Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies

Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection

2019

Best Teaching Practices for Engaging Adult Students' Foreign Language Learning

Aksana P. Mather
Walden University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations

Walden University

College of Education

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Aksana Mather

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee
Dr. Candace Adams, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty
Dr. Earl Thomas, Committee Member, Education Faculty
Dr. Anita Dutrow, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

The Office of the Provost

Walden University
2019

Abstract

Best Teaching Practices for Engaging Adult Students' Foreign Language Learning

by

Aksana Mather

MA, Belarusian State Pedagogical University, 2002

BS, Belarusian State Pedagogical University, 1994

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

August 2019

Abstract

Government initiatives for strengthening the safety of the United States led to increased requirements for military linguists' knowledge of foreign languages. This study explored the development of professional training for instructors at a military language school to address the gap in teaching services. The purpose of this single case study was to explore best teaching practices for engaging adult students' foreign language learning following andragogical principles. Knowles's theory of andragogy provided the conceptual framework. Data were collected using anonymous responses to an online survey from 26 instructors who answered 3 open-ended questions. Data were analyzed by coding answers to the research question and indicated that approximately one third of participants preferred language-centered practices for engaging their students' foreign language learning. Another third of the respondents noted learner-centered approaches, and the remainder listed both language- and learner-centered approaches among best teaching practices. The proposed curriculum might facilitate discussion about the benefits of each approach to promote teaching and learning at the site. Participating in suggested training that is grounded in the theory of andragogy and local data may bring about positive change by advancing instructors' expertise, improving educational services, and resulting in increased students' proficiency.

Best Teaching Practices for Engaging Adult Students' Foreign Language Learning

by

Aksana Mather

MA, Belarusian State Pedagogical University, 2002

BS, Belarusian State Pedagogical University, 1994

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

August 2019

Table of Contents

i

ii

List of Tables

Section 1: The Problem

Exploration of best teaching practices for engaging adult students' foreign language learning at one of the military schools in the United States was prompted by national-scale challenges. During the last decade, numerous hearings at the highest government levels addressed the deficits of highly trained professionals, whose jobs are critical to protecting national security, and revealed the shortage of experts in foreign languages throughout the federal government workforce (*Building Language Skills*, 2008). Professionals who use foreign languages to protect national security hold different positions at various agencies, including active-duty military personnel, special forces operatives, and law enforcement officers. The appropriate training programs and resources for honing learners' linguistic skills are critical for advancing and maintaining the armed forces' ability to communicate in foreign languages at professional levels to fulfill the job mission. Moreover, the current operating environments require the members to possess more sophisticated foreign language skills, regional expertise, and understanding of the factors that drive social change in target countries, which require appropriate adjustments to foreign language training and education services (*Transforming the U.S. Military's Foreign Language, Culture, Awareness, and Regional Expertise Capabilities*, 2008). Advanced training and education in foreign languages and local customs are not only relevant to officers' abilities to communicate with foreign nationals for protecting and defending civil rights and freedom, but these competencies are also critical for individuals' survival during conflicts.

The need for advanced training that promotes the expertise of military members in foreign languages and area studies is also reflected in other government documents. For example, the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (2017) contains the emphasis on the need for consistent modernization in approaches to training and equipping forces to meet the operational demands, including foreign language related competencies. Congruent with the armed forces' concerns, the U.S. Department of Education officials developed an international strategy report. The document stated that foreign language skills are critical for interpersonal communication within multilingual and multicultural society in the United States to facilitate civil discourse and to bring people together based on the wealth of cultural experiences and languages (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). Furthermore, in the U.S. Department of Education report, presenters described the role of foreign languages in ensuring national security and diplomacy while referring to the famous words of Nelson Mandela, who said "If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart" (p. 7).

Well-developed foreign language skills are essential for individuals involved in providing public safety and national security because they allow professionals to establish understanding, communication, and rapport with a diverse population within the United States and internationally. However, the data from official reports indicated some insufficiencies in linguistic competencies among foreign language professionals. For example, according to the U.S. Department of State report in 2016 (as cited in Courts, 2017), "23 percent of overseas language-designated positions were filled by Foreign

Service officers who did not meet the positions' language proficiency requirements" (p. 1). Courts (2017) also noted that despite some improvements from 2008, "the Department of State still faces significant language proficiency gaps" (p. 1). Measures for advancing professional development may include the requirement to promote necessary foreign language skills that are critical for the armed forces' mission implementation.

Due to government officials' attention to the importance of the armed forces' foreign language skills and cultural expertise as highly relevant to national security, the call for action to address the gap in foreign language proficiency of the essential personnel prompted several administrative decisions. U.S. government officials agreed that employees of selected agencies should be encouraged to develop high-level foreign language competencies that are essential for the efficiency of government operations involving armed forces and critical for the border security (*A National Security Crisis*, 2012). Particularly, the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) representatives implemented measures to address the need for increased competence of the armed forces in foreign languages and cultures that is critical for the security of the nation and mission implementation (commandant, personal communication, 2016). The call for action affected practices of government institutions responsible for providing foreign language education and training to the involved personnel (provost, personal communication, 2016). The purpose of the current study was to address the challenges related to improved language proficiency in one of the government-operated schools that provides education services to U.S. armed forces.

The Local Problem

The mission of the DoD is to provide military forces to protect the security of the country. Strong command of foreign languages has been prioritized among other professional skills critical for DoD mission implementation. The current study was conducted at the foreign language school in North America that operates under DoD guidance. The pseudonym of International Language Academy (ILA) was used to protect the confidentiality of the research site and study participants. Formal references for internal documents and names in personal communication were omitted for the same purpose. As an educational and research institution, the ILA provides linguistic and cultural education to armed forces and government agency employees involved in protecting national security. The school is responsible for the defense language program that includes planning, curriculum development, and research in second-language acquisition and provides education services to adult learners whose jobs are related to the DoD mission.

The ILA is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. The ILA provides training to students who are soldiers, marines, sailors, airmen, and other armed forces and allies in more than two dozen foreign languages and dialects. The academy also offers instruction and sustainment training for thousands of learners worldwide through its extension, distance-learning, and online programs in various foreign languages. To address the need for increased linguistic and cultural competencies of the related personnel, the ILA joined

the government agencies' efforts in advancing educational services for the cadre of the armed forces, partners, and allies.

In 2016, DoD officials directed an increase of minimal language proficiency standards for ILA graduates, raising it from Level 2 in reading and listening skills to Level 2+. Moreover, the learners must maintain the new minimally required foreign language proficiency during employment with the armed forces. In other words, after completing study at the school, adult learners must demonstrate linguistic knowledge and skills that correspond to a specific level in the foreign language proficiency measurement system, and this minimal level is higher than in previous requirements.

At the ILA, designated specialists administer the Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT, n.d.) to measure students' foreign language proficiency in listening and reading based on the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) scale. The ILR is a federal interagency organization that establishes and coordinates language-related activities such as language learning, language use, and language testing (Descriptions of Language Proficiency Levels, n.d.). The understanding of the foreign language proficiency levels, as defined by the ILR, is critical for all involved stakeholders from teachers and students to supervisors and government officials. The system of levels serves as a tool for evaluating and assessing learners' abilities to read, write, listen, and speak in foreign languages. The ILR scale describes each proficiency level within the hierarchy, where a higher level incorporates all lower levels. Each level presents descriptions of specific skills and abilities that a person must demonstrate while communicating, interpreting, or comprehending a foreign language. The characteristics of necessary skills also include

the limits that individuals encounter when attempting to function at the next higher level.

There are six base-level and five plus-level descriptions (ILR, n.d.). An individual can

demonstrate certain foreign language reading and listening skills that allow assigning a

specific level of proficiency. Table 1 includes the concise descriptions of the ILR levels.

Table 1

Interagency Language Roundtable Foreign Language Proficiency Levels

Proficiency level	Concise description
Level 0. No functional proficiency.	An individual cannot understand or communicate in a foreign language.
Level 1. Elementary proficiency.	An individual can understand and recognize main ideas and simple descriptions of persons, places, and things, basic survival needs, and minimum courtesy expressions.
Level 2. Limited working proficiency.	An individual can comprehend and apply regular social communication and limited job requirements; can understand factual content in general news, social notices, business letters, and simple technical and biographical information.
Level 3. General professional proficiency.	An individual can analyze, hypothesize, express opinions and arguments, can understand the implication, detect emotional overtones, efficiently communicate on social and professional topics, and comprehend a variety of authentic prose materials on unfamiliar subjects.
Level 4. Full professional proficiency.	An individual can evaluate, create or otherwise use the language fluently and accurately in professional fields, including philosophy, drama, and poetry, can participate in debates, conferences, and lectures, and provide accurate informal interpretation.
Level 5. Native proficiency.	An individual can function at the level of educated native speakers and demonstrate the complete fluency in all linguistic features, including idioms, cultural references, and colloquialisms.

Note. The descriptions of the foreign language proficiency levels adapted from the http://www.govtilr.org

The DoD directed the increase in minimal standards from Level 2 to 2+ in foreign language listening and reading (provost, personal communication, 2016). The sublevels, or plus levels, such as 0+, 1+, 2+, 3+, and 4+, are subsidiary to the base level designations. The plus level (or +) allows more accurate assignment of the individual's foreign language proficiency in cases in which a person demonstrates the skills that exceed one level but does not entirely meet the criteria for the upper level. The ILR defines Level 2 as the Limited Working Proficiency Level and Level 2+ as the Limited Working Proficiency Plus. At Level 2+ in listening and reading, individuals can sufficiently comprehend authentic everyday conversations or factual materials created for the general public at the target-language country, such as news, social notices, and simple technical or biographical information, as well as some idiomatic expressions and implications. The half-level increase in listening and reading (from 2 to 2+) requires learners to demonstrate foreign language comprehension skills that are more pertinent to Level 3 but could be incomplete or inconsistent. Thus, a half-level increase in minimal standards means that linguists will have to demonstrate more advanced language proficiency to bridge the gap in language-related job performances that are critical for the security of the nation.

Academy students' proficiency scores are not among the data that are easily available for researchers. Nevertheless, the organization's documents and results of professional communication with the staff provided sufficient information for identifying the local challenges related to a directed increase in minimal students' foreign language proficiency. These data allowed me to conclude that to advance learners' linguistic

proficiency for meeting new standards, the teaching approaches at the ILA have to be adjusted.

To comply with the directed increase in student language proficiency from Level 2 to 2+ in listening and reading, the ILA administration developed the operation plan 2016-2020 (OPLAN). Among the stated goals of technology integration, quality, sustainment, and contingency support, the document lists the faculty as one of the most critical factors that lead to the mission fulfillment. The ILA management called the staff to encompass all efforts and enable students to achieve the minimum goal of 2+ in foreign language listening and reading proficiencies (commandant, personal communication, 2016). The headquarters encouraged the educators not only to reach Level 2+ minimal requirements but also to advance learners to Level 3 and beyond. According to the managers, this task accomplishment will require increasing proficiency of students, the professionalism of the faculty, and relevant and authentic curriculum. The OPLAN contains information that brings specific attention to a possible gap in faculty's core competencies and directs department leaders to facilitate participatory teacher development by providing opportunities for training, activities, and mentorship.

Moreover, the ILA commandant signed a program memorandum (commandant, personal communication, 2016) to strengthen the efforts for sustaining and expanding faculty professional development and to encourage teachers' contribution to the dialogue on foreign language education. Consequently, the ILA administrators issued the Action Plan that pinpointed the workforce challenges to raising minimum proficiency standards

and set the goal to increase the number of professional development programs for instructors (commandant, personal communication, 2016).

The content of professional communication at the research site also provided critical information for identifying the local problem and offered ideas for solving it. While participating in professional conferences, some instructors stated that teachers at the ILA are dedicated professionals who already provide high-quality educational services to the students (faculty, personal communication, 2016). During professional summits, faculty members and their immediate supervisors admitted that it would be challenging to deliver a shift to higher levels using similar approaches and that advancement of students' foreign language proficiency will require innovative and efficient teaching strategies (faculty, personal communication, 2016; director, personal communication, 2016). A common theme expressed by the administration at the staff meetings indicated that new professional development programs must emerge to ensure all faculty members' readiness to address the challenges of new higher-level standards in students' foreign language proficiency (provost, personal communication, 2016). The ILA practitioners also noted that new professional development programs must be grounded in best teaching techniques and approaches from the prominent theories in the fields of applied linguistics, foreign language teaching, and adult learning with a focus on the unique educational environment at the school (faculty, personal communication, 2016). The ILA personnel are involved in efforts to promote best practices for advancing students' foreign language proficiency. Instructors' brainstorming sessions at the continuing education department indicated that learners' success depends not only on the

level of professionalism of the instructor and the quality of the curriculum but also on the level of students' active involvement in their learning and their increased accountability (faculty, personal communication, 2017). Answering the question of how to engage adult learners at the ILA in the advancement of their foreign language skills may lead to solutions for promoting students' academic success and their increased foreign language proficiency. A tailored professional development program for the faculty may expand educators' expertise and provide insights for strengthening practices leading to students' advanced proficiency through increased learning engagement.

The evidence of the existing gap in teaching services that are critical for meeting raised minimal standards in students' proficiency at the school came from the statements in organizational documents, such as Action Plan, Command Guidance, and OPLAN, and was supported by the content of professional communication. The project study was a response to the administration's internal call for action to investigate and reinforce best practices for advancing students' foreign language proficiency and promoting students' learning at the academy. Moreover, the ILA managers encouraged the staff to conduct studies at the academy and use the results of scholarly investigations for further professional collaboration and development.

Rationale

The purpose of the study was to increase the understanding of best teaching practices for advancing adult students' foreign language proficiency at the ILA. ILA students' proficiency statistics were not among the public data. However, academy documents provided evidence of the local problem and supported the study rationale. The

OPLAN highlighted a 2020 goal of ensuring that all ILA graduates demonstrate minimal proficiency Levels of 2+/2+ in foreign language listening and reading (commandant, personal communication, 2016). However, in 2015, before the DoD directive, the goal was to ensure that graduates maintain 2/2 proficiency greater than 80% (commandant, personal communication, 2016). The increase in students' proficiency is significant. It will require additional efforts and improvements at different levels, including instructors and adult learners.

The scholarly investigation of best teaching practices from the perspective of adult learners' engagement is grounded in extensive literature reviews, professional observations, and reflection on existing data pertinent to the identified local educational problem. Information about effective teaching approaches indicated that best practices can be ineffective if students do not share responsibilities for learning success. Analysis of the school's internal documents, faculty's PowerPoint presentations, staff meeting minutes, and conversations with ILA instructors indicated that students' success depends on several factors (faculty, personal communication, 2016). Instructors' comments revealed that ILA students' foreign language learning outcomes are heavily related to their level of classroom engagement and commitment to study. During community of practice meetings, the colleagues noted that despite faculty members' efforts and a well-organized educational process, not all students participating in training sessions are equally engaged in learning activities for advancing the target language competencies. Some students demonstrated a lack of commitment to learning, indifference, and apathy in classroom interactions, which negatively affected the learning outcomes (faculty,

personal communication, 2017). Identification of best teaching practices at the ILA that promote students' foreign language engagement in classrooms may inform instructional approaches essential for increasing adult learners' foreign language proficiency. Findings may also strengthen professional development efforts at the school.

While considering professional competence as an essential component of instructors' performance, the employees of the faculty development department are continuously involved in promoting the professional growth of the ILA cadre and providing the personnel with appropriate training. The academy offers multiple opportunities for faculty members to stay abreast of advanced features in the field of foreign language teaching and encourages instructors to incorporate them into their classroom interactions. However, given the increased students' foreign language proficiency standards, the requirements for professional competency of the foreign language instructors have also increased. This demand is reflected in the organization's objective to enhance faculty teaching methodology through participation in seminars, in-house workshops, and sponsorship of a master's program in the field of linguistics, as stated in academy's general catalog. Moreover, the catalog mentioned that ILA instructors are mostly native language speakers with education degrees in foreign languages, foreign language teaching, and applied linguistics. In the current project study, I responded to the management call for enhancing instructors' expertise. The purpose of the study was to raise faculty members' awareness of best teaching practices that include adult learning and teaching principles for promoting adult students' foreign language learning.

The general information available from the faculty development department (FDD) at the school also provided evidence for the study rationale. These data indicated that currently offered professional training does not include adult learning and teaching principles as a high priority (FDD specialist, personal communication, 2017). Although the managers encourage instructors to be continuously involved in self-directed professional development, core andragogical principles or students' learning engagement are not among the recommended training topics. Even though the faculty development professionals offer opportunities to participate in workshops and can tailor the courses for instructors' needs, it could be challenging for teachers to evaluate or define the training needs when it is not clear what content in the relevant fields could be most beneficial for professional advancement. Faculty development professionals at the school provide a variety of training for instructors including but not limited to implementing diagnostic assessment in the classroom, overcoming fossilization, transformative teaching and learning, developing students' critical thinking skills, and various team building workshops (FDD specialist, personal communication, 2017). The data showed that the training sessions currently available to instructors do not include andragogical principles or students' learning engagement. School supervisors encourage instructors to continue self-directed professional development, and many teachers participate in educational programs. However, there are no available data on the exact hours or courses for advancing professional expertise. In the project study, a 3-day professional development program for foreign language instructors based on study findings may be beneficial for addressing the gap in faculty's expertise for advancing students' proficiency. The offered

training may increase awareness and reinforce teachers' understanding of the best teaching practices by focusing attention on approaches for addressing adult students' needs and fostering learning engagement in classrooms based on principles of andragogy.

The research took place at one of the language centers (LC) that operate under the umbrella of the ILA. The site employs approximately 100 instructors who provide continuing education services for adult foreign language learners assigned to the armed forces and other government agencies. About 27 instructors are government employees, and approximately 73 instructors work as contractors. Adult learners enroll in language enhancement courses at the LC to sustain and advance their knowledge and skills in selected foreign languages. The LC's mission is to deliver the highest quality language instruction and to develop language learning products and services for the customers. The instructors provide continuing workplace education for the linguists and conduct foreign language sustainment and advancement courses (ILR Level 2 and higher) for enrolled adult learners. The instructors' primary task is to provide training that will sustain students' foreign language proficiency at the new minimum ILR Level 2+ in listening and reading and will help them to advance to Level 3 and beyond within 4-5 weeks courses. Instructors aim to promote foreign language proficiency and increase job performance of the linguists employed by specific government agencies that provide national security.

The purpose of this project study was to inform the development of the professional training session for instructors with the purpose of expanding their expertise in adult students' learning engagement leading to advanced foreign language proficiency.

The exploration of best teaching practices included an examination of adult learning and teaching principles based on the theory of andragogy. Data collection included instructors' perceptions of the most effective teaching approaches and classroom activities that address adult learners' needs to promote engagement and how these perceptions reflect the core principles of andragogy. The results of the project study may inform practices at the ILA, starting with the LC, and may provide pedagogical tools for instructors so they can promote learners' academic success in foreign language classrooms to meet the new requirements for increased minimum proficiency standards.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions of critical terms associated with the local problem provided the theoretical foundation for the project study.

Adult learner: A self-directed person engaged and ready to acquire new knowledge and expertise for immediate application based on personal experience for fulfilling social roles (Knowles, Holton III, & Swanson, 2015).

Adult learning: "The process of adults gaining knowledge and expertise" (Knowles et al., 2015, p. 157).

Adult learners' needs: Need for deeper understanding of processes through a reasonable combination of practice and theory and with a purpose of further application; a need to inquire and understand how to make use of the opportunities for further growth (Owusu-Agyeman, Fourie-Malherbe, & Frick, 2018).

Adult teaching: The methods employed to influence adult learning (Knowles et al., 2015).

Andragogy: The art and science of adult learning (Knowles et al., 2015).

Approach, method, and technique: "Language teaching is sometimes discussed in terms of three related aspects: Different theories about the nature of language and how languages are learned (the approach) imply different ways of teaching language (the method), and different methods make use of different kinds of classroom activity (the technique)" (Richards & Schmidt, 2013, p. 30).

Audio-lingual approach: This approach to foreign language teaching that views language primarily as an oral phenomenon and focuses on intensive oral drilling of grammatical patterns and pronunciation (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Autonomy in language learning: "The ability to take charge of one's own learning and to be responsible for decisions concerning the goals, learning processes, and implementations of one's language learning needs" (Richards & Schmidt, 2013, p. 44).

Communicative foreign language (FL) teaching: An approach that "aims to develop learners' communicative competence through their participatory experiences in meaningful interactions focused on creative learning tasks" (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 83).

Competency: The "ability to do something at some level of proficiency; usually composed of some combination of knowledge, understanding, skill, attitude, and values" (Knowles et al., 2015, p. 255).

Grammar-translation method: A method in foreign language teaching that focuses on grammatical analysis and translation (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Foreign language teaching: The teaching of a language in a country where that language is not spoken (Horwitz, 2012).

Learning engagement: "Constructive, willing, emotionally positive, and cognitively focused participation with learning activities" (Skinner & Pitzer, 2012, p. 23).

Learning strategies: "The learner's goal-directed actions for improving language proficiency or achievement, completing a task, or making learning more efficient, more effective, and easier' (Oxford, 2011, p. 167).

Expertise: "The power of knowledge and preparation; instructor knows something beneficial to adults, knows it well and prepared to convey it through an instructional process" (Knowles et al., 2015, p. 184).

Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR): A federal interagency organization that establishes and coordinates language-related activities such as language learning, language use, and language testing (Descriptions of Language Proficiency Levels, n.d.)

Linguistic competence: "Underlying knowledge of characteristics of the differences and similarities in the language that is being learned" (Saville-Troike & Barto, 2017, p. 3).

Learning need: "The gap between where you are now and where you want to be in regard to a particular set of competencies" (Knowles et al., 2015, p. 255).

Motivation: "The inclination, energy, emotion, and drive relevant to learning, working effectively, and achieving" (Martin, Ginns, & Papworth, 2017, p. 150). "Motivation refers to the underlying sources of energy, purpose, and durability, whereas engagement refers to their visible manifestation" (Skinner & Pitzer, 2012, p. 23).

Performance: The ability to use language that was learned and practiced in an instructional setting (Performance Descriptors for Language Learners (2015); "actual production of the language by learners at various stages of acquisition" (Saville-Troike & Barto, 2017, p. 3).

Professional development program (for teachers): "Organized activity for the purpose of learning and improving… teaching and student learning" (Akiba & Liang, 2016, p. 101).

Proficiency: "The ability to use language in real world situations in a spontaneous interaction and non-rehearsed context and in a manner acceptable and appropriate to native speakers of the language" (Performance Descriptors for Language Learners, 2015, p. 1).

Second-language acquisition: "The scholarly field of inquiry that investigates the human capacity to learn languages other than the first, during late childhood, adolescence or adulthood, and once the first language or languages have been acquired" (Ortega, 2014, pp. 1-2).

Target language: "Any language that is the aim or goal of learning" (Saville-Troike & Barto, 2017, p. 2).

Task-based language teaching: An approach that "aims to develop learners' communicative competence by engaging them in meaning-focused communication through the performance of tasks" (Ellis & Shintani, 2014, p. 135).

Significance of the Study

According to the ILA's mission statement, the school provides culturally based foreign language education, training, evaluation, research, and sustainment for selected federal government personnel to enhance the security of the nation. The school program faculty instruct students in the use of functional language skills so that they can perform successfully in their foreign language-related duties. The programs also facilitate knowledge and understanding of international cultures and provide opportunities for professional growth in the present or future assignments. The academy offers culturally based, learner-centered, and proficiency-oriented education services based on authentic foreign language materials. The staff continually review the program and incorporate innovative developments in the field of foreign language teaching with an emphasis on learners' communicative competence in real-life situations, as well as military terminology and functional skills required for particular duties. Through developing skills in foreign language listening, reading, writing, speaking, and translation, the graduates expand their worldview, learn about diversity, and gain an understanding of social values and cultural behaviors. The learners expand knowledge in historical, cultural, political, economic, and geographical areas of the target country where the foreign language is spoken. Development of students' foreign language proficiency requires faculty to implement a comprehensive approach in organizing a learning-conducive and proficiency-oriented environment that is tailored to the students.

Teaching military and civilian government linguists to develop higher language proficiency requires staff to employ instructional approaches that are different from

regular college-level courses. The administrators use policies and standards to guide and encourage instructors for constant improvement in delivering highest quality educational services. The academy employs civilian teachers who are mostly native speakers of the language they teach. The professional development department offers teacher certification courses, workshops, and training programs to facilitate instructors' professional development. According to the ILA general catalog, the academy managers also encourage faculty in their efforts to obtain higher education degrees from accredited U.S. universities and participate in other professional development initiatives. Faculty development is a critical focus in ILA operations due to its relevance to quality educational services.

The investigation of best teaching practices leading to increased students' foreign language proficiency is challenging due to the depth and breadth of the phenomenon and related methodological underpinnings. The current study focused on students' foreign language learning in a classroom environment. Student success, in this study, was related to increased linguistic proficiency in accordance with the new standards.

The evidence of engagement's critical role in promoting students' success is reflected in the works of noted scholars in the fields of adult education, foreign language teaching, and applied linguistics (Christenson, Reschly, & Wylie, 2012; Kormos & Csizér, 2014; Mullin, 2012; Sinatra, Heddy, & Lombardi, 2015; Skinner, 2016; Skinner & Pitzer, 2012; Strandberg & Campbell, 2014). The prominent theme from professional observations at the academy indicated that foreign language learning outcomes are related to the level of students' engagement and commitment to study in conjunction with

advanced foreign language instructional approaches employed by teachers (instructors, personal communication, 2017). Identifying best teaching practices at the LC that promote students' foreign language engagement in classrooms may improve the delivery of services to adult foreign language learners not only at the academy but also in other educational settings.

The purpose of the study was to explore best teaching practices for engaging adult students' foreign language learning at the LC and develop a professional training curriculum for instructors. The training may expand teachers' expertise for advancing adult students' foreign language proficiency based on adult learning and teaching principles. The training program may be extended to all academy faculties. The findings may open additional venues for refining foreign language instructional approaches at the LC and ILA. The study outcomes may also inform policies for establishing more progressive educational practices at the ILA. Moreover, the results of this scholarly inquiry may contribute to the enhancement of instructional strategies for language learning and adult education.

Research Questions

The study informed the development of professional training for instructors to address the gap in local teaching services. The primary purpose was to explore best teaching practices for engaging students' foreign language learning following andragogical principles. The teaching practices were investigated at the LC based on instructors' perceptions. The following research question with two subquestions guided the study:

Research Question: How do LC instructors' perceptions of best teaching practices for engaging adult students' foreign language learning reflect the core principles of andragogy?

Subquestion 1: What teaching approaches and classroom activities do LC instructors perceive as most effective for engaging adult students' foreign language learning based on their needs as adult learners?

Subquestion 2: How do LC instructors' perceptions of the most effective practices for engaging students' foreign language learning reflect considerations for adult learning and teaching principles described in academic literature?

Review of the Literature

Findings from the literature review supported the data from the academy's documents, which demonstrated that advancing students' foreign language proficiency to higher standards requires a comprehensive and systematic approach. One of the strategies for improving students' linguistic performance included the instructors' professional enhancement. The aim of the project study was to develop a 3-day training session for academy instructors. The purpose of the training is to promote best teaching practices for advancing students' foreign language proficiency through introduction and validation of core andragogical principles in current practices. The in-depth study of academic resources played a critical role in defining the conceptual framework for the project and informing the development of the final product.

Conceptual Framework

The focus of this scholarly investigation was to gain insight about best teaching practices for promoting students' foreign language proficiency at the ILA and enabling them to meet the increased standards. The literature review indicated that theories related to adult students' engagement in foreign language classrooms could be beneficial for promoting their language learning (Akbari, Naderi, Simons, & Pilot, 2016; Johnson, 2015; Pawlak, 2016; Wang, 2014). There is no agreement among scholars on what instructional approaches encourage students' learning in the best possible way. However, there is one concept that became evident in the literature review and professional observations. Adult students exert more effort in class when teachers consider their learning needs, facilitate feedback and discussion about their learning experiences, and provide opportunities for active involvement and decision-making about their learning (Knowles et al., 2015). Adult students demonstrate a higher level of engagement when they have a certain level of control over their studies and can influence the teaching process for mutual benefits (Knowles et al., 2015). Knowles's theory of andragogy provided a framework for the study as a student-centered theory that considers adult learners as active participants in the process of education and training.

According to Knowles (Knowles et al., 2015), adults are self-directed in their learning. Also, adults have a lot of experience that helps them to learn more successfully. Adult learners are ready to acquire new knowledge and skills because they believe they will help them to fulfill their social roles. Adults want to apply their learning to solve or prevent problems, rather than spend time in class for general knowledge acquisition.

Adults are internally motivated in their learning and have a need to know why they are studying something and whether this process and its results are useful (Knowles et al., 2015).

The concepts of adult learning are closely related to adult teaching practices. Moreover, the application of adult learning and teaching or andragogical principles reflects a learner-centered approach in adult education and foreign language teaching. Malik (2016) supported the appropriateness of using andragogical principles by adult educators for promoting student success. Park, Robinson, and Bates (2016) found a positive relationship between instructional design elements framed within the tenets of andragogy and learners' satisfaction with the teaching practices. Hagen and Park (2016) and Fornaciari and Lund Dean (2014) agreed that instructional principles grounded in andragogy could improve learning. Honcharova-Ilina (2017) also highlighted the importance of andragogical principles in adult classrooms for successful foreign language learning, and Zepeda, Parylo, and Bengtson (2014) expressed confidence that application of adult learning theory promotes professional development. Adult learning and teaching principles are critical for facilitating engagement in classrooms and can play an essential role in curriculum development.

Teachers who design their classroom interactions based on Knowles's principles of andragogy consider different aspects associated with adult learning. Adult educators' professional interest is in finding answers to several questions: how to involve adults in the planning and evaluation of their learning, and how to assist adults in reflecting on their learning for establishing further objectives. Instructors also consider how to

incorporate adults' experiences into the learning processes, how to ensure that learning sessions and curriculum design are relevant to the learners, and how to choose instructional approaches for facilitating learners' personal and professional growth. A professional inquiry may include questions of how to provide problem-solving and learner-centered instruction, how to ensure that learners understand why and what they are learning, and how students can apply new knowledge and skills. Instructors may focus on identifying and addressing the needs of adult learners. Focusing foreign language teaching according to andragogical principles has a great potential for promoting adult students' learning engagement. Andragogical concepts provided a solid foundation and a framework for finding the answers to the research question in the current study. Investigating instructors' perceptions of best teaching practices for engaging adult students' foreign language learning based on core principles of andragogy was critical for informing the development of the training curriculum at the LC and ILA. I conducted a thorough examination of educational practices at the research site and an extensive analysis of the academic literature.

Review of the Broader Problem

The exploration of best teaching practices for promoting adult students' foreign language proficiency in a formal classroom setting is multifaceted and requires a thorough study of credible academic resources from related fields. To inform the development of the professional training for instructors, I reviewed the literature found in academic resources such as Google Scholar, Walden library databases, federal government websites, and other sources including relevant books from my personal

collection. Most of the resources were available through the following Walden library databases: ERIC, EBSCOhost, Academic Search Complete, SAGE Journals, Science Direct, Directory of Open Access Journals, Education Source, and Dissertations and Theses sources. The process of identifying the local problem for the study started with information gathering and analysis of related documents at the ILA. Personal communication with colleagues, participation in staff meetings, organizational policies and procedures, and related memos at the upper management level supported the perception of the local problem. Research and analysis of official documents from the U.S. Congress, the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Department of Education, and the ILA's general catalog, official papers, and other artifacts provided evidence of the problem.

Based on the identified need for increasing students' foreign language proficiency at the academy, the study started with a theoretical investigation of best teaching practices in adult education. Educators around the world have examined how to provide the most suitable instruction for learners and to develop effective learning processes. Scholars have perceived learning as a process of mental inquiry and have argued that teaching must trigger this inquiry (see Knowles et al., 2015). Similar views on knowledge acquisition prompted educators to develop techniques for engaging learners in cognitive and spiritual inquest. The Socratic dialogue of the Greeks, the defensive speech of the Romans, and the storytelling of the Chinese remain among the most popular methods of engaging adults in learning (Knowles et al., 2015). Merriam, Caffarella, and Baumgartner (2012) noted that learning in adulthood is an intensely personal activity with distinct

characteristics and that teaching adults requires different approaches than educating children.

I began the exploration of best teaching practices for advancing adult students' foreign language proficiency with literature reviews on best teaching practices in adult education. Then, I examined adult learning engagement as a critical element of students' academic success and foreign language learning engagement in particular. I continued investigating best teaching practices for engaging students' foreign language learning based on different approaches to foreign language teaching presented in current academic articles. As a result, I identified adult learning and teaching principles and specifically Knowles's theory of andragogy as a conceptual framework for the study.

