

## Research questions answered: Case 2

### Case:

- One learner and one coach;
- 12 sessions of about 15-30 minutes;
- Coach and learner already knew each other. (Volunteer) coach supports language training to a group of seven L2 learners, does this together with another volunteer teacher;
- Background info of the learner: Man, 36 years old, born in Morocco, moved to NL at the age of 11. Went to secondary school in NL. Finished secondary school at a lower level. Worked in a technical job but was now unemployed since one and a half year. Level of oral skills near native, but learner claims to have problems with speaking. Level of written skills unclear, learner says he has difficulties with writing.
- The coaching sessions were offered to the learner along the weekly group sessions. Because there were two volunteers working on this group, one could have a separate moment (15-30 minutes) with an individual learner for a coach conversation.

### Collected and analysed data:

- Two interviews with the coach (after three sessions, after 12 sessions).
- Two interviews with the coachee (after three sessions, after 8 sessions).
- Two observations (the 8<sup>th</sup> and the 12<sup>th</sup> session), for the first an observation report, the second recorded on video.

### Section A. Questions concerning the coach

#### 1. Do the coaches deliver the appropriate, relevant coaching behaviour<sup>1</sup> during the pilot?

During the coaching the coach is relaxed, allows the learner time to think. He respects the learning goals of the coachee.

When coach starts talking, he sometimes talks for a longer time, telling about his own learning experiences, making suggestions. Coachee is not very talkative and coach tends to fill the silences. He is open to what the learner wants to learn, but can be directive as it comes to how to proceed. The coach shows high expectations regarding commitment of the learner. After the second session, the learner had not done the tasks coach and coachee had agreed on and coach refused the coach conversation that week.

## 2. Did the coach training help the coaches to deliver relevant coach behaviour?

### a. Which aspects of the training were particularly helpful/unhelpful and why?

The coach received only a summarized version of the training, as he could not attend the training when it was scheduled in his pilot organization. Because the coach had previous experience in both teaching and coaching, he quickly understood what we were aiming for.

His style remained pretty directive though.

We can't say that this would have been different if he had been able to attend the training with the role-plays, but the issue of directivity had been central focus point in this part of the training.

### b. Which elements of the training are likely to be helpful to prepare coaches for coaching low literate learners in specific settings (i.e. workplace, further education or community settings?)

I can't answer the question.

## 3. How do the coaches feel while working with learners in the way the approach requires: do they enjoy it?

Coach did enjoy the work with the coachee, he feels he can support him in a more adequate (tailor made) way than he possibly could in the group work.

## Section B. Questions concerning the learner

### 1. Do the learners show increased autonomy in literacy learning?

#### a. What behaviour can be taken as evidence for increased autonomy?

The learner showed increased ownership for the process. In the first sessions he sometimes did not do the tasks he and the coach had agreed upon. In later sessions this was no longer the case. This might be connected to the shift of focus: from writing a letter of complaint in the first three sessions to his problem with talking to people in the later sessions. The latter may have been a more genuinely felt learning need. In the first interview after the third session, when the learner was still working on his writing, his answer to the question about his learning goal was:

C= coachee, T=project team member

C: Just communication with other people , yeah, what I find hard is eh, hard is a big word, but what I want to learn is writing letters by myself, just paperwork.

T: You say communication, do you mean speaking or writing?

C: Talking, yeah, mainly talking.

T: In what situations would you like to be better at it?

C: Well, mainly when I meet new people, then it is usually a very short conversation.

**b. Which strategies were attributed to increased autonomy?**

Reflecting, finding resources, practicing new skills.

**2. Where there was increase in autonomy,...**

**a. what role did coaching play?**

There was an increase of ownership for the learning process (the learner carried out the activities he planned in the second stage of the coaching, while he not always did so in the first stage). This may be a result of the behaviour of the coach, who made clear that he wanted commitment of the learner in return for his commitment. It also may be a result of the importance of the learning process as experienced by the coachee.

And there was an increase of the skills the learner wanted to improve: he became more skilful at chatting, to the extent that he found a job that included a lot of chatting, and was praised by his new boss because of doing this so well.

**b. did any literacy learning strategies respond to coaching more? (Which ones, evidence)**

I can't answer the question.

**c. what resources are appropriate to develop autonomous literacy learning behaviour?**

Coach conversation and reflection was helpful for the coachee.

Coachee read websites about small talk and tried to carry out the tips and tricks he read about.

Coachee observed other people chatting.

**3. What did the learners think about coaching as an approach to develop autonomy? (did they think it works, did they like it)**

The learner particularly liked the personal attention and the space to work on own learning goals.

The learner worked on an issue that was bothering him and he took the coaching as a motivator to change his habits and to try new behavior. While doing so, he solved another life issue, which is being unemployed since more than a year. So he did not only manage to start chatting to people but by doing so, he found a job. So he really felt it changed his life.

**4. Did the background of the coaches influence their approach? i.e. if they were teachers**

The coach had both experience as a teacher and as a coach, was trained in various conversation techniques etc., which was of influence of his interest in being in the pilot on the first place.

In what way what part of his background influenced his coaching style, is hard to say though.