Małgorzata Malec-Rawiński*, Bogna Bartosz**

## AN EDUCATIONAL MODEL FOR WORK WITH SENIORS – EXPERIENCES OF TEACHERS WORKING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

### U3A as the most popular place to study for seniors in Poland

Becoming and being an elderly person[1] does not put an end to the learning process. Seniors in Poland are educationally active mainly at the Universities of the Third Age (U3A). Since 2011 the National Federation of Associations of the Universities of the Third Age has been functioning in Poland. The main purpose of the Federation is to bring together statutory organisations which function in the field of education and activation of elderly people and which provide organisational, legal, logistical and financial support for them (http://www.federacjautw.pl). According to data from the Statistical Office from 2015, in Poland there are 575 Universities of the Third Age (Adamska et al. 2016). Primarily two types of U3A function in Poland; the first type stems from the so-called French-intensive model, where classes are run mainly by people from the academic environment. The second type of U3A is derived from the so-called English-extensive model where classes are conducted by representatives of local intellectual and social elites (Szarota 2009).

The idea of U3A is a valuable proposition for activating seniors, a meeting place, a place for the exchange of experiences and non-formal as well as informal education, which is confirmed by a growing number of U3As each year (Malec-Rawiński 2013). On the one hand, it shows elderly people's need to learn, on the other hand, the people who work at U3A and those who are responsible for the concept and organisation of classes face new educational, andragogical, gerontological, and psychological challenges. As the analysis from projects carried out on the Universities of the Third Age shows, only two of them have had a nationwide range so far, i.e. 'Zoom at U3A' (www. Zoomnautw.pl)

---

* **Małgorzata Malec-Rawiński**, PhD – University of Wrocław, Institute of Pedagogy, Poland; e-mail: malgorzata.malec-rawinski@uwr.edu.pl.

** **Bogna Bartosz**, PhD – University of Wrocław, Institute of Psychology, Poland; e-mail: bogna.bartosz@uwr.edu.pl.

[1] In our article, when we use the concept of an elderly person, old person or senior, we focus on people who in our culture have entered a period of old age and, following the WHO, we accept that early old age begins at 60 and continues up to 74, medium old age covers the years 75-89, late old age or longevity starts at 90 and continues until death (http://www.starszaosoba.pl/2013/11/starosc-wedug-who.html).

and 'Report on the activities of the Universities of the Third Age (U3A-1)' (www.stat. gov). However, despite the wide range of the research conducted within the framework of the above-mentioned projects (cf. http://zoomnautw.pl/raport-z-badania/ and www. stat.gov.pl), the educational dimension of the Universities of the Third Age is still poorly recognised at the level of empirical and theoretical explications. Therefore, long-term observations of the activities carried out within the framework of U3A and the results of completed projects prompted us to undertake research that would enable the identification of educational experiences of teachers who worked there and preparation of an initial proposal for an educational model of work with seniors. In the next stage of our research, this model will be verified in a larger group of subjects.

As a result, the overriding objective of this research is the analysis of individual educational experiences of teachers (geragogy specialists) who work at U3A in Wroclaw and then indication of significant – in their opinion – aspects of educational work with seniors. Showing important aspects of educational activities may, on the one hand, contribute to optimisation of educational process at the Universities of the Third Age[2] and, on the other, it can provide information on how to improve the educational process, as proposed by Adam A. Zych (2012), so that seniors may obtain not only honorary diplomas of U3A but also actual qualifications and certifications in order to extend higher level education by the 'leaving generation'.

## Teacher of seniors

As the number of U3A students increases every year, newer and newer activities keep appearing. A greater number of new lectures, seminars, and workshops is connected with running different forms of classes by new teachers. According to Ewa Skibińska (2008), the effectiveness of the process of studying, educating or rather learning for seniors at U3A depends to a large extent on the significant 'link', which is the teacher who conducts classes.

