

ANDRAGOGY VERSUS PEDAGOGY OR FROM PEDAGOGY TO ANDRAGOGY: A RE-ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLES'S DILEMMA WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNING THEORY

Knowles' formulation of andragogy raised a number of debates – perhaps the most significant was the question of whether children and adults learn differently. This paper argues that it is not a matter of age that affects learning, but a matter of previous experience. Having a novel experience usually means that we are more aware of the sense experience and it is from this that we learn. Once we have given meaning to the sense experience, our learning tends to begin in the cognitive domain. This approach to learning theory offers a solution to the dilemma that Knowles' formulation posed and which he never resolved in a satisfactory manner.

In 1970 Malcolm Knowles wrote *The Modern Practice of Adult Education* and he subtitled it *andragogy versus pedagogy* but as a result of the discussion that followed he changed the sub-title in the second edition of the book in 1980 to *from pedagogy to andragogy*: the question is which of these was right, if either. The argument of this paper is that as we have learned more about human learning there is a sense in which neither was really right and that it would have been more sophisticated to have used the more simple sub-title *andragogy and pedagogy*. While this paper might be reviving an old debate, it is not the history of the debate that really interests us here but the advances in learning theory that have occurred during the past quarter of a century and the new light they throw on an old debate. In order to do this, we will briefly review that debate and then show how we think that it can be finally resolved.

Part 1. The Debate after the 1970 Edition

As early as 1972 Houle (1972, pp.221-223) gently disagreed with Knowles' claim in the original sub-title by suggesting that education is a single process, but the debate really did not take off until later in the decade. McKenzie (1977) sought to provide Knowles' rather pragmatic formulation with a sounder philosophical base by arguing that children and adults are existentially different. Elias (1979) disagreed and responded to this by claiming that this is not necessarily significant since men and women are existentially different but no one has yet suggested that men and women should be taught differently, to which McKenzie (1979) replied that while they might be existentially different their readiness to learn was not related to their gender. At the same time Knudson (1979) suggested that humanagogy would be a better term because it merely suggested that we are teaching human beings whatever their age or gender and while this idea did not really receive much attention it was perhaps much more valid. But by 1980 Knowles re-entered the debate with his revised edition of the original book - with a new sub-title *from pedagogy to andragogy*.

While this really killed off the debate about the difference between andragogy and pedagogy, two other issues became important: firstly, many writers claimed that Knowles had not really understood that nature of andragogy itself (Hartree, 1984, Tennant, 1986, *inter alia*) and others pointed out that Knowles has not understood how the term was used in Yugoslavia and this latter claim was essentially correct; secondly, andragogy became used much more to signify an adult teaching technique and there is a sense in which this was true to Knowles' own thinking – but as a teaching technique it was nothing new since many adult educators had always accepted that learner-centred education was the nature of adult education. But Knowles' ideas about andragogy became very widely accepted since this was a time of rapid growth in the education of adults and the term became a symbol for this expanding phenomenon which differentiated it from traditional education.

One of the most significant things about the debate in the 1970s was the emphasis on existentialism: some that is again coming to the fore and perhaps a clue to Knowles' dilemma lies in this fact. For Knowles (1980,p.43) andragogy was 'the art and science of helping adults learn': for him, it was a teaching technique rather than a theory of learning based upon adult characteristics which he called assumptions. But it was a teaching technique that he related to the learners and their characteristics, pointing to one of the major developments

in education at the end of the twentieth century – the emphasis on learning itself. While Knowles was unsure about the characteristics of the learners that he described – four were described in his initial writings but he later extended this to six (Knowles, 1989), but it matters not how many he identified, the fact is that he did not concentrate on the way his learners learned and so he never managed to solve his dilemma.

