Learning Design as the base for adult educators' professionalism in the field of intergenerational learning

Progettazione formativa come base per la professionalità dei formatori degli adulti nell'ambito dell'apprendimento intergenerazionale

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ABSTRACT
The educational interventions dealing with the ill-defined educational problems frequently found in the field of adults' education require high professionalism. Intergenerational Learning, a trend of growing importance for lifelong learning, is a case that illustrates particularly well this situation. Emerging strategies and technologies like Learning Design could support educators' professionalism, aiming to work in a more effective way. In this article, the following research question was explored: Can the process of design for learning, intended as forward oriented and creative process, support the achievement of adult educators' professionalism? The research consisted on a case study based on an European training programme, the "ALICE (Adults' Learning for Intergenerational Creative Experiences) training of trainers". The programme adopted several means, from more traditional residential and online training activities, to the deployment of an experimental idea based on the ALICE educational framework, the ALPP (Adult Learning Pilot Programme). Learning Design was introduced as concept entailing a set of tools along the whole process of implementation of the ALPP. The phases of this creative process (contextualizing, planning, implementing, evaluating and sharing) were analyzed through a holistic and mostly interpretivist (yet mixed methods) approach. As a result, the connections between learning design as forward oriented process and the adult educators' professionalism were observed, documented and discussed.

Gli interventi formativi che hanno a che fare con problemi poco definiti, come quelli relativi alla formazione degli adulti, richiedono un'alta professionalità. L'apprendimento intergenerazionale, una tendenza di crescente importanza nel contesto del apprendimento permanente è un caso che illustra particolarmente questa situazione. Alcune strategie e tecnologie emergenti come il Learning Design (progettazione formativa con uso di supporti digitali per la visualizzazione di specifiche dimensioni didattiche e pedagogiche) potrebbero diventare un valido supporto per lo sviluppo professionale degli formatori degli adulti, mirando a migliorare l'efficacia del loro lavoro. In questo articolo, la seguente domanda di ricerca è stata esplorata: Può essere il processo di progettazione formativa supportato da tecnologie, inteso come processo creativo e orientato ai risultati, un valido supporto per lo sviluppo professionale dei formatori degli adulti? La ricerca ha focalizzato un caso di studio all'interno di un programma europeo di formazione dei formatori nel contesto del progetto ALICE (Formazione degli Adulti per la generazione di esperienze intergenerazionali creative). Il programma ha adottato diverse modalità per la formazione, dallla più tradizionale attività in presenza e le attività di formazione in rete, all'implementazione di una sperimentazione formativa consistente in attività pilota informali con adulti (Adults Learning Pilot Programmes, ALPP). La progettazione formativa supportata da strumenti digitali è stata introdotta attraverso una serie di strumenti digitali da utilizzare dalla pianificazione all'implementazione degli ALPP. Le fasi di questo processo creativo (contestualizzazione, pianificazione, implementazione, valutazione e condivisione) sono state analizzate attraverso un approccio olistico e interpretativo dei dati (ma basato su metodi misti). Come risultato, sono state osservate, documentate e discusse le connessioni tra progettazione formativa supportata da strumenti digitali e lo sviluppo professionale dei formatori.

KEYWORDS
Learning Design, adults' educators, professionalism, case study
Progettazione formativa, formatori degli adulti, professionalità, case study.

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Introduction

Educational projects for adults' education require careful reflection and planning with regard to the resources, the roles and forms of communication between the trainer and the participant. In fact, adults' education has been considered one of the less structured, ill-defined fields in terms of professional practices and competences required to operate effectively (Research voor Beleid, 2008). In some particular areas of adults' education, even the fact that an initiative is part of the discipline of education, or it falls into the area of health care and social development is object of discussion. The result is highly informal, fluid contexts of learning . For the educator this means that she has to feature the own context of work in every intervention, and that competences beyond the classroom management are to be acquired (Buiskool, Broek, van Lakerveld, Zarifis, & Osborne, 2010). Instead, other types of professional profiles in education (like teachers at school or academic context, and even vocational educational trainers) work in formal and non-formal environments with better defined tasks and activities (Przybylska, 2008).

In the case of Intergenerational learning (IL) as well as family learning, which both play a crucial role in the field of adults' education, we see clearer examples of the problem above mentioned. In fact, IL improves dialogue between generations through civic participation in common social and institutional spaces, triggering processes of informal learning towards the achievement – both by adults and children – of key competences for lifelong learning. However, it is also clear that ensuring IL through the creation of adequate educational environments is a challenge both for researchers and practitioners. Formal education promotes mainly intra-generational experiences, structured in learning contexts where little or no contact between among generations (beyond the technical role of teachers/educators) occurs (Loewen, 1995; Miller, Shapiro, & Hilding-Hamann, 2008). Instead, intergenerational learning implies setting up adequate learning contexts for both children and adults' learning (Newman & Hatton-Yeo, 2008). Moreover, events like parenting, cultural participation, support to the own kids' schooling, social activities, engage adults and have the potential of taking them to reflect on their own condition as lifelong learners, from one side, and as *educators* of the future generations, from the other (Margiotta, 2012; Raffaghelli, 2012). However this field of practice is frequently considered part of the "private" space (the case of family learning) or just a cultural, entertainment or volunteering space of practices, where no pedagogical approaches are needed.

If more effective practices for intergenerational learning are required, the need of intervening on adult educators' professionalism becomes an imperative: promoting professionals with the ability to understand new contexts of learning, and to reinforce the adults' key competences for the lifelong learning society without invading their sense of independence and advocacy in the social spheres of life, along informal learning occasions (Margiotta, 2011).

The concept of *design* provides us support at this point: like in the field of architecture or engineering, the educators can design their interventions, that is, analyzing the context, the available resources, the educational problem and the participant's motivations, in order to orchestrate *educational solutions* both supported by educational theories and the educator's own pedagogical experience. The practice of design is supported by the ability of *design thinking*, which is the ability to think about ill-defined problems, acquiring information, analyzing knowledge, and hence, designing possible solutions. It can be considered a style of thinking, that combines empathy for the context of a problem, creativity in the generation of insights and solutions, and rationality to analyze and fit solutions

to the context (Cross, 2007). From one hand, this type of thinking is connected to the own personal taste, creativity and imagination; but from the other, in the field of education it promotes the visibility of practices and the possibility to share them, to promote discussions about the set of values, the approaches and the effectiveness and quality of them (Kali, Goodyear, & Markauskaite, 2011). Therefore, the solutions achieved designing for learning would lead in time to a pedagogical reflection that can end up in further conceptualizations, that can be *represented* and *shared* (Laurillard, 2012).

The concept and practice of design has acquired growing importance in the field of educational research. Actually *Learning Design*, that is, an approach for educators to explore their educational problems and make more grounded decisions to plan/implement their pedagogical practices is an emerging trend (Agostinho, Bennett, Lockyer, & Harper, 2013; Conole, 2010; Goodyear & Dimitriadis, 2013). Why Learning Design to support adult educators' professionalism? As it has been emphasized in the extensive report commissioned by the European Commission, "Key competences for adult learning professionals" (Buiskool et al., 2010), designing for adults learning is one of the key competences for professionals operating in this area. In fact, to promote intergenerational/family learning, being this a rather ill structured field of practice, new forms of representation and sharing of educators' knowledge could lead to better approaches and skills to manage the problems encountered in the field. Therefore, there would be a joint development of professionalism (the single ability to intervene in a field of knowledge) as well as reflections contributing to the development and impact of adults' education (a consolidated set of practices that support a group of professionals in their ability to deal with specific educational situations).

In this paper my attempt is to illustrate how Learning Design, as practice that supports educators in capturing and representing the own (situated) plans of action within educational interventions, can be a key element to develop educators professionalism, towards quality and effectiveness of adults' education. This assumption is underpinned by the introduction of a specific training approach (that of the A.L.I.C.E project), where adults' educators are invited to implement a creative/reflective process of five stages; every stage introduces tools for representing as part of the Learning Design approach; furthermore, educators are encouraged to go beyond representing, by sharing and commenting other educators' designs. According to this approach, two levels of professionalism are promoted: the level of the single educator, and the level of the community of adults' educators.

The analysis of the process of *designing for learning* within a blended, international course is undertaken on the basis of an exploratory, interpretivist approach, attempting to show the connections between designing for learning and the reflections from the participants on the professional achievements.

1. Learning Design and Educators' Professionalism

The current focus of Learning Design is representing teaching and learning as an integrated process (Mor, Craft, & Hernández-Leo, 2013). Representing is something frequent in other disciplines like music, chemistry, architecture, and so on. Let's take into account the example of music[1]: wonderful music could have been lost if

1 This example is taken from the Larnaca Declaration on Learning Design: http://www.larnacadeclaration.org/

it was not for the invention of the system of musical notation. Of course a good system of notation does not make an interpreter excellent, not even good. But a good notation allows to understand the creator's idea, and to pass, from one musician to another, beautiful pieces of art. Learning Design aims at making visible the invisible art of education (Conole, 2012). Some designs will be more connected to the visual representation of ideas (Botturi & Stubbs, 2008), while others search for patterns and templates that allow the educators to work out the own ideas supported by the inputs given by the schemes for designing (Mor & Craft, 2012).

