

ACE – Ageing Challenges Education

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Presentation of ACE and its partners

Summary

As a result of demographic changes - the ageing of our society - the demand for and the nature of lifelong learning also changes. People will need to stay active longer than before and will therefore need training to remain so. Education needs to adapt to the specific needs of older learners in terms of knowledge and competence management, didactic approaches, services, organisation, use of ICT, etc.

The ACE partnership set out to raise awareness of those needs and to look at different approaches to keep older learners socially, intellectually and professionally active as long as possible. Through a series of study visits and workshops involving staff, the partnership succeeded in stimulating reflection and research about learning at more advanced aged and sharing good practice on working with older learners.

To promote and share the results of that collaborative work with adult education organisation beyond the partnership, it published these results as easily accessible ICT based content on the project website and as a booklet containing the descriptions of good practices and an inventory of relevant competences.

Aims and objectives

The overall objectives of the proposed project correspond with the specific and operational objectives of the Grundtvig Sectoral programmes:

- To respond to the educational challenge of an ageing population in Europe
- To help provide adults with pathways to improving their knowledge and competences
- To improve older learner's quality of life by providing them with an integrated programme
- To support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning
- To improve pedagogical approaches and the management of adult education organisations
- To facilitate the development of innovative practices in adult education and their transfer including from a participating country to others

- To assist people from vulnerable social groups and in marginal social contexts, in particular older people and those who have left education without basic qualifications, in order to give them alternative opportunities to access adult education

To achieve these objectives, the partnership has identified a number of key issues and has mapped those onto the expertise of the different partners. During the planned mobilities, this expertise will be shared during a series of workshops and demonstrations of good practice involving both staff and learners. Themes of the workshops include the following:

1. working beyond the traditional age of retirement
2. learning beyond the traditional age of retirement
3. methods and ways to transfer experience to younger people
4. profiles and self-evaluation of competences of teachers and learners
5. moving on, Second chance, career decisions...
6. teacher training in older learners in adult education
7. using innovative ICT with older learners

Between the mobilities, each of the partners will disseminate and apply the outcomes of the workshops and demonstrations of good practice within their own institution. Simultaneously, the results will be made available through the project website and via a virtual community of practice that will be established.

Other key objectives of the ACE-project are

- to improve the quality and accessibility of mobility throughout Europe of people involved in adult education and to increase its volume, so as to support the mobility of at least 7,000 of such individuals per year by 2013;
- to improve the quality and to increase the volume of co-operation between organisations involved in adult education throughout Europe;
- to raise awareness of the challenges aging poses to adult education throughout Europe;
- to work with teachers, trainers, institutions, organisations and corporations...on how to keep older learners socially, intellectually and professionally active as long as possible.

The situation addressed by this project—the ageing of the population—is not a local problem, as is clearly indicated by the statistics and prognoses available at the European level.

The partnership includes 6 organizations with different backgrounds and key competences working in the field of adult education and the challenges that the ageing population poses to the adult education throughout Europe. The advantage of the current partnership is that it forms a diverse network for collaboration between institutions and organizations from 9 different countries. This

diversity of organizations allows the partnership to look from different perspectives and assures the involvement of rich experience that is definitely useful for the project objectives.

The partnership will allow all partners to broaden their understanding about challenges that the ageing population poses to the adult education throughout Europe and exchange ideas and best practices. The project facilitates the development of innovative practices in education.

Generally speaking, the whole programme will be used as a helpful educational and management tool that will promote adult education (formal and non-formal). The theme of the programme will offer students and staff a current vision of our European society, and will raise motivation for both trainers and learners to seek for an adequate and up-dated education in response to our society needs.

The partnership project also stipulates fostering cooperation between organizations in this field such as education and training public and private institutions and organizations as well as private companies and other employers.

So, the project's outcomes as well as the outcomes of its continuation – the bigger project that will follow - can be applied in adult education throughout Europe.

ACE project partners



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Multidisziplinäres Institut für Europa-Forschung Graz (Austria)

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www.cepaj Joanmirimir.org



Centre for Adult Continuing Education, University College Cork (Ireland)

www.ace.ucc.ie or www.ucc.ie



VUCFYN & Fyns HF Ringen Nyborg (Denmark)

www.vucfyn.dk



WHL - Wissenschaftliche Hochschule Lahr (Germany)

www.whl-lahr.de

E-learning and the lifelong learner: Challenging common assumptions

By James G.R. Cronin, University College Cork, Ireland

Introduction

In Ireland, the majority of lifelong learners are part-time students trying to maintain work and family commitments. Ireland's participation in the European Union's Bologna Declaration (1999) has established a higher educational qualification framework that advocates flexible career progression paths and greater educational opportunities. If course providers are to fully integrate non-traditional learners within higher education they need to consider opportunities afforded by learning technologies to enhance self-directed inquiry.

Malcom S. Knowles (1970, 1975, 1984) acknowledged the importance of prior experience and self-direction in adult education. Increasingly, the term reflective practice is appearing in the vocabulary of adult education discourse. Broadly speaking, reflective practice is a mode that integrates thought and action with reflection. Over the past two decades, educators have become familiar with the concept of reflective practice through Schön's writings on reflective practice (Schön, 1983, 1987). Schön's work has an historical basis in a tradition of constructivist approaches as exemplified by Kurt Lewin, Jean Piaget, Lev *Vygotsky* and John Dewey each of whom advocated that learning is dependent upon the integration of experience with reflection and of theory with practice. Shulman's paper on signature pedagogies in the professions (2005) implicitly owes a debt to the work of Schön.

This workshop, presented in Denmark, discussed current research challenging common assumptions, in Britain and Ireland, relating to e-learning/ "blended" learning and the older learner: perceived deficiencies in technical proficiency; perceived deficiencies in media literacy skill acquisition; perceived reticence to online engagement; the "digital divide". Specific findings were discussed with reference to empirical evidence presented by Cronin, *et al.* (2009). 'Critical survey of information technology use in higher education: blended classrooms' (pp. 203-215). In Carla Payne (ed), *Information Technology and Constructivism in Higher Education: Progressive Learning Frameworks* (Information Science Reference, Hershey & New York) as responded to by Wollard (2011). *Psychology for the classroom: E-learning*. Routledge, London.

Current issues in international scholarship on e-learning:

- **Identity and self-presentation:** How does the ability to “construct” an online identity affect our view of ourselves in digital culture?
- **Intellectual Property:** How is digital culture, rooted in telephony, shaped by its history? Should the Web be thought of in the frame of book culture? With reference to the work of Lawrence Lessig, how have definitions of Intellectual Property (IP) rights been challenged by digital culture?
- **Authorship:** What is the role of the “expert” in digital culture? How can knowledge be authenticated in the distributed “hive mind” of wikis and mashups?
- **Ethics:** In the digital space, do we need new ethical systems? The Internet and the changing nature of capitalism, technological innovation and globalisation. Social justice issues that are connected to different forms of technology. How is power and inequality (e.g., the “digital divide”) made manifest on the Web?
- **Collaboration:** How will social networking and the Semantic Web continue to effect perceptions of authorship and the mediation and remediation of information? Discussions on the implications of “Prosumption” (i.e., the convergence of production and consumption online).

E-moderation: the roles of the online tutor and distance education

“Ease of access to information via the World Wide Web has changed the role of teachers from being information providers presenting in front of a class to becoming facilitators in guiding learners through information access and processing, problem-solving, and creative learning projects, using learning technologies in a learner-centric classroom. . .Focus is placed on assisting learners to construct knowledge both as independent self-directed enquiry and communally in peer groups in order to demonstrate their knowledge attainment through enactment and application”

(Cronin, McMahon, Waldron, 2009, p.207)

“. . .skills of an e-moderator are the same as those of a good classroom teacher when managing face-to-face discussions: listen; ensure that all have their say; guard against dominators; encourage respect for different opinions while encouraging people to challenge their beliefs; resolve disputes; bring discussions to meaningful closure, etc.”

(Cronin, McMahon, Waldron, 2009, p. 208).

The stages of Gilly Salmon’s five-stage model (Salmon, 2002) are as follows:

1. **Access and Motivation:** Exploring the technology and motivation building are key issues. The e-moderator helps learners navigate the environment.

2. **Socialisation**: Building on the first stage, this stage focuses on social processes and “community building”.

3. **Information Exchange**: Information is exchanged and co-operative tasks can be achieved.