Part 2. Developments in the Theory of Learning

In many ways Knowles' own theory of learning was not well developed and yet his work contributed greatly to the development of learning theory. Amongst Knowles' characteristics was the experience which adults accumulate over their life time and which they can use in their future learning and about which adult teachers had to be aware in their teaching of adults. At the time when he wrote two major approaches to learning were prevalent – behaviourism and cognitive development: both are very weak theories since behaviourism can be characterised as the 'mindless body' while cognitivism can be seen as 'the bodiless mind': neither were combined in these two approaches. But the emphasis on the learners' experience was coming to the fore – the work of Dewey and Lewin were again being recognized and in the 1970s Kolb and Fry (1975) published an experiential learning cycle, which was to become popularised by Kolb's (1984) book. Learning from experience became quite central to the development of learning theory and, indeed, it also fitted very nicely into Knowles' work, so that we venture to suggest that without it, Kolb's work would not have become so popular. Kolb focused on the learner's experience and then on reflection on that experience which was also in line with Knowles' own work. Kolb, however, then claimed – wrongly we think – that reflection led to generalisation and abstraction and from there to experimentation. This cycle has become as symbolic of experiential learning as Knowles' concept of andragogy became of adult education, although both were constructed without sound empirical research.

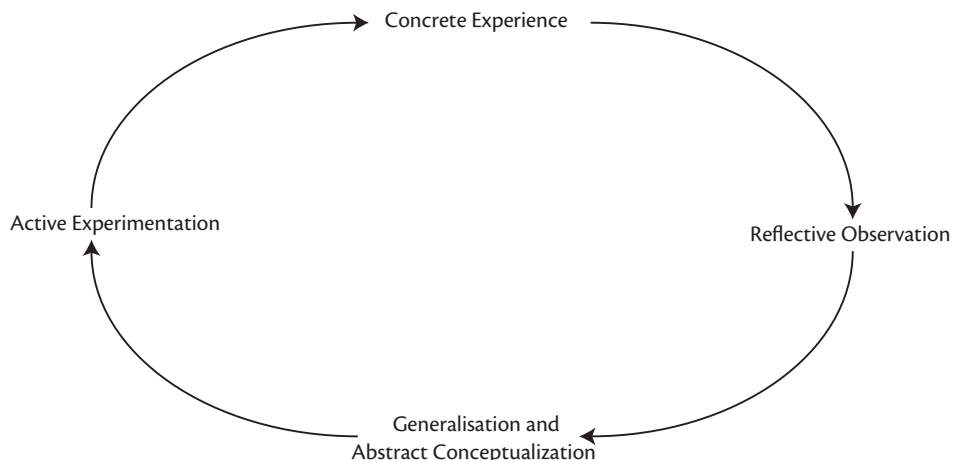


Figure 1. Kolb's Learning Cycle

Indeed, when Jarvis (1987) developed his learning model in 1987 – which was a development on Kolb – he found very few of the people whom he researched actually generalised from a single learning experience. However, he did claim that his research probably covered children's learning as well as adult learning although he had not included any children in his sample. In this sense, he was reflecting the 1970s debate about andragogy and to a very great extent agreeing with the sentiments expressed by Houle (1972). Over the years that followed that research, has continued in human learning and Mezirow (1991; and associates, 2000) has also built on this with his theory of transformative learning. While Mezirow has pointed a way forward, he has not answered the question posed by Knowles. Perhaps one of the clues to understanding the original problem actually lies in the ideas of existentialism that McKenzie and Elias pointed towards in that original debate but they looked at age and gender rather than the whole person. Rogers [1994(1969)], however, had highlighted this issue very early although it had never been brought into the original debate – it is the whole person who learns, not just the mind or the body – and in this he agreed with Knudson. Once we recognize this, we enter a different debate about learning because we have to ask the question about the nature of the person who has the experiences from which learning occurs. Now this had not been done, although Knowles' characteristics of the adult learner had begun to do this, although not in a systematic manner. The person is a combination of the body and the mind and we cannot separate them this recognition allows us to advance learning theory.

Part 3. Towards a Theory of Existential Learning

Learning always begins from human experience, so that we can see how both Knowles and Kolb were pointing us in this direction – but experience is neither mindless nor bodiless and so it is important that we begin to explore the idea of experience before we can proceed – something that Knowles did not do because he rather assumed it to be the sum of previous experiences amassed throughout the life time and so he became concerned and the nature of the adult.

