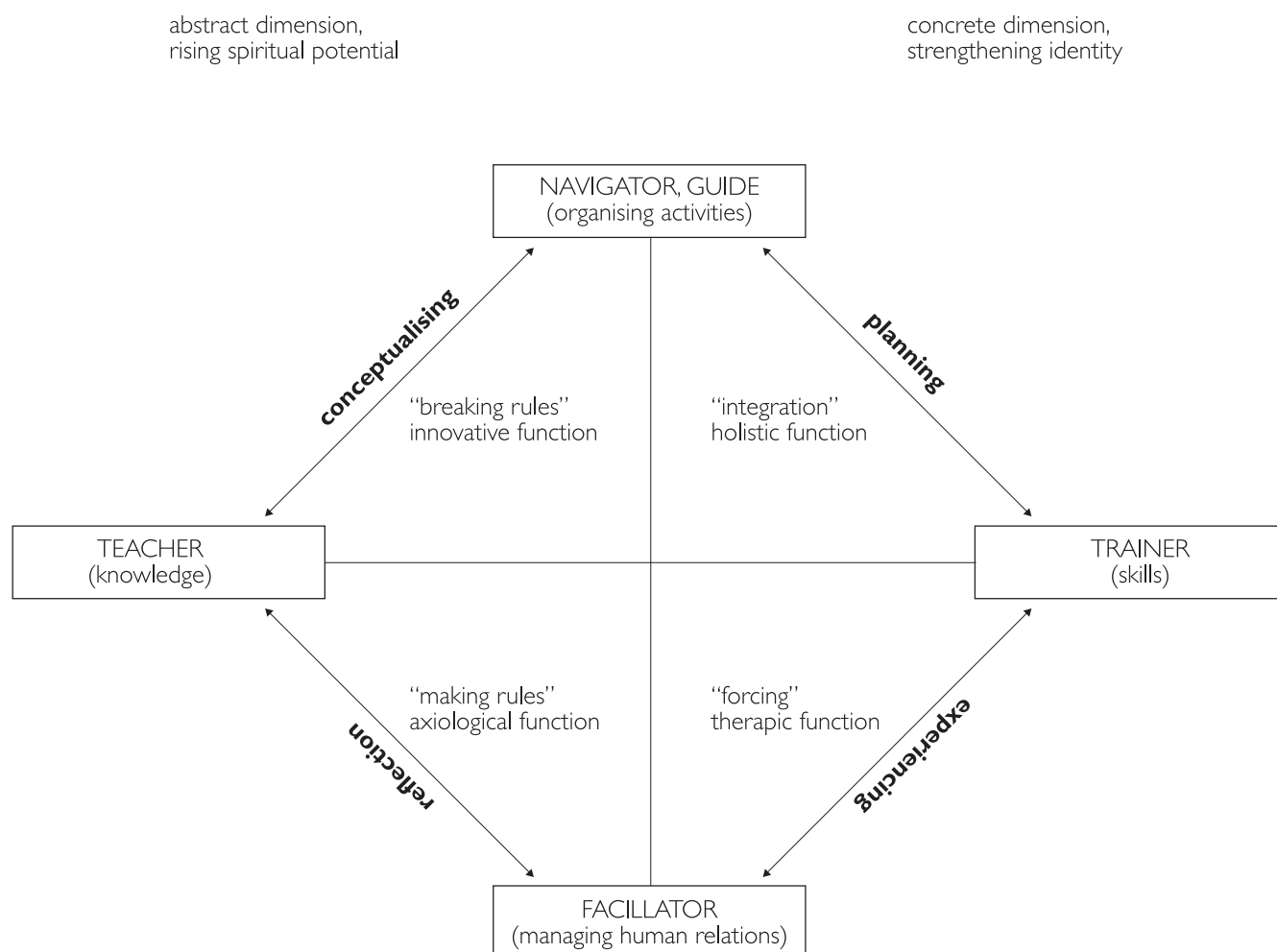
Beginning with the new study-group and initiating its learning processes, we as a adult educators start very often with "making rules" (see above) – what, how, why we will do things and what norms should guide us on our way? When the group reaches conflict-phase of group-processes, someone will appear in every group who would like to know more about the educator, to test him/her and study-mates, break the rules and maybe even create new rules. But, what is very important, if there is no such person in the group, the teacher must provoke the participants him/herself. Usually the educator is a little bit afraid of group unexpected (read: negative) activity, but how can we otherwise encourage people to ask questions and see possible gaps between life and theory? As we have mentioned earlier – learning is very intimate process and nobody can create any concepts in me but me, i.e. we also have to learn about "breaking rules". Here we often see that before learning something new, we have to "free" ourselves from the "old" knowledge and attitudes. Very important for the adult educator here is to use the help of the more active students, who can support other participants in being creative and trying things out. At the same time, the teacher must not forget reflection and group integration, of course – individualism and supporting individuals are two different things. Adult educators tend rather often to underestimate the importance of reflection, hoping that some fine day the learner will gasp the real meaning of his or her studies. Unfortunately, it is not always so. In addition, reflection can strengthen the ability to see how to use one's new knowledge. Therefore it also strengthens the general capability of participants and creates a readiness to stay motivated even during "hard" times on the learner's path towards positive changes.

To be a self-directed learner assumes a very specific attitude, where decision-making and responsibility for learning rests on the learner himself. It means that the learner's knowledge, feelings and behaviour are in harmony and his learning has an aim. More often, however, we see that the learner understands his/her responsibility for his/her learning, but is afraid to make decisions. Therefore he is also not ready for the dialogue with the educator so as to answer the questions what, how and why.

Models of behaviour also serve as an answer to the question of how to encourage individuality. Just as we cannot motivate everybody with similar methods, we cannot support individuality with similar methods. Again there arises the question of educator empathy – either he understands the fears and reasons for uncertainty in the learner or he does not and, what is even worse, he may not think they are fatal to the result of learning processes. That's why the question about methods is much more complicated than we would like to think, depending not only on the subject, but much more on values, group-processes, ability to learn etc. concerning both learner and educators . If preparatory courses of adult educator do not start to evaluate the development of self-directedness, the unexperienced young adult educator will never start to look for teleological answers to different questions. But to be human is to be self-directed person.

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2.5 Learning styles

Latvian Adult Education Association

Adulthood is a period when a person feels and assumes the responsibility for his/her life. No exact age can be mentioned when the person is to be called an adult, since their social or mental development continues throughout all periods of life. It is important to comprehend the regularities of adult development, the self-realization needs of a mature person, the realization of his/her creative potential. Maturity is the longest period of one's life. Individual freedom is based on deliberate choice. If there is a deliberate choice and a person is aware of his/her actions and assumes responsibility for his/her choice, we can talk about maturity of personality.

Usually most people choose the direct way through education, i.e. primary school, secondary school or vocational school, higher education – but this is the ideal version which does not always work. People's choice can be affected by different circumstances and they can stop at different levels of education, but lifelong learning provides possibilities to return to education at different ages, different levels.

There reasons are different reasons for adults wanting to return to education (new work, career). Some may be homemakers who interrupted their studies to raise children; others may be retired business executives who want to pursue work in fields that have always interested them. They may have excellent prior academic backgrounds, or they may have only fulfilled the minimum requirements for admission.

Adults as learners are different from young people in certain crucial respects, and therefore a different approach is required to help them learn.

Malcom Knowles (1913 -1997) was a very influential figure in the adult education field. He based his work on an original theory of andragogy (the art and science of helping adults learn) as distinguished from pedagogy (the art and science of teaching children and youth). His four andragogical assumptions are that adults:
*   move from dependency to self-directedness;
*   draw upon their reservoir of experience for learning;
*   are ready to learn when they assume new roles;
*   want to solve problems and apply new knowledge immediately.

Adult learning should produce at least these outcomes (Knowles):
*   ***Adults should acquire a mature understanding of themselves.*** They should understand their needs, motivations, interests, capacities, and goals. They should be able to look at themselves objectively and maturely. They should accept themselves and respect themselves for what they are, while striving earnestly to become better.
*   ***Adults should develop an attitude of acceptance, love, and respect toward others.*** This is the attitude on which all human relations depend. Adults must learn to distinguish between people and ideas, and to challenge ideas without threat-

ening people. Ideally, this attitude will go beyond acceptance, love, and respect, to empathy and the sincere desire to help others.

