Master's Degree Studies in
International and Comparative Education

Relation, Methods and Motivation

A Case Study of the Professional Competence of Literacy Trainers in Sudan

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Abstract

The overall aim of this study is to explore the professional competence of trainers in a literacy program in Sudan and to compare this with the intention of the organisation running the program. Do their views of literacy teaching and learning correspond?

This is a qualitative case study, which primarily is based on interviews of trainers and their supervisors. Concepts and theories in the field of literacy and adult education are linked to the findings, which show that the relationship between the trainer and the learner is considered to be of utmost importance for attendance and learning. The way to teach has, moreover, an impact on these issues too and a successful teaching-learning process leads to the development of the student and increased motivation of the trainer.

Relationships are also important when it comes to the trainers and their supervisors. One should treat the trainers in a similar way that one wants them to treat the participants. Initial training and in-service support, in which the trainers can openly share their experiences and get advice from colleagues and supervisors, form the basis of the trainers' professional competence together with their working experiences which increase over time. Such a system seems to enhance the possibilities for an organisation to influence their literacy trainers.

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Abbreviations

ADRA Adventist Development and Relief Agency

CBO Community Based Organisation

CPA Comprehensive Peace Agreement

EFA Education for All

GDP Gross Domestic Product

GER Gross Enrolment Rate

IDP Internal Displaced People

MDG Millennium Development Goals

NCLAE National Council for Literacy and Adult Education

NFE Non Formal Education

NGO Non Governmental Organisation

NLS New Literacy Studies

PRA Participatory Rural Appraisal

REFLECT Regenerated Frerirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques

TOT Training of Trainers

UIL UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Adult literacy is said to be among the top priorities of governments and the international community. One of the Education for All (EFA) goals are: "*Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults*" (UNESCO, 2010a, p. 94).

Despite this, there is an estimated 796 million illiterate adults (including youth) in the world today; about one in five lack the basic skills of reading, writing, and numeracy (UNESCO b, n.d.). Based on these facts adult literacy is one of the most neglected EFA-goals (UIL UNESCO, 2010).

Crucial for high rates of literacy is access to education. Schools and learning centres must be present in all areas and all groups in society must have the right and possibility to access education. However, providing access to education does not mean that a person will learn anything. Students must also be able to pass the different levels of the educational system (UNESCO Education Sector, n.d.). Consequently the quality of the education must be secured and this is highlighted, not least, when it comes to acquiring literacy. In the EFA goal number 6 it states: "*Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills"* (UNESCO, 2010a, p. 104).

Teachers play a central role in the quality of learning. A lack of educated teachers will then reduce the quality. Empirical research has shown that there is a clear link between teacher education and the effectiveness of a teacher. The relationship between student achievement and the teacher qualifications, such as knowledge in the subject and knowledge about teaching and learning, has been proven (Smith, 2006).

Even though the professional competence of teachers must be guaranteed, in developing countries there are, however, a large number of teachers who either lack teacher education entirely or possess teacher education with severe shortages (UNESCOa, n.d.). When it comes to the teaching of adult literacy, volunteer trainers are more common than educated teachers. Since a literacy trainer often does not only play a strictly pedagogical role, but also acts as a community worker, their lack of education is even more serious. As such, a literacy trainer must be aware of development objectives as well as instructional ones (Bhola, 1994).

Sudan, a country that still has high rates of illiteracy, has to improve the quality of their literacy education. A large number of the teaching staff is unqualified. Governmental literacy initiatives make use, apart from educated teachers, of university graduates (NCLAE, 2008) and a great part of the literacy initiatives are in the hands of the Non Government Organisations (NGOs) (LEAD, n.d.), which often recruit literacy trainers with limited educational background, give them a short internal training and then engage them on a volunteer basis (E. Bashab & M. Elmahdi, personal communication, January-February 2011).

1.2 Statement of the problem

Even if a trainer to be attends a course in how to teach literacy, this does not necessarily mean that the lessons taught will be learned. Organisers of literacy programs have to think carefully when choosing and training trainers on these premises. An evaluation of a literacy program in the north Sudan has shown that a quarter of the facilitators, after a certain period of work, started to focus on the practical skills of literacy rather than to follow the prescribed and more holistic approach of the program (Ebizon & Bashir, 2008). Whether the trainers at a particular NGO (some of whom only have a secondary school exam) have developed an understanding of literacy teaching/learning sufficient enough to secure the quality of their work will be the focus of this in depth case study. To what degree do the trainers grasp the teaching-learning process and in what sense did the organisation influenced it and how?

1.3 Aims and objectives

The overall aims of the study are to explore the professional competence of the trainers in literacy programs in Sudan and to compare this with the intention of the organisation running the programs. The main objectives are:

- To view the literacy trainers' picture of the literacy teaching-learning process
- To compare the trainers' understanding with the formal view of the organisation.
- To investigate how the trainers' view has been developed.

1.4 Delimitations and limitations

The study deals only with the theoretical competence of the trainers. As it seeks to paint a picture of the trainers' and their supervisors' understanding, it does not investigate how the trainers carry out their work in practice. Unlike many other studies using grounded theory, the thesis is designed to view not only the development of the main informants themselves, the trainers, but also the learning process of others, in this case, the participants.

As a qualitative study the research cannot claim to be objective. A subjective interpretation of the researcher has been unavoidable and the selection of data has been consciously and/or unconsciously affected by the researcher's previous understanding even though the researcher has tried to be as bias-free as possible.

Another limitation in qualitative studies is that it is not possible to generalize this case in other scenarios, but rather the purpose is to build a theory. Due to the limited scope of time and difficulties in finding suitable subjects for the study, only one organisation running literacy programs will be highlighted. Thus the theory building will less strong than if it has been possible to compare it to different cases (Bryman, 2008). Moreover, the comparative elements are limited to within the organisation in terms of comparing their trainers' conceptions with the formal view.

1.5 Significance of the research

There is a vast amount of research done on literacy, but only a few studies focus on literacy trainers. It is most common to write from a participant's perspective and/or to concentrate on the effects of literacy or literacy policies. But as the teachers are key-people when it comes to securing the quality of education (Caillods & Postlethwaite, 1995, p. 20) the role of the trainers (who function as teachers) should not be neglected.

The thesis seeks to shed some light on the professional competence of the trainers and their development. Even though the trainers lack formal and longer pedagogical training, they have the responsibility of supporting people towards literacy. This may be of interest to other organisations working with literacy (and life skills) training in (more or less) similar contexts.

1.6 Organisation of the study

The thesis is composed of seven chapters. The first is an introduction, where the background of the problem and the aims and the objectives of the study are introduced. The significance and the limitations of the study are also found in this section. Chapter two brings up the national settings in order to give a clearer picture of the country context and the conditions of education and literacy in Sudan, and frame the context of the case. The case of adult literacy is focused on and there is also a short presentation of the literacy programs of the study.

The third chapter deals first with concepts and theories. More specifically, the concept of literacy- what earlier research says about the nature of literacy; common current literacy teaching approaches; and the impact literacy has on individuals and their community. The following subchapter explains the working conditions of a literacy trainer and what training that he/she might be in need of to meet the challenges of teaching literacy in a developing country. Theoretical perspectives on teaching-learning and education that have proven to show conformity with the findings are discussed. The theory of caring in education, a selection of adult learning theories, and the theories of social and cultural capital are presented. These provide different theoretical standpoints concerning conditions for teaching, learning, and motivation. The role of learning, in the case of literacy trainers, is seen as complex. It is about the trainers' own development, at the same time as it also deals with the participants' learning process, and the theories are connected to both of these aspects.

In chapter four, the methodology of the study is presented and justified. How the study has been conducted is stated there too. Chapter five describes the findings of the inquiry based on the data collected from the interviews, documents, pictures, and field observation. These findings are then discussed and related to the relevant theories in chapter six, where conclusions, implications and ideas of possible future research therefore are presented.

Chapter 2 - National and local settings

2.1 Country background

After a civil war between the north and south in Sudan, which lasted for more than 20 years (and there were many years of fighting even before that), a peace agreement was finally reached in January 2005. For six years the country was ruled by an interim regime, where the south had some autonomy. A referendum in January 2011 led to a division of the country in July 2011 when South Sudan became independent (BBC, 2011).

The civil war was not the only conflict in the contemporary history of Sudan. In 2003, a fight broke out in Darfur, in the west of the country. Hundred thousands of people have died in the conflict and about two million people have been forced to flee their homes (SIDA, 2011). In addition to this, there have also been disturbances in the eastern Sudan, although a peace agreement was reached between the government and a rebel group in 2006 (UNDP, n.d.). Finally, there are still tribal tensions in the states at the border between the north and the south Sudan as the demarcation is not yet been decided upon (UNHCR, 2011).

Due to the climate changes, droughts have become more common and this is something that has increased poverty in many parts of Sudan and been one of the reasons for the conflicts. Another reason is that many parts of the country lack political and economic influence (SIDA, 2011). Poverty is hence both a reason and a result of the conflicts. In several parts of Sudan human and physical resources have been destroyed and millions of people have been forced to flee their homes (FAO, 2010).

In fact, Sudan was recently ranked as the country with the largest number of internal refugees and many of them have settled in the suburbs of Khartoum, the capital. In 2008, it was estimated that 1,2-1,5 million people (of the 8 million inhabitants in Khartoum) were internal displaced people (IDP) even though many of them call themselves migrants. From the beginning the refugees mainly came from the south, but as conflict erupted in Darfur, people from there also fled to or were displaced in Khartoum (later many ended up either in Chad or in other places in Darfur itself).

The Southerners started to return to the south of Sudan when the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the north and the south was signed (Landinfo, 2008). After the referendum that made the south independent, more or less all Southerners had to leave because dual citizenship was not to be permitted for the Southerners (Sudan Tribune, 2011). The Darfurians remain and inter-tribal riots are now continuing in the states near the southern

border (UNHCR, 2011). The latter indicates that more refugees might come from that area as well.

Another problem that faces the country, and that is linked to poverty and lack of social well-being, is the large youth unemployment rate, caused mainly by the fact that the higher and secondary education outputs do not meet the demand of the market. Thus, education can play a key role when it comes to preparing the younger generation to fill the needs of the society (UNESCO, 2008).

2.2 General educational context

Naturally the situation described in the previous subchapter has influenced the state of education in Sudan. There are many children and youth who have been denied educational opportunities as a result of the conflicts. The education system itself consists of 2 years of pre-school and then 8 years of basic education. This is followed by 3 years of academic, technical or vocational secondary education (UNESCO, 2010b). According to the UNESS report (UNESCO, 2008) there are many children and youth however, who are not enrolled in the school.[1]

Table 1 North Sudan: General Education Gross Enrolment Rates (GER) 2005 – 06 & 2007/08

Level	Pre-School		Basic		Secondary	
	05/06	07/08	05/06	07/08	05/06	07/08
Total GER (%)	25.3	32,9	64.3	74,3	26.4	31,5

Source: UNESCO 2008 and UNESCO 2010b

The figure above makes it clear that only a small number of the Sudanese children are enrolled in pre-school and secondary school even though some progress was made between 05/06 and 07/08. Another crucial fact concerning the enrolment rates is that they vary greatly from state to state. For instance, in *South Darfur* the GER percent in pre-school are only at 18 %, meanwhile they are at 58,7 %. In the *River Nile* and for the secondary school, *West Darfur* has a GER as low as 13,9 %, compared to *Khartoum* that has 54,4%. Differences also exist in the basic education, though the average GER is much higher nationwide. That children attend the basic schools explains the high rates (River Nile for instance has a GER of 151 %)

[1] The data is not seen to be totally adequate as Sudan has not established an Educational Informal System (which would centralize and cross check the data) yet. (UNESCO, 2009)

however there is in any case still a long way to go to reach the goal of 2015 of 100 % enrolment of children in primary education (UNESCO, 2008).

In the urban areas, classes can contain 100 pupils and 5 % of the children in the countryside have to travel more than 3 kilometres to go to school, are two explanations for the lower rates. It is also not uncommon that both boys and girls in rural areas are expected to work to support their families and therefore cannot attend school (UNICEF, 2009). Moreover, there are many parents who cannot afford to pay the school fees for more than one of their children (Ebizon & Bashir, 2008).

Gender disparity can be seen in the statistics of primary schools. Girls do not have the same access as the boys have (UNESCO, 2008). In some communities, girls are raised to be future wives and mothers and helpers in the household. The priority is therefore not to send them to school. When the girls get older, a lack of single-sex classes and female teachers can then be another barrier to education (UNICEF, 2009).

In addition to this, there are few educated teachers in basic education. Only 62 % are said to have specific training and other surveys point out that about 73 % only have secondary school education (UNESCO, 2010b). A Teacher Training Assessment has shown that there might be as many as 110,000 unqualified teachers within the school system in Sudan (UNICEF, 2009), an issue likely to have an adverse effect.

The problem with so many children out of school, lacking elementary education, and the shortages in quality can also explain the high rates of adult illiteracy in the country.

2.3 The status of Literacy

Depending on the source one looks at, the rates of adult literacy in Sudan will differ. UNDP (2012) has estimated it to 62%, but according to the National Council for Literacy and adult Education (NCLAE) there is no accurate literacy rate of Sudan and their estimation is between 60-70 %. Their Deputy Secretary General, H.S. Osman also says (personal communication, 27th of November 2011) that the number of illiterate adults (over the age of 15) is above 7,2 million, and about 2/3 of these are women. It must be said, however, that even if the situation is still dire, the rates of literacy have increased a lot since 1990. At that time, less than 20 % of the women of north Sudan were literate (UNDP, 2012).

To increase the level of literacy in a country many aspects are involved. The political leaders of the state must take the literacy challenge seriously and there have to be explicit

literacy policies to safeguard the quality of the compulsory school and to invest in literacy programs for youth and adults. The former includes, among other things, a clear framework for coordinating different literacy initiatives, a sufficient budget, a concern for the needs of the learners, and provision of suitable literacy materials and adequate language policies. (Ministry of Education & UNESCO, 2007).

Since the 1990s there have been greater efforts put forth by the government to create literacy policies in Sudan, as a result of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the EFA. The EFA goals were accepted 1991 and the same year the NCLAE was established. NCLAE is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Education (NCLAE, 2008), and it is officially responsible for the eradication of illiteracy (Abu-Zaid & Akarim, 2006). They should, among other things, formulate policies and strategies for literacy and adult education and they are responsible for carrying through mass literacy campaigns (Yousif, 2007). Their focus has been set on basic education (UNESCO, 2008) and NCLAE found it more effective to target young people rather than adults as there are still many children out of school. At present they run three programs for different age groups of young people who have dropped out from school (H. S. Osman, personal communication, 27th of November 2011).

Even though there have been policy developments, there are still problems financing education because of competing demands. The Sudanese government prioritizes the military and security services and not education in their fiscal planning. Therefore, governmental investment in education, in Sudan, is one of the lowest in the world) (National Education Stakeholders Workshop, 2007) & (UNESCO, 2008). A. Mohd, Education Consultant at UNESCO (personal communication, 21st of December 2011), says that at present, 2,8% of the governmental budget goes towards education. As the educational system is decentralised and partially funded by taxes on state level, investment in education differs from state to state

Reasonable pay, professional status and training opportunities for literacy educators are also needed in order to increase literacy rates (Ministry of Education & UNESCO, 2007). To increase the quality of literacy activities, NCLAE has a training centre in Shendi, a town north of Khartoum. As it is the states' responsibility for implementing literacy initiatives, leaders and trainers from the different states receive training in how to administrate, plan, and coordinate literacy activities and how to train trainers (H. Abu Shora, Head of the Training department of NCLAE, personal communication, 27th of November 2011). The centre is said to have contributed to developing many of the currently used literacy approaches in Sudan, for example, the functional literacy approach and the Regenerated Frerirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques (REFLECT). Financial constraints have, however, led

to physical and technical deteriorations and the performance of the centre has been decreasing (Abu-Zaid & Akarim, 2006).

According to Q. E Garanba'a, Professor in Adult Education at Khartoum University (personal communication, 21st of November 2011), NCLAE is collaborating with the Department of the Adult Education of the Khartoum University, in order to train facilitators in many areas. It is the only university in Sudan that is dealing with adult education, and apart from offering Master and PHD programmes in this field, all the students in the Faculty of Education, take a course in adult education, whether they study to become a secondary or primary school teacher.

The purpose of this course is to increase the students' practical and theoretical knowledge, and their capacity to plan, implement, and carry out adult education activities. Likewise, it also stresses the importance and role of adult education in Sudan (Department of Adult Education).

By focusing the youth, NCLAE to a large extent, has trusted the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to run literacy programs for adults (Yousif, 2007). A disconnect between the initiatives of the government and the NGOs can be seen. The government mainly runs activities in the more settled communities; while NGOs more often target remote areas and displaced and poor communities. The literacy programs of the NGOs often have a larger impact on the learners than the governmental campaigns. Explanations for this are that NGOs train their staff in participatory methods while the literacy trainers of the state make use of more traditional methods (Abu-Zaid & Akarim, 2006).

One approach that has been popular among the organisations is REFLECT. There is even a network called *Pamoja Reflect*. The Sudanese part of the network contains 21 NGOs and Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and its purpose is to "*promote learning, sharing and continuing evolution of* REFLECT *experience in Sudan in order to build a critical mass of literate people, aware of their rights and empowered to develop their communities*." (Reflect Action, 2009). According to one of its founders the "*mission is to help whoever is interesting in learning the approach, to work to expand the approach, to use the approach all over Sudan"* (L. Bashir, personal communication 21st of December). In order to do so they offer about two courses a year for Trainer of Trainers (TOT) where the focus is on initiating, running, and evaluating REFLECT programs (ibid).

The characteristics of the REFLECT approach will be further outlined in chapter 3.1.2.

2.3.1 The literacy programs of the case study

The organisation in the case study is an international relief and development organisation which focuses on five areas of need: food security, economic development, disaster preparedness and response, primary health, and basic education. The basic education section, in turn, is divided into four parts: adult education, basic literacy and numeracy, curricula development activities and primary and secondary education (ADRA, n.d.)

In Sudan, the organisation, among other things, runs literacy programs in three suburbs of Khartoum: Haj Yousif, Kerary, and Um Baddah. Most of the inhabitants in these areas are poor and many of them are IDPs (ADRA, 2010). Until recently, many refugees from the south of Sudan lived there, but as was mentioned in a previous subchapter, most of these people have moved back after the country divide. At present, there are mainly people from Nuba and Darfur in these neighbourhoods. The rate of illiteracy is high among these people who often come from an agricultural or pastoralist background and therefore lack the livelihood skills (including literacy) required in the city. The aim of the projects is to empower the most vulnerable women and children so that they can live a life of dignity, justice and respect. (ADRA, 2010). Women and children in these areas are considered to have had less access to education (Gamil & Ezibon, 2008).

Altogether, there are 28 literacy trainers enrolled in these programs. The trainers have all been trained in the REFLECT methodology during a 14 days initial course. Over the years, they also have attended additional trainings on, for example, HIV (E. Bashab, personal communication, 19th of December 2011).

The organisation is one of the founders of the Pamoja Network. The role of Pamoja in the programs is to offer technical support during the training courses, to design the manual for the literacy circles, and to evaluate the projects (L. Bashir, personal communication, 21st December 2011).

Each literacy circle contains of 25 participants. Each group meets four days a week in two hours sessions; exactly when will be agreed on by the participants (ADRA, 2010). The session on the fifth day is focusing on awareness, where the trainers bring up topics like HIV, general health and environment (E. Bashab, personal communication, 19th of December 2011). In addition, there are two levels of literacy training. To complete the first one takes nine months and the advanced level, eight (ADRA, 2010).