Experience: Michael Oakeshott (1934) suggested that the concept of experience is one of the most difficult in the philosophical vocabulary – see also James (Capps and Capps, 2005) - but it has also become predominant in the vocabulary of learning. Oakeshott was clearly right and one of the problems with a great deal of the writing on experiential learning is that it does not seek to explore the nature of experience itself. But we do have experiences when we as persons interact with the world in which we live and the sum total of these episodic experiences might be regarded as the life-time experience. Experience occurs in space and time – space can be any place but time is a more problematic concept. We take time for granted. The philosopher Bergson (1999 [1965]) describes this as *durée*, the sociologists Schutz and Luckmann (1974,p.7) write about it in the following way:

I trust that the world as it has been known by me up until now will continue further and that consequently the stock of knowledge obtained from my fellow-men and formed from my own experiences will continue to preserve its fundamental validity... From this assumption follows the further one: that I can repeat my past successful acts. So long as the structure of the world can be taken as constant, as long as my previous experience is valid, my ability to act upon the world in this and that manner remains in principle preserved.

While the psychologist Csikszentmihaly (1990) calls it ‘flow’ - ‘the way people do things when consciousness is harmoniously ordered’. For him being is always connected to the ontological present.

The point about learning is that this flow is interrupted: we are no longer in a harmonious relationship with our world – we now no longer fit into our world – a disjuncture has occurred and we experience dissonance. We no longer can take our life world for granted and *durée* becomes a consciousness

of time. We are aware of our world, we experience it, and we ask questions like - Why? How? What does it mean? We have to think about it: we have to learn about it. Now these situations to which we respond are usually, but not always, social and they can be either self-initiated or other-initiated. But we as persons are both body - physical, genetic and biological and mind -knowledge, skills, attitudes, emotions, values, beliefs, senses and identity. When we experience the 'now', we have to recognize that it is all of these dimensions of the person that are involved in the experience and respond to the situation. Most learning theorists tend to restrict their analysis of the experience to knowledge and skills, although a few have more recently ventured into the emotions and attitudes, e.g., Goleman (1996), but there are few who have tried to examine the whole person in this situation. Significantly, we can see that once we discuss the whole person, disjuncture can occur and cause dissonance in any aspect - knowledge, skills, sense, emotions, beliefs, and so on (see Jarvis, 2006 for a discussion on disjunction).

- It can occur as a slight gap between our biography and our perception of the situation to which we can respond by slight adjustments in our daily living which we hardly notice since it occurs within the flow of time;
- It can also occur with larger gaps that demand considerable learning;
- In the meeting of the stranger, the disjuncture might not only occur in the discourse between them, it might actually occur between them as persons and their cultures and it takes time for the stranger to be received and a relationship, or harmony, to be established;
- In addition, some disjunctural situations - often emotive in category - just cause us to wonder at the beauty, pleasure and so forth that we are experiencing. In these situations, it is sometimes impossible to incorporate our learning from them into our biography and our taken-for-granted. These are what we might call 'magic moments' for which we look forward in hope to repeat in some way or other but upon which we might often reflect;
- Finally, we recognize that we cannot learn from the experience so that we become non-learners blocking out the opportunity of learning anything new.

Disjuncture, then, is a varied and complex experience but it is from within the disjunctural that we have experiences which, amongst other things, start our learning processes. There is a sense in which learning occurs when-

ever harmony between us and our world has been broken, so that the relationship between our present understanding and our experience of the 'now' needs to be established, or re-established. The rather interesting speculation is about when there is no disjuncture and if there was ever a time when human kind existed in perfect harmony with the world.

While there are a wide variety of ways in which we can discuss experience, we will focus on two forms here – primary and secondary – which relate to the whole person as body and mind.

Primary Experience: In this we experience the world through our senses. However, it would be false to say that in the ordinary course of events we experience phenomena through one sense only. For instance, when we hear something we might also respond emotionally; when we smell something we might well have a cognitive response as well, and so on. However, experiences through our senses are predominantly primary ones; they are, as it were, us 'touching' the world directly. In itself each sensation is meaningless. But primary experiences are more than just the sensations since through reflection and interaction with others, we give them meaning, so that we know that a certain odour comes from a flower in the garden or the factory in the town, or tastes of a certain food, etc. But there are other primary experiences to which science cannot give meaning – what is the meaning to the cosmos? Our daily lives consist of primary experiences to which we respond in a wide variety of ways but through which we seek meaning.

