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Case-based Learning with Digital Videos: Does it Promote the Professional Development of Teachers and Trainers in Adult Education?

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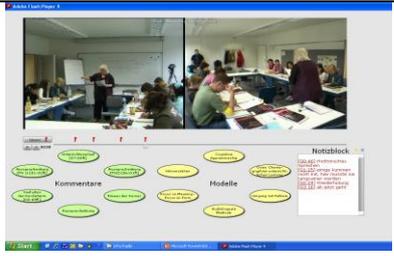
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Teacher education or training respectively is a well established research area, but still we lack of empirically sound knowledge about its effectiveness and preconditions, especially regarding the enhancement of adult educators' expertise as teachers. Our research project "Promoting Teacher Expertise: The Relation of Individual Prerequisites and Instructional Processes in Computer-supported Case-based Learning Environments" within the German Research Foundation Group "Orchestrating Computer-supported Processes of Learning and Instruction" addresses this teacher expertise: Knowing that the professional competency of teachers is closely related to the competency to perceive and analyze pedagogical situations (Nittel, 1997), we focus on the promotion of teacher expertise in terms of a "competency to diagnose pedagogical situations". We consider this competency a cognitive *conditio sine qua non* for a systematically targeted enhancement of teachers' professional performance later on. In (adult education) science, professionalism can be characterized by one's ability to make adequate use of a broad, scientifically sound and thus in many ways abstracted knowledge in concrete situations, or vice versa: to recognize in such situations which elements from the pool of knowledge might be relevant (Tietgens, 1988, p. 37) and to adopt multiple perspectives on single issues (Nittel, 2000). Potential to foster these capabilities is ascribed to case-based learning (Lundeberg et al. 1999).

Referring to these discourses, the utilization of pedagogical conceptual knowledge and the adoption of different teacher and learner perspectives are regarded as central dimensions of the "competency to diagnose pedagogical situations" – together with the capacity to discern and depict pedagogical situations in written form.

The research questions is: How does the supply of these multiple perspectives, conceptual knowledge, and their combination via hyperlinks in a case-based learning environment influence the acquisition of the competency to diagnose pedagogical situations in learners with different levels of experience (i.e. in-service vs. pre-service trainers)? To answer the question, a 2*2*2 quasi-experimental field study was conducted with inexperienced pre-service English teachers (n=84) and experienced in-service English teachers (n=84) working in the field of adult education.

		supply of multiple perspectives		
		learning prerequisites	not given	given
supply of conceptual knowledge	not given	low level of experience	n=21	n=21
		high level of experience	n=21	n=21
	given	high level of experience	n=21	n=21
		low level of experience	n=21	n=21



The proposed presentation pursues a twofold goal: (1) Regarding methodology, we show how quasi-experimental pre-post intervention studies – conducted in the field instead of the lab – can help to generate externally *and* internally valid knowledge on the effectiveness of teacher training programs, providing one answer to the question of workshop C ‘Which methods can be used to measure the effects of teacher training?’ (2) Concerning the effects of teacher training – another question of workshop C –, we present results of our research showing how teacher expertise can be promoted by using video-case-based learning as a means for the professional development of the teaching personnel in the adult education sector.

References:

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