

The Concurrent and Consecutive Models of Initial Teacher Training: Problematics and Tendencies

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Abstract: The article presents the review of the models of initial teacher training. There are two common models of teacher training in Lithuania: the concurrent (individual subject training + pedagogical training + practical activity) and the consecutive academic studies of a certain subject proceeding with the realization of teacher training. Both models have certain advantages as well as disadvantages. The article explores most common models of teacher training. It discusses the tendencies of the teacher training in the world and its reasons.

Keywords: models of initial teacher training, concurrent teacher training, consecutive teacher training.

Introduction

Relevance. Today, the importance of education is revealed by all the main European legal acts and reports, whereas the problematics of teacher training is becoming the central theme when talking about the quality and availability of education. “Motivated highly qualified teachers is the most important prerequisite for a good young people education” the publication of the Directorate-General for Education and Culture of the European Commission “The Teaching Profession in Europe” maintains (Mokytojo profesija Europoje..., 2002). The necessity to guarantee quality education is one of the main targets of the Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training (“ET 2020”). The programme underlines that it is extremely important to ensure the appropriate training of teachers, continuing professional development of teachers and university teachers and achieve that the teaching profession would become attractive. In the conclusions of the European Council published in the March of 2013 regarding the investment to education and training in order to support the “Europe 2020” strategy, it is noted that it is necessary to review all the aspects of the teaching profession and enhance the profession by, for example, ensuring effective teacher training and the implementation of the consistent professional development system of pedagogues that is provided with appropriate employment, selection, teacher training, and support for an early career resources (Notices from European..., 2013). Science theoreticians maintain that the most important quality of any system is new quality which is created by the elements of a system through corresponding relationships. It is noted that every system creates new quality, if its elements are connected through corresponding relationships and function correctly (Cole, 2010; DuBrin, 2011). How does Lithuanian education system ensure the quality of teacher training, does it combine teacher training, support for young teachers and professional teacher development into one whole by creating a new quality system which the modern global society requires?

Scientific problem. Today, education quality is linked to the altered activity of pedagogues and students, the introduction of novelties, information technologies, distance learning, multicultural education ugdymo, interdisciplinary integration (Subotkevičienė, 2008). The research results of foreign authors show that the quality of the preparation of teachers make a huge positive influence on the knowledge of students, (Darling-Hammond, 2005) and that it is a defining factor that has influence on the learning results of students (Rivkin, Hanushek, 2005). Today, the role of the teacher has changed significantly due to the rapid development of information and communication technologies, and school governance reforms. The following challenges are posed to the modern European teacher: to present the taught subjects with European tinge; positive attitude towards the European dimensions (pluralism, multiculturalism, democracy); to develop a spirit of partnership; the knowledge of at least one European language; the knowledge of other educational systems; information and communication technologies management (Galkutė, 2006). The introduction of the dimensions of European education has become an important factor that has an influence on the process of education in the new economic,

social and cultural environment of European countries, and it is linked to the preparation of young people to live in a democratic, multicultural, multilingual Europe that will be increasingly more and more complex (Stobart, 1996). Thus, new challenges are posed to teacher training as well, targeted longitudinal scientific investigations are necessary in these areas. The role of the teacher has to be increasingly recognized, therefore, teacher training also has to become a priority in the politicians' eyes (Mokytojų rengimas inkliuziniam..., 2012).

Over the years, those who train pedagogues have tried numerous way in order to ensure quality teacher training and, most importantly, when solving the problem of long-term gap between the theory of teaching and the practice at schools (Zeichner, 2010). Over time, a few initial training models of pedagogues were commenced to use: the concurrent and the consecutive (Pagrindiniai duomenys apie..., 2013). Both teacher training models are provided by the Regulation on Teacher Training of Lithuania (Dėl pedagogų rengimo..., 2012). Lithuania's National Education Strategy for the period of 2013–2022 provides that pedagogical studies should combine wide humanitarian and thorough professional and practical pedagogical education in order that young teachers would feel competent enough to commence their independent work (Valstybinė švietimo strategija..., 2012). Which model of the ones provided in the the Regulation on Teacher Training of Lithuania – the consecutive or the concurrent – can essentially ensure the implementation of strategic targets for Lithuanian education? Which model has possibility to function reliably by joining in the whole of education system and creating conditions for better quality of teaching and learning?

