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## What Contribution Can the Humanities and Social Sciences Make to Career Guidance in General and Technological Lycées? The Case of Economics in Year One of Lycée in France

In accordance with the 2008 Resolution of the Council of the European Union on "Better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies", the reform of French *lycées* has included career guidance among its priorities. This reform, which was implemented in 2010, includes lessons on exploring economics for all students in year one (*seconde*) of the French three-year *lycée*. Will this new feature help to promote career guidance?

This research aims to show that academic and vocational guidance is socially controversial, and that the two programmes on economics, "Sciences économiques et sociales - SES" (*social and economic sciences*) and "Principes fondamentaux de l'économie et de la gestion - PFEG" (*basic principles of economics and management*), provide knowledge and skills from the humanities and social sciences that are useful for the guidance of year one students, even if the teachers involved do not feel directly involved in assisting with career guidance.

As career guidance is not a discipline, will efficient teachers be those who are able to distinguish between "knowledge that" and "knowledge for"?

En conformité avec une résolution de 2008 du Conseil de l'Union européenne portant sur «Mieux inclure l'orientation tout au long de la vie dans les stratégies d'éducation et de formation tout au long de la vie», la réforme du lycée en France affiche parmi ses priorités l'éducation à l'orientation. Cette réforme mise en œuvre en 2010 comporte entre autres un enseignement d'exploration d'économie pour tous les élèves de seconde. Cette nouveauté va-t-elle contribuer à promouvoir l'éducation à l'orientation?

Cette recherche se propose de montrer que l'orientation scolaire est une question socialement vive, et que les deux enseignements d'économie de seconde, «Sciences économiques et sociales - SES» et «Principes fondamentaux de l'économie et de la gestion - PFEG», apportent des savoirs et compétences issus des sciences humaines et sociales utiles pour l'orientation des élèves de seconde, même si les enseignants impliqués ne s'estiment pas directement concernés par l'aide à l'orientation.

L'éducation à l'orientation n'étant pas une discipline, l'enseignant efficace sera-t-il celui qui saura distinguer «savoir que» et «savoir pour»?

### Keywords

Career guidance; teaching economics; social acute questions; French general and technological *lycée*; "education for...".

### 1 Introduction

According to the Council of the European Union (2008), guidance consists of both providing information and counsels and teaching the skills necessary for decision-making. Lifelong guidance begins in the school. Guidance means educating for citizenship and in decision-making. To some extent this converges

with the goals of "education for...", in particular with education for sustainable development and education for health. Like sustainable development and health, guidance is not a discipline apart, but it concerns all the students. Vocational and academic guidance is intended to be a subject taught in all the disciplines.

The guidelines of the Council of the European Union are addressed to all Member States. We have limited the scope of this research to the case of France. The ongoing reform of France's lycées started in the year one classes (*seconde*) at the beginning of September 2010, it continued with year two, the "junior" year (*première*), in September 2011, and will reach year three, the final or "senior" year classes (*terminale*), in September 2012.

The objectives of this reform as outlined by Luc Chatel (2009), then Minister of Education, are to ensure the success of every student. To achieve this, the reform targeted three points: for each student, better guidance, better support, better adaptation to the present time. The first of these three points directly invokes guidance, which is to have an orientation that is more progressive, more open, and fairer, the latter two points being of course not unrelated. The lycée reform took a novel form in year one: the students have to choose two exploratory courses lasting an hour-and-a-half per week in order to assist with their future guidance, and one of these must be introductory economics. Lycée economics courses are taught either by teachers of "Sciences économiques et sociales - SES" (*social and economic sciences*) or by teachers of economics and management, who prepare students for, respectively, an economics and social sciences high school diploma (*Économique et social - ES baccalauréat*) or a management science and technology diploma (*Sciences et Technologies de la Gestion - STG baccalauréat*). In year one, these courses can be part of either of two different programmes, "economics and social sciences" (SES) or "Principes fondamentaux de l'économie et de la gestion - PFEG" (*basic principles of economics and management*).

We have made the hypothesis that the lessons in exploring economics contribute to academic and vocational guidance. Does the differing content of the two programmes have an impact on the way in which the students do, or do not, take on board the guidance?

Our theoretical framework is sociological, and we draw on curriculum theory. The curriculum is socially constructed (Mangez 2008) and results from a process of selecting what is to be transmitted (Forquin 1989). This involves analyzing the gap between the formal curriculum, consisting of knowledge that is to be transmitted to the pupils, and the actual curriculum, as students take it on board in the real-life school situation.

