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Research Paper

Ivorian Primary School Teachers' Competency Reference: What Evaluation?

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ABSTRACT: *The objectives of this study is to refer to the common culture of primary school teachers' profession, to identify the professional competencies expected, to measure, to judge or to assess the frame of competencies reference. Our hypothesis is that primary school teachers' have a professional competencies frame of reference that is proven and therefore, there is no need of a refoundation, of a competencies renovation. Our methodology is based on the results of the grids of observation constituted of thirty-two (32) class-visits in primary schools. The frame of observation is constituted of levels going from CP1 to CM2 in public primary schools. The results of evaluation got, lead us to say that there are three different competencies and for it a grid can be offered in order to identify them.*

Keywords:*professional competency, frame of reference, evaluation.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Approaches to the concept of competence are almost unanimous in the field of education, but they still lack a sufficient theoretical framework. Despite somewhat divergent positions (Perrenoud, 1997, Tardif, 2003, Jonnaert, 2002), a certain consensus seems to surround the overall definition of this concept.

Forsome authors and in a very broad approach, competence is, sometimes, the ability to do something or sometimes, as for D'hainaut (1988), in a more circumscribed way, competence is a body of knowledge, know-how and expertise that makes it possible to carry out properly a role, a function or an activity. For others, competence is highly composite. Thus, for Montmollin (1986), competences would be a stabilized set of knowledge and know-how, standard behaviors, standard procedures and types of reasoning that can be implemented without learning. With Leplat (1991), this would be a system of knowledge enabling a person to generate activity that meets the requirements of tasks in a class of situations.

Jonnaert and Vander Borght (2003) believe that competence is like the intelligence of situations. From the analysis of the different definitions of the concept of competence comparison, there are at least three constant elements (Jonnaert, 2002):

- A competence would be based on the mobilization and coordination, by a person in situation, of a diversity of resources,
- A competence would develop only in situation,
- A competence would be achieved only in the case of a finished treatment of the situation.

Competence and ability are both concepts with very different definitions, because there are conceptual shifts. For others, it is among others, clashing and superposition or even confusion. Hence, it is necessary to have an explanation in this regard. Jonnaert (2002) establishes a parallelism between capacity and scheme, that are very close.Several capacities coordinated with several resources are then organized into a real operational beam of resources (Allal, 2002, p.81) for the handlingof a situation. The capacity belongs to the cognitive resources mobilized for a competence in situation. It is demarche, not a matter of content, but a method, and determines the learning process, specifying their conditions and levels of achievement.

A competency will develops in a situation on the basis of the actions carried out by a person, depending on various resources. In such a prospect, necessarily located, everything does not happen only in the individual's thinking. What matters is not only the knowledge mysteriously stored somewhere by the person, and just as

mysteriously mobilized for action. All resources are potentially useful for the development of the action and a competence in situation.

The practice of a competence involves complex mental operations underpinned by patterns of thought (Paquay, 1996; Perrenoud, 1996, 1998), which enable us to determine (more or less consciously and rapidly) and to realize (more or less effectively) an action relatively adapted to the situation. The question is not whether a model is true or false, but to examine what it means, to understand in a more heuristic way, that is to say, it follows a path that is not descriptive in advance, including trial and error, trial-error, digressions and impasses. This is why Larcher (1993) adds that

"reality is in fact replaced by a mental construction, oriented by the borrowed point of view or by the question that one asks about this reality."

The scientific explanation rests on the construction of models or theories. A model is a mind construction that replaces the real object for all the intellectual operations that can be performed on the latter (deduction, analysis, synthesis, application). It then carried out a comparative study of the five ways of approaching skills:

- approach by knowledge
- approach by expertise
- approach by behaviors and know-how
- approach by knowledge, expertise and know-how
- approach by cognitive skills.

Professional skills are built: the resources that it mobilizes, theoretical and methodological knowledge, attitudes, know-how and more specific competence, motor schemes, perception schemes, evaluation, anticipation, decision.The frame of reference that we are following here attempts to grasp the movement of the profession, insisting on ten great families. This inventory is neither final nor exhaustive. No frame of reference can guarantee a general agreement, a complete and stable representation of a job or competence that it implements (Perrenoud, 1999).

A frame of reference for professional competences defines the objectives and the common culture to all Ivorian primary school teachers. These competences are acquired and deepened during a continuous process starting in initial training and continuing throughout the career through accumulated professional experience and the contribution of continuing education. The list of competency reference that a teacher have to master for his profession has several objectives:

• Assert that all staff contribute to common objectives and can refer to the common culture of their profession,
• recognize the specificity of the professions of primary school teachers, in their practice,
• identify the expected professional competencies. These are acquired and deepened from initial training and continue throughout the career through professional experience,
• measure, judge or perform the assessment (Linn and Gronlund, 2000) to the competency repository.

Our problem is that in order for an education to flourish, it would be necessary to carry out an assessment of the competency repository. The profound changes of the stakes in our society and the unpredictable nature of its evolution compel the world of education to mutations. We need to collect a sufficiently relevant set of information and examine the adequacy of this set of information in order to make a decision about the competency repository.

