

## Initial training and active teaching methods: the case of the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Casablanca of Morocco

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**Abstract:** In Morocco, most private middle and secondary schools rely mainly on public teachers to compensate for the lack of pedagogical support in the private education sector. To enable these private institutions to have a stable teaching body, the Ecole Normale Supérieure (ENS) organized educational courses in licenses for the professions of education. As part of this training, several teaching methods are taught. The latter would have a direct impact on students' learning and cannot be dissociated in the context in which they take place (the work climate, the high class size, the availability of teaching and experimental materials, Time management, level of student pre-requisites, teaching experience, etc.). In order to align the initial training with realities in the classroom, we surveyed graduates of the ENS of Casablanca who have already obtained a teaching load and we wanted to know if they use the teaching methods, centred on the student, learned during their initial training in their classes and also what factors restrict the use of these methods? According to the results obtained, only a minority has the opportunity to put into practice and the lecture (masterful or interactive) is always dominated their teaching.

**Key words:** teacher training, teaching methods, college and secondary education qualifying.

**Résumé:** Au Maroc, la plupart des collèges et des lycées privés reposent essentiellement sur des enseignants du public pour pallier le manque que connaît le secteur d'enseignement privé en termes d'encadrement pédagogique. Pour permettre à ces établissements privé de disposer d'un corps d'enseignant stable, les écoles normales supérieures (ENS) ont organisé des formations en licences aux métiers de l'éducation. Dans le cadre de cette formation, plusieurs méthodes d'enseignement sont enseignées. Ces dernières auraient un impact direct sur l'apprentissage réalisé par les élèves et elles ne peuvent être dissociées dans le contexte dans lesquels elles prennent place (le climat du travail, l'effectif élevé dans les classes, la disponibilité du matériel didactique et expérimentale, la gestion du temps, le niveau des pré-requis des élèves, l'expérience en enseignement...). Dans le but d'arrimer la formation initiale aux réalités en classe, nous avons sondé des diplômés de l'ENS de Casablanca qui ont déjà obtenu une charge d'enseignement et nous souhaitons savoir s'ils utilisent les méthodes d'enseignements, centré sur l'élève, apprises au cours de leur formation initiale dans leurs classes et aussi quels sont les facteurs qui restreignent l'utilisation de ces méthodes ? D'après les résultats obtenus, seulement une minorité a l'occasion de mettre en pratique et l'exposé (magistrale ou interactif) est toujours domine leur enseignement.

**Les mots clés :** formation des enseignants, méthodes d'enseignement, l'enseignement collégial et secondaire qualifiant.

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### I. Introduction

In Morocco, since the introduction of the national charter of education<sup>1</sup> in 2000, the private education sector has developed rapidly, and the contingency plan<sup>2</sup> 2009-2012 has only boosted this trend. In fact, enrolment at primary level has more than tripled in less than 15 years, from 4% in 1999 to 14% in 2013. Another telling figure, between 2000 and 2012, 99% of new primary Established in private schools. Following this trend, projections indicate that by 2020, 24% of Moroccan students will be enrolled in private schools, all ages.

In order to stimulate parents, private schools play a role in the quality of training and education. This encourages those in charge of the latter to rely mainly on the most experienced public sector teachers instead of training its staff of teachers, especially middle and secondary qualifying, because in Morocco, those who want

to teach in a private institution are not required to acquire training in teaching. The higher degree specialized in a discipline is usually required to obtain a teaching function.

Recently, a note issued on 18 December 2014 by the Department of the Minister of Education has just terminated, from the end of the 2014-2015 school year, the authorizations granted to teachers in the teaching profession of teaching cycles, to execute extra sessions in private educational institutions.

However, the Ministry is granting additional time to private schools that are already working with public teachers, in exceptional cases, for a transitional period of three school years which will end at the end of the 2016-2017 school season. The aim is to enable them to take the necessary measures to have a stable teaching body.

To meet this demand for training and to prepare students for the competitive recruitment of teachers of the civil service, the Ecoles Normales Supérieures (ENS) organized professional licensing courses for the professions of education.

In order to improve the quality of the curriculum as well as meet the needs of new teachers and private institutions, we surveyed graduates of the ENS of Casablanca who have already obtained a teaching load. We wanted to know if they were using the lessons learned during their initial training. This modest study, carried out using a questionnaire, represents the first phase of wider work that aims to better tie initial training to realities in the classroom.

In this article, we present the theoretical framework and then describe the research methodology before discussing the results obtained.

### ***I-Revision of the pedagogical model within the ENS:***

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Morocco launched, in the light of the guidelines of the National Charter of Education and Training, an educational reform, allowing the modification of Curricula and the adoption of the competence-based approach instead of the approach by objectives which has dominated national school education since the Kingdom's independence.

