

**Notes from Workshop Session 1**  
**Case Studies from Norway and France**  
**Johannes Learning Centre, Norway**  
**Ateliers de Formation de Base, Haute Normandie and**  
**Savoirs pour Réussir, Marseilles France**  
**Stéphane Daniau, Chair**

***Johannes Learning Centre, Stavanger, Norway, Bente Bergeson***

Bergeson spoke of the Johannes Learning Centre in Stavanger, Norway. The centre offers programmes for 16-20 year old immigrants, as well as lower secondary education for adults who are learners of Norwegian as a second language. She uses learning portfolios to track learner progress, and to develop learners' skills for self-assessment and for "learning-to-learn". Bergeson noted that she also keeps her own set of critical notes, with these comments shared with the learners during individual conferences. Bergeson stressed the essential role of scaffolding and peer group work in building these skills (that is, providing learners with the level of challenge they are ready to handle). Learners at the centre keep also learning logs on their progress. Bergeson noted that learners are often far stricter in their self-assessment than are the instructors' assessments. She also noted that adult learners tended to react very differently to praise than children: they generally fare better with constructive comments (an important aspect of formative assessment). She emphasised that formative assessment greatly contributes to the goal of 'taking the hamster out of the classroom'. During the discussion period, an important question raised was whether school leaders are ready to invest the necessary time in such an endeavour.

***Jean Philippe Mercier, Ateliers de Formation de Base (AFB), Haute Normandie and Francis Lavoine, Caisse d'Epargne Foundation Savoirs pour Réussir (SPR), Marseilles, France***

Mercier introduced the formative assessment model used in the Ateliers de Formations de Base (AFB) in Haute Normandie. The model has been disseminated to and adopted in other adult literacy programmes in France. The AFB is run primarily by a team of volunteer trainers. The AFB model also places a strong focus on programmes to "train the trainers".

Mercier stressed the importance of addressing the concepts of 'how to assess', 'what to assess', and 'why assess'. Mercier described a 'dynamic' and ongoing evaluation throughout a learner's time at the AFB; using this model, learners' emerging needs can be addressed appropriately. In smaller groups, learners are assessed at the same time, so that a proper focus for the group can be shaped. Criteria are established to track the progress of each learner. Their progress is assessed over time.

Lavoine presented the Savoirs pour Réussir programme in Marseilles. The centre has an extremely diverse clientele. Lavoine emphasized that, above all, the centre is a social centre and 'social' needs are treated as a priority i.e., (if an adult's health is poor, this would be treated as a priority before moving onto learning foundation skills). Beyond this, adults' personal interests determine the 'curriculum' (i.e., if an adult enjoys dining in restaurants, class sessions can focus on restaurants, using menus as materials). Much importance is placed on defining learning objectives, including measuring and negotiating the goals which have yet to be tackled with the trainer.

Any elements that might directly remind adults of compulsory schooling are avoided, though it should be noted that there was a clear emphasis on rigour and discipline as learning is not a 'game' (however the centres do occasionally utilize grading systems reminiscent of compulsory schooling). Lavoine

emphasized that if learners do not understand the material, the instructors should assess their approach and how it might be improved.

During the discussion period, workshop participants raised concerns on the utility of learners setting their own goals. It was noted that democracy has its limits; at the same time, the trainers' goals tend to overshadow those of the learner. The presenters from the two French programmes also expressed the importance of allowing learners to come to their own understanding of mastery of the material, and to come to the realization that they have become more autonomous. The session concluded in general agreement as to the importance of remembering that there are heterogeneous ways to learn.