Living, and therefore doing, is a primary experience! We live through our acts. Consequently, in the course of daily doing (and living) we acquire many skills and the exercise of skill is always a primary experience. It is not surprising therefore that in preparing people to enter a new occupation practical placements have become an increasing necessity and we are re-discovering the need for apprenticeship and mentoring since the apprentice cannot learn the skills in the classroom. Learning the skills must be done through the act of doing and, therefore, experiencing. But, doing something is not just an act, it has a cognitive dimension as well and the inter-relationship between knowledge and skill emerges.

Secondary Experience: However, there is another form of experience – secondary or mediated experience - this comes through interaction and sharing. Foucault (1979, p.26) makes the significant point about sex – that we transform the experience into discourse and this we have also done with many other aspects of our lives including learning. This is precisely the way that culture is shared. It is through interaction that we experience other people and

this is a primary experience. But it is not just the person whom we experience, in the interaction we share our narratives and even listen to each other's discourses. The content of the narrative or discourse is also experienced, but this is a secondary experience. Indeed, the meaning that we give to primary experiences is secondary once we try to tell it to others. Most of what we learn about the world comes from secondary experience and much of what we are taught in college or university, often called theory, is also secondary experience, although we can also have facts mediated to us through teaching. But often it is the interpreted experiences of others that are transmitted by us or to us and about which we always need to be critical. Many educators have endeavoured to provide primary experiences, through role play, simulation, and so on in order that learners experience cognitively, physically and emotionally so that they relate the theories that they learn (secondary experiences) to the world of reality. It is this provision of primary experiences that has come to be known as experiential teaching and learning. Experiential learning, in this limited sense, is also existential but all existential learning would not be considered by all experiential learning practitioners as experiential, although we would maintain that it is. It is from these experiences that we learn.

Human Learning as Transformation: It is important to note that we are born in relationship – as Buber (1994 [1923], p.22) says, 'In the beginning is relationship' - and that we live the whole of our lives within a social context; the only time when most of us sever all relationships is at the point of death. Consequently, no understanding of learning can omit the life-world or the wider social world within which we live since learning is a process of transforming the experiences that we have and these always occur at the intersection of the individual and the wider society. Neither can it omit our experience of the natural world.

Learning from primary experience: As we have noted, experience itself begins with body sensations, e.g. sound, sight, smell, and so on. This is a human experience – it is universal. Indeed, we transform these sensations and learn to make them meaningful to ourselves and this is the first stage in human learning. We are more aware of it in childhood learning because many of the sensations are new and we have not learned their meaning, but in adulthood we have learned sounds, tastes, etc. and so we utilise the meaning as the basis for either our future learning, or for our taken-for-grantedness, in our daily living. For example, we know the meaning of a word (a sound) and so we are less aware of the sound itself and more aware of the meaning, and so on. This first process is depicted in the following diagram:

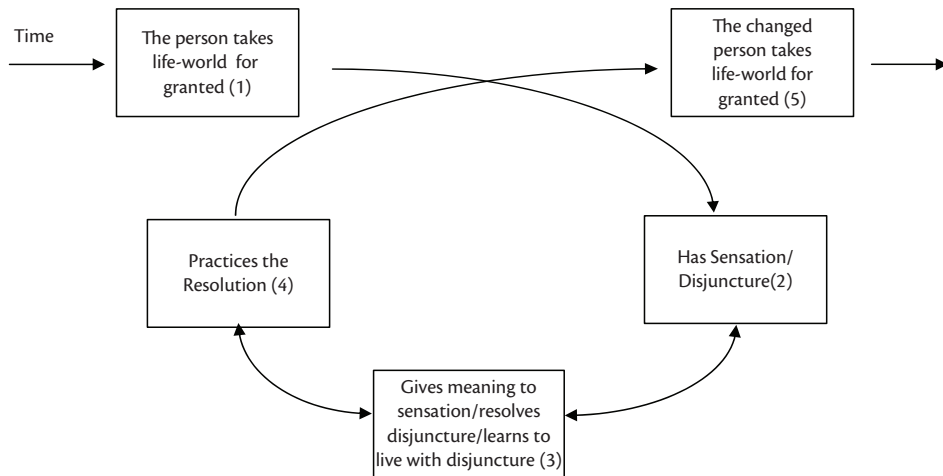


Figure 2. The Transformation of Sensations: initial and non-reflective learning

Significantly, we live a great deal of our lives in situations which we have learned to take for granted (box 1), that is we assume that the world as we know it does not change a great deal from one experience to another similar one as we noted above (Schutz and Luckmann 1974). Over a period of time, we actually develop categories and classifications that allow this taken-for-grantedness to occur. Falzon (1998, p.38) puts this neatly:

Encountering the world... necessarily involves a process of ordering the world in terms of our categories, organising it and classifying it, actively bringing it under control in some way. We always bring some framework to bear of the world in our dealings with it. Without this organising activity, we would be unable to make any sense of the world at all.

We recognize that very young children may not always be in a position to make such assumptions and they are in a more continuous state of learning so that for much of their early life they are developing from the stage of box 2. Learning from primary experiences is life long, although as we gain more experiences, we take them for granted and focus on their meaning. But how we treat our experience is also vital; the more time we give to it, the more attentive we are about it (Crawford, 2005) the deeper might be our insights, so that if we meditate on the experiences, we might see even more. We all have these experiences, we all have new sensations and then we cannot take the world for granted; we enter a state of disjuncture and immediately we raise questions

– What do I do now? What does that mean? What is that smell? What is that sound?, and so on. Many of these queries may not be articulated in the form of question but there is a sense of unknowing (box 2). However, unknowing is also a social phenomenon since one person's knowledge is another's ignorance, and so on. There is a double arrow between the second and the third box indicating that we do not necessarily gain a meaning immediately but eventually we are able to give meaning to the sensation and our disjuncture is resolved. An answer (not necessarily a correct one, even if there is one) to our questions may be given by a significant other in childhood, by a teacher, incidentally in the course of everyday living through discovery learning, or through self-directed learning, and so on (box 3). Significantly, the answers are social constructs and so immediately we are affected by the social context and our learning is influenced by it. Once we have acquired an answer to our implied question, however, we have to practice it in order to commit it to memory (box 4). The more opportunities we have to practice the answer to our initial question the better we will commit it to memory. Since we do this in our social world we get feedback, which confirms that we have got a socially acceptable resolution or else we have to start the process again, or be different from those people around us – as the double arrow between the third and fourth boxes indicates. A socially acceptable answer may be called correct, but here we have to be aware of the problem of language – conformity is not always 'correctness'. This process of learning to conform is 'trial and error' learning. In addition, we have to recognize that those people with power can define what is regarded as socially acceptable but as we become more confident of ourselves we are in a position to reject this socially accepted answer. But as we become more familiar with our socially acceptable resolution and memorize it we are in a position to take our world for granted again (box 5), provided that the social world has not changed in some way or other. Most importantly, however, as we change and others change as they learn, the social world is always changing and so our taken-for grantedness in box 5 is of a slightly different situation. The same water does not flow under the same bridge twice and so even our taken-for-grantedness is relative.

The significance of this process is that once we have given meaning to the sensation and committed a meaning to our memories then the significance of the sensation itself recedes in future experiences as the socially acceptable answer (meaning) dominates the process, and when disjuncture then occurs it is more likely because we cannot understand the meaning rather than about the sensation itself. It is in learning that we incorporate culture into ourselves;

this we do in most, if not all, of our learning experiences. In this sense, we carry social meaning within ourselves – whatever social reality is it is incorporated in us through our learning from the time of our birth onwards. Indeed, this also reflects the thinking of Bourdieu (1992, p.127) when he describes habitus as a ‘social made body’ and he goes on in the same page to suggest that:

Social reality exists, so to speak, twice, in things and in minds, in fields and in habitus, outside and inside of agents.

There is a sense then in which we might, unknowingly, be imprisoned behind the bars of our own minds¹ but perhaps there is a reality that is other than the social which needs further exploration. But it is within us that we experience the world and it is from within us that we start our every learning journey – it is a journey into all academic disciplines and all forms of knowledge.

