

The questions we care about: paradigms and progression in entrepreneurship education

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Abstract: *One of the most frequently discussed topics in the entrepreneurship education literature is current practice in entrepreneurship education with regard to what is taught and how it is taught. The literature on entrepreneurship education is replete with statistics and reviews of entrepreneurship courses and programmes. In this paper, the authors take a different approach and propose a model that transcends the current understanding of entrepreneurship. Instead of asking what entrepreneurship education is and what it does, they ask what ideally it should be and should do. The authors suggest that there is a logical progression between existing approaches – paradigms – to teaching entrepreneurship, and that a fourth ‘new’ paradigm, ‘everyday practice’, constitutes the foundation for all other entrepreneurship education because it establishes the core entrepreneurial competence. They further identify four dimensions as the constituent elements of entrepreneurship as everyday practice.*

Keywords: *entrepreneurship education; paradigms; pedagogy; didactics; everyday practice*

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The past decades have witnessed a rapid increase in entrepreneurship courses at all levels of education, from primary school to university (HE). Some 25 years ago, numerous researchers (see, for example, Hills, 1988; McMullan and Long, 1987; Sexton and Bowman, 1984; Vesper *et al*, 1989) highlighted the confusing variety of approaches to and accepted

paradigms of entrepreneurship education with their associated myriad purposes, methods and learning goals. This concern is no less valid today, with the increasing number of courses reflecting a multitude of paradigms with different ontological views on the nature of entrepreneurship and different didactic approaches to education (Bécharde and

Grégoire, 2005; Gartner and Vesper, 1994; Honig, 2004).

In light of this variety of approaches, a fundamental question has arisen among researchers in entrepreneurship education: what constitutes entrepreneurship education? Attempts to answer this have led to many reports and studies laying out the current landscape of entrepreneurship education in different areas and educational levels. However, we argue that such mappings are unlikely to provide answers to the 'questions we really care about' in relation to entrepreneurship education. In this paper we therefore seek to formulate these questions in order to establish a solid and more relevant foundation for future curriculum development in entrepreneurship.

In the following section we outline these questions we care about: we then continue to unpack each of these questions into fundamentally different paradigms by identifying the objectives and contents of each of the resulting paradigms. We argue that there is a logical progression in these paradigms, in the sense that the paradigm, which we call 'everyday practice', constitutes the paradigmatic foundation for all other questions we care about. Finally, we introduce an outline for those logically, constituent elements of a programme that addresses 'everyday practice'.

The questions we care about

Both the proliferation and diversity of entrepreneurship education initiatives have spurred significant interest in entrepreneurship education research designed to answer two fundamental questions.

- (1) How do we currently teach entrepreneurship?
- (2) How can we categorize or taxonomize the myriad approaches?

The first question is often supported by an explicit political agenda to promote entrepreneurship education and to benchmark universities or countries against one another. The answer is manifested by the number of reports and articles that empirically map and describe the landscape of entrepreneurship education in a certain area and level of the educational system (see, for example, Fonden for Entreprenørskab, 2010; National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship and the Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship, 2010; NIRAS Consultants *et al*, 2008; Rae *et al*, 2010). Such reports often include information about university policies and institutional support for entrepreneurship education initiatives and the balance between curricular and extracurricular activities. The conclusions are surprisingly similar. These studies typically report a growing emphasis on entrepreneurship education, where

entrepreneurship is increasingly embedded in the strategy of higher educational institutions. Moreover, entrepreneurship education takes place at all levels of higher education, extracurricular activities are increasing and various teaching techniques or pedagogies are used.

However, the broad nature of these surveys and their often-designated political audience limits the possibility of achieving a more in-depth picture of the fundamental didactic questions in entrepreneurship education, such as: (i) who are the target groups; (ii) what are the learning goals; and (iii) what is the content of the courses? This is what the second fundamental research question addresses by providing distinctions or typologies that categorize entrepreneurship education and didactic approaches (see, for example, Béchar and Grégoire, 2005; Gibb, 1987; Hannon, 2005; Honig, 2004). Perhaps the best known of these typologies is Hannon's distinction between three overall types of entrepreneurship education – about, for and through entrepreneurship – and how each is related to fundamental didactic and pedagogical concerns.

