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New Ways in Andragogy: Regional Andragogy

Abstract: The starting point of the study is that andragogy has evolved into an important and subtle subsystem of pedagogy, education and public culture which can be and must be examined from a scientific point of view from several aspects and as a consequence, from a regional one as well. The aim of the study is to point to the presence, importance and development possibilities of research of regional approach in andragogy. According to this – in the first place in the scientific special literature of Hungary after the political restructuring and on the bases of different kinds of researches – it outlines the main directions of research of regional aspect, it analyses the interdisciplinary and inter-trade linking points in connection with it. It would like to give an answer if the ways of research and results could be an adequate basis for the emergence of a regional andragogy which can be defined as a special field within andragogy.

Key words: regional andragogy, regional educational research, cultural research.

Introduction

According to the scientific trends adult education research developed in the expanding and interdependent interaction with other scientific fields, too. Besides the traditional linking fields – pedagogy, psychology, philology, sociology, economy, labour sciences, artistic discipline, history etc. – there was a natural need for the inclusion of the aspects, methods and results of spatial sciences into adult education research. The study interprets education at a mature age from the point of view of andragogy and does not reduce it to adult education. The relationship with public education and public culture, the question of the integration or disintegration of the two fields concerned cause a lot of problems and disorders in the research of andragogy and in the practice of adult education. It obviously

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comes from the extremely variegated nature of adult education forms and places. It has been an actual question whether andragogy is of disperse nature or it can be interpreted, examined and operated as a coherent system. Andragogy clearly undertakes the examination of formal education, training, in the case of informal education and learning the situation is less clear-cut. Adult education research leaves the fields of formal and informal learning connected to public education institutions, organizations, cultural and community activities in the hands of cultural and educational research. The application of open coordination approach and method are indispensable in regional research, regional management, planning and the highly diversified system of andragogy requires this approach as well. The scope borders do not make possible the examination of the scientific and professional fields which regional andragogy can build on (regional science, education geography, regional and settlement development etc.). It touches upon though those main trends of teaching, culture and education research connected to andragogy directly in which adult learning and/or regional view are present.

The sources of the forming regional andragogy

The main trends of regional educational research

The regional based examinations have become a characteristic part of education research in Hungary since the 1970s. The typical motivation of these researches are the analyses of the new regional models of education organization, planning, the hoisting of regional approach into education development. The view, terminology, methods, results of social geography have been built into education research. The regional differences of the lack of education, education, qualification, culture have been examined as well as the regional models of the school system, the reasons of regional inequality. They threw light on problems, such as inadequacy of the district, regional and settlement data base, which have been up-to-date problems nowadays as well and they also cast light on how adequate the typology of settlement geography and the indicators serving as bases for it and the administrative configuration are for educational research. The spatial structure of the different levels of school system, the school zones, the effects of school zones, the perspectives of the farm and village schools, the ones of the higher education institutions of the middle-sized towns have also been examined. An attempt has been made to elaborate a culture based regional typology (Kozma, 1987). They wanted to reach the reduction of the horizontal – regional – inequalities of the society with the help of a kind of social oecological view, the

changing of the environmental (educational) conditions and they drew up the demand for the complex analysis of education indicators with social-economic indicators (Forray, 1993). The supply of institutional culture transmission, employment, regional mobility, demographic behaviour, vocational training and trade structure, accessibility, job possibilities, the initiation of social and political indicators are the basic elements of regional research of education today as well. In spite of the oecological view – because of the unformed nature of the adult education system – the andragogical approach has not been present characteristically. The political restructuring, then the joining of the European Union have placed the research of education into new political, economic, social, regional dimensions. On one hand the new research topics, approaches, preferences examined the former points of view in more sensitive ways in the changing space, on the other hand new research points of view and methods appeared. The examination of the relatedness of the regional characteristics of education, (regional) human resource development and (regional) competitiveness has become more stressed (Balázs, 2005). The regional researches beyond the borders of the Carpatian basin have been intensified. In the 90s Tamás Kozma and his colleagues drafted the hypothesis in connection with the examination of the regional spread of third degree trainings that in the future the expansion of the fourth degree training (adult education) would be the main area of the expansion of education (Kozma, 2000). The examination of the schools of the small settlements got a new topicality after the political restructuring. The role of school was examined as a factor which influenced migration, forms of the local society, organized the community and helped life-long learning (Imre, 2004). The regional approach appears in education research concerning the size of the settlements, their wealth and their connection to educational inequalities from the point of view of commutation, regional segregation, access to quality education, ethnic segregation, student achievements and several others (Keller & Mártonfi, 2006). The subsidy policy of the EU strengthened the decentralization of educational management and the region-specific planning and resulted in a kind of sectoral and intersectoral cooperation pressure. The examination of public and higher education system is being done clearly in the way of looking at life-long learning in education research. The researches going on in the Education Research and Development Institute in 2010 – like the participation in the examination of adult competence (OECD PIAAC), the research of adults' independent learning, learning besides work – also support the more and more characteristic appearance of adult education (and adult education out of the school system) within education.

