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Please cite the final published version:

Blenker, P., Frederiksen, S. H., Korsgaard, S., Müller, S., Neergaard, H., & Thrane, C. (2012). Entrepreneurship as everyday practice: Towards a personalized pedagogy of enterprise education. *Industry and Higher Education*, 26(6), 417-430. doi: 10.5367/ihe.2012.0126

Publication metadata

Title:	Entrepreneurship as everyday practice: Towards a personalized pedagogy of enterprise education
Author(s):	Blenker, P., Frederiksen, S. H., Korsgaard, S., Müller, S., Neergaard, H., & Thrane, C.
Journal:	<i>Industry and Higher Education</i> , 26(6), 417-430.
DOI/Link:	https://doi.org/10.5367/ihe.2012.0126
Document version:	Accepted manuscript (post-print)

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Entrepreneurship as Everyday Practice: Towards a Personalized Pedagogy of Enterprise Education

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Abstract

In this article, we pursue the perspective of 'entrepreneurship as an everyday practice' in education. We conceptualize opportunities as arising from the everyday practice of individuals. Opportunities are thus perceived as having their genesis in the individual entrepreneur's ability to disclose anomalies and disharmonies in their own personal life. We illustrate how opportunities unfold depending on regional differences as well as local heritage and gender to show how entrepreneurship education must take differences in context, culture and circumstance into account.

Rather than perceiving entrepreneurship education as universalistic and instead of searching for a generally applicable approach to teach entrepreneurship, we argue for the need to tailor entrepreneurship education to the particular. We therefore posit that the pedagogy of entrepreneurship education should be personalized, and we build a conceptual framework that contrasts two opposing views of entrepreneurship education: "universalistic" or "idiosyncratic". Following this distinction, we explore how different elements of enterprise education may be fitted to the particularities of each individual learner. This insight is relevant for didactic reflections on single entrepreneurship courses and for the construction of an entrepreneurship education curriculum.

Introduction

The rapid increase in entrepreneurship education has led to the development of a bounty of different teaching approaches. The field has been blessed with a myriad of purposes, methods, and learning goals. One may find courses in business planning built on traditional behavioural management logic, courses on entrepreneurship theory where students are introduced to classic and contemporary entrepreneurship theory, process-oriented social cognition courses seeking to improve the students self-efficacy, or a variety of apprenticeship-inspired courses based on pedagogies of situated learning.

Most of these educational activities tend to share the idea that entrepreneurship education can, by and large, be perceived as a 'one-fits-all' activity. There are disagreements about which definitions of entrepreneurship to subscribe to, which theoretical approaches to use, whether it be business planning, effectuation or something else, and disagreement on which pedagogical processes to lean. Nevertheless, it is rarely discussed whether one particular didactical approach or entrepreneurial pedagogy fits all learners. This is just tacitly assumed.

In this paper we challenge that assumption. Entrepreneurship education is analysed through four different, but related lenses: the *general assumptions*, *definition*, *didactics* and *pedagogy* of

*ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: This research was supported by a generous grant from the Danish Strategic Research Council and carried out within the PACE project (www.badm.au.dk/PACE)

entrepreneurship. This analytical approach is inspired by Morgan's (1980) conceptual framework (alternative realities, schools of thought and specific tools) and is used in this particular case for understanding the relationship between the nature of entrepreneurship, the purpose of entrepreneurship education and specific approaches to entrepreneurship education.

First, we examine the nature of entrepreneurship and the purpose of entrepreneurship education. We draw on the idea of a broadening of the conceptualization of entrepreneurship and hence a broader understanding of the purpose of enterprise education. Two approaches are introduced to illustrate the broadening discourse; one is entrepreneurship as an everyday practice (Spinoza et al 1997), the other is the idea of educating for enterprising behaviour (Gibb, 2002).

Second, our definition of entrepreneurship starts from Shane and Venkataraman's (2000) understanding of entrepreneurship as an individual-opportunity nexus. However, we adjust their original definition to the entrepreneurship as everyday practice perspective by arguing that opportunities do not exist independently of entrepreneurial individuals but that these are inextricably linked to individuals at all levels of analysis. Accordingly, we conceptualize opportunities as stemming from the everyday practice of individuals and as dependent on the individual entrepreneur's ability to disclose disharmonies and anomalies in their own everyday practices and turn them into opportunities through interaction with stakeholders (Sarasvathy 2008; Spinoza et al. 1997),

Third and fourth, this means that the particular everyday practice of the potential entrepreneur sets the scene for the kind of opportunity that it is meaningful for an entrepreneur to create, and it focuses attention on the need for a personalized pedagogy of enterprise education. At the meta-level, we contrast two opposing paradigms (Morgan's alternative realities): entrepreneurship as a "universalistic activity" and entrepreneurship as an "idiosyncratic activity" dependent on context, culture and circumstance. The former suggests that the same engines of growth will benefit all societies and that general models for entrepreneurship education are needed and can be fashioned. The latter suggests that entrepreneurial practice is idiosyncratic and grounded in subjective experiences related to different e.g. cultural, local, and gender backgrounds.

The remaining part of the paper is used to illustrate in more detail how such a personalized approach to enterprise education can be conducted.