Common to both sets of questions is that their answers have not been particularly useful in helping educators design curricula and courses. The first broad question on how we teach entrepreneurship has resulted in a number of studies which are difficult to compare objectively, while the second question on how to categorize the many different approaches to entrepreneurship education may have given us fruitful conceptual distinctions, but only little insight into how these approaches are unpacked in the entrepreneurship classroom in HEIs. In both cases the focus has been on the basic elements of entrepreneurship education in what is already taught.

As suggested by Sarasvathy (2004), the questions we ask often prevent us from asking the questions we care about. What, then, is it in entrepreneurship education that we care about? What is the genuine concern that drives us to ask the questions we ask? The answer is perhaps not different from 'general' research in entrepreneurship, namely to foster entrepreneurship at the individual and societal level to create value (Sarasvathy 2004). As such, what is currently taught is perhaps less important than what should be taught: we need to adopt a different perspective. We would therefore argue that entrepreneurship educators 'really' care about one or more of the following four fundamental questions in entrepreneurship education,

- (1) How can we educate students to start new ventures?
- (2) How can we educate students to create high growth firms?

Table 1. Entrepreneurship education: questions and paradigms.

Question	Paradigm	Value to be created
How do we install an entrepreneurial spirit in students?	Facilitating entrepreneurship as an everyday practice.	Indeterminate: depends on the students and their everyday practices.
How do we train students to start new ventures?	Training students to create new ventures.	Economic value (through new ventures).
How do we train students to create high-growth firms?	Training students to transform ideas and knowledge into economic growth.	Economic value (through growth ventures).
How do we train students to solve a broad number of societal problems entrepreneurially?	Facilitating entrepreneurial energy for social change.	Social value.

- (3) How can we educate students to solve a broad range of societal problems entrepreneurially?
 (4) How can we educate students to adopt an entrepreneurial mindset?

These questions are the logical outcomes of the ambition of entrepreneurship educators to provide the best possible teaching whilst having to accommodate being embedded in different research trends, different institutional settings, having different understandings of what entrepreneurship is and thus operating with different learning goals. These questions are those that we continually ask ourselves as educators when planning our courses and curricula. It is only by asking such questions that we can continually improve our educational efforts. Table 1 presents the four fundamental questions we care about in entrepreneurship education, reflecting our genuine desire to foster entrepreneurship and thus to create value.

These four questions each link to established or emerging streams in entrepreneurship research such as entrepreneurship as new venture creation, innovation and growth theory, social entrepreneurship or broad ideas of enterprising behaviour and self-efficacy. The questions are thus firmly based in existing or emerging understanding of what entrepreneurship is. Furthermore, as will be made clear below, they each link to specific views about (i) why we teach entrepreneurship (the value we are trying to facilitate the creation of) and (ii) how we should teach it (didactics and pedagogy).

The four different questions constitute four different paradigms of entrepreneurship education. In this context, 'paradigm' is considered to be a scientific

achievement (for example, the identification of entrepreneurship as a key driver of economic growth) on which there is significant agreement but which leaves a variety of issues to be addressed and solved by researchers already committed to the paradigm (Kuhn, 1996). As such, paradigms provide researchers and educators with rules and standards for research and education practices.

The adherence to an entrepreneurship paradigm, whether explicit or implicit, thus includes a fundamental understanding of what entrepreneurship is and, by implication, an understanding of what kind of value we, as entrepreneurship educators, are trying to enable or train the students to create. The objective of teaching informs the didactics and pedagogy of the course or the programme. In other words, if the aim is to teach students to start a business, then we need to provide students with a set of necessary skills to do so: but if we want the students to develop an entrepreneurial mindset, other skills are needed.

Four entrepreneurial paradigms

In the following we present the four paradigms of entrepreneurship education which, in our perception, act as a guide for the choice of a specific approach to entrepreneurship education.

Educating students to create new ventures

This approach to entrepreneurship teaching is generally accepted to be the oldest and currently dominant methodology in entrepreneurship education. Its basic intellectual heritage originates in two fields. One is Schumpeter Mark I (Schumpeter, 1934) and the Austrian approach to economics (Kirzner, 1997), focusing on the entrepreneur as the function of innovation creating economic growth. The other is the 'heritage from traditional management' theory, in which management control and planning are perceived as the central vehicles for businesses and entrepreneurs adapting to the forces of the external environment. More specifically, inspiration from the published literature typically comes from an integration of marketing (for example, Kotler and Keller, 2009), strategy (for example, Porter, 1980) and budgeting into some kind of SWOT-like planning framework (Andrews, 1971). In combination these inspirations synthesize into the business plan format as the dominant framework for entrepreneurship education. Courses comprise teaching the procedures for developing a business plan as a type of 'how-to-do-it' programme. In addition, such courses are often linked with participation in various kinds of business plan competitions.