Interaction occurs between content, other participants and the e-moderator who assists exploration activities.

4. **Knowledge Construction**: Knowledge development and discussion activities become important. Participants start to take control of knowledge construction.

5. **Development**: Participants become responsible for their own learning and that of their group.

Ideas are applied to individual contexts. This stage is characterised by reflection and assessment.

(Cronin McMahon, Waldron, 2009, p. 209).

Modifying curriculum design to focus on learner understanding

Since 2004, the Centre for Adult Continuing Education, University College Cork, has seen the potential for using online resources to enhance disciplinary understanding within “blended” learning environments whereby online is integrated with class-based teaching and learning. The two-year, part-time diploma in European Art History aims to provide lifelong learners with a sound base in the historical, critical and contextual study of European painting, sculpture and architecture. Teaching and learning is enacted through lectures, case studies, tutorials, workshops, field trips, and web-based media supported on the university’s Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment. This “blended” model supports social interaction appreciated by adult learners. A decision to adopt a “blended” teaching and learning model, comprising both direct in-class contact and remote online communication, was motivated by a desire to give the class an opportunity to post their comments on a topic of art history, covered either at a lecture or in a tutorial, over a longer time-period. It was hoped, in turn, that this process would consolidate in-class teaching and learning.

The Internet facilitates student and teacher access to many inquiry-based learning experiences. Discussion boards and chat rooms allow for collaboration outside of the educational institution.

“The context of the Art History course the researchers are able to interpret what Meyer and Land (2003; 2006) call a ‘threshold concept’ which ‘represents a transformed way of understanding, or interpreting, or viewing something which must be understood before the learner can progress’ (Cronin et al., 2009: 211). That the transformation may be sudden or protracted over a considerable period of time. By identifying the difficult concepts in art history, such as students’ understanding of the social and political context of the work, there is a better comprehension of how the forum can aid in grasping difficult concepts.”

(Wollard, 2011, p. 29)

The foundational principle of threshold concepts is that there are, in each discipline or subject area, “conceptual gateways” or “portals” that must be negotiated to arrive at important new understandings. In crossing the portal, transformation occurs, both in knowledge and subjectivity. Meyer and Land (2003) proposed that in most disciplines there are concepts that ‘can be considered as akin to a portal, opening up a new and previously inaccessible way of thinking about something’; concepts that a student must understand if they are to progress. These concepts, however, prove very difficult for students to grasp and are characterised as being “troublesome” (derived from Perkin’s (1999) notion of troublesome knowledge) where they may be counter-intuitive, alien or far from commonsense understandings. Meyer and Land propose that difficulty in understanding threshold concepts may leave the student in a state of “liminality” where they get “stuck” in “a suspended state in which understanding approximates to a kind of mimicry or lack of authenticity” (2003, p 10). Once the concept has been grasped, the students have a transformed way of understanding or viewing something that may represent how people “think” in a particular discipline, or how they understand, perceive, apprehend or experience particular phenomena within a discipline.

Aspects of this system mirror Lev Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development (ZPD) which is the difference between what a learner can do without help and what he/she can do with help (Vygotsky, 1978). Threshold concepts typically have these characteristics:

- **Transformative:** once understood, a threshold concept changes the way in which the student views the discipline.
- **Irreversible:** given their transformative potential, a threshold concept is also likely to be irreversible, i.e. they are difficult to unlearn.
- **Integrative:** threshold concepts, once learnt, are likely to bring together different aspects of the subject that previously did not appear, to the student, to be related.
- **Disciplinary:** threshold concepts have been originally thought of as disciplinary-specific, however, current research is probing questions of integrative learning and teaching across disciplines see Higgs, Kilcommins, and Ryan (2010).

Experience of e-moderation in art history continuing education at Cork

“Attempts to encourage debate on the forum were initially slow to develop. Online silence, or lack of forum participation, resulted from lack of student confidence in publicly posting written responses. Although beyond the scope of this study, this silence poses questions about perceived power-dynamics between moderators and contributors in online discourse. Participation improved during the second term due to systematically embedding the forum within the module design and by

encouraging the use of the forum as a “virtual sandbox” where disciplinary understanding could be played out prior to assessment submission. . . the e-forum provided a public platform where the cumulative, step-by-step process of concept formation, refinement, application, and revision were fully visible to peers and mentors.”

(Cronin, McMahon, Waldron, 2009, p.213)

“An interesting statistic arising from the work of Cronin and colleagues is that, although the forum received in the region of 900 views for each module (by about 70 per cent of the students), there were far fewer posts, ranging from 21 to 40 in different modules. . .The online public and researchers (Nonnecke and Preece, 2000; Richards, 2003; 2009) identify the non-participants as ‘lurkers’ and, according to this research, lack of confidence accounts for this online silence. The students who show more frequent participation are the higher achievers in the group. . .digital immigrant, digital native, digital divide and disenfranchisement. James Cronin relates some of these issues to the concept of Pierre Bourdieu’s knowledge capital and explanation of inequalities in educational achievement.”

(Wollard, 2011, pp.29-30)

Digital divide, as a manifestation of digital inequality, is marked by the following structural barriers to full educational participation: equipment, location of access, autonomy of use, technical skills, social support, purpose for using information technology, gender divide, and age divide (O’Brien & Ó Fathaigh, 2007, pp. 59, 225). O’Brien and Ó Fathaigh have explained the digital divide using Pierre Bourdieu’s knowledge capital conceptual lens. For Bourdieu, capital -- economic, social, cultural and symbolic -- operates as an instrument of cultural reproduction thereby helping to explain inequalities in educational achievement (O’Brien & Ó Fathaigh, 2007, p. 227).

From the Cork study, Wollard (2011) notes:

- *the VLE [Virtual Learning Environment] would be of more value if introduced at the start of the programme;*
- *the VLE supported learning by providing resources;*
- *lack of confidence, time constraints, user friendliness mitigated against participation*
- *‘feelings of intimidation or embarrassment’ and ‘a sense of reticence’ impeded participation;*
- *factors of ‘user-friendliness’ were cited as impedances with the structure of forum and sub-forum not helping ease of access;*
- *‘being named’ and associated directly with the contribution was seen as a significant impediment to participation*

(Cronin et al., 2009).

Web-based media as alternative entries to learning for dyslexic students studying art history at Cork

Dyslexia constitutes part of a group of Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) that may affect learning. Dyslexia is the result of cognitive difficulties in the processing of the phonological parts of language. It affects the left-brain where language is not processed in the correct sequence. This means that anything to do with understanding and interpreting sequences of symbols is harder than normal. Dyslexia causes difficulties in learning to read and write due to slow and inaccurate coding of letters and graphic symbols into speech sounds and speech patterns (Smythe, Everatt and Salter, 2004). A predisposition to dyslexia is hereditary. The affects of dyslexia vary from person to person. The only shared trait among people with dyslexia is that they read at levels significantly lower than typical for people of their age. Many students with dyslexia develop coping strategies. For others, the demands at third level mean that they may need to develop new coping and learning strategies (Kennedy, Treanor and O'Grady, 2008). A significant problem with dyslexia is a feeling of low self-esteem. This is often as a result of poor interaction with the education system, which can label those with dyslexia as unenthusiastic for learning as a whole without taking into account the problems that dyslexia can create. However, dyslexia is associated with remarkably artistic creativity. Interestingly, the incidence of dyslexia is far higher among visual art students than non-art students (Wolff and Lundberg, 2002).

One of the central issues for the support of dyslexic students in higher education is an understanding of how dyslexia affects the individual's capacity to study within the teaching and learning framework of higher education. People learn in different ways. A dyslexic student benefits from multi-sensory teaching and an acknowledgement of their personal learning styles (Smythe, Everatt and Salter, 2004).

