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ADULT EDUCATORS OR ADULT TEACHERS? (THE SEARCH FOR AN ADEQUATE TERM)

Annotation. The role of an adult learner has always been in the focus of the researchers while little attention has been paid to people working with adult learners. It has led to the existence of a wide range of terms denoting these people. The important question of corresponding terminology has been touched in the article. There have been selected the most frequently used terms in the scientific educational literature in English and in Russian and Ukrainian. Their meanings are not identical. The author has analyzed their definitions and identified the reasons of choosing this or that term. It has been established that the choice of the term depends on the role the person plays in adult learning process and on its emphasizing by scholars. There have also been found out the advantages and disadvantages of their use. The received data has been summarized in the table. The further perspectives of the research in this field have been pointed out.

Key words: *adult educator; adult teacher; definitions; terms; advantages; disadvantages of the use.*

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ЕДУКАТОР ДОРОСЛИХ ЧИ УЧИТЕЛЬ ДОРОСЛИХ? (У ПОШУКАХ ВІДПОВІДНОГО ТЕРМІНУ)

Анотація. Роль дорослого, що навчається, завжди перебувала у фокусі уваги науковців, при цьому роль педагога залишалася поза колом наукових інтересів дослідників. Це привело до існування великої кількості термінів, що позначають осіб, які працюють з дорослими учнями. Стаття присвячена вирішенню цього важливого питання – пошуку відповідної термінології. З англійської, російської та української науково-педагогічної літератури було вибрано найбільш частотні терміни, що позначають особу, яка працює з дорослими учнями. Автор проаналізував їх дефініції та визначив причини вживання різних термінів. Також було з'ясовано переваги та недоліки вживання того чи іншого терміну. Отримані дані було систематизовано у таблицю. Було окреслено перспективи подальших наукових розвідок у цій галузі.

Ключові слова: *едукатор дорослих; учитель дорослих; визначення; терміни; переваги; недоліки використання.*

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ЭДУКАТОР ВЗРОСЛЫХ ИЛИ УЧИТЕЛЬ ВЗРОСЛЫХ? (В ПОИСКАХ СООТВЕТСТВУЮЩЕГО ТЕРМИНА)

Аннотация. Роль обучающегося взрослого всегда была в центре внимания ученых, при этом роль педагога оставалась вне поля исследователей. Это привели к существованию множества терминов, которые обозначают людей, работающих с взрослыми учащимися. Статья посвящена решению важного вопроса – поиску соответствующего термина. С англоязычной, русскоязычной и украиноязычной литературы были выбраны наиболее частотные термины, обозначающие педагога, работающего с взрослыми учащимися. Автор проанализировал их дефиниции и определил причины употребления различных терминов. Были также определены преимущества и недостатки употребления тех или иных терминов. Полученные данные были

систематизированы в таблице. Были определены перспективы дальнейших разработок в этом направлении.

Ключевые слова: эдукатор взрослых; учитель взрослых; определения; термины; преимущества; недостатки использования.

Introduction. To be an adult educator is “an art”, “a craft” and at the same time a great “challenge”. Different words and metaphors are used to describe the role of an adult teacher in educational literature to show how important he/she is. Yet, their concerns and training needs are often neglected. D. Boud and N. Miller remark that little attention is paid to a person who works with an adult learner [1]. Traditionally, the role of an adult learner has always been in the focus of the researches.

The problem in question is becoming more acute nowadays. Adult educators work in a wide range of different economic, social, educational organizations. People working with adults share the knowledge, organize the learning and training processes, encourage the changes from the social, political and cultural points of views, take into account the priorities of the societies and countries where they are living. They are responsible for both adult’s personal and professional development and their own. Their tasks are innumerable. They have to develop educational potential in different social practices by organizing, teaching and helping adults in their learning activities. It’s rather a challenging job, because those who teach adults face with various problems every day. The most significant one is that people working with adults do not perceive themselves as adult teachers, educators, as it is stressed by Mark Federman from Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. He had been working with adults for 20 years before he began to consider himself “an adult educator” [2].

This results in another problem of theoretical and scientific character, that is the absence of the universally accepted terminology in the field of adult learning. It leads to misunderstanding and not proper translations into national languages.

