

Young people with disabilities and infinite worlds: Potential for a transdisciplinary reflection

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Abstract

The paper presents a transdisciplinary reflection on emergencies that young people with disabilities find themselves in today. Compared to the population of young people and university students, those with disabilities have a greater risk of having “limited worlds” to experience themselves as adults. In this paper, we will consider one of the most difficult dimensions: work and job inclusion. It uses a case study in a productive organisation focused on recognising the capacity to work of intellectually impaired persons. The process of labour inclusion through apprenticeship transcends purely technical questions and brings reflections on the concept of hospitality. The paper concludes that education is a powerful tool to promote important themes of social cohabitation and to build real opportunities to the youngsters to experiment themselves in the role of adults.

Keywords: Young people with disabilities; Transdisciplinary; Hospitality; Labour Inclusion; Apprentice Course.

Introduction

Inclusion is a big contemporary issue in social sciences and elsewhere. It may concern minorities, religions, geographical disputes or national sovereignty, among many other characteristics and contingencies that define peoples and individuals. It inevitably involves consequent discussions on legislation. Perhaps, an evident example is the Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons approved in 1975 by the United Nations (UN), redacted and ratified by different nations around shared causes with the aim of ensuring

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human respect and cohabitation. It was not the first time that different nations gathered around shared ideals and values, however, this convention represents many of the hopes of the contemporary civilization.

The educational power of collective causes and social movements reveals the degree of historical changes originated by the recognition of the importance of these themes. Undoubtedly, this process needs raising the awareness on the necessities of different groups and the ensuing transformations in perceiving them. We could mention many other movements, which were hard discussed, contested and negotiated in the past and conquered rights that belong to our reality (Mantovani, 2005; Benhabib, 2005).

This paper discusses specifically the inclusion of people with disabilities in productive organisations. Better, it argues for recognising their abilities to work and, most importantly, the right to participate in social life. We do not intend to discuss only the implementation of specific laws, but to provoke an ample discussion on the meanings of inclusion, its comprehensiveness, possibilities and limits within productive organisations. To achieve this goal, we use concepts as *hospitality* (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 2000) and *cosmopolitanism* (Beck, 2006a), to approach inclusion in non-purely assimilative or unilateral proposals, which might disregard the complexity that exists in diversity. This choice derives from the belief that the form in which a theme is introduced to a society may or may-not increase the chances of its reception, in this case diversity and relative cohabitation.

The paper departs from a case study with an important specification – the organisation deliberately chose to include some specific types of disabilities: psychosocial and intellectual, that is persons affected by mental and intellectual difficulties, as well as multiple disabilities. The term psychosocial disability is relatively recent, established by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2006, it concerns experiences of social disadvantages that arise from mental health issues (Szmukler; Daw & Callard, 2014; Sasaki, 2012). These disabilities are usually more difficult to include in organisations, because of the belief that these people have reduced or non-existent abilities to work. The Annual Report on Social Information by the Labour Ministry in Brazil in the last year confirms the trend to include fewer workers with intellectual and mixed disabilities in the labour market. The analysed firm defied this assumption and the greatest challenge caused by this choice was how to construct different communication codes to bridge the characteristics of the subjects and the organisational needs.

Learning has an essential role in inclusion. The Brazilian educational system seems to have an expressive gap placed between school and work. In response, some educators may rightly emphasise that the school forms citizens; however, this assumption runs the risk of undervaluing the role of the citizen as worker.

We do not defend the transformation of school into a mere training ground for future work (with the obvious exception of vocational schools). We support adopting the notion of work as a central element in the lives of the students. Choosing a profession means deciding, when possible, a future job. This is one of the most important choices in life.

Another relevant consideration on the relations between learning and inclusion is that the so-called able persons could learn early how to cohabit with people with disabilities at school, learning how to deal with the differences. Therefore, the strangeness in the relationships with diverse people may decrease or disappear. “Accepting strangeness means being open to contrasts, questioning certainties, tolerating sufferings and limitations” (Rodrigues, 2005, p. 61). Brazilian schools are starting to accept children with disabilities in regular classes. However, this still depends on a series of specific characteristics that vary in each case and on the available school structures. Inclusion is still an exception more than a rule. On the other hand, the reality of the country can be fairly described saying that inclusion is not standardised, it still depends on individual or casual initiatives.

