Expected Outcomes of Teacher Internship, or a Pedagogical University Graduate Trapped in Standards

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Contemporary educational standards of higher education for teacher training still do not meet the requirements of the professional standard for school teaching, which complicates the future work for pedagogical universities' graduates. Undergraduate teaching internship can become an effective means to strengthen the practical orientation of training and socio-psychological adaptation to the school environment for future professionals. The article discusses the following topics: setting the goals for pedagogical internship programs; proving these programs effectiveness in forming the graduates’ preparedness to meet the professional standard requirements for school teaching; the impact of the internship programs on intention towards working in education.

Keywords: teacher education, internship, professional standard, employment.


Research area: psychology.

Since the publication of the Concept of Pedagogical Education Support and the launch of the Comprehensive Project for the Pedagogical Education Modernization teacher internship has become akin to the pedagogical fashion trend. There have been attempts to introduce both undergraduate and postgraduate internship programs (Gevorkian et al., 2013; Zabrodin, 2011; Miniurova, Leonenko, 2015). At the same time foreign analogues are being thoroughly examined (Kentucky Teacher Internship…; Scheffer, 2012; Gracheva, Luchkina, 2014; Luchkina, Gracheva, 2010; Semenova, 2009; Sidorkin, 2013).

Meant to overcome the so-called negative profession selection (Sobkin, Tkachenko, 2007), to increase the consolidation of graduates of educational organizations who specialise in pedagogical areas, and also to strengthen the practical focus of the basic professional educational programs of the enlarged group of specialties “Education and Pedagogical Sciences” (Kasprzhak, 2013; Sobolev, 2015), the Russian teacher internship in most present models has the following essential characteristics:

− internship is a practically oriented module of the basic professional educational
program (additional professional educational program), implemented in network interaction with the municipal educational organizations;

- the program target component is based on professional standards;
- the internship program content is represented by subject-methodological and research training under the supervision of experienced teachers working in various educational organizations and guided by the university graduate chair.

Meanwhile the essential characteristics of the foreign analogues of pedagogical internship (the US internship, two-phase training in France and das Referendariat in Germany) are not yet legally available for implementation in Russian conditions. It these systems an intern is treated as a beginning teacher with less teaching hours, but at the same time he/she is paid a sum commensurate with regular teachers. Then the intern should pass a qualification exam. In addition, the management of the program, as a rule, is carried out by the system of general, rather than higher education (municipalities, federal lands, etc.).

Adoption of the Professional Standard “Pedagogue” has set the professional and pedagogical community the task of harmonizing competences as planned results of Federal State Educational Standard of Higher Education with employment functions and working activities of the professional standard. The discrepancy between the standards raises a lot of controversy about the quality of the bachelors of pedagogy training. In the situation of high rotation of young teachers, when half of them quit in a year, and in 3 years no more than 35 % continue teaching, this issue becomes even more acute. I shall remark that the indicators of rotation of young teachers in Russia are at the European level (Teachers matter…, 2015).

We also conducted a survey of employers on the quality of bachelors’ training. 118 school head masters answered the question “What do you think the graduates of pedagogical specialties lack?” in the following way (there could be several answers from one person):

- readiness for practical activities – 66 %;
- awareness of real needs, understanding of current tasks and ways to address them, social and educational policy in general – 53 %;
- independence, initiative – 47 %;
- basic theoretical professional knowledge – 29 %.

There is a need to determine specific indicators of graduates’ practical readiness to professional work and, accordingly, to intensify the applied component of bachelor’s programs. (Here, in our opinion, the most important elements are long-term training of undergraduates in educational organizations and their diploma work at the request of employers. And these are the key components in the real teacher internship at the Krasnoyarsk State Pedagogical University named after V.P. Astafyev).

The teacher internship has been realized in the University since 2013 as an innovative project to increase the preparedness of the graduates-bachelors for professional work. By now the project has reached the stage of evaluating the effectiveness of the practiced university model of the teacher internship.