Our research corpus consisted of official guidelines, reports, and interviews conducted in a general and technological lycée. An economics teacher in the SES and PFEG options teaches year one students aged 15-16. As part of a recorded semi-structured interview, we asked the following question: "In the year one lessons on the exploration of economics, what is there about guidance?" The teacher gave us permission to go into the PFEG class and ask the students to complete a questionnaire: "What did you learn in PFEG that can help you with your academic and vocational planning?" The wording suggests that the pupils must have learned something, but they are free to answer that they have not learned anything. We transcribed the interview and, given the small number of students surveyed (29), went through the questionnaire manually. We also interviewed three students at the end of the class without the teacher present.

In the first section we show that, in shifting from a prescriptive approach to an educational approach, academic and vocational guidance has become a

controversial issue in the humanities and social sciences. In section two, we examine in greater detail the programmes of the two new subject areas, SES and PFEG, to see whether the lessons in exploring economics enable the year one teachers to address topics that are directly related to guidance. We conclude with a discussion.

## **2 Guidance in the School Framework**

### **2.1 Career Guidance: From a Prescriptive Approach to an Educational Approach**

#### **2.1.1 A New Definition**

As was noted by Huteau (1999), the history of guidance is the result of several interacting histories: economic and social history, the history of education, the history of psychology, and the history of ideas and practices. The definition of guidance has also evolved over time; here we propose two.

The first legal definition of guidance in France was set out in Article 1 of the Decree of 26 September 1922, but repealed in 2006: "All the operations devolving to the Deputy Secretary of State for Vocational Education prior to the placement of young men and women in trade and industry and which are designed to establish their physical, moral and intellectual aptitudes" (Danvers 1988, 7). Career guidance at that time concerned only students of vocational education. Indeed, until the early twentieth century, the question of guidance did not even arise, as positions were fixed at birth, the son generally taking up the trade of his father. The need for reconstruction after the First World War along with technical progress made it necessary, in the words of Charles F. Taylor, to place the right man in the right place, which was the justification for guidance in the form of psychometric testing.

The 2905<sup>th</sup> session of the EU Council (2008) on Education, Youth and Culture defined guidance as "a continuous process that enables citizens at any age and at any point in their lives to identify their capacities, competences and interests, to make educational, training and occupational decisions to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which those capacities and competences are learned and/or used. Guidance covers a range of individual and collective activities relating to information-giving, counselling, competence assessment, support and the teaching of decision-making and career management skills."

The 2008 Resolution stresses people's responsibility with regard to their guidance throughout their lives. The school is thus the first concerned. The point is to move from a prescriptive approach to an educational approach to academic guidance. In the prescriptive approach, the adult is responsible and is the one who directs, and the students do what they are told. In the educational approach, the students are responsible and are the ones who direct themselves, and the role of the adult is to help students develop skills that enable them to make their own choices.

#### **2.1.2 The Student at the Heart of Academic Guidance**

Every student needs to receive information and advice to find the studies and the profession where they can flourish. The Law of 10 July 1989 on guidance introduced the right to guidance counselling, and Article L313-1 of the

Education Code states: "the right to guidance counselling ... is part of the right to an education".

Circular No. 96-230 dated 1 October 1996, published in the *Bulletin Officiel* No. 36 of 10 October 1996, introduced career guidance into lycées. The Circular states right from the introduction that decisions about guidance must remain the personal responsibility of the student. Having a good basis for this choice demands in-depth education and information. The general and technological lycées therefore need to carry out a vigorous policy on guidance counselling and information on courses and careers. Upon completing lycée, the students must be able to make their decisions in full awareness of the requirements of higher education and the related opportunities. During the three years of lycée, career guidance should enable the gradual formation of a hierarchy of choices. This may be done by enriching the skills already acquired in *collège*, or middle school, in preparation for career activities and the social and economic environment by providing information about the characteristics of the different types of *baccalauréat* diplomas and the related training pathways, while striving to challenge stereotypical representations and helping to develop a positive and realistic self-image.

Academic guidance primarily concerns head teachers, guidance counsellors, psychologists, librarians, and senior education advisors, but also involves the other members of the educational team. Choices about guidance are crucial for the students and their families, which leads us to consider guidance as a lively and controversial issue.