However, if we return to box 2, disjuncture is treated there as if it a single type of phenomenon whereas there is continuum of disjunctural experiences, as we pointed out above, e.g. from there being but a small gap between what we experience and what we already know in our biography so that we merely adjust our response a little and this often occurs almost unthinkingly in the process of everyday life – in the flow of time - to there being a massive gap between the two which we recognize that we cannot bridge and we cannot get answers to it. We called this latter one ‘meaningless experience’ but there are other ways of looking at this, such as learning to live in ignorance and incorporating our ignorance into our biography, and so on. We dismiss our ignorance by recognising that we live in an extremely complex world and after all when we do not know something we can also claim that ‘it might not be my field’ etc. We learn to live in ignorance without disjuncture. This helps us understand why many people might no longer want to think about unknowns of daily living, including religious phenomena. But what some people incorporate into their minds as meaningless and then learn to take their ignorance for granted might be meaningful or learning experiences for others. There might be socially acceptable meanings within our culture, or we may have to devise new understandings and interpretations and this is also a part of the process of learning. In addition, there might be ‘magic moment’ experiences, religious experiences, where the sensation is more important than any socially ascribed meaning.

¹ This phrase, I think, originated with Peter Berger

The point about primary experiences is that we want to give them meaning but we might live in a state on constant disjuncture because we cannot always provide one, nor might our culture provide one that we can accept. This is significant in itself because a sensation has no meaning in itself and only we can give a meaning to our own experience, even though the meaning we give might be one which is socially acceptable. But clearly, we are all affected by these experiences to which we can or cannot give a meaning, and this brings me to the second aspect of our theory of learning – in every learning experience the whole person is changed.

Learning from secondary experience: Significantly, however, we learn to take our sensations for granted when we have given them meaning and it is then in the cognitive dimension that we experience disjuncture – this time, the answer we have to previous experiences might be questioned, the answer that we have read might not seem correct, and so on. In the same way, the values and beliefs that we have worked out may be questioned by others, including teachers, or even by something that we see on the television, and so on. Consequently, we also learn a great deal from mediated, secondary experiences.

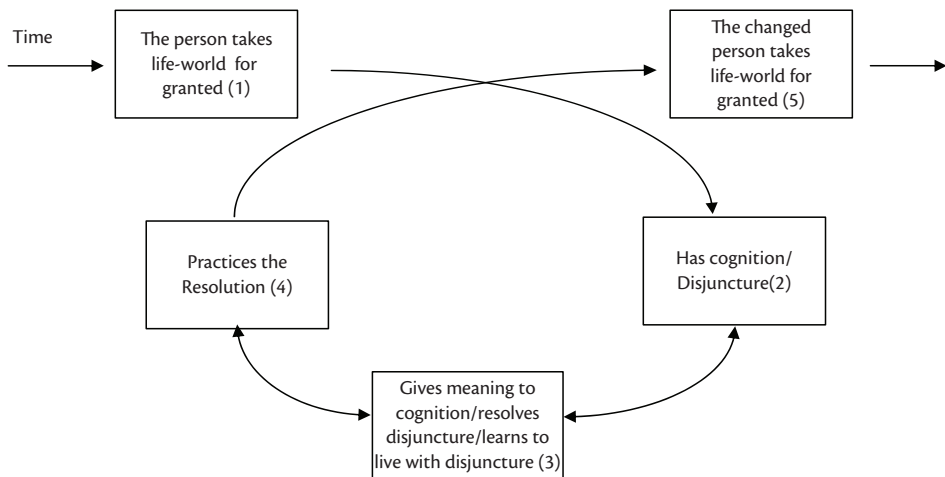


Figure 3. Learning from Secondary Experience

In this cycle, we go through the same processes as we did in our description above about learning from primary experience. Now we are transforming meanings, values, beliefs, and so on. It is at this point that this argument approaches Mezirow's theorising about adult learning. But human learning is more than just transforming the meaning, it is also about transforming bodily

sensations into meaning and the meanings that we have into new ones. It is the process of transforming the whole of our experience though thought, action and emotion and, thereby transforming ourselves as we continue to build perceptions of external reality into our biography. However, we have to combine these two processes and recognize that the whole person has both these primary and secondary experiences, usually simultaneously, and learns.

