

## Abstract

- Title: Restructuring Adult Education. The Adult Education Initiative as a Way of Organising Change.
- Language: Swedish
- Keywords: Restructuring, adult education, discourse, policy, social change, governance
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During the last decade adult education in Sweden has undergone some major changes connected to the implementation of a strategy of lifelong learning. These changes have challenged the performance of the existing adult education provided by the municipal councils. A new adult education order has been established in which municipalities are encouraged to provide more flexible forms of education by using an extended range of education suppliers.

The thesis deals with the conditions under which this shift has taken place and is concerned both with the discursive construction of a new adult education system and the "techniques" for initiating organisational change in a selection of municipal districts. Interviews with decision-makers in 38 municipalities and on a national level, as well as policy documents such as Government Propositions, letters from the Ministry, application forms and other artefacts where the desired change is formulated have formed the main empirical materials.

Critical discourse analysis has been a major research tool in the investigation. This tool has been used in order to help identify and discuss the meaning of the changing concepts of adult education and the way these concepts contribute to re-define the purpose and the structure of adult education within a hegemonic struggle over the possible meanings of that term. In this sense the study is not only concerned with changing texts in adult education, it is also concerned with the ways in which discourses intervene in local performances as techniques that are cultured in order to create change. The concepts of "boundary object" "standardized packages" and "bandwagon" have been important in this analysis. In part by using these concepts the thesis concludes that there are five different discourses operating in the discursive formations of change and renewal in adult education at the present time; a discourse of governance, a discourse of marketisation, a discourse of cooperation, a discourse of individualisation and a discourse of learning.