



**GENDER
AND DEVELOPMENT
IN PRACTICE**



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



COLLABORATIVE LEARNING FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

- *Workshop on pedagogy with
a focus on migrant women*

12 OCTOBER 2018

GOTHENBURG, SWEDEN



Organisers: Ulla Björnberg, Edmé Dominguez,
Nancy Contreras, Regina Mattsson on behalf of GADIP;
Gender and Development in Practice.

This report has been written by Regina Mattsson and Lisa Sutton,
revised by Ulla Björnberg and Edmé Dominguez.

GADIP 2018
www.gadip.se
gadip.sverige@gmail.com
Gothenburg, Sweden



INTRODUCTION

GADIP is a non-governmental organisation operating from Gothenburg. The organisation started their work in 2012 and is led by a board of academics and practitioners. GADIP operates as a network for feminist within academia and activism who are interested in mutual exchanges of knowledge and experience. GADIP is an acronym for Gender and Development in Practice, is a non-politically tied non-profit organisation with the goal to create a forum for researchers and activists to meet and engage in dialogue concerning gender and development in Sweden, as well as internationally. GADIP collaborates with the European network WIDE+, Women in Development Europe, and the workshop today on pedagogy with a focus on migrant women is the second workshop within the Erasmus + project run within WIDE+: The Europe we want? Feminist approaches to gender, migration, and democracy. The project is co-funded by the Erasmus + programme of the European Union.

WELCOME

Ulla Björnberg, president of GADIP, and Edmé Dominguez, vice president, present the theme of the workshop and welcome everyone, “welcome to collaborative learning for women’s empowerment - workshop on pedagogy with a focus on migrant women”. During this second workshop we wanted to focus on something different – which is pedagogy. The traditional view on pedagogy is based on the act of someone teaching another – a form of thought still present today. With this workshop we aim to present different perspectives and communicate on pedagogy as the knowledge about how we learn. Pedagogy and the act of learning is a mutual process where both parts learn from each other. This kind of learning is subsequently a central process of successful work in integration processes.

In today’s society we see concepts and statements such as that people who have immigrated to Sweden should be “assimilated”, meaning to adopt and adjust to current, local norms. GADIP, on the other hand, sees integration as a mutual process where we can integrate with each other, through dialogue, give and take, and learning to understand each other. This process of learning can contribute to the empowerment of people. Empowerment concerns not only individual empowerment, but could also concern the empowerment of a group of people. Even though current discourses on empowerment are often focused on the individual, it can be based on the political process where groups can be empowered together. Learning as a mutual process has the potential to create empowerment, which is hence the chosen theme of today’s workshop.

For today’s workshop experts and professionals who work in the process of learning in different forms are gathered together. We therefore want to communicate different perspectives on pedagogy and learning – through practical knowledge we can generate empowerment!

Thank you to all the speakers and participants! Especially big of a thank you to Kvinnofolkhögskolan (the Women’s College in Gothenburg) for offering their premises for today’s workshop - it is a valuable and important cooperation.

FEMINIST ECONOMIC LITERACY

Patience Nkengafac, **WIDE+**, *The University of Gothenburg*

Patience is a master student in Gender Studies at the University of Gothenburg, currently completing her internship with WIDE+, where she works to compile a handbook on Feminist Economic Literacy.

Patience commences by explaining that as the participants of today's workshop are academics and practitioners the presentation is based on academic findings. The introduction will define economic literacy.

Economic literacy – a definition: What is economic literacy? Generally it means the ability to utilise core economic concepts to be able to make informed decisions regarding your income, expenses and savings. The common economic discourse focus only on the financial contribution to the economy, which is why feminist economics see the economy as a social and political construction. Feminist economics includes the care economy, which sees the economy from a female point of view.