## 2.2 Guidance: A Controversial Issue for the Humanities and Social Sciences

Legardez (2006) defines a social acute question ("une question socialement vive") as one that is controversial in three domains: in society, in the reference knowledge, and at school. Here we show how guidance is controversial in society at large, in academic knowledge in the humanities and social sciences, and in education.

### 2.2.1 Guidance is Controversial in Society

In the field of guidance, individual issues take precedence over collective issues (Henoque, Legrand 2004; Solaux 2005). Collective issues are reflected in the practices of selection and distribution; the point is to optimize the management of flows so as to adapt the students to the number of positions in various institutions and to the opportunities available in the economic environment. Individual issues are reflected in each person's desire to succeed in life.

Due to the rising strength of the values of individualism and consumerism, families want the power to make decisions about their children's guidance (Humann 2009; Richit 2010). Parents, especially from the managerial class, no longer grant recognition to the expertise of the teachers and school teams. They overwhelmingly prefer general education pathways and do not hesitate to challenge the decisions of academic counsellors and head teachers, or even the appeals process<sup>1</sup>. If a final decision is not to their liking, they prefer their

<sup>1</sup> In France, the last teachers conference of the year uses to decide the next class for each student on the basis of parents' wishes. This teacher conference is composed of all the teachers of the class and presided by the head teacher. At the end of year one, the next class may be year two with a specified pathway, or year one again. If parents disagree, they have a discussion with the head

children to repeat. Parents also want to be able to choose which school their child attends, and do not hesitate to put the different institutions in competition, including with private schools, and they challenge the school districting. Finally, there is social pressure on the part of all families to extend education, with level "bac+3" becoming the norm. This corresponds to a "*licence*", level L in the European LMD system. Parents believe this will protect their child from unemployment.

The state is primarily concerned with managing flows in order to find a position for each student and to fill training in an optimal fashion. It must make trade-offs between the costs of education and social justice. These are political decisions. The media debate poses supporters of an interventionist state against free market proponents who are advocating more power for users. The values of equality and freedom compete. Today, the focus is not so much the problem of a society that works for the common good as that of the individual and the family. In *Le Monde diplomatique*, Christian Laval (2011), a sociologist, argued that, "it is important to understand finally that we have entered an unprecedented age of the institution: that of the new capitalist school."

### 2.2.2 Guidance is a Controversial Issue in the Academic Knowledge

There is ongoing debate in academia about the reality of equal opportunity. In the fields of the humanities and social sciences, we have chosen to highlight economics and sociology.

In economics, education is an investment. The theory of human capital, proposed in 1964 by Gray S. Becker, assumes that individuals can improve their productivity by voluntary acts of investment in education and training. The possession of a diploma does indeed reduce the risk of unemployment. In addition, people's salaries tend to vary directly with the level of their diploma. Wage differences reflect the fact that individuals are not all willing to make identical investments in training. For Duru-Bellat (2006), this investment does not always pay. She shows that while the race does usually pay off for those who take part in it, it is wasteful for society as a whole: diploma inflation tends to reduce their value. For their part, poorer families often have to make a cost-benefit calculation. Boudon (1973) showed that the continuation of studies depended on the trade-off for families between the costs of schooling and the expected benefits in terms of a more enviable social position. While families of modest means overestimate the cost of continuing studies, affluent families do not tend to consider any path other than higher education for their children. Thus, for a given level of results, children from poorer families are less ambitious and practice self-selection, which is endorsed by the teachers conference (*conseil de classe*).

In sociology, Bourdieu and Passeron (1964) employ the theory of cultural capital to show that the school honours the culture of privileged strata, and thus functions as a machine for social selection. While the vast majority of children with high cultural capital have access to university, the children of the working classes are selected out. The massification of secondary education is not synonymous with democracy (Merle 2002). Unlike low-income families, families with high cultural capital are "in the know", and understand how to make the right choices in terms of options and establishments (Duru-Bellat, Perretier

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teacher, and if they are not satisfied they can appeal. In this case, they are heard by a commission composed of external teachers and head teachers, which definitively rules. If the student is accepted in a not-enough renowned pathway, some parents prefer their child to repeat

2007). Landrier and Nakhili (2010) demonstrated that, given comparable grades, students from different social origins do not access the same channels. For example, the STT stream (now STG) is a refuge for girls from disadvantaged backgrounds who are lagging behind (Defresne, Rosenwald 2004).