From the perspective of the gerontologist, the work with seniors requires from a teacher good knowledge in the fields of education and didactics of elderly adults, whereas from the point of view of psychology it requires a knowledge of issues of developmental changes occurring in old age. Many studies on the specificity of developmental processes occurring in old age and, above all, the information they contain, can become not only useful but actually indispensible in developing a didactic methodology and cooperation during classes with elderly people (cf. Bee 2004; Brzezińska, Appelt

---

[2]  Research assumptions and further research design became more important due to the fact that one of the authors Małgorzata Malec-Rawiński was appointed head of one of the greatest and oldest U3A in Lower Silesia.

2016; Olejnik 2006; Trempała 2014). This article will only signal the issues which are significant for the work with seniors.

Changes which occur in old age refer to the physical, social, cognitive, and psychological sphere. First of all, it should be taken into account that the perception of change signs occurring in the body may become a source of stress and cause a change of mood for the worse. Moreover, deterioration in visual acuity, hearing aid efficiency and reduction in the ability to hear in particular high-frequency sounds, should be taken into consideration by teachers. Most of the deficits can and should be corrected by successful usage of spectacles and hearing aids. It should be noted, however, that regressive changes may occur at different rates in the above mentioned areas as well as their progress in individuals who are even the same age. Individual differences in the range of changes can also be, as the research results show, connected with gender. At this stage of life women are focused on health to a larger extent than men. This is the reason why they are more interested in classes which are dedicated to the issues connected with prevention and health. However, what is important, deficits in the range of some elementary functions can be, and often are, compensated by extensive knowledge and autobiographical experience, which the teacher should refer to. Many different data indicate that in spite of the existing belief in the inevitability of the lowering of cognitive abilities along with age, general intellectual ability does not have to be weakened (Olejnik 2006). For example, the research by Schai (cit. in Olejnik 2006), in Olejnik 2006) shows that factors such as health condition, personality features and a preferred type of activity, which are characteristic of an individual, determine efficient intellectual functioning in late adulthood. Moreover, competences and attitude, which are connected with acquired autobiographical experience, constitute the elements of so-called life pragmatics. Baltes (cit. in Brzezińska, Apelt 2016) pointed out that the development of intelligence in the period of old age is not connected with formal structures of intelligence, but mainly with the development of competence which is the wisdom of elderly people or the ability to formulate relevant judgments in significant as well as difficult to define issues and solve problems of life. This may serve as a postulate and a guide for teachers who, when taking advantage of these resources, may refer to them and at the same time build and develop their own autobiographical competencies which stem from this. These as well as other factors discussed in literature, which are specific to late adulthood, should become the methodological basis for teachers of U3A who create concepts for their own classes.

Therefore, going forward, the basic competence of teachers of seniors is the knowledge of the learning conditions of elderly people or barriers to educational work with adult people (see Package 'Experienced worker' (http://www.silverteam.dobrekadry.pl/). Elderly people have great 'baggage' of experiences, including educational experience,

they have wisdom, knowledge, and at the same time they show different educational expectations. They make up a specific group that requires adequately trained teachers who through their attitudes, reflective behaviour and by asking constructive questions or inspiring the elderly to make reflections will enable them to experience the cognitive and emancipatory nature of the encounter. Education in this sense does not have an 'introduction' but 'emancipation' character (Jabłońska 2000) because educational activities with an 'introduction' character, perceived primarily in the form of instrumental rationality, are aimed at reproduction (Jabłońska, 2000). However, in education with an 'emancipation' character teachers undertake motivating, reinforcing activities, treating their pupils or students subjectively. "The teacher by entering the socio-cultural world, creates conditions for students to express themselves in different forms of activities, inspires and encourages them to present their own interpretations of the world" (Jabłońska 2000, p. 10). The coexistence of these two interpretations of education results in the fact that the approach to learning or teaching elderly people becomes problematic and requires in-depth analysis. We also agree with Barry Golding, John McDonald and Małgorzata Malec-Rawiński (2015) that the acquisition of skills and qualifications at the level of formal education is crucial from the neoliberal point of view. However, what is important in education of elderly people is increasing the value of informal and non-formal learning, which should be attended to when working with seniors. Furthermore, the different – in comparison to the specificity of younger people learning – optics of work with seniors requires a modification of the learning process, which makes the teacher of seniors assume new roles such as that of coach, mentor, advisor, consultant, animator, teacher who will be a partner and through their attitude, reflective action and constructive questions will contribute to the situation in which the meeting with them will be of a cognitive and emancipatory character (Malec 2008). It is important to know the specifics of work with seniors and in this sense to describe and clarify educational experiences of teachers at U3A.

