

Competence 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0

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Abstract:

Competence-thinking is probably as old as humankind. But it lasted until the 1950s until the construct of competence entered behavioural and social sciences. In the course of the 1960s the first applications of the construct emerged in educational sciences, mainly to enhance the alignment of educational programs with society and the world of work. In the 1970s this movement however was criticised by its instrumental and atomistic implementation, and other educational philosophies were embraced. However, being a resilient construct, in the course of the 1980s the core competence idea gained ground, and in the 1990s there was a strong revival of competence-based education. The notion of competence as a key educational goal got the attention of international vocational and higher education policy experts, and it was used to strengthen qualifications frameworks, and was finally institutionalised via reference systems like the European Qualifications Framework and the related National Qualifications Frameworks of member states of the European Union. Competence in these frameworks however is not precisely defined, although there is an overarching understanding of competence levels as level of professional maturity. However, in qualification frameworks like in Germany, the United Kingdom and France, other operationalisations of competence are being used. Scientifically, competence is seen as the integrated capability to perform which consists of related clusters of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Looking back on the two waves of competence thinking of the past, being competence 1.0, the training of more or less independent and detailed skills for known tasks, and competence 2.0, the integrated education of students for known jobs, which includes the knowledge, skills and attitudes to perform core tasks in work settings, it is high time to focus on competence 3.0, the development of competence of new generations for the unknown future, in which jobs will exist that are not invented and roles will be played we cannot imagine yet. This presentation will elaborate competence 3.0, competence for the unknown future.

Mulder, M. (Ed.) (2017). *Competence-based Vocational and Professional Education. Bridging the Worlds of Work and Education*. Cham: Springer International Publishing Switzerland (in press).