The experience of Paul illustrates ways Web-based media offer alternative entry points to learning for dyslexic students. Paul, a mature first year art history student, had only recently discovered his dyslexia as it had been masked in his previous experience of higher education which had been at an art college where he was not so engaged in written assessments. He was an intelligent, imaginative, motivated and articulate student. However, he had difficulties with written expression and information sequencing. This was a barrier to full participation as the majority of undergraduate assignments were written assessments. Currently, History of Art at University College Cork uses a survey course as a disciplinary foundation to its undergraduate degree. Broadly speaking, this model has a strong chronological structure distinguishing stylistic periods. Students are tested on their ability to distinguish these stylistic phases through written assignments and written visual tests. A student may be required to become familiar with approximately three thousand images over a year (Elkins, 2002). Learning a new discipline involves laying down new patterns of thought and

action which become habitual over time. Paul initially found difficulty in articulating the process of visual analysis. He rushed to comprehend meaning without first describing what he was seeing. This is a feature shared in common by undergraduates learning art history. “Slow-time” has been perceived as inner time for individuals to think, absorb and reflect (Bruneau, 1973; Miller, 1993; Ollin, 2008). Media literacy workshops assisted Paul in scaffolding his thinking in a structured way by including topics on critical looking, whereby the process of examining an image was slowed down, in the sessions and by planning and mindmapping. A “slow looking” scaffold, enacted through moments of pause, gave Paul time to sequence his visual analysis. The rubric can be best understood within the context of explorations of visual thinking by the Project Zero team at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Project MUSE, a research project component of Project Zero, was formed in 1994 and completed its work in 1996. It developed a learning tool called *The Generic Game*, which structured a set of questions that can be used by learners of all ages in encountering a range of works of art and/or other educational experiences. The open-ended questions help to scaffold understanding. Arising from this, an educational approach was developed called *The Entry Point Approach*, which accommodates a range of intelligences or learning profiles. *The MUSE QUESTs* synthesize the structure of *The Generic Game* with *The Entry Point Approach* to learning, which facilitate individual learning styles. The result is five different sets of open-ended questions, each of which gives access to learning through particular entry points: 1) Experiential, 2) Narrative, 3) Aesthetic, 4) Foundational, and 5) Logical/Quantitative (Davies, 1996). Dynamic web tools like audio and video podcasts, reviewed in class and included on the blog site, gave Paul alternative entry points to learning the discipline and assisted him in accommodating and amplifying his personal learning style. At the end of the academic year, Paul had improved his written assessments by ten percent and he gave credit for this to the scaffolding afforded through the workshops.

Some future implications for teachers arising from this study:

- Raising awareness of the potential media tools offer for learning opportunities;
- Teachers become intentional regarding the types of online resources they use;
- Greater threading of online tools within and across the curriculum structure;
- Media tools help to enhance learning strategies;
- Media tools help to expand the classroom space;
- Internationally, more needs to be done on e-moderation and assessment, for example how can e-portfolios or digital story-telling help to bridge “threshold concepts” or “troublesome knowledge” in subjects?;
- The educational potential of Wikipedia and Commons Knowledge is currently being researched at Imperial College, London.

Encouraging teachers to become reflective about their students' learning:

Many writers in the field of adult education have developed guiding principles to assist adult education practitioners facilitate learner-centred education. Rhonda Wynne has compiled a composite of some of these principles:

1. **Including learners in the planning and implementing of their learning activities is considered to be a hallmark of adult education.** Their participation can begin with the needs assessment process where group members establish the programme goals and objectives. It is a widely held belief that people will make firm commitments to activities in which they feel they participated and contributed to the planning. Mutual planning of both curriculum, learning objectives, resources, assessment and evaluation methods encourages student participation in, and engagement with, the learning process.
2. **Create a climate that encourages and supports learning.** The classroom environment should be characterised by trust and mutual respect among teachers and learners. It should enhance learner self-esteem. Supporting and encouraging learning does not mean that the environment is free of conflict. It does mean that when conflict occurs, it is handled in a way that challenges learners to acquire new perspectives and supports them in their efforts to do so. Adults will generally learn best in an atmosphere that is non-threatening and supportive of experimentation and in which different learning styles are recognised.
3. **Foster a spirit of collaboration in the learning setting.** Collaboration in the adult classroom is frequently founded on the idea that the roles of teachers and learners can be interchangeable. Although teachers have the overall responsibility for leading a learning activity, adult learning is a co-operative enterprise that respects and draws upon the knowledge that each person brings to the learning setting.
4. **Develop an understanding of learners' experiences and communities.** Draw upon learners' experiences as a resource. Not only do adult learners have experiences that can be used as a foundation for learning new things but also, in adulthood, readiness to learn frequently stems from life tasks and problems. The particular life situations and perspectives that adults bring to the classroom can provide a rich reservoir for learning.
5. **Foster critical reflective thinking.** Adult learning is facilitated when teaching activities do not demand finalised, correct answers and closure; express a tolerance for uncertainty, inconsistency, and diversity; and promote both question-asking and -answering, problem-finding and problem-solving.

6. Develop and/or use instructional materials that are based on students' lives. An important part of the participatory approach is using instruction that reflects the context of students' lives. Sometimes referred to as contextualised learning, this instruction--and the instructional materials--draw on the actual experiences, developmental stages, and problems of the learners to integrate academic content with real-life problems. Furthermore, it has the advantage of integrating academic skills; rather than focusing on learning academic subjects separately, promoting learning in ways that are meaningful to the student ensures that the classroom becomes more authentic because adults learn to use skills in real-life situations.

7. Incorporate small groups into learning activities. Groups promote teamwork and encourage co-operation and collaboration among learners. Structured appropriately, they emphasise the importance of learning from peers, and they allow all participants to be involved in discussions and to assume a variety of roles.

8. Cultivate self-direction in learners. Self-direction is considered by some to be a characteristic of adulthood but not all adults possess this attribute in equal measure. In addition, if adults have been accustomed to teacher-directed learning environments, they may not display self-directedness in adult learning settings. Adult learning should be structured to nurture the development of self-directed, empowered adults.

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Compiled and adapted from:

http://www.nightcourses.com/teaching_toolkit/principles_adult_learning.html

Conclusion

Lee S. Shulman (2005) hinted that embedding Web resources require an imaginative curriculum modification. For us, this study validated this assumption. In both case studies the e-moderated forum was integrated so as to remove any anxiety surrounding prior skill-sets for the group. Students began to confidently critique art historical discourse within their assignments in a manner that was encouraged and supported through e-moderation. Students valued synchronous and asynchronous modes of communication

provided by the online forum thereby validating Boettcher's (2007) observations, the e-forum provided a public platform where the cumulative, step-by-step process of concept formation, refinement, application, and revision were fully visible to peers and mentors.

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Descriptions of good practices

The partners of the ACE project came together 6 times during the fundig period of the project. They followed different workshops during these transnational project meeting in which they gained knowledge on the how to deal with older learners in education.

- November 2009: Antwerp, Belgium
 - Profiles and self-evaluation of competences of teachers and learners
 - Workshops
 1. Facilitating adult learning - creative problem solving
- March 2010: Mahón, Spain
 - Methods and ways to transfer experience to younger people
 - Workshops
 1. How to you create your own case role play?
 2. Methods and tools of managing diversity and teaching diverse groups
 3. Barnga – a cross cultural game
- November 2010: Lahr, Germany
 - Teaching older learners
 - Workshops
 1. Carrousel
 2. Film
 3. Listening, C. Humphris
 4. Total Physical Response (TPR)
 - Working and learning beyond the traditional age of retirement
 - Workshop
 1. Working and learning beyond the traditional age of retirement
- February 2011: Cork, Ireland
 - Moving on, second chance, career decisions...
 - Workshop
 1. Second chance, moving on and career decision

- April 2011: Middelfart, Denmark
 - Using innovative ICT with older learners
 - Workshops:
 1. Mobile learning
 2. Parallel teaching
 3. Distance learning
- June 2011: Graz, Austria
 - No workshops (preparation of the descriptions of dissemination and implementation possibilities of every workshop held)

The following pages provide a chronological overview of the workshops created and followed by the project partners.

The following elements are considered in this overview:

- Where and when the workshop was given.
- The responsible partner for the development of the content of the workshop.
- A description of the workshop and its background.
- How the findings of the workshop were disseminated by the partners and a number of issues regarding dissemination strategies. Dissemination is the promotion of the project and its results to a well defined audience in and beyond the different organizations involved in ACE.
- Concerns regarding the implementation of the findings for each workshop.

Profiles and self-evaluation of competences of teachers and learners

Facilitating adult learning – creative problem solving.

Date / Location

December 2009 during the partner meeting in Cork (Ireland)

Name / Speaker / responsible Partner

Sheila O'Driscoll (Centre of Adult Continuing Education, University of Cork)

Description

Introduction

EU education and training policies have gained impetus since the adoption of the Lisbon Strategy in 2000, the EU's overarching programme focusing on growth and jobs. The strategy recognises that knowledge, and the innovation it sparks, are the EU's most valuable assets, particularly in light of increasing global competition. As the Grundtvig programme focuses on the teaching and study needs of learners taking adult education and 'alternative' education courses, it aims to help develop the adult education sector, as well as enabling more people to undertake learning experiences, notably in other European countries. It covers not only teachers, trainers, staff and organisations working in the sector, but also learners in adult education. These include relevant associations, counselling organisations, information services, policy-making bodies and others such as NGOs, enterprises, voluntary groups and research centres.

