

TOPIC I:

Pedagogy Versus Andragogy

By Donald Greive

	Pedagogical	Andragogical
The Learner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The learner is dependent upon the instructor for all learning • The teacher/instructor assumes full responsibility for what is taught and how it is learned • The teacher/instructor evaluates learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The learner is self-directed • The learner is responsible for his/her own learning • Self-evaluation is characteristic of this approach
Role of the Learner's Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The learner comes to the activity with little experience that could be tapped as a resource for learning • The experience of the instructor is most influential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The learner brings a greater volume and quality of experience • Adults are a rich resource for one another • Different experiences assure diversity in groups of adults • Experience becomes the source of self-identity
Readiness to Learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are told what they have to learn in order to advance to the next level of mastery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any change is likely to trigger a readiness to learn • The need to know in order to perform more effectively in some aspect of one's life is important • Ability to assess gaps between where one is now and where one wants and needs to be
Orientation to Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning is a process of acquiring prescribed subject matter • Content units are sequenced according to the logic of the subject matter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners want to perform a task, solve a problem, live in a more satisfying way • Learning must have relevance to real-life tasks • Learning is organized around life/work situations rather than subject matter units
Motivation for Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primarily motivated by external pressures, competition for grades, and the consequences of failure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal motivators; self-esteem, recognition, better quality of life, self-confidence, self-actualization

Source: FloridaTechNet.org

Pedagogy is based upon the teaching of children and is synonymous with the meaning of the word “leader.” Thus, traditionally, teachers have been viewed as leaders in the learning process. This role involved not only the development of learning objectives, but also the development of classroom techniques and activities which are then implemented by the class “leader.” In this pedagogical model the teacher had full responsibility for making all decisions about what will be learned and how it will be learned, when it will be learned and if it has been learned (Knowles, 1990).

In 1967, 80.5 percent of entering first-year students were 18 years old, while only 13.7 percent were 19 and older. By 2006, 68.5 percent of entering students were 18, while the percentage of students 19 and older more than doubled to 29.6 percent (Pryor, Hurtado, Saenz, Santos, Korn, 2008). With the arrival of an older and more diverse student body, instructors are confronted with the task of addressing a different set of needs in the classroom. Not only do adults wish to draw upon their previous experience, but they usually come to class ready and motivated to learn. In addition, they are self-directed and may be motivated to learn for real life needs as well as self satisfaction. They are often goal-oriented and problem solvers and bring with them a need to know *why* they are learning something.

Thanks to demographic changes in the composition of the college student population the andragogical model of instruction was pioneered and adopted for use by Malcolm Knowles. Knowles based his andragogical teaching model on these newly defined characteristics of the college student which he generally calls the adult student. This andragogical model is based upon:

1. the student’s need to know,
 2. the learner’s self concept,
 3. the role of the learner’s experience,
 4. the readiness to learn,
 5. an orientation to learning, and
 6. motivation.
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To accommodate the andragogical model of teaching adults, we must again examine the motivation for adult learners. Far from just earning credits to get a degree as the major motivation, 21st century students and adult learners bring with them additional needs. Often the student in today's classroom will be there to meet a social need as well as an intellectual one. Many adults will be responding to specific training or professional advancement needs and will have difficulty in adjusting to courses that do not specifically address that goal or activity (Knowles, 1990).

Accompanying this set of needs are an additional set of behaviors or conditions which may be barriers to learning. For the adult learner, these may include such things as: outside family responsibilities and activities, medical and rehabilitative problems, child care, transportation problems, and lack of confidence. These conditions make it doubly important for adjunct and part-time faculty to be aware of a learning process that accommodates rather than alienates students. An additional characteristic of the adult learner is that "they will vote with their feet" in terms of course value; that is, if their needs are not met, they will simply disappear. Thus the andragogical model of teaching positively impacts student retention.

Pedagogy Versus Andragogy: The Debate

Andragogy has become popular both within and outside adult education circles and andragogical approaches are commonly employed in adult education, nursing, social work, business, religion, agriculture and even law. Andragogy has had its opponents as well as its proponents. Much of the controversy stems from a difference in philosophy, classification and the underlying values attached to the term adult education (Davenport & Davenport, 1985).

