

Learning for the Elderly: Education as A Relational Process

Renate Schramek

Abstract – The learning concept of geragogy in Germany is concerned with perceiving of the individual benefits of learning: education is seen as the possibility to enter into the world in relation to others and participate in the world, as a responsible protagonist, by means of interaction and relationships. This following view will present in detail the articles available on learning processes in old age.

Keywords – Geragogy, Lifelong Learning, Learning Arrangements, Relational Understanding of Geragogy, Didactics for the Elderly.

I. INTRODUCTION

Why is lifelong learning or education for the elderly meaningful? How do we conceptualize the education process for the elderly? What are the consequences that arise from this?

An initial explanation of the terminologies is necessary to answer these questions adequately: a distinction is established between a third and a fourth age: “the third age” is associated with activity while the “fourth” is characterized by withdrawal [1].

The life phase of old age can stretch from 30 to 40 years. This phase in Germany is marked by diverse and quite different ways of life, precisely in view of activity or withdrawal. Likewise, physical and cognitive capabilities as well as material and social situations differ greatly from one another – this focuses attention on both the inter-individual differences – i.e. the fact that people age differently – and the intra-individual differences – i.e. a person ages in various capabilities at differing rates within him or herself. From the developmental psychological point of view it is well known that people in the third and fourth ages grapple with different development tasks, existential questions and themes. During the third age the individual often has relatively greater mobility and so-called “young old-agers” are often interested in cultural themes and engage themselves in social matters. As a rule the radius and sphere of activity in the fourth age contracts and developmental tasks and themes (such as the maintenance of health, organizing self-determined everyday life, how to cope with limits, dependency, accepting help etc.) become foremost.

Geragogy as a scientific discipline that involves research, teaching and practice with learning and education for the old aged, both actually in old age or approaching old-age stems from the understanding of old age as a development task: the limitations of which may, however, be accompanied by potential gains. Education is hereby understood as an impulse, in which the challenges of old age, in all their diversity, are confronted with openness and learning. Higher life expectations, longer health, bound up with the potential and individual gains (e.g. knowledge experience and the necessary spare time for actual involvement) are perceived as favorable

conditions that the elderly have the opportunity to rethink anew and organize as development options in both their individual and public spheres [2, 3].

What is at under consideration in the following text is learning for the elderly, in the context of lifelong learning under relational aspects. It also embraces the complexity of accompanying aspects in the learning process to see how they interact. The relationality of learning processes is of particular emphasized. And furthermore the importance a relational understanding of education to the conceptual development of geragogy is discussed.

II. ON THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING AND EDUCATION FOR THE ELDERLY – A SOCIO-GERONTOLOGICAL CATEGORIZATION

When we speak of geragogic concepts regarding both learning and education, for clarification, it is necessary to distinguish between the terminologies. In the discourse of learning (in old age) the construction of behavior and knowledge patterns are thermalized primarily. The education discourse in Germany includes this learning understanding, but goes beyond that. It aims at the individual that is learning and becomes learned and the organization of the world in which it learns [4]. In this instance what is referred to is the understanding of education as already formulated in 1960 by the German Committee for Education and the Educational System. The committee states that with regard to adult education the actual term ‘educated’ applies to a person living in the constant endeavor to understand society and the world and acting upon this understanding accordingly [5].

In terms of the necessity of lifelong learning, in the framework of this discourse, what is involved, above all, is the understanding of learning meaning adaptation to the new as well as the construction of knowledge and behavior patterns. Increased life expectation on the one hand, the many years the individual wishes to organize, constant changes and further transitions occurring along the way and the increasing changes in society, on the other, demand a continual re-orientation processes.

Of the broad educational terms favored here those formulated for the understanding of education in old age by the Gerontology Commission [2 pp. 125 – 127] [6] are also appropriate. Here education is not confined only to the acquisition of knowledge and qualifications but also refers to “...capabilities, skills and experience that make for effective, creative interaction with current or future demands and tasks “[6, p. 81].

