

‘A Good Teacher Has to Laugh a Lot’: Talking About Perceptions and Beliefs of LESLLA Migrant Mothers in a Small Flemish City

‘Un buen profesor tiene que reír mucho’: Hablando de percepciones y opiniones de LESLLA madres emigrantes en una ciudad flamenca pequeña

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Abstract

In this contribution we present and discuss the perceptions on and beliefs about language and literacy acquisition of a small group of LESLLA-learners in Tienen, a city located in the center of Flanders (Belgium). LESLLA-learners often perform poorly in official language and literacy programs. Recent studies indicate that experiences of cultural dissonance may be at the root of the issue. In order to find out whether this assumption is true, we conducted in-depth interviews with nine low-educated migrant mothers during home visits. The analysis of the interviews led to an unexpected kaleidoscope of views on learning, second language learning and literacy. Based on our findings we draw a few conclusions that may be relevant to LESLLA teachers.

Keywords

Literacy; second language acquisition; LESLLA-learners; cultural dissonance

El alfabetismo; el aprendizaje de segundas lenguas; estudiantes LESLLA; la disonancia cultural

1. Introduction

In Flanders, the northern part of Belgium, LESLLA-learners tend to benefit less from the official language and literacy programs set up for adult migrants (Berben et al., 2003; De Niel et al., 2016; Plichart, 2003). In 2003, a study by Berben and colleagues (2003) showed that one in three LESLLA-students drop out before they reach the end of their A1-program of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)(Council of Europe, 2014). A recent study adds to these findings by indicating that only 24% of lower educated adults and only 10% of the adult learners who enter a literacy program without any prior schooling or

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literacy experience manage to pass from level A1 to level A2 courses. In the academic year 2014-2015, only 20% of the lower educated learners and only 3% of the learners who were non-literate at the start of the program obtained the official language certificate within ten months of education (A2) (De Niel et al., 2016).

Research provides us with several reasons why official language and literacy programs do not seem to lead to the desired results for LESLLA-learners in general. The first strand has to do with findings in cognitive psychological research showing that non-literate adult second language learners do not show the same metalinguistic skills as low- or literate adult second language learners. “Alphabetic literacy changes the way L2 learners process oral L2 input” (Tarone, 2010:75; see Pettitt & Tarone, 2015, or Young-Scholten, 2013 for an overview). LESLLA-learners, for example, do not notice recasts on changes to language form, whereas they do notice recasts on meaning and even learn from them (Tarone, 2010). Isolation of words and word segments seems to be very hard for LESLLA-learners (Kurvers, 2015). Also, when non-literate or low-literate learners are asked to make judgments about word length, their answers are related to referential content rather than to word length in itself (Kurvers, 2015). Kurvers (2002, cited in Young-Scholten, 2013: 447) even concluded that “literacy makes more of a difference than age.” In one of her studies concerning non-literate learners, non-literate adults turned out to differ more from the adult readers than from the pre-reading children, suggesting that literacy is crucial for the development of metalinguistic knowledge. Furthermore, the differences between literate and non-literate adult learners cannot merely be explained by language (learning) abilities that are promoted by literacy. Lukes (2009: 166) indicated, for example, based on classroom observations, that a non-literate female student “despite rich and varied life experiences, [...] needed to begin to learn classroom norms and behaviors, teacher expectations, how to use a book, how to hold a pencil, how to write the alphabet, letter–sound correspondence, and so on.” Therefore, language-learning programs should take into account what we understand of the non-literate adult mind.

The second explanation is related to the sociocultural aspects of learning. More in particular, it has to do with the beliefs and perceptions on learning of the teacher on the one hand and the students on the other hand. The ideas of learning a second language, learning how to read and write, or learning in general of adults with few or no education are fostered by informal experiences of learning in non-institutionalized contexts and/or testimonials of others who did get access to formal schooling. In informal contexts, people generally learn through observation and listening or overhearing, awaiting to participate in the community (Keller, 2003; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff et al., 2003). In some (usually non-Western) communities, harmonious family relationships and respect to other community members are highly validated (Keller, 2003). For socialization to be efficient within this context, learning has to be situated and collective, and thus involving participation in ‘the community of practice’. Learning is a social process and occurs through experiences of participation in one’s daily life (Lave & Wenger, 1991). In some other (usually Western) socialization contexts, on the other hand, the focus is on individual goals, and learning is considered to be most successful in a separated classroom, with standard curricula and a trained teacher (Decapua & Marshall, 2015; Keller, 2003; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff et al., 2003). DeCapua & Marshall (2015b) speak in terms of ‘cultural dissonance’.

