



Place of cancer in the students' representations

Sébastien Malpel, Robert Andres

Emmanuella Di Scala

Philippe Ricaud

Nathalie Pinsard

Laboratory CIMEOS EA 4177

University of Burgundy, ESPE of Burgundy, France

Introduction:

Cancer: - severity
- mortality
- frequency

⇒ Strong impact on people's mind

⇒ Frequent references in media

~~⇒ Teaching procedures~~

What are the representations of cancer among students?

Procedures:

217 subjects:

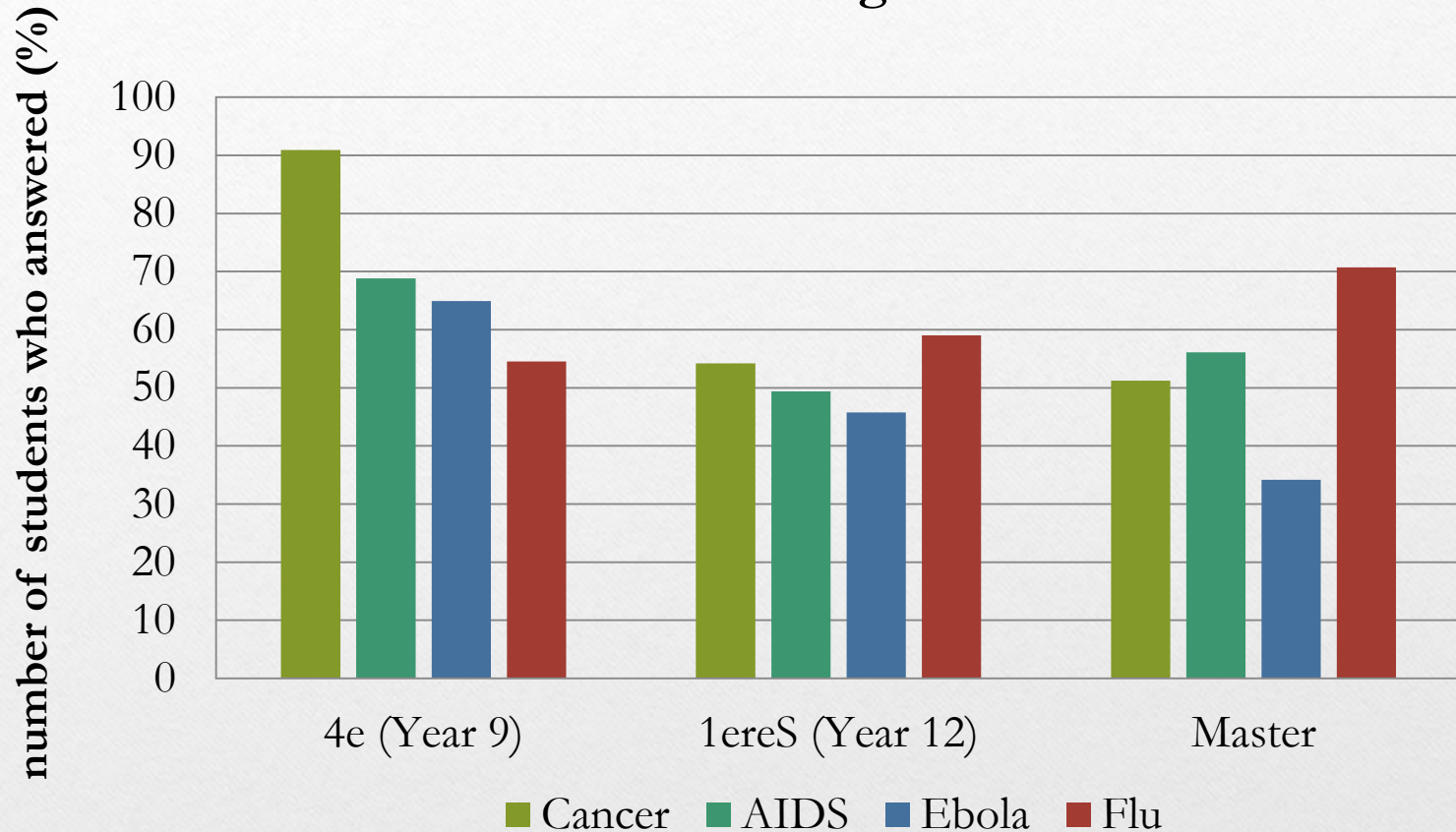
- 96 from Year 9 (13 years old)
- 83 from Year 12 (16 years old)
- 38 master students (22 years old)

