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PECULIARITIES OF ORGANIZATION OF PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE FOR FUTURE TEACHERS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL IN UKRAINE AND CYPRUS: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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Abstract. The article substantiates the relevance of practice-oriented learning and highlights the importance of practice in school in the process of training future teachers. The authors define progressive ideas of teachers' practical professional training in Ukraine and the Republic of Cyprus. A comparative analysis of the Field Placement Program of student teachers of the two countries was performed. The stages of practice-oriented training of future primary school teachers, the content and results of pedagogical practice are highlighted. The paper describes the experience of the University of Cyprus (UCY) on the activities of clubs in teacher education, where students create conditions to discuss positive and negative situations, share ideas with students at school, carry out collaborative analysis of their teaching during field placement in video clubs. It was found out that in Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University (PNU) the discussion of the results of students' work during pedagogical practice at school is carried out mostly at the university with a group of teachers and learners where future teachers publicly report on their work. The graduate students' feedback on Teacher Education (results of pedagogical practice in school) is analyzed: the presence of clear instructions on the organization of teacher activities in primary school; ability to set goals and objectives of the lesson; ability to plan professional activities to achieve these goals; skills of organizing educational dialogue in the classroom; ability to create comfortable psychological comfort in the classroom; establishing partnerships with students' parents and teachers at school; skills of communicative culture in teaching children; use of means to stimulate students' motivation, etc.

Keywords: teaching practice, practice-based learning, primary school, field placement, training of a modern teacher, teacher education.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the conditions of modernization of higher education, its European integration the problem of the practice-oriented approach as the means of professionalization of future teachers training becomes extremely relevant. This approach involves the orientation of the content, forms, methods and technologies of professional training on the formation of future teachers' practical skills, professional competencies, which will allow them to effectively implement pedagogical activities in the school.

In pedagogical science researchers substantiate methodological issues and empirical methods of practice-oriented research [14]. The relevant questions are how to “better prepare students for practice in 21st century universities and complex workplaces” [13, p. 71]. Practice-based learning is the basis for training professionals in various fields. For example, in medical education much is spoken about development of targeted activities for trainees taking into account the specifics of the region and self-study, regularly analyze the practice of using methods of quality improvement, systematically implement changes aimed at improving practice [17]. American scientists emphasize that universities must work with communities to be closer to real practice. For example, “one means of bridging the academic-community health practice gap is through “increasing integrated learning opportunities for students in public health”; it is necessary to increase the opportunities for medical students to work in real health care settings” [11, p. 102].

“Education for professional or occupational practice extends beyond the time, place and intention of university curricula and includes initial preparation for the occupation and ongoing development across the working life” [13, p. 72]. The training of a highly qualified specialist is aimed at creating inbound trajectory, which is focused on competence in the practical sphere, i.e. education must be constantly transformed in accordance with new social challenges. And therefore, it must be related to the practice realities. First of all, it concerns the training of a modern teacher, which must be creative and innovative [1; 3; 6].

The experience students-teachers, acquire during their teaching practice allow them to apply the theoretical background and skills that they have learned during teacher training. It helps them determine whether teaching career they have chosen is really for them. Students’ teaching practice at schools is a compulsory component of vocational training. Such training is required for obtaining a qualification level and is aimed at acquiring by students professional skills. In many universities in the budget of educational time, the production (teaching) practice takes about 20-26% of the total academic time. The efficiency of practice is ensured by the links between the higher educational institution and the relevant institution for the practice – schools, kindergartens, etc.

With this paper, we aim to highlight organizing practically oriented primary school teaching practice in Ukraine (PNU) and the Republic of Cyprus (UCY), analyze differences and similarities in the experience of both universities and attempt to suggest some ways of perfecting this process. The purpose of teaching practice in any country, in addition to the formation of professional practical and organizational skills, is also experiencing the whole process of obtaining qualifications from an ordinary student to a skilled teacher.

2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study uses the results of theoretical analysis of applied research of modern scientists on the organization of the teaching practice during their studying at the higher education institution.

The readiness of the future teacher for practical work with students is determined by the formation of the following components: worldview, motivational, emotional-volitional, operational, evaluative. These components determine the teacher’s theoretical and practical readiness to work at school.