## Methodological frame of the project, the purpose and the applied method

According to the assumptions of the project, experiences of teachers who work with seniors at the University of the Third Age of the University of Wroclaw are at the centre of our considerations. The analysis of the collected research material is aimed at establishing useful initial guidelines for practitioners, and in the next stage, developing an educational model of work with seniors as well as preparing a research project on a larger scale. It should be emphasised once again that the project is of a pilot, preliminary and exploratory character.

Starting from our first assumptions, the following general research questions were formulated:

– What sort of educational experiences do teachers of seniors have?
– What is the course of the process of teaching seniors and how do they learn?
– What barriers and problems do teachers of seniors experience?
– What educational challenges are connected with the work at U3A?

When making the preliminary analysis of educational experiences it was assumed that reference should be made to a wide spectrum of individuals and thus to a variety of beliefs, judgments, feelings, reflections, and opinions of the people who work at U3A, and then an attempt to interpret them should be made (Urbaniak-Zając, Piekarski 2001). Thus, the project discussed here is founded in qualitative research methodology and the applied research methods refer to the reflective self-awareness of teachers and the interpretation of the situations in which they participate (Bartosz, Żurko 2014).

The method which was applied in the research and which aimed at obtaining responses to the research questions was the interview. Ten interviews with teachers of U3A at the University of Wroclaw were carried out, which were recorded and then transcribed. In addition, one interview was conducted on-line and one interview from a magazine issued by U3A in Wroclaw was used – 'Courier of U3A'. Being aware of the limitations connected with the diversity of the data obtained, we would like to emphasise that the overriding purpose is the analysis of experiences through the prism of subjective, individual reflections of teachers and this condition is fulfilled by the indicated empirical materials (including the interview conducted on-line and the interview contained in the magazine). The pilot and preliminary character of the research which was carried out in the period from June to August in 2014 justifies this approach (Bartosz et al. 2010). It was also inevitable that we locate our own educational experiences in the whole research process[3]. This enabled us to make reflections on our own educational activities and enrich our methods of work with elderly people.

## Characteristics of subjects

The University of the Third Age at the University of Wroclaw was established in 1976 and is very popular among the inhabitants of Wroclaw. As statistics of U3A show, every year the number of students increases. In the academic year 2014, when the pilot research was carried out, 771 students, i.e. 660 women and 111 men, attended classes at the University of the Third Age of the University of Wroclaw. The largest

---

[3] The authors of the article have been running classes at U3A at the University of Wroclaw (workshops lectures, seminars), and at the same time they are scientific and didactic workers at the University of Wroclaw.

group (654) consisted of people aged between 60-80; there were 75 people below 60, 39 people between 81-90 and 3 people over 90. Most of the students were single (475), 460 people had higher education, 310 had secondary education and only one person had a vocational/primary education.

Classes, workshops, lectures, and seminars at U3A in 2013/2014 were conducted by 95 teachers of different ages, who represented various disciplines, carried out a variety of activities, and had different seniorities as well as practice. We emphasise again the preliminary and pilot character of the project, in which twelve teachers participated who conduct regular lectures, workshops, and seminars as well as foreign language classes at U3A.

Data for the analysis were obtained from teachers aged 23 to 85 whose experiences and work at U3A ranged from 1 year to 15 years. There is one man (27 years old) among the subjects. Five people were over 50, whereas seven people were below 35. The subjects of the research conduct various classes, namely foreign language courses and computer classes and they also conduct specialised classes and projects (they co-create a blog, a theatre which integrates generations, they conduct a choir, rehabilitation activities, support groups). Some teachers carry out more than one type of class. Bearing in mind the fact that the data obtained made it possible to outline the 'contours' of the problem only, nevertheless we emphasise the value of the data obtained as sufficient at this stage of the project in order to indicate the direction of further research aims.