1st questionnaire:

« Which are the diseases that come straight to your mind? »

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Diseases that come straight to the students' mind



Cancer seems to be more present in younger student's mind.

Whereas older students seem to consider equally other diseases.

2nd questionnaire:

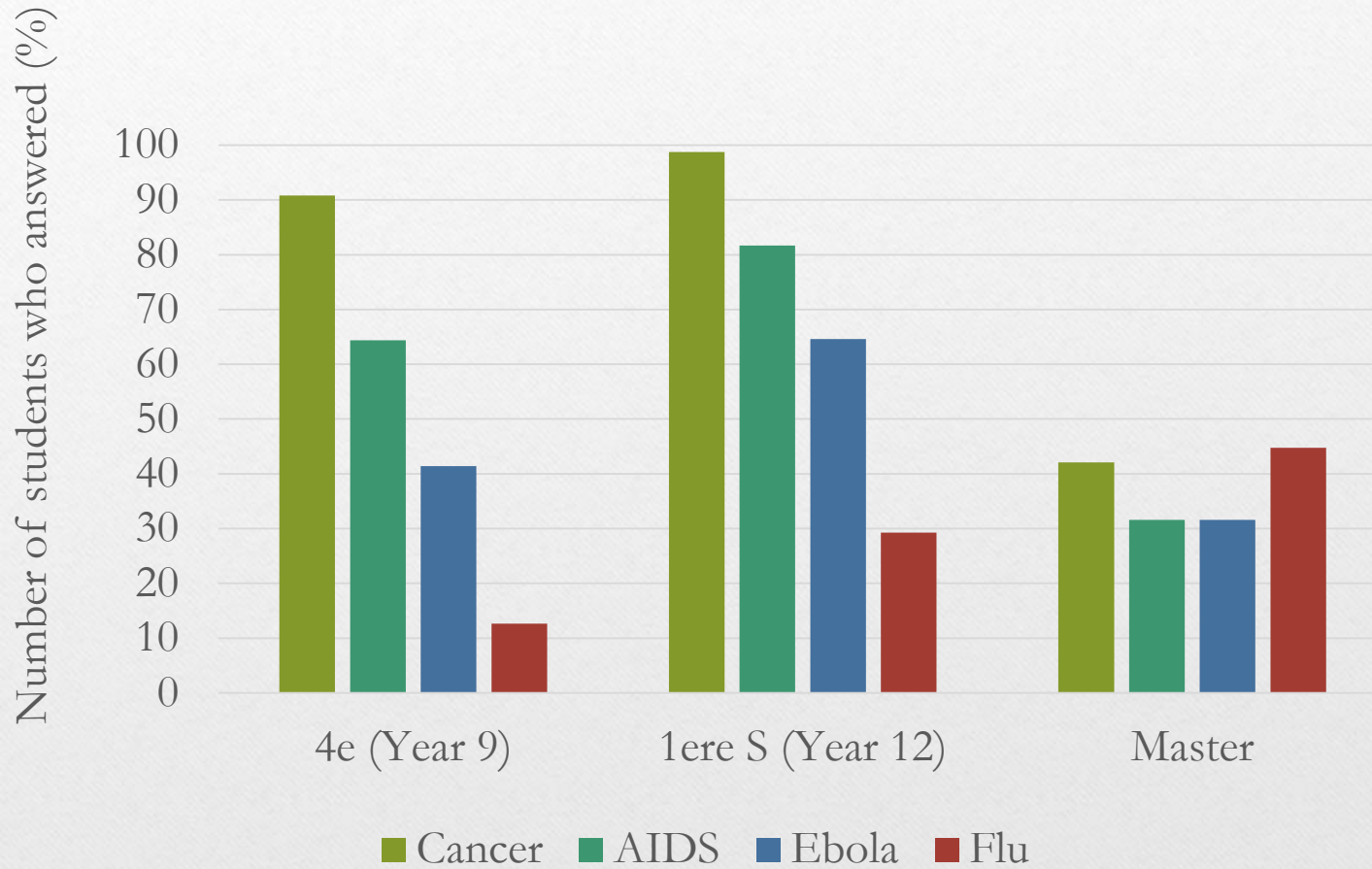
- 1) “Can you list the diseases you know that are contagious?”
- 2) “Can you list the diseases you can die from?”
- 3) “Are there diseases you can recover from without any medicines?
Which are they?”
- 4) “What are the diseases you absolutely need to take medicines in
order to heal?”

