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## Engagement in Active Learning with Brazilian Adult Educators

John Henschke

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**From the Selected Works of John A. Henschke EdD**

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2009

# Engagement in Active Learning with Brazilian Adult Educators

John A. Henschke, EdD



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Gabriele Strohschen  
*Editor*

# Handbook of Blended Shore Education

Adult Program Development  
and Delivery

 Springer

*Editor*

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*This book is dedicated to  
the children of the Orphanage Ban Thanhathai Pawai in Ratchaburi, Thailand, who  
prevailed in the face of hardships and horrors and still hope  
and to  
Alma Luise Minna, my granddaughter, with her wide-eyed wonder and trust.  
The children encourage us to help create the future they will inherit from us,  
their elders.*



*Gabriele I.E. Strohschen with children at orphanage*

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All profits due the contributing authors of this book will be donated to the orphanage. To make contributions to the orphanage, please contact the editor for details.

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Study and Development Institute. He also led the Vocational Information and Consultation Institute at East Java Province, Indonesia and holds the position of Chief of the Association of Industrial & Organizational Psychology for East Java.

**Dave Harré** is a New Zealand film-maker, activist, and heritage conservator who designed and implemented the Moeawatea process. He was elected to the Waitakere City Council and served as Chairman of the Auckland committee of the New Zealand Historic Places Trust. He received a Queen's Service Medal for his devotion to youth, Aotearoa identity-formation and heritage conservation. Among recent projects – conducted along lines similar to those at Moeawatea – are the restoration of trams for Wanganui and Waitakere City. He has conserved and saved a museum, water-wheels, a bridge, a prayer house, kilns, and railway structures.



**John A. Henschke, Ed.D.**, is Associate Professor and Leader of the Award Winning Adult Education M.Ed., Ed.D., and Ph.D. Programs at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. He has been President of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE); and Missouri, USA/Para, Brazil Partners of the Americas. He has chaired the Commission on International Adult Education (CIAE) of AAACE. He is a Member of the International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame (IACEHOF). John has been testing his adult education (andragogical) ideas around the world since 1970.



**Dr. Holtz** is Assistant Professor in DePaul University's college for adult learners. Her research interests are the act of research and characteristics of researchers, and how advances in brain research affect teaching and learning in the sciences. She teaches almost exclusively online and has authored multiple distance course guides in the sciences. Dr. Holtz has published in clinical sciences, clinical education, and in distance learning and assessment in the sciences. Her Ph.D. is in Adult and Continuing Education, emphasis research education; her Masters is in Gerontology, with clinical emphasis, and her Bachelors is in Biology, emphasis human biology.



## **Chapter 9**

# **Engagement in Active Learning with Brazilian Adult Educators**

**John A. Henschke**

### **Brief Background**

Partners of the Americas was inspired by President John F. Kennedy, who in 1963 launched the Alliance for Progress, a program of government-to-government economic cooperation across the Western Hemisphere. At the same time, Kennedy also called for a parallel people-to-people initiative, one that would allow private citizens to work together for the good of the Americas. Today, it is a private, nonprofit, and nonpartisan organization, enjoying the support of many individuals, international corporations, and foundations. Every US president since Kennedy has endorsed the Partners' program, as have government leaders throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. There are 60 'partnerships' that have been permanently established between 45 states and the District of Columbia in the USA, and 31 Latin American and Caribbean countries. The relationship between Missouri and Para is now in its 43rd year. The main program areas include: Citizen participation, education and training, economic development, family life, and culture. People volunteer their participation from all walks of life, including: doctors, nurses, social workers, religious leaders, farmers, foresters, artists, city administrators, university professors, engineers, students in high school and higher education, and leaders of numerous community organizations.

### **Content of the Program**

The programs that I designed and conducted with the folks in Brazil were focused on the methods and techniques of teaching adults. More specifically, the content relates to the principles of adult education (andragogy – the art and science of helping adults learn). At this point, a capsule form of this content could be depicted in two ways which complement each other. The first one is oriented toward five building

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blocks of teaching teachers of adults how to teach adults. These include: Beliefs and notions about adult learners; perceptions concerning qualities of effective teachers; phases and sequences of the learning process; teaching tips and learning techniques; and, implementing the prepared plan (Henschke, 1987). The second one is about six assumptions and eight process elements. The assumptions are: Adults need to know why they should learn something; adults have a deep need to be self-directing; adults have a greater volume and a different quality of learning experience than youth; adults' readiness to learn is tied closely with their needing to know or do something new in their life situation; adults enter into a learning experience with a task-centered orientation to learning; and, adults are motivated more by internal than external motivation. The process elements adults need are: Preparation for the learning; a climate conducive to learning; a structure for mutual planning; engagement actively in their determining their learning needs; translating their learning needs into objectives; designing a pattern of learning experiences; conducting the learning experiences; and, evaluating the extent to which their objectives have been met (Knowles, 1996; Henschke, et al., 2003).