The regional approach in cultural and educational research

While adult education and mainly adult training are interpreted in the education/training system, too, andragogy is an integrated part of the cultural sphere as well, the connection between the two systems is mutual and multidimensional. Until recently andragogical (and pedagogical) theory has paid little attention to the community and self-study, cultural processes beyond and out of organized education. Educational and cultural theory have examined and examine today as well – first of all not in educational theory respect - the educational aspects of the cultural sphere, the questions of education and culture out of and beyond education and training (Lada, 2006). The cultural sector is mainly the field of the adults' informal and formal education, the cultural institutions are connected to andragogy through their public cultural roles which back the adults' public education activities.

The main fields of cultural research in the 90s were the examination of the features and utilization of culture consumption, the evolution of cultural needs, the traditional cultural activities, reading and TV watching habits, the usage of the internet, taking part in creative groups, cultural supply – their institutions and services. The comparison of cultural institutions and services, the cultural activities according to settlement types connected to them got into the centre of interest mainly from the point of view of equal chances. According to the examinations those who live in households with lower income and those who are low-qualified are usually less active in cultural sense, in spite of this in the first decade after the political restructuring in Hungary mainly the settlement inequalities influenced a lot the chance of access to cultural services (Bernát, 2005).

The complex research about the cultural state of Hungary done in the first half of the new millenium (similarly to the former country-wide state surveys) seems to be an important source of information from theoretical and developmental points of view and outlines important conclusions. During a more differentiated examination of cultural consumption it highlights the importance of educational level and age and emphasizes the increase of education on a social level, the creation of the needs and possibilities for self-education in the cultural capacity. Although in a refined way, but it points to settlement determination, the importance and responsibility of the local level (Dudás & Hunyadi, 2005).

The analysis of the different cultural dimensions reflects the appearance of the regional points of view in the approach of the relations between the capital, county seat, other towns (under 10000 inhabitants, between 10000-100000 inhabitants), village (under 2000 inhabitants, between 2-5000 inhabitants) and traditionally between Budapest and the country. Among the research points of view

the age group characteristics have been taken into consideration in the respect of knowledge, experience, way of living, the change and difference of the need for learning. The researchers mention among the most important tasks to decrease the residential environmental disadvantages and to help the development of personal abilities and skills. As the consequence of the expansion of cultural and entertainment supply they stress the importance of the personal, selection and orientation skills, the density and quality of the personal connection network as decisive chance increasing factors. The results of the research show a correlation between cultural reception and knowledge possession. In Hungary, where half of the society consume 90% of cultural supply, where 70-80% of the adult population are not able to understand complex texts, adult education must be of vital importance in the liquidation of cultural discrimination from the point of view of the subsequent supplement of cultural and network capital, the possession and development of knowledge capital, the labour market integration. The research stresses the different functions of adult learning, like community development, the increase of self-confidence and self-esteem, social (re)integration. They attribute the same importance to civil organizations, hobby circles, clubs, workshops, helping communities in adult learning as to formal institutions (Hunyadi, 2005).

From the point of view of social chances, qualification has a more determining role in Hungary – compared to the western countries – besides the regional and local innovation characteristics, educational, cultural institutional supply, settlement type, the cultural sensitivity of the self-governments and the traditions. It derives, besides other factors, from the building up, functional and effectiveness deficiencies of the self-educational, correctional, remedial nature of the adult education institution system. In the middle of the 90s the economic wester-eastern slope could not be projected onto the state of cultural institutions and public education clearly, the cultural indicators of the Great Hungarian Plain were better than its economical ones. At the beginning of the 2000s the situation was more differentiated and the regional, settlement differences increased. Some big and small towns had better complex development indicators in spite of the weaknesses of economic indicators. The basis of their competitiveness is their good innovation, cultural institutional system, their well-qualified elite, cultural traditions, their sense of identity, their local patriots – and generally their better human resource supply. All these support the opinion of the experts of the cultural sphere that regional and settlement development is cultural development to a great extent as well (Agárdi, 2005).