The object of the research is the models of the consecutive and the concurrent teacher training.

The goal of the research is to analyze the tendencies of teacher training models in Lithuania and the world.

Methodology

The methods of the research: having performed the analysis of Lithuanian and foreign scientific literature, to analyze the models of the consecutive and the concurrent teacher training, their concept and teacher training tendencies, and problematics in Lithuania and the world have been discussed.

Results and discussion

The problematics of the consecutive and the concurrent teacher training. The advantages of the consecutive and the concurrent teacher training systems have been discussed by the global academic community for a long time, however, lately, a clear tendency has been noticed to extend the duration of the period of teacher training programs and raise the standards of teacher training in Europe (Ladd, 2007).

The most often emphasized advantage of the consecutive teacher training is that teachers are prepared in a shorter period of time, teacher training is facilitated, and the teacher shortage problem is solved faster (Consuegra, Engels, 2014). The economic question of teacher training is also discussed: one year (full-time studies) or one and a half years (part-time studies) pedagogical studies are cheaper. The consecutive model would also solve a teacher shortage faster which is revealed by the research on the age of teacher working in Europe: on average, one fifth of the teachers will reach retirement age in the next ten years (Mokytojo profesija Europoje..., 2002). In insights into Lithuanian education development, it is “that if conditions do not change, after 10-15 years, there even might be a teacher shortage: those around 1300-1500 new teachers who come in a year might be insufficient to substitute those in the teaching profession who leave due to reaching their retirement age.” The number of vouchers allocated by the state decreases every year. If preparation to become a teacher lasts five years and a student gains only one speciality, there will be an even greater shortage of teachers (Jackevičius, 2014). The decrease of teachers' workload also makes look at pedagogical studies in a different way. Lithuania's National Education Strategy for the period of 2013–2022 points out towards the encouragement to gain two - three pedagogical specialities in order that teachers would be able to reorientate easier and would be more mobile in the face of the decrease of workload (Valstybinė švietimo strategija..., 2012). However, studies of a few pedagogical specialities are possible only when learning in accordance with the concurrent model. Only the concurrent teacher training can also ensure

other teacher needs that are essential today: such as the knowledge of cultural diversity, international cooperation, and the understanding of international context, the knowledge of global ethics, and meet the teachers' need for acquiring interpersonal skills in order that they would be able to work with ethnic and linguistic minorities and children with special needs, and would be able to solve conflicts that arise in the classroom. One year consecutive studies to acquire these competencies are not enough, the question of the acquisition of key competencies listed in The Teacher Professional Competence List (Dėl mokytojo profesijos..., 2007) in such a short period of time is debatable as well.

The following advantages of the concurrent model of teacher training are distinguished in the scientific literature: professional interests are refined, the student discovers problems that are specific to teaching and learning, a better integration of academic and professional studies. From the very first year of studies, students take field placements at schools which enable to link theory and practice (Concurrent Education Program, 2014). A pedagogical field placement is one of the essential factors determining pedagogic professional self-determination of pedagogy students of technologies (Balčiūnaitė, 2006; Barkauskaitė, Pečiuliauskienė, 2007). The significance of a pedagogical field placement and the lengthening of its duration are also provided by the EU documents, recommendations are included to explore effective field placement models (e.g., more integrated than the consecutive ones, the development of key competencies using the spiral principle) and base them theoretically (Mokytojų rengimas inkluziniam..., 2012). During their pedagogical field placement at school students assess their subject-related competencies, they check themselves in their work with pupils and after such experience often discover their calling, confirm their choice or even change their negative attitude not to work as a teacher. It is extremely important that students get acquainted with the work of the teacher gradually: at the beginning of studies, they observe, later, they work under the supervision of a mentor, and during the last year of studies, they lead lessons independently. The continuation of their field placement during the period of time allows for skills and values to form, there is sufficient time for reflection. Losing touch with his field placement does not provide an opportunity for a future teacher to mature as a personality. Students do not have an opportunity to acquire an in-depth knowledge of their professional environment and the relationship of their personality to it (Adamonienė, 2003). Without the knowledge of the laws or principles of the pedagogical process, psychological patterns, the pedagogue will work for some time intuitively: using trial and error method, a possibility arises for improper practical skills to form. Non-integrated stimuli get embedded in the professional conscience and do not allow the pedagogue himself to perceive the essence of his professional pedagogic activity as a whole by confronting him all the time (Kregždė, 1998). The consecutive model for teacher training allows to hastily acquire knowledge which in the modern learning paradigm does not create a precondition to become a real pedagogue. In the modern learning paradigm, the role of the teacher and the university teacher is different, it is "internationalization of values and the continuous improvement of its interaction with the educator" (Aramavičiūtė, 1998), it is cooperation, reflection, experience which is not acquired hastily.