The content of this paradigm is clearly inspired by the context in which most entrepreneurship education has taken place. Entrepreneurship has predominantly been in the hands of teachers in management and business schools and the subject of entrepreneurship has usually been incorporated as an element of the general course content. It is thus to be expected that a significant proportion of entrepreneurship course content is founded on conventional management philosophies.

Typically, the training of students in new venture creation consists of a rational planning process which considers the relationship between the entrepreneur's new venture and its environment. This rational planning process is typically expressed in various types of models which illustrate how the potential entrepreneur, as decision-maker, should progress through a series of stages, gradually gathering and analysing relevant information and making rational, informed decisions about whether – or not – to start a new venture; and if the answer is 'yes', how then to set up the business.

Educating students to transform ideas and knowledge into initiatives that will create economic growth

Whilst the micro-level focus of entrepreneurship teaching has become an integral part of the curriculum in most business schools, another perspective has also gained ground. Governments generally want to support entrepreneurial activity, for macro-economic reasons: the activity must result in economic growth at a societal level and not merely in profit for the individual entrepreneur.

Economic growth has become a mantra for most governments and in past decades this has been increasingly associated with the establishment of new businesses. Indeed, the link between entrepreneurship and economic growth is well established and documented in the entrepreneurship field (see, for example, Davidsson *et al*, 2006). As stated by Venkataraman (1997, p 133),

'...the connection between the individual entrepreneur's profit seeking behaviour and the creation of social wealth is "the very *raison d'être*" of the field.'

According to this view, the function of entrepreneurial activity is to create economic growth and this is translated into a normative statement that entrepreneurs should grow their companies (Wiklund *et al*, 2003). One of the original inspirations of this view is Schumpeter Mark II's identification of the R&D departments of large corporations as functions of innovation and growth in society (Schumpeter, 1950). The basic

concept is that ideas and knowledge generated at universities and other research institutions could and should be used as the foundation for forming new businesses.

In principle, entrepreneurship teaching could be envisaged as constituting an element of practically any discipline in a university context. Thus in recent years there has been a significant focus on pairing entrepreneurship teaching with a number of other subjects, especially within the natural, medical and technical sciences. The vision is that such combinations will create a swift and efficient innovative commercialization of university research, which – again – will lead to economic growth in society.

Apart from the business planning tools and skills presented above, the topics relevant to the type of entrepreneurship education that arises from regarding entrepreneurship as a vehicle for economic growth might include knowledge about building an entrepreneurial team, patents, internationalization and accessing venture capital. As such it builds on the same fundamental planning and analysis skills needed to start a new venture (as illustrated above).

Facilitating entrepreneurial energy for social change

Recently, the concept of entrepreneurship has been broadened to include activities that are not directly business or market-oriented but are rather more directed at achieving social change. Thus, the concept of social entrepreneurship has evolved. Social entrepreneurial activities have grown out of a number of sources including government cutbacks, market failures and the insight that for-profit corporations will benefit from taking social responsibility. This particular form of entrepreneurship seeks to solve or alleviate social or environmental problems and has fostered a whole new range of courses and programmes.

In general, the sub-field of social entrepreneurship has adopted the underlying assumptions and values of the original, broader field of entrepreneurship. Two notable examples of this are the incorporation of the opportunity concept into the social entrepreneurship field (Austin *et al*, 2006; Haugh, 2005; Hockerts, 2006; Thompson *et al*, 2000) and the widespread use of heroic figures as role models (Sarasvathy, 2008). Whilst the purpose of social entrepreneurship is to foster social entrepreneurial projects and social change, as opposed to new ventures and growth, the methods and learning goals are not necessarily different from those described above. The fundamental skills of planning, analyzing, financing and organizing are emphasized, and many of the tools and skills can be readily transferred from business related entrepreneurship teaching, particularly if, for example, the initiative is based on selling a

product and using the proceeds to support a disadvantaged group.

