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HISTORY AND MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF ANDRAGOGY:

THE STATUS OF TEACHING ENGLISH FOR ADULTS IN HUNGARY

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Abstract

This thesis presents a theoretical overview of the history of andragogy, then investigates to what extent English teachers in Hungary put theory into practice where adult education is concerned. It looks at this question from both the learners’ and the teachers’ perspectives. The aim of this research is to identify – partly – the current situation in this area. Comparing the two points of view might give a certain insight into the current understanding of adult education and most specifically the field of English teaching in Hungary.

1. Introduction

This paper aims to give an overall picture on the “past, present and future” prospects of adult education and more specifically the status of English teaching for adults in Hungary. The research is partly based on the knowledge we have derived from theories concerning the different needs adult have and the different ways they can be effective in their learning process.

Having all this information about adult learners at our disposal, the question emerges: How educators can benefit from this knowledge, in other words how often and effectively they use these theories to become more successful in their profession? This question yields the hypothesis of my work.

The HYPOTHESIS: Hungarian English teachers can successfully meet the requirements of the different and accelerated needs of teaching adult learners (focusing on Hungarian adult learners). I assume that they perceive the differences between teaching children and adults and can effectively put the theories of adult education into practice.

The assumption of specific requirements of adult learners based on the theories mentioned below. The importance of this research comes from the fact that English language by becoming the global lingua franca has a great effect on a country’s economy, society, and many other aspects of a country’s performance. Therefore English teachers also have an influence on the future and a big responsibility in how effectively they do their work.

Considering the fact that English teaching is a diversified profession, research should cover as many aspects as available to get a comprehensive result. To fulfil the criteria of
a broad research this paper uses different methods to get answers from the two sides of participants – learners and teachers. Results are based on the opinion of 62 adult learners using questionnaire and 4 English teachers from various fields of this profession giving their reasoned opinion through a mini focused interview. Nevertheless we should be careful when considering this research as a representative one in consequence of the limitation in the number of participants.

The reason why I am interested in a particular segment of adult education – which is English teaching for adults is twofold. Today we live in an extremely globalized world, therefore, adults need to develop not just their professional skills but integrate language skills into it as well. However language teachers in Hungary earn high proficiency in their field they do not get supplementary training in connection with the requirements of teaching adults. They should get a deeper understanding on the differences and challenges when it comes to teaching adults. Teachers for foreign languages face an increasing pressure to develop their professional knowledge and gain some more specific competencies when they work with adults.

According to Knox and Fleming (2010, p.125), “at the highest level of their career development, adult educators are expected to participate collaboratively in the solution of global issues, like the global economic crisis, war and peace, terrorism, unemployment, health, sustainability, etc.”

This notion highlights a different approach to the profession of adult educators and suggests that they need to play a more complex role, which means that their views have to be broadened to reach a higher dimension in this profession.

2. The History of Andragogy

The term “andragogy” is used to describe methods and principles in the field of adult education. As we look back in history it is evident that the concept of adult education has existed for a long time. But formal institutional adult education is relatively modern. The term “andragogy”, was first mentioned by Alexander Kapp (1833), a German high school teacher. In his book entitled Plato's Educational Ideas he claimed that lifelong learning should be available for all human beings. Then the term andragogy was put aside for a relatively long time, by the beginning of the next century when it started to emerge again (Reischmann, J., 2004).
Rosenstock-Huessy (1925) believed that andragogy should be the only one possibility for the country and the German people to recover from the collapse after the First World War in 1918. (Reischmann, J. 2004)

About the same time, Lindeman (1926) from the USA travelled to Germany and brought the concept to America. Although he was very determined by claiming that andragogy was the method for teaching adults, the term had not been established in America until many years later (Wang, 2010).

Consequently, it seems safe to assume that he laid the earliest groundwork in the USA for the practical application of andragogy as the method for teaching adults.

2.1 The Beginning of US Adult Education

Malcolm Shepherd Knowles (1913 - 1997) was an American educator who established the main idea of adult education in the USA after the 1950s. He very soon realized that adults have different needs, and placed emphasis on there being a friendly, motivating atmosphere during their learning period. He also agreed that educators should be flexible and existing or future experiences should be incorporated into their teaching methods.

2.2 The European Development of Andragogy

Andragogy has a very slow beginning over a period of almost one century. In many ways, there is a similarity in the programs of the different countries, since the basic needs of adults are similar in all countries. However, we can discover specialized needs in different countries based on the cultural, economic, social, etc. variety (Henschke, 2010).

From the middle of the 20th century the term “andragogy” started to appear in publications; however, there was no or little formal training for adult educators. As Henschke (2010) points out, there was not a unified understanding on knowledge, theories, practice, ideology and commitment in this field and therefore the term could not be clearly identified.
Knowles’ approach did not become widely used in other European countries because the development of andragogy was not clear and tangible not to mention the fact that unified understanding of the term and its practical sense could not be formed. Nonetheless, it is indisputable that andragogy has started to evolve from 1970 and it has been present in educational and professional institutions, publications, training etc since then (Knowles, 2012).

2.3 Adult Education in Hungary in the last two Decades
The perception of andragogy changed a lot during the formation of the market economy (Németh, 2000). Newly emerging organizations like UNESCO and the European Union had a great effect on the process and helped to evolve new ways in adult education. Here it is important to mention the work of Mátyás Durkó (1968), who laid the groundwork of theories in this field.

The findings of the first Hungarian Delphi study (2011) reflect the huge differences among approaches and terms used by both novice and expert senior educators, revealing that the attempt to have a common understanding and unified point of view is still in its early stages. We also can find significant differences in the knowledge of novices and experts. It is also important to point out that however there are plenty of scientific studies available on this topic (e.g. Németh (2015), Feketéné, (2015)) the role and position of andragogy in education is not entirely clearly defined and understood. The majority of educators consider the question of andragogy as a sub category of pedagogy rather than an independent discipline (Feketéné, 1998).

Taking the above into consideration, it seems safe to assume that in Hungary the theory of andragogy is not entirely unified: so we might conclude that further research is needed. The next chapter is designed to collect the most important characteristics of adult learners to provide a starting point for this attempt to measure the current understanding of adult education.

3. Literature Review on Theories in Adult Learning
In this chapter, the main focus is to highlight some of the main theories developed over the years to get a deeper perception of the different characteristics of adult learners. As many of the experts pointed it out adults represent a unique group of learners that significantly differs from children. In 1980, Knowles made assumptions about the
characteristics of adult learners, identifying the most significant differences adults have during a learning process as compared to children (Hubbard, 2003).

3.1 Characteristics of Adult Learners

In the case of adult learners, the following assumptions can be made:

• Adult learners can be characterized as independent and self-directed individuals with the need of having an influence on their own learning. It is important to recognize that they are active participants in their learning process; however, they may need some help from a facilitator. Educators should allow and encourage them to take the responsibility for their own progress. They should provide a range of opportunities to help them to reach their goals but let them choose the best way for themselves (Knowles, 1980).

• Any previous life and job experience which adults bring to the class can be a powerful tool in the educator’s hands and they should use it to make the learning process even more relevant and useful for adult students. It is a necessity for them to see the relevance and the benefits of their efforts (Knowles, 1980).