Despite the adoption of this approach, several current teaching practices in Moroccan secondary schools are still oriented towards the paradigm centred on education (Elatlassi, al., 2016), where the teacher is the main actor in the transmission of knowledge. However, according to Romainville (2004), this type of transmission of knowledge is increasingly incomplete.

In particular, the so-called traditional teaching methods are criticized for not favouring the development of the student's personality, limiting their ability to analyze and synthesize, and not being able to acquire conceptual and methodological tools: The teaching methods of teachers have a direct impact on learners' learning (Ramsden, 2003).

Since the establishment of the training courses in the teaching profession, ENS have tried to convey and apply the principles of the student-centred paradigm in order to facilitate students' learning, taking into account their motivations and strategies Learning in articulation with the action of the teacher. The latter must no longer transmit but facilitate, animate, support and advise.

The curriculum is designed to encourage as much as possible the reinvestment of the content of initial training, including the so-called modern (pupil-centred) teaching methods in the teaching environment. But in some cases, the real context is not always favourable. Indeed, when a young teacher begins his or her career in a private or public institution, different elements specific to the host environment facilitate or make difficult the application of these active methods that involve the student in his own learning.

For many reasons, young teachers, who are more self-centred and more focused on content (Feyfant, 2011), struggle to apply the notions learned during their training in everyday practice. The working climate, the high class size, availability of didactic and experimental materials (for science subjects), time management, interpersonal relations with pupils, colleagues and administration, level The pre-requisites of the pupils, the experience in teaching, are all aspects that new teachers are confronted as soon as they enter. According to Ramsden (2003), teachers' teaching methods are directly related to the classroom and school contexts in which they take place.

Sometimes, in order to overcome these difficulties, the new teacher can choose traditional teaching methods as a reassuring and easy strategy to promote his professional integration, because he is profoundly accustomed to these methods which he has faced throughout his years of teaching. And completely forgetting the student who must be at the centre of any teaching strategy adopted by the teacher.

In order to check the relevance of the pedagogical contents taught at the ENSC in the context of the working environment in Moroccan educational institutions, we ask ourselves the following questions: our graduates who have obtained a teaching function, do they use the student-centred teaching methods learned during their initial training? If not, what restricts the use of these methods?

## ***II-Description of the training in the teaching profession at ENSC:***

To be admitted to the teaching profession in the ENSC, one must hold a Diploma of general university studies or equivalent and have passed a written and oral examination. This training lasts one year.

The training consists of three parts: the first part, purely theoretical, consisting of courses in basic sciences, didactics and psycho-pedagogy; A second part, more practical, in the form of test lessons carried out in establishments attached to the ENSC.

The students of the ENSC prepare a course under the supervision of a trainer of the ENSC and according to the instructions of the master of application. The trainer and the teacher both attend a course and give their impressions with notes. The third and final component will be the production of an evaluated dossier, the content of which will relate to a didactic or pedagogical problem encountered during the training.

## ***III-The teaching methods taught at the ENSC:***

Among the necessary objectives, ENSC graduates must be able to plan a course using appropriate teaching strategies.

The preparation of a course implies a number of pedagogical decisions. The teacher must specify the following parameters: the content and approach to be considered, the strengths, needs and interests of the pupils, the common essential lessons that can be introduced, the most effective pedagogical approaches and the Teaching methods. These decisions are critical and need to be made in the knowledge (Glickman, 1991). Thus, the teacher must have a solid knowledge base on education, a repertoire of teaching practices, and reflective and problem-solving skills (Arends, 1988). In addition, teachers can achieve better results and less discipline problems if they choose teaching methods that take into account the variety of student learning styles (Dunn and Dunn, 1987). This is one of the reasons for choosing to have the different teaching methods studied by ENSC students.

The aim of this course is not to determine the superiority of one method to another, but to provide students with a repertoire of solid teaching practice in order to facilitate their professional integration and adapt their teaching to the needs of their students. To give the reader a more explicit portrait, we detail the course of the sessions during which the teaching methods are taught.

### ***III-1-Problem approach:***

The session is given in the form of micro-teaching. The students are grouped into a team of four, then read the problem situation, identify unknown scientific terms, formulate hypotheses and share the individual search for information (Major, 2002). The role of the teacher is to facilitate, support and advise. It also organizes the learning environment, gives students more opportunities to participate (Martin, 1983) and ensures that they do not give answers and resists the temptation to push participants towards one choice or another.

Before ending the session, the teacher organizes a round table discussing the advantages and disadvantages of this method of teaching, in order to transmit to our students that this method takes longer than direct teaching, the results are less guaranteed. Thus, it is necessary to know that there are skills and approaches that must teach the students so that the students derive maximum benefit from this method such as observation, encoding, comparison, interpretation, Verification and summary.

