

Aleksandar Bulajić, Tamara Nikolić, Cristina C. Vieira (Eds.)

Navigating through Contemporary World with Adult Education Research and Practice



Institute for Pedagogy and Andragogy, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, Serbia
ESREA - European Society for Research on the Education of Adults
Adult Education Society, Serbia

NAVIGATING THROUGH CONTEMPORARY WORLD WITH
ADULT EDUCATION RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

Editors

Aleksandar Bulajić, Tamara Nikolić, Cristina C. Vieira



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ФИЛОЗОФСКИ ФАКУЛТЕТ

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ADULT EDUCATION IN LATE MODERNITY: RESEARCH AND PRACTICE BETWEEN WELFARE STATE AND NEOLIBERALISM

Abstract

The first part of the article deals with the effects of neo-liberalisation in practice and in the science of adult and continuing education. In the second part, a cultural and educational science-based theorisation of adult and continuing education in late modern times is developed. On the one hand, this is differentiated into five portals of education, on the other hand, a perspective of a common transnational education and research space is discussed. The article ends with an introduction to research on programs in multi-perspective research approaches and its contribution to the analysis of lifelong learning.

Keywords: social changes and hybridisation, adult and continuing education and cultural formation, portals of education, transnational adult education and research space, research on programs in multi-perspective approaches

Introduction

As a result of neo-liberalisation, strategies aimed at regulation, control and (self-)optimisation have been used in adult and continuing education since the 1990s. These developments weaken both the practice and the academic field of adult and continuing education and lead to efficiency thinking, more inequality and a decrease in the diversity and variety of the adult education landscape with its institutions, programmes and offers.

In this article, questions are raised regarding uniform thinking and research and common perspectives in adult education as well as the educational behaviour of individuals in society. The aim is to contribute to the understanding, support, research and design of the rhizome-like growth of adult and continuing education.

For the shaping of social processes, adult and continuing education sees itself as an institution of transformation. Current social topics include (flight)

migration, the connection and transformation of cultures, processes of interpretation and related challenges, dealing with strangeness, cultural resources, but also radicalisation and right-wing thinking. The population must be prepared for these changes. At these points, the complex challenge for adult and continuing education as an institution that shapes culture becomes visible. The examination of social developments seems to make it necessary to grasp the major and culturally rapid developments and to analyse them with regard to corresponding educational questions and conceptualisations of education and their meanings. The social transformation processes lead to an expansion of cultural education processes, which must also be considered under the conditions of digitality. In the social formation processes, adult and continuing education as a human right takes on an important task for the formation of democracy.

Building on this, the present article provides a broad conceptualisation of education for adult and continuing education, which is broken down in a model into the five education portals of culturality, emotional elasticity and stabilisation, political participation including analytical-reflective skills, employability and professionalism. For the design of these portals in a transnational space in the transcultural sense, categories are taken up.

Finally, the rhizome-like growth will be discussed again using the example of programme research. Here, the development of the institutions is part of the rhizome-like process of change in society and the programmes and offerings are part of the rhizome-like growth that is expressed in the structures of the institutions.

Self consequences of neoliberalisation in adult and continuing education in practice and in science

Looking at developments since the 1990s, it is striking that neoliberalisation has used strategies aimed at more regulation, control and (self-)optimization. The educational policy and economic interest in habituating individuals to extensive self-regulation and informal learning, which was already initiated in the 1990s, cannot be fulfilled by all individuals in this way. This is shown by empirical results based on quantitative data analysis (Baethge & Baethge-Kinsky, 2004).

Thesis 1: Neoliberalism is at the end of all creative power, but it has developed broad effects in the direction of self-optimization and control. Adult and continuing education must be involved in design processes that support rhizome-like growth in practice and science.

Regarding the first part of thesis one there are selected aspects that can be observed and mentioned in the practice of adult and continuing education and

in science. For the second part of the thesis, theoretical and empirical considerations will address the need for rhizome-like growth in adult and continuing education.

In practice of adult and continuing education finance is a substantial precondition for securing education. The public financial security in the different countries seems to be very different, i.e. in Germany there is continuity, but more project-oriented financial strategies can be stated (Käpplinger at the ESREA-conference). The structural effects of this development must be examined in more depth. There is a lack of legal structures. These are too fragmented (Grotlüschen & Haberzeth, 2016), weakening the field. Instead, quality management systems were introduced, which are implemented by external control bodies. These systems, partly adapted from industry, are, as empirical results show, without effects on the quality of educational processes. Only for the meso-level in organisations can limited positive effects be proven (Hartz, 2011). Our own research in the field of professionalisation shows that the academic qualifications of adult educators are on the rise, but no adult educational qualifications have become established, they are far from dominating and not consistently required (Kühn, Brandt, Robak, Pohlmann, & Dust, 2015).

A further analysis shows that, at both international and European level, the introduction of market mechanisms leads to more competition for funding (Hodge, Holford, Milana, Waller, & Webb, 2018) and dominance seeking of single groups.

In the end these developments lead to more inequality and declining of the variety and diversity of the adult educational landscape with its institutions, programs and offers.