In this way the education terminology becomes the guiding concept of geragogy, in which the discourse on lifelong learning is situated. Thus the reasons for lifelong learning can also serve as the postulate for offers in education or take the lead in the context of aging itself. Furthermore, the term “education in old age” crops up

once more in the concepts of education policy: as a factor to be taken seriously regarding the organization of personal and public life in times of demographic change. Thus in terms of the educational possibilities for individuals: learning and education can contribute by grappling with the constant change, and meeting with the challenges ushered in as a consequence to find ways to deal with them constructively and use the opportunities that arise in each case [2]. Learning and education – understood as synonyms here – is given the following functions: to open options and encourage the organization of individual’s lives. They can also contribute to the knowledge and competences between the generations, to the maintaining of health and as a result help avoid diseases. They can even contribute to extended employability or support the possibilities of (active) social participation in the post-acquisitional phase – for example regarding qualification offers in the context of voluntary involvement, as well as special education offers. The education concept of geragogy certainly goes beyond a listing of individual benefits. Education can be seen far more as a potential to enter into a relationship with others and the world and to organize connections and relationships with them as a responsible participant.

III. THE EDUCATION DISCOURSE IN THE DEBATE

A) Understanding of Education: Understanding and Doing

(Self-) education of the elderly differs from learning at earlier phases in life in as much as it no longer concerns itself with the acquisition of professional qualifications – but exceptions do of course exist. The goal of learning is no longer an immediate usability of the content e.g. in professional life. This de-professionalization offers the opportunity for the elderly and extremely elderly age to recognize their own conscious as well as unconscious competences and potentials and the choice to further unfold “potentials”: thus allowing them, for instance, to discover new interests and fields of activity or define new tasks.

The objective of the organization of learning and educational arrangements in the context of the elderly is to accompany the learners in the process of their dealing with their personal, societal and historical (life) worlds, for that process of dealing and gaining understanding to open up further, new courses of action [7]. Learning for the elderly pursues therefore far less an output orientation – such as the continuing and further education during professional life – but aims more at a developmental process that is open to its results and potentials. This simultaneously encompasses understanding and acting. In concrete situations understanding and acting are closely linked: self-reflexion and personal life organization, exchange in “reflexive milieus” and joint action as well as socially related open discourse and political activity are often mutually determined [8].

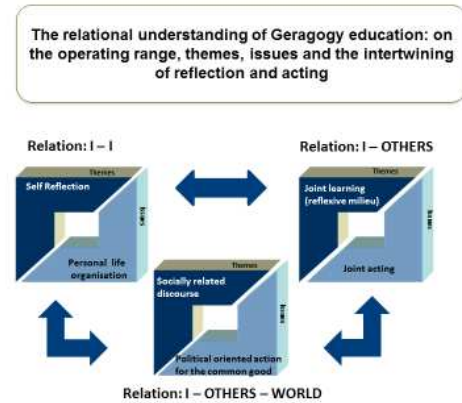


Illustration 1: The relational understanding of Geragogy education: on the operating range, themes, issues and the intertwining of reflection and acting. (skulling to Bubolz-Lutz et al. 2010)

Fig. 1. The relational understanding of geragogy education: on the operating range, themes, issues and the intertwining of reflection and acting, [alluding to 8]

The education theory of Holzkamp [7] is also taken up here, based on the learners learning significantly from a fundamental and continuing connection with their own learning projects. Education is then understood as a specific form of human action, in which the individual develops him or herself in new social constellations of meaning and acquires an expanded competence to act enabling the individual to improve their quality of life.