Set Up

This workshop, entitled Facilitating Adult Learning – Creative Problem Solving drawing on a Problem-Based Learning (PBL) pedagogical approach, invites the participants attending to an interactive seminar. The purpose is to illustrate how learning maybe a social as well as an individual process and to promote learner autonomy while simultaneously reflecting on whether this is an appropriate form of pedagogy for your particular discipline.

Teaching Tools

Cases or Case Studies: This seminar began with an introduction to the academic discipline of Disability Studies drawing on a Problem Based Learning approach (PBL) with a series of questions. The questions provided a forum to reflect on the misconceptions and stereotypes around the notion of disability and the notion of ageing. Consideration was given to whether this teaching approach is a useful tool and participants were invited to share how appropriate (or otherwise) it might be in different disciplines.

Explorations: it is acknowledged that this approach to learning does not suit all teachers who prefer the more traditional structured seminars.

Project Work: Differs from subject to subject, location, institution etc.

Exercises: Developing exercises in class that keep students motivated – moving from seminar approach. Allow students to be in charge of their own learning – a PBL approach.

Dissemination within and beyond ACE

From the workshop the consortium were requested to:

- Inform partners about the focus within their own organisation
- Invite contacts to join open social software pages
- Promote the project within local and international networks and inform partners re same.

Implementation by partners

Internally within her institution, this partner joined an Ageing Research Cluster where the goals of ACE were shared with our academic schools within the university. Externally institutions both statutory and voluntary were made aware of the goals of ACE.

Methods and ways to transfer experience to younger people

How to you create your own case role play?

Date / Location

March 2010 during the partner meeting in Mahón (Spain)

Name / Speaker / responsible Partner

Rupert Beinhauer (MERIG)

Description

Introduction

As an interactive approach to teach cross- cultural differences role playing cases engage participants by placing them directly in the story. The story and thus the case develop and come alive as students interact with one another.

Through play and the following discussion, students gain insight in (cultural) differences and recognize real life cultural and psychological traits, they learn to identify the major characteristics which influence interaction and decisions. They benefit by acquiring a deeper understanding of the case, the involved people, the language used and of the cultural perspective.

Background

A role-playing case is a type of game in which players assume the roles of characters and collaboratively create narratives. Game play progresses according to a predetermined system of rules and guidelines, within which players may improvise freely. Player choices shape the direction and outcome of role-playing cases.

Role-playing cases are typically more collaborative and social than competitive. A typical role-playing case unites its participants into a single team that adventures as a group. A role-playing case rarely has winners or losers. This makes role-playing games fundamentally different from board games, card games, sports and most other types of games. Like novels or films, role-playing games appeal because they engage the imagination.

Set-up

In this session the method of role-playing cases, by giving a short theoretical input and by presenting different examples has been presented. Due to a lack of time it was not possible to actively test this

method among the ACE working group and to learn about its implications for the thematic of transferring experience to younger people.

Dissemination within and beyond ACE

So far the consortium members used the following channels to disseminate the results of the ACE workshops:

- Informally with teaching staff.
- Discussion in task force for ACE project (mostly language teachers).
- Network has been informed about workshop.

Implementation

The following feedback has been provided by the ACE partners related to the implementation/utilization of the method case role play introduced in the workshop held in Menorca.

- Role play is not new as a teaching method in our institutions already.
- Used by all of use in different subjects and with different groups – challenge with older learners (much experience makes it often more difficult to play/take a role – enter into a part).
- Teachers know the method but it needs a lot of time for preparation to create and on the other hand is the lesson (to explain, to play, and to make a conclusion).
- You can create a role play without any preparation – it involves students and make them active in their own learning process.
- Many older learners feel embarrassed participating in a role play.
- Method not only applicable for older learners but for everybody.
- You have to have a focus to work on afterwards.

Methods and tools of managing diversity and teaching diverse groups

Date / Location

March 2010 during the partner meeting in Mahón (Spain)

Name / Speaker / responsible Partner

Rupert Beinhauer (MERIG)

Description

Introduction

Teaching in a multicultural classroom can be very different from a mono-cultural setting. It provides its unique set of opportunities and challenges. A cultural heterogeneous group of participants can be difficult to handle, but can also provide additional viewpoints and examples. There are a multitude of possibilities for synergies and for misunderstandings between the cultures. To enable everyone involved to understand the differences between their usual single-culture environment and a multicultural setting, we must learn to look at many interactions from a different angle.

Set-up

This presentation focused on giving a brief overview about managing diversity and teaching diverse group. After a short general introduction to the subject, different teaching tools have been presented.

Teaching Tools

Cases or Case Studies: Cases, or Case Studies, are typically the history or presentation of a problem or dilemma. Background information is often used to illustrate the problem. The aim of the teacher is to work through the problem at hand and lead the participants to find acceptable solutions for themselves.

Explorations: In the most direct form of excursions, participants directly travel to a local or location or event to personally and directly experience it. In a more indirect approach, participants can be asked to explore their own surroundings, either exploring freely or using a questionnaire to answer specific questions raised by a trainer.

Project work: Project work with participants can take many different forms. Good intercultural projects tackle current issues, especially those which are of concern for different cultural groups, and involve people from different cultures to discuss these problems together and work on a common solution.

Exercises: Shorter activities, some of which need only a few minutes of time and minimal preparation. Exercises come in many forms and shapes and have different aims.

Dissemination within and beyond ACE

The consortium members gave feedback on the workshops to teachers in language institutions to disseminate the results of the ACE workshops.

Implementation

The following feedback has been provided by the ACE partners related to the implementation/utilization of methods and tools of managing diversity and teaching diverse groups which have been introduced in the workshop held in Menorca.

- Case studies are used as a “conduit” (link) between theory and practice (Shulman, 2004) and are efficient to apply when working with intergenerational groups. It shows the complexity of the issue.
- The importance of the role of the student in the learning process can be seen very well.

Barnga – a cross cultural game

Date / Location

March 2010 during the partner meeting in Mahón (Spain)

Name / Speaker / responsible Partner

Rupert Beinhauer (MERIG)

Description

Introduction

In Barnga, participants experience the shock of realizing that despite many similarities, people of differing cultures perceive things differently or play by different rules. Players learn that they must understand and reconcile these differences if they want to function effectively in a cross-cultural group.

Set-up

The aim of this interactive workshop was to play Barnga. Therefore the meeting room has been adjusted, groups of four formed and the roles on how to play the game explained. Participants played cards for several rounds according to the instructions provided by the workshop leader. After playing a number of rounds participants have been aware that they were playing by different rules. The workshop ended with a short debriefing, where impressions and experiences have been discussed.

Overview

Participants play a simple card game in small groups, where conflicts begin to occur as participants move from group to group. This simulates real cross-cultural encounters, where people initially believe they share the same understanding of the basic rules. In discovering that the rules are different, players undergo a mini culture shock similar to actual experience when entering a different culture. They then must struggle to understand and reconcile these differences to play the game effectively in their "cross-cultural" groups. Difficulties are magnified by the fact that players may not speak to each other but can communicate only through gestures or pictures. Participants are not forewarned that each is playing by different rules; in struggling to understand why other players don't seem to be playing correctly, they gain insight into the dynamics of cross-cultural encounters.

Dissemination within and beyond ACE

So far the consortium members used the following channels to disseminate the results of the ACE workshops:

- Informal talks within the network.
- Discussed it within the taskforce of teachers.
- Told other colleagues about my experiences.

Implementation by partners

The following feedback has been provided by the ACE partners related to the implementation/utilization of the game introduced in the workshop held in Menorca.

- Have not implemented the game.
- We did similar exercises.
- In new groups → to show the importance of communication and that we all share a similar understanding.
- Used it to train attitudes:
 - Is it ok to be 10 mins. late?
 - Is it ok not to join in group discussions?
- Played it during a study day with teachers. Workshop was lead by teacher who attended the meeting in Menorca.
- Following observations have been made:
 - Those rules are the right ones.
 - Assume that others play by the same rules as we do.