## Areas selected in the analysis

The analysis of the collected empirical material indicated a few areas that are not only worth being taken into account, but they should be considered with reference to the work with seniors for formulating guidelines for practice (Silverman 2008). They constitute an integral part of the response to the research questions. The first of the selected areas in the analysis is: becoming and being a teacher of seniors. The research group of teachers who ran the classes requires a division into older and younger teachers with different ways of adopting this role and different work experience. Analyzing the statements made by young teachers of seniors, we can see more clearly the process of becoming a teacher of seniors. Young teachers in some sense have to 'tame' seniors, make seniors get accustomed to them, convince seniors of their knowledge and skills, build their identity on the basis of their experience and then define their role. They learn to be teachers and to recognise psychological and andragogical characteristics of late adulthood as well as the specifics of working with elderly people.

Senior teachers are definitely in a different situation, and to some extent they feel more 'at home'. Their role at U3A is often double but fluid in the sense that they are teachers *and* learners. Furthermore, they know and understand the specificity, needs

and problems of seniors from their own experience. This gives them a greater sense of confidence in communicating with their students. And here we can talk more about '*being*' a teacher than becoming a teacher. In this group (of older teachers) there are also teachers from outside who 'came for a while' but stayed for many years. Responding to the need reported by seniors for some continuation of their classes, teachers developed the original concept of them, and enriched them with new contents which were often co-created with the participants of classes. For young teachers, the beginning of becoming a teacher of seniors is often connected with work-practice at U3A during their studies at the Institute of Pedagogy or with their involvement in the realisation of projects. For them it is often a clash with 'another' world, with a different pace of work that must be learned, understood and accepted because all this determines the quality of classes. Becoming a teacher means learning to cooperate, to be patient (repeating the same contents and tasks several times), learning to keep distance in relation to the difficulties they are faced with, learning to treat seniors as fully-fledged pupils/students, learning to avoid, not to cause or solve conflicts, learning to develop their own and students' attitudes of respect and tolerance, learning to understand the different approaches of seniors conditioned by their age. It is learning to recognise the needs of students, to exchange and use their knowledge as well as getting to know through experience the specificity of working with them, the limitations that exist, learning to explore a spectrum of possibilities and to take advantage of existing knowledge in the field of psychology about people in the late adulthood period.

Another area which was selected in the analysis is as follows: the image of a senior as a student – emerging from the experience of teachers of seniors. The process of aging and old age involves numerous changes in the sphere of physical and psychic condition (Straś-Romanowska 2011). During this period, there appear diseases, illnesses, or disabilities which limit or hinder overall functioning. As results from the experience of the teachers of seniors studied, these changes are also visible in the students of U3A who do not attend classes due to health problems (illness or a stay in the sanatorium), do not perform tasks because of a lack of understanding or due to problems with proper hearing, or because they may tend to be excited because of medicines they take. It is therefore necessary to apply the principle of individualisation when working with seniors. This obliges people who work with seniors to be highly aware of the needs of students and to be sensitive not only to what happens during the classes but also to everything which is connected with their family and individual situation or their health condition. Seniors vary in terms of political and worldview attitudes and outlooks; they have their own opinions and do not change them. This often results in intense discussions which may cause different emotions. Analysing statements of teachers, we can conclude that a therapeutic aspect is also important when working with seniors – chatting, listening,

not judging, understanding, noticing and devoting time for everyday things and life experiences are of great significance. Young teachers for reasons of age as well as work experience, emphasise that teaching seniors is very important for them mainly for two reasons. Firstly, they learn about old age through their relationships with seniors – not from a book but by learning from seniors' experience (see Malec 2011). According to one of the teachers: *I have a greater knowledge of the possibilities of seniors and I'm learning too, e.g. savior-vivre 'rules of proper behaviour in the best style'* (N10, 33 years old)[4]. Secondly, young teachers acquire wisdom and experience through contacts with seniors – *cyclic meetings reinforce my self-development. I often wonder if by any chance it is not me who derives more from these meetings than their participants?* (N7, 23 years old). Some of them emphasise that they made friends with seniors (N11, 26 years old, N3, 28 years old). Senior students are people who are involved in the acquisition of knowledge, they are systematic, punctual and insightful.