2nd questionnaire:

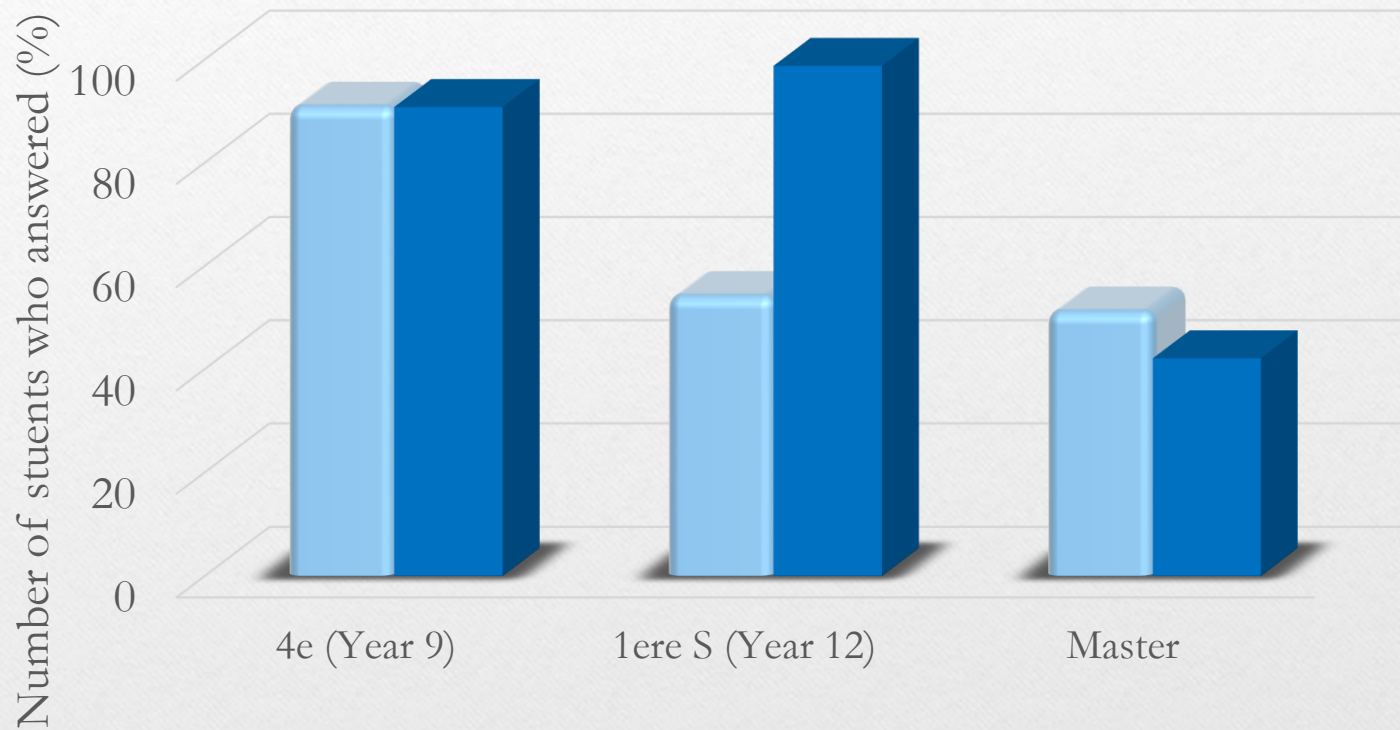
- 1) “Can you list the diseases you know that are contagious?”
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“Can you list the diseases you can die from?”

