

Differential Patterns of Lifelong Learning: Implications for Practice

Dr. Astrid Seltrecht
Department of Educational Sciences
University of Frankfurt

DePaul University – School for New Learning, Chicago/IL
October 5th 2012

Lifelong Learning – Overview

What does it mean “lifelong learning”?

**Learning
Dimensions**

**Learning
Contexts**

Lifelong Learning

**Learning
Modes**

**Learning
Strategies**

Developing a differential pattern

=> two empirical studies

=> qualitative research

=> biographical research

=> life courses

Educational biography research

Format of modern (auto)biography has only been known since 1770, approximately.

American social scientists analyzed biographical material for the first time:

⇒ ***“The Polish Peasant in Europe and America“ by Willam Thomas and Florian Znaniecki (Chicago!!)***

In Germany, for instance, researchers frequently use the autobiographical narrative interview (Schütze 1978)

⇒ ***“ Disease as a teacher?“ (Seltrecht 2006)***

⇒ ***“Lifelong learning in the context of life-threatening diseases“ (Nittel/Seltrecht 2013)***

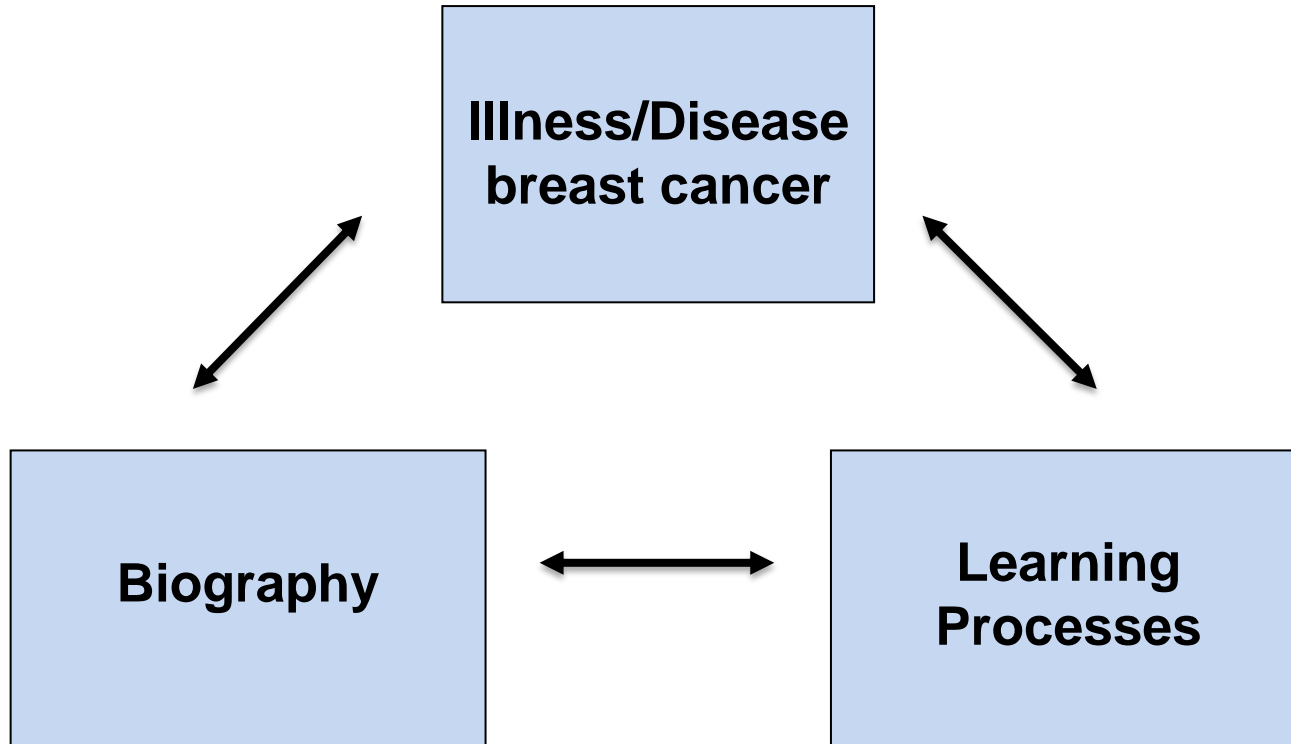


Figure 1: cf. Seltrecht 2006, p. 121

2 Perspectives:

**What and how learn patients with a life-threatening disease?
(gegenstandsbezogene Perspektive)**

**What can we learn about informal learning processes?
(grundlagentheoretische Perspektive)**

“Disease as a teacher?”