2. Context and Target Group of our Small Scale Study

2.1 Non-literate migrant mothers: a vulnerable yet important target group

Among the LESLLA-learners arriving in Flanders, there are an important number of mothers who had very little or no access to schooling at all in their home countries. These mothers are a very vulnerable group of learners. First, without intensive outreaching action, they are difficult to be reached by formal learning institutions. Yet, their learning is crucial for the educational success of their children; children of low educated mothers tend to have more learning difficulties (Belfi et al., 2011; Belfi et al., 2014). Secondly, the standard official second language and literacy programs are not tailored to these mothers' needs: they have difficulties finding day care where they can bring their baby to during the course, and they often have to interrupt their learning due to pregnancy and child care. As a consequence, progress is slow in their language and literacy acquisition; a lot of them drop out after several attempts, leaving them frustrated and without a certificate (De Niel et al., 2016; Drijkoningen, 2012).

2.2 A flexible program leading to a privileged relationship with the mothers

A flexible literacy program³ tailored to these mothers' needs was established in the rooms of a charity organization that distributes food parcels three times a week in Tienen, a small city in Flanders. Tienen is located somewhat in the center of Flanders. The city is characterized by its population of older natives and migrant very low-educated families that are coming in, while young higher educated natives are leaving. 5,13% of the inhabitants is of foreign origin, 9,77% received Belgian nationality within the last year. More than one in ten children is born in a low-income family (Stad Tienen, 2012). This means that they are born in a family with a low income, a low level of education of the parents, poor housing and health conditions. Yet few socio-cultural events are organized or actions taken by the city to increase social cohesion or to promote education. Until recently, in Tienen, there was for example no officially funded provision for the unique learning needs of non-literate second language learning adults.

Through this program, we were able to reach 20 non-literate or very low educated migrant mothers aged 25 to 48, together with their young children who were allowed to come along to the meetings. As the program allowed us to follow these women over four years of services, a rapport and a relationship of confidence was established with them. This privileged relationship made it possible to get access to the personal life and minds of the mothers.

3. Framework

As we already indicated in the introduction, two learning paradigms can be distinguished: a Western-style formal way of learning and teaching, sometimes called Assembly-Line Instruction (Rogoff, 2014), and a non-Western, informal way of learning, also called 'Learning by Observing and Pitching In (LOPI)' (Rogoff, 2014). Although these learning paradigms make a continuum of ways of learning and teaching (DeCapua & Marshall, 2015a; Rogoff et al.,

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2003), they can be very different in certain aspects. In informal learning settings, there is typically a strong relationship between teachers and learners. Furthermore, it is essential that the subjects that are studied during the course have immediate relevance to the learners. Learning in an informal setting is contextual and is often rather incidental than explicit and structured (DeCapua & Marshall, 2015b). In formal learning settings, on the other hand, learning is typically structured by a trained teacher and a standardized curriculum. Relationships between teachers and students can be close, but it does not have to be the case for learning and teaching to be effective (Rogoff, 2014; DeCapua & Marshall, 2015a).

The perceptions and beliefs of LESLLA-learners about learning in general, learning a second language and learning through a Western educational schooling system seem to have been fostered by informal experiences of learning in non-institutionalized contexts. Perceptions and beliefs of teachers on how to teach literacy and a second language, on the other hand, are shaped by the Western educational setting they experienced themselves.

In the table below (Table 1), we compare the beliefs and perceptions that are possibly generated in the mind of teachers who have been socialized in the Western-style formal education on the one hand to the perceptions and beliefs LESLLA-learners may have built up through non-formal learning (cf. Keller, 2003; Rogoff et al., 2003; Rogoff, 2014).

