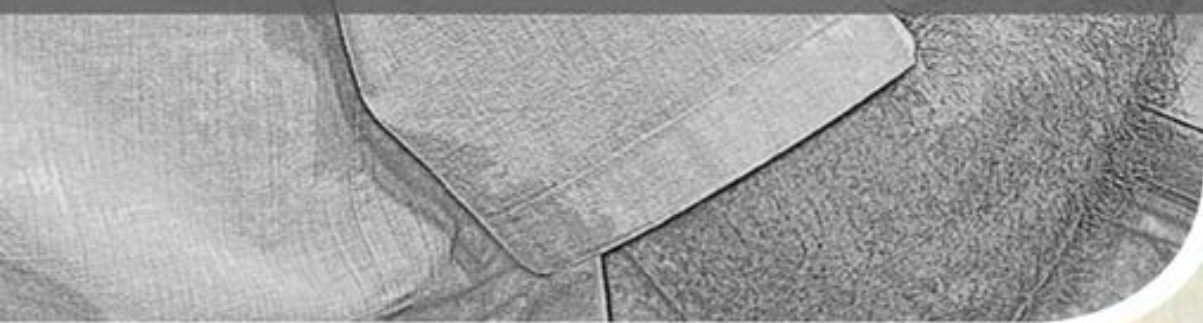




Active life learning experiences

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Active Life Learning Experiences

Publisher: Centre for the innovation and development of education and technology
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Printed in Spain by: ColorImpress SLU

ISBN: 978-84-943058-0-1



This publication has been produced in the framework of the “Active Life Learning” Grundtvig Learning Partnership and with the collaboration of all the partners, Project reference: 2012-1-FI1-GRU06-09534
<http://www.activelifelearning.eu>



The Sant Mateu Town Council (Ajuntament de Sant Mateu) is the promoter of this publication
<http://www.santmateu.com/>



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission and the National Agencies. This communication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

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Motivation

The current issue that many European Union countries are facing is population aging, including adults and seniors that are far away from active aging. In that connection active roles must be taken in order to provide active aging for adults and older people, so not only self-confidence but also the contributions by them to the society can be gained. Via the steps to be taken for the active aging we can remove segregation of them and we can help set up a bridge of solidarity between the young, adult and the older.

The main aims that motivated the creation of this partnership are to:

- enhance solidarity between generations in order to create a society for all ages
- respond to the educational challenge of an ageing population in Europe
- provide an active participation of adults and seniors in social, economic, cultural, spiritual and civic affairs.
- provide adults and the seniors as active contributors to their families, peers, communities and nations.

Our target group is all EU citizens as the consciousness-raising on active aging should start from the early ages. We particularly focus on adults, seniors, relevant organizations such as governments, civil society and social partners, universities, schools, research centres and care providers.

So as to reach our goals we shared our good practices on happy, healthy, active life. During the 2 years of the project, we have mutually developed and implement these practices through the targeted local and transnational activities such as fairs, exhibitions, concerts, games, storytelling and expert lectures for the wide audience. We raised awareness through a brochure and developed a ebooklet consisting of these practices

The objectives of the project were:

- to promote active ageing in the community.
- to provide opportunities for adults and seniors to continue their learning, to feel healthier, happier and more valuable.
- to contribute to the recognition of existing skills and capabilities along with valorizing prior informal learning activities.

- to foster volunteering in the activities.
- to build a sense of community and camaraderie.
- to raise consciousness of active aging.
- to strengthen the European dimension and cooperation.

We target all EU citizens from all walks of life, as this consciousness must be gained starting from the young ages. In this partnership we mainly focus on adults and the seniors who are from vulnerable social groups, who are socially isolated from the society, who are not engaged in life and who have not been given chances to contribute to the society. In addition we also target the relevant organizations and their staff, which are local, regional and national governments and stakeholders such as researchers, employers, trade unions, NGOs and policy-making bodies and universities. This equips them to better provide opportunities for adults and seniors for active life and offer a wider implementation by reaching larger communities. Among the problems we intend to address with this project are: inadequate level of cooperation amongst the relevant organizations, the need to increase the amount of learning opportunities for the disadvantaged, lack of pathways for motivating adults and seniors in participating in the activities for active aging.

Through the transnational meetings we shared good practices on the dimensions of active aging and thereby improve professional competencies of our staff. This booklet wants to make this experience visible and exploitable for others.

Acknowledgments

This book is part of the “Active Life Learning” Grundtvig Learning Partnership (<http://www.activelifelearning.eu>). This project was supported by the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Commission reference: 2012-1-FI1-GRU06-09534.



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Partners

Ayuntamiento de Sant Mateu (Spain)

The local municipality of Sant Mateu (SM) has a department aimed to provide non-formal and formal education to adults and seniors. The SM municipality is part of the North campus of the Senior Citizens University (SCU), a branch of the Jaume I University (UJI) a public education institution in the city of Castellón. The SM town has 2100 citizens, but that North Delegation of the SCU-UJI includes other towns in a rural area about 10.000 citizens. The SCU has a total of 919 senior learners (more than 55 years old), which are part of the University, 97 of those learners are part of the SM delegation. By this way, the local municipality is currently very active as an Adult Education Provider with the collaboration of the SCU.



The SM municipality aims a higher increased cohesion, to reduce the risk of exclusion of their senior citizens and promote an active way of living based in the lifelong learning principles. The SCU has expertise-teaching seniors (ICT but also humanities, arts, history, economy, law, etc.), and creating ICT tools for seniors (as the Wikisenior <http://www.wikisenior.es>, anthropology blogs and other virtual communities where seniors are members <http://mayores.uji.es/antropologia> and hiking activities) and the SM has experience in other non-formal educational activities. The North delegation of SCU in SM was created in the academic year 2004/2005, since then it has been consolidated, but new challenges has raised. The SM municipality is at the present trying to foster the use of ICT in seniors, especially those who live in risk of isolation and exclusion, in a rural area and with some disability.

The SM tries to offer learning opportunities through the use of ICT tools to maintain them social, integrated, creative and active, with all the great potentialities that the network can offer to seniors in rural area. We will participate providing our expertise on using ICT to empower seniors and keeping them active but also gathering knowledge about how making them more enthusiastic and motivated from different vital aspects that make them more participative and the rest of society to take advantage of their potential. Some of theses aspects focus on environment, cultural and intellectual, sharing and collaborating to grow up emotionally and socially, on the net (where sometimes intergenerational communication must be considered) but also in their lives.

Voksenopplæringa, Tromsø (Norway)



Voksenopplæringa i Tromsø is a provider of secondary school for adults that don't have the exams. That might be Norwegians or migrants without their papers. Accordingly we also provide Norwegian language courses for migrants. Most of our students are migrants, age 16 and up. The main target is teaching them Norwegian so they can participate in the Norwegian society. Integration for work and social activities are our main aim like the main objective of the project.

Some of our migrants are elderly, and have bigger problems integrating in our city than the young ones. For them the language is essential for getting integrated, since the work situations for them are harder than the young people. We solve this by teaching them about the city, the possibilities they have to get in contact with other citizens of the city. Included in our education are computer skills, work with language training and contact with different organizations in the city.

We also would like to improve our target group in active aging aspect. For this reason this partnership will contribute so much that we will be able to promote active aging to the staff and learners in the organization. By sharing the good practices we will get more methods. Our specific role is to set up the website and update it with collaboration of Poland partner. Via carrying out the shared methods in the local activities we will integrate our target addresses in social life actively.

The Pedagogical Academy in Lodz (Poland)



THE PEDAGOGICAL
ACADEMY
IN LODZ

The Pedagogical Academy in Lodz is a private university that provides activities within the fields of education, special education and sociology. We offer the two-level study system with bachelor and master degree in education as well as great offer for postgraduate students. The Pedagogical Academy in Lodz launched activities in the field of external cooperation and exchange (the bilateral cooperation, Erasmus, international projects: Comenius, Grundtvig, COST, Daphne III). The Pedagogical Academy in Lodz pursues consulting and educational activities for local communities as well as people and institutions concerned. Many educational and scientific conferences and debates were organized, mainly dedicated to problems of special education needs, the risk of exclusion, peer aggression and new media etc. The staff is involved in a number of research projects both, on national and international level.

“Academy of Adulthood” is integral part of The Pedagogical Academy in Lodz and proves that ‘being active’ in life does not end with the retirement or pension. We offer lectures lead by specialists from various fields of study, seminar classes in the sections of interest and opportunity to learn new language to people who have completed 55 years of age, have free time and wish to join “Academy of Adulthood”.

Our programme does not only provide opportunities to deepen or acquire new knowledge, but also gives a great chance to make new friends and develop social contacts.

The activities of our Academy in the project will aim at making and developing forms of training and development of seniors, who want to continue to develop their knowledge and interests through a variety of forms and methods of work. In addition, within the project we will carry out the tasks related to preparation and shaping mental, emotional and physical activity of participants, as well as broaden the educational activities that will arouse and motivate seniors to creative and active work. We want to create and deepen contacts with European partner organizations with similar objectives and expand the exchange of knowledge and good practice in terms of lifelong learning programme. We will try, through mobilities and dissemination of this project, to raise awareness and reinforce the values resulting from the experience of life of elderly people in Poland and the partner countries and to promote healthy and active living.

Tüm Aktif Memurlar Derneği (Turkey)



Our association is located in Kütahya, Turkey and it has been actively working on adult and senior education since it was established. Our target group includes the adults and seniors who have left education without basic qualifications, who are isolated from the society and who are in a disadvantage situation economically and socially.

Our aims are to contribute the personal development (educationally, socially, physically, culturally etc) of our target group and also the staff. In order to promote our target group for living active and for being more motivated to learn further we organize many educational activities in certain periods. Seminars, courses, competitions, trip, etc on different fields such as literature, second language learning, ICT, social development, cultural development, gaining basic skills, sports, arts etc amongst our activities.

Through these activities we believe our target group can not only recognize their own skills but also feel the value and gain confidence in them. By this way they are encouraged to participate in the activities, which provide their active aging. With this partnership project we would like to share good practices on active aging with different perspectives and include them to our teaching/learning methods. Thanks to

the new ways, we will be able to increase the participation of adults and seniors in the activities and foster their living actively without isolated from the society. In this way we can gain lot from adults and seniors' experiences.

In order to achieve the aims of the partnership, we, like the other entire partners, are supposed to do the tasks properly. The specific task we will fulfill is to prepare a brochure which helps the partner to announce about our partnership. We will also contribute to the project by sharing good practices, helping with the other tasks of the partners, evaluating the process and doing the arrangements when we host the partners

Rahel Varnhagen Kolleg - Weiterbildungskolleg der Stadt Hagen (Germany)



Rahel-Varnhagen-Kolleg is an Institute of Further Education located in Germany with campuses in Hagen, Gevelsberg, Hemer, Menden and Luedenscheid. Opened in 1983, it is now one of the biggest Institutes of Further Education in North Rhine-Westphalia with currently more than 1,000 students being registered.

We offer a wide range of courses – including online courses – for school leavers and adults returning to education in order to graduate from school and we welcome students from a variety of backgrounds and cultures each with their own learning requirements. We always make it an effort to admit migrants to our Institute and foster the development of cross-cultural competences.

Our curricula are to a very large degree split into modules because we believe that modularization of further education gives our students greater freedom in choosing their study paths due to the requirements of lifelong learning. Classic teaching methods have been being replaced by methods of self-dependent learning. Our courses combine a mature learning environment with a range of support services in order to make further education more accessible to disadvantaged young people and to provide a re-entry route for those in the workplace who wish to upgrade their skills in line with emerging needs and to give them a chance to combine education and graduation with family, work and other responsibilities.

In this whole big thing it is important to get older with life quality. Life quality can be reached by our education and our curricula. With the contribution of the partnership we would like to improve our curricula and enlarge the perspective of the organization. In the project the main duty of ours is to prepare the e-booklet by cooperating with the other partners responsible for this. In each meeting we will also share the good practices on the determined topics and carry out the suitable one /ones in the local activities. We will also have active role in evaluation and dissemination activities.

Chapter 2

Intellectual active learning

Self-education and Mnemotechnics in Social Activation of People Over 50

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IN LODZ

Factors influencing the attitudes and behavior of the elderly are not only such factors as attribution of work or expectations of them, but also the image the individuals have of themselves.

Whether people over 50 think of themselves as “the elderly” who should give up their place for “the young” or they still have the willingness to work, study or other activities has an immense influence on their decisions connected with their career paths and social activities.



The aim of this summary is showing the opportunity of active learning for the 50+ people because aging is a very difficult period for a human being, especially in today's world ruled by the cult of youth. Being old is often associated with “the period of losses”. What comes with aging is decline in physical and mental powers, loss of beauty and attractiveness, sometimes losing close people, retiring, decline in social position and prestige. According to the psychologists a human being handles some situations better provided that there is a potential for positive changes. Aging does not bring any beneficial perspectives. Youth is characterized by the conviction that all the good is yet to come. This perspective is unpopular with the aging ones. In the process of aging difficult or critical events have an increasingly stressful impact on the individual. “Old age is a sort of a challenge for the individual who has to cope with inevitability of biology and is entangled in numerous crisis situations which are inscribed especially in this period of life”

Various people react to this challenge differently. One of the components of good old age is positive self-assessment, acceptance of the passage of time and the adjustment skill. The Academy of Advanced Age at the Pedagogical Academy in Lodz executes a self-education programme which activates the people over fifty.

Self-education is present throughout each individual's life and its symptoms can be observed in infants, as well as children in kindergarten and school age. On each stage of education self-education has a different shape and dimension. In the academy self-education should dominate over education guided in such a way that after finishing the institutionalized education its graduate can continue this process throughout one's whole life. The self-education process is also undertaken by the retired people when more and more often ordinary daily duties are not enough and they search for new fields of activity. The increasing sense of loneliness, anxiety and more and more questions which appear and they cannot answer them and the need of contact with their peers lead to looking for constant education opportunities.

The aim of The Academy of Advanced Age is including the elderly in constant education, intellectual, mental and physical activation of the attendants as well as working out the method of education and implementation of gerontological prevention.