The implementation of the teacher internship project encountered normative limitations and content-meaningful problems of interaction between the internship subjects, as the monitoring showed in 2014-2016. The monitoring involved using questionnaires and focus groups of students, interviewing teachers and school head masters. The normative restrictions were related to the status of the intern and the impossibility of independent practice in pedagogical activity; content-meaningful problems were related to the understanding of the pedagogical internship subjects (teachers, mentors in educational
organizations, interns) of conceptual and substantive differences of the teacher internship from traditional on-the-job training, the need for its introduction as an obligatory part in the pedagogical bachelor’s programs. This hampered the project development. An analysis of monitoring data proved that the management of the teacher internship project should lead from the goals to the planned results. According to the definition of OECD, this can be called a management cycle, within which the target values in the field of efficiency and effectiveness are defined (OECD. Modernizing Government..., 2005).

The requirement of efficiency is aimed at the search for the optimal organizational model to achieve the planned results. Organizational model of pedagogical internship in the KSPU named after V.P. Astafyev is shown in the Table 1.

At this point the project and this article face three research objectives:
− what should the invariant internship programs on different profiles include, or, what should the planned internship results be, under the conditions of two inconsistent standards (Federal State Educational Standard of Higher Education and the professional standard)?
− whether the pedagogical internship can meet the requirements of the professional standard “Pedagogue” (evaluating the graduates’ preparedness to work) and whether the graduates plan to find a job according to their specialty, i.e. whether the educational internship is effective?
− what are the mechanisms for updating the curriculum of the teacher internship as regards the planned results?

The problem of the planned results (invariant) of the teacher internship was solved via compiling by the employers (experts) of a list of necessary and sufficient working activities according to the professional standard that ensured the minimum success and “survival” of the young teacher at school. These activities include performing daily teaching duties, organization of events in non-school time and interaction with children, parents, colleagues and administration. In 2015 we compared the lists of such working activities from three independent groups of experts (a total of 42 employers: head masters, deputy head masters, representatives of the territorial departments of education) and obtained an invariant list of planned results of the teacher internship – key working activities (see Table 2). To confirm that these very working activities are objectively necessary for the young teacher, we also took into account the research data of TALIS (2013) and the All-Russian study “Successful adaptation and professional development of young teachers in the Russian Federation” (2015) (Mitrofanov, Loginova, 2015; Lenskaia, Pinskaia, 2015).

The effectiveness of the teacher internship program can be estimated by two criteria:
− intentions and indicators of the graduates to find the work according to their specialty,
− readiness to perform working activities in compliance with the professional standard.

Since the launch of the teacher internship project in 2013, the situation with the intentions to be employed in education and real indicators of employment has changed. For instance, in 2014 among the third-year students only 36 % were going to work within their specialty, while in 2016 56 % of these graduates were going to work within their specialty, with fifth-year students with a double specialization outperforming the fourth-year students with a single specialization by 18 %.

In general, since the start of the teacher internship, there has been a positive dynamic of employment within the specialty: according to the Centre for Employment and Career of Graduates of KSPU named after V.P. Astafyev,
Table 1. Organizational and activity chart of the pedagogical internship model in KSPU named after V.P. Astafyev

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undergraduates</th>
<th>6 (8) term</th>
<th>7 (9) term</th>
<th>8 (10) term</th>
<th>Portfolio</th>
<th>Results are taken into account during the state exam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choice of the educational organization, the coordination of the individual plan of internship, the conclusion of a contract on employer-sponsored education*</td>
<td>Performing the teacher/tutor duties 2-3 days a week under the guidance of a teacher trainer</td>
<td>Performing the teacher/tutor duties 6 days a week under the guidance of a teacher trainer</td>
<td>Probationary period with a supervisor (when the person is recruited*)</td>
<td>Participation in the federal Internet examination of bachelors/City qualification examination for readiness to perform key working activities (launch in 2016)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation * in the regional contest “A Teacher Who is Waited for”, other professional competitions, etc.</td>
<td>Practical seminar in an educational organization on topical issues of methodological training, classroom discipline, documentation management, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving an assignment for graduation thesis</td>
<td>Pre-project research (coursework), coordination of the graduation thesis project</td>
<td>Graduation thesis project realization</td>
<td>Defence of the project – the practical task of the graduation thesis in front of the teaching staff of the educational organization (EO)</td>
<td>Graduation thesis defence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science and methodical seminar on the basis of the graduate chair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling in the Centre for Support of Employment and Career of the University, meetings with employers, fulfilment of the terms of the contract on employer-sponsored education, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(*) – if possible.
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35 % of graduates found the work in education in 2013, 42 % – in 2014, 55 % – in 2015, 57 % – as of September 2016. Official indicators of employment according to the Pension Fund of the Russian Federation (the data on the site http://graduate.edu.ru) – 80 % in 2013 and 2014, with 70 % employment in general for the University in 2014 (except for masters); there was also an increase in the proportion of graduates remaining in the region (from 80 % in 2013 to 91 % in 2014).