<p>Perceptions of Western teachers about learning in an institutionalized Western educational context</p>	<p>Perceptions and beliefs on learning fostered by non-formal learning</p>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning is an individual process, taking place in the head of the learners. • Learning is best organized in spaces exclusively designed for that purpose and isolated from daily activities. • Learning a language is a separate ‘subject’, isolated from its social context and purpose. • Taking up an active role in the classroom is a sign of motivation of the learner. • What is to be learned is first de-fragmented into smaller units and then transmitted in a certain order, defined by the linguistic complexity. • Learning is a one-way process in which the teacher is the expert, giving him a dominant position in the relationship. • Intensive exposure to the L2 exclusively, is ‘the’ way to enhance L2 learning. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning is a collective process, taking place while participating in social events. • A safe and familiar place is crucial to make learning possible. • Learning can only take place when learners get access to crucial social practices. • Learning is an integrated process, taking place by gradually moving from observation to taking an active role in a social practice. • The importance of a specific social practice defines the urgency of what has to be learned. • In the learning process, equality, mutual respect, trust and flexibility in the roles are crucial. |
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Table 1 Perceptions of Western Teachers about learning in an Institutionalized Western Educational Context versus Perceptions and Beliefs fostered by non-formal Learning

Since most of the LESLLA-learners have had very little to no experience with the Western-style formal education, they may experience ‘cultural dissonance’ when entering a formal Western-style educational system: they may experience the differences between their ways of learning and the Western-style ways of learning, and they may get confused about learning and teaching strategies (DeCapua & Marshall, 2015b; Rogoff, 2014).

In order to overcome this ‘cultural dissonance’ in the classroom, DeCapua and Marshall (2011; 2015a) and Marshall and DeCapua (2013) developed MALP, the Mutually Adaptive Learning Paradigm. With this alternative pedagogical approach, which is a type of Culturally Responsive Teaching (cf. Gay, 2000, as cited in DeCapua & Marshall, 2015b: 49) teachers are able to “transition students to formal school settings through a mutually adaptive approach” (DeCapua & Marshall, 2015a: 154). According to the researchers, the cultural differences between low-educated students and their teachers’ ways of learning must be made explicit in order to develop effective learning and teaching strategies. By combining learning strategies from both views on learning, transition is likely to occur more easily. In order to do so, DeCapua & Marshall (2015b) propose to combine oral and written communications, among other things, and to provide opportunities for the learners to become familiar with these ‘new’ ways of learning.

Interaction and negotiation between teachers and their LESLLA-students on the possible mismatch in their perceptions and expectations should therefore form an integral and crucial part of every learning program set up for non-literate learners. Research shows that this is unfortunately not always the case in Flanders and the Netherlands (both Dutch speaking parts of Europe). Teachers often tend to hold very specific views on what seems to be going on in the mind of their learners, while few report on the discussion of these issues with their learners. For example, according to a study conducted in The Netherlands, teachers in adult basic education often think of their non-literate female immigrant students as too passive, which results in them thinking their students do not want to learn Dutch at all. Teachers want their students to be ‘active learners’, but the students think it is more appropriate to be ‘passive learners’ and to attribute a central role to the teacher (Lunenberg & Volman, 1999, p. 442). Regarding views on learning, for most students in basic education, the *intake* of knowledge is the most important mental model of learning (cf. Vermunt, 1992), because they think of learning as a “process of memorizing” (Lunenberg & Volman, 1999: 440). According to teachers, on the other hand, the *use* of knowledge is the general aim for these learners. With regard to the students’ learning orientation, many learners refer to the aspiration to learn language for everyday use, to participate in Dutch society. For example, they want to go to the doctor or they want to be able to communicate with their children’s teachers (Lunenberg & Volman, 1999). A study conducted in Flemish basic education showed similar results (Plichart, 2003). Plichart (2003) asked a number of LESLLA-teachers about the perceptions on learning of their learners. According to the teachers, non-literate learners show a lack of insight in their learning process, especially at the beginning of their learning. They also lack educational competences such as concentration, active listening to other learners or sitting still; they are

reported to have problems with abstract reasoning. Another observation mentioned by teachers was that non-literates only discover their specific learning needs after a period of schooling and that their learning needs are often limited to basic social interactions. For learners with children, they show interest in education and school. And last, according to their teachers, LESLLA-learners rarely express the need to learn to read and write.