- Didactic activity – it involves lectures from such academic fields as history, sociology, philosophy, medicine, geography, arts, pedagogy and psychology.
- Cultural and recreational classes: meetings with interesting people (meetings with a painter, sculptor, ethnographer, archeologist) walks with guides, bus trips, participation in exhibitions and festivals.
- Workshops and interest sections: (arts workshops, painting workshops, cultural and touristic section, swimming pool classes).

In the current term, except for the already mentioned self-education some techniques have also been introduced, which involve not only exercise for the mind but other practices as well and recommendations which are meant to strengthen the concept of active getting old (sports, nutrition, art., spare time activities, voluntary work, ICT etc.).



Mnemonotechnics which are described here are all poems, associations, acronyms and other ways which help the seniors remember some information. Already the ancient Greeks and Romans used mnemonotechnics. It was them who discovered that two main pillars of remembering are imagination and association. Actually all memory techniques are based on grouping information in order to reduce a bigger number of items to a smaller one, also associating these items so as to make them connected with each other and one leading to another and using imagination in such a way that information bits supported with colorful imaginations are easier to remember. The most frequent sort of exercises used in classes by the lecturers is the technique of association (the chain method).

- Thanks to implementing the above mentioned techniques and short trainings before the classes the students
- Regain belief in their own capabilities
- Improve their independence
- Improve their self-esteem
- They reduce the risk of depression
- They get in contact with their grandchildren – surprising them very often
- They can change from the clumsy grandmother or grandfather to the person who can surprise with their knowledge
- They can get to know new people



Prognosis:

- More attention should be paid to education on old age and it should include all society and every generation;
- Demographic structure of the society should be taken into consideration in the widely understood social politics
- Increasing the activity of people of the third age, including them in active social life, so as they can function in their own living area;
- Preparing the modern man to one's own old age period which is not only about obtaining the rational reflection on old age and accepting the fact that it is natural and generating mental acceptance and readiness to perform the changing social, health, family roles in the course of getting old, but also creating a skill of accepting old people, together with their behaviour, their system of values and beliefs.

Chapter 2

Intellectual active learning

Wonders of perception

Stefan Schmale
Rahel Varnhagen Kolleg (Germany)

Illusions and phenomena in visual, auditory, tactile and social perception

An example of experience-based learning in psychology or other social scientific subjects

Structure and realization of the presentation

The basic idea behind this presentation was to show the participants of the Active-Life-Learning-Project, how to integrate short practices into social scientific subjects, which can be used to provide an active learning experience. The overall aim of this kind of methodical access should allow learners to succeed in learning growth, which is motivating and highly sustainable.

For this to happen I prepared a tour ("The museum of wonders of perception") with different stations about visual, auditory, tactile and social perception. The participants visited the "Museum of wonders of perception" and walked around the different stations. They were given the instruction to experience the different illusions and phenomena while taking notes of their impressions, thoughts and feelings. Below and on the next page there are a few pictures, which were taken during the practice.

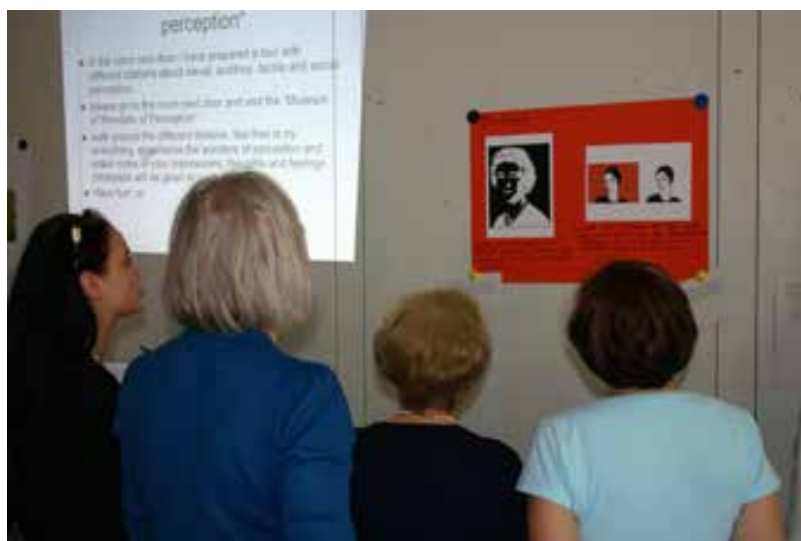


Participants are looking at a few reversible figures, which are derived from ideas of Gestaltpsychology.



In the upper picture and the picture below participants are shown, who try different physiological illusions.

These kinds of illusions are best explained by using a biological approach.



Here Participants look at so called afterimages. An afterimage continues to appear in one's vision after the exposure to the original image has ceased

After participants tried the different stations we took a short discussion about the implications of the individual experiences. The learning aim that was achieved was to allow learners of the project to realize that the human perception is influenced by a subjective dimension of experiences, feelings, wishes and knowledges. It is not an objective representation of reality.

Application to psychology lessons

Further information was given the participants so they could comprehend how this practice could be applied to psychology lessons in ordinary school life.

1. This practice is usually the opener to a longer lesson-sequence of a few weeks
2. Usually the students don't get further explanations about the presented phenomena, but work on the theoretical background in the following lessons
3. At the end of the first lesson, after the tour in the 'museum', learners should be able to develop/understand, that human perception is not an objective representation of reality.
4. After these initial insights there has to be a further learning phase, in which learners get the chance to extend their knowledge about the processes of human perception.

Aims of experience based learning in psychology

It is intended that learners make their own experiences and that they learn while being active. This aim is so important because learning is considered as a holistic process, in which nearly all senses should be stimulated. In this way learners are "picked up" at their individual level; their (everyday) life and (everyday) experiences become contents of their learning progress. Furthermore they improve their skills of self-reflection, which is necessary for active life learning.

In the following lessons after the initial insights learners can improve e.g. their social skills, media skills or organisational skills. They can initiate their own projects in which learners become teachers and teachers become learners. The basic idea of experience based learning is to create a strong link between theoretical and practical work. The highly individual experiences motivate the learners to extend their knowledge and skills.

Methodical and didactical implications

For experience based learning motivating and stimulating learning material is necessary. Learners should be free to gather their own impressions and experiences; at first there are no "mistakes" oder "wrong answers", every point of view is valid.

Because of this ideological shift the role of the teacher is slightly modified: the teacher organizes and supports the learners, but isn't any longer the focus point of lessons. The optimal solution would be that learners become teachers and the teacher becomes the learner. It is necessary that the learners have the confidence to communicate their impressions and experiences. Because of this not every content is appropriate for every learning group. Learning groups should have developed a climate of confidence. Of course social skills play a big role concerning this matter.

My personal experiences with experience based learning

In psychology there are endless possibilities for experience-based learning. Probably the ideas of this method can be applied to other subjects and learning methods. The students are very motivated by this learning arrangement. Therefore skills and knowledges that are developed in this arrangement are often highly sustainable and effective. Last but not least it's fun for learners and teachers!



Chapter 2

Intellectual active learning

Examples of “active life learning” in science at Rahel-Varnhagen-Kolleg, Hagen, Germany

Bettina Freund

Rahel-Varnhagen-Kolleg, Hagen (Germany)

Today there are excellent digital media for student's use available to enlarge their knowledge in biology, chemistry, physics and maths, but the experience of real life around them diminishes. So the idea of the science department was to leave the virtual world and classroom as often as possible and go outside instead, giving the students the opportunity to experience real situations and access to propaedeutics of science. Besides working with their own hands, they learn about things concerning their own lives, the surrounding they live in and train their social abilities. Hagen is situated at the border of the rural areas of the highlands and the more industrialized region of the former steel and coal area with universities and museums, which supplies us with a whole bunch of places of interest.

In what follows some examples of the activities are given:

Biology: The current curriculum focuses on three main topics, ecology, genetics and evolution. What is important for a species to live in a certain habitat and how competition in similar species can be avoided is the leading question when students attend a bat-night. At first research about the needs of the expected species is necessary, then the theory that three different types bats can share the same place for hunting because the forage on different kinds of insects and hunt in different places within the habitat has to be proved on location. Using real research equipment like a bat-detector evokes interest how science works.



The next theme is a close look at an ecosystem and focuses on freshwater. There aren't any natural lakes nearby, but the highlands offer a variety of water reservoirs and so we visit the “Sorpe-Talsperre” regularly. The main basin has an excellent water quality and the students take water samples to identify plankton organisms and collect data concerning several chemical and physical parameters. Since the tasks are divided between them, they learn about team work and have to rely



on each other. To reach a certain buoy indicating the deepest spot of the reservoir, boats have to be prepared and rowed.

Changes in biodiversity related to climate change have become one of the central aspects in environmental biology and Citizen Science has become a clever method to join exact methods of scientific research and the enthusiasm of interested laymen. Within a short time, large amounts of data and information are collected. The German magazine “GEO” each year announces a contest for schools and other groups to look for creepy crawlies, birds, plants, snails or something of that kind and post their results. A group of people of our school took part and concentrated on a brook in the forest near our school, making it a “family business” with students, their kids and teachers all caught by exploration fever. One intention was to encourage them to repeat this on their own and spread what they have learned to raise interest in other people to become aware of their environment and help protecting nature.



Since American TV series like CSI belong to the student’s favorite programs, looking what is behind forensic investigation makes genetics attractive. The German Ministry of Science and Education sponsors a laboratory truck which can be rent by schools. First in a classroom experiment DNA from onions was made visible as a kind of white slime, but the mobile laboratory had the equipment to multiply DNA from cells of oral mucous membrane and analyze a DNA fingerprint after gel electrophoresis. Working with professional equipment raised the interest in laboratory work and shows new perspectives concerning the choice of a job or studies after school. Fortunately we were able to invite a member of the German Parliament to join us and he offered us a discussion about genetic engineering and ethics because he is involved in governmental decisions dealing with that topics. The discussion will be in September 2014, compèred by some of



the most advanced students who already designed posters with information and invitations. Teacher's involvement has been reduced as far as possible.

Regarding evolution a temporary exhibition in the Natural History Museum in Münster presented the evolution and life of whales, connecting lectures at school with authentic fossils showing the changes from a wolf-like quadruped animal to the biggest water living creature ever. Whereas most people like whales and especially dolphins, the human ancestors are even more interesting. In 1856 by chance a spectacular find of a hitherto unknown human ancestor was made in the Neandertal close to Düsseldorf. The museum there shows the evolution of mankind from the first ape-like beings to modern men. The eye-to-eye-confrontation with real size models starts thinking about relationships and humanity. Museums have well-prepared display models, but our students also get the chance to dig for fossils and minerals by themselves. In the devon period the eastern parts of Hagen belonged to a shallow tropical ocean leaving fossil coral reefs and dripstone caves when it surfaced. So in a quarry they learn to look closely, describe, compare and find different types of brachiopods, corals, stromatolites and geological strata.



Chemistry: Learning with all senses is an aim in chemistry, too. Picking up every day situations, the experiments deal with historical methods to dye cloth, preserving food, making soap, creating artificial fruit fragrances which are for example ingredients of shower gels or chewing gum. But not only benefits of chemical processes are discussed. The effects of detergents or heavy metals on the environment can be measured in experiments. A highlight is the synthesis of Aspirin, visiting the school-lab at Ruhr-University-Bochum. The students get a feedback how precisely they worked and can lay hands on their product. To look into the matter of common drugs and their side-effects and medicine may make them more aware concerning the use.



Mathematics: From theory to application and from abstract to something touchable catching the student's interests was the goal of a project which will be the school's contribution to a scientific competition. Calculating geometrical forms and drawing anamorphoses had a high fun factor and arose the curiosity of other students.



Computer applications: At last turning back to digital media one part of a project about presentations was not to consume perfectly made software but to be creative and develop their own ideas how to transfer abstract content into a form other students could use to learn with. So short video-clips were made. Everything from writing a storybook to the construction of a set to directing, filming, dubbing and cutting was left to the responsibility of the student's group. Again, this was training of teamwork, but as a side-effect they learned to include things like copyright in their considerations which may be useful when publishing things on a homepage, Youtube or otherwise, so there is direct the connection to the student's private lives again.



Chapter 3

Social active learning

Learning in the net society

Pilar Escuder-Mollon, Roger Esteller-Curto
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Introduction

The use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) is increasing across all levels of society, and also among senior citizens (those aged 55 and over). Educational institutions are working to teach ICT to this group of learners. The most basic ICT skills include practical computer and Internet use. Other competences such as the capacity to adapt, learning independently, asking for help and helping others require a more complex educational intervention. Informal and non-formal learning are therefore complementary ways of reaching a proficiency in ICT, in short term (during courses) and long term (promoting a change in attitude)

In this chapter we show how the senior citizens are learning in the digital society, using computers and internet as a content, that is learning to use them (surfing, searching, using e-mail, etc), but also using computers and internet as a mean (learning, sharing, creating). The experience is located in the city of Sant Mateu (a town around 2.000 citizens in the region of Castellón, Spain); there are courses and other educational activities offered in this town by the local council with the aim that once the courses finish, the ICT allow senior students to keep learning in the digital society.

The net society

First of all we will try to clarify what the concept of “digital society”. Sometimes it is referred and the society that uses the internet for their daily routines (this is the computer mediated society) but the Internet is only a source of information and a mean of communication. Some researchers prefer to name it the “information society” or the “knowledge society”. Having clear that there is still no clear concept of the new society that it is being built, most important sociologist remark the fact that the information and communication technologies (also named as digital technologies) have an important role in everybody life (that is in our society, as in a net). Following we try to clarify those concepts from its origin and motivation:

The Knowledge Society (KS) is a term commonly used in the social sciences (Krüger 2006). This concept attempts to summarise the social transformations that are happening today. The ideas of Information Society (IS) and KS are frequently

linked; in fact a UNESCO document (2005, p. 28) presents a sequence of causality. Crovi (2004) deconstructs the concept of KS, proposing a perspective from which KS can be understood as a revolution in the sources of factors of production, but also in a cultural and social sense. She brings together the concepts of IS and KS in a new term: Information and Knowledge Society (IKS). In this way technology and cultural ideas are combined and compared (Crovi 2004, p.22) to hardware and software in a simile involving computers. Crovi affirms that the KS “is a society where the basic capital is the collective knowledge and information, distributed in everyplace, continuously valued and in real time synergy”. Internet (the network of networks) frequently springs to mind when we refer to KS and IS, but again, we should remember that network and information can be shared at different levels; hardware and software, IS and KS, technology and society.