Different stakeholders are involved in the projects. There are government authorities at different levels and among these is the popular committee at the area level. The committee has more direct influence on the literacy trainers as they facilitate the establishing of the

program in the area, assign places for building shelters for the literacy circles, nominate literacy trainers, and monitor the circles activities (ADRA, 2010). The organisation is, however, the one that monitors the quality of the trainers (E. Bashab, personal communication, 19th of December 2011).

Chapter 3 - Conceptual and theoretical framework

3.1 Literacy

3.1.1 What is literacy?

In order to investigate literacy, one must first define the word literacy itself. In fact, the definition of literacy in the academic world differs depending on the perspective of the researcher. Quantitative studies try to define it objectively while the qualitative approaches seek to depict what literacy means to literates themselves (Fairbrother, 2007, pp. 48-50).

One way of interpreting literacy is called *functional literacy*, meaning to be able to read and write well enough to use literacy in the everyday life. For example, filling in job applications and understanding signs (Williams & Snipper, 1990). This view was common in the 1960s and 1970s, but in recent years, it has been combined with questions concerning the functionality of literacy and the purpose it serves. Bhola (1994) writes that the functional literacy of today focuses on creating awareness as well as on dealing with economical skills and literacy itself. As such, it bears a certain resemblance to *cultural literacy*.

Cultural literacy stresses the socio-historical context and was founded by Paulo Freire. In this view, the reader is constructing the meaning of a text while reading or writing it. What a reader brings to the reading has to do with his/her background, values, and experiences (Williams & Snipper, 1990). Freire emphasised the necessity of using one's language when reading and writing and that language could not be separated from thoughts nor separated from the world of the reader or writer (Freire, 1972).

Freire was also the one who introduced *Critical literacy*, which expands upon the concept of cultural literacy. In this context, the word critical refers not only to critical thinking in order to test the strengths of evidence and arguments, but also means analysing the forces behind a text to see whose perspective they give. In other words, the power relationships are taken into considerations (Janks, 2010) and through literacy, people should be empowered to reclaim their community, culture and beliefs (Bhola, 1994).

Freire is not alone in his thoughts of literacy linked to a social context and power structures. Within the field of *New Literacy Studies* (*NLS*), researchers speak about *multiple literacies*, meaning that literacy varies from place to place and time to time depending on the specific culture. The word culture does not necessarily refer to the country/region; instead it stands for a group of people that use literacy in a certain context. What is counted as literacy

in one situation does not necessarily have to be counted as literacy in another (Street, 2003, p. 77). There are women's literacy, prisoners' literacy and family literacy etc (Bhola, 2008, p. 8). Street (1984) proposes a model he calls *ideological literacy* that says that literacy has not only different meanings for different groups, it has also different consequences. Further he poses the *ideological literacy* against the *autonomous literacy* which sees literacy as an independent variable and claims that there is a single line between literacy and development. The autonomous literacy seems to be a form of functional literacy as it also defines literacy as a technical skill, rather than a social practice.

The NLS also bring up that some groups' literacies are dominant meanwhile others are marginalised and that there should be a distinction between literacy events (the very act of decoding text or writing it) and literacy practices (the use and conceptions of reading and writing) instead of using the term literacy for both things (Street, 2003, pp. 77-78).

Bhola (2008, p. 8), on the other hand, points out that the discussion of how literacy can be understood is a matter of epistemology. An autonomous model would rather require a positivist perspective but an ideological needs a constructivist. Likewise it also depends on if the approach is etic or emic. As the teaching of literacy, itself, comes from the outside it is etic, meanwhile the learning that takes place within the learner/group of learners is emic. In this sense, the two perspectives cannot be separated from each other as the technical skill of literacy also will be acquired and utilised.

Not only scholars, but politicians, educationalist and development workers need to define literacy. A common and more functional definition is that a literate person is someone *"who can with understanding both read and write a short simple statement on his or her everyday life"* (UNESCO, 2010a, p. 94). But as the phenomenon is complex UNESCO suggests combining the previous definition with the broader: "*literacy is about the acquisition and use of reading, writing and numeracy skills, and thereby the development of active citizenship improved health and livelihoods and gender equality"* (ibid, pp 94-95).

The second quotation broadens literacy to not only cover the ability to read, but also the capability to write and what is mentioned less in literacy, numeracy. The quotations above seem to give a more autonomous than an ideological point of view, but even representatives of UNESCO state that these definitions alone are not satisfactory but must be connected with the social and political context (Richmond, Robinson, & Sachs-Israel, 2008). The idea of literacy as a social practice has led to literacy campaigns designed for a particular context. Children's textbooks, for example, are seldom used in adult literacy classes, as materials connected to the life of the target group are preferred. Adult literacy can differ from the

formal literacy learned in school. More often is it explicitly linked to functional knowledge and learning for life. It is not unusual that literacy projects integrate classes in local development or income generating activities (Bhola, 2008, p. 9).

3.1.2 How should literacy be taught?

The way of teaching literacy does vary from country to country. The local culture and context in terms of social structures and educational standards do influence literacy programs. Apart from that, the concept of literacy can be very individual. Traditionally, literacy training focused on the cognitive process itself, converting written words into spoken words and constructing an understanding of what the words mean: this was deemed literacy skills. But today, there are many different approaches used in development work and many of them are based on a contextual perspective (Wagner & Robert, 2005).

According to a report (Ministry of Education & UNESCO, 2007) there are three current categories of approaches to literacy promotion: the traditional, the functional and the psychosocial. The traditional has often been used in big campaigns for mass education meanwhile the functional focuses on the illiterate person's ability to improve his/her living conditions through literacy, and the psychosocial concentrates on community development rather than on the individual's progress. Even if these categories do not exactly reflect functional, cultural, and critical literacy as they were described previously in this chapter, they prove some similarities. The psychosocial approach, for instance, seems to have much in common with critical literacy in terms of the view of the target group and the objective. Likewise, it seems the traditional is related more to the early version of ~~the kind of~~ functional literacy, which was described in 3.1.1.

There is no single teaching method connected to each of these categories, but the different goals of these approaches will influence how the literacy activities will be carried out (Ministry of Education & UNESCO, 2007). The following table illustrates the particular features of each of these categories and in view of this, it will become more obvious that the underlying perception of literacy plays an essential part when deciding how to conduct the teaching of it.

Table 2 Features of the tree main approaches to literacy promoting

	Traditional	Functional	Psychosocial
Disadvantage	Illiteracy	Underdevelopment	Exploitation
Objective	Literacy	Innovation/Production	Conscientious raising
Concept	Education	Development	Liberation
Target Group	All illiterates	Shared-need groups	Oppressed shared-need groups
Content	Standardized	Advanced	Spontaneous
Teaching aids	Traditional textbooks	Functional textbooks	Improvised document
Method	Teaching	Teaching and demonstration	Dialogue
Teacher	Literacy or general teacher	Expert, Technician, guide, Leader	Coordinator, leader
Student	Passive	Active, participative	Participant
Evaluation	Written/competitive	Promotion/Production & Management ability	Social actions
Infrastructure	Traditional & religious learning centres	Government & Development institutions	Rural promotion

Source: Ministry of Education & UNESCO, 2007

As the table shows, the objectives of the approaches differ quite a bit. In the traditional approach, literacy is a goal in itself. Meanwhile, the other two approaches view it as a tool for something else. These background perspectives influence the methods. It is not strange that the psychosocial approach sees dialogue as a way of learning – according to this approach the learners need to express themselves in order to become free from oppression.

Also Lind (2008) distinguishes between three main branches of approaches to literacy teaching and learning, the formal education or continuing adult education approaches, the development-oriented or functional approaches and the social awareness or liberation approaches. These can easily be matched to the categories mentioned above, but she also states that nowadays there is more convergence between them. A literacy program is, in fact, often a mixture of different elements as the different approaches complement each other.

REFLECT belongs to the psychosocial or social awareness approaches and it is a method often used in developing countries (Ridell, 2001). But even if this usually is connected to *critical literacy*, as it was developed by Freire- the originator of the theory, it has also been implemented by organisations with a more functional or social understanding of literacy (Fransman, 2008).

To be more specific, one can also distinguish between the techniques of teaching reading literacy. For instance, there are the alphabetic method which focuses on the letters followed by words and sentences; the word method of starting with the words before going to the letters; and the sentence method where the sentence is broken down to words and the

words into syllables and the syllables to letters (Bhola, 1994). REFLECT, for example, goes from pictures to words and from words to letters (L. Bashir, personal communication, 21st of December 2011). The approach includes many different forms of communication practice as part of the literacy process and it means that literacy is connected to power and people's ability to influence of their own life situation. The REFLECT approach integrates literacy with development in a structured participatory way of learning that encourages the participants to critically question their own environment and other relevant issues (Ebizon & Bashir, 2008). Participatory methods aim to ensure that the voices of the people are heard (Reflect Action, 2009).

In addition, the methods include frequent use of visual aids (maps, diagrams, photographs etc) and other pedagogical devices such as role-plays and songs. These tools are used to stimulate discussions and the aim is for the participants to use their knowledge and experiences to learn more. REFLECT focuses what the people already know and continues to build upon their skills (ibid).

3.1.3 Effects of literacy

Not only are there many ways of defining literacy and determining how to teach it, there are also different opinions of what literacy leads to. As mentioned in the previous section, many researchers deny that literacy alone can change society, but if the political, economic and cultural systems allow, literacy can be a tool of development or at least a condition for it (Bhola, 2008, p. 28). There are, in any case, many claimed effects of literacy and thus reasons to teach it.

Literacy is seen as a human right. The right to education was stated by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 and since literacy is a foundation for education it is indirectly covered by the statement (Richmond, Robinson, & Sachs-Israel, 2008). The view of literacy as the basis of education is supported by the fact that projects that fight poverty and try to improve general living conditions are less likely to succeed if the target groups are illiterate (Actionaid, 2005).

To become literate will change the individual learner. Not only will he/she obtain a skill that helps him/her to construct the understanding of the world, and gain greater self-confidence and self-esteem, but literacy may also lead to their voice being heard (Bhola, 2008, p. 28). Especially women are said to have more opportunities to participate in decision-

making, both in the household and community, when becoming literate. Furthermore, children of literate mothers are more likely to stay in school, be healthier, and there is a lower rate of infant mortality amongst literate mothers (Actionaid, 2005).

Literacy also seems to have a positive effect on economic development. Studies have shown that there is a positive correspondence between the level of literacy in a country and the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita growth (Ministry of Education & UNESCO, 2007). Also, Bhola (2008, p. 51), based on a number of studies in different developing countries, adds the perspective of literacy as a foundation of sustainable development as it can lead to a greater understanding of the importance of taking care of the local environment.

Another effect is that literacy has been an essential tool when it comes to fighting HIV/AIDS. The topic is often integrated in the literacy programs, which means that people get information about these dieses (Actionaid, 2005).

A summary of the functions of the literacy can alternatively be seen in following model:

Asset / Function / Level	Human: Learning TO BE	Political: Learning TO LIVE TOGETHER AND TRANSFORM	Social: Learning TO KNOW	Economical: Learning TO DO
	Self confidence Autonomy Personal development Inclusion Access to information Freedom	Democracy Citizenship Participation Empowerment Nation-building Human rights Peace	Literate societies Gender equality Multi-cultural inclusion Education EFA Improved health Fertility control	Poverty reduction Livelihoods growth Productivity
Individual				
Family				
Community				
National				
Global				

Source: Lind 2008, p. 78

Figure 1 Literacy as potential human, politic, social and economic asset at different levels

The figure shows that literacy has impact on many different levels; from the individual to around the world and that it can be used for different purposes in different areas.

3.2 Training of literacy trainers

3.2.1 Challenges and context of a literacy trainer

As have been stated in 1.1 there is often a problem of many unqualified teachers and trainers in developing countries. The training of trainers is therefore of great importance regardless of exactly which pedagogical approach that is used. The training will prepare the future trainer to carry out his/her work and it is a way to ensure the quality of the literacy programs. But what are the challenges of the literacy trainer and what context is he/she working in? This must be known first in order to determine what elements the training should consist of.

First of all, it might be good to look at the different names a literacy trainer is given in different settings, which can indicate the role he/she is supposed to play. One common expression is the word facilitator, which is often used for a literacy trainer in Non Formal Education (NFE) and refers to the trainer as someone that makes it easier for an adult to learn (Ministry of Education & UNESCO, 2007). Other names are animator or instructor but even the word teacher is used sometimes (Bhola, 1994). In this study the researcher mainly uses the word "trainer", but sometimes the term "facilitator".[2]

According to Bhola (1994), the work of a literacy trainer can be divided into two areas: one technical and one social (or cultural). The former is about the way he/she teaches the practical skills meanwhile the latter has to do with the role the trainer plays in the community he/she is working in. Often it is not just about motivating the learners, but also motivating the community leaders to take action. It has been said that one of the biggest challenges for a trainer is to make the learning relevant (Ministry of Education & UNESCO, 2007).

In order to motivate others, the trainers must be motivated themselves. Caillods and Postlewaite (1995) write that the working conditions of a teacher have an impact on student achievements. They mean that low salaries, delayed salaries, or no salaries at all, do not inspire to serious teaching efforts. In general the first priority is to make a living. The fact that literacy trainers often receive small incentives instead of salaries, as they are employed on a more or less volunteer basis (Bhola, 1994), can thus be an obstacle in effective teaching as well a reason that few educated teachers select this career.

Payment is not the only things that matters. A report from UNESCO (2006) asserts that there are other things that will motivate a teacher (whose situation is reminiscent of a

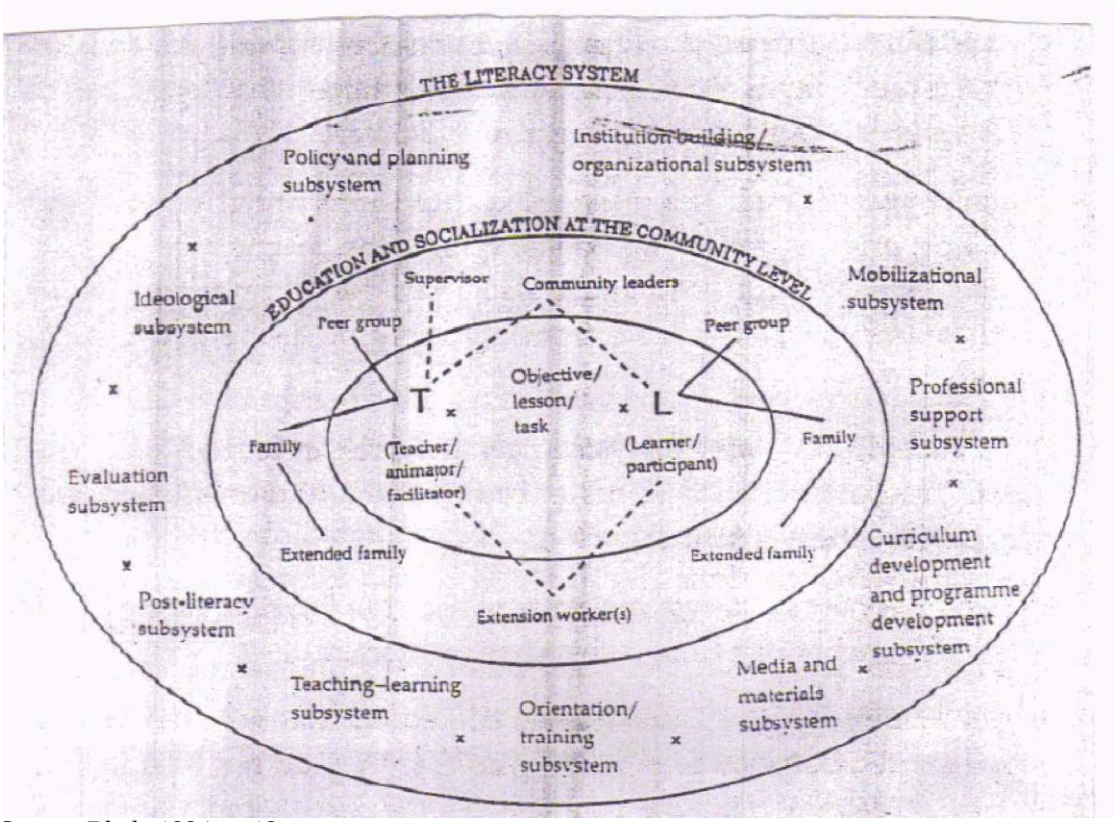
[2] The reason for not solely using the more widespread word trainer is that facilitator is the most common name for trainers working in NGOs in Sudan.

trainer's). First, dedication to his/her profession, then there is the grade of success, (if the students achieve the goals there will be professional rewards). Moreover, the prospect and possibility of promotion, and the status the trainers get from the community will be motivating factors.

Naturally, issues surrounding workload, lack of teaching aids, and an unfavourable working environment can also negatively impact the quality of the teaching (Caillods & Postlethwaite, 1995). As well as the absence of clear guidelines and policies do. Working conditions are important for inspiration (UNESCO, 2006).

There are different ideas of what a good teacher is. The OECD, for instance, has stated five essential characteristics: the teacher should have managerial and pedagogical skills. He/she should have knowledge of his/her topics and be able to use self-reflection and show empathy (OECD 1994 cited in (Fredriksson, n.d., pp. 7-8). These are qualities that could be applicable to a literacy trainer as well. However, in addition to these more general characteristics, Bhola (1994) brings up the importance for literacy trainers to understand the learners and their communities. In order to do so, they first need to know themselves - to face their personal needs, and to clarify their personal values, abilities and potential. For example, they must admit they are not experts but can learn from their participants.

Moreover Bhola explains the literacy system with following model:



Source: Bhola 1994, p. 19

Figure 2 Teaching and learning in the context of an ideal-type, fully functional literacy system

With this model, Bhola explains many things which can influence the teaching and learning in a literacy project. In the outer oval, different subsystems are present. The ideological, for instance, has to do with the cultural and economic ideas that the literacy program is based upon. The policy and planning subsystem it is related to the politics of the country. The institution-building and organisational subsystems are then connected to the roles of the government and the non-governmental organisation. Meanwhile the mobilisation deals with the selection of trainers and learners as it, at the same time, seeks to get resources from the community. There is also the professional support subsystem, which includes evaluation, research, and specific training and can be a part of the organisation that runs the program or come from the universities and other institutions as well. Moreover, there is a subsystem of the development of the curriculum and the program too.

There is also the media and material subsystem that decides teaching aids, and another one taking care of issues like the pre-service and in-service training of the trainers, the literacy teaching itself, the follow up, the evaluation, and the supervising.

The Bhola model clarifies that both the learner and the trainer are constantly influenced by the people around them. The literacy facilitator can be influenced on many different levels- by their family, colleagues, supervisor, and/or community leader. A similar pattern is then seen for the learner and the whole inner oval is a picture of the educational and social norms at the community level (ibid).

3.2.2 Pre-service and in-service training

Is the complexity of literacy really relevant to teachers? Williams and Snipper (1990) ask themselves this question, and conclude that it is important for pedagogues to understand their own conceptualization of literacy and its strategies, as it is influenced by cultural and political concerns. If they only see literacy as something functional and leave out the more complex need of the students, they limit their students' academic achievements and the personal growth. Bhola (1994) confirms this in the case of the literacy trainer. He says that the trainers need to have a basic understanding of curriculum development as well as about the idea of the project itself. If not, they might have problems understanding why their subordinates ask them to follow a certain curriculum and why the projects are organized as they are.

If the trainer understands the big picture of the curriculum, he/she can also be able to adapt it to the local environment and better meet the actual needs of the learners (ibid).