B) Contexts and Interpretations of Learning

In the post professional life phase education processes rarely take place in formal environments: most of them occur in the life world of the elderly person; in informal environments and activities (e.g. via lectures, travel, in joint intergenerational activities). While learning in everyday life occurs almost unnoticed and almost “en passant”, the learning processes become established in connection with civic involvement or neighborhood developments schemes. Schäffter talks of learning in the “intermediary field” between everyday learning and institutional learning arrangements offered by education providers such Germany’s Adult Education Centre’s (Volkshochschulen) [9] – particularly for the elderly [10]. Regarding civic learning the exchange within an initiative and learning through reflection of joint praxis is at the Centre. Learning stems from practice and for practice. In this way, out of the learning impulse for practice there also arise learning opportunities and requirements for practice. And here too, the three above-mentioned ranges of education are found again: learning from oneself, learning through the organization of social relations and the (participatory)-organization of social relationships through learning.

The intentions and motivations for learning change in old age – as well as changes in the life phase, de-professionalization, for instance, play additional roles. The organization of their own lives and the everyday move more into the Centre, the motives for learning become strongly linked to the individual’s requirements and interests. With this knowledge, offers are established in the social sphere or in the realm of their motivations. They offer impulses to learn close to the living area and utilize

locations of everyday life as new learning places [11]. So-called “anchor points” (sites where elderly and old age people are known or where they are relevant) become sites of education [12]. Education impulses which are available for old people by other old people are of great significance in this context, [13]. Thus an on-site learning consultancy for older people can be offered. In this instance the elderly act as learning consultants. They create the possibilities for other senior citizens to open up to learning processes, to inquire about individual paths of access, interests and needs “on an equal footing” and search for suitable solutions.

C) *Learning Arrangements Between Externally Organized Offers and Support for Self-organized Learning*

In the meantime, a broad range of offers, usually for full-time activities for the elderly, has become available in the context of education for the elderly. Of these are offers of professional (further) education for the elderly, to keep access open to them regarding the developments in particular concrete fields of work. These take the form of offers from further educational institutions such as the Adult Education Institute (VHS), studies for people in the third age at Universities, qualification offers for a chosen voluntary involvement or a new professional career and offers from (church) communities etc. The number of educational offers for elderly and old-aged – also in the field of further education – has increased significantly in recent years. Likewise the interest and participation of old-aged people has grown correspondingly [14 cf. for the 65-80-year-old group; and 15 for older people up to 64-years-old]. Direct offers from educational institutions are, however, used primarily by those people who are well situated, trained and already accustomed to searching for education offers and making use of them. Formally organized educational offers such as offers in the field of blended learning (connecting traditional learning forms with modern forms of E-learning) – will naturally be used by better-placed elderly and old-aged people with a higher educational background and higher educational attainment [16]. It is noteworthy that this group corresponds to the increase in recent years of the image characterized by the term the “active old-aged”.

On the other hand, over the last two decades, a trend has been observed that has nothing to do with externally organized offers, but with the capabilities and will of old-aged people for self-organization. From a theoretical perspective, in 1999, Schäffter already criticized the orientation of the offers of education for the elderly [9 pp. 136]. During the same period, adult educator Dräger designed an educational infrastructure model for the use of the elderly [17]. As a result, concepts were developed taking into greater consideration the self-determination of the organization of the learning process that had been observed [18].

Currently self-determined learning approaches are of the same value alongside offer oriented educational conceptions. It has been shown that the heterogeneity of old age calls for manifold concepts and offers, appropriate to the differing and various life situations, needs, interests

and a need to develop tasks for the elderly and old-aged. Solely to establish conceptualized education offers, embraces only one aspect of the requirements. For the new generation of stronger, independence-oriented old-aged people, the provision of “learning spaces” is appropriate. In this instance, the themes and concerns are chosen by themselves and the organization of the learning processes is incumbent on those interested. But it is not to be overlooked that even such self-organized approaches are in need of secure basic conditions, like those frequently on offer at educational institutions [19].

