

## **Report from BASKET meeting in London, February 27 and 28, 2012**

*Organisation: Vox, Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning*

*Meeting: London*

*Host organisation: University of London, Institute of Education*

*Date: 27.02.-28.02.2012*

*Location: University of London, Institute of Education, London*

### **I. Reflections**

#### **a. What were the most useful experiences?**

The methods used in teaching adult teachers in basic skills and ESOL were explained and described to us in a very efficient way (short versions). We also had to act as trainees and do some of the exercises the students normally have to do. This was very enjoyable, and it was also very useful for us to understand the content and the approach of the training.

ESOL: we were exposed to how helpless you may feel and how difficult it is to learn a new language in a new country, as an immigrant or refugee.

The exercise of prioritizing different disciplines in terms of their relevance to adult literacy teaching, was also very interesting and awareness raising. Teachers and researchers would associate education in basic skills and ESOL with a socio-cultural approach and cognitive psychology.

Also the principle that you should be brought outside your comfort zone to really understand how it may feel like to be a learner, is an example of good practice in our opinion.

We were also exposed to questions like "what is literacy", " what do you do when you read and write" etc. You think you know the answer but very quickly realize that there may be different answers or opinions on this.

#### **b. What can be considered as examples of good practices?**

We saw a film from a teaching practice group showing how theory and practice are combined in teacher training. There was a group of trainees practicing together in a class together with the teacher of the class. The trainees took turns of teaching while the other watched. These sequences were followed by feedback, reflection and discussion in groups afterwards, with the teacher taking part. The mentor at the university also took part and commented on the trainee.

We think it is a very fruitful to let the students be exposed to the teaching situation very early in their training, even before they had learned much theory (pedagogics), in addition to peer tutoring. We think it is very good that there is so much space for reflection as a part the training.

- c. What did you learn that is similar or different from policy and practice in your own country?

We recognised very much of what we heard in London, because we have been very much inspired from the work done in the UK. We have developed our competence goals for basic skills based on the model in the UK. We also use much of the same methods and practice in teaching Norwegian as a second language.

d. What conclusions can be drawn from the experiences of the meeting? What recommendation can be made based on the experiences and discussions of the meeting?

- at EU level;

There should be flexible, maybe shorter, courses for teachers training basic skills to adults in all EU countries. The training should be flexible because the trainers will have very different and variable background and experience. This would ensure that teachers have qualifications. At the same time it is important not to lose good teachers because of too strict requirements.

In the UK there are two different educations for teachers of basic skills depending on whether you already have a teacher qualification or not. We think this is a good way of organising the professional continuous development of basic skills teachers.

In the UK they offer shorter courses of 30 hours (approximately one week), we think that is a good idea. This could be combined with, short following courses (this was not the case in the UK).

- at national policy making level/at institutional level;

In England you are encouraged to get a qualification in order to teach basic skills to adults. We think this is a good thing and it would contribute to increase the importance or prestige of this field. In addition, we think the same recommendations that we have suggested at EU level should be applied to national level.

Local or regional networks of basic skills teachers could also be a good idea to enhance the quality.

