

Book Review: Rolf Arnold - Assisted Learning: A Workbook, Landau: Bildungstransfer Verlag (2010)

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Abstract

The current review aims to make a short overview of Professor Rolf Arnold's book on assisted learning highlighting the notions that are at the core of author's enabling didactics: self-determination and self-control in learning, educational leadership and emotional competences, in the context of postmodern pedagogy.

Keywords: Assisted learning, self-determination, self-control, educational leadership, emotional competences, Rolf Arnold

Professor Rolf Arnold, born in 1952, got his PhD at the University of Heidelberg, worked after that in an International Adult Education Centre, conducted his postdoctoral studies at the Distance University of Hagen, Germany, in 1987, and has been working since 1990 at the Department of Pedagogy (particularly Vocational, Distance and Adult Education) at the Technical University of Kaiserslautern, Germany. He is also Scientific Director and Chairman of the Board for the Distance and International Studies Centre (DISC), and the Speaker of the Virtual Campus Rhineland-Palatinate (VCRP). Few specialists in Education Sciences are more prolific in the field of pedagogy than Professor Rolf Arnold: author of over 50 books, he recently published *How to Lead without Domineering: 29 Smart Leadership Rules* (also available on Amazon Kindle, in e-book format) and *Independent Learning* (in collaboration with Markus Lermen).

According to the author, the pedagogical concepts that stand at the

foundation of these book are: a) self-determination and self-control in learning, b) educational leadership and c) the notion of emotional competence. All these three concepts reflect current preoccupations in postmodern pedagogy, and they are integrated by Professor Arnold in the operational and intriguing notion of *assisted learning* respectively an *enabling didactics*.

The book is structured in 8 chapters that progressively introduce the reader in the topic of assisted learning, starting from the analysis of uncertainty in education (Chapter 2), a postmodern presentation of learning and learning theories (Chapter 3) respectively the principle of leadership and guidance (Chapter 4). The concept of assisted learning is further developed in a separate section (Chapter 5), in which the author expands his ideas of the shifting from teaching culture to learning culture, the issue of innovating the pedagogical methodology, the importance of e-learning and of guided self-study. The book is continued in Chapter 6 by a pertinent study of pedagogical leadership as a subsidiary leadership, highlighting the importance of self-leadership, self-reflection and trust in teacher – student relationships. One of the most important contribution of the book, in our opinion, is concentrated in the last two chapters: The Systemics of Emotions (Chapter 7) and Emotional Competence as a core competence of school leadership (Chapter 8). The author, reflecting a deep understanding of the importance of emotional dimension in education, with obvious influences from humanistic psychology, underlines the necessity of encouraging the development of emotional competences, particularly at the level of educational leadership.

We strongly recommend *Assisted Learning: A Workbook* by Professor Rolf Arnold to: teachers (particularly from primary and preschool education), teacher trainers and university professors, school managers and leaders, adult education providers, and to education sciences students interested to understand more about the current trends in postmodern pedagogy, particularly in Europe.

References

Arnold, R. (2010). *Assisted learning: a Workbook*, Landau: Bildungstransfer Verlag.