

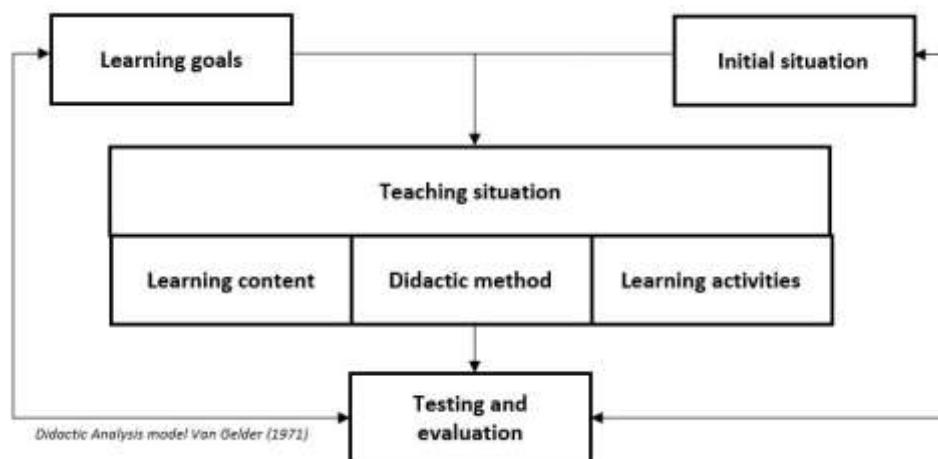
Didactic Model

Theoretical and methodological considerations Van Gelder model



In this Dementia in Cultural Mediation project, cultural mediators will be encouraged and educated to use the DCUM Toolkit. When teaching or training others, an educational tool is often used to guide this process. Until the 1960th there was little literature on systemic learning. Education was focused on the content and the organisation of the education. The goal of education was preparing for life, socially. Since then the goal of education has moved to the development of a person. An educational model structures the preparations for providing a training. In the DCUM project, the didactic model of Van Gelder guides us through the different components.

In 1971 the Didactic Analysis model of Van Gelder was introduced. Van Gelder was one of the first to look for possibilities in developing an educational theory. If our education is to be meaningful and optimal, we have to ask ourselves a number of important didactic questions. In this paper, theoretical and methodological considerations on the didactic model of Van Gelder will be given in relation to the practical use of the training material.



Van Gelder model

The Van Gelder model gives a framework that exceeds the focus on the subject alone, since the goal of a class or training is not just to give information to the participants but to also provide tools to use the information and or skills. The model includes knowledge and experience of the trainer and of the participants, in this project the cultural mediators. It also includes the objective, tools, and the end result. A lesson or training is therefore a learning process that requires appropriate preparation.

The traditional Van Gelder model has been designed as a teaching tool for a prolonged teaching process. The idea behind this model is that teaching is a goal-oriented activity. This means a goal is chosen, choices are then made with regard to the structure of the educational situation and ultimately it is examined to what extent the goal has been achieved.

The Van Gelder model has four components in the preparation process: learning goals, initial situation, learning situation, and the evaluation. In this context, different questions are asked in preparation for a class or training. These key questions are seen as the basis of didactic action and the answers to these questions show the essential components of teaching and the didactic methodology.

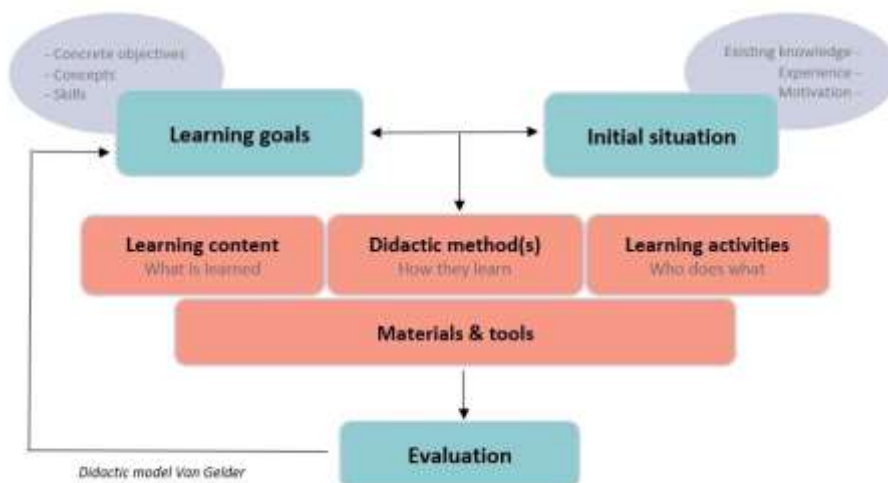
- What do I want to achieve for the students? (**Goal**)
- Where do I begin? What is the prior knowledge of the students? (**Initial situation**)
- What learning material do I need and should I choose? How can I outline the learning process? Which didactic (teaching) methods are useful? What am I going to do and which activities are the students going to do? (**Teaching situation**)

- What is the result of the training? Have the objectives and goals been achieved? What should we work on next time (**Evaluation**)

There is a close relationship between the didactic components. When formulating the objective, the initial situation (existing knowledge and skills of the participants) must be directly involved in order to determine a realistic learning goal. Is the target not set too high or too low? The next step includes the learning process, meaning content, methods, learning activities, materials and tools. The initial model ends with the result of the process or activity, the circularity shows the result and therefore what is needed or has to change for the next class. In this, it specifically focuses on the learning process of the participant and assumes a prolonged process of this learning.

Adjusting and expanding the traditional model to a single training, as we did in the DCUM project (see model below and the document 'Sharing the activity'), the result section should not only include the question if the learning goals are reached for the participant but also how they experienced the overall training. This includes information given beforehand, practical uses in the training and their opinion about the skills of the trainer. Using the results of evaluation, the trainer is also able to benefit from this model in his own learning process and the best way to give this training.

Some critics state that the traditional model assumes that the learning process only happens during training and doesn't take the teachers behaviour into account. The model does consider existing experience like the knowledge students should have acquired in previous education but not the individual experience due to workplace, years of work or life events. However, the traditional model can be expanded with some questions to address this. For both cultural mediators and trainer, learning is an ongoing process.



Why use a didactic model?

As mentioned, a didactic model can give structure to a training and exceeds the focus on the preparation of the subject alone. It enables a teacher to lay a rational basis for the choices he or she has to make in different learning situations under different learning circumstances. To provide a training, just having knowledge of the subject is not sufficient. A didactic model provides a framework to be well prepared for a successful training. When educating cultural mediators on how to organise and oversee an activity for people with dementia, the goal of the training seems the same every time. However, the initial situation of the cultural mediators can differ greatly in each training so the learning situation must be adjusted. Besides changes in content, methods and activities, the availability of materials and tools should be checked at the location. This to prevent the need for changes during training. Due to this variation, the learning goal may have to be adjusted each time.

Furthermore, it is important that a training is interactive, learning from each other is key. This means that it is important to evaluate the results and experiences from the cultural mediators and use this in the preparation for a next session. As the model shows, it is an ongoing process for the trainer to deliver a successful training.