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Educational Reengagement Programs and Measures in the Region of Murcia. An Approach to their Understanding

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Abstract

Spanish the present text, the different re-engagement programs existing in the Region of Murcia (Spain), which aim to cater to the needs of those students who have dropped out of education are analyzed. It has been carried out after a bibliographic review of the regulation and throughout a qualitative methodology there has been an analysis of the contents of the legal texts that regulate each of the assessed programs. Regarding the main results of the study, it is worth highlighting that there are a variety of programs and measures that are progressively interconnected so as to address school dropout and disengagement, some presenting a more preventative nature, and others, a more reactive nature. Whilst some programs are aimed at retaining students within the educational system in which they have been failing, others, intend to redirect them towards training programs outside of their usual schools, or rather direct them towards training aimed at labor integration. From a legal framework, the analysed programs tend to homogenize the collective of students they are targeting, however, these students are characterized by a great diversity in their educational and social background. Many of the difficulties that the educational system continues working to offer an adequate response to originate here

Keywords: disengagement, second chance education, reengagement; school dropout, school failure.

Programas y medidas de reenganche educativo en la Región de Murcia: un acercamiento a su comprensión

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Resumen

En el presente texto se analizan los diferentes programas de reenganche existentes en la Región de Murcia (España), que tienen como objetivo atender las necesidades de aquellos estudiantes que han abandonado la educación. Se ha realizado tras una revisión bibliográfica y mediante una metodología cualitativa se ha llevado a cabo un análisis de contenido de los textos legales que regulan cada uno de los programas evaluados. Como principales resultados del estudio, cabe destacar, que existe una variedad de programas y medidas que se encadenan progresivamente para responder al fracaso y al desenganche escolar, unas con carácter más preventivo, y otros, más reactivo. Mientras algunos programas intentan retener al alumnado dentro del sistema educativo en el que han venido fracasando, otros, pretenden redirigirlos hacia programas formativos fuera de sus escuelas habituales, o bien encaminarlos hacia una formación orientada a la inserción laboral. Desde el marco legal, los programas analizados tienden a homogeneizar el colectivo de estudiantes al que se dirigen, sin embargo, estos estudiantes se caracterizan por una gran diversidad en sus historias de vida educativas y sociales, donde se originan muchas de las dificultades a la que el sistema educativo continúa luchando para ofrecer una adecuada respuesta.

Palabras clave: desenganche, segunda oportunidad, reenganche, abandono escolar, fracaso escolar



In the educational systems and the research regarding that field, one of the main problems that researchers are confronted with in the last decades is early school leaving (ESL)¹ and school failure. The importance of the study of these issues lies in the close connection between the low level of education and the risk of ending up in a situation of social exclusion, especially for those people in a more vulnerable situation (NESSE, 2010; *Boylan & Renzulli, 2014*). When a high percentage of young people in a given country has a low level of education, this translates into difficulties in accessing employment, which often leads to situations of social exclusion with undesirable consequences which affect both the people suffering them as society in general. For this reason, reducing ESL to 10% was one of the targets in the Europe 2020 strategy (*Eurostat, s.f.*).

ESL is a social, multidimensional and procedural phenomenon that according to international literature (*Tarabini et al, 2018; NESSE 2009*), requires parallel prevention, intervention and compensation measures. In the present text, a number of reflections and considerations about some of those measures, the existing programs designed by the educational administration to mitigate the aforementioned ESL or school failure are presented. Among the programs analyzed we can find some of national level, and some exclusively conceived for the Region of Murcia: Program of Integral Learning (from now on, PAI), Vocational Training Program (PFP), Occupational Classroom (AO) and Basic Vocational training (FPB). These programs have been studied under the scope of a national research project of greater significance, focused on the analysis of, among other issues, how reengagement of these students is possible thanks to their attendance to these programs. In the scope of this project, in this article we intend to analyze the regulations for the implementation of these measures, reviewing and analyzing the reengagement initiatives being carried out in the centers of the Region of Murcia (from now on, CARM). Following the analysis of these, the idiosyncrasies of each of these programs will be detailed, as well as possible similarities and connections between them.