Theoretical readiness involves the formation of a number of student competences, especially the system of psychological and pedagogical knowledge, skills and abilities, learning patterns and practical activities, methods of forming skills and abilities and more. Such knowledge and skills the future teacher receive while studying the theoretical context of pedagogical academic disciplines and professional teaching methods. Theoretical training of future teachers is effective if it is focused on the principles of pedagogical reflection, research and personality-oriented learning in order to form a number of competences: instrumental (cognitive, methodological, technological and others), interpersonal (communication skills, teamwork, etc.) and systemic (ability to learn, application of

knowledge in practice, initiative, independence, leadership, etc.).

“Practical theory is the most abstract cognition in a conceptual system” [18, p. 159]. However, any knowledge, values, experience is always practice-oriented and “tested in practice”, “practical theory is both a realistic and idealistic framework for teaching: the teacher always has some ideals and goals and they also want to achieve these in teaching” [18]. There is a term “Practical Knowledge” [10] in teacher training, as it is important to find a balance between theory and practice, how to use knowledge in practice. “Teaching practice is an interaction among various stakeholders out of which teacher, learner and teaching practice”, resulting in the use of theory in school practice [7; 19].

Practical readiness of the future teacher is formed in the process of mastering the experience of professional activity while studying in higher education institution, especially in the process of pedagogical practice in comprehensive schools. In the context of a practice-oriented approach, the student acts as a carrier of a certain system of knowledge, skills, abilities, values, experience of creative activity [4]. They are primary and serve as a prerequisite for theoretical training, as well as the basis of professional reflection. The future teacher not only masters professional competences, but also learns to solve practical issues of pedagogical content [19]. “Practice-based learning and improvement lends itself to watching a learner over time, allowing for inference, over many episodes in which they demonstrate self-directed behaviors” [5, p. 38].

According to the results of the study of experience in Ukraine, the organization of practical training of future primary school teachers is carried out in the following stages:

Stage I – the actualization of the students’ existing experience in studying the academic disciplines of the psychological and pedagogical cycle. Here they pass through the acquaintance with professionally important roles, their acceptance as a model of behavior within the chosen professional specialty – educational – introductory practice of the first-year undergraduate students (Bachelor’s level). At this stage the students observe the teachers’ and school students’ activities in real school conditions, interpersonal communication of professional orientation, i.e. application of experience in the process of entering the teaching profession. Besides, students form their psychological - pedagogical competence that synthesizes knowledge, skills, and values necessary to perform relevant roles. Students have the opportunity to analyze the work of a qualified teacher in the classroom, however, during this practice they are not involved in conducting lessons or other activities with students.

Stage II – passing by students of pedagogical practice in primary school in the process of professional training in the third and fourth years of Bachelor’s level. At this stage, the reproduction of theoretical knowledge and practical skills acquired at the previous stage is realized. Accordingly, the future teachers form the experience of professional role-playing activity. Students conduct lessons independently, teachers and lecturers have the opportunity to observe and advise them. It is essential that at this stage the design of the most appropriate individual sets of professionally important roles is carried out in accordance with the content of professional activity. The adaptation of students to the professional environment of primary school takes place. The ways of interpersonal communication with students, parents, colleagues are determined, i.e., “the polished” (based on real experience) professional competence is formed.

Stage III – approbation of professional competence in the process of pedagogical practice, when pre-formed abstract concepts and models of child’s upbringing are concretized in terms of educational practice in primary school. The future specialist has the opportunity to consolidate skills and abilities in the system of one’s own professional experience, in fact, after completing a Bachelor’s degree or in the process of dual education.

In June 2018, the teachers of the Precarpathian National University (PNU) under the project of EU Erasmus+ KA2 “Modernization of Pedagogical Higher Education by Innovative Teaching Instruments (MoPED)”, No 586098-EPP-1-2017-1-UA-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP (2017-2021), had visiting study at the University of Cyprus (Nicosia). During the week of training, we became acquainted with the peculiarities of the organization of the educational process and modern technologies of teaching in higher education institutions. The participants of the training had the opportunity to enrich their knowledge of innovative forms and learning tools, compare the structure of undergraduate programs

of teaching practice for future teachers of primary school in both countries, etc.

The undergraduate program of the Department of Education at the University of Cyprus is presented in Fig. 1.

