What is change-oriented adult education - and why do we need it?

Workshop on adults and digitalisation - How can we manage the challenges of digitalisation by using change-oriented adult education?

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Structure of the presentation

1. Concrete examples of different types of ICT courses
2. What is change-oriented adult education?
3. Why and when is it needed?
4. How it differs from regular adult education
   - has different aims
   - fosters different type of learning
   - require different kind of teaching and learning methods
   - mainly organized outside (in the margins of) official system
Workshop on adults and digitalisation - How can we manage the challenges of digitalisation by using change-oriented adult education?

Examples of ordinary, not-change-oriented adult education courses on digitalization

A. Social Media Courses Online on Udemy for Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn

1. 10 Facebook Marketing Strategies That Make Me 6-Figures
2. Instagram Marketing 2019: A Step-By-Step to 10,000 Followers
3. Social Media Marketing MASTERY | PPC on 10+ Platforms
4. The Complete Instagram Marketing Masterclass
5. Facebook Ads & Facebook Marketing MASTERY 2019

ICT-courses in Finnish adult education centers:
- Basics of Windows 10 and Office 365
- How to organize digital photos
- How to fill in digital tax return form
- Internet
- Email

Examples of change-oriented adult education courses on digitalization

One example of change-oriented adult education course on digitalization

Innosta ja innosta sosiaalisessa mediassa

“Become inspired and inspire others in social media”. Course for adults working in associations, based on socio-cultural animation, organized by Citizens’ Forum.

https://kansalaisfoorumi.fi/english/
https://fi.wikiversity.org/wiki/Innostu JA_innosta_sosiaalisessa_mediassa
In policy documents education is mainly seen as a reactive tool = helping adults to adapt in changes:

• “... improve everyone’s capacity and ability to cope with life” (LLL-policy, Estonia)  WHY NOT: “... improve everyone’s capacity and ability to change their life - and develop the society”

• However, many adult education theories see adult education as a transformative, change-oriented activity
  – Eduard Lindeman: AE as a tool for community change
  – bell hooks: teaching to transgress
  – Jack Mezirow: transformative learning, critical consciousness and change of meaning perspective → individual change
  – Paulo Freire: “conscientization” → change in society
  – Yrjö Engeström: expansive learning in organizations

→ There is a gap between what (1) policy makers think and majority of adult education providers do, and (2) what AE could do to make world a better place
→ should change-oriented adult education be used more?
POLITICAL OPTIONS FOR ADULT EDUCATION
(Picon 1991)

‘From our historical experience we have learned that the actors involved in adult education do not have a neutral posture. They have ideologies and fundamental interests which they are attempting to legitimate […] these actors are guided by and support one of the following basic political options:

1. **Maintenance and conservation** of the traditional ordering of the society, however unjust and unequal it may be;
2. **Reform to improve the system** and make the necessary adjustments for more equity;
3. **Structural transformation** leading to a new national order, whether by progressive steps or radical changes through revolutionary processes.’

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Example: Alternative options how adult education could solve the digitalization challenges

1. **Maintenance and conservation** of the traditional ordering of the society
   - **Real-life and digi-example**: courses to make individuals more skilled users of Facebook; basic ICT-skills; how to use online bank; how to send email etc.

2. **Reform** to improve the system
   - **Real-life example**: Nordic *folkbildning* system since 19th Century (to educate the common people so that they can become active citizens of the democratic, parliamentary system) → Nordic democratic welfare states
   - **Digi-example**: courses where adults learn to recognize fake news and act as responsible social media users

3. **Structural transformation**
   - **Real-life example**: Civil rights movement in the USA in 1950-60’s (Highlander Folk High School; Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King)
   - **Digi-example**: development program where adults learn how to contribute to development of new kind of “Facebook”, which is based on “bursting the bubbles” instead of strengthening them (“transformative citizenship”; Banks 2017)

Why change-oriented AE is needed?