The third area that was selected in the data analysis includes barriers, difficulties and challenges in the work of the teacher of seniors, which constitutes the foundation for constructing an educational model and guidelines for practice. The U3A teachers who participated in the research stressed that during the work with seniors a number of difficulties and barriers may appear and they were divided up in the following way:

– psychological barriers – connected with the specificity of the group, relationships with the group, lack of knowledge about characteristic aspects of aging;
– identity barriers – connected with the role of teachers of seniors and its reference to their personalities and characters (search for answers to the questions: *what kind of teacher should I be? how to work with seniors? how to get involved in the work?*);
– educational barriers – connected with previous negative educational experiences of seniors (negative attitude towards learning);
– health barriers – connected with diseases, disabilities of students (e.g. falling asleep during classes, hearing impairment);
– formal barriers – connected with the experiences of teachers, lack of adequate teaching aids, books;
– organisational barriers – connected with the duration of classes (a desire to start earlier or to make classes last longer).

Another issue which is clearly worth emphasising is connected with the lack of specific methodological solutions and teaching aids. The subjects-geragologists emphasised in their talk the lack of various types of aid, such as books, didactic materials adapted to the work with seniors, including audiovisual aids. Available materials often

---

[4]  In order to follow the conventionality principle of conducting research, all of the subject teachers were randomly assigned with numbers and their age. Thus designation N1, N2, is an abbreviation deriving from Teacher 1, Teacher 2, additionally the teacher's age was given.

strengthen stereotypes about elderly and aging people or they include only a technical side, for example, the font size. Preparing materials which would take into consideration both the needs of seniors and the experience of teachers who work with them, would certainly be very useful while working with seniors.

## Education of seniors from the perspective of U3A teachers – reflections, conclusions, guidelines for practice and the educational model of work with seniors

The work on the project, discussions, the interviews carried out and the direct contact with U3A teachers, as well as the analysis of the materials, provided us with many reflections. They enabled the formulation of preliminary diagnoses which require (we are fully aware) confirmation in studies on a larger scale. The reflections and guidelines, which are presented below, can serve as a starting point – and we hope so – for a discussion among practitioners, teachers, psychologists, adult educators and older adult educators, for whom the idea of lifelong learning and the specificity of work at U3A are of great importance. They do not have the status of the only or final findings, they rather indicate issues that should be taken into consideration by teachers of seniors, who are aware of their roles and the actions they take.

Seniors who attend U3A constitute a very diverse group in many respects and, according to Zofia Szarota (2009), classes at U3A have a peculiar methodology which is determined by the perception possibilities of students. This diversity requires the application of different techniques and methods of work and taking into account various paces of learning, abilities, interests, predispositions, personalities and expectations. It is important to develop such methods, which will take into consideration the needs and problems of senior learners at U3A in order to elaborate a catalogue of optimal methods a teacher at U3A can use. It is essential to depart from the effect-oriented approach and to stress the processes which occur during learning.

The health aspect turns out to be an extremely significant element in a senior's functioning in the role of the student. At the beginning of classes, it is worth developing and writing down the rules (a contract) together regarding participation in particular classes. This will make it possible for the teacher to organise the work and will also provide seniors with a sense of security. In the educational process, it is important to take into account the needs of seniors, and to adjust the pace and level of difficulties to the capabilities, skills and limitations of the students. Therefore, it is reasonable to carry out a preliminary diagnosis of the group with which the teacher conducts classes.

In the education of seniors it is necessary to emphasise that the educational context should refer to the everyday life of elderly people; it should relate to their micro-world, deal with issues which are important for *them* and not for the teacher. It should also

be noted that old age and the way it is approached constitute a particular theme. For example, teachers of seniors stressed the fact that they should not focus on the problems of old age but go beyond this topic.