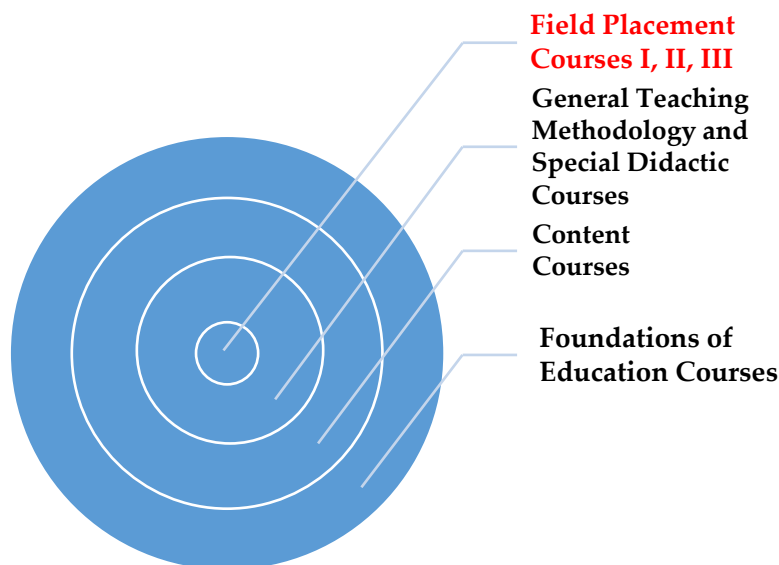


Fig. 1. Structure of the undergraduate programmes of the Department of Education (UCY).

In May 2020, the lecturers of the University of Cyprus visited Ukraine as part of the above-mentioned project, where they were introduced to the educational process and training of future teachers at some universities. Besides, experts from Cyprus conducted a series of advanced trainings for the Ukrainian academic staff focusing on the research method in teaching STEM subjects and the use of experiments in working with secondary school students. The Inquiry Based Learning (IBL) method, which is widely used today in educational institutions of leading countries in Europe and America [22], was presented. Such experience is especially valuable in the context of the global coronavirus pandemic, as it involves the use of online laboratories to conduct experiments and develop students' critical thinking [9]. Nowadays, these practical methods are used by Ukrainian students during pedagogical practice in primary school in the conditions of distance / blended learning.

Thus, the content of pedagogical practice of Ukrainian and Cypriot students includes the following aspects:

- 1) preparatory work of students for the practice: participation in the guidance meeting on the organization of pedagogical practice, acquaintance with the methodological recommendations and requirements for teaching, methodological and research work;
- 2) acquaintance with the administration and school teachers; inspection of classrooms, their equipment and design; study of thematic and lesson plans of teachers; analysis of primary school curricula and textbooks; planning of one's own educational and methodical work for the period of practice;
- 3) psychological-pedagogical study of primary school students and class staff through the use of experimental techniques: the method of rating, ranking, pedagogical experiment, sociometry, training and others; drawing up psychological-pedagogical characteristics of the student group;
- 4) preparation for conducting lessons in primary school, their discussion (according to the calendar plan); observation of lessons and educational activities conducted by teachers, fellow-students, participation in their discussion; selection of didactic materials and multimedia presentations for classes; development of students' cognitive activity and creative talent; individual educational work with children of primary school;
- 5) performing the functions of a form-teacher; socio-pedagogical activity on propaedeutics of

offenses and bullying; participation in parent conferences, lectures, consultations of parents invited to the school;

6) methodical and research activities: systematic documentation of practice; study of the best experience of school teachers; participation in school council meetings; preparation of photo and video materials for the report on the results of practice in primary school; work on the diploma (Master's) work on the chosen topic.

Taking into account data from Fig. 1, students of the Department of Education at the University of Cyprus have three phases of Field Placement (teaching practice), which is somewhat different from the experience of Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University. In Ukraine for educational level of "Bachelor", students have the following two types of practice: observation-educational; production teaching. Those students obtaining Master's Degree have: production teaching practice in primary school; production assistant practice of Masters; research practice.

At the same time, an important aspect of the organization of practice at the University of Cyprus is the creation of videos and participation in video clubs for future teachers [8]. Here students have the opportunity to demonstrate fragments of their conducted lessons, talk about their successes and failures, take into account the views of their fellow-students on working with school children.