Castells (2006, p. 27-75) states that societies have always been organised in networks, and that information has always been a key factor. What sets the present apart is the exponential rise of information and communication technologies. Castells calls this development the “informational paradigm”. In this context, technology (the storage, chips and the network) and its capacity to process and transmit information is what has allowed change in the social structure to take place. He presents this change as a revolution, similar to other historical revolutions such as the invention of the printing press or the steam engine. However, as will be explained below, Castells is somewhat critical of the term knowledge society. UNESCO (2005, p.27) recognises that the technological base leads in this case to what they call “knowledge societies”, affirming “the new information and communication technologies have created new conditions for the emergence of knowledge societies”. Castells also acknowledges the important role of technologies in this changing society, but later qualifies this by arguing that technologies enable a “net society” not a “knowledge society”.



Research works presentation (15.05.2014)

Based on this difference in the concepts, meaning and impact of the IS and the KS, two contrasting ideas can be extracted to further understanding of social changes and how they can be related to individuals:

The evolution of ICT has played a key role in how actors in today's society (citizens, companies, government) access and transform information. This new capacity and new ways of using technology we refer to as the IS.

The use of ICT has brought about a change in how people learn, organise, defend their rights, access information, buy, build links with each other, socialise, create new contents, produce new channels of power (bottom up and horizontal as well as top down), etc. This change is so dramatic and far-reaching compared with any previous event that it is reshaping the social structure. We refer to this as the KS.

The role of the elderly

ICT competences among the elderly have advanced, and continue to do so, but not at the same pace as among younger generations (empirica & Work Research Centre – Dublin, 2006).

Adolescents and young adults are the main users of ICT tools. They use ICT to expand their personal relationship networks and for enjoyment or entertainment. They have a sense of ownership of the net and, on the whole, are unafraid of trying out anything new or unfamiliar (Horrigan, 2009; Jones & Fox, 2009)

In contrast, seniors mainly use the net as a basic communication tool (electronic mail or chat), for information (searching and reading) and other services (access to organisations they already know: banks, colleges). In most cases, these functions are considered sufficient to meet their needs, as they essentially want to communicate with friends and relations through emails or messaging services and consult certain websites for information (empirica & Work Research Centre – Dublin, 2006; Jones, 2009)

However, the experience of the Senior Citizens' University (SCU) in the town of Sant Mateu belies this generalisation and shows that with the right kind of educational intervention (Esteller, et al., 2007) – in other words if it is motivational, enjoyable, and free of pressures – seniors will be keen to continue learning. Senior students are open to discovering new possibilities (communication, leisure, entertainment, information, etc.) and, wherever possible, will take advantage of them.

Against this backdrop, we cannot deny senior students the opportunity to continue learning about the more complex facets of the Internet simply because we believe they have enough knowledge to meet their own needs or because we think they might not be interested. Numerous studies have demonstrated that ICT use among seniors is very useful, motivating and enjoyable (Kaye, 2009; Eastman & Lyer, 2004).

We consider education to be a right, recognised in legislation at all levels, and that it also brings huge benefits to learners and the society in general (Escuder, 2007). The Internet has created new kinds of links and information flows with enormous potential for participation and interaction from which seniors must not feel excluded. Furthermore, the society cannot be built without the participation of seniors.

Active learners

In an attempt to bridge the digital divide and also as a result of the demand from seniors, many educational institutions are now offering ICT courses and activities for this group of citizens. Consequently, seniors are acquiring increasingly higher levels of competence in using the Internet and communicating through it, and greater inclusion in today's society. (Kim & Kim, 2001; Parson & Hick, 2008).

The main aim of a basic course at the SCU is to enable students to use a browser, learn to navigate websites, search for content, and use a mailing tool (Web 1.0 tools). Perhaps because other media (forums, mailing lists, chats, personal web pages, etc.) can be more complex and their meaningfulness is not so immediately obvious to seniors, they tend not to use them so widely (empirica & Work Research Centre - Dublin, 2006). This tool-based teaching increases the seniors' web experience but not their web expertise (Chadwick-Dias, Tedesco, & Tullis, 2004).

Moreover, Web 2.0 (O'Reilly, 2005) now offers new ways of making contact with other people; it goes further than previous methods of communication and also has great potential for content creation. Web 2.0 is not only a series of tools that we can learn to use; it is also a philosophy, a way to keep in touch, learn, share – and to be integrated in the “network society” (Castells, 2006).



ICT classes in Sant Mateu (22.02.2013)

Any curriculum designed for seniors must include activities and exercises that will motivate them, and take into account the pace they require. Courses for seniors are very different from those offered to other citizens. These differences arise because their learning capacity is not the same as that of younger learners (Monstad, 2006) and also because their interests are entirely personal – learners attending senior universities are not driven by professional or career demands as shown in Cabedo

et al. (2006). Learning to use computers and software is similar to learning a new language, and requires a completely new set of skills (Repetto & Trentin, 2008, pp. 189–198; Cuciti, 2005; Esteller, et al., 2007). For that reason, ICT education for seniors is not only about teaching, explaining things and letting learners practise; it constitutes a complex educational process where other concepts must be considered. Teaching Web 2.0 raises new challenges, which the SCU is trying to deal with through a complex educational intervention.

Learning roadmap

The activities we offer at the SCU can vary greatly. They have been designed to fulfil the aims outlined above. This section summarises the activities carried out by the SCU in the 2012–2014 academic year.

Theoretical lectures and seminars

Theoretical lectures and seminars offer the chance to explain and show the impact of ICT in society, what Web 2.0 is and how it works. Some lectures and seminars deal with recent Internet history, the dot-com bubble crash, collaborative websites, and examples of their usefulness and impact in real life. Websites cannot be explored in detail because these lectures are addressed to seniors in general, both with and without ICT knowledge. In addition, more detailed information is given to ICT learners (allowing them to practise later).

The familiar web

As a person is learning something new, he or she may be afraid of practicing or trying out new things (e.g. driving, speaking a new language, travelling abroad). The SCU's website which provides details of all the subjects taught and extra-curricular activities (hiking, drama group, trips, photo albums, students' work) has been modified to allow student participation and interaction. As beginner learners recognise the SCU environment, they find it easier to begin to explore and participate in the Internet through the SCU website.



Information

Through our classes, a mailing list and a blog, we reported on the relationship between the virtual and the real world by keeping track of news items dealing with the two worlds and how they impact on each other. Providing this information proved to be a relatively simple task, as traditional media (TV and newspapers) frequently report ICT-related news, and there is also a wealth of higher quality, innovative information on the Internet. This task was carried out at all course levels. Practically all the students considered this information to be very useful and appreciated it, although we also noted that it was not always completely understood. In these lectures and communications, we tried to use simple language and also provide background information.

Production of content

Everybody is free to write, participate and exchange information and knowledge. Students can communicate through electronic mail, but we also show them other means of communication (blogs, Wikis, commenting on the SCU website, photo submission and comment, etc.). Enabling seniors to move from knowing how to use the tools or merely being aware of their possibilities to a state where they know how



to participate in the society, influence and defend their rights, and create content is a more challenging task. Sometimes they simply do not want to (not always for any clear reason), or they do not know what to write about because they think they have nothing sufficiently important to say. We proposed two approaches for the students who expressed an interest in creating some type of web content: They could form groups and write about their common interests (e.g. cooking, travel, local customs, etc.) or write about events in the local institution (in this case, activities and other events in the SCU).

Giving learners a central role

In Grundtvig learning partnerships, the learners take centre stage. Their involvement and opinion is crucial in these projects. Volunteer work for example as trainers (or teaching assistants) takes full advantage of their knowledge, and motivates them and other learners to continue (such as in the SenTrain project, see below). The

most advanced learners can also participate in organising conferences or preparing materials in book or manual form (Cabedo et al., 2008, pp. 177–248)

Courses and activities

The SCU at Jaume I University offers ICT courses at three levels each year: basic, intermediate and advanced. The main characteristic of these courses is that they are very broad-based, that is, they do not focus on only one computer application or Internet service.

The basic level is designed for people with no experience of computers or the Internet. They learn to use the mouse and the keyboard, and the operating system (Windows) with its own language and interface (windows, clicking, double clicking, dragging and dropping, copying, pasting). They then learn to use the tools (browsers and mail tools) and to apply them for their own purposes (searching, learning, entertainment, etc). On completing the 50 hour course, they have become basic Internet users.



Pubic presentation of the project results in Sant Mateu (10.07.2013)

The duration of the intermediate level course is also 50 hours. The students learn to use the Internet for their own needs: to buy online, chat, use translation websites, and so on. The course focuses on the use of web pages (museums, maps, media, blogs, Wikis), security (virus, mails) and information search (web pages, images, programmes). On completion of this level, students should

have gained sufficient skills to take advantage of the Internet and also to become independent learners. However, we came to the conclusion that this is not entirely true in reality as we observed a lack of initiative and determination to keep trying, testing and asking for help accurately (that is, asking the right questions in order to solve the problem they are experiencing).

The advanced level is designed for students who want to use specific computer tools (image uploading, social networks, bookmark services), but also to continue

learning more about areas covered in the intermediate level (e.g. search tags, payment services, security advice, etc).

Other courses that we offer are 15 hour workshops that have been created to cover specific areas of ICT, such as photography, blog creation, presentation tools, window maintenance and open software. The workshop contents vary each year depending on demand.

The Active Life Learning project

The Grundtvig learning partnerships which are part of the Lifelong Learning Programme (formerly Socrates Programme) supported by the European Commission (2009) and the Europe-wide network of national agencies, provide an excellent opportunity for adults to participate actively in European projects. This has been the opportunity of the Active Life Learning project (<http://www.activelifelearning.eu>)

Within this project we wanted to activate the senior learning activities in the net society, and the web 2.0 provides this opportunity where Internet is understood as a platform constantly growing and evolving and new ways of communication, those are reshaping and widening the scope of possibilities that users can aspire to. The revolution we are witnessing today is driven by a new set of characteristics and a philosophy that demands that users, not big corporations and organisations, become the main actors in the Internet. This is the era of Web 2.0.

Web 2.0 enables users to communicate better with each other, overcoming physical distances to keep in touch with family or friends. Web 2.0 also offers a way for people to express themselves. Finally, Web 2.0 tools and their underlying philosophy greatly improve web usability for everybody, the elderly in particular.

At the SCU we have designed a realistic, well-reasoned path to achieve full competency with Web 2.0 tools, which leads to more active ICT users. We have defined a set of stages through which users can gradually move forward as they become comfortable and aware of their own potential to create content and contact other people:

- **Reader users:** Users in the first stage are those with Web 1.0 knowledge. This is the starting point towards Web 2.0 integration. These users should be able to navigate websites, search for information, and send and receive emails.
- **Collaborative authors:** The first step in using a Web 2.0 tool should be taken through working in groups. We suggest using a Wiki as a collaborative tool where users share information and start creating content without fear of making mistakes, as any mistakes will be corrected by their Wiki-colleagues.
- **Individual authors:** When users feel comfortable about creating content

and sharing it with friends or family, they may start creating and publishing information on their own. They are ultimately responsible for the contents created, the style, layout, and so on, of any published information. This is the most difficult stage as users are taking their first Web 2.0 steps on their own.

- Integration in virtual social networks: As users become familiar with ways of sharing information and creating contacts with other Web 2.0 users, they can create or join a range of issue-related communities. They find common interests with people they do not know personally and establish a link. This is the highest level of Web 2.0 integration

The senior learners had the opportunity to learn to collaborate in a wiki (<http://www.wikisenior.es>), and in a blog about local anthropology (local history, arts, culture, traditions, etc). All this activities had a triple perspective: learning to use a tool (the wiki and blog tool), learn about local history and traditions, that is “learning by research” but also learn other attitudes for group collaboration skills (sharing responsibilities, negotiating, analysing, defending their position, etc).



Cultural exchange between Polish partners and local students (09.07.2013)

When students read completed articles by other people, they feel encouraged to finish their own. Reading a variety of articles gives students a great deal of ideas about presentation and publishing layouts that they can use. We also realised that users feel comfortable editing pages in Wiki source code, which is easier than HTML.

They were also pleased by the professional appearance of their pages (Wikipedia style).

This methodology, based on proactive teaching, has been highly advantageous for senior learners. Common Wiki problems, such as digital vandalism or a sense of ownership were addressed from the outset. Difficulties experienced by early users were also dealt with to avoid the same situation arising with others.

These approaches enabled seniors to learn how to write together and support each other. The role of the teacher and facilitator was crucial in motivating them and helping them to learn how to use the tools (Traver, Esteller, & Escuder, 2009).

The impact on other learners was substantial once the content had been created, and in turn led to greater interest – and sometimes surprise – than expected in all areas of the university and the local community (e.g. newspapers, other seniors). We believe that this reinforcement and recognition of their work was crucial to them.

After writing and participating in the SCU platform, students are motivated to create content and publish it (e.g. write blogs, upload their holiday photos), later join networks (e.g. feeds, links) and participate in the knowledge society (e.g. help others, shape new models of information).

As important as the impact that activities had in their own learning process has been the impact the knowledge had in the near family and friends, but also society. Now everybody can take advantage of their experience and expertise, all those culture could be lost without the active research and collection done by the learners. Furthermore, it increased the social positive perception of the elderly.

Educational institutions can only encourage and empower seniors to become net-citizens. In the end, it is their choice whether they become active or not. Whatever path they decide to follow, it is vital they are given that opportunity, and they, and society as a whole, have the chance to reap the benefits of their reasoned, rational decisions.

