

MODULE II:

ADULT EDUCATION AND PARTICIPATORY TECHNIQUES FOR GROUP EDUCATION



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
A. ADULT EDUCATION	2
1. Process of effective teaching/learning	2
1.1 What is learning?	2
1.2 What is teaching?	2
2. The "why" and "what" of what we teach: defining objectives and contents	3
3. Analyzing the learner: "Whom are we teaching?"	4
3.1 The conceptual framework of the adult	5
3.2 How adults learn	6
4. Methods, techniques and materials: the "how" of what we teach	7
4.1 The importance of active learning	7
4.2 A methodology that promotes learning based on experience	7
4.3 Basic principles of participatory education for adults	8
4.4 Some strategies for educating adults	9
4.5 Characteristics of a successful facilitation	10
B. PARTICIPATORY TECHNIQUES FOR GROUP EDUCATION	11
1. Animation techniques	11
2. Role-playing techniques	13
BIBLIOGRAPHY	15

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this module is to equip the educator with the tools necessary for carrying out participatory training of traditional birth attendants. The basic elements of adult participatory training are included. They describe the basic concepts of the teaching-learning process with particular focus on the following four elements:

- * *What are the teaching objectives?*
- * *What should be taught?*
- * *Whom are we teaching?*
- * *How can we teach more effectively?*

This analysis should make it easier to apply the basic concepts of adult education to training TBAs.

In this module, the educator will find lively activities especially aimed at working with traditional birth attendants from the Guatemalan highlands. Because most of these women do not read or write and their mother language is not Spanish, techniques were selected that do not require reading. To facilitate communication with and among those obliged to speak in an unfamiliar language, techniques were selected which require rather straightforward communication. It is recognized that more complicated techniques suitable for literate groups also exist.

The animation techniques described are generally used at the beginning of an activity to encourage mingling among participants and to create a trusting and friendly environment. These techniques are also used to relax and reanimate the group after an intense, tiring session. The more entertaining the activity, the better the participants' response will be. Humor is often a useful ingredient in working with groups.

The role-playing techniques (skits and dramatizing patients' histories) allow the participants to express their views and perceptions. These techniques are very useful in demonstrating the group's knowledge on a given topic and can also be used during the review at the end of a topic to measure the group's comprehension.

This module provides a few ideas. Each facilitator should, however, use his or her creativity to invent and adapt other techniques.

A. ADULT EDUCATION

1. PROCESS OF EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

In order to discuss effective teaching and learning, we must first understand the basic components of these processes. Given that effective teaching results in effective learning, we begin by examining and comparing these two processes.

1.1 What is learning?

To learn is to change behavior. The process begins when the learner (student) receives messages from the educator. An internal process occurs in which the learner analyzes the messages received, taking into account his/her own experiences and circumstances, and decides what he/she finds useful. A personal conclusion is reached. When actions follow the decision, change is brought about and one can say learning has taken place.

1.2 What is teaching?

Teaching is the transmission of information which provokes desired changes in the individual. Teaching is an art. How does one teach? How does one transmit knowledge? There are many ways to do it, but the result must always be that the material taught becomes learned.

The four components of teaching are:

Why do you want to teach? Final objectives	Who will you teach? The learners
↓	↓
WILL DETERMINE	
↓	↓
What you teach Contents	How you teach Methods, techniques, materials

These four elements are interdependent. They cannot be visualized or conceptualized by themselves. For example, if the basic teaching objective is to achieve a decrease in the maternal and peri-neonatal mortality in the population attended by TBAs in your community, then:

Why? (objective)	Modify TBAs' practices in obstetric and neonatal care to decrease the maternal and peri-neonatal death rates at the community level.
To whom? (learners)	TBAs
What? (contents)	Detection and management of the principal causes of maternal and peri-neonatal death.
How? (methodology, techniques, support material)	Depends on the characteristics of the learner (in this case, the TBA) and on the material resources available for the training.

One must analyze what is necessary to achieve the proposed objective: what, who, when, where, how, with what? In this case, the objective implies that the TBA must be trained to carry out appropriate, timely actions to avoid death. She must thus be taught how and when to act.