From the viewpoint of people with disabilities, the introduction of a law with a quota system opened a large labour market, as hiring disabled workers became required by law. The law found the labour market with serious difficulties to provide this workforce while firms were eager to fill those posts. The presence or lack of it, of people with disabilities effectively able and prepared to assume a task immediately did not coincide with the emerging needs of the companies. Companies that opted for a real hiring of disabled workers and not just to obey the law, had to bridge wishes and reality by providing training to these workers. These choices define the different inclusive projects of the firms.

Considering the easing or inhibitory factors of labour inclusion and the project of the studied firm, this study asks some questions: is the inclusion of persons with disabilities helped by training for the job? Does learning favour the process of hospitality towards different people in the organisations? By this, we mean learning to work as combining technical and attitudinal learning, like the programme developed by the mentioned firm in partnership with a teaching institute.

The next section discusses the theoretical concepts that form the basis of the analysis of the case, which we think can help us in finding the answers for the guiding questions of this paper. Hospitality is commonly interpreted as receiving a guest or visitor at home or another place where we play the role of hosts. The guest may be known already, a friend or a family member, or can be a total stranger. These characteristics and other ones like conditions, reasons, length of the stay and more, define our relationship with the guest. Is it possible

to apply this concept to the labour inclusion of persons with disabilities? This question entitles and problematizes the theoretical discussion that follows.

Labour inclusion: new borders for young people with disabilities

Workers with disabilities are hired, most of the times, to comply the obligations of the law. However, their wages are below average and employment happens as result of measures of flexibility, like outsourcing, which weaken the ties between firms and workers. The labour inclusion of disabled persons presupposes a discussion about solidarity, recognition and respect for the differences, tolerance towards different rhythms and more. These elements often clash with many of the needs of contemporary corporations. Among them, the emphasis on the *employability*, quick obsolescence of expertise and the constant need of training, reinforce the individualist character of labour relations. All of these flexible work characteristics provoke high expectations of performance, with goals increasingly more difficult to attain that justify an ever more intense competition.

Since the nineteen-eighties, many authors studied these characteristics of the labour market. They associated, in one way or the other, unpredictability with the consequences for the individual and working life of the workers. We have some strong concepts such as the corrosion of character or the flexible men (Sennett, 2009), liquid life and wasted lives (Bauman, 2007; 2005), high modernity (Giddens, 2002), risk society (Beck, 2006b), and other authors who interpret the characteristics of an increasingly globalised and ephemeral world. This paper acknowledges this background and recognises the additional difficulties encountered by disabled people to access the labour market.

The existence of laws granting the right to work to people with disabilities means that without them these persons would be left behind in favour of others. The Brazilian law requires from two to five percent of workers with disabilities employed by firms with over 100 employees and the percentage increases according to the size of the firm. This requirement forced the reception of persons with diversities, who began to cohabit in organisations that were not used to these new actors. It also created new necessities like pulling down physical obstacles, raising co-workers awareness about the reality of different disabilities, establishing new forms of communications and adapting the environment of the workplace for people with disabilities.

We run the risk to discuss hospitality in unilateral terms, the so-called normal persons receiving people with disabilities in organisations. However, it is undeniable that social life is set for people who have control of their physical

and mental capacities. This justifies the supposed partiality of the concept. Apart from this, we consider inclusion as a reciprocal concept, which does not benefit only people with disabilities, it modifies the general terms of the relationships among people.

Derrida's words differentiate between the **law of hospitality** and **laws of hospitality**:

"The law of unlimited hospitality (to give the new arrival all of one's home and oneself, to give him or her one's own, our own without asking a name, or compensation, or the fulfilment of even the smallest condition), and on the other hand, the laws (in the plural), those rights and duties that are always conditioned and conditional". (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 2000, p. 77)

The author makes a clear distinction between unconditional hospitality, which is mandatory but considered almost impossible to be put into practice, and hospitality, which is always conditional. Derrida (1997) sustains that hospitality is unconditional by philosophical and moral principles but alerts to the fact that there is also a risk in offering unconditional hospitality. In doing that, the other may impose his or her own culture, language or way of behaving. This is not an easy problem to solve and has to be constantly negotiated. Hospitality should not be either assimilation, acculturation, or simply the occupation of my space by the Other.