### 2.2.3 Guidance is Controversial in Education

Students are directly confronted with choices about guidance, with teachers often feeling helpless to address a type of question that is unrelated to their reference pedagogical model.

On the one hand, there is a large gap between the intentions set out by the government to ensure positive guidance and on the other the practical reality of guidance by failure. As part of her research on STG students, Richit (2010) showed that they suffer from a poor image of their stream, which is a far cry from the official portrayal of streams with equal dignity. At the end of the teacher-parent conferences following the last quarter of year one, the students have a sense of injustice, because they feel that more account is taken of their grades than of their work or their projects. From this perspective, guidance is subjective, as is attested by docimology (Dequiré 2008). This is also the result of unequal resources in the family and social environment: poor families are more likely to trust the teachers, whereas more privileged families do not hesitate to do whatever it takes vis-à-vis the head teacher and the appeals board to force a pass. In this case, the teachers feel disavowed.

On the other hand, the *Bulletin officiel spécial* no. 1 of 4 February 2010 on the lycée reform states that better guidance is one of the reform's key priorities. Thus, guidance aims to give every young person the tools, skills and methodology they need to enable them to manage the learning process and steadily to assume responsibility for projects that will make them full citizens. The insistence on career guidance applies to all disciplines.

In our opinion, the teaching of the humanities and social sciences can be a way to awaken students' interest by making them aware of what is involved in guidance. We take the example of year one economics.

## 3 Education in Exploring Economics and Career Guidance

Career guidance at the lycée aims to provide information about academic and university education, as well as different professions. This can be done through a course in exploring economics.

### 3.1 The Knowledge to be Taught: The Formal Curriculum

Like the other exploratory courses created in 2010, lessons in year one economics contribute to career guidance. They concern the humanities and social sciences more specifically and, while each retains its specificity, contribute to the overall objective of training citizens and promoting decision-making.

#### 3.1.1 Education in Exploring Economics: Generic Elements

The exploratory courses shed light on higher education and the opportunities it provides by enabling the students to project themselves into the medium- and long-term future. We chose to study more specifically the two new exploratory courses in year one that aim to provide an introduction to economics, i.e. SES

and PFEG. Both programmes were published in the *Bulletin officiel spécial* no. 4 of 29 April 2010. Each of them consists of four pages, with one page presenting the programme objectives and three pages on the content, with the themes, concepts and additional information set out in three columns.

In making a comparative analysis of these two preambles, we find that both insist on two points. Firstly, these lessons are designed to give all students the basic elements of an economic culture essential for the formation of the citizen. Secondly, they are intended to facilitate an informed choice about pursuing an education in high school and higher education. The official texts thus provide confirmation that economics is useful knowledge for citizens, which helps with choices on guidance, whether the year one SES option or the PFEG option. On the other hand, specific elements are set out.

### 3.1.2 Education in Exploring Economics: Specific Elements

The specific elements concern the content, the possible choices of study, and the methods recommended.

Regarding the content, SES aims to open the horizons of high school students to two new disciplines, economics and sociology, while PFEG aims to highlight the specific role of particular human collectives represented by organizations, and in particular the company in the economy, and it targets the fields of economics and management.

Regarding the choice of possible studies in higher education, the SES programme relates "mainly to studies in Economics and Management, Law, Humanities and the Social Sciences, the Institute of Political Studies, and preparatory courses for the *grandes écoles* in business and social studies. These studies lead to many different management positions both in public service and in the private sector." The PFEG programme states that it potentially leads to various higher education programmes, including "the *licence*, *grande école* preparatory classes, DUT degree, BTS diploma in the fields of the humanities and social sciences and especially in economics, law or management". The DUT (*Diplôme universitaire de technologie*), a university diploma in technology, and the BTS (*Brevet de technicien supérieur*), a higher technical certificate, are diplomas that lead to further education lasting two years after the lycée final exam (*baccalauréat*), based on selective access. To this end, the SES programme aims to help students acquire some core concepts and logic in economics and sociology, while the PFEG goal is to enable them to construct accurate representations with a view to a rational informed choice about further study in the lycée and higher education in the fields of the humanities and social sciences.

With regard to teaching methods, PFEG favours the OAC method (observe, analyse, conceptualize): the observation phase is based on the environment of the students and their knowledge of current affairs; the analysis must help bring out the meaning so as to arrive at an understanding of the phenomenon being studied and to be able to conceptualize it. In SES, the point is to take a research approach to initial data and to formulate explanatory hypotheses to give meaning to what is learned.