The development of LD as field of research was hand in hand with the idea of improving educators' professionalism; the two discussions are intertwined, as we will see. The focus of the LD movement was on searching for representations of learning and teaching strategies as a mean to promote effective reflection and sharing of practices (Koper, 2006, Conole, 2010, 2012). Furthermore, the discussion went on the direction of improving the status of teaching (within educational sciences) as *design science* (Laurillard, 2012), different from the natural sciences or humanities, basing on *designerly ways of knowing* (Cross, 2007). Adopting new pedagogical frameworks like socio-constructivism where knowledge cannot be "transmitted" effectively, but it is created through dialogue; or connectivism, like participation in networks of key people engaged in the development of a field of practice/ideas (Conole, 2012), the LD movement claimed that a clearer representation of envisaged pedagogical practices could had impact on further sharing, discussing and opening educational processes. Furthermore, Learning Design could have encompassed other two goals: to allow educators other than the original "creator" of an educational intervention to discuss, remix, and recreate educational processes; and to support learners' in better understanding the scheme of activity where they are engaged (Mor, Craft, & Hernández-Leo, 2013, Persico, 2013). Regarding this position, some designs could be more connected to the visual representation of ideas (Botturi, 2006; Agostinho, Harper, Oliver, Hedberg, & Wills, 2008), while others would search for patterns and templates that allow the educators to work out the own ideas supported by the inputs given by the schemes for design (Goodyear, 2005; Mor & Craft, 2012) . Across the two approaches, educational technologies are vastly adopted to support all sorts of representation (Conole, 2012). As we can see, LD encompass the improvement of educators skills' regarding: a) a holistic approach to a specific educational intervention, connecting learning goals to educational values and the expected impact of the activity; b) reflection along the intervention, comparing the initial plan and its expected results with the actual learning outcomes; c) documentation of an educational process in a way that its sharable and can be reproduced by others, becoming, at a certain point, a scheme of practice, that Laurillard has denominated *pedagogical pattern* (Laurillard, 2012).

Nevertheless, the value of LD for educators' professionalism may be conditioned by the way LD is envisaged as practice. As a matter of fact, in the last two years, new concern about the *use* of learning design (both the process and the products) has raised. Particularly, there has been criticism regarding the idea of just *representing* and expecting impacts of this activity on educational effectiveness and outcomes(Agostinho, 2011) . As Persico & Pozzi point out (Persico & Pozzi, 2013), *schemes and graphic representations* are not new practices in the field of design for learning; the authors go further saying that from the '80s for example conceptual maps have been used to describe and govern an educational intervention complexity (op.cit, p.137). Nowadays, the complexity of educational interventions (thinking for example at the educators and their daily activity) require

flexible and intuitive tools that can be easily adjusted during activities, strengthening the value of LD as support for educators' reflexivity. In the same vein, Goodyear and Dimitriadis claim for the connection of LD activities with pedagogical practices *in the green field* (Goodyear & Dimitriadis, 2013). That is, to understand the links between the process and products of LD and the actual pedagogical practice, on the basis of empirical analysis and further conceptualizations.

Building on Goodyear & Dimitriadis theoretical contribution, *design for adults learning* should go beyond a deterministic conception of Learning Design as the prior representation of a pedagogical intervention, addressing what the teachers and students have to do from the beginning or *ab ovo*; instead, it should be considered as a continuing process of reframing practice, *in medias res* (Goodyear & Dimitriadis, op.cit, p.3). As a result, designing for learning becomes a *looking forward process* (Dimitriadis & Goodyear, op.cit), influencing the educational intervention in an iterative process that includes four phases. I further considered every phase's impact on educators' professionalism, and added a further, fifth phase, to generate a framework for the case study hereby introduced.

Table 1 introduces the theoretical framework.

Design for Learning Phase*	Description	Expected impact on Educators Professionalism
Design for configuration	Representing (using narrative/visual tools) as a base to prepare the educational intervention.	Individual level - Knowledge and "vision" about an educational intervention. - Acknowledgement of potentialities and criticalities in a specific intervention - Community level - Sharable scheme of practice without confirmation of its effectiveness
Design for orchestration	Using Learning Design representations and tools created to support the implementation of a pedagogical practice.	Individual level - Management of educational interventions. - Strategic skills to intervening in critical situations as well as to catch up opportunities improving educational impact.
Design for reflection	Using Learning Design representations and tools to trigger reflection on the implemented pedagogical practices.	Individual level - Ability to analyze and compare the planned educational intervention with the effective learning outcomes and educational impact. - Ability to deepening on the sense of an educational intervention, thinking about the own deontological engagement.
Design for redesign and sharing	Using Learning Design representations and tools to support change and innovation applied to the implemented practice, including sharable schemes of practice (*pedagogical pattern*) as well as the results of an educational practice.	Individual level - Ability to monitor ongoing processes and reflect on the adjustments to be done in order to correct possible misleading. - Ability to change and improve the own professional work on the basis of the experience. Community level - Ability to "package" the own work in a way that is easily understandable and usable by peers. - Ability of networking on the basis of professional results, discussing about the possible improvements, implications for future practice, and impact on the professional identity.

Table 1 – Theoretical Framework connecting Design for Learning with Educators' Professionalism

(*) Phase 1 to 4 have been taken from Goodyear & Dimitriadis (2013); phase 4 has been re-elaborated by the author of this article.

2. Methodological approach

In this study, I attempt to demonstrate the connections between design for learning as creative process and the educators' professionalism. I further operationalized the relationship between designing for learning as *creative process* (in the sense of developing something from scratch, within an ill-defined situation) divided into four phases retracing the framework introduced (Tab. 1); and the educators' reflection and concrete professional skills acquired (as part of their professionalism). Focusing this study on a specific case (an international project of educational cooperation), the guiding research question was: *Can the process of Design for Learning, intended as forward oriented and creative process, support the achievement of adult educators' professionalism?* This research question entailed an experimental training activity to support adults' educators to design and implement engagement in intergenerational learning activities. Accordingly, the methodological approach chosen should support the ontology of the phenomenon analyzed (a creative process) and the research goals (exploring the connections between design for learning and educators' professionalism) (Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011). Therefore, the approach of *case study* was selected, since it entails a process of understanding the developments of a situated phenomenon, seen in its uniqueness and originality, as an "individual unit" (Stake R., 1994) or what has been later called a "functioning specific" or "bounded system" (Stake R., Qualitative Case Studies, 2008). The valuable contribution is hence the thickness of descriptions and information obtained regarding the problems posed and the developments of the situation. The boundaries of our case are given by:

a) The educational process and strategies to improve adults' education, in the context of the LLP-GRUNDTVIG project "Adults Learning for Intergenerational Creative Experiences" (see Margiotta & Raffaghelli this Issue);
b) The transnational and eLearning approach. Six institutions from IT, RO, UK, EL, CH built a course and an educational environment (on Moodle as Learning Management System) provided the space to reflect about practices and share ideas, during an initial phase of introduction to creative languages and the project's approach, which was more informative, and lasted 6 months (see Margiotta & Raffaghelli this Issue).
c) A professional learning community composed by 23 adults' educators and a team of 6 adults' education institutions attempting to shape new approaches, namely, the Adults Learning Pilot Programmes or ALPPs. The ALPPs' design overlapped with the final part of the eLearning activity, but the central part of ALPPs –the implementation- was conducted by educators coached by the professional community and by the national coordinators. As a matter of fact, during the ALPPs, the educators worked on the field to promote the idea of adults as educators as well as the value of creative languages to mediate intergenerational/family learning (see Margiotta & Raffaghelli this Issue).

Conceptually, it was not a simple training activity. Instead, the educators were provided with the ALICE project approach (use creative languages to promote intergenerational learning), being invited to *create* from grasp, an educational intervention adopting the approach but further providing reflections on the impact and the approach's shortcomings. Therefore, the "training" became *a creative process stimulating problem setting, problem solving and the generation of*

educational patterns. To this regard, hence, the theoretical background of Learning Design was embraced.

While for the educators and national coordinators the interest was, of course, to promote effective and quality educational interventions, the research focus for me was to explore the relationship between designing as *forward oriented practice* and professionalism as a *proxy* variable of effectiveness. As for the concept specification, I considered that the Learning Design phases were a dimension correlating with the development of professionalism being this last concept divided into the several abilities mentioned in the framework. The assumptions supporting this research were:

At the level of the single educator, the more s/he improve her/his skills about designing for adults' learning, the more s/he would be able of planning and intervening in ill-structured problems, providing creative educational solutions.

At the level of the community of adults' educators, the more the educators are able of designing for adults' learning, the more they can adopt tools to represent, share and discuss the own practices, reinforcing a field of professional practices, which is also part of the adults' educators professional identity. Technologies are a mean in the process of representation and sharing.

The Figure 1 represents the process along a timeline, while Table 2 shows this approach through its elements.

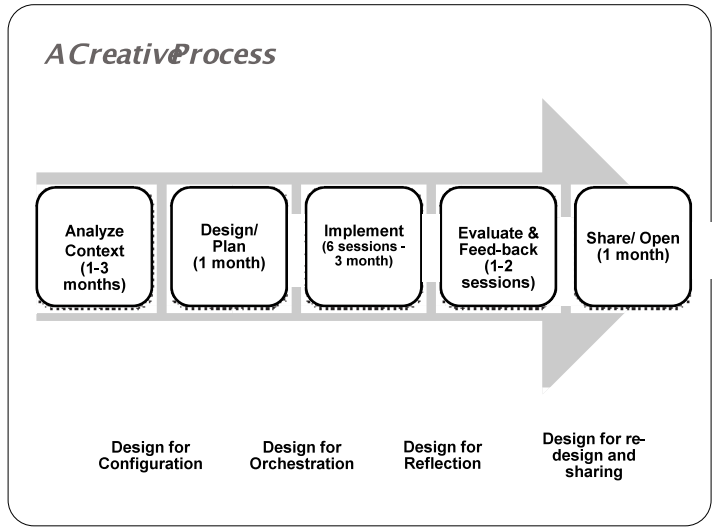


Figure 12 – Phases of Experimental Training for Adults' Educators

Phases of Design for Learning	Phases of Experimental Training for Adults' Educators	Description
Design for configuration	Contextualize	Objective: to collect information and reflect about the driving forces in the context of educational practice. Tools to represent/think about the design approach: Design Narratives[2] Design thinking to provide solutions for...: The context as changing, fluid space of learning. The enlarged context of learning in the intergenerational case: adults' goals of learning and children/teen goals of learning differ, but can dialogue in an *enlarged* context of learning.
	Plan/Create	Objective: Plan the intervention beyond the procedures, reflecting on the pedagogy. Tools to represent/think about the design approach: Pedagogical Patterns and the Four Leaves taxonomy.[3] Design thinking to provide solutions for...: a clear and concise representation as part of the process of Learning Design to allow discussion and peer-reviewing on the quality of approaches before putting them into practice.
Design for orchestration	Implement	Objective: A process of implementation that is continuously monitored from peers, participants and external stakeholders (institutions engaged in the practice Tools to represent/think about the design approach: template for monitoring and reporting and private *trainers' log*.[4] Design thinking to provide solutions for...: telling a *story* that makes the whole approach effective and accountable.
Design for reflection	Evaluate	Objective: A participatory approach to understand learning achievements and the educational impact Tools to represent/think about the design approach: the *learning/key competences map*.[5] Design thinking to provide solutions for...: understanding effectiveness as part of the educational process.
Design for redesign and sharing	Edit/Share	Objective: To understand the importance of Open Educational Resources in strengthening the pedagogical and design thinking. Tools to represent/think about the design approach: a virtual platform to shape/upload the own educational work. Design thinking to provide solutions for...: sharing educational practices in search for quality within the educational process.