2. THE "WHY" AND "WHAT" OF WHAT WE TEACH: DEFINING OBJECTIVES AND CONTENTS

The issues must be analyzed taking into account the objectives (decrease the maternal and peri-neonatal mortality in the population attended by TBAs) and the recipient of the teaching (TBAs).

- > *What is the problem you wish to solve or improve with the objective?* Mortality
- > *Of whom?* The maternal and peri-neonatal group
- > *What do they die from?* Principal causes of death (epidemiologic analysis of the problem)
- > *Why or how do they actually die?* Lack of detection and appropriate management of complications (analysis of technical-clinical management of complications)
- > *What can the learner (the TBA) do to contribute to the objective (decrease the maternal and peri-neonatal mortality)?* Analyze:
 - Where is the TBA?
 - What tools does she have for her work?
 - How much can she learn? (see analysis of to whom)
 - What is her problem-solving ability?

- > In view of the fact that the TBA is located in the community and relies on scant equipment, she must be educated so that she detects and appropriately manages/refers all complications (e.g. postpartum sepsis).
- Danger signs of postpartum infection must be known.
 - Women must be visited for an examination during the postpartum period.
 - The woman must be referred to the health center if there are signs of infection.
 - Abundant fluids must be given until the referral point is reached.
- > *What must she know?* Danger signs of postpartum infection and management of the case.
- > *What must she examine?* She must examine for fever, abdominal pain, offensive lochia.
- > *What must she do?*
- Make postpartum visit
 - Examine the patient
 - Inform the family, arrange transportation, obtain treatment for her patient

It is a common error to want to teach so many topics or so much information that not only do you not help resolve the problem, you confuse the learner. The clearer and simpler the information, the easier it will be to learn. The less the information transmitted each time and the more times it is repeated, the more it will be remembered and retained by the learner. For example, to learn how to administer oral rehydration salts and prevent dehydration in a child, we do not need to know the exact chemical composition of the ORS. But we do need to know that the package has to be diluted in one liter of clean water and that we need to give it in small amounts, etc.

3. ANALYZING THE LEARNER: "WHOM ARE WE TEACHING"

We must take the characteristics of the TBA into account: Who is she? Where is she? In what circumstances does she work? How does she learn?

Who is our TBA?

- Generally she is a woman who has had several children, who has a lot of experience, and who has seen women and children die in her community.
- She has learned her profession by observing other TBAs and by practical experience in her own work.
- She is known and generally well-respected in her community.
- She knows a lot about the customs and traditional medicine of her community.

- She has received training by the health care system, but this has not convinced her to change certain practices. Why?
- She sleeps in class (just like us) when the subjects are not interesting to her or when she does not understand the technical language.

How do TBAs work in their communities?

- Alone, without anyone to support them in difficult situations.
- Without much equipment.
- Traveling by foot to distant communities.
- Receiving little monetary remuneration, especially considering the importance of their work.

How does she learn best?

Since TBAs are adults, it is important to understand how adults learn.