Broadening the understanding of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education

In the following we introduce the main ideas and authors behind attempts to broaden both the understanding of entrepreneurship and the purpose of enterprise education. We introduce the perspective of i) entrepreneurship as an everyday practice (Spinoza et al 1997) and ii) educating for enterprising behaviour (Gibb, 2002). Further, we suggest a revision of the definition of entrepreneurship as the 'individual-opportunity nexus' as proposed by Shane and Venkataraman (2000). We adjust their definition to the broadened conceptualization of entrepreneurship as an everyday practice and argue that opportunities are inextricably linked to the individual.

Broadening our understanding of entrepreneurship

Originally entrepreneurship was singled out as an economic phenomenon restricted to the economic function of innovation that leads to the formation of new markets and organizations (Schumpeter, 1934). This understanding of entrepreneurship as something restricted, heroic and particular can also be found in the traits tradition (McClelland, 1961) where researchers have sought to differentiate entrepreneurs as distinct from non-entrepreneurs, such as managers or wage earners, on the basis of personality traits (Gartner, 1985).

Recently, researchers have begun to introduce understandings of entrepreneurship as a more pervasive and general activity. These can be labeled in different ways: e.g. mundane entrepreneurship (Rehn & Taalas, 2004), entrepreneurship as an everyday activity (Steyaert & Katz, 2004) or entrepreneurship as a method (Sarasvathy & Venkataraman, 2011), but they all suggest that entrepreneurship can exist more generally disengaged from a restricted business context. This is most radically expressed by Sarasvathy and Venkataraman (2011, pp 125) who claim “...*there exists a distinct method of human problem-solving that we can categorize as entrepreneurial. The method can be evidenced empirically, is teachable to anyone who cares to learn it, and may be applied in practice to a wide variety of issues central to human well-being and social improvement*”.

In this view, entrepreneurship has the potential to unleash a valuable and creative potential that lies in every human being (Goss et al, 2011). Entrepreneurship is thus not for the few and chosen who can identify business opportunities in the marketplace, produce a business plan, provide the necessary financial capital and build a new venture. Rather, it is argued that engaging in entrepreneurial processes is fruitful for the solution of a broad spectrum of social problems and for creating a better life in general, by empowering people and setting them free to pursue value creation for themselves and others.

Broadening our understanding of entrepreneurship education

A similar and related agenda can be found within the entrepreneurship education discourse that establishes a distinction between entrepreneurship education and enterprise education” (Garavan and O’Cinneide, 1994, Gorman et al 1997). To some extent this distinction has been geographical. North American researchers have primarily used the term “entrepreneurship education”, while researchers in Great Britain and Europe have preferred terms like enterprise education (Hannon 2005, Rae 2010), enterprising education (Anderson & Jack 2008) or entrepreneurial learning (Cope 2003, Rae 2005). The distinction is important, as it is more than just a geographical or semantic difference. It involves fundamentally different perceptions of the classic didactical questions of target group, learning goals and curriculum content. “*The major objectives of enterprise education are to develop enterprising people and inculcate an attitude of self-reliance using appropriate learning processes. Entrepreneurship education and training programs are aimed directly at stimulating entrepreneurship which may be defined as independent small business ownership or the development of opportunity-seeking managers within companies.*” (Garavan and O’Cinneide 1994 pp 4). Differences thus exist between enterprise education, enterprising education or entrepreneurial learning, but the idea of broadening is a joint ambition.

Rae (2005, 2010) elaborates on how this broadened idea of learning takes place. Entrepreneurial learning is described as “*learning to recognise and act on opportunities, and interacting socially to initiate,*

organise and manage ventures" (Rae 2005, pp 324). To Rae entrepreneurial learning has both a particular learning goal in the form of "learning to behave" entrepreneurially, and a particular pedagogy in the form of "learning through entrepreneurial ways" (Rae 2010, pp 594).

Jones & Iredale (2010) broaden the learning goals even further. Their interpretation of enterprise education is as an active 'learning enterprise education pedagogy'. This pedagogy holds the potential to create the personal competences needed to function as a citizen, consumer, employee or self-employed person; and involves the development of personal skills, behaviours and attributes for use in a variety of contexts; not only in business, but also as an enterprising individual in the community, at home, in the workplace or as an entrepreneur. Hence, they stress a pedagogy that produces enterprising skills, behaviours and attributes that can be used throughout a person's life.

Gibb's (1993, 2002) concept of "enterprising behaviour" has been one of the central inspirations for the argumentation presented above. Enterprising behaviour refers to the formation of general innovative and enterprising qualities in the individual. To Gibb "enterprising behaviour", is a positive, flexible and proactive attitude towards change, which denotes a broader meaning of entrepreneurship in that it does not need to include any commercial aspect, but involves initiative power and venturesome attitudes. Hence, enterprising behaviour can find its expression in many different contexts. In order to encourage such behaviour through the educational system, it is essential for students to learn how to perform and internalize this behaviour. The challenge here lies in re-designing educational programs aimed at teaching people how to tackle, create – and perhaps even to thrive on entrepreneurial circumstances of uncertainty and complexity (Gibb 2002).

In the remaining parts of the paper we shall use the concept of *entrepreneurship education* as a general umbrella covering the wide variety of educational initiatives related to entrepreneurship. The concepts of *enterprise education* and *enterprising education* are seen as identical and used more specifically to portray education initiatives that seek to train students to perform an *enterprising behaviour* that can be used in many different aspects of life. Further, *entrepreneurial learning* is seen as the particular pedagogy that can be used in these training processes.