• Adult learners might have well-defined goals when they decide to attend a course and they usually want to know the specific elements and a predictable outcome of a programme before they join. Therefore, a well-organized and clearly structured programme with specified objectives can be more attractive and beneficial for them. Of course, consistency and flexibility should be in balance during a course (Knowles, 1980).

• Adults are relevancy-oriented, so they want to see the reason for learning something. They should be able to adapt their learning to their work or any other responsibilities they have. This means that clearly identified objectives are necessary and there must be a link between the goal and the field they will use their knowledge. The best way to achieve this criterion is to allow participants to take part in their own learning process. (Knowles, 1980)

• Adults are practical, focusing on the link between learning and its practical benefit. They must see the gain of their efforts. (Knowles, 1980)
• In this particular market segment, showing respect is a very sensitive aspect. Instructors must acknowledge the value of experiences that adult participants have and they should be treated equally free to express their opinion in class (Knowles, 1980).

During the last period of time, a wide range of theories appeared giving a deeper insight into the concept of how adults learn. These can provide help for educators to become more effective by taking the different needs into consideration. There is no single theory that can be exclusively applicable to all adults. Rather, the knowledge what we have had so far in this field of education is based on research, experiences, and assumptions from the past decades. The more that adult educators are familiar with this knowledge base, the more effective their practice can be, and the more responsive their practice can be to the needs of adult learners (Corley, M. A. 2003).

4. Theories in Adult Education

4.1 Experiential Learning

When it comes to examining characteristics of learners it is necessary to study the research and findings experts made during the last period of time. David A. Kolb published his learning styles model in 1984 from which he developed his learning style theory.

In Kolb’s theory, the force for the development of new concepts is provided by new experiences. “Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience” (Kolb, 1984 p.38)

Knowing a person's (and your own) learning style can be a powerful tool to direct their learning process into the field where it can be the most effective. Again it is important to emphasize that no-one has one single learning style so elements should be transferred from one to another to achieve more efficiency. (Kolb, 1984)

Educational Implications of the Theory

Kolb's learning theory is a practical tool, which can help teachers critically evaluate the learning process and create more appropriate learning opportunities for their students. Educators should ensure that activities are designed and carried out in ways that give
the best opportunity for students to maximize results. Also, it can be very helpful to identify the learner’s less-preferred learning styles and give them the opportunity to develop using the elements of experiential learning theory. Ideally, activities and materials should be developed in a reasoned way that best serves the interest of individuals.

There are other experts to identify the learner’s style as well however the main concept is almost the same. Honey and Mumford (1986) adopted Kolb’s model and created their own version to suit better for managers in the business (See Figure 1):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Honey and Mumford Learning Style</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activist</td>
<td>Learn by doing and participation</td>
<td>• brainstorming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• problem solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• group discussion</td>
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<td>• puzzles</td>
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<td>• competitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• role-play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflector</td>
<td>Learn by watching others and think before act</td>
<td>• models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• stories</td>
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<td>• quotes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• background information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theorist</td>
<td>Learn by understanding theory very clearly</td>
<td>• time to think about how to apply learning in reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• case studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• problem - solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• discussion (Rose, 1987)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Table:**

| Pragmatist | Learn through practical tips and techniques from experienced person | • paired discussions  
| | | • self-analysis questionnaires  
| | | • personality questionnaires  
| | | • timeout  
| | | • observing activities  
| | | • feedback from others  
| | | • coaching  
| | | • interviews (Cano-Garcia & Hughes, 2000) |

*Figure 1. Honey and Mumford Learning Styles*

Of course, there are overlaps in the categories because every individual learns in their own way and we cannot establish strict boundaries. The critics of learning styles tend to indicate that the learning styles have weaknesses. For example, some argue that assessing the learning styles of every classroom participant and then matching the instructional methods to that is unfeasible. In addition, a heavy-handed implementation might show a tendency to label the participants and it could restrict learning rather than developing their capability and ability (Smith, 2001). Nevertheless, learning styles are widely researched and used in the government and private schools and educational institutions in UK, USA, and many European countries as this helps teachers to understand the needs and wants of the learner (Sarabdeen, J. 2013). Although, it is crucial to determine the learning style of each student but it should be only the first step. To succeed when teaching adults, I think that educators’ focus should be widened and other theories must be involved as well.

**4.2 Task - Based Language Teaching**

The task-based language learning approach is an alternative way for educators to develop their students’ communicative skills. This way of teaching also can serve the improvement of cognitive skills so that is the reasons why language teachers, textbook writers, and course designers welcomed the approach as an option to provide disciplines
fit for the requirements of our globalized economy. The importance of task-based learning in the present day context is evident from the numerous recent publications made in the field of task-based learning and teaching (e.g. Meyer, B. 2008). Task-based approach focuses on communication and conveying a message. It attaches secondary importance to the forms used during the classes (Ellis, 2009).

Educators need to provide activities that aim is to use the language in a meaningful way. So students are not just language learners but language users at the same time. In this way, they can experience how language function in real-world situations and seeing the point can give them bigger satisfaction. These activities should be based on previous knowledge and incorporated into the field where participants are the most interested in (Nunan, 2012).

In a nutshell, task-based learning:

- Helps learners to interact spontaneously;
- Supports automaticity;
- Gives language learners opportunity to learn vocabulary;
- Provides essential conditions for language learning;
- Maximises communication. (Nunan, 2004)

A lot of research (e.g. Willis, 1996) has been done in the area of task-based learning and various techniques are suggested to improve vocabulary, independence of learning and developing the ability of use the language in various situations. Teachers have a significant role in providing the appropriate materials and motivate the learners to use the language on communication level. It is also important to be flexible a creative while involving participants into the task. (Ellis, 2009)

However, while task-based learning offers a good opportunity to improve language skills, a comprehensive teaching programme may contain elements derived from other theories as well.

### 4.3 Communicative Language Teaching Approach

The reason why communicative language teaching approach (CLT) started to develop from the 1970's is the lack of effective methods for learning communication skills instead of grammar and language structure. As the world has become more and more
globalized, people have increasingly wanted to use their language knowledge in practice and to reach a good level of competence as English language users to have access to better opportunities in the labour market, use the Internet, communicate with others, etc.

The aim of CLT is to develop people’s ability to form and use sentences and put a focus on the meaningful communication instead of mainly teaching grammar. CLT includes the following principles:

- Importance of meaningful interactions. For instance, making telephone calls, talking about different topics, giving explanations, taking part in conversations, etc.;
- Provide the opportunity to form sentences both in oral and written forms;
- Use the language in conversations;
- The teacher’s role is to encourage learners to try out new forms and new ways of saying things;
- Meaningful, and relevant context to motivate learners;
- Use the language in practice, both inside and outside the classroom (Richards, 2006).

According to Jack C. Richards in his book *Communicative Language Teaching Today* (2006), learners need to actively participate in class and teachers should provide the tasks that are mostly based on cooperation and autonomy. A good way to engage students in practical activities is to indicate interactions through group work and pair work. In this way, they are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and the teacher can occupy the role of a facilitator.

### 4.4 Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is not a new concept or practice, let us think of Socrates or Plato but definitely has got a new exposition in the modern, globalized world especially when it comes to learning English.

Using critical thinking as a skill while our learning process can lead better understanding and a higher level of language usage. If learners aim to express their opinion and examine a question from different points of view they might be enthusiastic
to learn more advanced ways of utterances so their language skills will develop at the same time.