3.1 The conceptual framework of the adult

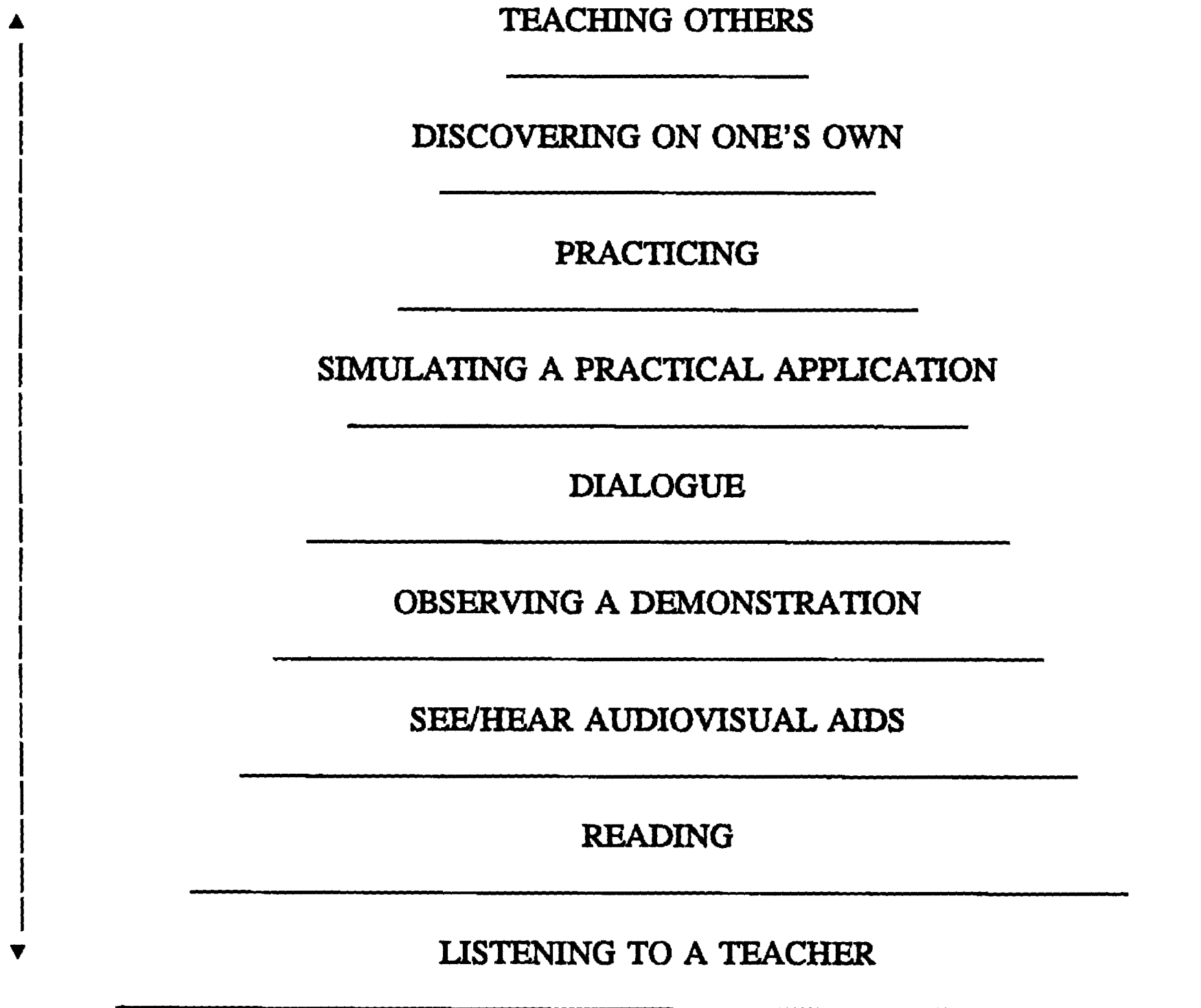
In contrast to small children, adults have a large volume of previous experiences. Based on these experiences, they already have well-developed conceptual frameworks or ideas about how the world functions and the way people and events relate to one another. Illiterate people frequently live very spiritual lives. They probably have very detailed knowledge of agricultural cycles and nature. Although they cannot express their cultural traditions in writing, they do this via other, marvelously complex forms such as music, dance, visual arts and crafts, and storytelling. Usually, their interpersonal relations are ruled by complex and overlapping systems involving obligations, loyalty, dependence and independence between family groups, in-laws, ethnic, religious and political groups. This is the basis of their understanding and of the relationship between themselves and the world in general.

3.2 How adults learn

An ancient proverb says: "What I hear, I forget; what I see, I remember; what I do, I know." The following "pyramid" shows some activities frequently used in education, in order of effectiveness.

LEARNING PYRAMID

PROMOTES GREATEST LEARNING



PROMOTES LEAST LEARNING

Ref.: The Learning Pyramid. OICD. Office of International Cooperation and Development.