It is important to know the group, individual predispositions and interests, as well as the ability to resolve difficult situations connected with possible disputes. It is worth remembering that the community of U3A students is a group that often atomizes; it often happens that presenting one's own viewpoint and defending one's own opinion turns out to be more important than openness to different arguments. Making geragolists more sensitive to this aspect requires knowledge and skills in the field of conflict resolution.

There is no literature in Polish on the specificity of educational work with seniors and the theory which is quite often presented in the literature on adult education does not work in the educational practice with seniors. The number of classes, courses, training, workshops which prepare teachers to work with seniors is also insufficient. In this situation, greater emphasis should be placed on this issue in the policy of the state/university/non-governmental organisations taking into account the experience of teachers who work with seniors by involving them and using their experience in elaborating handbooks to work with seniors.

The analysis of the subjects' statements show that by taking up jobs, teachers bring their experience, both educational and personal, which is important in dealing and working with seniors. On the one hand these experiences constitute some facilitation (for senior teachers), but on the other hand, they are a challenge because they often refer to overcoming barriers, prejudices, stereotypes (especially for younger teachers). Sharing these experiences with other teachers would enable a dialogue between them as well as between geragologists and an inter-generation dialogue. Moreover, it could become an inspiration for other teachers to take up work with seniors. One of the forms of exchanging experiences could be an Internet forum of teachers of seniors.

The analysis of the collected research material shows that classes should have a cyclical character and should be developed and/or supplemented with new contents. In particular, those which, according to seniors, are interesting, significant and useful. Incidental education – classes that are conducted only once and are brought up or suggested by seniors according to their needs, should be continued for volunteers, whereas the people who did not acquire a given competence to a sufficient degree would have a possibility to participate in classes again. For example, classes in computer science or therapeutic group meetings belong to this type of repetitive classes.

According to the teachers, 'bracketing' the institutional framework is useful in the education of seniors. This means that such forms of work as seminars, workshops,

discussion groups, which have a definite mode and duration can be developed and 'enriched' with informal meetings or with the formation of discussion groups on the Internet forums for volunteers – but without any enforcement of mandatory participation in them.

Teachers of seniors, both younger and older, emphasised that the educational model should also be seen as part of the therapeutic character of relationships. Taking into account the specificity of seniors' experiences, we should not ignore or understate feelings such as loneliness, longing for the past and for other people who no longer exist, the family who left them (often went abroad), or grandchildren living in another city. Responding to this challenge requires that basic competencies be acquired by teachers of seniors in the field of psychological help and support. Teachers should also be presented opportunities of directing seniors to the clinic or specialists who can provide psychotherapeutic help in a competent manner.

The optimal model of education of seniors is the one that is developed and created 'in progress' and its co-authors are and should be seniors. They are the experts, have valuable knowledge about what forms of work, methods, relationships are in their opinion appropriate and effective.

In Table 1, we present concise conclusions and reflections which can be helpful as guidelines for the educational practice of teachers working at U3A as well as valuable for educators, animators and other people who work or intend to work with seniors.

Table 1. Fundamental aspects of educational activities –
an educational model of work with seniors

| Fundamental aspects of educational activities important for working with seniors | Educational model emphasizing the learning specificity of seniors |
|---|---|
| Purpose of educational activities | Quality-oriented aspect of actions taken together as well as relationships and focusing not only on the results achieved |
| Forms of classes | Active, workshop forms which enable interaction and the establishment of informal relationships between seniors and a teacher with seniors |
| Psychosocial context of classes | Atmosphere conducive to reinforcing the self-esteem of seniors |
| Size and character of the group | Small groups which enable interactions, discussions and provide participants with a sense of security and the opportunity to participate in classes depending on health condition (e.g. due to physical and mental condition) |
| Teacher | Teacher – using experience of seniors, performing his/her role and taking therapeutic action depending on the individual situation of participants, not understating individual problems of seniors, listening to their needs and expectations; Teacher = Confidant = Coach |

(Based on the authors' research)