Adult education as a science

There are also developments in the scientific field of adult and continuing education that indicate a weakening of the field. An international tendency to combine adult education professorships with i.e. Human Resource Development (HRD) (Rubenson & Elfert, 2019, p. 25) or even the loss of professorships¹ in adult education raise the question whether the discipline has enough power to further establish a unique scientific culture. Adult education is associated with emancipation, critical thinking and enlightenment. Does this connotation lose significance or relevance? There seems to be a tendency that evidence-based pol-

1 Professorship is here understood as full professors holding designated chairs in adult education research, i.e. the last and final step in the academic career structure. This should not be confused with assistant or associate professors, nor with university teachers in adult education in general (Nylander & Fejes, 2019, p. 232).

icy leads to more quantitative survey. An increase in quantitative survey studies to show the efficiency of learning partly leads to a narrowing of benefits to efficiency (Meyer-Drawe, 2010). This focus of education policy on evidence-based policy making has not provided sufficient stimulations to further differentiate and develop the discipline.

Bibliometric analyses² show two major structural contrasts, one related to the research object (education versus work) and one contrast separating scientists based on the level of analysis (cognition/learning versus politics). There are two contrast lines: separating more macro-oriented research in the south from researchers who deal with learning as a micro-process in the north (Nylander, Österlund, & Fejes, 2019, p. 56).

Another recent analysis of research topics shows that adult education is a weak field (Rubenson & Elfert, 2019). The results, concerning the research topic “education of adults” show a dominance of the perspective “learning of adults”, with an strong influence of psychology, whereby the topic of teaching is thematically reduced to the perspective of adults learning processes (p. 20). A weak field regarding to Vauchez (2011) means deeply interwoven with neighboring fields and rather undifferentiated internally (p. 16). Rubenson and Elfert (2019) even speak of a fragmented field of research.³ The discipline’s logic of dividing itself into critical tradition and other approaches (Rubenson and Elfert, 2019) is not future-oriented and integrative in a constructive and creative sense.

Amy Rose states: “Adult educators have a vibrant and impassioned calling, yet the researchers fail the field. Are we not (...) able to move beyond a critique of power and oppression” (Rose, 2011, p. 44).

There was and still is a strong story of adult education as a movement. This story is not prepared for the effects of neoliberalism. We have to raise more questions and search for new answers. Our discipline needs more centrifugal forces; more shared perspectives and conceptualizations are necessary for adult and continuing education in late modernity.

2 Nylander et al. (2019) analyzed five peer-reviewed journals pertaining to adult learning listed in Scopus between the years of 2006 and 2014 (*Adult Education Quarterly*, *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, *Studies in Continuing Education*, *Journal of Education and Work* and *Journal of Workplace Learning*).

3 More developments indicate that the research field of adult and continuing education must be further differentiated, post-structural tradition with its emphasis on gender and critical race theories and a major impact of the new economic paradigm with a rapidly increasing number of articles focusing on workplace learning resulted in a broadening of the conceptualisation of learning in adult education (Rubenson & Elfert, 2019, p. 21). Continuing vocational training (In-company resp. business learning) is reduced to workplace learning. It seems to divide the field, resp. subdisciplines emerge, i.e. workplace-oriented learning, out of the combination of adult education and HRD (see Rubenson & Elfert, 2019, p. 21).

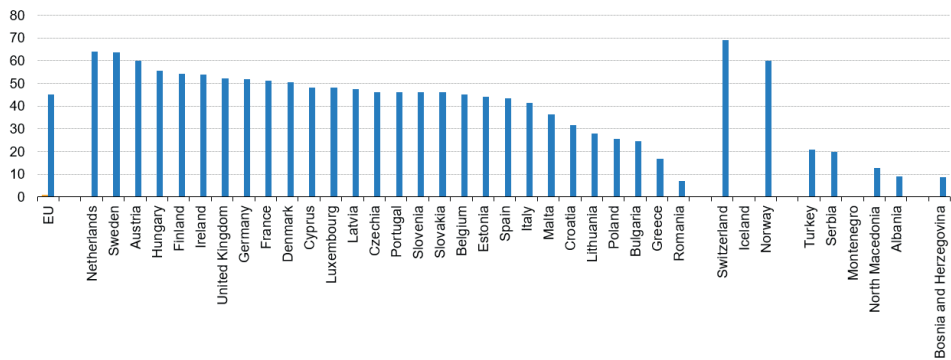


Figure 1. Participation rate in education and training (Eurostat Statistics Explained (2019). (*Adult Learning statistics*).

Part of the evidence-based policy but also relevant in research are international surveys. Are these a starting point to ask questions for shared perspectives that bring in own ideas and conceptualizations? In this context, how are stagnating participation rates and differences in rates in the different countries to be interpreted (see graphic 1)? Do we even refer to these results and what are our considerations and perspectives? At least questions can be asked:

Why are they stagnating? Is the individual smart enough or tired of learning or is it hindered or not sufficiently promoted? We can look at the social environment, at the system or at the individual in his learning activities, like the Adult Education Survey (see graphic 1). But we can also ask: What are the structural reasons for this? Is participating in adult and continuing Education sufficiently affordable? Are their structures and institutions sufficiently supportive?

I will argue that we must focus all these aspects and support the developing and shaping processes.

The following comments refer to the second part of *thesis 1* and introduce the relevance of adult and continuing education also with regard to the design of late modernity: Adult and continuing education must be involved in design processes that support rhizome-like growth in practice and science (see above).