The recruitment of the trainers is, however, often one of the weakest spots in many literacy programs as the trainers selected often lack experiences or have an attitude that will not facilitate the teaching learning process. In fact, many studies have shown that a positive attitude of the trainers is more important than their formal education and pedagogical training (Lind, 2008). Thus the training must serve two roles, both as means to increase the trainers understanding and skills and at the same time motivate them. The questions remain what they learn in such a short pre-service training and how they can remain motivated and committed to their tasks (Lind, 2008).

In any case, the kind of training of the literacy trainers receives depends to a large extent on the literacy program itself. As some programs only deal with literacy, meanwhile others combines it with development issues or activities, and some are formal and other non-formal, the content of the training differs. This is why many organisations that run literacy programs train their own trainers, and by doing so, allow the trainers to become familiar with the specific material they will use themselves when teaching literacy (Rogers A. , 2006).

Naturally, the trainer of the trainers is a key person in the education of literacy facilitators (Lind, 2008), but the curriculum is influenced by the underlying values of the training and by the participants themselves. Most non-formal training of trainers programs will contain some parts of literacy teaching and other development issues. Often though, there is less on the specific role of adult learning. When it comes to the methods, they are participative, although it is less common that they give the trainers a practical teaching experience (Rogers A. , 2006).

It is, however, not enough to only have an ad hoc training and then believe that the trainers are fully trained (Lind, 2008). There are suggestions that there should be refresher courses every 6 months. The training should support the literacy trainers' immediate needs and questions as it will integrate the theory in practice (Rogers A. , 2006). But the question is, how to ensure that teaching staff in adult education, on a regular basis, take part in continuing training in order to update their knowledge and to improve their performance (DVV International, 2005).

The different steps in training adults, regardless of the curriculum and the methods, can, in general, be defined as following: the first step is to identify the needs of the learners (both in terms of capacity and motivation) and set the goals; secondly to create a dialogical atmosphere in the classroom where the learner can be safe and communicate with the trainer and the co-learners; step number three is then about to questioning, giving feedback to and

scaffolding the learner; the fourth step is to help him/her to learn independently through self-evaluation etc.; and the last one is to evaluate the learners progress (OECD, 2008).

Whether it is in a pre-service course, in-serve training, or as general support, the trainer of the trainers or the supervisor of the trainers should be aware of these stages. The following subchapter will look more closely at the pedagogical theoretical features of teaching, learning and education, issues which are close connected to the training of trainers as well as teaching literacy.

3.3 Theories on learning, teaching and education

3.3.1 The caring theory in education

One particular view, often applied on children's education, but possible to apply to adult learning as well, is the caring theory in education which to a great extent focuses on the learning environment and the role of the teacher. According to Kroth and Keeler (2009) the most important issue for students is that they feel that they are cared for. They support their idea by showing that caring is essential for education and especially for at-risk students. They also see care as an attitude which is likely to be expressed in a variety of ways: attention, listening, response, empathy and high expectations, are some of these (ibid), and are phenomena that all seem to be appropriate in an adult learning situation as well.

Noblit and Rogers too mean that caring is a necessity in education. "*It frames and gives meaning to what happens in classrooms and schools*". Moreover they say that caring "*lies hidden beneath the technical and instrumental ways of viewing culture and schooling*" and that "*instruction, discipline, classroom organization, and all the other pedagogical aspects of classroom work are based on a foundation of caring*" (1995, p. 680).

Noblit and Rogers claim further that caring can help to discover one's own capabilities, increase their self-esteem and to learn how to interact with others. At the same time, caring also has a link to cognitive skills, among other things, it can support learning to read (ibid p. 684-85).

Noddings, who is said to have laid the foundation of the caring theory (Kroth & Keeler, 2009), and who claims that caring is the basis of all successful relationships, discuss two perspectives of caring in education. She talks about a non-relational view of caring which oppose her own approach and where caring is seen as a virtue of "the carers". From this point

of view, the carers should decide what they think is the best for the "cared for" without listening to those they care for. The disadvantage with this view, according to Noddings, is that the carers sometimes choose things that are best for themselves, but not for the ones they care for. Instead, she recommends an ethic of care where the focus is on the relation between the one who cares and the one being cared for. In a school situation, the teacher is often seen as the former and the student is the latter (Noddings, 2005).

By using the expressions of "engrossment" and "motivational displacement" she explains this mutual relationship. Engrossment has to do with being receptive and open to the one, one cares for. (Noddings acknowledges even the word attention used by other writers to describe this kind of awareness of other people.) Motivational displacement means then that the caregiver can transfer the focus from his/her own plans to the wishes of the one cared for and understand the world from the eyes of that person. Motivational displacement, as well as engrossment, is what then underlie the act of caring itself, performed by the caring person (ibid).

The one who is cared for does not, however, play a passive role. Not until he/she recognise the caring efforts, is the caring relation completed (ibid). Likewise, it is essential that he/she responds to the act of caring. Noddings (1996, p. 35) explains it in following way:

> *What the cared for gives to the relation either in direct response to the one-caring or in personal delight or in happy growth before her eyes is genuine reciprocity. It contributes to the maintenance of the relation and serves to prevent the caring from turning back on the one caring in the form of anguish and concern for self.*

Noddings works, which generally hold a feministic focus, do not only contain elements directly connected to the teacher-student relationship. In fact, she writes a lot about moral education, the importance of teaching the students to care, and how to do this (Noddings, 2002) and (Noddings, 1984). It includes among other things to care for oneself, for others (both well-known and strangers), for the environment and for ideas. Such education is said to have four components when it comes to teaching it. The first one is modelling, that the teacher himself/herself actually creates caring relationships with his/her students (Noddings, 2005). Another element is dialogue. Noddings says that with the word dialogue, just as Freire, means something genuine and open-ended. It means gathering adequate information before making decisions and to get to know others better. A third is in practice, trying to change one's attitudes and by doing acts of caring, and the fourth is confirmation: to appreciate and encourage the best in other people (ibid).

Pintrich and Schunk (2002) too, mention the importance of caring in education. They bring up three aspects concerning the psychological climate of a school or learning organisation that could also fall under a theory of caring: a sense of community and belongingness, warmth and civility in personal relations, and the feelings of safety and security. The first aspect includes the notion that members of the group are committed to the organisation's goals and values, and feel that they belong to it. At the same time, it implies that the representatives of the organisation have to care about its members.

The second aspect resembles the first, as it too refers to relationships, but here the focus is not a sense of community, but how individuals in the organisation treat each other. By being polite and keeping collegial relations, the effectiveness of the organisation is sustained. Teachers are less isolated in their teaching tasks and more satisfied if they have friendly relations with their colleagues. Likewise, even the students will benefit if they get support and concern from their teachers (ibid). Research has been done on adolescences' perceptions of teachers' caring. Bosworth (1995), has found that most of his informants first connected the caring of a teacher to teaching practices, for example, helping students with the schoolwork and being encouraging. However, caring about the students outside the school-activities, for example, giving them assistance and guidance with personal problems, was another issue frequently mentioned. Also, the personal attributes of a teacher who, for example, could be described as nice, polite or being involved, were noted.

The third part that Pintrich and Schunk (2002) bring up has to do with the sense of safety and security and it not only refers to the physical dimension, but also has to do with the ability to express personal opinions and ideas without fear. In a wider perspective, the latter can demand a teacher who actually cares about the students' feelings and growth.

3.3.2 Perspectives on adult learning

As this study deals with the teaching/learning of adults, it is also useful to bring up some perspectives on adult learning. Adult learning is sometimes mixed up with adult education, but although learning is the desired result of education, it is not always a consequence of it (Brookfield, 1996). The expression adult education refers to the whole organisation of education for people regarded as adults in their society. Neither the contents, levels, or methods matter, and nor whether it is formal or not (UIL, 2009). Meanwhile, education can be seen as a set of practices (Brookfield, n.d.). Learning is about increasing the quantitative

knowledge, acquiring facts, methods, and skills and changing behaviours and attitudes. The latter can be developed either through instruction or experience (Shangwu, 2011).

The challenge of adult learning is clearly stated in the goals of Education for All (UNESCO a, n.d.). It can have many purposes, which from an individual perspective can be summarised as, *"learn to know, learn to do, learn to live together and learn to be*" (UIL, 2009, p. 17). Even though education, of itself, does not create jobs, learning can help an individual adapt to the demands of the rapidly changing knowledge society (Rubenson, 2006). It can, for example, be of benefit to an illiterate man conducting a literacy program in a developing country or to a woman in a more developed part of the world, catching up the upper secondary school she missed when she was younger. Whether it is carried out in formal or non-formal (or even informal) settings, adult learning often gives opportunity for grown-ups to make up for education they have missed (UIL, 2009). Not least, in developing countries, the concept of non-formal education is widely used (Rogers, 2004).

The opportunity to learn as adults does not only have an impact on the single man or women, but also on the community as a whole. The "knowledge society" of today needs educated people with technical skills, and education is a foundation for erasing poverty and to make the world a better place to live in. All over the world, there are adults involved in learning activities (e.g. literacy or second language programs, vocational training, life-skills projects and primary and secondary education), continuing the process of life-long learning (UIL, 2009).

Since the 1990s, the concept of adult learning has nonetheless, nearly been swallowed by the wider term "lifelong learning", and the idea of that continuous learning throughout life is necessary for the state's economic survival. Here, learning is seen as a life-long process and the focus is on the connections established between schooling, education at universities, and workplace learning. This view is more holistic and it refuses to acknowledge that adult learning should be an isolated incident, separated from learning at other stages of life. The variables of culture, ethnicity, personality, and political views, determine the propensity for learning more than the age of the student (Brookfield, n.d.).

There are researchers, however, who argue that some issues are of particular importance to adults in their learning process. According to Brookfield (ibid), there are four areas which play a more significant role for adult learners than for children and adolescents. Firstly, adults have the capacity to think dialectically, which means that they can see things from more than one perspective, and this is used both in educational settings and in everyday decision-making. This includes the statement that adults can more easily understand a general rule

(also in terms of being able comprehend exceptions and combine subjective and objective viewpoints). Secondly, adults have the ability to employ practical logic, in other words, think contextually in a deep and critical way. Brookfield expresses it as:

> *A logic that is practical is a logic that springs from a deep understanding of the context of the situation (...) It is a logic that does not follow formal rules of deductive reasoning, but that is experiential and inferential. It involves being aware of, and attending seriously to, very subtle cues whose importance only becomes apparent to those who have the benefit of a lengthy and mindful immersion in experience* (ibid).

Thirdly, they can use critical reflection which means that they, due to the life experiences gained over a longer period of time, can reinterpret values learned as children. Finally, Brookfield (ibid), also holds that adults have an ability to know how they know what they know and how to learn to learn. These areas tell something about how learning takes place and how the teacher can provide good learning conditions.

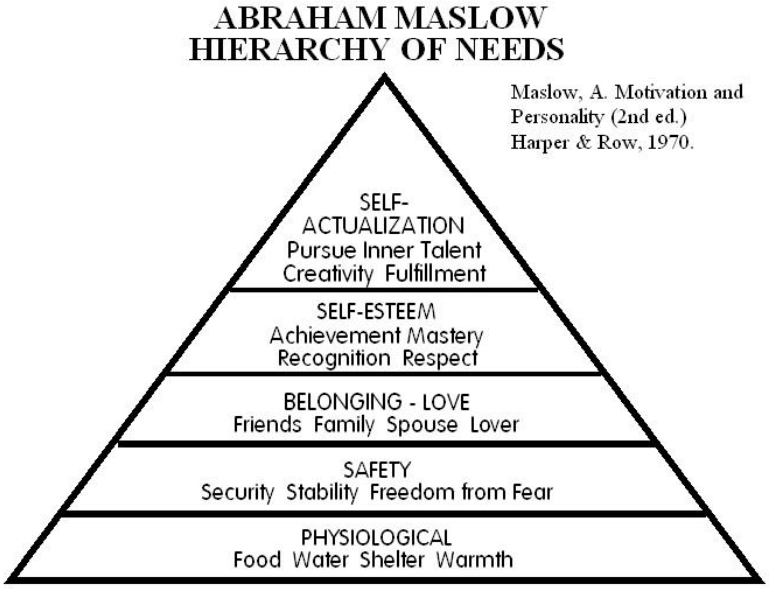
The focus on critical reflection is obvious in the transformative perspectives of learning, which sees adult learning as a means for social and personal change. Freire, one of the spokesmen of this theory (Taylor, 1998), meant that learning should start from where people are. By using words and concepts which the learners are familiar with from their lives, the educator should learn together with the student, which will in turn, liberate people from the domination of the ruling class (Tusting & Barton, 2006). Freire held a conflict view on education, which states that the ones in power use the formal, state education, for reproducing inequalities in the society (Coffey, 2008). Knowledge taught in in schools was also part of such a strategy. He saw critical reflection as an important ingredient in the learning process (Freire, 1993). Freire used the word conscious-raising, which can be explained by following quotation:

> *Critical consciousness refers to a process in which the learners develop an ability to analyze, pose questions and take action in the social, political and cultural and economic context that influence and shape their life. Through dialogue and problem-posing learners develop awareness of structures within the society that may be contributing to inequality and oppression* (Dirkx, 1998, p. 3).

The thought that learning is not just about a cognitive process, is also brought up in the andragogy perspective of learning. This widespread view has gone even further than Brookfield's in its attempt to distinguish between adult learning and children/youth learning. Malcolm Knowles, the founder of andragogy, has come up with a set of assumptions about the adult learners. They need to know the reason for learning something in order to become

motivated, and they will derive their learning motivation from things that they can make use of in different life situations. Furthermore, the adult learners' greatest resources are their own experiences (even if these might be biased) and they must take responsibility for their own learning and be treated as capable of learning (Dunn, 2000). But even though the andragogy view shows some similarities with Brookfield's ideas, he and others have criticized it as they view these assumptions as applicable to all learners and not only to adults. Moreover, it rather describes an ideal state of how adult learners should be, rather than giving a realistic picture (Tusting & Barton, 2006).

Andragogy highlights the potential of adult education and the self-development of learners, a concept built upon Maslow's model of the Hierarchy of Needs and others humanistic psychologies (Kunc, 1992). Maslows' ideas can be illustrated as in following figure:



Source: (Kunc, 1992)

Figure 3 Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

As the pyramid shows, Maslow believed that all human beings have some needs. First are the physical ones and then the more psychological factors. When the needs on one level are fulfilled, humans tend to strive to fulfil the ones on the level above. According to Maslow, people will therefore automatically turn to learning as it is a way towards self-actualisation, the very top of the pyramid (provided that the more urgent needs are already fulfilled). With self-actualisation, humans must use and develop their talents to be at peace with themselves (Kunc, 1992). It is not strange that these orientations have inspired educationalists as they

hold a positive view in the drive for learning. Likewise, the fact that the need of self-actualisation, as a rule, does not become strong until adolescence or later (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002), can be a reason to why the model is used in adult learning theory.

The level right below self-actualisation, self-esteem, can also be linked to education. Maslow meant that self-esteem can be developed when one is rooted in a community and that it has to do with our need to prove our value, to ourselves. By mastering or achieving something in a particular field or by getting respects from others, this need can be fulfilled (Kunc, 1992). Learning can lead to mastering, and status often goes hand in hand with educational achievements.

According to Maslow, the environment plays a role in providing opportunities to fill the needs. If for example, a child does not get his/her needs satisfied at home, this will hinder a more positive development. In accordance with this, many schools offer social and health services to their students and try to increase their safety by dealing with issues such as violence (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002) and bullying.

Another humanistic psychologist that has had an impact on adult learning is Rogers. Based on his experiences during therapy sessions with his clients, he came to the conclusion that there is an in-built motivation in each person to make the very best of their lives (Tusting & Barton, 2006). A positive outlook on the power of motivation is not, however, shared by everyone. It is not enough to only take into account what is happening within the individual, it must also be balanced with the social relations and the settings where learning is stimulated (Rees et al., 2006).

Based on the variety of adult learning theories (though not all of them have been referred to in this thesis) Tusting and Barton (2006) draw some conclusions on the subject. They highlight different perspectives that contribute new insights to the research and teaching field. As adult learning is said to be self-directed, the educator should just provide the environment where learning can take place and the learners should learn how to learn and choose the styles of learning that suit them best. Moreover, adults learn by engaging in practice and even though the adult learner has the responsibility of his/her own learning, the teacher should scaffold these activities as he/she also will provide opportunities for the learners to discuss problems taken from their real lives and to find solutions for these. The individual learner is unique and so is the context of learning, but as reflective learning empowers people to see things from new perspectives, adult learning is a tool for change, both at the individual and societal level.

A lot of the adult learning research focuses on the white western world, and this is something to be aware of when applying these theories on a non-European/North American context. During the 1990s, it became more common with a cross-cultural approach and such studies have shown differences between learners in different cultures. Adults in some cultures, for instance, do not benefit from a self-directed approach (where adult learners themselves take control over what they want to learn and how). Research has also shown that it is better for adults to be taught by someone from their own cultural group. It seems though, that learning built on experiences is appreciated by adult learners throughout the world (Brookfield, 1996).

3.3.3 The theory of economic, cultural and social capital

Adult learning theories and the caring theory in education mainly focus on the significance of the learner itself (and his/her teacher) and the environment where learning takes place. But there are other perspectives on learning and education which focus more on the relation between educational issues and the society.

One of the most prominent contemporary theories in the field of sociology is the human capital theory. In short, this theory assumes that human competencies are more valuable in industrialized countries than machines, land, and physical labour (Lauder, Brown, Dillabough, & Halsey, 2006, pp. 7-13) and that education, by transferring useful knowledge and skills, increases the productivity of workers. It should also be considered an investment since it is undertaken to enlarge personal incomes (Becker, 1993).

One of its underlying assumptions is that individuals are driven to increase their material well-being as much as possible. But objections have been raised against this assumption. Participation in life-long learning should not essentially be motivated by economic factors. Even if the economic benefit is low, one can attend a course because of the pleasure to learn or to increase the capacity of how to do a job. Universal, socially constituted, rationality rather than economical motivates people to educate themselves (Rees, Fevre, Furlong, & Gorard, 2006). Moreover it is said that:

> *learning behavior is conceived as the product of individual calculation and active choice, but within parameters set by both access to learning opportunities and collective norms. Moreover these parameters, by their very nature vary systematically over space and time* (ibid, pp 926-927).

Bordieu, one of the influential spokesmen of the cultural and social capital theory, does not agree totally with the human capital theory either. He criticises the assumption that an

individual's choice to invest in training depends on analysing the present value of the costs and benefits of such an investment. Like Rees et al., he claims that one must take other types of capital, not only the economical one, into consideration. According to him, there are three forms of resources that an individual or a group of people can possess: economical capital, social capital, and cultural capital. Economical capital can be seen as money or property, cultural capital is connected to educational qualifications, and social capital has to do with connections, which are often linked to a certain rank or title. Cultural capital as well as social capital can often, however, be converted into economic capital (Bourdieu, 2006).

Cultural capital can, in its turn, also be divided into three subgroups. The first one Bourdieu calls the embodied state or the cultivation of individuals. This cultivation process takes time and does not mean that someone obtains theoretical knowledge, but also that a person may change his/her behaviour, and even the way he/she speaks. It often takes place within the family, and as not all parents have the financial or cultural means to give their children cultural capital (that in contrast to the economic resources require an accumulation over time), there will be big differences between families and social groups (ibid).

In recent years many researchers have pointed out that this kind of cultural capital is important for social mobility and career progression. Already in school, the cultural capital of the parents will influence a child's cognitive development and performance (Esping-Andersen, 2006). The theory also claims that by being poor, one will lack the motivation, language, and other skills required for equipping oneself to and being selected to future university studies (Halsey, 2006).

