Andragogy:

Is it the forgotten practice of FE Teachers and practitioners in a Lincolnshire FE Institution?

Jason Boucher
Andragogy: Is it the forgotten practice of FE teachers and practitioners in a Lincolnshire FE institution?

2. Aims of the research

Through this research I intend to explore the notion of Praxis through the lenses of the teacher. There is an interesting notion possible when considering the lensed approach. That is the ‘educational’ lens developed by the teacher as a result of an enriched education and therefore potentially critical of Andragogical approaches compared with that of the ‘social’ lens perhaps developed as a result of an enriched approach to social interactions or the intersection of the two lenses through observation and modelling of parent interactions while growing up, and therefore more accepting of and more likely to adopt Andragogical approaches to teaching.

Interestingly this process leads to investigations of teaching practice or ‘praxis’ with regards to adults being either intuitive through the use of a ‘social’ lens or turning theory into practice through the use of an ‘educational’ lens. Understanding the landscape within which this ‘praxis’ takes place helps to properly contextualise it both for the teacher and the student.

Possible research aims / avenues for investigation.

1. What does Andragogy mean to teachers in a Lincolnshire FE institution?
2. How does a teacher in a Lincolnshire FE institution understand the educational landscape within which they operate?
3. Is the use of an Andragogical approach, explicitly realised by teacher / practitioner as consciously arrived at by choice or as intuitive praxis as a social construct between adults to enable learning to take place?

3. Methodology for the research

The stories of lived experience provide a rich insight into the tapestry of human existence. Powerful and rich in detail, Clandinin and Connelly established the educational importance of narrative inquiry as a research methodology that brings ‘theoretical ideas about the nature of human life to bear on educational experience as lived’ (Clandinin et al. 2007, pg 22). The intent of the research is to discover how individual teacher’s lenses have developed and influence both their understanding of the educational landscape they participate in and influence their practice of either Andragogical or Pedagogical processes in the classroom. It is precisely because these lenses develop over time and as result of lived experience that Narrative inquiry potentially provides the right solution for the investigation of these issues.

This means that the Narrative Inquiry method requires an interview process to discover the lived experience of the participants, to discover their lenses and to investigate their preferred process. The purpose of the survey is also to provide data to validate the existence of their preferred process so that the narrative is backed up by the data. This provides both qualitative and quantitative data collection processes which support each other, and a method by which this researcher hopes to provide sufficient, valid and reliable evidence to provide a satisfactory answer to the question posed.

4. Methods for the research

There should be at least 6 interviews conducted with participants who work in the FE institution. Before the interview, they would complete the PALSI instrument. It consists of 30 questions and is designed to investigate the participant’s predilection for Andragogical / Pedagogical processes in their current practice. The intent was to conduct a thirty minute interview with them in their work spaces so that they felt comfortable and at ease. The interviews would be recorded using a digital voice recorder and then transcribed. Information from the answers could then reasonably be utilised to support argument raised in the main article.

I have piloted my data gathering process with 1 participant and am looking to use findings to modify my approach to this in my major study.

The questionnaire used is the PALSI instrument lifted directly from The Adult Learner 7th Ed, Knowles, Swanson and Holton (2012, pages 282-297). The use of the questionnaire is quite purposeful because it makes the participant really think about their practice. As a researcher it appears to offer a reasonable investigation into the methods of the interviewer that will lead to a fruitful discussion about the research questions so as to be able to derive a suitable

5. Ethics

In line with BERA principles issues of Anonymity, Rights to withdraw, Dignity, and privacy will be respected and made clear on the ethics forms presented to participants. All teachers are suspicious of person(s) who ask questions of their practice and I foresee that I will have to be clear about both my motive and the reasons for my research. 

I need to be transparent about the methodology and the requirements of their participation in my studies. All of the survey results are intended to be data driven and not personalised so anonymity is taken care of. Any digital records of conversations will be destroyed once transcribed and written records taken in the case of technical failure will be completely anonymised.

Learner


There are other significant references and for the purpose of the immediate concern of understanding my statement of the research these are provided here, the rest can be found on the referenced pages.
WHAT IS ANDRAGOGY?
ANDRAGOGY

• “...IT IS A SET OF CORE PRINCIPLES THAT APPLY TO ALL ADULT LEARNING SITUATIONS.”