- **Adults should develop a dynamic attitude toward life.** They should accept the fact of change and should think of themselves as always changing. They should acquire the habit of looking at every experience as an opportunity to learn and should become skilful in learning from it.

- **Adults should learn to react to the causes, not the symptoms, of behaviour.** Solutions to problems lie in their causes, not in their symptoms. We have learned to apply this lesson in the physical world, but have yet to learn to apply it in human relations.

- **Adults should acquire the skills necessary to achieve the potentials of their personalities.** Every person has capacities that, if realized, will contribute to the well-being of himself and of society. To achieve these potentials requires skills of many kinds – vocational, social, recreational, civic, artistic, and the like. It should be a goal of education to give each individual those skills necessary for him to make full use of his capacities.

- **Adults should understand the essential values in the capital of human experience.** They should be familiar with the heritage of knowledge, the great ideas, the great traditions, of the world in which they live. They should understand and respect the values that bind men together.

- **Adults should understand their society and should be skilful in directing social change.** In a democracy the people participate in making decisions that affect the entire social order. It is imperative, therefore, that every factory worker, every salesman, every politician, every housewife, know enough about government, economics, international affairs, and other aspects of the social order to be able to take part in them intelligently.

Adults differ from children as learners. An adult has assumed responsibility for himself/herself and others. Adults differ specifically in self-conception, experience, readiness to learn, time perspective, and orientation to learning. It's a plain fact that adults learn differently from teens and children, but any teacher would serve those being taught well by applying these concepts to any audience. Stephen Lieb (Arizona Department of Health Services) has identified a profile and some common attributes for the adult learner. Any trainer who understands these attributes will be more effective when training the adult learner.

The following chart identifies some key differences between children and adults as learners

Children	Adults
Rely on others to decide what is important to be learned.	Decide for themselves what is important to be learned.
Accept the information being presented at face value.	Need to validate the information based on their beliefs and values.
Expect what they are learning to be useful in their long-term future.	Expect what they are learning to be immediately useful.
Have little or no experience upon which to draw, are relatively "blank slates."	Have substantial experience upon which to draw. May have fixed viewpoints.
Little ability to serve as a knowledgeable resource to teacher or fellow classmates.	Significant ability to serve as a knowledgeable resource to the trainer and fellow learners.

We can meet different students, different learning styles and different personality types in the class.

Lots of psychologists have several theories about adult learning styles:
1) VAK (Visual, aural and kinesthetic learners);
2) Kolb's theory (Kolb's learning cycle);
3) Honey and Mumford theory;
4) The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI);
5) Gardner's multiple intelligences.

In the class we must use the three main sensory receivers – visual, auditory and kinesthetic – to determine the predominant learning style. Learners use all styles to receive information, but one or more of these are normally predominant. This style may not always to be the same for some tasks. The learner may prefer one style of learning for one task, and a combination of oth-

ers for another task. Differing aptitudes, abilities, and experiences have caused individuals to develop a preference for sending and receiving information through one sense rather than another. Most often people prefer auditory or visual input; however, some people have a preference for kinaesthetic learning.

While it is thought that people have developed a preference for or have greater skill in processing one type of input over others, most people simultaneously process information through multiple senses. In fact, the retention of learned material is enhanced if the learner is asked to process information using more than one sense. Presentations that are multi-sensory (using visual and auditory components) in combination with interactive activities will increase learning and retention for most adults.

Visual *learners prefer graphic illustrations such as bar graphs or cross tabs to explain data; colour codes to highlight salient information; maps to find their way on the subway or while driving in a new city; written material to study new concepts; wall charts that display points to be remembered; written outlines; drawings or designs to illustrate overhead presentations; sitting "up close" in a presentation in order to see the presenter's face, gestures, or visuals; taking notes during a lecture; instructors to repeat verbal directions.*

Visual learners have two sub-channels - linguistic and spatial. Learners, who are visual-linguistic like to learn through the written language, such as by reading and writing tasks. They remember what has been written down, even if they do not read it more than once. They like to write down directions and pay better attention to lectures if they watch them. Learners who are visual-spatial usually have difficulty with the written language and do better with charts, demonstrations, videos, and other visual materials. They easily visualize faces and places by using their imagination and seldom get lost in new surroundings.

Aural *learners prefer a verbal presentation of new information, such as a lecture; group discussions to hear other points of view or practices; fast-paced verbal exchanges of ideas; a good joke or story that they can repeat for others; verbal cues or pneumonic devices to help them remember information; music at the beginning or during transitions in a training setting; words to accompany a cartoon; oral reports of working groups.*

Auditory learners often talk to themselves. They also may move their lips and read out loud. They may have difficulty with reading and writing tasks. They often do better talking to a colleague or a tape recorder and hearing what was said.

Kinaesthetic *learners prefer movement, such as rocking or shaking a leg during a lecture; hands-on experience to learn a task; gestures while making a point; role play exercises over discussion groups; shaking hands when meeting or greeting people; trying new things without a lengthy explanation of the activity; frequent breaks; regular opportunities to change seating or room arrangement; "just doing it" rather than talking about it.*

Kinaesthetic learners do best while touching and moving. It also has two sub-channels - kinaesthetic (movement) and tactile (touch) they tend to lose concentration if there is little or no external stimulation or movement. When listening to lectures they may want to take notes. When reading, they like to scan the material first, and then focus in on the details (get the big picture first). They typically use colour highlighters and take notes by drawing pictures, diagrams.

Here are some strategies to ensure that our courses present information that appeal to a range of learning styles.
- Teach theoretical material by first presenting phenomena and problems that relate to the theory (sensing, inductive, global). For example, don't jump directly into free-body diagrams and force balances on the first day of a static course. First describe problems associated with the design of buildings and bridges and artificial limbs, and perhaps give the students some of those problems and see how far they can go before they get all the tools for solving them.
- Balance conceptual information (intuitive) with concrete information (sensing). Intuitors favour conceptual information--theories, mathematical models, and material that emphasizes fundamental understanding. Sensors prefer concrete information such as descriptions of physical phenomena, results from real and simulated experiments, demonstrations, and problem-solving algorithms.
- Make extensive use of sketches, plots, schematics, vector diagrams, computer graphics, and physical demonstrations (visual) in addition to oral and written explanations and derivations (verbal) in lectures and readings. For example, show flow charts, demonstrate the experiments.
- To illustrate an abstract concept or problem-solving algorithm, use at least one numerical example (sensing) to supplement the usual algebraic example (intuitive).

- Use physical analogies and demonstrations to illustrate the magnitudes of calculated quantities (sensing, global).
- Occasionally give some experimental observations before presenting the general principle, and have the students (preferably working in groups) see how far they can get toward inferring the latter (inductive).
- Provide class time for students to think about the material being presented (reflective) and for active student participation (active). Occasionally pause during a lecture to allow time for thinking and formulating questions. Assign "one-minute papers" near the end of a lecture period, having students write on index cards the lecture's most important point and the single most pressing unanswered question. Assign brief group problem-solving exercises in class that require students to work in groups of three or four.
- Encourage or mandate cooperation on homework (every style category). Hundreds of research studies show that students who participate in cooperative learning experiences tend to earn better grades, display more enthusiasm for their chosen field, and improve their chances for graduation in that field relative to their counterparts in more traditional competitive class settings.
- Demonstrate the logical flow of individual course topics (sequential), but also point out connections between the current material and other relevant material in the same course, in other courses in the same discipline, in other disciplines, and in everyday experience (global).

A learning style model is useful if balancing instruction on each of the model dimensions meets the learning needs of essentially all students in a class. Which model educators choose is almost immaterial, since the instructional approaches that teach around the cycle for each of the models are essentially identical. Whether educators are designing a course or curriculum, writing textbook, developing instructional software, forming cooperative learning teams, or helping students develop interpersonal, leadership, and communication skills, they will benefit from using any of these models as the basis of their efforts.