Best Teaching Practices in Adult Education

The question of how to facilitate adult learning in a formal setting remains at the center of many discussions among educators. The connection between best practices and instructors' professional skills is evident in current academic studies. Wolfe and Poon (2015) and Payton (2015) brought attention to instructors' competencies and highlighted their roles in creating productive personalized, learner-centered environments for promoting students' learning. Wolfe and Poon argued that effective teaching is related to educators' professional development and specifically to their abilities to deliver transformative student-centered instruction. Conducted literature analysis indicated that the efficiency of teaching is evaluated based on multiple criteria and depends on the particular educational situation. However, profound knowledge of adult learners and

learning in adulthood is a universal professional standard for higher education professionals.

Among a variety of aspects related to educating modern-day adults, the scholars of andragogy agree on a few essential characteristics. Knowles et al. (2015), Merriam et al. (2012), Vella (2016), and Wlodkowski and Ginsberg (2017) noted that adult learners are diverse in their learning styles, motivation, and ways of thinking, yet they are similar in the objective of learning multiple means of problem-solving through practical applications in real-life situations. Nilson (2016) underlined that adult learners value their experiences and are willing to use them in learning activities while having high expectations for instructors' knowledge and expertise. Vella (2016) emphasized that adults learn the best when they are involved in the dialogue, when they are engaged in decision-making about their education, and when teachers understand their cultural and personal backgrounds. Vella named learning as an active process where students are involved cognitively, emotionally, and physically. In other words, adult learners are ready to learn, internally motivated, and self-directed. They want to apply new knowledge in practice and acquire them based on experiences. Educators must consider that adults want to learn problem-solving skills and expect that teaching will be focused on addressing their learning needs (Knowles et al., 2015; Vella, 2016). Besides faculty members' competencies in learner-centered approaches, understanding of other significant factors influencing the teaching practices is critical for professionals geared towards refining their skills.

Some scholars connect best teaching practices to students' learning outcomes and specifically to students' academic accomplishments. Payton (2015) linked effective teaching in higher education to academic success while highlighting the importance of the learning content and the instructor's role in engaging students in their learning. According to Payton, to guarantee students' academic success, a teacher must have explicit short- and long-term goals for students' achievements, produce a realistic syllabus that integrates technology and measurable learning objectives, and include cross-categorical methods if needed. When students engage in their learning, they develop personal efficacy and confidence in situations where they can reflect on their studies and express their ideas verbally or through hands-on projects (Payton, 2015). Further literature analysis indicated that best teaching practices encompass other facets in addition to the quality and quantity of knowledge and skills, which adults gain during their education. Perrow (2013) warned about a possible one-size-fits-all approach to the term of best practices and presented a concept of best teaching as context-specific techniques grounded in core values and beliefs about teaching and learning. The literature analysis led me to a conclusion that best instruction is often associated with students' satisfaction with overall learning experiences, how it addressed their needs, and whether it helped to reach their learning goals and objectives. Considering that investigation of best teaching practices in adult education covers multifaceted categories, the current study was focused on examining students' learning engagement as highly relevant to their academic success.

The literature review, results of professional communication, and personal experiences allowed me to suggest that one of the best teaching practices' concepts is related to facilitating students' learning engagement. Miranda Martinez (2015) expressed that in response to increased pressure on higher education institutions to improve students' academic performance, schools started adjusting their teaching approaches and bringing more attention to students' engagement in their learning experiences. Strandberg and Campbell (2014) identified students' engagement and the role of student-instructor interactions in the learning process among the best teaching practices. The authors highlighted the strategies for promoting collaborative learning and bringing real-life and modern-world situations. Congruent with the mentioned ideas, Huang and Hu (2016) and Moore (2011) expressed confidence in classroom practices that facilitate learning by doing as the most engaging for students, primarily when adult learners can reinforce communication skills and when they can receive immediate feedback about their progress. Emphasizing on the importance of interactive students' involvement for better learning, Walker (2016) noted that diversified instruction in the classroom leads to increased students' engagement and performance, specifically, during the inclusion of both group and individual learning activities based on tasks and simulations. Literature reviews indicated the universal thought that, among conceptual complexities of best teaching practices, educators' competencies in providing the learner-centered educational process and promoting adult students' learning engagement are critical for achieving desired scholarly goals and objectives.

Adult Learning Engagement

Reviewing recent academic publications, I noticed students' learning engagement as a popular topic for many scholarly discussions. Azevedo (2015) provided a robust overview of learning engagement and defined it as "one of the most widely misused and overgeneralized constructs" (p. 1). According to the author, many researchers exemplified different levels of adherence to certain aspects or definitions of engagement, yet they did not follow the specific theory of engagement "because there is none" (Azevedo, 2015, p. 88). Christenson et al., (2012), Fredricks, Filsecker, and Lawson (2016), Reeve (2012), and Skinner (2016) emphasized on students' learning engagement as a contributing factor to academic success and viewed engagement and motivation as related yet distinct constructs. Different authors brought readers' attention to multiple angles and nuances related to learning engagement. Chan, Graham-Day, Ressa, Peters, and Konrad (2014) convinced that teachers must adopt new effective instructional strategies and support students' active role in their learning. When students become meaningfully engaged in learning, they develop a better understanding of how to achieve desired outcomes (Chan et al., 2014). According to Chan et al., supporting and teaching students to take ownership of their learning lead to improved students' achievements. Finn and Zimmer (2012) also noted that engagement plays a critical role in promoting scholarly progress. Learning engagement is a valid and essential concept in education and adult education in particular.

Engagement as involvement and interest. While reviewing academic articles, I noticed that some scholars connected learning engagement to involvement and interest.

The notion of interest and engagement as something that captures the attention of a learner and supports learning is not a newly developed concept (see Dewey, 1913). Despite the frequent use of the interest in defining the engagement and vice versa, the concepts of interest and engagement are distinct (Renninger & Bachrach, 2015). Renninger and Bachrach (2015) and Ainley (2012) noted that triggering the interest establishes engagement. Other researchers connected students' engagement to their involvement in learning. Mullin (2012) considered involvement as a key indicator for predicting students' success and highlighted long-term benefits that students receive from their involvement. Connecting involvement with satisfaction, Bryson and Hardy (2012) suggested that involvement requires students to invest psychosocial and physical energy into their learning and that quality and quantity of involvement influence their satisfaction with learning. While looking at the involvement as interaction, Evans (2017) investigated engagement in the context of the in-class and out-of-class environment in higher education and defined it as efforts that students put in class participation, which is reflected in their interest and involvement in interacting with instructors, classmates, and learning material. Evans argued that academic achievement tends to be higher when students are engaged with the instructor, peers, and content. The terms of involvement and engagement sometimes used interchangeably in the literature because they are closely related and because there are some differences in definitions of engagement. Often, scholars relate adult learning engagement to motivational factors.

Engagement in regard to motivation, self-regulation, and self-determination. Another approach to learning engagement definition, portrayed in the literature, includes

references to students' motivation. Reeve (2012) noted that motivation comprises "private, unobservable, psychological, neural, and biological" factors, whereas engagement comprises "publicly observable behavior" (p. 151). Martin et al. (2017) defined motivation as "the inclination, energy, emotion, and drive relevant to learning, working effectively, and achieving" and engagement as "the behaviors that reflect this inclination, energy, emotion, and drive" (p. 150). Martin et al. looked at motivation as "an internal factor that has an energizing impetus" and engagement "as a factor reflecting more observable, evident, or external constructs" (p. 152) with motivation as mostly cognitive term and engagement as a primarily behavioral term. The theorists of andragogy also convinced that motivation is a driving force for adult learning, and it is critical to students' success (Knowles et al., 2015). Therefore, students' learning engagement is closely related to adult learning motivation, and, as one of the central phenomena in the current study, required a thorough theoretical examination.

From a different perspective, researchers connected students' learning engagement not only to motivation but also to the theories of self-determination and self-regulation. Deci and Ryan (2012) originated the theory of human self-determination as a macro theory of motivation suggesting that individuals evolve their inner resources to self-regulate own behaviors and develop personality and can be motivated internally (intrinsic motivation) or externally (extrinsic motivation). Among theorists in the field of foreign language acquisition, Oxford (2016) considered self-regulated learners as responsible and involved individuals capable of managing the content and the process of their learning according to a particular sociocultural environment. Oxford also suggested

that students' self-regulation involves management and control of their language learning from cognitive (foreign language application and construction), affective (learning motivation, emotions, attitudes, and beliefs), and sociocultural interaction (identity and specific contexts issues) perspectives. Similar to Oxford, Seker (2016) distinguished cognitive, affective, social, and behavioral aspects of self-regulation in foreign language education. Other scholars offered additional perspectives on the phenomenon of engagement. Sinatra et al. (2015) brought attention to motivation and self-regulation in learning engagement as constructs that are present in most characterizations of engagement and are not considered as separate traits. Sinatra et al. also warned scholars that all dimensions of engagement are co-occurring; therefore, measuring only one dimension may raise problems in learning engagement evaluation. The conducted literature review allowed me to conclude that learning engagement is closely related to motivation, self-regulation, and self-determination processes and overlaps with student interest and involvement. In recent decades, the multidimensional definition of learning engagement received new insights from representatives of the holistic approach.

Holistic perspectives on engagement. Some scholars considered engagement holistically from sociocultural perspectives. Kahu (2013) and Zepke (2014, 2015) noted that learning goes beyond the classroom, and society and culture have a profound influence on it. Zepke (2015) emphasized the holistic approach and named students' engagement in higher education as "a generic indicator of quality learning and teaching and successful student outcomes" (p. 1311). The literature review indicated different scholars' perspectives on defining learning engagement and relating it to existing theories

and phenomena. For the project study, I chose the definition of learning engagement provided by Skinner and Pitzer (2012) that addresses its importance for students' success and academic performance.

Definition of engagement for the study. Skinner and Pitzer (2012) defined academic engagement as "constructive, willing, emotionally positive, and cognitively focused participation with learning activities" (p. 23) and named it as a necessary condition for student learning. The authors highlighted that "motivation refers to the underlying sources of energy, purpose, and durability, whereas engagement refers to their visible manifestation" (Skinner & Pitzer, 2012, p. 23). Eccles and Wang (2012) agreed with Skinner's and Pitzer's definition of engagement and noted that, from this viewpoint, the phenomenon is easier to measure, study, and relate to other theories. Taken into consideration that learning engagement involves much more than classroom interactions, the current study was focused on students' engagement in a classroom environment as a visible manifestation of learning motivation using Skinner's and Pitzer's definitions.

According to Skinner's (2016) model, engagement and disaffection play a central role in students' academic success and can be used to guide educators in their efforts for improving students' learning motivation. Skinner provided an overview of the theoretical research and concluded that "engagement and disaffection are central outcomes of all theories of motivation" (p. 152). The author noted that it is critical for educators to realize that "engagement is the pathway to all student learning and success" (Skinner, 2016, p. 157). Skinner offered teachers' evidence-based working model of students' motivation and learning as guidance for teachers to reconfigure or rework their practices. The scholar

also suggested educators to start with students' success and, going backward, identify and promote "the proximal influence of student engagement, task selection, and coping, which are shaped by students' experiences as well as supported or undermined by the actual classroom context, student academic performance, and engagement" (Skinner, 2016, p. 158). Skinner and Pitzer (2012) presented a concept of students' engagement with learning activities in the continuum of engagement-disaffection based on three components: behavior, emotion, and cognitive orientation. The authors perceived students' engagement with learning activities as a critical component of academic achievement (Skinner & Pitzer, 2012). The investigation of best teaching practices in this study included the examination of instructional approaches that promote adult students' learning engagement in foreign language classrooms. Moreover, the focus of the inquiry included underlying factors influencing the instructors' choices for classroom activities that engage adult foreign language learners.

Foreign language learning engagement. Engagement in foreign language learning includes similar characteristics as the learning in general. Kormos and Csizér (2014) highlighted language learning engagement in adulthood as a process of initiating and maintaining scholarly efforts to reach particular goals related to sufficient foreign language use in practice. According to Johnson (2015), in language classes, adults learn about themselves through critically reflecting and adopting new perspectives on the target-language country, which promotes their transcultural and translingual competence and progresses in becoming self-directed learners. Akbari et al. (2016) also argued that students learn more efficiently and increase their practical linguistic competence when

they actively use language in various contexts within a collaborative learning environment. Thus, many researchers agreed that adults engage in foreign language learning more efficiently when they can practically apply newly obtained knowledge and skills.

Besides practical orientation, the researchers found that course design, linguistic materials, and teachers play significant roles in learners' engagement. Wang (2014) explored how to integrate task engagement principles into an online foreign language instructional design. According to the author, teachers have to understand students' needs, interests, and backgrounds to develop appropriate teaching materials to keep them engaged. Wang's dissertation included two studies that explored the application of task engagement in foreign language instructional design and practice. The author identified five principles that are essential for designing engaging tasks, such as student needs assessment, challenge/ability match, clear learning goals, clear instructions, and clear directions. According to Wang, teachers and curriculum designs play a significant role in engaging students' learning. However, besides the learning content, the primary factor influencing engagement is the role of the teacher (Wang, 2014). Further literature analysis indicated scholars' agreement that instructors' choices for engaging activities in foreign language classrooms differ significantly yet have some common features.

Some authors accentuated the advances in teaching practices that involve students' collaboration and problem-solving for increasing their foreign language learning engagement. Other scholars indicated the importance of critical thinking, creativity, and reflection for students' engagement. Philp and Duchesne (2016) explored

key concepts and indicators of adult learners' engagement in the context of task-based foreign language classrooms. They described students' learning engagement as "a multidimensional and interdependent construct with cognitive, behavioral, social, and emotional aspects" (p. 50). Philp and Duchesne supported the ideas of teachers playing a critical part in recognizing the need to involve students in learning and inspire their efforts and persistence in foreign language acquisition. Another group of authors provided evidence of empirical research suggesting that students feel engaged in learning when teachers encourage them to solve problems, stimulate their creative thinking, and facilitate their critical reflection through classroom activities (Maksimova, Gatin, Nazmutdinova, Zorina, Vygodchikova, Khrisanova, & Dolgasheva, 2016). Moreover, the authors suggested that project-based methods create motivation and positive emotional environment leading to sustainable interest and involvement in the learning process.

Among the variety of views on sufficient foreign language instruction, teachers prefer some approaches to others. However, to meet the ever-changing needs of today's adult learners, it is critical that instructors explore their teaching practices and continuously reconstruct instructional designs while finding inspirations in contemporary research findings.

Approaches to Foreign Language Teaching

Academic literature depicts multiple approaches to foreign language teaching. Ellis (2005), while pinpointing three approaches to language teaching, such as oral-situational, notional-functional, and task-based, noted that language teachers do not rely only on one method in their practices. Long (2014) distinguished approaches to foreign

language teaching as synthetic (with a focus on the linguistic units) and analytic (with an emphasis on the message, subject matter, and communication). From the other point of view, Cook (2013) distinguished academic, audiolingual, communicative, and task-based language teaching. Richards and Rodgers (2014) argued that foreign language teaching considers how languages are learned, how knowledge of a foreign language is represented and organized in memory, how the language is structured, and other factors. Some language teaching theories present a combination of language learning and general learning theories.

A variety of theories reflect the complexity of language learning processes. According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), foreign language teaching often draws on different learning theories, such as behaviorism, cognitive-code learning, the creative hypothesis, skill learning, interactional theory, constructivism, sociocultural learning theory (or social constructivism), and theories with attention to individual factors in language learning. The focus on students' learning engagement is evident in language learning theories of constructivism and social constructivism.

Richards and Rodgers (2014) highlighted the constructivists' views on learning and noted that students, guided by the teacher, internally construct the meaning from experiences, while being engaged. Together with associated concepts of restructuring, schemata theory, and scaffolding, the constructivism is apparent in communicative and cooperative language teaching. The sociocultural learning theory related to constructivism explains that language learning happens in a social setting, through dialogue and interaction between learners and more capable or knowledgeable others.

Scaffolding, joint problem-solving, and collaborative dialogue are common characteristics of foreign language teaching guided by the sociocultural learning theory (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Additionally, Richards and Rodgers brought attention to the role of individual factors affecting language learning, such as learning style preferences, personality traits, and motivation. Moreover, the analysis of provided classification on foreign language learning theories offered by Richards and Rodgers indicated that communicative language teaching is one of the most popular instructional designs. The communicative approach grounded in constructivism and sociocultural learning theories informed many successful foreign language teaching practices.

  A communicative approach to foreign language teaching. Communicative foreign language teaching gained popularity in the 1970s when instructors offered students in classrooms to engage in real-life communication with one another while using authentic language. Richards (2006) noted that the communicative approach facilitated the shift from drills and memorization to role-plays, group-work, and projects as preferable learning activities. In the late 1990s, communicative language teaching, as a set of goals for learners to achieve communicative competence, represented a process-based methodology that "believed to best facilitate language learning" (Richards, 2006, p. 27). Ellis (2005), Ellis and Shintani (2014), Dornyei (2013), Long (2014), Richards (2015), and Van den Branden (2016) brought attention to a communicative foreign language instruction as one of the most prevalent among other modern approaches to language teaching. Current research, depicted in academic publications, expands these views on communicative language teaching. In the study, I described the communicative

approach to foreign language teaching in detail because this instruction is recognized among the most effective practices at the ILA (provost, personal communication, 2016).

There are a few distinct aspects that brought recognition of communicative foreign language teaching. Arnold, Dornyei, and Pugliese (2015) emphasized the practical nature and collaborative learning as the reasons behind the popularity of the communicative approach among foreign language teachers, in comparison, for example, to grammar-translation and audiolingual methods of instruction. The communicative approach promotes learners' communicative competence through their participatory experiences in meaningful interactions based on creative learning tasks (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Thornbury, 2016). Littlewood (2014) noted that language teachers have different definitions for the communicative language teaching term and explained that discrepancies are rooted in a dual focus on communicative perspectives on language and on learning. Focus on language means that people learn a language primarily based on language function and not on language structures (Littlewood, 2014). The communicative perspective brings attention to the process of learning and natural capacities of individuals to acquire language through communication. The communicative approach is not only among the most accepted and famous educational theories, but it is also closely related to the concepts of adult learning. The communicative approach is learner-centered. Yoo (2016) put the learner at the center of communicative language instruction, where foreign language learners must negotiate the meaning in the target language freely through verbal interactions with others.

In comparison to approaches that keep the audience minimally engaged in learning through interaction, such as in audiolingual for example, where the instructor plays a role of authoritative knowledge transmitter, the communicative language teaching provides opportunities for communication through real-life messages and comprehensive input (Yoo, 2016). Therefore, aiming to develop a communicative competence of foreign language learners, the modern approaches to language teaching connect the linguistics with the learning theories. Despite pluralities, the common theme in language teaching grounded in learning theories contains an accent on learners and their individuality factors. Adult learners are diverse in their learning strategies, learning style preferences, affective aspects, and learning motivation, and have different purposes, goals, and objectives for further foreign language use. Educational practices with a focus on learners are common in foreign language teaching, applied linguistics, and adult education.

Learner-centered foreign language teaching. Regardless of what approaches teachers choose in their classrooms, most educators agree that the instructional design must be learner-centered. Cook (2013) brought attention to the necessity for teachers to address the interests and experiences of their students, whether teachers choose grammar-translation method with emphasis on a cognitive acquisition of grammatical points or communicative teaching where students talk to each other. Cook argued that teachers need to know their learners for structuring lessons and noted that the reasons why some techniques do work, and some do not depend on many factors. Long (2014) emphasized that foreign language teaching must include progressive educational principles, such as holistic teaching, learning by doing, rationalism, free association, and learner-

centeredness. Long also distinguished the learner-centered teaching as catering to learners' differences through individualization of instruction and with respect for underlying psycholinguistic processes.

Moreover, in learner-centered classrooms, students have a voluntary association and play an active role in their progress while being treated as rational human beings (Long, 2014). According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), the learner-centeredness relates to the individualized approaches to foreign language teaching, which are based on assumptions that people learn differently from various sources and have different goals and objectives. Thus, the focus on learners is prominent in current foreign language teaching theories and practices.

The attentiveness to learners is also prevalent in educational practices of the military foreign-language schools. Ataya (2015), who studied cultural competency issues in adult foreign language acquisition at the foreign language institute, recognized that the graduates must demonstrate essential knowledge of sociocultural differences, ethical norms, and other significant factors of the target country, in comparison to a sole linguist training provided by other schools. Bebawi (2016), who studied the teaching practices at the military foreign-language institute, also accentuated the benefits of teaching that is focused on learners' needs. Bebawi noted that military students enrolled in intensive language courses need to utilize specific learning strategies for reaching higher language proficiency and that teaching approaches must be tailored to their needs. Despite the plurality of views on best educational practices, it is evident that a variety of methods to foreign language teaching offers more opportunities for instructors in choosing one

approach over the other or combining them to facilitate student learning in the best possible way. Conducted literature reviews indicated saturation of scholarly articles on student-centered approaches to foreign language teaching. The theory of andragogy that places adults in the center of teaching practices may provide additional opportunities for engaging adult students' foreign language learning.

Implications

Exploration of best teaching practices for engaging adult students' foreign language learning is a complex process. The academic resources in adult education and foreign language learning and teaching provided ample information for the study. Reviewed literature indicated multiple ways and approaches that possibly could offer solutions to a local problem and improve teaching practices at the ILA. This work represents a scholarly effort for investigating the identified theme from a less familiar perspective. Relating adult learners' engagement to their addressed needs in foreign language classrooms within the tenants of andragogy is not a typical research topic. However, employing adult teaching principles can improve students' learning and foreign language learning in particular (Ataya, 2015; Honcharova-Ilina, 2017; Johnson, 2015; Pawlak, 2016).

Many scholars agree that adult students' engagement increases when instructors consider when, how, and why the adults learn in the most sufficient way (Ainley, 2012; Akbari et al., 2016; Azevedo, 2015; Banks, 2014; Bryson & Hardy, 2012; Caruth, 2014; Cummins, 2016; Fredricks et al., 2016; Philp & Duchesne, 2016; Renninger & Bachrach, 2015; Skinner, 2016; Sogunro, 2014). The emphasis on students' needs, or, in a broader

definition, necessities or conditions for successful learning, relates to the learner-centered approach in adult education (Graves & Bledsoe, 2015; Owusu-Agyeman et al., 2018). According to adult teaching principles, adult learners' needs are not only related to a gap between what individuals know and what they want to know. Adult learners' needs include necessary conditions that facilitate their learning (Knowles et al., 2015). The perspectives on best practices that increase adult students' learning engagement in foreign language classrooms depicted in this study are not new. However, the project study with a professional training curriculum as a final product is distinctive and may offer further insights for practitioners and scholars.

Changing the focus from the language units and functions to the learners and their needs may empower ILA educators to use new approaches that increase student learning engagement and, as a result, enhance their proficiency. The ILA students are armed forces who study foreign languages for job-related purposes. Their learning aptitudes, as well as language-learning abilities, are among enrollment criteria. Comparing to other typical groups of adult learners in higher education settings, the ILA students are more homogeneous and share many common characteristics, including learning motivation, purposes, and further application of acquired knowledge and skills. Addressing the needs of adult learners at the specific setting at ILA based on andragogical principles may enhance teaching practices that promote students' learning engagement.

Summary

In the study, I aimed to explore best teaching practices for engaging adult students' foreign language learning and offer a solution for improving a local educational

situation at the military school in North America with the pseudonym of International Language Academy. The need for the inquiry appeared from the raised standards of students' foreign language proficiency issued by the headquarters. For addressing the gap in educational services at the academy, I started with the theoretical investigation of best practices for advancing adult students' foreign language knowledge and skills. The research continued with a focus on instructional practices that promote adult students' foreign language learning engagement in classrooms based on andragogical principles as a critical component of students' academic success.

A thorough literature review informed the research and provided a rationale for the study. The theoretical investigation of best teaching practices continued with analyses of concepts related to academic success, learning engagement, foreign language learning and teaching, learner-centered teaching approaches, adult learners' needs, and the theory of adult learning and teaching. The literature examination, the purpose of the study, and specifics of the adult student population at the site allowed choosing the theory of andragogy as a foundation for the project. The study rationale, analyses of the local situation and scholarly articles brought me to a conclusion that developing a 3-day training curriculum for instructors at the site may help to bridge the identified gap in services.

The next section of the manuscript describes the research methodology. The narrative includes articulation and justification of choices for a study design based on research questions and purposes and continues with a rationalization for deciding on study participants, criteria for participants' selection, and a sampling technique. The

formulated research questions further guided the investigation of best teaching practices for engaging adult students' foreign language learning based on instructors' perceptions at the site and additional literature reviews. The paper includes descriptions of the elected procedure for gaining access to key informants and explains methods for establishing working relationships with them, including the means for protecting participants' rights. Next, the chapter includes description and justification for the data collection, identifies the instrumentation, and provides an explanation for data recording, keeping, and managing. The data analysis, limitations, and implications of the study results conclude the second section of the paper.

Section 3 describes the final project in the study based on research findings. The narrative includes the rationale for addressing the local problem within the chosen project genre. Discussions of the project implementation, identification of potential barriers, and possible solutions to barriers follow the project overview. The project evaluation plan and possible implications conclude Section 3. Section 4 provides the final study reflection and conclusions.

Section 2: The Methodology

The purpose of the study was to increase the understanding of best teaching practices at the ILA and LC. The study was conducted to inform the development of a professional training session for instructors with the purpose of expanding their expertise in adult students' learning engagement leading to students' advanced foreign language proficiency. The exploration of best teaching practices included the investigation of adult learning and teaching principles based on the theory of andragogy. An extensive review and analysis of adult learning and teaching principles and adult learners' needs informed the study and provided a rationale for data collection and analysis. Data collection included LC instructors' perceptions of the most effective teaching approaches and classroom activities that address adult learners' needs to engage their learning and how these perceptions reflect andragogical principles. Knowles's theory of andragogy provided the conceptual framework for the study. The results of this scholarly investigation informed the development of the training curriculum for the LC and potentially for the ILA. A qualitative case study design guided the process of finding answers to the research questions.

Qualitative Research Design and Approach

I employed an inductive strategy for descriptive data collection and analysis to explore instructors' perceptions of best practices in the local educational setting. Generalization of findings was not among the purposes of the study. The results offered a solution for addressing the identified gap in services at the local site. The investigation of best teaching practices at the site took place within a bounded real-life educational

setting. Instructors' perspectives on the study subject played a pivotal role in the final product. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), the listed features in combination with the project study format, which was a professional development curriculum tailored to a specific group of foreign language instructors, characterize qualitative case study research. The case study included an investigation of teaching practices that LC instructors perceive as most effective for addressing the needs of adult students in classrooms to increase their foreign language learning engagement. The inquiry involved analyses of these practices in relation to the core principles of andragogy.

According to Thomas (2016), the case study design allows the researcher to explore a phenomenon, a person, an event, or any subject of interest in its completeness from different angles. Thomas defined case studies as "analyses of persons, events, decisions, periods, projects, policies, institutions or other systems which are studied holistically by one or more methods. The case that is the subject of the inquiry will illuminate and explicate some analytical theme, or object" (p. 23). The current case study included an investigation of relationships and processes rather than causation or generalization of results. The data came from a singular in-depth inquiry that provided analytical insight and informed the creation of a product intended for local consumption. Another qualitative design that had the potential for addressing solutions to the stated problem and answering the research questions was phenomenological inquiry.

Phenomenological inquiry is a methodological approach used to explore the lived experiences of selected individuals (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Similar to a case study, a phenomenological inquiry involves intensive qualitative data gathering to understand the

meaning of participants' experiences rather than pursuit of a causal explanation of these experiences or prediction of behaviors (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), purposeful sampling is key to a phenomenological study. This technique allows researchers to select participants who can provide relevant perspectives about the phenomenon and are willing to share their lived experiences. However, the purpose of the current study was not in-depth examination of participants' teaching experiences. The focus was instructors' perceptions of best teaching approaches for engaging adult students' learning. Gill (2014) noted that phenomenological studies address participants' experiences as the main object of the inquiry. The current study addressed not only the best teaching practices for engaging adult students' foreign language learning but also instructors' perceptions of adult learners' needs and adult learning and teaching principles. The qualitative approach with a case study design provided the methodological foundation for addressing the stated problem and answering the research questions.

Participants

The purpose of this scholarly inquiry included an examination of LC instructors' perceptions of adult learners' needs and adult learning and teaching principles. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) suggested that in qualitative case studies, collection of rich data from critical informants is a common strategy for data gathering. The academic literature analysis indicated that it is vital to identify the sources of descriptive data capable of providing answers to research questions. In the current qualitative study, the results were not generalizable to the entire population of adult learners studying foreign languages and

foreign language instructors. Rather, results were intended for local consumption. Finding a balance between a sufficient number of informants and in-depth responses was essential for the validity of the study. An online survey with open-ended questions has less capacity to obtain detailed information on the research topic in comparison to other qualitative data-gathering methods such as individual or focus group interviews. The study population included all LC instructors working at the site as contractors to compensate for the possible brevity of online survey answers. Involving all LC instructors allowed me to collect sufficient data by providing equal opportunities for all teachers to express their opinions, which also served as a means of minimizing sampling-related biases.

According to the manager at the site, the LC employed 73 foreign language instructors working as contractors at the time of the study. All instructors had experience in teaching foreign languages to adult students at the ILR levels 2/2+ and beyond. Inviting all 73 professionals to participate in an anonymous online survey presented an opportunity to gather sufficient data to answer the research questions. A high participation rate was critical for the study.

Regarding motives that encourage individuals to participate in online surveys, Krosnick (2018) noted the desire for self-expression, intellectual challenge, willingness to assist the researcher, and a chance to improve a specific social situation. Krosnick also admitted that respondents' beliefs about the usefulness of their answers and the degree of the survey questions being personally important are critical for obtaining valid data for research purposes. The survey questions were designed to elicit information that was

meaningful for study participants. Informing potential survey participants about the projected benefits of their contribution played a significant role in the recruitment process.

The group of 73 individuals is somewhat small for an online survey. Fosnacht, Sarraf, Howe, and Peck (2017) suggested that in small sampling size surveys (with 50-75 participants), a 20-25% response is considered as relatively high, although this consideration should include the anticipated data usage. Within 10 days that the online survey was open, the 26 instructors posted their answers, which put the response rate at 36% (26 out of 73). According to Fosnacht et al., this response rate (36%) is relatively high, which adds strengths to the study results. Finding a balance between the quantity and quality of responses was an essential consideration for data collection.

Participants' recruitment and data gathering started after receiving support for the research at the local site and obtaining approval from the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The process of gaining access to potential study participants started with an application to the managers at the site authorized to grant such permissions. The application included an overview of the research and its purposes and provided a detailed description of the data collection procedure, as well as measures to protect study participants. The document also contained a request for third-party assistance from a designated person (DP) at the site to eliminate the researcher's direct access to potential study participants for ensuring anonymity and strengthening efforts for their protection. The DP is a person with existing access to email addresses of all potential study participants due to the nature of her job. During the study, the researcher sent three

consecutive emails to the DP, who further forwarded the letters to all 73 instructors. These group email notifications included the IRB approved consent form to potential study participants and served as an invitation to take a survey. The consent form provided information about conducted research, its purposes, potential benefits and offsets for participants, as well as clearly defined the role of the researcher. Emails contained a request for potential participants to share professional opinions by responding to open-ended questions in the anonymous online survey after expressing their consent to participate in the study by following the inserted hyperlink.

A scholarly investigation includes several essential components; however, ensuring participants' protection is one of its most critical elements. In human-subjects' related studies, ethical issues are possible during the research process. Compliance with Walden University IRB requirements, obtainment of official permission at the site, and close attention to any reasonable concerns ensured the protection of study participants during and after the data gathering process. Following the approved research plan and complying with Walden University regulations helped me to adhere to high ethical standards essential for a doctoral-level study. The consent form in group emails described anticipated minimal risks associated with participation and provided overviews of each question in the survey so instructors could make an educated decision. The study incorporated additional efforts for protecting respondents' anonymity and ensuring that their contributions were voluntary and confidential.

Instructors received assurance that their actual classroom practices will not be scrutinized and that all provided information is highly appreciated and critical for

developing the training curriculum. Potential participants also received assurance that they can withdraw from the survey at any moment if they wish. Contact information for Walden IRB representatives in the consent form provided more transparency and demonstrated my accountability as a researcher. There were no anticipated problems in establishing researcher-participants working relationship because participants and I work for two different employers following the separate chain of command yet performing similar jobs and co-teaching the same groups of students.

I had no access to participants' email addresses and no knowledge of who responded to the survey. The survey prompts did not collect any demographic data. Only anonymous online survey responses were recorded, analyzed, and reported in the study. Additionally, all related data will be securely stored with backup electronic files for 5 years for a possible audit and destroyed after that. All study papers included pseudonyms of the research site to ensure confidentiality. The confidentiality of data collection, recording, and storage is a critical part of complying with Walden University ethical requirements. My position at the academy is not related to any supervisory duties. The consent form in each group email to potential key informants described my status as an independent scholar and emphasized the separation of these roles (teacher vs. scholar) in the study. Mentioned measures allowed minimizing the potential conflict of interest and maximizing the protection of study participants.