### ***III-2-The simulation:***

Before starting the simulation session, the teacher asks the participants to solve problem situations individually: For example, in the physical and chemical sciences, by offering simple electrical circuit assemblies analyzed using the modeling of certain simple electrical components.

At the beginning of the simulation session, the teacher starts the activity by explaining his expectations (the goals, the means ...). Then he mentioned the time constraints and the rules to follow: freedom of action, use of sources and materials, respect of roles.

Each pupil has a computer at his disposal, and the teacher asks the participants to redo the problem situations proposed in the class and his role is limited to animate the activity. During the session, students discover that this method makes them more active in the learning process: discussion aloud, each participant wants to defend their propositions and logic of reasoning, thus the realization of other electrical and by comparing their proposals with those given by the software...

### ***III-3-Co-operative Learning:***

Co-operative learning is an interactive method in which students in small, heterogeneous groups work together to achieve a common goal. It is a method that encourages more positive interpersonal relationships in helping students learn (Johnson and Johnson, 1989).

Furthermore, according to Slavin (1987), two conditions must be present if cooperative learning is to lead to improved outcomes. "Students need to work for a common purpose and success depends on individual learning for all group members" (p.9).

The session begins with an interactive presentation on the theory of this teaching method (its origin, its foundations, its development ...). Among the foundations of this method, positive interdependence, individual responsibility, active engagement and respect the point of view of each member of the group.

In order to clearly demonstrate these foundations to the participants, the teacher trains teams of five or six, distributes cooperative roles. The members of each group assume various roles and are interdependent in achieving the group's objective.

After a quarter of an hour of individual work, this teamwork invites students to analyze, compare and judge arguments in order to arrive at a conclusion or a decision. The teacher supervises the teams and monitors the progress of the solutions. Before the end of the session, each team presents its solution.

#### ***III-4-The interactive presentation:***

The interactive presentation is a masterly presentation, favouring a transmissive conception, updated by research on learning and also in cognitive psychology. While the lecture is defined as an oral presentation by a professor, a content expert (Legendre, 2005), the interactive lecture aims to make students active in their learning to promote deeper retention (Vanpee, Godin & Lebrun, 2008).

The session begins with a discussion of the difference between the lecture and the interactive presentation. Then the teacher makes an interactive presentation supported by slideshows. During this presentation, he makes several learning breaks (individual reflection activities aimed at the application, comprehension or consolidation of contents).

In order to choose the appropriate teaching methods, the teacher must know the extent and limits of each. For this reason, at the end of the session, the teacher and the students opened a broad discussion about the limitations of the interactive lecture in order to make them understand that this method is nevertheless a method centred on the teacher. Where the latter is primarily responsible for the transmission of knowledge on the one hand and on the other hand that this method must remain the last choice in terms of preference, especially to avoid using the lecture.

#### ***IV-Research Methodology:***

##### ***IV-1-The target population:***

Our data collection was carried out during the months of January and February 2017, concerning only the graduates of the professional licenses qualifying to the professions of education section "Physics Chemistry" and section "Science of the life and the earth" of the NCSS. The latter consists of 68 graduates, between 2014 and 2016, in all disciplines

##### ***IV-2-Instrumentation:***

To achieve our objectives, we asked our subjects to respond to a questionnaire, which included:

- An introduction containing: a presentation of the survey and its objectives, an incentive to complete the questionnaire, instructions for filling, instructions and acknowledgments→
- An identifying part of the person participating (optional because the questionnaire is anonymous): age, sex, institution name ...→
- Part of the questionnaire production consists of three parts: the first focuses on the use of teaching methods learned in initial training by ENSC graduates, and the second focuses on factors that inhibit the use of these methods and the last contains some open questions always related to factors that restrict the use of different teaching methods called active.

##### **Note:**

This questionnaire was validated by two experts in teaching pedagogy at the ENSC. It also allows us to collect socio-demographic data, on their current status of education, on their professional career, on the type of courses they give...

##### ***IV-3-Analysis of the results:***

Our method of analysis consists of combining the quantitative and descriptive data collected using the questionnaire used. The first analyzes of the quantitative data allowed us to identify the methods learned during their initial training according to the frequency of their use in class. Open-ended questions about what restricts the use of these methods, content analyzes have been carried out. In this work, only the responses of 29 teachers, who work in a private institution for analysis and rejected the responses of public teachers, were retained because the graduates of the ENSC who hooked a position in public education, They spent an additional year of training in a regional centre for the trades of education and training.

**V-The results obtained:**

What a pupil learns depends not only on what he is taught but also on how he is taught. This means that the teacher must carefully select the most appropriate teaching methods. From the results of the table below, we can see that the lecture seems to be still used in Moroccan institutions: 12 respondents still use it but accompanied by explanatory exercises.