Table 2 – Design for learning theoretical framework aligned with the phases of experimental training of adults' educators (A creative process)

2 http://www.ld-grid.org/resources/representations-and-languages/
3 http://www.slideshare.net/JulianaElisaRaffaghelli/alpp-strategylu6lu7
4 http://www.slideshare.net/JulianaElisaRaffaghelli/alpp-strategylu6lu7
5 http://www.slideshare.net/JulianaElisaRaffaghelli/alpp-strategylu6lu7

Hence, design for learning as forward oriented practice (from the idea for the educational intervention to the crystallization of practices in an open educational resource) was the kernel of the creative process, and I expected this had impact on the adult educators' professionalism. The analysis of this relation between dimensions was undertaken as a participatory and developmental approach, where the educators were expected to engage from the beginning. To this regard, it must be highlighted here that the case study is an idiographic research where concepts as validity, reliability and generalization do not apply. Instead, basing on the interpretive tradition, I searched for *trustworthiness* and forms of *authenticity* (Lincoln et al., 2011), being fully immersed within data and debriefing at every phase of development with participants (Onwuegbuzie, Leech, & Collins, 2008). From the five forms of authenticity listed by Guba & Lincoln (1989), I mainly emphasized firstly, *ontological* and *educative authenticity*, as *criteria for determining raised level of awareness by individual research participants* with *strong moral and ethical overtones* (Lincoln et al., 2011, p.122). As a result of this, I aimed at obtaining *catalityc* and *tactical authenticity,* in the sense of prompting, through the research activity associated to the intervention, forms of changing the social/educational context.

Therefore, the analysis of the impact of designing for learning on the own professionalism, as main dimension of this research, was undertaken from the beginning of the process, adopting strategies and instruments for reflection in parallel with the provided tools for learning desing, and along the creative process. The table 3 shows the type of tools and the pieces of data collected and further analysed.

Type of source	**N of units collected/analysed**	**Period of data collection**
a) Trainers' Log	23	September 2012 – March 2013
b) Online Forum and Social media as collectors of evidence on the ongoing practices	8 online forum Focus on 4 specific threads	September 2012 – March 2013
c) Reports from coordination webmeetings International Meetings, as well as other field notes taken by the author of the article along the process of training.	6 Webmeetings 3 International Meetings 13 Educators' Monitoring reports 24 "Memos" (researcher fieldnotes)	July 2012 – October 2013
d) Educators' Competences Map as counterpart of the adults Key Competences/Learning Map	12 Learning Maps	March 2013
e) Artefacts produced by educators as part of the crystallized practice: an Open Educational Resource within the field of adults education	1 "wallpaper" 13 Evaluation reports 8 OER	January 2013 – November 2013
f) Final Survey regarding the impact of Learning Design tools on the professional activity	1 Final survey (n. 11)	June-September 2013

Table 3 – Data collection sources and timeline

3. Results

3.1. *Design for Configuration: Contextualize and Plan/Design*

The first phase of the creative process was that of the contextualization of the educational intervention. The focus was put on the situation in which the trainer had to intervene and the driving forces that could support the ALPP or prevent it to go ahead; it was also the moment in which the educational problem was identified. In this phase, the trainer was supposed to think about the participating groups and the institutions that could support her. As tool for Learning Design, the educators were provided with a very simple instruments: the "Design Narrative" (Mor, 2011) . The Design Narratives are personal accounts, detailed and deep, to interpret a scenario of practice and change, based on the importance of personal narrative as form to organize our experiences into a meaning making process that we can lately share (Mor, op.cit). It is a story about change, and in our case, about educational change. The adoption of this instruments was not immediate: surprisingly, the educators were eager to use templates to planning the activities, but several doubts arose at the time of just stop and take a look at the context as a "bigger picture", an ongoing narrative in which the "educator's story" had to find its own place.

As initial step all educators shared their ideas in an online forum, which was commented by the eTutor in charge of coaching the activities. The participants were sure about the own educational vision, but it was less easy to focus the way the forces could accompany or block the efforts.

This was reflected by the eTutor comments' on the educators' ideas:

> *Some ideas give me the perspective of action (what are you going to do as part of the educational intervention) like the case of L., S. and D. You should start reflecting about the educational value and the educational problems you want to face with them. Some other ideas seem very interesting, but more conceptual, and I cannot imagine how are you going to intervene. It seems to me that you are mainly focusing the intergenerational intervention between the school and the family…* (eTutor, Online Forum LU6)

One of the educator's questions also illustrate the type of hindrances to develop the design narrative and the map, which related not only to the problem of moving the educational vision from the educator to the context and the potential learners; the narrative also entailed a new way to approach the educational problem:

> *I hope this is the assignment you asked for…*
> *I will not write a whole story… I need some help*
> *Do we have to write that something has happened to someone under some circumstastances?*
> *And at the following story: something=video on youtube that kids found? Someone=their fathers? Circumstances = the background of the story?*
> *Question: we are trainers, what exactly is our role in design narrative? We just have to represent in context the education problems and give a solution?*
>
> (P., Trainers' Log, LU6)

What these episodes are showing is how difficult was to conceive an "ill-defined" scenario. The virtual "wall-paper" exposed the transition of educators from a more "educator-centered" perspective to the new, refurbished ideas, based on the work done through the design narratives. Fig. 3 shows a final stage of the wallpaper.



Figure 13 – Virtual Wallpaper showing Design Narratives

This initial approach to the educational problem was followed by the moment in which the educators carefully thought about the "educational solution" they wanted to propose. This was the time of Planning/Designing, a time for considering a personal strategy to solve the imagined educational problem, but including the ALICE approach and method. The common factor across the entire project was, in fact, the selection of a Creative Language to mediate intergenerational relationships, making adults to become more competent in supporting children and dialoguing with teens.

As mentioned before, the educators were provided with "templates" for Learning Design, basing on two levels of granularity of the educational intervention. There was hence a "macro-level", or of the *educational approach* proposed by ALICE project; and a "micro-level", or of the *educational session*. These provided the educator with examples of use of the creative language in an intergenerational learning process; they were based on the "design narratives" provided by the educators, so they found their ideas crystallized at this level.

After collecting the many educators' designs, it was possible to see some similar elements characterizing approaches, that allowed me to identify what, according to D. Laurillard (2012), we could call "pedagogical patterns": that is, elements that can be systematically found across several planned or implemented educational interventions. Stemming from an initially "ill-defined" educational problem, these patterns can put the basis to generate systematic approaches to intervene, problems. Fig. 4 shows one example of emerging pattern.

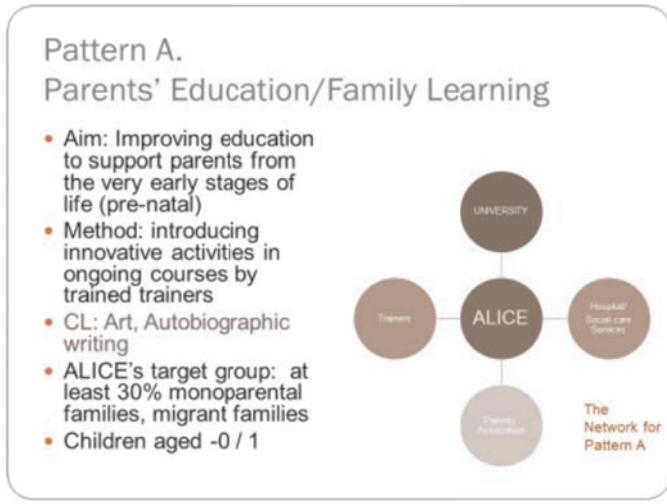


Figure 14 – Pattern showing the "ALICE educational approach"

The design instrument for the second level (micro) was a set of templates based on the "Four Leaf" framework (Margiotta, 2006, cited in Raffaghelli & Icleanu, 2013) or ILAP, acronym that stands for Information, Laboratory, Assessment and Personalization. The ILAP framework is composed in fact by four phases where the learner is engaged in different activities aimed at promoting specific (but connected) learning outcomes by every sequence. The four phases, and their connected activities are:

– INFORMATION: See, Listen, Read, Explore
– LAB: Discuss, Reflect, Try, Do
– ASSESSMENT: Check your knowledge and skills
– PERSONALIZATION: Make your learning useful for your personal/professional purposes
– Every phase encompasses:
– Learners specific Activities (LA)
– Trainers specific Activities (TA)
– Resources for Learning (R)

The participants were provided with both a template to structure the own plan, and web-based tool[6] were to input the several activities (see Fig. 4).