A research terminated in 2009 represents the infiltration of regional approach into the researches of public culture, which mapped the institutional system in settlements with a population under 30000 inhabitants. It wanted to form

a notion of institutional and functional dismemberment and concentration on the basis of the institutional and functional supply of the settlements and the regional cooperation of the institutions, and according to the aim of the researchers, it wanted to give scientific foundations of the institutional and functional integration efforts of the settlements/regions. According to the research, depending on the characteristic features of the certain regions, settlements (disadvantageous situation, suburbanization level, urban rank, settlement size, social-demographic composition etc.) the factors explaining the level of supply can be other ones (Talata-Dudás, 2009).

The research aiming at the professional foundation of culture-based town development were extended to the cities (pole towns) as well in the 2000s. Their starting point is – logically – that the development of intellectual infrastructure is as important as the development of the physical one. The main topics of the research – the cultural, educational, creative, modernizing, democratizing, habitable town – reflect an integrated view which interprets culture as a development source of energy, a set of abilities and a framework of cooperation (Hunyadi, Kiss & Dénes, 2006).

The main directions of adult education regional researches

The andragogical researches developed differentiated and parallel in several respects with teaching, cultural and educational research from the second half of the 20th century, naturally a bit in a consecutive position due to the several hundred years' of „drawback”. But at the beginning of the 21st century the adult education researches compete with pedagogical researches concerning their volume, sensitivity, quality and innovation role.

Education is an organic unit, among the subsystems of which – public education, vocational training, higher education – adult education has become an important part of the integrated system. Adult education though – concerning its functions, clients, organizations, teachers – differs to a great extent from the other subsystems of education and that is why it is difficult to integrate it into the education system (Halász, 2001). Besides this, concerning its volume, the centre of interest of learning activities in Hungary has shifted more and more onto the adult age out of and beyond the formal school system, learning forms and places differentiated extraordinarily – they are connected mainly not to the school but to the schooling-age. Consequently, both the basic characteristic features of adult education and the trends of learning helped andragogy to become a definable system. Life-long learning, the paradigm of education based society

and economy resulted in the overestimation of adult education research in the system of organized, regular, formal non-formal and informal learning in our country, too. The changes gave extraordinarily intensive impetus to the extension and development of adult education functions, institutional system, places, contents and forms. The research fields are strongly influenced by the fact that educational, employment and economy policy prefer the economic role of adult education and from among its social functions the ones which are connected to labour market. They support those kinds of adult vocational trainings in and out of the school system which establish the increase of competitiveness, increase employment, decrease structural unemployment from the point of view of the role of economy, and from the point of view of the relief of social tension those trainings, institutions, educational fields and forms which play a role in the labour market re-integration of socially disadvantageous and unemployed people. The andragogical researches are directed towards the regional based approaches mainly by planning, organizational, successfulness, efficiency – thus practical – questions and the regional view appears only tangentially and secondarily in the theoretical researches. The motivations of the applied researches are helped by the convergence of the institutional, financial and planning systems of educational, cultural and employment policy with the subsidy support principles and practice of the European Union, with the establishment of the regional structure of the Union in Hungary.

There was an attempt to examine the adult education system in a complex way and to make a map-like survey from the 90s. The involvement of the JPTE FEEFI (Janus Pannonius University of Pécs, Adult Education Institute), The International Educational Institute of the German People' Academy Alliance, the Education Research Institute, the Hungarian Cultural Institute and other institutions reflected the andragogical view interpreting broadly the places and forms of adult learning. According to this, the data and the statements of the cultural survey of Hungary in 1996 were regarded as important adult education sources. The research included the survey of the county seats and the districts of the capital (Bajusz, Hinzen & Bodnár, 1998). They examined the relations between the size of the town and the supply market, the differences of the schooling – cultural – adult education map, the ratio of learners/inhabitants, the legal forms of the educational institutions, the entrepreneurs and the civil people, the qualification of the teachers, the forms of training and several other factors (Koltai, 2003). They also set an aim to survey the other towns, counties and small regions later, too. Although adult education statistics has developed a lot since then, unfortunately andragogy profession has not been able to make a country-wide survey which would aim at completeness referring at least to the generally applied set-

tlement and space typology. A few years later a kind of country-wide map was made, too about a narrower segment of the adult education system using the tools of space informatics. The correlations between employment data and adult education supply were examined on a small regional level pointing to county and regional correlations, too. The aim of the statistical analysis was to show the white spots of supply, to serve as a basis for the survey of adult education demand (for this it could have served only as a contribution). The company seat dispersion of registered adult education institutions, the OKJ (registered) trainings, the accredited institutions, the number of vocational training schools were analysed and compared on small regional level (Szentiványi & Szentiványi, 2006).

