

# **Development-oriented learning in a project team. Applying an interactive research approach**

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The overall purpose of the article is to describe a joint learning process where both practicable and theoretically anchored knowledge are in the foreground. The empirical data derives from an EU project. In focus is a group of course leaders and their experiences of carrying out a training programme targeted for a group of individuals with a weak position on the labour market. The author brings out what happens when individuals try to understand perspectives from one another. The results demonstrate the knowledge that is developed when members of a project team are included in the entire research process, from the definition of problems to the analysis, presentation of results and suggestions of change. Further the outcome illustrates how an interactive research approach can be conducted in close co-operation with those concerned. Active participation, a structured learning process, critical reflections and common understanding then became essential prerequisites. Taken together the study reveals that it is possible to learn how to approach complex problems and situations. By communicating experiences and thoughts that could be attributed to interaction patterns in social relations, communication structures, emotions, influence and power, the course leaders and the researcher jointly created a learning environment where reflection, understanding and development-oriented learning were of vital importance.

**Key words:** interactive research approach, the joint learning process, development-oriented learning, reflecting seminars