6 http://www.alice-llp.eu/Templates/Trainers/template_for_trainers.html

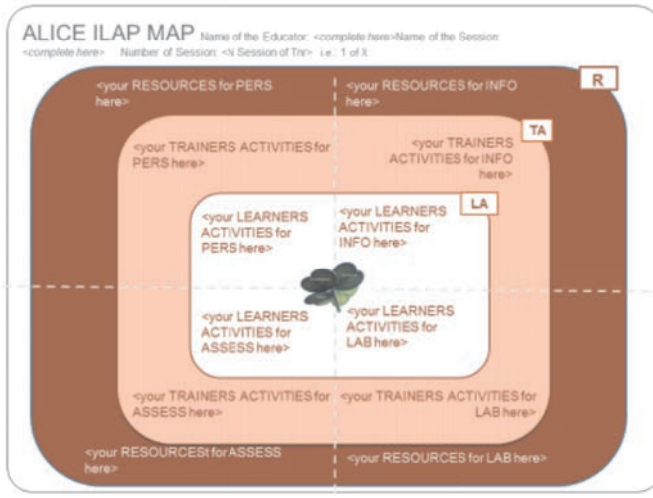


Figure 15 – A scheme for the representation/visualization of your session

This visual representation was expected to help the educators to connect the learning goals with the learners' activities (the kernel) the trainer's activities and the necessary resources. It was also a base to discuss with peers the scheme of sessions, the coherence of the plan and the criticalities found in aligning the macro-plan (educational problem, strategy, learning goals) and the micro-plan (specific activities per session).

The national coordinators and peers discussed the outcomes of this plan; there was hence an international session between national coordinators (February 2013) to jointly analyze the main problems detected at this level. Two orders of problems emerged in the mentioned session, arising from the contrast between the general idea and the specific activities. Firstly, the difficulty in focusing adults' learning within intergenerational activities, with many activities were the adults accompany children learning, but do not have space for the own learning. Secondly, and tightly connected, the difficulty of envisaging evaluation (and reflection) as part of the intervention. In fact, particularly in adults' education the moment of reflection is that of acknowledging the informal learning that eventually had place along an intergenerational creative experience.

This second round of designing for learning (being the first the adoption of narratives) led the group to better focus the educational problem (intervening to support adults in intergenerational processes) as well as to become aware of the shortcomings with regard to adults' learning, in the plan of action. As a result, most plans of intervention were reorganized, particularly at the level of the participatory evaluation as *adults'* session to reflect on the intergenerational experience. In some of the participants' words (excerpts of Trainers' log):

> *"…I must say I thought everything was clear to me until I had to imagine the implementation day by day. The exercise of learning design was, how could I say, …painful? But there's no gain without pain ;)"*
>
> (D., Trainers' Log, LU6)

> *"…Planning for adults' learning is not easy. I realize we are all thinking about the children's activities, their space for learning, but we forgot adults. But I think we actually find the best way to access adults' learning through the joint activity with children followed by the moment of reflection. I did not realize the potential of reflection in this intergenerational experience!"*
>
> (S., Trainers' Log, LU6)

> *"…In some extent I was worry that too many templates, too many instruments to use in my professional work would only impede me to think creatively. I still care about the burden of things I have to do before and after a training session with ALICE approach. But I was not able of seeing "dark zones" in my thinking that the exercise of planning the sessions with the provided instruments allowed me to see…"*
>
> (E., Trainers'Log, LU6)

These results point out how the Learning Design tools and activities in these phase addressed better educators' knowledge and awareness about the importance of the context; moreover, the educators acknowledged the different adults' needs in an intergenerational learning situation and improved the precision of their plans to respond to these specific needs. However, as many of the educators referred, the adoption of design tools was burdensome. Some educators had to connect first with the creative activity, with the educational problem an idea, which was also led by their prior experience. This was particularly true for expert professionals: they already had a number of consolidated approaches to practice that tried to adopt to the intergenerational learning proposal. However, the adoption of tools supported them to go in depth and to "see" (as E says) the "dark zones", the intervention features they were not able to thinking of. For novice educators, the cognitive load was important, and some of them were not able of using accurately the tools, for they could not imagine how to "fill in" the requested "areas". Here the support of an expert trainer (the national coordinator) was crucial to scaffold the use of the Learning Design tools. This is an important issue since it points out that designing for learning is not an immediate professional skill and the tools offered, to be effective, require adequate support.

3.2. *Design for Orchestration: Implement*

The next phase regarded the process of implementation, which lasted from March to June 2013, even if many of the educators had already implemented "preliminary/testing" sessions to engage participants.

The design supports provided consisted in a template to "document" ongoing experience. The templates were very simple, with the structure of a "Google-doc" report[7]. This was accompanied by the "trainers' log" as well as national meetings, which encompassed a process of reflection and discussion to monitor the ongoing activities.

The strategy followed during the meetings regarded two main ideas: the first

7 https://docs.google.com/document/d/12NnB0XF2Gf0MQAQtp62QPIE6Pm-45ttzGOs4SkMcoOs/edit?usp=sharing

one, that there is a substantial difference between plans and action; the second one, that the strategy of monitoring was aimed at keeping to the forefront the educational "vision" proposed through A.L.I.C.E approach, while at the same time searching for better impact on the target group (adults). It was reminded, basing on the "ALICE patterns" that the project attempted to *raise awareness*, through *participation and engagement*, on the following issues:

- Adults as Educators are a key for the Lifelong Learning society
- Adults can improve their skills to support children, having impact on their own *Key Competences for Lifelong Learning*[8]
- Creative Languages can help adults to better support children, generating intergenerational creative learning experiences

This monitoring strategy was supported hence by the following points, that were later adopted to select best practices:

To what degree is your ongoing intervention…

- *…Focusing adult's learning prior and during the experiences?*
- *…Introducing properly creative languages and adopted them as a mean to improve intergenerational dialogue?*
- *…Implementing a participatory evaluation based on educators and adults reflection?*
- *…Targeting adults (within ALPPs) that are relevant for the EU benchmarks the project is aiming to contribute with (i.e. least educated adults, senior volunteers, immigrants, adults excluded from education)?*
- *…Achieving relevant learning outcomes in terms of adults' key competences?*
- *…Showing forms of impact on children?*
- *…Adopting concrete strategies for documenting the own activity?*
- *…Adopting concrete strategies to disseminate and exploit the own approach?*

One of the main results of this phase, as reported by national coordinators and educators, regarded the way educators' explored and discovered the perspective of adults' education within intergenerational interventions. The weaknesses at the level of planning, followed by discussion and adjustment of interventions, were the springboard for a more effective orchestration. The educators observed that adults engaged in intergenerational activities initially underlining their exclusive interest on their own children. However, the creative languages embedded in the educational activity, followed by moments of reflection and dialogue with other adults had as effect adults' insight and appreciation of the educational value of the intervention.

While this awareness on how to better guide the intergenerational learning from the perspective of the adult was not completely based on the adoption of the design supports, the initial Learning Design provided a base to focus the process of monitoring. The figure 5 is a "*wordcloud*" (a representation of semantic density) which was elaborated using the monitoring reports written by the educators engaged in the implementation of ALPPs (n 13). Inside the wordcloud the bigger words are those more frequent in the text. The semantic density of the

8 http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/pdf/ll-learning/keycomp_en.pdf

meaning of the terms appeared in the wordcloud was controlled reading accurately the reports, in order to formulate the following interpretations. The words that appeared mainly represented were "reflection", "design", "parents", "participants"; followed by terms like those referring to two of the creative languages "storytelling" and "technology" as well as "activities" and "designing". Finally, other words that received consistent attention were "ALPP", "creative", "adults", "session", "music", "art", "grandparent", "family", "experience", "intergenerational". The semantic density of the first four words shows the attention received to critical incidents, solutions adopted, and outcomes, regarding the "ill-defined" educational situation of working with adults (particularly parents) as participants, where design was a reference point (many monitoring reports point out how the initial design was the base to re-think strategies against the concrete experience with adults). The following group of words, consistently represented, had to do with the creative languages and the other (less frequent) type of adults engaged (particularly grandparents). The word "designing" can be linked to the concrete effort undertaken by the educators to "doing" and "implementing" the creative process, instead of the final product (the "design").



Figure 16 – Wordcloud from Trainers' monitoring reports

In most reports analyzed, the concern of educators was to lead adults to reflect on the intergenerational activities undertaken, promoting a relaxing time through the use of creative languages. However, many critical incidents were connected to the use of technologies (a word with high semantic density), present in most experiences; the difficult situation, which most educators had foreseen from the initial learning design, was managed both emphasizing kids'/teenagers' skills as well as enough space and time to understand the technical issues (as a mean to an end for the intergenerational experience). The word "session" and the word "activity", consistently represented, are linked with the effort done, systematically (session after session) to deal with the complex educational process, based on experiential learning (activities), analyzing how the initial plan aligned with the concrete participants' needs.

These results highlighted the role of Learning Design tools connected to monitoring activities: they addressed better management of educational intervention, as perceived by the participants. Since no objective observation on skills

was performed, it is not possible to say whether the strategic skills for problem solving in educational interventions was achieved. However, the effective (and objective) final results in terms of key competences in adults (see Margiotta & Raffaghelli this Issue), allow us to consider that the educators put into practice these skills.

3.3. *Design for Reflection: Evaluate*

The project adopted a participatory approach to evaluation that aimed at understanding whether ALPPs had been *effective* and of *quality*. There was clear concern about the social, political and value oriented nature of evaluation, which in practical terms implied a constructivist methodology based on interpretation of meaning making processes as the main way to achieve evaluation results. The educators, as evaluators of the impact of the ALPPs, were addressed to see themselves not as external experts with "true" knowledge about processes, activities, results. Instead, the strategy was focused on interacting and inviting participants to understand why and how things are done, taking altogether the responsibility for the intervention. In this process, the trainer/evaluator and participants were supposed to learn from each other, through dialogue and self-evaluation.