Accepting such a broad perspective on entrepreneurship education implies that everyone can learn enterprising behaviour. Entrepreneurial competencies, on the one hand, are useful in many different contexts, but more importantly they may simply help people to create a better life for themselves. Entrepreneurship education, on the other hand, can train students for autonomy, where they perform the leading role in their enterprising way of life (Van Gelderen, 2010)

Still, these attempts to broaden the conceptualization of entrepreneurship and the purpose of entrepreneurship education may prove destructive to the academic discipline. If the concept is diluted by the suggestion that entrepreneurship is all and everything, then the discipline loses its defining characteristics. We thus argue that attempts to broaden the context and scope of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education must necessarily be accompanied by precise definitions and choices of relevant theories and pedagogical methods. In the following, we therefore turn towards the definition of entrepreneurship, in order to adjust it to the broadening project.

Reconsidering the individual-opportunity nexus.

In this paragraph we move to next level of analysis; the definition of entrepreneurship. From the above, it is clear that there is a need for a definition, which is both sufficiently broad and widely accepted to incorporate the relevant elements of education and learning processes. For this purpose, inspiration is found in Shane and Venkataraman (2000). They define that “...*entrepreneurship involves the nexus of two phenomena: the presence of lucrative opportunities and the presence of enterprising individuals*” (Shane and Venkataraman 2000, pp 218). This definition has been both heavily utilized and criticized. For example, it has generated the theoretical controversy on the discovery versus the creation view of entrepreneurial opportunities (for an overview see Korsgaard, 2011). Moreover, their definition has engendered a consensus around the idea of an individual-opportunity nexus as the defining aspect of entrepreneurship research. However, it has also produced fundamental disagreements concerning the particular contents of this nexus.

The definition may be read in several ways depending on whether the focus is on the nouns (opportunity - individual), which results in quite a broad definition of entrepreneurship - or on the adjectives (presence of lucrative - presence of enterprising), which represents a more confining and particular definition. Shane and Venkataraman's (2000) definition thus contains a particular and confining ontology in the sense that they emphasize the *presence of* opportunities and of *enterprising individuals*. The term 'presence of' indicates that opportunities already exist independently of the individual waiting to be discovered. The term 'enterprising individual' indicates that some individuals are already in advance entrepreneurial. Accepting one part of the nexus - the broad definition of entrepreneurship as the nexus of the individual and the opportunity - does however not automatically lead to the acceptance of the confining parts (Blenker & Thrane, 2007).

In the following, we accept the broad definition, perceiving entrepreneurship as emerging in and from the interaction between individuals and their environment (Jones, 2006). In this perspective entrepreneurs and social systems co-evolve. However, using the individual-opportunity nexus as the basis for discussing entrepreneurship, as 'an everyday practice' requires some fundamental ontological changes to the original ideas of Shane and Venkataraman. In particular, we refute the assumption that opportunities have objective existence. Instead we emphasise a reflexive and emergent ontology for both individuals and opportunities (Venkataraman et al 2012). We thus advocate the view expressed in more recent entrepreneurship research based on pragmatist, constructivist and structuration ontologies, which perceives opportunities as something that is created in an entrepreneurial process where individuals are intensely involved in changing their everyday practice. This broad notion of entrepreneurship underlines that the important aspect is neither the individual nor the opportunity - but the hybrid or the meeting itself. Furthermore, it opens for a richer understanding of the social dimensions of opportunity creation. Entrepreneurial individuals in this view depend on the input, commitment and collaboration of others in the development of opportunities (Fletcher 2006; Korsgaard 2011). Central concepts in the attempt to describe such processes where individuals create both opportunities and themselves as entrepreneurs include: bricolage, co-construction, co-creation, effectuation, negotiation, improvisation and transformation (Venkataraman et al. 2012).

Performing entrepreneurship on the basis of everyday practice?

The perspective of entrepreneurship as an everyday practice described above has primarily been accounted for as a broadening attempt. The concepts of mundane entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship as an everyday activity or entrepreneurship as a general method were introduced to suggest that entrepreneurial behaviour can exist more generally. For this to serve as a useful guideline in the construction of enterprise education initiatives, we need to know in more detail how the everyday practice of individuals may serve as a foundation for their opportunity construction.

Therefore, in the following we first examine the disclosing of opportunities on the basis of individual everyday practice generally and subsequently we illustrate this process by a few selected empirical cases where we see these processes unfold.

Disclosing opportunities on the basis of individual everyday practice

In their seminal book entitled 'Disclosing new worlds' Spinosa et al. (1997) introduce an understanding of entrepreneurship as an ontological skill of disclosing new ways of being. The everyday practices of individuals are central to this process. According to Spinosa et al (1997), the outset for entrepreneurship is how we deal with ourselves and our everyday practice. The key question then becomes: "*How, then, do we ourselves, other people, and things appear in average, everyday human activity?*" (Spinosa et al 1997, pp 17). Hence, they emphasize the importance of sensitivity toward one's own everyday practice over detached theory and abstract knowledge that is not explicitly related to the everyday practice of the individual. Even the dealing with disharmonies in everyday practices is portrayed as a skill of intensified practical involvement that cannot, at least initially, be converted into a detached intellectual problem in one's life. "The best way to explore disharmonies, in other words, is not by detached deliberation but by involved experimentation" (Spinosa et al. 1997, pp 24).