D) *The Specifics of Learning for the Elderly*

The organization of learning processes for the elderly requires some “age typical” specifics. In view of the fact that the aging process, particularly that which occurs in people of really advanced age, means one has to take into consideration the slower learning pace of certain individuals in the group. One has to schedule in more repetitions and pauses at briefer intervals and pay attention to intelligibility. One has often to take into consideration, in a special way, the wish for an exchange of experiences, contact and the desire for community. During the connecting to the life world, requirements and interests constitute the learning desideratum for all age groups and the importance of orientation to biography in educational work with the elderly is particularly clear. After all, the experience knowledge of the older generation is central to the concept of old age education, flanked by principles of self-organization and self-determination and the advancement of the individual [20]. For that reason, the “participative learning” approach remains central.

E) *On the relation of education and relationship – a relational understanding of the understanding of education*

In the last decade brain research has demonstrated the importance of “successful” interactions for human development quite impressively. It describes the brain as made up of individual parts, an adaptable and plastic whole – and that which most crucially influences us, throughout everything, is what flows through our senses. Our social experiences, our experiences with relationships play a vital role here. They lead, in fact, to structural changes in the brain. The neurobiologist Hüther speaks of the “social construction of the human brain” [21]. Furthermore, trauma research informs us that emotional injuries change the biology of the brain. This is the effect feelings and relationships have on our senses. Conversely, if we have the feeling to have mastered something or we experience a happy relationship it feels good, for in this moment the motivation systems release feel-good hormones. We feel recognition and affection or love. This satisfies fundamental human needs of attention and recognition.

It follows accordingly that the most important competence required in life is skill in relationships – the competence to create relationships. Doctor, gene researcher and neurobiologist Bauer uses this as the foundation upon which learning is built [22]. The neurobiologist argumentation postulates that learning from role models works simply through watching, which then

activates the nerve cells in the brain responsible for the specific action required. Through inner participation while watching (without actual participation in reality) a learning process is actually completed. As a consequence, what is observed connects to the learner's own experience. One such activation of nerve cells in the brain is also possible through feeling. But in order for an activation of the corresponding brain area to occur through watching, a positive, emotional relationship to the observed is required i.e. to want to learn something in particular or to want to be able to do so. In this way, through the relationship to the activity/competence, the learning process is initiated: a fact will be linked with feeling (through the limbic system) and reaches another sphere of activity other than that of the mere storage of facts. Transmitting through interpersonal relations is known to us in this process between parents and children. For example, if parents try to say something to children during the age of separating, they cannot accept it, whereas should the same words come out of their friend's mouths those self-same words can be integrated into their own actions.

In Educational Science concepts, particularly in the area of professional learning in grown adults, this link is usually only rarely noted. In clear contradistinction, geragogy has observed this connection and emphasizes the principle of relationship-orientation to be a distinguishing feature of the learning process – relationships to the closest, to relatives, others and to the “world” as the focal point of their observations [23]. The experienced relationship quality – to the lecturer, learning guide and/or to the other learners – is seen as a central factor which opens people up to learning, to addressing the new, the unfamiliar, accepting criticism and to critically reflect and change their own attitudes.

In this sense learning psychology particularly underlines the importance of experience of “integration” for the development of learning motivation [24]. Educational scientist Künkler states that in his differentiated analysis of modern learning theory approaches [25], that the subject of the relation so him/herself and to the world in the relation to others is learned. The central importance of encounter and relationship is to be found again in approaches of existential philosophy – for instance in Buber's concept of encounter. This describes the phenomenon of coming to oneself in others [26], affirms the relationship as the “beginning” [26, p. 22] and postulates a level of “between”. Learning is carried out therefore “...beyond the subjective and on this side of the objective in the sphere of the between” [25, p. 475]. Thereby the dialogical moment in the encounter of I and thou is termed as the transforming moment in the learning process.

