



International Conference
**NEW PERSPECTIVES
in SCIENCE EDUCATION**



**Study on the cancer's representations from
non-initiated academic pupils
and their filing systems**

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Introduction :

Cancer is widely seen as a severe, mortal and frequent disease by the French population

⇒ Strong impact on people's mind

⇒ Frequent references in medias

What are the representations of cancer among scholar population ?



METHOD :

N = 64 French pupils in Year 5
aged from 10 to 11 years old

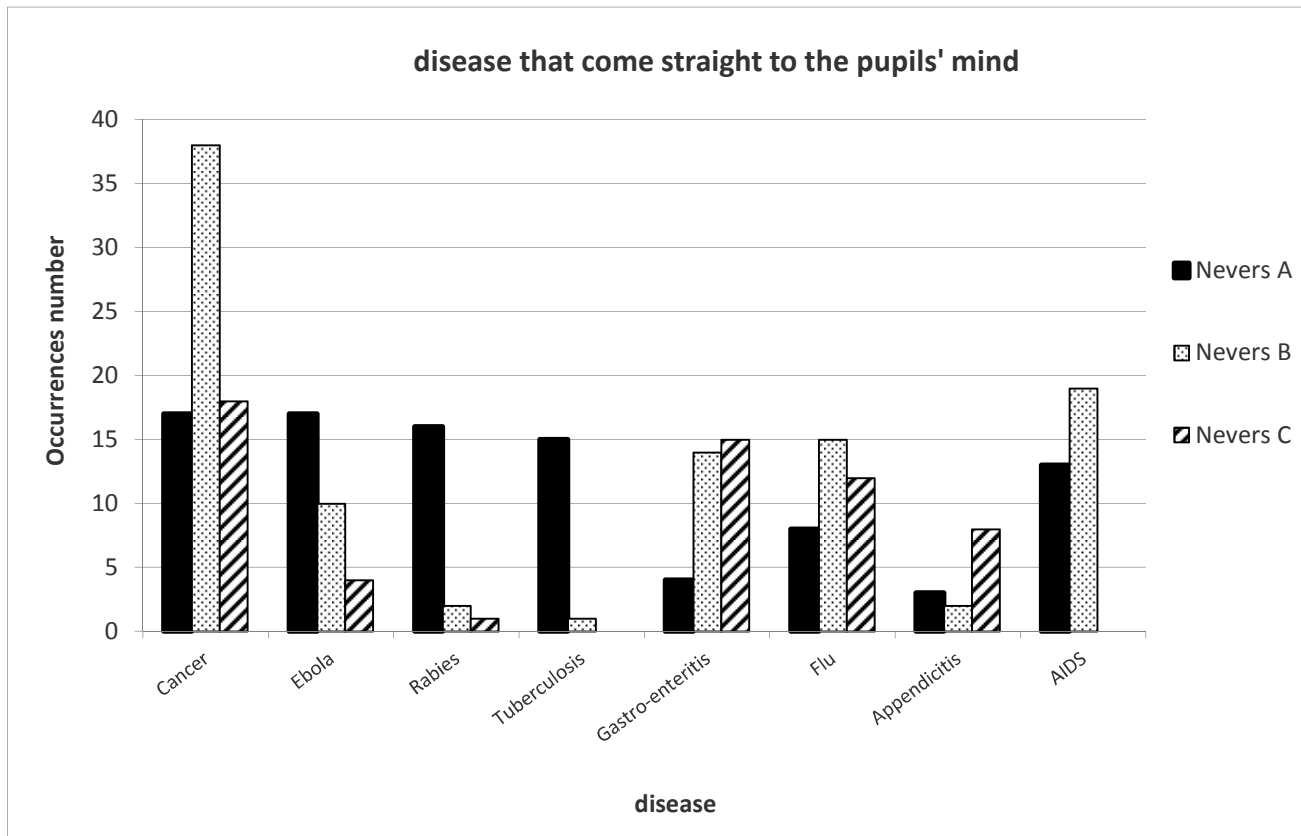
and divided in three different schools :

- 2 of them are situated in Nevers (Nevers A and Nevers B)
- and the last one is located in a village near Nevers (Nevers C)



1st questionnaire :

« What are the diseases which come right to your mind ? »



Cancer is central for younger pupils



2nd questionnaire :

- 1) Can you list the diseases you know which, according to you, can be transmitted from a person to another (= contagious)
- 2) Can you list the diseases one can die from?
- 3) According to you, are there diseases one can recover from without medicines ? If so, which ones ?
- 4) Which are the diseases only curable thanks to medicines ?