What is the assessment of the competency repositery? Would the measure or the judgment be in accordance with what would be found in the frame of reference? To be able to fulfill their task, as a reflective practitioner, in a competency-based approach, will teachers have a corpus structure of adequate knowledge and expertise?

We assume that the profession of primary school teachers has an established professional competence repository. After having established the assessment and the assessment of this reference system of competences there is no need for a refounding, renovation of competences. We Always have to accompany the course of Ivorian student taking into account reference dedication of the skills.

II. METHODOLOGY

It is a mode of data collection, by which we want to visually observe the behaviors of the different actors-teachers-learners over a given period of time. The objective is to describe the pedagogical action by identifying the functions of the teacher, the characteristics of the pedagogical situations, specifying the nature of the communications in the classroom. All these with the aim of discovering the reference models. More and more, teaching is a true art, which,one has to master all the aspects, for the act of creation, that is, the teacher's self expression in the pedagogical relationship, appears to be what can be meant by the art of teaching.

2-1- Observation grid

We want to establish an observation grid in order to understand the variables involved in the pedagogical situation. This will aim to analyze the behavior of the teacher, in the action taken by him to establish communication, direct or refuse it. The aim is to establish a criterion for the emergence of the phenomenon to be studied, which must be defined in operational terms.The pedagogical model involving the experimental approach is the active or interrogative method that invites learners to ask questions, to formulate a problem, to formulate hypotheses, to design and then to experiment, to exploit the results. The experimental method proposes to develop in the learner, logical thinking by allowing him to organize his work, to do individual research.

2-2- Population and Sample

We question the representations of actors in education:

• around the being
• around knowledge
• around expertise
• human qualities

These observation results will consist of the class visits that will be carried out and which will involve thirty-two (32) classes for collecting primary data following observations. The observation framework consists of levels going from CP1 to CM2 from public primary schools. These results will be obtained through observing behaviors, and the behaviors taking place during the course sequences. The observation adopted is non-participatory because we have adopted an external viewpoint. On the basis of these reports, the observation grids of the teaching tasks will be established, that will help to determine the competent primary school teacher.

€ Characteristics of the teachers monitored

 DRENs

Various DRENs have been selected to conduct this study. The 32 teachers observed were selected from five DRENs.

According to the graph, a little more than a third of the teachers observed (34%) practice in the DREN of Abidjan 1. 21% of the observed work in DREN of Abidjan 4 and 18% in that of Divo. The remaining 27% is divided between the DREN of Abidjan 3 and that of Abidjan 2.

 Seniority

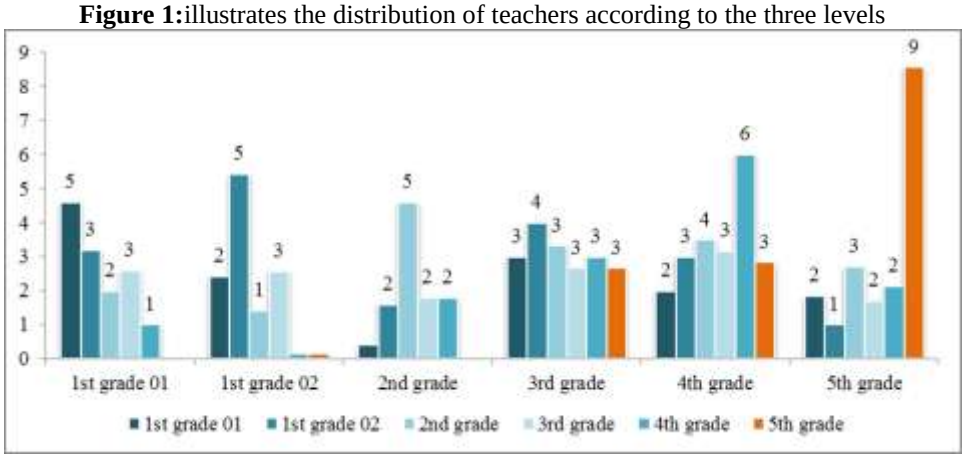
The observed teachers have different levels of seniority. This seniority was captured during the observations. The following chart summarizes the seniority of the observed teachers.

Nearly half of the teachers observed have less than 10 years of experience. One-third of teachers have 10 to 20 years of experience. It is also noted that one teacher out of five has more than 20 years of experience. But what about the class held at the time of the observation?

 Class held and experience

During the observation, the observed teachers were almost equally divided between the three levels (preparatory courses, elementary courses and average courses). The graph below illustrates the average number of years spent teaching each level.

Figure 1:illustrates the distribution of teachers according to the three levels



As it can be seen on the graph, on average, that the teachers have a high experience in the level at which they were observed. The teachers of the CP (1st grade 01 and 1st grade 02) have less taught the CM (4th grade and 5th grade) and vice versa. However, the teachers of the CE2 (3rd grade) in particular are straddling on all levels. However, almost all teachers had to teach other classes.