The concept of pedagogy within feminist economics refer back to Paulo Freire's method on popular education. Paulo Freire was a Brazilian activist and pedagogue who worked within "critical pedagogy". Paulo Freires method emphasised that the teachers don't have all the knowledge, instead that learning is a mutual process where the one learning also contributes to the learning process. The method demonstrates that many systems within politics, economy and education are authoritarian and function from the interest of the economic and political elite. Knowledge is not neutral but a part of larger structures. For example, if a society suffers from inequalities and defined power hierarchies then the education will also reproduce these structures. This manner of teaching means in practice that a lot of people don't have the ability to make decisions that influence their lives in order to develop their greatest potential. Instead, Freire encourages a system where education is used to free people, where the weight of learning is to contribute to critical thinking and the willingness to take part in social change. In this way education becomes a system that encourages people to free themselves from current structures, develop their creative abilities, and influence social change. Within Freire's model there are three main categories: encourage social change and create creative and critical consciousness. These three categories can support people in their learning.

"Learning is a mutual process where the one learning also contributes to the learning process."

Based on Paulo Freire's methods, Patience communicates that education is not neutral, that it reproduces the status quo in society, both in regards to inequality and patriarchal structures. Furthermore, Patience explains the model that has been developed by Wide+, the "spiral model". The model is based on the idea that learning starts with the experience and existing knowledge of the participants.

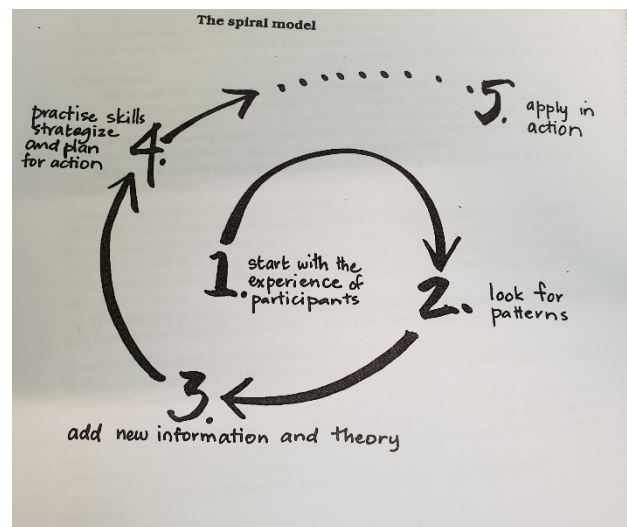
After collecting the experiences of the participants, these are then analysed. These analyses create new theories that on their turn create new knowledge that produce new skills and strategies for action that can be used in daily work. "

This is different from an "expert model" when a teacher teaches and students learn, because it values the knowledge and experiences from the participant. Everybody learns and teaches in a collaborative method by developing new knowledge based on the experience from the participant. This model of learning can lead to action for social change through being critical to the ideas and practises that uphold the inequality and reproduce the status quo.

Within this model theories are not considered purely abstract, but instead something that steams from practise and own experiences. By trying to demystify the ideas of theories as difficult and abstract, learning is encouraged.

The Spiral model:

1. Start with the experience of participants
2. Look for patterns
3. Add new information and theory
4. Practice skills, strategise, and plan action
5. Apply in action



In the second part of the presentation Patience gave examples on how economic literacy can be utilised. An example is to redefine work to also consider unpaid work within the home, as well as women's economic contributions. According to Patience it seems hard for policy makers to acknowledge women's unpaid work as contributing to the economy. This includes all the different roles women have within society. In their work with Wide+ research is done on how women are contributing to society and economic activity, not from a neoliberal perspective, but from a feminist economic perspective. This as classic economics doesn't consider care work, even though women's unpaid work in reality reproduces society both from an economic viewpoint and as human capital.

Patience wants us to take with us from today how you can use the strategies from today's workshop in your daily work - you can influence knowledge! When you leave this workshop and go back to your work place or maybe decide to create and organisation, consider what you took with you from this day and remember that experience creates knowledge.

WOMENS ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH BUDGETING

Janviere Ntamazeze, Fisofa

Janviere Ntamazeze work for Fisofia, "Financial Solutions for all", an NGO that started in January 2015. The NGO is connected to a network with four other organisations and consist of 36 members.