### **Type of Program, Size, Duration, and Organizations**

The program I led spread over six trips to Brazil I made in a period of 13 years, conducting 19 different courses (all focused on the art and science of helping adults learn), with a total of 428 participants from five Brazilian states, and 33 educational, corporate, and service agencies. Total instruction time for all the programs came to 351 hours. The agencies included: The Federal University of Para (UFPA) – Belem and Santarem Campuses; Lutheran University of Santarem; Brazilian Movement for Alphabetization (MOBRAL); Belem, Para, Public School Adult Education (BPPSAE); Belem Community Adult Basic Education Programs (BCABEP); Escola Bosque (School in the Jungle); Central Electric Corporation of Para (CELPA); Federation of Industries of Para (FIEPA); Service to Small Businesses and Industries of Para (SEBRAE); Secretary Municipal of Education and Culture (SEMEC); O Liberal (Newspaper, Radio, and Television Communications of Belem); Telecommunications of Para (TELEPARA); Cement Company of Brazil (CIBRASA); Colegio Paulino de Brito (CPDB); Secretary of Work (SOW); Companheiros Das Americas do Para (CDA); Federal University Hospital; Para Community Educators; Procter and Gamble-Belem; State University of Para (SUPA); Partnerships between nine Northeastern Brazilian States and their USA Partner States; Estacom Corporation; Institute of Educators in Belem (ISEBE); and, University of Amazonia-Belem.

### **Rationale/Purpose of Providing an International Program**

The Para Partners included the Vice-President for Extension at the Federal University of Para (UFPA). He was very much aware that UFPA had no program on methods and techniques for teaching adults. Nonetheless, he knew and understood

the Field of Adult Education with a literature base that emphasizes how adults need to be taught differently from children (Knowles, 1980, 1996; Henschke, et al., 2003). Some of the sources of his information regarding this difference came from his knowledge that the University of Missouri had some resources related to this and a graduate academic program in Adult Education. He was also very knowledgeable about one of the main Partner Program Areas, that includes bringing together institutions of higher education – north and south – to share and exchange knowledge. The Vice-President used the opportunity of a visit to St. Louis, to explore the possibility of garnering some of the help from the adult education resources at the University of Missouri to assist them in their learning needs. This also set in motion the exchange of adult learning resources that would continue for many years to come.

### **Mission/Philosophy of the Organizations**

As can be seen, the organizations served by this program cover a broad spectrum: Industrial production, service, education, healthcare, business operations, news media, volunteerism, professional associations, telecommunications, and municipal government, to name a few. Although each one of these organizations has a unique mission and philosophy, they have a common element – their managers and employees live in a changing world, and thus learning is a continual component of their survival. The fact is that, today's rapidly changing and increasingly technologically-oriented society has created a need for teachers and trainers whose outlook reflects understanding and concern for the unique needs of the adult learner, provides appropriate instruction that meets the needs of diverse learners, and recognizes that learning is a lifelong enterprise and proposition.

### **Issues, Barriers, and Strengths and Corresponding Strategies Applied in Program Development**

In my initial contact with this program, I provided a list of adult education topics I would present in Brazil to the President of the Missouri Partners. My first thought was that in line with my philosophy of how adults learn, rather than lecturing to them, they would be much more inclined to participate in the mutual planning and carrying out of an educational program. The Partners President nevertheless, told me that I was the authority in adult education and they would want me to lecture (Henschke, 1995). I kept my doubts to myself about that, but dutifully provided the one page list of possible adult education lecture topics to the Missouri Partners President, who passed the list on to the Vice President of the Federal University of Para (UFPA). However, I made my preparations and readied materials that I would use. Of course, I knew that I would be working through translators to communicate in Brazilian Portuguese; however, in my preparations I had no contact with the interpreters UFPA would provide.