Literature Review. The problem of basic terminology is traditionally raised in every scientific article and publications. For instance, some basic concepts of adult education, their terms and the reasons of the preference in their use were analyzed in the author's article [3]. However, there are no publications which summarize the reflections on what term is better to use and its reasons. The publication by B.Mansfield (2004) [4, p.297] about the difference in terms "competence", "competent" and "competencies" may be considered a rare valuable contribution into the development of a scientific thesaurus of adult education. Using his metaphor in relation to the mentioned terms "a Pandora box" which hides a lot of secrets, it is possible to reveal some of them in concepts denoting people who work with adult learners. The extensive review of literature which has been done to select the most frequently used terms is presented in the part about the results and discussion. In short, the publications by European, American, Russian and Ukrainian authors were under consideration.

Thus, **the aim of the publication** is to select the terms which are used to denote people who are working with adult learners, to trace their differences and identify the advantages and disadvantages of their use.

The Methods of the Research. In view of theoretical character of the publication, the applied methods were analysis and synthesis, descriptive and classifying methods which made it possible to select the most frequently used terms, to make the analysis of their definitions and to identify their strong and weak points. It has led to the generalizing the information of the terminology for people who are working with adult learners. The use of these methods resulted in creating the table where the obtained information has been summed up.

Results and Discussion.

The concept of adult teachers in educational literature in English is termed with a number of special words: "adult trainers", "adult educators", "adult education instructors", "adult teachers", "facilitators", "motivators", "tutors" and sometimes even "animators". There are scholars' debates on what terminology suits best to the activity which is performed by these people. For instance, interesting reflections on

this question are presented by Ivo Eesmaa in “The Adult Educator’s Different Roles”[5]. The scholar states that “adults cannot be educated by an adult educator” because an adult is responsible for forming his/her education himself/herself. It means that he/she is a subject and, sequentially, not an object of the teaching process. Clearly, an adult teacher can only facilitate the learning process. Hence, the term “adult educator” is not adequately used.

A. Roger (2013) is also of the opinion that “adult educator” is not a proper term. He points out that an adult educator is a person who works in adult educational institutions, no matter if he/she is engaged in teaching or only in supporting the learning process: curriculum designers, teaching resource providers and so on [6].

The same uncertainty can be observed with the term “teacher”. But unlike a teacher of children, a person working with adults does not teach, he/she shares his/her knowledge, experience, encourages adults to learn, helps adults in choosing the best learning strategies which suits them best of all, applies his/her learners’ experience in the learning process. In other words, he/she facilitates the learning process. Therefore, the use of the term “adult facilitator” can seem rather efficient as it reflects the main idea of an adult teacher’s task – facilitation of the adult learning process.

However, it should be mentioned that being a facilitator is only one of the four customarily distinguished roles together with a teacher, a trainer, a guide. Such classification of adult educator’s roles is based on the functions he/she performs. A teacher gives knowledge, a guide or navigator organizes the process, a trainer trains the adult learner’s skills, a facilitator manages the people’s relations [7].

Still, there can be some more terms which reveal the purpose of learning or the characteristics of the learning environment. R. O. Ani (2003) states that adult facilitators can be of three types. The first is volunteers who have little or no training in working with adults. The second is facilitators who work with adults and who have special education but not in the field of adult education. He called them “specialists”. The third type is “academics”. These are people who are trained in adult education and who work with adult audience at tertiary institutions as lecturers, researchers or educators in adult education [8].

In addition, the people working with adults can be named as only “educators” or “teachers”, that is those who are educating and those who make this process possible. All depends on the society needs: either to develop the staff of the professional adult educators or to concentrate on increasing the number of basic teachers or part-time teachers of adults. Another criterion for such division, the researcher sees in the conceptual difference: the availability of knowledge and practical skills to teach adults and personal qualities of a teacher and his/her ability to establish the rapport with adult learners.

T. Ugwoegbu (2010) addresses to the term “adult instructors” but expands its meaning from the narrow concept denoting people who are mostly engaged in imparting the skills of reading and writing to the illiterate to those who help an adult or adults to learn anything useful to them [9, p.102].