However, since social entrepreneurship is typically concerned with doing something for somebody else, without necessarily having a physical product, the educational focus will also be concerned with issues such as networking, fundraising and creating initiatives that may raise money through providing some type of service or by partnering with organizations that will sponsor an activity, which results in a profit.

Didactically and pedagogically this approach has both similarities and differences compared to the traditional, new venture creation approach. It is similar in the sense that the focus is on teaching students how to develop appropriate contacts and networks and create ideas that can be sold at a premium, or be innovative at the marketing level: it is different because the purpose of the action lies in the resulting benefits for society at large. It is therefore likely that the motivation of the entrepreneur will be different and that other tools will be available to social entrepreneurs in terms of finance (for instance, grants, sponsorship and donations), recruitment (use of volunteers) and pricing (people will often pay more for products characterized by an ethos of 'not-for-profit' or offering social or environmental benefits).

Facilitating an entrepreneurial mindset in everyday practice

Another recent trend in the field of entrepreneurship is an increasing focus on entrepreneurship as an everyday practice (Steyaert and Katz, 2004) in which it is argued that entrepreneurship research has traditionally overlooked the many 'mundane' forms of entrepreneurship which occur in the market as well as on the boundaries of and beyond the market (Rehn and Taalas, 2004). It is suggested that a more basic kind of entrepreneurial behaviour exists, denoting something broader than business entrepreneurship and involving 'initiative, strong persuasive power, moderate rather than high risk-taking, flexibility, creativity, independence/autonomy, need for achievement, imagination, high internal beliefs of control, leadership and hard work' (Gibb, 1987, p 6).

Sarasvathy and Venkataraman (2011) have pursued a similar line of thinking in suggesting that entrepreneurship is a method: it, entrepreneurship, is seen as something that '...unleashes the potential of human nature' (Sarasvathy and Venkataraman, 2011, p 115), through principles and mechanisms that should be taught to all learners, regardless of their characteristics and personalities.

Such concepts focus on initiative and risk-taking attitudes as competences expressed in a person's

innovative actions. This kind of action may find its expression in many different contexts and organizations. The basic idea is that the energy which is present in entrepreneurial processes can be used not only for creating new businesses but also to solve a number of other social problems and enrich life in general. In order to expand the scope of entrepreneurship it is argued that the focus of entrepreneurship education should not be solely on the prospect of economic enterprise and profit, but on value creation in the broadest sense, including the community, enabling, and individual empowerment and self-realization (Steyaert and Katz, 2004).

These ideas are to an extent expressed in educational activities directed towards the personal development of the students, something that has been part of entrepreneurship education. A range of coaching-oriented activities can often be identified, aimed at developing students' imaginative abilities, entrepreneurial competence and capacity for entrepreneurial actions. Equally, courses can be found that seek to augment the student's ability to handle the diversity and complexity of their community. These types of courses can be said to build on the concept of entrepreneurship as an everyday practice – an emancipating, everyday competence not necessarily related to creating new ventures but, eventually, to becoming virtuous citizens or strong cultural figures (Steyaert and Katz, 2004).

This form of entrepreneurship education, which *de facto* overlaps to some extent with teaching through entrepreneurship, in the sense that an enterprising way of being, or an entrepreneurial mindset can only be learned through enterprising behaviour, has not been discussed to any great extent in the literature and it is unclear how it relates to the other types of entrepreneurship education. However, we shall argue that it plays a vital role and in many respects serves as a precondition or foundation for the other forms of education.

In essence, the proposition is that entrepreneurship is not reserved for the few who can spot opportunities in the market place, write a suitable business plan and persuade investors to provide the necessary finance. The elements that form part of a course programme within this paradigm combine consideration of opportunities and anomalies (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000; Spinosa *et al.*, 1997) with bricolage (Baker and Nelson, 2005) and effectuation (Sarasvathy, 2008). The paradigm concentrates on the personal rather than the business or societal level, developing an entrepreneurial mindset through the enhancement of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). It aims at realizing opportunities that originate from within the individual and which are therefore unique and less imitable, using storytelling

and creativity tools to fine-tune the project and commit and effectuate in order to bring the ideas to fulfilment. Furthermore, the teacher needs to act as a facilitator of the process rather than as a lecturer and to provide feedback in learning situations. The teacher needs to prepare exercises and help students to reflect on their learning experience in small groups.