In this view, the everyday practice is not only the target for the entrepreneurial process in the sense that opportunities have the potential to change everyday practices for other people. It is also the means by which individuals disclose opportunities from the disharmonies they experience in their everyday practice. Therefore, showing sensitivity towards your own everyday practices becomes a fundamental aspect of entrepreneurship education that in many ways contradicts traditional academic clarity, which seeks detachment by extracting students from their everyday practice and their passion of the moment. As suggested by Spinosa et al. (1997 pp 17) "*[We should] direct our thinking away from the mistake of starting... with our Cartesian preconceptions of what we and things are – and begin with how we, in fact, deal with ourselves and things in our everyday of coping*". Then, instead of focusing on what *is* (for example in terms of teaching students about products, markets, industries and market gaps), we should direct our focus toward what can *become* because of who we are and what we do as a particular entrepreneurial way of being.

From an educational point of view, the everyday practice of each and every student is different. Students from the natural sciences share one particular everyday practice, which is different to those in the social sciences and to those from the liberal arts. They understand the world differently, learn differently and solve problems differently. This means that even if they are presented with exactly the same problem or disharmony, they will understand and solve it in different ways. However, even within each group

disharmonies present themselves differently, so each student, depending on his/her particular cache of experiences and capabilities, will conceptualize disharmonies in an individualized way on the basis of his/her everyday practice. Presumably, students from an urban background conceptualize differently to students from the rural. Thus, presented with exactly the same task, students will approach disharmonies in a variety of manners. Hence, neither resources nor opportunities are objectively given ex-ante in the form of a gap in the market but are constructed in a processual interplay between thought and action. Let us provide you with an example: Two engineering students lived in very small apartments with their girlfriends. Both girls became pregnant and gave birth around the same time. Both families were confronted with the challenge that their bathrooms were too small to keep an ordinary baby bathtub. So the two fathers start discussing how to solve this problem and come up with the foldable bath – the Flexibath. Now, although this problem has been experienced by numerous young families growing up in cramped apartments no one has previously experienced this eureka moment. The prototype saw the light of day about two years ago. Today the bath is sold in 50 countries. The idea did not arise because the two young men saw a hole in the market but because they wanted to solve their own everyday disharmony.

We therefore argue that entrepreneurship is an “idiosyncratic activity” dependent on context, culture and circumstance and that these play a major role in how entrepreneurial ideas unfold. In the following, we illustrate the importance of everyday practice as a foundation for opportunity creation and entrepreneurial processes by introducing a number of empirical cases. These cases illustrate how opportunities unfold differently depending on regional and local as well as gender differences and could be used to inspire enterprise education to take context, culture and circumstance into account.

Regional and local differences

In the regional development literature, scholars generally agree that spatial conditions and the local social and economic milieu greatly influence entrepreneurial activities. The immediate environment, culture, history and relations with for example family, networks, and role models play an important role for entrepreneurship (Julien, 2007). Hence, entrepreneurship highly depends on the socio-political, socio-material and socio-cultural context in which it is created (Aldrich and Ruef, 2006; Anderson, 2000). Different localities offer different types of entrepreneurial opportunities. Most research addressing the spatial dimensions of entrepreneurship focuses on the regional level (Trettin and Welter 2011; Hindle, 2010). These studies find that regions with high population density, such as cities and metropolitan areas, with easy access to stocks of human, social and financial capital, have more entrepreneurial activity than regions that are lagging behind in these respects. Nonetheless, peripheral areas less well equipped with such forms of capital and infrastructures demonstrate rather unique forms of entrepreneurship. While metropolitan areas offer opportunities of many kinds (e.g. high-tech, arts and crafts, etc.), entrepreneurial opportunities in rural regions are often connected to what the immediate environment and the innate resources it has to offer, and are thus unique and specific to the everyday practice in the region. This suggests that students with different regional (and national) backgrounds will bring very diverse perceptions of the framework conditions for entrepreneurship into the classroom.

While regional characteristics are certainly important, there are also vital dynamics at the local level which impact on entrepreneurial activities. While the regional level is perhaps often understood in terms of structural and cultural terms, localities are best seen as places. A place is defined as a localized complex of material and social relations. It is a meaningful location, where the meaning is constructed in continuing practices, which bring together materialities such as the landscape, infrastructure or weather of the location and social aspects such as community, local culture, and heritage. In an attempt to address the role of place, we have conducted studies of entrepreneurial activities in rural island settings in Denmark (Korsgaard 2010; Korsgaard et al. 2011; Neergaard et al. 2008). In these studies, we find that place can be of vital importance for the creation of opportunities.

In particular, we find that the material and historical elements of place, can serve as resources from which entrepreneurs can create opportunities. In one example we find an opportunity being created from the history of salt-production and the unique water conditions on the island Læsø (Neergaard et al. 2008), Another example is the successful local brewery and restaurant built on the unique water and history of the island Fur (Korsgaard 2010). 'Sort Safari', a touristic business in the rural Wadden Sea region in Denmark, is based on an opportunity provided by the natural resources of this particular region. The region possesses a rich and diverse wildlife, which also includes huge flocks of birds that fly, or rather "dance", in hundreds of thousands in the evening sky. This phenomenon is called the 'Black Sun'. This spectacle is highly seasonal, and Sort Safari has seized this opportunity specific to the locality and created a thriving business around the natural resource. Today, the company organizes a wide selection of guided tours in the area throughout the year. 'Ribe Vikingecenter' displays authentic reconstructions of buildings from the Viking Age of Ribe. Ribe is Denmark's oldest city, and the area is one of the world's most important archaeological sites for the documentation of trade, craftsmanship and farming in the Viking Age. Today, the centre employs 25 local people and 400 volunteers, attracts around 250.000 tourists every year to the area, and runs a local production school aiming to activate the unemployed youth of the area. This example, illustrates a successful entrepreneurial initiative evolving around an opportunity that stems from the specific history and heritage of this region.

