

## **THE DEVELOPMENT OF PEDAGOGICAL INTERNSHIP: MENTOR AND STUDENT ACTIVITY AND EXPERIENCE ASPECTS**

<sup>1</sup>Vincentas LAMANAUSKAS, <sup>2</sup>Rita MAKARSKAITĖ-PETKEVIČIENĖ,

<sup>1</sup>Vilhelmina LUKAVIČIENĖ

<sup>1</sup>*University of Šiauliai, LITHUANIA*

<sup>2</sup>*Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, LITHUANIA*

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**Abstract.** It is without doubt, that student pedagogical internship intention is to help future teachers to develop cross-cultural, general, professional and special competencies, acquiring necessary skills for practical work. On the other hand, this is verification of the acquired competencies in education practice. During the internship pedagogical work practical abilities are being improved. The internship itself is an inseparable part of pedagogical studies. It is necessary to much more strengthen pedagogical internship: its organisation, student and mentor collaboration, education activity reflection, feedback analysis and its use in the study process improvement and other. By this research it has been sought to ascertain what support for students during the pedagogical internship supplies mentor, to analyse the performed functions of the practitioners and their experience, and to present mentor characteristics referring to students' opinions and evaluations. 77 bachelor study final year students from two Lithuanian universities participated in the qualitative research. The research results show that mentor help and participation in the internship process are very important, regardless of their performed function complexity. Mentor

competencies have a crucial importance in the pedagogical internship results. It is purposeful to constantly research internship participant opinions on these actual pedagogical study questions.

*Keywords:* qualitative research, pedagogical internship, study improvement, university students

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## **Introduction**

Preparing pedagogues pedagogical internship becomes a very important factor and condition, during which students purposefully educate the necessary competencies for a pedagogue and personal qualities necessary for this activity. In Teacher training regulation, 2012, it has been indicated, that pedagogical internship has to be based on higher school and internship school collaboration. For it encourages favourable conditions for internship process, creates guaranteeing success practical activity environment. In this document it is emphasized, that future pedagogue acquires necessary professional competencies and experience for practical pedagogical work under support of mentor and internship leader. The importance of mentor and mentorship, productive student and mentor collaboration are especially highlighted recently. Autukevičienė (2012), having researched mentor professional competencies and their expression guiding for student internship in pre-school education, makes a conclusion, that a very important pedagogue preparation factor is pedagogical internship, during which theoretical knowledge is related with pedagogical activity context. Also, actual becomes activity of a mentor, taking care of a student during pedagogical internship. Stankevičienė & Monkevičienė (2007), draw attention to the fact, that mentor is necessary for a student as a model, from whom he can get practical experience. Skiecevičius & Kanišauskaitė (2009), emphasize mentor's, as the main student's professional leader's role and functions. In the mentorship area they highlight the relation between mentor and practitioner and their common attained goal – professional and person-

al improvement, learning by doing and reflection of both process participants. Montvilaitė & Monkevičienė (2007), characterising mentorship mission, mark mentorship importance both for the student and for the education institution culture, and for the whole pedagogue preparation system, also describe in foreign states developed mentorship process understanding. Having performed efficient mentorship concept analysis, Paulikienė (2014) makes a conclusion, that efficient mentorship is complex, because it comprises individual demand and teaching programme goal integration, accentuates relation, mentor pedagogical knowledge, personal quality, self-motivation and professional ability importance. Therefore, in order to achieve efficient mentorship, important becomes contribution both of the organisation in which professional internship is being performed and of a higher school, creating favourable environment not only for the student but also for the mentor teaching and learning.

During the internship mentor collaborating with the student performs various activities and roles. In scientific literature one can find various activity functions and roles assigned to mentors. It is highlighted, that the spectrum of requirements for them should be rather wide and it is difficult to define it, because managing the learner it is necessary to take into consideration his needs, experience and personal peculiarities. The authors (Mačianskienė et al., 2004) distinguish and describe six typical mentoring roles: leader, guide, expert, counsellor, supporter, role modeller, encourager. Monkevičienė et al. (2007) discern four main mentor roles: instructor, consultant, carer and moderator. The competencies characterising an ideal mentor are specified and characterised: social, personal, professional. In different literature from four to ten mentor roles are defined. Mentor can perform one or several functions. Mentor and student-practitioner carried out functions are closely related to mutual interaction is taking place.

