

## BOOK REVIEW

# Pedagogical and Andragogical Teaching and Learning with Information Communication Technologies

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*Pedagogical and Andragogical Teaching and Learning with Information Communication Technologies*

*Victor C. X. Wang, Lesley Farmer, Judith Parker & Pamela M. Golubski*

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No one will disagree with the fact that information communication technology (ICT) characterizes current society. To say that a new technology comes into our lives every day and that we are living with technologies that were unimaginable ten and even five years ago is not an exaggeration. As numerous technologies increasingly become essential to our lives (e.g., smart phones, internet, etc.) education professionals are facing daily challenges se-

lecting and applying a technology to be used most appropriately and effectively in their profession, viz., teaching and administering students. In addition, in current educational environments, pedagogy (i.e., art and science of teaching children) and andragogy (i.e., art and science of teaching adults) are not mutually distinguishable. School teachers sometimes borrow andragogical models to teach children by accepting the constructivist teaching approach (e.g., teacher's role as facilitator, learner's self evaluation, etc.). On the other hand, educators in higher educational institutes often use pedagogical teaching methods to teach adult students (e.g., teacher as a knowledge dictator, criterion referenced test, etc.). These two approaches are often mixed and used in a course. In other words, educators select and follow one of the two perspectives not according to the age of learners as the definitions of the two terms imply, but

rather by the learning content, context of learning environment and the culture of the learners. However, education professionals occasionally fall into trouble using the two approaches freely and appropriately when they teach whether in online or in traditional environment. Taking these situations into account, the *Pedagogical and Andragogical Teaching and Learning with Information Communication Technology* written by V. C. Wang, P. M. Golubski, L. Farmer, and J. Parker, could function as a lighthouse for education professionals.

As described in the preface section, this book is written for presenting meaningful approaches and ideas to utilize technologies, such as web 2.0, social networking services, etc., with both pedagogical and andragogical approaches. In the first chapter, Wang begins the discussion by illustrating pedagogical teaching and learning in comparison with the perspective of the andragogy. Interestingly, to do so, he incorporates the teaching philosophies of the three ancient great teachers, namely, Plato, Socrates, and Confucius. By connecting the pedagogical model characterized by behaviorism to Platonic authoritarian approach, he explains why the model has still taken a dominant position even in the online learning environments. According to the author, the pedagogical approach is simply easy and convenient for most teachers because it has been used in education for centuries. Furthermore, this approach still remains the most common form of *programmed instruction* in online teaching and learning environment where “teachers quickly moved their pedagogical model onto the computer screen (p. 7)”. Based on these considerations, he concludes it unlikely that any other model will replace the pedagogical model, as long as the educators pursue the learner’s measurable performance objectives in quantifiable terms. But he also asks a question, which is related to the purpose of the entire book: “Are there other approaches rather than just the programmed instruction (i.e., pedagogical model) for online instructors? (p. 11)” From this question, all au-

thors start their own discussions about teaching with various technologies through pedagogical and andragogical approaches.

Although this book is not organized by subsections based on specialized topics, the readers may recognize the sub-topics, which can be categorized by each author. For example, Wang presents his idea about teaching with ICT based on the perspectives of both pedagogy and andragogy. He discusses several possible pedagogical and andragogical assessment methods to be used in online learning environments (Chapter 4), and explains the role of teachers in online educational environments with a dichotomy (knowledge dictator or learning facilitator) derived from the concept of pedagogy and andragogy (Chapter 14). He also provides a meaningful discussion about teaching approaches in the traditional classroom and in the virtual environment by comparing and contrasting pedagogical and andragogical methods (Chapter 16). Through his chapters, I believe that the readers could not only better understand the concepts of pedagogy and andragogy, but also get practical guidance when applying technologies to any instructional interventions, whether it is in traditional off-line classroom settings or virtual learning environments.

Another author, Golubski, focuses on the use of technologies for administrative purposes. She introduces the ways to communicate with students for the purpose of mentoring (Chapter 6), and academic advising (Chapter 5), via various web technologies, such as Facebook, instant message, blogs, Twitter, etc. In addition, she points out the potential of web 2.0 technology as a tool for increasing college students’ retention rates, and introduces two useful web technologies as well; Google Wave and Wimba Collaboration Suite. Unfortunately, one of the tools, Google Wave service was terminated in April 2012. However, this is not if we consider how fast the world of technology is changing, and how long a draft takes to become a published book. In this point, it was understandable (at least to me), and I anticipate that the Chapter 2

will greatly help college administrators who are looking for ways to increase school retention rates by using web 2.0 technologies.

The third author, Farmer, discusses several social/cultural issues which education professionals could encounter when applying online learning. She first characterizes e-learning as a communication cycle occurring within the context of society, and then describes the social and developmental aspects of e-learning (Chapter 3). In Chapter 15, she identifies the cultural elements which may influence online teaching. In addition, she talks about the issues in the process of developing a curriculum for online learners (Chapter 7), and brings up gender (Chapter 8) and age issues (Chapter 11) in online education. Throughout her chapters, she approaches online learning with socio-cultural perspective and provides e-learning stakeholders (i.e., instructional designers and online instructors) with useful information which they should consider when applying e-learning.

Parker, who is the last contributor, focuses on instructional methods which are more appropriate in online education. She examines five methods including lecturing, discussion, action-learning, experiential learning, and active learning in the context of online learning (Chapter 9). She then explores how the social networking and knowledge development features of Web 2.0 technologies have impacted instructional methods utilized not only in pedagogical but also andragogical teaching in both face-to-face and virtual classrooms (Chapter 10). Finally, she illustrates how to engage learners via information technologies (Chapter 12) and also investigates the motivational factors in distance education (Chapter 13). She presents several case studies and interview data in her chapters. These case studies could guide the readers to clarify how specific technologies can be used for a certain purposes in real life situations.

At first glance, a reader may simply assume from the title that the purpose of this book is to introduce new technologies applicable to various educational settings. However, this book covers much more. *Pedagogical and Andragogical Teaching and Learning with Information Communication Technology* contains a very wide range of content from theoretical background about pedagogy and andragogy to practical guidance in using the current technology with pedagogical and andragogical methods, and from teaching students to administering them with various technologies. The greatest strength of this book can be found in the breadth of the content. Additionally, I found it very helpful that the book was consistent in having a section about future research trends (or directions) at the end of each chapter. This section will be useful to novice researchers and doctoral students who are seeking their own research topics regarding how to use information communication technologies for educational purposes, whether teaching and learning activities or administering students.

As Wang says in the last chapter, “no single [educational] method is likely to dominate in the future (p. 233)” and there is no panacea that can be applied to all educational issues. Every educational event is unique, and so educators may encounter various problematic situations depending on the context or socio-cultural background of their students. In addition, the society’s increasing use of technology requires education professionals to be armed with more knowledge and techniques. The more they know, the better they cope with technology related deficits in pedagogy and andragogy. In this sense, I believe, the *Pedagogical and Andragogical Teaching and Learning with Information Communication Technology* will successfully lead the readers in the right direction to find appropriate methods for their own educational purposes.