FACULTY OF PSYCHOLOGY
AND EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

Being successful in blended adult education: A person-centered approach

Public defense to obtain the degree of
DOCTOR OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

of

Ms. Silke Vanslambrouck

which will take place on
December 12th 2018, 6 p.m. (18u00)
Building D, room D.003
Brussels Humanities, Sciences & Engineering Campus (Etterbeek)

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Summary

While adult education is recognised as important in the rapidly changing world, and blended learning is seen as the future of education, there is still the issue of unqualified dropout of students in blended adult education. Qualitative support is seen as a crucial necessity but information is lacking about what support blended adult students need. Therefore, the central aim of this dissertation is to explore the factors for success in blended adult education from the perspective of the student. The dissertation aims to provide an answer to the question about what factors could be anticipated to support the diverse group of adult students.

While there are a lot of student characteristics, the current PhD focusses on two most crucial characteristics mentioned in the literature, namely motivation and self-regulated learning (SRL). Results provide insights on who the students are, how they learn and what characteristics are related to the success of students. It is found that students have diverse motivations and SRL skills that can be represented by diverse motivational and SRL profiles. Furthermore, students seem to use more ‘traditional’ strategies of learning rather than working with technology. Lastly, regarding the effects on success, results show that self-efficacy, help-seeking, task-strategy and attainment and utility value are variables which can play a significant role to enhance students’ success or SRL.

In sum, this PhD stresses the need to personalise and differentiate education and to trigger adults to use technology. The PhD concludes with some recommendations for the centers for adult education and their teachers and further scientific research.

Curriculum Vitae

Silke Vanslambrouck was born in Roeselare on October 24, 1990. In 2011 she graduated as a teacher in primary education. Afterwards, she obtained the degree of Master of Science in Pedagogical Sciences in 2014 at Ghent University. Silke started her PhD research at the VUB in November 2014 as a member of the inter-university (IWT-SBO) project “Adult Learners Online (ALO!)” that focused on enhancing the quality of online and blended learning in centres for adult education in Flanders. Specifically, the research of Silke targeted blended adult education from the perspective of the adult learner and focussed on students’ motivation and self-regulated learning. During the past four years, Silke managed to publish two articles in international peer-reviewed scientific journals, contributed to the ALO! book and presented her research results at various (inter)national conferences.