The relation between guest and host has to be constantly re-invented. Derrida gives some examples, like a new language to communicate with somebody that we just met or is unable to speak the same language. We have to translate, invent, gesticulate, show, draw, touch, whatever may convey the idea we intend to express. Here, the learning process mediates the relationship of hospitality facilitating the mutual understanding. In the case study we see how learning helps the communication among different groups involved in the process of inclusion. "Hospitality is a very general name for all our relations to the Other" (Derrida, 1997, p. 8). Besides, there are not pre-established rules. Returning to what we affirmed above, the legislation helps regulating the inclusive relationships, but the rules for cohabitation are built during the process of sharing the space. It can be called mutual learning.

Beck (2006a) uses the concept of *cosmopolitanism*, a very ancient expression that had different meanings throughout history, until its present one owed to globalisation and contemporary human movements. Like hospitality, cosmopolitanism includes the element of otherness, or the presence and unavoidability of the Other in our lives. "The important fact is that the human condition has itself become cosmopolitan" (Beck, 2006a, p. 2). The concept entered our daily lives. The author calls it *reflexive modernity*, where cultural

borders and differences changed drastically demanding new policies of hospitality and cohabitation. Cosmopolitanism, in association with hospitality, helps us understanding the relationships, roles and results that come from the interfacing of inclusion vs exclusion.

Beck (2006a; 2006b) is among the authors who reject the concept of post-modernity or the death of modernity. This view proposes alternative ways to explain and theorise the social changes caused by globalisation. Beck reviews the concept of modernity, called by him as second modernity, through a double transforming movement: institutions become global, as daily life breaks free from traditions and previous customs. Social movements, including the one of people with disabilities, become the protagonists of the changes through their struggle to be recognised, questioning the ingrained ways to see the world.

In including diversity, the negotiating processes always involve moral, ethical and political questions. These processes do not automatically mean intolerance, but agreements to establish the norms of cohabitation. As affirmed by Benhabib (2005, p. 31) and Mantovani (2004, p. 8), the culture becomes, increasingly, a shared narrative, but also constantly contested and re-negotiated, in terms of space, meanings and boundaries between *us* and the *others*.

This paper proposes to open the firms to diversity avoiding to do it only because it is required by the law, but as a much wider learning process. By giving hospitality (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 2000) in structures conceived for able-bodied people, the element of strangeness or the Other (Beck, 2006a) follows a journey of learning. Learning is the missing link, or the passage from school to work, the process of social insertion through labour inclusion. Learning in this way means a mutual benefits for companies and apprentices, for hosts and guests. This assumption is made clearer in the case study.

The case study: inclusion through learning

To understand the process of inclusion, this research used a practice of preparatory work and training of a group of individuals with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities, developed in a project by a firm and a vocational school. The programme of inclusion through learning started in 2010. The firm concerned has three manufacturing units that produce consumer goods sold in Brazil and exported to other countries. It is based in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil and employs approximately two thousand labourers. The company accomplishes the requirements of law, the three units have respectively 5, 4.5 and 4 percent of the workers with disabilities.

Data collection was carried out using reports provided by the company and interviews to participants of the process. The study is qualitative with a

phenomenological approach. It seeks to establish common points in the workers' depositions and in the documents consulted, without restrictions in interpreting other possible meanings that came from individual factors (Gil, 2008; Roesch, 1999). This study has an exploratory approach, an ample approximation to the theme that seeks familiarity with the problem, trying to make it known more widely and open to new hypotheses (Lakatos & Markoni, 1991).

Textual analysis was used as it is a method that enhances the comprehension of the content as it proposes deconstructing the texts and, then, it establishes the relationships among the elements that came up during the interviews. Deconstructing texts implies, examining in detail the material researched by fragmentation, formulating analytic units and understanding the contents (Moraes, 2003).

The research was carried out using semi-structured interviews and the guidelines followed the aims established by the researchers for each category of interviewees. This aimed to deal with the difficulties found in the apprenticeship course and the benefits perceived by all sides involved.

Five workers with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities, who started working in the organisation thanks to the learning programme, were interviewed. These workers were unmarried and childless and lived with relatives. The main goal was to obtain a vision on the different perspectives involved in inclusion. Therefore, a teacher from a vocational school, a relative responsible for a worker with disability, a Human Resource employee who belongs to the inclusion programme, and the Public Manager by the Labour Ministry (MTE) were also interviewed.

The interviewed persons identify with the codes listed in the Table 1.