From an educational perspective this directs attention to the localized resources, knowledge and meanings that students from different localities draw on when making sense of entrepreneurship and that they may draw on when formulating ideas and opportunities for entrepreneurial action. Indeed, individuals and opportunities are locally embedded and the diversity of localities represented through the students in the classroom may in itself become a resource.

Gender differences

Research on women entrepreneurs has painted a picture of them being disadvantaged compared to their male counterparts when it comes to entrepreneurship. Women are often portrayed as lacking in regard to social, cultural, human and financial capital. Their businesses tend to be smaller and grow less quickly than male owned firms, and women's networks are also normally smaller when compared to men's (Aldrich et al., 1989). Thereto must be added that women are still likely to take primary responsibility for childcare and household duties, which also are considered to prevent women from accumulating and deploying the

resources needed for exploiting opportunities (Brush, 1992). Other scholars point to gender as a result of socialization processes which make women and men develop fundamentally different views of the world. This has an impact on opportunity creation, since these unique stocks of human capital, which men and women develop, lead to rather different entrepreneurial processes (Detienne and Chandler, 2007).

Moreover, studies in gender and entrepreneurship also call attention to the fact that entrepreneurship is in itself a gendered concept (Ahl, 2006, Bird and Brush, 2002) and that women perceive and approach business ownership in ways different to that of man. Therefore, Bird and Brush (2002) argue that the traditional way of viewing venture creation processes stepwise with opportunity recognition as the first step is in keeping with this masculine norm and not the everyday practice of women. This means that women tend to unfold opportunities that originate not from observing holes in the market, but are based on effectuation principles that build on their everyday practice. Indeed, it seems that women tend to follow the same effectuation principles as those, which Sarasvathy (2008) claim characterize 'expert entrepreneurs' and they tend to unfold ideas that have intrinsic links to disharmonies and anomalies in their everyday practice.

One example is the Rübner case. Bente Rübner was a trained weaver, but had worked in the county offices for most of her career. In 1990, Bente and her husband had to change the slate roof of their house. Bente thought the tiles were beautiful in colour and texture. Each tile was different, both by nature and because it was worn from exposure to all kinds of weather. So the slate tiles were stored at the bottom of Bente's garden. Then, in 2002 the Danish government initiated mergers between counties. The mergers had consequences for many employees in that their jobs became obsolete, and Bente was among these. One day she was told that either she would be made redundant or she would have to accept a different job. That evening she wandered down the bottom of the garden once again. She picked up a slate tile, ran her hand over the top. Then she picked up another – and put the two next to each other on the grass. Using her sense of texture, colour and pattern, she fitted two more next to them, and then another two – and thought: I could make tables. With this thought in her mind, she went back to the house and rang the local blacksmith to enquire if he could make a table frame. They made an appointment and based on Bente's ideas and his knowledge of what would work, they developed a frame. Bente then cut the slate to fit the frame and her prototype was born. The next step was to sell the product. Bente had never sold anything in her life and she did not want to make a fool of herself in her own hometown. What if the local furniture store would just laugh at her idea? So she got in her car and drove as far across the country as she could get. Here she entered the first furniture store, showed them the prototype and asked if they would be interested in selling her tables. The answer was yes. So encouraged, she went into all the furniture stores that she drove by on her way home. In each and everyone, she made a sale. By the time she got home, her order book was more than full and her business was born. She realized that what had sold the tables was the story: the story about the roof and its origin and although each table was the same, it was still different because the tiles had been worn differently by the weather. She quickly used up the whole stack of tiles from her own roof, and had to look for another source of raw material. However, rather than buy new slate tiles from a quarry, she started to buy up old slate roofs. She made sure that with each roof, she got the story of the house it came from, and each table was consequently fitted with a small booklet with a 'certificate of origin' and the story of

the roof. Thus, the table and its origin could easily become the topic of conversation at the dinner table. Bente's business is today international both in sourcing and in export sales. She also started using other natural materials besides slate.

Another example is 'MyDummy'. Pia Callesen came up with the idea when her young son started in nursery school. More often than not, when Pia came to pick him up, she found that not only had his dummy disappeared, but another child's dummy was in his mouth. She was very unhappy with this unnecessary spreading of germs, as well as the constant and costly replacement of dummies. The business MyDummy saw the light of day. It sells personalised dummies with the child's name, permanently engraved so the lettering can withstand both boiling and sterilizing. It is easy to recognize for day care employees. With help from her knowledge from an education in marketing and PR, Pia started the business in 2005 as an Internet-based business and today she sells between 50 and 80,000 personalised dummies each month to 12 different countries.