The programmes are presented in the form of a list of themes, which are different in SES and PFEG<sup>2</sup>. The themes that could provide the teacher an

<sup>2</sup> Bulletin officiel spécial n° 4, april 29, 2010 presents new curricula with objectives, themes of

opportunity to enable the students to reflect about guidance are, in our opinion, as follows: in SES, theme 7, "The diploma, a passport to a job?" and, in PFEG, theme 9, "What is the individual's role in a company?" The additional guidelines are as follows for the SES theme: "Using statistical data, we will analyse the relationship between the level and nature of the studies pursued and access to jobs with a higher or lower skills level. We will show that the pursuit of higher education is an investment in human capital, but that it is also influenced by the social environment." This theme can help to address the issues of guidance from both an economic and social perspective.

With regard to the themes to be dealt with in PFEG, the additional guidelines specify: "The importance of the human factor in the company will be discussed based on examples from the students' immediate environment, highlighting the different dimensions of human resource management (recruitment, training, promotion, compensation) and showing how human skills can be a source of advantages for the company relative to its competitors. We identify issues involved in job evaluation and the different dimensions of earnings (variability, collective bargaining, employee incentives, etc.). The influence of labour law on a company's activity will be highlighted through a few simple examples." This theme can offer an opportunity to provide knowledge about different professions and to address the human skills required by business. For example, discovering a company during a real or virtual visit can raise awareness about skills and career paths.

### **3.2 The Knowledge Taught: The Real Curriculum**

Our hypothesis is that the exploratory lessons in economics are conducive to career guidance. We offer two views on the implementation of the reform, which began in September 2010: that of the general inspectorate after a mission, and that of a year one class.

#### **3.2.1 The Report of the Inspection Générale**

The general inspectorate for national education produced a report (2011) based on a survey monitoring the reform of the general and technological lycées, which was conducted from November 2010 to January 2011 in a number of lycées from different French school administrative areas. Point 1 of the report is entitled: "Promoting progressive guidance, helping to discover new disciplines: the role of exploratory courses".

"Teachers often offer a lecture that mainly focuses on concepts, without always having the possibility to use ICT and to provide a more attractive dimension to the education provided. The reaction of the students is positive when the teachers address economic points about situations rooted in the classroom environment and they seek to involve the students in a project approach of discovering the economic features of topical situations or themes. The exploratory course takes on its full meaning by giving students access to economic knowledge and to an

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exploration and associated questions, notions to discover and additional instructions for the use of teachers.

SES curriculum :

[http://media.education.gouv.fr/file/special\\_4/73/5/sciences\\_economiques\\_sociales\\_143735.pdf](http://media.education.gouv.fr/file/special_4/73/5/sciences_economiques_sociales_143735.pdf)

PFEG curriculum :

[http://media.education.gouv.fr/file/special\\_4/73/7/economie\\_gestion\\_143737.pdf](http://media.education.gouv.fr/file/special_4/73/7/economie_gestion_143737.pdf)

understanding of their environment." (p.13)

The survey therefore concludes that the 2010 reform has not been understood by many SES teachers, who persist in thinking that the exploratory course is a prerequisite for access to the year two ES course. This was the case with the old pre-requisite course, but is no longer true. As for the pedagogical methods, the project approach is more conducive to career guidance. This approach is generally preferred by the PFEG teachers, who also prefer to take into account the student's local environment.

### **3.2.2 The Viewpoint of a Year One Class**

In accordance with official guidelines, the lycée we visited offers its students a choice between SES and PFEG. We interviewed a teacher of economics and management who teaches SES and PFEG, and then the students from one of her PFEG classes.

For the teacher, the option of economics in year one provides knowledge that will enable students to decide whether they like economics and whether they are comfortable with this material. It helps them to discover the world around them. With respect to guidance, she sees this in the SES programme only in the "diplomas and employment" section, but this is more in relation to "the more degrees you have, the greater the chances of getting a job", and not really about guidance. In PFEG, she highlighted the section on the role of the individual in the company.