Bordieu (2006) also talks about the objectified state, which are objects that hold a value of culture capital, such as media, writings, and paintings etc. To master these, e.g. consuming a painting or using a certain machine, belongs to the embodied capital. Moreover, the institutionalised state is third form of cultural capital and is about the formal competences of a person. Rather than looking at the actual capability of a person, the academic qualifications guaranteed by a certificate, is what counts. Like the embodied state, these two forms, according to Bordieu, are also vital for success.

Social capital is also of importance. Studies have shown that middle-class children are favoured by the school system, this partly due to the parents' network and the ability to make use of them (McNamara Horvat, Weininger, & Lareau, 2006). The abilities of social capital stretch over more than education. Bordieu (2006) defines social capital as *the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationship of mutual acquaintance and recognition* (p. 110).

This, he describes, as membership to a particular group, whether in a family, tribe, social class or party, does not matter. Irrespective of which, the network of relationships is a result of investments (collectively or individual) that can take place in various part of the society and benefit a single person or a group of people. There are, however, some groups in the society that are ranked higher than others, and explains why people with access to these groups will be given better opportunities than others (ibid).

Chapter 4 – Methodology

4.1 Research strategy

The research approach of any study depends on five underlying factors: the theory chosen for the study, the epistemological perspective, the ontological perspective, the values of the researcher, and practical considerations. Epistemology is a matter of what is seen as adequate knowledge and ontology is concerned with if social entities exist independently of the social actors or if they are constructed by these actors (Bryman, 2008). The underlying perspective of this study is qualitative. The reason for choosing such a research strategy is mainly a matter of the research questions. To investigate a phenomenon, such as peoples' understanding of a certain issue and what factors that lays behind this, is of qualitative nature and requires an inner perspective. Whether questioning the trainers or the ones that are responsible for the literacy program and the pedagogical training, a qualitative approach will allow the interviewees to give their own view.

The interpretive and constructive starting point means that no objective truth can come out of such an investigation, but rather a subjective construction of reality where the individuals' meaning is at the core. Thus, a hypothesis generated from a certain theory cannot form the basis of the study and the approach is consequently inductive. The researcher makes use of the so called grounded theory, an analysing strategy, which means that theories are generated out of the findings (Bryman, 2008). There is, however, some conceptual and theoretical framework that is linked to the findings in the analysis.

According to Charmaz, grounded theory requires the development of "*abstract ideas about research participant's meanings, actions and worlds and seeking specific data to fill out, refine, and check the emerging conceptual categories* (2005, p. 508). She also means that the work "*results in an analytical interpretation of participants' worlds and of the processes constituting how these worlds are constructed"* (ibid p. 508). More information on grounded theory will be found in 4.4.

4.2 Research design

The thesis is built on a case study, a design that makes it possible for the researcher to dig deeply into one single organisation (Bryman, 2008). The case study "allows investigators to

retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events – such as individual life cycles, small group behaviour, organizational and managerial processes...” (Yin, 2009, p. 4).

Moreover, the study is what Bryman calls an exemplifying case as it seeks to view a commonplace situation (2008). Stake (2005) implies the same thing when he talks about the instrumental case, which is studied mainly in order to give insight into an issue or to develop generalisations. Even though the study is carried out in depth, the instrumental case study helps us to understand something external. The trainers’ situation in the case is not something unique. Similar conditions and circumstances exist in other organisations that work (or have been working) in Sudan. Naturally, though, the researcher has to consider the specific features of the particular case, paying attention to the nature of the case, its historical background, the informants, and the settings (Stake, 2005).

The case study is particularly suitable when the investigator wants to focus on contemporary events and explain the how and why (Yin, 2009), which is the purpose of this thesis. Criticism has, however, been raised against case study design. The main criticism of the case study approach is that it is not possible to generalise from the particular to the general, but as the study of the case aims to draw generalisations to a theory rather than to other cases, the criticism does not seem to be so relevant (Bryman, 2008).

The data collection will contain both an individual and an organisational unit, but as the unit of analysis is at the organisational level, the case itself it is what Yin (2009) calls a holistic case study.

4.2.1 Rationale for selecting the organisation

The organisation selected for the case study has more than ten years of experience of running literacy programs in Sudan. Even more important is that their literacy programs show similarities with other literacy programs. Like many other NGOs in Sudan, the organisation in the study makes use the REFLECT approach in their literacy programs (Reflect Action, 2009). Like other courses in basic and post literacy in the suburbs of Khartoum, the literacy trainers are trained in how to use the REFLECT manual in an initial course that takes about two weeks. Moreover, many of the trainers only have a limited educational background exam and teaching experience (E. Bashab, M. Elmahdi and L. C. Harris, Personal Communication, January-April 2011). Hence the organisation is suitable as an exemplifying case.

4.3 Research methods

4.3.1 The semi-structured interview

The main research method of the study is the semi-structured interview. In order to uncover the view of the trainers and the ones responsible for the programs it seemed a good idea to ask them about it. As Fontana and & Frey (2005) say: "interviewing is one of the most common and powerful ways in which we try to understand our fellow humans". The semi-structured interview has many advantages. All qualitative interviews consist of open questions, but unlike the unstructured interview, the same topics will be covered for the same groups of informants in the semi-structured interview. This facilitates a comparison and is useful when addressing specific issues. At the same time, spontaneous questions which clarify and deepen the answers are accepted, and the order of the topics can be shifted to better follow a certain line of thought (which is not the case in the quantitative structured interview). In all types of qualitative interviews, however, the focus is on the informants understanding of issues and events (Bryman, 2008).

Participant observation, a common alternative of a qualitative interview, is not seen as a main option in this study as an interview will allow the researcher to "dig deeper" in how the trainers understanding has changed through training, practical work, and other experiences. This cannot be explored through a number of observations of literacy facilitators in action, or at least, not during a limited period of time. Besides, even if the trainers might reveal their literacy conception while facilitating a session, a level of fluency on the part of the researcher, in this case Arabic, would be required to get something out of it. Translating might not be a very big problem in an interview, but listening to a translation when observing would be much more challenging. Still, as everything can be considered as data in grounded theory, the researcher has taken some notes from two training sessions she was present at.

Fontana & Frey (2005) offer advice on what to consider when doing unstructured interviews, and even if the semi-structured is not accurately the same type, their advice seems useful to follow. Among other things, they stress the importance of understanding the language and culture of the respondents. In order to do so, a translator was required since the informants speak only Arabic, a language which the researcher does not master. To use an interpreter is always a risk as he/she will add his or her own values to the translation and might not manage to translate the words accurately. These problems arose in this study, especially in the first interviews, before the translator and the researcher got to know each other. There have, throughout the whole data collection, been some minor problems

concerning communication between the researcher and interpreter, and worse, the sentences were not translated one by one, instead the interpreter sometimes summarised what the informants said. Upon discussing this matter with the translator and giving direct instructions to the women in the beginning of the interviews, allowed for breaks in order to give the interpreter a chance to translate, the issue became less and less problematic even if not completely solved.

Moreover, Fontana & Frey speak of the importance of building trust. The interviewer must establish a good connection with the informants in order to have a chance of hearing their real stories and opinions. Even if the topic of this study is not particularly sensitive, the respondents can be suspicious when someone from abroad questions them or they might be cautious answering when thinking that their superiors will find out what they say. By presenting oneself and the study before each interview and by granting the informants anonymity, the hope was to build trust. The majority of the interviewees did not seem to have problems talking about personal opinions and experiences. Only on occasion did the interviewer have to ask the informant to give longer answers.

The matter of understanding each other was not only due to an occasional inadequate translation, the understanding of the questions have varied greatly between the different informants. Some have more easily understood what the researcher has been after and some less. Also, the informants have sometimes expected the interviewer to be more familiar with the settings than she was and this has also caused some misunderstandings. But in most cases, the interpreter, who is Sudanese and familiar with the language and the culture, was able to clarify some issues.

There is not only a challenge seeing the world from the eyes of the interviewee, at the same time, the researcher must keep his/her objectivity (Fontana & Frey, 2005). When transcribing the interviews, the researcher has discovered some situations when she has given value laden (positive) replay to what the participants say, but in general, she has kept a neutral stance, trying not to influence the participants' answers. Furthermore, the quotes of the informants have, even though the translation is linguistically defective, been kept as they are in the findings chapter in order to not to let the interpretation of the researcher influence the words of the informants. The only thing she has corrected in the transcripts is when the translator has talked about he/him when it should be she/her. As both the trainers and the participants have solely been women, there has been no doubt which gender the informants actually meant to refer to.

The study is not a narrative inquiry, a form of qualitative research based on stories people tell about their own lives and experiences (Trahar, 2009) and that concentrates on both what people say and how they say it (Chase, 2005). But even so, the researcher's intention was to encourage the informants to not plainly answer abstract questions, but to bring up their own experiences and the interpretations of these, so that their stories could be heard. This also means that the researcher wanted to get the particular experience and opinions of the respondents rather than a generalised version that an interviewer commonly wants (Chase, 2005).

After each interview, the researcher took some notes about the place and date and the physical settings of the interviews and she also commented on how they went. Likewise, there were some immediate reflections of things that were different in the next interview. More information about interviews is discussed in 4.4.

4.3.2 Rationale for selecting the informants

There were 10 interviewees: 8 literacy trainers, the manager of the literacy programs, and a trainer of the trainers in the study. The trainers were chosen through a purposive sampling in order to cover the diversity within the organisation. This means that there was a balance in of trainers in terms of age and educational background. Furthermore, it also accounted for the suburban areas the trainers worked in.

Naturally, the informants chosen were willing to let themselves be interviewed. The researcher has, when needed, also given a minor incentive to the informants to cover their transportation costs to the centres where the interviews have been conducted. These matters were discussed in advance with the project manager and it was the organisation that picked out 8 facilitators based on the researcher's request. The latter meant, of course, a risk that the facilitators chosen were the ones the organisation was satisfied with and who had a positive attitude towards their work. If so, the picture they give would not be representative of the organisation as a whole, and to prevent this, the researcher from the beginning pointed out the importance of a variety of people also in terms of their achievements and attitudes.

The reason behind interviewing the program manager is that she is a supervisor of the trainer and the main person responsible for the literacy programs in general. The trainer of the trainers is also called a representative of the organisation in this study (even though she does not belong to it) and a supervisor of the trainers. The reason for this is that she, apart from running the training courses, also used to do evaluations of the programs. Moreover, she is a

spokeswoman for the REFLECT approach, a founder of the PAMOJA network, and this makes it suitable to equalize her view with the organisation's.

The following chart is an outline of all informants:

Table 3 Informants of the study

Pseudonym	Post	Age	Nr of Years	Educational Background	Parents' Education	Additional professional experiences	Working Area
Fatima	Literacy trainer	36	2	University	Informal education	Basic school teacher	Haj Yousif
Huda	Literacy trainer	24	5	University	Primary school	None	Haj Yousif
Elham	Literacy trainer	29	6	University	Basic education	None	Haj Yousif
Afaf	Literacy trainer	38	6	Secondary school	Father: Basic education Mother: no education	None	Kerary
Doha	Literacy trainer	40	4	Secondary school	Basic education	Basic school teacher	Kerary
Samia	Literacy trainer	37	9	University	Father: Quran school Mother: no education	Work with Women's union	Um Baddah
Omaima	Literacy trainer	43	6	Secondary school	No education	Basic school teacher	Kerary
Hanan	Literacy trainer	41	9	Secondary school	Father: Quran school Mother: no education	Pre-school teacher	Kerary
--	Program manager	-----		University	-------	------	-------
--	Trainer of trainers	-----		University	-------	-----	------

4.3.3 Interview guides

The researcher has not used fixed interview guides as the aim has been to allow the trainers to tell their own perceptions of literacy and how this concept has developed. She wanted to get as much information as possible from the trainer of the trainers and the program manager. The interviewer has therefore, as much as possible, encouraged the interviewees to tell their tales from their experiences. As Bryman (2008) says, the initial questions should cover the background of the informants and be a way to get into the interview. But apart from this, there have been four main areas covered in every interview: the informants' ideas surrounding the meaning of literacy, how and why they should teach it, and their experiences relevant to

education and training. More detailed interview guides are found in the appendices, but the specific questions in the guides were used in order to give the interviewer different ideas on how to get the participants to open up. Not all the questions have been used, others have been added, and every interview has been unique in terms of what questions have been asked and in what order.

After the first three interviews, some new questions were added, meanwhile others were deleted. After another three interviews, the questions to some extent were refined again. Finally, when all of the interviews were completed, the questions were focused a second time before doing some follow up interviews and in order to gain access to answers that could prove the categories and hypothetical relationships between them.

4.3.4 Document studies

Another method used in this thesis was document studies. This has been used mainly to complement the interviews with the trainer of the trainers and the project manager in order to capture the official view of literacy held by the organisation. The advantages of using documents as a source for a case study is that documents can be read repeatedly and they can cover a vast span of time, as many settings and events and are useful for corroborating other sources. Less pleasant is that they can reflect the bias of the author or be difficult to access (Yin, 2009).

The latter is the case in this particular study as the course manual, as a whole, was only in Arabic. This was used by the literacy trainers when teaching literacy in the programs and it was also used for their own training. Luckily, the same introduction and the first unit of this manual was translated into English and found in a manual used by another NGO in Sudan. The view of literacy teaching in these documents has been studied and compared to the trainers' view of literacy in order to uncover the virtual understanding between them. The use of more than one source in the data collection makes it possible to triangulate (to match) the construction of the findings, before reaching the conclusions (Yin, 2009).

In order to uncover some additional information of the official view of the programs, a former evaluation of the programs has been looked into as well.

4.3.5 Field notes and photos from observation

Twice, the researcher was able to attend small parts of sessions in a course for the trainers. The courses were conducted in a community centre in Kerary, one of the suburban areas of Khartoum, and all 20 trainers of the literacy programs in Kerary and Um Baddah attended. As most of the trainers had worked for a long time, this was a refresher course on the REFLECT approach.

Even though the observations were short, about 10-15 minutes each, and even though they were in Arabic, the investigator was able to observe the methods used and the level of participation, which can complement the picture provided by the trainer of the trainers on literacy and literacy teaching. In grounded theory, everything can be seen as data (Samnet Dialog, n.d.).

The researcher took the role of a complete observer who does not interact at all with the group he/she observes (Bryman, 2008) and the interpreter gave a summary of what was said. During the observation of the course, the researcher took some field notes, photos of the sessions and of the posters produced in the training, which are also used in the literacy circles. The photos shed some light on the content and methods of the training. The photo of the poster, which was brought up in the interviews, has been used to understand the informants. To some extent, these sources have been triangulated with other data.

4.4 Data processing

The study makes use of the grounded theory analysing process. Grounded theory is characterized by a so called theoretical sampling, which is a form of purposive sampling. In brief, theoretical sampling means that data will be collected until the researcher has achieved theoretical saturation, that is to say, until there is enough data to form the basis of a theory (Bryman, 2008). In other words, the need for data will direct the sampling (Department of Philosophy, Lund University, n.d.). More specifically, the analysing process takes place in following way:

The first step is to code the data. When coding, the data is broken down in smaller parts and is given different labels that are created from the data itself (Bryman, 2008). Charmaz (2005) says that the codes should be short and focus on defining action and unspoken assumptions, at the same time they also will help to see the processes. In order to be able to synthesize the data, a line-by-line coding is advisable. It is a comparative method where data is compared with data, category with data, and category to category. Furthermore, she means

that: “Coding gives a researcher analytical scaffolding on which to build. Because the researchers study their empirical materials closely, they can define both new leads from then and gaps in them” (ibid, p 517).

There are, dependent upon the perspective one has, different types of coding processes. The originators of the grounded theory, Glaser and Strauss, differ in their opinions (and terminology) on how to do this. Strauss and his co-writer Corbin advocate a more structured and detailed approach in the initial phase and more concrete research questions from the beginning than Glaser. Likewise, they also recommend testing out a theory and seeking out relationships between different concepts earlier than Glaser (Samnet Dialog, n.d.). As the research questions for this thesis have been more or less fixed before the data collection, the Strauss and Corbin approach lies near at hand, but as it has been criticized for closing off an unbiased coding too quickly, the researcher has then used Charmaz’s way of coding instead. It must be said, though, that grounded theory has been developed and interpreted in a way that makes it possible to be flexible with how to use it (Guvå & Hylander, 2003).

Charmaz recommends an initial coding and a selected or focused coding. The initial coding is usually very detailed and is about getting a first impression of the data. Here, the researcher must try to be as open-minded as possible when making sense of the data. He/she must also be aware that although the codes should reflect the informants’ interpretation of the world, they more likely reflect the researcher’s construction of their world (Bryman, 2008). A good idea at this stage is to ask oneself: what is happening and what people are doing (Charmaz, 2005). The open coding should generate *concepts*, discovery of phenomena (Bryman, 2008). Cars (2011) stresses the importance of a constant comparison between concepts and indicators when using grounded theory, and grounded theorists will therefore start their analysis early, even before they have collected all their data (Charmaz, 2005).

The following step, focused coding, is about selecting the most common codes and those that reveal the most about the data and are able to be categorized. Initial codes can be combined with new codes. The data is then looked over again in the light of the selected codes (Bryman, 2008). During this open stage, a *core category*, based on the *core problem* should be found. The core problem is the problem that the informants’ behaviour is centred around and that they try to solve. The core category will then be a concept closely related to this. The other categories will take the role of subcategories and be related to the core category (Department of Philosophy, Lund University, n.d.).

To saturate the categories, which is about collecting data until there no longer will be any new aspects to add to them, is also important and this must be done before the theoretical

phase when hypotheses about the relationships of the categories will be developed. These hypotheses will then be tested through another theoretical sampling as new data will be collected. So the categories can be saturated once again and the theories tested in order to generate a theory. There are two types of theories; substantive theory and formal theory. The former emanates directly from the empirical data meanwhile the latter has a higher level of abstractions and can be applied to many contexts. In order to reach a formal theory one must collect and process data from contrastive settings (Bryman, 2008). As this thesis is a relatively small study, the aim is, however, not to generate a full new theory, but to find some categories and for the hypothesis to be related to already existing theories and further developed in a larger study.

During the whole analysis process, the investigator should write memos concerning the codes and categories. They will remind the researcher of his/her thoughts and, at the same time, help to generate new ideas (Department of Philosophy, Lund University, n.d.).

Issues of reliability (that the study can be replicated) and validity (that there is a proper connection between the findings and the theories and a sufficient base for generalisation) are certainly of great importance. In the qualitative approach, however, it is more common with alternative criteria of credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability. Credibility means that there is enough data to support the theory building; dependability is related to how clear the researcher has reached his/her conclusions; and transferability is concerned with that caution is kept in reaching the depth of each case. Confirmability refers to the researcher's ability to show that he/she has not purposely allowed personal values or theoretical standpoints to sway the study (Bryman, 2008).

All these aspects have been considered in this thesis. As stated in 4.3.2, the initial selection of samples tries to cover trainers with different experiences, something which will increase the credibility (since it will give a more modulated picture). In order to make the confirmability stronger, the researcher has over and over again, reminded herself to not let any prejudices direct her interpretation. The credibility has been strengthened when the researcher gained familiarity with the settings of the case by visiting the organisation, taking part in a training course and reading program documents (which is also something that can increase the transferability). Like Charmaz (2005) advices, the investigator has also made sure that the comparisons between the observations and the categories are systematic and that the categories cover a wide range of empirical data. Furthermore, she has tried to safeguard the logical connection between the data and the analysis.

By being transparent in how the different steps of the study are carried out, the intention is to make the dependability stronger. The following is a description of how the interviews and the analysis have been conducted:

The interviews of the 8 trainers were conducted over two weeks and during the same time period, the two minor observations of the training course were conducted. It was not possible to hold one interview at a time as the informants were spread out in the vast suburbs of Khartoum, they work in different locations near their homes and there has not been any chance for the researcher to go there on her own. She was dependent upon the visits that the representatives of the organisation have done and on those occasions when the trainers have been gathering. This resulted in that 2- 3 interviews were conducted on the same day and that there was not much time between the days of data collection. Between interview number 1-3 and 4-6 there was one week and between number 4-6 and 7-8 there were only two days. As it is time consuming to transcribe and analyse, there has not been enough time for a proper theoretical sampling during this stage and this can be considered as a weakness of the study.

