



Three Proposals in Adult Education to Improve Employability

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Abstract

Adult education and lifelong education has become, during the twentieth century, a powerful tool in the societies all over the world. Considering a milestone *The Meaning of Adult Education* of Lindeman (1926), they are developed, all along the century, the three fundamental concepts of adult education: lifelong education, lifelong learning and lifewide learning. They are three similar but rather different concepts. That triple plays a crucial role to ensure active citizenship into society. Among them, the most influenced one by economic aspects is lifelong learning. European Union takes account about the importance of lifelong learning as a way to improve employability in the European area and definitely bets for adult education and lifelong learning. The aim of this paper is to show three proposals in adult education to improve employability: technical professional studies, entrepreneurship through the program *¿Cuál es tu vaca?* and the course *English for restaurants* framed inside the non-formal education, carried out by Adult Education Centre *CEPA Antonio Machado* in the city of Segovia in Spain.

Keywords

Lifelong learning, employability, technical professional studies, entrepreneurship, non-formal education

1. Introduction

Adult education and lifelong education have come, during the twentieth century, a powerful tool in the societies all over the world (Field, 2001). Considering a milestone *The Meaning of Adult Education* of Lindeman (1926), the three fundamental concepts of adult education are developed all along the century: lifelong education, lifelong learning and lifewide learning (Jackson, 2012). They are three similar but rather different concepts. That triple plays a crucial role to ensure active citizenship into society (Zepke, 2013). Among them, the most influenced one by economic aspects is lifelong learning (Jenkins et al., 2003). The European Union takes account about the importance of lifelong learning as a way to improve employability in the European area and definitely bets for adult education and lifelong learning (Commission of the European Communities, 2006). The aim of this paper is to show three proposals in adult education to improve employability: technical professional studies (Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, 2006), entrepreneurship program *¿Cuál es tu vaca?* (Diputación Provincial de Segovia, 2018) and the course *English for restaurants* framed inside the non-formal education (Trilla, 1992), carried out by Adult Education Centre *CEPA Antonio Machado* in the city of Segovia in Spain.

2. Technical Professional Studies

This kind of Spanish studies has the aim of improving the qualification of citizens in order to reach better jobs. That

fact coincides with the explanation of the European Commission (European Commission, 2011) in *The future of learning: preparing for change*, section 5.2 Challenge 4: Transition from school to work,

“Lifelong learning policies across Europe aim to improve permeability between different education and training systems, so that people can progress vertically (raise the level of their qualifications and competences) or horizontally (broaden their achievements, re-qualify or change learning pathways)”

Furthermore, talking about re-qualifying, one can find in the same document, in section 5.3 Challenge 5: Re-entering the Labour Market,

“Effective incentives for lifelong learning and second-chance opportunities are needed, coupled with systems for recognising acquired competencies, and a focus on efforts supporting those with low skills.”

In Spain, once arrived in mandatory secondary education, students have some ways to reach higher education levels, as explained in the next figure,

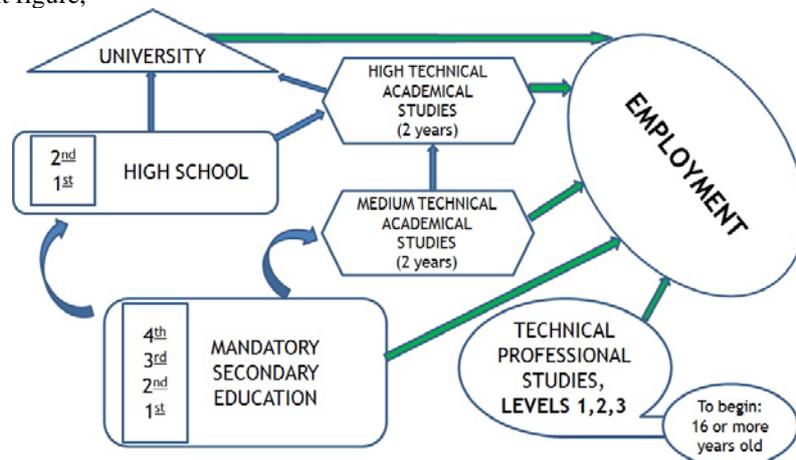


Figure 1. Secondary and higher education in Spain.

Source: ownelaboration.