To support this approach, the educators were provided with what we called the "Key Competences Conversational Evaluation". This meant that adults' reflection was conducted as a conversational process by educators, basing on the illustration of key competences and further discussion (in group and personally) about the levels of achievement. The "KC conversational evaluation" was implemented mainly in a final session, where the educator analyzed together with adults which learning outcomes in terms of Key Competences for Lifelong Learning have been achieved. The educators were provided with a template[9] from the first phase of Design, but this was effectively implemented at this point. No questionnaires or complex grids were distributed among adults: the educators were supposed to adopt the Key Competences grid and discuss with the adults which levels of competence had been achieved.

This approach to evaluation, jointly with the results achieved with the implementation of ALPPs were discussed in the "Educators' International Workshop", held in Crete (24-25 June 2013). The Figure 6 shows one educators' presentation; every presentation was followed by a discussion for peer-reviewing and the Scientific Committee's suggestions/recommendations.

9 https://docs.google.com/document/d/16UkdvccB2cXOcgFToUSQN9wLdDWx3v3SEquJ-SdITX7k/edit



Figure 17 – Discussion Session with ALICE educators

Along the individual presentations and during the final discussion, all educators manifested great satisfaction with the work done, for it promoted intense experiences not only for adults and children engaged, but also for themselves. However, the educators remarked how difficult it was to trigger initial adults' reflection, and how after being triggered, they faced the concern of documenting adults' deep reflections and stories without incurring in problems linked with privacy. Many educators felt that they had to struggle against the "project technicalities" (the request of documenting using the Learning Map and video/audiotaping the sessions as evidence from the process) and the own sense of adults' education as an art, something that flows in the moment and cannot be "written". Moreover, the educators' discussed about how the professional community, generated through the local contact with other educators' as well as through the online educational environment, supported them in reflecting about the experience. As some educators manifested (Memo 17, fieldnotes from the international workshop):

> *In my mind, I felt I had two voices sometimes in harmony, sometimes in conflict: one regarding the technical approach, the other regarding the specific learning needs and situation I was dealing with (…)You have to know your audience and be prepared for challenging and be flexible at the moment to apply. As a trainer you should never impose, rather help in case of actual difficulty of someone, give the message through reflective thinking, you stimulate in the adults.* (A.)
> *The approach of the Learning Map was not easy to apply; I understood it well since we used the same tool in our training, step by step, then technically I knew what I was supposed to do. However, by the end of the ALPP, I felt it was not easy to identify the evidence about the key competences in the adults' discourses. I had to get back to the audiotaped session to accomplish my own Learning Map* (M.)
> *I was aware I could not become expert in everything [the creative languages], yet I profited a lot from the experience of the others within the ALICE network. At the beginning, I felt everything was strongly theoretical and technical, but slowly it ended up in interactions and discussions that supported me in implementing my idea* (X.)
> In the end, most educators agreed with the idea that the approach

adopted to implement ALPPs and to reflect on its results was complex, but also rewarding.
I found that ALICE gave trainers a great freedom to use the tools they knew or got to knew, while the creative languages offered a wide range of expressive possibilities. I (and I think my colleagues) hence passed this attitude on to my "pupils", the adults, as a continuous process of reflection for the improvement of our social contexts (P.).

Overall, the educators agreed that the fluid online educational environment, put together different social and cultural environments, requiring educators' trade-off between the local situations and the tools provided to for planning and implementing of ALPPs: these were basic features of ALICE. As L. expressed: *the trainers did a massive work with the online course, becoming teachers and learners at the same time, as it should be always while working with adults*.

As for the educators' professionalism we can confirm that the participants developed mostly the ability of *deepening on the sense of an educational intervention, thinking about the own deontological engagement*. The ability to analyze and compare the planned educational intervention with the effective learning outcomes and educational impact, was less developed since it was one of the "difficult" issues as declared by the educators when illustrating the participatory evaluation (see M. comment). However, the approach and particularly the tool (Learning Map) supported in raising awareness about the connections between the designed learning activities and the actual learning, beyond learners' and the own trainer satisfaction.

3.4. *Design for re-design and sharing*

After the debate on evaluation, a concluding session during Crete's international workshop for educators was devoted to how to wrap up all the materials produced by educators (from the plan/reports and resources for learning, to the evidence collected on learning outcomes) in order to "document" the own activity and transform the whole in an "Open Educational Resource" (OER). While the process of "documentation" had started from the very beginning of ALPPs, as part of the strategy of evaluation, in this phase the idea was to go a step further, basing on the recent EU strategy of "opening up education"[10] (announced at June and launched by September 2013). The EU strategy consisted on aggregating open, quality content, in order to allow institutions and educators to show the quality of their researches and activities by sharing them, for all to profit of such results and further develop or apply them. The idea of producing OERs stemming from the educational activity within ALICE project was planned in 2011 (see Project Proposal). However, the strong emphasis by the new EU policy conveyed educators' attention about the relevance of the strategy. Moreover, it was pointed out the situation of intergenerational learning, where there is a lack of OER, highlighting the importance of ALICE's contribution to fill such a gap. However, an OER requires both a pedagogical development (an implemented and documented educational intervention, such as the ALPPs) as well as technological supports to make it accessible on the web. At this point, a Learning Design tool was introduced, with the aim of support-

10 See: http://openeducationeuropa.eu/

ing the process of working out OERs. An interoperable platform, "Octopus"[11], developed by the Technical University of Crete (TUC) was introduced; it had been previously analized by the developers and the educational coordination of the project, and it had been featured according to the pedagogical patterns given for the ALPPs learning design (macro-plan), and on the basis of the ILAP model (micro-plan). The aim of the platform was to provide a technological support for the trainer to account for and display her activity, methodology and results. The educators logged in the platform and created their account, following hence a hands on session on the platform editor with the help of the TUC educators. Each trainer from the other partner countries described their ALPP and added resources to integrate the description, in order to modelize it and allow its repetition by other users. The educators started a complex process of revisiting the own work and looking back at activities aiming at "showing" their results in an "usable" way. After an initial enthusiasm for the easy affordances of Octopus platform, the educators demonstrated appropriated motivation and understanding of the task ahead. The residential workshop was followed by a process of three months in which the educators were pedagogically assisted by national education coordinators, which in time interacted with the transnational coordination; and technologically assisted by the TUC.

Along this process, two types of problem were observed (Memos 20-23). The first one was the need of developing basic technological skills, instrumental for the elaboration of analogical content (pictures, drawings and other adults' learning artifacts), as well as for the placement of this content "on the cloud" in a way that it could be easily accessed (using of social networks, using of video or podcasting platforms, etc.). The second one related to the holistic conception of the OER: What is to be shown? Amongst the chaos of resources gathered along the experience, what should be selected to account for the educational intervention in a significant way? The education coordinators had to intervene heavily to render the final resources, in a process of dialogue for the *translation* of the ALPPs to the means of an OER. As it was underlined by one of the education coordinators "*it seems this part of professionalism was never considered; as if using the technologies to document and account for the training work was an addition…but I understand this is becoming a key part of the training profession"* (Webmeeting, September 2013, Memo 22)

Another education coordinator manifested our trainers should have required more technological training. They feel in some extent this work could be done by someone else, but at the same time they are eager to be the main authors, to own the whole process. (Webmeeting, July 2013, Memo 20)

It could be concluded that the educators became aware of the distance to cover between the raw educational material elaborated and collected, and the actual "packaging" in a knowledgeable piece of work, mediated by technological supports.

Another concern is that in this phase the interactions were less than expected amongst educators. There was a sort of isolation and focused interaction with those providing scaffolding, in order to make the creative effort to produce an OER. The task was perceived as onerous, not only due to its characteristics, but also due to the fact that it had to be accomplished during the summer time (Memo 21-22).

11 http://learn.ced.tuc.gr/octopus/home/

The issues emerged from the initial meeting introducing to the OER strategy to the distance process of coaching and elaboration, was discussed at a new international workshop held in Bucharest (24 October)[12] . During these meetings, the educators expressed the own limitations to pass from the initial platform, which affordances were deemed accessible, to the actual process of "translation" of materials gathered to the form of an OER. While the aspects addressed by the national education coordinators were confirmed, the educators expressed a more positive vision about the impact of the OER enabling device to rethink the own practice. Most educators expressed that the initial feeling of "unpreparedness" and lack of interest in devoting so much time to use technologies to package the own materials became, through the dialogue with national coordinators and the technical support, a way to revisit the own design and connected experience, "*as if I was looking everything from outside*" or as from a "*bird eye*" (Memo 24, expressions collected during the meeting). As for the issue of collaboration between educators, when asked during the meeting, the educators expressed that the process of wrapping up the own work was a more "lonely" stage of work, but that they "lurked" other visible works and examples (provided by TUC) in order to figure out how to accomplish the own task.

It can be concluded that while the phase of designing for re-designing, supported by the platform Octopuss and its affordances, did not lead to the full development of the expected professional skills for this phase, it could be actually considered an effective milestone in the way to do so. With regard to the individual skills expected, namely, the ability to monitor ongoing processes and reflect on the adjustments to be done in order to correct possible misleadings; as well as the ability to change and improve the own professional work on the basis of the experience, the reflections made demonstrate increasing awareness of educators about the importance of technologies as complementary element of the own professional activity but also as a new way to work, where documenting and sharing becomes crucial. At the community level, even where there was no dialogue or collaboration for possible improvements between the educators, some of them actually remixed exemplar OER built by the group of educators led by TUC, and they all took a look to the others' work to get inspiration. This could be considered a very basic (but highly necessary) skill to network and share the own work. The raising awareness and concern about adopting technologies to make the own work accountable, as discussed in Bucharest, should be also considered an element of a changing professional identity. It must be also said that the time devoted to this activity was probably insufficient to enact collaborative processes, an issue that should be considered in future interventions.