An extremely important advantage of the concurrent study programmes of teacher training is the integrity of discipline and educology studies, the predominant interdisciplinary and cooperation view towards teaching and learning (Concurrent Teacher Education..., 2014,a,b). The integral learning of a discipline or the learning of a few disciplines at the same time with an iterative field placement and student's reflection creates conditions for the knowledge analysis and synthesis, ensures an opportunity to acquire proper skills of the work with pupils and allows a young teacher to avoid experimenting when already working at school, and the formation of erroneous skills. If the preparation of the pedagogue lasts for a year in isolation from his profession and pedagogical process, the student acquires only certain knowledge of pedagogy and psychology (abstractions). Scientists doubt whether students will be able to understand this knowledge as a system (Adamonienė, 2003).

Models of initial teacher training in Lithuania. Two models of initial teacher training are common in Lithuania: concurrent and consecutive. The concurrent model is the main one, when students get an individual subject training as well as pedagogical subjects and a certain amount of practical activity credits at school. The scope of the Bachelor's degree curriculum is 240 ECTS credits (it includes pedagogical studies 60 ECTS module: 30 credits of pedagogy, didactics and psychology, and 30

credits of teacher field placement). Full-time studies take 4 years whereas part-time studies – 5 years. Qualification acquired: a bachelor's degree in certain subject and teacher's professional qualification.

The consecutive model of teacher training is relevant for those graduates that have a subject degree, but have no teacher qualification. The qualification is acquired in one year (60 ECTS), after studying 30 credits of pedagogy, subject didactics, psychology and 30 credits of teacher training practice. Qualification acquired: teacher's professional qualification (Dēl pedagogu rengimo..., 2012).

The influence of teacher training models on the quality of pedagogical studies in the global context. In Ireland, teachers are trained in accordance with both the concurrent and consecutive models. Primary school teachers study their speciality in accordance with the concurrent model (4 years of studies, 240 ECTS), whereas future secondary school teachers acquire the right to work at school after one year of pedagogical studies in accordance with the consecutive model (60 ECTS). In 2012, in Ireland, the research was finished that had continued five years and examined five consecutive teacher training programs in Ireland. All the programs were aimed at preparing pedagogues that are able to teach 12-18-year-old pupils. When examining the programs, very many similarities were discovered in them: studies in pedagogy; the didactics of a taught subject, teaching practice and the like. In all the programs, there was a not shorter than 100 hours compulsory pedagogical field placement. 3720 graduates of consecutive programs of pedagogical studies took part in the research. Most of the respondents (63%) pointed out that the structure of their program should be restructured, because they were dissatisfied with their studies. The research revealed that non-integrated studies in pedagogy (the consecutive teacher training model) cause problems to students, especially to those who are not accustomed to such disciplines as psychology, sociology, philosophy and in the course of which, e.g., students have to write an essay as a report or the like (it is quite difficult for those who have completed studies in science). Most of the graduates who took part in the research maintained that they had encountered problems when they had to complete pedagogical field placement at school, because they had not been to schools since they had finished them and felt psychological discomfort and anxiety that they would have to return there. Most of them also pointed out that they had felt great stress at the beginning of their field placement, it was noticed that too much had been expected from young teachers. Most of the graduates pointed out that while completing their field placement at school and, having started to work pedagogical work, they had not felt properly prepared for it yet, because they had lacked classroom management skills, and problem solving skills. According to the graduates, it is impossible to prepare a real specialist during such a short time when there is a need to prepare the pedagogue or get retrained (Clarke, Lodge, 2012).