Critical thinking involves questioning. It is important to teach students how to ask good questions, to think critically, otherwise, they may become manipulated or lose interest easily. “Every field stays alive only to the extent that fresh questions are generated and taken seriously” (Center for Critical Thinking, 1996).

In order to engage students in critical thinking, the educator needs to bring more consistent content to the table and monitor the discussion process. They also have an important role in encouraging students to express their opinion and let them think in a freeway as well as to encourage thinking critically: “Even though when the thinking process does not always end with a right answer, but instead sometimes ends in more questions or differing evaluations of the topic” (Halx & Reybold, 2005; p.293-315).

Reflective Thinking

Just like critical thinking, reflective thinking also can help to develop the questioning attitude and explore new perspectives but it is supposed to place emphasis on the process of making judgments by providing complex situations and with them, the opportunity to think the steps over, rather than concentrating on the desired outcome.

Characteristics of environments and activities that support reflective thinking:

- Involve students in collaborative activities;
- Provide friendly, supportive environment in the classroom;
  Monitor the learning situation (past, present and future goals);
- Provide relevant tasks;
- Encourage students’ reflection by asking questions;
- Provide a less-structured learning environment;
- Incorporate group activities to support co-operation and explore different perspectives. (Dewey 1933)

5. Reflection on Previous Research

As we can see the development of andragogy from previous researches (e.g. Feketéné, 1998 and Lada, 2006) it is safe to assume that this process has not been finished. As our
world has become more and more globalized new challenges and new opportunities have occurred. To be aware of the current state of this field is very important and very useful considering the fact that the concept of lifelong learning has gone widespread.

Here I would like to highlight some of the recent surveys to represent statistics that are closely linked to this area. According to Education First (EF), an international education company which provides the EF English Proficiency Index (EF EPI) Hungary shows a quite stable tendency. That is the global trend as well, most of the countries do not improve significantly relative to one another in terms of their citizens’ English proficiency.

So how do they measure proficiency? The company collects data by measuring up the average level of reading and listening skills in English among people who take the EF Standard English Test (EF SET). This test was created to classify test takers into one of the six levels of the CEFR system, and the actual index is based on three different version of EF SET tests. Each country has been categorized into proficiency bands which are adjusted to the levels of CEFR system. See Proficiency bands below:

- The Very High Proficiency band corresponds to CEFR level B2.
- The High, Moderate, and Low Proficiency bands correspond to CEFR level B1, with each band corresponding to a single EF course level.
- The Very Low Proficiency band corresponds to CEFR level A2.

Hungary ranks #19 in 2017 which belongs to the High Proficiency representing that test takers are at level B1 on average.

Here, Figure2 represents the ranking of our country over the last several years:

![Figure2: Hungary’s status in EF EPI index](Source: EF, 2017)

This means the between the age of 25-70 less adults have English knowledge compared to some previous years. It is also interesting to note that in Hungary, people over the age
of 25 have spent an average of 12 years in education or training after leaving school, whereas the global average is 9.2 years.

In general, we can say that in spite of the fact that Hungary shows a stable situation in terms of proficiency, Hungarians can speak much better than the global average. With 57.8 per cent of Hungarian men and 59.4 per cent of women we are well above the global average.

Figure 3: Percentage of men and women regarding proficiency in English

Source: EF, 2017

Since a country’s overall level of English knowledge is highly connected to its economic competitiveness, social development and innovation, those countries where proficiency in English skills is higher usually the average salary, the quality of life and the research and development investments are also higher. See Figures 4, and 5.
**Figure 4.**

**Better English and Income Go Hand in Hand**
English proficiency shows a strong correlation with a country’s gross national income.

**Gross National Income Per Capita**

**Figure 5.**

**Better English, Better Quality of Life**
There is a correlation between how well a country’s population speaks English and education, life expectancy, literacy, and standards of living.

**Human Development Index (HDI)**
That is why the future of English education has a great importance and it also explains the hope of English teachers of this interview to have changes in the future not just in the quality of teaching, but also in the quantity of English taught in Hungary.

In Hungary, there are attempts to measure up as much of the situation as possible but research of andragogy has still in its early phase.

It is also important to see it as a whole and identify not just from one side but compare the different (teachers and students) points of views. In my research I focus on the fact that teachers may see it from a different aspect than adult students do and vice versa. That is the point why I chose it to be my thesis’ main focus because to ascertain the unified state of the adult education system we must see how unified it is in the reality.

Efforts have been made to uncover how andragogy is developing in the accelerated world of the 21st century. One of the most extensive studies was done by the Hungarian Institute for Educational Research and Development in 2011. In this research the main focus is on the formal way of adult education and most of the data comes from universities or other higher educational institutions. Considering the fact that this is a very extensive study I would like to highlight only some of the most relevant findings those which are closely linked to the field of English teaching.

In this research, 351 educators were involved asking both by questionnaires and interviews. 43% of educators do not have a qualification as a teacher and 72% of them have never attended any further training in connection with the methodology of teaching adults. The majority of educators (82%) want to improve mainly in the field of methodology of adult education.

One of the most important goals of the study was to measure up the current state of adult education from the educators’ point of view. When it comes to dividing students into categories from the aspect of teaching methods data shows that the most significant fact is whether the student has work experience or not. 43% of teachers said that those who have any work experience need some different approach during their learning process.

From this study, we can see that the way of evaluation represents a weak point in adult education and the culture of evaluation has been changing very slowly. Educators often use summative assessment – where the main goal is to evaluate student’s knowledge at
the end of a certain unit – instead of formative assessment where continuous monitoring and feedback are in the main focus.

32% of respondents claim that practical knowledge has a big importance beside the theoretical part of teaching and they use different technics to support that like teamwork, co-operative technics, blended learning, debate, etc.

Although further training in these methods have been supported by the central government during the last decade (due to significant emphasis and funding from the European Union) they could not become widely used. The main reason for this failure was that the Law on Higher Education focuses mostly on the scientific fields rather than on the aspects of pedagogy and andragogy.

Regarding the learning environment, it is important to clarify what is meant by this term. In this particular study all the facts are included that influence the efficiency of formal and non-formal learning as part of the learning environment. During personal interviews, 71% of educators claimed that the environment they teach in was good. 20% of them found it satisfactory and only 9% said that it is unfavourable. The reasons why they found it not even satisfactory were not mentioned. The rearrange-ability of classrooms was mentioned in the first place as an area where improvement is needed, but this also shows attempts are being made to provide an innovative or friendlier learning environment.

It is indisputable that former experience or existing knowledge should play an increasing role when it comes to teaching adults, and this is more significant in the area of English teaching since adults are relevancy-oriented: they need to see how the newly-acquired knowledge can be connected to what they already know and can do.

From the received answers it seems safe to claim that even within the framework of formal institutions educators are devoted to build on formal experience. 73.5% of respondents gave a positive answer to this question.

To judge from this survey, it is obvious that universities and colleges play a major role in adult education; however, it is necessary to highlight that where language learning is concerned, adults tend to prefer to pursue other opportunities as well. Therefore, to get a more comprehensive picture on the status of language teaching focus should be widened and other fields must be incorporated.
That is the purpose of my research to broaden the examined areas and focus on the comparison of the two groups of participants (teachers’ and students’) opinions. It is also important to highlight that results reflect the specific situation of Hungary although similarities are observable with other European countries; still, it must be acknowledged that andragogy has developed differently in each country depending on its unique circumstances.