Adult and continuing education as a discipline has an important relevance for understanding, supporting, researching and shaping rhizome-like growth: to explore how society (brings in objective needs), the individuals with their (subjective) needs, requirements and interests are considered and how the professionals take this up and transform it into offers and programmes. The metaphor of 'rhizome' is used in social science as well as in adult education research. It was introduced as a philosophical concept mainly by Deleuze and Guattari (1977). If the rhizome is a metaphor to describe the developments of Western societies, then adult and continuing education is part of this process. Authors in adult education research have applied the metaphor in different ways (see K  pplinger, 2019). Usher (2010) argues that Lifelong Learning is a rhizome and needs rhizomatic

approaches. Enoch and Gieseke (2011) used the term rhizome in Germany (see also Gieseke, 2010). They identify a non-hierarchical, openly developing structure of educational provision, which contains elements of extension, decay and new linkages. As K  pplinger emphasizes, rhizomatisation is not meant as a process where everything turns into chaos, wilderness and becomes arbitrary. It is a heuristic concept for looking for different connected and unconnected traces and their connections (K  pplinger, 2019, p. 159). Rhizom-like growth is a metaphor to understand and observe adult and continuing education as a non-hierarchical, openly-ended and continuously developing structure, observing educational provision and how these refer to learning and educational behaviour in a broad sense.

As argued above, adult and continuing education as a science is also part of these developments. How can we as a discipline contribute in order to also shape and design our future societies and cultures?

Culture forming processes and the contribution of adult and continuing education

Let us get closer to ideas of understanding late modernity and the relevance of adult and continuing education.

In this chapter the following thesis is outlined.

Thesis 2: In order to be involved in societal shaping processes, adult and continuing education considers itself as a shaping, culture-forming transformation institution with corresponding/accompanying and fundamental research.

Adult and continuing education becomes a transformation institution and can be understood as a component of social processes. As a transformation institution it needs a continuous engagement with the relevance of their own interpretations and positions. A clear ethical positioning is a basic requirement, which includes at least these elements: We support the diversity of the population, work for the protection of minorities (with and without migration biographies), freedom of the press, cultural freedom of expression and Rule of law. Furthermore, in addition to the politically desired topics (e.g. digitalisation), we support and reach out to fundamental issues for the conservation of the earth. In doing so, we always keep the autonomy of the individual in mind and strive for this within the framework of our educational considerations.

Concerning the relevance of cultural and educational sciences: So far, an important reference for AE in order to interpret societal developments is and was to understand modernization processes. Approaches of individualisation (Beck, 1986), reflexive modernization (Beck & Giddens, 1996) or milieu theories (i.e. Bourdieu, Vester, Sinus-Milieus) describe the requirement for the individual to constantly be able to make new decisions and to be able to orientate himself flexibly and quickly. Biographisation is becoming more and more complex (Alheit & Dausien, 2010, p. 720). Expansion of transnationalization processes in

Europe and on a global scale (culturally, economically, socially in institutions and structures), increasing forms of migration (currently still forced migration) are what we are dealing with now. These are overarching topics. Thus, connecting and transforming cultures becomes an overarching perspective for education. Especially, if we assume that people are involved in the formation of cultures. Individuals are concerned with cultural formation through processes of interpretation, deconstruction and construction: Interpretation, such as understanding migration processes and the challenges associated with them, deconstruction, e.g. of forms of racism or anti-semitism, and construction, such as new forms of living together (Fleige, Gieseke, & Robak, 2015; Robak, 2018). These are requirements in a migration society.

Flight migration poses a variety of challenges for society and refugees, such as insecure life planning, difficult living conditions, language, literacy, degrees/qualifications, vocational integration/employment, unfamiliar social policies, and fundamentally different gender relations. Some people have to overcome traumas. It is now a matter of shaping migration societies and placing education in them.

For Germany we know that already in 2018 about 4 out of 10 of the refugees since 2015 have a job (Tagesschau, 2018), currently already 35 % of the refugees have a job, it is calculated with 50 % after 5 years (Groll & Schuler, 2019).

The population must be better prepared for global changes and shifts, including migration. Basic topics such as dealing with strangeness, with different cultural resources and also with questions of memory cultures and cultural heritage (Hall, 2005; Smith, 2006; Tauschek, 2013), but also of all forms of Group-focused inhumanity (Zick & Klein, 2014; Zick, Küpper, & Krause, 2016) must be given more attention in education. Especially now, when forms of radicalisation are becoming even more easily accessible through digitisation and this right-wing thinking can spread more quickly (Ebner, 2019).

If we include all these developments, the complex challenge for adult and continuing education as a culture-shaping institution becomes visible. Shaping culture is an overarching perspective of the adult and continuing education. Dealing with social developments seems to make it necessary to grasp the major and culturally rapid developments and analyze those in respect to corresponding educational questions and conceptualizations on education and their meanings.

Mechanisms that influence the free development of the individual are still effective, and Lebenslaufregime (translated: life course regimes, i.e. there are certain aspects and institutions, structures that influence the life course) are particularly active in Germany (Diewald, 2010). Adult and continuing education can, however, positively influence those regimes and can have a changing effect on culture. The fundamental thesis here is that social transformation processes lead to an expansion of the processes of cultural formation, which must now be viewed under the conditions of digitality. These processes of expansion or forming can be described with certain theoretical approaches, which are: transculturality and hybridization (Bhabha, 2000; Reckwitz, 2006; Welsch, 2011), society of singularities (Reckwitz, 2017) and with culture of digitality (Stalder, 2017).