Table 1 – Identifying Codes for Interviewees

Interviewed	Description
E1	Worker with intellectual disability who attended the apprenticeship course in 2012.
E2	Worker with psychosocial disability who attended the apprenticeship course in 2012.
E3	Worker with intellectual disability who attended the apprenticeship course in 2011.
E4	Worker with intellectual disability who attended the apprenticeship course in 2014.
E5	Worker with intellectual disability who attended the apprenticeship course in 2014.
E6	Teacher at the Vocational Technical School
E7	Member of the Corporative Programme of Inclusion
E8	Public Manager by the Labour Ministry
E9	Relative of a disabled worker hired through the learning project

Source: Data obtained from the interviews

Hospitality: Preparing the hosts to receive the guests

The proposal of inclusion through learning is an initiative promoted by the MTE. This agency is responsible for implementing the legislation on inclusion and acknowledges the difficulties faced by the companies in hiring and training workers with disabilities. Instead of taking a punitive posture against companies that do not accomplish targets, the Ministry tried to stimulate projects like the one described here. This attitude enhances the qualification of the labour force with disabilities and creates a labour market more favourable to the attainment of the quotas.

The regional agencies of the MTE promote inclusion through the modality of learning to favour the meeting of interests common to firms and candidates with disabilities. This strategy has been most effective for types of disabilities scarcely visible on the labour market, like people who quit school because of social difficulties and for all those people who did not develop working skills and qualifications. Unlike the requirements for general apprentices, there is no age limit for those with disabilities, while, for those with mental disabilities there is no need of school certification. Furthermore, this apprenticeship contract can exceed the limit of two years established by the general legislation.

The companies that hire in this modality have some advantages, for example, some discounts on workers' wages and social contributions. The person with disabilities continues to receive the customary package of Government Benefits during the apprenticeship period, without direct costs for the company. In 2011, these norms became more flexible as the government benefit is no longer cancelled but remains suspended when the person is hired with a contract. These changes brought peace of mind to workers and their families, who maintain a guarantee of income in case of job loss, without incurring into further bureaucratic obstacles.

The company launched the Project of Inclusion for disabled people in 2009 to accompany the requirements of quotas established by the affirmative action legislation. A team from the Human Resources department developed the programme after benchmarking firms, which had previous experience in this field. The Board of Directors accepted the proposal that went beyond legal employment requirements that simply establish a percentage of disabled workers.

The first step made by the team was to raise awareness among managers and workers of the firm on the importance of including disabled people. This beginning unlocked other actions and adaptations in the firm, changing substantially the employees' way of viewing work. A programme created for affirmative actions was transforming the organisation, which began to get involved with the whole process of inclusive work – from selections,

integration, orientation, adaptation and development to withhold disabled workers in the firm.

The firm started modifying processes to improve and adapt the working conditions. Family members were included in the selection process and accompanied the integrative training. Departments as Work Medicine and Safety became part of processes that before were managed only by Human Resources and area managers. These actions greatly improved adaptation and training on the workplace.

New kids on the block. As Figure 1 below shows, these actions have been very effective, as the amount of disabled workers grows each year and currently the firm covers the percentage required by the legislation. The case study considered events until 2015 as the inclusion program was adapted after this period due to the political and economic crisis faced by Brazil.

Another factor that distinguishes the case is the choice to hire workers with intellectual disability. As we can imply, by analysing the nationwide RAIS data, this kind of worker tends to lose his spot in the market. Figure 2 shows that 69% of the current workers with disabilities that work in the firm are intellectually disabled and 7% have multiple disabilities, which also includes intellectual disability associated with other ones.

After the initial phase of raising awareness among workers and directors, the program of inclusion was introduced in 2010. A training group was formed in collaboration with a Vocational Training School (the School, from here onward). More details about the training contents are given later. We describe here the importance of this action for the firm to learn limits and potentials of the process of inclusion. As a positive aspect, we emphasise the propitious results, which translate in a better preparation for workers in the firm. This observation stirred the interest of the organisation to hire more workers through the training mode. Since then, the firm has promoted five more groups, including the last one recently finished in 2016, employing 7 of the 10 trainees. Up to this moment, most of the participants have been hired by the company, which indicates the success of the project of inclusion.