Some prefer to view education as a single fundamental human process and feel that even though there are differences between children and adults, the learning activities of men and women are essentially the same as those of boys and girls. Such thinkers reject andragogy as an organizing principle in adult education and perceive it as a technique. London (1973) and Elias (1979) have questioned

andragogy's theoretical status, general utility, and how it is different from progressive education applied to adults. They preferred to stress the oneness or unity in education. In 1980, Knowles retreated somewhat by stating:

I am at the point now of seeing that andragogy is simply another model of assumptions about learners to be used alongside the pedagogical model of assumptions, thereby providing two alternative models for testing out the assumption as to their 'fit' with particular situations. Furthermore, the models are probably most useful when seen not as dichotomous but rather as two ends of a spectrum, with a realistic assumption in a given situation falling in between the two ends (p. 47).

He also indicated that there were occasions when andragogy might be used with children and pedagogy with adults.

McKenzie (1979) defended andragogy on philosophical grounds declaring that "the existential differences between children and adults require a strategic differentiation of education practice" (p. 257).

After a review of the experimental literature comparing andragogical and pedagogical methods, Rachal (1994) concluded: "In general, the bulk of the experimental and quasi-experimental work done to date suggests an approximate equivalence between andragogical approaches and pedagogical ones on both achievement and learner satisfaction. Ultimately, practitioners will continue to employ methods that work for them" (p. 1).

Cross (1981) described Knowles' claim that andragogy could be viewed as a unified theory of adult education as "optimistic." Hartree (1984) found that Knowles' work presented three basic difficulties for adult educators: (a) confusion between whether his theory is one of teaching or one of learning, (b) confusion over the relationship he sees between adult and child learning, and (c) ambiguity as to whether he is dealing with theory or practice. She also questioned the soundness of the basic assumptions underlying the theory or practice of andragogy.

Mohring (1989) took issue with both andragogy and pedagogy. She contended that the terms andragogy (implying the education of adults) and pedagogy (meaning the education of children) are etymologically inaccurate. Although pedagogy is derived from *paid*, meaning “child,” from antiquity it has also stood for education in general—without reference to learners’ ages. Andragogy is derived from *aner*, meaning adult male and not adult of either sex, therefore excluding women. In view of efforts to purge English of sexist words, she proposed the use of a new term, *teliagogy*. Based on the Greek *teleios*, meaning “adult,” it would include both sexes.

Andragogy and Student-Centered Learning

Andragogy differs from pedagogy in that it places the student at the center of the learning process and it gives emphasis to collaborative relationships among students and with the instructor. The model prescribes problem-solving activities based upon the students’ need rather than the goals of the discipline or the instructor. In short, the andragogical model calls for the college teacher to become a facilitator of learning rather than a director of learning. This model is sometimes described as learner-based and learner-organized. However, one must be cautious that this does not imply that the instructor show up in class with the attitude of “what do you want to do today, gang?” In fact, the andragogical model requires more professional and quality teaching techniques and strategies than the self-directed pedagogical model.

The first step in developing andragogical teaching strategy is to create a warm and friendly classroom environment. Without open communication and a warm atmosphere, students will withdraw from the collaborative process and wait to be told what to write down so they can pass the test. Be aware that many adults are anxious about their learning experience and lack confidence, thus it is important to avoid embarrassing them or making them feel ill at ease. Activities in which the students feel confident and secure should be planned. This climate should produce a nonjudgmental atmosphere in which students share in the responsibility for their learning and are not dependent upon instructor expertise.

Important to this relationship is the first class session. The first class session will very often set the tone for the balance of the course or the program, and it should start on a healthy note. Warm and open conversation can be implemented in the first session by such activities as introductions, discussions of the goals of the course, discussions of why the students are there (with the instructor indicating why he or she is there) and the incorporation of group work or partnership. This can often be accomplished simply by eliciting a response to an ice breaker statement or a question concerning the experiences of individuals in class. It is important in the first class session that you establish yourself as a partner in learning and not the expert that has all the answers. Remember that there are many students in class who are older, less affluent, of different races or with disabilities who have not experienced support or positive classroom behavior. It is important that these individuals are connected to the rest of the students in the class and made to feel welcome. Also, it is not unusual for students to have special needs which they do not care to verbalize publicly. All students should be invited to discuss with you privately any personal needs or considerations they may have.

Classroom Strategies

During the first class it is important to establish that although the program or course will be collaborative and cooperative, it will not be a student-run class. Make it clear, however, that classroom activities will be student-centered and not discipline-centered and that relevant participation (not irrelevant) of all students is not only welcomed but expected. Many of the techniques of andragogy are the same techniques that good instructors have been using for years. Hopefully, the day of the college instructor standing in front of a group and lecturing for an hour or more has passed.