4. Overall impact on Educators' Professionalism

We could now consider two other results, obtained on the basis of a) the educators' self-evaluation after having accomplished the phase of design; and b) a survey were the educators' evaluated the impact of the tools provided to design for learning, after having concluded the phase of evaluation. These results would al-

12 "Opening Educational Practices for Adults Education: promoting adult trainers' "open" professionalism" http://www.alice-llp.eu/conference/?page_id=78

low us to further understand the connections between the "creative process" supported by the Learning Design tools, and the educators' professional development. They are presented separatedly for they provide evidence on the overall impact of the "creative process" on educators' professionalism. Moreover, the information collected through these two instruments worked as a form of "triangulation", which in qualitative and mixed-methods research is deemed to improve the quality, relevance and trustworthiness of interpretations (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2014).

4.1. *Educators' self-evaluation*

This evaluation was performed by the end of the Learning Unit 6 (online training of trainers) on "Designing for Adults' Learning", which represented the end of the process of designing the own educational interventions. Most trainers had already started the process of implementation with small "ice-breaking" activities, or preliminary activities devoted to collect information about the context of intervention, testing the feasibility of the intervention. Therefore, this self-evaluation was considered a good screening of the way in which the educators perceived themselves with regard to the basic skills to design for learning.

The self-evaluation adopted the Learning Map, which is a rubric presenting the type of competences evaluated, and the description of four levels of development of a specific competence. The rubric was presented through a web form, previously tested by two respondents regarding the affordances and the linguistic adequacy. A the point of implementation of the specific rubric, the participants had already used other five rubrics to evaluate other areas of knowledge and skills regarding adults learning, as foreseen in the training of trainers programme (see Margiotta & Raffaghelli, this issue). The table 4 introduces the rubric adopted and following it, there is a brief descriptive statistic showing the educators' responses.

Threasholds Competence Indicators	Initial threashold (L1) Descriptors	Standard threashold (L2) Descriptors	Advanced threashold (L3) Descriptors	Expert (L4) Descriptors
Learning Unit 6: Learning Design – Implementing Adults Creative Intergenerational Activities				
C1- Knowledge about the concept of adults' education .	I'm informed generally about the concept of adults' education as reflexive and transformative practice	I'm informed in detail on the the concept of adults' education as reflexive and transformative practice. Even if I understand the concept, details sometimes are obscure.	I'm well informed on the concept of adults' education as reflexive and transformative practice. I see clearly the connections with the ALICE strategic approach. Everything is perfectly clear to me.	Not only am I informed about the concept of adults' education as reflexive and transformative practice and its connections with a general strategy in the context of EU policies; I'm also able of adopting some of the specific messages on adults education in order to generate innovative educational practices in my context of professional intervention.
C2- Understanding/ skills for Learning Design within adults' education	I'm informed generally about the concept of Learning Design as strategy to promote better educational interventions in the field of adults education.	I can recognize the importance of Learning Design as strategy to promote better educational interventions in the field of adults education..	I can recognize the importance of Learning Design as strategy to promote better educational interventions in the field of adults education; and I'm able of implementing some tools that support this perspective (I know where to find them and which examples are valuable). Everything is perfectly clear to me.	Not only can I recognize the importance of of Learning Design as strategy to promote better educational interventions in the field of adults education, as well as adopting the tools seen in this LU6; I'm also able of identifiying new tools to keep improving my skills on Learning Design.
C3- Knowledge and skills to Implement Adults Learning Activities	I'm informed generally about the strategies to implement (like continuing monitoring and joint reflection with participants) Adults Learning Activities	I can recognize the importance of the several strategies (like continuing monitoring and joint reflection with participants) to implement Adults Learning Activities.	I can recognize the importance of the several strategies (like continuing monitoring and joint reflection with participants) to implement Adults Learning Activities; I'm also able of	Not only can I recognize the importance of the several strategies (like continuing monitoring and joint reflection with participants) to implement Adults Learning Activities, as well

			adopting some of these strategies. Everything is perfectly clear to me.	as adopting some of these strategies; I'm also able of identifiying new strategies to keep improving my skills on adults' education interventions
C4- Networking for project implementation	I am eager to participate in local projects regarding adult education	I am able of creating some informal educational activities in collaboration with other expert trainers	I am able of creating specific activities both with other or by my own.	I am able of creating specific activities negotiating them in local networks. I am open also to work with national European networks.
C5- Evaluating Adults Learning Pilot Programmes	I'm informed generally about the strategies of participatory evaluation (like the Key Competence Map).	I can recognize the importance of the strategies of participatory evaluation (like the Key Competence Map).	I can recognize the importance of the strategies of participatory evaluation (like the Key Competence Map); I'm also able of adopting some of these strategies. Everything is perfectly clear to me.	Not only can I recognize the strategies of participatory evaluation (like the Key Competence Map), as well as adopting some of these strategies; I'm also able of identifiying new strategies to keep improving my skills on participatory evaluation.
C6- Sharing Adults Learning Pilot Programmes	I'm informed generally about the strategies to share my work as adults' educator.	I can recognize the importance of the strategies to share my work as adults' educator. I understand the concept of opening educational practices for quality.	I can recognize the importance of the strategies to share my work as adults' educator. I understand the concept of opening educational practices for quality, and I'm ready to create my own Open Educational Resource.	Not only can I recognize the importance of strategies to share my work as adults educator. Taking into account the concept of open educational practices, I'm ready to create, collaborate and exchange the educational resources that I could of producing.

Table 4 – The Learning Map

The results presented in the figure 7 are based on a very small group, yet, 12 of 13 educators implementing the ALPPs. The bars show the frequencies of options selected regarding the self-evaluated level of competence (1 to 4); the results are grouped per competence (C1-C6), as explained in the table 4. In line with the qualitative results analyzed phase by phase, it is possible to see that the educators perceived themselves as generally well prepared to face the "creative process". As expected the participants were cautious about the level of competence achieved, selecting the highest levels (L3-4) regarding conceptual skills like the overall understanding of adults' education (8 frequencies on L3 and 4 on L4).

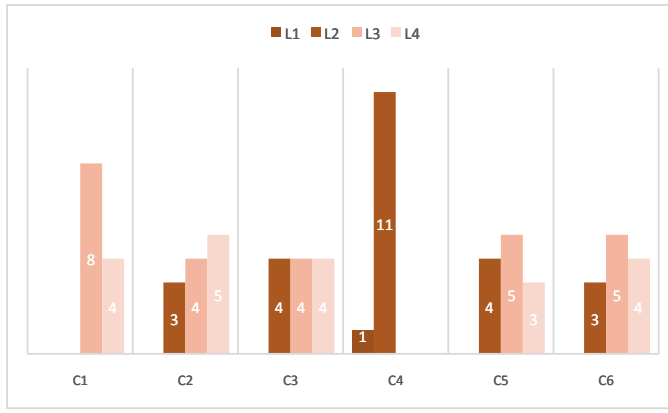


Figure 18 – Educators Self-Evaluation results

It is interesting to see, in any case, that for C2, C3, C5 and C6, most frequencies (8-9/12) are distributed also for the highest levels of competence, which is to say, good understanding and proficient use of tools (L3) or creative use of concepts and tools (L4). In sum, this means that the trainers felt ready to design, implement, evaluate and share ALPPs at the beginning of the "creative process". The only element that could be considered weaker regarded C4 "networking for project implementation", which implied the knowledge and skills to engage collaborate in local, national and international networks to make the own work more sustainable. Even when tools to develop this area of skills were provided, the educators manifested (in the qualitative comments to the survey) that networking (particularly beyond the local level) was not envisaged as part of their professionalism, and that "somebody else" would be in charge for both disseminating and connecting the interventions at higher institutional or international levels. While this was beyond the scope of my actual research (this area of skills development was undertaken by another expert project's partner), this result is pointing out that there are areas of adult educators' professionalism that will require specific attention in the future. On the light of the results for the fourth phase (Design for re-design and sharing) it is also clear that the participating educators overestimated their skills to "share ALPPs" (C6), since they did not consider the technological component that required consistent support by national education coordinators and the technological team (TUC).

4.2. *Educators' evaluation on the provided support to design for learning*

As mentioned earlier, a brief survey was implemented at the end of "creative process" in order to understand how the educators perceived the support provided and which were the most effective tools for them. The answers were collected via web form, but the survey was illustrated during Crete's residential workshop, ensuring that the educators understood which was asked. The survey consisted in:

– Contextualizing the ALPP: three overall qualitative questions about the educational problem faced, the type of difficulties found to work out an approach

to intervene, and the hints provided along the creative process;
– Evaluation of Learning Design tools provided as user experience (Template A including design patterns, and the ILAP framework, for planning; Template B for monitoring; Template E for evaluating including the Learning Map; The Octopus platform for sharing)
  - closed questions adopting a scale (1-5, being 1 "not useful at all" and 5 "very useful") to evaluate the overall usefulness of the tools to design for learning;
  - open choice questions to define the characteristics of the Learning Design tools (Inspiring, Good guide/check list, Insightful, Practical, Confusing, Complex, Stressful)
  - open qualitative question on why and how the tools were useful (if any usefulness had been perceived)

Eleven responses out of thirteen participants were collected, which allow considering the results significant with regard to the engaged group of educators.

As a methodological weakness that has to be underlined here, this evaluation was requested in June 2013, during Crete's workshop (end of the third phase and beginning of the four phase of the "creative process"), but being opened since then until the end of the process (September 2013). The answers were collected at different stages of development of educators' experiences; this could cause an error of measurement (the type of judgement on the experience is different for there is variance on the experience reported itself). I tried to include this element in the interpretation.