6. Research

6.1 General data

In the first part of this chapter data give general information about the participants of this survey. The second part of it focuses on the questions one by one to explain the findings in detail and the possible conclusions that can be drawn from them. Analysis of the situation is based on the received answers from questionnaires and interviews on the one hand and also the usage of other background information collected from relevant publications. In some cases citation from the interviews is necessary to help provide a clearer understanding as to why quotation marks and italics are used.

Taking into account that the research from the Hungarian Institute for Educational Research and Development focuses on the institutions of formal higher education (chiefly, universities and colleges) it is important to point out that adults have various opportunities when it comes to learning English, ranging from private lessons to organised language courses in a language school, company courses or the most modern form of learning like online courses or Angloville, which is an intensive residential English programme for adults.

In the first part of this research, which was carried out by filling out questionnaires, the main goal is to analyse answers given by active adult English learners to draw the conclusion how they sense the situation in this field. The questionnaire consists 15 questions built on the main ideas of the mentioned theories to get a clear picture on the assumption that English teachers distinguish sufficiently when it comes to teaching English for adults. In view of the somewhat limited number of respondents, the survey cannot meet the requirements of a more representative survey, although it can yield deeper insights into this question.
62 adult students were involved coming from various backgrounds considering the learning environment such as private lessons, language courses, company courses etc. All the students were characterised by their gender (male or female), their level in English (A1-A2, B1-B2, C1-C2) and the purpose of learning (general/ESP).

Study shows that 59% of respondents are female accordance with the statistics in 2011 which reveals that the number of women is slightly higher in the tertiary education than men’.

Considering the students’ level of English it is important to mention that language learners are not always aware of their actual level determined by the CEFR guidelines. Although it does not seem too important (unless they intend to take a language exam), 35% from those who could give a clear answer say that B1-B2 is their current level and 16% say A1-A2.

100% of students learn for general purposes.

Concerning the type of class, these were characterised as: private class, course at a language school, company course and university course. From the information given we can see that a great number of adults are willing to attend private lessons. The reason of this result can be twofold. On the one hand the majority of adults might be frustrated because of their limitations of language skills; on the other hand, a private class can be tailor-made for their pace, time and other requirements. However, language courses are also popular and have many advantages, like practising in groups or in pairs. The distribution of students according to learning environment can be seen in Figure 6:
6.2 Questionnaire

1. “During your English language course has it ever been discussed that in what way do you learn the most effectively?”

The first question of the survey intends to reveal how much effort teachers take to determine their student’s learner type in order to find the best way to teach them. According to the survey, 79% of learners have been asked questions regarding the most effective way they can learn during the course. Of course, the limitations of a questionnaire does not allow to have a deeper insight of the way of questioning or it does not contain cases where educators use other ways to measure up which learner style they belong to. So all these possibilities give us the right to assume that a great majority of teachers know the importance of the learner’s style characterization and they use it in practice.

2. “How motivating and welcoming do you find the place (classroom, training room) you learn in?”

Providing a well organised, motivating and friendly environment for the learning process is mainly the teacher’s task. It is very important to understand that milieu has a great impact on performance and better performance can be achieved by improving the learning environment.
Today’s learners need a motivating learning environment that meets their individual and collective needs (Brown, 2004). Sometimes the physical environment cannot be changed however everything from the colour of the wall to the decoration can have an affect on a person. More importantly the recognition of the need for a positive, engaging and encouraging learning environment may require advanced skills from a teacher’s side. According to the questionnaire, 63% of learners find the environment especially pleasant and 37% say that there is nothing special about it. The respondents’ answers do not reveal in detail whether they mean the physical surroundings or the atmosphere created by the teacher but the point is that they feel good while they are learning. Compare to the results of the Hungarian Institute for Educational Research and Development where 71% of educators claims that they work in a good environment that can meet the needs of the modern educational goals we can conclude that the majority of both learners and teachers show satisfaction when it comes the learning environment.

3. “Do you use a course book or special material is provided by the teacher?”

When examining this question we can identify some background information behind the exact meaning of it. It can explore how much effort teachers make to provide a wide range of variety of tasks. It would be important not just because this way the class was much more enjoyable but it could fit better the needs of students. However relying on a course book does not require so much preparation; but to make a lesson tailor-made is an inevitable demand which today’s educators have to respond to.

It also reveals how much they use the modern technology to create meaningful, relevant and up-to-date exercises to engage their students. What respondents of the survey reported is that 45% of them use both materials provided by the teacher and a course book. 29 per cent of students use tasks that are prepared by their educator and 25 per cent use a course book during the lesson. In total, we can calculate that 74% of teachers in the survey attempt creatively to find better opportunities than a course book itself can provide; however this does not clearly indicate how effective and relevant such instruction is in reality.

4. "How satisfied are you with the variety of given tasks?”

This question is designed to find out the satisfaction with those tasks chosen by teachers to engage students and provide an enjoyable learning process on the one hand and the
variety of toolbox teachers have in order to develop all skills in different ways on the other. 67 per cent of learners say that the diversity of tasks is “quite good” which must be considered a strongly neutral reply. Only 33 per cent claim that their teacher brings a huge variety of tasks to the classroom. None of the students in the survey describes the class as monotonous. To use a wide scale of tasks is one of the most important elements of Task-Based Learning approach but overlaps can be noticed with other theories as well.

5. “How much really useful vocabulary do you learn?”

To understand the importance of “really useful” vocabulary as a teacher is a must, since adults have been shown to be relevancy-directed – meaning that they need to see the connection between what they learn and what they can use in their lives. Of course, it is inevitable to teach unnecessary terms from time to time but efforts should be made to explore the most effective ways to meet the learners’ needs. This can be achieved by clarifying the goals at the beginning, or by becoming familiar with the fields students are interested in. It is also a good idea to ask for a list of topics or situation where they want to use suitable words and expressions. There are numerous ways to develop vocabulary in more enjoyable ways but the focus should always be on the relevancy and usefulness of lexis taught. Slightly more than half (56%) of respondents think that they learn a big amount of really useful vocabulary while 44% claims that although they learn a lot of vocabulary it is not hundred per cent relevant for them so they might do some unnecessary work by studying them. Teaching vocabulary is a quite significant part of theories such as Task-based learning approach where obviously each task can be elaborated only when appropriate vocabulary is involved.

6. “How much interaction do you have with other students or with the teacher?”

To estimate the amount of interaction is not an easy and objective task because it depends strongly on the individual needs. Some students struggle even with lesser interaction while others can cope with interactive contents without too much effort. Given that the next question intends to find out what is the prior purpose of attending any kind of language classes (in other words, which skill/skills learners would like to
develop), the result here shows that 100 per cent of students surveyed chose speaking and communication as their primary goal. Assuming that they are all goal-oriented, rich interaction must be a need during the classes. The study shows that English teachers have recognised this need and try to make huge efforts to organise interactive and communicative classes because 100 per cent of respondents claim that “quite a lot” interactions are involved in classes. As the other option would have been “not so much” we can conclude that learners are more or less satisfied with the amount of interactions. The importance of interactions among the participants of a class has been recognised by all experts of this field, therefore the majority of theories regard it as a basic element.