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Chapter 3

*Social active learning***Seminar organisation****Fatih Tanrikulu****Tüm Aktif Memurlar Derneği (Turkey)****Communication among generations**

Inner feelings of human being in young ages like happiness, enjoyment, hopefulness, excitement, great expectations, pleasure, satisfaction, love replace in older ages with desperation, loneliness, fear of death, illnesses, sadness, dissatisfaction, displeasure, passive feelings... etc. If the senior person has to live these negative feelings with her/his own this will make the life for him/her more difficult and unbearable. The most effective way to prevent senior people not to feel bad things and take pleasure from the life all stages of which have different nice tastes. To experience these different and nice tastes of life in different ages, the individual has to live it actively. As a result of this fact somebody has to teach, motivate and guide seniors to live actively with enjoyment. We think young ones can make it easily and the first ones from whom the seniors expect support is their children. On the other hand this new techno-world

is making ties between generations weaker day by day. As a subject of our Project Active Life Learning we have decided to make something to remind young people who are running from one place to other one - except their parents' house- everyday that they have somebody who are a part of their body and soul. This will be possible only if we repair and re-establish the communication ties among generations. We have organised a seminar in our institution on the subject of "Communication Among Generations" and a psychologist described the methods that will strengthen the communication problem among parents and their children. We talked about the Project that we have been carrying out for two years and seniors learning activities in partner countries to the audience. After that the psychologist gave tips to eliminate the problems arising from different kind of life styles of seniors and their children. Besides he described how to fill up the generation gap in the families. We suppose this seminar has tried to find out some solutions to destroy the ignorance walls we are building everyday to imprison ourselves in

Chapter 3

Social active learning

Seniors education and intergenerational challenge

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The WHO defines aging as “the process of health opportunities optimisation, of participation and security with the purpose of improving the life quality as people age”. That is why we should set aside the “age” concept as the conditioning in the active process of development and learning of the people since it’s done at all ages and throughout life.

This is the reason why seniors should be actively involved in the new technologies mainstreams, in the 2.0 society, that’s avoiding the actual existing digital gap. But, is this gap only digital?

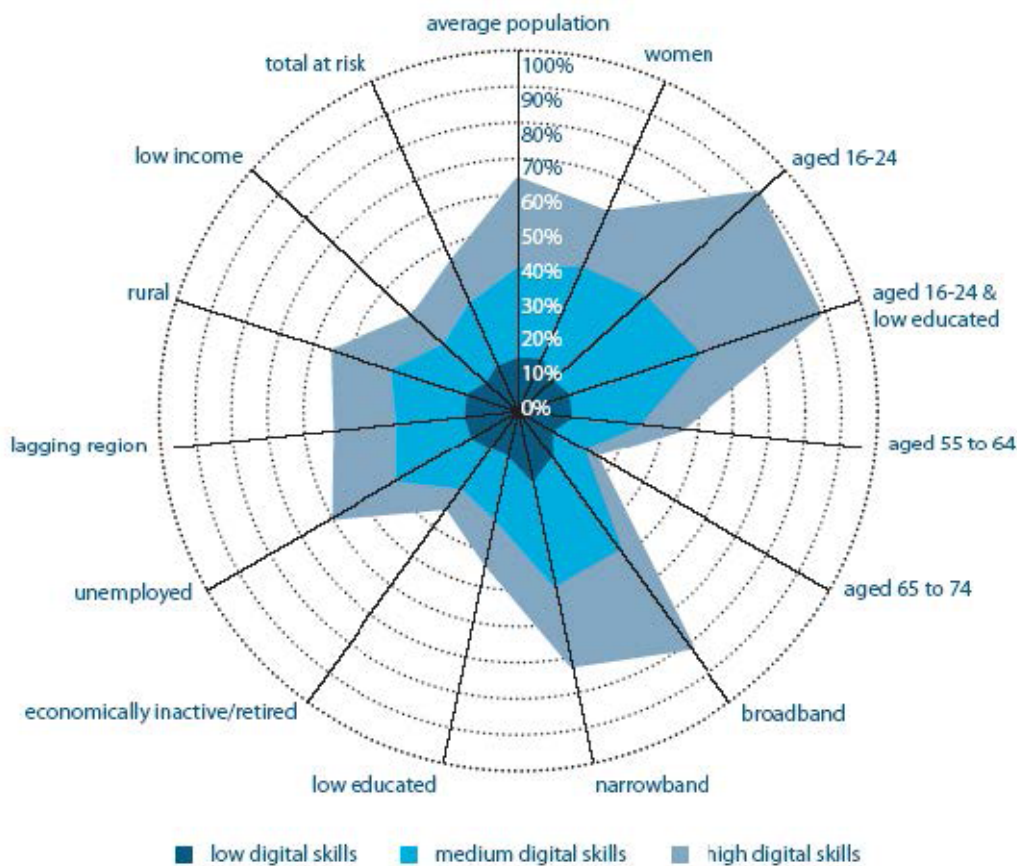
Nowadays technology affects us greatly; condition our customs and habits, our way of working, the way we are related with other people, and in general, affects our lives. We live in the “software and hardware” culture, in a society that has changed the old media to adapt it to the technology. We have got “informationalism” stated by Castells and the technology has adapted to us.

Therefore, when we talk about the digital gap in seniors we’re not only referring to the digital gap as such. We’re referring also to a kind of social exclusion. That social exclusion is the digital one that affects to people with material or educational difficulties to access to the ICT world and take active part on it. Europe must strengthen the technology skills of the society in order to improve the economical competitiveness and the social inclusion, allowing us at the same time to fight against the unavoidable challenge of the demographic change in the European Union population structure.

According to the studies in population made in 2009 reported and reported in the “Europe’s Digital Competitiveness Report, 2010”, only 20% of people over 65 have knowledge or uses the ICT compared to 90% of the users with good and very good skills and knowledge of it in the ages of 16 to 24 regardless of their educational level.

As we can realize, the young society have been able to adapt and fully integrate in the technological transformation process, but aged people are not in the same situation. Which are the main causes for that?

The main cause is not related with the policies and we should focus on a demographic cause.



Elderly people have not experienced a technological revolution as experienced with the emergence of ICT, furthermore with the little schooling they have received throughout their lives combined with the lack of habit drives them to question themselves: Why do I need something like that?

However, we should also raise questions about the active aging policies and if they are going to solve the problem of social exclusion caused by the lack of knowledge of ICT by the seniors

In order to reduce this gap, we should create learning methods, systems and environments about ICT adapted for seniors, and especially taught by people who despite being expert in ICT, know what kind of students or people have in front of them. That is, create a system of intergenerational relay.

That intergenerational education models should be based on a new educational model, different to the already known by them models and in line with the objectives and claims they have with the new technologies. Do we know what are their interests and real needs?

Young people have a common interest in technology due to the huge impact of it in their future working skills, but when we talk about elderly people, we're on a very different situation. Their main interests about technology are:

- They can use it to live connected to other people
- They can continue learning

We are required to make them know the media they knew before still exist, but in somehow different way, implemented on the new technologies and they're able to approach all in real time. Seniors need to know technology getting used to it and understanding it as a tool that integrates them into society, making their lives easier and happier.

Once we know well their interests and adapting them to intergenerational programs, the mutual benefits that younger and older people get are clear: A new way of social interaction with two main benefits. The first is the creation of new social links with people sharing knowledge between them, and the second one and most important, is to mitigate the digital gap (thanks to the program) and the social one (thanks to the new links and interactions).

Hopefully, the willingness of elderly people looking to get involved in the learning process to broaden the base of communication, can increase the responsiveness of young people and extend the learning process beyond the classrooms. Elderly can teach to young learn in attitudes and general competences.



Young trainer explaining the use of social networks to senior learners

In summary, intergenerational learning programs implemented to the new learning processes combined with technology allow the students to achieve the following objectives:

- Overcoming mutual stereotypes. The ties that bind the generations help to forge the bonds of union between them.
- Social inclusion of the elderly. Perhaps one of the most important objectives, allowing to eliminate the risk of social exclusion of the elderly.
- Knowledge sharing. Acquire new knowledge not only the elderly but also the young people due to the elderly experiences attitudes and knowledge.
- Promote feelings of self-esteem and self-confidence, as well as conducting an active life in seniors.

- Use of the technology in a collaborative and creative way aimed to create a useful communication bridge which makes possible to reduce digital gap between generations.

Therefore, we should not ignore as important aspect as the social integration of the elderly and especially the integration of ICT culture.

In the framework of the Active Life Learning project, also during the ICT classes in Sant Mateu, we always aimed seniors to learn using the social networks and other communication tools, not only for their own interest (searching and reading other people news) but also to create a useful sense of technology for communicating with their family and grandsons.

This has proven to be very impactating

1. As a learning motivation for seniors, that want to learn more, increasing their curiosity, positive attitude to ICT and at the end, their skills. Driving them to the active learning.
2. In their families and society, creating a positive view of the aging process and also as creators of new content and knowledge that otherwise would be lost. Now, the elderly become active creators of knowledge.

At the end, the culture is everything we remember once we forget all we learned.

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Chapter 4

Emotional active learning

Emotional and spiritual development in the process of education of the elderly as a factor influencing quality of life. Following the example of Polish society and activity of The Academy of Advanced Age.

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The people aged 50+ are one-third of Polish population

Age structure of Poland in 2012.

Age range	Population	Per cent
0-24	10.712.281	27,8
25-49	14.119.135	36,6%
50 +	13.701.883	35,6%
total	38.533.299	100%

The most important problems of seniors:

- health changes,
- change of one's social position,
- a sense of rejection and being redundant.

Withdrawal from professional life and also performing social roles has a significant influence on emotional life and personality of the elderly. Ending professional career is not only reducing the income, but also loss of friendly relations from work, which for the elderly is a factor contributing to crisis.

Factors contributory to improvement of the emotional state of the elderly are:

- being married,
- charity work,
- having various interests,

- having good relations with neighbours.

Research in the field of gerontology shows that strong emotional bonds with friends and family have

a very positive effect on health and psychological well-being of the elderly people. Thanks to these relations the elderly suffer from depression less often.

The elderly should try to maintain friendships because they are the source of their good mental state. Loneliness of the elderly is a factor which contributes to depression.

One of the ways which are a countermeasure for these states is the educational activity of the elderly which is popular at The University of the Third Age.

Tasks and the role of The Academy of Advanced Age

The Academy of Advanced Age support emotional and social development of the elderly through:

- creating the community of the elderly in which the senior citizens feel wanted and welcome,
- giving a sense of belonging to peer group,
- enabling sharing problems of daily life with people who understand them,
- enabling engagement in new activities,
- enabling fulfilling oneself in new roles,
- wise time management,
- deepening of perceiving the world and the human being,
- meeting the cognitive need,
- integration of life experience with new knowledge,
- fostering personality development by inspiring reflections on life,
- inspiring new interests,
- raising self-evaluation and self-esteem.

The elderly who have active life style:

- are characterised by a better mental state,
- live longer,
- bear failures better,
- they are at lower risk of the sense of helplessness and loneliness.

Activities facilitating getting used to the old age:

- Creating conditions for using technological novelties by the elderly – it is important because of distance of the elderly towards novelty and lower capacity for learning new things (keeping up communication, e.g. by phone, access to information).
- Engagement and being active as regards social roles (participation in organizations and family gatherings).
- Improving conditions connected with the environment and activity (safety, comfort and autonomy).

The elderly should not be treated as dependent, needing support (according to current social stereotypes) because it is limiting for developing of their potential and it is contradictory with popular theories in contemporary approach to the old age accentuating personal development in the whole life period. Life activity is a factor connected with a sense of contentment, satisfaction, usefulness and one's own value.

Happy aging is connected with:

- high self-esteem,
- positive relations with other people,
- autonomy,
- having a purpose in life,
- an opportunity for self-development.

Activities of The Academy of Advanced Age in the field of emotional and religious development:

The main condition of spiritual growth of the Participants of AAA is calming of the mind and listening to oneself, listening to the interior voice – one's soul, self or conscience. Our seniors think that silence constitutes a context of deep experience, one gains understanding or wisdom in silence. Withdrawal of the subject from the active life (professional, family, social) with no regrets, with a sense of liberation, independence conduces to the peace of mind.

Furthermore, slow pace of life and its simple and stable mode which is ritualistic by its monotony (often defined as enclosed) is helpful. Meditation, contemplation and prayer ensure peace of mind, irrespective of the individual and one's mode of existence. The elderly, thanks to fewer duties have more time, which they can devote to other forms of activity. What makes the mind peaceful and facilitates reflection is also decrease in life energy of the elderly, weakening of drives and vital needs.

What we have observed during these meetings is that the process of becoming introvert (propensity to focus one's attention on one's own interior experience) is a natural and common phenomenon. The process of becoming introvert fosters creative processing of experience, self-confrontation, "settling up" with oneself which leads to interior calm, harmony and (often after hardships and pain).

However, concentrating on one's own interior, memories, problems, experiences alone does not guarantee development. What is indispensable to achieve it is will, self-determination, connected with readiness to bear unpleasantness, mental pain and even suffering; in other case the process of becoming introvert can only lead to recollecting the past, memories, self-pity leading to stardust, bitterness, being pretentious and often even hostility, jaundice, aggression and self-aggression. That is why, an important factor which contributes to spiritual development are special and natural changes which take place in the mind of an adult human being and they can be maintained up to the old age.

They involve increasing facility in the following field:

1. Associating facts, locating them in the situational and historical background (so called contextual thinking).
2. Connecting and understanding the opposites, overcoming logical contradictions and making synthesis (so called paradoxical or dialectical thinking).
3. Taking into consideration various perspectives or reference points in interpreting events (relativistic thinking).



Finally what is important for spiritual and emotional development of Seniors are contacts with people who are also concentrated on one's development and what is most efficient is the contact with the ones who have achieved high level of spirituality and can perform the role of a spiritual guide. Conversations, exchanging experiences, views, social comparisons – all these foster noticing various reference points and different ways of interpreting of events, it facilitates self-

confrontation and verifying one's current way of thinking, it motivates people to start new activities, which, up to this point, were not in the scope of interest of the subject (e.g. community activities, charity, self-education, etc.). In order to support



our Participants we have introduced optional classes on relaxation with elements of “healing code” (elements of principles by authors of the programme of the code Alexander Loyd and Ben Johnson’s). It is a twenty-second long method which serves releasing everyday stress, purifying and concentration.