Non-university technical studies are split in two branches: technical academic studies and technical professional studies, as shown in the next figure,

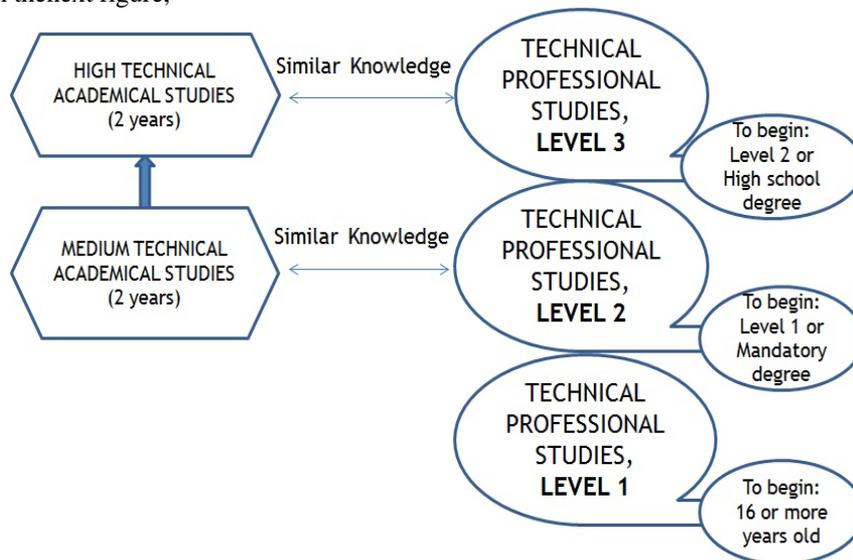


Figure 2. Technical academic studies vs Technical professional studies.

Source: ownelaboration.

A question that arises naturally is: Are the two branches necessary? or maybe Spanish government could end qualification to citizens just with one of them. The two branches are necessary because of some reasons; these are

some of them:

1) Different type of students: for one hand, in technical academic studies the students are usually teenagers and youths from 16 to 20 or 22 years old, who come from mandatory secondary education and who want to reach higher levels in an experimental branch of education. That is not a rule nor a law, people from 16 years old and with mandatory secondary education degree can begin these studies but people over 30 years old are very unusual in these branch of technical studies. On the other hand, in technical professional studies it happens the other case: students are usually adults up to 30 years old, that have been working for a long time and who want to get qualification to improve their job conditions.

2) Different conditions to get in: while getting in technical academic studies requires mandatory secondary education degree, that is not necessary with level 1 of technical professional studies. This is the reason why many people choose technical professional studies (among them, everyone who have not got mandatory secondary education degree). One can begin in level 1 of technical professional studies and then continue to levels 2 and 3.

3) Different affections to knowledge and learning: students of technical academic studies have much more motivation to learn just for there as one of acquiring knowledge and skills. That does not happen with students of technical professional studies who remain reasons to get qualification to reach better job conditions.

There are another less important reasons to promote the two branches of technical studies but those are the most important ones.

3. Entrepreneurship Program ¿Cuál es tu vaca?

Entrepreneurship has turned on a good way to create an own job and to gain skills and experience at work. Moreover, entrepreneurship can be well framed into situated learning so it can be used to insert, in labour market, citizens of low socio-cultural and economic levels and under risk of exclusion (Niemeyer, 2006). Furthermore, students of an entrepreneurship program have more possibilities to start their own business and increased their competencies and intention to ward self-employment (Sánchez, 2013). As find in (Álvarez Marqués & Alburquerque, 2012),

“Actually several studies and authors underline the importance of (early) entrepreneurship education to the creation of an entrepreneurial and innovative culture of social and economic change. This requires models of education more focused on preparing people for tomorrow’s labour markets and for a more unpredictable and complex society, as well as new policies especially target for this area. Assuming that entrepreneurship skills can be taught and that they should be considered as a general attitude, useful in all work activities and everyday life, the discussion about teaching goals and methodologies is very relevant.”

The entrepreneurship program *¿Cuál es tu vaca?* is an initiative of province government *Diputación provincial de Segovia* in order to introduce entrepreneur knowledge and skills into Segovia education centers (schools, high schools and adult education center). The program consists on some stages that take place firstly in the education center and secondly in local businesses. As shown in the next figure, the aim is to create pro-active people among students through coaching, group dynamics and motivation activities; after that, students are asked to discover the Business Model Canvas through the generation of ideas and brainstorming; the final step is a meeting among education centers, like a final match, to decide what projects are the best ones. Obviously, the aim of educative system is to teach students about entrepreneurship and to show them a professional way for the future.