4. METHODS, TECHNIQUES AND MATERIALS: THE "HOW" OF WHAT WE TEACH.

4.1 The importance of active learning

If adults succeed in integrating the new ideas into the conceptual framework they already use, it will be easier to understand, assimilate and remember them. If the learning process has allowed them to play an active role in the integration of the new information into their existing conceptual framework, they will "appropriate" these ideas. People who have experienced the process of active learning remember and more frequently accept new ideas and probably will apply these ideas, basing their future actions on the altered or amplified conceptual framework.

4.2 A methodology that promotes learning based on experience

To facilitate the acquisition of specific competencies and to promote their application on the part of the learners, it is important that the learning process be based on concrete activities that permit the learner to actively experience. A flexible teaching style must therefore be used, centering on the learner and his/her experiences.

This methodology is based on the following suppositions:

- * Knowledge is not something that can be injected into people; it arises as a result of a process of experimentation and analysis. It is therefore very important to actively involve the adult learners in the educational process. If their participation is limited to the role of a passive recipient of information or knowledge, the learning will be much less effective.
- * Every individual is unique and has his or her own style of learning. Educational activities must, therefore, be varied to accommodate the distinct ways different people learn.
- * Learning has no significance if it is limited to the mere acquisition of data. Data become valuable only when the learner understands the reason why the information is important and how a piece of knowledge can provide something beneficial when applied in practice. Educational activities must then focus on the development of abilities or dexterity, instead of on the diffusion of information.
- * The most effective learning is achieved when the content and the objectives have relevance in the daily life of the learner, when they help resolve daily problems, when they are related to what he/she already knows, with what he/she does at work, and with his/her personal goals.

4.3 Basic principles of participatory education for adults

- * Regardless of his or her level of "formal" education or scholarliness, each person brings knowledge and experiences acquired in his or her life to the educational process.**
- * Knowledge gained through practical experience is a valid and valuable asset in the learning process.**
- * Education is a two-way process. All of us have something to teach and something to learn, "teachers" as well as "students."**
- * Students learn from one another, not only from the teacher.**
- * The role of the educator is to facilitate the learning process, not simply to "deposit" or "transfer" technical knowledge.**
- * Education is an active process on the part of the learner. LEARNING is more important than TEACHING. The student, not the teacher, is the "star."**
- * The product of this process is knowledge that belongs to everyone who has contributed to its construction. No one is "owner" of the truth.**
- * The education comes not only from the teacher's reality but also from the student's. The focus must be on the student's interests and needs. It must make sense and apply within the context of his or her life.**
- * The most effective learning is active, experiential, and practical (not just theoretical). Adults learn better those things they have experienced via their senses, things they can apply immediately, and things that they have discovered on their own.**
- * The educational process is critical. It must increase our capacity to reason, analyze and act, not just our capacity to memorize.**
- * In participatory adult education, we are all responsible for the process: the control and the power are shared.**
- * We human beings are unique in our capacity to effect changes in ourselves and in our environment. Education must bring about the transformation of our world, and must furnish the practical tools to help us improve our lives.**

4.4 Some strategies for educating adults

- * To enhance the memory, use the senses of vision, hearing, smell, taste, touch, and kinesthesia (movement). Good humor, exaggeration and stimulating the students' creativity all help a lot. Be creative; learning should always be entertaining, never boring.**
- * Unless there is a reason for the students to learn technical vocabulary, do not use it. Listen to how they talk among themselves and use the same words that they are familiar with. If you use words they do not understand, they will not be able to grasp the message.**
- * Another technique for involving learners more actively is presenting case studies (real or hypothetical) followed by discussion. Try to identify a familiar problem appropriate to the group from a cultural point of view. Include humorous elements to stimulate laughter and participation.**
- * Students learn more when they receive support and stimulation, such as congratulations and positive reviews, instead of criticism. Try to create an environment in which the students can help and stimulate each other and work in groups. To facilitate work at the group level as well as for the individual, divide the difficult tasks into more simple, short ones so the students can quickly attain some satisfaction from doing things correctly. If tests are given to measure progress, ensure that the questions are directly related to what has been taught, so students will feel encouraged by how much they have learned. If you ask very difficult or misleading questions, the students will feel frustrated and demoralized and will lose their motivation.**
- * Concentration powers and attention are greater in short sessions (20 to 50 minutes). In a two-hour session, short recesses must be included. The more frequent these recesses are, the more benefit will be obtained.**
- * The memory capacity is greater when the material to be covered is organized around key concepts, with key words or images to remember. Slogans, mottos and sayings are also useful.**
- * For people to be able to permanently fix new information in their memories, they need to review it the same day, the next day, the next week and after a month. You must review frequently, but be creative and vary format to avoid boredom and sleeping among the participants. When a student falls asleep do not blame her; on the contrary, this shows that the teacher should analyze his or her techniques. It is very important to use didactic aids and demonstrations to visually reinforce the message, and then to bring the message to life through dramatizations, educational games, and other activities that make the learned material more practical.**