The work of Fisofa is based on women's and girls' economic empowerment, to increase women's access to economic resources and opportunities such as work, financial services, property and other productive assets, as well as the development of competence and market information. Fisofa's work is based on strengthening knowledge about the economy and entrepreneurship for women. Many of the girls and women that Fisofa meets have a need to learn about economic terms and understand their economic rights. Janviere means that it is hard to confront economic problems if the terms and rights are foreign to you.

Fisofa meets predominantly women who have migrated to Sweden, through their collaboration with the Integration Network, who invites Fisofa every Thursday. Fisofa focuses their work on capacity building and advocacy. According to Fisofa women who have migrated to Sweden are to a bigger extent prone to poverty, trafficking, lack of information and a lower level of literacy. According to Fisofa these situations can lead to both dependency and violence within the household.

Fisofa utilises the strategy "learning by doing", like learning how to write a budget. Fisofa separates the participants in smaller groups and supports them in writing down their budgets; how they spend their money and how they plan for their private economy. The aim is to understand the importance of having a budget and a financial plan, of how I can best provide for my family and how I can prepare for the upcoming month. Questions such as "why am I not meeting my targets" are treated.

The integration network in Gothenburg invites Fisofa every Thursday to have study circles about budgets. This work on budgets happens in groups of four people. All of the participants are assigned a budget template and receive instructions to discuss questions that concern a budget. Through these discussions the women learn from each other. After the group discussion every participant can book a time with one of Fisofa's members for individual mentorship in 30 minutes long sessions. The study circles are only for women. If men are interested in the study circles too, a different group is created for them.

In addition to budgets, Fisofa offers preparatory programs which aim to strengthen people to take control over their economy. The first module is named "take your own responsibility", this module is an hour long and goes through practical examples, as well as through the problems that the participants meet in regards to their economy, with the aim that every individual can discuss and come up with their own solutions. This method is aimed to strengthen women to take control of their own financial situation.

Amal Ahlin and Sahar Armandi, Terrafem Gothenburg

Terrafem Gothenburg is a women's aid organisation that offers support and legal consulting, to women and girls who are victims of violence, in their mother tongue (in approximately 60 languages). Terrafem offers a national wide phone line that targets women and girls that are or have been victims of abuse, rape, harassment, threat or are in the risk zone for forced marriages.

Terrafem is a nationwide network with locations in Uppsala, Stockholm, Gothenburg and Eskilstuna. The Gothenburg branch, who is invited to today's workshop, is made up by four employees that together speak Persian, Kurdish, Albanian, English, French and Somali.

The phone line is staffed with female volunteers that offer information in different languages. They are called in when needed. If the conversation is urgent and the office cannot offer conversation support in the women's or girls' language they contact different offices and book time for the conversation. If the person who calls wants to speak with someone in Gothenburg they book a time together with the inquirer and the volunteer.

Terrafem applies a definition of violence that is broader than physical violence. It includes physical, psychological, sexual, economic and material violence. Material violence describes violence where a person tries to or causes the destruction of a possession of significant importance – an object of material value that is hard to replace. This violence is practiced with the aim of destroying something of emotional value, for example a painting made by their child.

The women that Terrafem Gothenburg meets are: Women who don't have permanent residency and risks deportation; Women who don't know the Swedish laws concerning divorces and custody battles; Women in need of safe housing; Women and girls who are facing violence in the name of honour, and need to escape, or have escaped from their homes or families.

Terrafem Gothenburg visits different schools and organisations to inform about violence, in the cases where they offer information at Universities, the lectures are deeper and in more detail concern the questions of violence and their expressions.

A group that Terrafem often meets is women who have come to Sweden due to a connection to a man. Many women are the victims of physical, psychological and/or economic violence. The violence is expressed in the situation where women are living with temporary residence in Sweden the first two years of the relationship. The women live in fear of the future. The man may threaten with calling the migration office and get them deported. The women often don't know their rights. This is the most important topic of concern for Terrafem Gothenburg, who can see that many men are exploiting this form of violence.