Data Collection

The identified gap in educational services at the research site is closely related to headquarters' increase of minimal requirements for graduates' foreign language

proficiency. All proficiency standards presented in the ILR levels serve as a model for developing students' linguistic competencies at the ILA, and the LC in particular. According to Knowles et al. (2015), competency-based educational practices make learning effective when adult learners understand how newly acquired knowledge and skills will add to their ability to perform better and become more successful. The investigation of best teaching practices for engaging adult students' foreign language learning based on the theory of andragogy started from finding the answers to the first research subquestion. Table 2 presents an alignment of research questions, survey prompts, and study framework.

Table 2

Alignment of Research Questions, Survey Prompts, and Study Framework

Study Framework: Theory of Andragogy	
Research Question: How do LC instructors' perceptions of best teaching practices for engaging adult students' foreign language learning reflect the core principles of andragogy?	
First Research Subquestion: What teaching approaches and classroom activities do LC instructors perceive as most effective for engaging adult students' foreign language learning based on their needs as adult learners.	Second Research Subquestion: How do LC instructors' perceptions of the most effective practices for engaging students' foreign language learning reflect considerations for adult learning and teaching principles described in academic literature?
The conducted online survey provided answers to the first research subquestion. Survey Questions: 1. How can you describe the learning needs of adult students in your classroom? 2. What instructional approaches do you perceive as most effective for engaging your students' foreign language learning based on their needs as adult learners?	Analysis of survey responses based on adult learning and teaching principles described in academic literature provided answers to the second research subquestion.

3. What classroom activities you perceive
as most effective for engaging your
students' foreign language learning and
what adult learners' needs they address?
Please, list as many as you wish.

The purpose of data gathering in the study was to gain insight, improve understanding of best teaching practices based on instructors' perceptions, and offer a professional development curriculum. The purpose of the curriculum is to expand educators' expertise in advancing adult students' foreign language proficiency through increased adult learners' engagement grounded in andragogical principles. According to study purposes and the identified sampling technique, the anonymous online survey was determined to serve as the main instrument of data collection. The Survey Monkey program (www.surveymonkey.com, 1986) provided a platform for designing and conducting a qualitative survey with an open-ended questionnaire. The Survey Monkey is a commercial software program frequently used in research as a reliable tool for data collection and initial analysis.

The current study included a scholarly investigation of a narrow and specific issue within a unique educational setting. Options for finding a credible preexisting measuring instrument were limited. Nevertheless, the survey designed by Soomro, Memon, and Memon (2016) inspired the development of the survey questions for this study. The questionnaire presented by Soomro et al. (2016) investigated teachers' perceptions about best practices, which is a relevant topic. Soomro's et al. survey questions were very insightful and helpful in generating new ideas for creating a sufficient data-gathering instrument. I designed the survey prompts to elicit participants' perceptions at the

specific site based on the research questions and study framework, which resulted in significant changes from the preexisting survey. However, I found more beneficial using the tool that was successfully applied in research than developing an entirely new instrument. One of the authors listed as a point of contact (Soomro et al., 2016) permitted me to use and modify the survey questions for the study. The permission note and the corresponding letter are included in Appendix A.

I developed the first research subquestion to elicit LC instructors' perceptions of teaching approaches and classroom activities that are most effective for engaging adult students' foreign language learning based on their needs, specifically, as adult learners. According to Knowles et al. (2015), a learning need is a gap between the competencies specified in the model and their present level of development. It is critical for the teachers to understand the adult learners' current learning needs to provide the instruction "with a clear sense of purpose… that converts course-takers and seminar-participants into competency developers" (Knowles et al., 2015, p. 60). Furthermore, Owusu-Agyeman et al. (2018) defined adult learners' needs as a necessity for a deeper understanding of processes through a reasonable combination of practice and theory and with a purpose of the further application. The authors noted that adult learners' needs are a necessity to inquire and understand how to make use of learning opportunities for further growth. Although the term of learners' needs has different interpretations in academic articles, the survey introduction did not include a specific definition. The intention was to elicit LC instructors' perceptions of the adult learners' needs based on their understanding.

The theory of andragogy (Knowles et al., 2015) and analysis of literature sources on best teaching practices for adult students' learning engagement provided a baseline for creating the survey questions with the focus on adult learners' needs (Miranda Martinez, 2015: Nilson, 2016; Owusu-Agyeman et al., 2018; Payton, 2015; Perrow, 2013). The survey consisted of three open-ended questions. The first question prompted LC instructors to share their perceptions about adult learners' needs in class. The second question prompted survey participants to share perceptions of the most effective teaching approaches for engaging students' foreign language learning based on their needs as adult learners. The last question encouraged participating instructors to share classroom activities that they perceive as useful for addressing adult learners' needs and beneficial for adult students' foreign language learning engagement. The instrument is included in Appendix A.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the instrument that consists of open-ended questions, Castillo-Montoya (2016) suggested examining each question for clarity, simplicity, and answerability. Castillo-Montoya noted that researchers could conduct a trial of the inquiry form by assuming the role of study participants and answering all questions using a think-aloud approach. In the current study, I conducted the testing for strengthening the reliability of the survey instrument by answering the questions, critically reflecting on them, and adjusting. The analysis of the tool and further modification continued to the point when the questions started demonstrating a strong ability to elicit meaningful responses from study participants' unambiguously and transparently.

I designed the survey questions to elicit descriptions of adult learners' needs as perceived by LC instructors, as well as examples of how instructors address these needs in class. All data were precious for enhancing the understanding of best teaching practices at the site and building the content of the training curriculum and its objectives. The survey questions elicited participants' perceptions of best teaching practices for engaging adult students' foreign language learning in class based on students' needs, specifically, as adult learners. This information provided the answers to the first research subquestion. Further analyses of survey results, and, mainly, how survey participants' perceptions reflected adult learning and teaching principles described in scholarly publications, provided the answers to the second research subquestion. Analyzing and cross-referencing survey data with information from academic literature allowed me to answer the primary research question.

The intent for collecting LC instructors' perceptions of best teaching practices for engaging adult students' foreign language learning did not focus on eliciting their opinions about the listed principles of andragogy. Instead, the goal was in obtaining detailed descriptions of what instructors perceive as effective teaching approaches and activities for students' engagement grounded in their needs as adult learners, and, based on further analysis of provided descriptions, determine how instructors' perceptions of best practices reflect adult learning and teaching principles. This approach allowed gathering critical information for the professional development session, and, predominantly, in defining learning content and objectives. Obtaining reliable and useful

data was crucial for delivering a sound project study. In addition to the instrument

sufficiency, it was extremely desirable to achieve a high rate of survey participation.

To ensure a high response rate, Creswell (2014) suggested informing potential

participants about the upcoming survey, sending two separate invitations for survey

participation with included information necessary for the informed consent, and a

gratitude note. Following Creswell's suggestions, the first email notification informed

potential participants about the upcoming survey and the rationale behind it. The second

group email included descriptions of the process, an actual invitation to participate in the

survey with the provided hyperlink for easy survey access, and the consent form. The

third letter, forwarded after a week from the second email, contained a general gratitude

note for those who already participated in the survey. Moreover, this group email offered

other instructors in the study population who did not participate yet to join this opinion-

sharing experience within another 3 days. The survey was open for 10 days.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, after obtaining all permissions necessary

for collecting the data, I sent the letters with the included consent form and survey

hyperlink to the designated person (DP) at the site. The DP with existing access to LC

instructors' email addresses forwarded the letters to potential study participants. The

survey did not collect any demographic or personally identifiable information. The

Survey Monkey online program (www.surveymonkey.com, 1986) allowed gathering

anonymous data based on LC instructors' voluntary participation.

My job primarily includes teaching a specific foreign language at the site, and not

related to any supervisory duties. Involving participants who share a different chain of

command helped to minimize possible ethical issues related to research at the place of employment. However, the situation when the researcher is analyzing and finalizing the collected survey data may influence the interpretation and reporting of findings due to the researcher's bias. To minimize the adverse outcomes of this issue, I validated the survey questions before the implementation. The internal audit, detailed reporting of the conducted analysis, and cross-referencing of survey answers with academic literature helped me to decrease this limitation. There were no hypotheses or preset notions about anticipated survey results that could significantly impact the objectivity of data interpretation. The survey invitation provided details of study purposes, explained possible offsets and benefits, and described efforts to protect study participants. I allocated a sufficient amount of time for establishing professional relationships with the research partner (using Walden IRB approved format) to ensure active survey participation.

Data Analysis Results

The data gathering in the current study covered a narrow topic within a unique educational setting, aiming exploration and not justification. The content of survey questions intended to obtain detailed descriptions from study participants and elicit meaningful saturated evidence for study purposes. Relevant information from academic literature, triangulated with the content of survey responses, allowed me to strengthen the analysis of collected data.

I started data familiarization simultaneously with the data gathering process. The research questions helped me to identify the essential thoughts and ideas expressed in

survey answers. Braun and Clarke (2013) and Creswell (2014) noted that academic literature reviews could assist in establishing the trustworthiness of means for the qualitative data analysis. Based on the authors' suggestions, I started the first level of examination by defining similarities and differences in all responses. The color-coding for separate assumptions provided a clear visual that aided data interpretation. I used the audit trail of code generation and triangulation to support the data analysis. After identifying, examining, classifying, and recording obvious similarities of ideas in all responses, I continued the analysis with grouping and re-grouping of topics based on themes. I explored survey responses by reflecting on identified patterns, interpreting them, and making sense out of them. Conceptualization of responses persisted with reviewing identified items in regards to their significance for the study and ability to answer the research questions. Full descriptions and sufficient details throughout the data examination and reporting allowed me to strengthen the credibility of findings.

Further cross-referencing of the identified themes and triangulation with academic literature led me to a final refinement of the new concepts and resulted in verbalized research conclusions. I used a bottom-up approach to data interpretation. A thorough examination of survey responses based on adult learning and teaching principles described in academic publications helped me to answer the research questions and contributed to the final product development.

Analysis of Answers to the First Survey Question

Question 1: How can you describe the learning needs of adult students in your classroom?

First question's answers yielded data about instructors' perception of adult learners' needs at the research site. In general, the respondents agreed that adult learners' needs "vary from class to class, from student to student" (#7), and "depend on individual's job and position and can range from language proficiency to cultural and linguistic expertise" (#1). One instructor defined the adult learners' needs explicitly as "a gap between their current and desired proficiency levels" (#7) and the majority of responses represented opinions implicitly through various detailed descriptions.

Based on the data analysis, LC instructors' perceptions reflected three different accents on adult learners' needs that could be summarized as language-centered, learner-centered, and the combination of language- and learner-centered. Eleven instructors primarily named language-centered needs, eight demonstrated the inclination to learner-centered needs, and seven respondents mentioned a combination of both.

Table 3

Summarized First Question's Survey Responses

	Language-centered	Learner-centered	Language and Learner-centered
Adult Learners Needs	11	8	7

The variation of identified needs is significant in all responses. Special attention some respondents paid to instructors' role in addressing both learner- and language-centered needs and, precisely, in ensuring a learning-conducive environment. Among adult learners' needs mentioned in all survey answers, language-centered and learner-centered are the most prominent.

Language-centered needs. According to the majority of respondents who accentuated the language-centered needs, the adult learners have to focus on advancing their skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, translation, and cultural interpretation of different material. Adult students need to develop cultural and linguistic expertise at a higher proficiency level that relates to descriptions provided in ILR standards (www.ilr.com). Respondents noted that students need to improve their grammar skills, expand their vocabulary, and have clear and accurate pronunciation, as well as achieving higher accuracy in material comprehension. Students need an adult content on a variety of topics and subjects that encapsulate different aspects of life in a target language country, such as economics, politics, and society at different levels from highly professional to casual and conversational. Students need to understand the appropriate language application in various situations; recognize the author's tone, intentions, and implications, interpret the main ideas, and identify between and beyond the lines information. Students need to develop strong skills in the analysis of authentic abstract passages and critical thinking, as well as skills for creating language materials that relate to skills at the desired ILR level.

Also, respondents brought attention to students' needs for acknowledged individual linguistic challenges and weaknesses that instructors can help to identify through assessment tests and interviews. Several respondents highlighted the importance of assessment and testing in establishing benchmarks that are critical for meeting language-related adult students' needs. Having clear course objectives, clear criteria for language-learning evaluations, and a clear understanding of the language standards at the

desired level are also among the essential needs of adult students studying the foreign language. The survey participants noted that having visible and measurable results in language production, comprehension, and analysis that correspond to higher ILR level skills are necessary for adult learners in their classrooms.

Learner-centered needs. Another group of opinions expressed in survey responses had the accentuated importance of learner-centered needs. According to LC instructors, adult students are self-conscious individuals that like to learn new things. Adults need to feel successful when they accomplish their goals and objectives of the course. They need to feel respected and self-confident. They have independent thoughts and need to feel free to speak their mind while being safe and relaxed. Students have their purposes of attending a class and different expectations from the course and instructors. Adults require experienced well-prepared instructors who value their opinion and invite students to voice their concerns, as well as instructors who acknowledge, validate, and incorporate their backgrounds and experiences, who are encouraging and motivating. Adult students have different levels of interest in the subject yet need essential content, real-life and application-based materials, and materials and activities that develop skills related to job requirements and positions. Adult learners need a comprehensive, immersive environment where their learning experiences relate to their own language and culture. Adults need to know why they are taught the lesson and why they are doing something in the class or homework. They need clear directions and want to know that instructors have clear and measurable goals and objectives for the students to achieve at the end of the lesson and the course. Adults need a chance to practice the language in

real-time life-related situations. They need a plan, a vision about the course. Students

learn in different ways, and their objectives can be different from the course objectives.

According to survey participants, instructors have to tailor the teaching to students'

learning styles and personal preferences and teach to their way of learning.

Other perspectives on learners' needs. Among the instructors who described

students' needs from both perspectives of language-centered and learner-centered, the

priorities are not consistent. For example, respondent #4 noted, "From my understanding,

learning needs can either be practical/real ones such as course objectives or perceived

needs such as independent thought and self-confidence in jumping into unknown

linguistic territories." The arising question is what are "the real" needs. Does it mean that

a need for independent thought and self-confidence is less critical for learning that a need

to increase the vocabulary? A discussion prompted by these questions during the offered

professional training may be beneficial for participants.

Despite some differences in emphasizing specific adult learners' needs, survey

participants agreed that addressing these needs is critical for successful adult learning.

For example, respondent #18 admitted, "If we do not attempt to understand their needs,

we may fail to recognize the support they require to be successful." At the same time,

there is a noticeable gap in understanding of what students need and what instructors'

think their students need.

Respondent #20 wrote, "A student mostly interested in taking a test after the

course, has nothing to do with a student not interested in taking a test, and who is here for

the language itself. We say that raising the proficiency, in general, will help the students

score better in tests; but a lot of students don't see it that way. So addressing the need of potential test takers should not be ignored." Respondent #17 noted, "The need I see they have is different than the need they think they have. They think they need to focus on passing their DLPT, while I think they need to learn the language following the foreign language standards. They should be able to show that they mastered the language by doing projects and create something in the target language versus getting a good grade in a multiple-choice exam." Answer #22 expressed observations that "Our adult students in the schoolhouse are obsessed and insisting on rehearsing for the DLPT test that they usually take after the course ends, so their needs seem to be framed by the content and the format of the DLPT level test." The reasoning behind the description of passing the test as a noticeable adult learners' need might be offered for discussion in the training. In particular, how instructors can address the needs of passing the test based on andragogical principles and what potentials this approach has for increasing the learning engagement of adult students at the LC.

Overall, the respondents identified learners' needs as a gap in skills critical for linguistic advancement on one side and needs related to certain conditions that consider specific characteristics of adult learners on another side. This observation relates to the dual definitions of adult learners' needs provided in the Definition of Terms chapter of the project study. Further analysis of participants' opinions on effective teaching approaches and activities provided more data to inform the development of the training curriculum.

Analysis of Answers to the Second Survey Question

Question 2: What instructional approaches do you perceive as most effective for engaging your students' foreign language learning based on their needs as adult learners?

Answers to the second survey question elicited respondents' perceptions of the most effective instructional approaches for engaging students' foreign language learning based on their needs as adult learners. The answers provided detailed descriptions of various teaching approaches and techniques. Eight respondents clearly stated that they consider learner-centered approaches as effective for addressing adult learners' needs to facilitate their engagement. For example, respondent #17 wrote, "Students should make an effort to learn versus getting everything ready and spoon-feed by their teachers"; #19 expressed that teaching should be focused on self-directed learning with free teacher-student exchange"; #15 highlighted "teaching that involves students in the learning process." Respondent #13 stated, "The adult students are not coming to learn for the sake of learning. They are in class to learn information that they can apply to their jobs." In addition to clearly defined learner-centered approaches, a few respondents expressed other opinions on the most effective practices.

Two survey respondents distinguished a communicative approach to language teaching, with the first answer accentuating language-centered instruction and the second answer accenting on both learner-centered and language-centered. Another respondent named interactive, one more person defined indirect, and three others mentioned differentiated approaches. The respondent who accentuated a combination of methods in addressing adult learners' needs noted that there are "no one size fits all" (#20) in foreign

language teaching. The participant admitted that "participative activities are useful and students running classes are ideal," and that "pushing students out of their comfort zone makes them successful" yet will require "a mix of teacher-centered and student-centered" approaches.

The combination of learner- and teacher-centered practices were identifiable in three responses. For example, respondent #1 mentioned, "I typically structure my classes as lectures from the instructor and discussions between the instructor and students. I also find it helpful to ask questions and have students answer." Participant #3 stated, "It depends. However, I am a firm believer in promoting autonomous learning. Students should learn at their own pace and should be able to learn independently after the class is over. I apply different techniques, from learner-centered to instructive learning. Sometimes, I have students who prefer the old-fashion way of teaching." Another two answers implied a combination of learner- and language-centered instruction. Respondent #9 mentioned approaches that "involve all senses: kinesthetic, visual, and aural" as most effective for engaging adult students. Participant #24 emphasized scaffolding strategies in language learning.

Among perceptions that depicted engaging approaches for addressing adult learners' needs, there are six answers with indicated language-centered preferences. Respondent #22 identified teaching with "clear written instructions that are repeated verbally all the time" and that "are usually about the content and the objectives of the course." Respondent #14 offered to consider different approaches for vocabulary retention and for teaching language and culture. Respondent #8 noted that it is sufficient

"to give students multiple contextual definitions of the same word and require them to formulate original sentences or scenarios within the many contexts." Participant #18 named a spaced repetition as an approach for the vocabulary build-up that is "the most effective and efficient way to learn the language." The summarized results of the teaching approaches are the following:

1. Learner-centered   8
2. Language-centered   6
3. Learner and Teacher-centered   3
4. Differentiated   3
5. Learner and Language-centered   2
6. Communicative (Language-centered)   1
7. Communicative (Learner and Language-centered)   1
8. Interactive   1
9. Indirect   1

One particular answer contained a possible discussion topic. Participant #21 noted, "I engage students through learner-centered activities. I explain the assignment and provide clear directions. I use translation and transcription. I use texts, audio passages, and TV programs based on authentic materials provided by native speakers in natural settings." This statement has the potential for promoting a discussion about the definition of a learner-centered activity. When the instructor assigns the work to students based on authentic materials and with the focus on mastering specific language skills, what makes it learner-centered? When it becomes language-centered and when teacher-

centered? These questions might be included in the learning content of the training session to facilitate participants' exchange in defining the best teaching practices.

Analysis of Answers to the Third Survey Question

Question 3: What classroom activities you perceive as most effective for engaging your students' foreign language learning and what adult learners' needs they address?

Responses to the third survey question also reflected different perceptions of the most effective teaching for learning engagement, which relates to the answers to the first two survey prompts. Thirteen instructors distinguished and listed the examples of mostly language-centered activities and exercises, nine included learner-centered, and four offered a combination of both types of activities.

Not all respondents provided reasoning for using specific activities. However, instructors who highlighted learner-centered teaching techniques included some explanations about engaging nature of these practices. The respondents accentuated that incorporating creative, real-life and application-based activities promotes independent learning and fosters confidence, teaches students how to interact and communicate, allows aligning their job performance requirements with the curriculum, and teaches them to think outside the box, thus facilitating their learning engagement. Among most commonly listed activities there are discussions, debates, case studies, projects, research activities, role-plays, games, presentations, storytelling, creative and real-life tasks, information gap tasks, brainstorming, and small-group activities. Several respondents accentuated on using technology and multimedia tools as the means for engaging students' learning.

Respondents #7 and #13 provided abundant examples of engaging activities and the reasoning for their use in the classroom. Instructor #7 noted the effectiveness of task-based activities that are critical "for work-related needs of the language." The respondent also accentuated on the following areas: "Problem-solving: Makes students independent and improves learner's cognitive and analytical skills in the target language. The task with a clear objective: Helps learners motivate why they are doing this task or activity. Challenging tasks or activities: Giving learners tasks and activities a little (1+) higher than their current level helps them get to the desired level and increase their interest. Activities that create learners' interaction because it makes the class learners centered. Activities should also address all types of learning styles so that no learner is left out." Respondent #13 described how certain activities could engage students' learning from different perspectives, such as "Memory: get students to create their own word bank from reading materials, cloze exercise, grouping words into categories, using flashcards, storytelling, spelling tests. Cognitive: watch videos or movies, discussions, summary-writing. Comprehension: reading, comprehension exercise, listening comprehension exercise, dictation. Metacognitive: explicit teaching, word games (e.g., crosswords), discussions, oral presentations Affective: storytelling, show and tell, oral presentations, role-playing, working in small groups." Participants #13 and #7 expressed opinions that incorporated both learner-centered and language-centered activities. However, respondent #7 accentuated on learner-centered and #13 highlighted mostly language-centered teaching techniques.

Similar to the first two survey responses, a significant number of answers contained descriptions of language-centered activities. Most prominent among the listed activities were quizzes, grammar exercises, direct explanations from the teacher, word games, cloze tests, fill in the blanks exercises, matching, reverse translation, transcription, compare and contrast activities, open-ended questions, repetition, dictation, spelling tests, comprehension check activities, as well as grouping words into categories, using flashcards, decoding, rephrasing, and guessing. Respondents #11 and # 12 expressed their beliefs in the effectiveness of activities that target all four skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking) during the lesson and in the assigned homework. Overall, the answers to the third survey question related to participants' opinions expressed in the first two questions.

The survey yielded 26 anonymous responses from LC instructors. Participants answered three open-ended questions via the Survey Monkey website. Most of the respondents noted the diversified nature of adult learners' needs in their classrooms and demonstrated different perspectives on the phenomenon. The answers provided detailed information that illustrated instructors' perceptions on the topic of inquiry. Among 26 responses, only three answers required a closer look due to the possible ambiguity, which was resolved by additional examination at the level of individual responses. The survey program combined all responses for each survey question as well as provided the break down for responses to all three questions for each participant. Comparing the results within these two levels helped to clarify the understanding of instructors' perspectives.

The provided data analysis included essential quotations and triangulation to strengthen the evidence of quality. Interpretation of results has incorporated triangulation with similar findings expressed in survey participants' perceptions and scholarly articles. The analysis of individual survey responses included multi-level examination and cross-referencing: with two other answers of the same responder, with all other responses for the same survey question, with the conceptual framework, with related academic publications, with the educational context at the research site, as well as their ability to answer the research question. Overall, the analysis of survey results, supported by concepts from literature reviews, provided sufficient information for developing a professional training curriculum. The respondents' perceptions presented essential data for creating a final product, which, when implemented, has a potential for advancing LC instructors teaching expertise.

Summary of Outcomes

In the study, I aimed to find the answers to how LC instructors' perceptions of best teaching practices for engaging adult students' foreign language learning reflect the core principles of andragogy. The analysis of survey responses indicated that a significant number of LC instructors (approximately two-thirds, based on responses that mentioned merely learner-centered and both learner- and language-centered teaching) consider learner-centered approaches that address adult students' needs as effective for engaging their foreign language learning. Identification of learner-centered foreign language teaching approaches among best practices at the LC based on survey results reinforced the rationale for incorporating this concept in the offered professional training

curriculum. Conducted literature reviews further supported the idea that learner-centered approaches grounded in andragogical principles may significantly improve teaching practices.

However, the mentioning of andragogical principles in survey responses was inconsistent. Including the theory of andragogy in the curriculum may be beneficial for training participants. Moreover, approximately one-third of respondents indicated preferences in combining language-centered and learner-centered approaches for engaging adult students' learning. This observation supported the idea that an effective combination of learner-centered andragogical principles with language-centered activities may be beneficial for strengthening educational services at the site. Incorporating this concept in the training curriculum may significantly expand instructors' expertise for advancing adult students' foreign language proficiency. The analysis of survey responses, supported by literature reviews, provided the answers to the research questions, and laid a foundation for developing a final project. Research findings triggered further professional reflection and strengthened the understanding of the short- and long-term effects of this scholarly work.

The inferences from respondents' opinions allowed suggesting that developing higher-level foreign language skills requires students' advancement beyond purely linguistic features, such as extended vocabulary or complex grammar. The respondents noted that adults need the learning content and teaching approaches that incorporate their experiences and backgrounds, their strengths and weaknesses, their desires to share opinions within a respectful and safe environment. They need to know why they are

learning something in specific ways and how these approaches will advance them to higher language levels. The identified adult learners' needs in survey responses relate to core principles of andragogy authored by Knowles (Knowles et al., 2015). This observation further strengthened the study rationale, which emphasized the implementation of the andragogical tenets in foreign language classrooms among the best teaching practices. However, the survey responses also indicated a strong presence of opinions that do not consider adult learning and teaching principles as primary in LC practices.

Forty two percent of participants (11 out of 26) named language-centered adult students' needs as a priority in their teaching practices. Moreover, 27% of respondents (7 out of 26) accentuated language-centered approaches and 50% (13 out of 26) listed mostly language-centered activities in their survey answers. Thus, despite the presence of andragogical principles in LC instructors' perceptions of best teaching practices for engaging adult students' learning based on their needs, the language-centered approaches were also prominent. Overall, approximately one-third of survey participants expressed that focusing on the language promotes linguistic skills to higher levels, thus addresses the critical adult learners' needs.

Advanced foreign language proficiency is one of the essential objectives for instructors and students. However, the analysis of academic literature provided in Section 1 indicated that form-focused practices are continuously losing their popularity in foreign language learning and teaching. While the subject matter, the content, and linguistic skills development are substantial elements in teaching, considering the nature of adult learners

is also critical. According to literature reviews on learner-centered practices, it is essential for educators to see not only what is learned but also who is learning and how (see Knowles et al., 2015).

Another topic for a professional discussion, as an element of the training curriculum, may include a possibility of incorporating the andragogical principles in language-learning activities. This approach may strengthen the development of language skills based on adult learning principles. Integrating the data from survey responses in the training curriculum can make it applicable and relevant to participants. Also, the analysis of survey responses allowed suggesting that LC instructors may find beneficial to clarify, reflect on, and systematize their understanding of the most effective approaches to foreign language teaching. Validating the effectiveness of andragogical principles for increasing adult students' learning engagement at the LC may positively influence teachers' perceptions of best practices and, consequently, lead to advanced professional expertise.

I identified the genre of the final project at the beginning of the study based on the local educational problem, existing policies, rules and regulations at the ILA, and my position as a foreign language instructor at the site. The identified problem is related to the directed increase in minimal graduates' foreign language proficiency. Academy's management called for strengthening initiatives for professional development. Creating a curriculum and conducting a 3-day training session to advance instructors' expertise in effective teaching practices is doable and, most likely, will be supported by the

administration. The project may result in tangible positive social change going beyond theoretical assumptions.

The implementation of other offered genres for the project study was questionable. The length of the courses for the continuing education programs at the ILA is predetermined and typically includes one-week or 4-5 weeks courses. Walden University requirement for the project study included developing a 9-week curriculum plan as a minimum, which is not a useful format for a language course that could be offered at the local site. Also, developing an evaluation report or a policy goes beyond the scope of my abilities to obtain necessary data at the level of the entire school. The ILA is operating under the umbrella of the DoD and serves the armed forces. It is challenging to obtain sufficient artifacts and documents for research at the place with strict regulations and the "need to know" level of access. I determined the chances to make social change and offer practical suggestions at the site as insignificant and unlikely for all other genres but a 3-day training curriculum. Designing a professional development curriculum for ILA instructors has more ventures for application yielding measurable and meaningful results. Moreover, knowledge and skills gained in the process of developing this final product are indispensable for my further professional growth as a foreign language instructor and an adult educator.

Section 3: The Project

The project study included a 3-day training curriculum developed for instructors at the LC and ILA. The goal of the training is to expand participants' expertise in learner-centered teaching based on Knowles's theory of andragogy and practices that promote foreign language learning engagement. The session will provide opportunities for participants to enhance teaching skills necessary for advancing adult learners to higher-level foreign language proficiency.

Offering a curriculum that facilitates a discussion within professional development programs at the school may significantly enhance instructors' expertise in adult learning and teaching. The curriculum design incorporates Knowles's andragogy (Knowles et al., 2015) as a prominent learner-centered theory pertinent to workplace continuing education. The curriculum includes information from current academic publications and local research. Scholarly publications alone would not provide learning content to suit the needs of the training session participants and make it reasonable, appropriate, and practical.

The curriculum includes the results of the local investigation on instructors' perceptions of the most effective teaching approaches and activities for addressing the needs of adult learners at the LC to complement the information from academic literature. Instructors' perceptions played a critical role in developing the training content to make it appropriate for application of andragogical principles and relevant to participants at the local site. Data that were collected, analyzed, and grounded in Knowles's theory of andragogy informed the development of the final product. The workshop includes 20

hours of training within a 3-day period. Adult learning and teaching principles served as essential concepts in the training design.

Project Rationale

When the ILA leadership raised the minimum levels for graduates' proficiency in foreign languages, all staff members were tasked with enabling students to increase their academic achievements. During professional conferences and community of practice meetings, the faculty and administration highlighted three areas that would require additional attention for meeting new standards in students' proficiency: students, curriculum, and instructors. The current study included a literature review on how instructors could promote students' learning and when students are most successful in their studies. The analysis of academic publications indicated that students' learning engagement and motivation have a significant impact on their success (Finn & Zimmer, 2012; Mullin, 2012; Seker, 2016; Skinner, 2016). Students' foreign language learning engagement is most successful when instructors employ student-centered practices (Bebawi, 2016; Honcharova-Ilina, 2017; Philp & Duchesne, 2016).

When adult students participate in continuing foreign language courses to improve job-related skills, addressing their needs as adult learners may promote their success. Knowles's andragogical theory (Knowles et al., 2015) provided an appropriate conceptual framework for studying adult-centered workplace continuing education. Increasing instructors' expertise in enhancing adults' foreign language proficiency by focusing on their needs may meet the new academic standards at the ILA and LC.

A thorough literature examination indicated that teaching approaches and instructional techniques that include adult learning principles have a high potential for engaging adult students' learning and promoting their academic success. This may also be true for engaging adult students in continuing education programs at the LC. Analysis of survey responses indicated that not all LC instructors are applying the principles of andragogy in their practice, and not all of them consider student-centered approaches for learning engagement. For example, 27% of respondents (7 out of 26) reported that language-centered teaching approaches are most effective for addressing adult learners' needs to facilitate their engagement, and 31% (8 out of 26) specifically mentioned learner-centered approaches in their survey answers. Providing opportunities for instructors to explore and discuss best practices for engaging adult learners in foreign language classrooms based on andragogical principles may enhance their professional expertise.

The training is designed to serve as an experience-sharing, inspirational, and team-building event at the LC/ILA. The session will provide opportunities for instructors' development through exchange, collaboration, and reflection. Zahra, Iram, and Naeem (2014) noted that success of the employee training program depends not only on its proper execution based on identified training needs but also the alignment of training objectives with organizational goals.

The goals of the training include the alignment with the academy's mission for delivering high-quality educational services to armed forces. The internal documents indicated the importance of facilitating employees' professional discussion in regard to

best teaching practices for advancing ILA students' foreign language proficiency (Action Plan, OPLAN). The purpose of this project was not to develop a professional training program for the entire academy, but to develop a narrower curriculum that could become a part of the larger program. Analysis of credible academic sources provided further evidence for the professional training curriculum.

Review of the Literature

In current educational settings, instructors have to meet the diverse and rapidly changing needs of adult learners. Faculty members' ongoing professional training and development is a necessity. Many scholars and practitioners agree that teachers have to be engaged in professional advancement to provide high-quality educational services. Akiba and Liang (2016) argued that vocational education happens through formal and informal opportunities for professional growth, such as teacher collaboration, participation in higher-education courses and professional conferences, professional development programs, and informal communication and individual learning activities. Akiba and Liang defined a professional development program as an "organized activity for the purpose of learning and improving… teaching and student learning" (p. 101). Avidov-Ungar (2016) acknowledged the importance of teacher professional development for increasing the quality of education services leading to improved students' academic achievements. Avidov-Ungar claimed that professional training comprises planned activities based on natural learning experiences and teachers' motivation and personal commitment to professional development. A focus on ongoing professional growth is necessary for improving the quality of educational services at the ILA and LC.

