

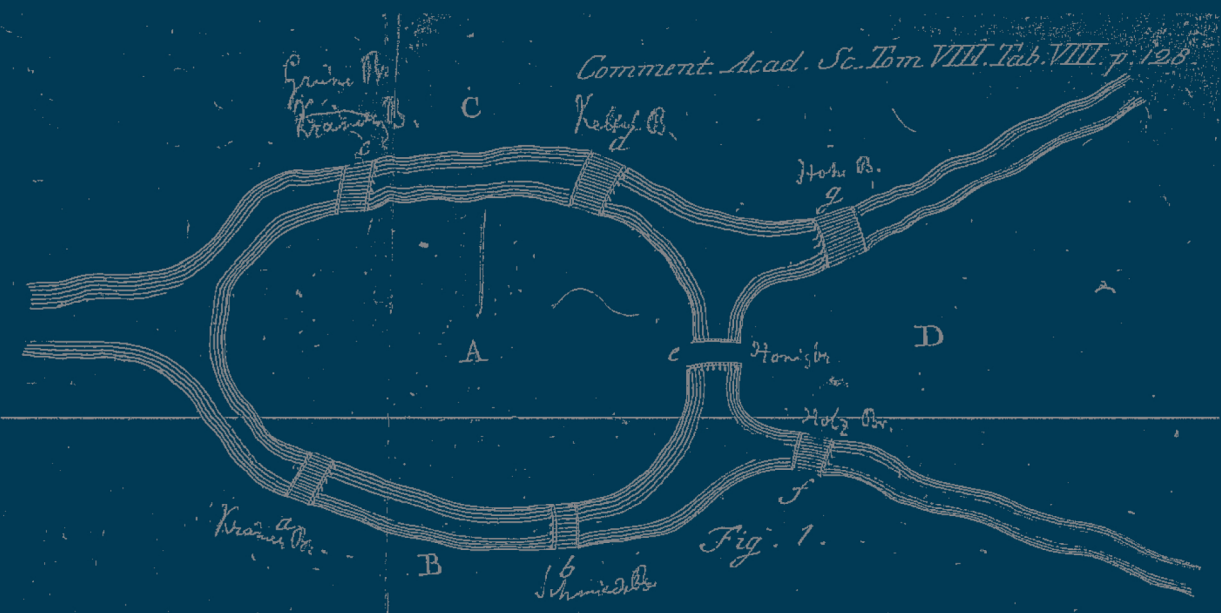
# INTERNATIONAL STUDIES IN TIME PERSPECTIVE

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## CHAPTER 21

### THE ROLE OF FEEDBACK FROM TEACHERS IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG'S CAREER ATTENDING COURSES EFA AND PIEF

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper intends to clarify how the teachers' feedback influences the development of perspective for the future of young people attending professional courses of Education and Training of Adults (EFA), and an integrated programme of education and training (PIEF), in the Lisbon metropolitan area. The main goal is to understand how young people at this stage of their lives, while professional school students, perspective the choice or the decision of a professional future, through the feedback from teachers about their school results and their educational trajectories. In this study, 42 youths participated in Lisbon, of which 31 were attending professional courses EFA and 11 integrate a PIEF group. These young participants were between 13 and 19 years. The methodological plan used included, in addition to collecting socio-demographic identification data, the application of a questionnaire with six issues of open response and the scale *Dellas Identity Status Inventory-Occupation* (DISI-O; Dellas & Jernigan, 1981, adapted by Taveira, 1986), to evaluate the development modes of construction of identity of a future career through feedback from teachers. The generality of the results at scale DISI-O dimensions, it was possible to verify that the young people show contrasting results in the statuses *Foreclosure* and *Moratorium*. These results seem to indicate that although these young people are attending a professional course, show little engagement in exploring development options and career building, and therefore have difficulty in making safe decisions or choices, especially the younger ones.

**Keywords:** feedback, teachers, youth, career, EFA and PIEF courses.

## INTRODUCTION

Education policies followed in Portugal, based on benchmarks of European Union (e.g. European Council, 2006, 2007; UNESCO, 2000) highlighted the importance of the role of formal education of young people, which occurs in school context, in the construction and development of essential skills to preparing young people for active life (Carvalho *et al*, 2008). Being one of the missions of the school encourage the appropriation of knowledge, enabling young people to become active citizens, the role of feedback from teachers is an effective resource in the creation of opportunities for exploration, interaction and relationship in the development of young's future career perspectives (Almeida, 2008; Coimbra, 1995; Taveira, 2000; Veiga & Moura, 2005, Vega, 2009).