• Andragogy as defined by: The Adult Learner, 7th Ed (2012), Knowles, M., Holton, E. F., and Swanson, R. A. (page 2)
Learners need to know
- Self – Concept of the learner
- Prior experience of the Learner
- Readiness to learn
- Orientation to learning
- Motivation to learn
QUESTION: How many different definitions of “Adult” can you think of and which definition do you think is most relevant to Andragogy?
ANSWER

1. Biological – The age at which we can reproduce

2. Legally – the age at which we can vote, get a driver’s license and marry without consent

3. Social – The age at which we start performing adult roles, parent, worker, spouse, voting citizen

4. Psychological – The age at which we arrive at the self-concept of being responsible for our own lives, of being self-directing

CRITICISMS OF KNOWLES

- THE ESTABLISHMENT
- THE ADULT LEARNER 8TH ED (2015)
- THE FUTURE
Figure 1. Conceptual theory mapping.
Praxis is here defined as “‘action’ referring, in a general sense to all intentional activities, by which people can reach a particular goal through their own efforts. More specifically, the term refers to rational action based on a conscious choice [...] and action is defined as the product of observation, desires, and intellect or reason [...]. The inclusion of reason means that action in the narrow sense is the preserve of adults who achieve ‘happiness’ through action” (Ponte & Smit 2013, p.462).

“...the element missing in the connection between an epistemological foundation and a practical intelligence of action is the human element in the middle making sense of the situation. It is the person Blunden (1997) suggests that mediates the space between what is known and action in the world.”
Students eyes  
Colleagues perceptions

Educational:
Based on education and teacher training governs views about teacher training and use of Andragogical principles

Social:
Over time, experience and exposure to Adults has learnt effective behaviours to naturally and intuitively engage in what could be termed andragogical practices.
RESULTS

Mean Score per Participant (PALSI)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>4.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>3.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>3.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>3.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RESULTS CONTINUED

Female Vs Male (PALS1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#1</th>
<th>#2</th>
<th>#3</th>
<th>#4</th>
<th>#5</th>
<th>#6</th>
<th>#7</th>
<th>#8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Female - Orange Line
Male - Red Line
RESULTS CONTINUED

Pedagogy Vs Andragogy (PALS)
Quotes from the Participants

Participant Number 8: “Andragogy is useful to enable a teacher to form a learning relationship with the learner to better understand the learner’s intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to maximise the learning benefit of the learner”

Participant Number 3: “You need to be much more ‘on your game’ with Adults, fast paced learning, much more alert to differences with Adults”

Participant Number 1: “Different mindset with Adults, they come to work and do all their work, [with] youngsters more like their mum, [it’s] basic stuff, pen, paper, sit still, phone away [more often] stuck in a negative mindset”

Participant Number 2: “Theories are not the be all and end all, [you have to] feel the classroom out, [demonstrate] empathy”

Participant Number 6: “You have to make social connections for the learning process to work, otherwise nothing gets done”
Conclusions

• Andragogy is alive and well but not in the expected context.
• Social interactions utilising Knowles assumptions as a method for breaking down barriers to learning is not what was expected.
• For some an educational lens has allowed them to better understand the social interactions required to break them down.
• More time needed to be spent with the Narrative Inquiry to better understand individual participant teaching practice
• No time to understand or investigate content versus process argument
• Or to investigate the notion of power in the classroom
• Cognitive processing of situational praxis changes warrants further investigation
Make my Classroom a better place to be
For my students and for me
Thank you for listening
Happy to take questions
Reference List 1,

- Pedagogy as defined by the English OED 2nd Ed (2003), Oxford University Press. “...The method and practice of teaching...”

- Andragogy as defined by: The Adult Learner, 7th Ed (2012), Knowles, M., Holton, E. F., and Swanson, R. A. “...it is a set of core principles that apply to all adult learning situations.” (page 2)


Reference List continued:


Reference List 2


Reference List continued
Reference List continued


Reference List continued


Reference List continued