The qualitative questions regarding the contextualization, triggered educators' reflections that were convergent with the data collected along the four phases of design. Most educators were concerned about not being able of convey the educational aims to the intergenerational environment chosen due to the high amount of work needed to structure the educational intervention (against an "ill-defined" educational problem); as well as to "*raise awareness amongst adults about the importance of this approach for the quality of their relationship with their children*". Some trainers also showed concern about the creative languages: "*I was not an expert on the creative languages offered by the ALICE project so I decided to adopt a new one and I was worried that this did not work*"; "*I learnt a lot about digital storytelling, I knew about storytelling but adding the digital part was a challenge*". From the other side, they pointed out that even when the tools and coaching was of good quality, the process was hard and at times they felt overload: "*the resources provided by the course were insightful, and the support by the staff continuous, yet I felt myself as crossing the ocean, hard effort, sometimes I felt lost, sometimes confused about were to go, but I could dealt with everything and I'm proud of my results*"; "*I was worried not to be able to fulfil every inputs requested by the organizers and the resources given in the platform, as they were posted in such a short time one after the other*"; "*I had the chance of question myself on how useful technology is in education, even though it can't substitute the interpersonal relationship in teacher/learner. I could share experiences, doubts and knowledges with the other partners, in particular in the group work*"; "*the staff was always at hand, with hints, ideas, suggestions, this is the way I can grow as professional, not with pre-packaged solutions*".

A first interpretation regarding the contextualization of ALPPs is that, as any creative process, there is a burden of work to carry out, and the creative effort is sometimes painful, conflictual, challenging our own capacity for problem setting and innovation; there is frequently frustration, feelings of confusion and questioning. Therefore, the tools and support provided could not address "off-the-

shelf" solutions, but they should trigger dialogue and ideas to set new pathways. This was the approach adopted along the project development. However, it is to be said that the complexity of tools, as expressed by the educators, generated sometimes an additional effort, dealing with new issues and having to develop new skills (particularly digital skills and the management of one creative language). This leads to an important consideration for further adult educators' professional development initiatives: specific tools and closer to the educators' need an initial skills, is maybe better than an extensive pool of resources from where the educator has to choose.

With regard to the "User experience", the figure 8 introduces the series of data on the overall perceived usefulness. The table 5 presents the results per Learning Design tool, and the figure 9 shows the results for all the Learning Design tools.

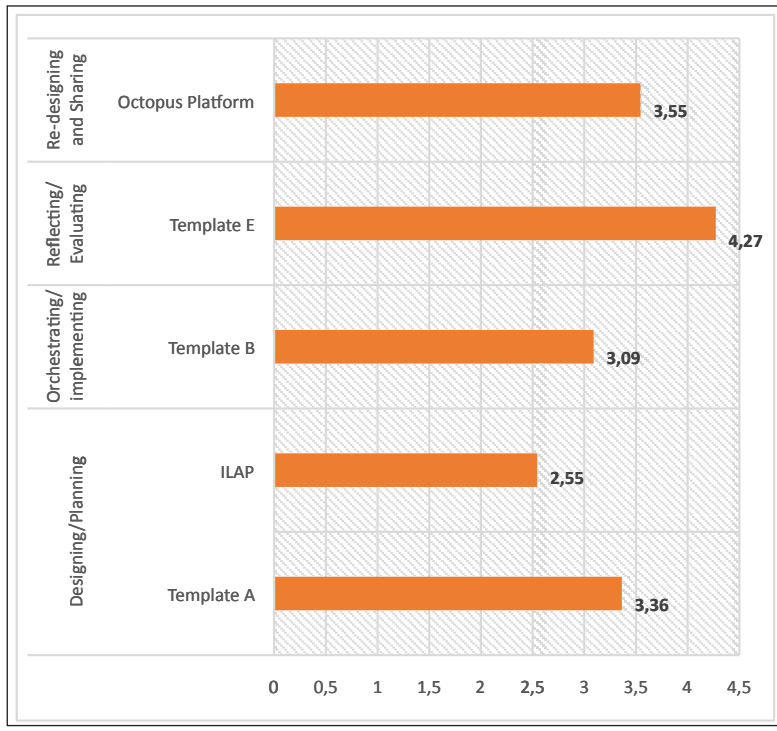


Figure 19 – Perceived Usefulness of Learning Design Tools supporting the Creative Process

With regard to the usefulness, it is to be underlined the higher value (4,27/5) attributed to the Template E (prepared to support the evaluation phase); the mean values (3,55 and 3,36/5) obtained by the Octopus Platform (Re-design/share phase) as well as the initial Template A (Design phase); and rather low value (2,55) attributed to the micro-planning tool, the ILAP (design phase).

These results point out that the trainers considered the tools addressing reflection on the final impact of the own experience; as well as tools to improve and show the own work through technologies, more useful than tools that go too much in detail within the initiative. In fact, the ILAP was a tool that increased the educators' workload in a significant way, and many of them (as emerged from

their plans) did not used fully, or used it in a single, exemplar session. This tool is highly directive, imposing the features of a session; some trainers preferred to organize the features of some sessions differently from the sequence "information, lab, assessment, personalization", which could be perceived too didactic and less appropriate for an open, informal education situation as that required for adults. We will keep these results in mind while analysing the rest of the elements, following.

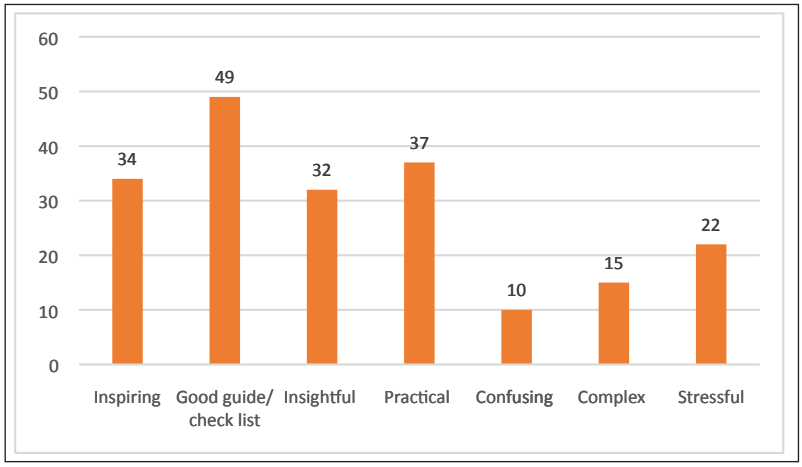


Figure 20 – Overall User Experience's evaluation about the Learning Design Tools for the Creative Process

It is possible to see that overall, the tools supporting design for learning as a forward oriented and creative process were considered mostly a good guide (49/55) and practical tool (37/55) to implement the own ALPP. This could be interpreted in the sense that the Learning Design tools never replaced the freedom given to the educators to intervene. In fact, the educators engaged autonomously identified the educational problems requiring their intervention, owning completely the concept of the solutions presented from the very beginning. Not too far from the first two dimensions (good guide and practical), in any case, the educators considered the tools "inspiring" (34/55) and "insightful" (32/55), which can be interpreted as a potential not only to recall the technicalities to be followed along the process, but also to generate new solutions. In fact, while the first too dimensions are evidence of the tools as scaffolding for the "problem solving" skills, the second could be deemed as scaffolding for the "problem setting" skills in a developmental process. This particularly applied to the Template A, E, and the Octopus Platform. Furthermore, the Template E (that provided for evaluating) was considered one of the most insightful and inspiring tool. As discussed during the Crete's sessions (Evaluation phase) this is due to the fact that it provided the Learning Map tool and enclosed all the process of reflection on the outcomes with adults. Template E supported hence one of the key moments along the intervention, where more critical issues emerged; but it seems that these critical issues triggered successful interventions, and a sense of fulfilment by the participants. It must be said at this point that the more positive impressions were collected later (by September), while the impressions left immediately after Crete sessions where more sceptical particularly on evaluation.

Another trend of opinion was observed for the Octopus platform: the forms collected by June- early July, showed better opinion than those collected by early September. The last forms collected by the end of September and one during the Bucharest sessions (October) showed again very good perceptions (after having concluded the work).

User Experience Dimensions	Learning Design Tools for the Creative Process					
	Design		Orchestrate	Reflect	Re-design & Share	
	Template A	ILAP	Template B	Template E	Octopus Platform	Total x dimension
Inspiring	8(*)	3	6	9	8	34
Good guide/check list	10	9	11	11	8	49
Insightful	6	3	8	9	6	32
Practical	11	6	6	6	8	37
Confusing	3	3	3	0	1	10
Complex	4	2	3	3	3	15
Stressful	1	6	5	3	7	22

Table 5 – User Experience with Learning Design Tools for the Creative Process
(*) the value represents the frequency with which an option was selected by educators (yes-no value) e.g. 8/11

A set of dimensions showing the negative perception on the user experience were also considered, namely, the "confusing", "complex" and "stressful" ones. The values were lower than in the case of the positive dimensions (Inspiring, Good-guide, etc.), but we should highlight the higher value of the dimension "stressful" (22/55), followed by "complex" (15/55) and "confusing" (10/55) (these last two showing very low frequencies). The "stressful" situation emerged is consistent with the qualitative information gathered along the four phases, particularly that of re-designing/sharing. In fact, the Octopus platform, was mostly considered stressful (7/11), for it implied digital skills most educators felt not to be completely prepared to put into practice. It is also consistent with the information collected for the "usefulness" the value for the dimension stressful (6/11) obtained for the ILAP.

As for the Figure 10, it introduces a perspective on tools built on the "positive dimensions" and the "negative dimensions" above considered. The figure shows both the frequencies along the several phases of the *creative process* (as timeline).

