

EDUPRO Conference
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Presenters:

Lucie Bucharova, Agata Gajewska-Dyszkiewicz, Monika
Rusnak, Beata Telatynska, Tamas Toth, Josefine Wagner,
Beata Zwierzynska



The EDiTE program at ULS – an example of softening boundaries for non-traditional adult students in Higher Education?

Presenters:

Lucie Bucharova, Monika Rusnak, Beata Telatynska, Tamas Toth, Josefine Wagner, Beata Zwierzynska



Structure

I) Introduction

II) Case Studies

Case Study: Monika

Case Study: Beata T.

Case Study: Lucie

III) Critical Debate on the Lifelong Learning Paradigm

IV) Conclusion



I) Introduction (Josefine)

- EDiTE (European Doctorate in Teacher Education) frames its research program under the title of “Transformative Teacher Learning for Better Student Learning in an Emerging European Context” and promotes “Research for Social Change”.
- This is a 4-year project supported under the EU’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation program and brings together five partner universities from Austria, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Portugal and Poland.
- At ULS, 3 fully funded Early Stage Researchers who may not share the host university’s national background study together with Polish researchers in the doctoral program.
- ULS is one of the only university in this consortium which grants as many as 6 self-funded students the chance to pursue a doctorate in this prestigious program. This way the self-funded researchers may participate in international conferences free of charge, academically grow within the EDiTE community and enrich it with their individual projects.
- This speaks for an approach at ULS that challenges restrictive and exclusive patterns in higher education even if areas can be identified which can be built out to better enable the self-funded students to reach their goal.



II) Case Studies

Who?

- 4 Non-traditional adult students

What makes you non-traditional adult students?

- Biographical input

In which ways does EDiTE promote lifelong learning opportunities and challenge inequality with regard to your own experience?

Which institutional and structural support have you as non-traditional adult students experienced in EDiTE? Where would you recommend improvements?

- Experiences



Case Study: Monika

What makes you a non-traditional adult learner?

- Firstly, the EDITE programme is conducted in English which is the novelty itself.
- I am studying in the EDITE in order to improve my teaching practice.
- I have the full time job and family.

In which ways does EDiTE promote lifelong learning opportunities and challenge inequality with regard to your own experience?

- It helps to raise consciousness and critical thinking regarding schooling
- It is a great opportunity to learn from other students- teachers from another countries how they cope with challenges and develop their professionalism

Which institutional and structural support have you as non-traditional adult students experienced in EDiTE? Where would you recommend improvements?

- International summer schools



Case Study: Beata T.

What makes you a non-traditional adult learner?

- My teaching experience spans over a time period of 15 years.
- Most of my career, I worked at a technical school, teaching 16- to 19-year-old students who go on to become construction workers.
- I am a trained secondary school examiner.

In which ways does EDiTE promote lifelong learning opportunities and challenge inequality with regard to your own experience?

- It helps teachers from different countries and different experience to share knowledge.
- It gives me the opportunity to meet with authorities in the field of education.
- It allows for a critical and reflective look on my teaching work.

Which institutional and structural support have you as non-traditional adult students experienced in EDiTE? Where would you recommend improvements?

- On- line virtual seminars.
- Summer school.
- Cooperation with partner schools of various



Case Study: Lucie

What makes you a non-traditional adult learner?

- My name is Lucie Bucharová. I am from the Czech Republic.
- I am teacher and have taught elementary school in the Czech Republic from 1995 until last February, 2016.
- I started my career by teaching in a small school in the center of Prague. For the last eight years, I taught in a mixed-grade school in a village of 900 inhabitants.

In which ways does EDiTE promote lifelong learning opportunities and challenge inequality with regard to your own experience?

- I began my doctoral studies in the EDiTE PhD program along with other researchers in March 2016. I am satisfied to be a part of this team of young people.
- A crucial part of my dissertation is to research possible changes that make schooling in our countries more equal and participatory.
- I must admit that it has been a challenge for me to study at my age in a foreign country, use two new languages; when I am expected to apply the theoretical knowledge I gained more than twenty years ago and I must fully acquire new knowledge as a PhD student.

Which institutional and structural support have you as non-traditional adult students experienced in EDiTE? Where would you recommend improvements?

- I greatly appreciate the conditions as EDiTE student: housing, salary, study free of charge, supervisor.
- I took the chance to change my life and enrolled in the EDiTE program, after long practice. In the Czech Republic, there is no tradition or law giving teachers a break from their regular teaching jobs. There is no such phenomenon as taking a gap year after a long, continuous period of practice as in other countries. I have appreciated to have this break as a possibility to study, have time for it, to stay on top of things in the educational and social world.
- Improvements - For me it would be useful if I could conduct research within my own teaching practice.

III) Critical Debate on the Lifelong Learning Paradigm (Tamas)

- Is lifelong learning a form of super-capitalist ‘life-loan labour’?
- Does “social quality” as a key focus contribute to equality?

IV) Conclusion (Beata Z.)

Beat's case:

- Teacher for 16 years, educator, interested in empowering teachers
- Research theme: Developing Spaces for Transformative Teacher Learning. A Study of Teachers' Longing to Learn, Collaborate, and Act.
- EDiTE researchers combine theory and practice in their projects

Conclusion:

- This presentation brings efficiency to higher education as the practitioners become scholars, and scholars are true practitioners.
- It is therefore possible for all of us to become change agents. We also treat the whole community (other teachers, parents and students), as the community of equals who can contribute to knowledge and change.
- For those reasons, this is how we understand equality in higher education - subjects become partners in the research. The extended school communities and us - people with different biographies, which are different of a typical PhD candidate, try to create help to change things that are important for the community and enable them to create sustainable and creative changes in society. In this sense, we are trying to develop lifelong learning and critical communities, hopefully challenging inequalities.