By the time I arrived in Belem, Para, Brazil for the first course I would teach, my hosts had amassed a participant pool of 40 participants from five Brazilian States, for our 45 clock hours of learning together. In my adult education style, I set the 41 chairs in a circle around the room. I like to be able to face learners (and have them face each other) when I teach and not have them looking at the back of other learners' heads. In the beginning session of about an hour, I began by explaining that in adult education, I believe that active participation would net the most learning. It also consisted of each introducing him/herself, where they were from, and their interest in adult education and this course. At the completion of the introductions of the participants, we took a break.

I started the next session as I suggested that we would take the next step in our process. I said no more than five words when someone interjected something like the following. "Wait a minute, you asked us to introduce ourselves, but you didn't introduce yourself. Who are you? Where did you come from? Who sent for you? What do you intend to do with us?" In other words, this person was expressing the sentiments of the group and saying, "You say you believe in active participation; well, we believe in participation, and this is how." Or, "Are we in for another dose of whatever from a USA 'Gringo'?"

Immediately, a Para Partners representative started to explain how I was invited to come to Brazil, and that this was part of the exchange program between Para and Missouri. After that person explained, I apologized for my oversight, introduced myself and said something like the following. "I am here to see if we can create a beneficial learning experience together. I cannot do anything without your cooperation. I would like to ask your participation and sharing to see if we can mutually benefit from interacting with each other in a constructive way. I am here to learn from you, and to share some things that I have learned in adult education." With that they opened up the doors of their hearts and invited me in. We began to investigate and demonstrate some interactive learning exchanges through a variety of learning and teaching techniques and methods that are in line with how adults learn. Needless to say, the sessions were lively and dynamic.

Perhaps the most beneficial and exciting technique we constructed and used is a simulation technique called the 'critical incident'. About 75% of the way through the course, as we were demonstrating the various techniques, I presented the situation in the simulation. You are involved in an adult education methods and techniques course conducted by an adult educator from a foreign country. He has just had an emergency situation arise at home and has had to return home. How will you organize yourselves to continue conducting the course now that the leader is gone? They began organizing themselves to carry on. In 15 minutes, another intervention comes: Word has just come that your bosses will come to the session they heard you were involved in, and would like to see you demonstrate what you have been learning. How will you organize the session to demonstrate to them what you have been learning? They began organizing themselves to prepare for their bosses arrival. In 15 minutes, another intervention comes: This time the message is that your bosses will be using what learning you share with them for this course, as a basis for your salary adjustments for this next year. How will you prepare for this aspect to put

yourselves in the best light for them to make their salary adjustment decisions? Needless to say, this was excellent as a capstone experience of learning for them, and the conclusion of the course indicated a great success from the participants' response to their active participation during the 45 hours of learning together.

### Challenges and Solutions in Program Delivery

The success of the first ventures on methods and techniques for teaching adults had a snowball effect on this program. The Para Partners were very satisfied with the result. They planned another opportunity for me to come and conduct a course again. This time when I arrived in Belem, they had to postpone the start of the course, since most of the participants would travel to the course on public transportation by bus, and the bus company was on strike. We used this time to visit a 'video school' that is conducted out in the jungle. When the bus strike finally ended, we gathered the 20 participants and started the course. As we began, I had only brought a book chapter with me that I had written on the topic of 'training teachers of adults'. These were the five building blocks that after 22 years in adult education and looking at the literature in the field, I determined were the major ingredients in preparing non-experienced teachers of adults: Beliefs and notions about adult learners; perceptions concerning qualities of effective teachers; phases and sequences of the learning process; teaching tips and learning techniques; and, implementing the prepared plan (Henschke, 1987). During the time together, we had the article translated into Portuguese, so the participants would have that article as a continuing resource after the course was finished. However, for the course structure, I decided to preface each one of these blocks with the following words in the form of a question:

1. As you are readying yourself for helping a group of adults learn, what would/do you focus on regarding your – beliefs and notions about adult learners?
2. As you are readying yourself for helping a group of adults learn, what would/do you focus on regarding your – perceptions concerning the qualities of effective teachers?
3. As you are readying yourself for helping a group of adults learn, what would/do you focus on regarding your – phases and sequences of the learning process?
4. As you are readying yourself for helping a group of adults learn, what would/do you focus on regarding your – teaching tips and learning techniques?
5. As you are readying yourself for helping a group of adults learn, what would/do you focus on regarding your – implementing the prepared plan?