Teaching older learners

Carrousel

Date and location

November 2010 during the partner meeting in Lahr (Germany)

Name of the speaker(s)

Liliane Pijl and Liliane Tavenier (CVO Antwerpen-Zuid)

Description of the workshop

Introduction

Carrousel is a good method to improve speaking and reading competencies of learners. To train speaking competencies you use pictures, reading can be practiced with a written text. In this workshop speaking is trained. In this workshop we had 16 participants. The group was split up into smaller teams of 4 participants.

Material needed

- as many playing cards as the number of learners in the class (i.c. 16)
- a set of pictures (4 because you have 4 groups) that, when put together, compose a story

Set-up

- First round:

Distribute the playing cards (i.c. 16 cards from ace to jack). The hearts form group 1, the spades group 2, the diamonds group 3, the clubs group 4. Every group receives 1 picture (1/4 of the material). The students comment on the picture: Who? What? Where? When? Details ... The teacher must inform the students that the picture will no longer be in their possession after a couple of minutes.

- Second round:

The teacher takes away the pictures and makes new groups. The 4 aces make group 1, the kings group 2, the queens group 3, the jacks group 4. Every member of the group has seen a different picture of the sequence so in fact each group should have all the information to reconstruct the story. Since they can not show the picture they have seen, each participant describes what was on the picture. Everyone has to talk, also the weaker ones. Eventually the whole story will be (re)constructed.

Evaluation

In the end one group tells its story to the other participants. The others may complete and afterwards the teacher shows the right sequence of the pictures.

Feedback

The participants succeeded in constructing the whole story. Since the pictures were deliberately ambiguous or a bit unclear it took some time to find the right sequence. Everyone participated in the discussion.

In this workshop the participants used the English language (of which they all have quite a good knowledge) for discussion but in a normal language course they speak the language that has to be learned. That increases the level of difficulty.

Addendum: How can you split up the group of learners?

Every student gets one playing card.

- A: ace
- K: king
- Q: queen
- J: jack

NUMBER OF LEARNERS	ROUND 1	ROUND 2: ALWAYS 4 GROUPS IN CASE YOU USE 4 PICTURES
8	G1: A/K/Q/J (4) G2: A/K/Q/J (4)	2A/2K/2Q/2J
9	G1: A/K/Q (3) G2: A/K/J (3) G3: A/Q/J (3)	3A/2K/2Q/2J
10	G1: A/K/Q/J (4) G2: A/K/Q (3) G3: A/K/J (3)	3A/3K/2Q/2J
11	G1: A/K/Q/J (4) G2: A/K/Q/J (4) G3: A/K/Q (3)	3A/3K/3Q/2J
	G1: A/K/Q/J (4)	3A/3K/3Q/3J

12	G2: A/K/Q/J (4) G3: A/K/Q/J (4)	
13	G1: A/K/Q/J (4) G2: A/K/Q (3) G3: A/K/J (3) G4: A/Q/J (3)	4A/3K/3Q/3J
14	G1: A/K/Q/J (4) G2: A/K/Q/J (4) G3: A/K/Q (3) G4: A/K/J (3)	4A/4K/3Q/3J
15	G1: A/K/Q/J (4) G2: A/K/Q/J (4) G3: A/K/Q/J (4) G4: A/K/Q (3)	4A/4K/4Q/3J
16	G1: A/K/Q/J (4) G2: A/K/Q/J (4) G3: A/K/Q/J (4) G4: A/K/Q/J (4)	4A/4K/4Q/4J

If you have more students, better work in two parallel circuits: provide 2 decks of playing cards!

If you don't have playing cards, you can also use colored paper (4 colors) with on each paper a letter (A/B/C/D).

Dissemination within and beyond ACE

The tool has only been implemented in CVO Antwerpen-Zuid but other partners indicated they will implement the method in the future.

Implementation

This method can be used at any level of language teaching regardless age, origin ... of the students. It has proven to be useful in creating a level-playing pitch.

Carrousel can be used as a 'test-as-you-teach' tool. Students will therefore learn more than what they are assessed for. It is also often used as part of official exams (for example: First Certificate in English, FCE). Carrousel can thus be used in formative assessment and summative assessment.

Film

Date and location

November 2010 during the partner meeting in Lahr (Germany)

Name of the speaker(s)

Liliane Pijl and Katrien Toch (CVO Antwerpen-Zuid)

Description of the workshop

Introduction

This tool is quite often used in the language class.

The film material can be persuasive, narrative, informative or artistic. Many skills are involved and trained:

- listening: the language of the movie is the language to be learned;
- reading: subtitles can be switched on if you're teaching in language classes at the lower levels. The teacher can read film reviews with the learners;
- writing: write a summary, write a review, exercise syntax and vocabulary;
- speaking: describe the characters.
- also vocabulary and grammar can be trained.

Set-up

During this workshop a short movie in Dutch is shown. The film is stopped at regular intervals and the teacher questions the listeners in a plenary session about what they presume has happened in the film. They are also asked to predict the sequel of the story.

Feedback

In this workshop the participants used the English language (of which they all have quite a good knowledge) for discussion but in a normal language course the participants have to speak the language to be learned. That increases the level of difficulty.

Most of the participants had a chance to speak because the leader of the workshop picked out different participants to comment on the film fragment.

The story was very interesting and funny from time to time, which captured the interest of the participants immediately.

Dissemination within and beyond ACE

As a teacher it is important during the teaching and learning dynamic to ask yourself the question 'What is the focus?', since the teacher needs to be able to give feedback on the particular intensions

of using film.

Film as a teaching method is widely used throughout Europe and does not need any special dissemination strategies.

Implementation

Film as a teaching method can be applied in any kind of teaching context and especially in a language teaching context. However, do not “abuse” films. They are a resource, not an excuse not to prepare the lessons.

Listening, C. Humphris

Date and location

November 2010 during the partner meeting in Lahr (Germany)

Name of the speaker(s)

Ira Bogaerts (CVO Antwerpen-Zuid)

Description of the workshop

Background

Christopher Humphris is head of research at DILIT-house in Rome and is the author of various articles on methodologies of language acquisition.

This method belongs to the cognitive sciences, a movement that was very popular in the eighties, and reflects on the functioning of the brain.

Humphris starts from the hypothesis that errors are allowed because they are part of the learning process. Another hypothesis is the gradual growth of grammar. One can object to this because of the danger of imprinting errors in the brain through repetition of those errors.

In Humphris 'listening' method an audio tape is played which the listeners try to understand. The level of difficulty has to be higher than what the learners can process. The emphasis lies on stimulating learners to listen to conversations or messages in the language one has to learn and not on full comprehension.

Set-up

The group is split up in pairs. The discussion takes place in small groups because otherwise the learners would feel embarrassed to speak up and show how little they understood. Therefore it's also best for the teacher to keep distance.

The workshop starts with a relaxation phase. The participants listen to relaxing music because listening without fear (of being questioned ...) leads to more concentrated listening and understanding. The listener is totally open to what comes.

The teacher plays an audio tape in Dutch. In this workshop the Dutch speaking partners cannot participate since they comprehend what's been said. The listeners tell each other what they've understood. Since everyone has a different background, personality ... the allegedly heard story differs. The participants complete or correct each other's versions of the facts. The text is very complex and almost not understandable which might cause frustration at the beginning.

The tape is played 3 to 6 times, depending on the difficulty level. This always leads to better comprehension during a next round. Changing pairs also increases the comprehension. After the sixth session the listeners have only understood 15% of the tape but at the end 30%, which is a duplication in the ability to listen.

The teacher should refrain from giving feedback and answering questions. Otherwise the learners will be discouraged knowing that they only understood a fragment of the tape. Moreover their motivation to try to understand more during the listening sessions will be higher.

As a teacher you have to make sure that students feel that they will increasingly understand but they will never completely understand everything.

Feedback

The participants in this workshop understood the tape quite easily because the Dutch language shows quite some similarities with the mother tongue of the participants.

In this workshop the participants used the English language (of which they all have quite a good knowledge) for discussion but in a normal language course the language they speak the language that has to be learned. That increases the level of difficulty.

The fact that the teacher did not give any feedback after this workshop caused slight frustration with the listeners who wanted to know the exact story.

Dissemination within and beyond ACE

No special dissemination actions were executed, except discussing it within the ACE-group. The reason for this is possibly because it is so well-known and widely spread.