"But that's guidance in a very general sense; we talk about professions, but we don't talk about their own career plans, their own skills, and their own wishes. Guidance for me is something individualized, it's hard for me to see how you could talk about it in general terms. We talk about wages, compensation, the job contract, but they don't all want to be employees in a business... This may give them some ideas, of course; when we presented the company I made them do some searching about '*auto-entrepreneurs*', this could inspire some desire. But for me this is not help with guidance... Assisting with guidance, this is hard to do as part of a course... I have a little trouble in being both a guidance counsellor and a member of the teaching profession. I was trained to convey knowledge and not to give advice, so I have a little trouble, I am not aware of all the training... and then I do not have time... For me, these are two totally different professions... There are guidance counsellors. I expected to teach economics, law... Somehow it bothers me, it's not my job, I'm not trained for that, I could talk nonsense. This makes us do things that are not within our competence. Just because you're a teacher of economics and management doesn't mean that you know every profession; I know the profession of teacher, that's all."

The students feel they learned a lot about guidance in the PFEG course. They stressed the importance of knowledge of new subjects, and particularly specific knowledge about economics and management. They believe they have learned about different career orientations and different professions and paths to follow, and the course is sometimes seen as helping with decision-making:

"With an ES BAC you can do a lot of things. PFEG helps us a lot to understand the world today." (girl)

"I learned how a company works, which will help in my planning, whether or not I want to work in a company later." (girl)

"I like PFEG, it's a subject that helped me to be sure about choosing my study stream, which is year two ES." (girl)

"This helps us to decide whether or not we are more destined to go into the ES or S (i.e.scientific) stream." (boy)

In the interview that followed, during which three student volunteers were asked to explain their views, Laura talked about the contents of the option, which will be of help to her later:

"I have learned many things that push me even more in the direction I wanted, because I wanted to go into S, to become... to work for myself... to become a veterinarian.... It taught me about managing a company, everything that the boss has to do, a lot of technical terms that help me... I think it will help me for what I want to do next, as a veterinarian, as someone who's self-employed."

Laura is aware of the value of managerial disciplines for someone who wants to set up on their own, as a self-employed professional or an entrepreneur.

Manouba told us of her pleasure in attending the PFEG course – discovering a subject that she finds interesting makes her want to go into STG:

"I have learned in PFEG that it makes me want to go to STG, because we talk about business, companies, it really shows things, so it gives you desire."

The year one students seem clueless about the choices they will need to make, and some will make them a bit at random. Sonia told us that she was indecisive:

"Actually I wanted to become a lawyer... since I was little... but later I told myself ... the teachers told me it's useless because I'm not good enough... some say yes, some say no... so later I said I'll go into STG because I like it a lot and we'll see what I will do later ..."

These views are not representative, as they reflect only one class in a lycée, but they nevertheless allow us to point out some issues that can be submitted for discussion.

## 4 Discussion

### 4.1 Teaching Economics – In Closer Connection to Sociology or to Management?

Lycée teachers in France are hired through a competitive process centred on economics and the social sciences (*sciences économiques et sociales*) for SES teachers and on economics and management (*économie et gestion - EG*) for PFEG teachers. In addition to economics, SES teachers need initial training in sociology, and PFEG teachers in management. SES courses in France have greater academic legitimacy than EG courses (Legardez, Valente 2009), while they still explicitly retain the goal of training in a critical approach. SES teachers, most of whom have a university education in economics, are often sceptical of the world of business, and consider that, in the new capitalist school, guidance tends to take precedence over teaching and the transmission of knowledge: the school might seek less to transmit culture and knowledge that is worthwhile for its own sake than to produce individuals who are suited to being incorporated into the economic machine (Laval et al. 2011). Teachers who teach economics and management in PFEG often themselves have corporate experience. As the company is an educational subject for them, they may perform internships and

meet with the company heads. They generally have a positive view of the company and see it as a source of jobs.

The teaching of economics in PFEG is more focused on management and the company than is SES. While in SES themes related to guidance are problematized ("Risks of dropping out of the labour market?"), in PFEG they usually concern career information and workplace relationships. The objectives of guidance could be achieved by each of the two courses: SES by offering a more comprehensive vision, and PFEG a more targeted vision, closer to the pupil's daily experience. As for pedagogical methods, SES emphasises a collective approach to class management in the form of an interactive lecture, using a few documents, whereas PFEG tends to focus on group projects (for example, some classes take part in a competition where the students come up with a proposal for a small company). The opinion of the *Inspection générale* is that this latter method is better for the students. The teacher we met also had the students do research on the Internet ("I made them do some searching about '*auto-entrepreneurs*'"). This does not preclude education in choice; for example, the teacher we met planned to have her students develop a dossier on a range of occupations in a field chosen by them, which could be the voluntary sector or public sector or an enterprise. The dossier could be the product of small groups, thus socializing the research process, or of the individual, and thus involving a more personal relationship with the teacher. The main limitation of this type of approach concerns staffing levels: it is difficult to handle an IT course with 35 students each working on their own project. Another limitation is the representation that the teacher has of the discipline.

