



## SICI Workshop 21-23 November 2012 – Paris/Sèvres-CIEP Teacher Performance Assessment in a Context of Change and Innovation

Summary of key issues by Isobel McGregor  
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It falls to me, as the SICI Inspection Academy coordinator, to make a few personal comments on this Workshop from the SICI point of view before the concluding remarks from our SICI President Marie-Hélène Ahnborg.

This has been a very varied, interesting, stimulating and useful Workshop.

It has dealt with a very important theme – the evaluation of teachers and the links to the evaluation of teaching. This is perhaps a theme which has given some SICI members more food for thought than many thought it would. SICI members not represented here have missed an important occasion to explore the theme and associated issues.

This has been a Workshop which attests to the courage of the French teacher and of the French inspector. The former has opened up his or her classroom to the presence and scrutiny not only of **The Inspector**, but also of foreign inspectors, and two of them at that, along with an accompanying IGEN or IGAENR. And the inspector has opened his/her professional work in an exceptionally courageous way to the view and scrutiny of inspectors from our different countries. How privileged we were to witness the very private discussion between a teacher and his/her superior in a real and active context. And to say nothing of the huge effort it must have taken to do all the organisation of the arrangements, all of which, like the other arrangements for the Workshop, have been truly excellent. *Chapeau, Daniel !*

Yesterday, I saw an inspector evaluating the teaching of mathematics in a primary class, so I am going to use some maths concepts to classify what this Workshop has given me personally.

First question – what has it added to my knowledge?

Answer: much detail – about inspectors in France, about the French education system, about the issues being debated currently in France, about the similarities among systems of the SICI members here represented and about our differences which, as usual, are considerable.

Second question – what has it taken away? (subtracted, would be more technical but Scottish children talk of 'doing take-away'...)

Answer: the preconception that there is a single system of teacher evaluation in France. No, there are several. In some cases the inspector has good knowledge of the work of the teacher involved, and the process does not always follow the stereotype of the unknown inspector swooping in every 5 years to deliver judgement.

Third question – and what has it multiplied? (*timesed* in Scottish child parlance...)

Answer: a number of things.

First the realisation that the headteacher in France does not appear to have much of that professional space which Rick Steur was talking about in the Dutch context. In a number of our systems there is much more professional space for the headteacher, especially in the hierarchical UK context, attested to also by Andrew McSorley's presence with us today and the context of his presentation. This is not the case in other countries where the head is more of a *primus inter pares* and has much less space – and no doubt responsibility.

Second, it has multiplied the intensity of the notion I already had that the school in France - *l'École de la République*, as we often heard – is rather sacrosanct and that significant change in the French system is therefore rather difficult to accomplish. But as we all know, our French friends are nothing if not subtle and '*astucieux*'. They will find other ways of effecting change, if not from the top down then from the bottom up (moving '*de la pyramide au rhizome*', which was the title of a conference I spoke at last week. Yes, look it up).

Also multiplied is my admiration for the task being accomplished by our OECD colleague Paulo Santiago. Dominique Remy-Granger and I had the task of doing a comparative analysis of our country posters, consisting each of a single page of text. His job of analysing and synthesising the situation across 26 countries in complex detail is daunting in the extreme, and I congratulate him for the highly interesting outcomes of his work which we heard of earlier this morning.

And the fourth question- what has the Workshop divided? (for information, but only understandable in Scotland – *goezintaes*. Have a guess)

Answer: well, possibly my confidence that we all really are talking about the same thing when we are discussing evaluation in this context. I thought I knew that we were talking on the one hand about the evaluation of the individual teacher and on the other about the evaluation of the combining of that across a school to give an evaluation of teaching. And the formative and summative aspects mentioned by Paulo are relevant to both. But actually I don't think that we were always using the terms in those ways throughout the Workshop.

Before handing over to our SICI President to make her concluding remarks, I would like to mention two key outcomes of the Workshop which have significance, great significance, for the SICI Inspection Academy, of which I am the coordinator. The first I take from comments made by Xavier Pons yesterday which highlighted for me the potential role of SICI to bridge the gap between professionals. We have started the process with Andrew's presence here today. But in its virtual form through our new website pages devoted to Academy issues – to go live in January we hope – we should find a locus for bringing professionals together. And the second outcome does relate to our face-to-face activities. And that is that we need further exploration of the issues at future SICI Workshops, with teacher evaluation perhaps becoming one of our major themes, as innovation has been over the last year and continues to be. This will be a very positive legacy of the excellent work done by Daniel Charbonnier and his team.