The curriculum is designed to stimulate a positive change in LC instructors' attitudes for delivering high-quality services. According to Caffarella and Daffron (2013), effectively planned and implemented educational programs lead to significant individual, organizational, and societal changes. At the organizational level, the project implementation is intended to increase the competency of faculty members through professional collaboration to strengthen the team around the mission of ensuring students' academic success and professional growth. At the societal level, the training will support and expand the organizational efforts for advancing the professional expertise of teachers and students, whose job is to provide services, which are essential for national safety and security. Expected changes in instructors' perceptions of best teaching practices may have a direct impact on their students' learning outcomes. Developing a training curriculum with an orientation to professional development efforts at the academy creates predispositions for making this initiative more meaningful for ILA stakeholders.

Joining the discussion in adult education about teachers' growth, Stewart (2014) differentiated professional development and professional learning. The author noted that passive and individually oriented practices are inadequate for promoting adult educators' professional development and emphasized the importance of collaboration and involvement in professional learning communities. Stewart highlighted that learning on the job, within a community of practice, leads to a change in theories, approaches, and assumptions through experience and reflection and based on student data (Stewart, 2014). Saroyan and Trigwell (2015) verbalized similar ideas. Saroyan and Trigwell emphasized

that workplace learning facilitates change in educators' beliefs and conceptions, forms a professional identity, and fosters engagement in the scholarship of teaching and learning. The authors added that professional training involves learning and applying new skills, promotes reflection, and encourages networking (Saroyan & Trigwell, 2015).

Patton, Parker, and Tannehill (2015) also supported collaboration and knowledge sharing among educators as critical factors for teachers' professional development. The authors referred to Einstein's notion of insanity, which implies doing the same things repeatedly and expecting different results, as a metaphor for demonstrating the need for new interactive approaches to professional training, and highlighted the importance for teachers to learn together and build social capital (Patton et al., 2015). Lauer, Christopher, Firpo-Triplett, and Buchting (2014) provided evidence that the main impact on participants' learning did not depend on the number of the contact hours as much as on the content focus and active learning strategies. Lauer et al. expressed that for ensuring positive outcomes from professional development workshops, the subject knowledge must relate to means for knowledge acquisition. The authors connected the primary influence of training to a degree of provided opportunities for participants' active learning through analysis of their current practices (Lauer et al., 2014). Therefore, many scholars agree that a successful professional development session has to include collaboration and networking, promote reflection and experience sharing, and involve active learning strategies and analysis of current practices.

Considering the aspects of professional development offered by Lauer et al. (2014), Stewart (2014), Saroyan and Trigwell (2015), and Patton et al. (2015), the 3-day

professional training is not planned as an isolated educational event. The intention of the project is not to create a single workshop for one-time use. The curriculum, grounded in adult learning and teaching principles, is designed to fit into the existing system of professional development and learning continuum at the academy. The training session may build up participants' existing knowledge and skills while providing opportunities for further growth and expansion through analysis of current practices and professional exchange. The project incorporates the local research data to ensure that the curriculum content and instructional approaches correspond to participants' needs in the specific educational setting.

After defining the context and purposes of the scholarly project, I expanded the literature review to resources containing the answers to the question of how to create a successful professional training. The approaches to designing a 3-day professional training curriculum for adult educators were examined from different perspectives. However, the literature selection and analysis primarily included considerations of the core andragogical principles to ensure the alignment of the training curriculum with the identified framework, research data, and study purposes.

Informing the Curriculum Content and Instructional Approaches

Reviewed scholarly works on professional development and training designs indicated the importance of andragogical principles as fundamental for successful adult learning. Cox (2015) argued that adults are ready to learn when they able to link their experiences to the relevance of their learning, and, at the same time, use them as an additional resource for new knowledge acquisition. Hadar and Brody (2016) noted that it

is imperative for teachers to understand how adults learn in a particular context and consider their experiences in educational practices. Hadar and Brody also emphasized the role of collegial conversation for fostering and advancing teaching practices. Adult learning and teaching principles are critical for classroom interaction and educational program development. Literature reviews confirmed that adults' engagement increases when the educational process meets their expectations and when the learning content and activities address their needs.

In the current study, the investigation of best teaching practices for engaging students' foreign language learning was grounded in the adult learning theory. According to the concepts of andragogy (Knowles et al., 2015), the adults learn better when they know why they are learning something and when they can immediately apply new knowledge or skills in practice. Adults learn better when it helps to solve or prevent a problem. Adults are motivated, self-directed, and ready to learn and rely on their own experiences in their studies while connecting new ideas to existing knowledge (Knowles et al., 2015). The designed curriculum is intended for adult participants who work with adult students. Adult learning and teaching principles guided the selection of learning material, identification of sources, and choices of appropriate instructional approaches.

For creating a sufficient curriculum in the project, it was vital to incorporate andragogical principles at both levels: in the learning content and delivery methods. It was also critical to align the training content and instructional techniques to pinpoint the adult learning and teaching principles in theory and practice. In other words, the session

exemplifies the content of adult learning and teaching by organizing the course for adults based on adult learning and teaching principles.

Additional academic literature reviews further informed the project development to ensure a useful application of the core andragogical principles. Wlodkowski and Ginsberg (2017) offered to motivate and engage adult learners by using activities that are beneficial for participants in daily job tasks. According to Wlodkowski and Ginsberg, the adult learners must clearly understand "what's in it for them": how new skills will help them to solve the problems and become better at what they do and what additional benefits they can gain during the training. Considering that adult learners rely on personal experiences and connect new information to existing knowledge, the authors noted that it is critical for adult educators to ensure validation of participants' experiences in practice. To meet the needs of adult learners, Wlodkowski and Ginsberg offered setting and verbalizing training objectives that are clear, measurable, and achievable as one of the first steps in designing a good session. These ideas relate to current research results where survey participants named similar student-centered learning needs that influence the choices of teaching approaches. The literature analysis confirmed that a theory of andragogy is a strong foundation for training development.

Additional literature reviews provided in-depth information for developing the training structure and content. The conducted analysis indicated the agreement among many scholars on values of andragogical principles in adult education. However, despite scholars' support of adult learning principles as being fundamental for designing successful professional training, many authors put different accents on specific principles.

Pawlak (2016) brought educators' attention to adult learners' self-direction as a contributing factor to the learning efficacy and pinpointed the particular value of engagement in autonomous behaviors that can lead to increased proficiency. On the other side, Ozuah (2016) accentuated the importance of clear goals and objectives for successful adult learning that address the need to know what they study. Ozuah also mentioned the importance of reinforcement and feedback as the means to address student orientation to gaining practical skills for problem-solving. From another perspective, Palis and Quiros (2014) emphasized on readiness to learn and described it as a stage when the existing level of knowledge and skills allows adults to comprehend the new learning content. Palis and Quiros related readiness to learn to orientation to learning when adults realize that they need knowledge and skills to cope with situations in their lives. Responses of the participated in the survey LC instructors also demonstrated differentiated opinions on the essential features of adult learning and teaching. The survey participants highlighted the importance of clear goals and objectives, reinforcement and feedback, as well as practical application and problem-solving activities. However, the respondents paid a little to none attention to self-directness and readiness and orientation to learning principles. It might be beneficial for training participants to discuss the applicability and usefulness of these anagogical principles for promoting adult learning in foreign language classrooms.

The analysis of survey responses indicated students' experiences as a significant element mentioned by research participants. Support for this observation is evident in academic articles that reflected common thought of learners' experiences being a central

point in adult teaching practices. MacKenzie (2015) recognized adult learners as self-reliant individuals who, based on past experiences, know better what to learn for succeeding in personal and professional life. Chen (2014) emphasized on teachers' task in providing meaningful learning for adults based on diverse life experiences and through reflection, while increasing their self-directness and providing opportunities to grow. Petty and Thomas (2014) noted that successful educational programs have to attend to adult learners' experiences and that acknowledgment and respect of these experiences by teachers are critical for learners' positive attitude and academic persistence. In other words, the scholars agree that acknowledgment and appreciation of students' past, present, and future experiences, as well as hands-on experiential practices, are important considerations for developing an educational event for adults. This notion relates to obtained research results.

The ideas of implementing reflection and self-reflection as effective teaching practices were not apparent in survey responses. However, the positive impact of these techniques is imminent in successful adult learning and essential for learning engagement. Some scholars noted a connection between learners' experience and reflection on these experiences for promoting adults' success. Foote (2015) highlighted the role of experience and reflection that provide meaningful adult learning and give a sense of self-efficacy, which are imperative for personal transformation. Brunila and Siivonen (2016) argued that self-reflection provides learners in adulthood with insights for personal growth and development and application of knowledge and skills helps individuals to achieve a better and happier life. Learners also appreciate the opportunity

to evaluate their educational progress as it helps to understand their accomplishments (Petty & Thomas, 2014). Reflective activities are included in the training curriculum as essential components of adult learning and teaching. Although reflection and self-reflection are not among Knowles's core assumptions of andragogy, Knowles et al. (2015) described the importance of these processes in adult learning and teaching.

Another research outcome included an observation of unsystematic descriptions of adult learners' needs and teaching approaches for addressing these needs in survey responses. Providing opportunities for training participants to organize definitions and clarify understanding of best practices may benefit their job skills. The accents and priorities of certain andragogical principles depicted in the academic literature are also different. Despite variations in categorizing adult learning principles, scholars emphasized on motivation as one of the most prominent concepts in adult education. The survey participants also highlighted motivation among essential learners' needs.

Several articles reflected the common idea that motivation plays one of the central roles in students' learning sufficiency. Horzum, Kaymak, and Gungoren (2015) expressed confidence in self-directedness and positive learners' experiences as facilitating factors for adult learning motivation. Sogunro's (2014) work provided evidence of adult learning motivation as being critical for academic success. Sogunro argued that adult students' need to know what they learn and why, and noted that their experiences, practical orientation, readiness to learn, and self-direction may significantly influence leaning motivation.

Among adult learning and teaching principles related to motivation, many authors emphasized on teachers' role of preparing the adults for becoming autonomous in their educational endeavors. The survey results demonstrated that LC instructors did not prioritize self-directness and learners' autonomy. There was no indication of these elements in the descriptions of the learning needs and only two mentions of self-directed and independent components among teaching approaches in survey results. Additional discussion of autonomous learning benefits and offsets may promote teaching practices at the LC. Specifically, discussions incorporated in the curriculum may elicit instructors' opinions on how to create conditions and develop students' skills for autonomous learning beyond the classroom. Increasing LC faculty members' awareness about their students' long-term educational goals and possessing skills that help to create a vision for future growth are essential parts of professional expertise.

The concept of self-directed, autonomous learning is significant in students' engagement. Providing opportunities for making choices and influencing the learning and teaching addresses the adult learners' need for self-directness. Cox (2015) agreed that adults are mature and self-motivated in their learning and that involving them as equal participants could address their needs for self-directness and self-determination. Taylor, Dunn, and Winn (2015) also bought attention to self-directness as a critical component of adult education where students can take initiatives, make choices, and feel independent in their learning process. Fátima Goulao (2014) and Soulé and Warrick (2015) pinpointed self-directed learning in adult education as a critical factor for addressing students' needs within social contexts. Despite some nuances, most authors agreed that self-direction is

one of the essential skills that allow learners to take better control of their studies and help them to excel. However, finding a balance between addressing learners' need to become self-directed and providing students with clear guidance and resources for reaching educational goals are very challenging tasks. To find this balance, the teachers must assume the role of adult learning facilitators or mediators and stay abreast of innovative and sufficient instructional techniques appropriate for adult learners. The training curriculum includes this element in the learning content. After defining leading approaches and significant components, I continued the curriculum development with further identification of the learning activities for the session based on research results' analysis and literature reviews.

Defining Teaching Techniques for the Project

The literature analysis indicated scholars' perception of the core andragogical principles as being critical for designing and implementing effective teaching practices that lead to students' success. The andragogical principles such as a need to know, self-directness, readiness to learn, orientation to learning, the role of experience, and motivation could be addressed in adult classrooms through a variety of techniques and approaches. Many scholars highlighted the importance of incorporating active and engaging adult learning tasks. Survey respondents also accentuated on using active, hands-on, practical units of instruction for engaging students' learning.

Further literature reviews supported the research results' analysis and provided necessary information for selecting instructional techniques and approaches for the project. Ozuah (2016) accentuated that the success of the training for a group of adults

directly depends on the incorporated and implemented teaching approaches as well as overall session's design grounded in adult learning principles. Kullberg, Martensson, and Runesson (2016) suggested that the object of learning is not limited to what participants supposed to know, understand, or be able to do because of instruction. Kullberg et al. explained that the result could not be fully determined in advance since the content of learning will depend on what ideas and experiences the participants will bring to a discussion. The current curriculum considers the authors' idea that the object of learning is dynamic. At the same time, the workshop includes measurable and achievable learning objectives to clarify the expected learning outcomes. Emphasizing participants' attention on results addresses the adult students' need to know why they are studying something.

There are multiple concerns in the professional training development process. Wahlgren (2016) acknowledged consideration of learners' needs, professional self-development attitudes, and the ability to manage learning processes as critical factors for successful learning. According to Stewart (2014), participants need opportunities for equal input in planning learning activities, reflecting on their learning, and choosing what and how to learn. Caruth (2014) named collaboration, practical application, and evaluation of own learning as critical techniques that promote adult students' success, which is highly relevant for the current curriculum. The guiding teaching principles of offered session include considerations for adult learners' needs in general, based on the theory of andragogy, and the needs of particular LC participants. The training instructor will define these needs and address them in class through collaboration and active learning. The curriculum incorporates participants' needs assessment.

A further literature analysis allowed me to validate and select appropriate activities from survey responses for the curriculum. I incorporated the instructional techniques in the current project to address the learning needs of the specific group at the LC. Leontev (2014) highlighted the importance of incorporating intellectual and practical problem-solving and distinguished games, training seminars, process modeling, problem discussions, debates, and round-tables as valuable adult teaching methods. Palis and Quiros (2014) suggested that active learning strategies, such as debates, reflective activities, small-group discussions, case studies, and role-playing, together with opportunities to a practical application of new skills to real-life situations make the learning more effective for adults. Reznitskaya and Wilkinson (2015) pointed out the power of learning that happens through discussion. When a teacher asks an open-ended question with no obvious single correct response and releases control of the discourse to the students, the learners elaborate on their views, provide reasoning, refer to different sources for evidence, and evaluate each other's answers (Reznitskaya & Wilkinson, 2015). Providing opportunities for dialogue is an essential part of the project.

Among instructional techniques that stimulate adult students' learning, Cummins (2016) offered an extended list that included but not limited to discussions, brainstorming, debating, questioning, one-minute papers, think-pair-share, case-based learning, concept maps, role-plays, commitment activities, jigsaw, team-based learning, problem-based learning, brain dump/free write, formative quizzes/surveys, self/peer formative assessment, small-group presentations, games, categorizing grids, features' matrix, peer teaching, computer-based interaction systems, student-generated questions,

misconception/preconception check, application activities, and simulations. The survey responses fully relate to activities highlighted in the literature reviews, however, have less variety. Adding these activities to the list from the survey data for further training participants' validation, cross-referencing with andragogical assumptions and considerations of possible use in foreign language classrooms may benefit teaching skills.

Furthermore, the literature reviews resulted in the allocation of a few books with ample descriptions of learning activities applicable in the adult classroom. Nilson (2016) and Macpherson (2015) offered detailed and comprehensive lists of critical teaching principles and instructional activities that promote adult learning. Nilson (2016) suggested selecting outcome-based learning activities where a teacher determines what students will be able to do at the end of the session. Among teaching methods that promote knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, cognitive development, and a shift in mental models, the author listed numerous instructional techniques. Activities mentioned by survey participants relate to the author's suggestions. Nilson (2016) also offered to match teaching methods to learning objectives for effective adult teaching and emphasized on a discussion as one of the popular techniques appropriate in adult classrooms. A good debate allows participants "exploring unfamiliar ideas open-mindedly, facilitates deep learning, critical thinking, problem-solving, listening actively, communicating orally, transferring knowledge to new situations, retaining the material, and wanting to learn more about the subject matter" (Nilson, 2016, p. 128). Research participants also emphasized on a discussion as a productive adult teaching activity and approach for engaging adult learners. Survey

respondents offered to pose a controversial or probing question, use the role of "the

devil's advocate," and ask students to discuss the topic or issue in small groups.

According to LC instructors, reading a passage or watching a video clip may elicit

learners' responses and promote discussions. Similar to Nilson (2016), Macpherson

(2015) also listed ideas and provided a robust variety of adult classroom activities for

knowledge and comprehension, application and analysis, synthesis and evaluation,

interaction and practice, reflection and feedback, as well as activities to complement

projects and to end the lesson. The references for these publications are included as

supplementary learning resources for training participants.

Survey respondents also named a few applicable ideas for involving adult learners

in experience sharing activities and emphasized on active learning strategies for students'

engagement. Silberman and Biech (2015) provided the following characteristics of an

active training session: "a moderate level of content, a balance among affective,

behavioral, and cognitive learning, a variety of learning approaches, opportunities for

group participation, utilization of participants' expertise, a recycling of earlier learned

concepts and skills, real-life problem solving, and allowance for future planning"

(Silberman & Biech, 2015, p. 183). The listed strategies relate to survey participants'

perceptions, which I included in the training curriculum. The mentioned above ideas and

examples of activities are applicable for addressing adult learners' needs and engaging

adult participants in collaboration and experience sharing. Literature reviews and

research results' analysis indicated that considerations of andragogical principles are

critical for choosing the most appropriate adult teaching approaches and activities.

Consideration of Additional Facilitating Factors

Besides selecting the most appropriate learning activities, identifying learning content, goals, and objectives, and deciding on teaching strategies, consideration of additional facilitating factors is also essential for promoting adult students' learning engagement. Caruth (2014) argued that creating a safe classroom environment is substantial for sufficient adult learning along with an addressed need to know and opportunities for collaboration, practical application, and evaluation of learning. Caruth emphasized on andragogical principles as critical conditions for engaging adult students' learning that consequently lead to students' success. Adding to facilitating factors of adult learning, Banks (2014) commented on the importance of providing a learning-conducive environment by ensuring safe physical and psychological surroundings. The attention to a safe and respectful learning environment was also noticeable in survey responses and will be considered in the offered training.

The analysis of research results brought me to another significant observation. According to LC instructors, the level of engagement in an adult classroom depends not only on teaching strategies but also on the role of the teacher. A similar idea is evident in academic publications where scholars distinguished adult educators as mediators and facilitators of learning. The focus on classroom interactions, and specifically on what teachers do to promote adult learning, is also a popular topic in scholarly works. Reece and Walker (2016) saw a teacher's role in facilitating the learning process through planning, managing, and assessing. The authors presented a basic teaching model with four building blocks: the objective or what teachers want students to learn, the behavior

or what students already know about the topic, instructional techniques that include

considerations of students' experiences and reflections, and the assessment of what has

been learned. Reece and Walker brought attention to learners' involvement in planning,

managing, and assessing their learning as a critical component of effective teaching. Reiff

and Ballin (2016) also named proactive interaction with instructors as one of the

significant characteristics of a good learning environment for adults and connected

learning engagement to good learning experiences. Stewart (2014) argued that in a group-

learning environment, it is critical for instructors to promote a partnership. The instructor

in the offered training will assume the role of an adult learning facilitator.

    The extensive literature reviews informed the study and project development. The

research questions, collected data at the local site, and Knowles' theory of andragogy as a

conceptual framework determined the direction for search, selection, and comprehensive

study of academic articles. Knowles's andragogical assumptions served as guidelines for

analyzing prominent concepts in survey responses to inform the curriculum development.

After concluding that survey participants' perceptions of adult learning and teaching

principles are inconsistent with the theory of andragogy, I continued academic literature

reviews for clarification and insights.

    Credible internet resources, such as Walden University library with access to

numerous education and research databases, Google Scholar search engine, as well as

online library books and peer-reviewed professional journals in adult education and

foreign language learning and teaching, provided reliable information for the study. The

ideas from academic publications helped me to improve my understanding of the main

topic and new themes and concepts, as well as triangulate and confirm the research data. Obtained information helped to validate best teaching practices for engaging adult students' learning at the site. The first focus-point in the literature search for project development included material on professional training and curriculum design. The second focus-point included investigation of andragogical principles and their interpretation and prioritization in different sources. Additional correlation with research results allowed advancing exploration of the concepts and assisted in decision-making, specifically for deciding on the training curriculum content and the most appropriate learning activities. The third focus-point of the literature reviews involved a search for additional elements that are critical for successful implementation of the professional training session, such as teacher's role and conditions for promoting a safe, respectful, and productive learning environment. Moreover, the literature on educational program planning and evaluation assisted in aligning project goals and objectives with the purposes of professional development at the organization, helped to create a better understanding of the project outcomes, and aided in comprehending the projects' theoretical and empirical components. The additional literature review not only strengthened the reliability of the study, but the in-depth analysis of academic publications depicting recent research and achievements in adult education also improved my understanding of the best teaching practices for engaging adult students in foreign language classrooms.

Description of the Project

There are no identified potential barriers for developing and implementing the designed training at the research site. However, it might be challenging to allocate 3 working days for a group of busy teachers so they can attend the session. For addressing this potential barrier, the offered training must demonstrate a high possibility of making a positive impact on participants' learning to offset their time and pay off host organization's efforts for providing space, equipment, and other accommodations.

The preference of a 3-day workshop in comparison to a shorter session is supported by academic articles were authors agreed that a more prolonged course is more effective than a single presentation (Akiba & Liang, 2016; Saroyan & Trigwell, 2015; Stewart, 2014). As noted earlier, the designed training curriculum includes consideration of the existing professional development system at the academy. Based on observations of current local policies and existing professional development workshops at the school, it is anticipated that management will support the initiative and provide assistance in setting the date and time and allocating the space for the session while considering teachers' schedules and availability. Research conducted at the place of employment has its benefits. Besides making the final project applicable and useful for addressing site-specific challenges, the insider's knowledge of available resources and stakeholders' attitude to professional development events at the school allowed me to predict that implementation of the curriculum will receive the necessary support from the administration.

Most likely, the training participants will receive all reasonable accommodations from the host and the trainer and will be encouraged to use different tactics for accomplishing their learning goals. Caffarella and Daffron (2013) recommended the educational program planners to pay attention to providing an appropriate physical environment such as good light in the room, comfortable temperature with air-conditioning, noise reduction, working equipment, available supplies, water, and snacks, as well as accommodation for individuals with disabilities and other special requests. Learning accommodations must ensure that students have appropriate resources and a comfortable environment for successful task implementation.

Further learning accommodations include appropriate space for the entire group of participants so they will be able to see the presenter and the presentation on a bigger screen or multiple screens in the room. It is crucial for a successful session that all technological devices (video, audio, microphone, computer, etc.) work correctly. It is desirable for participants to have stand-alone desks so they can comfortably gather around as a group for a discussion and collaborative work. A big screen with an appropriate sound system is necessary. Having office supplies, such as posters, paper, pens or pencils, markers, and sticky notes, is also desirable. Providing participants with printed course logistics would be helpful in the overall training organization. Providing participants with copies of developed during the workshop products will require additional investments from the host and the trainer but, together with supplemental resources, is highly effective for instructors' learning and continuing professional development. Participants' registration for the course based on free will and desire to

expand and enrich professional expertise vs. direct assignment may help to strengthen the project outcomes. Having a contingency plan is also desirable for successful project implementation.

Considering the experiential and collaborative learning environment as a critical component of the training, a medium-sized group with approximately 14-16 individuals will be appropriate for the training. The selected group size provides opportunities for all participants to become engaged in active learning, participate in discussions, and practically apply new skills and ideas. Also, this group size allows bringing enough practitioners to share and validate the teaching experiences. A larger group would provide fewer opportunities for all participants to speak, and a smaller group would have less power in eliciting, discussing, and validating the best practices. The curriculum includes 20 hours of training within a consecutive 3-day period. The first day of training is devoted to Knowles's theory of andragogy and adult learning and teaching principles. The second day brings participants' attention to best teaching practices for engaging students' foreign language learning based on study findings and participants' brainstorming and experience sharing. The third day facilitates participants' discussions and builds an understanding of how the application of adult teaching principles can improve students' learning engagement in class and lead to increased foreign language proficiency.

The research results allowed suggesting that a safe and respectful learning atmosphere is critical for adult learning to occur. Reiff and Ballin (2016) commented on the importance of ensuring adult participants' physical and psychological safety for

providing a learning-conducive environment. Using ice-breaking activities, fostering reflection and feedback, asking participants to create and follow the group rules help the teacher to provide most appropriate learning conditions for a group of adults (Reiff & Ballin, 2016). According to Banks (2014), group rules offer opportunities for participants to agree upon instructional goals, expected and accepted behaviors, as well as suggest an organizational structure for better mutual understanding and additional stimuli for learning engagement in the particular educational setting. Establishing group rules is an essential step for collaborative learning. The training session includes a designated time on the first day of class for participants to negotiate group rules and set up individual learning goals and objectives for the course. Creating a learning-conducive environment for students is an integral part of their overall accommodation in the classroom.

The role of the trainer as a facilitator of learning is critical for successful project implementation. Being sensitive to learners' needs and able to adjust teaching is an important professional quality for an adult educator. However, appropriate adjustments must be meaningful, effective, and grounded in the existing, thoroughly planned curriculum. A right balance between relying on the existing courseware and teacher's abilities to adjust the learning content and activities to meet adult students' needs has a strong potential for promoting students' learning. The effectiveness of a training session depends on a curriculum, its content, and embedded instructional approaches and techniques, and then on the professional qualities of the trainer.

The purpose of the training is to expand teachers' expertise in advancing academy students' foreign language proficiency based on the application of andragogical

principles. Through discussions, experience sharing, and collaboration, participants will define, acknowledge, and acquire skills critical for professional development. Participants' proactive attitude and ability to become a subject of their learning will facilitate not only professional but personal growth and self-actualization.

Project Evaluation Plan

Evaluation and assessment are critical components of adult learning and teaching. The purpose of an evaluation is to gain and interpret information about participants' learning for further adjustment and improvement of educational practices. According to Suskie (2009), the theorists of adult education share different perspectives on defining the terms of assessment and evaluation. Suskie suggested that evaluation is a broader concept than assessment and noted that evaluation is a process of informed judgment that educators make based on assessment data. Through assessment, educators gauge how well students achieve specific learning goals and objectives, and evaluation allows gaining an understanding of teaching-learning strengths and weaknesses and what changes will improve the learning outcomes. An educator can conduct an assessment during the session to gather information for adjusting the teaching in the current class and making improvements in the next iteration or another program (Suskie, 2009). The plan for evaluating the training session for LC instructors in the project includes data gathering before, during, and at the end of the course with followed by analysis, interpretation, and suggestions for improvement. (Appendices B, J, and K).

The instructor can use information from participants' reflective sharing, self-assessment, and feedback in class for evaluation purposes that can lead to improved

practices. At the beginning of the first session, the instructor will ask participants to rate

their level of knowledge based on a set of ideas and terms that relate to course learning

objectives. The questionnaire consists of five prompts asking participants to reflect on

and rate their current knowledge about Knowles's theory of andragogy, adult learners'

needs, adult teaching principles, and adult learning engagement on a scale from 1 to 10

(with 1 as Poor and 10 as Excellent). Same questions are included in the postcourse self-

assessment questionnaire to evaluate the dynamic of participants' learning. In the

precourse questionnaire, participants also will have opportunities to express their best and

worst anticipations for the course. This data will help to inform the instructor about

possible areas of concern. The postcourse questionnaire includes questions to elicit

participants' perceptions about the overall success of the course and recommendations for

future iterations.

     After obtaining the anonymous and voluntary participants' responses to precourse

and postcourse self-assessment questionnaires, the instructor will analyze the rating scale

data through descriptive statistics procedures and theming and coding for the open-ended

questions. The calculated mean for each category will demonstrate an average grade

between 1 and 10. The histogram will provide a visual for further data analysis,

interpretation, and reporting. To have a better understanding of the results, the instructor

will record all rated items from the questionnaires on the horizontal X-axis and the rating

for each item on the vertical Y-axis. Calculated standard deviation will demonstrate the

level of variability in the distribution for each item. Analysis of participants' opinions

expressed in the end-of-course assessment will enable the instructor to make educated decisions about the session for the next iteration.

In addition to conducting pre and postcourse self-assessments, facilitating ongoing adult students' reflection and feedback in class may serve as another data-gathering tool that can help to improve learning and teaching. Feedback in adult classrooms occurs when a teacher or peer provide information about one's performance or understanding. Feedback and reflection embedded into a learning task allow learners to critically analyze their experiences and draw a conclusion about the overall learning achievement. Zher, Hussein, and Saat (2016) suggested that students engage in feedback because they understand its advantages for their development. Feedback provides learners with information about their success in reaching learning objectives and simultaneously contributes to other participants' learning (Zher et al., 2016). Facilitating adult learners' reflection and feedback after a learning task completion or at the end of the day corresponds with adult learning and teaching principles (see Knowles et al., 2015). Besides providing critical information for course evaluation, participants engaged in reflective activities share their success stories and inspire each other. Reflection and feedback are necessary for assessment and evaluation and critical for learning and teaching.

Besides administering pre and postcourse self-assessment questionnaires the instructor will facilitate and use participants' feedback about learning activities, content, accommodations, teaching techniques, and other ideas expressed in class discussions to assess and evaluate the overall session and its specific elements. The instructor will gauge

participants' learning based on rubrics, or short narrative descriptions of Excellent, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory in individual and group-work. Rubrics allow teachers to gather data for decision-making about the session by evaluating the overall student learning without providing feedback to an individual participant (Suskie, 2009). The instructor may instantly address the revealed gap and tailor teaching to learners' needs and preferences. Instructor's observations and holistic assessment of participants' learning may be useful for adjusting the next step in the session, such as rephrasing and repeating major points or providing additional resources.

The analysis of data gained during and at the end of the training is included as an initial step in training evaluation. The instructor and other stakeholders will be able to gauge the actual value of the project based on participants' transfer of learning that most likely will become evident after a few weeks or even months from training attendance. It might be helpful for the instructor to offer participants to keep the reflective journal containing the analysis of the aftereffects of the training and share the results in the future community of practice or staff meetings. Investigating main stakeholders' perceptions of the program's success is also essential for program evaluation. Reflection and feedback from training participants' students and their immediate supervisors as stakeholders will present more data that are valuable for this purpose. The informal tally of comments from participants' immediate supervisors and other faculty members at the academy as well as formal end-of-course students' feedback also could serve for program evaluation purposes. Training evaluation is a complex and multileveled process that is essential for

program development. I included several project evaluation strategies to improve the offered curriculum during and after the first iteration.

Project stakeholders include but not limited to training participants who are ILA faculty members and their immediate supervisors, as well as ILA students who are the armed forces and their supervisors responsible for promoting job performances. On a bigger scale, the USA government, as a financing organization, may benefit from positive project outcomes in the long run, because an investment in employees' professional development is potentially profitable.

Project Implications

The current doctorate-level study demonstrated my aptitude to conduct a scholarly investigation where the best practices were identified, examined, and verified based on the analysis of academic literature and local research. The original, in-depth inquiry of a specific issue resulted in new knowledge and demonstrated my scholarly ability to analyze and synthesize new ideas for addressing the gap in local educational services. Before generating innovative ideas and finding alternative ways to promote current practices, I started the scholarly work with a broader approach to a local problem and included considerations from different perspectives.

The congruent concepts from foreign language teaching and learning and adult education inspired the inquiry. The analysis of various sources of information, including academic publications, materials from professional conferences and meetings, formal and informal documents, policies, and regulations, as well as personal communication with educators and professional observations of practices at the local site brought me to

conclusions that helped to build a study. First, increased students' engagement improves learning. Second, students demonstrate higher learning engagement when instructors respond to their needs. Third, the theory of adult learning and teaching authored by Knowles provides a sound and reliable framework for instructors enabling them to address some typical needs of adult students. Forth, to promote best practices at the local site, the andragogical theory must be aligned with and complemented by a local content, which is related to foreign language learning and specific needs of ILA/LC students. Fifth, participating in the training session on addressing the needs of adult learners based on principles of andragogy, which is specially developed for the site and based on local data, provides additional opportunities for ILA/LC instructors to expand their expertise in teaching foreign languages to adult learners.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Project Strengths and Limitations

Adult learning happens in a variety of settings and encompasses numerous factors. The project study curriculum is designed to promote participants' personal and professional improvement, help them achieve their potential, and foster their development as foreign language instructors. Despite a variety of opinions, many academic articles reflected scholars' agreement about the value of adult learning theory for professional development (Shi, 2017; Zepeda et al., 2014). The project training session provides the opportunity for participants to apply their learning in their context. McGauley-Keaney (2015) emphasized the effectiveness of this approach and suggested that application of adult learning theory in professional training enhances learners' accountability, provides the transfer of learning, and makes a positive impact on practices. Adult learning and teaching principles are not only included in the project as major components of the educational content but also serve as essential concepts for training delivery. The training curriculum includes andragogical principles to facilitate participants' transfer of knowledge in regard to adult learning and teaching with an orientation toward effective foreign language practices. The direct connection of the content and delivery adds strength to the project implementation because it relates theory to application. Participants will obtain new skills through discussions, reflection on current practices, brainstorming, and professional exchange. Support for the effectiveness of this approach is evident in scholarly works (Cox, 2015; Vella, 2016). Adults learn better when they are able to link their experiences to the relevance of their learning.