I planned to have small groups of four persons, thus giving me five groups. I would have all of the groups discuss and generate their responses to each of these questions in turn. However, I gave them a choice. Did they want me to share my answer first to one question at a time, then have them discuss, generate and share their answer to each one of the questions in turn? Or, did they want to discuss, generate and then

share their responses to each question, and then I add what I would answer that is additional and different from what they answered? Interestingly they chose the latter one. They wished to have the opportunity first to discuss, generate and share their answers, with mine added. This made it obvious that my early perception that they did not want me to lecture to them was affirmed. They were very much in line with what we know about how adult learn – they were inclined to be self-directed.

As an illustration for what they generated and what I added on, we will focus on question # 2. As you are readying yourself for helping a group of adults learn, what would/do you focus on regarding your – perceptions concerning the qualities of effective teachers?

#### The Participants Responses:

- to identify the role/develop respect for the role;
- participative communication;
- define needs and experience of the group;
- connect theory to practice;
- content knowledge;
- motivate;
- dynamic/active [participative];
- friendly;
- provoke participation;
- perceive expectations of learner;
- use of multiple methods and techniques;
- accept critique during evaluation;
- skills in awakening interest in the learner;
- develop a flexible plan;
- share rich life experience;
- good listener;
- place value on learner's experience;
- always look for new/better ways;
- have adequate/applicable use of evaluation/feedback;
- enthusiasm – be creative;
- interest in learner/content; and,
- understanding that learners also teach (Titus, 1996).

#### My Responses:

- interest in the students and the subject being studied;
- able to communicate well;
- good knowledge of the subject;
- prepared to teach the lesson;
- enthusiastic;
- a desire to instruct;
- a sense of humor;
- being flexible;
- tact;

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- patience;
- using a variety of teaching techniques;
- sensitivity; and,
- courtesy (Henschke, 1987).

### **Evaluation at Learners' Level and Program Level**

As time moved along, the satisfaction increased on the value derived for the course offerings on 'methods and techniques for teaching adults/helping them learn'. Thus I kept receiving invitations to come back to Brazil and teach more times. I was engaged as a major evaluation designer, according to adult education principles, for the Partners Regional gathering in Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil. This was a gathering of nine states from Northeastern Brazil that were partnered with nine States in the USA. The four days spent planning and implementing leadership development of those partnerships focused on: Folks from 18 states/nine partnerships, getting acquainted with one another; sharing what was transpiring in each partnership; developing plans for the directions each partnership would take in the future; preparation for leaders from the USA States to spend time in their Partner state; and, reflecting on the value of a major gathering of this kind with implications for the future. The experience was enthusiastically embraced and recommendations were made that this same kind of meeting needed to be offered in the future, not only a repeat of these nine partnerships, but in other regions of the Partners of the Americas.

When we went to the Missouri Partners State of Para, we had an opportunity to plan for the future of the partnership with partner members. In addition, I had the opportunity to conduct a short seminar at the Federal University of Para. One of the most exciting things that happened at that seminar, was a participant from an earlier course a couple of years previously attended part of the session. At the break time, he came to me and said something like this, "I am a Professor at the Para State University, and I attended your course three years ago when you were here. I want to thank you for all I learned during that course. I am using all of the methods and techniques I learned then, in my courses at the State University. They have been immensely beneficial and my classes are so much better, with my students being more enthusiastic about learning than ever before." I certainly must say that comments like that make the effort all worthwhile.

### **Sponsorship of the Belem Municipal Secretary of Education**

Next, I was invited to conduct the course (methods and techniques for teaching adults) at the Institute of Educators in Belem (ISEBE) that services 53,000 teachers in the Belem metropolitan area of 1,500,000 inhabitants. This 40-hour course was attended by 28 participants. These were mostly teachers in the public school system of Belem, a different group of educators than I had worked with previously. This time, I had the opportunity to take an Adult Education Master's Intern and a Doctoral Intern with me to help in facilitating the learning of those adults.

In addition, we had the opportunity to visit a number of corporations, organizations, and educational institutions to talk with them about what they were doing in adult education and human resource development. This was mainly in preparation for conducting a series of courses the next year. I was already being invited again to expand the educational offerings. This was an evaluation commentary on our work. Satisfaction and results were increasing and expanding to other entities that have a lifelong learning component involved in their work, although they are not primarily an educational organization.