The issue dealt with in this article is one of a special relevance, as the Region of Murcia is an area especially affected by this educational problem, as it is shown in its high rate of early school leaving. As have been mentioned before, ESL can be understood as the case of all students between the age of

18 and 24 who have not completed some kind of post compulsory, ruled and ordinary secondary education (Valdés, Sancho & de Esteban, 2020). This region, in the South-East area of Spain presents a higher rate than the national average (Valdés et al., 2020), being the second autonomous community with the highest rate of early school-leaving (24.1% in 2019), 7 points higher than the national average (17.3% in the same year), a reason why there is a greater urgency to resolve this social scourge (Eurostat, 2018).

The theoretical approaches on school leaving, failure, disengagement, etc., are organized around two main axes which facilitate their understanding, given the complexity of the issue.

It has to do, on the one hand, with how an effective attention to diversity of the students who reject the educational system is realized and, on the other, with the subsequent paths followed after school leaving and failure take place (Fernández et al., 2013; Fortin et al., 2013; Jurado & Tejada, 2019; Vinciguerra et al., 2021). When we start to work with said constructs, we find that they overlap in their multifactorial character and in the diversity of perspectives from which they are addressed (Portillo-Torres, 2015; Tarabini, 2015; Vallejo & Dooly, 2013).

On the one hand, there is a certain consensus in that the approach to the problem by the administration has been a faulty one: blaming it on the students, who are oftentimes in a situation of vulnerability (Escudero & González, 2013), and making their school career conditional on the rather unsatisfactory outlook projected onto them (Escudero, 2013; Escudero & Rodríguez-Entrena, 2013; González & Bernárdez-Gómez, 2019), sometimes labeling them school objectors or social failures (de Prada Vicente, 2002; Escudero, 2013; Fernández Sierra, 2017; García Fuentes, 2016), and exempting the educational system from their responsibility on the students' lack of adaptation in the day-to-day classroom practice (Janosz et al., 2000).

Diverse studies (Alba et al., 2020; González et al., 2009; Reschly, 2020; Socorro & Reyes, 2020) point at the existing prejudice towards a number of young people who, for one reason or another, have not been bestowed with an appropriate response to their specific needs by the educational administration. Following this assumption, García Garrido reveals the role that the educational administration plays in the emergence of those students who actively reject their schooling:

What the state needs to pursue is not compulsory schooling, but the real schooling of their youth. Insisting on the old concept is what lies behind young people's conception of schools as prisons and, in turn, their objection to schooling or, according to the term which has become a household name, their transformation into school objectors (García Garrido, 2002, p. 30).

These young people, certainly disengaged from their training process (Clycq et al., 2017; González, 2015, 2017; Zyngier, 2016) develop a series of characteristics in their academic history which make them receivers of specific measures of attention to diversity (Escudero, 2013; Rutschow et al., 2014) among which we can find the different reengagement initiatives, which are aimed at the accomplishment of some bare minimum training skills, facilitating the social inclusion of these educational actors, generally labeled as students with specific needs of educational support (ANEAE), due to their condition and academic history.

Based on this context, the following academic and/or formative itineraries (which, as pointed out by the existing literature on the topic, can be summarized in two main pathways) for the reengagement process are suggested: that which pursues the students' educational reengagement, and that whose purpose is focused on offering training oriented towards the labor integration of the students (Velázquez & Cano, 2018).

These formative itineraries that offer students the possibility of returning to a work-oriented training, once students have dropped out of the educational system, are considered second chance programs (Bernárdez-Gómez & Belmonte, 2020; Hernández-Prados et al., 2011; Montero, 2018; Thureau, 2019; Vázquez & Muñoz, 2018). Second chance programs are aimed to improve social and professional integration of young people that are outside the formal education system without any kind of qualification (Salva-Mut et al., 2016; Villardón Gallego, 2020). These programs aim to offer a response to those young people who, in former stages, have been let down by the educational system and, in order to complete their training process as efficiently as possible, they are given access to these programs, equipped with the organizational, curricular, and pedagogical conditions aimed at making possible the students' success. In this second chances

programs the training is tailored to help the students reengage with their studies (Salva-Mut et al., 2016) Among other characteristics, we can highlight the following: reduced working groups, curricular flexibility, close monitoring of the students, support and counselling provided by teachers, individual training (adapted pace and interests), eminently practical methodology, etc. (European Commission, 2001; Rodríguez-Entrena et al., 2019). By means of these and other idiosyncrasies related to methodological, organizational and curricular aspects of these programs, three objectives are sought for:

Promoting the integration of socially excluded students; guaranteeing the access of the young to education, training, and employment, particularly by means of promotion and the recognition of their non-formal education and learning and supporting their transition from the school to the labor market, helping them, for instance to find work-life balance (Fernández et al., 2016, p. 101).

Bearing in mind the above-mentioned theoretical approaches, the objective of the present article is a thorough analysis of the programs and measures of educational attention to students excluded or disengaged from the educational system and/or who also feature school failure. Said analysis will make it possible to have invaluable knowledge to further assess the practical application of these programs to the educational and social realities of the students suffering from these problems.

Method

The present study is framed within the secondary research type (Cea D’Ancona, 1996; Pacios, 2013) in which a content analysis is carried out (Miles et al., 2014), taking into account the elements of the grounded theory for its coding (Alarcón et al., 2017; Franco & Morillo, 2016). The use of this methodology is based on the experience of working with documents that, although preceded by analyses of previous legislation, no work has been found to analyze the documentation worked here. In this way, it explains relationships that deepen a certain reality by explaining the relationships between two or more categories of reality that is analyzed (Alarcón et al.,

2017).

By means of a qualitative methodology, the analysis carried out has followed an initial open coding of the legal content, with the aim of identifying the different underlying concepts; a second axial coding has determined the relationships we can encounter and, finally, a selective coding, in order to analyze the data in a joint manner.

In table 1, the different stages of the data coding process can be observed.

Table 1.

Stages of the model of analysis based on the grounded theory

Open Coding	Axial Coding	Selective Coding
Examines and interprets data line-by -line	The categories are linked in relation to their properties and dimensions	It integrates and refines the theory
Compares data in search of similarities and differences	The broken data during the open coding are regrouped	Only the main categories are integrated to shape a larger theoretical scheme
Events, objects, actions, or interactions are considered similar	The categories are built up and linked to the subcategories	The research findings are shaped into a theory
Data are grouped by nature, relationships or meanings under “categories” and properties		It integrates and refines the categories

Source: Franco y Morillo (2016).

Once the existing regulation on reengagement programs/ measures to tackle school early-leaving and failure in the Autonomous Community of the Region of Murcia (Table 2) has been consulted, an in-depth analysis has followed, which in Bisquerra’s words (2016), should be systematic so as to generate knowledge. Therefore, to carry out the analysis, we have made use of the qualitative analysis program ATLAS.ti, where, by means of an inductive approach, 27 analysis categories have been generated, which have enabled us to determine the different similarities and differences between the programs. The mentioned categories deal, on the one hand, with the formal structure set in this type of legislation, being these: access, tuition action,

addressee, assessment, purpose, modalities, and organization and, on the other, the reengagement programs/measures analyzed to be able to determine potential relationships between them, as can be seen in table 2.

Table 2

Codes utilized in the Analysis

Occupational Classroom	Integral Learning Program	Basic Vocational Training	Vocational Training Program
Access AO	Access PAI	Access FPB	Access PFP
Tutorial Action AO	Tutorial Action PAI	Tutorial Action FPB	Tutorial Action PFP
Addressee AO	Addressee PAI	Addressee FPB	Addressee PFP
Assessment AO	Assessment PAI	Assessment FPB	Assessment PFP
Purpose AO	Purpose PAI	Purpose FPB	Purpose PFP
Modalities AO	Organization PAI	Modalities FPB	Modalities PFP
Organization AO		Organization FPB	Organization PFP

Below, in table 3 we compile the educational programs analyzed in the present article, as well as the reference normative we have made use of to carry out this work.