Diseases one can die from



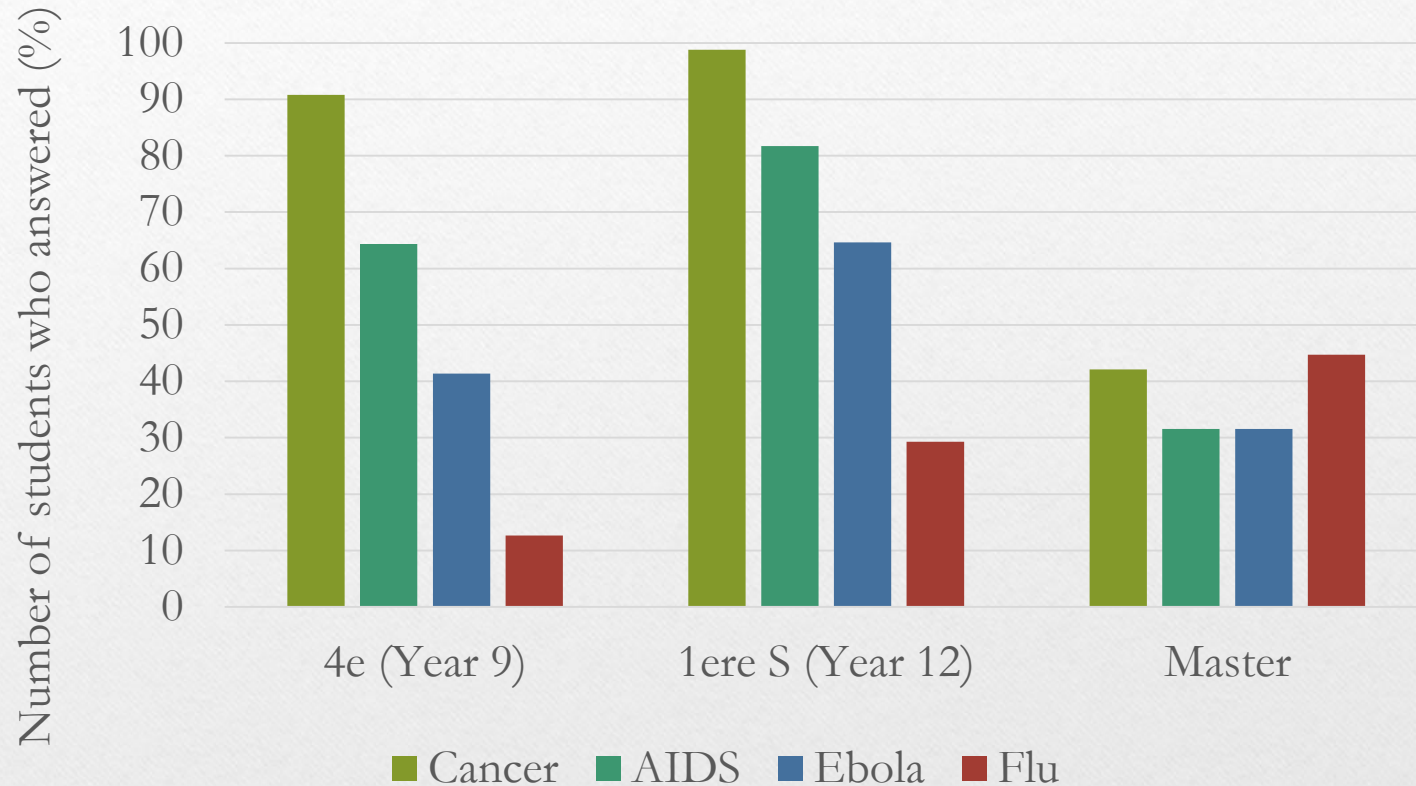
Diseases which come right to one's mind / Diseases one can die from