"The decisions should come from the woman herself if they should have a longstanding effect"

Terrafem Gothenburg works after the principle “help to self help”, they work to motivate the women they meet and never tell them what they should do. The decisions should come from the woman herself if they are to have a longstanding effect. The women that Terrafem Gothenburg meet often haven’t made decisions about their futures and are still living in situations where they are exposed to violence. Terrafem Gothenburg doesn’t want to be another person “who tells the woman what to do”, but instead display different alternatives and work by offering motivation. In the situation where the woman still lives in situations exposed to violence, Terrafem works with motivation. When they meet women who have left violent men they work to process and work through the past by offering conversation and support. Many of Terrafem’s volunteers are legal practitioners, two of them work for Terrafem Gothenburg offering legal support.

The work of Terrafem is aimed to support women, especially those not having had the opportunity to make decisions regarding their own lives. Therefore Terrafem wants to encourage and focus on the independence and empowerment of these women.

Discussion:

- How does Terrafem categorize honour based violence? Terrafem doesn’t categorize honour based violence as separate from other forms of violence as they are practised within the other defined categories. To separate honour based violence from other forms of violence could lead to the risk of creating further stigma concerning the topic. However, Terrafem Gothenburg gives lectures on violence in the name of honour.

- Women’s violence against women – what is Terrafem Gothenburgs view on that? Terrafem means that women’s violence against women often includes men’s violence and violence in the name of honour, when women’s violence against women is part of the patriarchal structures within the family: when the man is the head of the family, but the mother might even carry out the violence. Terrafem Gothenburg also offers lectures on gender equality, where women’s violence against women often is discussed.

- When inquirers call and seek support and want practical help in their contact with official authorities, Terrafem supports the women to be able to do this themselves. If this doesn’t work, they can offer support to handle the contact with authorities. The idea is that women should do as much as possible themselves and be strengthened through it – to feel that they can do it themselves.

HANDICRAFTS AND WOMEN’S RIGHTS – A TOOL FOR EMPOWERMENT

*Nancy Contreras, **Project manager, ABF***

Nancy Contreras works with work training at ABF (Workers' Educational Association) in Trollhättan with the project “Strong Women”. Strong Women has existed for two years and was started as a group of women who are far away from the labour market, illiterate och with very low educational skills.

ABF Trollhättan started this project in collaboration with Arbetsförmedlingen (The Swedish Public Employment Service). Offering this group of women three to six months work training.

This decision to be part of the group is based on the participant's employment officer and the time frame is decided by the Employment Service. However, the participants and ABF are requesting a longer time frame in order to improve the results. The project has two groups, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The target group is varied, and as already said their education level is low or non-existent.

The project offers computer knowledge, Swedish language courses, as well as needlecraft. The computer courses include, for example, how to pay bills online, how to create an e-mail address and how to sign up in the cue for access to renting property. The project is supported by a professor from the University of Gothenburg who comes in to give lectures. These lectures address subjects such as women's rights, the right to your own body, what it is like to be a mother or sister, as well as discussing different cultures and religions.

According to Nancy this project challenges different stereotypes and expectations of how different groups should behave. The project also confronts the participants' experiences and trauma as these can be a hinder in their learning process. By being aware of these difficulties everyone is met according to their own abilities.

"By being aware of these difficulties everyone is met according to their own abilities"

To create the sense of empowerment and acknowledge their rights, ABF and the Strong Women's project utilize different methods. Craft, learning how to sew, is one tool that also challenges gender-related activities as in Somalia sewing is considered a male profession, something that many women of Somali background have not done before. Within this project everybody is offered different opportunities to sew, to create something of their own choice. The craft created is later sold, which in turn is a part of the work towards economic empowerment. Another goal with the project is that the participants should develop their knowledge in the Swedish language, which means that all the activities are in Swedish. Women from the program have created their own organisation under the name Strong Women. It is open to all women and the clothes and bags that are made are sold to the organisation. The goal for the new organisation is to create an economic association where the women can support themselves through their sewing.