Using these experiences as an additional resource for learning contributes to a scholarly

discussion in adult education and foreign language teaching.

The curriculum design and implementation are intended to demonstrate positive

outcomes of an educational process in which participants internalize new ideas, form new

beliefs, and create new patterns of dealing with professional challenges. This approach is

more popular among adult educators in comparison to strategies that require participants'

memorization of facts and ready-to-use knowledge (see Knowles et al., 2015). The

project methodology includes an emphasis on the educational process that facilitates

adult learners' knowledge and skills acquisition rather than knowledge transmission.

Knowles's theory of andragogy provides the rationale for this approach as advantageous

for learning, thereby demonstrates additional strengths of the project.

The workshop participants will not only increase their expertise in best teaching

practices for engaging students' learning based on principles of andragogy, they will

acquire skills for facilitating ILA students' foreign language proficiency. The project

incorporates local data to be relevant to participants, includes considerations of an

existing professional development system, and offers solutions that can go beyond local

consumption. The project implementation integrates long-term contingency planning to

inspire adult educators for further exploration of best teaching practices. The presence of

these elements in the project adds more strength to its design and implementation (see

Knowles et al., 2015). Looking for the answers in the overlapping area of two separate

fields, such as adult education and foreign language learning and teaching, poses some

study limitations but also provides insights and ideas that are new, innovative, and potentially effective.

The training will provide conditions in which participants will be able to share their perspectives on best practices through reflections. Collaboration during the session will create precedents for scholarly exchange, facilitate teamwork, and promote a tolerance for and positive attitude toward other professional opinions. Moreover, the training will provide opportunities for professional dialogue, mentorship, and support. The project implementation at the ILA will enable participants to build social capital and develop an environment for continuing professional inquiry about innovative theories and practices to meet the needs of the ever-changing adult student population.

Besides anticipated benefits, the project has certain limitations that can hinder the effectiveness of the positive outcomes. Not all adults have an open-minded attitude towards learning new things. Some professionals who accumulated years of experiences and hold higher education degrees have established opinions about the topics under discussions. Some training participants may have preset and fossilized notions about their practices or their understanding of best practices. For example, participants who believe in language-centered approaches may be challenged to address the application of andragogical principles in foreign language classrooms. Instructors may struggle to change their beliefs about language teaching if they exclusively relate it to building linguistic skills with attention to forms and grammar functions. Some instructors may believe only in exercises, drills, quizzes, and test preparation as essential components of foreign language teaching. The project study survey indicated a significant number of

responses with a strong orientation to language-centered teaching approaches and activities. The project curriculum includes discussions of pros and cons for using language-centered and learner-centered approaches.

Validating participants' opinions and offering alternative considerations for tailoring instructional techniques to students' needs may address the possible biases and reluctance toward the use of andragogical theory in foreign language teaching. Some instructors may believe that attention to the holistic growth of each student is unnecessary and insignificant in short-term language courses conducted at the LC. This issue also could be a perceptional barrier to reaching the project's objectives and will require closer attention from a training facilitator.

The training session outcomes depend on the professional qualities of the training facilitator. Despite well-organized and detailed curriculum, the facilitator may interpret and deliver the content differently, which may negatively affect the training outcomes. According to Knowles's theory of andragogy (Knowles et al., 2015), the role of the instructor is a critical element in successful training implementation. The project curriculum includes various group activities and offers opportunities for professional exchange. Group dynamics, as well as the experiences and attitudes of each participant, will influence the session's outcome. Taking notes after each day of the session about successful and unsuccessful activities and discussion topics, conducting a dynamic assessment of participants' learning, and reflecting on learners' feedback may help the facilitator to modify the training content and teaching approaches. The trainer must possess and use skills for engaging each participant and eliciting maximum interaction

within the group. The ability to lead a professional conversation with the focus on tangible outcomes and mutual benefits for all participants, flexibility in adjusting the learning content and activities for productive communication, and demonstration of higher-level expertise are essential for the training facilitator. Training facilitators who lack these abilities may lower the positive outcomes of the workshop.

After a first trial of the project curriculum, it is also critical to make necessary adjustments and develop further plans. Without contingency arrangements, accountability in improving the session based on first iterations, and a commitment to future project implementations, the workshop may become a one-time event. It is also essential for training facilitators to avoid shortsightedness in the project's implementation. Carrying out the curriculum must include thorough planning and skillful execution to develop a positive reputation among the stakeholders, which is necessary for future iterations. The alignment of the project with other training programs at the school may help to promote positive change and strengthen the professional development efforts.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

The conducted survey gathered sufficient information critical for developing a professional training curriculum as a final project. The data portrayed LC instructors' perceptions of best teaching practices for addressing adult learners' needs and facilitating learning engagement and provided essential content for the project. However, the nature of the online survey with three open-ended questions created some challenges in eliciting and interpreting the data. A few participants' responses contained phrases or incomplete sentences, and a few responses were not clear, which required some implications during

the analysis. Having detailed answers with examples and reasoning behind the expressed ideas may increase the strength of data collection and interpretation. Gathering in-depth information from study participants is another way for approaching the research. Ability to ask clarifying questions, lead a discussion for eliciting rich yet specific information, and make meaningful conclusions are apparent in qualitative studies with a semi-structured interview as a primary data gathering method.

Conducting in-person interviews with instructors at the local site is an alternative approach. The evidence collected from informants during individual interviews may provide descriptive materials critical for answering the same research questions and making conclusions about best teaching practices at the LC. It may be useful to accumulate professionals' opinions about the reasoning behind their preferences for certain teaching approaches for engaging adult students' learning based on their needs. A strong rationale for the best teaching practices elicited during the interviews and supported by scholarly opinions from the literature may serve as a basis for developing a new policy. Creating a guiding document with suggested for implementation teaching approaches that include andragogical principles among other preferred methods is more potent for promoting a positive change at the LC and the academy. Although developing a new policy will require a thorough validation, strong justification, piloting, adjusting, and long-term planning. Most likely, it will require a team effort for communicating the need for a change to upper-level management. The policy needs to include the responsibilities of all involved stakeholders and describe their roles in each step of the policy implementation.

Conducting the interviews also has additional limitations. Fist, recruiting interview participants at the place of employment poses social desirability and researcher's biases risks. It may be challenging to recruit a sufficient number of participants in a considerably small team of professionals. Choosing participants as primary information sources will require a thorough justification for policy development at the site. Also, despite the efforts for ensuring instructors' confidentiality, there is a chance of their identification based on the interviews' content, which is posing a challenge for protecting the human research participants. Despite the mentioned challenges, personal interviews with LC instructors may be useful for developing a new policy. The data gathered during the interviews may also inform the development of a professional training curriculum as a final project, similar to the current study. Conducting interviews with LC professionals has a high potential for the researcher to learn and extend professional knowledge and skills. Regardless of the preferred approach to the research, the exploration of best practices requires a comprehensive study, analysis, and reflection of multiple concepts at different levels for an extended period. The current project is the beginning of a long-time professional journey.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

The presented scholarly work is a result of a postgraduate study that finalizes the completion of the Adult Education program. Accumulated knowledge and skills gained during the program courses served as prerequisites for conducting local research to address the identified gap and offer possible solutions. A practical orientation to a study with a tangible final product provided more opportunities for facilitating social change at

a local site that also may be observable in the nearest future. Ability to see how the offered ideas may improve local practices provided additional motivation yet added more responsibility for project implementation.

The research conducted at the place of employment allowed me to fulfill the requirement for completing a local study and, at the same time, added numerous challenges. It required scrutiny for identifying the gap in local educational services, thus placed significant responsibility on me for complying with high professional ethics standards. The inductive or up-to-bottom approach helped to address this challenge. It allowed me to identify the problem based on documents and professional communication at the site. The analysis of the situation at the school resulted in a few observations, and the most prominent issues laid a foundation for formulating the theme and the title of the study.

"Best teaching practices for engaging adult student's foreign language learning" appears as a broad title for a local study and may raise a few concerns. However, the choice for this verbalization reflects an effort to investigate the area of overlapping in adult education and foreign language teaching as a potential for building new knowledge and facilitating further professional self-growth. Mainly, the exploration of best practices for engaging adult students' foreign language learning at theoretical and empirical levels, or in academic literature and local practices, improved not only my scholarly skills but also professional abilities in foreign language teaching.

Data collection, interpretation, and analysis processes, as well as literature reviews in these areas, resulted in improved research skills. The alignment of theory with

real-life practices facilitated a deeper understanding of the topic under investigation and led to an acquired belief in andragogical approaches as effective means for improving students' foreign language proficiency. It is possible that in the nearest future, these newly obtained skills will help me to conduct action research at the workplace. A further scholarly inquest will enable me to improve practices, report on the obtained results to colleagues, and offer ideas for collaboration and professional exchange at the school.

Obtaining permission for a study from Walden University IRB created a positive education experience. It was beneficial for me to understand the importance of study participants' protection as one of the most critical research elements. Adherence to IRB requirements through the application process added another perception of the data collection process. Understanding of the research from participants' point of view was critical for reflecting on the study and identifying its additional weaknesses. The application process also helped me to align all research elements with attention to outcomes.

It was challenging to keep the study focused, as many fascinating ideas appeared in the process of literature reviews and survey results' analysis. The Walden University committee members, who were assigned to help in this scholarly work, assisted in meeting the guidelines and established criteria. Reflection on the committee members' feedback gave information for self-development. The mentors' comments provided opportunities to improve skills in verbalizing the thoughts, delivering a precise message, avoiding ambiguity and redundancy, maintaining the scholarly tone, and keeping a narrative focused and aligned.

The development of leadership skills during the study was not as prominent as the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. However, taking a proactive position, communicating the research ideas, and offering a sound plan for a change in local practices were essential for delivering the message to decision-makers at the school. Gained skills in verbalizing the ideas in a convincing scholarly manner helped to obtain support from the research partner, and the transparency of the proposal assisted in building a trusting relationship at the site. The granted permission to conduct a study symbolizes faith in the projected benefits of the initiative. Research permission is merely a credit that holds accountable for successful project implementation. Besides strengthening skills in professional training design, the awareness of this responsibility led me to a thorough exploration of education programs' planning. It required visualizing not only the immediate project implementation but also a long-term projection and contingency planning. Conducting a scholarly investigation at theoretical and empirical levels strengthened the understanding of essential concepts, widened knowledge about the topic through extensive literature analysis, and improved analytical and critical thinking skills.

Reflection on Importance of the Work

The analysis of the survey results indicated that there is no standard terminology in participants' responses and no direct mentioning of andragogical principles. However, this observation does not indicate that instructors do not use these principles in practice or are not aware of them. Based on survey responses, LC instructors already employ the adult learning and teaching principles in classroom activities, but there is a possibility

that they are doing it intuitively or empirically have found them as relevant, effective, and appropriate for promoting students' foreign language proficiency. Some instructors may use these elements purposefully as suitable for accomplishing lesson's goals and objectives based on simply knowing that they will work. However, selecting and constantly using a limited number of same teaching approaches may hinder students' progress. Also, having a higher level of awareness about modern educational theories enables instructors to choose the most appropriate teaching techniques and strengthen the practices. The danger of professional fossilization is in reluctant attitude towards expanding the expertise.

Reflection on the study findings led me to a few observations and conclusions. The professional growth stagnates or stops when an educator is completely satisfied with a chosen approach and instructional techniques, does not believe in changing or adjusting, does not reflect on practices, and stops reading academic literature or participating in a professional exchange. Offering professional development training may facilitate a scholarly discussion and inspire instructors for further learning and growing based on revisiting own experiences enriched by colleagues' input and supported by current trends in adult education. The expected outcome of the project is in making a cognitive, emotional, and behavioral impact on participants through professional dialogue.

One of the most important objectives of the project is to challenge participants in exploring new perspectives on foreign language teaching. However, the most crucial goal was to gain an in-depth and clear understanding of best teaching practices for my

professional growth and development as a scholar, a foreign language instructor, and an educational program developer. The process of finding the answer to the questions of what can hinder teachers' perceptions of best teaching practices and why there are significant differences in understanding of what works the best for the students at the local site promoted reflection on my teaching.

Several conclusions aroused in the process of critical reflection on research results, theoretical materials, and professional observations. Students have to improve their linguistic skills to meet proficiency standards. A significant number of LC instructors emphasized on language-centered learning and teaching in survey responses. However, looking at the language learning from both the language and learners may provide a more significant outcome. This idea was also noticeable in survey responses. Considering an adult learner with specific scholarly needs may significantly increase the learning motivation and learning engagement in particular as its visible manifestation.

Typical language-focused activities include but not limited to the following: translation, transcriptions, summarizing and gisting, various tests (cloze tests, progress tests, proficiency tests, etc.), grammar exercises, vocabulary quizzes, and others. Even conducted in the form of games, computer-based practices, and with the use of creative materials (humor, poetry, songs, movies, etc.) these language-focused activities may be less effective if students do not understand how completion of these activities can help them to succeed. Merely complying with rules does not lead to internal changes, and following the pattern without understanding will result in memorization but not in the effective use of the language in different contexts. Teachers' beliefs of what is interesting

or important may not be relevant to the interests of adult participants in the class. Teachers can make assumptions about the students and their needs based on their own experiences and worldview. Cultural, personal, and social differences in perceptions may influence the development of teachers' biased attitude towards the learners, learning content, and teaching methods. All of these issues create barriers for effective transfer of learning within the learner-centered approach. Revisiting my teaching skills in this context helped to adjust perceptions of best practices.

One of the most critical study findings includes the idea of combining or adding andragogical principles to language-centered approaches. However, it will require instructors' knowledge of andragogical principles and willingness to take extra steps in building and adjusting the learning activities. The survey participants noted that expanding the vocabulary in a target language is one of the important students' needs. Nevertheless, the approaches and activities for addressing the same needs could be different. Drills, flash cards, and memorization of words from the provided lists will have a lower level of learning engagement than word games such as crosswords, charades, and jeopardy. At the same time, word games could be less effective or non-effective if the activity disregards the needs of students. For example, when the teacher offers the crossword with random low-frequency words taken out of the context, the completion of the activity takes a lot of time and includes no analysis or feedback, this approach has less power for facilitating learning engagement. If the teacher asks students to create a smaller-size crossword based on the particular concept (such as a grammar rule, high-frequency keywords on the topic, related idioms, or synonymic groups), and the activity

includes a group-work, analysis, and reflection, this approach most likely will engage

students. It may be beneficial to add another perspective on language-centered activities

from the andragogical point of view.

Other examples of how to create vocabulary-building activities with

considerations to andragogical principles may include the following. The principle of

self-directness may be applicable for vocabulary building through activities that offer

students to develop their vocab list based on the authentic material. It is important to

provide students with resources that describe strategies for word recognition, recall, and

retention that could be useful for learning new words and phrases during self-directed

studies. Applying the readiness to learn principle can include the activities for building

the vocabulary list based on a paradigm of known words, grouping the words into

collocations while using the last day vocab/topic or other preparatory activities that form

the foundation for acquiring the upcoming material. The orientation to learning principle

may be useful when students complete vocabulary-building activities based on

application, such as understanding ambiguity as a foundation for humor or application of

words from different registers in various speech styles. Selecting the learning content

based on a significant sociocultural situation, authentic material, and relevant tasks is an

example of the orientation principle. The principle of motivation is observable in

vocabulary-building activities that are relevant to students in the class, such as words that

capture their attention, pose a topic for intellectual curiosity, and promote intellectual

inquest. One of the most applicable andragogical principles is a need to know. When an

instructor assigns a vocabulary-expanding activity with identified possible benefits for

learning certain words, such as common contexts or idiomatic expressions critical for reaching higher levels, or explains strategies for understanding and using these items for faster more productive learning, students' learning engagement may increase.

Students' trust in instructors' choices of materials and activities is not a given. Students need to understand how instructors' selection of learning material and tasks can improve their learning, and they need to see that instructors are aware of that as well. Building productive relationships in classrooms will require respect for each other's time, efforts, knowledge, attitude, and ethics. Learning the language skills is critical for increasing proficiency, yet putting the students before the language may improve the learning outcomes and promote further learning and growing.

In the project development, I attempted to visualize the final product for identifying potential issues that can influence the outcomes. Possible negative attitudes toward teaching practices at the ILA have to be addressed for minimizing their detrimental effects on students' learning. Instructors may feel that promoting adults' engagement is not among their job responsibilities. They may feel that mature individuals enrolled in courses must comply with requirements and that passing proficiency tests at satisfactory levels solely depends on students' motivation and their efforts. Some instructors may believe that they are using student-centered approaches based on their understanding of what students need without any assessment or observations. Trusting adult students in making decisions about their learning and believing in their capabilities of identifying what works for them and what not is a step that not every adult educator is willing to take. However, students' understanding of how certain activities, strategies, or

approaches can help them to improve learning outcomes may increase their learning

engagement.

Learning and growing do not stop after the class is over, which is true for training

participants as well as their students. The session will have better outcomes when the

participants reflect on what they learned, how they learned it, and what they will take for

further use. When learners admit having negative experiences, this issue must be

addressed if not within the session but in other iterations. Acknowledging "take home"

messages and reinforcing positive experiences facilitate the transfer of learning. It is

essential for all instructors and students to create a vision for further learning and

growing. It is useful to develop a plan, identify resources and a support system. There are

plentiful opportunities for continuing education. Creating a pass-way for life-long

learning, inspiring individuals for further investments of time, efforts, and other resources

may lead to an expanded level of knowledge and skills. Providing leadership and

mentorship in this process are essential roles of adult educators.

Further visualization of the training session and reflection on its design allowed

predicting other possible areas of concern and the ways for dealing with them. Among

the ILA/LC faculty members, some instructors came from different educational

backgrounds and professional fields, such as applied linguistics, philology, literature, and

social or political studies. Some of them received degrees in foreign countries and may

have different assumptions about effective educational practices and foreign language

learning and teaching in particular. The differences in terminology, names of theories and

theorists, prominent educational philosophies are creating the barriers in establishing a

mutual understanding of best practices among faculty members. The conceptual framework authored by Knowles that guided the study and the final project development may be new to some training participants. It may require some time, flexibility, and willingness to accept the new ideas and adjust existing perceptions for those instructors who did not think of the theory of andragogy as applicable in the foreign language-learning context. Considering andragogical principles for practical implementation in foreign language classrooms may require some teachers to "think outside the box" and get out of their comfort zone, which most likely prompted them to continue using same approaches and activities. It may require more efforts and time from teachers to reflect on practices and make adjustments. Not all educators are willing to experiment in the classroom, especially if they precisely follow the approved curriculum and co-teach with others. Teamwork and collaboration are necessary for adopting new approaches. However, this shift may happen faster and easier if the changes in instructional methodologies are implemented at the level of foreign language curriculum developers and further supported by the management.

To strengthen the training learning outcomes, it is reasonable to ask participants to acknowledge a few new ideas from the session that they can implement in class with a provided rationale. In a few weeks, the participants may find it useful to gather for a Brown Bag or a Community of Practice meeting and share their experiences. Confirmation of valuable practices and replacement of least effective approaches and activities are necessary for professional development efforts. Creating positive experiences and facilitating open, ongoing, and mutually supportive scholarly discussions

increase the effectiveness of professional development efforts. A systematic approach to teachers' training helps to establish high professional standards, increase professional ethics and faculty members' reliability and accountability. Management's investments and support of educational opportunities create a healthy working environment and prompt positive social change.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

The ILA is a government operated school with established protocols, policies, and procedures. Most of the foreign language courses offered to armed forces at the ILA require accreditation and thorough validation before actual implementation in classrooms. Despite best intentions for employing innovative teaching strategies, ILA instructors are limited in their choices for making changes in the course structure or modifying the expected learning outcomes of the course. At the same time, it is imperative for instructors to adjust teaching approaches and tailor units of instruction to students' needs. Although all stakeholders, including but not limited to the US government, ILA and headquarters' administrations, all faculty members, students, and students' supervisors, share the responsibility for graduates' successful foreign language learning. From another perspective, possibilities for positive change in educational services at the school depend on educational programs' and language courses' developers and their supervisors as well as on policies that guide their work.

The alternative way to increasing graduates' foreign language proficiency at the ILA is to provide professional development training to curriculum developers besides the instructors. Advancing expertise of faculty members who create language courses and

develop educational programs required for academic degrees at the academy may promote students' success. Moreover, it would be highly advantageous for advancing ILA students' foreign language proficiency if target language-courses curricula could incorporate adult learning and teaching principles. On a bigger scale, staff members responsible for curriculum development have more power to make changes critical for promoting best teaching practices at the site. Instructors' willingness to change together with upper management's support will make this initiative meaningful and realistic. Curriculum development involves different from classroom teaching skills and requires specialized education or training. A new policy or protocol with outlined measures for the incorporated theory of andragogy as well as increasing curriculum developers' awareness of adult learning and teaching principles may provide a more comprehensive approach to meeting new proficiency standards.

Studying current ILA procedures and suggesting a new protocol or a policy that may enable curriculum developers to implement andragogical principles in courses is another approach to addressing the identified gap in local services. The research could include background investigation of the existing documents related to curriculum development and include an analysis of all pertinent artifacts at the academy. The study may employ interviews with key professionals at the site as a qualitative data collection method, in addition to internal documents' analysis, and include evidence from academic literature to strengthen the study results. Further research may investigate available training opportunities for course developers and instructors who want to create language courses. Professional training for course developers is another possible opportunity to

address the challenges related to engaging adult learners in foreign language classrooms. A new policy and a training curriculum for developers may be useful for strengthening local educational services. Acknowledgment at the administration's level about potential benefits of utilizing the andragogical theory in foreign language classrooms for increasing graduates' academic success has more power for promoting positive social change at the organization. Increased students' learning engagement may lead to increased proficiency, as well as increased proficiency may facilitate learning engagement, which poses another topic for possible research.

Conclusion

Identifying and implementing best teaching practices is an ongoing process. A thorough study of academic literature and actual practices at the local site informed the development of the final project. There is no "one size fits all" in adult education or foreign language teaching approaches. Every instructor and scholar have their preferences and justified choices in selecting and using some strategies over others. Local sites also have their preferences in teaching theories that guide the programs. However, the exploration of what works the best based on not only personal observations but also credible opinions of other scholars in the central and related fields may be beneficial for improving adult learning and teaching. The andragogical theory authored by Knowles is applicable in foreign language classrooms and has a strong potential for promoting adult students' learning engagement. Learning engagement is a critical condition that is necessary for increasing LC students' foreign language proficiency.

In this scholarly work, the exploration of best practices for engaging adult students' foreign language learning included research at theoretical and empirical levels. According to conducted literature analysis, several scholars emphasized that learning engagement plays a significant role in increasing students' academic proficiency and is critical for developing higher-level skills and knowledge related to general education and the language proficiency in particular. According to the study findings, adult students are mostly engaged in their learning when incorporated classroom activities relate to their needs. At the same time, students' motivation and classroom engagement can be lower due to their busy schedules and various work and life events or because they do not see the obvious benefits of class participation. Moreover, when adults attend formal courses, they come to a classroom with different sets of expectations, experiences, and goals that may hinder their learning success. Despite the diversities, all students in foreign language classes at the ILA are adult learners, which create a common ground for bringing them together for a productive collaboration. Making learning meaningful, effective, and relevant to adults' needs is essential for their engagement and requires teachers to employ the most suitable instructional approaches. On the other side, educators' disregards of adult students' needs may cause learners' apathy and indifference that negatively influence their academic success. The theory of andragogy (Knowles et al., 2015) includes assumptions that, in continuing education settings, learners become increasingly interested, involved, and engaged when teachers address their needs specifically as adult learners and provide a learning-conducive environment. In other words, when teachers consider adult learners' readiness to learn, pay attention to their experiences and

orientation to learning, offer opportunities for being self-directed, promote internal motivation, and clarify what and why students study something in a particular way.

The exploration of best teaching practices for engaging adult students' foreign language learning in this project started with a theoretical examination of the phenomena in adult education and foreign language teaching and learning fields. Consequently, the study incorporated andragogical principles presented by Knowles (Knowles et al., 2015) and other adult education theorists as influential for addressing adult learners' needs and increasing their engagement in the learning process. At a practical level, the study continued with an investigation of the local educational situation through research and further analysis of academic literature. Data from professional observations and personal communication with faculty members added valuable information to the scholarly inquiry.

The purpose of the study was to explore best teaching practices for engaging adult students' learning to promote their foreign language proficiency and meet increased proficiency standards at the local site. Identification of best practices for adult students' learning engagement based on instructors' perception and academic literature analysis played a vital role in offering a possible solution to a local problem. Foreign language teachers were identified as key staff members with power for promoting students' learning engagement. The scholarly research resulted in a tangible product: a developed 3-day training curriculum for ILA/LC instructors. The goal of the training is to enhance teacher expertise in adult students' learning engagement through the application of andragogical principles and, specifically, by addressing their learning needs.

The anonymous online survey with three open-ended questions was a center point of the research. Survey data played a critical part in developing the training content. The goal of the survey was to gather instructors' perceptions of adult learners' needs in their classrooms, as well as teaching strategies and activities that address these needs. I incorporated local data to initiate a professional conversation among training participants about best practices for engaging their students' learning based on adult learners' needs. The framework of Knowles's andragogy provided general guidance for developing the workshop and inspired the creation of learning activities. However, the accent of the training is on participants and their learning and not on theoretical assumptions presented during the session based on academic literature reviews. The participants will be prompted to share their experiences; thus, learning will happen during the course through professional discussions. Enhancement of teaching expertise is a continuing process. It will be an overstatement to say that one curriculum can bridge the gap in services to reach higher minimum proficiency standards at the school. Nevertheless, the proposed 3-day training session will promote professional discussion among participants for engaging adult students' in language studies by addressing their learning needs. Together with other professional development opportunities at the site, this training may enhance the efforts for sharing and adopting best practices at the academy.

The curriculum is only a plan and direction for facilitating training participants' learning. The trainer's goal is to elicit participants' perspectives based on theoretical assumptions and data from the survey. It is critical for the training facilitator to initiate a professional dialogue about adult learners' needs during the workshop. Moreover, the

training participants will discuss best practices for engaging adults' learning based on the application of andragogical principles during the session. The instructor must address participants' readiness to learn, pay attention to their experiences and orientation to learnings, provide opportunities for being self-directed, promote motivation, and clarify what and why they study the specific content. The attention to the volume and the value of participating foreign language instructors' experiences will create opportunities for their professional exchange, enrichment, and growth. The training may provide opportunities for LC/ILA instructors not only to discover, share, and adopt best practices, but also to encourage each other's professional reflections, support development, and facilitate collaboration and networking.

Social change happens when ideas find support. Searching and identifying new insights for further application is only the beginning of the professional development process. Collaboration and joined efforts may stimulate the growth of adult learners as well as adult educators. The purpose of this scholarly work was to facilitate positive social change and inspire adult educators to explore and implement best teaching practices that promote foreign language learning.

References

A national security crisis: Foreign language capabilities in the Federal government: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs, Sen. 106-801 (2012).

Ainley, M. D. (2012). Students' interest and engagement in classroom activities. In S. Christenson, A. Reschly, & C. Wylie (Eds.), *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 283-302). New York, NY: Springer.

Akbari, E., Naderi, A., Simons, R., & Pilot, A. (2016). Student engagement and foreign language learning through online social networks. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education, 1*(4). doi:10.1186/s40862-016-0006-7

Akiba, M., & Liang, G. (2016). Effects of teacher professional learning activities on student achievement growth. *Journal of Educational Research, 109*(1), 99-110. doi:10.1080/00220671.2014.924470

Arnold, J., Dornyei, Z., & Pugliese, C. (2015). *The principled communicative approach.* London, United Kingdom: Helbling Languages.

Ataya, S. (2015). *Adult foreign language acquisition: Knowledge growth* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order No. 3643738)

Avidov-Ungar, O. (2016). A model of professional development: Teachers' perceptions of their professional development. *Teachers and Teaching, 22*(6), 653-669. doi:10.1080/13540602.2016.1158955

Azevedo, R. (2015). Defining and measuring engagement and learning in science: Conceptual, theoretical, methodological, and analytical issues. *Educational Psychologist, 50*(1), 84-94. doi:10.1080/00461520.2015.1004069

Banks, T. (2014). Creating positive learning environments: Antecedent strategies for managing the classroom environment & student behavior. *Creative Education, 5*(07), 519-524. doi:10.4236/ce.2014.57061

Bebawi, G. (2016). *A mixed-methods study exploring effective learning strategies that contribute to successful acquisition of Arabic as a foreign language among adults* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order No. 10164151)

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful qualitative research: A practical guide for beginners.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Brunila, K., & Siivonen, P. (2016). Preoccupied with the self: Towards self-responsible, enterprising, flexible and self-centered subjectivity in education. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education, 37*(1), 56-69. doi:10.1080/01596306.2014.927721

Bryson, C., & Hardy, C. (2012). The nature of academic engagement: What the students tell us. In I. Solomonides, A. Reid, & P. Petocz (Eds.), *Engaging with learning in higher education* (pp. 25-46). Oxfordshire, United Kingdom: Libri.

Building language skills and cultural competencies in the military: DoD's challenge in today's educational environment: Hearing before the Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, H. Rep. 110-12 (2008).

Caffarella, R. S., & Daffron, S. R. (2013). *Planning programs for adult learners: A practical guide*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Caruth, G. (2014). Learning how to learn: A six point model for increasing student engagement. *Online Submission, 1*(2), 1-12. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED552869)

Castillo-Montoya, M. (2016). Preparing for interview research: The interview protocol refinement framework. *Qualitative Report, 21*(5), 811-831. Retrieved from http://nsuworks.nova.edu

Chan, P. E., Graham-Day, K. J., Ressa, V. A., Peters, M. T., & Konrad, M. (2014). Beyond involvement: Promoting student ownership of learning in classrooms. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 50*(2), 105-113. doi:10.1177/1053451214536039

Chen, J. C. (2014). Teaching nontraditional adult students: Adult learning theories in practice. *Teaching in Higher Education, 19*(4), 406-418. doi:10.1080/13562517.2013.860101

Christenson, S. L., Reschly, A. L., & Wylie, C. (Eds.). (2012). *Handbook of research on student engagement*. New York, NY: Springer.

Cook, V. (2013). *Second language learning and language teaching*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Courts, M. J. (2017). *Department of State*. GAO Report No. 1-41.

Cox, E. (2015). Coaching and adult learning: *Theory and practice. New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 2015*(148), 27-38. doi:10.1002/ace.20149

Creswell, J. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approach.* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cummins, J. C. (2016). College student engagement patterns in small group learning activities conducted in courses organized using a flipped learning instructional pedagogy. *University of Tennessee.* doi:10.13140/RG.2.1.1038.7440

de Fátima Goulão, M. (2014). The relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement in adults' learners. *Athens Journal of Education*, *1*(3), 237-246. doi:10.30958/aje

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2012). Motivation, personality, and development within embedded social contexts: An overview of self-determination theory. *The Oxford handbook of human motivation*, 85-107. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Defense Language Proficiency Test. (n.d.). *Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center.* Retrieved from http://www.dliflc.edu/academics/evaluation-standardization

Descriptions of Language Proficiency Levels. (n.d.). *Interagency Language Roundtable.* Retrieved from http://www.govtilr.org/Skills/ILRscale

Dewey, J. (1913). *Interest and effort in education*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Dornyei, Z. (2013). *Communicative language teaching in the twenty-first century: The principled communicative approach.* Retrieved from https://www.semanticscholar.org

Eccles J., & Wang, M. T. (2012). Part I commentary: So what is student engagement anyway? In S. Christenson, A. Reschly, & C. Wylie (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Student Engagement.* Boston, MA: Springer.

Ellis, R. (2005). *Instructed Second Language Acquisition: A Literature Review. Ministry of Education, New Zealand.* Retrieved from www.minedu.govt.nz.

Ellis, R. (2012). *Language teaching research and language pedagogy.* Chichester, United Kingdom: Wiley-Blackwell.

Ellis, R., & Shintani, N. (2014). *Exploring language pedagogy through second language acquisition research.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Evans, T. Z. (2017). *Twitter in the higher education classroom: Exploring perceptions of engagement* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order No. 10608973)

Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter? In S. Christenson, A. Reschly, & C. Wylie (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Student Engagement.* Boston, MA: Springer.