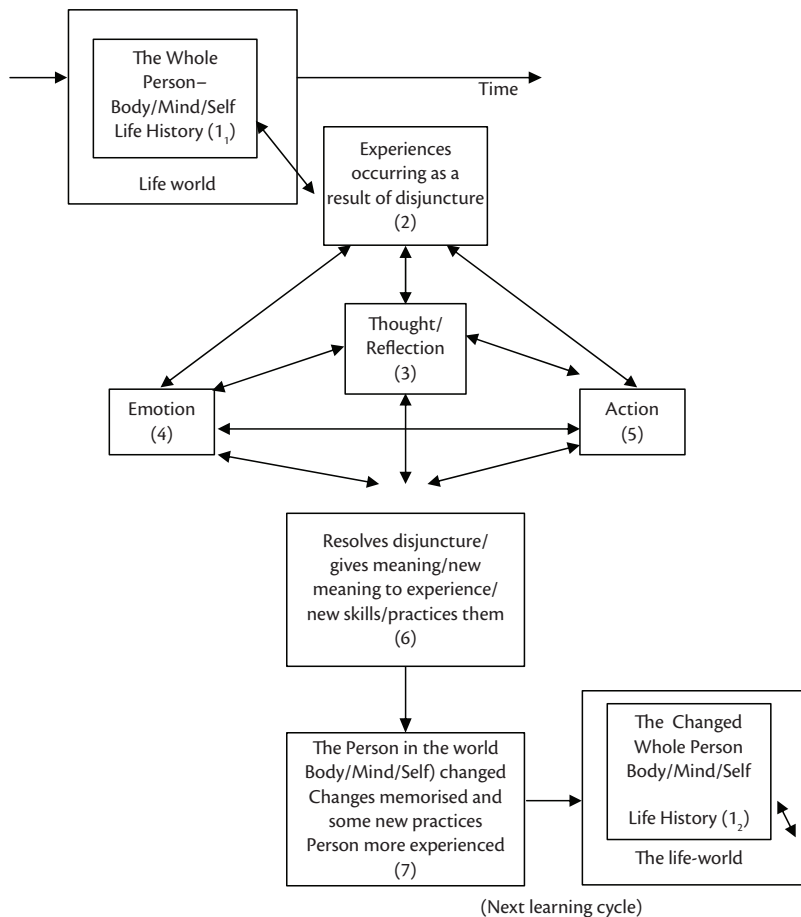


Figure 4. The Transformation of the Person through Learning

Figures 1 and 2 are incorporated into this diagram which seeks to depict the processes of learning. In it we have tried to capture its continuous nature by pointing to the second cycle (box 1₂). However, this diagram must always be understood in relation to the previous figures, but it is only by separating the

primary and secondary experiences that we can actually understand the learning processes. Having had an experience (box 2), which might occur as a result of disjuncture, we can reject it, think about it, respond to it emotionally or do something about it – or any combination of the three (boxes 3-5). Throughout this diagram the arrows are in both directions illustrating the interactive nature of the experience, there is always a feedback mechanism in each aspect of learning as well as a progressive dynamic. What is important about this observation is that we actually always learn from our experience not from the social situation. As a result of the learning (box 6) we become changed persons (box 7) but, as we see, learning is itself a complex process. Once the person is changed, it is self-evident that the next social situation into which the individual enters is also changed. And so, we can return to experience – we do not need to have a meaning to learn from the experiences although I might want to give meaning to it as we reflect upon them (box 3). However, my emotions might be transformed (box 4), my beliefs affected and so might my attitudes and values be (box 3), and so on. We might even want to do something about them (box 5). Finally, we see that as a result of learning (box 6) we become changed persons and so only in being can we become and in learning we experience and transform sensations, the person and then the social situation.