Geography based local and regional works also dealt with the connections of employment, education and adult education. Adult education appears in these analyses characteristically as an educational, training segment providing correction for the deficiencies of the educational and vocational training system, decreasing unemployment and helping employment (Garai, 2007). The strengthening of the bottom up attitude of economy development brought about the examination of the local economy developer role of adult education. The satisfaction of the general and special educational needs of multifunctional employment embedded into the local society, the attachment of adult learning to concrete space and time, the development of the local system of adult education could be important segments of future research trends (Tóth, 2007). The realization choices of the idea of the learning society also motivated the local examination of the educational and cultural level of adult village population, the willingness to take part in learning, motivation, activity and values, etc (Zsumbera, 2001).

Characteristically the role of adult education, its functions, forms, its fruitfulness and effectiveness questions are examined in the regional analysis of the educational system of adult education connected to public education and the regional approach (region, county, small region) serves as a kind of developmental framework. They usually set out from the statistical data, specimen generally used in regional researches – demography, employment, unemployment, schooling, settlement structure. The regional approach appears in some researches in the accessibility of adult education institutions in connection with the question of the regional structural inadequacy of trade/job/qualification, in the examination of the adult education school districts and in regional organizational coordination circles, too (Bajuszt, 2005).

To examine the regional drawbacks within the framework of the examination of disadvantageous situation is an emphasized direction in adult education researches. Usually the examined regional borders are the regional operation of the Regional Training Centres, the districts of the county labour organization

and its branches in the out-of-school labour market adult education researches. A country-wide research examined the number of accepted and recommended trainings, the labour demand of the region and the participation in the training, the characteristic feature of the effectiveness of the training according to residence (a settlement at a disadvantage, depressive region) (Halmos, 2005).

The most neglected segment of the adult education institutional system is the non-profit sphere even from the point of view of research. State adult education operates trainings and institutions providing educational services with definite content for the reaching of aims preferred by the state for certain target groups. The for-profit trainers adjust their educational structure to demand/supply and choose premises, operation district accordingly. The non-profit and particularly the civil organizations organized from the bottom make the system really diverse. This sector, which basically does not have entrepreneurial attitude, represents the values and claims of diverse groups and is not recorded or administered properly, can be researched with scientific claim with difficulty. The great number of non-profit specialized literature and researches contradict this only apparently. The research of the general questions of educational non-profits – and thus their regional examination – can only be discovered sporadically within the sector, usually as the „appendix” of the analysis of the sector. Nevertheless, a research has been made in Hungary concerning the adult education civil/non-profit organizations with a summarizing purpose (Arapovics, 2007). This research, despite its limits, gave a subtle comprehensive analysis about the organizations. The regional points of view were also considered when the organizational circle examined was chosen (capital, town, settlement). The registered adult education organizations, and within them the number, ratio of non-profits, were analysed according to regions. Although on a surface level only, but the data were compared with the economic development of the regions and the regional indexes of learning participation were used on the basis of KSH (Central Office of Statistics) data.

As adult education has had its own legal, regulation, guiding, professional, institutional frameworks by now, the effective, successful and „just” operation of this sector, which is complex and covers several branches, demands multi-dimensional planning. It is particularly more valid for adult education than other educational branches that it can only be planned well on a regional (district) basis. The development of the decentralized educational system, the planning of suitable subsidization and training supply requires deep regional survey. Adult education planning runs into serious difficulties even on this level. During planning emphasis is usually laid on the examination of accredited adult education institutions and trade schools. The most characteristic indexes, which adult education literature indicates as the starting factors of planning are the number of

