

# How Students Reflect on Practical Training in the Field of Primary Teaching at Faculty of Education of Masaryk University

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# Annotation

- In this article we present the knowledge from research which aim was to analyze the practical training of students in Faculty of Education.
- We focus on training in didactics especially.
- In the interpretation we also bring the description of current state of practical training of future primary teachers and also the proposals for its improvement.

# Introduction

- During the five-year Master program of Primary Teaching subjects of practical training are divided into all ten semesters.
- Our model is composed of 12 study subjects of practical training and study subjects of integrated and supportive character. One of the main starting points of the concept of practical training is the rigorous linking of pedagogical- psychological and subject-didactic training (see more in Havel, 2003).
- Our aim was to find out whether it really happens.


# Methodology

- A technique of analysis of *students' reflections*.
- A research tool was the *written answers of students* of graduate year of full-time and combined mode of study
- A research sample was consisted of 126 students who in this calendar year have finished their undergraduate training in the study programme Primary Teaching.
  - Specifically it was 69 students of the full-time mode of study and 57 students of the combined mode of study.

- Students commented the ten-point syllabus related to the issue of:
  - *setting learning objectives,*
  - *preparation for teaching,*
  - *implementation of teaching experiments,*
  - *the influencing and creating social relationships in the classroom and at school,*
  - *the need for further education,*
  - *their own preparation at the Faculty of Education.*
- We paid the particular attention to the frequency of positive and negative responses of individual disciplines (or even departments) in relation to the practical training of future primary teachers.

# Full-time mode of study - results

- Primarily they appreciate all forms (subjects) of practical training and they traditionally expressed a little practice during the study (mentioned by 24 respondents, 19,4%).
- More than one tenth of the students stated, that didactics were generally low, but the theory was too much. Also 14 respondents (1,3%) reported that they were missing the connection between theory and practice.
- Typical is also fact that they are not too specific in statements and their judgments are not often based on any arguments.

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- The relatively high proportion of positive feedback to pedagogical disciplines is the first positive signal for the evaluation of our concept.
  - Students widely recognized that the form of preparation required by teachers at faculty (mostly by professional didactics) is an important way to develop their professional skills as well as understanding the current curricular reform.
  - Students also report the positive feedback to influencing of professional didactics.


# Examples of students' responses

- *„It bothers me that some important subjects do not teach teachers with several years of experience working with children.“*
- *„Many of didactics is taught in such a way that person nothing takes away from.“*
- *“... The Comenius' principle of clarity should be practiced not only in children in primary schools, but also on the faculty's audience.“*
- *“Over a time I have started using various forms and methods of teaching, we can say that these lessons make me happier. Pupils are more active, better cooperate. Also, I use more words of praise and try to find in every student better character.”*



# Combined-mode of study-results

- Also these students express to didactics positively in their statements generally.
- They want to meet more practitioners in lessons, who have experiences, have contact with the school or directly teach.
- Naturally, this applies to mainly didactics, where despite the general satisfaction with the approach of teachers more than 28% of students lacked the practical advice and experience.

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- In the statements of students of this form is shown more life experience and often professional passion. They appreciate erudition of teachers as well as their humanly friendly approach.
  - To the principal subjects, which are in primary school Czech Language and Mathematics, is criticized a short time allotment by students of combined mode of study equally.

# Examples of students' responses

- *“... we were gradually making various researches, when I realized that without knowledge of the theory it would not work. When didactics came in the second half of the study, I realized, how important the theory was.”*
- In the P.E., they appreciate the form of didactics and practical disciplines that are „*very close to practice.*”
- *„Almost the entire cycle of subjects of Czech language was based on memorizing theory and spelling, but how to work with children, how to teach them spelling, how to teach the word categories, etc., I have missed.”*

# Conclusion

- The positive findings should be assigned by a statement that 92% of all respondents feel, at the end of study, the need for further training and they are naturally start to lifelong learning.
- Students of full-time and combined mode of study clearly agree on the need to attend, in the further education, the training focused on solving a problematic situation, such as lying, aggression, bullying, racism or meetings with parents.
- Quite surprising is the fact that a large proportion of students (21%) of the combined mode of study at the end of a difficult five years study plan to attend other courses at faculty.
- Compliance of students of both forms of study exists also in the appreciation didactics in general (26% resp. 28%).

- Many of students also state that with didactics in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade of study, their studies make a sense.
- Students of combined form propose a modification of the curriculum for those who teach in the primary school.
- Interesting idea probably fail on the fact that the number of teaching students every year is significantly reduced.
- Anyway, this idea is worth consideration and can significantly contribute to improving the undergraduate primary teacher training.

# Literature (full paper)

- Havel, J. (2003). Model praktické přípravy studentů učitelství primární školy v pětiletém studiu. In *Pedagogická praxe. Sborník příspěvků z III. celostátní konference* (pp. 47-51). Praha: PdF UK.
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- Švec, V. (ed). (2000). *Monitorování a rozvoj pedagogických dovedností*. Brno: Paido.

Thank you for your  
attention!

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