A special experience came on this trip when we drove out into the jungle and visited what was to be called 'Escola Bosque' (School in the Jungle). It was being built within the Amazon jungle, with the walkways made to accommodate the heavy rains of the area, without it becoming muddy. The building was being constructed in the midst of the trees and growth, without removing them. Some of the classrooms were placed outside to take advantage of that setting educationally when it was not raining. Housing was also being provided in such a way as to protect participants from the elements, especially the heavy rains (they receive about 90 inches of rain per year there).

We were offered the possibility of conducting our courses in that location the next year when we would come to Belem. However, time would not be on our side, since the school building was not finished by the next year. Some problems emerged that slowed construction.

### Education as a Two-Way Street

The following Summer, Ms. Isabel Silva, an English Professor at the Federal University came to the University of Missouri-St. Louis to enroll in an adult education course I was conducting on the topic: Comparative International Adult Education. She came so that she could learn directly about how to teach adults. She indicated that they do not know how to teach adults, but have taught adults like they teach children – in a transmittal approach rather than in an inquiry approach. Even though they try to do transmittal less – like sitting in circles – she says it is not enough. They still ignore students' experience, and are very much preoccupied in transmitting the information. She learned a number of new active participation and interactive techniques on how to teach adults and found it to be an enlightening experience. She took those new techniques home to implement in her classroom. In addition, she will be helping in the instruction and translation of the courses the next time I would be going to Brazil (Marty, 1995).

### Benefits for and Shortcomings of Faculty and Staff During All Phases

The fifth time I went to Belem to teach was a combination of excitement, collaboration, cooperation, stretching, engagement, fund raising, and some conflict. It also entailed some relaxation and recreation, as did all of the other trips. I was especially invited by Tancredi Carvalho (1995) the Director of the School of Education,

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Federal University of Para (UFPA), to teach a series of four courses at UFPA. These courses were entitled: Methods and Techniques for Teaching Adults in Human Resource Development Programs; Curriculum Theory and Development in Human Resource Development Programs; Program Development Marketing in Human Resource Development Programs; and, Distance Education and Learning in Human Resource Development Programs. The courses were conducted over a period of 84 hours of instruction, in conjunction with the numerous institutions listed in the beginning part of this chapter.

I recruited three others, with whom I had previously worked on other projects, from the University of Missouri-St. Louis to go with me to teach these courses: Professor of Reading and Adult Education, Dr. Gwen Turner; Adult Education Doctoral Intern, Mr. Tom Titus, Engineer from the Boeing Corporation; and, Adult Education Master's Intern, Mr. Murray Young, Private Consultant from Howlette and Associates. Although the national office of Partners of the Americas paid for two of the round trip plane tickets for our faculty, there was a major fund raising effort that was carried forward by Ms. Marcia Leite from Para. This effort garnered funds for the other two round trip plane tickets, housing, per diem, local travel, and course materials. Marcia, as a member of the Para Partners and a faculty member of the UFPA, was the major force who obtained funds from the corporations, universities, municipal education office, social institutions, and agencies. She also was one of the translators for the courses, along with Ms. Isabel Silva, and Mr. Robert Finnegan, whom the UFPA used on numerous occasions as a translator for academic projects.

The four faculty and three translators (from English to Portuguese and from Portuguese to English) worked very well and cooperatively during all this time. I can say that the work went very smoothly during the courses. A major benefit present was that I had worked in this kind of situation numerous times (conducting courses through translators) and so was able to manage the process quite well. We had a total of 54 people enrolled in the four courses, with most of them taking all four courses. One drawback in all of it was that, each one of the teachers and the translators did not always understand the differences in culture and differences in some of the meaning of academic words. Consequently, extra time was used to clarify what was being conveyed in both directions of the translation. Continuously seeking to improve our process of working together during the conduct of the courses was mandatory. We checked with each other to see how things were going and what we needed to do in order to continue to be effective.

One of the evaluative comments (in English, no less) about the courses came from Fabiola who works in the FIEPA (Federation of Industries in Para).

Mr. Henschke: I'd like to thank you for these extremely enlightening meetings. I'm certain the results of this course will be very useful for me, both professionally and personally. I would like to thank you saying: please come back. With pleasure, FABIOLA.