#### 4. 2 Teaching Economics: For Knowledge Transmission or for Skills Acquisition?

We believe that the teacher tended to emphasize knowledge (academic knowledge for SES, practical knowledge for EG) and to resist the requirement to introduce skills. For example, in the lycée in question, the economics teachers are continuing to give grades in year one, whereas the exploratory courses must be evaluated based on skills. In France, grades are usually based on tests, whereas a skills-based evaluation requires that the teacher ticks a box, "acquired" or "not acquired", on a list of specific items to be evaluated in the course, with each item representing a skill. Economics professors want to give grades, as they believe that this is a good way of motivating the students to listen and work. However, language professors manage to give grades based on five skills, using the European reference framework for languages, by setting up flexible skills groups, even though this calls into question the perennial schooling form and creates major problems for the schedule.

Unlike her students who feel they have learned a great deal in the PFEG option regarding their guidance, both in terms of the contents of the subjects taught in certain streams and the different professions in companies, the teacher was dissatisfied. When asked, "In the year one lessons on exploring economics, what is there about career guidance?", she wanted to answer "Nothing". How can this difference in perception be explained? By dealing with the programme content and by answering the students' questions, the teacher discussed themes that could help the students. The teacher's main activity regarding this theme consists of contributing knowledge in the fields of economics and management, as well as providing information about the different year two streams, and particularly the STG stream (management science and technology). The teacher did not feel equipped to counsel the students about their future or about the

best courses to take to prepare for it, she took a long-term approach. The students, on the other hand, felt that they had received good guidance when the information they were given enabled them to choose their next year's class, and thus took a short-term approach. The teacher represents guidance simply as individual counselling. For her, guidance is outside her field, and is the province of the professionals, psychologists, and guidance counsellors, who are trained for this.

Teachers often have a representation of their role as a transmitter of legitimate knowledge. For them, only their own discipline is legitimate, they are specialists in it. They possess a discipline-based awareness (Reuter 2007) and are sceptical about "education for" and "cross-disciplinary skills" (Rey 1996). They want to teach, to educate in a rigorous way, but they cannot train, whereas the circular of 23 May 1997 defines the mission of a teacher working in a collège or a general, technical or technological lycée as follows:

"The teacher's mission is both to educate the young people entrusted to them and to contribute to their education and train them with a view to their social and professional integration. He or she ensures that they gain knowledge and expertise, in accordance with the levels set by the diploma programmes and qualifications, and supports the development of their skills and abilities. The teacher helps them to develop critical thinking skills, to build their autonomy and to develop a personal project."

It is therefore important for teachers to help students develop career management skills. These skills are interdisciplinary, and include initiative, autonomy, and argumentation. The teacher did not report that the PFEG work methodology could help students to develop skills within the social sciences that might be useful, for example, to search for, process and analyse information, or for working in teams. She doesn't believe that her lessons in communications and her professional experience have equipped her with the skills in psychology that would enable her to help her students to find the training and jobs that suit them best.

There is reason to regret the vague side to the curriculum for education in guidance, as for other "educations for". Teacher training in different social sciences is important for the teacher to be able to carry out career guidance.

## Conclusion

Career planning requires identifying reference points, making informed choices, steadily building one's own pathway for learning and employability, and learning to become independent and lucid in one's decision-making. The two exploratory economics courses enable year one teachers to discuss with their students themes that are directly related to guidance, for example, in sociology, the theory of reproduction and the social practices of guidance and selection, and in management, knowledge about the professions and the skills that they require, by challenging stereotypes (SES) or by helping to construct a better self-image (PFEG). Education in guidance, like other "educations for" (Pagoni 2009), requires calling into question the form of schooling and the training of teachers in both knowledge and skills.

The courses exploring economics are thus potentially conducive to career guidance. In our opinion, more than just the option SES or PFEG per se, it is the teacher's familiarity with the "educations for..." that makes for effectiveness, by distinguishing "knowledge that" from "knowledge for".

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