- The aim is to develop “better individuals” and/or make communities, organizations, society or world a different and – hopefully – a better place.
- Change can take place at different levels…
  - individual (attitudes, perceptions…), community (structures, social cohesion…), organization (activity system, culture…), society (equality, policy…), and world (climate, global challenges…)
- Need to organize change-oriented AE can be based on…
  - experienced or observed social problems (here: problems caused by digitalization)
  - political systems which are undemocratic or open to dangers of populism (Brexit?)
  - poverty, austerity policies, economic and gender inequalities
  - destructive ways of behaving and thinking (hate speech, lack of media literacy skills, climate change denial…)
  - or on political objectives; not necessary “good” (for example the “civic education program” in Nazi Germany) or supported by majority of people
- A fundamental question is, how and by whom the need for change (peaceful or radical) is defined.
Organized by whom?

- The “ruling” groups and people are not likely to promote radical changes through education, and focus therefore mainly on
  - Option 1 (general education, training for jobs, basic civic education, “transmission of culture”)
  - Option 2 (peaceful development of individuals, organization or society)
- Option 3 is organized mainly outside the official education system and often organized by individuals themselves
  - “renewal from the margins”, “do-it-yourself learning spaces” (Kirchgaesser 2019b)

Require learning and teaching methods which...

- Facilitate dialogue between people who have different world views, and critical reflection
- Helps to become aware of own and other people's attitudes, beliefs, values, and (meaning) perspectives
- Challenge the existing conceptions and attitudes
- Help seeing things in alternative ways
- Encourage to do things differently
- Lead to concrete action and shared responsibility
Different political options require different types on individual learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Picon</th>
<th>Bateson/Sterling (types of learning)</th>
<th>Potential courses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Option 1</td>
<td>First order change (cognition)</td>
<td>Doing things better (effectiveness; conformative learning)</td>
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<td>Courses enabling adults to become active and proactive actors of their &quot;digital life&quot;. For example, user-oriented ICT-development projects where people can participate and contribute on planning of new technology.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Option 2</td>
<td>Second order change (meta-cognition)</td>
<td>Doing better things (changing assumptions; reformative learning)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Option 3</td>
<td>Third order change (epistemic learning)</td>
<td>Seeing things differently (paradigm change; transformative learning)</td>
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</tbody>
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Examples of “change-oriented” learning methods

- **Serious games** (Connolly, Boyle, MacArthur, Hainey & Boyle 2012)
- **Social sculpture** ([https://www.artistsofsociety.com](https://www.artistsofsociety.com))
- **Fishbowl** (a collaborative, dialogical alternative for panels; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fishbowl_(conversation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fishbowl_(conversation)
- **Photovoice** (Akther & Dirckinck-Holmfeld 2018)
- **Participatory action research** (PAR; Kemmis, McTaggart & Nixon 2013)
- **Liberative walks** (Raisio & Ehrström 2017)
- **Change laboratory** (Sannino & Engeström 2017)
- Teaching methods that can be applied to develop *transformative citizenship skills* (Banks 2017, 372 – 374)
  - Culturally Responsive and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy
  - Civic Action Programs (participatory action research, service learning etc)
- See also this toolbox: [https://www.collaboratiohelvetica.ch/toolbox](https://www.collaboratiohelvetica.ch/toolbox)

Manninen, Jetsu & Sgier (2019)
Concrete example: alternative ways how ICT courses for aging adults could be organized

• Mainstream education for older adults (like basic ICT-skills courses, liberal arts, hobby related activities etc.) satisfy mainly so called
  1. coping needs (managing online bank, sending email etc.)
  2. expressive needs (taking pictures, writing memories etc.)
• but fail to satisfy
  3. contributive and influence needs such as how older adults could become useful contributors to society and agents for social change
    • for example courses and development programs where they can participate user-centered design projects to develop more user-friendly software and gadgets (to adapt technology for people, not people to technology)

• Critical educational gerontology
  – based on critical pedagogy and Freire’s model
  – aims to emancipate and empower older adults as active and critical citizens able to contribute on their social reality and choices in their lives (Findsen 2007; Formosa 2012; Hachem, Nikkola & Zaidan 2017).