Discussion

- The work training through ABF is offered in Trollhättan. Strong Women have existed for two years. Currently according to the rules of the Employment Service the length of the course is six months.
- Many women who participate don't have a place to live but participating in the project helps them to solve this problem.
- As the participants leave after six months there are difficulties to follow up. However, according to Nancy, many who have participated in the project have been offered employment in other municipal projects. Others have been encouraged to continue their education.

THE WOMENS COLLEGE: EXPERIENCES CONCERING PEDAGOGY

Maria Fredriksson, Kvinnofolkhögskolan (The Women's Collage)

The Womens College (Kvinnofolkhögskolan) in Gothenburg is a communal college (Folkhögskola) with a feminist and multicultural foundation.

Background: The Women's College has existed since 1985, however, the work to create the school started already in the 70s when a work group was created in 1976, as part of the women's movement, to get permits in order to create a school. Thereafter, it was ten years before a decision in the parliament made the opening of the school possible. The aim was to create a room for women and the school has been sex-segregated from the start.

Profile: The Women's College is open for women and for people identifying as trans. At the start the school was only open for women, however as the trans community grew it became an issue the school had to deal with. This was solved by the decision to welcome both women and people who identify as trans as staff as well as students. The school aims at breaking the segregated labour market by encouraging the entrance of women and transgender people into 'masculine' branches such as construction, electronics and technology. The school also offers general courses, in order to equip women with resources needed to take up space in society.

There is a strong and calculated ambition in the forming of the schools courses. As a "folkhögskola" (adults college) the school has a mission to compensate, focus on and prioritise people with low levels of education. The school prepares students to fight for equality targets, to lift up women and transgender people and to help those who need it to achieve the basic educational standards. The also school offers different educational programs, courses in Swedish, as well as courses on feminism. The students' average age has lowered during the years and is today quite low. Before the range of ages was bigger. The students represent a cultural, language and ethnic diversity.

About separatism: Maria explained that before, she was not aware of the controversies around the fact that men are not accepted within the school. Afterwards when she had to argue against the charges of sex discrimination she became aware that the reasons for this 'pretended discrimination' was that the school has to privilege women and now trans students on account of their underprivileged status, to create spaces for them to become equipped to make their inclusion in society more successful.

"Separate organization for future increased inclusion of women and transgender people within society"

The Women's Adult College does not want to cement a difference but has an ambition to increase inclusion within society. A lot of people seek out the school searching for a safe space. The concept of a safe space is something the staff often discusses – what does a safe space mean? Maria meant that there is a difference between safety and trust. The goal of the school is not to create safety in the sense of being able to say anything without being challenged. A school should be place where students should be challenged in their ideas but within an environment of trust and security in which constructive criticism leads to interactive learning.

Organisation: The school is run by a foundation and has a school board operating the daily administration. The staff council is a decision making body. The foundation is made up by a number of women's movements that have come together. The school is free from religious or political belongings. The Women's Adult College does not operate under the National school ministry but under the council for Adult education (folkbildningsrådet).

An important factor for the school success is, according to Maria, that the teachers evaluate the gradual evolution of the student until she, or them, accomplishes the necessary qualifications for a high school diploma or its equivalent. In other words, the school does not use the normal grading systems but the general Adults education's rules in this matter. In this way the students' skills are appreciated as a whole and not only in their performance of ordinary tests or tasks.

EMPOWERMENT FOR MOTHERS REAPS BIG REWARDS

Bodil Frey, Project manager, "Early Parental Support"

Bodil works with the project "Equal start in life" in the division of cultural interpreters. Bodil's background is as a Doula, a person who professionally support people before and during their pregnancies.

The project "Equal start in life" main vision is that everyone should be able to receive the same start in life, without regards to if the parents live in a vulnerable position or not, as the early time in life is of emotional importance. The project "Equal start in life" is carried out by the organisation "Early Parental Support" which aims to empower women with early support of their children.