Implementation

This method was presented to be used in language courses and was also used successfully in language courses but may also be applied in other courses.

Recommendation: the role of experience is important. The method should be explained in detail in order to avoid frustration because the students don't fully comprehend the story. The teacher should give feedback by explaining the method used. The teacher should emphasize the process of listening instead of the necessity of full comprehension.

Total Physical Response (TPR)

Date and location

November 201 during the partner meeting in Lahr (Germany)

Name of the speaker(s)

Erwin Willems (CVO Antwerpen-Zuid)

Description of the workshop

Background

TPR is a method developed by Dr. James J. Asher, a professor emeritus of psychology at San José State University, to aid learning second languages. It became popular in the seventies.

TPR is based on the premise that the human brain has a biological program for acquiring any natural language on earth including the sign language of the deaf.

The process is visible when we observe how infants internalize their first language. The secret is a unique "conversation" between parent and infant. Dr. Asher calls this "a language-body conversation" because the parent speaks and the infant answers with a physical response such as looking, smiling, laughing, turning, walking, reaching, grasping, holding, sitting, running, and so forth. These "conversations" continue for many months before the child utters anything more intelligible than "mommy" or "daddy." Although the infant is not yet speaking, the child is imprinting a linguistic map of how the language works. Silently, the child is internalizing the patterns and sounds of the target language. When the child has decoded enough of the target language, speaking appears spontaneously. The infant's speech will not be perfect but gradually the child's utterances will approximate more and more that of a native speaker.

When using this method in the class room, one will immediately notice that learners are less anxious and stressed because they don't have to speak up. It reduces their inhibitions. This method also lowers the affective filter, often the impediment to acquiring a language because emotions such as anxiety, self-doubt or even boredom ... interfere with the acquisition process. The impediment can be overruled by using a method that captures the interest of the learners and takes away their anxiety. TPR allows them to spontaneously react to language and receptively capture language before actually having to produce at first. It also facilitates long-term retention.

This method is also very applicable with the vocabulary about body parts, health & medicine and many more cases.

Set-up

The learners – in this case the project partners – formed one group. The teacher addressed the partners individually by giving instructions like *"Come in, have a seat, write down your name please,*

open the door, shake hands etc.” in Dutch, the native language of the teacher, which is a language that none of the people present spoke. They responded by opening the door etc.

Feedback

We noticed that everyone experienced the thrill of immediate understanding.

Dissemination within and beyond ACE

The ACE partners disseminated this method to the language teachers within their institutions by setting examples. It is also used in clinical practice (UCC).

Implementation

This teaching method is useful when teaching a language to beginners. It can also be used as an ‘icebreaker’ to demonstrate to students how easy it can be to learn a language when learning in real life context.

Positive about this method is that it is applicable with all kind of learners. Age is not issue here.

When implementing this method in the class room one has to take into consideration that implementation requires regular sessions that progress in a logical order.

Working and learning beyond the traditional age of retirement

Working and learning beyond the traditional age of retirement

Date and location

November 2010 during the partner meeting in Lahr (Germany)

Name of the speaker(s)

Matthias Matic, Bernd Remmele, Gabriele Stork (WHL Graduate School of Business and Economics)

Description of the workshop

Set-up

The workshop consisted of two parts:

- a. the presentation of results of a survey conducted by Lahr before the meeting concerning the different national backgrounds in relation to educating the ageing;
- b. groupwork to reflect different aspects of the survey results.

Part 1 Presentation of Survey - Major results:

There are clear differences between social groups concerning actual retirement age.

There are different reasons for differences between legal and actual retirement age.

All consider it 'right', that retired people continue working because for these people it is important to be active and have social interactions.

It is supposed that there are influences of continuing education activities on the employability of older people.

Education is part of self-coherence: higher participation in general and professional education correlates with higher participation in later years.

Preferred teaching methods for these groups are:

- face to face teaching;
- low speed;
- small groups;
- good professionals;
- experiential learning systems;
- group discussion,;
- reminiscence, personal narratives;
- teacher as entertainer;
- teaching and learning methods they are familiar with even those that are not the most appropriate

Recommended focuses for teacher education in regard of ageing people are:

- learner involvement;
- conflict management;
- detailed explanation of issues;
- empathy;
- information technology;
- learning activities;
- "inductive education";
- ability to dispose material systematically;
- ability to speak loud and clear;
- insights in cognitive learning patterns of older

learners; • start from the experience and expertise of them; • provide enough pauses; • provide learning material gradually

Part 2 Group work with 3 different groups/topics

Group work I: “With view on the current social trends please discuss and evaluate the different objectives of education of ageing people” (on a European level or differentiated in accordance with national backgrounds) e.g.: • stabilizing work force; • personal development; • overall social capital accumulation; • building the ‘more-generation-society’

Group work II: “Based on the questionnaire/discussion please reflect the structure of an ageing-sensitive didactics” (organizational, methodology, teacher education, ...) concerning the different national and partner backgrounds (with potential case).

Group work III: “Based on the questionnaire/discussion please reflect the different motivations (or reluctances) for ageing to learn in relation to the national backgrounds and how they can be motivated”; concerning e.g.: • overcoming negative experiences; • improving ICT skills; • specific offers for women (or migrants) ...

Dissemination within and beyond ACE

There have been conference presentations and scientific based on the survey (which is in line with other research).

Results of the survey have been transmitted to local staff.

Implementation:

Further feedback has been collected with questionnaires in order to find out older students motivations.

It has been taken into account that older learners need longer time to adapt to new situations

The results are a basis for the application of a multilateral project concerning the value of intergenerational learning.

Moving on, second chance, career decisions ...

Second chance, moving on and career decision

Date / Location

February 2011 during the partner meeting in Cork (Ireland)

Name / Speaker / responsible Partner

Sheila O'Driscoll (Centre of Adult Continuing Education, University of Cork in collaboration with the lead partner Elena Calafat Polo MIR I MIR SPAIN)

Description of the workshop

Introduction

The 2009 Ageing Report: Economic and budgetary projections for the EU-27 Member States (2008-2060) warns that in the coming decades, all EU countries will experience steep increases in the share of older persons in the total population and a significant decline in the share of young people and those of working age.

Since its inception in 2000 one of the key objectives of Grundtvig was to respond to the challenges of an ageing population in Europe and to help provide adults with pathways to improve their knowledge and competences and facilitate the exchange of educational approaches across Europe. By 2030, half the population of Western Europe will be over 50 with more generations surviving next to each other than ever before. Individual life courses will change both professionally and personally and individuals will have to rethink how they mix education and work. The labour market will face increasing skills shortages and a large proportion of older workers who will need to be retrained while home is like to develop as a place of work, education and health care. Government policies have tended to think of demographic ageing as leading to large numbers of old people, rather than large numbers of people who are living longer. This latter concept offers mature societies the opportunity for multi-generations to live and work together, each contributing their own experiences and expertise. Life long education of adults will move to the fore and the division of education along chronological age lines will blur. Education may continue through-out the life course enabling individuals to draw on a portfolio of options and likely to be a mix of formal group teaching, self-directed learning using information and media technology, community learning, work-place learning and skills development. The role of "qualifications" will need to be re-examined.

Set Up

This was a collaborative workshop where the lead partner developed a questionnaire for approximately 100 students attending different types of training courses in Spain. Five of the

students were interviewed and these interviews were recorded, videoed and presented at the workshop. The role of the Irish partner was to bring three mature students (2 females in their 40s and one male in his fifties) who had attended an access course which had led them to decide to take a degree in Bachelor of Social Science to join in the debate that followed the presentation. The students gave a little of their own history e.g one had no formal education, another had worked in a bank and the third had gone to sea with her husband while very young and again had very little formal education. They all found that having completed the access course facilitated their move to full time education, particularly in the area of academic writing. They further mentioned that received guidance counselling really supported and motivated them in their decisions. The session concluded with questions from the Grundtvig partners.

Teaching Tools:

Cases or Case Studies: Background information provided from indepth qualitative informal interviews can be useful in supporting mature students in making the right decisions personally but also for educators when designing courses to meet the needs of mature students

Explorations: Providing a safe and supportive forum for students to discuss what works in formal education settings is valuable information for educators.

Project Work: Differs from subject to subject, location, institution etc.

Exercises: Developing exercises in class that keep students motivated – moving from seminar approach. Allow students to be in charge of their own learning

Dissemination within and beyond ACE

Details of the ACE Learning partnership including the workshops was made available to a wider audience within UCC who were the hosts. This was included in the President's address and the UCC News and also local and national agencies with an interest in ageing and education.