Some recent research on meta-analysis explain feedback is “the most powerful influences on achievement” (Hattie, 2009, p.173). In model of feedback proposed by Hattie and Timperley (2007), it is recognized the importance of feedback in the formative process of questions like “where am i going”, “How am i going” and “where to next”. The feedback effect integrates the temporal flow of personal and formative experiences, as the parties of past, present and future (Zimbardo & Boyd, 1999). In this sense, it seems for us, that the feedback acquires a fundamental role in the development and vocational guidance of young people, to help in choices and decisions for a future job or profession (Savickas, 1997/1998).

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Participants and procedure**

In this study participated 42 young people (all male), between 13 and 19 years old ( $M = 16.5$  and  $DP = 1.46$ ). These young people integrated 4 courses, one of them being equivalent of 5 and 6 grade and the remaining three that had professional curricula (courses of Education and Training of Adults-EFA) at the 7, 8 and 9 grades of elementary school. The respective courses was designated: Integrated Programme of Education and Training (PIEF), Waiter, Kitchen and Maintenance Hotel Operator (OMH). Filling in the questionnaires was supervised by the investigator in the courses above mentioned. This task took place in the normal hours of the courses training and the youths collaborated voluntarily, taking up all the time that was necessary to fill in the questionnaires properly.

### **Instruments**

It was used *Dellas Identity Status Inventory Occupation* scale (DISI-O) that has already been adapted to the Portuguese population by Taveira (1986), has 35 items sorted into 5 statutes of vocational identity, similar to the taxonomy developed by Marcia (1964, 1966): achievement, moratorium, foreclosure, and diffusion-diffusion and diffusion-luck. We also used a open-end questionnaire with six issues to assess how these young people perceived the feedback from teachers in the construction and development of vocational identity.

## **RESULTS**

On the analysis and discussion of the results of this study, had taken into account the following central goals: a) Evaluate the characteristics of vocational identity of young participants, according to age and the courses; b) knowing the perceptions of young participants about the feedback from teachers in the development of perspectives of professional future.

## Characteristics of vocational identity of young participants

In Table 1, is organized the data collected through the DISI-O scale to evaluate the characteristics of the vocational identity of young participants, according to age and courses in training. In this Table, the age of young participants was considered in three groups. These age groups are designed based on the mean of age of young participants.

Table1 – *Statistical elements according to age and courses in training of young participants*

Course	Mean (in years)	Statutes of Vocational Identity									
		Achievement		Moratorium		Foreclosure		Diffusion-Diffusion		Diffusion-Luck	
		M	Std. Deviation	M	Std. Deviation	M	Std. Deviation	M	Std. Deviation	M	Std. Deviation
PIEF (N=14)	15,5	21,3571	6,80053	24,8571	5,9337	19,2142	7,62766	23,5000	5,14033	21,9286	5,83707
Waiter (N=9)	16,7	25,7777	5,51764	27,7777	6,74124	22,6666	6,87386	23,6666	7,07106	22,2222	5,09356
Kitchen (N=9)	16,4	24,6666	3,24037	25,8888	4,45658	21,6666	4,27200	24,3333	2,91547	22,6666	3,53553
O M H (N=10)	17,8	25,0000	6,27162	25,9000	5,40473	19,7000	4,49814	22,0000	5,51764	21,0000	6,78233

In general, the results obtained through the application of the scale DISI-O, allow us to find a line with the vocational identity theory and with previous studies (e.g. Dellas & Jernigan, 1981; Taveira, 1986, 2000; Taveira & Campos, 1987; Blustein & Noumair, 1996; Veiga & Moura, 2005). In particular, in terms of vocational identity, most of the young participants, are in full period of adolescence, stays in the status of identity moratorium, which is characterised by young people who are living a period of exploration of the issues of identity, expressing difficulty in making choices. In this situation, we also realize that in spite of the young participants in this study are attending professional courses, which main goal is essentially enable them acquiring essential skills for a future career, these ones reveal difficulties in defining a vocational guidance.

## Perceptions of young people about the feedback from teachers in the development of the future career

From the 42 young participants, only 38 completed the open-end questionnaire. In this study, from the 6 issues worked in questionnaire, we present the following questions:

- In the assessments that you receive from teachers, did you ever feel that this was the course that you wanted to attend to find a job/profession?"
- Do you think important that teachers advise or explain which course/profession/job you should choose?

The construction of categories consisted of group, by content similarity, the justifications given by young people for each of the questions in open-end format (Bardin, 1977; Patton, 1990). The categories and the frequency are present in Tables 2 and 3.