How children develop in the uterus can be affected by stress. In addition, the relationship with the parents after the delivery is central to the child's development. A Doula or supporter has shown to be of significance to the women giving birth, only a few hours can give great results: less pain, less complications, the mother being more satisfied with the delivery viewing themselves and their child in a more positive light. Within the project there are cultural interpreter, who works with those who are hard to reach. The project collaborates with the public health care and other authorities.

Background: The need for a Doula and Cultural interpreters was discovered when women in particularly vulnerable situations, often new immigrants, where lacking sufficient knowledge of the health care system, lacking social networks and suffering from non-visible postnatal depressions. Development and support at an early age is a good investment, Bodil clarifies, explaining the Hackman curve which means that early investment in children contributes to positive development, not only by focusing on children in preschool, but also, before that, focusing on the parents. This is often forgotten according to Bodil, especially regarding new migrants. Programmes such as early parental support within the health care system should be available to everyone, but being offered only in Swedish limits the participation of new immigrants.

A lot of the knowledge that made the foundation for the project possible came from “the Birth House”, where Bodil has worked with other Doulas and Cultural Interpreters previously. The women often were referred to the “the Birth House” from the maternal health care or through social networks. Many of the mothers Bodil and others within the organization met were lacking knowledge about the Swedish society as they had not received the information needed. Many of the mothers came from countries where the social networks around pregnancies and deliveries are strong, whereas, in Sweden, the mothers were often alone with their partners, and felt isolated. The doulas came into contact with women who were depressed, disappointed and found themselves alone in Sweden leading, in the worst cases, to a lessened parental ability. With this background the doulas and cultural interpreter’s role became very important in order to build bridges between the mothers and the Swedish system and to support the creation of networks among the mothers.

Cultural interpreters: The function of the cultural interpreters is to act as a support person regarding integration and language. The cultural interpreters can easily access people who are “hard to reach”.

Activities: The project encourages women to reach out to and support each other. They offer a programme that is called “the Spice” (Kryddan). “The Spice” contains courses in many different areas, where a large number of children and teenagers attend. It becomes a public living room where young people can come and read and do their homework. The project involves eight employed cultural interpreters who speak Arabic and Somali and hold courses. Additionally, other professionals, such as midwives, social workers, psychologists, dieticians are invited to hold courses. “The Spice” also offers a baking course and the project offers the service of looking after the children while the mothers attend the courses. They have also arranged meetings with politicians.

Pedagogy: The project works together with the family unit in Angered (a district within Gothenburg) where two cultural interpreters, speaking Arabic and Somali, usually are available in the waiting room. The cultural interpreters meet many of the parents who attend the family unit, where 2200 children are assigned to. Many of the parents are new in Sweden. The cultural interpreters answer questions concerning all matters that concern different government departments (migration, insurance, social services and so forth.)

The first step is to take contact, build a relationship and offer support and advice.

The second step involves building social networks, where women for example are involved in the organization in order to support each other.

The project is very successful, however, unfortunately, the financial support runs out next year. They are currently trying to find continued financial support as the need for their services continues.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN SFI – A LOOK BACK TO IMPROVE THE FUTURE

Marie Carlson, Gothenburg University

Marie Carlsson originally worked as a middle school teacher and afterwards as a teacher at SFI (Swedish for Immigrants) at Komvux (the Municipal system for Adult Education), adding altogether fifteen years of experience in teaching. In her doctorate thesis Marie chose to focus on the sociology of education as she was interested in SFI from a point of view of the society. Marie wrote her PhD about SFI titled “Swedish for immigrants – bridge or border? The view on knowledge and learning within the teaching of SFI” (2002).

SFI started in 1965 outside from the public school system. The organisers were educational associations (studieförbund) linked to unions and the Adult education school's system. During the first twenty years there were no course plans nor any requirements for professional teachers. SFI has from the start served several functions and raised high expectations. Several actors, including the Employment Service (Arbetsförmedlingen) and the social services get involved in SFI's functioning linking, for example, the funding of welfare to the attendance of SFI courses.