With the concept of transculturality, Welsch (2012) refers to the fact that cultures interpenetrate or intertwine each other and that the idea of self-contained and externally delimited “cultural spheres” can no longer be maintained. In a third space (Bhabha, 2000), which forms through perception and integration of cultural difference, new mixtures and forms are shaped (hybrid forms). Reckwitz (2006) describes this as “hybridization” that permeates the structures of modernization as a process of cultural shaping. This not only leads to a permanent change of culture, which is conceptualized as “subject-culture” in late modernity, but also to an often conflicting diversity of cultural practices, interpretations and perspectives. In the interspaces new cultural formations and redesigned forms emerge, which form a basis for the singularization described by Reckwitz (2017). With the described process of hybridization and transculture, we succeed in making the transition to digitization as a cultural transformation process.

Singularization means, that each individual contributes on this forming process. The individual participates in the shaping of culture. It must balance contradictory demands. Fields of tensions are increasing; a permanent searching process is taking place. Biographisation processes are becoming more complex (Alheit & Dausien, 2019).

We are approaching the core of this article; it is the conceptualization outlined below and presented in two graphics, which were further developed for the underlying keynote of the ESREA conference in Belgrade (graphic 2 follows in thesis 3).

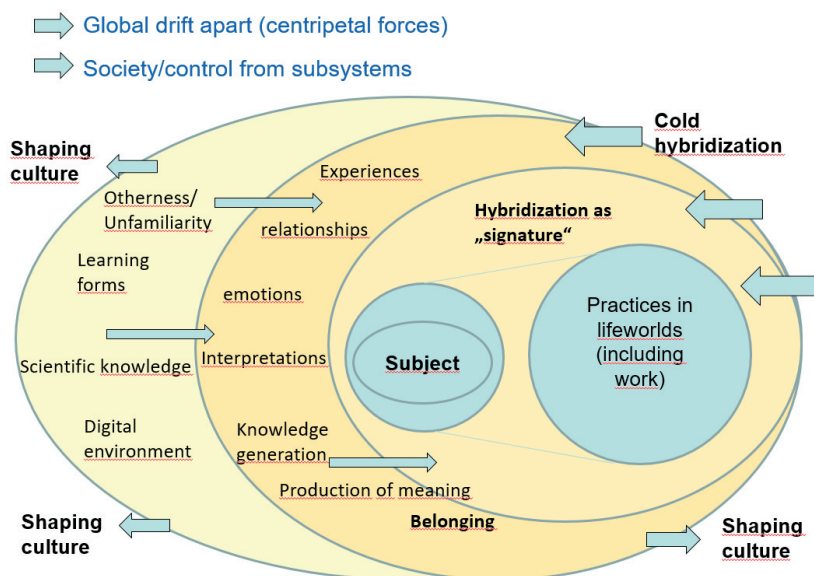


Figure 2. Hybridization processes shaping culture and the contribution of education (own image).

The inner ellipse depicts a fundamental hybridization process in which the above-mentioned subject cultures, analyzed by Reckwitz (2006), are involved in the shaping of culture through their practices in the various areas of the life-world. This process can be read in more detail in the above-mentioned study. It is assumed that this happens in the mode of hybridization and these form signatures (Schneider, 2000).

The following ellipse in the middle specifies educationally relevant aspects which the individual brings into hybridization processes and which are relevant for educational processes. The individual participates in cultural formation in a shaping role by generating, introducing and contributing experiences, relationships, emotions, interpretations, knowledge production (see the analyses in Robak, 2012a), meaning production (Reckwitz, 2017) and the shaping of belonging. The outer ellipse represents the connection to the environment and the living worlds. Cultural shaping takes place at this interface. From the educational perspective, the aspects of otherness, the design of forms of learning, scientific knowledge as such and the digital environments are given a particularly important role.

Adult and further education are considered here as a transformational instance and as a shaping component of culture and thus society. Participation in shaping culture can mean supporting countercultures in social movements; it can also mean enabling and accompanying knowledge generation and distribution. The focus should be on the individuals in their contexts, relations and relationships and the institutionalizations that accompany them. The widening of forms of institutionalization and lifelong learning from different perspectives can be understood as part of cultural formation.

Adult and continuing education take on a nourishing task. It is a human right. Learning and education move into the centre of the interspaces and more intensively in the “between”. Hybridization must not be a cold hybridization. Cold hybridization controls the process, it prevents reflection, knowledge generation, intervenes in belonging, through exclusion and hierarchization.

Education is central to emotional differentiation and balancing requirements (Gieseke, 2016). The individual interacting in a way or mode of relational autonomy wants to make experiences, build up and differentiate interpretations and face the increasing demands of confrontation with unfamiliarity, digital environments and differentiating forms of learning. It is important to find your own positions and to feel safe in these positions.

Concerning digital environment and learning forms: In the Adult Education Survey (AES), digitally supported forms of education were recorded. According to this, 43% of all educational activities are digitally supported. 29% of adults participated in digitally supported education (BMBF, 2019).

We observe a high demand for scientific knowledge, for degrees, in order to position oneself and to be able to better assess the world. Adult and continuing education perceives and analyses these developments very fundamentally.

Shaping culture is then a reflexive process, it is not left to itself as unreflected socialization. Thus, education takes on an important fundamental task for democracy. The erosion of democracy is happening directly, but above all in many indirect ways that initially elude attention and observation. We have been experiencing this in Germany since 2015; the strengthening of right-wing forces and the taking in of part of the middle class had not been seen. We were also able to reconstruct this in the educational programs (Robak & Petter, 2014; Robak, 2018).