Progression

The paradigms presented above represent four different approaches to entrepreneurship education because they are answers to very different questions. They build on different assumptions concerning the nature and purpose of entrepreneurial activity, embodying different learning goals and indicating different methods used in education. At first sight it may appear that at least some of the paradigms are incommensurable since they embody radically different views of entrepreneurship and seek to realize different forms of value.

Many of the existing entrepreneurship programmes and courses deploy what Hannon (2005) refers to as teaching ‘about’ or ‘for’ entrepreneurship, focusing on the creation of new ventures. This builds strongly on a business planning ideology originating in the USA. However, despite its dominant position in entrepreneurship education, this does not necessarily reflect a general or universal use of the paradigm. At least four distinct features of the ‘teaching for or about the creation of new ventures’ approach moderate its capacity to serve as an all-embracing, or universal, approach to entrepreneurship teaching:

- (1) It assumes that the students are already to some extent willing or motivated to engage in entrepreneurial activity;
- (2) It is based on the Anglo-Saxon educational culture in which students return to university after having worked in an organization, bringing with them extensive practical knowledge;
- (3) The intention underlying courses is for students to become entrepreneurs either during their studies or immediately following their graduation; and
- (4) There may be a strong self-selection bias because typically students are already predisposed to entrepreneurship – the reason why they choose to follow the courses.

Therefore, the ‘teaching for or about the creation of new ventures’ approach is neither necessarily applicable nor relevant in all areas of entrepreneurship education or in all cultural settings. Many entrepreneurship teachers are confronted with students who are not motivated to pursue an entrepreneurial lifestyle; indeed, many European students enter a post-graduate programme

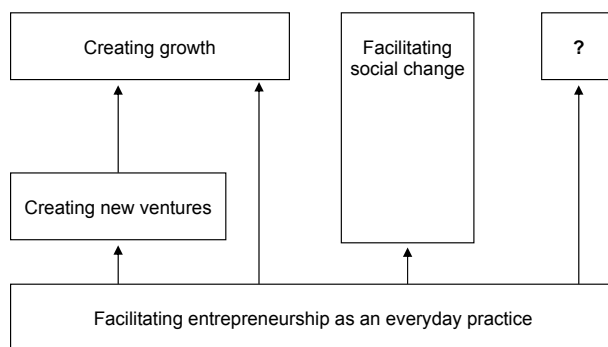


Figure 1. Progression of entrepreneurship teaching.

immediately following their Bachelor’s (first) degree, and individuals often wait until they have gained at least a few years of practical experience before embarking upon entrepreneurial ventures. Nevertheless, many students may have entrepreneurial potential even though they do not initially perceive themselves as entrepreneurs. This means that before students are taught how to write a business plan we have first to influence their mindset and self-perceptions.

Thus, rather than choosing a singular paradigm, entrepreneurship education programmes might do better by seeking to integrate multiple paradigms in the overall curriculum, in order to produce a teaching portfolio that is relevant and useful for a larger number of students, as well as providing the students with a broader range of value-creating skills, knowledge and motivation.

Towards a progressive taxonomy

We will address the issue of reconciliation of the four paradigms by developing a taxonomy to serve as a flexible framework for coordination of educational building blocks that can be used to create progression in the entrepreneurship curriculum. ‘Building blocks’ in this context would be what we normally understand as courses, while an entrepreneurship curriculum would typically be what constitutes a consistent study programme. As such, the framework deals with the question of didactics in entrepreneurship education: didactics in relation to target groups, objectives and content of what is taught.

The underlying logic of the progression represented in Figure 1 builds on two central ideas. First, we propose that entrepreneurial activity can result in the creation of multiple forms of value (Korsgaard and Anderson, 2011) and is therefore not restricted to the creation of economic value. Second, we suggest that across the different forms of value creation there exists a core in the form of a value-creating entrepreneurial meta-competence, an entrepreneurial mindset, or

method, which can be applied in multiple walks of life and not only in starting one's own business (Gibb, 2002; Mauer *et al*, 2009; Sarasvathy and Venkataraman, 2011). The assumption is that a fundamental and generic entrepreneurial activity is present in which individuals express themselves through reflection, action and creation. This underlying generic activity can be found in all the different expressions of entrepreneurship in the various paradigms. It underpins new business creation, growth processes and the instigation of social change. As such, the broad notion of entrepreneurship as everyday practice is a *sine qua non* of all other forms of entrepreneurship.

