Case 5, Den Haag, The Netherlands

The pilots in The Hague did not only teach us something about autonomous learning, but as wel about implementing a pilot in a big educational organization. The pilot was due to take place in a community college in the The Hague region. The The Hague administration, being one of the parties funding the project, had invited the college to take part in the ALL-SR-pilot. The manager confirmed participation.

In March 2015, a project team member met up with the manager. The manager expressed their wish to introduce portfolio methodology in their teaching, to promote learner autonomy and awareness, and as well as a tool that would allow evaluation of the learners and the extent to which aims and objectives were met. Project team member confirmed that portfolio could be introduced to promote learner autonomy, though that we could not develop an assessment tool within the scope of this project.

Also in March 2015, an observation took place of a session of the group in which the pilot was due to be carried out. These learners joined a bridging course for young people who wanted to enroll in some sort of job training, but were not ready to start right away. The program includes language, math, digital skills and job orientation. Some learners were obliged to join the program, facing budget cuts in their social security payments if they wouldn't. During the observation, the project team member observed a teacher working very hard, eager to please the learners and trying to keep the spirits up. The majority of learners remained passive and seemed not very interested. Some were explicit about their motivation: "If it were not for the money, I wouldn't be here". One learner seemed motivated and was working teacher independently on her reading assignments.

In response to the wishes of the manager and the observation in the bridging course group, the project team member informed the manager: It seems well possible that a shift in responsibility (from teacher to learner) in this group could change the attitude and behavior of the learners. We can see a role for the introduction of a portfolio, like the manager and team wishes. We agree on starting to develop a portfolio tool, while the manager promises to try and find a few staff members who can help develop the portfolio by providing input and reflecting on concepts.

In April, a first draft of the portfolio is developed indeed, but staff members to join the project team are not found. In exchange of e-mails about the subject, the manager reports the organization being overloaded, they are still interested in joining the pilots but they don't find the time.

In September 2015 the project team member insists on deciding whether to join the pilots or withdrawing. The manager informs the project team that the bridging course, in which the pilot would take place, is no longer carried out. She proposes several other courses with learners that could benefit from the approach. In October 2015, again it seems hard to find teachers who have time to join the project so the manager proposes, the project team will provide a training after which we will see if some of the teachers can try out bits of the approach in their groups. The project team refuses and insists on carrying out a pilot as agreed before. Or being clear about it if this is not

possible. The manager says they are still interested in carrying out the pilot and she will find the teachers who want to join.

In December 2015, a half a day training session takes place, with three participants. They are professional teachers, one of them with previous training in coaching. They are enthusiastic to join the pilot but have to talk to the manager about their schedules. They seem to feel that it is going to take a lot of time, or experience so much pressure in their current work schedules, that even a little bit of extra time is too much.

In January 2016, one of the teachers informs the project team that she and one of her colleagues want to start a pilot. From the process with this coach, a case description is put together (Case 4, The Hague, The Netherlands).

With the second teacher, an e-mail conversation takes place in which she tells about the group in which she would like to offer coaching to some of the learners. The group is a language group for L2-parents, connected to a primary school. The teacher teaches the groups since a number of years and feels strongly connected to the learners. The group consists of 12 learners but to make the coaching challenge manageable, the coach decides to coach a few learners in a small subgroup while other learners work on individual tasks. She expresses the need for 'materials' that would support the learners in the coach process. The project team member produces a translation in Dutch of the portfolio materials that are developed for the German pilots, because they seem applicable in this Dutch context as well.

A meeting is planned in February, which is cancelled by the coach because of health issues. The meeting is postponed to March 2016. Reflecting on the provided portfolio materials, the coach feels that the portfolio materials do not meet the needs of her learners, the materials are 'too easy'. Although the language group is divers, the learners to whom the coach wants to offer coaching are more educated, and she feels they don't need the small steps nor the simple language used in the German portfolio materials.

We discussed the choice of the learners she offered coaching to. The coach explains that she has picked the learners of which she felt that they could (or: would need to) make new steps in their language learning and lives. She feels ambitious for these learners and she is sorry that the learners do not seem to feel these ambitions for themselves. So her goal for the coach process is more or less to convince the learners.

From here, project team member tried to take up a coaching approach towards the coach. What made her feel this way? Where did her responsibility end and the learner's responsibility begin? Could a coach take a more neutral position in a coach conversation, and how? How could she accept the choices that learners make for themselves and how do you find out if the choices are genuine or rather made out of lack of courage of lack of information about possibilities? The coach feels pretty emotional about reducing her ambitions for her learners and handing over responsibility to them.

The coach had a few coach conversations with her coachees about their future learning. She reported about these by e-mail. The coach process was interrupted by school holidays, Ramadan,

etc., so the process did not meet the point at which an observation was allowed or would not have harmed the process. In June 2016, the coach informed the project team member that she would continue her coaching after summer holidays, although two of her coachees had decided to stop with their language course, 'may be as result of the coaching'. The coach felt that this may have been a good outcome of the process.

The project team member decided to stop supporting the coach from here, because the end of the project came close and we had to process our findings in the summer of 2016.