7. “During the course what is your priority to learn?”

This point is partly discussed above but it is also important to highlight that this level of consistency proves again that a new era of English teaching has begun especially when it comes to teaching adults because their primary aim is to become a language user and the main focus is on the communication. Of course this approach is quite overarching and learners need more specific goals when they want to succeed in their learning process. That is where challenge starts for a teacher to find the most helpful and suitable way to reach these goals.

8. “How often can you practise your priority?”

This question is strongly connected to the previous one and put the focus on the recognition of this priority from the teacher’s side. Obviously it is not enough to understand what lies at the centre of students’ interests, but for teachers to provide continuous and flexible support to learners is a must. Slightly more than the half of respondents (58%) think that fifty per cent of the class activities concentrate on what they are interested in. Therefore they feel that the second half of the class is not useful or not relevant for them however they might know that learning seemingly not useful things is inevitable when they are attending a language course. Only 3 per cent say that they can practise their priority less than they want.

39 per cent claim that almost the whole class is organised around the skill they want to develop which is speaking and communication. A dominant element of task-based learning theory emphasises the importance of communication and the support of spontaneous interactions. On the other hand communication is in the centre of
communicative language teaching approach since it focuses on the promotion of meaningful interactions and active participation based on cooperation and autonomy. So all of these theories consider communication as a very important element and teachers might use them during their classes in certain extent.

9. “How often are you ‘forced’ to practise what you are not too good at?”

Sometimes teachers need to put some pressure on the students even if we talk about adult learners. In some cases activities are not so enjoyable since they are supposed to reveal weaknesses and highlight the lack of knowledge. Evidently the best way of learning what we do not know is through practise so teachers should find ways to encourage and motivate students to put aside their frustration and seize the opportunity given in the classroom. Data show how well educators play this role and how persuasive they can be: 64 per cent of respondents say that they are “forced” to work on their weak points almost during the whole class (and that in this way they can improve a lot); meanwhile, 36 per cent claim that they almost never have activities they are not good at because they do not like them. This situation can be explained in several ways. It can be possible that teachers do not know how to encourage them or they are simply too worried to lose the good atmosphere in class.

10. “If you have an idea what to practise during the lesson:”

“I say and we practise that,” claim 46 per cent of learners, which suggests that students have a relatively big influence on the structure of the class. It requires a high flexibility from the teachers’ side but it also makes the courses more customized. However it is important to keep the balance because students tend to go to the direction of easier and more entertaining tasks.

51 per cent say that “I usually don’t have an idea,” placing responsibility with the teacher and showing trust in their judgment. That is the reason why educators should place a huge emphasis on the content of the lessons because the majority of students still rely on the professional to make these decisions.

Only 1 per cent of respondents report that “I say, but it is hard to change the teacher’s plan,” which also confirms that flexibility is an existing feature of the language courses.
11. “Who is the dominant speaker of the lesson?”

The lesson is teacher-centred when the most dominant character is the teacher and learner-centred in the other case. This study shows that the current situation is that “The teacher is a member of the group, so almost fifty-fifty” according to 69 per cent of students which seems consistent with the previous answers claiming that the amount of interactions are appropriate from the students’ point of view. 16 per cent say that the teacher is the dominant speaker especially in lower level language classes where this result may be acceptable. 14% of respondents see themselves as the dominant speakers of the class so it would appear that in this kind of classes, the teacher plays the role of a trainer or facilitator.

12. “How often do you get feedback on your performance or improvement?”

Giving feedback regularly is a well-known basic element of many theories because without any reflection on their learning process nobody will know if they are getting closer to their purpose or not. My research resulted in the following findings:

Almost the same percentage of students claim that they get feedback many times during the lesson (33%) or sometimes during the course (31%). 14% of respondents say that they receive some critical assessment at the end of each class. It demonstrates that two-third of teachers are devoted to give some reflection on learners’ performance even though it can be sometimes quite sensitive in case of adults.

13. “Use 3 adjectives to describe the English course you attend”

In this part of the research learners were encouraged to use their creativity and describe the most typical characteristics of the course they attend. Chart2 represents the findings of this question. The horizontal axis shows the adjectives received by students. The vertical axis represents the number of respondents.
Here, we can see that learners provided two groups of adjectives – probably unconsciously. Words in the first group represent their emotions during the class, e.g. friendly, funny, enjoyable etc. and they used adjectives like communicative, useful, practical, effective to describe English classes as a service. We can conclude that in general positive attributes are more frequent and because friendly and useful are the most commonly mentioned ones, we can also assume that learners do not just enjoy the atmosphere of the classes but they find them useful as well.

14. “Are you encouraged to express your opinion in connection with the given topics?”

This question is designed to reveal to what extent critical thinking is used as a tool during the lessons. However critical thinking is not an explicit way of teaching English I strongly believe that it cannot be left out from the classes when it comes to teaching English. Not just because it can support the language learning process but it is important when teachers work with adults to let them express their own point of view. It can be perceived as part of respect and as the part of being a facilitator instead of being a lecturer. According to the survey 88 per cent of learners are encouraged to express their opinion and even to discuss something from different points of view. It can be a good starting point for a discussion or even a debate which are essential when it comes to developing communication skills. Only 8 per cent of students claim that they use a course book and the given tasks from it; however, there is no evidence that it does not
include some elements of critical thinking theory. On the other hand having the
opportunity for a discussion certainly requires some existing English knowledge so in
case of beginners to bring critical thinking into the classroom is hardly a possibility.
Nevertheless only 3 per cent of respondents marked the third option that they learn
grammar, vocabulary and sentences instead of discussion.

Results show that in English classes mainly communicative, interactive activities are
dominant, built on discussion that reveals the different approaches of the participants.

15. **“In percentage terms, how much can you practise what is your goal to
learn?”**

This question is designed to be a control-question and its result shows slight difference
compared to Question 8 where 58% think that fifty per cent of the class activities
concentrate on what they are interested in. Therefore they feel that the second half of the
class is not useful or not relevant for them. At the end of the survey 54% of students
think that less than 40 per cent of the class is the useful part for them. Only 3 per cent
claimed previously that they can practise less than what they want. The possible reasons
for that can be on the one hand that they are satisfied with a lesson which contains 40 %
useful or relevant part on the other hand this slight difference can be resulted from mere
carelessness.

6.3 **Interview**

In order to highlight the opinion of English teachers in Hungary, a mini focussed
interview was implemented. The main goal of this interview was to reveal some aspects
of the current situation, and in the meantime to provide a point of comparison to the
results received from learners’ answers. As an outcome, I intended to get a broader view
on the status of teaching English for adults in our country.

In the interview four English teachers from different position were involved and five
questions were asked from each of them. The moderator and an observer were part of
the process as well. The interview went in Hungarian and the full audio recording is part
of the appendix as well as the English translation of the text.
Regarding the method of the assessment I chose the comparison of all the answers for each questions one-by-one. This way we can see how similar or how different opinions are:

The first question is designed to highlight some views on the basic statement in connection with adult education and to get some insight from professionals of this field.

1. *Can you see any differences between teaching children and adults regarding the methodology? If yes, please mention some of them!*

As it turned out from the received answers Hungarian English teachers see the most significant differences in

- **Flexibility**, which can be achieved mostly in private lessons, but it affects the time management and the syllabus as well.