Thus, the perspective question can be: How can the individual develop and contribute to the shaping of society and how does adult and continuing education support this?

Hybridization as a superordinate process is influenced by practices of digitalization, by cultural difference, by how society deals with foreignness, with fears of alienation, with global shifts in democracies and non-democracies. At present, processes and resources that strive for processing in the sense of transculturalization, and thus with the aim of forming a new, common culture, are in danger; we are observing, as mentioned above, an increase in right-wing radicalism and other forms of group-based misanthropy.

The reflection of patterns of interpretation (see middle ellipse of graphic 2) gains new relevance: the recourse to existing patterns of interpretation reproduces only what is known, the stimulation with new productions of meaning challenges us to go beyond what we know and feel.

If this remains on a surface, without any connection to the shaping of knowledge structures and interpretations up to patterns of interpretation that allow and promote complex analytical abilities, this redundancy leads to a lack of democratic ability. The feeling of being left behind even in the very basic sense endangers the capacities to act and interpret. Fukuyama (2019) speaks here of the necessity of a new interpretation of identity, i.e. the formation of affiliations. Differentiation phenomena are necessary; every person needs confrontation, although confrontation does not mean fighting against somebody or something and is not to be equated with degradation.

Broad conceptualisation of education for adult and continuing education

The statements and considerations in the previous chapter form a basis for the following reflections on a broad conceptualisation of adult education and continuing education in late modern times.

The underlying *thesis three* refers to a broad conceptualization of education:

Late modernity requires the development of a broad resp. wide concept of education that enables access to adult and continuing education for the various contexts in which people live.

This concept supports forms of institutionalisation between self-education, digital contexts, education in “adjunctive” organisations and in different institutions and organisations, belonging to different providers. This broad conceptualisation can be shaped in portals of education.

The term education here is not meant in the sense of upbringing; it rather considers enlightenment, emancipation, reflexive and analytical interests of the individual for all areas of the life world.

This also means that the structuring principles (according to Giddens, 1984) have to be further developed and differentiated, whereby for educational research in these areas field specific aspects always have to be taken into consideration, which are legislation, dialogue between politics, science and practice, differentiation of professionalisation and professionalism.

Our greatest shortcoming is, among other things, the lack of our own terms and definitions. How could we use international expertise to work this out jointly? A broad concept of education sees itself in the advocacy for individuals in relation to the shaping of society and culture.

It includes personality development, identity development, political and civic action, health, exercise and emotional stabilisation as well as employability as part of a broad educational concept (Robak, Rippien, Heidemann, & Pohlmann, 2015a, p. 34). We also associate the term employability with a broad approach and include the interests of the participants abductively (Reichert, 2003). The latter can aim at direct activity, personal professional development, pure interest without immediate usability, professional specialisation without direct activity reference, differential life contexts, personality development, identity formation, shaping of the environment/organisation, stabilisation of the body and emotional elasticity (Robak et al., 2015a, p. 265). This broad interpretation in the approaches takes into account different degrees of institutionalisation and, in vocational terms, different concepts of continuing vocational and in-company training, including approaches to workplace-based learning.

We were able to analyse and describe this broad concept of education empirically very precisely in our study on educational behaviour during educational leave by interviewing 561 people within the framework of a multi-perspective research framework.

We also asked for follow-up learning and the intended learning usage of the participants: One of our most important findings is that multiple interests in the interests and use of learning exist at the same time, but that these vary according to the educational sector. There are differences in the learning-utilisation interests in seminars of general education, vocational education and training and political education. Apart from political education, all the other seminars simultaneously have interests and perspectives of use which are based on professional concerns and which relate to different contexts of life and manifold questions of the lifeworlds (Heidemann, 2015; Heidemann, 2020 in preparation). Two exam-

ples shall be given: In seminars of the general education sector we could observe a dual structure of non-professional learning use interests of the individual on the one hand and vocational goals on the other hand (vocational development, employability). The participation rates reveal a strong focus on health education and cultural and arts education with the motivations to stay emotional flexible, creative but also with a motivation to keep mobile and stabilized for work and for employability in general.

In seminars of the vocational education sector the *immediate applicability for work activities* and the *long-term development of employability* are primarily relevant.

I would differentiate this broad concept of education into five large portals of education, which structure themselves primarily from the perspective of individuals and their interests, needs and demands, and which off course incorporate and integrate the needs of society, employers, etc. These five portals of education are: culturality, emotional elasticity and stabilization, political participation including analytic-reflexive skills, employability and professionalism.

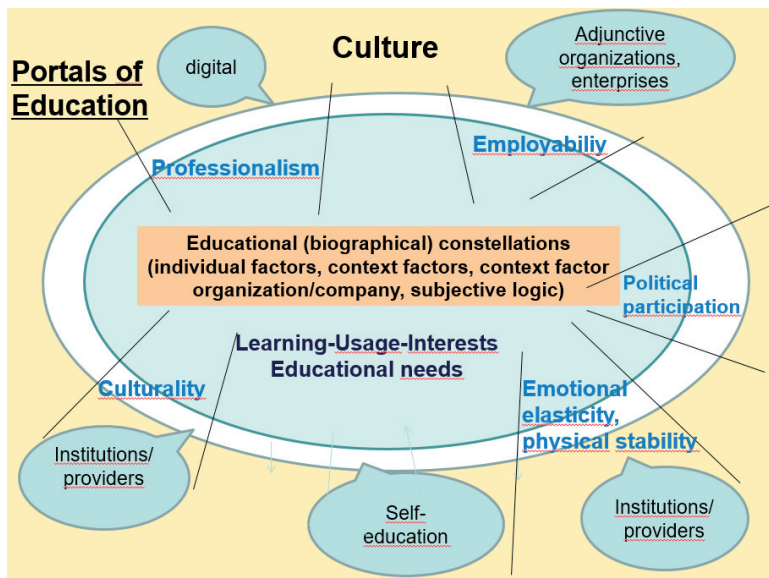


Figure 3. Portals of Education for adult and continuing education (own image).