The issue of assessing effectiveness in forming preparedness to perform working actions in accordance with the requirements of the professional standard is complicated, because before the basic professional educational programs have not focused on this task. We used the method of expert assessment in the process of observing bachelors at the state exam (half of the experts were employers, another half – university lecturers, so the analysis renders a generalized estimation). The subject of evaluation was the quality of the solution of cases which constituted the interdisciplinary exam procedure.

Expert observation and evaluation took place in 4 subgroups of 12 people each, two of which included undergraduates who had teacher internships and the other two – undergraduates who had on-the-job training. The basic professional educational programs (hereinafter referred to as BPEP) were distinguished not only by the length of the bachelors’ work in educational organizations (interns had the opportunity to visit their educational organization twice a week even before and after the usual for all programs period of on-the-job-training (November-February)). So the interns attended the organizational institutions in September-October and further on – in March-April. Programs with an internship in their structure also included supporting elective courses that were conducted during the “dispersed” internship; the graduation theses were agreed with the school educators, while their

Table 2. Planned internship results as agreed with employers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Generalized employment function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical activity on design and implementation of the educational process in educational organizations (pre-school, primary general, basic general, secondary general education)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Employment function. General pedagogical function. Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.1</td>
<td>Working action. Planning and conducting lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.2</td>
<td>Working action. Forming universal educational actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Employment function. Upraising activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.1</td>
<td>Working action. Realization of educational opportunities in various kinds of children activity (education, game, work, sport, arts, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Employment function. Developing activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.1</td>
<td>Working action. Development (together with other specialists) and implementation together with parents (legal representatives) of programs for the children individual development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Generalized employment function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical activity on design and implementation of basic general education programs (varied for each basic professional educational program)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Employment function. Pedagogical activity for the implementation of primary general education/basic general education programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.1</td>
<td>Working action. ... (choice of basic professional educational program in accordance with employers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other characteristics</td>
<td>Compliance with legal, moral and ethical norms, professional ethics requirements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
university lecturers had reflexive meetings with interns to solve both their methodological and psychological-pedagogical problems, though the frequency of these meetings varied individually.

Having analyzed the cases to be solved at the interdisciplinary exam by graduates of different baccalaureate programs, we singled out typical cases (found in tasks for all specializations) and determined general criteria for assessing their solutions by the graduates. These criteria are correspondent to the requirements of the professional standard for pedagogues (see the table below), thus, the results of the expert assessment represent an analysis of the frequency of the graduates’ ability to perform work in solving a particular case.

What is interesting is not only an objectively more successful solution of professional problems by intern graduates, but also the quality of the cases’ solution; graduates who have not passed an internship rarely perceived the problem as a real situation to deal with, therefore, apparently, their answers were of a formal nature, for example: “We must convince/motivate/organize children to listen”.

Consequently, the effectiveness of the teacher internship is confirmed by the comparatively more successful solution of cases evaluating students’ willingness to perform working activities, the dynamics of their employment intentions. This effectiveness is proved by the growth in employment, though this correlation is indirect, as there could be other factors of increasing the employment within one’s specialty in the last years, for example, the crisis in the service sector – banks, tourism business, where graduates of pedagogical universities are highly in demand.

The growth of teacher vacancies in the educational organizations of the region (at the time of writing the article there were more than 700 vacancies) and changes in the graduates’ sought-after competencies are related to the increase in the number of students (children) with health limitations, which is likely to lead to the update of internship programs both in terms of organizational and legal aspects and as regards the planned results and the content of training.

Teacher internship, in fact, becomes a network program for the preparation of baccalaureate graduates who studied to be pedagogues to meet the requirements of the professional standard and to be employed as teachers in the regional educational organizations. At the same time, as regards program financing, there should be some changes on the part of the main stakeholders:

- municipal administration should be interested in reducing vacancies and attracting young teachers through scholarships, housing guarantees, covering the expenses of travel to the internship place, payment of training (including additional education programs) and other social guarantees within the framework of contracts for employer-sponsored education.