Figure 1 - Number of workers with disabilities employed by the firm in the last six year

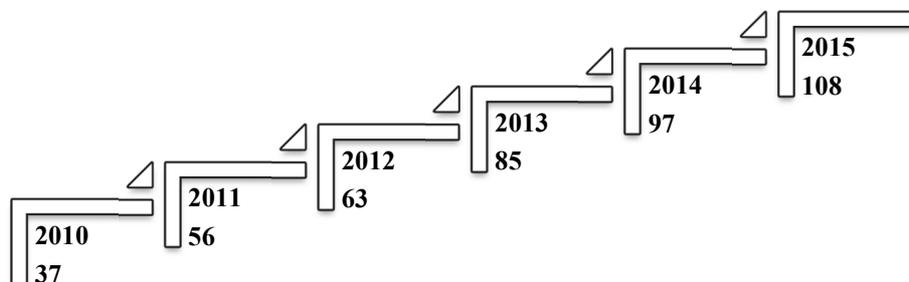
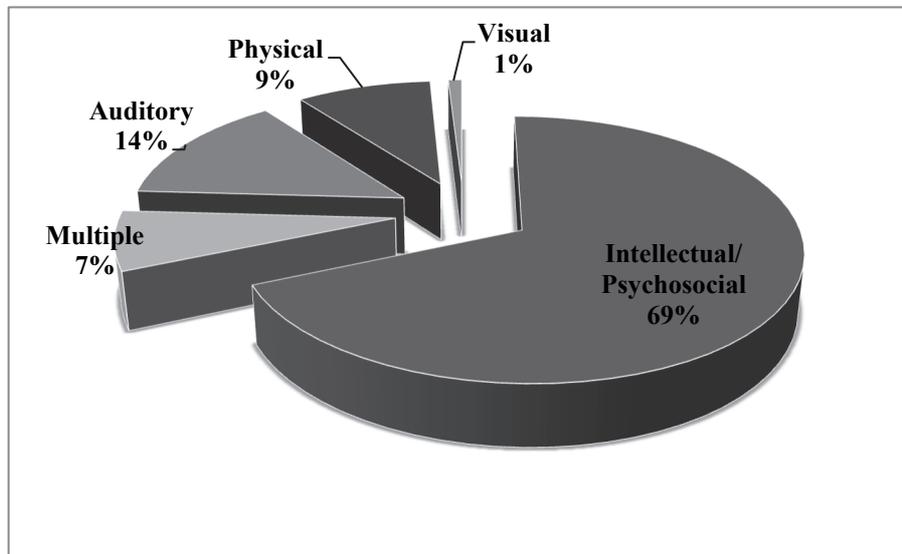


Figure 2 – Percentage of hired workers by type of disability



Source: Report by the firm

The learning process was split in two parts: the part one consisted of theoretic lessons, lasted 400 hours in the classrooms. Part two consisted another 400 hours of practising in the firm. After these two stages, the students received a certificate of conclusion and, depending on the overall performance, hiring is considered. The training process comes next.

Inclusion through training step by step

Working out the right number of guests. The learning process starts with the assessment of the number of available posts by Human Resources. Next comes the negotiation with the School about the period and the number of trainees in the course. After these procedures, the training process begins, with the definition of spaces, teachers, tutors, timetables and people involved.

The firm offers the posts on websites, newspapers, schools, associations aiding people with disabilities and other recruitment agencies specialised in providing this kind of workforce. A team composed by training instructor, HR analyst and a psychologist select the candidates. The former two are responsible for the training process, monitoring the trainees, supervision, and adjustments of the programme.

The following elements are scrutinised in the selection: time availability, possible participation of a family member in specific moments during the process, level of literacy, autonomy in accomplishing activities (for example, autonomous or assisted performance in executing tasks), future plans and more. This information provides the base to plan the teaching and, later, to adapt the working environment once the person is employed by the firm.

A moment of integration takes place among students, their guardians, the School, and company representatives. Here, all sides sign the training contracts and obtain the information on the contractual conditions and the benefits that the students will receive during the training, including the scholarship (half a *minimum wage*, approximately R\$ 400, or US\$ 125 that students receive during the course), transportation passes, medical insurance and discounts for pharmaceuticals. Furthermore, families and students receive information about the period of training to enable them to decide and reflect on their commitment to the course, aiming to form a good context for learning, avoiding future abandonment and other problems.

From the beginning of the lectures in the School headquarters, the personnel responsible for the inclusion in the company participate regularly to the teaching activities, to get to know the trainees better and prepare the future work-posts. This systemised contact identifies the skills of each student and defines, with bases on the student's competences, the activities that the trainee will perform in the company. The company has a diversified and flexible output producing a variety of goods. These characteristics facilitate integration in the company, as well as reallocations in case of non-adaptation to the work post.