■ cancer as a disease which come right to your mind

■ cancer as a disease one can die from

Diseases one can die from

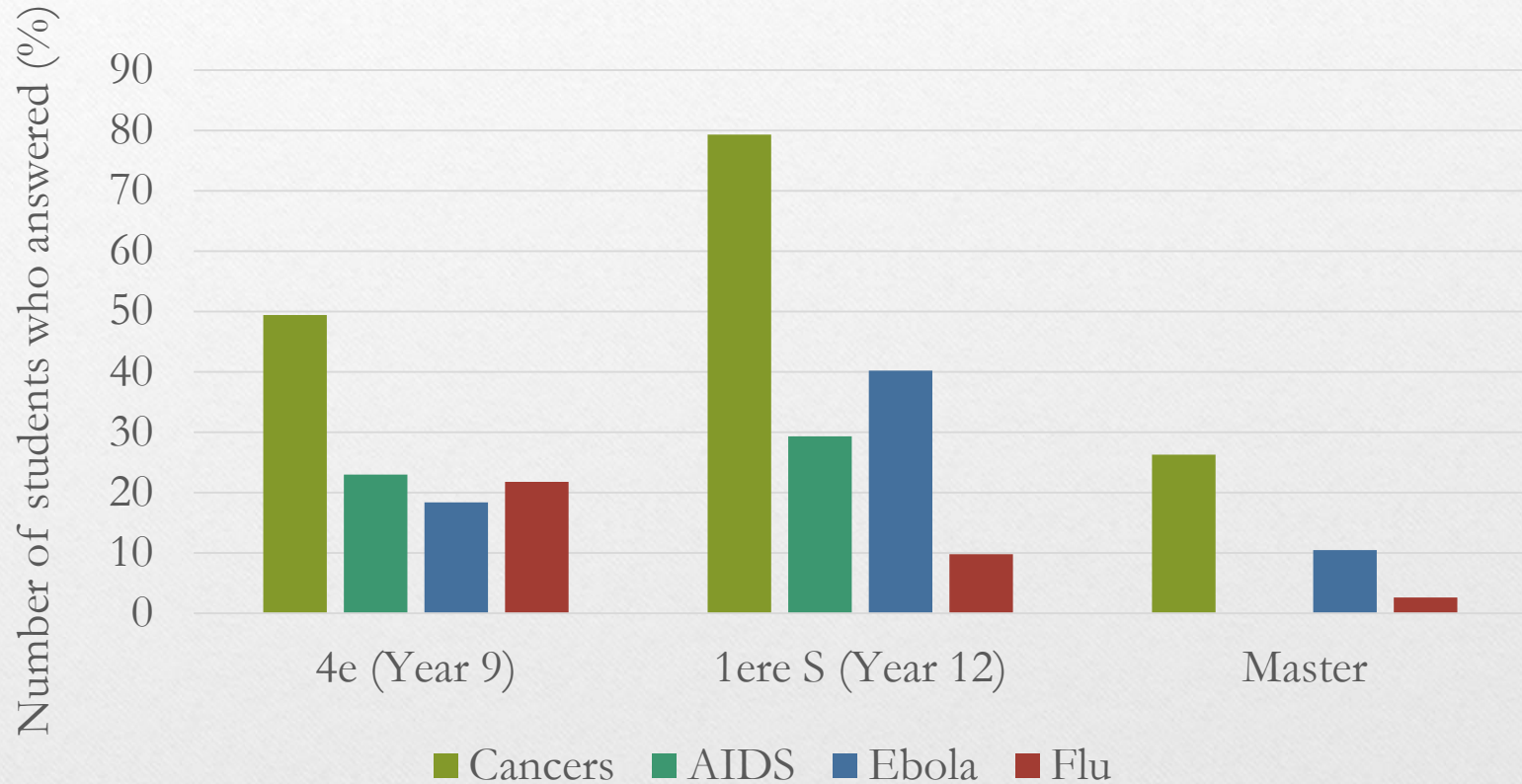


Young students strongly associate cancer with death which is not the case for older students.