- **Persistence** is also a crucial point considering that adults do not posses it to a great extent – according to one of the respondents.

- **Relevancy** is the subsequent difference between adults and children. As all the experts pointed it out adults want to connect their learnings to their work or any other responsibility they have.

- **Difference in methodology** – put the emphasize on developing practical skills like communication insted of coursebooks, or grammar tests.

- **Personality** – the teacher’s personality (soft skills) is a determining factor while speaking about differences.
2. What are the most important characteristics and methods of a teacher working in the field of adult education?

To summarise the received answers see Figure 5, which details the most important methods and the characteristics according to respondents:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee1</td>
<td>Flexible</td>
<td>various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee2</td>
<td>patience, sensitivity</td>
<td>clarify goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee3</td>
<td>act as a partner in the learning process, facilitator</td>
<td>encourage independent learning, show alternatives how to reach goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee4</td>
<td></td>
<td>variety of tasks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 9: Methods and characteristics
During the interview the remarks below were heard as well:

There are many aspects to take into consideration while a course design is planned and students often come to the lesson with their own idea regarding the topic and the learning method – that is why flexibility received such a huge emphasis.

The Internet is mentioned as a great opportunity to develop creative, and “entertaining” tasks. Balance is needed while entertaining learners because tasks also need to be useful but this way they can learn almost unconsciously.

3. To what extent do you agree with the statement that theories in adult education are widely used by teachers?

To have a common understanding on the “theories” in adult education candidates for this interview had received the related parts from this paper and a Youtube video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vLJ7cRwKI-I) in advance so they could prepare for the question. This video gives a short summary of Six Adult Learning Principles in 4:39 minutes.

After preparation they gave the following answers:

- It is certain that English teachers in Hungary use these theories to a certain extent; otherwise, there would be no successful educators in this field. It is not entirely clear whether they use it deliberately or just as a result of some sensitivity towards adults’ needs.

- Changes in the higher education would be required to achieve wider application of theories – flexibility, consideration of individual needs and practice orientation are in their early stages in Hungary. However, English teachers in Hungary would be willing to use this knowledge to become more successful.

- There is no harm in learning from these theories; nevertheless, the most important thing is for teachers to possess the necessary sensitivity to find the best way to help learners.

- I myself mainly rely on my natural gut; but it is for sure that English teachers often participate in teacher training, although this training is rarely directly connected with adult education methodology.
4. What do you think about the statement that “Adult education is facing significant changes?”

In this respect I received very similar responds only the wording differs slightly and some supplementary remarks were made.

All the interviewees agreed that the statement is true thanks to the opportunities provided by the Internet. They claim that this process is far from its end and they also hope that more significant changes will be implemented in the future. It is also said that the profession of pedagogues must be divided from the profession of teaching adults and the latest must become a more significant, independent field within the education system.

5. How do you see the future of teaching adults? In what way will it influence your work?

Responses for this last question are strongly connected to the previous one obviously because they describe the status of English education as a process which will (hopefully) continue in the future as well. They also think that teaching methods should become more useful and practical and that a new generation of English teachers must appear to meet the needs of this “internet-centred, over-modernised world”.

Another slightly different opinion is that English teachers should be trained to meet these accelerated and ever-changing expectations and it requires further improvement or even life-long learning from teachers today’s English teachers.

They strongly emphasize the role of the Internet and globalization in the future and the need of further trainings.

7. The Limitations of this Research and further Research Recommendations

Considering the limited number of participants my research cannot be regarded as a fully representative one; however, I tried to choose respondents carefully to represent every age group and almost equally divide among genders and the levels of proficiency in English. Furthermore English teachers were selected from many fields of their
profession and they represented various age groups. Since the situation has been changing rapidly further research would be welcomed with an extended number of participants and also to compare the results to other surveys have been taken in Hungary during the last years (e.g. Juhász, 2002, 2007, KSH Statistics).

8. Conclusion and Summary

As a final conclusion of this research, I would say that the hypothesis is justified according to the response of participants.

The HYPOTHESIS: Hungarian English teachers can successfully meet the requirements of the different and accelerated needs of teaching adult learners. I assume that they perceive the differences between teaching children and adults and can effectively put the theories of adult education into practice.

After the change of regime in 1989-90, Hungary was one of the first newly associated countries that voted YES to the development of adult education by adopting a new structure of vocational training and establishing a high-quality adult education system. However, if we look at the statistical indicators connected to adult education from the European Union Statistical Office (EUROSTAT) it is clear that today Hungary shows a significant lag compared to the average rankings of other European Union (EU) states in recent years (Fodor, 2015).

Despite the fact that adult education and its concept is in its early stage for English teachers it seems to be proven that they do use theories to become more effective in their work. They have recognized the different needs of the adult generation and try to adapt to them. It seems safe to assume that there are huge differences between the institutional adult education and the “private” sector which is much more flexible and adaptive. From learners’ points of view, it is also confirmed that educators apply specific elements of teaching methods and the traditional grammar and test-book centred way of teaching is getting replaced.

According to the result of my research English teachers working with adults pay attention to the students’ learning style mostly not by using explicit learning style models rather trying to find out in what way they can learn the most effectively.
It is also declared that creating a positive, supportive learning environment plays a significant role in their profession although results slightly differ according to institutional circumstances. On the other hand, when a parallel is drawn with the results of the Hungarian Institute for Educational Research and Development we can see that significant differences are observable in the field of evaluation. Since among institutional circumstances, the summative form of assessment is the most common we can say that students and teachers from the private sector agreed on the importance and practice of frequently received feedback.

From the received answers of the questionnaire – in accordance with the teachers’ views – we can clearly state that educators have realized that communication and speaking skills are needed to be improved the most and classes are built up from this realization. At the same time, it is also safe to declare that teachers do persuade their students to think critically or at least think over an idea from different points of view.

During the interview, the importance of flexibility was emphasized – from the teachers’ side - several times as one of the key requirements of adult education although more than half of students do not really require to have an influence on the process. On the other hand, they may require more flexibility in time or in other conditions.

In general, I can conclude that serious efforts have been made from the teachers’ side to keep pace with the ever-changing expectations towards them.

On the one hand the lack of further training, to get more competent and competitive is palpable, (not just teachers in the higher education but also from the private sector can agree with this), on the other hand, globalization and the use of the Internet provide great opportunities to improve and acquire additional skills to the existing teaching ones.

As English teachers of the research pointed it out the digital revolution has a great influence on our profession and it requires an entirely new concept of education, which is more interactive, more practical, and more competitive. This new programme is unfeasible without changes in educational policies to become more flexible and adaptive to the higher expectations. It might be a long process but alternative ways of self-development are available and it is the educators' responsibility to keep pace with the needs and demands.
Among these alternative ways, we can find all the theories made decades ago to help us in our improvement and also the new opportunities of the digital world that provides a tremendous amount of materials available on our computer right now.

To become a 21st century’s educator life-long learning is a must and it requires serious changes in the education system and teacher training – that is also what English teachers claim during the interview.

The future’s educator will have a big responsibility and since globalization is continuing, English teachers will play an important role in a country’s economic performance, social life, and living standards.