When Marie 2002 wrote her thesis, the Employment Agency had coined the concept “SFI Level”, linking it to the possibility of getting support as an ‘active job-seeker’. During 2017, SFI had 169 175 participants, of which 51% were women, which is four times as many as in the turn of the century. Following the increase, a quality check is on the way to be performed.

Teaching Credentials: Before there were no formal diplomas or degrees demanded to be a language teacher, primary school credentials were acceptable, without specific demands on credentials for teaching a second language or knowledge of adult pedagogy. From 2011 there is a regulation concerning formal diplomas and degrees.

How are people met in their SFI education? It is of importance to see what images are being used and reproduced. Women who are illiterate are often pictured in a hijab, even though several of them don't use such a cloth and there are many men attending as well.

Dialogue: The role of adult education in a multicultural society cannot be one-sided teaching in the traditional sense. When adults are involved in an educational setting it is not correct to speak in disciplining, socialising or re-socialising terms. According to the researcher Charles Westin, the adult education in serving the multicultural society is about activating and reactivating the potential of adult people. Adult education can function as a meeting place where understanding and respect for differences is being encouraged – which places large demands on the teacher.

According to the researcher Elisabeth Elmeroth, a researcher who has written “Ethnic power hierarchies within schools and society”, the participants experiences were invisible in the SFI teaching and integration programs. The participants were expected to change their professions, values and language – in a multiple “re-schooling” process.

The meaning of language: To be able to communicate and be listened to. In Marie's study it is not rare the participants experience feelings of inferiority and of being considered stupid. In some way the participants of SFI are emptied of their previous experiences and cognitive abilities.

"When we came here we were almost as children – it doesn't matter that you have previous knowledge, having attended school earlier – when you sit here and can't speak the language it is like you have no mouth or ears – you can't understand, so you're a loser. You sink down into being a loser. You feel like you are not enough, like you don't exist. You have knowledge – but when I can't express it with language I have no use of the knowledge. Then you think, or you think that from their perspective we are ignorant, non-educated, ---- or well, not modern. Maybe they don't think that about others, but that's how I feel, like them thinking that I'm not good for anything – I don't have any knowledge." (Carlson 2002: 233)

The "right" to an interpreter: A common misconception is that there is a law that gives everyone the right to an interpreter, but that is not the case. However, it is strongly marked in the Public Administration Act (Förvaltningslagen). In the Public Administration Act §8 it is stated that a person *should* be offered an interpreter. This means that not everyone is necessarily offered an interpreter when in contact with authorities.

The meaning of language in print: In the paper process of migrants who want to start working there is a tendency to see them as males, thereby making women migrants invisible even within texts concerning work and access to work in society. This is the case even regarding educational material, as well as other materials referring to SFI and labour market plans.

SFI: SFI has become a market space according to Marie. The adaptation to the market is one of the tendencies that has changed the terms of the function of education internationally as well as nationally since the beginning of the 1990s. The market adaptation should however not be confused with it acting on a "free market", instead the state is a driving and controlling actor behind this change, through laws and regulations supporting the development where the school is being adapted to the values and ideals of the market. It is the municipalities that foremost decide SFI's extent and configuration. The adult education within the city of Gothenburg has been reorganised through the New Public Management-thinking. Currently SFI is being controlled by a market oriented organization logic according to a client model and the use of procurements (upphandlingar). The customer is however not the student, but the organization demanding the service and the students are therefore marginalized and objectified, according to Marie.

The afore mentioned situation has led to a new SFI- evaluation whose first results are expected in February and the final report at the end of May. The evaluation is already showing that there is not much individually focused education for newly arrived immigrants, nor is there any option for those needing more challenges. The report will show if there is a need to increase the guaranteed period of education, as well as what support actions can be used in order to help all those who strive to attain higher education.