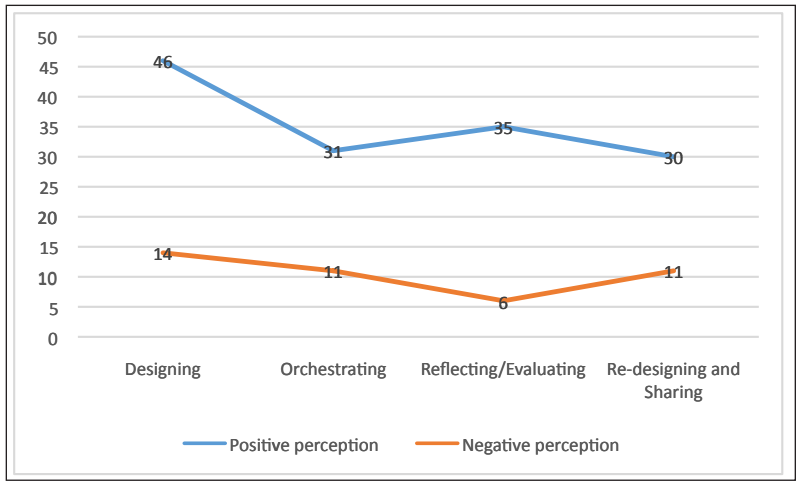


Figure 21 – Positive and Negative perceptions on Learning Design tools along the phases of the creative process

This data allows us to visualize in which phases of the creative process the tools were more or less "supportive". No significant differences are seen in this figure, being all the phases generally perceived as well supported (30-46 of positive dimensions selected out of a total range of 55). It is to be underlined, in any case, that the phase of designing was the one presenting more negative perceptions (14/55). However, the negative perception was mitigated by the good support provided by the tools in the same phase (46/55). This is consistent with the data collected in other areas of the survey (usefulness), and it is influenced by the use of the ILAP, being probably the more technical phase. Very positive also the consideration of the support provided by the Evaluation tools, also considered less negative. While this could be considered not consistent with the qualitative analysis (a phase with complex transitions for the educators, where they had to reconsider the way they were documenting and the importance of evaluating and reflecting on the outcomes), this issue can be interpreted as the result of a sense of fulfilment after having overcome the difficulties of the designing and implementing.

Conclusions

The quality of adult educators' practices is a challenge, which requires high skills and professionalism, as well as more emphasis on the definition of the areas of intervention of adults' education. The foundational works of Knowles, Freire and Mezirow (Raffaghelli, 2013), which theoretical efforts went into the direction of defining adults' education as field of practice, emphasized the idea of adults' education as conversational practice, based on learners' reflection to transform the own conditions of life; this means that adults decide to learn when there are significant events in significant contexts. Professionalism, or the capacity to react in uncertain situations according to expert patterns of action, should harness the potential of a conversational approach, mainly informal, to face "ill-defined educational problems".

In this research, I contended that Learning Design, as practice that supports educators in capturing, representing and reflecting on the own (situated) plans of action within educational interventions, can be a key element to develop educators professionalism, towards quality and effectiveness of adults' education. In the debate about Learning Design as research area the focus has moved beyond the development of tools to design for learning, towards the importance of designing for learning as *forward oriented process* (Dimitriadis & Goodyear, 2013). This concept means that Learning Design is not an activity performed at the beginning of the pedagogical practice, but is rather a process where the available several tools are adopted to plan, organize, monitor, evaluate and share the educational work.

In an attempt to explore the connections between adult educators' professionalism and Learning Design I formulated the following research question: *Can the process of design for learning, intended as forward oriented and creative process, support the achievement of adult educators' professionalism?*

The research consisted on a case study where I analyzed specific aspects of an international, experimental training programme, the "ALICE training of trainers", through an holistic and mostly interpretivist (yet mixed methods) approach. The aim of this programme was to develop the participants' skills to generate intergenerational learning experience through the use of creative languages (art, music, digital storytelling, games, etc.), mainly focusing on the adults role and learning, as form of adult education intervention. It adopted several means, from more traditional residential and online training activities, to the deployment of an experimental idea on the basis of the ALICE educational framework, the ALPPs. It is in this last phase of the training that Learning Design was introduced, as concept entailing a set of tools that could mediate the professional development. As *forward oriented process,* not only it promoted the adoption of Learning Design tools at the beginning (planning) but along the whole process of ALPPs' implementation supporting educators' reflection and continuing improvement of the own practice. The five operational phases of the training activity (contextualize, plan, implement, evaluate, share) were conceptualized adopting Dimitriadis and Goodyear's four phases of designing for learning as forward oriented process (Design for configuration, for orchestration for reflection for re-design and sharing). Overall, the phases integrated a *creative process* were the educators were called to focus an adults' educational need, to provide and implement solutions, to evaluate their impact and to wrap up results using technologies to share/disseminate the educational results. I presented, phase by phase, the tools and activities supporting designing for learning along the creative process, discussing the positive relationships and the shortcomings in order to promote adult educators' professionalism.

In synthesis along every phase there were expected results, some of them confirmed, some other leading to the areas where further research is needed:

– Design for configuration. In this phase it was observed better educators' knowledge and awareness about the importance of the context; moreover, the educators acknowledged the different adults' needs in an intergenerational learning situation and improved the precision of their plans to respond to these specific needs. While the use of Learning Design tools was significant and they were perceived positively, it can be concluded that there was a relationship between the tools and the skills achieved. However, as many of the educators referred, the adoption of tools was burdensome, and the tools

in this phase were those that raised more negative perceptions (stressful, complex, confusing sensations about their implementation).While intensive support was necessary (particularly in the case of novice trainers) it is to be highlighted that designing for learning is not an immediate professional skill and the tools offered, to be effective, require adequate and tailored support.

– Design for orchestration. The evidence collected showed that the Learning Design tools and activities connected to monitoring addressed better educators' management of the educational intervention. Since no objective observation on skills was performed, it is not possible to say whether the strategic skills for problem solving in educational interventions was achieved. The positive perceptions on the tools and the good results reported against the initial problems raised allow us to consider that these skills were probably put into practice.
– Design for Reflection. The Learning Design tools supported the ability of deepening on the sense of an educational intervention, thinking about the own deontological engagement. The ability to analyze and compare the planned educational intervention with the effective learning outcomes and educational impact, was less developed since it was one of the "difficult" issues as declared by the educators when illustrating the participatory evaluation (see M. comment). However, the approach and particularly the tool used in this phase (Learning Map) helped the educators to raise their awareness about the connections between the designed learning activities and the actual learning, beyond learners' and the own trainer satisfaction.
– Design for re-design and sharing. The platform Octopus and its affordances supported increasing awareness of educators about the importance of technologies as complementary element of the own professional activity but also as a new way to work, where documenting and sharing becomes crucial. At the community level, even where there was no dialogue or collaboration for possible improvements between the educators, some of them actually remixed exemplar OER provided. This could be considered a very basic (but highly necessary) skill to network and share the own work. It must be also said that the time devoted to this activity was probably insufficient to enact collaborative processes, an issue that should be considered in future interventions.

There are two important remarks after this synthesis, regarding the two topics that I am putting into relation in this paper. The first one regards the debate about adult educators' professionalism: the evidence presented here helps us to consider that providing a rich environment for development, with several available tools, with problems to solve, was effective but it required high quality support from the staff and it produced, at a certain point, high levels of stress that required energy and determination to be managed. In the literature the professional communities of learning, the problem/project based approaches and the use of technologies have been too much emphasised as a panacea for triggering professional learning, and particularly in the case of teachers (Hendriks, Luyten, Scheerens, Sleegers, & Steen, 2010) and extended to trainers (Przybylska, 2008). However, we can see here that the devices for learning (like the learning design tools) must be planned carefully, avoiding the educators' overload. Also relating to the educators' professionalism, we can conclude that there is an ongoing transition about the way the participants in this research perceived the own professional identity. All educators were clearly focused on their task as social anima-

tors, in the microcosm of the learning group and the learner (particularly the children as learner in the intergenerational relationship). Most educators were not aware (as they declared) about skills regarding the process of reflection/documentation, evaluation, networking beyond the group level, as well as adopting technologies to show and share the own professional achievements. Many of them considered the final phases of the creative process as an additional task that would be performed usually by another "expert" (in technologies, in European projects, etc.). As Buiskool et al. (2010, p.33) put, beyond more traditional activities like learning needs assessment, learning facilitation, monitoring and evaluation of adults' education, the adult educators are expected to deal with tasks as overall management of activities, marketing and PR activities (what here has been called "networking") as well as ICT-support activities. Moreover, in the context of opening up education, it is easy to connect the requirement of sharing educational resources on the Web with professional skills to do so; as we could appreciate in this case study, this is not an automatic step; adult educators will have to be supported in designing for re-esigning and sharing their work in the form of OER. The second remark regards the debate on Learning Design. While we can conclude that Learning Design tools are effective in promoting adult educators' activities and reflection linked to professional development, the tools' affordances should be better explored in order to understand which of them are really helpful and which of them are overloading. Representing educational processes is a complex effort that is added to what is deemed the central educator's task, which is facilitating adults' learning. As emerged in this case study, some complex Learning Design tools (like the ILAP form), aimed at facilitating the representation, were associated with stress and a feeling of not being able of managing the burden of work; instead, simpler tools (like the Design Narrative) were useful to cast out the educators' ideas . This is an element worth to be considered at the time of developing complex Learning Design tools to represent and inform pedagogical practices, as it has been the trend in the last ten years (Persico, 2013); a trend that has been criticised, considering the fact that many Learning Design technologies would not be strictly connected with the educators' need of facilitating their work conducting effective interventions (Arpetti, Baranauskas, & Leo, 2014) . However, this issue reinforces the concept of learning design as a forward oriented process, where the tools are adopted in a dialogic way with the pedagogical practices along a process with the educator's professional identity at the core. In fact, as emerged in this case study, the educators selected and adopted in personal ways the several tools provided: they considered the tools' value differently, as far as these could be a springboard to improve the ongoing pedagogical practices.

To conclude, this case study cannot assume its findings as generalizable; however, the internal consistence of results, as well as the expressions of fulfilment by all the stakeholders (national coordinators, educators, adults) might support its trustworthiness, as a base to keep working, promoting more practices and field research, with the final aim of undertaking effective adults' education as a key or our lifelong learning society.

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