

Research questions answered: Case 3

Case:

- One learner and one coach
- 12 sessions of about 20 minutes to half an hour
- 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/coach.
- Background info of the learner: Woman, 35 years old, born in Bulgaria, L1 is Turkish. Went to primary school in Bulgaria. Lives in NL since about 5 years. Language level <A2. Runs together with her husband a small cleaning company. Wishes to communicate with clients properly.
- The coaching sessions were offered to the learner along the normal 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).
- One observations (the 8th session).

Section A. Questions concerning the coach

1. Do the coaches deliver the appropriate, relevant coaching behaviour¹ during the pilot?

During the coaching the coach is relaxed, allows the learner time to think. He respects the learning goals of the coachee. Regarding to the question of how to reach the goals, the coach is giving directions, making suggestions, advising, rather than asking or trying to support the learner to develop her own strategies.

He is giving feedback on the work the learner did between the session by pointing out the errors in her written text and correcting them.

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 the coachee in a more adequate (tailor made) way than he possibly could in the group work. He feels the coachee does not always get what she needs in the group, because she is the weaker learner in the group.

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 especially showed increased autonomy in her work. She wanted to learn how to write text messages to clients, something important for her works she always needed her sons' help for. By the time she was halfway through the twelve coaching sessions, she did it independently.

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

Together with the coach the coachee made a list of situations in which a text message to a client would be appropriate. For these cases, she wrote concepts of text messages which she improved with feedback of the coach. After this, she memorized the message by copying it a number of times.

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

- a. what role did coaching play?**

The coaching gave the coachee a platform to express her learning needs and to address her personal learning goals. The coach had a major influence on how she proceeded.

- 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 feedback was helpful for the coachee.

The coach introduced the Action Plan in the first session, but they forgot using it later, which indicates that this was not particularly helpful.

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

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

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.