The analysing process, nevertheless, started as soon as the first interview was transcribed. Every description or statement the informants made, has been transferred into a code in the margins of the transcripts. As soon as an interview was coded, it was compared with the codes of the other interviews. Memos were written to capture different concepts which were formed into tentative categories. Early on, the researcher also started to think about the possible relationships between the different categories. Many different concepts were created during the initial coding but some were left out and others were completely changed when new combinations of codes were tried out. When all the interviews with the trainers were coded and compared, the following four categories were chosen: “dealing with participants”, “teaching literacy”, “viewing literacy” and “becoming motivated”. Most of these, were however, rearranged and renamed as the analysis moved on. “Teaching literacy” became “pedagogical methods” and viewing literacy “change in participants”. “Pedagogical methods” was later changed to “pedagogical devices” and the category “becoming equipped” was finally added as this, unlike the others, said something about the trainers, not their participants’ development.

It became clear that the main concern or the core problem of the trainers was how to support the students to make them come to the circles in order to learn. The category “dealing with participants” was detected as the core category at a quite early stage, but both this and the subcategories were compared to the samplings from four additional follow up interviews with the informants from whom the researcher received the least rich data. The reason for this

was to clarify that the researcher had understood them correctly. This was a kind of theoretical sampling that led to saturation of the categories and which to some extent confirmed the hypothetical relationship between the categories. Likewise, the field notes from the observations and parts of the course manual were coded to see if they could triangulate the categories and their properties. It did, but mainly when it came to the subcategory of "pedagogical devices" as this was the main area they contained information about. During the whole analysing process different memos were written to clarify the properties of each category and possible links between them.

Even though grounded theory is often used in the approach of qualitative studies, there are however also criticism of it. Apart from that it is time-demanding, the fragmentation of data might result in a lost sense of context and even if such a study often generates concepts, there are not always new theories produced. There are also doubts that the researcher can remain neutral in his/her interpretation of the data and not let one's previous knowledge about relevant concepts influence the way of creating categories (Bryman, 2008).

When using the grounded theory in this study, the researcher has experienced that this criticism is well deserved. There has been a lot of data and one of the largest problems has been to connect all the loose ends. But by detailed re-coding and categorising of each interview and by trying different theoretical codes/hypothesis of the relationships between the codes, saturation was reached in the end, even if on a small scale.

4.5 Ethical Considerations

The study follows the general principles of ethics in social research that is mentioned by Bryman (2008). First of all, the informants were informed of the purpose of the study, what is was about, and what was required from them. It was clearly stated that their participation was voluntary and what would happen with the information they gave. They were also granted anonymity: pseudonyms are used instead of the real names and all interviews were recorded and kept by the researcher only. A copy of the draft version of the thesis was later sent to the English speaking informants in order to give them an opportunity to respond on the data they contributed with. Later on, the final version will be sent as well and then hopefully also the non English speaking informants will have an opportunity to take part of the findings.

Chapter 5 Findings

5.1 Conception of the teaching-learning process

The figure below (which will be further developed in this chapter) is developed by the researcher and it is based on the conception of literacy teaching-learning (in terms of what will facilitate learning and what learning will lead to) that seems to exist both among the trainers and their supervisors. The main concern or the core problem[3] of the trainers is to make the participants come to the circles in order to learn. Two main strategies of how to solve this problem have been visible in the study: dealing with the participants in a certain way and using pedagogical devices which will motivate them and facilitate the learning. There are some requirements, however, that make the trainers aware of these strategies: their training, learning from their work, and to learn from other members of the staff.

Participants' attendance will increase the abilities to learn and the result of learning is two sided. First the informants are convinced that the circles make a change in the lives of the participants and secondly that the participants' learning leads to the trainers gaining new motivation themselves.

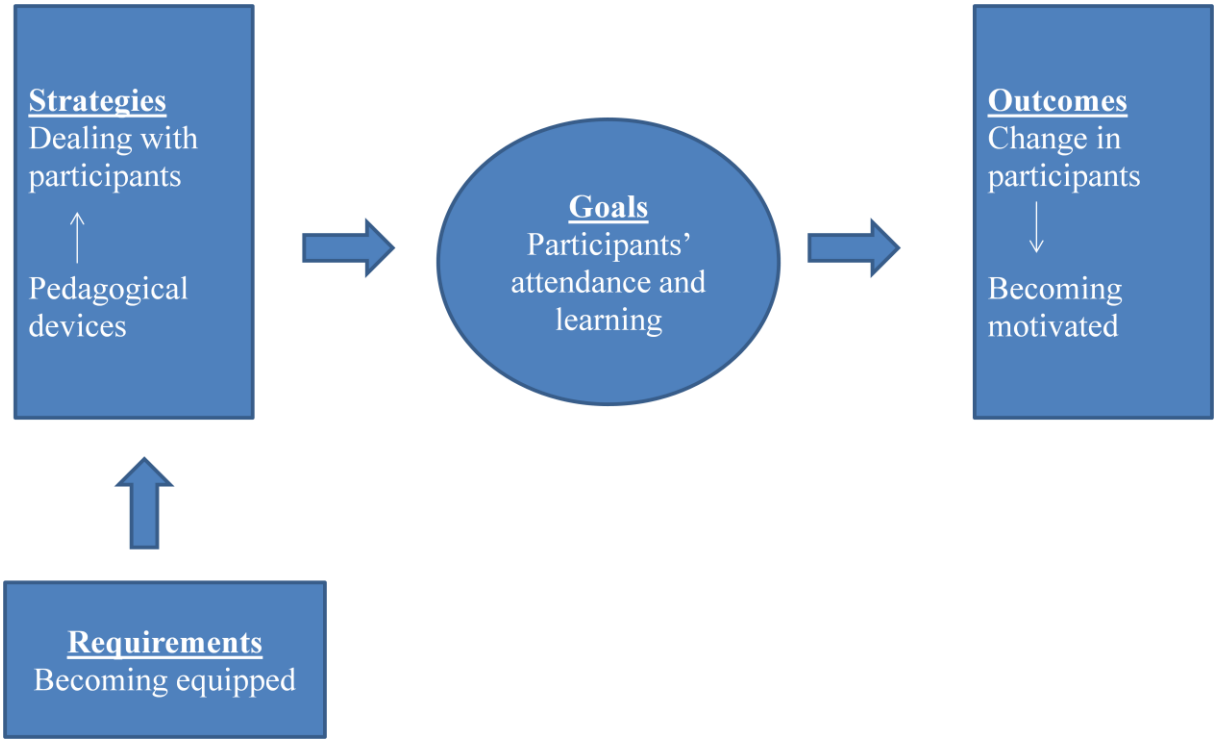


Figure 4 The informants' conception of the literacy teaching-learning process

[3] In the model of the findings, the word "goals" is used instead of core problem/main concern. The reason is that "goals "are a more general term and more commonly linked to words like "strategies" and "outcomes".

5.2 Goals of the trainers

As was briefly mentioned in 4.4 and 5.1, the main concern of the trainers is how to make the participants to come to the circle, which is regarded as a condition for learning. In fact all the trainers, in one way or another, either directly or between the lines, talk about this. Fatima says that she needs more support from the organisation when it comes to "*make women to come to education or learning*". Others bring up the problems arising when people are absent. Afaf confesses that:

> *Sometimes the absence of the students, this is difficult for me (....) when they are absent this let me to repeat again and to let again to the last lesson and come again to the first and this take time. And maybe you have not background, this is new, this is must go back.*[4]

Another trainer does also complain about challenges of teaching when people have been absent: "*Sometimes they come too late and this let them to repeat again or to revise"* (Elham). She means that the most difficult part of the job is *"The attendance of the… the situation of the people*" and she continues to talk about the reason to the absence: *"Because some women work in market to get money (....) This is a problem that face them."*

Like Elham, Omaima mentions both the problems and the causes behind absence and drop-outs:

> *The late, some of the participants come so late, this is one of the challenges. And other people draw away from, begin and draw for some reason. The pregnant and the delivery, all this is problem, the situation of the baby when it is small, because she couldn't come to study.* (....) *Also the far distance also, this is some problem.*

She adds that even if a neighbour of the absentee will bring some notes from the circle, this will not be enough. *"Maybe she lost many units in the course. She will not follow up the way of teaching. Just to copy or write down."* Doha too, talks about the practical problems of pregnancy and delivery as common excuses to lack of attendance.

There are, nevertheless, not only practical reasons for lack of attendance; it can also have to do with cultural beliefs. Omaima has spoken to a presumptive participant who said that she had *"no (...) need for education, because her father is rich".* Samia lifts up another

[4] As this direct quotation shows, the English language is not grammatically adequate. It is however by purpose the researcher has kept this and all other quotations of the informants as they were given in spite of grammatical errors, and fragmental constructions. By doing so, the authenticity of their words is kept.

conception, which can obstruct the participants' attendance and learning: "*There is some view, if woman married, it is difficult to learn, difficult to educate herself."* She concludes, however, that this idea can have an opposite effect as *"those participants they have a desire to prove for the society or for community that (...) we are able to learn after the marriage."*

Sometimes the trainers also have to convince the family of a participant that the circle is something respectable or meaningful. Huda gives an example of a father who prevented his daughter from attending the course, but then changed his mind when Huda went to their home and described what they were doing in the circle and why.

The trainer of the trainers gives a similar picture as the facilitators about the reasons to absence:

> *Most of the obstacles of the problem, (...) they say that they are not, have not enough time to come because they are busy. Some of them, they are do, this is related to the socio-economic problems. Some of them are off and on because of economic problems, some of them having the things, the ideas that they cannot learn because their brain are closed.*

Both she and the program manager of the literacy program confirm, moreover, that the trainers are concerned with keeping the participants in the circle. They say that this is something which the trainers often bring up and even if many of them has good attendance rates in their circles. An evaluation of the programs from 2008 has shown that 82 % of the participants had regular attendance in the circle activities (Ebizon & Bashir).

5.3 Strategies for strengthen the participants' attendance and learning

The trainer of the trainers points out that the facilitator is a key person for the attendance of the participants and the absence:

> *...is not very big problem because if the participants feel that they are benefiting from the circle they will try to find time*. (....) *All people, always they evaluate things, what are they benefiting. If they feel that they do not improve, they will not continue to come. They have a lot of work to do in their houses so they will not come.*

The informants highlight some areas that will help the participants to get something out of the circles.

5.3.1 Dealing with participants - the core category

A strategy for attendance and learning is the treatment of the participants. In fact, dealing with participants can be seen as the core category since all informants have been firm with the importance of how they treat the participants, and it can easily be connected to the other categories. This category contains three properties: *building relationships*, *showing respect*, and *being patient and persistent*.

Building relationships

To build relationships with the participants is something that goes beyond the teaching task itself. Fatima says:

> *If somebody stays in her home I go to her and see what is her problem (…) and after that it is possible to solve it and after that return her back. Teachers should be close to women, to get them, to know them so clear, and to deal with them openly. This is good things to let them to learn...*

Visiting the participant and learning the reason behind her absence is also done by others.

> *I go to her, myself and ask her: why are you absent? When I know his problem, if I know she is pregnant or delivering, I let it and after that she completes her days and after that she came back to us. We make revision to her* (Doha).

> *Yes there is mutual social. We go and went to them and to share in occasions and in ceremony we will gather together This is the same relationship between them. (....)*
> *If there is a woman who has a child and this child sometimes (....) maby prevent her to come, we say to her: bring your child and after that we solve this problem. It is not a problem. We can solve this problem to bring her child with her* (Huda).

An important difference between formal teaching and the one of RELECT is, according to Omaima, the focus on relationships; "*to form communities and societies and associations, the tie to people or the relationship to people."* She says, like many of the other trainers, that she has introduced a saving box in her circles*: "We have a society and in the end of the month when we get some salary we choose one of the participants and stay with her in her home, this mean that the relation is intimacy."* She clarifies, moreover, that the collected money is used for supporting the the participants who have the biggest needs. It could, for instance, be about buying food items or to help a woman to be able to afford a birth certificate to her child.

Omaima's idea is shared by Huda: "*The participants need without reading, needs material for example food example flour, sugars and something like this, to help them*".

The saving box is, according to the program manager, not mandatory for the circles. But as each circle should have some extra activities which the participants and the facilitator do together and as many participants are poor, this is a practical way to support them. Hanan draws a direct link between the saving box and the attendance: "*to put pounds everyday and for this money we can bring some materials for example these absent women, this is an encouraging way to make those people to come there."*

The project manager, as well as the trainer of the trainers, stress the importance of relationships in attendance and learning. The program manger tells that the organisation purposely choose facilitators from the same areas as the participants. Thus, the facilitators, from the beginning, will know that they are to support other women in their own communities. She also says that:

> *This kind of areas are very committed to each other, they have this kind of gathering weekly for coffee or tea. They are helping each other whatever someone has any problem. Someone face something all the time they are near them.*

The trainer of the trainers is on the same track when mentioning that (the trainers) "*they should be from the community and they are involved in the same problems, the same needs of the community. And also they should be friendly with their groups."* She elaborates that both the attendance and learning challenge can be solved by the facilitator:

> *They just be a friend of her and see what she thinks about and what she wants to learn, because whenever... we have to know them very well and their interest and ... We have to help them, so they feel that they are doing a successful job. (....) This is what I think that the facilitator can play a very good role if she can just help them to come and be punctually...*

Showing respect

Some of the facilitators view illiterate people as ignorant, but at the same time, they are also aware of the importance of treating the learners with respect. The trainers are very considerate when it comes to respecting the older women. Hanan, for instance, explains: "*to be careful about the old women, old mothers, if she came late to revise to her or to give her something to help her. To respect and to revise them."* Fatima says that she feels a bit uncomfortable to

apply the drawing techniques in her circle as the participants, especially the old ones, sometimes become frustrated or ashamed when they have to draw something.

Doha gives an example of the importance of expressing oneself respectfully. Once, when she told the participants: "*if you are educated it is easy to write and to educate your children. (…) they (became) so angry: Why do you say like this, because we're not educated?!"* From this she learned to choose her words carefully and when she gives feedback on assignments, she considers how to say it in a polite way.

The clue is to not let the participants feel that the trainer believes she is superior. The program manager means that people should consider the participants' life experiences even if they are illiterate.

> *They don't know how to read and write, but some of them have great experience and knowledge and they are not... they are from rural poor areas and, but they are not all completely miss the chance of learning from life. From those people we found some people that knowing about personal hygiene, there are not many of course, but there are some who are not involving in formal education but still they are educated from their own area and life style.*

Elham proves to have similar ideas as the manager when she says that "*before ADRA I know the education is chalk, blackboard and teachers. After ADRA I know the learners have experiences and have information and I've learn to trying to learn them and to get this information."*

The trainers draw on the equality between the facilitator and the participants. Afaf puts it simply: *"deal with them as they are. Don't see yourself above*" and this is supported by the statement of Samia who means that the trainer should *be as the same, to be there (...) not as a teacher. (....) I didn't want them to feel I am more than in education... in the same level. This let me easy to facilitate or to help them in education.*" Doha focuses on that trainers and participants can learn from each other and Huda would advise new teachers to consider the individual differences of the participants, "*to read the women, because women are different from one another (…) what is the way?"*

The trainer of the trainers points out that they should not treat people differently:

> *They should (...) talk to them in equally balance for all of them not to be friendly with this and not with this. They are all equal and even they have to be in a good communication, talk to them in good communication way. They respectful, they should feel that they are respectful and give them the chance whenever they want to talk about something. Even if it's private, they give them the chance to talk because this*

> *will help them to open their mind and their heart for each other. Friendly ways, give them time, to give them feel freedom, be released and so on.*

Being patient and persistent

The third property of the "dealing with participants" category is being patient and persistent. Without exception, all informants mention patience as an essential quality of a literacy trainer. Mainly, they talk about it in relation to the learning process itself. Fatima and Huda mean that the trainer should be persistent: *"There are people get difficult to learn some letters and this needs some extra efforts and to be followed up all time with him"* (Fatima). "*The teachers must or should send the message, the information for the learners until they understand and before they go outside"* (Huda).

Afaf has a similar understanding. She says that the facilitators must be patient as they give a lot of information and as many participants are old women. Like Huda, she also underlines the importance of following up on them: *"to correct and to see their note books and exercise. And after this you know or understand if she understands or knows."* Doha emphasis the persistency as well: "*If they do not understand, I could not give up to teach them more and more, they should understand."*

Patience seems to be needed both for the facilitators and the participants themselves. Elham means that "*Patience, they need patience the persons. It is difficult from the first time to write and how to read. Many questions open to teach it. Also you must be, have also patience too."*

Apart from highlighting the importance of following up on participants, Samia gives background on why it's important to behave persistently also when it comes to encouraging attendance:

> *There are external factors that let her maybe, or there is problem in her home that stops her to come here. And also we encourage her or them to continue or don't give up. Sometimes if you find this is problem concerning to the money, it is easy to help her, we can help her concerning this in group.*

5.3.2 Pedagogical devices

A second category that also serves as a strategy for the facilitators to keep and to teach their participants can be named "pedagogical devices", a subcategory that can be described by the following properties: *contextual teaching*, *literacy method*, and *participation*. This subcategory is closely related to the core category. Contextual teaching and participatory

methods is built upon respect for the learners' knowledge and are likely to improve relations both among the participants themselves and between the participants and the trainer.

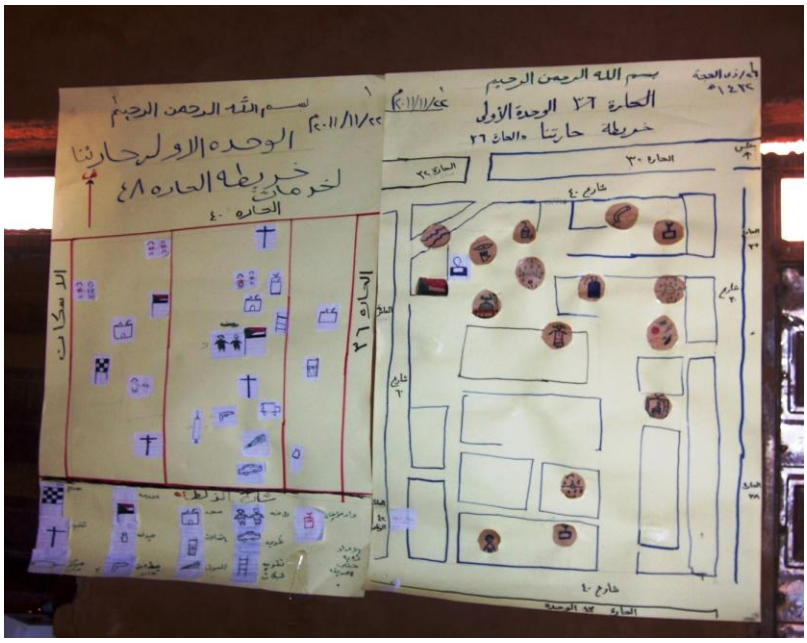
Contextual teaching

The importance of contextualizing the circle is stated by the program manager. According to her, the purpose of the programs is not only to teach the participants how to read and write, it also aims to let the participants **"***get awareness, complete awareness about the community problems*", to help them to plan for a solution of these problems and "*to implement these actions (...) or the decisions they decide concerning the problems they have*."