4.5 Characteristics of a successful facilitator

The facilitator is one of the most important keys to success with the participatory approach. The facilitator must have the ability to generate an entirely new learning process. Some characteristics of a good facilitator are:

- Respect for people
- Sensitivity and openness to the feelings, attitudes and relations between people
- Ability to increase people's self confidence
- Ability to motivate
- Fluency in the language of the majority
- Ability to listen
- Friendliness
- Belief in the possibility of change, people's ability to grow, and their potential
- Belief in the value of group decisions
- Skill in encouraging discussions and dialogues and group dynamics
- Being dynamic, creative and flexible
- Technically knowledgeable
- Ability to set a pace for the class which is appropriate for the students
- Firmness without being authoritarian

One should not become discouraged when reading this list. Keep these characteristics in mind and try to develop them. They make an excellent facilitator, who will have much success and satisfaction.

B. PARTICIPATORY TECHNIQUES FOR GROUP EDUCATION

1. ANIMATION TECHNIQUES

The objective of these techniques is to excite the group and to promote communication, trust and a team spirit between the participants and the facilitator.

Use these techniques at the beginning of a session to break the ice or to refresh the group after a tiring session. Entertainment and good humor help activities seem more agreeable and generate enthusiasm in the participants.

Remember that the techniques are only a tool for achieving an objective. They are not an end in and of themselves and should not be overused, as this can devalue the activity.

1. The tide comes in and the tide goes out

Draw two parallel lines or place two ropes on the floor approximately three meters apart. Have the participants form two rows, one behind each line on the floor.

The animator stands in between the two rows and shouts **tide in**. Everyone takes a step or jumps forward onto the line or rope. When the animator shouts **tide out**, everyone steps or jumps back to their original position. This should be done rapidly.

When one of the participants makes a mistake, he or she must do something for the group (such as dancing, singing, or answering a question on a previous topic).

2. Dwarfs and Giants

Form two parallel rows of participants who will remain standing. Designate two monitors, one in each row.

When the animator says **dwarfs**, everyone must stoop down. When the animator says **giants**, everyone must stand up. The monitors must pick out those who make mistakes and take them from the line. In this way, the participants are gradually eliminated. Those who stay on the line (those who have not lost) say what the losers must do (such as: dancing, singing, or answering a question on a previous topic).

3. The Cat and the Mouse

The participants form a circle and hold hands. One person stands inside the circle; she is the mouse. Another person stands outside the circle; she is the cat.

The cat tries to catch the mouse; the participants in the circle do not allow the cat inside the circle to catch the mouse. If the cat enters the circle, the mouse leaves it and the participants again close the circle. The objective of the game is for the cat to try to catch the mouse. The mouse tries to keep from being caught. If the mouse is caught, the cat says what she must do as a penalty. The mouse then becomes the cat and must catch another mouse, and so on.

4. The King Says (Mother May I)

Form a circle and explain to the participants that they must do what follows the command "the king says." The animator starts the game by saying, for example, "the king says lift your hands," and everyone lifts their hands. The animator then says "lower your hands." In this case no one should lower their hands because the order was not preceded by "the king says...". Those who make mistakes are eliminated from the game.

5. The Train

The participants line up one behind the other, holding on to the waist of the person in front and chanting "choo, choo" like a train. The animator calls out "the train divides into twos" and the participants must form groups of twos. Upon hearing "the train divides into threes," they must form groups of threes and so on.