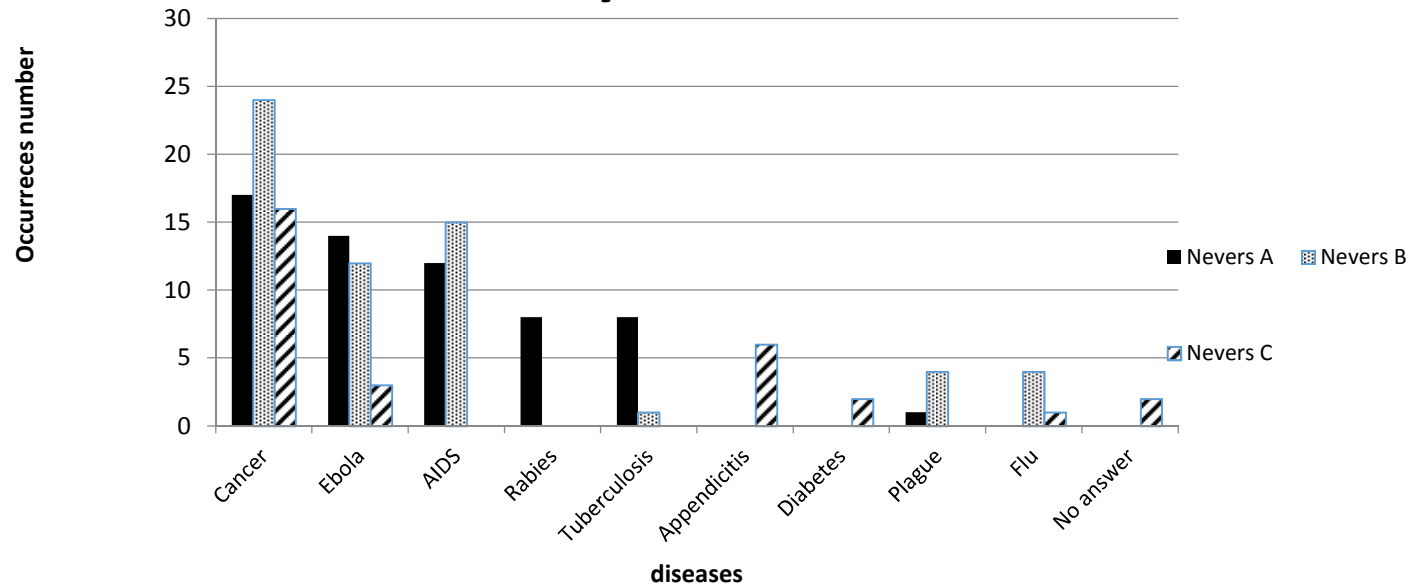
RESULTS

- 1) *Can you list the diseases you know which, according to you, can be transmitted from a person to another (= contagious)*
- 2) *According to you, are there diseases one can recover from without medicines ? If so, which ones ?*

For these 2 questions, the cancer is never quoted by the young pupils



Diseases you can die from

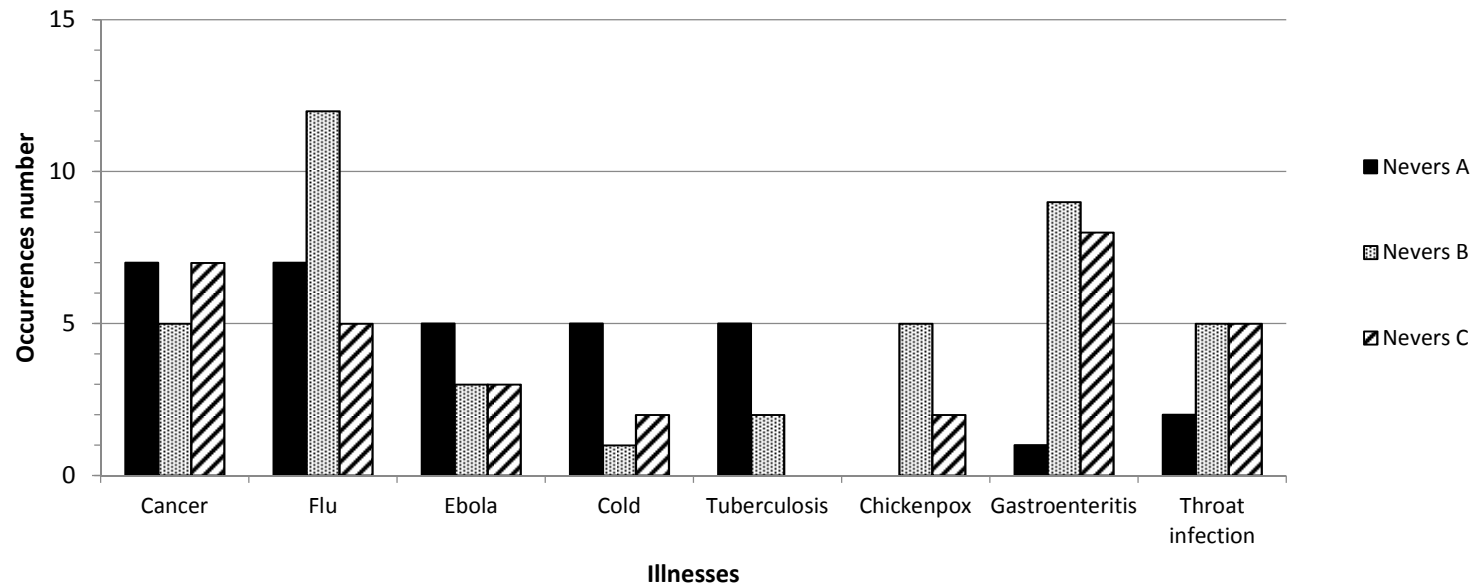


What are the diseases one can die from according to the pupils ?

Young pupils strongly associate cancer with death



Diseases only curable thanks to medicines



we can suppose that this question is somehow linked to the severity of the disease in the pupil's mind



Conclusion

- Cancer is a disease highly present in Year 5 pupils' mind, even though this subject was not seen during a lesson and many other diseases affect them in their everyday life.



Conclusion

- The young pupils have access to varied extracurricular information.
- The values, opinions, imagination associated to cancer and mediated through the extracurricular and social spheres are factors to take into account in the representations structure



Thank you for your attention