We start with the inner part of the graphic: Our and other research show that individuals form constellations, which have an influence on the learning and educational activities.

These individual constellations are structured by their biographies, including educational biographies, and situations. Educational monitoring studies, in

particular a longitudinal study by Harry Friebe (2008), but also considerations by Jürgen Wittpoth (2018) and other colleagues indicate how biographical constellations are formed from aspects that have an effect in the different life worlds and at the workplace (e.g. position and complexity of the workplace structure). The aspect of time, as analyzed by Sabine Schmidt-Lauff (2018), is also one of the constellation-forming aspects that influence educational decisions and educational activities.

The aspects for educational-biographical constellations were qualitative and quantitative developed in the above-mentioned study on educational behaviour during educational leave (Robak et al., 2015a), then quantitative further developed (Heidemann, 2020 in preparation; Mania, 2018). We can differentiate into: Individual factors (sociodemographic characteristics – gender, age, educational level), context factor family (marital status, children in the household), context factor activity/employment (employment situation, work situation, activity, duration of employment, trade union member), context factor enterprise (area of employment, size of enterprise, works council, further training support) (Robak et al., 2015a, p. 276). Under the aspect of subjective logic, further education-related characteristics (decision to participate, further education/educational leave activity, learning and exploitation interests) are taken into account (qualitative research: Robak, 2015a; quantitative research: Heidemann, 2020 in preparation).

The complexity to shape these portals evolves from the fact, that the society can indicate so called objective needs, that only brings the individual to training, when it is obliged to do so. However, participation in adult and continuing education is predominantly voluntary.

Thus, it is a professional task and advantage to find out subjective needs, interests and learning-usage-interests to invite people. These aspects must be analytically combined with the above-mentioned biographical constellations of individuals in order to pass through portals of education by designing suitable offers and seminars. This means that knowledge of and involvement in the design of these portals can support decision-making processes for educational participation of the individuals.

The portals are also structured by the different learning locations. These learning locations show different degrees of institutionalisation and different forms and approaches of didacticisation as well as different learning cultures; these are adult and continuing education organisations, adjunctive education including companies, digital learning forms up to other forms of self-education.

Educational institutions and organisations in which programmes and services are developed by professionally trained staff and also offered with face-to-face teaching remain important. But we also observe a growing role of organisations of adjunctive education; these are organisation with other main tasks than

education, but they also offer qualification and education.⁴ This results from a growing need for knowledge generation, for scientific knowledge as a whole, and also from innovation interests, such as the visible link between work and learning. In addition, there is an interest, e.g. cultural institutions such as museums, to address the public additionally through educational offers and to interest them in the institution and the offers and exhibits.

The diverse institutions and organisations are of high relevance; here we see specific aspects that attract different milieus for different institutions. Digital forms of learning and digital competences, as basic competences and as specialisations, are playing an increasingly important role, we see this currently in a research project on the development of digital learning and digital competences (FuBiDiKuBi, 2019). Also, projects of colleagues are dealing with this (Egetenmeyer, 2019). Forms of self-education will also retain relevance (Arnold, 2010).

The five portals are thus structured, on the one hand, on the basis of the aforementioned institutionalisations, on the other hand, on the basis of the learning forms and ways of knowledge acquisition, and on the basis of the contents (this is offered by the various educational sectors such as vocational training, cultural and intercultural education, health education, political education etc.). They resonate as a perspective with the learning-usage-interests of the individuals, which are composed of educational interests, motives and uses for the different contexts of life.

Furthermore, the portals take up empirical findings and theoretical knowledge and are guided by it.

These are: political and civic participation, employability, professionalism, culturality, emotional elasticity and physical stability. Thus, a portal of access only forms an approach, when the individual responds to the offered structure.

At this point, I would like to make two further comments, one on the role of continuing training in the company and the other on the role of legislation.

Concerning the uprising role of enterprise training in Europe (Eurostat, 2015): it is a part of the system and should be addressed by more research. I would like to argue that we do not banish also not isolate on the one side, but also not exclusively address the enterprises and training or workplace learning on the other side. It can be considered as one institutional context, even if it is a big one. It is interesting to see how different it develops.⁵

4 The term organizations of adjunctive education was first developed on the basis of empirical results in a study that analysed the development of cultural and intercultural education in Berlin and selected regions (Gieseke, Opelt, Stock, & Börjesson, 2005).

5 The education report 2018 for Germany shows, that among those enterprises, who do offer CVET the forms of proposing learning and qualification varie: the bigger the enterprises the more opportunities to offer different forms: External Courses, internal or indoor-training; training at the workplace, attending conferences and speeches, Workplace rotation, selfdirected learning, quality circles (Bildungsbericht, 2018).