Our final example is SanseMotorik established by Vibeke who was trained as a nurse and worked in the maternity ward. Later she became a health visitor with responsibility for post-natal care in the home. During this work she discovered that many of the children she visited had motoric difficulties. Vibeke decided that she wanted to do more, she wanted to help these children and she started her business SanseMotorik in 2009. Today, she offers training for parents whose children have motoric problems and she has produced a full programme that covers all the various problems encountered. She also sells courses to day carer's and other groups who find they have a need and she has developed her portfolio of exercises into a franchising package.

From an educational perspective, the implication is that ideas, which arise from a personal disharmony, are widespread, not only but maybe particularly among women. Many of these ideas use existing competences, sometimes some that have lain dormant for years or maybe are hobby related, to effectuate the idea into a fully-fledged business. However, this does not mean that these ideas do not have growth potential as the examples illustrate. However, the examples also stress the need for courses that can enhance students' awareness of the importance of anchoring business ideas in themselves and provide them with knowledge about relevant business models and potential alternative growth paths.

From the cases above, it is clear that context-specific aspects, such as differences in region, locality, and gender strongly impact on the genesis of entrepreneurial opportunities, the entrepreneurial process itself and how each individual performs entrepreneurially. This has consequences for the way we approach entrepreneurial education: Enterprise education should be sensitive to the everyday practice of students and accept that there are different ways of unfolding enterprising behaviour for each student. This is more clearly formulated by Jones and Matlay (2011 pp 698) who emphasise that *"... a community contains enormous diversity and our students are a clear reflection of such diversity. The important issue for us as entrepreneurship educators is that we understand the nature of heterogeneity that constantly surrounds our students' lives and appreciate the role it plays in their education"*.

It can thus be argued that in order to learn entrepreneurship, students should ideally engage with what McMullen and Shepherd (2006) refer to as first person opportunities; i.e. opportunities that are interesting, relevant and feasible for the student. This is in opposition to traditional case oriented teaching

based on third person opportunities; i.e. opportunities that students can see are relevant for others, but which are neither relevant nor feasible for them. While students can certainly learn from working with third person opportunities, e.g. through collaboration with real life entrepreneurial companies, this will remain a partially detached learning experience, essentially training the student for consultancy for others rather than entrepreneurship for themselves. “True” attachment relies on working with first person opportunities derived from the idiosyncratic everyday practices of the students and feasible based on the resources available to the student (cf. Haynie et al. 2009).

Entrepreneurship education on the basis of everyday practice.

To design enterprise education, which is able to appreciate the heterogeneity of students, is a difficult task that fundamentally contradicts the way we usually teach at higher educational institutions. Figure 1 shows how our idea of a personalized or idiosyncratic approach to enterprise education based on the everyday practice of the students fundamentally opposes the traditional ideals of universalistic university education.

This alternative perspective, the personalized or idiosyncratic approach to entrepreneurship education, contributes with a new approach to entrepreneurship education; yet we appreciate that it bears strong similarities with e.g. opportunity centred learning (Rae 2007), effectuation based learning (Read et al. 2011) and an increasing number of learning activities in higher education institutions, which incorporate a practical dimension based on the students resources and abilities such as university based student incubators.

Figure 1 approximately here

The universalistic approach to teaching entrepreneurship is based on the classic ideals of the university in at least two fundamental ways. First of all, the universalistic approach builds on what Spinoza et al. (1997) refer to as a Cartesian logic where knowledge production and learning takes place through the use of universally accepted scientific research methods, which ensures that the researcher as well as the learner has a non-biased, detached and disengaged relationship to the subject matter. The search for and use of objective knowledge and analytical problem-solving with well-established scientific methods is at the centre of teaching in the universalistic model. In this perspective the ideal for entrepreneurship education is to develop general models or theories for entrepreneurship education. Actually, the goal is not just to teach theories but to teach students ‘the theory’ of entrepreneurship encompassing a toolbox with detailed causal description of mechanisms relevant to all or most students of entrepreneurship.

Secondly, the universalistic model is supported by what Gibb (2002) refers to as the bureaucratic and corporate cultures or values of universities that maintains an institutional logic of control and accountability, which privileges programmed knowledge in terms of prescribed and measurable outcomes (Rae 2010). Hence, the universalistic approach mainly describes courses and programs in terms of teaching content being the causal detached description of the world, where the teacher primarily controls “what” is taught in terms of content. How the student learns is not an issue in the universalistic approach. Whether he or she learns by reading and attending class – or by sleeping with the book under the pillow, has no interest

if the student can show knowledge of the content in the exams. Attention is therefore mainly focused on the knowledge content and the structure of that knowledge and not the details of “how” the course might be taught relating to the personal development of the student (Gibb 2002).

Several scholars in enterprise education research have addressed some of the fundamental problems with the sole focus on content within a Cartesian logic, and called for an alternative. For example, Löbler (2006, pp 20) argues that “... *traditional management education focuses very much on a content driven education and on understanding existing ‘roadmaps’*. *This has already been addressed and changed in entrepreneurship education. To create and invent new ‘roadmaps’ for unknown territories, entrepreneurship education should take into account more and more a process driven pedagogy with an open learning process.*” Jones and Matlay (2011 :pp 701) further stipulate that “*What makes entrepreneurship education effective has less to do with transferable teaching techniques or standardised curricula and more to do with the unique set of dialogic relations*”.