Another comment came from an engineering professor in the College of Engineering at the Federal University of Para (UFPA). He had shared that he

was having difficulty with getting some of his students to understand engineering concepts. They just did not seem to get it, and he didn't feel that he was connecting with them. As we used the adult learning processes, we were trying to make a connection with the characteristics of the learners, and then would suggest (and demonstrate the use of) techniques that would constructively respond to each one of the characteristics. As examples, we used the following; for the characteristic of 'immediate concerns', techniques suggested were to use realistic problems, adult-oriented materials, and concrete situations. For the characteristic of 'low self-concept', techniques suggested were to respect learners for what they respect in themselves, involve them in planning and decision-making for the curricula, and tap their experiences. For the characteristic of 'alienation-loss of control', techniques suggested were to enhance attitudes about their ability to learn, orient learners to be active and seek community resources rather than focus on events, cite examples in which awakened human potential changes one's life drastically (Henschke, 1989). As we went through these suggestions, one at a time, finally this professor exclaimed,

Now I get it, I know what I have been doing wrong with my students. I know why I have not connected with them and they don't understand. I now know what I need to do that will help them understand the engineering concepts. I have only been focusing on the content, and I need to focus on them and engage with them so that they can process the concepts through their minds.

— Engineering Professor at UFPA —

In the Distance Learning Course, each group was assigned the responsibility to construct an event that would exemplify what they had been learning about the use of adult education methods and techniques for addressing the situation. One group used the short wave radio to reach their audiences located remotely in the Amazon jungle. The event they developed was a plane flying from one place to another and had crashed in the jungle. They used their short wave radios to make contact with help, and guided them to the location where the crash had occurred. No one was hurt but they were stranded. Through this means the helpers were able to get them out of the crash location and safely home. They emphasized that this situation was an actual happening in one of their programs and provided some of the details. What an enlightening experience this was when someone from another group spoke up and said, "My father was on that plane, and they actually rescued them in the way that you described." The 'oohs' and 'aahs' were definitely heard in the room at that time.

### **Role of Administration in the Para Partners and Missouri Partners Role**

There was some difficulty that emerged surrounding the presentation of the four courses that were presented and the funds that were garnered from various Para sources. Marcia Leite, who single-handedly went to the corporations and

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organizations to ask them to contribute, used the FADESP (Foundation for the Development of Educational Special Projects) at the Federal University of Para (UFPA) as the fiscal agent to deposit the money and pay bills for the project. This worked very well and helped the project run smoothly. However, the then President of Para Partners, felt that the money should have been deposited in the Partners Bank Account and that all expenditures should have been approved by her. She had no commitment to the Adult Educational Project in which we were involved, and had been known previously to divert Partner Funds toward personal projects of her liking.

A full accounting of the income and expenditures was provided by Marcia Leite to Partners of the Americas (POA) in Washington, DC. Nevertheless, Para Partners President wrote a letter to the Missouri President and POA in Washington, expressing her displeasure with how the funds had been handled, and she was asking the Missouri Partners to ban any further interaction with Marcia in the future. On the face and very practically, it seemed to me that it was a situation of 'jealousy' and 'desire for control' on the part of the Para President. Others may look at it differently. Nonetheless, before the Missouri Partners Meeting, the President indicated that he was prepared to present this letter from the Para President and ask for a vote of condemnation of the action that was taken by Marcia Leite. It finally came down to my saying to the Missouri Officers that if they insisted on doing that, I would ask for equal time to present the other side of the story. It turns out that they had not investigated both sides of the story, but only were going to take action based on the letter of displeasure they received from the Para President. To my knowledge, the issue was never discussed in the Missouri Partners Meeting, and no further action was taken, unless it was taken when I was absent from the meeting sometime later.

### **Opportunity for Conducting Adult Education and HRD in One Corporation**

The sixth time I went to Para to conduct my now standard (with adaptations each time) methods and techniques for teaching adults, brought with it some special opportunities. All of the previous work I had conducted in Para under the auspices of the Partners of the Americas, had been held closely within the Belem (The Capital City of Para - 1,500,000 population - at the mouth of the Amazon River) and suburbs in the immediate close proximity. This time once again I conducted the course with 35 Faculty Members of UFPA, the University of Amazonia, the State University of Para, Public Schools in Belem, and from other institutions nearby. The usual excitement and interest was generated as the course progressed.