Furthermore, I would like to argue that in order to strengthen structuring (Giddens, 1984), the role of legislation must be strengthened. This must involve adult education, including science. Research can be referred to understand policies, politics and polities (Field & Schemmann, 2017; Milana, 2017; Milana & Holford, 2014). Research shows furthermore that a strong state involvement leads to more access (Desjardins & Rubensen, 2013).

There is no coherent continuing education law that comprehensively and coherently regulates all aspects relevant to continuing education (organisation, institution, financing, provision, participation, curriculum, etc.) (cf. Grotlüschen & Haberzeth, 2018).

We need to participate in the shaping of the principles of structuring, including legislation, differentiation of professionalisation and professionalism, both through dialogue between politics, science and practice and appropriate research to be meaningful and well-founded.

I increasingly see an important task in strengthening practice: this must also remain meaningful and be able to justify one's own work and performance well.

It is extremely difficult for us to influence it, but it is worthwhile to work for it. We can exemplify this in Germany with research on education vouchers (Käpplinger, Klein, & Haberzeth, 2013), educational leave (international Cedefop, 2012; Heidemann, 2020 in preparation; Pohlmann, 2018; Robak et al., 2015a) and initiatives that can also be seen in connection with the introduction of the Integration Act and the development and differentiation of cultural, inter- and transcultural education (Robak & Petter, 2014).

Reflections on common categories for the design of transnational/transcultural adult and continuing education

For the following considerations, I would like to follow on from the remarks of the last chapters and take up some categories for the design of the portals in a transnational space in a transcultural sense.

Thesis 4: In order to design a transnational/transcultural educational space of adult and continuing education it is necessary to conceive and further develop common categories.

The autonomy of the individual and a necessary professionalism of adult educators to support the rhizomatization of the field is a basis of these considerations. We need perspectives and research that can critically examine democratically taken decisions and democracy forming ideas, knowledge, attitudes and concepts. From what do we want to derive these common categories? If we look at our central references, these are the educational and learning processes of individuals in their social and institutional contexts. If we understand the

actions of individuals as shaping society, this must be considered in its facets and transferred into the educational context in order to accompany processes of social formation and transformation.

Can we communicate without missing our common field? Large Scale Surveys seem to be a good starting point (see Field, 2016; Schmidt-Hertha, 2018). They follow the interest to understand participation, even though there are limitations. They are important not only for visibility but also for further discussion on how to develop those approaches for elaborating adult and continuing education as a discipline in late modernity.

Another study I want to mention is the BeLL-Study (Fleige & Sgier, 2016; Manninen et al., 2014; see also Manninen & Meriläinen, 2014; Thöne-Geier, Fleige, Kil, Sgier, & Manninen, 2017), because it has been conducted in ten countries, it develops categories coming from our discipline and it contributes important results to show the relevance of liberal education.⁶ My research on different groups of German-speaking expatriates and cosmopolitans living in China shows which aspects play a role in learning and educational processes, in terms of competence development at the workplace, cultural learning and cultural education, as well as in terms of informal learning in everyday life world. In this case the individuals are of high qualification and able to speak Chinese language. This group was able to participate in education in Europe and China, using the offers of different providers in Europe and in China. The individuals were also able to realize a transcultural change of perspective. A transcultural shift in perspective means having in-depth knowledge of systems of interpretation and being able to switch between patterns of interpretation of different cultural origins. This requires a lot of resources and knowledge from many fields and especially about cultures (Robak, 2012a, 2015b).

All these considerations, the mentioned and further studies which cannot be carried out lead to the following categories which are currently relevant among others. Individuals must be able to deal with paradoxes in late modernity and maintain their capacity for democracy. The ability to shape culture, to undertake cultural transformations and to produce meaning is closely linked to the ability to be democratic.

A modern, steered society demands thoroughly regulated and differentiated emotional budgets, at the same time: To be innovative, the ability to learn, liveliness and creativity are required, that can mean balancing between “joining oneself” (informal learning) and the interest in abandoning prefabricated paths (Gieseke, 2016, p. 101). The ability to balance emotions also ensures democratic ability (Manemann, 2019). Thus, common categories can be: *Emotions* are essen-

6 These are the categories: Changes in educational experience, social engagement, mental well-being, tolerance, sense of purpose in life, locus of control, health behaviour, self-efficacy, family benefits, work related benefits (Thöne-Geier et al., 2017, p. 181; see also Manninen & Meriläinen, 2014).

tial in order to form differentiated possibilities of reception and decision-making and to differentiate evaluation and decision-making processes. Emotional learning opens up for critical and reflective engagement with oneself and the world and strengthens individuals in dealing productively with the paradoxes and social challenges mentioned above (Gieseke, 2016; Manemann, 2019). *Experiences* (Böhle, 2009; Meyer-Drawe, 2010; Negt, 1971): The ability to experience and the preservation of and openness to new experiences are fundamental to shaping a common culture. They guide, among other things, the possibilities of cultural and educational participation and thus of shaping society. The ability to interpret (Schüßler, 2003) experiences and to classify them within the framework of patterns of interpretation, or even to deconstruct destructive or outdated patterns of interpretation and allow new ones to emerge, enables broad participation by the individual in education and in shaping democracy. The preconditions, processes under the sign of late modernity challenge to new questions. Thus, *interpretations* (Schüßler, 2003) and the *formation of interpretation patterns* (Arnold, 1991; Arnold, 1999; Mezirow, 2009) are assumed to be more relevant categories for further research or an in-depth examination of it. Other categories that should be mentioned are knowledge acquisition, generation and knowledge development, the above mentioned benefits (Manninen et al., 2014), *interests* (Grotlüschen, 2010) and learning-usage-interests (Robak et al., 2015a). The capacity for *creativity* and the desire to develop it in the most diverse forms can be regarded as a fundamental anthropological fact (Menke, 2013), so all people should be given these opportunities. Here too, new research and development challenges arise (Fleige et al., 2015; Reckwitz, 2012).