A. Roger (2013) considers the term “instructor” to be very restricted as it implies some limitation of educational activity – learning as a mechanical phenomenon, adults get a number of instruction how to act. By analogy, A. Roger also denies the term “trainer” as it is perceived as merely a person who forms the knowledge [6].

In Ukrainian educational literature a person who is engaged in teaching adults is named “an andragogue”. The term was coined by analogy with the word “pedagogue” from “pedagogy”, “andragogue” from “andragogy” (the theory and practice of teaching adults). Though in the world’s leading researches this term has not been widely used, the preference is given to the above-mentioned terminology. The reason for this, to our mind, is the definitions given by some English encyclopedia dictionaries to the term “andragogy”: “1. The methods or techniques used to teach adults. Mistakenly used to refer to adult education for both male and female learners. “Mistakenly” because andro, -andra- refer only to males. 2. Another erroneous definition is, 'the art and science of helping adults learn”.

In Russian and Ukrainian research papers the term “andragogue” has different connotations. For instance, an andragogue denotes a specialist who teaches adults only within special educational institutions for adults; a specialist in management,

consulting, social, rehabilitative and correction work in the adults' environment; a leading specialist who works with adults. L.Lukianova O. (2012) stresses that andragogues are those who have special adult education and who work with adult learners in formal educational environment [10]. As it can be seen, there are different interpretations of one term. The Russian and Ukrainian definitions vary from the narrowest to the widest range. Besides, the profession of an “andragogue” does not exist in the Classification of Professions in Ukraine [11, p.8], thus the term cannot be used to denote a person with special adult education.

To sum up, all terms and definitions, their pluses and minuses are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Generalizing Information on the Use of Basic Terms in Adult Education

Term	Advantage	Disadvantage
Adult educator	Has a wide meaning; Generalizing term which involves smaller concepts May show the special adult education of a person who works with adults.	Is not adequately used in relation to the adult learner who is not an object but a subject of the learning process; May denote both those who work with adults and those who support the learning process
Adult teacher	Universality of the term	Teachers are people who work with children; Does not reflect the peculiarities of adult learning. May seem a position lower than an educator. May imply only practical skills.
Facilitator	Focuses on the essence of the activity.	Does not encompass the range of other side of the process (giving knowledge, establishing people's relations, training skills). Does not show the difference between those who work in formal, non-formal

		and informal settings.
Adult instructor	Has got the enlarged meaning of a person who helps adults to learn anything useful to them	May seem very restricted in meaning only to giving instructions; Contradicts the facilitating character of working with adults.
Adult trainer	May be widely used in on-the-job adult learning	Has limited meaning of a person who trains, that is gives knowledge and develops practical skills.
Andragogue	May become a general term denoting any person who is engaged in adult education in any educational setting (formal, non-formal, informal)	Terms coined by analogy may be not properly understood. Is mostly understood as a person with special education working in formal education field. Unavailability of special education in developing countries.

Source: summarized by the author.

Unambiguity of terms for people who work with adults resulted in the absence of the corresponding terms to denote the process of their initial and further training.

The mostly widespread term is “training of trainers” in the contracted form TOT. It is common to use the abbreviation TOT to define this learning process. However, there is another interpretation of this term which is not as wide as “training of trainers”. It can be also decoded as “trainer of trainers” and describes the person who facilitates the training of trainers. Thus, one more term can be applied to those who work with adults. But in this case, with the special category of adults – teachers themselves.

The absence of the common terminology in denoting people who work with adult learners reveals that the theory and practice of adult learning is developing and the scholars and practitioners are in the search of the adequate terminology which should be concise and clear, universal in multicultural environments and easily recognizable.

Conclusion. Having analyzed the publications of European, American, Russian, Ukrainian scholars in the field of adult education and the people who are engaged in it, it has been found out that these terms are multiple and various. The mostly frequent are adult educator, adult teacher, adult facilitator, adult trainer, adult instructor and andragogue. They are not identical in their meaning. The preference in their applying in the scientific educational literature depends on the focus the scholars put on the role which is played by these people in adult learning process.

Further studies on the topic are planned to be performed on identifying the challenges which adult educators meet in practice and the ways of their settling, particularly on the national level. It would be also of great interest to compare them in different countries.

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