Let us comment that the experience of the TEACH FOR AMERICA project on attracting teachers on a contest basis and alternative training of teachers for socially complex school bodies could serve as an example for municipal administration to seek for and employ the university graduates while they study through additional scholarships, payment for their education, but the most important is professional tuition on the spot, and, possibly, the payment for getting additional qualifications (Teach for America; Sidorkin, 2013):

- school head masters should try to take interns before their graduation on positions that do not require higher education to be completed, to offer guaranteed employment and other social guarantees within the framework of contracts for employer-sponsored education;

- interns should invest in obtaining additional qualifications, if this is demanded by
the organization that concluded the contract on employer-sponsored education;

– the university should be interested in such an indicator of effectiveness as employment, using the opportunities of the curriculum (and federal subsidies); in addition, it should raise extra-budgetary funds for additional payment to internship programs’ supervisors and the research advisors for interns’ graduate theses. Also the universities should invest in the development of training courses for teacher trainers at schools.

Due to the predicted in 3-5 years avalanche-like growth in the vacancies of secondary school teachers in the region the government shall solve the task to make employment of undergraduates during their internship period possible. This experience was described by M.Iu. Zabrodin (Zabrodin, 2011), when graduates of Moscow State Pedagogical University and Moscow State Psychological and Pedagogical University were sent to educational organizations in Moscow with a teaching load varying from half-time to full-time (Miniurova, Leoneneko, 2015). As our experience shows, when there are openings, especially in rural areas, the school administration employs undergraduates to perform the duties of a teacher as a counsellor, laboratory assistant, etc., in some cases, as teachers. In this case school administration takes an advantage of paragraph 9 of the Unified Qualification Directory of Managers, Specialists and Employees Positions, section “Qualification characteristics of education positions” (with amendments and additions): “Persons who do not have special
training or work experience as specified in the section ‘Qualification Requirements’ but have sufficient practical experience and proficiency, perform their duties competently and in full, on the recommendation of the certification committee, as an exception, can be appointed to the relevant positions in the same way as those having special training and work experience” (Edinyi kvalifikatsionnyi spravochnik...).

Meanwhile, according to Art. 46 of the Federal Law “On Education in the Russian Federation” “The right to work as an educator is granted to persons who have secondary vocational or higher education and who meet the qualification requirements specified in the qualification handbooks and (or) professional standards” (Federal’nyi zakon ot 29.12.2012...). In this regard, it is impossible to ensure an independent professional activity of an intern with full responsibility for the life and health of children and for the educational results. The status of “Assistant/Teacher Assistant” which is being discussed by public and professionals could be a way out of the present situation, but it is not yet supported by the normative introduction of this position in the qualification directory, whereas qualification requirements for the level of education required to work on this position also mandate having not lower than the average professional level, as can be seen in available publications (Zabrodin, 2015: 69).

As for the content dimension, it is necessary, ahead of the events, to fill teacher internship programs with master classes; onsite trainings on the development of adaptive educational plans, individual educational trajectories, use of educational online platforms and resources of the social and cultural facilities of a city or a village for upbringing children with health limitations (especially for children with intellectual disorders, autism spectrum disorders), for gifted schoolchildren, for children from socially vulnerable families.

All of these should help the young professional, though being stuck between different standards on the required results, to form an individual style of professional activity and come into profession.

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Ob utverzhdenii professional'nogo standarta “Pedagogue (pedagogicheskaia deiatel'nost’ v sfere doshkol’nogo, nachal’nogo obschego, osnovnogo obschego, srednego obschego obrazovaniia) (vospitatel’, uchitel’)” (utv. prikazom Ministerstva truda i sotsial’noi zashchity Rossiiskoi Federatsii ot 18 oktiabria 2013 g. No 544 n [“On the approval of the professional standard “Pedagogue” (pedagogical activity in the field of preschool, primary general, basic general, secondary general education) (nursery school teacher, teacher) (approved by the order of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Russian Federation of October 18, 2013 No 544n)], available at: http://www.rg.ru/2013/12/18/pedagog-dok.html


Отсутствует текст в изображении страницы.
татов для программ педагогической интернатуры и доказательству результативности ее в отношении формирования готовности у выпускников выполнять требования профессионального стандарта «Педагог», а также влияния на намерения трудоустройства по направлению подготовки посвящена настоящая статья.

Ключевые слова: педагогическое образование, интернатура, профессиональный стандарт, трудоустройство.

Научная специальность: 19.00.00 – психологические науки.