Conducting a Discussion

Obviously, one of the most elementary and effective methods of collaborative learning is developing a stimulating discussion. This can be implemented by asking the group refreshing questions about the assignment, listing critical points concerning the assignment or related to outside assignments, and breaking the class into

small groups to reach consensus. Obviously the discussion must be facilitated in such a way that it maintains class integrity and is not general conversation.

The more students who are actively involved in their learning experience, the better the learning environment becomes. Active involvement can include: presentation by students of issues and questions of concern, panel presentations and student demonstrations of their experience or knowledge that may be related to the course being taught.

Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is probably the most often used student-centered technique in the college classroom today. Sometimes called collaborative learning, it is actually one of the oldest educational techniques. Cooperative learning brings students with differing abilities together in small groups where they teach each other the concepts of the class by reinforcing the lecture and text materials. The students may either work on specific projects cooperatively or take selected quizzes and/or tests together. This process forces all students to become actively involved in all activities. For the instructor there are two significant prerequisites for good cooperative education groups—thorough planning and total commitment. As a facilitator, the instructor becomes an idea person and a resource person and may even be a mediator (Sego, 1996). For additional information on the use of cooperative learning techniques refer to Topic XI.

Questioning

The most common activity in the traditional classroom that lends itself to the andragogical model is the formulation of good questions. Good questions can lead to active and broad student participation during the learning activity. The instructor as a facilitator reserves the right to develop such questions. A few things must be kept in mind in the development of good questions. Questions should not be posed that can be answered by simple yes or no or one-word answer, rather they are posed for the stimulation of discussion. Many times questions may require a waiting period (whether they be directed to a class or an individual) and that the allowance of

a period of silence after the question is not necessarily negative. Basically there are three major types of questions:

1. **Factual Questions.** Used at appropriate times to check the background knowledge of students. These may be necessary before proceeding to the next task.
2. **Application or Interpretation Questions.** These questions should be formulated to get relationships, applications, or analysis of facts and materials.
3. **Problem Questions.** Discussion questions are used to provide students the opportunity to develop solutions to a problem or issue that may be different from that of the instructor.

A spin-off of a good questioning process will be one in which a student may ask another student or group of students for assistance in formulating an answer which could then lead to an active interaction throughout the class (McKeachie, 2010).

Non-Participating Students

The greatest fear of instructors new to the andragogical model is that students may not respond or will remain silent. The reverse of this type of conduct is that a few students may dominate the class at the expense of others. This can often be prevented by involving the students in the activities described for the first class session. That is, reduce the students' fear of speaking to build their confidence and to make them feel that they are a contributor to the class. Sometimes it is best to have students write out their answer to a posed verbal question; thus the non-participating student can be asked simply what they have written down, or if they have developed an answer with a partner, ask one for the response and ask the other if they agree. Non-participant students can be greatly encouraged by the old technique of body language. A nod of the head, a smile or a "thanks, that's a good answer" can do wonders for a student who has never before been praised for classroom participation.

One activity, when starting the class is to have the students write a short autobiography with an option to write out a life experience they may not wish to talk about themselves but give permission to

the instructor to use as a class anecdote. (Permission granted, of course).

Another technique that is effective is that of asking questions that have general answers. In this case you should feel free to call upon any student in class and accept any answer given.

Another simple but effective active technique for classroom involvement is a buzzword. In this procedure the instructor may split the class into two groups or any number of groups they wish, have them assemble and develop a hypothesis that is relevant to the course work, one application of the principle and an example of the concept.

Conclusion

To contrast the two models discussed here Knowles describes reactive and proactive learning. In the reactive environment (pedagogy), Knowles describes the traditional course instructor as requiring the students to respect their authority, to commit to learning as a means to an end, to develop competitive relationships that require only the skills and the ability to listen uncritically, to retain information, to take notes, and to predict exam questions. Whereas the proactive (andragogical) instructional environment would include people with intellectual curiosity, the spirit of inquiry, knowledge of resources available, healthy skepticism toward authority and expertise, criteria for testing, commitment to learning which requires the ability to formulate questions answerable by data, the ability to identify data available by printed material, ability to scan quickly, ability to test data against criteria, reliability and validity and the ability to analyze data to produce answers to questions (Knowles, 1990).

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