Adults vary tremendously in how they acquire knowledge and no one theory on adult learning styles can adequately address the diversity of each learner. However, a synthesis of the research findings on adult learning is illustrated in the following:

Structure of learning experiences
1. Adults prefer flexible schedules that respond to their own time constraints.
2. Adults learn better when learning is individualized.
3. Adults prefer face-to-face learning rather than learning through the use of video or audio communications.
4. Adults derive benefits from interactional activities with others who differ in age, level of experience, and professional preparation.

Learning climate
1. Adult learners seem to learn better if there is an atmosphere of mutual helpfulness and peer support.
2. Since adult learners are reluctant to take risks, the climate should be characterized by a sense of trust and acceptance.
3. Adult learners appreciate the invitation to express their views and are open to the views of others.
4. Adult learners bring clear expectations to the learning environment and expect instructors to accommodate these expectations.

Focus of learning
1. Adult learners derive the greatest benefit from instructional methods that assist them in processing their experience through reflection, analysis, and critical examination.
2. Adult learners value teaching methods that increase their autonomy.
3. Adult learners are motivated by practical how-to learning.

Teaching-learning strategies and media
1. Adult learners value problem solving and cooperative learning.
2. Adult learners seem to benefit from active participation in the learning process.

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2.6 Distance Education (DE) and its methodology.

Bo Wentzel, Studiefrämjandet i Norra Stor-Stockholm

A short overview, based on own experience

1. Background

a) What defines DE?

This concept points out all forms of education where the teacher and the pupil are separated from each other and are acting in different places. It might consist of one-way or two-way communication; this doesn't matter: the important thing is that the face-to-face relation is not present. On the other hand, the presence of the teacher and the pupil(s) could be simultaneous, in time during a common phone call or in a common computer session. This session – on the other hand – could as easily be a period of one week as just ten minutes. In the case of one week, it is not likely that the teacher and the pupil will meet simultaneously, but they will both operate in the virtual classroom during the period.

b) Earlier Swedish experiences

In Sweden, DE was a fact even before WW2. Names such as 'Brevskolan' (= the letter school), 'Hermods' and the like, are nostalgic for the old generation. Most of these schools have disappeared, but others have taken their place. The significance of their structure was that they used the written letter as the only tool for communication. The pupil – on his own – read the letters which were sent to him, answered questions that completed the letters, and then mailed the answers to the organizer.
Many people over 20 who lacked formal education from school or higher forms, or simply didn't have enough knowledge because it was all about new knowledge that didn't exist earlier – could in this way increase their knowledgeduring their evenings or weekends and in that way get a new job or perhaps keep a job they already had.

The education course was given to individuals on a one-way communication basis and in due time it was possible to pass an examination and become an engineer at a lower level. This could take two years, with the letters passing to and fro. The knowledge content was defined. The important thing was to study the letters and correctly answer the questions, in order to get a certificate which showed what you had learnt.

This kind of DE – one-way communication – contributed to the growth in numbers of educated people in Sweden in the 1940s, 1950s and part of the 1960s.

As society slowly began to change, and the technical level rose, the importance of those letter study courses decreased, and the trend was for them to disappear completely. When the computer revolution started, this meant a new chance and a new challenge to a changed DE.

2. The current situation

a) Where is DE used?

Today, DE has spread throughout Sweden at the same speed as the broad band or access to the Internet. Different campaigns from the state have involved the communities in Learning Centres along with the CFL – Centre for Flexible Learning – formerly a state school for adults. CFL has involved study organisations and the Folk High Schools and urged them to make efforts in making the DE within the liberal adult education process well-known and a tool for everybody. But DE a also a winner within companies and enterprises, as many of the employees have been given the opportunity to study from their own homes.

b) The FC-platform and the non-formal adult education (folkbildning) arena.

The 'folkbildning' process has some features that rule it out from other education processes:
The face-to-face meeting between participants that are looked upon as equals, the idea that no knowledge is to be found without the help of the other participants in the learning process, the respect for every participant's thoughts, reflections and conclusions, all of which can contribute to the growth of knowledge.

The essence of these ideas is the conception of knowledge as something that is created together among the participants of a study group and that this is best attained in the simultaneous meeting. How does this go together with DE? Where the simultaneous presence and thoughts and reflections made of the individual participants are not processed by other pupils.
The answer is FC! The First Class platform was created (in Canada) and with it, the virtual conference room comes into exis-

tence. In the conference you will find every thought and reflection from start-up till now and sorted into topics, in order to let everyone take part in the process of growing knowledge. In this way, the ideas and ideals of the folkbildning are part of the communication and the learning process. The First Class platform is rapidly growing as a tool for DE.

3. Why DE?

a) The elements of Democracy

Education is a right in Sweden, as of course in many other countries. This means that everybody – regardless of conditions and ethnic background– shall have the possibility to take part in learning processes. DE answers better to this than many other educational forms.

b) The overcoming of physical distance:

Someone living in the northern mountains can take part in the process together with someone from the inner city of Stockholm. The "distance kills" consequences vanish.

c) The overcoming of fixed time:

People who are part-time working, live with their babies at home, or have other difficulties in adapting to fixed timetables, have a very good chance to take part on equal terms with people with more favourable conditions.

d) Neutralisation of socio-economic conditions:

When using a computer, the important thing is not that you own it, but that you can use it without buying it during your study time. DE makes it easier to use without owning, as there are a lot of computers that can be freely used in local communities.

e) A decreasing influence of different disabilities:

A physical disability often makes it almost impossible to take part in educational processes, especially any connected with transportation, stairs, lights etc. There are other disabilities such as shyness, stammering which are obstacles in taking part in public processes. DE eliminates most of this.

f) Better possibilities for own reflection:

DE on the FC-platform creates access to the core of all education: the reflection over the learning process and new knowledge. You can easily go back to previous mails, look at what different participants said on particular occasions, think forward, and check your own ideas with others. In short: reflection benefits and consequently promotes the growth of knowledge.

4. Methodology

a) The role of the teacher

The teacher that has the classroom as his arena has a somewhat different situation to that of the DE-teacher:

open feelings in the classroom – silent computer

present pupils – mostly absent pupils

those who shout loudly take over – no one can take over

absence due to illness is seen directly – absence due to illness is not seen at all

pupils are seen all the time – no one in seen and no one says thank you

the progression can be controlled – it is hard to impose controls

The situation can be summarised in the following way:

The participants are – as you can see – present and take part in the learning process; in the face-to-face-situation.

The participants are not seen/ perhaps not taking part in the process at all, in the DE-situation.

b) Target group and group aims:

The target groups in DE often consist of people who would like to be able to ignore physical or other obstacles. It is therefore of great importance that the aims for the studies are well known and clear and that the studies are organised so that partial aims are continuously attained.

In this process a person that starts to slow down from the others in the group will be an obstacle to the whole group, which has difficulties in discovering this. It is therefore of outmost importance that the teacher constantly relates every action to the

common goals and to discussing solutions and conclusions from individuals to the entire group. It is the teacher's firm responsibility to resolve unclear contexts for the benefit of the whole group.

c) Contracting vs. progression:
Most probably the DE-group has accepted a certain progression with subgoals that together form a progression. Week 1 will reach this, week 2 that and so on. All experience indicates that DE-groups are more vulnerable than other groups. Therefore the alternative "jump off" is closer to participants in DE-groups. As the group with its fragile structure is almost organic, such a decision is a greater threat to the DE-groups than otherwise. Therefore we need a contract, according to which the individual participant agrees to reserve time for necessary study activities during the agreed week or whatever the scheduled period may be. The necessity of taking part in group communication is crucial. If not, the loser is the entire group, based on the idea that knowledge is reached through interaction.

d) The teacher as a social "magician"
"Even if you can't see it, it's still there." If social catastrophes occur in the classroom, the same things happen in the virtual classroom as well as in homes or workplaces. The big difference is of course that you seldom see things happen in the virtual space, unless someone makes it public in the virtual conference. The teacher has to be an extremely good listener and not only read between the lines but listen between the lines to find what should have been said; not only to what actually was said. Maybe he should have a direct and private contact with the participants. He should at any rate have contact on a regular basis with all in his group – just to make sure that the learning process is not too disturbed. He has to share problems and joys in a human way in the social field. His reward is a happily completed learning process and, who knows – he might have got a friend for life too. Nothing in the social field is impossible to deal with and a wide range of ideas as to how to act is a good asset.