III. Results

3.1-Evaluation of the teachers competency frame of reference

3.1-1.Grid of competent teachers

For the most effective teachers, the grid that can be proposed in order to identify them is as follows:

Variables	Label	Modality to consider
QH_Q37	Understanding	Very good
QH_Q44	Manages an affective relationship with students	Very good
AT_SQ20	Technical and scientifically correct knowledge and training	Good
AT_EQ18	Innovation	Good
AT_SFQ27	Technical training	Good
QH_Q41	benevolent	Very good
QH_Q42	Comrade	Very good
AT_SQ25	Knows how to approach children's, knowledge of children psychology at various levels	Very good
QH_Q45	Humanizesteaching	Very good
AT_EQ12	Active	Very good
QH_Q43	Available for the student	Very good
AT_EQ10	Organization	Good
QH_Q36	Teacher as a friend, someone you can talk to	Very good
AT_EQ19	Interpersonal relationships	Very good
QH_Q38	creates an atmosphere of trust and affectivity	Very good
AT_SQ26	A good initial, scientific training ... a good continuous training ... which allows him to get information	Good
QH_Q39	Gives love and affection	Very good
AT_EQ14	A calm person, with discipline and order, benevolent	Very good
AT_SQ24	Good scientific-pedagogical training, a deep knowledge of the child in the various aspects of its development	Good
AT_EQ11	Available, who believes in the person, who believes that "the best of all are children", interest in other human beings (children)	Good
	#N/A	
AT_SFQ33	Good educator, pedagogical knowledge	Fair
QH_Q36	Teacher as a friend, someone you can talk to	Fair
AT_EQ17	Creativity, openness	Fair
QH_Q37	Understanding	Fair
AT_EQ3	Pedagogical qualities.	Fair
AT_SFQ27	Technical training	Fair
AT_EQ14	A calm person, with discipline and order, benevolent	Fair
QH_Q44	Manages an affective relationship with students	Fair
AT_EQ16	Social adaptation, think about the socio-cultural context	Fair
QH_Q38	Who creates an atmosphere of trust and affectivity	Fair
AT_SFQ34	Good initial training, scientific and pedagogical training and a good continuing traing	Fair
QH_Q45	Humanizesteaching	Fair
AT_EQ8	Communication Capacity	Fair
AT_SFQ30	Good scientific-pedagogical training	Fair
AT_EQ1	Personal maturity	Fair
AT_EQ2	Motivation	Fair
AT_SFQ35	We can see the strength of the "personal dimension" in the representations of the trainers, probably related to the level of education to which the teacher in training is destined	Fair
QH_Q40	Symbolizes security	Fair
AT_EQ18	Innovation	Fair
AT_SFQ29	Do not simply limit on accomplishing a program (often already surpasses)	Fair
AT_SFQ32	Good communicator	Fair
AT_EQ11	Available, who believes in the person, who believes that "the best of all are children" interest in other human beings (children)	Fair
QH_Q43	Available for the student	Fair
QH_Q46	Do not forget the human dimension and the individuality of the student	Fair
AT_SQ21	Scientific and even pedagogical qualities	Fair
QH_Q41	benevolent	Fair
AT_SQ22	Not deprived of the opportunity and pleasure of (re) learning with knowledge which needs to be as up-to-date as possible / routine	Fair
QH_Q42	Comrade	Fair

Variables	Label	Modality to consider
AT_EQ15	Commitment, dedication	Fair
AT_EQ12	Active	Fair
AT_EQ5	kindness	Fair
AT_SFQ28	As a pedagogical skill, the ability to make appropriate diagnoses and to develop the most appropriate activities to solve the problems observed does not deprive of the opportunity and the pleasure of (re) learning with them, as he transmits them a knowledge	Fair
AT_SQ26	A good initial, scientific training,... a good continuous training ... which allows him to get information	Fair
AT_SFQ31	Competence	Fair
AT_SQ20	Technical and scientifically correct knowledge and training	Fair
AT_SQ25	Knows how to approach children's, knowledge of children psychology at various levels	Fair
QH_Q39	Gives love and affection	Fair
AT_SQ23	Interest in culture in general as receiver and transmitter	Fair
AT_EQ10	Organization	Fair
AT_SQ24	Good scientific-pedagogical training, a deep knowledge of the child in the various aspects of its development	Fair

3.1.2-Average teacher grid

For average teachers, the grid that can be proposed to identify them is as follows:

Variables	Label	Modality to consider
AT_EQ18	Innovation	Fair
AT_EQ11	Available, who believes in the person, who believes that "the best of all children" for other human beings (children)	Fair
AT_EQ15	Commitment, dedication	Fair
AT_EQ12	Active	Fair
QH_Q40	Symbolizessecurity	Fair
QH_Q39	Gives love and affection	Fair
AT_SQ25	Knows how to approach children's, knowledge of children psychology at various levels	Fair
AT_SQ24	Good scientific-pedagogical training, a deep knowledge of the child in the various aspects of its development	Fair
AT_EQ10	Organization	Fair
AT_EQ5	kindness	Fair
AT_SFQ29	Do not simply limit to accomplishing a program (often already surpasses)	Fair
QH_Q41	benevolent	Fair
QH_Q43	Available for thr student	Fair
AT_SQ23	Interest in culture in general as receiver and transmitter	Fair
AT_SFQ35	We can see the strength of the "personal dimension" in the representations of the trainers, probably related to the level of education to which the trainee teacher is destined	Fair
AT_EQ13	Creator	Fair
AT_EQ16	Social adaptation, think about the socio-cultural context	Fair
AT_SFQ28	As a pedagogical skill, the ability to make adequate diagnoses, as well as to develop the most appropriate activities to solve the observed problems, is not deprived of the opportunity and the pleasure of (re) learning with them, as he transmits them a knowledge	Fair
QH_Q38	Who creates an atmosphere of trust and affectivity	Fair
AT_SFQ31	Competence	Fair
AT_SQ20	Technical and scientifically correct knowledge and training	Fair
QH_Q45	Humanize education	Fair
AT_SQ26	A good initial, scientific training,... a good continuous training ... which allows him to get information	Fair
AT_EQ17	Creativity, openness	Fair
	#N/A	
QH_Q43	Available for the student	Very good
QH_Q42	Comrade	Very good
AT_SQ25	Knows how to approach children's, knowledge of children psychology at various levels	Very good
AT_EQ12	Active	Very good
QH_Q45	Humanize education	Very good
AT_EQ18	Innovation	Very good
QH_Q44	manages an affective relationship with the student	Very good
QH_Q37	Understanding	Very good

