

Changing the nature of teaching and learning under the 14-19 reforms

Andragogy, pedagogy and beyond

School-based learning, the work of teachers and the development of trainees are driven by the understanding and implementation of pedagogy. In teacher training, it is described as subject knowledge and understanding. The work of Shulman focuses upon pedagogic content knowledge - not just a teacher's knowledge of the curriculum but the teacher's knowledge of how to teach the skills, knowledge, concepts and attitudes of the subject.

Tutors and trainers in further education are driven by andragogy. It is their perception of how adults learn and constructing the right environment for learning.

If differences exist then teachers, tutors, trainers and trainees working in the 14-19 context need to understand the differences and similarities.

Malcolm Knowles devised a set of four assumptions that differentiated adults from children as learners. He suggested that different approaches to teaching adults and children are necessary. His four assumptions are based upon the adults': awareness of self-concept, experience of learning over a long time, readiness to learn and orientation to learning. Knowles believed that an andragogical approach to teaching adults was vitally important in order to meet the adult's learning needs and to "teach adults how to learn" (Knowles, 1970: 39).

Modern approaches to pedagogy including recent DfES initiatives in thinking skills, leading in learning, assessment for learning, ICT capability and the National Strategies in general place the child at the centre of the learning process. They advocate that teaching:

- ◆ promotes cognitive independence (awareness of self-concept)
- ◆ encourages reflection upon prior learning (experience of learning);
- ◆ motivates learners (readiness to learn); and
- ◆ places learning in an appropriate context (orientation to learning).

It appears that a major exclusivity of andragogical practice is being undermined by the changing approaches in pedagogy.

Indeed, the argument that adults' readiness to learn makes them very different to pupils and that different strategies are required is undermined by leading educationalists such as:

- ◆ Neill in the 1960s and his work in Summerhill;
- ◆ Montessori in the 1950s and the focus upon the child determining the context of learning; and
- ◆ Dewey at the turn of the last century and his assertion that the teacher should be a guide to learning.

Perhaps the teachers and trainees of key stage 4 need to be more aware of the principles of andragogy so that they might better understand how the changes in pedagogy can better meet the needs of students as they pass through their adolescence to adulthood. This third way of considering pedagogy and andragogy is termed heutagogy,

Heutagogy is the principle of teaching based upon the concept of truly self-determined learning. It is suggested that heutagogy is appropriate to the needs of learners in the twenty-first century, particularly in the development of individual capability, individualised learning and independent learning using the internet-based systems including multimedia, virtual learning environments, online assessments and social software.

The rapid changes in society, the pervasive nature of new and developing technologies and change in employment patterns from manufacturing to service industries and from physical skills-based to knowledge-based occupations have an impact upon what a vocationally-based curriculum should contain. Heutagogy is associated with capability. It contains principles of teaching that foster and create independence within the learner. From the perspective of young people experience a vocational driven curriculum there are important

attitudes and understandings arising from the idea that there is no longer any certainty about one's job, chosen career, place of work, abode, relationships and economic circumstances. Heutagogy and the 14-19 reforms have similar aims because the world is no place for the inflexible, the unprepared, and those attempting to ignore the changes around them.

The design of effective lessons is fundamental to the pursuit of high quality teaching and learning. Teachers, trainees and teacher trainers are under considerable pressure to incorporate the pedagogic approaches promoted in the recent key stage 3 initiatives. There is an emphasis being placed on how to teach which focuses upon the structure of learning and chronology of teaching. It is far from allowing pupils to determine the course of their own learning or fostering individualisation. "The Strategy intends to strengthen its emphasis on pedagogy by promoting discussion about the key factors in lesson design (DfES, 2002b).

Trainees need to recognise that ICT has been responsible for the transfer of education from passive participation to active participation. The internet provides the learner with opportunities to go beyond the immediate curriculum, learn with others separated both by distance and by time, experience real contexts for their learning and to receive immediate feedback upon their answers and queries. The internet through the worldwide web and social software facilitates the self-directed learner in ways that classroom-based learning cannot.

Perhaps it will be the challenge of the end of this decade to recognise the patterns of teaching prescribed for 11 to 14 year-olds is not appropriate for the 14 to 19 year-olds and that teachers need to adopt a new style of pedagogy - heutagogy. Pupils must be encouraged to be independent learners to be able to deal effectively with change - they need to know how to learn, be creative with the skills they possess, use their competencies in novel as well as familiar situations and work with others.

The move towards a more self-directed learning style is considered more appropriate to the new century and is more closely aligned with heutagogy (Hase and Kenyon, 2000).