## Summary

At this stage, the results presented of the conducted pilot research have the status of preliminary diagnoses which require confirmation and supplementation based on further research activities. It is possible and reasonable to supplement the analyses carried out, to develop them and to consider our interpretations critically. In our opinion, the advantage of the findings presented here is the indication of how the educational model of work with seniors at U3A is constructed, what difficulties and challenges are connected with seniors' learning, and what portrait of senior students emerges from the experience of U3A teachers. From our point of view, the conclusions drawn from the analysis and the proposal of the educational model of work with seniors may be useful for people who conduct classes with seniors as well as for older adult educators, so they should be taken into consideration in designing a training programme for teachers who work at the Universities of the Third Age.

We are convinced that the conclusions presented in this paper may become an inspiration to pose questions referring to the specificity of seniors' learning and factors which are important for the quality of classes conducted at U3A. When planning further, more extensive and in-depth studies, in our view, it will be worth taking into account the analysis of the changes to the meanings assigned to the field of education of elderly people, which was proposed by Marcin Muszyński (2016). It seems particularly important, in the context of the considerations contained in this article, to present the University of the Third Age as a place of discovering and transferring knowledge as well as of the acquisition of skills by seniors. This place, like any other institution dealing with formal or non-formal learning, should be characterised by the highest possible quality of education.

## References

Adamska K., Czarnecka D., Grzeszczak J., Wierzbowska A., Żyra M. (ed.) (2016), *Uniwersytety Trzeciego Wieku w roku akademickim 2014/2015*, GUS, Warszawa, www.stat.gov.pl, 18.10.2016.

Bartosz B., Straś-Romanowska M., Żurko M. (2010), *Badania narracyjne w psychologii*, Eneteia Wydawnictwo Psychologii i Kultury, Warszawa.

Bartosz B., Żurko M. (2014), *Badanie narracyjne w podejściu interpretatywnym: wskazówka metodologiczna*, "Teraźniejszość, Człowiek, Edukacja", Vol. 4, pp. 19-38.

Bee H. (2004), *Psychologia rozwoju człowieka*, Zysk i S-ka, Poznań.

Brzezińska A., Appelt K. (2016), *Psychologia rozwoju człowieka*, GWP, Gdańsk.

Golding B., McDonald J., Malec-Rawiński M. (2015), *Uczenie się starszych mężczyzn we współczesnych badaniach andragogicznych: wybrane konteksty, implikacje i przypadki*, "Dyskursy Młodych Andragogów", Vol. 16, pp. 59-72.

Jabłońska M. (2000), *Nauczyciel jako interpretator rzeczywistości. Wprowadzenie*, in: *Nauczyciel w zmieniającej się rzeczywistości społecznej*, M. Jabłońska (ed.), Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, Wrocław, pp. 7-17.

Malec M. (2008), *Czy osoby starsze potrzebują nauczyciela?: w poszukiwaniu geragoga*, in: *Aktywność społeczna, kulturalna i oświatowa seniorów*, A. Fabiś (ed.), Wyższa Szkoła Administracji, Bielsko-Biała, pp. 129-135.

Malec M. (2011), *Poszukiwanie recepty na starość – wyzwaniem dla edukacji dorosłych: refleksje nad uczeniem się starości przez całe życie*, in: *Edukacyjne, kulturowe i społeczne konteksty starości*, M. Malec (ed.), Oficyna Wydawnicza Atut, Wrocław, pp. 11-28.

Malec-Rawiński M. (2013), *Znaczenie krytycznej gerontologii edukacyjnej dla badań i praktyki*, "Rocznik Andragogiczny", Vol. 14, pp. 173-184.

Muszyński M. (2016), *Zmiana pola znaczeń pojęcia edukacja osób starych*, "Dyskursy Młodych Andragogów", Vol. 17, pp. 79-96.

Olejnik M. (2006), *Średnia i późna dorosłość*, in: *Psychologia rozwoju człowieka*, J. Trempała (ed.), PWN, Warszawa, pp. 234-258.

Silverman D. (2008), *Interpretacja danych jakościowych*, trans. J. Ostrowska, PWN, Warszawa.