Not all the informants link the content of the circle to the attendance issue, but they do describe the content of the course as something linked to the world of the participant. Most of them bring up the first unit of the course when they describe the nature of the REFLECT approach. According to the course manual (GOAL, 2007) the idea of unit one is to first let the learners, individually, start to draw a map of their area including all existing facilities, and then the group will do the same thing together on a big paper, sharing their ideas. When the big map is completed and the participants copy it, there will be a discussion on the characteristics of the quarters and its services (or lack of services). Moreover, they will also discuss who is responsible for solving the problems, both in terms of how they can contribute themselves, and how to contact relevant authorities.

A description of the first stage of drawing the map is for example given by Omaima:

> *The main streets, in the same area or in the same square. The services, what is the services and the distance. Each participant should appoint their house or her house on the map. We draw the map on the board and at the poster and the arrow of the north. The things and the services we choose the symbols for. From the symbols we know this is the school and this is... The flag is education or indicate to the school for example, the Sudan flag (....) The hospital, the symbolize the injection. And mosque this is for peace, symbol for peace. We take these symbols and we start in a suitable way.*



Source: Colliander, 28th of November 2011

Figure 5 Example of two area maps used in the courses

Elham offers another aspect on contextual teaching. She talks about that she brings external experts to give adequate information to the participants. When they talk about health issues, she brings in a doctor from a hospital to give information and advice *"and also if the topic or if the unit talk about the awareness of environment or something like this, also to take some man or some women from the same area to get information for it"*.

This is in line with what the program manager says:

> *Each or most of the units aim back to action within the come out from the participants themselves. (....)These plans actually ask them to plan go and to seek and to see who person in the community who are direct, to solve this problem.*

Hanan talks about another aspect of contextual teaching, making actions relevant for the participants as part of the circle activities or projects. What "*we study here as a theoretical, we apply in practice, in practical in their area, for example the activity of work, of clean and health.*" In fact, she means that this is what makes the participants motivated to come and attend the circle. The trainer of the trainers also mentions the importance of implementing actions or small projects for the improvement of life in their communities as a part of the circles activities. She concludes, however, that this is something that is often left out in the circles. "*They come to discussion, they analyse, they have the skills of how to talk and self*

confidence, even self reliance for some people they have gain it, but still the action for the community it's not there".

Concerning another aspect of contextual teaching, Hanan states that:

> *We taught the thing in a daily life, the things in their life. And this skill help the participant and help us also to teach them. (....) By sugar, tea, coffee, vegetables, rice, water, electricity, literacy through all the things around us they see, the table and the chairs. They see the table and the write table and they didn't forget it. And this kindergarten, they can know this is kindergarten from the door.*

The trainer of the trainers also describes contextual aspects of the literacy teaching. She talks about the material used. In the circles, they do reading exercises using a newspaper "*because it's reading for life*" and if the participants say that they will read their children's books in order to support their children's education, they are free to bring these as well. Likewise, they can bring their children's exams in order to be able to interpret the results. Moreover, there are women who "*did not hear that there are documents like the passports, their nationality, the birth certificate*", which can also be used in literacy teaching. She concludes that they should not deal with "*words that means nothing for them, but words that means something for them, their life, their family and their community life so this is literacy*".

This reasoning will lead to the practical literacy method itself, which certainly can be covered by the concept of contextual teaching, but deserves some explanations in practice.

Literacy method

The trainer of the trainers emphasizes the importance of using keywords "*affecting their real life*". According to the course manual (GOAL, 2007) these keywords should come from the topics they are dealing with in the circles. In the beginning, it could preferable to use the names of the participants. All the units contain literacy activities integrated with different topics that serve to increase the awareness and engagement of different issues. An objective of the first unit is, for example, "*to execute ideas for action that help in the mobilization of the community and resolution of its problems*" and this should, among other things, also include "*reading and writing 15 words to be selected by the participants. Consider selection of the keywords of the subject of the discussion and the coverage of these words to all alphabetical letters*" (ibid, p. 16).

The ideas of using words connected to the world of the participants are brought up by some of the trainers in the interviews. One example comes from Samia, who says that *"use*

the word and separate it from letter and after that pictures and drawing (...) this is related or close to their needs in their life, familiar to them."

Fatima says that she let her participants "*give example of things from their lives (…) for example orange and chalks*". She means that *"If finding any word or anything for example soap in books or in the shop, it is easy to know this word and to read it"* and her participants used to tell her when they found one of the words that has been brought up in the circle and want to check if they are right.

Elham thinks when she talks about using pictures of familiar things that:

> *Without you read, you know this is the carpenter, this is material or equipment of the … or instrument. This is the carpenter and this is the driver and something. To learn after that, he can put the symbol and the work together to learn write and this is simple.*

The majority of the trainers highlight the fact that the method starts with the whole word and not just letters. Afaf says for example:

> *The general word and after that to part it, the general method. To give one word and after that to cut it. For example take it or for instance the tree. We gave them whole and after that we part or we separate the letters, t… and after that we collect those letters together and give us the tree, the one word.*

In the REFLECT course manual, a summary of Freire's view of literacy teaching is given. According to him, it is in helping the participants through the process of decoding that they will see "*everyday practices from a new angle i.e (sic) through codes (pictures and drawings) that represent the problems and challenges which surround their life whereas they begin describing the symbolic drawings and then analyze the problem deeply for establishing the truth*" (GOAL, 2007). Most of the trainers mention that they use drawing as a method in practical literacy teaching. Huda means that the organisation has *"a unique way how to draw and posters, this differ from the old"* and Elham says:

> *I think this is comfortable and quickly learning. The first time some people say I don't know how to draw and how to write, but they told them this is not like scientific, perfect or properly (…) it is easy to learn or to try to learn, to draw.*

Some facilitators explain that they use songs and games in their literacy teaching and an example of a game in numeracy was seen at one of the sessions in the training course that the researcher observed (the 1st of December 2011). The game they played started with the

session leader writing out a number on a flipchart. Then the participants, as quickly as possible, were to choose and arrange flashcards with single numbers so that they matched the figure on the flipchart. They worked in three different groups and there was an active competition between those.


Source: Colliander 1st of December 2011

Figure 6 a & b Playing a mathematical game

Afterwards, there was a discussion about how the game could be used in the literacy circles and what level it was best suited for. Moreover, the group gave different suggestions about the advantages of the game.

Participation

According to the course manual (GOAL, 2007), participation is an essential ingredient in any circle and the program manager is resolved that the participatory approach of REFLECT should be used also in the training of the trainers. The game and its follow up discussion, as previously mentioned, showed that these prescriptions are followed. Not only the voice of the trainer of trainers was heard, but many of the participants gave their opinions as well and during the game there was laughter and engagement from the whole group.

The second sessions observed (on the 28th of November 2011), contained participatory elements where the way of sitting in a circle signalled the equality between the trainer and the participants. The trainer of the trainers, herself, certainly stood close to the flipchart when she was explaining the difference between the pronunciation of a single letter and a letter within a word, but before that, she sat down like any other participant and there was a dialogue between her and the learners.

Source: Colliander, 28th of November 2011

Figure 7 Formation like a circle

To take the participants experiences into consideration was something that was brought up in 5.3.1. Some of the interviewed trainers do also speak about methods they use to encourage participation. Samia mentions that she makes use of dialogues, and so does Omaima, who also likes to ask the participants questions and "*make discussion and the analysis of our area what we need...''* and Hanan, who says of her participants: *''they agree in discussion or in dialogue''.*

The trainer of the trainers states that a lot of emphasis in the circles is on decision-making and that a group discussion, with some guidance, is a way to teach the participants how to make decisions:

> *they help them to decision-making, and decide what they want to do, if this is a situation there are some problems, there are some needs, what can we do? They decide. For example, they come up with three or two ideas or four ideas (....) We have to do some tools to help them to priorities these things. We never drop anything out. All things are respected, but we put in priorities.*

Afaf also points out the importance of dialogue and discussion for learning, meanwhile, Elham brings up another perspective in talking about drawing as an activity where everyone is active.

> *The method is new, not like the traditional method. Drawing, there is the work with the poster for showing, collective work. To collect work together and everybody is say I worked this or I draw this picture. I will try the first poster that differs from the next poster, the difference between the first and the…*

5.4 Conditions

The knowledge and skills necessary for using the strategies and in trying to reach their goals are not automatically something that the trainers had from the beginning. Instead, they and their supervisors witness that the facilitators have learned things since they started to get involved in the literacy activities of the organisation. This forms the category "becoming equipped".

5.4.1 Becoming equipped

Three things that have had an impact on the trainers' ways of dealing with their main concerns can be seen in: *training courses*, *work experiences*, and *in-service support*.

Training courses

According to the program manager, the aim of the training courses is to empower the trainers "*through the methodology of REFLECT, in reading and writing and mathematics, and in leadership and management and business, how to provide it*". She focuses on that the training will equip the trainers to get "*complete awareness about the community problems*", and to "*plan for the priorities and problems and how to reach a decision, how to implement these actions (...) or the decisions they decide concerning the problems...* and she claims that the "*methodology told them how to trace and to make, to know the root of the problem*".

Even if they do not say that the training has helped them to solve community problems, most trainers are confident that the training they received has had an impact. Doha and Hanan point out that a course in REFLECT is necessary for being a facilitator and most of the informants talk about that the training has given the facilitators another perspective on how they look at teaching. Omaima for example, means that it has helped her to know "*how to teach, and what is the ways that to teach",* and that she has *"applied to the ways or the methods of teaching"* from this. Also, the trainer of the trainers picks up this thread when she refers to what the facilitators said to her in the last training she conducted:

> *We do not know it's like this, we have been taught in long time, but if it could be like this, it will be good I will do it and you can come and visit me. I will do it. They said like each people can learn like this. This will not take time. It will be interesting, I will use reading materials like this, the certificates, the newspapers or books they are interested in. They say we are going to change the way we're being taught. They always said like this.*

More specific examples are given too. In 5.3.2 it was stated that the drawing method was new to one of the trainers but also others connect drawing to the REFLECT approach of the organisation. Moreover, the literacy method, itself, is something learned from the initial training. Huda says:

> *... I found it a particular way when I come to ADRA, different from my way that I had before I come to ADRA. Before ADRA I started to teach letters, but after ADRA with words, the whole word completely, not D or I.*

Samia, on the other hand, explains that what she gained most from the training was the value of a relationship:

> *The first, how to deal with the people and how to gain their friendship and make relation with or among people. In the first workshop they know how to make relation and how to make a good relationship with people that you have not any benefit or you cannot get any benefit from them. It is refunded relation, not just in this field, but in the social issues or something like this. This is useful.*

Elham is also mentions relationships. According to her, it was the initial training of the organisation that taught her "*how to deal with the society or the community because the society are different people"*.

Work experiences

Learning to teach is also developed in the experiences of working as a facilitator. Hanan says that she has learned many things from this*; "to be social, to know many places and people, the brotherhood and family, be connected. I learn people."* Afaf too meant that "*when you stay a long time this has give a long and good experience in the work of teaching"* and Samia claims that her work as a facilitator has lead to that she gained "*the encouragement to discuss any topic. I'm trying to see, to solve for any problem or any topic if people don't agree (....) openly or frankly."*

The program manager has also seen a change coming from working experiences, both when it comes to the teaching itself and in their relation to the participants. She says that many of the trainers:

> *became very experienced and I could say that the way the new one is different from the old one. New facilitator is different from old one. Old one now became very committed to REFLECT. They are very committed to the way we are providing the*

circles (...) I've realized that facilitators became so experienced in that manual thought and giving. They are very oriented about the education and the situation, how to provide it, how to manipulate the discussion within the, the... how to manage the participants to resign on their symbol, whether it's a map or something, so I think by time, they are different. (...)Yes, improve their performance. That I could say. The broad experience, they gathered the relation with the participants.

In-service support

One of the facilitators, Hanan, who also has acted as a supervisor, gives some examples of how she used to support trainers in their teaching task. "*If I found a facilitator that has no good way to give the message or to understand the participants I could take the chalk and to explain for them how to get message for her participants*". Moreover, she could give the trainer support through letting her observe a lesson to understand the way to teach, give comments on a lesson's preparation, or talk to the participants when they did not listen to the trainer.

These examples might more easily be related to pedagogical devices, but when it comes to dealing of the participants and their attendance, there are ways to support the trainer. According to Hanan, the supervisor can look at the attendance sheets to see if anybody is absent, and if so, she and the facilitator should go to the home of that participant and look for the reasons behind the absence.

The facilitators can be supported, both by each other, and by supervisors. The system is organised in that way. According to the program manager, there are supervisors from the organisation who visit the trainers weekly and there are also monthly planning meetings where the field supervisors and the program manager meet together with all facilitators in the same area. In these meetings, the facilitators should present their teaching plans, which unit they will go through, how they will do it, and with what objectives. The manager says further:

We evaluate her timetable, her progress in sessions, the time, the date will tell us where is she now, when she start the units with which aims for the facilitator. We evaluate her checking, I mean her attendance sheet for the participants. We evaluate her participants' exercise book. (....) *How she marks, if she really considers each mistake, what's her way of correcting, how can she help them to make their handwriting better, make their performance better?*

Moreover, the program manager lifts up the role of the collegial support in these meetings:

at the same time, they exchange their experiences from each circles. They are from different blocks in the same area, so they exchange experiences. They come with new suggestions because there are other activities of the literacy session. They exchange

their trainer, for example one circle have a trainer in handcraft, then she organises with this circle to go and have the same kind of training, to come for her circle later on.

Most of the trainers give a similar picture about the collegial advice. They mean that they can ask their colleagues and support each other. To a large extent, their support seems to be related to the dealing of the participants. Huda says:

Our advices all of us or among us are to care about the women or the participants and we try to give them the correct information about education and we don't lose our temper, to be patient. They are old women this needs to be to keep your temper because to deal with them is so difficult and for this reason we stay calm and to say normal

Other advice is connected to the teaching plans. Omaima puts as "*If you prepare is not good (...) they give you advice*". This is coherent with what the trainer of the trainers says:

They learn the skills in the initial training but they want to be followed because if there is system of supervision they can find out what are the weaknesses. Within this supervision they can organise or find the content for the ongoing training. For example if the planning of the lesson is not good they come and focus on the lesson planning. If they found that literacy skills are not getting very well by the participants, they can come to discuss more exercises and how to overcome the problems.

5.5 Outcomes of the circles

Chapter 5.2 deals with the conditions of attendance and learning in the circles and 5.3 gives an account of what the informants experience as outcomes of it. These can also be easily connected to the core category, as the facilitators are likely to be more motivated when they witness the impact of their efforts in people they have a relationship with and care for.

5.5.1 Change in the participants

All informants have implicitly and explicitly agreed on that by completing the circle, the participant will be changed and this is both due to becoming literate and to the other activities that are taking place in the course. They also agree that literacy is more than merely the skills of reading and writing (only a few mention mathematics), and this forms the subcategory "Literacy as a tool for change", which can be described by three properties: *awareness, empowerment, and status*.

Awareness

Becoming literate will lead to a greater awareness. The facilitators give examples from their participants whom told them stories of how they suddenly can understand number plates on the cars or read signs in the streets and the market, knowing, for instance, where the pharmacy and the bank are. More general is the statement "*literacy is a knowledge and to know the society or to know the information about the society"* (Afaf), but according to some trainers, the literacy circle is a way to influence the participants by providing new knowledge in order to improve their life. Hanan says that with literacy "*there be development of the country and refuse the bad customs and habit"* and Samia does also mention the prevention of such things:

> *I think (...) according to the literacy we can prevent or we can fight many things that contract or make some troubles for learning or education and some customs or traditions prevents to go forward. There are many harmful traditions or customs. This is the result of the illiteracy. (....) The harmful tradition or customs. We have inherit some traditions or some customs from our grandfathers or mothers, but nowadays maybe it is harmful for our community or society. How can I let it or how can I go or continue in this tradition?*

And so does Omaima. She means that the benefit of the REFLECT approach is:

> *To form society or the participants. The participant herself, her life to changed to better. The tight, the good relation between the participants in the same area besides to write, or to learn how to write and to read, and to fight some bad habit or customs that is harmful for the society. (....) We have some disease, some people break their teeth, this is also a custom. (....) By fire or by nail. It is harmful, it is harmful and circumcisions and the waste or the rubbish also... many things.*

The trainer of the trainers agrees with the others. She says that there is a proverb in Sudan saying that "*whoever to know how to read and write is... not the... how can I say it, the person who is aware*"

Empowerment

Awareness is closely connected to empowerment, a principle that is applied in education (often in a feministic context) to enhance the individual's possibility to become more independent, to set up her own goals and be the one in charge of her own life (Nationalencyklopedien, 2012). The Project manger means that illiterate people, due to that they never had an opportunity for proper education, are "*not aware about the general information that could help him to have better chance of life".* Her statement contains ideas of

that the awareness should lead to an increased standard of living (not necessary limited to the economic level) and the mission of the organisation can therefore not only be to teach practical literacy skills.

The trainer of the trainers gives some more detailed examples of the way the participants of the circles are to be empowered:

> *So literacy is not reading and writing, it is empowerment of how to solve the problem, how to think, how to communicate with others, to gain more knowledge, to gain more experienced, to be empowered, to be skilful for life.*

By reading signs themselves, the women will not depend on others when it comes to finding their way around and in reading they can take responsibility for their families in a new way. The trainers often mention that by becoming literate, the participants can help their children with their education. Another example of empowerment is when the participants learn how to write their names, they will also be able to sign documents. Doha, for instance, says about one of her participants: "*One of them went to the school and they said to her sign your name and she signed her name and after that she is very happy, became very happy."*

Empowerment can also mean being given an opportunity to further their education. Hanan tells stories about participants that she has had in her circles and who after having completed the circle, continued to study at the primary school and then sit for the Sudanese certificate[5]. "*I have ladies, they started with me in thirteen years and now they are in secondary school."* Some even go to university and three of her former participants have been midwifes and one a teacher in the Quran. Hanan means that "*if you educated yourself, how to read and how to write, you can get anything that you want."*

The role of literacy for empowerment can further be summarized in what Elham says: "*Literacy is the life. If you are literate to define yourself, to defend yourself and to introduce yourself to the society.*"

Status

Between the lines, in looking at the ways some facilitators talk about uneducated people, it is possible to see that becoming literate will also increase the status of a person. Huda means that literate people are people that understand and can communicate with others in a polite way and this statement implies that the illiterates on the one hand are not able to be polite.

[5] Students who have completed 3 years studies in Academic Secondary Education can sit for the Sudanese certificate, which is necessary for applying for university. (Ministry of General Education, n.o.)

Hanan does also express her view of the illiterate implicitly. According to her, literacy is "*a help for education. It is a state of progress for human. If you know write and read this is indicating that you have progressed or you developed yourself "*.

Fatima puts it in a more direct way. She used to show her participants *"the differences between educated men or educated women and uneducated. People can see the differences between educated men and women and not educated men or women.*" In fact, she means that this comparison is a motivation for the participants. It gives them a goal to strive for. Another straight expression, which also shows the visualized differences in status between the illiterate and the literate people is:

> *Former they didn't know anything and after that they have an ability to read and write. (....) If you know to read and write you are educated woman or educated man. To recite Quran, to read magazine, newspapers, to know the news about the word. If you no read and if you no write, you're nothing* (Doha).

Samia gives another perspective where it's understood that illiterates cannot contribute to the community in a desirable way and in that way, lack something essential:

> *The literacy is not only about how to read and write but how to know that things can benefit for society or the community and how to deal with the next or the new things in the life. You must have a role in this life. You must explain or you must offer it in this life. You must offer or you have a role in this life. This is literacy, not just how to read and write*.