institutions compared to the number of employed and unemployed people, the regional characteristics of their premises, the regional adequacy of the educational structure and the employment structure and the trends of labour market processes (Szép, & Vámosi, 2007). We can find definitely region-based works in connection with adult education planning questions. The research of the National Adult Education Institute done in the spirit of open coordination examined the connection and harmonization of the regional and the educational/training plans focusing on small regions at a disadvantage. They analysed how and to what extent adult education was present in them, how the regional and sectorial plans influenced the formation of adult education supply, participation and employment after training. They pointed to the deficiencies of the planning, those factors which hindered the realization of the plans. The predominance of the role of outer factors, the inadequacy of inner human resource, of connection and social capital, the lack of institution supply, the hindrances of knowledge centre accessibility, the passivity of the population, their disappointment, their negative attitude to learning, the predominance of state adult education, institutions over the private entrepreneurs' and non-profit training institutions are factors which force the regions at a disadvantage into a spiral moving continuously downwards. The regional, small regional plans, in which adult education is present on a general level at most, do not give an answer to them. During planning new answer should be given to new questions according to new points of view, the possibilities of knowledge production should be looked for besides knowledge utilization (Benke, 2005).

In Hungary the research of the concept of learning region, learning town built on international experience represents the connection between adult education and regional development. By now the learning region concept has been representing an extraordinarily complex, collective, dynamic learning process since its economy developing and competitiveness increasing root. The learning region is actually an organizational framework confined within spatial limits, which provides suitable circumstances for continuous learning in the interest of the economic, social development of the region. It aims at the development of infrastructure besides/instead of infrastructure, includes problem-solving learning, the development of interpersonal competencies and results in the development of the representation of interests and of new learning culture in general. It presumes the organizational and inter-organizational network learning, the development of innovation systems on settlement and regional levels, where the learning of the participants is connected mainly to their regional roles. In this cooperative network the educational institutions (the universities in the first place), cultural institutions of the region, as well as the K+F institutions, the enterprises, the

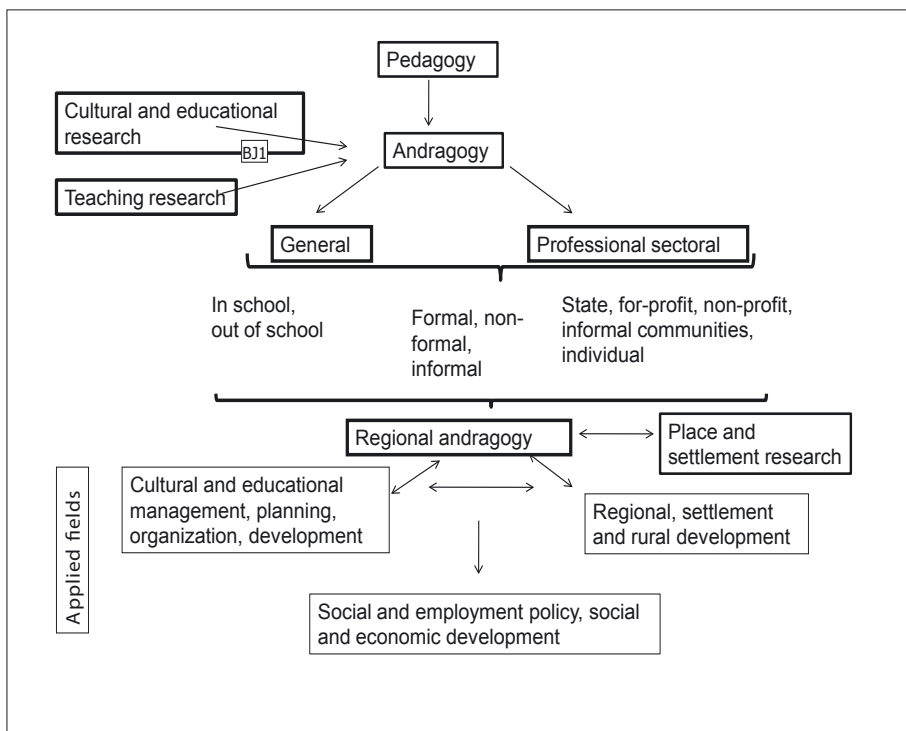
chambers, the labour organization, the civils, the self-governments take part, so it displays the political – economic – social network building at the same time (Németh, 2006). The adaptation and practical realization of the theory of learning region in Hungary can mean an exceptionally important direction of regional andragogical researches in the future.