The workshop has been supported by a realistic research in Spain plus a subtitled video with personal biographies of students that could be used to motivate our own potential students or students in different countries. All these materials could be used in each partner's website as part our dissemination as videos are more connected to our senses and feelings.

Implementation

A short course on Ageing and Education is being considered by CACE.

Questionnaires have been developed and already conducted in different institutions among our project partners. Feedback about how questionnaires should be improved was given after the presentation by other project members. Personal narratives are more and more used in publicity or

dissemination of projects. Coaching is frequently used in centers as a way to raise student's motivation and personal welfare.

Using innovative ICT with older learners

Mobile learning

Date / Location

April 2011 during the partner meeting in Middelfart (Denmark)

Name / Speaker / responsible Partner

Robert Wareham (VUCFYN & Fyns HF Ringen Nyborg)

Description of the workshop

Introduction

The support and enhancement of learning and teaching through the use of handheld technologies, smartphones has some implications:

- Learning needs to be mobile
- Learning doesn't only take place in the classroom
- Learning needs to be close to everyday life of the learner and the learner's world
- Learning needs to be flexible (company classes/in-service training)
- Learners have to be ready for change/adaptability

A smartphone is basically a hand held computer with a camera, internet access, video, sound recorder. See more at www.m-learning.com

Mobile learning increases the engagement of students and can bring back and help drop-outs, non-traditional learners and people with learning difficulties (dyslexics). It also supports different learning styles:

- Does the learner learn best by listening? (recorder/player)
- Does the learner learn best by watching? (video)
- Does the learner learn best by reading (text, internet, apps)
- Does the learner need to move about a lot? (mobility)

Advantages of mobile learning:

- Personalization: The learner finds out how he or she learns best and can personalize learning.
- Instant response/multimedia is possible.
- Captures learning experiences
- Collaborative learning: Through the use of media boards learners can upload texts, video, photographs, sounds etc, which can be studied together.

Disadvantages of mobile learning:

- Special vocabulary
- Specific work procedures

Possible contexts:

- Sports lessons filmed and photographed ...
- Catering students: grandparents making traditional dishes
- English classes: filming and photographing daily life and hobbies

Dissemination within and beyond ACE

The ACE partners shared ideas on mobile learning during the workshop with the teachers at VUCFYN. CVO Antwerpen-Zuid has discussed the approach within the task force of teachers.

The use of mobile phones in classroom is forbidden in most educational centers in Spain, nevertheless, some teachers permit their use in order to improve the educational experience.

A couple of ACE partners had some concerns on whether bringing life context into classroom using any “mobile” device or tool is really mobile learning ...

Implementation

Mobile learning is a good supporting tool, particularly for hearing improvement or powerpoint presentations. It is especially useful for teaching dyslectics, language students and less motivated students. This teaching tool enables frequent contact between teacher and student. However, using mobile devices has to be well prepared before it can really bring added value.

Parallel teaching

Date / Location

April 2011 during the partner meeting in Middelfart (Denmark)

Name / Speaker / responsible Partner

Ulla Køjner (VUC FYN Middelfart and Glamsbjerg)

Description of the workshop

Introduction

The workshop – being held as parallel teaching – focused especially on the practical /technical aspects of the system.

To make the participants experience the parallel teaching first hand, we started out with a little Danish-lesson. The participants in Glamsbjerg had to wait for the participants in Middelfart, who were a little late, and “fortunately” one of the participants in Glamsbjerg touched a wrong button, so that the system (television-screen, projector, smart board, and computer) had to be rebooted. All things that made the situation very authentic.

Background

The system was established 3 years ago as a possible way to realize small classes of e.g. Italian, Spanish or mathematics on a higher level, that otherwise would not have been financially stable. It is a one-time expense to acquire all the equipment, but once acquired it runs without further costs (apart from repair and maintenance).

From the next school year Glamsbjerg will collaborate with an education center (one of VUC Fyns sections) in a small island south of Fyn on several subjects, e.g. social studies, German and psychology, so that it will be possible for the inhabitants there to take a full secondary education in spite of the number of participants. It is very important for the island which has a rather high unemployment rate.

Teaching methods

As we still mainly use the same materials in the parallel teaching, as in the ‘traditional’ teaching, the pedagogical methods do not, for the time being, differ a lot. But that is an area which should be developed and given more focus.

Of course the technical challenges have dominated the initial phase, and we are currently working on improving the system. But still there are many pedagogical challenges waiting for us to be solved more ideally.

Experiences of teachers and students

The experiences of parallel teaching differ from subject to subject or person to person. Mostly the students are satisfied, that they are after all offered the possibility to study the actual subject. But many of them would of course prefer having the teacher physically all of the time.

In the same way teachers – especially of foreign languages, where students are absolute beginners – sometimes find it difficult to motivate the group sitting in the other city for the entire 4 lessons.

Final discussion

As a conclusion of the workshop, the meeting participants were asked to comment on their personal experiences of the parallel teaching environment first-hand.

Dissemination within and beyond ACE

CVO Antwerpen-Zuid has discussed the findings of the workshop in its internal task force of teachers. The University College Cork (Ireland) has discussed it across the university with different professors and members of staff.

Implementation

Until now, most of the parallel teaching in VUCFYN has been held as evening classes. The participants therefore mostly belong to the group of more mature and independent students. They are often very motivated for learning the subject but not necessarily as open-minded toward new challenges of ICT as the younger students. On the other hand VUCFYN has experienced young students leaving the class during parallel teaching in one city in spite of the protests of the teacher in the other. So indeed the challenges are important, concerning both groups of learners (younger and older) – although of different character.

Further research needs to be done on what is the most appropriate teaching method in this classroom. Ideas include focusing on students as producer of knowledge. This will however lead to a change in the curriculum

Research literature says that learning is now more collaborative, less institutionally focused but this has implications for the traditional academic curriculum

Student needs to be a risk taker (as well as the teacher): innovation, creativity and personal engagement becomes increasingly important.

This method implicates a change from “funnels” (institutional education) to “learning webs” (collaborative education) (see for more details: Ivan Illich Deschooling society, 1971).

One last remark: It is often assumed that younger students are better at ICT than older students, but the research literature doesn't hold this out.

Distance learning

Date / Location

April 2011 during the partner meeting in Middelfart (Denmark)

Name / Speaker / responsible Partner

Ulla Køjner (VUC FYN Middelfart)

Description of the workshop

Introduction

It is possible to take either a full secondary education via distance learning or single subjects after own choice.

The workshop described the process from the first registering of the long-distance student to the final examination.

The different steps were demonstrated – the ‘welcome-letter’ informing on practical matters, the expectations to the ‘good’ and active student, the online-material, the folders, where students have to upload their assignments/exercises, the way the teacher read, comment and mark their assignments etc.

The role of the teacher

The role of the teacher is quite free in the way that he can teach whenever and wherever it pleases him. There is however a fixed period during the week in which the student can always be sure to get in contact with the teacher via phone, Skype or personally in the ‘resource-center’.

The typical long-distance student

Persons who, for different reasons live abroad for shorter or longer periods of time. – People working or studying in other institutions during the ‘normal’ time of lessons. – Parents who prefer staying at home with their children during daytime. – People with different mental diseases, e.g. sociophobia.

Focus points on the negative aspects of long-distance learning

During the workshop different difficulties/problems concerning long-distance teaching were mentioned - and afterwards discussed:

- Little or no physical contact between teacher and student
- Exams still practiced in the traditional way
- Greater awareness of the way teacher address the students, the tone which is used – in view of the long distance

- Existing pedagogical material based on traditional education – not really considering the new media
- Ethics, responsibility, ‘ownership’ as keywords for the long-distance student

Dissemination within and beyond ACE

Discussions and exchange of ideas with other teachers have occurred in CVO Antwerpen-Zuid. This might have implications on future distance learning.

Virtual learning environments (VLE) take a common place in higher and further education

In CEPA JOAN MIR I MIR MAÓ, discussions in small groups of teachers about their new ICT system and about how they could improve (or solve) the negative aspects took place.

Implementation

Experiences have until now shown that this way of education appeal to more mature and determined students because of the flexibility. At the same time it is also this group of students who, in the most ideal way, are able to live up to the responsibility and independence, that the long-distance learning requires.