Table 3

Reference normative for reengagement programs

Program	Reference Normative
Occupational Classroom	Resolution of 7th March 2019 of the General Department of Attention to Diversity and Quality of Education, whereby instructions are issued for the organization and authorization of Occupational Classrooms in public educational centers of the Autonomous Community of the Region of Murcia for the academic year 2019-2020.
Integral Learning Program	Resolution of 15th June 2016, of the General Department of Educational Innovation and Attention to Diversity, whereby the Program of Integral Learning in Compulsory Secondary Education and its implementation in the public centers of the Region of Murcia is regulated.
Basic Vocational Training	Decree nº 12/2015, of 13th February, whereby the conditions for the implementation of Basic Vocational Training and the syllabus of thirteen education cycles of these studies are established and the organization of vocational training programs in the Autonomous Community of the Region of Murcia is set.
	Organic Law 8/2013 of 9th December for the improvement of educational quality
Vocational Training Program	Order of 3rd September 2015 of the Regional Ministry of Education and Universities whereby the Vocational Training Programs in the Autonomous Community of the Region of Murcia are regulated. Royal Decree 127/2014, of 28th February, whereby specific aspects of the Basic Vocational Training studies in the educational system are regulated; fourteen professional training degrees are implemented, their basic curricula are established and the Royal Decree 1850/2009 of 4th December, on the issuing of academic and professional certifications corresponding to the studies detailed in the Organic Law 2/2006, of 3rd May of Education is modified.

Results

In the analysis of the normative, a series of fundamental axes have been developed. The training practices categorized as reengagement or second chance measures revolve around said axes. Hence, in the next section, the analysis results are presented, in relation to three main categories: the purpose of the programs, the profile of the addressee of these educational

activities, the modality of access and their curricular organization.

Purpose of the Programs

The study of the purpose of these programs reveals that all of them have at their core, a backbone geared, on the one hand, towards reducing absenteeism and early school leaving by means of the Integral Learning Program and the Occupational Classroom, when the students have not yet dropped out and, on the other hand, towards their personal, educational and professional development through Vocational Training Programs and Basic Vocational Training when the traditional path within the educational system has not provided them with a satisfactory answer, that is, reengaging students in their education -giving them a second chance at the Education System- and making them follow through it and facilitating their success in the process of labor integration (Montero, 2018; Thureau, 2019).

This way, both the Resolution of 7th March 2019 of the General Department of Attention to Diversity and Quality of Education which regulates the Occupational Classroom, as well as the Resolution of 15th June 2016, of the General Department of Educational Innovation and Attention to Diversity, which establishes the guidelines for the Integral Learning Program, include in their articles referring to the purpose that, apart from the previously mentioned, their goal is to favor the continuation of the students in the education system. This is emphasized in the case of the Occupational Classroom, where said continuation should take place by means of the acquisition of the necessary personal, social and professional skills to be able to entirely develop their training process (Almerich et al., 2020; Valle et al., 2020), preventing the personal factors and conditions and the school history of these students from exerting so large an influence on the abilities that they could achieve.

Examples of the similarities and differences between the objectives of the programs analyzed are evidenced in the following excerpts from the normative itself:

(...) reducing absenteeism and the risk of early school-leaving, providing the students with the personal, social and professional skills

which favor: a) their continuation in the educational system, preferably within an education cycle of Basic Vocational Training, without discarding their possible continuation in Compulsory Secondary Education (CARM, 2019, p. 9132) (AO).

(...) reducing the phenomenon of absenteeism and the risk of early school-leaving, with the purpose of favoring the promotion of the addressee students within the educational system, in one of the following options: a) Regular group of the corresponding academic year; b) Second year of the Learning and Performance Improvement Program, c) Educational cycles of Basic Vocational Training; d) Adapted Vocational Training Programs; d) Occupational Classroom (CARM, 2016, p. 19741) (PAI).

From a different perspective, three of the programs analyzed- Occupational Classroom, Vocational Training Programs and Basic vocational training- already consider within their objectives the transition to the labor market, focusing on the young people's training geared toward their integration in the labor market and working life.