There were two special opportunities. One opportunity was with Albras/Alunorte, the third largest aluminum industrial corporation in the world. This was one hour by boat and one hour by auto away from Belem. When they built the plant, they also established a city nearby to accommodate 45,000 in population. The city,

with houses and the infrastructure, needed to be developed because this plant was constructed in the middle of the Amazon Jungle. The second opportunity was 500 miles up the Amazon River in Santarem, the second largest city (250,000 population) in Para. This was for Faculty of the Santarem Campus of UFPA, Faculty of the Lutheran University located there, and other interested adult educators from various institutions around the city. The only way to reach Santarem from Belem is a one-hour plane ride, or a 1200-mile auto drive through the jungle.

The Albras/Alunorte Corporation program was to be conducted as part of a series of 15 courses in a professional development project that Jose Trabulo (an Engineering Professor at UFPA, and Past-President of Para Partners) had negotiated with the Corporation. This course was being conducted for 26 engineers who were also managers, and had the responsibility of keeping their workers up-to-date with learning the new developments in their field. This time I didn't work through a translator. These people were fairly fluent in English, so we conducted the course in English. Thus, the course was labeled: The Engineering Manager as Educator (Ingalls, 1976). It cast their thinking in a whole different light, seeing themselves as facilitators of learning (Boone, 1991; Henschke, et al., 2003; Henschke, 2007; Knowles, 1980, 1996; and Titmus, 1989).

The course went well with my combining the five building blocks of training teachers of adults, and focus of getting them to assess themselves on the dimensions of manager as educator, along with their needs for change regarding the dimensions. There responsibility was to design an adult education program for their workers becoming updated in their field(s), based on the things they learned in the course. All went well at the beginning session, when Jose Trabulo was present. However, he had to be absent for the second session.

During the second session, I had started to get them to assess themselves on the dimensions of 'manager as educator'. One engineering manager spoke up and we had quite an exchange between him and me.

(Walt)

- John, what is the objective of this exercise? (Then he repeated about four or five times, the following.) We are not teachers. We are not professional teachers. (Then he continued.)

Why is this part of a program for engineers?

Are you an engineer? Our first course in this series of 15 (this is # 4) was not taught by an engineer.

Trabulo is an engineer - he taught one of the courses.

Do you teach a group of engineers like this in the USA?

Is this part of a series you do for engineers in the USA?

(John)

- You are managers and some of their role is as educators.

(Walt)

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(Walt)

- These are academic things.

(John)

- Trabulo only negotiated this kind of program in Brazil, not the USA.

(Walt)

- Why is this part of engineers program?

(John)

- We (you) would have to take that up with Trabulo and the people in the corporation who made – entered into – this agreement. My responsibility is to do this on these topics. This is what Trabulo asked me to do.

(Walt)

- What are we doing? What is the objective this week?

(John)

- Five building blocks and application to your situation, along with assessing yourselves on the dimensions of a 'manager as educator'.

(Walt)

- This is the first time you have taught a group of engineers? Does this connect with what went before and what comes after?

(John)

- I am perfectly willing for you to discuss this with Trabulo and your bosses in the corporation. I have this responsibility to fulfill, and Trabulo paid my way down here from the USA, and to house and feed me while I am here to do what he asked. That is what I need to accomplish. We will move on with the agenda at hand.

With that we moved forward with the course as was designed. Walt's non-verbal response to this appeared to indicate a reluctance to talk with Trabulo or the bosses in the Albras/Alunorte Corporation. To my knowledge, he never pursued this further. Trabulo came to the next session and addressed the matter very shortly. We addressed the agenda very smoothly from then on. Anytime Walt got a bit hesitant with what we were doing, the other 25 engineering managers in the program would chide him and say, "Come on now, Walt, get with it. We have this to do, and we are going to do it." They would also take some pains to explain to him if he didn't understand things immediately. The discussions went well during the remainder of the week, and each of the resulting products from the five groups was excellent.

The course was well received in Santarem, and all the participants were excited about the learning they were gaining. There were 20 participants and the instruction lasted 24 hours. The evaluations were such that they all indicated the benefit they derived for their jobs, and expressed hope that I would come back sometime in the future.