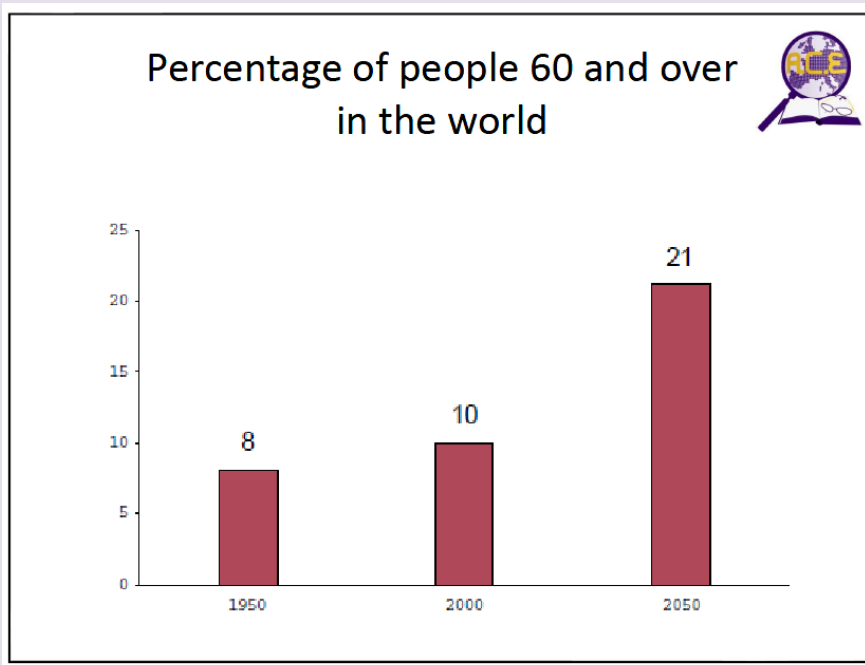
Learning platforms are widely used and implemented in most teaching/training institutions.

Different types of assessment need to be considered, since most educational institutions still mainly use traditional methods. We need to make steps further – and also make use of new technology (e.g. Paper based written F2F exams were introduced in 1792 in Cambridge.)

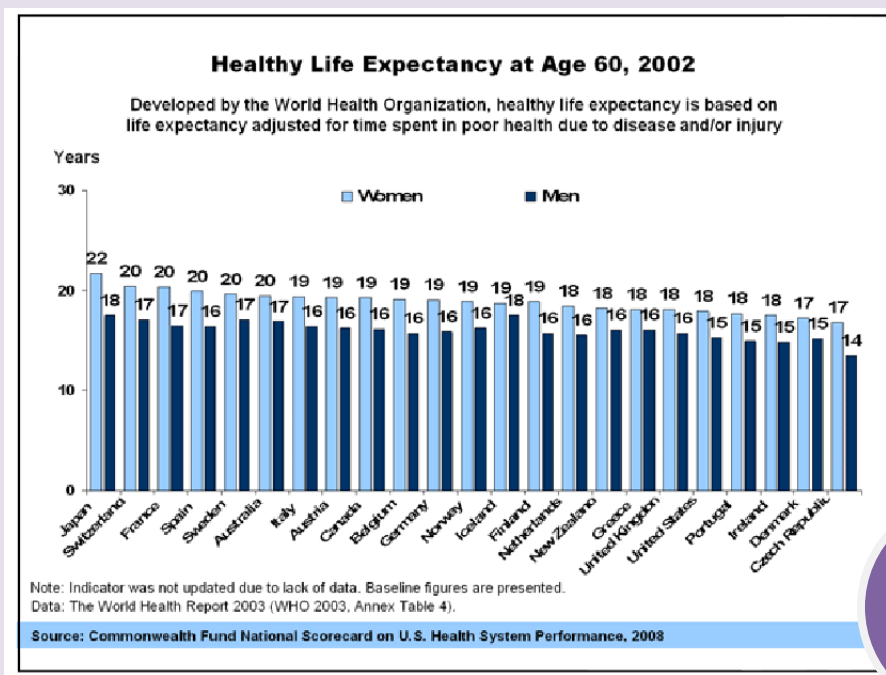
Research results

Selection based on the survey performed by WHL Wissenschaftliche Hochschule Lahr


Global overview of people aged above 60 years old



Healthy Life Expectancy at age 60 (2002)




Life expectancy and retirement age

Q 

Life expectancy and retirement age

		Austria	Germany	Spain	Ireland	Denmark	Belgium
Live expectation	♀	82,9	82,4	82,2	81,6	77,9	80,4
	♂	77,4	77,2	77,8	76,8		
Legal retirement age	♂	65	65	65	65	67	65
	♀	60					
Actual retirement age	♂	58,9	63	63	61,5	62	59,5
	♀	57,9					

General significant differences between social groups concerning actual retirement age

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significant differences

- Lower professional status → earlier retirement
- Depends on type of work / company (financial crisis)
- women retire earlier than men

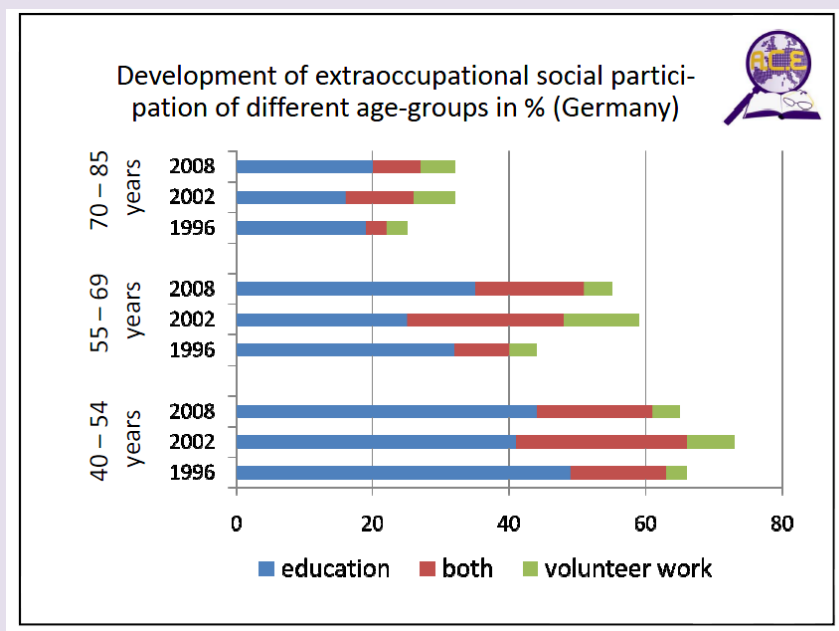
Education as part of self-coherence

Education as part of self-coherence



- higher participation in general and professional education correlates with higher participation in later years
- In Europe, the level of adult people's participation in learning activities ranges from those who have low level of education 23.1% to people with high level of education 68.7%.

Development of extraoccupational social participation of different age groups in % (Germany)



Preferred teaching methods of older learners

- face to face teaching
- low speed
- small groups
- good professionals
- experiential learning systems
- group discussion,
- reminiscence, personal narratives
- teacher as entertainer (same way as in school time)
- teaching and learning methods they are familiar with even those that are not the most appropriate

Focuses for teacher education of ageing people

- learner involvement
- conflict management
- detailed explanation of issues
- empathy
- information technology
- learning activities
- "inductive education"
- ability to dispose material systematically
- ability to speak loud and clear
- insights in cognitive learning patterns of older learners
- start from the experience and expertise of them
- provide enough pauses
- provide learning material gradually

Suitable learning locations for teaching



Suitable learning locations for teaching older persons



	Austria	Germany	Spain	Ireland	Denmark	Belgium
educational institutions	fairly good	fairly good	good	poor	good	fairly good
at home	poor	poor	poor	poor/inappropriate	poor	inappropriate
online, with social media	fairly good	fairly good	fairly good	poor	fairly good	fairly good
learning on job	good	good	good	fairly good	good	fairly good

Inventory of relevant competences for teachers of older learners

CURIOSITY

PATIENCE

COMMUNICATIVENESS

EMPATHY

RESPECT TOWARDS
STUDENTS

UNCONDITIONAL
POSITIVE REGARD

RESPECT TOWARD
OTHER WAYS OF
DOING THINGS

WRITE AND SPEAK
CLEARLY

UNDERSTAND THE
COGNITIVE CHANGES
OF OLDER STUDENTS