Voluntary work of the elderly

What is significant in old people's lives is voluntary work which is willingly performed by them.

It involves activities for others which is not connected with salaries, similarly to charity, compassion and philanthropy.

Thanks to voluntary work the elderly can:

- use their own experience
- continue their development
- feel that others need them
- strengthen bonds with their peers and other generations,
- derive satisfaction from life,
- strengthen one's sense of dignity and self-esteem.

88 % of women doing voluntary work have higher levels of energy, power and positive emotions.

A typical voluntary worker has a sense of social integration and connection with others, has one's sense of dignity, value and life satisfaction. Participation in voluntary work is connected with experience that a person is totally fulfilled only when loving and giving oneself to others.



Religious life of the elderly in Poland

The other field in which the elderly get fulfilled is religious life. Vast majority of Poles consider themselves to be Catholic.

Declared religion	Per cent of Poles
Catholicism	94,7%
Protestantism	0,4%
Eastern Orthodox Church	0,4%
Other	0,4%
Irreligious, atheism, agnosticism	2,1%
Christianity (generally)	1,2%
Hard to say	0,4%
Refusal to answer	0,4%

- 13% of Poles define their faith as deep
- 54% of Poles participate in religious practices at least once a week, from which 5% do it more than once a week
- 18% practice at least once or two times a month
- 19% participate in religious meetings a few times a year
- 9% does not practice at all



According to Poles their purpose in life is in:

- happiness in family life (81%)
- satisfactory job (44%),
- trust of other people (39%)
- love (36%)
- peaceful life (36%)
- deep faith (29%)
- finding one's place in society (29%)
- leaving some permanent trace of one's life (23%)
- aiming at knowledge and education (20%)
- trying to achieve some aim (19%)
- money (17%)
- belief in some idea (15%)
- achieving individuality, one's own style and the skill of being oneself (12%)

It should be observed that all abovementioned circumstances are considered as contributory to spiritual development they are insufficient to make this process take place nor they guarantee its continuity, even if they coexist. What is indispensable is the will of the subject, one's internal readiness for development. The will constitutes the basic and necessary condition. Nobody and nothing can make a person change one's way of thinking of oneself and one's life and changing its mode – the only person who can do it is oneself, thanks to one's will, conscious engagement and what is more, thanks to readiness to the effort, hardships, and even often by one's agreement to mental suffering occurring at the beginning of one's path because of deepened self-knowledge. That is why, specialists in this field are of the same opinion that although many people are predisposed to change relatively few of them decide on it (Dabrowski, 1975; Erikson, 1968; Jung, 1969). These are the people for whom the words of Seneca, the Roman philosopher "The highest value is not life itself but beautiful life" are still valid.



Chapter 4. Emotional active learning



Chapter 4

Emotional active learning

Fairytales: How to make migrants proud of their language

Voksenopplæringa, Tromsø (Norway)

Migrants are a diverse group. There are different countries, languages, religion, age and social background.

The adults have to learn Norwegian, and while they are at school, the children are at kindergarten, or other day-care centers. Here the children meet other children with different languages and backgrounds and they have to learn another language real quick to communicate with the adults and the other kids. What happens then with their mother tongue?

- A female student said: I try to speak Tigrinya with my child, but she only answers in Norwegian. "That's what the other children speak!" Why do the children and young adults need to keep their mother tongue?

- family
- cultural heritage
- knowing your roots
- it's proven that learning ones family language properly makes it easier to learn a second language

Proud of your background

One may say that it is the family's responsibility to maintain the language. That may be true or not, but why not show them that the surroundings need their skills of languages? Why not show the children that there are others in the community that speaks the same language and can be role models for them?

The library of Tromsø wanted to do exactly that, and different projects were started. One of them is: "Fairytales in your mother tongue."

Students (young adults) in The Adult Educations center of Tromsø perform a fairytale in their own language for the children from different kindergartens and day-care center.

1. The students translate a fairytale into their own language.
2. They rehearse and make a performance based on the fairytale.
3. Kindergartens are invited to the library for a performance in different languages.

The audience are children from different nations, also Norwegian. But in this performance only the children that understands Tigrinya understands everything that are said. The other children might not understand the words, but they know the fairytale and can easily follow the performance and still understand what is going on.

Experiences:

When the library invite the kindergartens to the performances it only takes a few days before it's fully signed. Every year they have to refuse several kindergartens that want to see the performances.

We take that as a sign that these kind of activities are wanted and needed in a multi-cultural society. Our pupils from The Adult Educations center are always surprised and proud of their own performance. They take pride in what they do: for themselves and for their language and culture.

The kids are always happy and the responses shows that they need to understand and experience their own language used in their new country.

Summary:

This is a project that need to continue. It means so much for the kids, the students, the kindergartens and our school.

You do not have to cooperate with a library to do this. It is easy transferred to any language education. Several fairytales are international, can be found in many languages, and can therefore be read (and performed?) in the mother tongue and the foreign language. Everyone should be proud of their mother tongue, and they should have the opportunity to experience that feeling wherever they live and all stages of life.



This picture is from the performance "Three Billy Goats Gruff" in Tigrinya

Chapter 5

Environmental active learning

Eco-Senior. Environmental education thanks to EU

Beata Warzyniak-Chrzanowska and Aleksandra Marciniak
The Pedagogical Academy in Lodz (Poland)



The project Eco-friendly (Grundtvig) was implementing in Pedagogical Academy in Lodz in 2011-2013). The projects main focus was on the growing threat on the sustainability of natural resources and ecosystems on earth and makes it necessary to deal with the environmental education process from a new point of view. Environmental sustainability is one of the Millennium Goals, with recognition that environmental stability is an essential part of economic and social well-being.



Sensitivity to the environment is inadequate in adult educational systems, and eco-friendly training methods need to be included in various educational activities in order to create a better life style.

The common environmental, social and healthy living themes identified by project partners form the context for the project to develop these aims and objectives in the first year and to pilot an innovative curriculum in the second. This procedure also intends to widen the participation among non-traditional learners. The main objective was to develop and promote a unique approach to environmental education with learners by developing an innovative environmental education curriculum including the use of organics, recycling, energy efficiency, green choices in life. The project partners created platforms for sharing ideas for dealing with some of the environmental challenges faced by the global community and ensure that innovative ideas spread throughout Europe.

Artistic and occupational activities caused the increase of sensitivity to the environmental problems and supported the use of natural and recycled products. The deficiencies which exist in the educational system must be compared with good practice in eco-friendly training methods in Europe and these improved methods must be disseminated and spread in order to provide new opportunities for greater environmental awareness for years ahead.



The project Eco-friendly focused on the:

- growing threat on the sustainability of natural resources and ecosystems on earth;
- environmental education process from a new point of view;
- developing and promoting a unique approach to environmental education;
- using organics, recycled energy;
- making green choices in life.

Partners in the project have created the following products:

- Creating the network and the discussion group on Facebook;
- Mainstreaming of practice of partners of the project by creating the network and open thematic group was achieved by the experience exchange concerning theme classes, workshops and study visits, films and photos from local events and with participation of the partnership.



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ecohi/>

The Polish website of the partnership

The website served to promote the project by placing valid descriptions of workshops, photo reports and articles concerning health and ecology online - everything was explained in Polish.

www.ecohi.wsp.lodz.pl



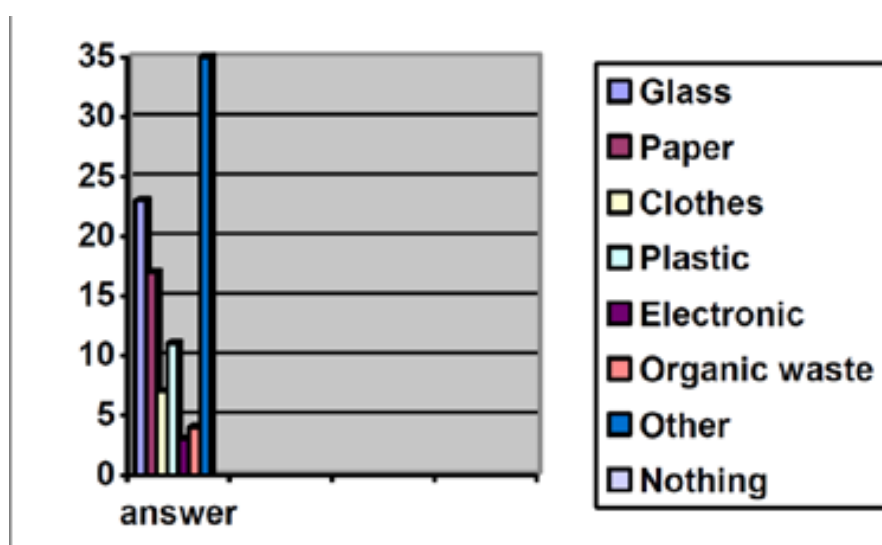
Research

Formulating results of the survey concerning social awareness of 55+ people by all the partners on the topic of recycling and health. Analysis of data was presented in the descriptive and graphic way.

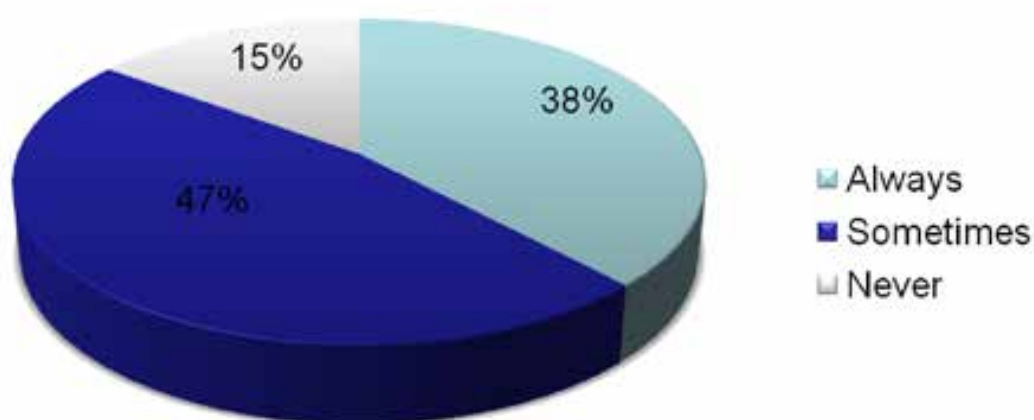
The main aim of the research was:

- Defining the profile of beneficiaries in each country (age, gender, features);
- Defining the phenomenon of recycling, ecological and health dangers in the country of each of the partners;
- Gathering the materials to create a booklet.

What do you recycle?



Do you recycle waste?



Creating artistic eco products

During the partner visit in Poland, Polish beneficiaries and beneficiaries from partners' countries created everyday items such as: jewelry and stained glass. The trainer taught them how to make it from recycled materials such as wood, paper, cotton, and glass. Thanks to the workshops learners became more aware of recycling, health and protected areas situated in central Poland. The increase of knowledge is connected with environmental classes that included information about waste selection, saving water and energy and taking care of protected areas. Workshops caused changes in participants' thinking and activities. Now they are partners who protect nature thanks to gaining knowledge about being eco and healthy. The participants think about nature's future, are able to predict all consequences of their activities and what is more they teach their relatives and friends how to take care of the environment. They inspire the citizens of our province. The Academy's students become more and more responsible for health and nature and still participate in eco events and encourage other people to do the same. All the products were shown at the photo-exhibition that is available on:

www.ecohi.wsp.lodz.pl



Workshops - flowers made from recycled paper

Aims of the workshops:

- handmade decorations as a way of preventing arthritis (a disease of the joints);
- making crafts from recycled materials (old newspapers);
- improving the mobility of elderly people by using workpieces such as a handicraft.



www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=10150581762655798&set=o.332144973473391&type=2&theater

Environmental Trail and Health Biomass and the Forest.

The first part of the activity was the expedition, which allowed the participants to become familiar with the environment and performed in moderate-intensity exercises. On the way, participants gathered sticks and plants (needles, flowers, bark, etc.) which have been used at the recycling workshop, organized after the trip.

During the workshop, participants have created some new everyday use objects (candlesticks, ornaments). they have been working on their creativity, team work and environmental awareness.



Movie:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qtwX_02CT4U

Students have formed an eco-tourist group. They organized eco-tours on Polish territory. Three trips were organized before June 2013:

- Kazimierz Dolny (visiting of ravines);
- Uphills of Lodz - natural landscape park;
- Lagiewniki Forest.



The results of the project:

- Ecology and healthy living became more important for seniors;
- Seniors participated and organized a few eco-friendly-events;
- Increase of ecological awareness;
- Providing knowledge about natural energy resources;
- Seniors were taught how to use energy wisely.
- Senior's competencies connected with ICT and English have increased.

The Academy of Adulthood joined The Partner Programme Grundtvig, project "Eco-Friendly methods for healthy living" declaring 30 learners, but the project became interesting for many people, therefore the group of beneficiaries increased to 45 people aged 55+. A total of 408 learners attended the workshops, during them we cooperated with non-governmental organizations such as the City of Lodz Office trainers.

Active Life Learning Socially In The Environment

Tüm Aktif Memurlar Derneği (Turkey)

Recently, with the continuous development of technology, lives of people have been changing inevitably. Strong effects of technology on human life makes them addict to its products such as TV, Internet, computers, mobile phones, may be cars and other devices in our environment. This makes the distance among individuals, even among family members, get wider. This is not a fantastic picture in which all family members have got a variable technological devices in their hands. To expect a still communication among people like them is a kind of desperation. As a matter of these problems individuals can not escape from being dragged into solitude. Actually, this is getting more apparent in human life as they are becoming older.

TAMDER, as a civil organisation, which was founded with the aim of making adults and seniors participate in social life actively, has naturally got the responsibility to deal with the problems of the individuals in such a fast-flowing and technologically developed life. The members of TAMDER are all officers working or retired in from various types of public institutions. They are accustomed to monotonous professional and social life style such as starting work at 8 in the morning and leaving for home at 5 in the week days. At the weekends most of them are spending time in front of TV, washing their cars, cleaning up the house for women, visiting parents if they are living in the same city, helping children for their homeworks and so on, of course after a long hours sleep till noon. It is impossible to see a socialising activity among those that have been mentioned. In order to mobilize them and change their life styles in the positive manner, Tamder organises many activities during the year.