### Insights About Teaching Cross-Culturally

One of the major things about cross-cultural teaching is to remember that language is not the only factor to be translated in the communication and learning. There is the culture that is to be also translated. Joachim Gomez, for a number of years was the Executive Director of the Para Partners. He was my translator a couple of times in the courses I taught. He ran his own international shipping business. He also served as ambassador to Finland for a number of years. He has the capability to simultaneously translate when one was speaking. It was almost like a machine – I could speak in the English language, and it would come out his mouth at the same time in the Portuguese language. By the same token, someone else could speak in Portuguese, and it would come out his mouth at the same time in the English language.

I noticed that after the person was done speaking, he would go on for a bit with more words. When asked about this, he said that he was translating the culture and explaining the culture in the other language. Many times, he said that it was difficult because some of the idioms or ideas in one culture had no likeness in the other culture, so it was necessary to go on with an elaborate explanation.

### Lessons on Building Inter-Cultural Partnerships

Perhaps this situation is quite unique, in that this inter-cultural partnership between Para, Brazil and Missouri, USA has been in the building process for now more than 40 years. We have at least six or eight exchanges per year, going both north to south, and south to north. Most of us who have been active in this Partnership (I have now been active for 23 years, and I carried on the methods and techniques for teaching adults program for 13 years) entertain Para guests in our homes and work with them on their programs at least two to four times per year. It is like having a member of the family come and visit. We open our homes to them and make them feel at home. Although sometimes the visitor does not speak English very well or not at all, we are still able to communicate quite well. We have learned to interact quite well with non-verbal communication. Thus, the greatest lesson in all this is that there is no better way to build inter-cultural partnerships, than to be present and work with members of the partnership. When a new visitor comes, it is like picking up the relationship where the previous one left off when they went home.

We had some very enjoyable recreational things that we did while we were in Brazil. Dinners in a variety of exotic restaurants were always a very delightful experience, especially when local folks joined us. Shopping was a special treat, thus

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acquiring some uniquely Brazilian artifacts. I had the opportunity to be a judge at the Carnival Beauty Contest in Belem two different years. The others from USA that were with me were also selected for that opportunity. That was quite an event. These girls were rated according to their beauty, the creativeness of their costume which they each designed for themselves, and their dancing talent. After one Carnival Beauty Contest, we left immediately for a four-hour boat ride on the Amazon River to Marajo Island, and spent the weekend on some of the most beautiful sand beaches in the world. The relaxation was great, the food was exceptional, the swimming was excellent, the fellowship with our hosts was 'top-notch', and the accommodations were superb. All in all, Belem, Santarem, Mosquero, Bacarena, Sourte, and Salvatere, in the State of Para, Brazil, are what makes this an enchanting, tropical paradise.

### Overall Lessons Learned

It is great to have folks to work with that get along and have a heart for the Partners of the Americas Program. This makes it so that there is no fighting about who gets the credit for what. We are all there to get the work accomplished.

When there are those who want to take issue with what is going on or how things are done, I like to give some thought about and distinguish what I have control of and what is in the control of others. Keep yourself focused on what you are seeking to accomplish and your responsibility. If someone seeks to fault you for something out of your control, just keep your cool and remember how and why you got to where you are and where you intend to go with what you are doing. Don't allow yourself to become sidetracked by someone else's agenda. Don't let the 'crazies' get you down, because they will be there in most every situation.

Learning is the central focus of what we are about in adult education. That is a human process. I have found that learners learn much the same way in all parts of the world. The only thing I have found as a small variation to this is that we relate our learning to our own situation and setting. Do some adapting and things will 'sail along'.

It is the relationship that teaches (Titus, 1996). So when I go into a situation, one I have been in previously or have not been in at all, I seek to establish a relationship with those there for our mutual benefit. In all the courses I have taught in Brazil, those relationships flourish as we spend time together seeking to understand the perspectives of each other. It is not all about 'me', but it is all about understanding others' point of view so that we may establish a personal working relationship in order that all of us may get to where we are seeking to go.

Be clear about what you are seeking to accomplish, devise the best way you know how to get there that is in line with your ideas about how adults learn, grow, and develop, and then seek to follow that path to produce huge benefits for all involved.

Always look to your host to guide you and support you in what you are seeking to accomplish. They know the local situation and can be of the utmost help to you. Be very sensitive, responsive, and give due honor to the local people and to the local culture.

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