The interactive presentation comes first, with 17 respondents who still use it, 7 often uses it. The simulation takes an honourable place (the third place) in the choice of our subjects with 3 respondents who say to use it always, 9 often and 13 occasionally. On the other hand, the problem approach comes in fourth place, only 2 candidates who still use it and 20 occasionally in their classes and 5 never use it. However, the latter occupies an important place in the ENSC program. Cooperative learning has not been appreciated by our subjects: only one candidate who declares to use it rarely.

Teaching methods	Always	Often	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
The lecture + explanation exercise	12	6	11	0	0
The Interactive Lecture	17	7	5	0	0
Problem-based approach	2	2	20	0	5
Co-operative learning	0	0	0	1	28
The simulation	3	9	10	7	0

From these results it can be said that the presentation is still very present in Moroccan education despite the pedagogical innovation and the variety of teaching methods that we insist on applying them during the initial training of students of 'ENSC. The simulation now occupies a significant place in the choice of our subjects especially with the availability of simulation software and also by the equipment of the rooms of schools by computer tools.

It also seems that the so-called non-traditional methods, such as the problem-based approach, have not yet found a paramount place in the choice of our candidates. This observation is more surprising since the program of the ENSC gives importance to this method with sessions in practice to better master it. Thus, all programs of Moroccan education are offered with a competency-based approach. Normally, this approach should prompt the surveyed teachers to use this method.

Generally, it is clear that teaching practices have not changed significantly despite significant changes in the Moroccan school system. This is probably explained by the fact that our subjects do not find encouraging conditions in their teaching environment to use student-centred methods commonly used in their initial training.

The table below shows the responses to the conditions that impede the use of these teaching methods:

Conditions that hinder the use of:	Interactive Presentation	Simulation	Problem-based	Approach Cooperative Learning
Working climate	1	15	27	29
Resource Available	5	7	11	10
Number of students	0	19	29	29
Management of Class	3	20	21	28
Time Management	0	21	26	29
Teaching experience	0	23	29	29
Student Diversity	20	5	7	11
Quantity of contents	1	25	24	28

According to the table, there are several conditions related to the host environment that make it difficult to apply modern methods such as problem-based, simulation and cooperative learning.

One of the major obstacles to the use of these methods is the working climate, the excessive number of learners, the teaching experience, the quantity of content and the time management of the session. In addition, our subjects mentioned, in responding to open-ended questions, that there are other factors that restrict the use of these methods: early career new teachers focused on themselves and course content, This prevents them from reinvesting these methods because they need a lot of time, preparation, mastery of the class and specific skills that have not typically possessed by a young teacher.

It is also clear that only half of the participants demanded that the availability of didactic and experimental materials in the Moroccan classes hampered the use of these methods. This shows that private schools have made a great effort in the field of equipment. It also appears that simulation is not a problem for half of the participants provided that there is the necessary resources in the educational institutions, especially the students are passionate and motivated by the computer tools, this makes them participants To the learning process.

In reality, most of our subjects prefer to apply direct teaching methods, driven by unfavourable conditions related to the host environment.

## II. Conclusion and prospective

In this modest work, it is clear that graduates of the ENSC who have obtained a teaching assignment in a private institution prefer to use, at the beginning of their careers, methods of direct teaching such as lecture Or interactive, despite the diversification of the latter learned during their initial training.

As representations play a crucial role in teaching practices: students have become accustomed to traditional teaching methods during their studies. Therefore, the training programs at the ENSC should take these concepts into account in order to make them evolve. For example, it would be better to reinvest the so-called modern teaching methods across all courses taught at the ENSC to make a conceptual change in students and also to increase the possibility of using them in a sustainable and continuous way in their classes after taking a teaching load.

Normally, when a teacher wants to set up a teaching sequence, various questions arise, various factors influence his decision. The host environment also seems to have a direct impact on the choice of the teaching method. It is surprising that the students try to use the student-centred methods during the training course in the establishments attached to the ENSC. However, these establishments are public establishments, have the same constraints and difficulties: the working climate is almost unfavourable, the overloading of the classes, sometimes lack of didactic and experimental materials ... The only difference is that the student is accompanied by the teacher of the host class and by a trainer from the ENSC. Thus, it can be said that, without pedagogical support, reinvestment in a professional context seems difficult to operate. Therefore, it is preferable to establish links between the practical environments and the training environments. For example, during the first year of employment, the young graduate must take advantage of a pedagogical follow-up periodically, once a month, to encourage him or her to face the difficult conditions of integration linked mainly to the workplace and to help him gradually to practice these methods of teaching centred on the pupil.

This research was limited to a limited number of ENSC graduates who obtained a private teaching load, so only graduates from the physical and chemical sciences and the life sciences And land, but it opens up avenues for further research that aims to link education with reality in the classroom.

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