The first one is Tamders' conventional picnic organisations. When the sounds of human being come together with the reviving effect of the nature, there arises communication, friendship, entertainment and social interaction among individuals. By this way everybody is surviving from the stressing working life and polluted air of city life for a while. So that they are able to renew and motivate themselves. One can say that how can a simple picnic



organisation contribute to an individual's socialization, but a well-organized picnic event with a rich content really works and strengthens the ties and communication among family members.

Next, Turkey is a gifted country in terms of its rich natural resources and Tamder is determined to take advantage of these opportunities for the sake of its members' benefit. In account of these facts Tamder organised a Rafting Party in Antalya. Members of the organisation had unforgettable moments in the cold and bustling water of rivers in the Mediterranean Region. They experienced the feelings of fun, excitement and friendship at the same time. In addition by the therapy of nature, water and sport they forget about their work stress and notice of their inner potential. Beside these advantages, adults participating in this organisation had the chance to activate their social life.



Tamder is a non-stop organisation, it usually attracts the attention of people around for its plans extra ordinary events. For example, exploring natural deep caves was the most interesting one it has organised so far this year. When it was announced that we would go to mountains to see and get into the natural caves, some of our members got amazed. It was really a different experience for the participants because there were a lot of people in the group who had never got into a cave. Breathing the fresh and

relaxing air of the deepside of the caves into the lungs made them feel relaxed. The quiteness inside was fascinating and peaceful, it made a reviving effect for the inside of our inner selves. This cave exploration activity also provided an opportunity for adults to experience active life environmentally.

The last but not the least is our Grundvig Project named “Active Life Learning” with four other countries and their very nice representatives. We have been carrying out this productive work nearly for two years. With this Project 16 members of Tamder who had never been in abroad before had the chance to visit 3 countries. These mobilities broadened the world view of participants, improved their tolerance and respect towards others who are different in nation, culture and religion, raised the sense of co-operation in a Project with friends and evoked an awareness in learning a foreign language in order to communicate with the world. These acquisitions can not be gained with local activities, so this European Project has a great importance for Tamder in terms of the development of its members personal and professional aspects.



To summarize, Tamder always tries to make adults active in social life by organising various types of activities. It forces people to get out from their houses to be socialized in order to save energy and prepare for older ages in the future. Some of these activities, especially ones related with environment, have been mentioned briefly.

Chapter 5

Enviromental active learning

Learning by an interactive worksheet

Tim Schlotbohm

Rahel-Varnhagen-Kolleg (Germany)

In the following it will be described how to learn and work by using an interactive worksheet.

I suppose everybody knows one of the common word processing programs like Microsoft Word, Libre and Open Office Writer. So, and I think every teacher has created worksheets about different topics of his lessons for his students. E.g. a short text and questions about this text with lines below to write down the answers –by using a pen. This is the original worksheet that's been used already 50 years ago.

The main difference of an interactive worksheet is that you don't write with a pen on a sheet of paper but on a computer. So, the teacher creates standard worksheet on his computer – like he also does in earlier times to print his worksheet. The material the students need to answer the questions of the worksheet are on the Internet instead of earlier times on a sheet of paper. But how to get the information on the Internet easily? Now the most important fact of the interactive worksheet comes into operation. After every question the teacher wrote on the interactive worksheet is a link. When the students clicks onto this link, his computer will transmit him to a webpage (or also just a document that's already onto the computer) where he can find all the information to get an answer to the question on the interactive worksheet.

On the next page you can see an example of an interactive worksheet of a geography lesson of the Aral Sea.

This method is quite suitable also for older people who don't have any or just less knowledge of IT. They get to know how to work with a text document, how to use the links and they experience the Internet.

Geography

Topic: Why is the Aral Sea getting smaller?

Name:

Date: 6./7. Feb 2014

1. Look at the climate chart of Kzyl-Orda in the area of the Aral Sea and answer the following questions!

- a) Which climate is it in the months April (4) till October (10)? (arid or humid?)

[Click here for the climate chart!](#)

- b) Now think about, which element do people living in this area necessarily need to grow plants!

2. Look at the following map and answer the next questions! [Click here for the map!](#)

- a) Name the brown coloured area in the map!

- b) Where do the people get the water from, which they use for the artificial irrigation?

- c) Please note, where the two rivers flow to!

3. Look at the following charts and answer the next questions! [Click here for the chart!](#)

- a) How big was the crop area, that was artificial watered in 1955?

Millions of hectare

- b) How big was the crop area, that was artificial watered in 1995?

Millions of hectare

If you look now again on all the questions and answers, you should be able to answer detailed our general question „Why is the Aral Sea getting smaller?“!

Answer: The Aral Sea got smaller because....

4. Additional task: Look at the following table and answer the questions![Click here for the table!](#)

- a) Describe the development of the Aral Sea's surface!

- b) Describe the development of the content of salt into the Aral Sea!

- c) Think about the consequences for the fish because of the high content of salt!

- d) Think about the reduction of fish concerning to the people living there!

Chapter 6

Physical active learning

Physical Activity of Senior Citizens Preventing Modern Diseases

**Aleksandra Marciniak and Kinga Lamparska,
The Pedagogical Academy in Lodz (Poland)**

Loss in fitness and agility is an unavoidable effect of aging. Many factors have an influence on the process of aging; they are biological, socio-demographic and economic factors. As we get older, bodily changes that occur after the age of 30 include:



THE PEDAGOGICAL
ACADEMY
IN LODZ

- Decreased height of 1 centimeter every ten years;
- Decreased brain mass by 10%;
- Decreased number of nerve fibers by 27%;
- Slower reaction time to external stimuli by 10-15%;
- Decreased muscle strength by 30%;
- Decreased lung capacity by 10% every ten years.

Polish senior citizens appear to be of inferior health and physical shape than their counterparts in developed countries. Studies show that health problems occurring at an elder age (after 60) for developed countries' citizens start to develop at a younger age (prior to 60) in Polish citizens.

In 2000, only 17% of older Polish citizens labeled their current state as "healthy", 30% said "average" and up to 52% said "poor". Polish citizens live shorter lives than their Western European neighbors. Statistically, the average Polish senior suffers from 3-4 chronic diseases and takes 5-6 types of medications.

Nowadays, the greatest threats to health are modern diseases, defined as globally present and common, by which their occurrence and subsequent spread are dependent on the development of civilization. Because of this, the term "21st century diseases" is used interchangeably with "modern diseases". When such a disease

ceases to exist, and therefore loses global status, it concurrently loses its label as a “civilization disease”. Diseases of the 21st century are the largest health problem of developed and developing countries, including Poland. These diseases include:

- cardiovascular disease
- respiratory disease
- obesity
- diabetes
- cancer
- osteoporosis
- gastrointestinal disease
- allergies
- psychological disease/deviation from society
- transmitted diseases

Their development is conducive to:

- a sedentary lifestyle,
- a minimal or complete lack of physical activity,
- a diet high in fat and sugar,
- habitual smoking,
- alcohol abuse,
- stress.



Image:401(K) 2012

Civilization diseases cause over 80% of all deaths, generate high social costs, and lead to a lower quality of life. Furthermore, falling prey to one of these disease increases the likelihood of gaining yet another. It turns out that the best preventative measure is a healthy lifestyle, which decreases the risk of sickness by 52%. For the

past several years, the Polish Ministry of Health has acted to halt the further spread of these harmful diseases. New methods of therapy have been introduced, as well as preventative/educational events and scientific research.

Health problems cause the Polish senior life to appear unattractive and unpleasant. In order to speak of successful aging, the following conditions must be met:

- keeping a satisfactory state of being,
- acquiring housing and financial independence,
- maintaining friendly and familial relationships,
- self-actualizing and self-improving.

The previous points underline that one of the most effective ways to maintain health and happiness in life is physical activity. Unfortunately, as the years go by, keeping in shape becomes more and more difficult because human biological potential decreases. Oxygen capacity decreases along with muscular and skeletal mass, which immobilizes any efforts to fulfill the most basic of functions. One's muscular strength between the ages of 50 and 70 drops by 30%, and further reduces by 30% between the ages of 70-80. Over half of individuals 80 years old and older are disabled. However, recent scientific studies are promising as they show that increasing muscle mass and strength through training is possible, even in the latter stages of life. Regular physical activity by older individuals should focus primarily on endurance, strength, and flexibility.

The benefits of regular physical activity in older individuals:

- Boosts self-esteem and betters physical and mental health;
- Allows effective weight loss;
- Strengthens the heart valves, and therefore lessens blood pressure;
- Helps craft an independent life style;
- Diminishes the negative effects of stress;
- Controls the risk of acquiring a modern, or civilization disease;
- Minimizes age-related pain;
- Allows a way to cope with the psychological concerns of getting older.



Image: Janette Goodrich

It is said that the young man is completely capable of multiplying his health twofold, yet is too lazy to do so; while the older man would like to, but is unable to. In aid seniors in reaching a satisfactory standard of health, our senior students encounter the most up-to-date scientific data in this field. Moreover, they are encouraged to likewise participate in regular physical activity tailored to their age, depending on requirements and capabilities. In the 2013-2014 summer semester we organized two meetings in which pupils learned the rules of safe physical movement. Shared exercise showed students that it is decidedly possible to achieve good physical condition even at a later age, and that physical exercise improves social skills and self-esteem. It is also a great way to spend free time.



Photo: Piotr Sobczak, The Pedagogical Academy in Lodz: Senior exercises in academy

Forms of activity specifically advised for willing older individuals include:

- Nordic walking
- Aqua-aerobic
- Bike riding
- Pilates
- Stretching



Photo: Piotr Sobczak, The Pedagogical Academy in Lodz: Senior exercises in academy

During group exercises designated for seniors suffering from back pain, it is important to consider the following:

- The warm up should not be entirely too strenuous, yet should succeed in stretching all the joints.
- Exercise should be executed in safe positions, such as lying on one's back, lying on one's side, or sitting.
- Do not practice isometric exercise, as it can potentially cause a spike in blood pressure, which is likely to already be above normal for this demographic.

- Repeating exercises by a designated number of sets is recommended; however, no specific tempo should be followed. Because of various symptoms such as muscle contractions, cramps, etc. speed of execution should not be a concern.
- Each exercise should focus on spine stability and overall mobility.
- Strengthening muscles that are usually weakened is essential: the spine (especially the upper back), the gluteal muscles, and the core.
- Strengthening muscles that are prone to nerve pinches is also essential: the chest, the shoulders, and the varicose sciatic muscles.
- Various rotations of the spine should always be incorporated. The intervertebral discs are like “sponges” and are nourished by “absorbing” nutrients from our body. Lack of motion may dry these discs and reduce their elasticity—causing discopathy and shallowing.
- Exercise should end with peace and quiet in order to relax the muscles.
- Calm music should be playing and light breathing should commence. Focused, directed breathing can regulate muscle tension and alleviate pain symptoms.



Photo: Piotr Sobczak, The Pedagogical Academy in Lodz: Senior exercises in academy

Chapter 6

Physical active learning

Creating interest in the environment where you live

Voksenopplæringa, Tromsø (Norway)

Every autumn Adult education center in Tromsø take a class walking up the hill to “Fjellheisen.” The aims of the trip are to get to know the local area around our city, and the local flora. At the same time we try to teach the evolution of flora and how it changes up hill.

On the way up this hill it is easy to see how the flora changes from a lot of flowers and trees at the bottom to the tree boarder halfway up. Above the tree line there is nothing but lichen, moss and berries. It is important for the students to understand why there is such a change in the flora. We try to make an insight in the climate changes the plants have to adjust to during the year, and make the students aware of the diversity.

The class are having some theory before the hiking trip. We teach them some families of plants and how to divert them when it comes to roots, stalk and seeds. We talk about how life once started in the ocean, came to shoreline and into land and what they needed to survive on land. What are the differences in the ocean and on land? Here the discussion about stalk is essential.

Above the tree line, it is easy to see which plant that had to be the first to settle: the lichen. They don't need any earth or soil to have their roots in, they get stuck on a rock and take what they need from the surroundings. When the lichen dies, it turns to earth and other plants can grow on it. This is how the evolution and development can change areas over thousands of years.

In the same area, we often have avalanches from snow or stone. That shows us



natural changes in the flora and we can see what grows up first, what can survive such an incident.

Our students, new to our country, are often strangers to look at the environment this way. They don't know the species that are growing in their new country. That is why we seldom try to teach them a lot of specific names on trees and flowers, we need first to teach them the diversity and the names like lichen, moss, mushrooms, fern, berries, trees with needles, trees with leaves and flowers.

Going uphill is never easy. There are more than 400 m to walk straight up, and even if we make a slope, there is bound to go upwards sometimes.

Tromsø is an area of mountains, to learn about the environment is essential. For the migrants to settle down here they have to accept this and use it. Many of the students have disliked the trip up, but at the same time learned about their own limits and how to push them forward.

Hiking is a popular activity in Norway, if we can make the students do it to, it can be a way of integrate them in their new country. And why not learn something about the nature at the same time?



Chapter 6

Physical active learning

Senior Dance – an active way of staying social!

Voksenopplæringa, Tromsø (Norway)

Senior dance started in Germany, but soon got popular outside the country, especially in Norway. It was established in Norway as a NGO without using campaigns. It is a meeting point, someone takes a few step carefully on the dance floor and there is always someone to follow.

In Norway we call the music type “gammeldans”, directly translated it will “old type of dance”, often played on fiddle and accordion. It has always been popular in Norway, but the generations that really know how to dance this way are getting older and young ones are not following up in the same amount. At the same time the older generation are getting more lonely and more “at home”, not as active as they used to be. This is a concern for the society, and is a danger for the physical mind and the body.

What can the senior dance do?

It offers a lot of challenges for the participants:

- Physically
- Mentally
- Socially

The organization of Senior dance has a motive: “Dance in joy – dance for life”, and goals are to give the seniors an active way of living, and having fun doing it: Wellbeing and happiness, smile and laughter.