Discussion

- It is a good thing that a new evaluation is under way. Internships should also be a part of the SFI education so as to give people opportunities to practise the language.
- Experience of SFI in the 80's explains that they were offered three hours of teaching and then further opportunities in the form of study circles and activities to practice Swedish 9-18 at the school. Another person described her experience as highly effective in the 80's, with 6 hours long courses every day during three months.
- It becomes evident in the presentation that individually focused education is important for the learning.
-

GROUP DISCUSSIONS

After today's presentations the participants were divided into four groups to discuss the themes that have been brought up during the day. All the groups were given an hour to discuss before they returned to the full group. The themes discussed were the following: 1. Pedagogy and didactics in learning; 2. Our images of the migrant women and how this affects collaborative learning; 3. How the life style situation (living arrangements, family, violence) can affect collaborative learning – how can we improve?; 4. How much does language affect collaborative learning?

1. *Pedagogy and didactics in learning*

The group started the discussion with talking about what they had heard during the day, they focused on the idea to build knowledge from their own and others experiences and that the learning should involve more than just consumption and reproduction. The learning should be a part of building experiences and knowledge, and give everyone the space to formulate their expectation of the learning in their own words. The group also discussed the concepts – what does collaborative and didactics mean? Didactics for the group meant the science of how we learn and how we view learning from our own experiences. The collaborative learning was produced through group discussions, when these discussions gave a lot of new knowledge. These concrete pedagogical tools is something that the group will take home from today's workshop.

2. *Our images of the migrant women and how this affects collaborative learning*

The group discussed the concepts of an "immigrant" as a concept can be considered in positive and negative ways. Another issue of discussion was the images portraying women, for example when associated with education the image is a white woman. Further the class aspect was discussed regarding who gets access to certain spaces, integration and inclusion then becomes a class issue. In the end the group talked about the importance of shared spaces where meetings beyond class and other social borders may take place.

3. *How the life situation (living arrangements, family, violence) can affect collaborative learning – how can we improve?*

The group talked about Sweden as a country of regulations. Also about how different life situations affect learning. It is difficult to learn the language and to be “integrated” to society when the family has not left the idea of “returning” to the homeland. Other life circumstances make learning harder, such as a difficult asylum process or the dealing with trauma. Traumatized experiences can have a great effect on the learning and this creates unreasonable demands on the individual as Swedish regulations don’t take into account these special circumstances and link SFI results to welfare support even though there are no formal rules on this issue. The future: For the future the group means that building relationships are of importance! Within organisations, networks and other arenas there is the space and opportunities to meet others. More information is needed from the start and continuously for people that are new to Sweden, information adapted to the different individual situations (for example if you are a single mother, retired, wants to study, and so forth.) It is also important to learn what the new comers expect and to correct the false images-information they get, for example their fear that the social service will take their children or that the authority in charge of collecting unpaid bills will take their money.

4. *How much does language affect collaborative learning?*

This group discussed the question: How can we move forward? And what strategies can we use? The discussion focused on language barriers regarding integration as it makes very difficult the contact with authorities and the access to information. The learning of the language is not just a question of will, it has to do with age, class, motivation and previous experiences. The Swedish society is highly segregated, how can people be given the space to practice and come into contact with each other? The group discussed the importance of cultural interpreters, bridges, meeting places such as libraries, language cafés or other activities based on common interests. The Swedish population must become better to establish contact and be able to receive other cultures, integration is a mutual process! The group further talked about work being an incitement to learn a language as a part of the learning process.

Finally, all the workshop participants agreed on the importance of compassion, curiosity and solidarity. Everyone has different circumstances and views, we don’t need to always agree with each other but we always have to show respect to each other.

FINAL WORDS

Ulla Björnberg and Edmé Dominguez thanked everyone who attended the workshop that in itself was an example of collaborative learning. A lesson from the workshop is that with self-confidence and empowerment everybody can manage better.

You are welcome to become members in GADIP and to attend future workshops!

Thank you!