(...) b) their social and labor inclusion and their integration into working life with responsibility and autonomy (CARM, 2019, p. 9132) (AO)

(...) providing the students with the personal, social and professional skills appropriate to their characteristics and necessities which favor their social and labor inclusion and their integration into working life with responsibility and autonomy (CARM, 2015, p. 32894) (PFP)

(...) its goal is that of preparing students for the tasks performed in a given professional field and facilitating their adaptation to the different labor modifications which can take place throughout their life (...) (Head of the State, p. 40) (LOE).

This does not imply the absence of a possible continuation within the educational system. However, it is also deemed essential for the young people who are in a situation of school abandonment or failure to cultivate some skills that favor their social and labor integration (Bahdon, 2020), which will be reinforced by a variety of monitoring and counseling tasks

which are aimed at the accomplishment of the competencies that allow their autonomy.

Addressee's Profile and Access Modality

The target group in all of the programs analyzed is that of students at risk of educational exclusion and/or which feature personal characteristics or schooling background which result in a negative appraisal of the school framework (table 4). This is the result of those situations where students labeled as *school objectors* or *social messes* (Escudero, 2013; Fernández Sierra, 2017; García Fuentes, 2016) find themselves in contexts or situations of vulnerability, on top of other risk factors, which make them vulnerable to non-desirable results in the educational context (Escudero, 2013). These students are highly influenced by the contexts where they are framed and by their realities, being prone to giving in to those and ending up disengaging from, and consequently, abandoning the educational system. This leads to frequent disagreements and lack of understanding between them and the traditional education process which pushes them to a situation where, apart from the diverse behavioral problems they display in the majority of the cases (Janosz et al., 2000), they reveal an evident curricular gap, becoming a social stigma and a scapegoat (Saturnino & Molina, 2019, p. 285) due to the circumstances they find themselves in.

Table 4

Access Profile of the Reengagement programs target students

	Integral Learning Program	Occupational Classroom	Vocational Training Programs	Basic Vocational Training
Age and Access Course	Students of the second year of Compulsory Secondary Education, within compulsory education age	Being 15 years old or turning 15 within the access year and being in the second or third year of Compulsory Secondary Education at the moment of accessing the Occupational Classroom.	Students between 16 and 21 years old at the moment of their incorporation, who have not obtained the certification of Compulsory Secondary Education	Students of 15 and 16 years old, allowing students between 17 and 19 years old when there are free vacancies.
Aspects related to their condition or school background	Their negative appraisal of the school framework; presenting serious difficulties when adapting to the medium, due to personal circumstances or their school background. They feature absenteeism and risk of school-leaving	Retaking a year in Compulsory Secondary Education or having been out of school. Not presenting Special Educational Needs. Having absenteeism records.	Special Modality: Students who present special educational needs related to personal conditions of disability; their starting age can be reduced to 15 years old. Adapted modality: Disadvantaged young people at risk of social exclusion who need a way of labor integration. Young people inside or outside the system at a high risk of social exclusion.	It will be a requirement to have taken part in other ordinary ways of attention to diversity considered in the current legislation. They present a general, serious curricular gap which predicts a risk of exclusion of the system.

Table 4

Access Profile of the Reengagement programs target students (continue)

	Integral Learning Program	Occupational Classroom	Vocational Training Programs	Basic Vocational Training
Access	Put forward by the teachers themselves. The Head of Studies, the school counselor and the Technical Teacher of Community Services select the proposed students, who are given the approval by the school principal. Parents give their approval.	The head of studies, the counselor, the Technical Teacher of Community Services and a municipal representative propose the students eligible for the program. It is given the approval by the school principal and the students' parents.	Proposed by the center the students came from, with a report of the guidance department. Commitment of parents or students if they are of legal age. School inspection supervises their admission.	Proposed by the faculty, coordinated by the home teacher and advised by the school counselor. The parents' consent will be requested in case they are minors.