In case of University of Cyprus, videos in teacher education programs is a rich and multilayered means for examining instruction [12], the so called "window to practice" as they carry vital and contextual information about verbal and non-verbal class interactions around the content [23]. Videos can throw a better light on some specific instructions that might be paid not appropriate attention while conducting a lesson, especially for student-teachers (STs) who are not accustomed to the complexity of teaching process, become a catalyst for teachers' professional growth [15], promote detail analysis and reflection around manageable pieces of practice experience. They support student-teachers in applying what they have learned at the university in real school environment, strengthening practical knowledge; foster students' professional reflection and help them realize differences between their theoretical knowledge and actions, generating changes in their teaching.

In University of Cyprus, a particular approach of using videos in teacher education is video clubs. They are organized in small groups of students who meet on a regular basis to watch video fragments of conducted lessons, discuss the teaching/learning procedure, and reflect upon certain educational issues, weaknesses and positive aspects of the teaching experience. Video Clubs serve a good reflection tool during Field Placement, thus, contribute to restructuring and developing students' science content and teaching knowledge; develop a more multidimensional focus of analysis attending to more complex issues pertaining to content, teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil interactions [21].

Video Clubs in teacher education programs identify significant components for teaching and learning interpret components based on teacher professional knowledge. Teachers were documented shifting from simply noticing pupils' ideas and actions to more thoroughly analyzing pupils' thinking from offering alternative strategies to those viewed to gradually understanding the teaching strategies used [20], collaboratively analyzing their teaching during field placement [16]. This is quite an interesting experience that is worth implementing in other pedagogical universities. Thus, for three years of training, future teachers in Cyprus undergo Field Placement. In the first year, they teach lessons but do not practice video. In the second year – Field Placement and Videos and Video Clubs. This experience is extended to the third year of practice, where they create videos of their lessons and participate in Video clubs for 10 weeks. It also develops communication skills, self-confidence and public speaking skills.

From the Field Placement experience at the UCY, we attempt to conclude that all the participants are somehow benefitting from the video clubs approach. For instance, video clubs

contribute to STs' lesson planning and enactment, which serve as proxies for their practice; video clubs do not influence universally all the STs in the same manner however, STs are benefitting in differential ways; different learning paths can be observed when it comes to STs' actual teaching practice.

Comparative characteristics of the Field Placement Program (Bachelor's level) are presented in Table 1.

<i>Main indicators</i>	<i>Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, Ukraine</i>	<i>University of Cyprus, Republic of Cyprus</i>
Total duration of practice	1 year of study – 2 weeks 3 year of study - 4 weeks 4 year of study – 6 weeks Totally – 12 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field Placement I-III • Videos and Video clubs 10 weeks
1-year students	Educational practice in natural sciences (in fields) Teaching no lessons 2 week	<i>Phase I:</i> 6 classroom observations 6 lesson plans Teaching no lessons 6 written reflections around classroom observations
2-year students	No practice	<i>Phase II:</i> 8 classroom observations 12 lesson plans Teaching these 12 lessons 12 written reflections around these lessons
3-year students	Ukrainian language (2 lessons) Literary reading (2 lessons), Mathematics (2 lessons), Natural sciences (2 lessons), Foundations of Health (1 lesson), Physical education (1 lesson), Manual work (1 lesson), Musical art (1 lesson), Fine arts (1 lesson), Extra curricular educational activity (1 event) <i>Practice documentation:</i> Student's report (diary of pedagogical practice); Conducted lesson notes and educational events, their analysis; Psycho-pedagogical characteristics of the student; Individual creative tasks; Assessment of the practice base; Assessment of practice defense	Classroom and school observations 10-week period 90 lesson plans Teaching these 90 lessons Engaging in reflection orally <i>Video Club (Phase III):</i> 20 videotaped lessons in Language Arts (4 per ST) 20 lesson plans (4 per ST) 60 post-lesson pupil interviews (12 per ST, 3 interviews after each lesson) 5 videotaped video-club sessions 5 reflection pre -interviews (1 per ST) 5 reflection post- interviews (1 per ST) 25 reflection card notes (5 per ST, one after each video-club session) 5 reflective diaries (1 per ST)
4-year students	Ukrainian language 1 Literary reading (1 lessons), Mathematics (2 lessons), Natural sciences (1 lessons), Foundations of Health (1 lesson), Physical education (1 lesson), Manual work (1 lesson),	-

	Musical art (1 lesson), Fine arts (1 lesson), I explore the world (1 lesson) <i>Practice documentation:</i> Student's report (diary of pedagogical practice); Conducted lesson notes and educational events, their analysis; Psycho-pedagogical characteristics of the student; Individual creative tasks; Assessment of the practice base; Assessment of practice defense	
Discussion of lessons conducted	In a group of students with the school teacher, teacher-supervisor, fellow-students-teachers after the lesson or a fixed time (often according to the schedule)	In the video club in groups of students
Reflection	With the teacher - partnership of a teacher and a student	With students while watching their own video clips of lessons conducted, student partnership

Tab. 1. Field Placement Program (Bachelor's level).