Here we are assuming that the group does not have any face-to-face meeting – some cases are like that – but the ultimate outcome is attained if the group could have two or three face-to-face meetings during the actual period. If so, the teacher can build a confident relationship with his pupils, which could be of great importance later on.

e) The "cleaning troop"
No matter the neatness in working out routines, the teacher will always lose something. One participant was not reachable. One context was not thoroughly discussed. Some reports were too late.

The teacher has to form a troop that goes back to find reminders of unsolved questions, undelivered answers and so on, to ensure that the learning process will not fail. He has to find the absent pupil and make sure that such pupils really still are in the process. If he finds them too far away from the middle of the process, he has to give them more of his resources than expected.

When his troop duty is ended, there is nothing unclear left.

f) Support of techniques and technical support
The teacher has to be the expert at the technical level where he acts. This means that he has to be everybody's trouble-shooter, no matter how simple or complicated the actual question might be. As the technical evolution is taking place at quite a high speed, you can't expect the teacher to be always at the cutting edge. But he has to have a vital knowledge regarding the needs of the group and its process. If you need technical support, then hire it. The teacher is in the first place the pedagogical support.

g) Group dynamics and reconnecting
Every group has its own dynamics. Of course this goes for virtual groups as well. One of the tasks for the teacher is to see to that the dynamics works as a successful motor: pushing the group forwards and not allowing anyone to stay outside. The sensitivity of the teacher will be put to the test; he has to see what is invisible and hear what is inaudible. Maybe one pupil is weeping copiously in front of the computer; one other is barking like a dog. Who knows? Some third person may be highly irritated about someone else in the group and is maybe on a campaign of his own in silence.

The teacher – who is also the cleaning troop – must find all those things, and make the pupils concentrate on what is important: the aims of the studies.

Here we are dealing with the reconnection: constantly indicating the subgoals and relating the present situation to the current process. In the face-to-face forum the teacher can show results and talk to everyone in the same time. In the virtual forum, on the other hand, the teacher has to organise the results, put them on the net, and collect the totality of opinions inside the communication process. The reconnection to the forwardness of the learning process is of crucial importance. "Without reconnection no relaxation" – what is not dealt with in terms of everyday work will turn into a mountain in the end and will perhaps permanently prevent the possibility of reaching the final goal.

5. Some final thoughts

The DE-teacher has a different working situation: he has to see what does not seem to be there, and hear what cannot be heard. Understand what is not understood by those that are difficult to see. Be aware of the degree of suspicion that there are disturbances, hard to prove.

Still, he often smiles, as his pupils through his support in the study process on their own conditions are often more successful than those in the face-to-face forum. Personal reflection, that is constantly due to be questioned by others, with their experiences, makes the individual develop in a adjusted way.

The slowness of the learning process becomes a big asset for the individual that has chosen to take part in DE activities; has he much more complicated conditions to deal with than most of his fellow students .

So, Icelanders, mountain foxes, desert crofters, part time stressers and the rest of you.

''DE will from now on be my cup of tea''.

2.7   Blended Learning
Sonja Hedman-Folke, Studiefrämjandet i Norra Stor-Stockholm

Introduction
When something new starts, it is often a case of old wine in new bottles. For example in Sweden we call it flexible learning, which means that you sometimes meet in virtual space and sometimes face to face. But we also have the word blended learning for the same activity, and when I explained that at a course in Lithuania they said, ''Oh, you mean combined learning'' In Sweden we say ''a loved child has many names'' - we have many names for the things we love.

But you also have the ideas concerning how you look at people, learning and society, of course of that I will mentioned that following (jag förstĆr inte ett f*** dugg av det här!) It is, of course, a pedagogical idea that accords with the Swedish form of ''folk-bildning'' (popular adult education=PAE), that each person can take part on the basis of her own experiences, knowledge and to be active and be able to influence the planning and methods as well as the dialogue of the whole learning situation.

So…in planning/building the learning structure we must know something about working styles (Dunn&Dunn, USA) and something about dominant intelligences, as researched by Howard Gardner (USA).

To be able to ''construct'' learning situations in the APE-way, we must use the technique that supports that model!

A learning platform where people can meet in dialogue, where life–experience and own (self-?) knowledge create methods and the non-hierarchic view of how humans learn on the basis of individual needs.

In the following, we will develop these thoughts a little further:

Leadership in virtual meetings…different from physical ones?
Some methods are the same no matter whether the forum is physical or virtual. Leadership in virtual space is more dependent on a large ''tool-box'' of different methods. To create inter-activity for learning (=the learners) the leader needs a good pedagogical tool-box, where the learner can be his own craftsman, choosing the right tool for the specific challenge and always with more tools to pick up to master new challenges. If the adult educator has a good pedagogical tool-box in the face-to-face meeting, it is easier to find the need for new knowledge when you enter virtual space. In the following we will consider pictures, videos and sound.

Pictures
The thing is that different working-/learning styles need different signals to get you going! Visual learners will create motivation from visualization…what else? That will motivate them to pick up information and start to work it over to produce …learning. And that is also the same no matter whether you are in physical or virtual space.

Your choice of pictures is also the same – by which I mean you can use pictures that can be informative or misinformative depending on the methods and information you use. Because of that it can be good to learn some methods about how to think and plan when you want to use such different kinds of tools as pictures, sound, videos and text.

The Story-board method is one example (of many) as to how to make more learning.

But now to virtual space
To shift to virtual space you need to think about such other things as…

How to use a digital camera – different kinds of imaging software are essential to make pictures manageable for the Internet. A short course about image size, pixel size and different image formats. And also knowledge about one or two types of software for photos/pictures, for example Irfan View http://www.irfanview.com, Photofiltre http://www.photofiltre.com, Gimp www.gimp.org – all those are free. Photoshop Element http://www.adobe.com/products is software that costs money.

As an Adult Educator in blended learning you need to choose one of those programs and learn how to use it. Because then you can be sure that you know how to change pictures and you can vary more when tutoring your learners.

Small video films
How can I make a small film for publishing on the Internet? Which software is available for support? In Sweden CFL, centre for flexible learning, have a support function on their website for people working with adult education so they easily can make small lectures ?? prepare small lectures?? using a web camera. The lecture can later be saved on the CFL server and used for different courses. http://kursnavet.cfl.se/broker/portal/cfl/english2.htm.

But if you have your own digital video camera, you can make your own films as well, and if you have Windows XP, you can use Moviemaker to edit the film. Then of course you must know a little about how to save that for the web and twhether the server can keep it.

The new knowledge needed, apart from the technical features, comprises thoughts about different backgrounds, how to look into the camera and the length of the movie sequence. It is different to give a lecture over the Internet than when you give a lecture to people sitting in the same room. You are not able to use your body language, white board etc. in the same way.

Sound: different options are available. One can record and send sound as a message attachment, or put a sound file on a web-page, one can use web conferences where one can see and have conversations over the Internet, or use a white board and give lectures in real time over the Internet. To do this, knowledge about different software and how to use it is necessary both for the leaders/teachers and the participants. Examples of software are the free MSN and ICQ. Though they have their inconveniences because extern's ?? visitors may invite you or interfere in your work. Because of that there are special programmes/conferences for learning where each group has its own "room". These special rooms are …Marratech >http://www.marratech.se and Macromedia Breeze http://www.adobe.com/products/breeze.
We at?? FolkbildningsrĆdet, the national cooperation level of PAE have a place of our own, Flash-environment. Since you need a server, it's a good idea to collect more groups to share the cost.

Learning and communication platforms
In physical space you have to consider the "lay-out" of the furniture to get the right learning-situation. If you need dialogue or if you need listening (=monologue)…the rooms should look different! It's just the same with different kinds of web-platforms. They each communicate a certain way of learning. For instance it's quite common for the Adult Educator to have a lot of possibilities to use pictures, sound, get historic ?? and to control what is happening – but the participants have none! Compared to an e-mailing system, you can diverse devise?? different subjects to get a better structure and don't have to mix it in everyone's mailboxes.