Foote, L. S. (2015). Transformational learning: Reflections of an adult learning story. *Adult Learning, 26*(2), 84-86. doi:10.1177/1045159515573017.

Fornaciari, C. J., & Lund Dean, K. (2014). The 21st-century syllabus: From pedagogy to andragogy. *Journal of Management Education, 38*(5), 701-723. doi:1177/1052562913504763

Fosnacht, K., Sarraf, S., Howe, E., & Peck, L. K. (2017). How important are high response rates for college surveys? *The Review of Higher Education, 40*(2), 245-265. Retrieved from https://scholarworks.iu.edu

Fredricks, J. A., Filsecker, M. & Lawson, M. A. (2016) Student engagement, context, and adjustment: Addressing definitional, measurement, and methodological issues. *Learning and Instruction, 43*(1), 1-4. doi:10.1016/j.learninstruc.2016.02.002

Gill, M. J. (2014). The possibilities of phenomenology for organizational research. *Organizational Research Methods, 17*(2), 118-137. doi:10.1177/1094428113518348

Graves, F., & Bledsoe, C. (2015). Understand what research says about how to best meet the needs of your adult learners. *Recruiting & Retaining Adult Learners, 17*(7), 8. doi:10.1002/nsr.30040

Hadar, L. L., & Brody, D. L. (2016). Talk about student learning: Promoting professional growth among teacher educators. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 59,* 101-114. doi:10.1016/j.tate.2016.05.021

Hagen, M., & Park, S. (2016). We knew it all along! Using cognitive science to explain how andragogy works. *European Journal of Training and Development, 40*(3), 171 - 190. doi:10.1108/EJTD-10-2015-0081

Honcharova-Ilina, T. (2017). Basic strategies of teaching adults foreign languages in terms of andragogy. *Філологічні Науки, 1*, 229-232. Retrieved from http://www.irbis.gov.ua

Horwitz, E. K. (2012). *Becoming a language teacher: A practical guide to second language learning and teaching* (2nd Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Horzum, M. B., Kaymak, Z. D., & Gungoren, O. C. (2015). Structural equation modeling towards online learning readiness, academic motivations, and perceived learning. *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice, 15*(3), 759-770. doi:10.12738/estp.2015.3.2410.

Huang, X. & Hu X. (2016). Teachers' and students' perceptions of classroom activities commonly used in English speaking classes. *Higher Education Studies, 6*(1), 87-100. doi:10.5539/hes.v6n1p87

Johnson, S. M. (2015). *Adult learning in a language classroom.* Buffalo, NY: Multilingual Matters.

Kahu, E. R. (2013). Framing student engagement in higher education. *Studies in Higher Education*, *38*(5), 758-773. doi:10.1080/03075079.2011.598505

Knowles, M. S., Holton III, E. F., & Swanson, R. A. (2015). *The adult learner: The definitive classic in adult education and human resource development* (8th ed.). London, United Kingdom and New York, NY: Routledge.

Kormos, J., & Csizér, K. (2014). The interaction of motivation, self regulatory strategies, and autonomous learning behavior in different learner groups. *TESOL Quarterly, 48*(2), 275-299. doi:10.1002/tesq.129

Krosnick, J. A. (2018). Questionnaire Design. In D. Vannette, & J. Krosnick (Eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Survey Research* (pp. 439-455). London, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kullberg, A., Martensson, P., & Runesson, U. (2016). What is to be learned? Teachers'
collective inquiry into the object of learning. *Scandinavian Journal of
Educational Research, 60*(3), 309-322. doi:10.1080/00313831.2015.1119725

Lauer, P. A., Christopher, D. E., Firpo-Triplett, R., & Buchting, F. (2014). The impact of
short-term professional development on participant outcomes: a review of the
literature. *Professional Development in Education, 40*(2), 207-227.
doi:10.1080/19415257.2013.776619

Leontev, M. G. (2014). Features of training teachers in the context of modern Russian
education. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 142*, 695-701.
doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.07.600

Littlewood, W. (2014). Communication-oriented language teaching: Where are we now?
Where do we go from here? *Language Teaching, 47*(3), 349-362.
doi:10.1017/S0261444812000134

Long, M. (2014). *Second language acquisition and task-based language teaching.*
Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

MacKenzie, A. (2015). Adults learning Finnish as a foreign language: Role of support,
emotions and reasons connected with learning. Retrieved from https://jyx.jyu.fi

Macpherson, A. (2015). Cooperative Learning Group Activities for College Courses.
Surrey, Canada: Kwantlen Polytechnic University. Retrieved
from http://www.kora.kpu.ca

Maksimova, E. V., Gatin, R. G., Nazmutdinova, M. A., Zorina, A. V., Vygodchikova, N.
N., Khrisanova, E. G., Vorobyeva, I.V., & Dolgasheva, M. V. (2016).

Pedagogical conditions of college students' core competencies formation in the process of foreign languages learning. *International Review of Management and Marketing, 6*(2S), 264-268. Retrieved from http://www.econjournals.com

Malik, M. (2016). Assessment of a professional development program on adult learning theory. *Libraries and the Academy, 16*(1), 47-70. doi:10.1353/pla.2016.0007

Martin, A. J., Ginns, P., & Papworth, B. (2017). Motivation and engagement: Same or different? Does it matter? *Learning and Individual Differences, 55,* 150-162. doi:10.1016/j.lindif.2017.03.013

McGauley-Keaney, T. (2015). Dialogue education. *Center for Health Policy and Research (CHPR) Publications, 186.* Retrieved from http://www.escholarship.umassmed.edu

Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4th ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Merriam, S. B., Caffarella, R. S., & Baumgartner, L. M. (2012). *Learning in adulthood: A comprehensive guide.* Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Miranda Martinez, J. (2015). *Academic coaching, student engagement, and instructor best practices* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order No. 3714996)

Moore, D. (2011). *Effective instructional strategies: From theory to practice.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Mullin, C. M. (2012). Student success: Institutional and individual perspectives. *Community College Review, 40,*126-144. doi:10.1177/0091552112441501

Nilson, L. B. (2016). *Teaching at its best: A research-based resource for college instructors.* Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Ortega, L. (2014). *Understanding second language acquisition.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Owusu-Agyeman, Y., Fourie-Malherbe, M., & Frick, L. (2018). Exploring the educational needs of adult learners: A study of three universities in Ghana. *Journal of Adult and Continuing Education, 24*(2), 165–187. doi:10.1177/1477971418782997

Oxford, R. L. (2011). Strategies for learning a second or foreign language. *Language Teaching 44*, 167–180. doi:10.1017/S0261444810000492

Oxford, R. L. (2016). *Teaching and researching language learning strategies: Self-regulation in context.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Ozuah, P. O. (2016). First, there was pedagogy and then came andragogy. *Einstein Journal of Biology and Medicine, 21*(2), 83-87. Retrieved from http://www.einstein.yu.edu

Palis, A. G., & Quiros, P. A. (2014). Adult learning principles and presentation pearls. *Middle East African Journal of Ophthalmology, 21*(2), 114. Retrieved from http://www.nih.gov

Park, S., Robinson, P., & Bates, R. (2016). Adult learning principles and processes and their relationships with learner satisfaction: Validation of the andragogy in practice inventory (API) in the Jordanian Context, presented at Adult Education Research Conference, Charlotte, NC, 2016. Charlotte, NC: New Prairie Press.

Patton, K., Parker, M., & Tannehill, D. (2015). Helping teachers help themselves: Professional development that makes a difference. *NASSP Bulletin, 99*(1), 26-42. doi:10.1177/0192636515576040

Pawlak, M. (2016). Teaching foreign languages to adult learners: Issues, options, and opportunities. *Theoria et Historia Scientiarum, 12*, 45-65. doi:10.12775/ths.2015.004

Payton, D. M. (2015). *Effective teaching in higher education for the 21st century adult learner* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order No. 10607417)

Performance Descriptors for Language Learners (2015). *The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.* Retrieved from https://www.actfl.org

Perrow, M. (2013). Welcome to the real world: Navigating the gap between best teaching practices and current reality. *Studying Teacher Education, 9*(3), 284-297. doi:10.1080/17425964.2013.833902

Petty, T., & Thomas, C. (2014). Approaches to a successful adult education program. *College Student Journal, 48*(3), 473-480. Retrieved from http://www.projectinnovation.biz

Philp, J. & Duchesne, S. (2016). Exploring engagement in tasks in the language classroom. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 36,* 50-72. doi:10.1017/s0267190515000094

Reece, I., & Walker, S. (2016). *Teaching, training and learning: A practical guide.* Great Britain: Business Education Publishers Ltd.

Reeve, J. (2012). A self-determination theory perspective on student engagement. In S. Christenson, A. Reschly, & C. Wylie (Eds.), *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 149-172). New York, NY: Springer.

Reiff, M. & Ballin, A. (2016). Adult graduate student voices: Good and bad learning experiences. *Adult Learning, 27*(2), 76 – 83. doi:10.1177/1045159516629927

Renninger, K. A., & Bachrach, J. E. (2015). Studying triggers for interest and engagement using observational methods. *Educational Psychologist, 50*(1), 58–69. doi:10.1080/00461520.2014.999920

Reznitskaya, A., & Wilkinson, I. (2015). Professional development in dialogic teaching: Helping teachers promote argument literacy in their classrooms. In D. Scott and E. Hargreaves (6th Ed.), *The SAGE handbook of learning* (pp. 219-232). Los Angeles, CA: Sage

Richards, J. C. (2006). *Communicative language teaching today.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press

Richards, J. C. (2015). *Key issues in language teaching.* Cambridge, United Kigndom: Cambridge University Press

Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2014). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (3rd ed.). Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. W. (2013). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics* (4th ed.). London, United Kingdom and New York, NY: Routledge.

Saroyan, A., & Trigwell, K. (2015). Higher education teachers' professional learning: Process and outcome. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, *46*, 92-101. doi:10.1016/j.stueduc.2015.03.008

Saville-Troike, M., & Barto, K. (2017). *Introducing second language acquisition.* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Seker, M. (2016). The use of self-regulation strategies by foreign language learners and its role in language achievement. *Language Teaching Research, 20*(5), 600-618. doi:10.1177/1362168815578550

Shi, H. (2017). Planning effective educational programs for adult learners. *World Journal of Education, 7*(3), 79–83. doi:10.5430/wje.v7n3p79

Silberman, M. L., & Biech, E. (2015). *Active training: A handbook of techniques, designs, case examples and tips.* Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Sinatra, G. M., Heddy, B. C., & Lombardi, D. (2015). The challenges of defining and measuring student engagement in science. *Educational Psychologist, 50*(1), 1–13. doi:10.1080/00461520.2014.1002924

Skinner, E. A. (2016). Engagement and disaffection as central to processes of motivational resilience and development. In K.R. Wentzel, & D.B. Miele (Eds.), *Handbook of motivation at school* (pp. 145-168). New York, NY: Routledge.

Skinner, E. A., & Pitzer, J. R. (2012). Developmental dynamics of student engagement, coping, and everyday resilience. In S. Christenson, A. Reschly, & C. Wylie (Eds.), *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 21–44). New York, NY: Springer.

Sogunro, O. A. (2014). Motivating factors for adult learners in higher education. *International Journal of Higher Education, 4*(1), 22. doi:10.5430/ijhe.v4n1p22

Soomro, M. A., Memon, N., & Memon, S. A. (2016). Concept of best practices in English language teaching to Pakistani ELT fraternity. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies, 7*(4), 119-123. doi:10.7575/aiac.alls.v.7n.4p.119

Soulé, H., & Warrick, T. (2015). Defining 21st century readiness for all students: What we know and how to get there. *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts, 9*(2), 178-186. doi:10.1037/aca0000017

Stewart, C. (2014). Transforming professional development to professional learning. *MPAEA Journal of Adult Education, 43*(1), 28-33. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ1047338)

Strandberg, A. G., & Campbell, K. (October, 2014). Online teaching best practices to better engage students with quantitative material. *Journal of Instructional Pedagogies, 15*. 1-14. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ1106761)

Taylor, J. M., Dunn, M., & Winn, S. K. (2015). Innovative orientation leads to improved success in online courses. *Online Learning, 19(4).* Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ1079576)

Thomas, G. (2016). *How to do your case study* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.

Thornbury, S. (2016). Communicative language teaching in theory and practice. In G. Hall (Eds.), *Handbook of English language teaching* (pp. 224-237). doi:10.4324/9781315676203.ch16

Transforming the U.S. Military's foreign language, culture, awareness, and regional

   expertise capabilities: Hearing before the Oversite and Investigations

   Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services, H. Rep. 110-171 (2008).

U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command. (2017). *The U.S. Army operating concept:*

   Win in a complex world. TRADOC Pam 525-3-1. Retrieved from

   https://www.tradoc.army.mil

U.S. Department of Education. (2012). *Succeeding globally through international*

   education and engagement: U.S. Department of Education international strategy

   2012-16. Retrieved from

   https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/reports/international-strategy-2012-16.pd

Van den Branden, K. (2016). The role of teachers in task-based language education.

   Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 36, 164-181.

   doi:10.1017/S0267190515000070

Vella, J. (2016). The power of dialogue in adult learning. *Reflective Practice: Formation*

   and Supervision in Ministry, 95-101. Retrieved from http://www.journals.sfu.ca

Wahlgren, B. (2016). Adult educators' core competences. *International Review of*

   Education, 62(3), 343-353. doi:10.1007/s11159-016-9559-4

Walker, S. (June, 2016). *Exploring the effect of social studies simulations on student*

   engagement in the secondary classroom. Action Research Projects. Presented at

   Annual Research Forum Studies in Teaching. Winston-Salem, NC.

Wang, T. (2014). *Exploring engagement in foreign language instructional design and practice* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order No. 3628894)

Wlodkowski, R. J., & Ginsberg, M. B. (2017). *Enhancing adult motivation to learn: A comprehensive guide for teaching all adults.* Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Wolfe, R. E., & Poon, J. D. (2015). Educator competencies for personalized, learner-centered teaching. *Jobs for the Future, 54.* Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED560785)

Yoo, J. (2016). A comparative review of audio-lingual methodology and communicative language teaching in second language instruction. *Electronic International Journal of Education, Arts, and Science (EIJEAS), 2*(4). 1-15. Retrieved from http://www.eijeas.com

Zahra, S., Iram, A., & Naeem, H. (2014). Employee training and its effect on employees' job motivation and commitment: Developing and proposing a conceptual model. *IOSR Journal of Business and Management, 16*(9). 60-68. Retrieved from www.iosrjournals.org

Zepeda, S. J., Parylo, O., & Bengtson E. (2014). Analyzing principal professional development practices through the lens of adult learning theory. *Professional Development in Education, 40*(2), 295-315. doi:10.1080/19415257.2013.821667

Zepke, N. (2014). Student engagement research in higher education: Questioning an academic orthodoxy. *Teaching in Higher Education, 19*(6), 697-708. doi:10.1080/13562517.2014. 901956

Zepke, N. (2015). Student engagement research: Thinking beyond the mainstream. *Higher Education Research & Development, 34*(6), 1311-1323. doi:10.1080/07294360.2015.1024635

Zher, N. H., Hussein, R. M. R., & Saat, R. M. (2016). Enhancing feedback via peer learning in large classrooms. *Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Technology, 4(1),* 1-16. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ1086243)

Appendix A: The Instrument

The Survey Questions

1. How can you describe the learning needs of the adult students in your classroom?
2. What instructional approaches do you perceive as most effective for engaging your students' foreign language learning based on their needs as adult learners?
3. What classroom activities you perceive as most effective for engaging your students' foreign language learning and what adult learners' needs they address? Please, list as many as you wish

Permission to Use and Modify the Preexisting Survey
From: Shumaila Memon <sh.memon@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2018 9:00 PM
To: Aksana Mather
Subject: Re: requesting permission to use survey questions

Sure. You can.

Sent from my iPhone

On 27-Feb-2018, at 6:28 AM, Aksana Mather <aksana.mather@waldenu.edu> wrote:

Greetings,
My name is Aksana Mather. I am a doctorate student at Walden University (USA) conducting a research on best teaching practices for advancing adult students foreign language proficiency. I would like to obtain your permission to use survey questions from the article by Soomro, Memon, and Memon, (2016) in my study. I am also planning to modify the tool to tailor it to my goal of obtaining foreign language instructors' perceptions of best teaching practices through open-ended questions. I would appreciate if you can indicate your permission by replying to this email. I will use the reference to your work in my papers. Thank you.
Best regards,
Aksana
Reference: Soomro, M. A., Memon, N., & Memon, S. A. (2016). Concept of best practices in English language teaching to Pakistani ELT fraternity. Advances in Language and Literary Studies, 7(4), 119-123. doi:10.7575/aiac.alls.v.7n.4p.119

Appendix B: Precourse Self-Assessment Questionnaire

1. Please rate your precourse level of knowledge on a scale from 1 to 10 (with 1 as *Poor* and 10 as *Excellent*) in the following areas by circling the corresponding level:

	Poor		Fair		Good		Very Good		Excellent	
Adult learning and teaching principles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Knowles's theory of andragogy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Adult learners' engagement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Adult learners' needs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Teaching approaches for promoting adult students' foreign language proficiency	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

2. Please answer to the following open-ended questions:

What are your best anticipations from this course?

What are your worst anticipations from this course?

Appendix C: Personal Adult Learning Style Inventory by Knowles

The Personal Adult Learning Style inventory is a learning instrument designed to help you assess the assumptions that underline your teaching/training activities.

Directions: Thirty pairs of items are listed on the next few pages. The statements comprising each pair are labeled A and B. After reading each pair and considering your own approach, decide on the extent to which you agree with *each* statement. Place your response on the scale in the center of the page by circling *one* of the choices.

Words *facilitator* and *trainer* may be used interchangeably, as well as *learning* and *training*.

Use the following key:

A = I agree fully with statement A
A>B = I agree more with statement A than B
NANB = I do not agree with either statement A or B
B>A = I agree more with statement B than A
B = I agree fully with statement B

	A	A A>B NANB B>A B	B
1	There are a number of important differences between youth and adults as learners that can affect the learning process	A A>B NANB B>A B	For the most part adults and youth do not differ in terms of the learning process
2	Effective learning/training design puts equal weight on content and process plans	A A>B NANB B>A B	Effective learning/training design is concerned with content first and process second
3	Effective facilitators/trainers model self-directed learning in their own behavior, both within and outside the learning session	A A>B NANB B>A B	Effective facilitators/trainers show learners that they, the facilitators/trainers, are content expert, with the knowledge and skills to be "driver's seat"
4	Effective learning/training is based on sound	A A>B NANB B>A B	Effective learning/training rests on the trainer's use of

	methods for involving learners in assessing their own learning needs		standard, valid methods for assessing learners' needs
5	Client system representatives must be involved in the planning of learning/training programs	A A>B NANB B>A B	It is the program developer's responsibility to provide clients with clear and detailed plans
6	Program administrators must plan, work, and share decision making with client system members	A A>B NANB B>A B	Program administrators must have full responsibility and be held accountable for their plans and decisions
7	The role of facilitator/trainer is best seen as that of facilitator and resource person for self-directed learners	A A>B NANB B>A B	The role of facilitator/trainer is to provide the most current and accurate information possible for learners
8	Effective learning designs take into account individual differences among learners	A A>B NANB B>A B	Effective learning designs are those that apply broadly to most or all learners
9	Effective facilitators/trainers are able to create a variety of learning experiences for helping trainees develop self-directed learning skills	A A>B NANB B>A B	Effective facilitators/trainers concentrate on preparing learning/training sessions that effectively convey specific content
10	Successful learning/training designs incorporate a variety of experiential learning methods	A A>B NANB B>A B	Successful learning/training designs are grounded in carefully developed formal presentations
11	Client system members should be	A A>B NANB B>A B	Learning/training program developers

		A	A>B	NANB	B>A	B	
	involved in developing needs assessment instruments and procedures that provide the data for program planning						are responsible for designing and using sound needs assessment instruments and procedures to generate valid data for program planning
12	Program administrators must involve their clients in defining, modifying, and applying financial policies and practices related to learning/training programs	A	A>B	NANB	B>A	B	Program administrators must be able to explain clearly to their clients their financial policies and practices related to learning/training programs
13	Effective facilitators/trainers must take into account recent research findings concerning the unique characteristics of adult learners	A	A>B	NANB	B>A	B	Effective facilitators/trainers must use the respected, traditional learning theories as they apply to *all* learners
14	Effective learning requires a physical and psychological climate of mutual respect, trust, openness, supportiveness, and security	A	A>B	NANB	B>A	B	Effective learning depends on learners recognizing and relying on the expert knowledge and skills of the trainer
15	It is important to help leaners understand the differences between didactic instruction and self-directed learning	A	A>B	NANB	B>A	B	Learners should concentrate on the content of learning/training rather than the method or methods of instruction
16	Effective facilitators/trainers are able to get learners	A	A>B	NANB	B>A	B	Effective facilitators/trainers are able to get, focus, and

		A	A>B	NANB	B>A	B	
	involved in the learning/training						maintain the learners' attention
17	Client system representatives need to be involved in revising and adapting learning/training programs, based on continuing needs assessment	A	A>B	NANB	B>A	B	Learning/training program developers must develop and use ongoing needs assessment data, to revise and adapt programs to better meet client needs
18	Program administrators must involve organizational decisions makers in interpreting and applying modern approaches to adult education and learning/training	A	A>B	NANB	B>A	B	Program administrators must be able to explain clearly and convincingly modern approaches to adult education and learning/training to organizational policy makers
19	Effective learning requires the facilitator/trainer to assess and control the effects that factors such as groups, organizations, and cultures have on learners	A	A>B	NANB	B>A	B	Effective learning requires the facilitator/trainer to isolate learners from the possible effects of outside factors such as groups, organizations, and cultures
20	Effective learning/training design engages the learners in a responsible self-diagnosis of their learning needs	A	A>B	NANB	B>A	B	Effective learning/training can take place only after experts have diagnosed the real learning needs of learners
21	Effective facilitators/trainers involve learners in planning, implementing, and evaluating their own learning activities	A	A>B	NANB	B>A	B	Effective facilitators/trainers accept responsibility for the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the learning activities they direct

22	Use of group dynamics principles and small-group discussion techniques is critical for effective learning	A A>B NANB B>A B	Effective learning centers on the one-to-one relationship between the facilitator/trainer and the learner
23	Program developers must help design and use program planning mechanisms such as client system advisory committees, task forces, and others	A A>B NANB B>A B	Effective program planning is the result of the program developer's efforts to interpret and use the client system data they collect
24	Program administrators must collaborate with organizational members to experiment with program innovations, jointly assessing outcomes and effectiveness	A A>B NANB B>A B	Program administrators must take the initiative to experiment with program innovations and assess their outcomes and effectiveness
25	In preparing a learning/training activity, the facilitator/trainer should review those theories of learning relevant for particular adult learning situations	A A>B NANB B>A B	In preparing a learning/training activity, the facilitator/trainer should rely on certain basic assumptions about the learning process that have been proven to be generally true
26	Effective learning /training engages learners in formulating objectives that are meaningful to them	A A>B NANB B>A B	Effective learning /training requires that the facilitator/trainer clearly defines the goals that learners are expected to attain
27	Effective facilitators/trainers begin the learning process by engaging	A A>B NANB B>A B	Effective facilitators/trainers start by making a careful diagnosis of

	adult learners in self-diagnosis of their own learning needs		participants learning needs
28	Learners must be involved in planning and developing evaluation instruments and procedures and in carrying out the evaluation of the learning processes and outcomes	A A>B NANB B>A B	Facilitators/trainers are responsible for planning and developing evaluation instruments and procedures and for carrying out evaluation of learning processes and outcomes
29	Program developers must involve client system members in designing and using learning/training program evaluation plans	A A>B NANB B>A B	Program developers are responsible for designing and implementing sound evaluation plans
30	Program administrators must work with organizational members and decision makers to analyze and interpret legislation affecting organizational learning/training programs	A A>B NANB B>A B	Program administrators are responsible for making and presenting to organizational authorities analyses of legislation that affect organizational learning/training programs

Scoring the Inventory

Directions: Circle the numbers in each column that correspond to the answers you chose on the survey (see key below) and then add down the columns. Enter the sum for each column in the box provided. You will have six scores (subtotals). Then, add the subtotals and place the sum in the total box at the bottom.

A   = 5
A>B   = 4
NANB = 3
B>A   = 2
B   = 1

I. Learning Orientation	II. Learning Design	III. How People Learn	IV. Learning Methods	V. Program Development	VI. Program Admin.
1 5 4 3 2 1	**6** 5 4 3 2 1	**11** 5 4 3 2 1	**16** 5 4 3 2 1	**21** 5 4 3 2 1	**26** 5 4 3 2 1
2 5 4 3 2 1	**7** 5 4 3 2 1	**12** 5 4 3 2 1	**17** 5 4 3 2 1	**22** 5 4 3 2 1	**27** 5 4 3 2 1
3 5 4 3 2 1	**8** 5 4 3 2 1	**13** 5 4 3 2 1	**18** 5 4 3 2 1	**23** 5 4 3 2 1	**28** 5 4 3 2 1
4 5 4 3 2 1	**9** 5 4 3 2 1	**14** 5 4 3 2 1	**19** 5 4 3 2 1	**24** 5 4 3 2 1	**29** 5 4 3 2 1
5 5 4 3 2 1	**10** 5 4 3 2 1	**15** 5 4 3 2 1	**20** 5 4 3 2 1	**25** 5 4 3 2 1	**30** 5 4 3 2 1
					Total:

Graphing Your Results

To bring your results into sharper focus regarding your andragogic or pedagogic orientation, plot your results on the following graph. Plot your total score on the Pedagogy/andragogy continuum by placing an X at the appropriate point. Scores of 120-150 would suggest a stronger andragogical orientation. Scores of 60-30 would suggest a stronger pedagogical orientation.

Overall results: How andragogic am I?

Teacher/trainer is more pedagogical   Teacher/trainer is more andragogical

| 30 | 45 | 60 | 90 | 105 | 120 | 135 | 150 |

Learner is more dependent   Learner is more independent
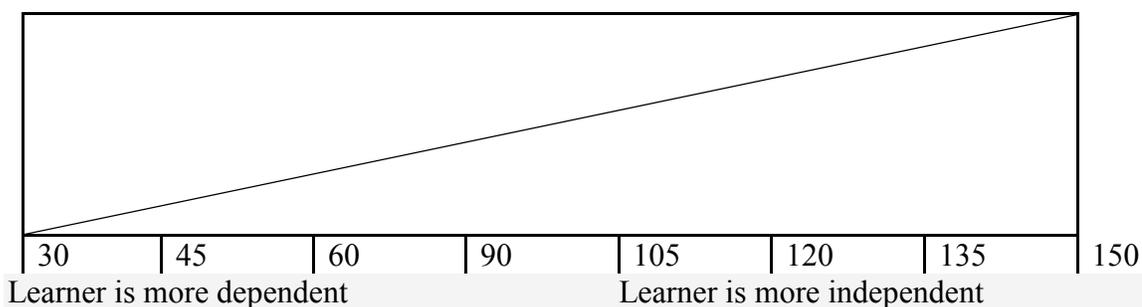
Component results: To what extent am I andragogical in each of the six areas?

	Pedagogically oriented	My scores	Andragogically oriented
I	5-10		20-25
II	5-10		20-25
III	5-10		20-25
IV	5-10		20-25
V	5-10		20-25
VI	5-10		20-25

Place each of your six component scores in the column labeled "My scores".

Compare your scores for each component to the pedagogy/andragogy ranges.

Traditional Learning: The Pedagogical Model

The pedagogical model is the one with which all of us have had the most experience. Teaching in our elementary schools, high schools, colleges, the military service, churches, and a variety of other institutions is largely pedagogically oriented. When we are asked to serve as instructors or prepare instruction for others, the pedagogical model comes quickly to mind and often takes control of our activities. That is easy to understand since pedagogy has dominated education and training practices since the seventh century.

Four assumptions about learners are inherent in the pedagogy model:

1. The learner is a dependent personality. The teacher/trainer is expected to take full responsibility for making the decisions about what is to be learned, how and when it should be learned, and whether it has been learned. The role of the learner is to carry out teacher's directions passively.
2. The learner enters into an educational activity with little experience that can be used in the learning process. The experience of the teacher/trainer is what is important. For that reason a variety of one-way communication strategies are employed, including lectures, textbooks and manuals, and a variety of audiovisual techniques that can transmit information to the learners efficiently.
3. People are ready to learn when they are told what they have to learn in order to advance to the next grade level or achieve the next salary grade or job level.
4. People are motivated to learn primarily by external pressures from parents, teachers/trainers, employers, the consequences of failure, grades, certificates, and so on.

Contemporary Learning: The Andragogical Model

During the 1960s, European adult educators coined the term andragogy to provide a label for a growing body of knowledge and technology in regard to adult learning. The following five assumptions underline the andragogical model of learning:

1. The learner is self-directing. Adult learners want to take responsibility for their own lives, including the planning, implementing, and evaluating of their learning activities.
2. The learner enters an educational situation with a great deal of experience. This experience can be valuable resource to the learner as well as to others. It needs to be valued and used in the learning process.
3. Adults are ready to learn when they perceive a need to know or do something in order to perform more effectively in some aspects of their lives. Their readiness to learn may be stimulated by helping them to assess the gaps between where they are now and where they want and need to be.
4. Adults are motivated to learn after they experience a need in their life situation. For that reason, learning needs to be problem-focused or task-centered. Adults want to apply what they have learned as quickly as possible. Learning activities need to be clearly relevant to the needs of the adult.
5. Adults are motivated to learn because of internal factors, such as self-esteem, recognition, better quality of life, greater self-confidence, the opportunity to self-actualize, and so forth. External factors, such as pressure from authority figures, salary increases, and the like, are less important.

Implications from the Models for Teachers/Trainers

A subscription to one model of learning or the other carries with it certain implications for the teacher/trainer. The basic concern of people with a pedagogical orientation is content. Teachers and trainers with a strong pedagogical orientation will be strongly concerned about what needs to be covered in the learning situation; how that content can be organized into manageable units; the most logical sequence for presenting these units; and the most efficient means of transforming this content.

In contrast, the basic concern of people with an andragogical orientation is process. The andragogical process consists of eight elements: preparing the learners, considering the physical and psychological climate setting, involving the learners in planning for their learning, involving the learners in diagnosing their own learning objectives, involving the learners in designing learning plans, helping the learners carry out their learning plan, and involving the learners in evaluating their own learning outcomes.

<div align="center">References</div>

Knowles, M. S., Holton III, E. F., & Swanson, R. A. (2015). *The adult learner: The definitive classic in adult education and human resource development.* (8th ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Note: Permission is granted to use this inventory without limitations (Knowles et al, 2015, p. 267)

Appendix D: Perceptions of Adult Learners' Needs

Working in small groups, discuss selected perceptions of the adult learners' needs from the local research data and answer the questions after the statements.

1. "From my understanding, learning needs can either be practical/real ones such as course objectives or perceived needs such as independent thought and self-confidence in jumping into unknown linguistic territories." The arising question is what are "the real" needs. Does it mean that a need for independent thought and self-confidence is less critical for learning that a need to increase the vocabulary?

2. "If we do not attempt to understand their needs, we may fail to recognize the support they require to be successful." Is there a noticeable gap in understanding of what students need and what instructors' think their students need?

3. "A student mostly interested in taking a test after the course, has nothing to do with a student not interested in taking a test, and who is here for the language itself. We say that raising the proficiency, in general, will help the students score better in tests; but a lot of students don't see it that way. So addressing the need of potential test takers should not be ignored." Can you relate to this comment? What is your opinion on the issue?

4. "The need I see they have is different than the need they think they have. They think they need to focus on passing their DLPT while I think they need to learn the language following the foreign language standards. They should be able to show that they mastered the language by doing projects and create something in the target language versus getting a good grade in a multiple-choice exam." Any comments?

5. "Our adult students in the schoolhouse are obsessed and insisting on rehearsing for the DLPT test that they usually take after the course ends, so their needs seem to be framed by the content and the format of the DLPT level test." Any comments?