Project “Disease as a teacher“ (Seltrecht 2006)

| | | |
|----|--------------------------|--|
| 1. | Questions | Where in life is a breast cancer disease located in one’s life-history? What learning phenomena emerge in the context of the diseases? What consequences do the learning phenomena have for the identity of the image of oneself and the world? |
| 2. | Object | Biographies of diseased individuals: 20 women suffering from breast cancer |
| 3. | Survey method | Autobiographical narrative interview (Schütze 1983) |
| 4. | Evaluation method | Narrative structural procedure (Schütze 1983) Grounded Theory (vgl. Strauss 1991) |

“Lifelong learning in the context of life-threatening diseases“

| Project “Lifelong learning in the context of ...“ (cf. Nittel/Seltrecht 2013) | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|
| 1. | Background | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- based on the study „Disease as a teacher?“- funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG)- 2009-2012 (realization: Nittel/Seltrecht) |
| 2. | Questions | The project aimed at clarifying further research questions on learning in the context of life-threatening diseases. |
| 3. | Object | The research design of the project was similar to that of the doctoral project, but enclosed an additional comparative perspective: Both women and men suffering from breast cancer Both women and men experienced a heart attack (13 re-analyzed+57 newly collected= 70 interviews) |
| 4. | Survey method | Autobiographical narrative interview |
| 5. | Evaluation method | Narrative structural procedure, Grounded Theory |

Structural learning processes

Structural learning processes

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 1. | Appropriation of knowledge |
| 2. | Modifikation of self-established theories |
| 3. | Change of attitudes |
| 4. | Change of identity |

cf. Seltrecht 2006

Process learning dimensions

In the follow-up project, process learning dimensions were added to the pattern of lifelong learning.

Process learning dimensions are added to the structural learning dimensions. “This category is complementary to the four process structures of the life course as we know them from social scientific biography research (Schütze 1981).” (Translation from the German; original: Nittel 2012, p. 40)

| Process structure of the life course | | Process learning dimensions |
|--------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. | Institutional expectation patterns | Managed learning |
| 2. | Biographical action schemes | Targeted learning |
| 3. | Trajectories of suffering | Troubled learning |
| 4. | Creative metamorphoses of biographical identity | Creative learning |

Learning modes

The learning processes are also to be differentiated in term of their learning modes. Apart from the learning modes of new learning (e.g. first appropriation of a cancer disease) or relearning (e.g. modification of existing self-established theories) also clear evidence of the learning mode of non-learning can be found in the empirical material (cf. Seltrecht 2006, p. 201f.).

| Learning modes | | |
|----------------|--------------|--|
| 1. | New learning | |
| 2. | Relearning | |
| 3. | Non-Learning | active non-learning / not-wanting-to-learn |
| | | passive non-learning / not-being-able-to-learn |

Learning modes

In the course of the second project, the learning mode of unlearning was added to the learning modes. It focusses on everyday routines that can no longer be uphold due to certain circumstances such as a disease.

| Learning modes | | |
|----------------|--------------|--|
| 1. | New learning | |
| 2. | Relearning | |
| 3. | Non-Learning | active non-learning / not-wanting-to-learn |
| | | passive non-learning / not-being-able-to-learn |
| 4. | Unlearning | |

Learning strategies

For the learning processes occurring in the context of a life-threatening disease, biographical learning strategies are relevant that can also be observed outside of a disease. Biographical learning strategies are described as action pattern developed in the course of the biography which are biographically relevant. As a result of the study (Seltrecht 2006), four forms of biographical learning strategies occurring both in the course of the disease and beyond within life could be shown:

| Learning strategies | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. | Biographical learning strategy of adaptation |
| 2. | Biographical learning strategy of comparison |
| 3. | Biographical learning strategy of seeking something |
| 4. | Biographical learning strategy of biographical reflection |

Developing a differential pattern of lifelong learning

| | | |
|----|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Structural learning dimensions | Appropriation of knowledge Modifikation of self-established theories Change of attitudes Change of identity |
| | Process learning dimensions | Managed learning Targeted learning Troubled learning Creative learning |
| 2. | Learning contexts | Pedagogically intended learning Non-pedagogically intended learning |
| 3. | Learning modes | New learning Relearning Non-learning Unlearning |
| 4. | Learning strategies | Biographical strategy of adaptation Biographical strategy of comparison Biographical strategy of searching for something new Biographical strategy of reflection |

Developing a differential pattern of lifelong learning

| | | |
|----|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Structural learning dimensions | Appropriation of knowledge Modifikation of self-established theories Change of attitudes Change of identity |
| | Process learning dimensions | Managed learning Targeted learning Troubled learning Creative learning |
| 2. | Learning contexts | Pedagogically intended learning Non-pedagogically intended learning |
| 3. | Learning modes | New learning Relearning Non-learning Unlearning |
| 4. | Learning strategies | Biographical strategy of adaptation Biographical strategy of comparison Biographical strategy of searching for something new Biographical strategy of reflection |

What are the consequences of these learning processes..