5.5.2 Becoming motivated

According to the informants, the outcomes of the attendance and learning do not only affect the participants, but also the trainers. This can be named "becoming motivated" and unlike the former subcategory, it refers to what happens with the facilitators rather than the participants. Most of the trainers state that they started to work with the organisation because it was a way to make a living, at least to a certain extent, as they could have another job besides facilitating. Some trainers also say that they had a genuine interest in teaching from the beginning, but none of these things oppose that motivation can be a result of the facilitating and not only a reason for it. The properties detected for this area are: *work for a change, student success,* and *receiving appreciation.*

Work for change

To presume that the described changes, which the informants expect to see and are the results they actual witness, motivate the trainers in their work, is close at hand. The hope of the program manager and the trainer of the trainers is naturally to select and train people with a positive attitude. The program manager says that they try to choose facilitators that are dedicated to the area and are willing to run the circle as a volunteer service to their community rather than to do it only to earn a living from it. The trainer of the trainers gives a similar view when she talks about the main qualities of a facilitator. In order to be interested in the work the trainer of the trainers, she mentions that the trainer should be from the same community and be involved in the same problems as the participants.

Some trainers, more than others, do more explicitly state the developmental aspect of their facilitating. They do not just focus on the individual learner but also look at their work as an opportunity to bring about changes to their society. Samia is motivated by the syllabus as it is open and not to detailed. As such, it provides a way to "*give your ideas to the participants"* and she means that she, in this work, can give *"the same message to the community"* as in working with journalism, her original field. Moreover, she says that if the participants will be good readers and writers it will be *"like propaganda for other people, propaganda to come and learn."*

Hanan talks about literacy as something which means development for the whole country:

> *Sudan benefit from this literacy, because when people be awareness and be educated this is also progress and this is development for Sudan. And also we can fight undevelopment if you are educated. (....) When you to be educated you can bring income to the country also.*

Elham seems to be of the same opinion:

> *The development is education or the education is important for development. We found that developed countries or developed people are educated and they use literacy very good. The government give chance for organisations to help in education field, because the government by itself couldn't take this on.*

Furthermore, when explaining the importance of literacy, she talks a lot about the requirements of the people in the area she is working in and refers to the personal needs of the women she teaches. Evidently Elham did not have a particular interest in education from the beginning, but after 6 years of literacy work for the organisation, this has changed and she

wants to continue to work until "*there is no illiteracy"*. Moreover, she says about the role of the facilitator that:

> *You have to be, to have a desire for this domain and you have to get this responsibility and this is a message for the society (….) You must think like this. (….) You're dedicated yourself to the new method and new things that help you in teaching and in this field and also you must educate yourself more the time.*

Also Afaf talks about the poor area and the people in need of education. Moreover, she says:

> *I see myself so proud to learn those people. This is good things or more things that encourage me to learn them. I feel I gave them good things, or before they didn't know anything, and now they write the title and know the date and…*

Student success

What Afaf says in the former paragraph can also be connected to student success and that other trainers witness this as something that gives them motivation. Fatima means that "*when you get a lot of people, this is means they have a desire to learn and this is the strengths that let me teach them and to…".* Also Elham claims that a full class gives her motivation and she talks about how much her participants appreciated a lesson on AIDS as it was the first time they heard about the issue. Moreover, she becomes happy "*when writing, when giving exercise, when the participants or the learners answer it, this exercise, or write or correct"* or when a participant has problems connected to the living circumstances in the area or to her neighbours, which Elham can help her to solve. She gives an example of what she heard from one of the learners: "*She say - after your enlightenment I give up this problem with neighbours and friend."*

Huda claims that she is motivated by the women's desire to come and to learn.

> *Their attendance this is motivating me and the desire women, the needs of women. When woman go to hospital, she feels I don't know how to ask our doctor or the nurses. This is also desire let them to come and to learn or to come to these circles. And one of them comes from a long away place. This is also desire for women. Also they get up early. If I'm absent they ask about me, what has happened and what is going on and this is also giving me indication that they have a desire to learn or to come to the course. This gives us indication they have desire or they have something inside let them to come to learn, because they got up early and from far place also that things let me to see those people have a desire to learn.*

The program manager does also view the student's progress as encouraging:

In our graduation some participants come to share and the way they talking or the way they present themselves really amazing. That, you feel really this have an impact after all this and of course that not happens only once, one year or two, it's a process that is ongoing of development and until now we have these fruits of…

More specific examples of how one can be encouraged by the participants' success come from Omaima as an answer to what is the most positive to work as a literacy trainer:

The first thing because this is as an organisation and I found many things and also many people educated also, to educate people. Some girls stay in home just. There are some people non-educated, but now in secondary school also a motivation and encouragement. (....) Lame, there is one is lame. She got a bicycle and come here and study and everything she knows. Some of them are not organising, but when they came, they are very organised, first they come to the market and their needs and things. They manage their time and her life change...

Receiving appreciation

Motivation seems also to come from the appreciation other people give to the trainer as a result of successful work. First of all, the organisation running the literacy programs has a clear grasp of which facilitators do an efficient job when it comes to promoting the participant's attendance and learning. The program manager says that "*we have our ways of knowing*". The literacy trainer "*is supposed to attend every day, give these two hours, sometimes more but not less, be interactive with her participants*". She must do her job properly. The first measurement is the attendance sheet of the circle (which shows both the facilitator's own presence and her participants). "*Maybe they are not encouraged by her, that's why the percentage of drop-outs are higher than the other*".

Secondly, the progress of the course is looked into because there is a special time frame for each unit. If this is not kept, the supervisors will talk to her but if no progress is seen, the program manager explains that:

when we realise that she's delaying or she's not with the time table, with the units, then we sometimes close her circle because we don't want to spend the resources and the waste them actually, the resources and the time. And then we actually talk to her in the meeting. We know directly if she is interested or not.

What the program manager says shows that it is important to get sufficient appreciation from the organisation - to avoid being lectured and, in some cases, even to keep one's job. Appreciation can, however, come from other directions too. Some informants say that a reward for working with the circles is the respect the trainer will receive from her participants and other members of the community. Hanan, for example, talks about that the participants

pay her respect by visiting her in her home and that former participants send their children to the pre-school she is running at the moment. And the program manager means that: "*in this community actually, people are very appreciating to someone that give them something. So for them the facilitator is a teacher, a teacher, not a facilitator. Ah, and they like her so much, appreciate her so much"*

The trainer of the trainers focuses more on the role of the popular committees, that they also play a role for giving the facilitators important appreciation:

> *Whenever we plan to, for example to celebrate the literacy day, they come and they do very good speeches to encourage the literacy facilitators and also the participants they do something which help them to feel that they are doing something good. And whenever some person feels that he is successful he go for more success action, successful actions.*

Chapter 6 Discussion

6.1 Starting position

The findings of the study do not only say something unique to the case of the organisation in the study, they can be said to form an embryo of a substantive theory, focusing the teaching-learning process in literacy training in Sudan. The limited scope of the study makes it impossible to come out with a full theory, but it has resulted in the model described in the previous chapter and this can be related to ideas of already established theories about teaching, learning, and education.

The whole model is concerned with the theoretical competence of the trainers, as it shows their beliefs about teaching and learning, and how they have developed this understanding. Since it focuses on the learning process of the participants, theories will naturally be connected to this subject, but as it also tells something about the development of the facilitators, and that issue will be discussed in the light of the theories. The relationship between the different parts of the model and relevant theories can be seen in following figure:

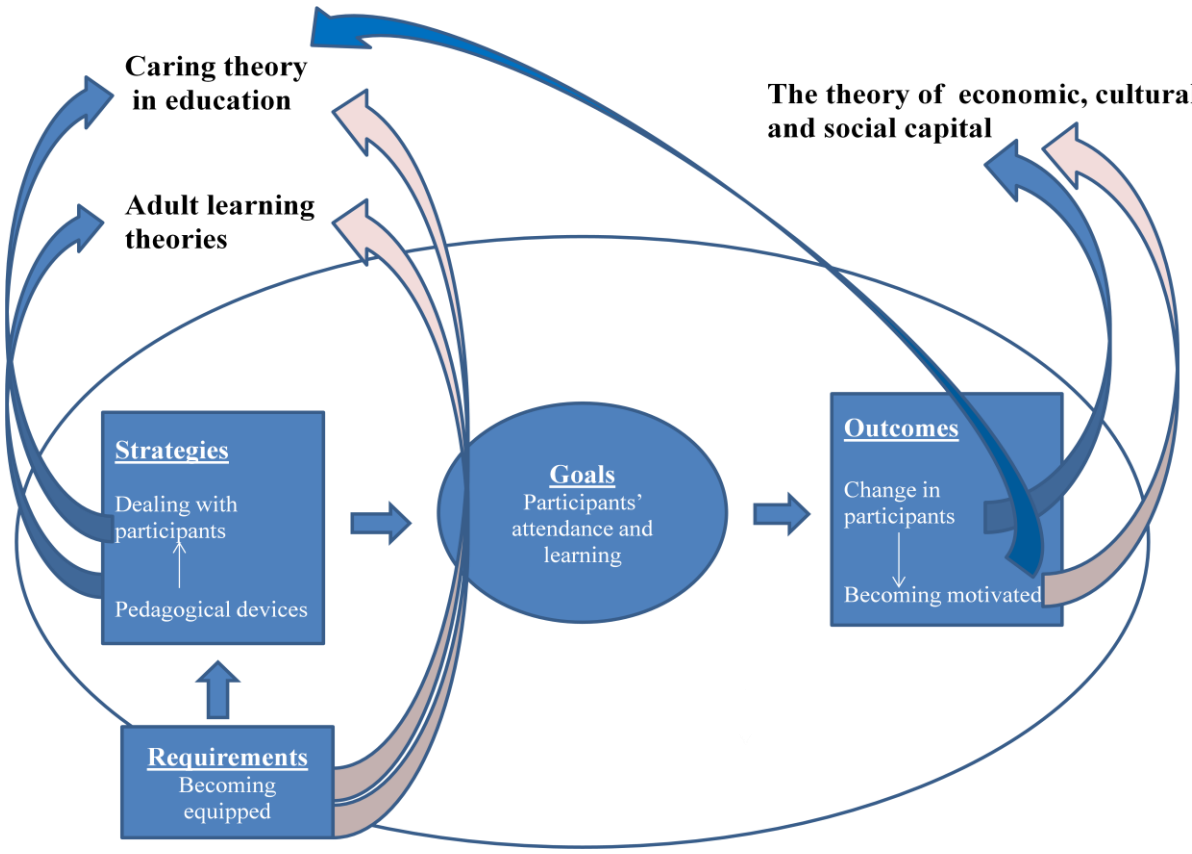


Figure 8 Theories related to the findings

The additional arrows show the connections between the findings and the theories. The darker stands for what the findings say about the teaching-learning-process of the participants and the lighter for the one of the facilitators.

6.1.1 Caring theory of education

As the core category of the findings deals with participants, it lies near at hand to make connections to a theory that highlights the relation between the pedagogue and the student. Even though the caring theory of education has a lot of influence from the formal school system and from the education of children, it corresponds well with the result of the study

The link between caring and attendance is clearly visible in the findings. The informants agree on that building relationships with the participants is essential for keeping them in the circle. To go to the homes of the missing students and investigate the reason for an absence, must be seen as an act of caring. Somebody takes notice of the participants are not there and somebody wants to know why they struggle with it. It is a way to see people, and after all, the term engrossment, that according to Noddings (2005) was one of the conditions to genuine care, could also be defined by the word attention, to be conscious of another person.

That the occurrence of the sharing box is likely to motivate attendance too, is explicitly stated by one of the trainers. The opportunity to receive help draws the participants to the circle. But are there only the physical items they may receive that are the outcomes of the saving box? Is it not also a sign that the participants' problems of poverty are recognised and then relieved by the facilitator and the group and that someone truly cares about them? And as the system of the sharing box is based on that everyone in the circle contributes a little to support each other, is it not also indirectly a way to learn how to care for each other and therefore a form of moral education? At least the participants get an opportunity to care for others in a practical way. Likewise, the trainer who searches out the reasons behind the absence by going to the houses of the participants, acts as a role-model when it comes to caring.

Even though the central activity of the circle is to help people to become literate, the aim is to empower them to live a life of dignity, justice, and respect. From a certain perspective, one can call this a form of moral education. Focus is given to increasing the awareness of the participants and on individual development, but there is also a clear collective aspect in the activities of the circles. The frequent use of dialogue as a pedagogical device is one example. The dialogue is, as previously mentioned, a means of moral education

and though Noddings does even interpret the word in the same way as Freire, who has initiated the use of dialogue in the REFLECT programs, it is present. The findings show that discussions are used both for literacy learning, and decision-making in the circles.

Not only the dialogue, but also the activities that the trainer and the participants are doing together, for the community, like cleaning areas, can be seen as a sign of moral education. The cleaning is an act of care for the environment and for the inhabitants of the community. Certainly it may be near at hand to do things collectively in the context of the case. In general, there is a collective culture in Sudan and according to the program manager, people are very committed to their neighbours in the areas where the circles are run. The context for Noddings, an individualistic American society, is very different from the one in Sudan. In any case, the idea of taking community development initiatives comes from the organisation as part of the literacy circles and thus the trainers are the ones who should introduce it to the participants. Consequently, one can, at least to some extent, see the programs as a form of moral education, whether it is explicit stated or not and as such it is important that the trainers set a good example.

If there is engrossment in terms of that the trainers see their participants, there is likely to be motivational displacement in the sense that they also have empathy. In the interviews no informant blames the participants for being absent; they give psycho-socio-economic explanations to it. The circumstances are seen as reasons to low attendance rates a difficult pregnancy, a small child to take care of, lack of money that force the participants to work instead, or the presumptions that not all women can learn. As the trainers are from the same areas, which are considered to be poor and it is said that many of them face similar problems, imply why it might not be so difficult for them to imaging the situation of the participants and being empathic.

Caring does not seem to apply only to attendance. The informants describe this in how they deal with the participants, for instance, having patience with them and showing them respect, facilitate the learning. At least they are convinced that an impatient and disrespectful behaviour does not support it. Thus, the informants of this study share the perspective of the students, which Bosworth (1995) conducted a research on. Caring teaching practises are, besides caring about the students outside the educational activities (for example listening to their private problems and giving guidance, which some trainers also say they do), identified as characteristics of a pedagogue who cares. This, in turn, is required for the creation of a good learning environment.

The findings also show that the circles change the participants. Apart from developing the more technical skills connected to literacy, they grow in awareness and self confidence. How much this is influenced by literacy and learning other things in the circles or being cared for, is difficult to say. But according to the informants, caring for the participants (even if they do not use that word) is essential for the learning and the theory of caring is resolute that caring leads to growth.

Noddings (1996) states the importance of getting a response from the one cared for, and this is, at least to some extent, is confirmed in the study. The trainers state that their own motivation is partly due to the response of the participants. That the latter are coming to the circle at all, is an implicit way of responding, that they improve their reading skills is another, and that the circle makes a difference in their lives a third. The fact that the trainers get invited to the participants' homes is, on the other hand, a more explicit form of gratitude.

Even though Noddings perspective is feministic, the research approach of this study is not. The approach was chosen because it corresponds with the findings, something which might be explained by the fact that all informants and the participants are women. Naturally, then, it brings up women's experiences (even if not in the sense that they are subordinate to men). However, with that, a question arises: would the focus on caring been less if some of the trainers or the participants been men? Or is this kind of caring equally important for both men and women? Apart from the gender issue, one can also consider the exposed situation of the participants, as being poor people who, in some cases, are refugees in their own country. Is that the reason to that the need of care seems so urgent? Their exposure has, however, also to do with gender inequality as the study takes place in a context where women, in general, are less empowered than men. The vulnerability of the participants can be explained by both economic and social factors, like poverty and disparity, the one does not have to exclude the other.

So far in the discussion, the theoretical perspectives of caring have been compared with the relationship between the trainers and the participants, but it is also relevant to see what it says about the relation between the supervisors and the trainers or between the trainers themselves. Is there a caring relationship between them? In order to analyse that, it is useful to look at ideas of Pintrich and Schunk (2002) as they (which was presented in a previous chapter) bring up the necessity of caring in the whole system of an educational organisation.

The first thing they mentioned was the sense of belonging, which includes that the individual members of the organisation are committed to its goals and values. In the case of this study, there is no doubt that the different members have similar goals and values. The

REFLECT approach, in terms of how to teach, seems to be deeply rooted in all informants (at least in their minds)- they share a positive outlook on the participants and they have the goals of attendance and learning in common. To some extent, however, there is a difference between the trainers' views and their supervisors'. Naturally the different roles of the informants are likely to influence how they look at the purpose of REFLECT. The trainers primarily lift up the individual participants, even though they are aware of the link between individual change and community development. Meanwhile, the program manager and the trainer of the trainers in general have a wider outlook, focusing on community development. With that as background, it is not strange that the program manager highlights the strategy for solving community problem as a learning objective in the initial training course and that the trainer of the trainers regrets that there are too few actions carried out by the circles.

Not only are the same values and goals important for a sense of belonging, but also that the member of an organisation feels that he/she is carried for. As there are weekly visits from representatives of the organisation to the trainers and monthly meetings between these two groups and the program manager, it is likely to assume that the trainers do not feel totally abandoned in their task as trainers and social workers. From the findings it is, nevertheless, impossible to determine if the trainers perceive the follow ups as something controlling or supporting. According to the program manager and the trainer of the trainers, they have a twofold aim: to evaluate the work of the facilitators and at the same time provide an opportunity for them to get help with things they think are difficult.

The trainers, on the other hand, talk more about the support they give to each other. Between them there seems to be what Pintrich and Schunk (2002) would call warmth and civility in the personal relations. They give each other advice on how to deal with the participants, for instance, when it comes to how to treat old women and on teaching by giving suggestions of activities to use in a lesson. Besides, they can also shift circles between each other if a trainer has a certain skill that is requested by the participants in another circle.

This kind of system, where the facilitators support each other, is intentional and encouraged by the organisation and not just something that happens randomly. It is influenced by the REFLECT approach as it contains the view of the trainers as capable people with useful experiences. What emerged from the observation of the refreshing course was that the relation between the trainers of the trainers and the trainers seemed un-hierarchical and relaxed.

The sessions observed lead to the last aspect of Pintrich's and Schunk's way of looking at caring in education. What they say is that an educational organisation not only has to ensure

the physical safety and security, but also create an open environment that allows different opinions, which corresponds with the REFLECT approach. According to REFLECT, participation and dialogue is central both when it comes to the literacy circles and the meetings of the trainers and the supervisors.

6.1.2 Theories of Adult learning

The pedagogical devices and the ways of dealing with the participants that the informants bring up have many contacts points with the theoretical perspectives on the adult learning theories previously described. The trainers may not necessary be aware of all of their assumptions or even less so of the theories that these show resemblance with. After all, most of them do not have higher education. This does not mean, however, that they do not have ideas of their learners' ability or even without these ideas, are able to see what is required in teaching.

Of the four things critical pedagogues site as the characteristics of adults in their learning process (and what was brought up in 3.3.2), the informants, more or less directly, mention two. Firstly, they say that the tool of discussion is used in the circles when making decisions. Is this not a sign of a belief that the learners can think dialectically and see an issue from different angles; that there are not always only one certain way of doing things?

Furthermore, many of the participants actually change their views during the course, when different issues are brought up in discussions. One example is when it comes to the practicing of traditional customs, like circumcisions. This is another fact that seems to support the supposition of dialectical thinking as it also includes the ability to re-interpret values learned as a child. This can, however, also be related to critical reflection, another characteristic of adult learning: to investigate ones values and opinions in the light of one's lives experiences.

