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## THE PRACTICAL TRAINING OF THE TEACHERS AS A MOMENTUM ELEMENT

**Abstract:** *The practice-applied teaching processes in the higher education establishments, where future pre- and primary school teachers are taught, are stipulated in the regulations in force. In order for them to be functional, a creative approach is needed, where the universities be the initiative-generator of joint educational activities with institutions in the field of the pre- and primary school education. This is crucial for the future teachers' practical pedagogical training. The earliest the force of habit (momentum) in the organization of the educational process between the school as educational establishment and the higher education institution is discontinued, the more efficient and high quality the training of students will be for work in actual school environment.*

**Key words:** *practical training, pedagogy, interns, teachers, kindergarten, primary school.*

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### Introduction

The profession “teacher” has been one of the most sought-after occupations in the past couple of years in Bulgaria. Not only do high school graduates pursue this profession, but a lot of people, graduated and with achievements in other professional fields, redirect their professional skills to re-qualify in the teacher’s profession or acquire a new specialty “Pedagogy”. The economic and political situation, we are witnessing, have achieved their goal – place the teacher’s profession in demand. For the appropriate selection of the applicants and their successful performance, the answer to the question “Why the teacher’s profession is in such a demand?” is essential. The Technical University – Sofia, through the Faculty of Engineering and Pedagogy in Sliven city, adequately expanded its educational potential towards the field of this sought-after profession [4]. Bachelor programs in Pedagogy and two Master study

programs were established - “Innovation and Technologies in Pedagogy” and “Pre-school and Primary School Pedagogy”. The future pre- and primary school teachers, both graduating the Bachelor’s and the Master’s programs, acquire their practical training in specified nursery and primary schools, under inter-institutional contracts concluded between the principal of the educational establishment and the higher education institution’s rector – pursuant to art.36 of the State regulations for obtaining professional qualification “teacher” [3], art. 13 of the Regulation for the statute and professional development of teachers, principals and other pedagogical specialists [5] The organization and supervision of the general practical training in the nursery school and primary school age by the higher education establishment is entirely within the responsibilities of the department board carrying out the practical training, considering the imposed

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representative and supervising functions – art.60, paragraph 2, item 3 according to the Rules for the structure and activities of the Technical University of Sofia [6]. The inter-institutional agreement is concluded at the start of the school year at latest by September 30th. It stipulates the logical sequence, each party's responsibilities and each activity's deadline. This is also a type of curriculum establishing the students' practical training – future teachers, directed by academic lecturers jointly with tutors. The latter are appointed by the principals of the primary educational institutions at the start of the academic year. The process is successful in the cases of logically connected and legally regulated and stipulated internal procedures. For the purpose of efficient collaboration between the institutions, where the education is conducted, are implemented partnership interactions on equal basis of the educational institution's administration of the pre-school and primary school education system, and the competent representatives of the higher education teaching department.. The academic education is focused on analysis of the observed pedagogical interactions – art.9, art.10 of the Regulation for the state requirements for obtaining professional qualification “teacher” [3]. Observation and analysis are the main methods at this stage of the practical training of the future teachers, where they are able to realize the connections between the acquired theoretical knowledge and its direct implementation in active form [2, 327-352]. The clever and purposeful guiding of the lecture, while discussing what is being observed, by the person in charge of the control and evaluation of the teaching process, is crucial for the active learning. Methods like brainstorming, analysis and synthesis are also used. The demonstration of innovative information and communication technologies, applicable or implemented to the respective educational process, is a must. It is compulsory that audio-visuals, with conducted electronic lessons for better presentation of specific stages in the lesson structure, be used. The students are encouraged by the lecturer to undertake activities which enable them to connect the theoretical knowledge obtained with their personal application in the group work. It is important that the students receive high-quality knowledge of the structure of the curriculum and be able to recognize its components. They have to possess in-depth knowledge of the educational principles, such as: demonstrativeness, consciousness, activity, system and order, endurance, accessibility, individual approach. They have to be able to select the most appropriate work methods depending on the lesson type and the specific didactic goals and tasks [9, 114].

The next stage of the students' practical training, future pre-school and primary school teachers, is their participation in the current pedagogical practice. It is carried out by the rules and organization as stipulated in the inter-institutional contract. The main goal is to

form professional and personal qualities and skills to conduct a high-quality educational and instructive process. At this stage, it is important that the future teachers develop skills for planning of the educational activities, preparation of methodological elaborations of lessons, including each child and pupil in the educational-instructive activities, and determination of the necessary expectations for that.

The practical training develops skills for making an appropriate pedagogical decision in the spontaneously occurred school situations. The successfully trained students should be able to apply efficient combination of individual structural components of the various types of school work. At the end of this stage, a definite number of methodological elaborations and records of observed and analyzed lessons are presented. While planning a lesson, the students specify the topic of the lesson with the main tutor. They support them while determining the goals, tasks of the work, the didactic materials. The topic is selected from the annual allocation of topics on the specific subject of the tutor, and the type of the lesson is, as planned in the curriculum of the primary / nursery school. The “tutor” provides the educational content. The support of the students includes also determination of the type of cognitive activity, knowledge obtained and skills developed in the lesson, the educational techniques and technologies, which the tutor uses for this lesson. After specifying these conceptual structural-instructive forms and components of the lesson, the students begin the preparation for conducting it. They prepare a plan-synopsis of the lesson and its course. To the individual main structural components, they include didactic and technical support to each, as well as preliminary planning of time for each element. A special part of the practical training is the demonstration by the tutor of the transitions between these elements, as well as the connections with previous and successive topics. This is discussed with emphasis on their importance in the lesson analysis. The main types of lessons, according to their didactic goals, can be divided into two groups – for new knowledge, and consolidation of already acquired or mastered knowledge, skills, habits and their control. By including of more or less elements of these main types, the structure of their derivatives can be obtained – a combined lesson, self-study lesson, lesson for examination and control, a lesson for consolidation and self-study work, lesson for inclusion and systematization of knowledge.

