Methods of learning and experiences in learning of seniors (GEM)

Fundacja Pro Scientia Publica (Poland)

Methods of learning and experiences in learning of seniors

During realization the project GEM we have used this methods and techniques of working with seniors as:

- The biographical workshops
- The biographical games
- The group work (tandems senior-student)
- The brainstorming
- Individual interviews

Experiences in learning of seniors:

The Fundation has been the beneficiary of two programs within the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP). The Fundation have implemented two project from Grundtvig Learning Partnership Project where we work with seniors:

- *Inter-Generational European Memories* (GEM) where we work with seniors by using the biographical method
- *Take part in Art* (pArt) where we work with seniors by using artistic workshops.

Moreover, The Fundation works with The University of Third Age in the University of Wroclaw and it have taken part in realization another The Grundtvig project: "Tell me". In this project the method of work with seniors is the theatre workshop.

It should be noted that the Pro Scientia Publica in cooperation with the University of Third Age constantly gaining experience working with seniors.

Association M3 (M CUBE) (France)

How M3-Cube worked with seniors during GEM's workshops ?

M3-Cube is used to work with seniors. Seniors are really busy persons and to plan a workshop with them, we had to be organized. First, we had to inform seniors about the project and the workshop. We published an article in our newsletter explaining what xas our project about, how we needed seniors participation and when we planned to held a workshop. We had several responses, the concept of the project was quite seducing our members.

The workshop took place in a quite informal way. Seniors need to feel comfortable and welcomed in a friendly atmosphere. Before they arrived, we settled some computers (one for each senior). We made a presentation about the project and also about biographies. What is a biography ? An autobiography ? How to write about myself ? In literature, a lot of different ways to talk about yourself exist. We introduced these ways to participants. Then, to be related to the chosen topic « your first time with ICTs », we asked them to type their stories on a computer.

After they finished, each participant read his/her story to the group. Finally, everyone had coffee together and talked about their memories.

M3-Cube, to make our partnership become a permanent network, proposes to write a kind of commitment letter signed by all partners. The letter will state that all partners involved in GEM project intend to work together again and will maintain contact. A first draft of the letter will be addressed to all partners by email and submitted to feedback/suggestions/corrections in order to have a final version of it during our next meeting in Roma where we will be able to sign it. A copy of the letter will be given to each organization.

IASIO- The Institute for Applied Language Integration Ottakring (Austria)

What measures we used to organize the workshops?

We have a lot of language learners but they do our courses online, so we only know a few of them in person. So, in order to find seniors for the workshops, we contacted our learners online, and also stated that people could participate, who are not doing our courses at the moment, but are very interested in the topic.

After we found enough participants we realized the workshop online, informing them about the subject, answering their questions and discussing with them. The main topic was their experiences regarding the job situation for older people. Then we encouraged them to summarize their thoughts in a written document. Moreover, we told them to include an outline of their personal history - especially regarding education and working career. Additionally we asked them to include their opinion about e-learning and its benefits.

Finally we invited the participants who are geographically located close to Vienna to participate in a discussion in order to discuss the subject also personally.

Nazilli HEM (Turkey)

Teaching methods:

Nazilli Hem institution has been practicing a variety of activities under the LLP in order to find out the best productive way during the process of mixed group of learners from age 20 to 50+

The main objective is to build ''Effective Teaching Strategies'' knowing that that ;

• Requires training other members of our team.

• Trainings will vary depending on target population/group of attendants.

• A variety of teaching strategies are needed to be effective.

After working closely unıted for almost a year with an unsteady group of volunteers (approx.55-60)we brought up the reality that ;

Adult Learners . . .

1. Are autonomous and self-directed.

2. Have a foundation of life experiences and knowledge.

3. Are goal-oriented.

4. Are relevancy-oriented.

5. Are practical.

6. Need to be shown respect.

So, the best method for the time is the mixture of Formal and non-formal training for such a group and purpose. Using a mixture of both methods provide the group with more freedom, and having a freedom to some extend makes them more creative and more involved in the activities. Having a target in formal rules and letting teenagers and adults work in non-formal rules make it easy to create a successful teamwork and reach the target. Especially as adults

are goal oriented ,they force the teenagers to be a member of the team and they make them to be aware of the responsibilities.

As the attendants have common goals after getting United as a team ,all work is quite deductive Alternative teaching approaches can be more inductive and useful time to time. So this is where formal and non-formal training meets.

The best part of the expected results is the evaluation. Life experiences and knowledge mix, positive judgments' are put forward and having the responsibility of being perfect is aimed under the supervision of seniors who behave like facilitators although in reality being learners.