The participants who aren't able to form groups of the required number must leave the train. Those who are able to remain on the train receive applause.

6. Soccer or Football

The participants divide into two groups and gather at either end of the room. Mark off the goals. The animator acts as referee and is in charge of blowing the whistle at the beginning and end of the match. The teams must not allow goals to be scored. The team who scores the most goals is the winner.

2. ROLE-PLAYING TECHNIQUES

1. Skits

Skits demonstrate elements for the analysis on a particular topic, based on real situations and events. Skits are one of the best ways of relating didactic material to reality while entertaining participants at the same time. This technique can also be used to determine a group's knowledge of a particular topic.

It is important to recognize that gestures, actions and words from daily life are used. It is not necessary to write anything beforehand, nor to bring special clothing. Scripts are not needed either.

Before beginning the skit, the "actors" meet to discuss the topic (4 or 5 people from each group). If the topic is, for example, "problems of the pregnant woman," the group would prepare a simple story about a mother with problems (e.g., swelling) and decide on the plot, who will take which role, and how they will act. If there is time, they can do a brief rehearsal. The actors should speak clearly and loudly and should use gestures. Two people should not speak at the same time. Limit the time while permitting the messages to be transmitted.

At the end of the skit, the audience should evaluate the way the topic was presented and should discuss it.

2. Role-playing

Role-playing demonstrates for further analysis the attitudes, behaviors and reactions that people have in daily life situations. This is very useful in presenting the attitudes of people towards their occupation or profession. For example, skits can portray the attitude of a hospital doorman when a TBA arrives; or a nurse's reaction when a TBA brings a complicated case to the health center at 4 o'clock when everyone wants to go home.

Select the topic to be addressed and then form groups with the number of people required for the situation. Each group should discuss the attitude that the characters have and the arguments they would use in real life. Afterwards, discuss the presentation of the skit.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adam, F. et al. Factores en el aprendizaje y la instrucción de los adultos. Caracas. Instituto Internacional de Andragogía. 1982.
- Bock, J. The demystification of nonformal education: A critique and suggestions for a new research direction. Amherst. Center for International Education, University of Massachusetts. 1976.
- Briseño, G. et al. El aprendizaje en el adulto. Informe Curso Taller: Situación Educativa y Procesos de Aprendizaje en el Adulto. CENAPRO. 1978.
- Charles, M. Comunicación y procesos educativos. Tecnología y comunicación educativas. Marzo 6, No. 17. 17-23. 1991
- Ething, A. Characteristics of Facilitation: The Ecuador Project and Beyond. Amherst. Center for International Education, University of Massachusetts. 1975.
- Evans, D. The Ecuador Project. Amherst. Center for International Education. University of Massachusetts. Technical Note No. 1. 1972.
- García, J. El aprendizaje adulto en un sistema abierto y a distancia. Madrid. Marcea, S.A. de Ediciones 1986.
- Guatemala. Ministerio de Salud Pública y Asistencia Social. Guía del Docente para la Capacitación de Comadronas. Guatemala. 1989.
- Kindervatter, S. Learner-Centered Training for Learner-Centered Programs. Amherst. Center for International Education, University of Massachusetts. 1977.
- Kindervatter, S. Nonformal Education as an Empowering Process. Amherst. Center for International Education, University of Massachusetts. 1979.
- Luft, J. Introducción a la dinámica de grupos. Editorial Herder. Biblioteca de Psicología. No. 18.
- McLaughlin, S. The Wayside Mechanic: An Analysis of Skill Acquisition in Ghana. Amherst. Center for International Education, University of Massachusetts. 1979.
- Menin, O. El aprendizaje en el adulto. La Educación - Revista Interamericana de Desarrollo Educativo. No. 92: 2-18. 1983.
- Vargas, L. Técnicas participativas para la educación popular. San José, Costa Rica. Centro de Estudios y Publicidad Altona. 1984.

Werner, D. Donde no hay doctor. México. Editorial Pax. 1981.

Werner, D. Aprendiendo a promover la salud. Palo Alto, California. Fundación Hesperian. 1984.