The popularity of the gatherings may be because there are varied dances, there is a social setting during the dance lessons, you don't need a partner but you will always meet people you can relate to. The participants are at the age 55-95.

Since there are lessons and courses, there is no need for pre-knowledge, and the instructors are professionals, in the way that they know how to dance and how to teach others.



Preventive health work?

After more than ten years of active coursing and gatherings all over the country, the effects are starting to show. The need of public care in their home or need of moving to a home elderly can be delayed. This means better quality and huge economical savings for the society because the participants are getting healthier, stronger and perhaps most important: more social and therefore more happy?



Senior dance can be arranged with a minimal of equipment and resources. You need music, a location suitable for dancing and some seniors!

People that are disabled can join the new movement: “dancing while seated”. Same kind of music, instructors and seniors. And all of them sitting in chairs and moving whatever part of the body they can.



People need people, and the most important are perhaps the interaction between people.

Chapter 6

Physical active learning

Learning through walking

Roger Esteller-Curto, M. Paz García-Alegre
Senior Citizens' University. Universitat Jaume I (Spain)

Introduction

To have healthy habits is crucial to increase physical and psychological health conditions and well being. The two most important healthy habits are the practise of adequate physical exercise and right diet. In case of the elderly (people over 65) it becomes more critical than in younger because not all physical exercise is suitable for them and also because of ageing other diseases may appear. It is important to learn (formal learning) about beneficial healthy habits and teach seniors how they can act to decrease any risks.

Apart of physical exercise itself, it is important also to engage seniors with activities that maintain them in touch with other people, avoiding by this way the risk of depression and therefore maintaining them also in good psychological health. For this reason, the activity must be done in groups, making possible by this way to enable the socialization. Senior engagement in educational and social activities enables them to change the outdated perception of seniors as being not very active and engaged in community life.

If that activity is done in groups and well organised, it can be used to allow a non-formal education: people in the group can take advantage of seniors life-long experience and the knowledge to be transmitted to other people, then that activity is decisive for their health but also meaningful for them and the society.



Practical part of the “Mediterranean diet” workshop, now tasting the olive oil (17.01.2014)

Education can be understood as learning in classrooms, but also, the informal learning can be very useful if done correctly outside classrooms. It allows the share of experiences and attitudes while doing an activity: this is very important between people of different cultures or ages, but society in general: family or group of friends. Experience of seniors will be transmitted in an informal way to help the group in general to acquire basic aptitudes as tolerance, communication, cooperation, active green attitudes (using less car, practicing green tourism, knowing and valuing natural resources) etc.

Justification

Hiking activity is the activity that reaches all three previous needs if promoted correctly:

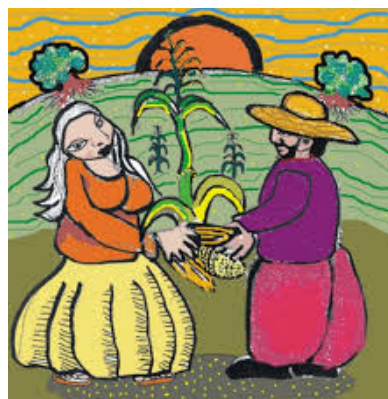
It represents a very good physical activity that can be done by nearly all seniors (except disabled or very elderly). It is a way to put in practise the theory of a “healthy life”: in hiking activity does not only involved walking, but eating healthier and also sharing a natural environment outside cities. It is also important to learn about the hiking itself: respectful about the nature and other considerations about the exercise itself. By this way, we encourage seniors to learn (formal learning) about healthy habits and motivate them to take actions to improve their health.

It can be practised by all ages and in groups. Hiking activity in a natural environment is generally an enjoyable activity. Seniors, because of their life-experience have generally more



Retos de la agricultura moderna:

Soberanía Alimentaria



Impartido por la Profesora Dra. Leonor Lapeña



Viernes 4 de abril de 2014

A las 17.00h. en el Salón de Actos del Hogar de Jubilados de Sant Mateu

Workshop about natural resources and food sustainability



Nuestro Patrimonio de la

Humanidad: la dieta mediterránea



Impartido por la Lic. en nutrición humana y dietética: Ana Domínguez

Viernes día 10 de enero de 2014, en la Llotja del Cànem

Grupo A: a las 11.00h. y Grupo B: a las 17.30h.

- La segunda parte de este Taller se realizará el viernes 17 de enero de 9.00h a 19.00h; Visita a los olivos milenarios de La Jana y Sant Mateu y cata de aceites y vino.



Mediterranean diet Workshop

knowledge about a region, their history, customs, even legends; also important is any knowledge about building structures, natural resources (geological, botanical, animal). All that information can be written and formalised, so other people can learn and enjoy it while they are doing the track itself. By this way, we promote the active citizenship, where seniors write that information and other learn about it (non-formal learning).

Hiking activity allows people to talk and share. Information flows and other aptitudes are exchanged (in-formal learning). An intergenerational and intercultural exchange can be done while people walk, learn about the environment, history, culture and other facts that they know. Hiking is a good way of education for sustainable development: Instead of using cars or travelling long distances to exotic places, hiking is considered a sustainable way of organising leisure activity and reducing energy consumption of the individuals.



The workshop about “Mediterranean diet” included a walk through the millenary olive trees. Also as part of walking to get a healthy life style

Educational experience

The educational activity of hiking proposed by the Senior Citizens' University in the town of Sant Mateu accomplished previous 3 aims, as it has an important historical and cultural background, the surroundings has singular buildings (as antique milling hills or hermitages) small forests (also millenarian olives trees) and ruins (from former civilizations), there are also interesting botanic and fauna elements (healthy plants, and animals).

The hiking activity was preceded with courses (as conferences, workshops and courses) about:

- Physiology, nutrition and body concepts related to well-being
- Healthy habits
- Hiking techniques and concepts
- Technology and techniques, orientation and survival
- Ecology, green attitudes
- First aids and emergencies

The hiking activity was planned with routes suitable for seniors

And after the hiking activity, there were still some educational activities.

Chapter 7

Spiritual active learning

Get to know each other

Tim Schlotbohm

Rahel-Varnhagen-Kolleg (Germany)

In the following it will be described two methods of how to get to know each other and how to express emotions.



Get to know each other is always a new and foreign thing. This is one method how to get to know each other if you would like to learn new names of a whole group of persons.

First all participants sit together in a circle. One participant, regularly it is a teacher/moderator, starts the “game” by saying his or her name in combination with another word (adjective/verb/noun).

Note: The first letter of the name and of the other word (adjective/verb/noun) must be the same.

Last, everybody should use a gesture to underline the chosen word.

Examples: „My name is Tim and I like drinking tea.“ (Gesturing drinking out of a cup) OR „My name is Sema and sometimes my hair is shaggy.“ (Gesturing grubbing into her hair) The second participant in the circle first repeats the name, word and gesture of the participant before and then tells the group his or her own name, word

and gesture. The third participant repeats everything before and then it's his or her part...and so on. So the last one has to repeat every name, word and gesture.

Furthermore e.g. a moderator or a teacher can ask now anybody of the group to tell the names (word and gesture) of e.g. participants 4-9.

If you already know each other...but you would like to start playfully in a new week on Monday morning?! Then you can use the same principle.

Sit together again in a circle.

Now everybody expresses a feeling/mood considering the first letter of the name and an adverb. Gesturing desired.

Example: „My name is Sema and I'm feeling safe.“

Conclusion:

One principle two different goals of learning. If you do not know each other, e.g. you meet with foreigners in a new group in the frame of a seminar or something like that, you can use the principle to get to know each other's names. Very effectively! Normally one round of introducing themselves and repeating all the names, especially with the fitting adjective and gesture is enough that everybody knows all names (including the adjective and noun).



If you know yourself already you can use the principle to express your feelings, too. This principle makes sense to start in a new week by telling others about your feelings. E.g. in a school class, you can start the first lesson on Monday morning by using this principle to give every student (or in general participant) the possibility to express his/her feelings. Furthermore you can use this information to avoid conflicts in class concerning emotions.

Chapter 7

Spiritual active learning

Increasing Quality of life of the senior learner

Pilar Escuder-Mollon, Mónica Sales-Giner
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Introduction

Ageing is one of the greatest social and economic challenges to European societies in the 21st century. It will affect all Member States and it will cut across nearly all EU policy domains. By 2025 more than 20% of Europeans will be 65 or over, with a particularly rapid increase in the number of citizens over 80 years old.

Institutions that teach seniors (65+ years old or retired) need to address courses to a target group that is not aiming to get a degree or to improve their career opportunities. They must therefore apply different methodologies and also create specially designed courses, activities and materials. From a broader perspective, their main aim is to increase senior learners' well-being and quality of life (QoL). In this context, teaching becomes a socio-educational activity where more formal, non-formal and informal activities are blended. The knowledge students acquire is important, but other skills, attitudes and aims should not be forgotten such as socialisation, integration, adapting to society, active citizenship, etc.

Existing research defines QoL in terms of both objective and subjective perceptions. Some parameters are available for evaluating QoL and, therefore, to take action to improve an individual's QoL. Levels of QoL may fall as a result of several kinds of risks (e.g. loneliness, isolation) and may rise due to other activities that promote integration or communication. Education can be used to minimise the risks and maximise QoL. The promotion and enhancement of QoL in senior citizens is highly positive as it not only leads to happier seniors, but also to more active, productive, participative, healthy older people who require fewer social services and whose value in society is increased.

This evaluation toolkit is addressed to teachers, trainers, tutors, facilitators, staff, technicians, managers and decision makers who want to know more about the QoL-education relationship among senior citizens. It is directly aimed at those people who want to set up an education programme for senior citizens.

Quality of life

When basic needs are covered, everybody has the right to pursue other targets in life: happiness, self-realisation, independence, etc. All the above concepts are related

to QoL, but they must be understood from the individual's subjective perception; having a good QoL means that one's life is pleasant and valuable.

QoL is based on external and internal components. The external components are those established by the community everybody lives in (social services, health, transport, security, etc.). The internal components are those that derive from ourselves: optimism, perceived control, adaptation, etc. People with a higher QoL have better attitudes to face the challenges and problems of life. Their perception of a health issue or problem is more positive. They participate more in social activities, their neighbourhood and family.

QoL is an aim that represents the long-term direction of society's progress, in which every individual tries to live a rich life, in the broadest sense. In general, society benefits more from citizens with high QoL than from those with low QoL. Moreover, low QoL tends to imply greater expenditure on social services and medical services.

Senior Learner

Although there is a large body of research and numerous publications focusing on disabled, marginalised or dependent people, few studies have explored the issue of senior citizens or retired people who capably manage their lives, and whose health problems are only those that typically accompany the ageing process. These people fall between the ages of 65 and 80 or even older as health conditions are improving.



Senior learners should be considered as active learners, where they can research and learn about the topics they like to later present and show their findings to the society

The ageing process can be critical in any individual because it involves major changes. These changes and the loss of control are the main factors that jeopardise individuals' QoL, particularly when they are unpredictable and people are unprepared for them. There are changes in work (retirement), family, society, our bodies, and health related problems that require adjustments to the perceptions and structures of our lives. All of these are psychological, physical and social challenges that can lead to a decline in QoL if the individual does not deal with them in the right way.

On the other hand, this stage of life offers the chance to grasp new opportunities because people generally have more time to participate in social activities. Senior citizens also have a wealth of life experience that should not be lost or wasted. Society can benefit from seniors with good QoL, not only because of their increased social

participation, but also through lower social and health service expenditure.

The role of educational institutions

There are public institutions, non-governmental organisations and associations as well as laws and regulations that combat poverty, exclusion, discrimination and other social aspects that create suffering and unfair living conditions. Actions to increase individuals' QoL can be taken from a global (governments, law, regulation, services, institutions) to a local (communities, families, friends, individual) perspective.

From the global-local perspective, individual QoL can be impacted through education. Learning has many stages in life; while children need to learn the most basic knowledge and social skills, training for adolescents and adults focuses more on professional skills and competitiveness. Education for elderly or retired people does not aim to improve their promotion chances at work, and their motivation is purely personal. The most common reasons they give for wanting to learn are: to find out about a subject they are curious about; to know more about today's society and its history; to understand modern society and keep abreast with changes; to avoid exclusion; and to remain active and creative. On the other hand, institutions offer this kind of educational activity because they know that they are beneficial for senior citizens: it equips them with the skills to face the challenges of present society, and to be more active and participative. Those concepts are closely linked to the aim of increasing seniors' QoL.

The design of any educational intervention aimed to increase learners' QoL is not something that can be gained in the short term through a course subject or other activity. This very broad aim requires a carefully design of the entire teaching-learning process which involves not only the course content, but how it is taught, how learners interact, the environment, and many other aspects that will be covered in this guide.

Education can impact seniors' QoL, but like any other habit, skill or attitude, QoL



Example of active participation of senior learners in the ALL project. Here senior learners from Sant Mateu (Spain) in the Pedagogical Academy in Lodz (Poland) (29.02.2013)

can be learnt in the same way as we learn tolerance, friendship or the right way to face up to challenges

The formal experience

Adult education institutions commonly offer senior citizens some choice in the courses and activities they wish to enrol on. If the institution runs courses in, for instance, philosophy, sociology, history, arts, gerontology and health, learners can choose the ones that most appeal to them and disregard the knowledge areas they find less interesting.

The course structure at the Senior Citizens' University is more formal than this. Although it cannot strictly be considered 'formal' because the courses do not lead to an official degree, 'formal' in this case should be understood as a 'structured' and 'strict', rather than 'non-formal', which in this text is understood to mean 'free choice' and 'variable'.

Offering senior citizens a formal course structure may appear to limit their freedom of choice and oblige them to study subjects they do not like, which can be interpreted as a negative aspect, particularly because they are motivated to enrol on the courses for personal reasons, pleasure or curiosity.

However, this more formal course structure greatly benefits senior learners' Quality of Life (QoL), and it is commonly adopted by seniors' educational programmes in Spanish universities.