Changing the learning context

"The need to provide opportunities that raise standards and achievement is a prime mover for changing the 14-19 learning landscape. It is increasingly acknowledged that the current institutional, curricular, qualification and assessment structures and systems require long-term rather than piecemeal reform in order to address the issue of too many young people leaving school without the qualifications and skills that they need. There is widespread recognition that the provision of learning opportunities for 14-19 year-olds is fragmented and lacks coordination and systematic planning. There is a growing consensus that a more strategic approach is required to achieve a more coherent education and training offer that links pre- and post-16 learning" (Sims and McMeeking, 2004).

The intention of the 14-19 reform is that the work that students do will, as far as is practicable, will be employer-led with real or simulated projects based on the business or organisational needs. This concept is becoming known as 'applied learning'. At key stage 4 that learning experience will take place predominantly in schools with some pupils learning in workplace and college locations for some of the time in either weekly or block placements.

The cohesion required through coordinated and systematic planning will arise through the unification of qualifications. Of particular interest to ICT teachers is the Diploma in IT. That development is being underpinned by a number of studies and initiatives that have been reported by the QCA. They all have influenced the curriculum pupils experience at key stage 4. The case studies presented by QCA (2006) represent the range of models found in schools, at a time of significant development. They provide a snapshot of work in progress. All the case studies include curriculum models and their rationale. Other aspects of provision discussed in each case study are indicated in the tables to enable users to locate those they are most interested in. They are: collaboration, entitlement, pace and

progression, pathways with the curriculum, student guidance, using GCSEs in vocational subjects and vocational programmes.

Trainee teachers should be aware of the curriculum approach that has been adopted in their placement schools.

Trainee activity: scan through three different case studies. Consider your placement school. Write down a number of questions that you need to ask your mentors about the key stage 4 curriculum and the way in which it meets the needs of the pupils. After gathering the information, write a short description of the key stage provision identifying how ICT is represented in their curriculum experience.

Further case studies are available on the vocational learning website (LSN, 2007) and on the FERL site (BECTA, 2007).

The BECTA FERL site provides access to a number of resources to help trainees see the 14-19 reforms in action. There is a 14-19 wiki space

<http://post16.net/CategoryFourteentoNineteen> which provides information about e-assessment, e-portfolios and other topics important to the 14-19 elearning agenda; this is also a good place to start if you have never used a wiki before, as it also contains background information and help pages.

The 14-19 e-learning community discussion forum

<http://ferl.becta.org.uk/display.cfm?page=1585>

The 14-19 Focus newsletter <http://ferl.becta.org.uk/display.cfm?page=1583>

Supporting the 14-19 learner

"In April 2001, the Government launched the Connexions Service. Connexions is the government's support service for all young people aged 13 to 19 in England. The service aims to provide integrated advice, guidance and access to personal and social development opportunities for this group and to help them make a smooth transition to adulthood and working life. It aims to bring together all the services and support young people need during their teenage years. It offers practical help with choosing the right courses and careers, including access to broader personal development through activities such as sport, performing arts and volunteering.

Through the Connexions Service all young people have access to a personal adviser. For some young people this may be just for careers advice, for others it may involve more in-depth support to help identify barriers to learning and find solutions brokering access to more specialist support. The personal advisers work in a range of settings, including schools, colleges, one-stop shops, community centres and on an outreach basis.

The implementation of the Connexions Service was accompanied by the introduction of an infrastructure of 47 local Learning and Skills Councils, overseen by a national Learning and Skills Council (LSC). From April 2001 the LSC has been responsible for the planning, funding and quality assurance of all post 16 learning and skills delivery in England - as well as working with partners at all levels to promote workforce development and economic regeneration activity" (NIACE, 2004).

The Why young people are not engaging with learning: Nuffield Review of 14-19 education and training (Nuffield, 2006) focuses on the issues arising from behaviour and disaffection which are important issues when teaching this age group. A TTRB review is available at <http://www.ttrb.ac.uk/ViewArticle.aspx?contentId=12881>

How do young people make choices at 14 and 16? DfES Research Report 773 (2006)

The key findings show that schools with effective support and guidance practice enable young people to make better decisions, that young people make decisions in different ways and therefore support needs to be differentiated.

Sometimes the vocational courses are only offered to the 'less academic' and not always recognised for entry on to A-level courses. QCA equivalences are also often not understood by either parents or post-16 providers.

Do your courses include sufficient experience of the range of vocational courses and a consideration of the equivalences using the National Curriculum Framework?

A review of the DfES report is available on the TTRB website

<http://www.ttrb.ac.uk/ViewArticle.aspx?contentId=12757>