... for the practice?

- *Can we transfer these differential pattern in the field of adult education?*

No? => Why not?

Yes? => What are the implications for the practice?

References – in chronological order

- Nittel, D./Seltrecht, A. (2013): Krankheit: Lernen im Ausnahmezustand? Brustkrebs und Herzinfarkt aus interdisziplinärer Perspektive. Springer Verlag, Heidelberg
- Nittel, D. (2012): Die Konstruktion des Patienten als Lernprozess. Erziehungswissenschaftliche Notizen zu einem medizinischen Begriff. In: Hessische Blätter für Volksbildung. Heft 1/2012, S. 38-52
- Seltrecht, A. (2012): Lehrmeister Krankheit: Was lehrt uns der Ausnahmefall für den Normalfall des Lernens? In: Hessische Blätter für Volksbildung. Heft 1/2012, S. 25-37
- Nittel, D./Seltrecht, A. (2011): Krankheit und Lernen. In: Education permanente. 4/2011, S. 38-39
- Seltrecht, A. (2011): "Sie sind nicht hier zum Sterben." Wie Ärzte auf Ängste von Krebspatientinnen reagieren. In: Dr. med. Mabuse - Zeitschrift für alle Gesundheitsberufe. 4/2011, S. 34-36
- Nittel, D. (2011): Die Aneignung von Krankheit: Bearbeitung lebensgeschichtlicher Krisen im Modus des Lernens. In: Der pädagogische Blick. Zeitschrift für Wissenschaft und Praxis in pädagogischen Berufen. Heft 2/2011, S. 80-90
- Herzberg, H./Seltrecht, A. (2011): Von der Gesundheitsbildung zur Gesundheitspädagogik. In: Der pädagogische Blick. Zeitschrift für Wissenschaft und Praxis in pädagogischen Berufen. Heft 2/2011, S. 68-79
- Nittel, D. (2010): Lernphänomene im Kontext lebensbedrohlicher Erkrankungen im Alter. Mechanismen der Erzeugung von biographischer Irrelevanz bei Brustkrebspatienten. In: Hof, Christiane/Ludwig, Joachim/Schäffer, Burkhard (Hrsg.): Erwachsenenbildung im demographischen und sozialen Wandel. Dokumentation der Jahrestagung der Sektion Erwachsenenbildung der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Erziehungswissenschaft vom 24. bis 26. September 2009. Hohengehren, S. 94-104
- Seltrecht, A. (2010): Lernprozesse im Spannungsverhältnis von kalendarischem, biologischem, sozialem und subjektivem Alter. In: Hof, Christiane/Ludwig, Joachim/Schäffer, Burkhard (Hrsg.): Erwachsenenbildung im demographischen und sozialen Wandel. Dokumentation der Jahrestagung der Sektion Erwachsenenbildung der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Erziehungswissenschaft vom 24. bis 26. September 2009. Hohengehren, S. 82-93
- Seltrecht, A. (2010): Informelles Lernen im Kontext lebensbedrohlicher Erkrankungen. In: Hessische Blätter für Volksbildung. Zeitschrift für Erwachsenenbildung in Deutschland. Heft 2/2010, S. 189-190
- Seltrecht, A. (2009): Handeln Ärzte pädagogisch? In: BIOS - Zeitschrift für Biographieforschung, Oral History und Lebensverlaufsanalysen. Heft 1/2009, S. 57-74
- Seltrecht, A. (2009): Changing lanes: On the contribution of research about non-learning in biographical contexts to an understanding of lifelong learning processes. International conference "learning revisited: what next?", http://www.ioe.stir.ac.uk/events/documents/Paper_067_AstridSeltrecht.pdf
- Seltrecht, A. (2008): Nichtlernen im biographischen Kontext. Eine bislang verkannte erziehungswissenschaftliche Kategorie. In: von Felden, Heide (Hrsg.) (2008): Perspektiven erziehungswissenschaftlicher Biographieforschung. Wiesbaden: VS-Verlag, S. 193-209
- Seltrecht, A. (2006): Lehrmeister Krankheit? Eine biographieanalytische Studie über Lernprozesse von Frauen mit Brustkrebs. Opladen und Farmington Hills: Barbara Budrich Verlag

Dr. Astrid Seltrecht
University of Frankfurt / Germany

seltrecht@em.uni-frankfurt.de