What now becomes interesting is considering what kind of relationship quality benefits learning in a special way. For this purpose research results already exist from the 1950s: they refer to a competence motivation moored within people [27], who already in their childhood demonstrated the meaning of the expression “to be able to be alone”. Gerontologist Wahl has described this in his book, “Das kann ich allein” (I can do that alone). He

emphasized that the competence motivation is effective even at a very advanced age – and how difficult it is for instance, for nursing personnel to be granted scope for action in looking after such subjects in old age [28].

Over our entire lifespan we need the feeling we can solve problems, annoyances and difficulties, overcome them and to manage something ourselves, with support, if necessary. The feeling of self-effectiveness comes from this continually necessary experience of self-determination. Finally, communication research tells us that successful communication does not arise from the objective level but actually from the relational level: the relational level determines that which will be taken up at an objective level [29].

The knowledge summarized here from the various scientific disciplines refers to the necessity to create a far stronger relation-oriented understanding of education. Hereby the learning process appears to be embedded in an interactive and dialogical relationship [25]. Thus the relationship quality in learning processes is the pivotal point for learning which focuses on a “good” life or quality of life.

The educational understanding of geragogy takes the relational aspect up in a particular way: here three central “relational fields” are discerned: the relationship to oneself (relation I – I), the relationship to other people (I – OTHER) and the relationship to society / the world (I – OTHER – WORLD) (cf. Fig. 1). Accordingly, education scientist Faulstich [30] also distinguishes three effective directions or levels of learning: ‘Individual’ (micro-level) ‘neighborhood’ (meso-level) and ‘society’ (macro-level). In his understanding, education means to acquire competences that the individual needs, “...to understand concrete, societal problems, to which they find their own position and to be able to influence them by acting” [30, p. 214]. Thus human learning should be “...geared to a stubborn insistence on the best possible future life” [30, p. 215].

IV. STARTING POINTS FOR DIDACTICS FOR THE ELDERLY – FUTURE RELATED NECESSARY ACTIONS

In Künkler's approach “learning in a relationship” – referring back to neuroscientific and constructivist theories – the most important role of the others, in this interpersonal field for learning is particularly emphasized [25]. This following relational understanding of learning conceives of education as a radical occurring of relationships. The person learns in an interaction with him/herself, with the others, with the group and societal relationships. In the context of the educational process it involves – according to the approach – balancing out the various needs and standpoints and reconciling of paradoxes such as the freedom of the individual and the given order. Thus the process of learning is understood as a process of “subjectivation” and likewise as a process of “participation” (in social milieus, groupings) [25, p. 563]. Learning can also be understood, however, as a “...relational occurrence”, which ultimately evades the

distinction between the individual and the social [25, p. 568], and as a process which takes place “through the meshing of self-, world- and other relations”. Thereby the aspect of the unplannable and openness to results of an educational process is introduced. “Learning in between takes place in the mode of interconnectedness such as relatedness and through these is ... essentially determined” [25, p. 568]. In this sense learning is to be understood as a dialogical process from the ground up, that not only focuses on itself and its counterpart, but also on the world and society (cf. in addition the approach of Bateson) [31]. On the basis of such an understanding of education the following three central challenges for learning in the phase of old age can be named, which emphasize three different aspects simultaneously:

1. Education for the elderly to be the opportunity for self-affirmation and identity development – in the light of the challenges of old age to develop a new understanding of self/an identity in differing relationships to people.
2. Education for the elderly to be the impulse for interaction with others and the development of a relationship culture quite detached from any thinking of performance and product.
3. To see education for the elderly as a task to understand social relationships and grasp their logic and enabling them to provide a contribution to cope with change in a manner proper to human dignity.