After the conclusion of the lectures, the students and their guardians are invited to another meeting, introducing the new learning stage: the training activities in the company. The productive and administrative departments, which will receive the apprentices, receive information about the profile of the trainees and the activities that they will possible perform. The departments appoint a tutor who will support the persons with disabilities and their supervisors at work.

In the practical stage of the learning, the students change the context and the most significant moment is introducing the trainees to their colleagues, managers and sectors. The employees are informed beforehand of the arrival of the new colleagues, in this occasion the sector's supervisor and the teacher review the most important principles of the company's functions and of the inclusion programme.

The training instructor is responsible for the activities of the trainees, the instructor along with the management and colleagues verifies and provides the adaptations and assistive technologies (adaptive and rehabilitative devices for people with disabilities) needed for the trainees on the work-posts. This is a key

role in the processes of inclusion and learning. Here, the teacher in charge of the course supervises the evolution and the adaptation of each student to the practical activities by making regular visits to the company.

At the end of the course, the jobs are confirmed to each trainee who has been hired. The workers with disabilities, their guardians and the sector that will receive them need to agree to all terms of the contract. After this, Human Resources begin the legal procedures to employ effectively the trainees. Table 2 shows the evolution of the admission of workers with disabilities as result of the above described apprenticeship courses.

Table 2 – Persons employed by the company according to their disabilities

Year	Course	Number of Trainees	Trainees Employed	Stayed in the Company
2010	Production workers	12	5	5
2011	Production worker	11	11	11
2012	Administration workers	11	11	8
2013	Production workers	11	8	6
2013	Production workers	8	8	7
2015	Production workers	10	7	7
Totals		63	50	44

Source: Reports by the firm

The present rate of people hired exceeds 80%. A rather high number if compared to the hiring rate of apprentices without disabilities, whose highest was 5%. The next item examines the qualitative aspects of the process of inclusion, departing from interviews with the different actors of the learning process.

The role of training in the process of inclusion and its advantages

Stepping into the labour market. A recurring statement by interviewees with disabilities, and their family members, is that they chose apprenticeship with the goal of entering the labour market. These subjects seem to perceive this opportunity as a safer door to access a professional life. All interviewees showed the expectation to work for the company after the end of the course. Statements, like the next ones, show the expectations attached to the process of training and the company. They go from the most logic affirmation by a family member, who sees the training programme as a facilitation to work for the company, to excessive enthusiasm towards a future that only just started.

“The first opportunity that happened was the apprenticeship course. It was his chance to enter the labour market.” (E1)

“I entered the course to see what it was like, but I want to be an employee. Nowadays, it is not easy to get a job; many people complain that they cannot get a job. A course makes it easier”. (E3)

“I really wanted to work, I like working very much, and I want to retire here”. (E4)

When a firm offers an apprenticeship course, the expectations of the participants and their relatives must be clear. As much as the company intends to hire all the apprentices, this does not happen in every case. There are countless reasons varying from course abandonment and family, company or personal decisions. Below we see why the firm managed to fulfil legal numbers of workers with disabilities only in 2015, or, five years after the beginning of the inclusion programme through learning.

“For the company the training is great, in this period we get to know the apprentices and get ready to receive them”. (E7)

On the other hand, the workers who finished the job-training course justified their reasons to remain in the company affirming personal characteristics such like commitment, wish to learn and ability to perform the tasks correctly. The level of apprenticeship of the course, surely effective for hiring, is perceived as essential to understand the reality of a company, prepare to cohabitate in a working context, and a determinant factor to enter the labour market.

The students see the course as a wake-up call, a display for their dormant skills that they did not know they possessed due to the difficulties associated to previous school and labour exclusion. None of the interviewed students had formally worked before; they perceive the course as a preliminary stage, a way to enter in a company. The answers below regard the question on the reasons for staying in the company.

“What made me stay? My apprenticeship, my growth. I started the course to see what it was like, but I wanted to be hired”. (E3)

“The trust that they [the company, authors’ note] have in me, my attitude to grow”. (E2)

Apparently, one of the main functions of apprenticeship is to break the initial barrier and favour employability. The next statements are by a teacher for professional training for intellectual and psychosocial impaired students since 2012, and a family member who accompanied a student throughout the duration of the course.