Content

The Senior Citizens' University at the Jaume I University began in 1998 with 38 students. From the outset, learners were not given a choice; they registered for a package of 10 subjects, each with 15 hours teaching, a total of 150 classroom hours in one academic year. A three-year degree was established. Now more than 1 000 learners attend one of the three year courses at the university. The subjects come from the areas of philosophy, psychology, sociology, arts, history, ethics, economics, family, gerontology, citizenship, health, technology, and learning to learn:

First course:

- Philosophy and culture of coexistence
- Adult psycho-social identity
- Genesis and structure of the family
- The geographical environment: natural and human landscapes
- Justice and law: practical issues
- Europe: significance, history and culture

- Historical heritage of the Valencian people
- Health education
- Writing workshop
- Science, technology and culture
- Socio-cultural promotion: leisure and free time
- Learning network

Second course:

- Introduction to sociology
- Lessons from economics
- Multiculturalism: lifestyles and current conflicts
- Art history
- Cultural roots of the Valencian people
- Major environmental problems of our time
- Citizens' rights and duties
- Medieval history
- Health education and physical activity
- Stress, emotions and wellbeing
- Socio-cultural promotion: active cultural participation
- Study skills and academic organization

Third course

- Society and information technology
- Music education
- Contemporary art
- Analysis of literary works and their authors
- Ethics and politics
- Saving and investment in households
- Introduction to the Constitution and its framework
- Modern history
- The culture of Castellón and its framework
- Seniors in today's society
- Socio-cultural promotion: learning about our heritage
- Contemporary history

- Research techniques and projects
- Final project

One disadvantage of this structure may be that students feel obliged to take subjects they do not like. In the SCU this problem does not arise however, because as an adult education programme run in a university, it is regarded as normal to enrol for a full academic year (as in a secondary school or for a formal degree) with all the subjects that course entails. Students can also enrol on the optional subjects of language and technology, common to all academic years. They can attend the level best suited to their skills and their specific needs or motivation.



Conference in the Sant Mateu town Council, learning about the ageing process. (28.05.2013)

On the other hand, this structure provides great advantages related to the impact on senior learners' QoL, namely:

- The three-year subject content has been carefully designed, aimed to provide senior learners with a basic knowledge of the society in which they live (history, arts), the changes they experience (physically and socially) and the necessary skills to adapt and learn collaboratively (learn by research). This three-year path should be followed completely from beginning to end because all the subjects are important and provide knowledge which senior learners need.
- Learners begin the first academic course in a class with 40-50 other students who will continue through subsequent academic years, enabling links to be forged among learners, and creating networks of support, trust, and friendship, which has significant long-term benefits.
- As all the students know each other, it is easier for the teacher to prepare group work and class discussions and debates. Learners develop a growing capacity to share opinions, express their thoughts and support their ideas. As the group members get to know each other better, even shy or introverted learners gain the confidence to participate.
- This structure does not allow teachers to get to know all the learners well; each teacher only has ten ninety-minute classes with each group. But each course has a tutor, namely, a member of staff who acts as a facilitator. Each tutor is assigned to two or three courses. The role of the tutor is to respond to questions about timetables, general course structure or any other administrative issues.

But what is more important, tutors are facilitators who encourage the inclusion of all learners and attempt to solve any problems or conflicts that arise in the group.

- As all the learners know each other, and that relationship lasts for three years, it creates a group feeling: everybody feels part of the Senior Citizens' University, but also part of a group, which increases the feeling of inclusion. Other beneficial actions emerge out of this relationship, such as the organisation of parallel social events, extra-curricular activities, or leisure activities. All groups elect two delegates who act as learners' representatives on the learners' board. This learners' board represents all the learners when providing feedback, proposing activities, requesting information or any other suggestion to the Senior Citizens' University Managers.
- Apart from the more formal, classroom-based subjects, all students can take part in academic activities outside the class such as visits to museums, cities, one-day cultural trips, etc. These activities are used to complement the regular classroom-based subjects and although they have an academic purpose, it is fair to say that learners gain a great deal of enjoyment from them, firstly because they have the opportunity to spend time with their classmates in a more informal environment, and secondly, because they discover more about neighbouring cities or cultural sites from a new perspective after having learnt the theory in class.

Recommendations

At the SCU, there are two groups on each of the three courses of the first degree, a total of six groups. When students finish the third course, many want to continue learning and the SCU must respond to this motivation. We offer a choice of four study programmes (similar to a Master's degree in formal higher education), but the subjects are still mandatory. Two of the Master's degrees change every two years. Each Master centres on one topic: history, arts, quality of life, etc.

It can be difficult for some institutions to create such a structured offer for senior learners, which they may not be used to doing, either because senior learners are not used to this kind of formality or because it might not be the main aim of the institution. However, this design has great advantages, and in some cases, certain attitudes and competences can only be achieved by belonging to a group over a long period, with all that involves. Some of these advantages are:

- An increased sense of belonging to a community with common interests, which also helps to forge new links between people who did not know each other before, and to create a new role for themselves (a new self).
- The pedagogy applied in the classes (participation, discussion and debate) includes those who are usually shy or introverted, and also because they can feel support from the group, their skills of communication and expression develop, and

they are more able to defend and support their ideas.

- Regular contact with the same classmates provides fertile ground for social relationships, usually for support, advice and help in a variety of aspects including personal, family or health problems. Although this type of support is not directly facilitated by the SCU (it is not its mission), qualitative interviews have shown that it is very significant for the receiver, and important for the giver. This support is also found in positive activities such as working together on a common project or hobby.
- Acquiring a broad perspective on ideas, problems, opportunities, etc., in other words, learning that can only occur informally, in the corridors, cafeterias, etc.

The SCU also offers extra-curricular activities outside class, such as cultural trips and visits to sites of interest or museums. Optional ICT subjects and language classes are also available, and are open to all students, regardless of the course they are enrolled on. It is much more difficult to create a sense of group belonging in these subjects, because it is the learners themselves who decide which level or ICT tool they wish to register in, but it is fair to say that learners frequently attend extra-curricular activities and enrol in a specific ICT group only because their classmates are also enrolled in that group. This could be regarded as negative: a student enrolls on a course despite not being motivated or interested in the subject itself. However, the opposite seems to occur: is a classmate's personal motivation not also a very good reason to learn something new? In this case, classmates are also a reason to continue learning and enjoying the acquisition of new knowledge. Social contact and learning in this environment create a synergy that leads to better quality social relationships and more knowledge that goes beyond the subject itself.

The informal experience

Introduction

We understand leisure as an integral part of an individual's experience and a fundamental human right. Free time is an aspect of human development, predominated by freedom of choice and expression and the freedom to carry out non-utilitarian tasks.

Today, education systems must adapt to the changes that these new times are generating. These changes include a higher life expectancy, and greater personal development through leisure. The family and the environment are also increasingly attuned with the educational situation, enabling educational systems to become more flexible.

Enjoying leisure implies satisfaction with oneself, keeping one's mind active and enjoyment, all of which lead to an enhanced quality of life and greater personal autonomy.

Leisure experiences

Leisure and personal development imply, a priori, freedom and equal opportunities, and the possibility for personal enrichment. Leisure may be defined as time for oneself, time that each person uses effectively and in a rewarding way.

Having opportunities for leisure is a fundamental human right that enhances quality of life as, among other things, it helps to improve personal autonomy in various facets of daily life (physical, functional, cognitive, emotional, social, etc.). Recreational activities are also a way of improving community inclusion in a pleasant way, thereby benefiting their opportunities in other areas.

Leisure can raise quality of life by increasing the degree of satisfaction that a person obtains from the lifestyle imposed by the society in which he or she lives. It is also related to the concept of well being. The potential availability of free time today is now considered as another variable with which to measure quality of life (Setién, 2000).

The main dimensions of leisure are recreational, environmental, creative, festive and supportive. Creative leisure includes the arts, adventure sports, new sports, hobbies; recreational leisure activities encompass walking, taking part in sports, etc. Culture, tourism, sport and recreation can be considered as areas of leisure.

An optimal experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997) is when a person perceives that he or she wants to and must do something that he or she is capable of doing. The interest of the leisure experience does not lie so much in the type of activity, but rather in the challenges it presents the person and the enjoyment obtained from achieving them.

The impact of leisure as a satisfactory experience goes beyond the personal and the individual to community and social levels. Leisure experiences as generators of experiences that tend to be repeated and improve the satisfaction they provide are sources of individual and social human development.

Worldwide, the proportion of elderly people is growing faster than any other age group. Life expectancy is increasing, and in Spain currently stands at about 80 years, and as a consequence the Spanish population as a whole is ageing. This ageing of the population can be considered as a major challenge involving greater social and economic demands.

The development of educational programmes that enhance the quality of life of the elderly in all its dimensions is one of the basic objectives in which public administrations,

universities and research centres, and all civil society institutions, should collaborate in a coordinated manner.

We must work towards a flexible and adaptable university, where new ICTs are institutionalised in the process of teaching and dissemination of knowledge, with a new type of student and where new functions are developed for the university.

Universities must engage as educational institutions and ensure access to knowledge for society as a whole.

The education of the elderly, from the university perspective, must be seen as a new response from these universities to the new challenges and social demands, to the existence of a new social group and to the possibility of lifelong learning.

University education programmes for the elderly could be included within what Stebbins (2004) has termed 'serious leisure', since these programmes include the six features highlighted below:

- Need to remain active;
- Find an occupation based on effort;
- Significant personal effort based on the knowledge, training and/or skills acquired;
- Lasting benefits: regeneration or renewal of self, improved self-image, social integration;
- The single ethos that grows around itself, a central component of an extraordinary social world in which participants can nourish their leisure and free time interests;
- Tendency to identify with the activities chosen.

The programme of the Senior Citizens University of Castellón in Spain offers a range of studies for students over 55 years. The Senior Citizens University, responding to the demand of a growing segment of the population, has offered these courses since the 1998-1999 academic year, aimed at people who, for various reasons, could not go to university when they were younger, or who want to return to study and reconnect with university academic activities. The aim is to promote personal development skills and values from the perspective of lifelong learning.

The Senior Citizens University's programme consists of core credits and credits corresponding to language, technological and analytical skills, equivalent to learning new technologies and English. This academic programme also includes extracurricular activities, which take place outside the university context but are attached to it. These

activities fall outside the curriculum but can potentially complement every person's general education, and include activities such as a hiking club, a drama group and a choir.

In addition, the students' education programme also offers socio-cultural activities that broaden students' education outside the classroom, such as visits to museums or cities of cultural interest, etc. These activities should be understood as outdoor classes, where art or history are taught through observation, without books. They also provide a magnificent opportunity to learn about our immediate historical and artistic heritage, to study it in greater depth and to develop subjects previously studied and explored in class.

“Walking is the best recipe to reach old age” Monica Rerelu.

Hiking could be encouraged by interest in health training activities and by maintaining a healthier quality of life.

It aims to improve student's physical capacities and cognitive functioning. Similarly, hiking involves aerobic training to improve the executive function and the speed with which information is processed. In addition this group activity helps to improve social relations and the enjoyment they can bring.

The drama group allows participants to recover sensory and perceptive capacities, exercise their memories, recover physical contact with their peers, revalue creativity, improve precision, re-start their cognitive system, foster the group experience and solidarity, and build new links and re-establish lost ones.

It aims to improve quality of life through involvement in stimulating, creative and highly significant activities.

By conceiving of theatre as play, among the elderly it fulfils a social and cultural function by allowing them to experience the pleasure of sharing a common activity, and satisfying the ideals of expression and socialisation. It also gives them the pleasure of physical and mental well-being. Socio-cultural re-vitalisation emerges as a way of organising free time, as well as constituting a means for personal and group emancipation through culture. Socio-cultural animation and leisure education are not exactly the same thing, but the former gives rise to situations of educational leisure, as well as offering possibilities for participation, permanent learning and cultural creation.

Conclusions

The present and the future of our society is characterised by a growing proportion of elderly citizens, and the increase of the number of people over the age of 65 years arouses concerns about their quality of life and the need to strengthen informal and community support structures.

A set of educational activities should be carried out that are designed to promote cognitive and relational sustenance and stimulation that favour constructive ageing.

Culture is an attitude, a process that has to be experienced from inside; a process that gradually culminates in a more active, creative and autonomous life.

In the area of seniors' education, teaching and culture form an indivisible whole. The aim and horizon of this whole is to favour personal and group identity.

In the area of leisure education as an important element of personal development, there is a persistent trend to consider leisure as a consumer activity, and any educational endeavour must be aware of this.

Leisure is based on principles of self-determination, of participation in social and cultural change, and the collective maturity of local communities.

The main aims of seniors' education involve shaping personal development that includes assimilating today's culture and taking advantage of leisure opportunities to achieve a higher quality of life.



Informal learning activities (here a group of students visiting singular buildings) allow to learn about local culture, but also acquire social competences and increase personal well-being

Chapter 7

Spiritual active learning

Seminar organisation

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Of course it is very important that government and civil organisations teach and motivate seniors in order to make them active in the life and take pleasure from living. Yet, if a senior or somebody else can't meet her/his basic needs like accommodation, food and health, to call them for a bowling party will be irrational. Like in other countries, in Turkey there are a lot of people who are homeless or in need of various vital things. And, some of these poor people are naturally seniors. This kind of life is more unbearable for elders than young people. TAMDER always look for poor or even homeless seniors in Kutahya and help them. Members of TAMDER (civil officers, teachers, doctors, engineers, directors, academicians and others) are very eager to take part actively in these organisations and support them financially. They are detecting the seniors in need, prepare food packets and visit them to present the packets. It is to be said that TAMDER never receives any financial help from the government or other organisations. Its only money fond is its members' revenue.



This kind of activities contributes community in two ways mainly. First one is that, seniors who are living lonely can feel somebody's hands on their shoulders and forget about loneliness at least for a while. Second one is that, our members are dealing

with valuable tasks like helping poor seniors. It is useful for psychological well being of human being, because a picture in which an old man is crying from desperation and loneliness make us very sad. On the other hand if we get into this Picture and do something for him as much as we can, this will make us feel relax. We call this philosophy “Active Living For Others Who Are In Need.”