By the idiosyncratic approach we seek to answer these calls for an alternative, based on our understanding of entrepreneurship as an everyday practice. In this case we argue that entrepreneurship education should rely and exploit the particular context, cultural heritage and circumstances of each individual student. Only students themselves possess the relevant knowledge of their individual opportunities. Knowledge is thus subjective and can only be created in a personalized and engaged way. Consequently, the teacher cannot alone decide what is relevant knowledge, but has to listen to the needs of each student and facilitate the learning process. Course descriptions must thus primarily depict the learning process. The challenge for this approach as Löbler (2006 pp 22) perceives it is that “... *if the student and not the teacher governs the learning process, what learning goals should be set by whom?*” In other words, what students should learn, cannot be determined in advance by the teacher. It must depend on the students’ idiosyncrasies. The task of the teacher thus changes into a facilitating role, addressing issues of the process rather than the content of learning. Whatever universalistic elements we should seek to derive will thus revolve around process issues; how can we plan and facilitate a good learning process for the students that allow the students to leverage their everyday practices and idiosyncrasies to learn entrepreneurship?

A more fundamental challenge specifically relating to the implementation and diffusion of the idiosyncratic approach is how educators should deal with the Cartesian practice as well as the bureaucratic and corporate culture as specified above. For example, entrepreneurship educators need to deal with the apparent allegation of lack of academic rigour in Cartesian terms in particular through recognition of the impact of emotions (Gibb 2002) as well as the impact of students’ every day practice (Spinosa et al. 1997) and general competences in terms of “what you know”, “who you are”, and “who you know” (Sarasvathy 2001). One way of dealing with this is to draw parallels between the scientific method and entrepreneurship as method as suggested by Sarasvathy & Venkataraman (2011). The normative implication of accepting that argument is not only to teach entrepreneurship to everyone, but also to accept the impact of subjective and personal elements such as students’ every day practice as an integrated part of the “scientific” method providing the necessary academic rigour and evidence to an idiosyncratic approach to entrepreneurship.

Moreover, as suggested by Rae (2010), we need to change the power balance between learners, institutions and educators to facilitate what he refers to as a personalized learning experience with liberating

and emancipatory effects for the learner. On a practical level, this includes new forms of assessments that encourage these personalized learning processes at the expense of the traditional examination system and its main focus on learning content. However, this is still contrary to the bureaucratic and corporate culture of most universities, which privileges programmed knowledge in terms of prescribed and measurable outcomes (Rae, 2010). One essential answer to this problem is that we still need to bring issues of politics and governance into the entrepreneurship curriculum debate as suggested by Gibb (2002), which echoes his call for a radical Schumpeterian shift in entrepreneurship education. Whilst waiting for Godot, the only apparent alternative is to specify the learning goals, not in terms of prescribed and measurable outcomes since they are de-facto personal in the idiosyncratic approach, but in terms of the learning processes, i.e. “how” it is learned, which is actually the only universalistic element in the idiosyncratic approach.

Translating ideas into the classroom

So far this article has portrayed enterprise education at a rather abstract level. It has introduced an abstract idea, a philosophy or a general approach to entrepreneurial teaching and learning. The real challenge is to translate this general idea into the particular classroom and translate ideals into a specific pedagogical practice. This challenge has recently been described by Jones and Iredale (2010 pp 14) who argue that as ,“ *a generalised philosophy its actual practice is loose, decentralised, non-prescriptive and fluid. Enterprise education practice within the same educational phase is inevitably open to change in part to meet the specific needs of different classroom practitioners, and learner requirements as well as to meet whole school, college or university expectations.*” In order to ensure that the recommendations presented above become more than just the claim of an ideal, two things need to be proven:

1. That this approach differ significantly from other approaches
2. That it is possible to design enterprise education based on an everyday practice perspective

How the everyday practice approach differs

Before demonstrating how an everyday practice approach differs from other approaches to enterprise education, we briefly summarize the insight produced so far:

First, students need to understand opportunities as individualized and context specific, in the sense that their particular opportunities can only be created on the basis of their individual and idiosyncratic background, where region, culture, locality, terroir, gender or heritage are only a few of the elements that constitutes this background.

Second, in order to utilize their individual and idiosyncratic background students need to become aware of problems or disharmonies in their close context that need to be dealt with, and be able to evaluate whether these may serve as a foundation for solving more general anomalies in society (Spinoza et al 1997)

Third, students should be made aware of the historical, cultural, natural or regional resources that abound around them. What are the context-specific resources at hand and what can the students as entrepreneurial individuals do with them? (Baker and Nelson 2005, Sarasvathy and Venkataraman 2011)

In Table 1 these characteristics are compared with the two other approaches to entrepreneurship education mentioned in the introduction. At the bottom of the table we place traditional university teaching. Within recent entrepreneurship education research this approach has often been criticised for having only a “about” entrepreneurship approach and for being unable to train students “for” entrepreneurship (Hannon 2005; Blenker et al. 2011).

Table 1: approximately here

The two bottom rows are often confused in the discussions on enterprise education. By separating them clearly, we are able to distinguish between educational initiatives that invite the learner to solve other people problems by situating him within a particular problem situation. This learning context is often fruitful, as it will allow for experiential learning (Kolb 1984) – but it should not be confused with our suggestion of enterprise education as an everyday practice.