“The ultimate realisation [as a teacher, authors’ note] is when a person with disabilities carries out autonomously his daily activities, including the professional ones and, what is more, becomes an independent and happy person”. (E6)

“It is a very fruitful apprenticeship project; through it many youngsters find an opportunity to acquire a profession. Without this apprenticeship, they would surely find many obstacles on the way”. (E9)

Gaining autonomy. All interviewees perceived the gains of apprenticeship. Some changes caused by the course were seen as beneficial for many different spheres of the lives of the students, for example, the perception of the surrounding context, the conquest of new opportunities and wider horizons. Often, they report situations in which previous boundaries that caused isolation or social exclusion were or are being overcome, as reported below by interviewee E2. Going out on the street, using public transport, and other daily activities are very challenging according to the kind and degree of disabilities and economical condition of the subjects.

“(…) it made me meet people, have independence. To go and return to the course alone. The course taught me to see things beyond home and have a daily routine”. (E2)

“Initially, my mother took me there, but then I decided to go and return on my own”. (E2)

Many interviewed students reported learning about living besides the working techniques, like E4, who also emphasised how he transferred elements of the course in his practical life. Not only apprenticeship, but also the cohabitation with colleagues and teachers resulted in a mirroring process, making the integration of the knowledge more complete.

“I learnt a lot with the teacher. Tidying up, organising. My father said: all that you learnt in Vocational Training School, now you do at home. [...] I do the washing up and drying, and the dusting”. (E4)

Apprenticeship is also seen as a greater involvement on the job, acknowledgement of the responsibilities required by the tasks. It is a process of maturation for the students regardless of their age. In most of the cases, apprentices will be working alongside other workers in a company for the first time.

“The course helped me to be more responsible with the activities that I do and left me more active and assured to do the activities. I acquired much experience”. (E5)

The Hosts and the Guests. Corporations and professionals involved in

inclusion programmes perceive many benefits in finding it easy to fulfil legal numbers, supported also by better performances by the disabled workers hired after the course. These professionals see results that resemble those related by the students, of greater responsibility and involvement on the job, as well as the specific knowledge about the production process.

“The company gains, no other course prepares a worker for the specific organisational processes. [...] the person with disabilities gains having an opportunity to obtain qualifications and get a formal employment, the person stops depending on state subsidies and becomes a taxpayer”. (E8)

“People with disabilities, who overcome obstacles, motivate the so-called able people who discover that disability can be inside everyone, whenever they find an inability to do something. The activities of the company will be carried out with greater involvement and dedication”. (E6)

Interestingly, we note that the statements confirm the strategy of MTE on the inclusion through apprenticeship, which places everyone in a cohabitating situation. This process allows breaking pre-conceived perceptions on capacities or limitations of the disabled workers.

According to a UNESCO (2014) survey, education provides a route to improvement of the living conditions of the vulnerable people. Through education, people can defeat the chronicity of the illness and, with it, prevent the transmission of precariousness to the next generation. The MTE representative interviewed said that disability also links with poverty, as it is traditionally seen as an obstacle to work. Apprenticeship initiatives increase the chance of employment and break the vicious circle made of failure and exclusion.

“The greatest gain for the disabled worker materialises through the worker’s realisation, he will have a working activity where he will get a financial reward for his work, and mostly, a personal gain, as he will feel useful and capable”. (E6)

Assessing the inclusion programme. Some roles are considered fundamental in the success of the apprenticeship programme, for instance, the participation of a family member especially at the beginning of the apprenticeship. The colleagues at work are also remembered as fundamental parts within the meshes of apprenticeship, to teach and correct the routes. This network of support seems to instil higher confidence to the apprentices with disabilities, to start their careers in the companies.

One of the interviewees (E8) considered the colleague of reference, or mentor, as essential for the apprenticeship during the practical part of the course. She referred that it would be ideal for this colleague to get specific training to

continue working with the new workers with disabilities. Furthermore, comes another important statement for the inclusion about family participation and establishing links between family and company.