V. THE FINAL CRITICAL ASSESSMENT

In conclusion, if critical comment on education for the elderly be allowed – education is smeared with the stain of the exclusion of certain groups. This is accurate particularly in regard to older and very old people in differing or in precarious life situations. It emerges that traditional education offers are excluding, as these are more in demand by people of a middle class milieu. Furthermore, impaired mobility often presents a limiting factor. Also in the context of commitment, positive images of active and productive old age are forcibly one-sided. As a result all these old aged people become marginalized as they cannot or do not want to meet with the predominantly more middle class image of productive old age. A critical perception of education for the elderly comes to the conclusion that it cannot be a school-like approach for the elderly nor can it exclude certain groups in any way. Education should also not serve as an instrument for societally “standardized” presentations of the elderly geared to being “active” in terms of productivity. Nevertheless, the personal as well as the societal use of learning and education for the elderly has to be recognized. A way to deal with the critical aspects connected with learning for the elderly consists in conceiving of learning and education for a long and healthy life so that the old aged design their development and learning themselves – and are therefore accompanied and, when necessary, supported.

REFERENCES

- [1] P. Laslett: Das dritte Alter. Historische Soziologie des Alterns. München, 1995
- [2] BMFSFJ: *Fünfter Bericht zur Lage der älteren Generation in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*. Potenziale des Alters in Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Der Beitrag älterer Menschen zum Zusammenhalt der Generationen, 2005. Berlin, Available: <http://www.bmfsfj.de/RedaktionBMFSFJ/Abteilung3/Pdf-Anlagen/fuenfter-altenbericht.property=pdf.bereich=bmfsfj.sprache=de.rwb=true.pdf>
- [3] D. S. Jopp, Ch. Rott, K. Boerner, K. Boch, A. Kruse: *Zweite Heidelberger Hundertjährigen-Studie: Herausforderungen und Stärken des Lebens mit 100 Jahren*. 2013. Stuttgart, Robert Bosch Stiftung GmbH
- [4] H. Thiersch: Bildung, in: H.-U. Otto, H. Thiersch. *Handbuch Soziale Arbeit*, 2011. München, Reinhardt, p. 162
- [5] German Committee for Education and the Educational System (1960): Zur Situation und Aufgabe der deutschen Erwachsenenbildung. Stuttgart, p. 20
- [6] BMFSFJ: *Sechster Bericht zur Lage der älteren Generation in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*. Altersbilder in der Gesellschaft. Deutscher Bundestag, Drucksache 17/3815, 2010. Berlin, pp. 81 – 82, Available: <http://www.bmfsfj.de/RedaktionBMFSFJ/Abteilung3/Pdf-Anlagen/bt-drucksache-sechster-altenbericht.property=pdf.bereich=bmfsfj.sprache=de.rwb=true.pdf>
- [7] K. Holzkamp: *Lernen*. Subjektwissenschaftliche Grundlegung. 1993. Frankfurt am Main, Campus
- [8] E. Bubolz-Lutz, E. Gösken, C. Kricheldorf, R. Schramek: *Geragogik*. Bildung und Lernen im Prozess des Alterns. Das Lehrbuch. 2010. Stuttgart, Kohlhammer, p. 26
- [9] O. Schäffter: Altersbildung und Didaktik. Perspektiven einer allgemeinen Didaktik lebensbegleitenden Lernens, in: R. Bergold, D. Knopf, A. Mörchen (eds.). *Altersbildung an der Schwelle des neuen Jahrhunderts*. 1999. Würzburg, Echter. pp. 196 – 200
- [10] S. Kade: *Alten und Bildung*. Eine Einführung. 2007. Bielefeld, Bertelsmann, p. 64
- [11] O. Harhues: Kreative Zugänge zu Werteorientierung und Engagement, in: A. Mochen, M. Tolksdorf (eds.). *Lernort Gemeinde*. Ein neues Format der Erwachsenenbildung. 2 Bielefeld, Bertelsmann. pp. 285 – 295
- [12] R. Schramek: *Lernen im Alter*, in: UGB forum. Fachzeitschrift für Gesundheitsförderung, 32. Jg. Heft 2/2015, pp. 85 – 88
- [13] G. Holzapfel: *Älterwerden – die ganz andere Baustelle für Männer*. Kurse für Männer ab 50, in: forum EB, Heft 4/ 2013, pp. 13 – 16
- [14] R. Tippelt, B. Schmidt, S. Schnurr, S. Sinner, C. Theisen: *Bildung Älterer. Chancen im demografischen Wandel*. 2009. Bielefeld, Bertelsmann
- [15] F. Bilger, A. Strauß: *Weiterbildungsverhalten in Deutschland 2014 – Ergebnisse des Adult Education Survey – AES Trendbericht*. 2015. BMBF (ed.), Bonn
- [16] C. Iller: Berufliche Weiterbildung im Lebenslauf – bildungswissenschaftliche Perspektiven auf Weiterbildungs- und Erwerbsbeteiligung Älterer, in: Kruse, A. (ed.). *Weiterbildung in der zweiten Lebenshälfte*. 2008. Bielefeld, Bertelsmann, pp. 67 – 91
- [17] H. Dräger, U. Günther, B. Thunemeyer: *Autonomie und Infrastruktur*. Zur Theorie, Organisation und Praxis differentieller Bildung. 1997. Europäische Hochschulschriften, Reihe 11, Pädagogik, Bd. 727, Berlin/ Bern
- [18] E. Bubolz-Lutz, H.-P. Rüffin: *Ehrenamt – eine starke Sache*. Selbstbestimmtes Lernen Älterer für ein selbstgewähltes ehrenamtliches Engagement: Begründungen, Erfahrungen, Anstöße. 2001. Montabaur
- [19] R. Schramek, E. Bubolz-Lutz: Partizipatives Lernen – ein geragogischer Ansatz, in: G. Naegle, E. Olbermann, A. Kuhlmann (eds.). *Teilhabe im Alter gestalten*. Wiesbaden, VS Verlag, pp. 161 – 180

