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Competence as Utterance

The notion of competence is the focus of numerous thoughts on work and training. It has been particularly emphasized for the past fifteen years, especially in order to understand knowledge mobilized by subjects in their field. But this is, for the most part, inaccessible to the researcher and to the subject himself. As a result, most of the steps of the analysis of work have created mechanisms of aid for verbalization (I. Oddone and Cloty; J. Theureau; C. Teiger; P. Vermersch) all of which seek to facilitate the co-construction of a word over the activity. In light of this work, the conclusion may be drawn that in the end, competence is only apprehended in action or in word.

It is with this second aspect that several thoughts might be developed, specifically, in the case of the formulation of experience acquired in a work situation within the context of the validation procedure of that which has been acquired professionally, a mechanism which articulates precisely the dimensions of work, of language and of training. And so, one can consider competence as an utterance.

This refers back, so it seems, to two perspectives of work:

- The analysis of the situation of communication and, especially, the situation of identities, roles and focuses of the “communicating”, “enunciator”, “interpreting”, and “addressee” (P. Charaudeau, 1983). From this perspective, one focuses less on the reference situation (work situation) than on the situation of language interaction created. The discourse produced is to be considered as a product of that precise interaction in the given situation. As a result, competence as utterance is therefore not only to that which has taken place, subject, in the work situation, that is to say, elsewhere and otherwise, but also what is taking place for him here and now, in the situation of communication and in the co-constructed contact which makes it possible.
- The analysis of signs in exchanges between participants, of the position of each subject in relation to this speech and the situation in which he finds himself, especially by the analysis of tensions, distances and modulations. (O. Galatanu, 1996).