Understanding lifelong learning and the role of adult education through programs and multiperspective research approaches

For the last chapter I take up the metaphor of the rhizome, and assume that the individuals who wish to face and participate in cultural changes and shaping processes – with their educational desires (Reckwitz, 2017) – and the institutions that transfer these desires and the identified needs into educational offers, are involved in the processes of rhizomatization.

Thus, the accompanying *thesis 5* is: *For the joint shaping of a transnational/transcultural educational space and the perception of culture-forming transformation tasks, adult and continuing education need research at the levels of the individual, the organisation and the system with references to politics, but also above all to demands for professionalism.*

I would like to present one example of a research approach that we are developing further – research on the programs, program planning, including research

on the participants' educational participation and the anticipation of this participation behavior for the planning processes (levels individual, organization, professionalism). Programs, programme planning processes, the single offers, projects and also concepts, are of particular interest.⁷ In the programs it becomes visible whether there is at all institutionally back-bound lifelong learning, which is why we are strengthening this area of research in order to create visibility; of course statistics are important for participation on the part of individuals. We document what is offered in terms of seminars, projects (all kinds of offers that can be identified).

Programs (printed, digital) show the institutions understanding and interpretation of education, qualification and competence development (Fleige et al., 2018; Gieseke, 2000; von Hippel, 2019; Nolda, 2010). The methodology and method of programme analysis has been developed specifically for adult education and is further differentiated (Cervero, 2017; Gieseke, 2000; K  pplinger, 2019, see international K  pplinger, 2015; Robak et al., 2015b, 2019a, 2019b; Rose & Fleige, 2017; Sork, 2016; St.Clair, 2016). Program analyses offers the potential to identify and further explore relevant research aspects and categories, such as topics, themes, target groups, approaches, learning and knowledge forms, focus of the provider, profiles, learning/educational objectives, digital competence, digital media etc. It is a non-reactive method, the material is analyzed on the basis of a coding system by a team. Developing a coding system is part of an abductive research process (Reichertz, 2003; Robak, 2012b).

In the programs and offers it becomes visible how education is interpreted and offered through new interpretations. This is an expression of the rhizome-like growth that is realized through program and offer development.

The program creates heterogenous forms of organisations and institutions of adult education (i.e.: community education centers, academies etc.); "adjunctive" organisations of adult education who in principal have, as outlined earlier above, a different focus, such as museums; organisations for professional further education within enterprises. So it is not the programs that are controlled by institutions, but the development of institutions is part of the rhizome-like process of change in society, and the programs and offers that adult and continuing education provide are part of the rhizome-like growth that is expressed in the structures of institutions.

Our approach is a multiperspective one that analyses both the institutional and the participants side to understand how the institutions operate as a transformation institution.

7 The Expert Group on Program Research includes scientists from various universities, both within Germany and internationally. An international conference on this subject was held in Hanover in 2015 (International Conference, 2015).

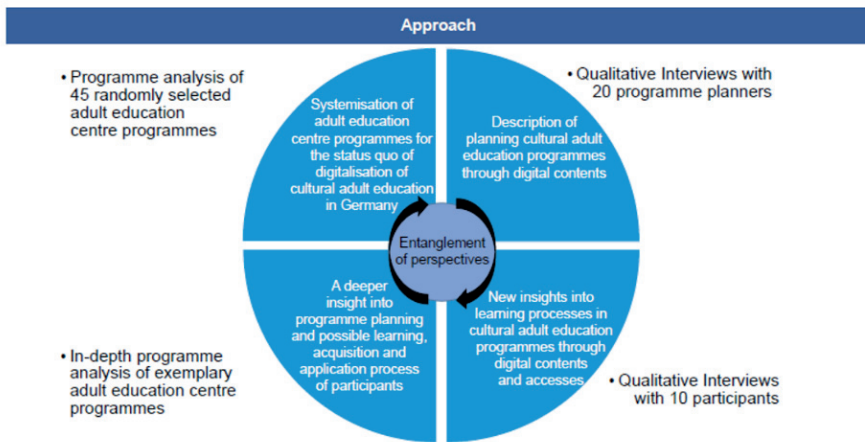


Figure 4. Research design for the project FuBi_DiKuBi (own image).

We observe that autonomous program planning activities of the Adult Educator initiative rhizome-like growth. There are many influencing aspects, such as finance structure, the laws on countries and also EU-level, but especially interesting are the different knowledge resources planners need for their decision-making processes shaping the program.

In an ongoing research project on digitization in programs of adult education centres we (together with DIE, Dr. Marion Fleige) analyze how digitization is offered in program structures, how these programs are planned and how the participants learn in these seminars.

Analyzing the integration of digitization as a topic and as digital learning forms show how adult and continuing education participates in culture forming processes, in the sense I introduced in thesis 2.

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