Older students consider cancer just like any other disease.

“What are the diseases you absolutely need to take medicines in order to heal?”

Diseases one can recover from only with medicines



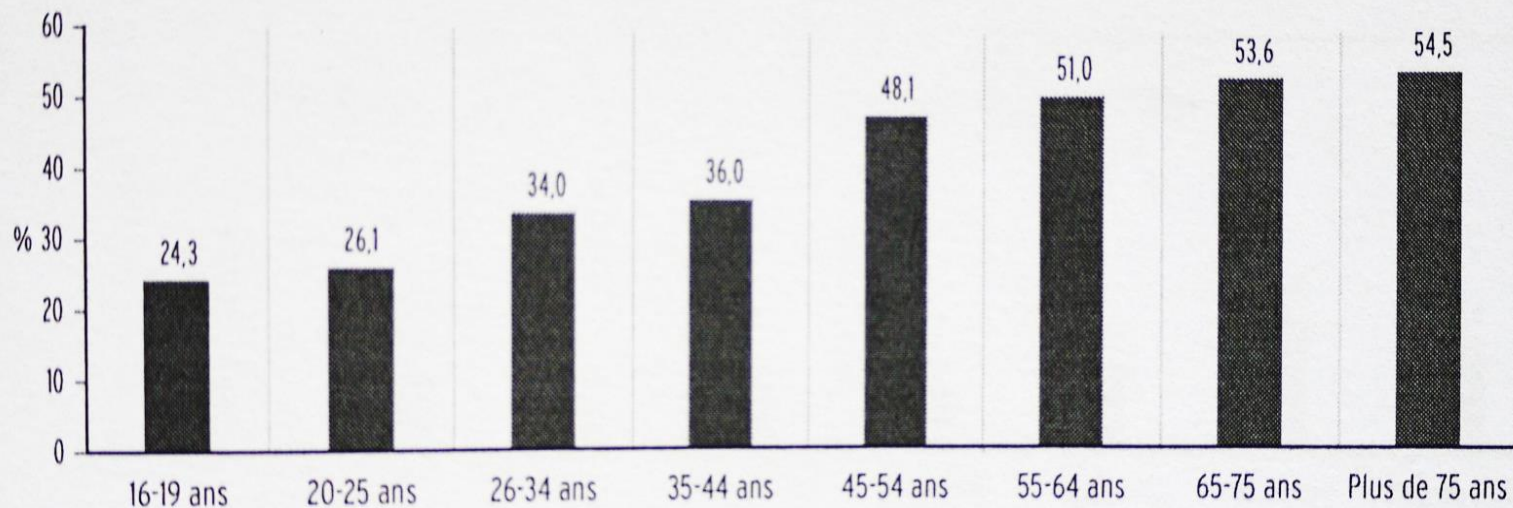
Cancer is a serious disease for any students, no matter the level.

Conclusion:

- Representations of cancer are different according to the age of the students
- Cancer is the most impressive disease for younger students
- Cancer seems to be a disease just like any other for older students
- Their maturity makes them less impressionable by the severity of cancer

People judging that cancer is a disease like any other.

Patrick Peretti-Watel
2005 Cancer barometer



In the general population, the more people are old, the more they consider cancer as a disease like any other.

The reasons of these changes during life are probably multiple and complex.

Perspectives:

- Comparison of representations before and after teaching procedure (Year 12)
- Younger pupils (Year 6)
- Comparison with English students of comparable level (Stafford)
- Real comparison with the general population

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