Products/Expected Results:

- ✓ Being a part of a team
- ✓ Having the feeling of being still productive and deductive (for seniors)
- ✓ Being in action, promoting
- ✓ Effectiveness and productivity
- ✓ Exhibition, seeing the results

As for the İnstitution, getting volunteers who are eager to work together around and trying to make them more active for the neighboring activities is a new experience. Always using formal methods usually make training some boring and uninteresting and demand on different activities become less and less .A different vision now.

The University of Seville (Spain)

The Classroom Experience at the University of Seville is a social aimed program of scientific and cultural development, to promote science and culture by means of generational and intergenerational relations, to improve the quality of life of elders and encourage their participation as social facilitators.

It is structured in order to define three functions: teaching, research and service to society.

Objectives:

• Provide a space for scientific and cultural debate.

• Provide a framework for generational and intergenerational relations.

• Provide, actively, people's access to cultural assets to improve the quality of life and promote creative leisure.

• Encourage the participation of elders as facilitators in their socio-cultural environment.

Biography method which we used during project GEM

- Justification:

Life stories are a way to know how the events of History shape a nation and each generation passes it on to the younger ones. One of the most important communication happenings, as well as the most common way of non-formal learning, is the unwritten culture transmitted orally.

Thus, an "official" literary tradition (memoirs, autobiographies, confessions), related mainly to public and relevant characters in History, displaces a more private and less-considered-for-

History-telling letters, diaries, notebooks, and other texts that do not suit the characteristics of the actual "official" canon.

No other literary gender has more examples than the exceptions to the systematized and canonized "centered" (auto) biographies. Nevertheless, they are hardly used as basis for the History and Science of any kind because of its lack of written records (or at least, their publication). Even these exceptions to the rule have their own exceptions: at extreme conditions, in a moment in time, this non-canonical literature (letters, diaries and private autobiographical texts) may be released or become books (Didier 1967: 46)

 - Methodology:

After showing different examples and submitting a theoretical framework, we have invited people from different generations to share experiences that are confronted with current life models. By doing so, we also promote the idea that the learning through life experiences is a way of sociological knowledge.

The methodology that has been applied to this course on autobiography is known as "Autobiography of fragments". It has been divided into two parts: 1) Theory and previous examples of (un)known writers; 2) Workshop on autobiography for the students.

THEORETICAL:

1.   From the dichotomous logic to modes of a homogeneous thinking. "To put memories into an (alternate) order"

2.   Fragmentary practice is "unlimited" and "discontinuous" in an ontological order which contains in itself a "truth" that the author hid and expects to be unveiled. (The Bible-> the Books -> the Truth) even though must be placed in front of the official truth.

3.   Бахти́ (Bakhtin): from the moment the author have the say, the consciousness individually selects pieces of memories from a social conscience.

4.   Autobiographies are central to historical research of the closest past.

5.   Autobiographical writing is closely linked to the construction of memory, "which is an essential element of individual and collective identity" (Le Goff 1979: 1104).

6.   Usefulness (motivation): K. Millet 'personal is political' (1968). Each life as part of the historical-political reality. It is a political experiment.

7.   "The aim of writing is not for itself, but taking life to a state of non-personal strengths" (Deleuze y Parnet, 2006: 59). Life is not only personal but collective.

8.   Relationship, between the individual and the immediate-political related, acquires all a collective value.

9.   The me, myself and I (unworthy, entitled, idealized, divided)

WORKSHOP:

-Text examples showing the struggle of the historical person with the non-fictional one.

-Texts to understand and coming to terms with her/his own past

-Texts showing the present and the past narrative

-Texts with the psychological pressures and the pressures of the narrative discourse of the History.

So, transversal themes and subthemes have been proposed in each class (love, family, conflict memories….)

No one was obliged to write their memories if they did not want to remember.

Students could display their thoughts in a freeway, no limited number of words, shaping their own ways of expressions (poetic, prose/narrative, mixed…).

E.Ri.Fo - Ente per la Ricerca e la Formazione (Italy)

Methods of learning and experiences in learning of seniors

During realization the project GEM we are using the autobiographical method and techniques of working with seniors as:

- exercise from the autobiographical method

- workshop

- laboratories

- educational games

- individual interviews

Experiences in learning of seniors:

- Erifo has been the beneficiary of the program within the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) and we have implemented the project from Grundtvig Learning Partnership Project where we work with adults learners. The title of the project is *Inter-Generational European Memories* (GEM). For this project we have create a specific training module about the autobiographical method that can help the learners to collect their own biographies.
The module is composed in two parts: a theoretical part, where we explain the origins of the method and the aims, and a practices part, composed by exercises that can help the learners to write the biographies.

- Erifo also organized two courses of in-service training, which are found in the database Comenius / Grundtvig, and continues to experience the autobiographical method even with these senior learners.