4. Research questions and Data collection

During the program in Tienen, we noticed that the women taking part in the meetings regularly expressed the need to share their personal feelings about the learning process and the impact on their learning of a certain behavior or incident with one of the teachers or volunteers. They made it clear that these issues were very important to them and needed to be discussed before any further learning could take place. During a private talk at the home of a mother D. for instance, she expressed her astonishment and disappointment about one of the volunteers in the program: The volunteer had explained to the group how she prepared eggs in a salad. When D. in turn wanted to explain ways in which she prepared eggs, the volunteer had cut her off. For D. this was a very negative experience: ‘How can I learn from someone who only wants me to listen to her explanation and who is not interested in how we prepare eggs in our cooking tradition?’ An incident another mother was upset about, was that a younger volunteer, aged 24, had given her a light slap on the bum, as a joke. When we asked her why she did not want to work with this volunteer in a next session, she explained to one of the older teachers ‘You can do that but not E.: She is younger than me, it is not up to her to reprimand me’.

With the framework as described above in mind and due to these interactions, we became more and more interested in the social and sociocultural aspects of their learning. The existence of a potential mismatch between the views on learning of the teacher and those of the students and the lack of interaction and negotiation on this subject, might well explain some of the drop-out rates and the failed programs in adult basic education.

In particular, we started looking for answers to the following research questions:

Can we collect more utterances like the ones expressed spontaneously by the learners that confirm that non-literate adult second language learners are well aware of and reflect upon the influence of the social conditions on their learning?

and

Do the utterances and reflections of the non-literate learners themselves confirm the robustness of the framework described in Table 1?

We decided to set-up in-depth interviews with the mothers at the end of the program. We conducted home visits, something we had already done on several occasions in the course of the program. We tried to get answers to a preset list of questions, at the same time showing interest in their daily preoccupations. Family members or friends translated if needed. As our relationship with the mothers was of major importance, we did not insist for the sake of an answer when the mother did not fully answer all of the questions. In this way, we recorded 9 in-depth interviews.

We analyzed the recordings independently from one another for each mother, by transcribing the interviews and selecting all utterances about perceptions and views on language and literacy acquisition. These reports were discussed in order to provide answers to our two research questions.

In Table 2 we provide some background information about the nine mothers we interviewed. A selection of what came out of the interviews with the mothers Z., R., M., B., F. and S. is described in chapter 4. Findings.

Mother	Age	Country of origin	Years of schooling	Religion	Number of children	Mother Tongue
Z.	40	Kosovo	0	Muslim	5	Roma/Serbian
R.	36	Kosovo	0	Muslim	7	Roma/Serbian
M.	43	Iraq	0	Muslim	5	Kurdish
B.	34	Iraq	0	Muslim	2	Kurdish
F.	38	Iraq	0	Muslim	5	Arabic
S.	31	Iraq	3	Muslim	6	Arabic
	38	Iraq	0	Muslim	6	Kurdish
	48	Iraq		Muslim	2	Arabic
	28	Morocco		Muslim	3	Arabic

Table 2 Demographics of the Participants

5. Findings: What the Mothers Shared

Mother 1, Z.: belongs to the Muslim Roma population in Kosovo. She fled from Kosovo at the end of the Balkan war together with her husband, whom she was forced to marry at the age of thirteen. They first spent some time in Germany, before coming to Belgium.

Z. has 5 children. Only the last one, 11 years old now, was born in Belgium. Her oldest son married in Belgium 4 years ago at the age of 19 and already has a son as well. By lack of financial means, the young couple and their little son were forced to stay and live in the house of Z. Z's grandson only speaks Roma, no Dutch (yet), except for the word 'auto' (car).

Z. was completely non-literate; she never went to school as a child, because her father had decided that only the boys could go to school. She always thought of that as really awful. Z. is convinced that a child of three years of age is too young to learn another language. At the same time, she claims that now it is very hard for her to learn how to read and write because she is too old.

The very first time she went to Dutch class, she thought she would never be able to do this, that she would never be able to learn how to read and write. She likes to learn rather in

small groups than in a class with a lot of other people, because the other mothers always talk in Arabic. When that happens, she cannot really focus. She also believes that reading is much harder than writing. She is much better at writing, but she really wants to learn to read and write. She told us that she was so glad when she discovered that she was able to read the word 'fish' on the window of the fish shop. 'Of course, 'fish' for a fish shop.' Another thing she mentioned was that she was so glad that the teacher told her and the other mothers in one of the classes that they make sweaters from plastic bottles. She said: 'nobody ever told me that before. If I had known ...' On the other hand, she thinks that in Belgium, people spend so much time going to school, at least ten years, and that is too much. If she could choose, Z. would go back to Kosovo. Her mother lives in Pristina. It has become so beautiful. It is like 'little Paris'.