At first, it seems the informants share the view that adults can employ so called practical logic (in other words think critically about a specific situation) as they talk about the relevance of the context too. But it is impossible from the findings to judge whether there really are examples of practical logic they experience. Clearly, the importance of the context in the teaching-learning process, as well as the occurrence of critical reflection based on life experiences, show that the informants are influenced of transformative learning perspectives. In transformative learning, the learning should be contextual and start from where people are,

just as when the trainers use words in the literacy teaching, which the participants already are familiar with and choose reading material that is relevant to them.

As in transformative learning, the informants also use (or promote the use of) the participants' experiences when focusing on their community, its problems, and how to solve them. Like Freire (1993) (the originator of the transformative learning) advocated, the circles bring up social evils and spend time on how to deal with them. Also, learning education is seen as a tool for social change and an important goal of the circles is to make activities that can improve the community of the learners. In order to succeed in the latter, conscious-raising is seen as central. The informants describe how they use discussions and dialogues, and let the participants together come to decisions on what to do in order to deal with the problems of the local community.

One of the most recognised outcomes of the circles is that the participants gain awareness of their society, of diseases and/or the risks of traditional practices. Similar to transformative learning, the change is not only for the society but also the individual, and this is something the trainers and their supervisors are aware of as they describe the change of the participants. Not only do the participants increase their awareness, empowerment and status are additional changes.

Since the literacy program is based on the REFLECT approach (inspired by Freire) these influences do not come as a surprise and there are other similarities between the findings and the transformative learning as well. The informants bring up the method of using pictures and going from whole words to single letters when teaching literacy and they talk about the importance of respecting the participants as these are adults who have a lot of life experiences themselves even though they lack formal education. Like Freire (1993), some of them state that the trainer should not be superior but a learner herself. The fact that trainers live in the same areas as their learners, and consequently are part of the same community, might facilitate this matter. Only a few of the trainers have a university degree and their parents are, in most cases, either uneducated or low educated. Thus the gap between the facilitators and the participants does not seem to be unsurpassable.

There are, in any case, also differences between the transformative learning and the literacy programs in the study. Freire (1993) talks a lot about freedom of oppression, but even though social evils like poverty are brought up, none mention inequality and nor do they criticize the authorities for the social and economical status of the beneficiaries of the programs. The trainers and their supervisors seem to focus more on what they and the participants can do themselves to improve the life of people, rather than to bring about

political change. Naturally though, inequalities may decrease when people become empowered indirectly, so nevertheless, there might be changes in the society as a result of the circles. To question traditional customs is another way to challenge the norms of a community.

The fact that the participants' life experiences are considered important in the learning process can be related to the andragogy perspective of adult learning. The trainer of the trainers thinks that the participants get motivation, if they see that they can benefit from education in their lives, is moreover also confirmed by andragogy spokesmen. That the participants find the circles useful is supported by the examples the other informants give about the outcomes of the circle. The example of the woman not knowing how to ask the doctor and the nurses questions is expressive. The circle gives self confidence and enlightenment to the participants as they become literate. It increases their awareness, and by that, the living conditions among learners are likely to improve.

Less easy, though, is to find anything in the findings supporting the statement of that the learners must take responsibility for their own learning. As the interview questions were more directed to the role and intention of the facilitator, this issue was never the focus, but between the lines, one can glimpse that many the participants take responsibility of their learning just by simply coming to the classes, even though it is a long way to travel and that they are concerned that their trainer should come too.

It is also possible to compare Maslow's "hierarchy of needs" (Kunc, 1992) with the picture the informants give. As the women in general are poor, the lack of attendance is often related to the lack money to cover their and their families' basic needs. The trainers are aware of this problem and try to prevent it by joint saving and supporting the ones who have the biggest need. At the same time, they also intend to create a warm environment by caring for the participants, something that at least partly, can fill the needs of safety and belonging. The need for belonging, or perhaps even the need for safety and security, may also have affected the choice of the woman whose father forbade her to attend the circle. She obeyed him and did not come until he changed his mind. To go against the will of one's father is in Sudanese culture not only creates conflict within the family, but also goes against the social norms of the society.

Further, the need for self-esteem in many cases is fulfilled when the women become literate. The informants witness the new respect the participants receive from others when they "enter" the literate society. Illiterates have lower status. Not only might others value the participants more as literate, there is also the aspect of self-actualisation. This is the last step

in the model, and means that human beings automatically turn to develop their talents when all their other needs were accomplished. By fulfilling oneself, one might also estimate oneself more. Whether the participants do this or not is difficult to measure from the findings, since no participants are interviewed. In the light of the "hierarchy of needs" it is, in any case, not difficult to understand that there is a risk that the participants will drop out from the circles. They do often have more basic needs to fill.

It is possible to relate the "hierarchy of needs" even to the trainers when looking at what gives them motivation. First of all, the trainers will be able to stay on if the organisation is satisfied with them, and by that they keep their income, which help them to satisfy their more basic needs. Another motivation for the trainers is the respect they receive from the community, which lies near at hand to the fulfilment of the need for self-esteem. Likewise, the motivation of doing something good for others and for the development of the country, this can be a sign of self-actualisation.

Since there is a course manual to follow in the circles, there is not much in the way of self-direction, which is another common attribute of adult education. Some exists though. The participants choose what practical activity they want to carry out in course exercises, the trainers provide discussions of real life problems, and let the participants reach decisions together. The trainers also consider the participants' desires concerning the reading material in the circle and they bring in people that give information or teach skills that are required by the groups. These are examples of scaffolding activities that aim to let the learners have influence over their own learning. That self-directed learning is said to better fit a Western context might explain why it is not more distinctive in the programs in this study.

6.1.3 The theory of economic, cultural and social capital

Another theoretical perspective that fits the outcome of the case study was the theory of capitals. Bordieu (2006), the originator of the theory, meant that there are three forms of capital that can be possessed: economic, cultural, and social. All of these can be considered when, for example, analysing why people choose to undergo education or work in a certain field. Starting with the trainers, most of them stated that the reason they went to the initial training and began to work as facilitators was that they needed a job and an income. In other words, they were motivated by economic capital. Later on, however, other things (like students' development and teaching success) also seemed to encourage them in their work.

Likewise, one can say that the trainers, just by being trainers, possess cultural capital. First, they have gone through the training, in-service support, and acquired work experiences, all of which can be kinds of the embodied states of this capital. They know a lot of the REFLECT approach and according to themselves and their supervisors, they have developed social skills, learned teaching in practice, and become committed to the approach itself. Thoughts and behaviours have progressed over time, just as what this embodied state usually does.

Social forms of capital can be seen in the findings as well. One of the trainers has her participant's children enrolled in her pre-school. From her facilitating work, she developed an active social network. In this case, the social capital transforms to economic capital as it helped her financially, but it is connected to the fact that she has become a respected member of the community through her work. The facilitators can thus have the advantage of being trusted in other matters and maybe known by many people in the society.

One can discuss though, if the trainers receive motivation only from the opportunity to increase their own capital, whether it be social, cultural, or economic, or if there exists selfless motives as well. In this respect the theory of capital can be questioned. That the trainers choose to undergo training (formal and informal in terms of training support) cannot be explained fully by the capital theory. The informants bring up many examples of participants (both specific and general) who have improved their lives because of the circles, and they talk about the opportunity their job gives them to bring about development in their country. It is therefore doubtful if the trainers receive motivation to develop in their professional roles only from the ability to increase their own capitals or in confirming their abilities. Are they not also glad for the success of others? The findings show that relationships and care for the participants are important for the facilitators. Thus it seems fair to presume that they have mixed motives to learn how to improve in their facilitating by further training and receiving advice from others.

Looking at the participants, as they are described by the informants, the theory of capitals can be related to some aspects of the findings. As no participants are interviewed, their motives of participating in the literacy training are discussed by the informants. A few of their examples of how the participants change from the training can be connected to economic capital. The two participants who later became midwifes, benefited from completing the literacy training through gaining employment, improving their financial situation.

In addition, the participants' opinions change (for example in terms of harmful traditions like circumcisions) change and their knowledge increases as they become aware of

new concepts. Furthermore, they become empowered and can do things they had never done before. These are all changes which can be seen as a cultivation process, an embodied state of cultural capital. When finishing the courses, the participants, as a rule, have learned to read, write, and some mathematics. The participants have however learned than a basic skill. They can, for instance, sign documents and understand information from their children's schools. They can also help their children with their school work, and support these in their cultivation process, helping them to acquire the embodied state of cultural capital.

An even more apparent sign of the acquiring of an embodied state of the cultural capital is the difference in manners that some informants see among their participants as "they become polite" as literate or educated people.

To some extent, the objectified and the institutionalised state of cultural capital is a result of the circles. As the former has to do with the mastering of an object, it can be compared to reading a book that one has in the house. This would probably not be counted as an objectified state in a community where everyone is literate, but in the community of the case study, it might very well be.

The institutionalised state, on the other hand, is represented by the fact that all participants who have completed the course and became literate receive a certificate. It is given in a specific celebration and it can be used for further studies. Former participants can go on and study up high school or obtain vocational training. Certificates, as a phenomenon, are considered of great significance in the Sudanese context, even when it is not used for continuing studies.

Even though the participants become literate they will, in most cases, still not go on to further their education. This group may not be what Bordieu (2006) had in mind when talking about the embodied state, which emerges from a Western perspective where the low-educated are said to lack cultural capital. In a context such as the one of the case, in poor areas where many people are illiterate, literacy is very significant in acquiring cultural capital. Literate people, though being less educated in a comparison to the entire society, would be considered middle-class within such a community.

Social capital does mean that someone has a network and the ability to use it. According to one of the facilitators, a participant said that she did not know how to ask the doctor and nurses questions. If she learned this in the circle, it would greatly increase her social capital. Visiting authorities and institutions in the community is one of the activities in the circles, which help the informants to acquire more social capital.

The embodied state of cultural capital can partly be linked to social capital as well. By becoming literate, the participants will become a member of "the group of the literates" and as such, increase their status.

6.2 Concluding remarks

As stated in the introduction, the overall aims of the study are to explore the professional competence of the trainers in literacy programs in Sudan and to compare this to the intention of the organisation running the programs.

From the case study, it is apparent that the main concerns of the trainers are to keep the participants in the circle and to help them to learn. The strategies for being able to fulfil these two goals are to be patient and respectful when meeting the participants in the circle and to care about them even outside the learning activities. Being a facilitator is more than teaching, it is being a friend and a community worker as well. These relational aspects of the work of the facilitator are shared by the supervisors and it is on purpose the organisation chooses trainers from the same areas as the participants. In that way, the trainers can imagine the situation of their students and have empathy. The participants are an exposed group in society which faces economic and social problems and they therefore have a great need of being cared for.

Secondly, the use of pedagogical devices is seen as a means of making the learning meaningful. This includes starting with familiar settings and making use of the participants' experiences in a participatory and creative way. When teaching literacy, one should go from pictures to words and then from the words to letters. Contextual teaching is important since the participants can see the relevance of the learning. These standpoints, which are held both by the trainers and the organisation, correspond well with the pedagogical ideas of transformative learning that has a great emphasis on the empowering of people and changing communities. The consensus of the views of the informants' show that the organisation has succeeded in its intention of training the trainers in the REFLECT approach, which the literacy programs are built on.

In regards to moral education, the informants share a common view of literacy as something greater than merely a skill. Attendance and learning will not only result in that the participants learning to read and write and some numeracy. By becoming literate, and through the other the activities in the circle, the participants also enlarge their cultural and social

capital as they increase their awareness of the surrounding community. When the participants learn ways of how to do things, they improve their self-confidence and status.

At the same time, the growth of the participants improves the motivation of the trainers'. Upon realising that their efforts have an impact, the facilitators' self-esteem will increase both in terms of the respect they receive from the community and in feeling that they have mastered their jobs. They also are happy about the development of others; that the participants become empowered and increase their cultural, social, and often indirectly, their economic capital.

The biggest difference between the trainers and the representatives of the organisation is their perspectives. The trainers focus more on the individual progress (even though some of them keep a broader perspective) and the individual group. Meanwhile, the representatives of the organisation have a different view of the circle and see the potential for development of the society.

That the connection between the official intention of the organisation and the trainer is so strong must come from the training, where the trainers learned the values and methods of the organisation. As the trainers of the trainers seem to treat the trainers in the same way as the trainers are supposed to treat their own participants, in a non-hierarchical and participative way, and let them participate in the same activities which will be found in the circle, the trainers have an opportunity to learn the desired values and behaviours of a literacy facilitator.

It is also interesting to see that the informants' understanding of the teaching-learning process, in many ways, is similar to the findings in educational research. To this end, the work experiences of the trainers, is of great importance. In the actual meeting with the participants, the trainers gain experiences of the teaching- learning situation, and see the outcome of their work.

The understanding of teaching and learning is also developed through in-service support, where the trainers, above all, support each other. This collegial support is encouraged by the organisation. In the regular staff meetings it is assumed that everyone should share their experiences and treat others with respect. The REFLECT approach seems to also influence the relationships between the members at the different levels of the organisation.

Though this thesis has only dealt with the theoretical competence of the trainers, when looking at how they carry out the training in reality, there could be a gap between what the trainers say they were doing and what they actually do when running the circles. A theoretical understanding is, nevertheless, a condition for practical teaching work and this study has

shown the attitudes and methods that lead to good attendance and learning and what inspires to continuing teaching and learning.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on these conclusions, a strong recommendation for organisations and institutions dealing with adult education is to not leave out the caring perspective, especially not when working with vulnerable groups in poor areas. Highlighting the importance of the relationships between the facilitator and the participants when training trainers and in-service support is advisable. The trainer is not solely a teacher, but must know that his/her role is much greater. Likewise, he/she must have tools and ideas of how to care.

The value of care must be supported. The trainers need to feel that they are cared for themselves by the management that they are not left alone, and have colleagues to ask questions and discuss pedagogical matters with. It is advisable to create forums for such discussions and the initiative should not come from the trainers themselves. It is also suitable to deal with the trainers in the same way one wants them to deal with the participants in terms of listening to their opinions and allowing them to make decisions.

Moreover, it is useful to encourage contextual teaching and engage trainers that are familiar with the settings and the culture of the participants and highlight the fact that though the facilitation is a paid position, it also has a volunteer aspect; that there are other things apart from the incentive that will be the outcome of engaging oneself in training.

6.4 Possible areas of future research

The study has come out with different components essential to the teaching-learning process and hypothesis of the relationship between these. It would be very interesting to continue the process of developing a substantive theory that would say something about the teaching and learning of adult literacy in the Sudanese context.

As this thesis only deals with a single organisation, it is difficult to tell to what extent the findings are representative for other literacy programs in Sudan. Would other literacy facilitators also trained in the REFLECT approach have similar experiences of the teaching-learning process? And what picture would trainers who have used other pedagogical approaches give? Would their main focus also be on attendance and learning? Would the

official intentions of the organisation and the facilitators' understanding be as obvious? Would the means of how to equip the trainers have mattered?

Likewise, it would also be worthwhile to compare the trainers' (and the supervisors') concepts with the understanding of the participants. Would the latter group have given a similar view of the learning process? By integrating their perspective in a study, the implications would be more deeply rooted.

By then taking a step further and comparing two or more literacy programs in contrasting situations, preferably cross culturally, might provide greater depth. If the aim was to reach a formal theory even more detail would be required. In that case, a comparative cross cultural case study, where the leadership, the trainer, and participant perspectives are all included, and finding out what factors are essential for the learners in attendance and learning would be preferred. For instance, it would be of particular interest to continue to explore the role of the relation between the trainer and the learner, and the trainer and the supervisor.

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Appendix 1 Interview guide to the literacy trainers

Outset: self introduction, aim, and confidentiality

The aim of this interview is to learn more about the trainers understanding of the teaching learning process. As the interview method being semi-structured, interview questions have been selected and developed from following areas and questions.

Background questions
Name:
Age:
Where are you from? (Geographical area and mother tongue):
Educational background:
Professional background:
How many years have you worked with Adra?

About why to teach literacy
How did you learn literacy yourself?
What was the view of education in your family when you where young?
How do you think that this has influenced your own idea of learning and teaching?
Why did you choose to become a literacy facilitator?
What is the most encouraging about being a literacy facilitator?
What is the biggest problem of being illiterate?
What change can you see in your participants' life once they become literate? Can you give an example?
What do you think you'll do/work with after 10 years?

About the definition of literacy
How would you describe what literacy is? What is it to be literate?
Did your picture of literacy changed since you started to work for Adra? If so, in what way?

Education, training and experiences
How do you learn things yourself?
Have your views of literacy changed since you've started to work for Adra?
What did you learn of literacy from the introduction course of Adra?
What did you learn from your working experiences as a literacy facilitator?
Do you need more training when it comes to teaching literacy?

About how to teach literacy
What do you think is the best way to teach literacy? Why do you think so?
Which is the most challenging area when it comes to teach literacy?
Advantages of the Reflect approach according to you?
Disadvantages have the Adra approach according to you?

What are your strengths as a literacy facilitator?
What advice will you give to a new literacy trainer?

Appendix 2 Interview guide to the trainer of the trainers

Outset: self introduction, aim, and confidentiality

The aim of this interview is to learn more about the REFLECT approach and how it is transmitted to the literacy trainers. As the interview method being semi-structured, interview questions have been selected and developed from following areas and questions.

Background questions:
Name:
Earlier education:
Professional experiences:

Pamoja
Can you tell me about the Pamoja network?

Definition of literacy
How will you describe would you what literacy is according to the REFLECT approach?
What is it to be literate?

Effects of literacy
What are the reasons to help people to be literate? What do you tell the trainers?

How to teach literacy?
Can you describe what the REFLECT approach say about how to teach literacy?

The training
What parts does the training consist of? Content of the course
What are the benefits of the reflect approach when it comes to teaching?

What would you say are the qualities of a literacy facilitator?

What do the training says about the relationship between the facilitator and the learner?

The impact of the training
In what sense do you think the initial training influences the literacy trainers?
Can you tell me some examples of what change you've seen and heard from them?
What obstacles do you think there are for the trainers to grab the REFLECT approach?
Why do you think that some of the trainers more quickly grab the concept of literacy and how to teach it?
What other things have you seen that have been influating the trainers teaching literacy skills?
What did you see is the most challenging area when it comes to teach literacy for the facilitators?
Is there anything you would suggest to improve the initial training?
How could the trainers be supported further?

What is motivating the trainers in their work?

Appendix 3 Interview guide to the literacy project manager

Outset: Confidentiality
The aim of this interview is to learn more about the structures of the literacy programs and the REFLECT approach and how it is transmitted to the trainers. As the interview method being semi-structured, interview questions have been selected and developed from following areas and questions.

Background questions:
Name:
Earlier education:
Work experiences:

Can you describe the role and the responsibility of the trainer?

Picking of trainers
How do you choose the trainers? What are the basic criterias?
What are the reasons that they want to become literacy trainers?

What do you want them to learn from the initial course?

What are the differences between the functional literacy circles and the REFLECT literacy circles?

How do ADRA look at the definition of literacy? What is it according to the organisation?

Effects of literacy
What are the effects/benefits of literacy, at the individual and society level that you teach to the trainers?

Training
What parts do the initial training consist of? Are there any summary of the units in English?
What is the course schedule?

What is impact of the initial training?
In what sense do you think the initial training influences the literacy trainers?
What is the most challenging area when it comes to teach literacy for the facilitators?
What obstacles do you think there are for the trainers to be to grab the REFLECT?
Why do you think that some of the trainers more quickly grab the concept of literacy and how to teach it?
What other things (then the training) have you seen that have been influating the trainers teaching literacy skills?
According to you, what are the reasons to some of the trainers are more efficient than others?

Supervising and in-service training
What kind of in-service training do you offer?
How do you monitor the literacy trainers?
What kind of support did the trainers receive from each other? What kind of support do you give to those who need to develop more as literacy facilitators?
From where do the trainers get their motivation? How do you do to encourage the trainers?