In Sweden, CFL (=Centre for flexible learning) has constructed programs for analysing learning platforms including:
• Participant aspects
• Teacher aspects
• Producer aspects
• Administrative aspects
• Technical aspects

More information at http://www.cfl.se//default.asp?sid=441

You will find a lot of so -called learning platforms out on the web. Some are expensive and some are free "open source" for any-one to adjust to individual needs.

Swedish popular adult education (PAE) uses First Class. The reasons for our choice are that the participants get a lot of possibil-ities and there are a few less possibilities for the teacher to control. Sound, pictures, home-pages, structured conferences, lots of space for saving material and easy handling both as a participant and for the moderator to construct. First Class makes it possi-ble for the moderators to focus on the pedagogical issues rather than the technical ones.

Need to structure more important in a blended learning situation
If you want everybody the to?? start dialogues, to do the whole course both in virtual and in physical space , try to find a model that can be good to have as a planning instrument.
Sometimes we use 7 steps in the knowledge process. From that model we can decide what we can and want to do in virtual space and what we will do in physical space. We have to remember that information and knowledge are not the same thing, we have to remember that everybody needs inspiration, and we have to decide when we think it can be good to work in pairs, in small groups and as the whole group.

7 steps in knowledge process, attachment 1,
One example of pedagogical methods

As you can see in the attachment the steps are
1 Planning
2 Inspiration
3 Putting the issue into words or making questions
4 Collecting information
5 Working with the chosen information (Process Information)
6 Presentations
7 Analysing what we have done and our next step (Evaluation)

Facts (or steps 4-5) are often stressed as the main learning steps. But you mustn't forget step 2.

Some say that there should be a step 2 before each of the other steps as a starter!?

How do you do that then? You must know something about the participants' learning style and you must have a good pedagog-ical toolbox as well as time. And you must have the courage to break the standard pattern! Some participants will protest and some will love it.

This process you can use both in the classroom or in distance-studies and in blended learning.

I am going to give an example for the blended learning situation.

And as usual you must make clear who's in the target group, what they are to learn, what is possible to do with the computer and what they have to do face to face.

As an example, it can be easier to work with the role-play method, first face to face, then to arrange it in the computer. And if you know that dramatizing is a good method for a particular aim, you had better plan it in the face-to-face meeting.

A course example can be organized like this
1) 2 weeks distance-part (Inspiration for the subject, knowing each other, getting to know the technical tools we are using and starting to plan a little bit)
2) Face-to-face meeting: 3 days, New Inspiration, a short resume of what has happened during the first distance-period, more planning and starting to discuss with the group: What knowledge do we already have in the group about this? Which ques-tion do we have? Where can we find the information? When you meet face-to-face you can for example use a concentric circle or work with questions and flip chart.
3) Distance-part again: 2 weeks Everybody are collecting information about the issue, through internet, books, interviews, the learners put that into virtual space, and the teachers and other learners can discuss it during the distance part. Here it can be good for those that need dialogue that they can use a web video, chat etc
4) Face-to-face meeting. Now we are in the phase working with the information to knowledge (Process Information) If we do so face-to-face, we can use experiments, Role Play, drama, two-part discussions, etc.

5) Distance part Presentation – For those who have done the presentation of their work in a written report, or a Power Point presentation – but maybe this must be in a face-to-face meeting because they want to show a experiment, or perform a drama

6) Evaluation and what to do next

The experiences we have are that learners are often very active just before and just after a face-to-face meeting, and also that they want to do everything during the face-to-face meeting.

Therefore the tutor/teacher must arrange very good planning for the distance part, and really thing about the methods.

Summary

As an adult Educator

When you want to plan a blended learning course (or flexible course or combined course) you naturally always start with the course plan or study plan. But before you do that you create your virtual space. Because everybody will start to meet there, it is all the more important to organize that space before the room or rooms where you will meet physically.

In virtual space you can put the course plan, the aim for different parts, the time-table and other aids for the participants, such as how to study, a small learning test. And of course a welcome letter for everybody. After that you must ask them to do their presentations. In the first distance part with you as an Adult Educator you must put quite a lot of effort into making sure everybody is together and can study together.

When you meet in the first face-to-face meeting, it is important to continue to build the group, because then it will be easier for them during the next distance part.

You as an Adult Educator have to develop some of the technical knowledge or at least together with a technician so you know what you want her/him to do for you with a video recording, or a drag and drop exercise and why you think that will be useful for your course.

And you can ask the participants to work individually, in pairs, in small groups, or as a whole group, and to write their own log-book, or to have the task to give response to somebody else's work.

You can decide to work for one week in what are called online seminaries, where everybody has to at least be there every day and discuss the subjects you have decided. You can decide to work for 2 weeks on tasks that everybody can do when they have time available during that period. You can have a time for chatting when everybody meets at the same time, and you can have the web video conference you also must meet at the same time and then you can both see each other and talk. And as an Adult Educator you must also remamber that people have different learning styles, so use pictures for the visual, use writing, use tactile and kinaesthetic methods, use sound.

As an organiser of Adult Education

I think it will be good for you to have decided which support you are going to give the teachers/tutors.

Which platform and which server for the platform and who are going to develop that platform?

The administration for the platform: What are the teachers supposed to do, what will a administrator do, what will a technicians do?

The Adult educator needs a computer, a web camera, a headset with microphone and some software program and Internet access.

At the face-to-face meeting you need rooms with Internet access, computers, sound blasters and projector, and also the possibility to shift rooms so you have a good environment for different kinds of tasks, exercises, so you can work in small groups and work as a whole group.

And you must enable the Adult Educator to have training in new digital tools and different kinds of methods and course planning, so they can feel secure in their job.

As a participant

You must have a computer with Internet access, a headset with microphone and a web camera and basic computer knowledge, or you cn be offered an extra meeting to learn basic computer knowledge. If you are a daily user of a computer you can also start to learn some of the software, for example how to use pictures on the web; then you can be more flexible when you are performing tasks and want to share your experiences. That is exactly the same as when you just started to use different methods in physical space, for example role play, or group discussion with the notes on a flipchart. But that is so long ago that now we take those methods for granted, and that will be the same with different kinds of methods in virtual space in the future – that is just a question of your imagination and time.

2.8   Learning Diary as a Tool For Reflection

Aurimas M. Juozaitis and Roma Juozaitienė, Lithuanian Association of Adult Education

Reflection is one of the main principles of adult learning. It may be implemented in different ways. A learning diary is one of them. The learning diary is as much important for the reflection of one's experience as for the provision of feedback to a teacher or pairs.

Why reflection and the diary are so important for learning?

Principle of reflection

According to K. Shelton (1999), using reflection for learning is "one of the most effective ways to encourage continuous professional development". The author argues that reflection is a process by the aid of which professional experience is converted into professional or personal development, which in its turn determines more qualitative professional performance. Thus, according to K. Shelton, new skills, new knowledge, new understanding, new meaning and new perception can be considered as the results of reflection.

The application of this new learning outcome to already existing understanding, skills, qualities and attitudes allows one to convert learning into professional performance of a better quality.

We are thinking about strengths and weaknesses of our actions while reflecting upon them. We perfectly understand and openly admit that it is the strengths we have to rely on during other classes too; they should not be forgotten, as it is these strengths which are useful to our learners and make them happy. Weaknesses should not be denied either, however; one should admit them and learn how to deal with them, openly and persistently improving one's mistakes.

Thus, while reflecting we win in two ways, i.e., we better assimilate the acquired knowledge and learn more about ourselves as P. Jarvis notes: "We become more authentic" (1992).

Learning Diary

Accordingly, the learning diary is one of the forms of reflection. It is a kind of everyday writing: rethinking and remembering what happened to me, what I did, why I took part in one or the other event. It is a real pity that modern human beings allocate less and less of their time to such things, as diary writing is not intended for eternalising oneself, or showing off to the others; first of all, it is meant for one's own self, for being in contact with one's own self. It is not chance that diary writing used to be a daily routine of an educated person. A human being that is permanently learning is not a person who makes a parade of his or her academic or professional achievements, but the one who indulges in continuous search and reflection.