Mother 2: R. is a Roma from Kosovo as well. She has 7 children. Three of them go to a school for special needs. Two of them suffer from a chronic kidney disease. Therefore they spend a lot of hours at the local hospital.

R. has an incredibly good memory. She told us for example during the interviews that she only needs a recipe the first time she cooks something new, but the next time, she just knows it by heart. Learning by doing is her habitual way of learning. For example, she wanted to tile the wall in the living room once. She just did it without anyone telling her how to, nobody ever needed to 'teach' her to do it. Her brothers and sisters went to school in Kosovo, but she never did, because as the oldest one in the family, she had to help at home. She did not mind, did not regret it. She told us the following: 'there is no real difference between me and my siblings; they just know how to read and write, that's all'. When she just started with Dutch class, she thought she would only have to go there once and then afterwards she would manage to read and write on her own. Learning for R. is a term that is especially related to learning in a formal setting. All the rest is just 'doing'.

Mother 3: M. belongs to the Kurdish minority in the north of Iraq. She married her nephew at the age of 16. Together they have six children. Her husband fled Iraq 6 years before her. During that time she had to raise her children on her own. A lot of her family members are still a member of the Kurdish army and are still fighting in the conflict area.

M. was completely non-literate when she entered the program. Nevertheless, she thinks it is really important to talk a lot with your children, one-to-one or all together. She wants them to know what is right and what is wrong. She wants them to express what they think but not just like that. M.'s daughter said that before her mother started to participate in the program, she rarely left the house. Now, she can manage going to the doctor or the shop on her own. However, in the beginning, M. thought she would not be able to learn; now she realizes she can. Although, because of problems at home, with the children, the war in Kurdistan, sometimes, there is not enough space left in her head for learning. According to her, learning is easier in a small group of mothers. Some of the mothers are talking too much. It should be quiet in the classroom. Even if the other mothers would stop coming to the course, she would still come, because she really wants to learn. In Kurdistan, children only go to school from the age of six or seven. Young children learn from other children or other people in the streets, not from a teacher. For young children it is easier to learn. Therefore it is a pity that there is no school for very young children in Kurdistan. Besides, the youngest child in the family learns from all the other family members. Her son said: 'Kurdish, of course, that's our mother tongue, so we learned it from our family'.

Mother 4: B. also belongs to the Kurdish minority in northern Iraq. She fled with her husband when her first child was born. Her second son was born in Belgium and is now four years old. She entered the program when she had just arrived in Belgium. M. and another mother introduced her to the program.

When B. joined the group, she was very shy and silent. During the interview she said she really loves school. She loves the idea that all the mothers come and learn together as a group. She thinks it is better to learn at school than at home. Her father was a teacher in Iraq. And still he did not send her to school, while he must have known how important that is. She is still very angry about that. B. is also glad that she took A., her youngest son, with her to the course. When he first went to kindergarten, the teacher immediately asked her if A. had been to daycare. The teacher was surprised that he had already learned so many things: holding a pencil, playing with other kids, or sitting on his chair.

Mother 5: F. Joined the program immediately after arriving in Belgium. She comes from a town in the South of Iraq. She has never been to school in Iraq and was completely non-literate. As soon as the war started, the girls were the first to be refused to go to school.

F. said she is glad that she can go to the course, although she would like A. (her baby) to go to daycare rather than take him with her to the course. She even asked herself: 'What would I have become in Tienen, if this group had not existed?' She said she learned the most when the teacher came to her house when A. was still a baby. A. talks a lot. He learned a lot of words in Dutch from his sister, words like 'stop' 'hello' 'high five'. Maybe A. will be a professor, who knows. However, F. thinks it is more important for A. to be able to walk at the age of one than to be able to talk. In Iraq, if a child is not able to walk at one year and two months, they give it an injection. F. also told us she likes to read books with a lot of pictures. She doesn't like books with small letters because she cannot read them.