As a conclusion, we can say that teaching adults as a profession is going to become more specific, more comprehensive, and complex in the future. It means that it should be improved within pedagogy to become a separated but related field focusing on the different needs of adult learners. It is important to use all the sources that can support these aims and accomplish comprehensive methods relying on the knowledge we have had and exploiting the opportunities of modern technology – at the same time.

I strongly believe that the role of a foreign language teacher or any other kind of adult educator is being a partner in the learning process who can provide professional help for students to achieve their goals. I hope that after realizing the increasing global competition, rising demands for considering the needs of adult learners and rapidly growing pressure of using information technology, teachers will find the best way to be ready for all these challenges.
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11. Appendices

APPENDIX 1.: Transcription of the interview used for the current research

APPENDIX 2. The Questionnaire used for the current Research
11.1 Appendix 1.: Transcription of the interview used for the current research

Moderator:

Good morning for everyone! Nice to see you and thank you for accepting my invitation to this mini focussed interview. Today is the 25th April 2018. The objective of this interview is to highlight some questions in connection with your profession which is teaching English for adults. The interview and the audio recording are going to be used for my thesis at the Corvinus University of Budapest with the title of ”History and main Characteristics of Andragogy”. Naturally, the interview is anonymous and is being held without any identification, the received answers are going to be translated into English.

Before we start I would like some technical information to be recorded:

The participants of this interview are:

- 4 interviewees
- 1 observer - supposed taking notes when it is necessary.
- 1 moderator

I would like you to get your answers one-by-one for all the questions (you will have five questions in total) and at the end of the interview, time is going to be provided for a short discussion or debate. Furthermore, I want to ask for a short introduction regarding your current position and work experience selected from the options given (you can see the options on the paper sheet in front of each of you). And of course you are free to add any information that is relevant and important and you are willing to share.

I hope to give all the necessary information but in case of any emerging questions, you are free to ask them whenever you want to.

So let’s start with the first question, which is that:

1. Can you see any differences between teaching children and adults regarding the methodology? If yes, please mention some of them!
Interviewee 1:
Good morning, nice to meet you! First of all, I would like to thank you for inviting me to this opportunity to participate in this interview. I hope that I can contribute to providing valuable results.

As for myself, I had been teaching in a higher education institution for 15 years before I retired. And I have been working as a private English teacher since then. Of course it is not a full-time job, however, I could have the opportunity to teach as much as I can because there is a huge demand for English teachers – as you certainly experience in your job. So my work experience belongs to the “more than 10 years” category.

To be very honest, I have never taught children but I don’t even think that I would be suitable for this job. There are huge differences between the needs of children and adults when it comes to learning languages or anything. Adult education requires enormous flexibility both in time management and in the syllabus. Especially the private lessons can give the opportunity to use very specialised and personalized tasks. Of course in a college, there is much more limitation in flexibility. And I also would like to emphasize that in a group of 20 methods should be completely different from methods in a 1-to-1 class.

Moderator:
Thank you very much and the second question is:

2. **What are the most important characteristics and methods of a teacher working in the field of adult education?**

Interviewee 1:
Perhaps the most important characteristic is the flexibility. There are a lot of factors that must be taken into consideration when we are designing a course program or planning a lesson plan. Not to mention the fact that adult students often come to the class with their own ideas about what they want to focus on, or practice and in what way. I would like to stress again that it is possible mainly in private lessons.
Moderator:
So if I understand you correctly flexibility as the most important point of view can mainly operate in a private class and in an institutional environment it is hardly feasible?

Interviewee 1:
As a matter of fact, we can state - in a very simplistic way- that in a school where there is a strict syllabus to follow beside the unique requirements of students to put flexibility into practice is quite impossible.

Moderator:
Thank you for your clarification and here is the third question:

3. To what extent do you agree with the statement that theories in adult education are widely used by teachers?

Interviewee 1:
It is for sure that teachers use them to a certain extent; otherwise there would be no successful English teachers in this field. However, it is not obvious to me whether they build the theories consciously into the syllabus but presumably, they can feel those requirements set up by adult learners.

Moderator:
Thank you now the fourth question is coming:

4. What do you think about the statement that “Adult education is facing significant changes?”

I think that this statement is hundred per cent sure thank the expansion of the Internet and partly because the world has been opened to a great extent after the change of regime. And I am also certain that this process has not been ended so we do have the opportunity to improve.

Moderator:
Thank you very much and now here is the final question for you:
5. How do you see the future of teaching adults? In what way will it influence your work?

Interviewee 1:
As I mentioned earlier we are in the middle of the process, and huge transformation is needed mainly in the fields of flexibility and utility. We definitely should work on it. As for my work – regarding that I am in the second part of my career (laugh) I think that a new generation must emerge to serve the needs of this internet-centred, over-modernized world better.

Moderator:
Thank you for your answers and now let’s go through all the questions again:

1. Can you see any differences between teaching children and adults regarding the methodology? If yes, please mention some of them!

Interviewee 2:
Welcome to everybody I am glad that there are demands to implement such kind of interviews I hope I can contribute with some useful notions. Currently, I have been working for a language school – with adults of course – mainly at the level of B1-B2. Students come with very different goals to school from taking a language exam to finding work abroad. My work experience is in the 2-10 years category.

My answer to this first question is definitely YES! Both have their difficulties and positive aspects, but in adult education teachers have more independence that is why responsibility is also bigger. Today we need to put an enormous focus on communication and must be careful with grammar tests. Luckily there are many interesting and useful tasks available on the Internet so we can develop our own preferences and insert, for example, debates, teamwork, role-plays etc. among the traditional ways.
Interviewee 1:

Excuse me may I ask here what you mean by traditional ways?

Moderator:

Thank you for this question may I ask our observer to record this and after the end of the interview, we will come back to it! So please do not forget your answers!

And now the second question:

2. *What are the most important characteristics and methods of a teacher working in the field of adult education?*

Interviewee 2:

The most important feature is patience – as in the case of any teacher – and apart from this, a certain kind of sensitivity. We should pay a big attention to individuals coming from different backgrounds and with different attitudes and how we can form an effective team from them. As for the methods, I think that it is important to define the goals precisely and together. I would like to highlight this: aims must very clear for everyone.

Moderator:

Thank you, and here is the third question:

3. *To what extent do you agree with the statement that theories in adult education are widely used by teachers?*

Interviewee 2:

Theories should be used in a wide circle and I am sure that educators would be willing to use them because it can be one of the keys of success; however, changes in the education system would be needed to achieve this. Flexibility, consideration of individual needs and practice orientation are in their early ages in institutions or language schools. There is the course book and everyone must learn from that, having the same amount of time for learning, hopefully with the same effectiveness and improvement.
Moderator:
Thank you, and here is my next question:

4. *What do you think about the statement that "Adult education is facing significant changes"?*

Interviewee 2:
Yes, I agree and I hope that more significant changes will happen in the future because these are needed if we want to keep pace with universities in Europe and other institutions.

Moderator:
Thank you, and here is the last question:

5. *How do you see the future of teaching adults? In what way will it influence your work?*

Interviewee 2:
I would be very happy to know that the future of higher education improved favourably even though it required further training from educators. I myself would be happy to develop in order to achieve these goals. I hope that the Internet and globalization will have a bigger impact on the future of education.