- [20] D. Köster, R. Schramek, S. Dorn: *Qualitätsziele moderner SeniorInnenarbeit und Altersbildung*. Das Handbuch, 2008. Oberhausen, Athena
- [21] G. Hüther: *Bedienungsanleitung für ein menschliches Gehirn*, 2006. Göttingen, Kösel
- [22] J. Bauer: *Warum ich fühle, was du fühlts*. 2006. München, Heyne
- [23] E. Bubolz-Lutz: *Geragogik – wissenschaftliche Disziplin und Praxis der Altersbildung*, in: Informationsdienst Altersfragen, 2007, H. 5, pp. 11 – 15
- [24] E. L. Deci, R. M. Ryan: *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior* 1985. New York, Plenum
- [25] T. Künkler: *Lernen in Beziehung*. Zum Verhältnis von Subjektivität und Rationalität in Lernprozessen. 2011. Bielefeld, Transcript Verlag, pp. 450 – 475
- [26] M. Buber: *Das dialogische Prinzip*, 2006, Gütersloh, Gütersloher Verlagshaus
- [27] R. W. White: Motivation reconsidered: The concept of competence, in: *Psychological Review*, Vol. 66(5), Sept 1959, pp. 297 – 333
- [28] H.-W. Wahl: *Das kann ich allein*, 1991. Bern, Huber
- [29] P. Watzlawick, J. H. Beavin, D. D. Jackson: *Menschliche Kommunikation – Formen, Störungen, Paradoxien*, 1969. Bern, Huber
- [30] P. Faulstich: *Menschliches Lernen*. Eine kritisch-pragmatische Lerntheorie. 2013. Bielefeld, Transcript Verlag
- [31] G. Bateson: *Ökologie des Geistes*. Anthropologische, psychologische, biologische und epistemologische Perspektiven. Frankfurt / Main, Surkamp

AUTHOR’S PROFILE



Dr. Renate Schramek

She is deputy director of the Forschungsinstitut Geragogik (Geragogy Research Institute) and academic employee at the chair for lifelong learning at the University of Hagen, main focus: lifelong learning, education in old age, civic involvement.