Conclusions – the positioning of regional andragogy in andragogy

In theoretical andragogical literature we can meet most often today the scientific-theoretical questions of andragogy, researches which support the justification of its importance, significance. These are didactic questions, they bring into focus the characteristic features of adult teaching and learning, their process, their participants, the activity of the participants and the factors influencing them. Besides this several theoretical works mention the importance of the consideration of regional factors in the development of adult education and we can meet researches of andragogical attitude (and not ones of adult education in a narrow sense). In applied researches the definitely region-based approaches are present usually in the case of regional analyses. The educational, cultural and andragogical trends outlined in the study, even if they do not verify but confirm the hypothesis of the reason for the existence of regional andragogy and they call the attention to the necessity of its elaboration with scientific care. The condition of scientific-based regional andragogy is to build up the comprehensive regional examination aspects, methods of the general, sectoral approaches in andragogy.

The place and connection system of regional andragogy in andragogy

The elaboration of regional andragogy requires a complex view and approach. Its condition is to build the andragogical attitude in a more stressed way into adult education researches. The examination of the forms, places and possibilities of organized adult education connected to the cultural sphere put one of the important segments of educational research in issue in andragogical research in a more characteristic way. The sensitive examination of the adult population must be applied from an andragogical point of view utilizing the results and methods of cultural and educational research besides the traditional connection with educational research.



Own drafting

The general research fields of andragogy – the characteristics of adult learning, its forms, motivations, the teaching of adults, its methods etc. – can be examined in connection with regional-environmental factors, effects. The research of sectoral-based andragogy, the system of sectoral andragogy are being formed today (eg. social andragogy) and it is easy to realize that sectoral andragogies and sectoral adult education can be examined on a regional base as well. Maybe the most important social functions of adult education are the dimensions which reduce inequalities, develop economy and employment. The development, planning, operation of both fields can be done successfully, effectively and justly in the context of regional characteristics.

The research field of regional andragogy is extremely complex, the most important ones of which can be:

- the determination of the used and applied regional data, indicators, indexes,
- the methodology of regional researches,

- regional/settlement data collection, data base, statistics,
- the institutional system,
- the training,
- the regional examination of training forms and sectors,
- regional analyses of adult education economy,
- regional planning,
- the system of regional regulation,
- regional need and demand survey,
- complex regional and local researches, surveys – learning regions and settlements,
- comparative regional adult education researches.

Thus regional andragogy is interpreted not as a sector of andragogy in this respect but as a new one – in coordination with the general and sectoral approaches – , as an attitude which can be applied for the whole system and to which a particular target system, methodology can be attached.

Regional andragogy – according to a possible starting proposal – examines the general factors of adult learning, its questions concerning content, its forms, institutional system, sectors, places, levels, managerial, planning, organizational and operational systems in connection with the regional characteristics and processes. It deals with the factors of regional characteristics influencing andragogy and with the role of adult education in the regional allocation of resources, in the reduction of regional inequalities. It fortifies the position of andragogy in scientific public opinion, politics and society, it contributes to the decisions of the government and sectors. The importance of interdisciplinary and interprofessional cooperations have become stronger and stronger in scientific and social researches, which involves the overestimation of the borderlines. Regional andragogy can be regarded as a borderline like that, which is naturally connected to place and settlement research in the first place, it must build on their views, results, methods. Regional andragogy can play the role of a kind of scientific, professional „bridge”. Its applied research connections can be grasped the most directly in relation to educational, cultural development, planning, management and regional, settlement and rural development and it can provide ammunition mainly for human resource, employment, economic and social political decisions.

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Novi putevi u andragogiji: regionalna andragogija

Apstrakt: Polazna tačka ove studije je da je andragogija evoluirala u važan i suptilan pod-sistem pedagogije, obrazovanja i javne kulture koja može i mora biti ispitivana sa naučne tačke gledišta i iz različitih aspekata pa kao posledica toga, mora biti ispitivana i iz regionalne perspektive. Cilj ovog rada jeste da ukaže na prisustvo, značaj i razvoj mogućnosti za istraživanje regionalnog pristupa andragogiji. Na prvom mestu u specifičnoj naučnoj literaturi Mađarske, posle političkog restrukturiranja i na osnovama različitih istraživanja – ona uokviruje glavne pravce istraživanja regionalnog aspekta, analizira interdisciplinarne i međutrgovinske dodirne tačke sa kojima je u vezi. Ona želi da dá odgovor na pitanje da li načini istraživanja i rezultati mogu biti adekvatna baza za nastanak regionalne andragogije koja se može definisati kao posebno polje unutar same andragogije.

Ključne reči: regionalna andragogija, regionalno istraživanje u obrazovanju, istraživanje kulture.

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