“Mother helps, she asked me if I wanted to do the course and work. (...) in the company, colleagues received me well from the beginning. This attitude made it easier”. (E1)

“I always got on fine with the teachers. [...] I helped the mates who had more difficulties. I always had fear [to move around on her own, authors’ note], but mother went with me on day one, afterwards I went alone by bus. Job mates were always helpful”. (E3)

“Thank God, my sister arranged this job for me. She provided much advice to me”. (E4)

“Mother and sisters always supported me; they still help me today. Mother always wanted me to attend training courses”. (E5)

“Fundamentally, the person with intellectual disabilities should want to work, the family should want the person to work and be ready to help in adapting the routine, and with a colleague of the same sector who is ready to help”. (E7)

We observe that one of the most important aspects to succeed in apprenticeship and permanence in the labour market is the synergy among teaching institution, company and family. Understanding that this is a gradual process of independence summons everybody to support the disabled person, everyone with a complementing role in the process of inclusion. Exchange of information and adaptations enhance a greater assertiveness in the inclusive process. Furthermore, awareness and availability of the colleagues also seem to affect directly the result.

Final Considerations

Inclusion in its entirety is one of the greatest challenges of contemporaneity. Perhaps, the world never produced as much intolerance as it does today and this makes the theme extremely appropriate. Examples go from the need to include masses of people migrating into Europe and elsewhere, to the inclusion of minorities in societies by granting new rights. (Sassen, 2015; Benhabib, 2005; Sennett, 2004).

Among these challenges, the inclusion of persons with disabilities in our societies and on the workplace is yet another big issue. Much ground has been covered by some countries and legislations, while in other cases they may lag behind.

In the case discussed here, the company opted to include workers with a

specific type of disability: the intellectual. It is a type of disability rarely absorbed by the labour market because it is more challenging in terms of job training. This factor gives special relevance to this study. The apprenticeship provided by the course went beyond the technical aspects required to carry out the job, it involved learning hospitality (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 2000), with the efforts made by the many actors involved in the process of inclusion. From the board of directors who endorsed the idea, to the people who implemented it, inside and outside the company, the students and their relatives and other subjects affected by the project, we note a search for harmony with the demands of the new kind of workers. This brought the demand for new languages, forms of communication and job execution, to implement the process of hospitality and inclusion. The interviews show, starting from different viewpoints, the commitment of the people involved in the process of inclusion.

Challenged by the pressing demands coming from the society, where the Other is ever-present keeping ethics in constant tension, while the capacity to welcome problematizes otherness and cosmopolitanism (Beck, 2006a). On one side we are global, on the other, we are local and claim our legitimacy and specific political rights. We need to consider this unknown Other who became part of our world, we need to learn new forms of cohabitation. Cohabitation becomes the order of the day, promoting hospitality and constructing bridges that favour the contacts among different people.

In practical terms, the case provides an inclusive dimension, an alternative to the dumping of a sizeable part of the population for lack of resources, this dimension allows them to work and grow professionally. The firm's project of inclusion was born out of a legal requirement, but it was taken to the heart, shaped with the courage to challenge and unsettle certainties. As, persons with psychosocial disabilities are more vulnerable to exclusion, we were able to see that the project provided them with empowerment and reduced their vulnerability. The Other, intended here as the person with disabilities, was inserted in the corporative reality by the legislation. This process that we named hospitality, with its different levels of acceptance, caused the mutual transformation of guests and hosts; or the cosmopolitanism, that is, the profound moral change in the society undergoing the process of awareness of the Other and his needs (Appiah, 2011).

In addition to these brief considerations, the results of this paper bring to our attention other two relevant themes to be discussed in future works. The first theme concerns the necessary synergy between the State and private initiative in the public field. This affirmation may lead to polemics, as it is usually mistaken with privatizing the responsibilities of the State. This is not our intention, as there are some models of *welfare mix*, where private initiative

opens doors and makes essential contributions to public policies (Agostini, 2005; Esping-Andersen, 1990).

The second theme is the impelling necessity of making school and work closer to each other especially when it regards people with disabilities. Many statements show that this transition between the teaching institution and work creates a void in the trajectory of the subject who, most of the times, remains at home, without income or social life. Many, if not all, interviewees went through this situation.

In the philosophical tradition, hospitality involves the relationship with the Other and its moral meaning, as well as the ensuing juridical-political aspect. The Other, stranger or guest, raises questions on moral laws, concerning compromise and reception, to grant social peace. "The language of hospitality is the language of practical reason" (Pérez, 2007, p. 53). Therefore, it is the language of ethics that leads to the possibility to improve the world. When we accept the Other, we establish the cosmopolitan laws of peaceful relationships. Consequently, we see a possible reciprocity in including persons with disability in working contexts. This process rests on clear rules of cohabitation, education and specific legislation, with no need to rely on individual or exceptional initiatives, attitudes, patronizing or on improvisation.

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