As can be perceived from the Table 1, there are considerable differences in pedagogical practice organization in the two universities. First of all, Ukrainian students of Pedagogy Faculty have 4 years of study on Bachelor's level, thus, totally having 12 weeks of teaching practice in schools. The number of conducted lessons in various subjects in primary school is also different from their Cypriot counterparts. Students in both countries prepare reporting documentation about their experience at school, however, these requirements are not similar as well. In PNU (Ukraine) currently there are no students' video clubs within pedagogical practice. Discussion of the results of students' practice is carried out mostly at school immediately after the lesson with the school teacher, university teacher-supervisor, students-teachers or at the university with a group of teachers. Future teachers report on the results of their first professional experience, where they present (often in humorous form) fragments of videos, storytelling, theatrical stories about their feelings (successful and failures) in school practice.

3. CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the efficient organization of pedagogical practice of university students in primary school requires clear instructions on the work of the teacher; ability to set goals and objectives of the lesson; ability to plan professional activities to achieve these goals and implement educational objectives; skills of organizing educational dialogue in the classroom; ability to create moral and psychological comfort during work; establish partnership with students' parents and school teachers; skills of communicative culture in teaching children; experience in using means to stimulate cognitive interests and motivate students to learn, etc. [7; 8].

We believe that the experience exchange between universities in teacher training is extremely valuable in today's integration of educational programs, dissemination of professional mobility practice of students and teachers. In particular, the study of Practice-based learning in training of primary school teachers in Ukraine and the Republic of Cyprus expands opportunities to improve

curricula and the quality of educational services, modernize teacher training at the university on the whole. After all, there are progressive ideas in the activities of many pedagogical teams in different countries. It is important to disseminate best educational practices and experience, especially in the field of innovative teacher training.

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Папаєвріпіду Маріос, Будник Олена, Близнюк Тетяна, Олімпіу Джеогре. Особливості організації педагогічної практики майбутніх учителів початкової школи України та Кіпру: порівняльний аналіз. *Журнал Прикарпатського університету імені Василя Стефаника*, **9** (1) (2022), 82–91.

У статті обґрунтовано актуальність практико орієнтованого навчання, висвітлено значення виробничої практики в школі у процесі підготовки майбутніх учителів. Визначено прогресивні ідеї практичної професійної підготовки педагогів в Україні та Республіці Кіпр. Здійснено порівняльний аналіз програм підготовки вчителів двох країн. Виокремлено етапи практико орієнтованої підготовки майбутніх учителів початкової школи, її зміст та результати. Описано досвід Кіпрського університету щодо діяльності клубів педагогічної освіти, де студентам створюють умови для обговорення позитивних і негативних ситуацій, обміну досвідом роботи з учнями в школі, здійснення спільного аналізу процесу їхнього викладання під час виробничої практики у школі у відеоклубах. З'ясовано, що у Прикарпатському національному університеті імені Василя Стефаника обговорення результатів роботи студентів після завершення педагогічної практики в школі здійснюється здебільшого в закладі освіти з групою викладачів та здобувачів освіти; майбутні вчителі публічно звітують про свою роботу. Проаналізовано зворотний зв'язок студентів-випускників у педагогічній підготовці (результати виробничої практики в школі): наявність чітких інструкцій щодо організації діяльності вчителя в початковій школі; вміння ставити цілі та завдання уроку, планувати професійну діяльність для досягнення цих цілей, створити морально-психологічний комфорт в класі; навички організації навчального діалогу та налагодження партнерської взаємодії з батьками учнів і вчителями; навички комунікативної культури, використання засобів стимулювання і мотивації учіння учнів та ін.

Ключові слова: педагогічна практика, практико орієнтоване навчання, початкова школа, виробнича (виїзна) практика, підготовка сучасного вчителя, підготовка вчителя.



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