These three diagrams together also depict the complex process of experiencing both sensations and meanings simultaneously, it is also a recognition that both primary and secondary experiences occur simultaneously. Learning, then, is a complex set of processes and so learning is defined as *the combination of processes throughout a lifetime whereby the whole person – body (genetic, physical and biological) and mind (knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, emotions, beliefs and senses) – experiences social situations, the perceived content of which is then transformed cognitively, emotively or practically (or through any combination) and integrated into the individual person's biography resulting in a continually changing and more experienced person.*

Part 4. Andragogy and Pedagogy

From the previous discussion we can see that in the first instance children learn more frequently from primary experiences since they do not know the meaning of the experiences that they have. Having learned the meaning, often through trial and error but also from having been taught by others, and practiced their answer on many occasions and found it to be acceptable to the social group in which they are members, they can internalize it and take

it for granted. They then do not have to concentrate on the sensations but on the meaning of the sensation for future learning and in this sense, their future cognitive learning depends upon their experiences – in precisely the way that Knowles recognized. However, it was not age that determined their level of experience but the learning from their previous experiences, so that young children are able to deal with cognitive learning when they have internalized the meaning as a result of many previous experiences.

By contrast, adults who experience a new taste, sound, smell etc – who has a new sensation - does not know its social meaning either and so they have to learn the meaning attached to their primary experience before they can take their primary experience for granted and move on to learning from meanings, or secondary experiences. Obviously, the more experienced we are, the easier it is to learn through secondary experience, although there are times when even experienced adults still have to learn from primary experiences. In addition, we are now well aware that in experiential learning we try to help adults, usually in work place simulations or work place student experiences, learn from the primary experiences that we have provided.

Now meanings are only attached to sensations by cultures and societies – so that to learn a meaning to a sensation, whether it is a word or a feeling, is only to learn what is socially acceptable and conformist. It is the ability to recreate disjuncture and question the socially accepted meaning through reflection and criticality that empowers individuals to develop their unique selves.

Consequently, we can see that in teaching people by providing them with primary experiences demands a different technique to teaching them through secondary experiences. Knowles was right thus far. He was also right about focusing teaching upon previous learning, but he was wrong in equating age and experience, so that he moved in the right direction in the later book but he could not break away from the adult-child dichotomy. For instance, he (1970, p.43) wrote that ‘the two models are probably most useful when not seen as dichotomous but rather as two ends of a spectrum’. He goes on to talk of a six year old and a forty year old and their levels of dependency rather than their levels of previous experience, so that for him both pedagogy and andragogy finish up as teaching methods based upon an incomplete theory of human learning.

Conclusion

We are now in a position where we can return to the original question: was Knowles right to differentiate between andragogy and pedagogy in either of the ways that he did? As different teaching techniques, he was right to differentiate between learner-directed and teacher-directed methods – but in the wider educational vocabulary neither term is specifically restricted to teaching methods. In terms of learning theory, he was hinting at a very valid differentiation in the types of experience from which we learn, but he was unable to substantiate his feelings because they were wrongly conceptualised. He neither explored how the learners actually learned, nor the nature of the experiences that they had, which he so rightly regarded as important. Perhaps his book would have been far more correct had he not tried to compare the education of adults with that of children, but recognized that as human beings we all learn in the same way but we do have different experiences at different levels and we learn from these and that teachers need to respond to the different experiences of their learners, as he recognized, if they are to be good educators.

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ANDRAGOGIJA U POREĐENJU S PEDAGOGIJOM ILI OD PEDAGOGIJE KA ANDRAGOGIJI: PREISPITIVANJE NOULSOVE DILEME SA RAZVOJEM TEORIJE UČENJA

Noulsova formulacija andragogije izazvala je nekoliko rasprava – možda je najznačajnije bilo pitanje da li deca i odrasli uče na različit način. Ovaj rad dokazuje da ono što utiče na učenje nisu godine starosti, već je to prethodno iskustvo. Steći novo iskustvo obično znači biti svesniji osetilnog iskustva, a upravo iz toga se uči. Kad jednom protumačimo osetilno iskustvo, naše učenje teži da otpočne u domenu saznanja. Ovaj pristup teoriji učenja nudi rešenje dileme koju je stvorila Noulsova formulacija i koju on nikada nije razrešio na zadovoljavajući način.