Why learning diary?
*   Learning as thinking. A human being cannot be taught anything – he can only teach himself. This is an old thesis, but one which is as relevant today as it was a very long time ago. If one wishes a man to learn something, i.e. to handle the acquired information with deliberate action and apply his or her skills with responsibility, he or she should train his/her thinking abilities, i.e. any real learning is related to the development of thinking abilities. Writing as thinking. Writing is a thought-locking. While writing we are thinking, recording what we remember and perceive. Writing of the learning diary itself is not a kind of stream of consciousness recording, but it is a thinking process expressed in writing. Memorizing as training. Memory training is one of the essential learning tasks. We act as educated people when we "withdraw" the information at the right time and apply (the word "educated" means "the one who has educated himself/herself Meanwhile, learning diary writing is a recollection and memory effort. And every effort trains. Analysis as growth. While writing a diary we do not just reflect and remember but also discuss and make evaluations – in other words, we analyse. Every analysis leads to conclusions and decisions. Decisions are preconditions for development and it is the learning diary that provides these preconditions.

Questions of the learning diary.

There are various diary forms. One may write only for oneself, where nobody is meant to see these writings, but it is also possible to write a diary for others to read, i.e. to use it as material for contemplation and insights. Both forms are acceptable and both have pluses and minuses. The former one is good in that in this case a person writes in a more open, "unmerciful" way (it means that a person writes not only about his/her weaknesses but about his/her strengths too, as quite a few of us are more modest in public , not inclined to talk about our strengths openly). Thus, the second form in this respect may be "more cautious". The minus of the former (which in the latter case turns into a plus) is a lack of sharing one's experience with others: it deprives us of a possibility to listen to a different attitude, a different evaluation which might lead to different perception and insights.

Learning diaries may be written in an open or structured form.

The following ways of structured learning diary writing (questions, unfinished statements) are possible:
- What I have memorised best of the topics I learnt? What have I learnt?
- What I would like to/ could I apply in my job situation?
- What I have learnt from the way the teacher/teachers taught?
- What I would draw his/her attention to, if he/she asked me about it?
- This day was meaningful to me as I understood…
- Also I learnt:…
- To my mind, I will be able to apply in future …
- I am definitely sure that in future I will retain these meaningful things …, as I…

Time meant for diary writing. You can write diaries at home or in a classroom. For a modern person in a constant hurry it is advisable to allocate some time for diary writing at the end of every course day. This will mean that the impressions and feelings are very alive and relevant; it is an easier or, perhaps, a more authentic way to write. In our courses we usually allocate about 15-30 minutes at the end of the day for this task.

Below are responses of our course participants to learning diary writing:
- "Though it means extra work, it is full of exciting enthusiasm and suspense".
- "Learning diary adds structure to what had not been structured".
- "It is a perceived experience".
- "Excitement and positive experience".
- "A feeling that it will be helpful for me in future".
- "More information is assimilated".
- "A pleasant task, though, requires extra time".
- "While knowing that at the end of the day you will have to write a diary, you concentrate your attention more on what you are learning".
- "Provides freedom for writing in a personal writing style'".
- "You "relearn" what you learnt during the day".
- "A diary is my personal record".
- "It makes one concentrate upon essentials things".
- "A good "self-ventilation".

To conclude, we would like to note that the thoughts written down and shared with pairs and adult educators is a huge treasure for course participants as well as for adult educators for the evaluation of the course involved and for the planning of future teaching and learning activities.

2.9   Feedback to Learners as a Mean to Growth

Aurimas M. Juozaitis and Roma Juozaitienè, Lithuanian Association of Adult Education

What is feedback?

Learning is communication. Qualitative learning is qualitative communication. Undoubtedly, such qualitative communication is, first of all, a mutual relationship. This "mutuality" can be characterised by a continual exchange of information, an understanding of other people's feelings and emotions and an ability to demonstrate that understanding. Thus, during the learning process an adult educator and a learner have to maintain this relationship, providing each other with intellectual as well as emotional information. However, this communication differs from a discussion between two friends. A learning dialogue has a clearly defined aim: the adult educator provides or receives the information with the aim/in order to cause/encourage /initiate changes in the learner's knowledge, skills (behaviour) or even attitudes, which would help the learner achieve his/her professional or personal aims. Thus, this type of communication to some extent may be "painful", as we have to accept (learn) something new and to unlearn something old. "New" by all means does not mean easy. The same can be said about the old experience, the habit which we have to give up – it may be dear and comfortable, though not efficient any more, and that is why we should not exercise it any more. Thus, while communicating in the learning situation, namely, while providing and accepting feedback, we have to be attentive to the process itself. The process should be organised in such a way that the leaner would maintain learning motivation throughout while receiving the information. Therefore, we have to think about a secure environment, one in which human dignity would not be hurt and only the improvement of specific behaviour aspects would be dealt with and particular information would be specified. Instead of saying: "You did it wrong, nobody behaves like this," we say: "I would like to draw your attention to the fact that you could have behaved in a different way in this instance." The feedback is of a descriptive but not evaluating or rating nature. Furthermore, we have to be grateful to each other for the provided feedback, as feedback is an openly stated expectation for a mutual relationship, – it is a perceived quality. We have to be grateful to each other for such things, as in such a way we become aware of what we are expecting from each other and in which direction we want our relationship to develop.

What do we receive while providing and accepting feedback?

First of all, the learner better memorises the learning material. In such a way, the learning material is reinforced. Feedback is usually provided about the activity which has been performed. This performance demonstrates how and what the learner has understood and what skills and abilities have been acquired. While talking about what should be maintained (positive feedback) and what should be improved (negative feedback, though it is better to name it call it developmental feedback) reminds the learner about the learning material which has been analysed during the classes.

Secondly, while listening to how the adult educator or pairs perceived his/her information or actions, the learner receives the information concerning his learning outcomes; he or she gets an instantaneous formative evaluation. It is a well-known fact that the evaluation is always important for the learner as it is motivating (or non-motivating) information. Additionally, having the information and comparing it to the learning outcomes, the learner discovers how to achieve his/her aims.

Thirdly, learning must be practical. This means that in order to achieve learning aims we have to find unique, individual ways for each learner. We are inclined to refer to them as "recipes". The name itself does not matter – it is the principle what matters. And the principle is the following: "Knowing (having information) what I am good at and what I am not good at I am aware what I should do in order to achieve the aim." The idea sounds simple, though it is not easily implemented. The difficult part is that one has to find one's own way of how to do it. The preconditions for finding out how can be favourable enough, especially if the feedback information had been provided correctly (in the way it has been described in the text above). And finally, the learner while receiving feedback is forced to look for an answer to the question: "what I am going to do with all this?" It is not merely "an invention" of recipes which has already been discussed above, but it is also training of thinking and reflection abilities. Any teaching or training is doomed to fail if amongst other aims it does not seek to train thinking abilities. This aim does not necessarily have to be in black and white but the adult educator must have it in mind. It may be among so called "hidden aims". It just must be there anyway.

Feedback is provided for the adult educator also. The adult educator, while receiving the feedback from learners as to how they evaluate learning content/material, methods and forms, is aware at what points and how he or she meets his/her learners' expectations. Unsatisfied expectations of the learners are the worst thing that may happen. Naturally, learners cannot understand and appreciate all learning methods and forms, but as far as the learning content is concerned, their judgements are always right. If the learning content is not understandable or unacceptable to the learners, this information is of special importance for the adult educator. Firstly, it may reflect the real situation (the learning content is inappropriate). Secondly, it may indicate that because of the inappropriate methods and forms of content delivery learners were not able to comprehend the learning material. And thirdly, both above described situations are possible. No matter which applies, the adult educator should alter the study programme. Feedback for the adult educator is a possibility to detect the strengths and weaknesses of his/her performance. Being aware what needs to be changed, adult educator can look for solutions. It makes him/her think (the reflection principle is being implement-

ed): which means that the adult educator is learning. At the same time, while encouraging the learners to provide their feedback and being able to accept it properly (with respect and gratitude), the adult educator serves as a behavioural model for the learners and inspires them to behave the same way. It is a well-known fact that the example inspires. In such a way one more learning principle (demonstration) is being implemented.