Singer J.A. (2004), *Narrative Identity and Meaning Making Across the Adult Lifespan: An Introduction*, "Journal of Personality", Vol. 72, No 3, pp. 437-454.

Skibińska E. (2008), *Proces kształcenia seniorów*, in: *Aktywność społeczna, kulturalna i oświatowa seniorów*, A. Fabiś (ed.), Biblioteka Gerontologii Społecznej, Bielsko Biała, pp. 95-114.

Straś-Romanowska M. (2011), *Późna dorosłość*, in: *Psychologia rozwoju człowieka*, J. Trempała (ed.), PWN, Warszawa, pp. 326-350.

Szarota Z. (2009), *Seniorzy w przestrzeni kulturalno-edukacyjnej społeczeństwa wiedzy*, "Chowanna", No 2, pp. 77-96.

Trempała J. (2014), *Psychologia rozwoju człowieka. Podręcznik akademicki*, PWN, Warszawa.

Urbaniak-Zając D., Piekarski J. (2001), *Jakościowe orientacje w badaniach pedagogicznych: studia i materiały*, Scholar, Warszawa.

Zych A.A. (2012), *Globalne starzenie się oraz potrzeby społeczne, kulturalne i edukacyjne ludzi starych – wyzwanie dla Uniwersytetów Trzeciego Wieku*, "Teraźniejszość Człowiek Edukacja", Vol. 2(58), pp. 157-164.

The package "experienced worker" (Pakiet „Doświadczony pracownik") http://www.silverteam. dobrekadry.pl/materialy-produkt-finalny.php, 12.11.2016.

http://www.federacjautw.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=556&Itemid, 18.11.2016.

http://www.federacjautw.pl/images/pliki/bazy/dolnolskie.pdf, 6.10.2016.

## AN EDUCATIONAL MODEL FOR WORK WITH SENIORS – EXPERIENCES OF TEACHERS WORKING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

SUMMARY: The paper focuses on the experiences of teachers who work with older adults at University of the Third Age (U3A), at the University of Wroclaw. In Poland, The University of the Third Age are the most popular place of educational activities of seniors. According to data from the Statistical Office

from 2015, in Poland there are 575 Universities of the Third Age. The paper presents the results of the conducted pilot research which have the status of preliminary diagnoses which require confirmation and supplementation based on further research activities. The paper consists of two parts theoretical and empirical one. The aim of the analysis of the collected research material presented in this paper is to establishing useful initial guidelines for practitioners, and in the next stage, developing an educational model of work with seniors as well as preparing a research project on a larger scale.

KEYWORDS: University of the Third Age, senior, learning, teacher, educational model.

**EDUKACYJNY MODEL PRACY Z SENIORAMI – Z DOŚWIADCZEŃ NAUCZYCIELI PRACUJĄCYCH W UNIWERSYTECIE TRZECIEGO WIEKU**

STRESZCZENIE: Artykuł prezentuje doświadczenia nauczycieli pracujących z seniorami na Uniwersytecie Trzeciego Wieku i Uniwersytecie Wrocławskim (UTW, UWr.). UTW są najbardziej popularnymi miejscami uczenia się seniorów w Polsce. Według danych Urzędu Statystycznego z 2015 r., w Polsce funkcjonuje 575 UTW. Niniejszy artykuł przedstawia wyniki pilotażowych badań, które mają status wstępnych rozpoznań, wymagających potwierdzenia i uzupełnienia o kolejne działania badawcze. Artykuł został podzielony na dwie części: teoretyczną i praktyczną. Celem badawczym prowadzonych badań jest analiza indywidualnych doświadczeń edukacyjnych nauczycieli (geragogów) pracujących na UTW we Wrocławiu, wskazanie istotnych z ich perspektywy aspektów nauczania i uczenia się studentów-seniorów oraz skonstruowanie edukacyjnego modelu pracy z seniorami, który w kolejnym etapie badań zostanie zweryfikowany w liczniejszej grupie badanych.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: Uniwersytet Trzeciego Wieku, senior, uczenie się, nauczyciel, model edukacyjny.