Moderator:
Many thanks for your answers. Let’s continue with the first question again:

1. *Can you see any differences between teaching children and adults regarding the methodology? If yes, please mention some of them!*

Interviewee 3:
Hello everyone, I would like to point out that we can hear very interesting and valuable points of view and I am glad to know that you are willing to share your honest opinion. I will try to add something new, although I can greatly agree with these thoughts.
It is important to mention that I am not an active teacher right now. I established a small language school some years ago, which mainly organizes educational materials. I work with many language teachers together and we take part in the organization of company courses. By the way, I graduated as an English teacher and I worked for a secondary grammar school.

I could memorize the first question and I would mention that not everybody is suitable to become a successful teacher. This profession requires a certain personality – a unique personality to teach children and a different one to teach adults. So, in my opinion, the mere acquisition of theories does not mean that a teacher can have a successful career and can become a good teacher.

Moderator:
Thank you for your introduction and answer and now we are here at the second question:

2. What are the most important characteristics and methods of a teacher working in the field of adult education?

Interviewee 3:
An educator working with adults should not be merely a teacher but a partner in the learning process. A kind of facilitator, with the aim of encouraging independent learning. On the other hand, alternatives must be provided how students can achieve independent learning.

Moderator:
I see. Thank you very much. Now the third question is:

3. To what extent do you agree with the statement that theories in adult education are widely used by teachers?

Interviewee 3:
I am certain that theories are used to a certain extent maybe not entirely consciously, but the most important is to sense how they can provide the biggest help for their students and I think that it is possible without studying all these theories. On the other hand,
there is no harm to be aware of these conceptions because they can widen the educators' point of view and put things in different light.

**Moderator:**
Thank you. The next question is:

4. *What do you think about the statement that 'Adult education is facing significant changes?*

**Interviewee 3:**
Pedagogy and the profession of teaching adults must be separated and become an independent, more important field within the whole discipline. Personally, I think, that this transformation has begun but it has been still in its early phase.

**Moderator:**
Thank you very much, and finally here is the last question:

5. *How do you see the future of teaching adults? In what way will it influence your work?*

**Interviewee 3:**
If the necessary improvements can be implemented with the help of the education system, that will influence my work in a very positive way. Many more adults will have the opportunity to attend effective education of a good quality.

**Moderator:**
Thank you for your contribution. And now the last turn, and here is the first question again:

1. *Can you see any differences between teaching children and adults regarding the methodology? If yes, please mention some of them!*

**Interviewee 4:**
Hello everyone, I am glad to stay behind because this way I could hear the opinions of all the more experienced colleagues.
I graduated three years ago at the Department of English Linguistics and Literature, and since then I have been working as an English teacher. I started my career at a language school where I have been working now in part-time. Beside this, I have some company courses – mostly for small groups – for beginners.

Unfortunately, I have no experience with children. So I would like to transform the first question and I would say that I studied mostly pedagogy at the university but now I can see that there is much difference in the field of teaching adults compared to teaching children. The most important is that they usually want to use the language in their job or expect to get better opportunities after they gain some knowledge of English. That is why educators must take their goals into consideration.

On the other hand – persistence is not among their strengths at least in case of adults.

Moderator:
Thank you very much, and here is the second question:

2. What are the most important characteristics and methods of a teacher working in the field of adult education?

Interviewee 4:
When it comes the methods I vote for variety. The Internet provides a great help to this where you can find a huge amount of useful and entertaining ideas. Using entertaining tasks is a very good method and if you can combine and make it useful – that is a great way of teaching. Actually, in this way students can learn almost unconsciously.

Moderator:
Thank you, here you can hear the third question:

3. To what extent do you agree with the statement that theories in adult education are widely used by teachers?

Interviewee 4:
I hope that teachers use them much more consciously than me because I mostly rely on my intuition. But it is for sure that teachers often go to attend further training in
pedagogy although less of them participate in further training in connection with the methodology of teaching adults.

Moderator:
Thank you, and now, here is the next question:

4. What do you think about the statement that "Adult education is facing significant changes?"

Interviewee 4:
The entire world is going through a continuous and fast transition, and I think that our profession is not an exception either. Working abroad, traveling, and the use of the Internet provide significant and necessary changes.

Moderator:
I see. Thank you, and here is the final question:

5. How do you see the future of teaching adults? In what way will it influence your work?

Interviewee 4:
We must improve continuously and keep pace with new challenges. It is a burden at the same time because you can never feel that you know everything in your profession. On the other hand, the generation of technology has a huge advantage and there are extremely many opportunities to develop.

Moderator:

Thank you for all of you your responses and now here is the time to discuss the question raised during the interview so I ask my observer colleague to give me the notes...and here is the question: What do you mean by traditional way of teaching compared to the modern way of teaching?
Interviewee 1:
Among the old methods, we can mention the classic course book, workbook, and test-writing...

Interviewee 4:
Memorizing from vocabulary - you know which has two sides.

Interviewee 1:
This is still valid today.

Interviewee 4:
Although it is much more effective to learn the words, let’s say in a group work activity, or while it is being used.

Moderator:
Thank you! Is there anything you want to highlight that you especially agree or disagree?

Interviewee 4:
It is certain that flexibility and patience have a key role in adult education and also that there is a huge difference between teaching adults and children.

Interviewee 1:
And it is also for sure that the Internet has a determining role as providing lots of opportunities.

Moderator:
Thank you for your participation and I will let you know about the results of this research!
11.2 Appendix 2.: The Questionnaire used for the current Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire for Adult English Learners</th>
<th>Gender: Male / Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Purpose of learning: General/ESP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. During your English language course has it ever been discussed that in what way do you learn the most effectively?
   - No
   - Yes

2. How motivating and welcoming do you find the place (classroom, training room) you learn in?
   - Very pleasant
   - Nothing special
   - Unfriendly

3. Do you use a course book or special material is provided by the teacher?
   - Book
   - Material
   - Both

4. How satisfied are you with the variety of given tasks?
   - Very varied
   - Quite good
   - Mostly the same

5. How much really useful vocabulary do you learn?
   - Very much
   - Much vocabulary but not always useful ones
   - Little

6. How much interaction do you have with other students or with the teacher?
   - Quite a lot
   - Not so much

7. During the course what is your priority to learn?
   - Practise listening
   - Practise speaking, communication
   - Practise reading, understand written materials
   - Practise writing, letters, e-mails
8. How often can you practise your priority?
   o Almost the whole class is about that
   o Fifty-fifty
   o Less than I want

9. How often are you ’forced’ to practise what you are not too good at?
   o All the time, we practise it so I can improve.
   o Almost never, because I don’t like it.

10. If you have an idea what to practise during the lesson:
    o I say, and we practise that.
    o I don’t usually have an idea.
    o I say, but it is hard to change the teacher’s plan.

11. Who is the dominant speaker of the lesson?
    o Mostly the student(s)
    o Mostly the teacher
    o The teacher is a member of the group, so it is almost fifty-fifty.

12. How often do you get feedback on your performance or improvement?
    o Many times during the lesson
    o At the end of the lesson
    o Sometimes during the course
    o Never

13. Use 3 adjectives to describe the English course you attend.

14. Are you encouraged to express your opinion in connection with the given topics?
    o We discuss the topic from different points of view.
    o We use a course book and the given tasks of it.
    o We learn grammar, vocabulary and sentences instead of discussion.

15. In what percentage can you practise what is your goal to learn?
    o below 40%
    o 40-60%
    o over 60%

Thank you!