QH_Q41	benevolent	Very good

3.1.3-Non-competent teacher grid

As for non-competent teachers, the grid that can be proposed to identify them is as follows:

Variables	Label	Modality to consider
AT_EQ18	Innovation	Bad
QH_Q40	Symbolizes security	Bad
AT_EQ11	Available, who believes in the person, who believes that "the best of all are children" interest in other human beings (children)	Bad
AT_EQ15	Commitment, dedication	Bad
AT_EQ13	Creator	Bad
AT_EQ12	Active	Bad
AT_EQ7	availability	Bad
AT_EQ9	Patience	Bad

From the above, there are competences to be further developed by teachers. These competences cover all the four main points addressed in this document. Note that all the criteria discussed above need to be improved. However, some deserve more attention than others. This analysis is based on seniority.

3.2-Evaluation of competence around seniority

From the above, there are skills to be further developed by teachers. These competencies cover all four main points addressed in this document. Note that all the criteria discussed above need to be improved. However, some deserve more attention than others. This analysis is based on seniority.

3.2.1.Around the Being

It can be noticed that teachers with a seniority between 10 and 20 years are the ones who are best able to develop the skills around the being. More specifically for this group, these are capacities such as:

- Innovation,
- Creativity, openness,
- scientific qualities,
- Joy,
- The capacity of creation,
- The fact for the teacher to be available, to believe in the person, to have an interest for other human beings (children).

The competence to be developed around the being are illustrated in the graph below:

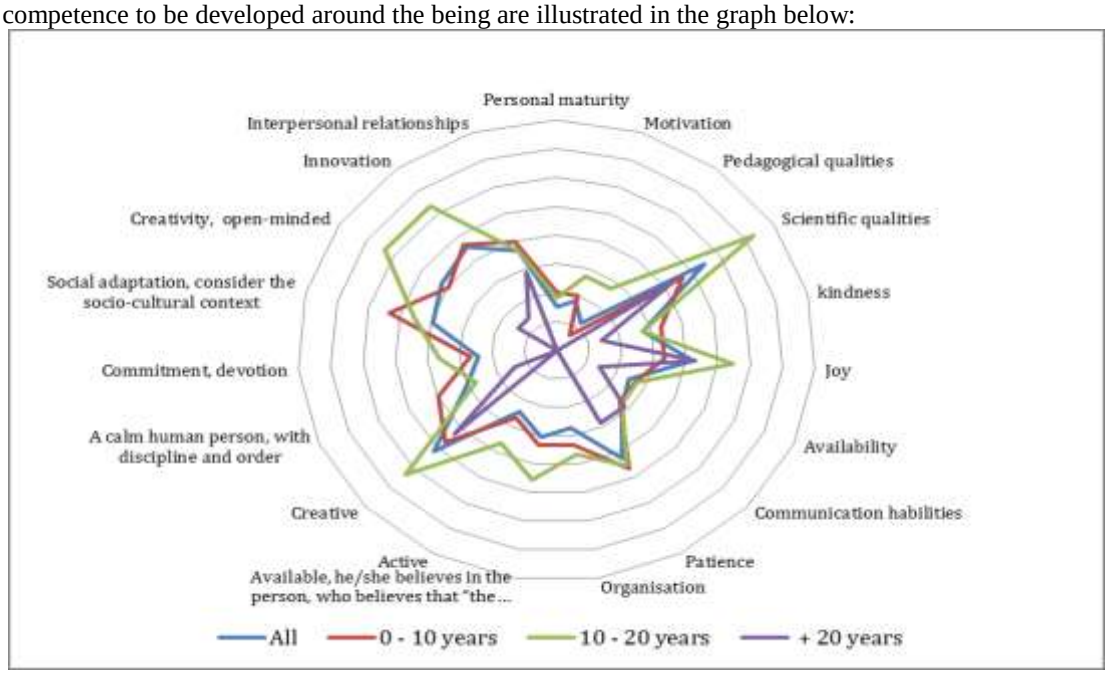


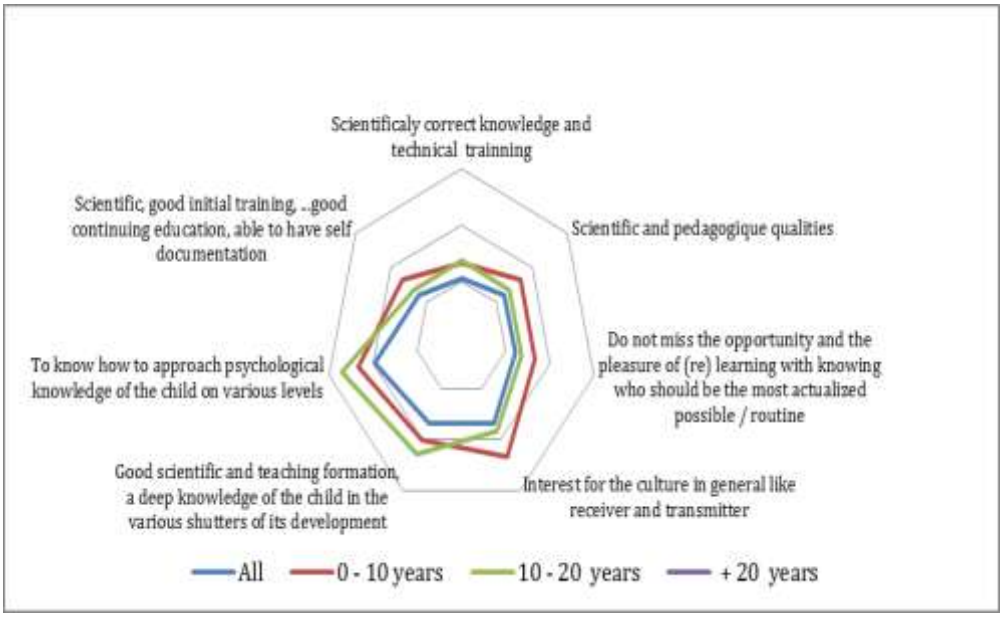
Chart 6: Illustrating The Competence To Be Developed Around The Being By Level Of Seniority

Sources: *Our calculations, based on observation data*

In addition, the less old teachers have difficulties in taking into account the socio-cultural context and have more difficulty to be calm, have discipline and order.

3.2.2. around Knowledge

The assessments of the cognitive representation of teachers revealed knowledge gaps in the competences. In this section, teachers with less than ten years of experience and those with ten to twenty years experience stand out. For the younger (less than 10 years of experience), the difficulties are in the interest of culture in general as receiver and transmitter. In addition, the educational and pedagogical training and the deep knowledge of the child in the various aspects of its development constitute another value in which teachers with little experience are not very competent. Thus, a good initial, scientific training and in-service training that allows the teacher to be documented are not very observable among these teachers.As for the more experienced teachers (between 10 and 20 years of experience), one of the main difficulties is the psychological knowledge that allows the teacher to know.



Graph 7: Illustrating Skills To Be Developed Around Knowledge By Level Of Seniority

Sources: *Our calculations, based on observation data*

Nearly 60% of teachers in this class experience encounter difficulties in approaching children. In addition, nearly half of these teachers do not demonstrate a deep knowledge of the child in the various aspects of its development.

3.2.3.Around expertise

Here, less experienced teachers have relatively more skills to develop. In addition to the communication skills and competence that are poorly demonstrated by one third of these teachers, at least 45% of these demonstrate gaps at four levels represented by the following units:

- *Technical training,*
- *Ability to make adequate diagnoses, develop the most appropriate activities for problem solving,*
- *Do not simply accomplish a program,*
- *We can see the strength of the "personal dimension" in the representations of trainers, probably related to the level of education to which the trainee teacher is destined.*

At the level of know-how, eight criteria were chosen. The skills to be improved are illustrated on the following graph:

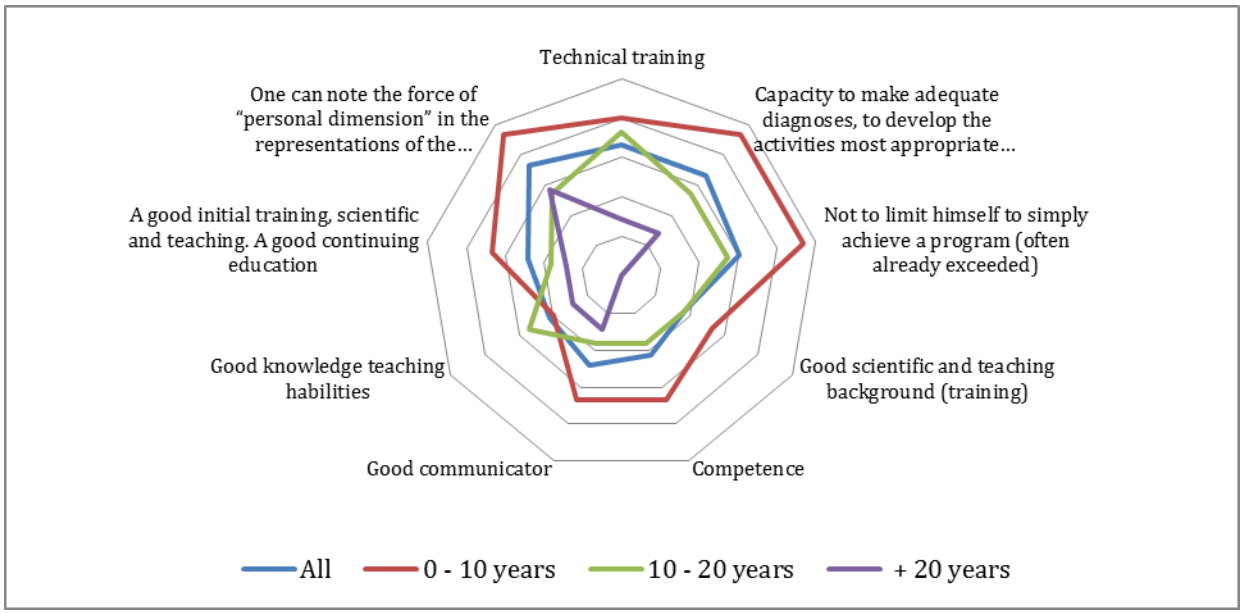


Chart 8 illustrating the competences to be developed around know-how by level of seniority
Sources: *Our calculations, based on observation data*

3.2.3. benevolentqualities

Concerning human qualities, some are acquired for almost all teachers, while others are more difficult to express. This is illustrated in the chart below.

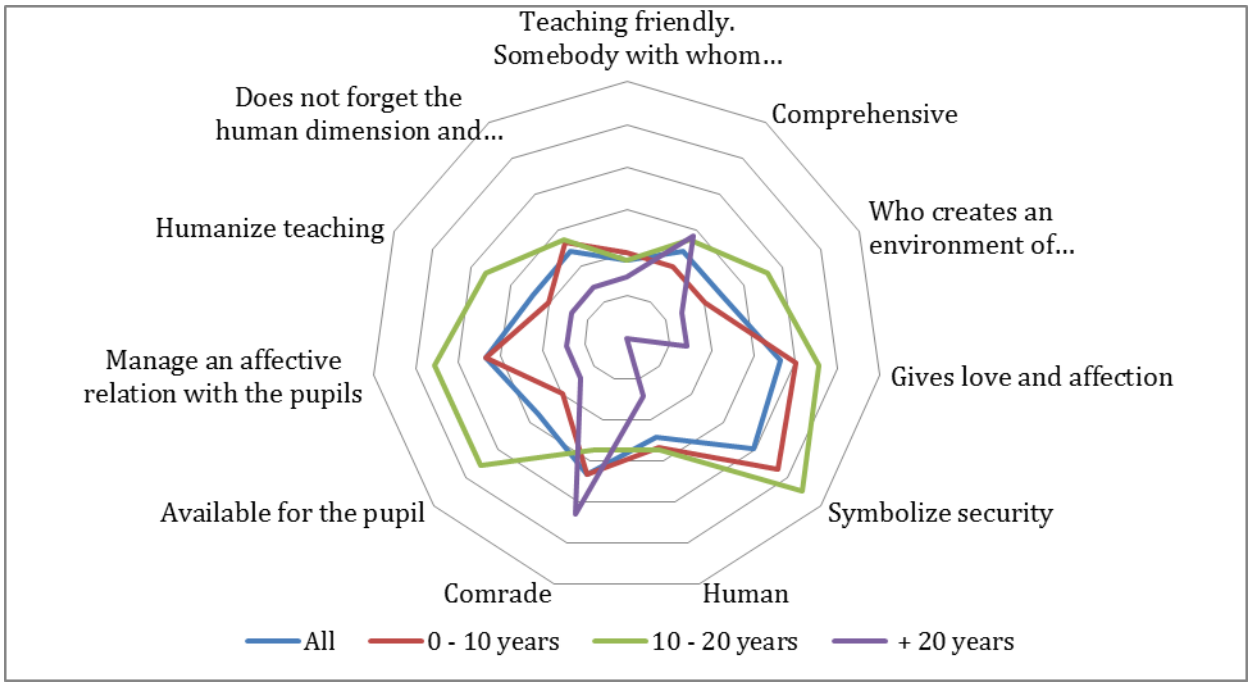


Chart 9 Illustrating The Competences To Be Developed In Terms Of Human Qualities By Level Of Seniority
Sources: *Our calculations, based on observation data*

In terms of the qualities developed by all teachers, the graph shows that most teachers humanize teaching, do not forget the benevolent dimension and the individuality of the pupil. They also know how to behave as friends, as people with whom it is possible to talk. The understanding and the atmosphere of confidence and affectivity are other benevolent qualities more or less well mastered. However, certain qualities are to be developed depending on seniority.

• Less than 10 years experience

The younger teachers (in terms of years of experience) do not give enough love and affection; At least they do not prove it enough. This reflects their lack of competence in this area. Moreover, according to the evaluations, these teachers are not very symbolic of security.

• *Between 10 and 20 years of experience*

For this category of teachers, there are three areas to improve. First, they do not symbolize security. Then they are not very close to the students. As such, they are not available for the students and have more difficulties managing an affective relationship with students.

• *More than 20 years experience*

For the older ones, it is important to note that their professionalism is very advanced. Theirbenevolent qualities are relatively well demonstrated. However, they are less "Comrade" with the students.