Thus, entrepreneurship as an everyday practice is ontologically and temporally prior to all other forms of entrepreneurial activity. It is therefore crucial that any entrepreneurship education programme somehow incorporates this. Hence, entrepreneurship education programmes in which the generic entrepreneurial activity is not present, either in the students as they enter the programme or facilitated by processes in the programme, are unlikely to generate the desired outcome, be it new venture creation, growth or social change.

To follow such a logic is to perceive enterprising action as a dynamic interplay between the individual and context (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000), giving rise to opportunities in a transformative process. This logic can be linked to theoretical fields outside entrepreneurship, ranging from the narrative tradition (Fischer, 1989), existential phenomenology (Spinoza *et al*, 1997), identity and role theory (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010), appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider and Srivastava, 1987; Kahane, 2004) and social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997). This broad and general foundation is supported by insights from existing research on entrepreneurship education (see, for example, Fayolle, 2007; Jones and Iredale, 2010).

Facilitating entrepreneurship as an everyday practice must thus be seen as a generic meta-competence positioned ontologically and pedagogically prior to other forms of entrepreneurial activities. It is therefore critically important that entrepreneurship education programmes in HE deal with the heterogeneity of students with regard to entrepreneurial competencies and mindset. If students enter entrepreneurship programmes with little prior experience and perhaps only limited entrepreneurial motivation and skill, the programmes must incorporate activities to accommodate and overcome such deficiencies. This might take the form of individual classes that experiment with such behaviour or include elements that support this form of learning in the general curricula. Even if students are provided with tools such as a business plan, this is

unlikely to generate the desired outcome – venture creation, growth or social change – if they are not preconditioned into an entrepreneurial mindset.

We therefore suggest that our progression model will be of particular use in environments where students do not already have an entrepreneurial approach to life; for example, in societies where children are schooled to become 'wage-takers' rather than 'wage-providers' and/or in which a welfare system supports a passive rather than active approach to potential or actual unemployment.

There is thus a strong need to acknowledge that (i) an entrepreneurial approach to life cannot be taken for granted in entrepreneurship students, and (ii) fostering and encouraging this approach will be an essential component in many entrepreneurship programmes. As a result, the development of an alternative approach, which focuses on building up entrepreneurship as a value-creating meta-competence, 'an entrepreneurial mindset', which can be applied in multiple walks of life and not only in starting a business, becomes a matter of paramount importance. We submit that this type of entrepreneurship education will support the development of more enterprising and competitive individuals and organizations.

Re-attaching the students

The introduction of entrepreneurship as a paradigm for everyday practice represents a departure from traditional academic teaching where detachment is one of the academic virtues that students experience in the traditional lecture room in order to attain a higher-order objective and an analytical perspective separate from their everyday life. At the university, we often teach and encourage students to isolate certain features into context-free elements and investigate how these elements are interconnected (Spinoza *et al*, 1997). Theoretical thinking is ultimately detached thinking and students are taught to take the spectator's distanced view: often, teachers analyse and present a topic in a detached way and develop tests that are separated from real-life situations. As suggested by Spinoza *et al* (1997) a result of this detachment – what Spinoza *et al* refer to as a 'Cartesian practice' – is a detachment from the things we encounter, traditions, our everyday life and, ultimately, our past and ability to make history and change everyday practice.

'We wish for the architect's plan of the whole before we build a building, write a book, begin a career, or raise a child.' (Spinoza *et al*, 1997, p 8)

At the more practical level, the experience of having to write lengthy business plans may postpone or even

nullify the realization of a business idea – or, worse, prevent such ideas ever arising. In general, this approach means things take longer to progress from conception to realization. The way to deal with this, and to a certain extent to counteract it, is to start influencing students at the pre-ideas stage.

Forging an enterprising mindset

Exploring deeper into the early parts of a progressive entrepreneurship programme, it is clear that teaching entrepreneurship as an everyday practice constitutes a less developed paradigm than some of its counterparts. In the following we will outline some elements that we believe may serve to lay a solid theoretical foundation for educational initiatives, methods and tools to promote an entrepreneurial attitude to life in university students. We propose that the very early stage activities of entrepreneurship as an everyday practice can be manifested as four dimensions: context, mindset, the genesis of opportunities, and transformation processes. By working directly with these four dimensions, we propose that it is possible to influence the values, beliefs, intentions and actions of students.