Appendix E: List of Andragogical Principles with Implementation Examples

Andragogical Principles	Examples of Andragogical Principles' Implementation
1. Motivation Adults have internal motivation for learning; they want to obtain knowledge and skills that will help them to succeed in life, get better, become happier, grow professionally and personally	- Present the course syllabus (with the course structure, schedules, goals, and expectations, rules, grading systems and criteria, resources, etc.); - Set clear learning objectives for the session/lesson that are challenging yet achievable; - Provide opportunities for the learners to express their expectations and anticipations in the course; - Provide a respectful, non-threatening, and conducive to learning environment; - Consider students' learning styles and preferences while focusing on whole-group dynamics and promoting collaboration; - Address learning engagement at cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and social levels (use different language formats from classic to modern, from colloquial to scientific; use various language materials that incorporate sociocultural aspects such as humor, drama, music, literature, dance, folklore, etc.). - Facilitate students' self-evaluation and reflection on their learning; facilitate students' efforts in creating a vision for further growth and language development.
2. Ready to Learn Adults need sufficient time for assimilation of new information; the existing level of knowledge and skills will allow comprehending the new learning content	- Conduct an ongoing diagnostic assessment of students' needs and address their language and related learning weaknesses; - Use scaffolding strategies to support the learning, scaffold the material and activities; - Ensure productive pace of the session/lesson, set sufficient time-frame for task completion; be flexible with timing yet control the dynamics; - Prepare students for new information; bring stories to life (use video clips, quotes, stories, address all the gaps before moving forward; answer the questions; promote idea sharing); - Check students' comprehension of the materials and related concepts or ideas, verify students' understanding of the learning content;

	- Conduct a diagnostic assessment to identify and address students' learning challenges, specifically for students in class with lower foreign language levels; - Implement differentiated instruction to accommodate students with different foreign language levels and learning preferences.
3. Experience Adults learn based on own experiences; have a need for their previous experience to be valued; expect the instructor to have a high-level experience; learn through experiences and want to utilize new experiences, practice and apply what they have learned; need to be engaged in active learning (active cognitive and psychomotor participation)	- Elicit, validate, and incorporate learners' life, work, and study experiences throughout the session/lesson with respect and care; - Incorporate activities and content that are relevant to a particular group of students; - Promote experience-sharing among the learners; - Focus on production; use meaningful (for the learners) activities; consider further applicability of newly developed knowledge and skills; - Facilitate students' reflection and feedback about their learning experiences; regularly provide feedback to students and facilitate peer-feedback to aid the learning and teaching adjustments; - Tailor classroom practices to students needs as an additional opportunity for the knowledge retaining (what they will walk away knowing); - Promote discussions and open communication; - Incorporate hands-on activities where students can learn by doing and learn together and from each other.
4. Orientation Adults need to gain practical skills for problem-solving with a focus on significant problems and practical applications of concepts; need opportunities for collaboration, sharing, networking; the orientation to professional growth and development; reinforcement of practical skills, the orientation of the content and methods to their everyday needs.	- Conduct students' needs assessment and incorporate the identified preferences of the particular learners in class; - Incorporate active learning strategies that require higher order thinking skills; - Involve students in collaboration and communication for problem-solving; - Promote discussions, provide opportunities for students to use skills related to recognizing, comprehending, and applying a variety of communicative skills, such as negotiating, arguing, persuading, mitigating, interfering, advertising, informing, criticizing, motivating, etc.; - Create opportunities for students to acquire new learning skills, language specific and learning specific; focus on metacognitive strategies; - Promote learners' intellectual curiosity and encourage them to conduct additional research for further clarification;

	- Enable students to identify credible learning resources and emphasize on the effective approaches to data search; - Incorporate various learning activities to address the diverse needs of the learners; - Use target-country specific and application-oriented activities, such as tasks, projects, case studies, scenarios, role-plays, simulations, and immersions, etc.;
5. Need to know Adults need to know why they are learning this particular content and how the instruction and content relate to the reasoning behind.	- Accentuate the expected outcomes and the reasoning for instructional and contextual choice; demonstrate understanding and awareness of professional accountability for implementing chosen content and teaching strategies (demonstrate that you know what you are doing); - Facilitate learners' reflection and feedback at the end of the session/lesson and after completed tasks to actualize their understanding of the outcomes and related learning processes (confirm that students know what they are doing); - Stimulate students to search for the most effective learning strategies vs. short-cuts and explain the related benefits and offsets; take time to explain how implemented activities, strategies, materials, etc. can improve students' learning outcomes; - Accentuate short and long-term benefits of the offered learning content, course structure, and teaching strategies for students' learning; - Emphasize on students' knowledge assessment/grading system in the course; ensure students' understanding of the criteria and how these criteria could help to guide the learning; - Provide transparency of decision-making in all classroom interactions; - Ensure ongoing exchange to have a complete and accurate understanding of the learning-teaching dynamics in class.
6. Self-direction Adults need opportunities to have control over the learning process, take initiatives, make choices, and feel independent in their learning process.	- Motivate students to create individual learning plans for short and long-term learning, assist if needed; - Highlight the opportunities for independent studies beyond the classroom environment; - Accentuate the course requirements in the syllabus as additional studying guidelines;

- Bring students attention to their learning objectives and promote students in setting these objectives in homework assignments or individual studies;
- Provide alternative ways to completing the assignments and participating in activities;
- Provide choices for choosing a group-work partner or between a group and individual work,
- Provide opportunities for students to create their learning tasks or choose topics and materials;
- Offer a variety of supplemental learning materials, credible resources, and reliable references for independent studies;
- Facilitate students' self-assessment to identify learning progress, facilitating factors, hindrances, and needed resources;
- Facilitate students' feedback on how the instructor, peers, and learning content can help to accommodate their learning.
- Facilitate students' reflection on the learning process and outcomes for further adjustments.

Appendix F: Knowles's Andragogical Process Model

Work in pairs. Create a two-hour lesson plan using Knowles's andragogical model below (choose a topic, a language level, and a type of a lesson).

"The andragogical model is a process model. The instructor prepares a set of procedures for involving the learners in a process involving the following:
1. preparing the learner;
2. establishing a climate conducive to learning,
3. creating a mechanism for mutual planning,
4. diagnosing the needs for learning,
5. formulating learning objectives that will satisfy these needs,
6. designing a pattern of learning experiences
7. conducting these learning experiences with suitable techniques and materials,
8. evaluating the learning outcomes and re-diagnosing learning needs" (Knowles et al., 2015, p. 51).

Appendix G: Summary of Language-Centered Needs Described by Survey Participants

Adult learners studying a foreign language at the language center have to focus on advancing their skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, translation, and cultural interpretation of different material. Thus, adult students need to develop cultural and linguistic expertise at a higher proficiency level that relates to descriptions provided in ILR standards (www.ilr.com). Students need to improve their grammar skills, expand vocabulary, and have clear and accurate pronunciation as well as achieving higher accuracy in material comprehension. Students need an adult content on a variety of topics and subjects that encapsulate different aspects of life in a target language country, such as economics, politics, and society at different levels from highly professional to casual and conversational. Students need to understand the appropriate language application in various situations; understand the author's tone, intentions, and implications, detect the main ideas, and identify between and beyond the lines information. Thus, students need to develop strong skills in the analysis of authentic passages and critical thinking, as well as skills for creating language materials that relate to skills at the desired ILR level. Additionally, students need to acknowledge individual linguistic challenges and weaknesses that the instructor can help to identify through assessment tests and interviews. Assessment and testing are essential in establishing benchmarks that are critical for meeting language-related adult students' needs. Having clear course objectives, clear criteria for language-learning assessments and clear understanding of the language standards at the desired level are also among the common needs of adult students studying the foreign language. The survey participants added that having visible and measurable results in language production, comprehension, and analysis that correspond to higher ILR level skills are necessary for adult learners in their classrooms.

Appendix H: Interagency Language Roundtable Language Skill Level Descriptions

Reading

Reading 2 (Limited Working Proficiency)

Sufficient comprehension to read simple, authentic written material in a form equivalent to usual printing or typescript on subjects within a familiar context. Able to read with some misunderstandings straightforward, familiar, factual material, but in general insufficiently experienced with the language to draw inferences directly from the linguistic aspects of the text. Can locate and understand the main ideas and details in material written for the general reader. However, persons who have professional knowledge of a subject may be able to summarize or perform sorting and locating tasks with written texts that are well beyond their general proficiency level. The individual can read uncomplicated, but authentic prose on familiar subjects that are normally presented in a predictable sequence which aids the reader in understanding. Texts may include descriptions and narrations in contexts such as news items describing frequently occurring events, simple biographical information, social notices, formulaic business letters, and simple technical material written for the general reader. Generally, the prose that can be read by the individual is predominantly in straightforward/high-frequency sentence patterns. The individual does not have a broad active vocabulary (that is, which he/she recognizes immediately on sight), but is able to use contextual and real-world cues to understand the text. Characteristically, however, the individual is quite slow in performing such a process. Is typically able to answer factual questions about authentic texts of the types described above.

Reading 2+ (Limited Working Proficiency, Plus)

Sufficient comprehension to understand most factual material in non-technical prose as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to special professional interests. Is markedly more proficient at reading materials on a familiar topic. Is able to separate the main ideas and details from lesser ones and uses that distinction to advance understanding. The individual is able to use linguistic context and real-world knowledge to make sensible guesses about unfamiliar material. Has a broad active reading vocabulary. The individual is able to get the gist of main and subsidiary ideas in texts which could only be read thoroughly by persons with much higher proficiencies. Weaknesses include slowness, uncertainty, inability to discern nuance and/or intentionally disguised meaning.

Reading 3 (General Professional Proficiency)

Able to read within a normal range of speed and with almost complete comprehension a variety of authentic prose material on unfamiliar subjects. Reading ability is not dependent on subject matter knowledge, although it is not expected that the individual can comprehend thoroughly subject matter which is highly dependent on cultural knowledge or which is outside his/her general experience and not accompanied by explanation. Text-types include news stories similar to wire service reports or international news items in major periodicals, routine correspondence, general reports,

and technical material in his/her professional field; all of these may include hypothesis, argumentation and supported opinions. Misreading rare. Almost always able to interpret material correctly, relate ideas and "read between the lines," (that is, understand the writers' implicit intents in text of the above types). Can get the gist of more sophisticated texts, but may be unable to detect or understand subtlety and nuance. Rarely has to pause over or reread general vocabulary. However, may experience some difficulty with unusually complex structure and low frequency idioms.

Listening

Listening 2 (Limited Working Proficiency)
Sufficient comprehension to understand conversations on routine social demands and limited job requirements. Able to understand face-to-face speech in a standard dialect, delivered at a normal rate with some repetition and rewording, by a native speaker not used to dealing with foreigners, about everyday topics, common personal and family news, well-known current events and routine office matters through descriptions and narration about current, past and future events; can follow essential points of discussion or speech at an elementary level on topics in his/her special professional field. Only understands occasional words and phrases of statements made in unfavorable conditions, for example through loudspeakers outdoors. Understands factual content. Native language causes less interference in listening comprehension. Able to understand facts; i.e., the lines but not between or beyond the lines. (Has been coded L-2 in some nonautomated applications.)

Listening 2+ (Limited Working Proficiency, Plus)
Sufficient comprehension to understand most routine social demands and most conversations on work requirements as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to particular interests and special fields of competence. Often shows remarkable ability and ease of understanding, but under tension or pressure may break down. Candidate may display weakness or deficiency due to inadequate vocabulary base or less than secure knowledge of grammar and syntax. Normally understands general vocabulary with some hesitant understanding of everyday vocabulary still evident. Can sometimes detect emotional overtones. Some ability to understand implications. (Has been Coded L-2+ in some nonautomated applications.)

Listening 3 (General Professional Proficiency)
Able to understand the essentials of all speech in a standard dialect including technical discussions within a special field. Has effective understanding of face-to-face speech, delivered with normal clarity and speed in a standard dialect on general topics and areas of special interest; understands hypothesizing and supported opinions. Has broad enough vocabulary that rarely has to ask for paraphrasing or explanation. Can follow accurately the essentials of conversations between educated native speakers, reasonably clear telephone calls, radio broadcasts, news stories similar to wire service reports, oral reports, some oral technical reports and public addresses on non-technical subjects; can understand without difficulty all forms of standard speech concerning a special

professional field. Does not understand native speakers if they speak very quickly or use some slang or dialect. Can often detect emotional overtones. Can understand implications. (Has been coded L-3 in some nonautomated applications.

Speaking

Speaking 2 (Limited Working Proficiency)
Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements. Can handle routine work-related interactions that are limited in scope. In more complex and sophisticated work-related tasks, language usage generally disturbs the native speaker. Can handle with confidence, but not with facility, most normal, high-frequency social conversational situations including extensive, but casual conversations about current events, as well as work, family, and autobiographical information. The individual can get the gist of most everyday conversations but has some difficulty understanding native speakers in situations that require specialized or sophisticated knowledge. The individual's utterances are minimally cohesive. Linguistic structure is usually not very elaborate and not thoroughly controlled; errors are frequent. Vocabulary use is appropriate for high-frequency utterances. but unusual or imprecise elsewhere. Examples: While these interactions will vary widely from individual to individual, the individual can typically ask and answer predictable questions in the workplace and give straightforward instructions to subordinates. Additionally, the individual can participate in personal and accommodation-type interactions with elaboration and facility; that is, can give and understand complicated, detailed, and extensive directions and make non-routine changes in travel and accommodation arrangements. Simple structures and basic grammatical relations are typically controlled; however, there are areas of weakness. In the commonly taught languages, these may be simple markings such as plurals, articles, linking words, and negatives or more complex structures such as tense/aspect usage, case morphology. passive constructions, word order, and embedding. (Has been coded S-2 in some nonautomated applications.)

Speaking 2+ (Limited Working Proficiency, Plus)
Able to satisfy most work requirements with language usage that is often, but not always, acceptable and effective. The individual shows considerable ability to communicate effectively on topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Often shows a high degree of fluency and ease of speech, yet when under tension or pressure, the ability to use the language effectively may deteriorate. Comprehension of normal native speech is typically nearly complete. The individual may miss cultural and local references and may require a native speaker to adjust to his/her limitations in some ways. Native speakers often perceive the individual's speech to contain awkward or inaccurate phrasing of ideas, mistaken time, space and person references, or to be in some way inappropriate, if not strictly incorrect. Examples: Typically the individual can participate in most social, formal, and informal interactions, but limitations either in range of contexts, types of tasks or level of accuracy hinder effectiveness. The individual may be ill at ease with the use of the language either in social interaction or in speaking at length in professional contexts. He/she is generally strong in either structural precision or

vocabulary, but not in both. Weakness or unevenness in one of the foregoing, or in pronunciation, occasionally results in miscommunication. Normally controls, but cannot always easily produce general vocabulary. Discourse is often incohesive. (Has been coded S-2+ in some nonautomated applications.)

Speaking 3 (General Professional Proficiency)
Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations in practical, social and professional topics. Nevertheless, the individual's limitations generally restrict the professional contexts of language use to matters of shared knowledge and/or international convention. Discourse is cohesive. The individual uses the language acceptably, but with some noticeable imperfections; yet, errors virtually never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker. The individual can effectively combine structure and vocabulary to convey his/her meaning accurately. The individual speaks readily and fills pauses suitably. In face-to-face conversation with natives speaking the standard dialect at a normal rate of speech, comprehension is quite complete. Although cultural references, proverbs and the implications of nuances and idiom may not be fully understood, the individual can easily repair the conversation. Pronunciation may be obviously foreign. Individual sounds are accurate: but stress, intonation and pitch control may be faulty. Examples: Can typically discuss particular interests and special fields of competence with reasonable ease. Can use the language as part of normal professional duties such as answering objections, clarifying points, justifying decisions, understanding the essence of challenges, stating and defending policy, conducting meetings, delivering briefings, or other extended and elaborate informative monologues. Can reliably elicit information and informed opinion from native speakers. Structural inaccuracy is rarely the major cause of misunderstanding. Use of structural devices is flexible and elaborate. Without searching for words or phrases, the individual uses the language clearly and relatively naturally to elaborate concepts freely and make ideas easily understandable to native speakers. Errors occur in low-frequency and highly complex structures. (Has been coded S-3 in some nonautomated applications.)

Retrieved from http://govtilr.org/Skills/ILRscale

Appendix I: Examples of Activities in Language-Centered Teaching

A. The Main Skill: Reading
1. Using different cuts and pieces put together the article, create a headline, write or verbally present a short briefing.
2. Using cuts of 3-4 articles reconstruct all of them and provide a gist about each one.
3. From 5-7 provided quotes, find one that reflects the main idea or your feelings about the article.
4. Read an article and changing the linguistic style retell the story (from an official style to colloquial, for example).
5. Based on the provided article, conduct research and find different perspectives on the same issue.
6. Each student gets a cut of the article; working with each other put the pieces in order and define the main idea.
7. Read the article and present its structure using graphs and charts.
8. Read short articles, separate them into groups according to the topic.
9. Choose the topic of your interest and conduct research using five different credible sources of information.
10. Read a poem; rephrase the meaning and describe your feelings and thoughts about it. Define the value of the poem.
11. Base on the provided description, define the object or notion or find the place on the map, etc.
12. Read a novel (a tale, a joke, etc.) and elaborate on beyond the lines ideas; define the implications.

B. The Main Skill: Listening
1. Listen to the cut and draw a concept map of the ideas from the material.
2. Listen to the cuts from different genre (humor, songs, drama, movie, video-clip, reality-show, etc.), demonstrate comprehension of the content, and define their sociocultural values.
3. Listen to the cut and continue the story using a similar style and language.
4. Listen to the cut and provide the opposite opinion about the topic or issue.
5. Listen to the cut and play the "devil's advocate" role in discussion the main issue.
6. Listen to the cut and discuss the difference of opinions.
7. Listen to the cut and create an advertisement for "selling" one of the ideas in the cut, while using linguistic items pertinent to higher language levels.
8. Listen to the cut and describe the individuals who spoke, define who is talking, to whom, and why.

9. Listen to the cut and provide a gist, theses, or summary.
10. Listen to the talk show (no video) and define how many participants are there, who are they, what are their positions, describe them, etc.
11. Listen to the cut, identify, and analyze the rhetoric devices (metaphors, idioms, contradiction, quotation, allusions, exaggeration, sarcasm, etc.). Find synonyms or antonyms and use rephrasing.
12. Listen to the cuts from diverse sources (official presentations, public services announcements, advertisement, motivation speeches, academic reports, work meetings, everyday conversations, etc.) in diverse situations (formal or informal, monolog or dialogue, good or poor quality of a sound, full or unfinished sentences, etc.).

C. The Main Skill: Writing
1. Write a report about the weather, natural disasters, traffic accidents, etc. using the features of a higher language level.
2. Write a graduation speech (condolences, farewell, motivation, etc.) as a part of a role-play.
3. Write a report about a football game, art exhibitions, music show, science fair, festival, etc. or other events of your choice (in science, technology, politics, etc.)
4. Write a fairytale for people of different ages. Write a poem based on the provided rimes. Write a scenario for a new movie, a game, or a play; write a movie critique; create a text for the video. Write an essay about your feelings and thoughts on a chosen topic.
5. Write and present first aid brochures for a stroke, a burn, a poisoning bite, a severe cut, a broken bone, a heart attack, and other emergencies.
6. Write "goodbye," "welcome to the team," or "excuse me" letters or a letter to a friend, an ancestor, or a descendant, or to yourself in the past or future, etc.
7. Write a regulation, a policy, or set of rules for a workplace or a class; write a resume, a job description.
8. Write a cooking recipe based on the set of ingredients; write a cookbook.
9. Write an official address to the President, a political leader, a famous person, an organization, etc. (of the target language country); write a critique of the famous person's actions in the target language country.
10. Imagine a new invention in science; describe how it looks and how it used. Develop a manual for using a piece of equipment or a device.
11. Write a description of the famous person for others to guess this person's identity.
12. Design a booklet for a museum or a gallery.

D. The Main Skill: Speaking
1. Describe a step-by-step process or tell a story about opening a bank account, selling or buying a house, building a house, finding a new job, opening a business, finding a new school, selling or buying a car, traveling aboard, buying a present, etc.
2. Participate in role-plays (based on real life or imaginary situations), such as a new hire interview, an interpreter in various situations, asking for directions in a target country; at a restaurant (ask for the best table, ask about menu, order a food with special requests, complain about the food or noise, not having enough money to pay the bill, etc.).
3. Participate in role-plays in various official situations, such as conferences, debates, round tables, expert panels, symposiums, talk shows, etc.
4. Participate in role-plays for conflict prevention or resolution, for example, at the hotel (no light, no hot water, overcharges, no internet connection, ask to lower the bill, check in or check out problems, etc.); at the airport (lost bags, security questions, rude co-traveler, a miss-behaved child, a wrong food order, etc.); home and family (conflict about chide discipline, lousy cooking, house chores, a car for a teenager, money for a vacation, negotiating with a landlord, etc.).
5. Participate in drama, poetry, or signing performance based on authentic scenarios/materials.
6. Public speaking (a report, an address, or a presentation):
    a. Policy (stop developing nuclear weapons, stop corruption, stop selling guns, global warming, election problems, etc.).
    b. Economy (raise a federal/city budget, build a new infrastructure, decrease an inflation, decrease taxes, increase pensions and salaries, cut the government spending, etc.).
    c. Science (stem cells research, GMO, transplantation, animal testing, euthanasia, etc.).
    d. Military (gender equality, care for veterans, new weapons, space wars, toxic wastes, a war and peace, etc.).
    e. Social (pore quality of education and healthcare, poverty, homeless people, neglected children, crime, domestic violence, unemployment, etc.).

Appendix J: Postcourse Self-assessment Questionnaire

1. Please rate your aftercourse level of knowledge on a scale from 1 to 10 (with 1 as *Poor* and 10 as *Excellent*) in the following areas by circling the corresponding level:

	Poor		Fair		Good		Very Good		Excellent	
Adult learning and teaching principles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Knowles's theory of andragogy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Adult learners' engagement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Adult learners' needs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Teaching approaches for promoting adult students' foreign language proficiency	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

2. Please rate your overall perception of the course on a scale from 1 to 10 (with 1 as *Poor* and 10 as *Excellent*) in the following areas by circling the corresponding level:

	Poor		Fair		Good		Very Good		Excellent	
Course content and materials	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Instructional design/delivery techniques	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Usefulness for future practical application	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Instructor's responsiveness to students' needs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Your overall course rating	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please provide your suggestions for course improvement or other comments

Appendix K: Project Evaluation

A Holistic Rubric for Group-work Assessment

1. Excellent

All participants successfully comprehended the major concepts presented in the session.

All participants successfully completed learning tasks and demonstrated great satisfaction with the results of their work.

All participants demonstrated active engagement in an individual and group-work.

All participants formulated persuasive argumentation while presenting their point of view to the group.

All participants emphasized on establishing a higher level of awareness and inspiration in regard to major session concepts and their further application.

2. Satisfactory

Most participants successfully comprehended the major concepts presented in the session.

Most participants successfully completed learning tasks and demonstrated satisfaction with the results of their work.

Most participants demonstrated active engagement in an individual and group-work.

Most participants formulated persuasive argumentation while presenting their point of view to the group.

Most participants emphasized on establishing a higher level of awareness and inspiration in regard to major session concepts and their further application.

3. Unsatisfactory

Most participants demonstrated insufficiency in comprehending the major concepts presented in the session.

Most participants demonstrated a lack of involvement in completing learning tasks and demonstrated a lack of satisfaction with the results of their work.

Most participants demonstrated poor engagement in an individual and group-work.

Most participants demonstrated insufficiency in providing persuasive argumentation or refused to present their point of view to the group.

Most participants reported on the unchanged level of awareness and inspiration in regard to major session concepts and their further application.

Note: To be used by the instructor for project evaluation

Appendix L: The Project

Slide 1

Professional Development Workshop
for Foreign Language Instructors

APPLYING PRINCIPLES OF
ANDRAGOGY FOR
ENGAGING ADULT
STUDENTS IN FOREIGN
LANGUAGE LEARNING

DAY 1
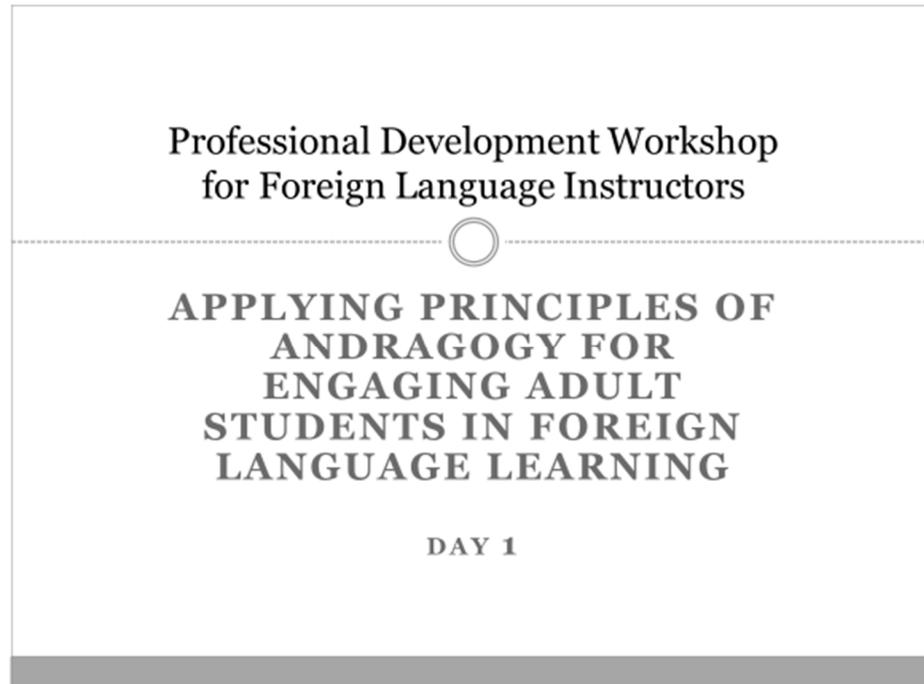
Duration: 3 days/ 20 hours workshop

Participants: foreign language instructors working with students at the intermediate ILR proficiency levels at the specific educational site.

Group size: a medium size group of approximately 14-16 people.

Handouts with training materials and the workshop schedule are provided to participants.

All office supplies, such as poster notes, paper, markers, etc. will be in place. A computer with the PowerPoint software, internet connectivity, and a big screen TV connected to the computer or a White Board with the sound system are critical for training implementation. It is desirable for each participant to have a computer with the registration on the shared educational platform, such as BlackBoard, so they can post the results of the completed learning activities instead of writing them on the posters.

The training site representatives will provide psychical accommodation to all participants, including necessary adjustments to individuals with disabilities.

Slide 2

Day 1.
Introduction and goal setting (25-30minutes).

The presenter introduces himself/herself, provides an overview of the workshop and related logistics.
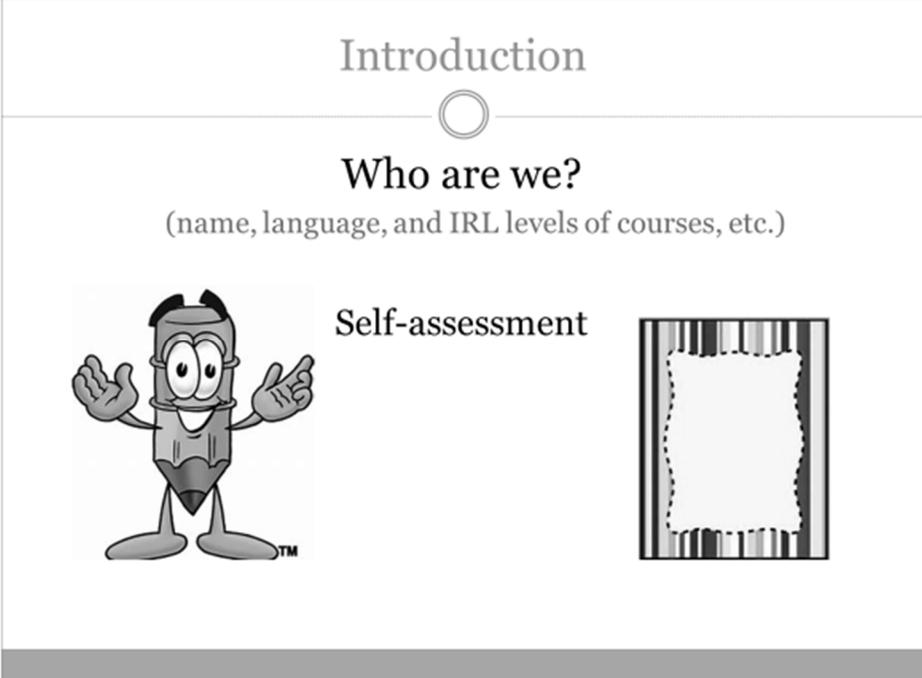
Participants introduce themselves (name, department, language, and IRL levels of taught courses, etc.).

Participants fill in the pretraining self-assessment form (Appendix B).

Slide 3

Learning Objectives

- Participants will reflect on and evaluate their current teaching practices; systematize and expand the views on effective strategies for engaging students' foreign language learning.
- Learners will demonstrate the comprehension of adult learning principles based on Knowles's theory of andragogy.
- Participants will walk away knowing and ready to apply 20-25 foreign language learning activities related to andragogical principles.
- Learners will reinforce and develop a set of teaching strategies (approximately 7-10) for addressing the needs of their adult students.

Introduction and goal setting (20-30 minutes) Cont.

Discussion. The presenter asks participants to reflect on their preassessment statements and express their best and worst anticipations of this workshop: "What do you expect will happen? What skills would you like to obtain? What you afraid would happen? What should be done to avoid it?"

After participants' elaboration, the instructor addresses any issues raised during the discussion in regards to participants' individual learning objectives and emphasizes on the overall workshop learning objectives.

Slide 4

Ice-breaking activity (15-20 minutes).

Working in small groups (4-5 persons) participants discuss and write down on the posters their daily routine or a work schedule. One individual from each group presents the results to the rest of the group.

The activity will allow clarifying participants' and presenter's understanding about the nature of others work, specifically, the description of their student population, how much time the participants spend teaching, preparing for classes, conducting research, working on professional development, collaborating with colleagues, etc.

The instructor asks participants to elaborate on their perceptions of professional development, it means, and available opportunities.

Slide 5

Brain-storming activity (25-30 minutes).

Working in two groups (or four smaller groups, if necessary) participants describe, discuss, and write typical characteristics of their students on the posters. The first group lists similarities and the second group lists differences. Each group presents the results of the discussion to the rest.

The instructor offers participants to reflect on the activity and provide feedback.

The instructor elicits participants' comments regarding adult learners' characteristics and brings the group to an agreement about noted similarities.

Slide 6

Movie clip and a lead-in discussion (25-30 mins)

Newell, M. (Producer), & Johanson, F. (Director). (2003). *Mona Lisa Smile* [Motion picture episode]. USA: Revolution Studios and Red Om Films Productions. Available from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7bLUG4g0cVc

Movie clip: Mona Lisa Smile – First lesson episode.

The instructor demonstrates the movie clip and facilitates a discussion to elicit participants' perceptions of the described situation. In the clip, a group of well-prepared young adults at the art college challenged the teachers' expertise.

Discussion: What happened in the clip and why? Have you ever encountered similar situations?

What can we say about the learners and their needs? Could a similar situation happen with younger students (children)? Participants reflect on their practices and provide related comments.

The instructor summarizes the ideas and answers the questions if any.

Slide 7

Interactive PowerPoint presentation (30 minutes, ends on slide #16)

The first person who used the andragogy as a term was Alexander Kapp, a German educator, in 1833.

"This new theory is going under the label "andragogy," derived from the stem of the Greek word "aner," meaning man (as distinguished from the boy).

This is not a new word; it was used in Germany as early as 1833 and has been used extensively during the last decade in Yugoslavia, France, and Holland (in 1970 the University of Amsterdam established a "Department of Pedagogical and Andragogical Sciences") (Knowles, 1973, p. 56).

Discussion: What is the difference between adult and children learning? Why and how children learn?

Expected answers: Children learn because parents told them that it is necessary; all children have to go to school; to belong to a group of children who are united by one goal – to learn something new; to interact with other children; they like their teachers; they enjoy learning and doing new things; they know they have to study to have a better job when they grow up (through adults' influence); parents will buy them something they really want (new iPhone, new gadget, new four-wheeler), etc. The learning process is regulated and controlled by adults.

Discussion: What is learning for you? When do you learn the best?

Slide 8
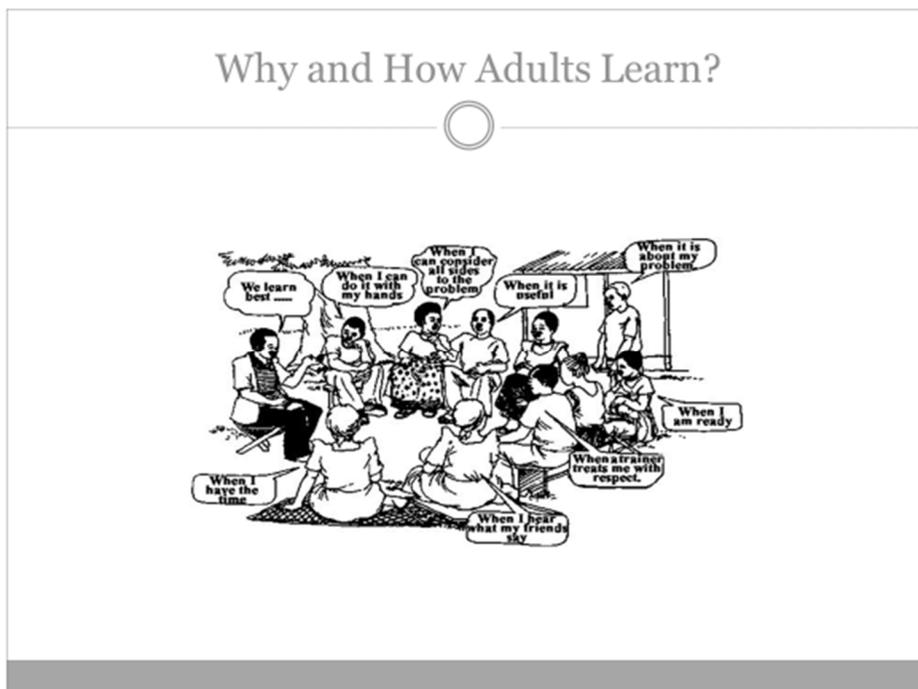
Discussion continues.