Mother 6 : S. comes from the south of Iraq. She went to school until she was nine years old. She joined the program the first week she arrived in Tienen: in the Iraq refugee community in Belgium, women of a family already living in Belgium have the obligation to invite the wife of a newly arrived family to their homes and introduced them to society. S. had four children upon arrival in Tienen. In the course of the program, she gave birth to twins. In the first years of the program they lived in very poor housing conditions.

S. was really sad when her father told her she could not go to school anymore when she was nine. Therefore, she is glad that in Belgium, children have to go to school.

S. wants to learn to talk and write in Dutch. According to her, when you arrive in a new country, you have to learn the language. Even if you are not sure you can stay in the end. At least, you learned something. However, when you are still unsure about your situation, and afraid if you can stay or not, learning the language is not so easy. S. believes that you have to repeat what you learned, try to speak in Dutch as much as possible. Otherwise what you learned "flies away". She also thinks that learning together with a lot of people is good: you see what others already learned and that motivates you to learn as well. Somewhat later during the interview, she told us that she thinks learning in small groups is better. Anyway, by going to the course, she is not afraid anymore to go to the shop. Going to the doctor is still difficult.

6. Discussion: A surprising kaleidoscope of views on (second) language and literacy acquisition

Even if the mothers were not able to answer all of the questions directly, they provided us with a lot of statements that can be related to a more collective socialization context and the non-formal learning situations that they participated in when in their native country.

Examples include mother B., who loves the idea that all the mothers come and learn together as a group. Mother F., who claims she learned the most when the teacher came to her house when A. was still a baby. Mother B. brought up that her baby learned a lot just by bringing him along to the meetings.

On the other hand, some of their statements show a shift towards the appreciation of more Western standards of formal schooling. Statements like ‘It is a pity that there is no school for very young children in Kurdistan’ or ‘My father knew how important school was, and yet he did not send me to school’ reveal that the mothers are influenced by the way Western society values formal schooling.

Furthermore, learning Dutch is typically associated with a Western-style formal setting; most of the mothers indicated it as something only adults or bigger children are able to do. The utterance of mother Z. illustrates it: ‘My grandson [aged three], he is too young to learn another language.’

Within the interviews, mothers shifted from one view to the other, thus sometimes expressing contradictory feelings about their preferred conditions of learning, like mother S.

However, the outcome of the in-depth interviews clearly indicates that these LESLLA-learners are capable of reasoning and talking about learning processes, in contrast with the findings of earlier research conducted in The Netherlands (Lunenberg & Volman, 1999) and Flanders (Plichart, 2003): They think learning would be better in small groups, or the other way around; they think it is easier for younger children to learn in a formal instructional setting than it is for them, and learning to speak, write and read Dutch makes them feel more confident.

7. Conclusions

We are convinced that our small-scale study confirms that LESLLA-learners are able to reflect on their learning process, thereby contradicting general teacher beliefs on non-literate learners. Therefore interaction and negotiation of these issues with the learners should take an important place in the learning program for LESLLA-learners. Ingredients we believe in are asking learners feedback after an incident observed, talking with the learners in the classroom, asking about their perceptions on (second) language and literacy learning, about their aspirations and motivations. Use of their mother tongue is indispensable in this case in our opinion.

The analysis of our in-depth interviews with originally non-literate or very low educated mothers shows that these new learners are navigating between old and new perceptions of learning. However, we can conclude from the results of our small scale study that the framework described in the background section above could be a useful tool for new teachers to make them aware of possible differences between their beliefs and perceptions about learning on the one hand and the ones of non-literate or very low educated adult second language learners who enter

their classroom on the other hand. We do not claim that the model we presented in this contribution is complete, but it can be a starting point.

Teachers should be careful not to interpret a particular behavior of a LESLLA-learner automatically from their own framework, but they should be supported in looking for ways to make this issue an integral part of the learning process.

Furthermore, the results of our study show that each learner is an individual with her own views on learning that cannot be brought back to the country of origin, ethnicity, religion, or years of schooling. Teachers have to be trained so as not to think about LESLLA-learners as a homogeneous group holding identical views on learning.

We realize our small-scale study does only cover a very specific aspect of the very complex process of language learning that uneducated or very low educated adult learners and their teachers go through. Yet we emphasize the importance of giving the learners themselves a voice in a research area of which the social relevance is in itself already underestimated. We hope that our workshop at the LESLLA conference in Granada and its proceedings will in one way or another contribute to a more comprehensive teacher training for LESLLA teachers.

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