On a different note, we can observe that these programs present a certain linearity in relation to their access due to the entry age and the further pathways students may opt for. While Integral Learning Programs and Occupational Classrooms are measures aimed at Compulsory School-age students who, therefore, have not been able to drop out of the educational system, Vocational Training Programs and Basic Vocational Training are geared towards those students who, both within and outside the system, have not obtained the minimum compulsory certification, and subsequently find themselves in the situation of “having failed” (Fernández et al., 2013; Fortin et al., 2013; Jurado & Tejada, 2019). While the age of entry to the programs can be considered optimal for this, it is also highlighted that these are measures that have come too late for the students. This is evidenced by the results of previous studies on the same topic (Rodríguez-Entrena et al., 2019), but notwithstanding, there are authors who emphasize the positive aspects of this type of programs:

Another frequent complaint among the teachers is the result of having in the same classroom (essentially in the second cycle of Compulsory Secondary Education) totally unmotivated students. The possibility of enrolling in programs of professional initiation from 15 years old on and the existence of itineraries can mitigate the negative effects of the labeled school objectors (de Prada, 2002, p. 71).

This situation takes place despite the fact that the school management staff are enabled to implement these and other measures of attention to diversity to a situation which starts to go adrift, as their proposals of access are made on behalf of the teaching and management staff, together with the collaboration of the Guidance department.

Curricular Organization of These Programs

As it has been pointed out above, one of the main objectives of these reengagement measures is their contribution to the development of these young people and their educational or labor reintegration. This is why a series of modules are offered (table 5) by which each one of their demands or necessities is taken care of, depending on the modality they are enrolled in.

Table 5
Existing modules in the curricular organization

	Basic Training Modules	Professional Modules	Optional Modules	In-work Training
PAI	X			
AO	X	X	X	
FPB	X	X		X
PFP	X	X	X	X

On the one hand, basic training modules appear in all of the programs analyzed. The goal of these modules is to ensure that students acquire the sufficient or basic competences in the main areas of knowledge within the

curriculum of basic education- experimental sciences, social sciences, humanities...-, through which that educational reintegration which we have been mentioned can take place. This makes basic training modules key elements in the curricular development of these measures; they are the only ones being developed when dealing with Integral Learning Programs (table 6), as this is the main initiative for curbing school dropouts, and, in said program, curricular organization includes areas with different common subjects for the students to reengage with their education.

Table 6

Curricular organization. Areas and Subjects. PAI

Area	Subjects it includes
Applied sciences	Biology and Geology, Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics
Socio-linguistic	Geography and History, Spanish language, and literature.
Artistic	Plastic, Visual and Audiovisual Education. Music
Motor and corporal expression	Physical education and corporal expression contents
First Foreign Language	
Religion and Ethics	
Tutorials	

These basic training modules are given different names in the rest of the programs analyzed, AO, PFP and FPB (table 7), but the content is remarkably similar. Hence, for the case of Occupational Classrooms, the modules and general areas not related to units of professional competence would include an area of applied sciences and a socio-linguistic one. In Vocational Training Programs, those are called modules not related to units of competence and include communication and society, applied sciences and optional matters. Finally, in Basic Vocational Training, they are given the names of professional modules of communication and society I and II and applied sciences I and II.

Table 7.

Curricular Organization. Modules and Areas. FPB, AO and PFP.

Modules	
Modules related to units of competence	Units of competence of professional qualification Level 1. Specific contents of each BVT certification (according to their professional profile)
Modules not related to units of competence	Communication and Society, I and II (contents of Spanish Language, Foreign Languages- English- and Social Sciences). Applied Sciences I and II (contents of Mathematics, Biology, Geology, Physics, Chemistry). Optional Modules ²
Professional module of in-work training	Contents of practices related to the professional profile
Tutorials	

On a different note, it is worth reminding that these measures were unique due their eminently practical component, and that is why one of the central axes around which they revolve around are the professional modules found in the Occupational Classrooms, Basic Vocational Training and Vocational Training Programs, respectively. Said modules comply with the different units of professional competence laid out in the National Catalog of Qualifications, hence, they are aimed at training students within a specific employment area (Velázquez & Cano, 2018). This way, an important part of the professional qualifications that the different jobs require is covered, apart from guaranteeing that students can as well find a way out of the situation they find themselves in.