The model represents those elements that will always be part of the entrepreneurial process – in other words the individual–opportunity nexus condensed into a contextualized and transformative perspective. Although it is fully dynamic, it is not a process that flows in any one direction and thus the elements cannot be separated but are forever and always connected in all directions and in a state of constant flux. The perceived logic is that opportunities find their genesis through and are transformed by an individual with entrepreneurial mindset in a certain context. To explicate: the entrepreneurial mindset comes into being through an interplay between narratives and storytelling which influence how the individual constructs their identity. Thus, narratives contribute to the creation of opportunities and construction of entrepreneurial identity. However, identity construction also contributes to the construction of new social worlds and new narratives: as the identity of an entrepreneur develops the narrative will change. Simultaneously, disharmonies and anomalies that are narrated into being by the individual give rise to contextualized opportunities and both the individual and the context are transformed through the process. The individual is transformed into an entrepreneur and the context into an opportunity. Figure 2 attempts to illustrate the connection between the dimensions as well as presenting some theoretical perspectives that can underpin educational activities to engage with the dimensions. We will present in brief, and discuss, these individual components.

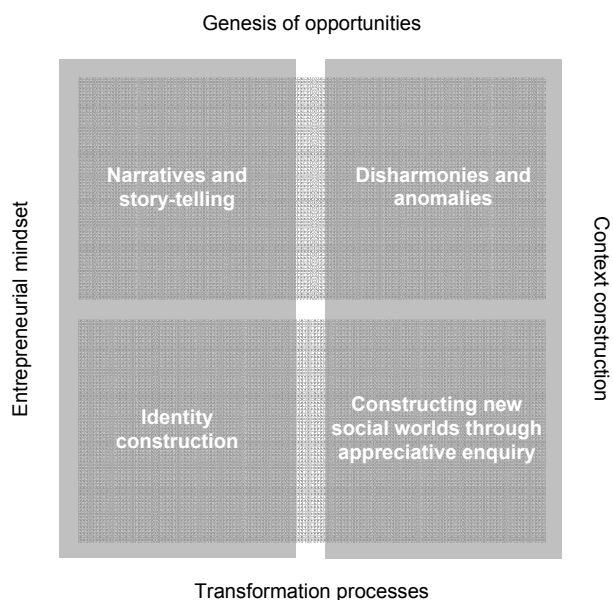


Figure 2. Elements of entrepreneurship as an everyday practice.

Narratives and storytelling

Stories and narratives of entrepreneurship abound. Numerous books and movies tell inspirational stories about how the authors created their businesses, producing a variety of insights or ‘eureka’ moments for those reading or watching them. Indeed, according to Gartner (2007) narratives are also reflexive. Such stories act as powerful means for transforming schemes in the mind because they often invoke role models. That storytelling constitutes an important means of communication is nothing new. It builds on the logic that stories and narratives have been shared over centuries in every culture, as a means of education to create worlds of shared understandings and meanings. Stories create their own bonds and their meanings constitute powerful means for replacing an existing ideology with a new mindset. Hence we can perceive entrepreneurship as the ability to construct and communicate stories that enable and produce action to make these stories ‘come true’. Narratives and storytelling thus become pathways for creating the world in which students want to carry out action and opportunities are narrated into being; or, as Gartner (2007, p 614) states, ‘the narrative of entrepreneurship is the generation of hypotheses about how the world might be: how the future might look and act’. The aim of including storytelling and narratives as a part of the entrepreneurship curriculum is to enable students to perceive their own world as one filled with opportunities that originate within themselves and reflect on how this affects their ability to act.

Disclosing disharmonies, anomalies and problems

This building block is founded on the observation that entrepreneurial opportunities and successful businesses often have their origins in the entrepreneur's ability to perceive problems and disharmonies in their own everyday practice. It therefore focuses on inspiring students to create opportunities by reflecting upon the disharmonies, anomalies and problems they encounter in everyday life. It is thus important to develop didactics and methods that enable students to reflect deeply on such anomalies, disharmonies and problems and to develop these into opportunities for creating value for others, as well as transforming existing forms of social practice into new opportunities (Spinosa *et al*, 1997). The aim is to create insight into the genesis of opportunities and the development of opportunities based on intimate engagement with everyday practices and how this may produce forms of value other than traditional technical or market oriented approaches to entrepreneurship education.