4. Non-formal Education Courses: English for restaurants

Non-formal education has arisen thanks to the research of Phillip Coombs (Coombs, 1971) on global education crisis of the seventies. From that corner stone, non-formal education has been developing towards its relation with economic affairs (Ahmed, 1975) and as a powerful tool against rural poverty (Coombs & Ahmed, 1974). Since its origins, non-formal education is linked to economic aspects of society, so one of its main aims should be labour market and employment. That is the reason why CEPA Antonio Machado of Segovia has begun the non-formal education course *“English for restaurants”*. The sequence of thoughts happened as represented in Figure 4. The main goal of this course was to endow restaurant employers basic knowledge about English in general and specific vocabulary and expressions about restaurants, meals and food.

5. Conclusions

As conclusions we show that education actions into adult education and through lifelong learning in general are necessary, not only to improve employment but also to endow citizens qualification skills and knowledge tools to face active citizenship in 21st century.

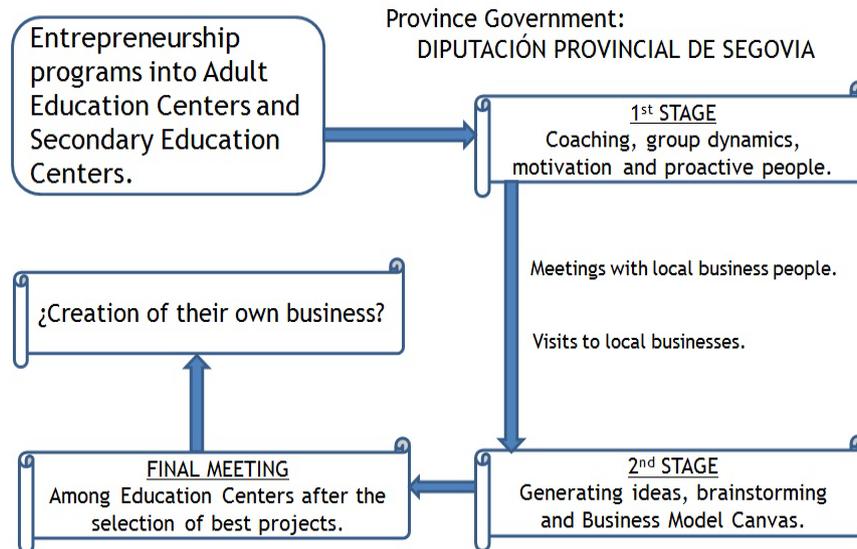


Figure 3. Stages of the entrepreneurship program ¿Cuál es tu vaca?
Source: own elaboration.

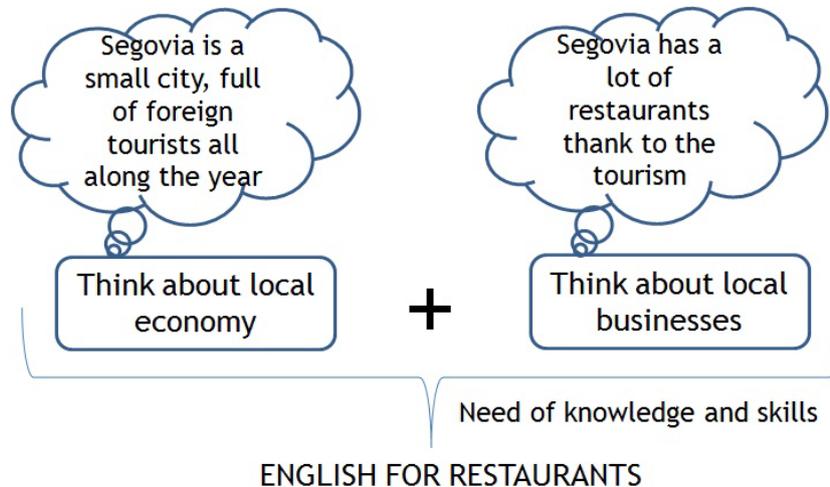


Figure 4. Brainstorming to create the course “English for restaurants”.
Source: own elaboration.

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