And finally, having a feedback from the learners the adult educator is able to provide a more comprehensive report to a client (the one who financed the learning). The client has to be informed how successful the adult educator was and how the learning process was evaluated by the learners.

How feedback is provided?

First of all, it should be noted that for the provision of the feedback sufficient time should be allocated. It cannot be done hastily and in a superficial way. As it has already been mentioned, it is a subtle process, and in such a delicate situation neither rush nor flounce can be tolerated. Thus, when planning learning programmes, choosing learning methods and exercises, it is necessary to evaluate time resources carefully. It is better to allocate a bit more time to the provision of feedback than necessary instead of allocating less. If you have a bit more time than necessary, you can answer learners' questions. Whereas if there is a time shortage, you rush. Rush gives the impression that a particular activity is not all that important, that something is meant to be concealed. Such situations are very harmful to the mutual trust between the adult educator and the learners. Learning does not take place in such situations.

Speaking about the forms of feedback, it has to be said that there are oral and written feedback forms.

Oral feedback forms are applied from small groups (groups of two) to joint group discussions. All types of oral forms of feedback are used for learners and learners - adult educator discussions. Filling of questionnaires or diary writing (individual feedback, i.e., feedback for oneself) is the written form of feedback The diary is discussed in a separate chapter and, as far as the questionnaires are concerned, it should be noted that they are important not only for a client but for an adult educator also. They are a useful information source for the improvement of the study programmes.

Conclusion

Feedback is a powerful learning tool that not only provides information about learning (starting from content and ending with form) but it also trains the thinking abilities of all participants involved in this process. And what can be more valuable than conscious and responsible people?

2.10 Video Taping in Adult Learners Classroom

Aurimas M. Juozaitis and Roma Juozaitienė, Lithuanian Association of Adult Education

We look into the mirror when we want to look more beautiful. Some of us look for a long time, others less. Whatever may be the case, while looking into the mirror we receive important information. Walls of all dancing hall are "padded" with mirrors, so one can better see what body movements are to be elaborated.

Thus, a glance from outside/of an onlooker is a powerful learning tool. Especially a glance from the outside at one's own self. Sometimes we accept the feedback from others in a very hard, painful, sometimes even defensive way, which means that we do not accept it at all. To be one's own evaluator is beneficial not only as regards the incoming information – it is also very useful for the insights which emerge after the attempts to rationalise one's own actions and behaviour.

In learning situations such a possibility is provided by video training, i.e., review and analysis of a filmed activity. The provision of feedback, from one's own self or from pairs and adult educators, occupies a special place in video training classes (we do not intend to dwell here on the importance of feedback and its forms, as a separate special chapter is devoted to it).

It is necessary to note that video training require thorough preparation. Below are some recommendations which should be followed if we want this learning form to achieve maximum results.

To start with, one should be able to apply the technique. Some adult educators refuse to master the video technique, preferring to hire professional video operators. That is not the right attitude. The adult educator has to do the filming herself/himself in order to record here and now those places, emphasise those details which would be most beneficial for the learner to pay attention to. In terms of learning, "foreground pictures" (the filming of only one general view) does not make maximum advantage of video

training possibilities. That is why the adult educator must have excellent video technique skills to be able to spotlight the special details and fix steady video camera work.

While filming, one should record not only those learners' abilities the development of which is the aim of a particular course but also such aspects as:
- the relationship of a learner to the audience: the way the learner interacts with the audience;
- the necessity to record the reactions of the audience: they may serve as a very important information source;
- non-verbal communication, i.e., body language is one of the video filming objectives. It is important to record the learner's behaviour in order to provide him/her with some necessary information concerning his/her body language.

These are three main aspects related to the video filming itself. However, it is no less important to provide a proper feedback about the filmed material. The filmed material is analysed and discussed. Therefore, before starting a review of the filmed material, learners have to be instructed in what they are expected to do during the review of the material: for instance, to make notes about "actor" behaviour and those aspects of their behaviour which should be improved. The filmed material can be reviewed non-stop or in parts, inserting some breaks (it is up to the adult educators at what point to make a break). Either way, the learners who were filmed should start feedback provision. This is for two reasons. Firstly, the learner who talks about himself/herself first more easily expresses self-criticism about his/her behaviour and more easily accepts the critique from his pairs than if his drawbacks are first pointed out by others. Secondly, every so often learners are too self-critical and notice fewer strengths in their behaviour than they actually demonstrate. Then, "outsiders" help the learners to rediscover their strengths.

As has already been noted, there should be sufficient time planned for feedback. Video training requires even more time, as adult educators can come across unforeseen situations in this case. For instance, when confronted with their unconstructive behaviour, some people get very excited and react to it very emotionally. In such situations, to continue with the learning process without stopping and clarifying the situation would be very irresponsible thing to do on the part of the teacher. People learn when they feel they are supported by their teacher. Under such delicate circumstances, adult educator support would be best expressed by empathy and attentiveness to the learner's inner state.

Thus, the more effective the learning method is, the more carefully it should be applied – and very thorough preparations for its handling are necessary.

2.11 Community Drama: Critical Creativity and Adult Educators

Produced by Department of Adult and Community Education,
National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Ireland

Aim:
- To introduce participants to community drama
- To introduce key ideas those are influential in community drama.
- To enable participants to make the connections between community drama and adult education, through reflective practice.

Format:
This module is designed to enable the participants to evaluate the Face 2 Face component of the AGADE programme, through community drama

Key Ideas:
- Liberation Movements
- Use of Arts
- Community Drama
- Power and Empowerment

Introduction: A Brief History
In the late 1960s, liberation movements were gaining power and empowerment in Western Europe, Australia, North and South Amercia. These movements involved grassroots, community-based activists. For many in these grassroots groups, the issue of education and literacy was highly controversial. Several of the grassroots movements were activated in the Universities, such as the Peace Movement, but this led to the exclusion of a huge number of the poorest and least articulate people. In response to this exclusion, the leaders focused on the arts, as a means of expression and communication.

Augusto Boal (born 1931, Brazil), influenced by Paulo Freire, devised the Theatre of the Oppressed, a process of using drama to articulate very complex, difficult issues among people who were totally disempowered. As the method developed, it influenced all other art forms, such as visual art, music, creative writing, and handicrafts. Simultaneously, the work of Howard Gardner (born 1943, USA) on Multiple Intelligences promoted creativity and art as a valuable source of knowledge. By the early 1970s, community arts groups were established in Canada, USA, Ireland, UK, and Australia.

The Use of Arts

The arts have always had the role of commenting on political and social issues. The great novels, paintings, music and sculptures have provided an insight into society much more effectively than academic or theoretical tracts. The key to the application of the arts to social and political issues in community arts is the removal of the distinction between high, elite art and the art of the people. Thus, community arts is based on the belief that everyone can make art, and can participate in the arts. The process is dialogical and empowering, valuing experience and valuing democracy.

Community Drama

This is the process of using the techniques of theatre to articulate personal, community, social and cultural issues. These techniques include symbolic costumes and properties; space; communication modes, such as mime, impersonation, mimicry, music, and so on; and the bodies of the participants. The participants can represent a complex set of ideas using these techniques, from introducing new theories, explaining experiences, and evaluating programmes. This is the context in which it is used in the AGADE project.

Power and Empowerment

The key issue of grassroots community activism is that of empowerment. It entails redistributing power from the elite in society to all members of society. Empowerment means increasing the social, economic and cultural of the people, by developing their capacity and confidence to express their difficulties. Adult and community education is the main way of building capacity and confidence. Community drama is one of the methods that facilitate this process.

Conclusion

Community Drama is a valuable new method in adult and community education. It is especially powerful in enabling people of very diverse experiences to combine the differences to represent a highly complex and layered set of ideas. It helps them to develop relationships with one another, and it builds the capacity of people to understand the social and political contexts. It overcomes the problems of lack of language and literacy. And it develops the creativity of the participants in an empowering, nurturing way.

