

Newsletter N° 2 – [July, 2018]

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About the European report and the meeting in Milan

I used to associate Milano, the capital of once heavily industrialised Lombardia, mostly with Modification, the Michel Butor's novel, the cult film Mimi Metallurgico (1972) with the unforgettable Giancarlo Giannini, the Fair of Milano, the recent Universal exhibition. Above all, in my eyes, Milano was the capital of design and architecture before I discovered that it was also a city of numerous services and inhabitants proud of their region. I can say that our recent trip to the transnational LearnersMot meeting in Milano was a trip to unknown and known at the same time, above all a sort of come back to buildings and authors of Italian architectural rationalism, aesthetic values and ethics, and much more. To cut a long story short, the trip was my come back to Italian language and culture. The partners met to discuss the work accomplished: the European Compiled Report on education of low educated and low skilled adults, functional literacy and characteristics of functionally illiterate learners to be attracted to education and retained there.

Being interested in animation approaches and methods to use as to trigger low educated learners' primary motivation for learning, the partners decided that the scientifically grounded handbook (grounded on the results of the compiled European Report) for adult educators, which they are planning to prepare, would contain units on the nature of functional literacy and common low educated learners' characteristics, a unit on dyslexia which may lead to functional illiteracy, a unit on learning how to learn, a unit on motivational methods, etc. Functional illiteracy can be felt in all areas of life, but as promised, partners will focus on illiteracy at work. Most of the remaining time, the partnership spent on planning future activities like management, financing, reporting as well as description of best practices and constituting an online library of recommended resources. The Italian hosts took kind care of our staying in their town. (Dušana Findeisen)



The project next steps

According to the main findings as highlighted in the European Report now partners have to embrace a new challenge: provide relevant tools and guidance to be used in adult education with low educated adults.

In fact, the project entails the creation of:

- A database of national and European resources about literacy, motivation and learning and teaching strategies
- As database of best practices in the field of teaching of basic skills to different groups of low educated learners.
- An interactive handbook of existing motivational strategies used by adult educators working with low-educated learners.

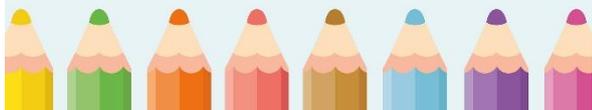
Who are functionally illiterate adults, how do they act?

Have you ever come across a functionally illiterate person? Most probably you have but did not know what it was all about. Can you imagine a worker who works longer hours because he is not able to say what the time is when consulting his watch? Can you imagine a worker who causes a lot of damage just because he does not know the symbolic meaning of red and green colour? Can you imagine a mother who does not urgently bring her new born baby to the hospital while the baby's body temperature is over forty? She does not know what the normal body temperature is and how she has to act. Have you ever met an adult who does not understand the instruction that medications have to be taken three times a day, not knowing that it means every eight hours.

Have you ever met a desperate person in front of a cash point machine who obviously spoke your language, but could not follow the instructions to withdraw money and seemed grateful when you did it for him or her. He or she could read, but he or she did not understand, his or her mental structures, his or her cognitive abilities were below the level of functional literacy. Have you ever met a person whom you cannot persuade to give you a smaller portion of food because she could not avoid following her boss's instruction and had difficulties understanding quantitative data.

The only way to discover the limits of the possible is to go beyond them into the impossible.

Arthur C. Clarke



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