In this line, the inclusion of a Professional Training module in Work Centers in both of the programs analyzed- BVT and VTP- needs to be highlighted. The goal of this module in both programs is to enable the students to keep on developing their professional skills in real contexts of the labor market. The phase in which the students need to carry out this module is the same in both programs and corresponds to the third term of the academic year, once the modules related to the corresponding units of competence have been completed. However, the length of the module varies

between programs: it would be 240 hours in the case of Basic Vocational Training and 120 hours in Vocational Training Programs.

Therefore, the most remarkable difference regarding the curricular organization of these programs is the professional perspective (or lack thereof) adopted in the framework of those and which makes the curriculum resemble more the basic studies of the Compulsory Secondary Education stage or rather a training more geared towards the social and labor insertion of the students.

Discussion and Conclusions

Nowadays, students' lack of involvement and their disengagement from school are identified as one of the main concerns in the different educational systems. Mainly, due to the high rates of school dropouts and failure they generate (Tarabini et al, 2018) and the serious consequences they bring about both for the people who are affected and society as a whole (NESSE, 2010; Boylan and Renzulli, 2014). The school background of these students who undergo this gradual process of disengagement which ends up in school dropout (Clycq et Al., 2017; Vinciguerra et al., 2021), has many common aspects related to personal, family, and educational factors but, at the same time, they feature a great deal of heterogeneity among them. ESL represents a heterogeneous and diverse group of students (Tarabini et al. 2018), who are intended to artificially seem homogeneous, on behalf of some criterion which in turn directs them to one or another of the different existing measures, analyzed in this article.

As it has been observed in the article, there is a great variety of programs and measures which are progressively linked to deal with school dropout and disengagement, ones with more of a preventive nature, others with a more reactive one. However, in all of them, the training is tailored to help the students reengage with their studies (Salva-Mut, Nadal-Cavaller & Meliá-Barceló, 2016). Most of them shared the features mentioned by the European Commission (2001) about the second chance programs: A partnership with local authorities, social services, etc. with a view to offering possible training places and jobs to pupils; a teaching and counselling approach focused on the student's needs; stimulation of active learning on their part; a

more flexible teaching modules allowing combinations of basic skills development (numeracy, literacy, social skills, etc.) with practical training, and a central role for the acquisition of skills.

Some of the different analyzed measures are aimed at keeping the students within the educational system in which they keep failing and others, redirect them to training programs outside the traditional school centers, or rather guide them towards a labor integration-directed education.

The measures found outside the school framework or compulsory secondary education have become an alternative in which to rescue and reorientate the students who are expelled from the educational system, that is, who leave it or are invited to leave secondary education centers (Hernández-Prados et al., 2011; Vázquez & Muñoz, 2018). This way, those students who do not fit in conventional educational frameworks which govern most schools find, within this scope, a way to continue their educational and professional development.

As we have observed, these initiatives offer multiple possibilities and adopt different modalities depending on the existing necessities. However, many of the measures which persist today are still focused on the perception of these students as maladjusted elements within the system, perpetuating a negative outlook of these and suggesting actions whose implicit goal is that of redirecting them to the traditional educational system, a solution that has proven to be useless, as it was demonstrated in the moment of dropping out. In this regard, Smyth (2005) indicates that working on ESL the focus should not be towards blaming students, their families and their backgrounds, on the contrary, the attention should be paid towards relationships, school culture, and pedagogical arrangements.

At the end of the day, it can be assumed that these measures are, on the whole, a quick fix which intends to address a systemic problem which requires a greater attention by means of the educational authorities. This implies the necessity of an earlier and preventive intervention, and through measures which consider the diversity of the students in an efficient manner, in cooperation between centers and the community and where said intervention is carried out in a holistic way, to cater for all the needs of these students (González et al., 2009).

Notes

1 According to Eusostat, (s/f) Early leaver from education and training, previously named early school leaver, refers to a person aged 18 to 24 who has completed at most lower secondary education and is not involved in further education or training; the indicator 'early leavers from education and training' is expressed as a percentage of the people aged 18 to 24 with such criteria out of the total population aged 18 to 24

2 These modules are only implemented in Occupational Classroom and Vocational Training Programs.

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