In almost all European countries, future teachers of pre-primary education and primary education levels are trained in accordance with the concurrent model. The only exceptions are France and Portugal: since 2011, only the consecutive model is used in these countries. In Bulgaria, both models are possible, however, most of future teachers study in accordance with the concurrent model. In Estonia, future teachers of primary education level (ISCED 1) can choose any of the models, however, most of future teachers study in accordance with the concurrent model. In Ireland, 1st-6th class teachers are trained in accordance with the concurrent model, whereas teachers of senior classes are prepared in accordance with the consecutive model, however, at the present time, there is already a discussion at all the levels in the country on the low preparation standard of teachers of senior classes to work with pupils, and it is thought that the teacher training from the first year of Bachelor's degree studies achieves better results. In Poland and Slovenia, future teachers of pre-primary education and primary education levels (ISCED 0-1) are trained only in accordance with the concurrent model. In the United Kingdom (England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland), it is possible to study both in accordance with the concurrent and consecutive models (Pagrindiniai duomenys apie..., 2013).

The situation in the area of basic education is much more diverse. The concurrent model, as the only option to study, is used in Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Slovakia, Iceland and Turkey. In eight countries (Estonia, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Luxemburg, Hungary and Portugal), the only possible model for the training of future pedagogues is the consecutive one. However, in the majority of the countries both models are applied (Pagrindiniai duomenys apie..., 2013).

When talking about the teacher training of secondary education level, in the majority of the countries, either only the consecutive model or both of the study models are offered. Thus, the majority of future European secondary school teachers study in accordance with the program of the consecutive model (Pagrindiniai duomenys apie..., 2013).

In Germany, Slovakia, Iceland and Turkey, the concurrent model is the only possible option when training future teachers of all the levels of education, whereas in France and Portugal only the consecutive model is applied. Conversely, in Bulgaria, Ireland, Poland and the United Kingdom, future pedagogues of all the levels – from the pre-school to the secondary education (ISCED 1–3) – can choose one or another model (Pagrindiniai duomenys apie..., 2013).

In Europe, Germany has got the longest, strictest and the least flexible teacher training programs. Basic teacher training takes about 5 years for primary school teachers and takes at least 6 years for secondary school teachers (Ladd, 2007). The first teaching phase takes 3-4 years for primary school teachers at universities and 5-6 years for secondary school teachers. Studies cover at least two subjects or the areas of two subjects, the learning of educology theory, psychology, sociology, and philosophy. During studies, students have to complete 3 months field placement at school. After successful graduation students can move towards the second phase of the preparation to become teachers which takes 1.5-2 years. At this stage, students work at schools at reduced salary and take part in various educational trainings all over the country. Fast acceptions to the second stage are not guaranteed, because it depends on the actual availability of jobs in the appropriate educational institutions. Having completed this stage, candidates take another State examination which consists of another written dissertation, oral examination and the assessment of classroom teaching. Only when the profession has been acquired the teacher is employed to work at school for a 2 years probationary period. Due to the fact that teaching is oriented according to separate levels (primary, basic, secondary) and types of school (secondary, vocational), it is not possible to move teachers from one level to another easily (Ladd, 2007; Teacher education in..., 2011). It has to be mentioned that a long and thorough teacher training in Germany is linked to big salaries of teachers, because such investments can be made only by the person who is really motivated to become a teacher (Ladd, 2007).

In Finland, which is one of the leading countries according to the results of PISA research, teacher training takes 5 years (3 years + 2 years), after these studies Master's degree is earned which is a necessary condition to become a secondary school teacher, whereas pre-school education pedagogues and primary school teachers only need to earn a Bachelor's degree. Primary school teachers go into educology, whereas future teachers of senior classes concentrate their attention on the subject-based studies, e.g., mathematics together with the didactics of the subject which encompass specific pedagogical knowledge of the studied subject. In Finland, there are no alternative ways to obtain a teacher's diploma: only a university diploma grants permission to teach. Since 1971, in this country, all the people who want to work as teachers need to have completed a university (Baskan, Yıldız, 2013). The goal of teacher training in the country is to seek equilibrium between personal and professional competencies of teachers. Particular attention is focused on the development of pedagogical thinking skills which would allow teachers to manage teaching process on the basis of the knowledge of modern education and practice. Study programs are mostly multidisciplinary which consist of at least 2 subjects (The Secret to..., 2010).