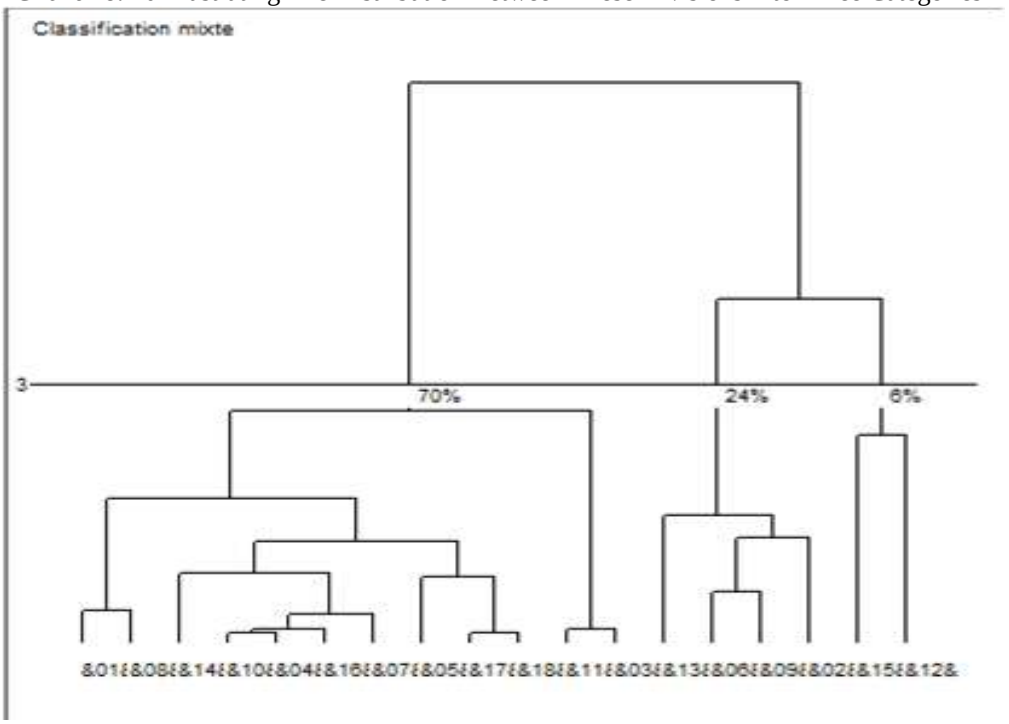
From what has been said above, what typology should be brought out? Beyond that, what contribution can we make for the identification of the competent teacher?

These two questions are answered in the following section.

3.3.Typology Of The Teachers Observed And Proposal Of A Competency Evaluation Grid

For this section, we have attempted to establish a typology of observed teachers that can enable us to establish a competency grid for teachers. The methodology adopted is the hierarchical classification.*Typology*According to the graph, the most interesting division is a division into three categories. The distribution between these divisions reveals that most of the teachers observed belong to the first category.As it can be seen in the graph, three categories can be distinguished. The first, which is the largest, contains two-thirds of the observed population. The second one contains one quarter of the teachers observed and the third with only 6% of the population.Thanks to the hierarchical classification, we can distinguish three classes, as shown in the following graph:

Chart no. 10 Illustrating The Distribution Between These Divisions Into Three Categories



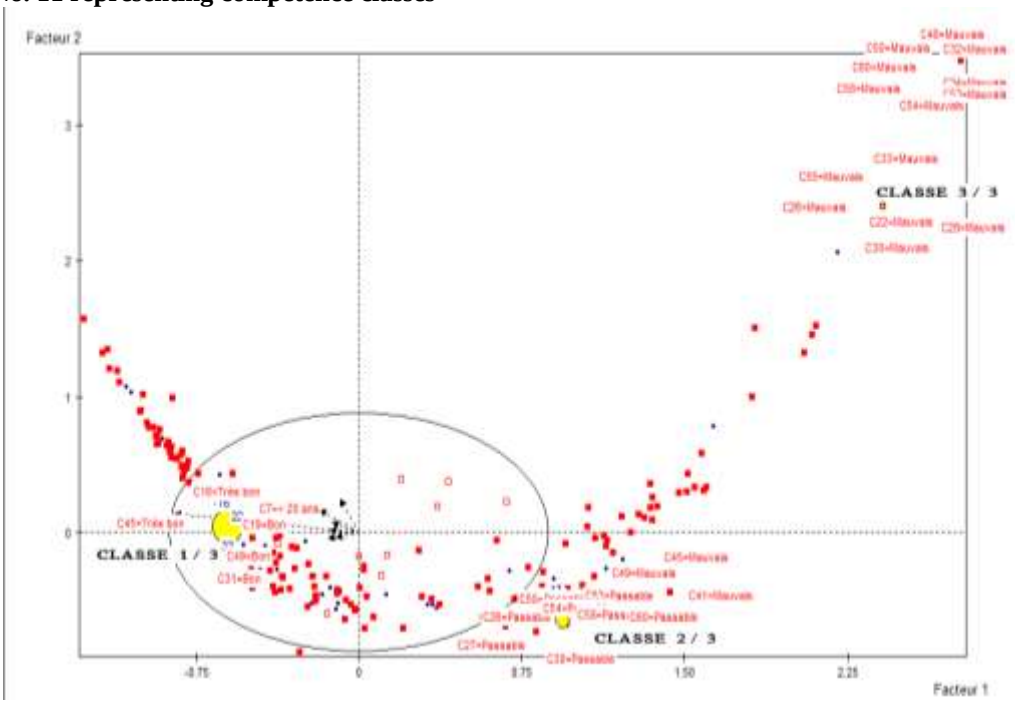
Cartography

This mapping that can be established for this category is illustrated in the following graph by three broad categories that can be described as follows:

 First category or the category of rather competent teachersThe main quality of the teachers belonging to this category is the proximity and the complicity that they are able to establish with the students. They are understanding teachers who manage very well an affective relationship with the pupils. They know how to bring innovation to their profession.They also know how to get closer to the child by humanizing the teaching, by being accessible to the students (Available, comrade, gives love and affection). They are active teachers, calm

person, with discipline and order, benevolent. For the teachers questioned, this class is the best of the three since it is the class of teachers with a higher index[1]; on average 4.3.

Chart No. 11 representing competence classes



- ***Second category: average teachers***

This second category is composed of teachers who are able to demonstrate a certain number of qualities at an acceptable level. It concerns innovation, because the teacher symbolizes safety, love and affection given, and taking into account the psychological dimensions of the child at various levels. These teachers have also a scientific-pedagogical training and a deep knowledge of the child in the various parts of its development to an acceptable level. Concerning our population, the teachers of this category have on average 3.3 as an index.

- ***Third category: non-competent teachers***

At the level of non-competent teachers, these are teachers who do not find certain qualities. These teachers in general do not innovate, they do not symbolize safety. They are less committed and not very dedicated teachers. They are less creative and active. They are impatient and unavailable teachers. They have little interest in children. In our study population, these teachers have an average index of 2.8.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This frame of competency has several objectives, namely to identify the expected professional competencies and to recognize the specificity of the profession of primary school teachers in their practice.

Our hypothesis refers to the concept of culture, to a competency frame of reference, ie to the idea that all education professionals recognize themselves in those values and beliefs that form the basis of their action, the education of all pupils. Teachers gather around common goals that ensure the meaning, the unity and the coherence of their actions. To demonstrate competence is to master all the parameters that allow an actor to change the situation in which he finds himself in a direction that seems favorable to him. This mastery combines several capacities and knowledge (Perrenoud, 2002). The teachers are qualified teachers, moderately competent teachers and non-competent teachers.The teachers have, in decrescendo, the averages of 4.3; 3.3 and 2.8 as index. To be competent teachers, the main quality is the proximity and complicity that they are able to establish with the pupils. They are understanding teachers who manage the affective relationship very well with the pupils. At the level of unskilled teachers, they are teachers who do not find certain qualities. These teachers in general do not innovate, they do not symbolize safety. They are less committed and are not very dedicated teachers. They are impatient and unavailable teachers. They have little interest in children. After having established the assessment and assessment of this competency frame of reference, it is necessary to refound and renew their competence.

[1]As a reminder, the index is the arithmetic average of the score obtained on the 46 questions.

Teaching needs to be humanized and the supposed foundation is benevolence. The emotional relationship and learning becomes more important when one is on the side of the learners (Gendron, and Lafortune, 2004). The latter, motivated by the teacher, learns better. The student thus needs to be loved, to be understood, to be assisted and taken into account. The teacher will then create the conditions for a motivational climate of mastery in order to encourage goal-orientations towards the task and goals of ego orientation. According to Lubart (2003), creativity would be "the ability to realize a production that is both new and adapted to the context in which it is developped". In relation to this approach, Lubart (2003) envisages designing a pedagogy of creativity involving the school environment where the teacher leaves room for divergent thinking. Learning to make the pupil aware of the traps he may encounter in his schooling while giving him tools to overcome them.

The scientific and pedagogical training, the educational and pedagogical training and the deep knowledge of the child in the various aspects of its development constitute another value in which teachers with little experience are not very competent. And the atmosphere of confidence and affectivity are other benevolent qualities more or less well mastered among the less competent teachers. Deep knowledge of the child in the various strands of its development constitute another value where teachers with not very extensive experience are not very competent. The understanding and atmosphere of trust and affectivity are other benevolent qualities more or less well mastered among the less competent teachers.The assessment of teachers' competencies frame of reference reveals differences. In relation to the competency measures, teachers are competent, moderately competent and very incompetent, educational culture speaking. For all these, a renewal of professional competence is required to truly establish education culture, so that it is practiced by all professionally.

The concept of common culture refers to the idea that all educational professionals recognize these values and beliefs, in the educability of all pupils. The portrait of this teacher in research position, which bases and adjusts his action on the assessment of students' needs and progress: he is a "reflective practitioner". He practices pedagogical differentiation to adapt to the diversity of students (Perrenoud, 2001). He uses digital tools and project approaches to enhance individualization, interaction, creativity and collaboration among students. He is a humanist, an engineer, a builder: by giving meaning to his trade, he opens the door of the future to his pupils.

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