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APPENDIX ONE

Sample Session for Community Drama
New Methods in Adult Education

Aim:
- To introduce participants to community drama as a new method in adult education

Objectives:
- To provide a brief background to community drama
- To provide an opportunity to practise community drama (to practice is AmE)
- To facilitate participants in completing a short project in community drama

Rationale:
- Community Drama is based on the ideas of Paulo Freire and Augusto Boal, and is premised on the concept that adult education has a crucial role in empowering people, enabling them to develop critical reflection and community progress.

Content:
- Introduction to techniques in community drama, starting with a warm-up exercise
- Short discussion on the role of personal empowerment, identifying a social issue for brief project
- Facilitating group in their treatment of the social issue through community drama
- Presentation of brief project

Timing:
- Introduction and warm up: 15 minutes
- Discussion: 20 minutes
- Practice of community drama: 90 minutes
- Presentations   25 minutes

      Total Time: **2 hours and 30 minutes**

APPENDIX TWO

Community Drama Evaluation

Aim:
to evaluate the Face-to-Face Test Course using Community Drama

Process:
Students are introduced to the concept of community drama, as part of the creative methodologies of working in adult and community education. Participants are asked to divide into groups of threes and fours and are then asked to depict three different points in drama:

1   Please depict your Learning Journey for the week, including the expected outcomes, as well as the unexpected.

2   What went well for you on the course?
    What do you want more of?
    What do you want less of?

3   What else would you include?
    What would you exclude?

Finally, the groups are asked come back together as a single group, and to make a tableau of their present feelings now that the course is finished.

2.12 Further Training Course Towards Becoming a Good Adult Educator

All the project partners

Course outline

Adult education is never neutral. Educators provide knowledge, organise education and encourage change based on the social, political and cultural situation and priorities in the society and country - at the same time acting in a global world. Adult educators assume responsibility for being open to and responsible for personal development and social intervention. Engaging in adult education means interaction which should be based on the democratic values of exercising freedom with responsibility, the values of tolerance and solidarity. Adult educators should help identify and value the educational potential in diverse social practices.

Course philosophy

Four roles and two groups of criteria for a good adult educator have been used as the point of departure for the curriculum discussion in the AGADE project. The criteria have been discussed and developed in 8 European countries; and an agreed minimum set has been used for the basis of the European course curriculum.

The goals of the course

- to share experience, knowledge and perspectives of own work,
- to reflect on one's own practice, to be a reflective participant - to empower adult educators as reflective practitioners.
- to provide a supportive learning environment for the practitioners in order to actively reflect on their practice so as to enhance the quality of adult education and adult education practice.
- to strengthen adult education as a field through building an international network and partnerships.

The course *Towards Becoming a Good Adult Educator* is a blended course, consisting of 3 modules: the first distance learning (DL), the classroom learning (F2F), and the second distance learning (DL). These three sessions are organically linked and support each other. The 1st DL is introduction, F2F active study and the 2nd DL is reflection and evaluation.

Course curriculum

Topic	1 Distance learning	Face to Face learning	2 Distance learning
Theme: Sharing experiences, knowledge and perspectives			
Reflective practice	Professional life stories 2 hours	Learning diary, training map Very clear explanation why and how? 3 hours	My learning story, training map 2 hours
Adult educator as reflective practitioner	Key text and reflection own work 1 hour	Adult educator as reflective practitioner, teacher's roles 3 hours	–
Adult education philosophy	Video lecture 25 minutes Questions 35 minutes 1 hour	–	Answers to the questions 1 hour
Theme: The role of Adult Educator today and in the Future			
Current policy of adult education in Europe	Video lecture 25 minutes Questions 35 minutes 1 hour	–	Answers to the questions 1 hour
Digital tools in distance learning	Examples and exercises 1 hour	Practice 2 hours	Exercises 2 hours
Social theory	–	–	Video lecture 25 minutes Questions + answers 35 minutes 1 hour
Developing skills and knowledge			
Curriculum building philosophy	Key text and practice model 2 hours	Building course plan 3 hours	See dream course
Learning styles	Key text, exercises 1 hour	Exercises 3 hours	Questions + answers 1 hour
Adult psychology	Key text 1 hour	Exercises 3 hours	See training map
Adult education methodology	3 exercises 2 hours	Practice 3 hours	Dream course. See also curriculum building philosophy 2 hours
Distance education methodology	Key text and questions 3 hours	Practice 3 hours	Practice 2 hours
Practice and feedback	Key text 1 hour	Practice 7 hours	–
Community drama	Video Key text 1 hour	Practice community drama 3 hours	–

2.13 Practicalities checklist

Katalin Varga, Hungarian Folk High School Society

Below is a list of ideas that may help you when organising a similar blended course. This checklist is far from complete, and is based on the structure of the course the AGADE partnership has developed. Our course consists of a 4-week distance learning (DL) phase before and a 3-week DL phase after the 5-day face-to-face (F2F) sessions in between. The course has been developed for adult education practitioners coming from all over Europe, so some of the advice is irrelevant if you are organising a similar course for participants from your own country only.

Advance information
- Provide clear information about the course when advertising it
  - o who the course is targeted at
  - o when the course will start and end
  - o how many hours of work are needed DL and F2F
  - o what topics will be dealt with
  - o who will deliver each topic, when and in what form: DL or F2F, or both
- Indicate the contacts of the course leader who will be following both the DL and F2F phases of the course.

Technical requirements
- Internet access at work, home, study centre or library
- Computer with sound card

Blended course
- DL and F2F tasks should build on each other
- the DL phase prior to the F2F session should be used to map the interests and needs of participants
- work done in the DL phase should be reflected on at the F2F session
- tasks in the DL phase after the F2F part should link up with the work done F2F
- all 3 phases of the course should be evaluated by participants and teachers

Learning environment at a distance
- provide the necessary information via regular email how to download and enter FC or other platform
- give the name and contacts (regular email, phone) of the technical assistant who can help with emerging difficulties
- have the contacts (regular email, phone) of all participants, so that they can be contacted if you feel that they need assistance or encouragement
- if it is an international course, take into consideration that people in different countries have different access and experience, if any, as to how to use such virtual space – this may be their first learning experience in the course! So
- have a clear structure for the entire course in the virtual platform
- set the rules e.g. how often a week participants are expected to visit FC, how often teachers will respond
- check regularly that all participants feel secure about how to use FC
- make sure that inexperience to use a virtual space is not preventing them from contributing
- make the virtual environment friendly, with photos and introductions of teachers
- give a little bit of yourself, so that participants feel good about giving a bit of themselves
- moderators responsible for each topic should respond to all contributions received from participants
  - o the minimum is to say thank you and give brief comments
  - o starting a dialogue one-to-one is good, but not enough
  - o encourage discussion among all participants

Learning Environment F2F
- give information about the rules of the place where the course is held
- give information about the location e.g. places of interest, shops, post office, public transport etc.
- start the course with some activities so that participants, including teachers, get to know each other's names and some basic information about their work, interests, family, etc.
- make sure that there is a balance between frontal lectures, whole group discussions and small group work or pair work
- it is not always a good idea to put participants in different groups
- If possible, have the same room, except for the DL part, for all the sessions.
- This room should allow for
- wall space to put all the flipchart notes on the wall for participants to see and reflect on during the course
  - o mark flipchart notes clearly as to when and why they were made

- o have different colour pens, paper, scissors, post-it notes etc.
- o space for about 25 persons to sit around comfortably for presentations and discussions,
- o move about to work in pairs or groups
- o have space for making videos
- make sure that you have one hour at the end of each day, so that participants can write their learning diary and reflect
- keep a log book or a separate flipchart paper for participants to make comments anonymously at any time during the course

Language
- If English is the working language, remember that participants
  - o will have different levels of language skills
  - o may find some of the reading material too challenging if the language is too complicated
  - o may have difficulty in communicating in English and need encouragement

Breaks and social programmes
- best is to keep time and plan breaks, but be flexible and take breaks when you see that participants need to "take a deep breath"
- it may be a good idea to have a longer break after lunch and work longer in the evening, especially if the course takes place in autumn/winter, when it gets dark early
- or in a remote place where the opportunity for social programmes is more limited
- organise social programmes in such a way that participants can experience the local specialities but also
- have space for them for reflections and discussions during free-time activities
- have also opportunities for activities of their own choice and interest