Discussion: What is the difference between adult and children learning? Why and how adults learn? What is learning?

Expected answers: To get a better job that brings more income or/and is really desirable and enjoyable for a person; to obtain a higher social status; to fulfill their obligations and promises to their family; to have a true satisfaction from a personal and professional growth; to obtain new knowledge and skills that make life easier and more productive; to create new things and ideas; to find own place in life; to become a happy self-actualized person; to fulfill own purpose in life; to make a better change in society and in own small social group; to provide for their families, etc.

Adults tie their knowledge to their experiences; adults know what they want to learn, where, when, and how; adults critically reflect on their learning; adults have a plan; adults want to see the results of their learning and their practical application; adults know when they are ready to learn; adults learn a lot from each other, adults have many social roles that influence their learning and their margin in learning, etc.

The instructor asks the participants to comment on the picture.

Picture's remarks: "we learn best…" - "when I can do it with my hands", "when I consider all sides of the problem", "when it is useful", "when it is about my problem", "when I am ready", "when a trainer treats me with respect", "when I hear what my friends say", "when I have the time". Retrieved from http://www.frome60e3f901497d4a23c9d051354c4295d pinterest.com

Discussion: If the learners in the picture are from your class, what their answers would be?

Slide 9

Dr. Malcolm Shepherd Knowles (1913 – 1997) - American researcher, author, theorist of adult education. In 1968, Malcolm Knowles offered andragogy as a concept to differentiate adult learning from children learning.

Knowles' concept of andragogy is based on six assumptions about adult learners: four were introduced in 1980, and two were introduced in 1984 (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007. p. 84).

Slide 10
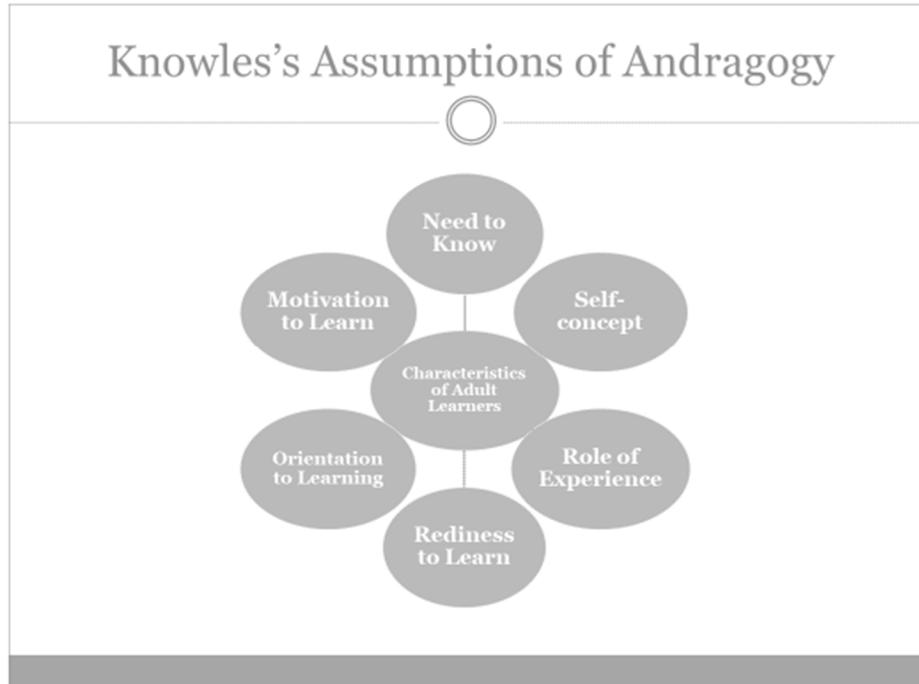
Knowles (1980) emphasized, "Andragogy is not a panacea, but a system of ideas, that can improve the quality of learning" (p. 49).

The instructor briefly introduces Knowles's six assumptions of andragogy or characteristics of adult learners (Knowles et al., 2015; Knowles, 1984; Knowles, 1980). Next slides will have more details.

Slide 11

Self-concept: "As people mature, their self-concept moves from a dependent personality toward being more self-directed" (Knowles, 1980, p. 44-45).

Additional information: Adults "have largely resolved their identity-formation issues; they are identified with an adult role. Any experience that they perceive as putting them in the position of being treated as children bound to interfere with their learning" (Knowles, 1973, p. 58).

Images and a quote from Greive, B. T. (2003). *Tomorrow: Adventures in an uncertain world.* United Kingdom: Andrews McMeel Publishing.

Slide 12

Role of experience: "As people mature, they accumulate a growing reservoir of experience that becomes a rich resource for learning" (Knowles, 1980, p.44-45).

Additional information: "Increasing emphasis on experiential techniques which tap the experience of the learners and involve them in analyzing their experience. The use of lectures, canned audio-visual presentations, and assigned reading tend to fade in favor of discussion, laboratory, simulation, field experience, team project, and other action-learning techniques" (Knowles, 1973, p. 59).

"Differences in cognitive styles have to be increasingly taken into account. If individual differences are important in dealing with children, they are more important in dealing with adults, because they widen with experience. A group of fifty-year-olds is more different from one another than a group of forty-year-olds, who in turn, are more differentiated than a group of ten-year-olds" (Knowles, 1973, p. 59).

Slide 13

Readiness to learn: "As people mature, their readiness to learn is closely related to the developmental tasks of their social roles" (Knowles, 1980, p. 44-45).

Additional information: "The purpose of education is the development of competencies for performing the various roles required in human life" (Knowles, 1972, p. 2).

"It is by no means assumed that one has to sit passively by and wait for readiness to develop naturally. There are ways to stimulate it through exposure to better models of performance, higher levels of aspiration and self-diagnostic procedures" (Knowles, 1973, p. 47).

"Andragogy assumes that learners are ready to learn those things they "need" to because of the developmental phases they are approaching in their roles as workers, spouses, parents, organizational members and leaders, leisure time users, and the like… For example, a new medical student needs to have direct experience with hospitals, patients, and practicing doctors before he is ready to learn facts about pathology, anatomy, biochemistry, and other content" (Knowles, 1973, p. 60).

Slide 14

Orientation to learning: "As people mature, their time perspective changes from gathering knowledge for future use to immediate application of knowledge, thus adult learners become more problem-centered rather than subject-centered" (Knowles, 1980, p. 44-45).

Additional information: "The adult comes into an educational activity largely because he is experiencing some inadequacy in coping with current life problems. He wants to apply tomorrow what he learns today, so his time perspective is one of immediacy of application. Therefore, he enters into education with a problem-centered orientation to learning" (Knowles, 1973, p. 61).

Slide 15

Motivation to learn: "As people mature, their most potent motivations are internal rather that external" (Knowles & Associates, 1984, p. 12).

Adults' learning motivated by intrinsic values. They learn to improve self-esteem and to obtain self-satisfaction.

Slide 16

Need to know: "As people mature, they have a growing need to know why they need to learn something" (Knowles & Associates, 1984, p. 12).

Slide 17

Knowles's Assumptions of Andragogy

True or False?

1. Adults are self-directed in their learning.

2. Adults have a lot of experience that helps them to learn more successfully.

3. Adults are ready to learn because they believe it will help them to sufficiently fulfill their social roles.

Validation of Knowles's andragogical assumptions through own experience (15-20 minutes).

Discussion: Elaborate on each assumption based on own experience as a learner and as a teacher. True or False? (Below are the expected answers).

1. Adults are self-directed in their learning.

True: Adults have a self-concept – adults know who they are, how they differ from others, what they want for themselves, they are proactive, choose to disagree with the teacher, etc.

2. Adults have a lot of experience that helps them to learn more successfully.

True: Adults are making sense of things based on their experiences and experiences of others – people who have experience of public speaking will be more successful in preparing and presenting to the class; people who have experience of driving a car, will be more successful in learning how to drive a truck; people who have experience of writing academic articles, will be more successful in their further academic writings.

3. Adults are ready to learn because they believe it will help them to sufficiently fulfill their social roles.

True: People who want to grow professionally are ready to learn and are very determined in obtaining new knowledge and skills; people who have young children will take their parenting classes more seriously, than childless people; people who want to save their relationships will learn more in counseling, than people who already see themselves free and separate.

Slide 18

> ## Knowles's Assumptions of Andragogy
>
> **True or False?**
>
> 4. Adults want to practically apply their learning to resolve or prevent problems, rather than for theoretical knowledge acquisition.
>
> 5. Adults are mostly internally motivated in their learning.
>
> 6. Adults have a need to know why they need to know something, why they are learning and whether this learning is useful for them or not.

Discussion cont. True or False?

4. Adults want to practically apply their learning to resolve or prevent problems, rather than for theoretical knowledge acquisition.

True: adults want to be able practically to apply their new knowledge and skills – people learn a foreign language better when they need it for the job; people learn etiquette better when they can use it to increase their social status; people will learn specific federal regulations when they plan to purchase a firearm.

5. Adults are mostly internally motivated in their learning.

True: compare to children; people learn to have better self-esteem, to increase their chances and opportunities in life; people enjoy the process of learning; people what to become better in all level of their life.

6. Adults need to know why they need to know something, why they are learning, and whether this learning is useful for them or not.

True: the learning is more successful when people understand the learning outcomes; adults have an internal drive to reflect on their learning in order to determine the reasoning for this learning: useful or useless, interesting or boring, commonly accepted or extravagant, suitable or unsuitable, valuable or worthless from personal and social perspectives; short term application or a lifelong knowledge and skills, etc. People learn to play a musical instrument to be professional musicians or because they enjoy playing it; people learn the First aid because of their job requirements or because they want to be able to save someone's life; people learn a new software program to better perform at their workplace, etc.

Slide 19

The instructors' presentation: Conditions of learning bring attention to teaching strategies (5 minutes).

Brief introduction to conditions of learning:
- Involvement in planning and evaluation
- Experience as a base for activities
- Relevance and impact to learners' lives
- Problem-centered rather than content-oriented learning

Slide 20

Small-group activity (10-15 minutes).

All participants count from 1 to 4 and re-group for the activity (all 1s, all 2s, all 3s, and all 4s).

Task: Discuss, write main ideas on the poster, and present your results to the rest.

Group 1: How you, as a teacher, can involve your adult students in the planning and evaluation of their learning?

Group 2: How can you incorporate students' experience into their learning activities and tasks?

Group 3: How can you ensure that your teaching is relevant to learners' lives and will have a positive impact?

Group 4: How can you provide problem-centered learning for your students' vs. content-oriented?

Examples of possible outcomes:

Q1: How you, as a teacher, can involve your adult students in planning and evaluation of their learning?

A1: Teachers can give students a choice in tasks or approaches for task completion. For example, students can choose their own topic, choose the format of the report (presentation, scholarly paper, or an art project); evaluation could be performed as self-evaluation, peers' evaluation, teachers' feedback or formal evaluation.

Q2: How can you incorporate students' experience into their learning activities and tasks?

A2: Use role plays and simulations; recreate real-life situations; use hands-on projects and task-based activities.

Q3: How can you ensure that your teaching is relevant to learners' lives and will have a positive impact?

A3: Regularly ask students to reflect on everything that happens in the class and beyond: how they feel, what they think, what works and what does not work for them, what destructs and what facilitates their learning, what are the remaining areas of students' needs.

Q4: How can you provide problem-centered learning for your students vs. content-oriented?

A4: Know your students' needs, acceptations, and concerns. Together with students define clear learning objectives and their efficient practical application for students' benefits and all other positive learning outcomes.

Slide 21
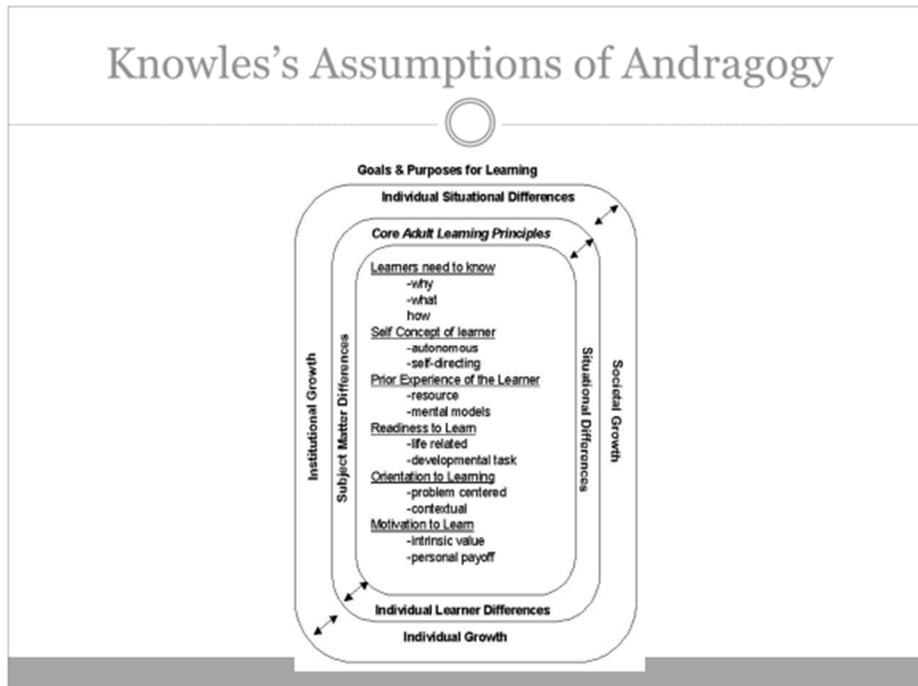
Knowles's assumptions of andragogy (Knowles et al., 2015). Summary and reinforcement.

Discussion: How can you summarize the presented Goals and Purposes of Adult Learning within the theory of andragogy? (5-10 minutes).

Application of core adult learning principles also relate to individual, situational, and subject matter differences, as well as individual, social, and institutional growth.

Slide 22

Participants reflect on the presentation and provide feedback (10 minutes).

The instructor answers the questions, addresses concerns, and summarizes the main ideas. The instructor also can announce the plans for the afternoon part of the session.

Slide 23

Knowles's Learning Style Inventory
Self-assessment, reflection on results, and discussion (45-60 minutes).

After a brief overview of the morning session, the instructor asks participants to complete the questionnaire. Knowles's Learning Style Inventory handout is provided to participants (Knowles et al., 2015).

Participants complete the Knowles's questionnaire (Appendix C) and evaluate the orientation in their teaching (andragogical or pedagogical).

Participants reflect on the self-assessment results.

Slide 24

Knowles's Learning Style Inventory (Cont.)

Small-group work (around each table): Participants reflect on the results of the completed inventory and their teaching styles, using provided descriptions for pedagogical and andragogical orientation to teaching.

Individual activity: On the provided card, participants will write down a few personal resolutions for further practice based on the ideas from the Learning Style Inventory.

Whole group discussion: How applicable the concepts of the Learning Style Inventory in your practice? How completing the questionnaire influenced the understanding of the andragogical and pedagogical orientation concepts?

Instructor's comments: The instructor highlights the generalization aspects of the inventory as it might be more or less applicable in different educational situations. The instructor might inform participants about the criticism of Knowles's theory of andragogy.

For example, Knowles himself called andragogy a "model of assumptions" (Knowles, 1980, p. 43), or a "system of concepts" (Knowles, 1984, p. 8). Merriam et al. (2007), expressed critics' concerns about defining Knowles's andragogy as a theory since it doubtfully possesses "the explanatory and predictive functions generally associated with a fully developed theory" (p. 85).

Merriam et al. (2007) provided an overview of Knowles's critiques while referring to some authors. According to Merriam et al., Hartree noted that it "was not clear whether Knowles had presented a theory of learning or teaching" (Merriam et al., 2007, p. 85).

Jarvis (as a representative of a holistic approach) noted that Knowles's concept is lacking attention to the social context in which this learning occurs (Merriam et al., 2007, p. 85).

Sandlin, from the perspectives of the feminist, Afrocentric, and critical theories, noted five issues in Knowles's andragogy: it assumes "education is value-neutral and apolitical"; it assumes "all adult learners look and learn the same"; "other ways of learning are ignored"; "the relationship between self and society is ignored"; "andragogy thus reproduces society's inequalities and supports the status quo" (Merriam et al., 2007, p. 88).

Brookfield noted that three assumptions are problematic when drawing inferences for practice: 1) self-direction is more the desired outcome than a given condition; 2) relating learning to particular social roles and focusing on immediate application can lead to a narrow, reductionist view of learning; 3) certain life experiences can function as barriers to learning (Merriam et al., 2007, p. 88).

Grace said that "Knowles never proceeded to an in-depth consideration of the organizational and social impediments to adult learning; he never painted the "big picture" (Merriam et al., 2007, p. 88).

Slide 25

Lead-in discussion (10-15 minutes).

The instructor asks participants to reflect on and describe the strategies that they use to identify adult students' learning needs. Specifically, how teachers define and identify individual students' needs and the needs of the class as a whole, why the understanding of the learners' needs is important, and how teachers prioritize the needs of all students in the class?

Slide 26

Understanding adult learners' needs (15 minutes).

The instructor asks participants to elaborate on their understanding of learner-centered and language-centered learning needs. The instructor presents the definitions of the adult learners' needs in the academic literature and facilitates a discussion based on participants' responses.

Adult learner - a self-directed person, engaged and ready to acquire new knowledge and expertise for immediate application based on own experience and with the purpose of fulfilling the social roles (Knowles, Holton III, & Swanson, 2015).

Adult learning – "the process of adults gaining knowledge and expertise" (Knowles et al., 2015, p. 157).

Adult learners' needs – a necessity for a deeper understanding of processes through a reasonable combination of practice and theory and with a purpose of the further application, a necessity to inquire and understand how to make use of the opportunities for further growth (Owusu-Agyeman, Fourie-Malherbe, & Frick, 2018).

Adult teaching – the methods employed to influence adult learning (Knowles et al., 2015).

Learning need – "the gap between where you are now and where you want to be in regard to a particular set of competencies" (Knowles et al., 2015, p. 255).

Slide 27

Understanding Adult Learners' Needs (Cont.) (30-45 minutes)

Small-group activity (2 or 4 groups). (Based on the results of the discussion and local research data).
The instructor asks the first group of participants to discuss, define, and present learner-centered needs and asks the second group to discuss, define, and present the language-centered needs of their adult learners.

The instructor can use the information from the local research to facilitate participants' discussion about adult learners' needs. There were 26 responses to the online open-ended questions survey conducted among the instructors who teach intermediate and advanced levels of foreign language courses at the language center (LC).

Slide 28

Small-group activity (2-3 participants). (45-60 minutes)

Working in small groups, discuss selected perceptions of the adult learners' needs from the local research data and answer the questions after the statements. (Use Appendix D: Perceptions of Adult Learners' Needs).

Slide 29

Participants' reflection and feedback (15 minutes).

What new have you learned today? What insights or inspirations did you have during the presentation?

The instructor answers the questions and comments.

Slide 30

References

- Knowles, M. S. (1972). *Toward a model of lifelong education.* Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED066632)
- Knowles, M. S. (1977). Adult learning processes: Pedagogy and andragogy. *Religious Education: The official journal of the Religious Education Association, 72*(2), 202-211. doi:10.1080/0034408770720210
- Knowles, M. S. (1980, August). My farewell address... Andragogy – no panacea, no ideology. *Training & Development Journal, 34*(8), 48-50. Retrieved from http://www.astd.org
- Knowles, M. S. (1984). *The adult learner: A neglected species.* Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED084368)
- Knowles, M. S., & Associates. (1984). *Andragogy in action. Applying modern principles of adult education.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
- Knowles, M. S., Holton III, E. F., & Swanson, R. A. (2015*). The adult learner: The definitive classic in adult education and human resource development.* (8th ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Merriam, S. B., Caffarella, R. S., & Baumgartner, L. M. (2007). *Learning in adulthood: A comprehensive guide* (3rd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Owusu-Agyeman, Y., Fourie-Malherbe, M., & Frick, L. (2018). Exploring the educational needs of adult learners: A study of three universities in Ghana. *Journal of Adult and Continuing Education, 24*(2), 165–187. doi:10.1177/1477971418782997

References for Day 1.

Slide 31

Professional Development Workshop
for Foreign Language Instructors

APPLYING PRINCIPLES OF
ANDRAGOGY FOR
ENGAGING ADULT
STUDENTS IN FOREIGN
LANGUAGE LEARNING

DAY 2

Day 2.
Greetings. Recall and reflection on the previous day learning.

Discussion: What is retained and why? (10 Minutes).

Slide 32

Warm-up activity (20-30 minutes).
Movie clip and discussion.
The Adventures of Tom Sawyer the scene of the fence.

Discussion: What strategies Tom used to engage his friends in painting the fence for him? Would similar approaches work if they were adults? Did Tom use motivation or engagement strategies? Did he use strategies at all?

Georgiev, G., Relis, A., and Weinhart, M. (Producers), & Kastner, J. (Director). (2014). *Tom Sawyer & Huckleberry Finn* [Motion picture episode]. USA: Cine-partners. Available from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAHXwLRI88Q

The picture in the slide: Tom Sawyer, US commemorative stamp of 1972 showing the whitewashed fence. The picture is retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Adventures_of_Tom_Sawyer

Slide 33

The instructor presents the definitions from the academic literature and asks participants to reflect on the definitions and provide comments. (10-15 minutes).

Learning motivation is one of the critical elements of teaching. Motivation - "the inclination, energy, emotion, and drive relevant to learning, working effectively, and achieving" (Martin et al., 2017, p. 150).

Learning "motivation refers to the underlying sources of energy, purpose, and durability, whereas engagement refers to their visible manifestation" (Skinner & Pitzer, 2012, p. 23).

Skinner and Pitzer (2012) defined academic engagement as "constructive, willing, emotionally positive, and cognitively focused participation with learning activities" (p. 23).

Slide 34

   Lead in question for discussion: What role learning engagement and motivation play in your classrooms? Is it important? Why? Do instructors have to engage students in classrooms, or this is entirely up to the adult learners? (5-10 minutes)

   Discussion (in 2 groups): What makes your students motivated and engaged in classrooms? What are the reasons for learning disengagement?

   The instructor asks participants to share best teaching practices for engagement and perceptions of the learners' disengagement (10-15 minutes).

Slide 35

Best teaching practices for engaging adult students' learning. (30-40 minutes).
Discussion: How can we define best teaching practices? (Whole group
discussion).

"Recall-pair-share" activity: Working in pairs, recall and share one of the most
prominent stories from a professional experience when you were able to
successfully engage students' learning. Reflect on the reasons for the success.

Movie clip and discussion: Mona Lisa's Smile - Second lesson "It's art!"

Compare the second lesson with the first episode from Day 1.
What changed? What strategies the teacher used and why? Can we say that students were
engaged? What are the indicators of engagement? What made them engaged?

Newell, M. (Producer), & Johanson, F. (Director). (2003). *Mona Lisa Smile*
[Motion picture episode]. USA: Revolution Studios and Red Om Films Productions.
Available from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYxCZpbKsAs

Discussion: What is the role of the classroom environment in facilitating learning
engagement? (10 minutes).

Slide 36

Brain-storming activity and discussion (10-15 minutes).

Who, what, and how can facilitate adult students' learning engagement?

Expected results: Participants' perceptions could be summarized into four categories/levels: 1) teacher, 2) student, 3) learning content; 4) teaching approaches/learning activities (or, in other words, who is teaching, who is learning, what, and how).

Slide 37

Discussion continues.

Slide 38

Group activity (4 groups). (80-90 minutes).

Describe facilitating factors of students' learning engagement in the classroom:
1. The participants in the first group discuss and present the concepts of students' engagement in their classrooms based on learning content.
2. The participants in the second group discuss and present the concepts of students' engagement in their classrooms based on teaching approaches.
3. The participants in the third group discuss and present the concepts of students' engagement in their classrooms based on an individual student and all students in the group (traits and attitudes).
4. The participants in the fourth group discuss and present the concepts of students' engagement in their classrooms based on teacher's traits/attitudes.

Whole group discussion: Worst case scenarios. When the best intentions for students' learning engagement don't work and what to do?

The instructor facilitates a discussion about the hindrances for promoting the adult students' learning engagement at the level of content and teaching approaches.

Slide 39

Discussion (10-15 minutes).

The instructor facilitates the discussion for participants to recall the main concepts of Day 1 and summarizes the assumptions of andragogy.

Jigsaw activity (for small groups) – 60 minutes. (The instructor provides a handout with the detailed description of each assumption and different types of teaching strategies all on separate pieces (Appendix E)).

Task: Using the handout, match each assumption with the list of strategies; choose three strategies from the list and elaborate on how each of them can address the presented andragogical assumption. Create 2-3 FL classroom activities using one or two from chosen strategies. Discuss with your partner/partners, write, and present to the rest of the group. Reflect on results and discuss.

Slide 40

Think-Pair-Share activity: How would you define/describe your FL teaching approach? What are the pros and cons of this approach? Present the summary of the teaching approaches discussed in your pair to the rest of the group.

Discussion: What are the most prominent approaches to foreign language teaching at the language center, and why?

Note: Survey participants (the anonymous online survey conducted at the site) described approaches that could be used in the classroom to address learners' needs as the following: Learner-centered, language-centered, learner- and teacher-centered, differentiated, learner- and language-centered, communicative (language-centered), communicative (learner and language-centered), interactive, and indirect.

Discussion. Discuss other approaches that are not reflected in survey responses: language specific, such as task-based, project-based, content-based, open architecture, holistic, transformational (vs. transitional), and others.

Note: the emphasis is on the "no size fits all," however, the understanding of the major FL teaching approaches and awareness of their benefits and offsets can help instructors to choose most effective means for promoting students' success.

(Approximately 45 minutes).

Slide 41

Discussion: Discuss the teacher's role in facilitating adult students' learning in your educational environment (50-60 minutes).

Small-group or pair-work: Based on discussion, summarize the descriptions of teacher's role in facilitating adult students' learning.

Present the results, reflect, and discuss.

Slide 42

The instructor presents the andragogical process model authored by Knowles and asks participants to compare the results of their previous activity with this model, followed by discussion (50-60 minutes).

Work in pairs. Using Knowles's andragogical model (Appendix F), create a list of activities for each element that could be relevant to your classroom practices (choose a topic, a language level, and a type of a lesson if needed).

Presentation of results and discussion.

Slide 43

Participants' reflection and feedback (10-15 minutes).

Prompts: What new have you learned today? What insights or inspirations did you have during the presentation? What will you walk away knowing from today's session? Do you have any comments, remarks, or suggestions?

The instructor answers the questions and provides comments.

Slide 44

References for Day 2.

Slide 45

Professional Development Workshop
for Foreign Language Instructors

APPLYING PRINCIPLES OF
ANDRAGOGY FOR
ENGAGING ADULT
STUDENTS IN FOREIGN
LANGUAGE LEARNING

DAY 3

Day 3.
Greetings.
Group discussion: Recall and reflection on the previous day learning. What is retained and why? (10 Minutes).

Slide 46

Discussion: What is language-centered teaching? What is your opinion about using grammar-translational and audiolingual FL teaching methods? What is your opinion about using communicative language teaching approach? How do you understand the relations between learner-centered and language-centered teaching? (10-15 minutes).

Slide 47

Discussion: How do you identify the language-related needs of students in your class? (For example, based on data from assessment and testing, observations, students' self-assessment, and feedback, etc.).

Read-think-pair-share: Elaborate on the following perceptions about language-centered students' needs from the online survey at the local site (Appendix G).

Reflect and discuss in the whole group.

(Approximately 25-30 minutes).

Slide 48

Brain-storming: Recall all students' foreign language proficiency assessment techniques applicable in your classroom? Name all formal and informal, summative, and formative. (For example, Cloze tests, Oral Proficiency Test, DLPT, quizzes, multiple choice tests, comprehension questions, discussions, presentations, transcription and translation tests, verbal interpretation, creative writing assessments, interviews, etc.).

Discussion: What are the advantages and disadvantages of these instruments?

(Approximately 10-15 minutes).

Slide 49

Discussion: What are the most common approaches to teach Grammar and Vocabulary?

Small-group activity: Discuss your perceptions of the most effective ways to advance students' in a target language grammar and vocabulary. Name three language-centered activities for each grammar and vocabulary learning. Discuss the possibilities of presenting or adjusting these activities from the learner-centered perspectives (for example, ask learners to work in pairs and present a specific grammar category for others, or ask students to create their vocabulary list of new words based on the selected material).

Present the results of your small-group work to others. Reflect on the activity and discuss.
(Approximately 30 minutes).

Slide 50

Discussion: What are the ILR levels? How often do you refer to the ILR levels in your practice? Participants decide on the ILR levels from the list that are most pertinent to their current students (Appendix H). (Most likely, ILR levels 2+ or 3).

Small-group work: Using the activities from Appendix I or adding some from your practices, choose 5, and modify them into activities that combine both language- and learner-centered approaches. Define the andragogical assumptions used in learner-centered approaches in these activities. How these activities would look without considerations of learner-centeredness? (Optional).

Group 1: Listening comprehension skills
Group 2: Reading comprehension skills
Group 3: Speaking skills
Group 4 (optional): Writing skills.

Present your work to others. Reflect on and discuss the results. (Approximately 60 minutes).

Additional resources:

Macpherson, A. (2015). *Cooperative Learning Group Activities for College Courses*. Surrey, BC Canada: Kwantlen Polytechnic University. Retrieved from http://www.kora.kpu.ca

Nilson, L.B. (2016). *Teaching at its best: A research-based resource for college instructors.* Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Slide 51

Movie clips and discussion (10-15 minutes)

Lead in discussion: Recall the plot of "My Fair Lady" ("My Fair Lady" movie (1964) or Bernard Shaw's "Pygmalion" (1912)).

Warner, J. (Producer), & Cukor, G. (Director). (1964). *My fair lady* [Motion picture episode]. USA: Warner Bros.

Watch and compare the two cuts.

1st episode (stop at 2:20). Vowel Awareness, My Fair Lady, 1964 Available from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MJr9SSJKkII&list=PLmJnqxAz9hhJSEwUc7H7YPYNCvfWBYSNk&index=5

Discussion: What language teaching strategies Professor Higgins used to teach Elisa? How successful were the lessons? What was the purpose of teaching? What was the purpose of learning?

2nd episode (stop at 3:00) "The Rain in Spain" – Rex Harrison, Wilfrid Hyde-White and Audrey Hepburn, 1964. Available from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xmADMB2utAo&list=PLmJnqxAz9hhJSEwUc7H7YPYNCvfWBYSNk&index=3

Discussion: What happened? What helped Elisa to move forward in her learning? (The expected answer: A move from the language- to learner-centered approach).

Image is retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/My_Fair_Lady

Slide 52

Pair-work: Working in pairs with instructors who teach same or similar language, decide on the type of the lesson (such as listening or reading comprehension, project-based, speaking practice, role-play, etc.). Create a 2-hour lesson plan with attention to both language-centered and learning-centered teaching approaches. For each step in the lesson plan, identify the possible application of andragogical principles. Start with learning goals and objectives for the lesson.

Present your lesson plan to others. Answer peers' questions. Reflect on your work the work of other groups. Provide feedback.

Discussion. How completing the activity influenced your perceptions of adult learners' needs and why? Identify useful strategies/information for possible further application? Share any related concerns. Share insights for further improvement in practices.
(Approximately 150 minutes).

Slide 53

Reflect on the last three days of learning and teaching.

Discussion: Did your best and worst expectation came true? What was most useful for you in this training session? What will you walk away knowing from this session? Name one resolution or a new idea that you will try to implement in your practices. Verbalize any questions or comments that you have.

Evaluation: Conduct a self-assessment of your learning and share your opinions following the prompts in the provided end of course evaluation form (Appendix J).

Slide 54

References

Macpherson, A. (2015). Cooperative Learning Group Activities for
        College Courses. Surrey, BC Canada: Kwantlen
        Polytechnic University. Retrieved
        from http://www.kora.kpu.ca

Nilson, L.B. (2016). *Teaching at its best: A research-based resource
        for college instructors.* Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Warner, J. (Producer), & Cukor, G. (Director). (1964). *My fair
        lady* [Motion picture episode]. USA: Warner Bros.

References for Day 3