The everyday practice perspective differs as it deliberately uses problems and disharmonies in the student's own everyday practice as the outset for learning. These problems and disharmonies are often linked closely to the way that the student interacts with the world, which in turn is inextricably related to existential growth experiences. The power of this approach to enterprise education is thus twofold. First, by being anchored in the students themselves it can harness a high energy level within the individual, as something that we perceive as relevant to ourselves is more likely to resonate and help transform the student from student to aspiring entrepreneur. Second, by building on context-specific resources that are actually accessible to the student, the barriers, and hence the potential fear of taking the next step, are reduced. The everyday practice approach builds on the paradigm of existential learning which holds that vital learning experiences are those that alter and reshape existing perceptual cognitive patterns and bring about transformation (Frick 1987). Indeed, according to Frick (1987, pp 411-412) such transformations come from a creative process within the person and help release the highest potential for learning. In everyday practice education we seek to sensitize students towards entrepreneurship in a way that they internalize entrepreneurial behaviour.

It is possible to design enterprise education based on an everyday practice ideal?

During the last five years the authors behind this article have been involved in the design and implementation of various enterprise education courses that is based on the everyday practice perspective. One of these courses is designed for postgraduate arts students in an experience economy master program. These students each arrive with different educational background in form of a bachelor from either arts or social science.

The course is process based, in the sense that five assignments drive the process (Bager et al. 2010). These assignments focus on the relationship between on the one hand, the students as individuals and groups with an everyday practice – and on the other hand, the disharmonies and opportunities they face in their everyday practice. In figure 2 we have described the progression of process over time along the dimensions of the individual-opportunity nexus.

Figure 2 approximately here

Figure 2 shows how the course is built on two premises. First, it builds on the individual-opportunity nexus – and second, it seeks to relate and build every assignment on the everyday practice of the learners. The students begin with themselves and their everyday practice, seek to identify disharmonies in their everyday practice that needs to be dealt with, analyses whether a solution of these problems can be of more general relevance, work with opportunities and solutions that they are able to realize on the basis of their everyday practice and finally seek to people from their personal network into eventual solutions. The course thus seeks to control the learning process, but leaves the specific course content open for each student to decide for herself. We do not claim that this is the ideal course – only that it is possible to build a process oriented course along the lines of an everyday practice philosophy.

Conclusion and implications

We have argued that enterprise education should be based on the idiosyncrasies of the individual entrepreneur, and we have demonstrated how entrepreneurial everyday practice differs from other individuals with respect to context, culture and circumstance. Further, we have explained what lies in an everyday practice approach to entrepreneurship education.

The idea is that underlying all entrepreneurial activities is a value-creating enterprising meta-competence. We can see this as a general entrepreneurial mindset, or an enterprising approach to life, which can find its expression in many particular entrepreneurial endeavours. This mindset, approach or entrepreneurial resource can be used not only for starting business, but also for intrapreneurship, civic entrepreneurship or cultural entrepreneurship (Spinosa et al 1997; Gibb 2002; Mauer et al. 2009; Sarasvathy and Venkataraman 2011)

This broad notion of entrepreneurship as everyday practice, we claim, is a *sine qua non* of other forms of entrepreneurship as it is ontologically and temporally prior to other forms of entrepreneurial activity. Therefore something actually is universal in entrepreneurship education - and we claim that any entrepreneurship education program must somehow incorporate this element. We thus assume that a enterprising activity is always present where individuals meet opportunities through reflexion, action and creation. This universal component can be found in all other more specific expressions of entrepreneurship. It underlies new firm creation, growth firms and the instigation of social change. Entrepreneurship education that is not somehow based on the everyday practice of the participants is unlikely to generate the outcome desired, be it new venture creation, growth or social change.

The conceptualization of entrepreneurship as an everyday practice allows us not only to embrace the idea that initiatives for enterprise education need to differ depending on context, culture and circumstance, but also to suggest how individualized enterprise education must make a move from focussing on “course content” towards “learning process”, where educators focus less on “what” is learned and more on “how” it is learned.

A radical and far-reaching consequence is that the learning objectives in entrepreneurship education is only related to the process elements of “how”, whereas the “what” is a highly idiosyncratic element only meaningful in the context of the specific everyday practice experienced by the actual student. Then, if course description requires a description of what the students will or should learn during the course, we need to describe these as process elements or methods for disclosing everyday practice. We find this insight highly relevant for pedagogic reflections on single entrepreneurship courses and for the construction of an enterprise education curriculum.

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Table 1: Comparing three forms for entrepreneurship education

	Description	Pedagogical form	Perspective
<i>Generalised entrepreneurship education</i>	Courses on the history of entrepreneurship theory, contemporary theories of entrepreneurship, general introductions to business planning	lectures, case stories, textbooks and readings	no persons perspective
<i>Enterprise education as situated, experiential or problem based learning</i>	Education initiatives situating the learner in a specific problem situation inviting him to solve real problems by using existing knowledge, searching for new knowledge and reflecting on the adequacy of knowledge	real world problem solving and reflection	a third person perspective
<i>Enterprise education as an everyday practice</i>	Initiatives that utilize the heterogeneity of the learners everyday practice to unfold her individual-opportunity nexus	learners own problems and disharmonies in her everyday life	a first person perspective

Figure 1. A juxtaposition of universalistic and idiosyncratic approaches to entrepreneurship education



Figure 2 An everyday practice based learning process