- **Open-end responses.** Emergent response categories are presented in Table 2 regarding the question, “In the assessments that you receive from teachers, did you ever feel that this was the course that you wanted to attend to find a job/profession?”

Table 2 – *Emergent Categories: “In the assessments that you receive from teachers, did you ever feel that this was the course that you wanted to attend to find a job/profession?”*

Category	Answer	Frequency
Interest	“Yes, when I joined this training, I felt that this was the right course”	8
	“Yes, because the teachers tell me that <i>I have got the way</i> ”	4
	“Yes, when teacher praises me and says that I have way, gives me more desire to follow the course”	5
Disinterest	“No”	13
	“No, because the course has nothing to do with me”	5
Indecision	“I don’t know”, “Not at all, it is too early”	3
	Not answered	1
	Total	38

Table 3 – *Emergent Categories: “Do you think important that teachers advise or explain which course/profession/job you should choose?”*

Category	Answer	Frequency
Guidance of vocational Comments	“Yes, because teachers have more ability to say what we should follow and what is best for us”	10
	– “Yes, because teachers are daily with me and know what I have way/capacity”	2
Career Comments	– “Yes, because they have years of life and experience”	4
	“Yes, because young people as me do not care much to this issue [job], they give time to time, which appear is well”	2
	“yes”	6
Disinterest	“No, because I think I have to make that decision”	9
	“No, because the profession I choose will depend on the way and the commitment and love that I will have for “	1
	“No”	2
Indecision	“I do not agree or disagree”	2
	Total	38

The most frequently cited response implicated disinterest. The young participants considered the feedback is not relevant, maybe because some of them are not identify themselves with the course “... the course has nothing to do with me” or simply by feel

undecided and consider is “... too early” to reflect on this issue. However, 17 of the 38 responses think that de comments from teachers are motivators. As in the study of Hattie (2003) “It is what teachers know, do, and care about which is very powerful” (p.2) in the achievement process, because teachers are the ones who most be able to monitor, understand, and interpret students with more insight. “As a consequence they seek and provide more and better feedback in light of this monitoring” (p.8).

Emergent response categories in Table 3 are concerned about the question “Do you think important that teachers advise or explain which course/profession/job you should choose?”

In Table 3 is possible to see that the majority of the answers of the young participants consider teachers’ opinion important for to have a choice in a future career. They consider that teachers provide effective feedback “...because they have years of life and experience”, helping them to better identify the individual skills “...because teachers are daily...” present with their students. 2 of the 38 young’s also consider that the feedback from teachers are important because young people “...do not care much to this issue, they give time to time, which appear is well” and in this way teachers can encourage students student to think in future. In this way, like in above the discussion of Table 2, teachers are seen by the young’s as experts who monitoring some problems providing relevant and useful feedback (Hattie, 2003).

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In a society, where teachers have a strong influence on personal and social development of young people, the feedback is an important component of pedagogical process, which provide support of the development of the perception of future career of young people (Brookhart, 2008).

According to the results of this work, it is possible to understand the importance that the young participants give to feedback as a guidance practice to develop their vocational identity, because the majority of young people are in a phase of identity moratorium, in which not yet reveal the ability to make choices or elaborate coherent projects for a future career. It is perhaps in this way that in second analysis of youth answers from the open-end questionnaire, it is possible to understand that the majority of young people considers the feedback from teachers, is a consequent practice, since teachers are seen as experienced professionals of school pathways of their students. As such, the feedback comments are mostly understood as motivators, coaches and clarifiers of future perspective of career development and construction.

One of the feedback advantage is that it is aligned with many of best practices associated planning and development vocational choices and life projects of young people (Almeida, 2008; Brookhart, 2008; Taveira, 2000; Veiga & Moura, 2005, Fisher & Frey, 2007; Vega, 2009). In the Hattie (2003) opinion the feedback is “the most powerful single moderator that enhances achievement” (p. 8)

The feedback has generally positive effects in classroom interventions as an educational guidance for promoting the development of future career perspectives (Hattie, 2009). This guidance practice in school context has numerous advantages in personal and social training of our young people, since for many of them school can be a single opportunity

to support the process of construction and development of vocational identity, allowing them access to vocational training and thus facilitating the transition to active life (Taveira, 2000, 2004). In Savikas (2005) opinion, “the goal of the school-to-work transition is that emerging adults learn to contribute to society by fitting their personalities into suitable work roles. The social expectation that adolescents seek occupations congruent with their abilities and interests is communicated to them in the form of vocational development tasks” (p.49). This transition between school and a future career, in addition to helping youth in their vocational choices, promoting the social inclusion of young people, helping them in their integration into the workforce.

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