Repertoires for identity construction and transformation through imaginization

Appreciating and mastering the generative qualities of imaginization is a powerful means of making continuous learning an everyday reality. The process of reflective constructivism helps students deconstruct, reconstruct and legitimize new identities and practices in everyday life. Therefore, we need to focus on conveying to students the imagery of a different identity in order to assist their identity transformation and finding ways of unleashing their creative abilities in a world of constant change. The basic logic is that it is very easy to become locked into a particular identity, professionally as well as personally. Imaginization is therefore a core competence for meeting challenges in a turbulent world: imaginization is placed between perception and intellect and is used to transform impressions into thought (Wenger, 1998). Understanding how it is possible to build and shift identity and change between roles helps enhance the transition process from employee to entrepreneur and embrace entrepreneurship as a career option (Hoang and Gimeno, 2010). The focus is on improving the student's ability to see and understand themselves in new ways through the three phases of separation, liminality and incorporation (Hägg, 2010).

Building new social worlds through appreciative inquiry

This focuses on learning new approaches of working together to verbalize, form and realize new entrepreneurial opportunities. It thus incorporates the

team element, a pertinent component in entrepreneurship. The logic is that new opportunities are formed as heterogeneous resources and competencies meet in order jointly to create innovative forms of entrepreneurial and social behaviour (Kahane, 2004). It is important to train the ability to enter into open, constructive and productive dialogue despite diverse disciplinary or cultural backgrounds, especially so in cross-disciplinary learning (Cooperrider and Srivastava, 1987). The aim is to develop a number of appreciative work forms that can be used when students from different backgrounds work together. This process of building team-efficacy (instead of self-efficacy) is needed in work and everyday life and is starting to emerge as a concept in entrepreneurship research (Gully *et al*, 2002). Therefore it is necessary to identify and experiment with approaches and techniques for social interaction in different entrepreneurial learning settings; and to analyse their relevance and potential for producing knowledge on which work-forms of appreciative dialogue are most productive and relevant for interdisciplinary and intercultural entrepreneurial teams.

Further course and curriculum development

Each of the four theoretical perspectives outlined above may be developed further as separate courses and integrated into a full study curriculum, or they may be condensed into a single course, depending on the programme into which they need to fit. What is central in this development is that learning objectives and learning activities enhance the students' entrepreneurial behaviour and this will require different sets of tools than are used in other types of entrepreneurship education. This might include, for example, treating entrepreneurship as a narrative and teaching the students fundamental narrative skills to help them reflect, communicate and mobilize. It might also include increasing the students' sensitivities to their own everyday practices by identifying and analysing any embedded disharmonies, or helping them imagine new identities through reflective and imaginative learning activities. Finally, it might include training the students in basic appreciative techniques that will help them to construct new social realities with their peers. We believe that substantial potential for innovation can be released if entrepreneurship educators continue to develop specific and definite learning activities to support these perspectives.

Conclusions

So, what does all of this entail? It means that entrepreneurship education is not generic and that each educational initiative needs to be tailored to the target

audience with regard to at least two aspects. First, the question we care about: what kind of value are we expecting students to create? Is it economic growth, new ventures or social change? Second, there is the stage of ‘mindset development’ of the students; this will determine where we can start the educational process. Can we start by teaching them to write a business plan; or do we need first to instil an entrepreneurial mindset? If students are socialized into a ‘wage-earner’ mindset, then we may have to set a transformation process in motion before we can take the next steps on the entrepreneurial ladder of progression.

Furthermore, this present paper has certain theoretical consequences. The most important implication is that it establishes a new theoretical paradigm in entrepreneurship education, developed on the basis of existing theories from other disciplines, combining and invoking them in the entrepreneurship field. However, this ‘new’ paradigm is, as pragmatic solutions often are, somewhat eclectic and more theoretical effort should be devoted to aligning the contributions from several traditions into a more consistent framework.

We believe that whilst its pragmatic ambition lies in aligning with existing approaches, the proposal has far-reaching potential in the shaping of a completely new entrepreneurship didactic that affects significantly how students think and act. This is particularly relevant because shaping the mindset results in a much broader applicability of student learning across the private, public and social spheres.

Finally, we issue an invitation to fellow educators to develop new educational interventions, experiments and assignments that incorporate storytelling activities, identity building, disclosure of anomalies and appreciative dialogue training.

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