In Denmark, teacher training takes place by studying chosen studies of pedagogical trend. Studies of a chosen subject and a field placement make 180 credits. After such studies, there is an opportunity to choose Master's degree studies and choose a specialization (Undervisning og opbygning, 2014).

At Norwegian universities, a three or four years teacher training has been chosen. E.g., Oslo university offers 180 credits teacher training studies (Bachelor's degree studies and a one year field placement) and 240 credits teacher training studies (Bachelor's and Master's degrees studies). Norway University of Nordland is teacher training-oriented. It offers Bachelor's degree studies to train the teachers of 5-10 classes and Master's degree studies in a chosen pedagogical or subject area. Studies of a general nature are offered during the first two semesters, from the third semester, studies of a chosen specialization commence. There is an possibility to complete Bachelor's degree studies and acquire competencies that a teacher needs in order to teach various subjects (mathematics, languages,

geography etc.). It is possible to choose one dominant specialization and other peripheral specializations: this possibility is especially attractive for students. Having graduated from a university, the student can teach different subjects in 5-10 classes. After Bachelor's degree studies, there are 2 years Master's degree studies with an in-depth focus on a specialization. In order to teach chosen subjects in senior classes, additional 60 credits for every subject have to be accumulated (subject and pedagogical field placement studies). 240 credits of pedagogical studies are also offered: so called professional studies (a chosen pedagogical trend plus peripheral specialities and a field placement) (Ladd, 2007).

In France, those who desire to become a teacher have to tackle not only studies, but also big contests. In 1990, in France, teacher training institutes were founded in which pedagogues were prepared within two years (the second year is for an independent field placement). In 2005, those institutes were started to join to universities, whereas in 2008, pedagogical studies were started to integrate into Master's degree studies. In 2013, Higher teacher training schools were founded that belong to universities and the purpose of which is teacher training (Concours de recrutement..., 2014).

In Canada, the concurrent teacher training program takes 5 years and a double diploma is obtained, whereas the consecutive one takes 1 year. From 2015, the consecutive teacher training program will take 2 years (Concurrent Education Program..., 2014). In the United States of America, teachers are trained in accordance with the concurrent model. Students study integrated Bachelor's degree study programs for four years in which they receive both subject and professional training. It provides an opportunity to link theory and practice (Teacher Education Program., 2014). In Belgium and Austria, it takes 3 years to train lower secondary level teachers, in Romania, it takes 3–4 years, depending on the subject that is taught at school (*Indicators on Initial...*, 2009; Staiculescu, Paduraru, 2013).

The duration of teacher training in Australia, Canada, England, and Korea is 4 years. In many other countries, the duration of teacher training differs, depending on the fact whether the goal is to become a primary school teacher or secondary school teacher. On the average, the duration of teacher training is 3.9 years for primary school teacher training, 4.4 years for lower secondary school teachers, and 4.9 years for upper secondary school teachers (Ladd, 2007).

No matter what country they would work, teachers are encouraged to work or study in other European countries for the sake of professional development. Mobility is the most important component of initial and continuous teacher training programs (Komisijos komunikatas Tarybai..., 2007). When given this opportunity, students can get acquainted with different education systems and cultures, analyze them and compare, develop their national identity, prepare for the development of the tolerance for pupils and prepare them for the challenges of globalization. Only by ensuring the international mobility of future and present pedagogues, we can lay the foundation for the the development of the further improvement of the education system and strengthen the European dimension.

Conclusions

1. In Europe, pedagogues are trained in accordance with both the consecutive and concurrent model, however, there is a noticeable trend to extend pedagogical studies and raise the standards of teacher training.
2. The concurrent teacher training model ensures the opportunity of the integration of the pedagogical field placement into studies when pedagogical experience, alternately with theory, while the student is reflecting, becomes pedagogical competencies, the student's personality matures.
3. Students who study pedagogical studies in accordance with the consecutive model have fewer opportunities to take part in mobility programs, develop cultural competency, prepare to work in the multicultural, multilingual and increasingly more and more complex Europe and learn to develop national self-awareness of pupils and respect for other cultures.
4. The concurrent teacher training model ensures the conditions of the implementation of the modern learning paradigm when the role of the teacher and university teacher is changing, when learning is not only the transfer of knowledge, but cooperation, reflection, and experience which is not obtained hastily.

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