

ON-THE-JOB TRAINERS: THEIR TRAJECTORIES WITHIN THE CURRENT SOCIOECONOMIC CONTEXT.

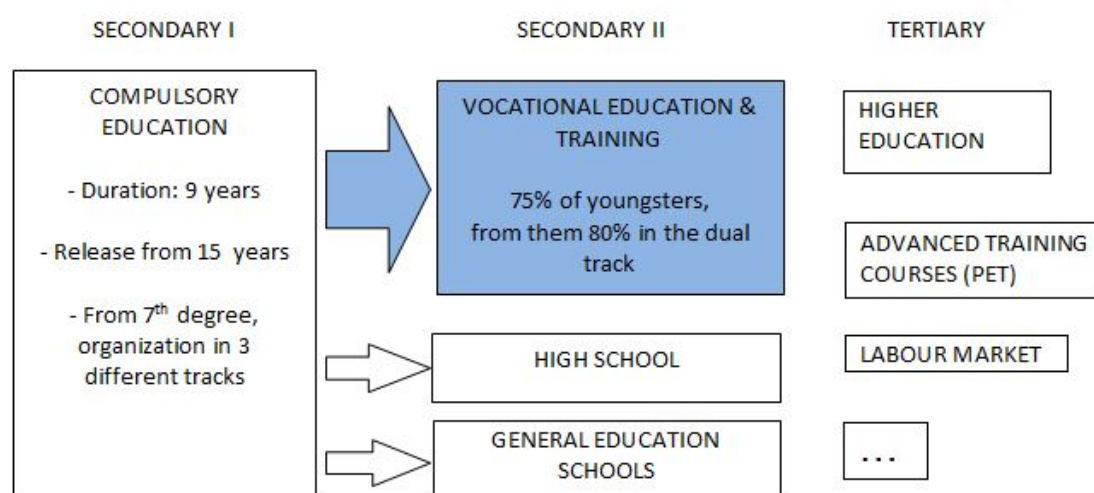
The case of the French-speaking region of Switzerland

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INTRODUCTION: SWISS SCHOOL SYSTEM



In Switzerland, vocational education and training (VET) is the pathway followed by most young people after compulsory education (SEFRI, 2013). This system combines periods of learning and work at school and in companies.

Consequences: the strong tie relying the VET system and the labor market (Hanhart, 2006); the central position of the companies within the system (SEFRI, 2013); the key role of on-the-job trainers in the learning process (Mulder, 2013; Baumeler, Lamamra & Schweri, 2014).

Although the decisive role of on-the-job trainers, little is known about them (Mulder, 2013)



HYPOTHESES - EXPECTED RESULTS

Social reproduction: influence by the family circle involved in vocational training or education.

Way for leaving a certain hardness of work and a specific position in the organization of work (dirty work).

Desire to transmit their job and their experience: identification to work

Professional and social mobility: access to the function of on-the-job trainer allows undertaking an ascending or a parallel career and reaching a higher social status.

Differences between men and women (transmission of work, perception of their role, motivation).

Recognition: becoming on-the-job trainer to be recognized at work (transversal hypothesis).

Influence by certain events of their trajectories (transitions, apprenticeship, work experiences).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Social and professional trajectories

Heterogeneity of trainers: economic sector, size of company, gender, education, work experience.

Social reproduction: family tradition in VET or in education.

Professional and social mobility: career, superior status.

School revenge: compensation of a negative school experience.

Significant others: colleagues, bosses, and friends

Recognition: function not always recognized (firm, hierarchy, colleagues).

Motivation: transmission of their work and experiences to prepare future colleagues and to lead apprentices to adult life (mission of socialization).

The current socioeconomic context

Transformations taking place on the labor market since the last decades: transition from fordism to post-fordism → flexibility, precariousness of work, intensification of work rhythms, individualization. Identity at work: their professional identity in transition (from professional to trainer).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The thesis intends to analyze on-the-job trainers' function and social and professional trajectories in the current socioeconomic context in order to answer the following questions:

What are the social and professional trajectories of on-the-job trainers?

What being an on-the-job trainer mean to the people who take on this role?

How do the trajectories and practices of on-the-job trainers relate to the current socioeconomic context in Switzerland?

The thesis focuses on the French-speaking region of Switzerland.

POPULATION

Different sectors (Federal Statistics Office), for example: industry; construction; trade; hotels and personal services; management, administration; health, education, culture, scientific professions.

Companies with different size (big, medium, small). Mixed male – female.

Different experiences in training.

Different levels in the work organization (for example: head of training, on-the-job trainers, trainers without qualification for training, HR).

Specific thesis population (extra): about 20 people doing the training for becoming on the-job-trainers who have different occupations and different experiences in training.

METHODS

Semi-structured interviews (No. 80).

Observations (No. 35).

Focus group (No. 3; each with 6-8 people) during the training program offered to prospective on-the-job trainers by cantonal institution.

Documentary analysis (legislative texts concerning VET trainers).

Statistics (cantonal data about VET trainers).

"IDEAL-TYPE" PROFILES OF TRAINER'S TRAJECTORIES

1. The ones who become trainers as a means to escape from exhausting or health-threatening jobs, or even as an alternative to the "dirty work" associated with some non-manual occupations.
2. Those who are committed to the transmission of their "passion" for their particular occupation, to which they demonstrate great commitment and energy.
3. Those whose use the status of trainer as a short-cut or access route to promotion and/or an upwardly mobile career path.
4. Those who see their function as the opportunity to build up personal and meaningful relationships with members of the younger generations, in fond memory of the positive contacts they had with their own trainers / mentors.

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