According to A. Asmolov, the cognitive activities that students have to learn, are how to develop their pupils' skills to classify and group the knowledge, with regards to the communication activities – how to work in pairs and as a team [1, 144-145]. The regulative training activities for establishing goals and tasks, and the expectation for their performance. This is related to the adoption and

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execution of rules, which is qualified through control, correction and evaluation. Therefore, the students are taught in practice how to develop the pupils' skills to organize themselves and perform the school activity in collaboration with the teacher. The communication activities develop the exchange of emotions, knowledge, skills, jointly with their peers and the teachers. For this purpose, the students are taught practical interactions by a tutor, in order to assist the pupils in understanding and acquiring the educational content [1]. Of the two types of lessons – acquisition of new and consolidation of previous knowledge, skills, habits, as well as of the four types of training activities – personal, cognitive and character-symbolic, regulative and communicative, the academic lecturers present to the students the variety of structural elements, for consolidation of knowledge, assigning homework and other projects, for control and evaluation of achievements. With this knowledge and skills, the students are preparing for the next stage of their practical training – internship. The main goal of the internship is to prepare the students for their independent professional activities. The interns are provided with conditions to conduct a real school process in class, as well as work with the actual school documents. This is a stage of their development, where they can apply independently acquired theoretical knowledge and the skills obtained from their practical training. Thus, the interns develop their professional skills in actual environment.

According to the requirements of the Regulation for obtaining professional qualification “teacher”, the minimum number of pedagogical situations or lessons

conducted by interns is between 15 and 22 pedagogical situations or lessons [3]. The evaluation of the future pre- and primary school teachers, for their practical preparation according to the specific stage, is made by different lecturers. Their work during the control and evaluation of teaching process in the current pedagogical practice is evaluated by the academic lecturer from the higher education establishment, and during the internship - by the tutor. The practical pedagogical training of the future teachers is performed by means of practice-applied examination, conducted in the school establishment, with an attending board consisting of lecturers with academic rank from the department providing the training, the headmaster of the nursery or primary school, and the tutor [10]. Each student is required to elaborate and perform pedagogical situations or a lesson, and defend them before the examination board, pursuant to art.15 of the Regulation for obtaining professional qualification “teacher” [3].

In a research, conducted at the start of 2022, with 81 graduates from the Bachelor and Master study programs of the Faculty of Engineering and Pedagogy – Sliven to the Technical University – Sofia, regarding their satisfaction from the chosen specialty in the context of quality practical training for their future professional fulfillment, the following results were obtained (Figure 1):

- 64% reckon that their professional preparation is sufficient;
- 58% have confidence in their future professional fulfillment, based on their practical training [7].

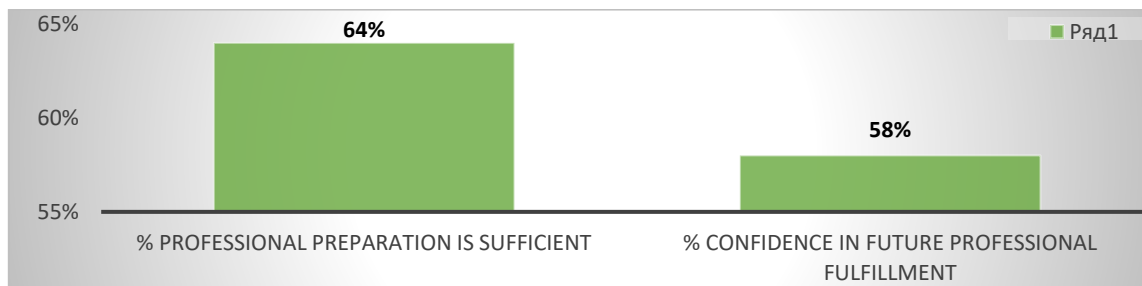


Figure 1. Satisfaction from the chosen specialty

### Conclusion

These results are not sufficient to make a comprehensive evaluation of the educational process for their practical training, still they are sufficiently indicative in the context of the momentum processes of organization and performance of the practical training in the field of pre- and primary school pedagogy, which is actually the focus of our present work [8].

An important feature, which is not included in the conduct of the state practice-applied examination of the future teachers, is that the school year for the

first to third grades is completed on May 31st, and for the fourth grade – on June 15th. This creates difficulties for the organization and conduct of this examination by the higher education establishment, as the schedule of the academic year (semesters and examination sessions) differs from the school year schedule. This is a problem, which has not been resolved yet, notwithstanding the increasing number of applicants in the field of pre- and primary school pedagogy, which demonstrates organizational inertness.

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For the efficient practical training of the students, future pre- and primary school teachers, there are two main factors – stipulated rules and direct interaction between the persons with representative and administrative functions from both institutions. Only in this way, is it possible to set clear configurations of the organization of the educational practice-applied process. Initiative is required by the

higher education establishments for joint educational activities with institutions in the area of the pre- and primary school education. The earliest the inertia in the organization of the joint educational process is discontinued, the more efficient the training provided to students will be, and the better the quality of their education and professional pedagogical fulfillment.

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