International research context also shows, that mentorship is a powerful instrument improving students' practical abilities (Manathunga, 2007). For a long time already researchers seek to better understand what mentors actual-

ly do in practice (Hawkey, 1998), and also find ways how mentors can help students to acquire as many as possible practical educational skills. As the research show, quite often pedagogical skills happen to be insufficient (Appleton, 2008; Monsour, 2003). On the other side, mentor qualification problem remains actual. One of the most essential things is the effective selection and preparation of mentors (Hobson et al., 2009; Löffström & Eisenschmidt, 2009).

So, the main research *aim* is to analyse mentor's given support during the internship, to discuss mentor characteristics, to present student's experience analysis during pedagogical internship, to ascertain mentor's contribution to student's pedagogical education acquisition. On the basis of empiric research, it is possible to effectively improve university pedagogical internship model.

## **Methodology**

### *Research features*

The research was carried out in the months January to February, 2016 i.e. at the beginning of the last 8th study semester. The research is based on the attitude, that students' opinion and evaluation research are important, because they allow ascertaining actual problems or specifying the already known ones. Referring to the respondent suggestion analysis, one can suggest problem solving ways, evaluate possible consequences. The opinion research is an effective means to initiate changes, in this case to improve pedagogical internship organisation.

### *Instrument*

The authors' prepared questionnaire was used in the research, in which eight open main questions/ tasks were presented. Only part of the pedagogical internship aspects (four aspects) are analysed here. The results about pedagogical internship contribution, personal student preparation, internship content and condition evaluation have been published earlier (Lamanauskas et al.,

2016). So, the respondents were asked: (i) to characterise mentor's given support during the internship in the education institution; (ii) to characterise pedagogical internship leader / mentor (to give mentor characteristics); (iii) to characterise practitioner's performed functions during pedagogical internship; (iv) to characterise the biggest / essential pedagogical internship "discoveries".

### *Research sample*

The fourth course students, future teachers from two Lithuanian universities – Siauliai University (46) and Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences (31) participated in the research. Totally 77 students took part in the research. Aforementioned universities are the main institutions preparing teachers in Lithuania. For the formation of the sample, non-probability purposive research group formation method was chosen, when the people included into a research group are the most typical in respect to the researched quality. Referring to Morse (1994), the sample of 30-50 participants is suitable for such kind of research. On the other hand, basically, there are no strict and specific rules forming the sample for qualitative research. Qualitative sample size may best be determined by the time allotted, resources available, and study objectives (Patton, 1990). Forming the mentioned sample, it was taken into consideration that: a) the respondents are the fourth (final) year bachelor's degree students; the respondents have performed all pedagogical internships, foreseen in the study plan. So, the attitude is hold, that such sample is sufficiently representative in the qualitative research.

### *Data analysis*

The research data were expressed in written form. The received respondent answers were coded. The most frequently repeating semantic units were grouped until the initial groups called sub-categories appeared. In the second stage the sub-categories were combined into categories. The qualitative research data were processed using content analysis, when in the informative

array essential characteristics are distinguished. The obtained verbal data array, referring to conventional content analysis methods, was analysed in three stages: (1) multiple answer reading; (2) semantically related answers and “key” words are sought; (3) Semantic unit interpretations.

Content analysis method distributes the research material according to categories and suits for sensitive phenomena analysis. The advantage of this method is a large amount of data text, used confirmative statements. Grouped categories are the result of a researched phenomenon (Elo & Kyngas, 2008).

In order to guarantee data analysis reliability, semantic unit distinction and later on grouping was carried out independently by three researchers. In the later stage, the researchers were looking for a consensus due to sub-category attaching to categories. Co-ordination and proof-reading went on in two stages. A two-week break was made between the first and the second co-ordination stages. The co-ordination degree was higher than 85%.

## Results

Having analysed the respondents’ expressed opinions about mentor’s given support during the internship in education institution, the corresponding categories were discerned (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Mentor given support during the internship in education institution

Categories	N (%)	Subcategories	N (%)	Statements	N (%)
Support realising education process	85 (68.0)	Support assuring effective education process	29 (23.2)	Mentor provided consultations, suggestions	10/8.0
				Mentor provided a lot of valuable didactic knowledge	6/4.8
				Provided necessary information	6/4.8
				Mentor shared the experience on education questions	4/3.2
				Mentor shared the collected and accumulated	3/2.4

				didactic material	
		Support planning, organizing and adjusting education process	28 (22.4)	Mentor adjusted education process, gave support and advice, how to improve activity, helped to solve problems	11/8.8
				Advised planning various activities	7/5.6
				Helped to choose education methods and devices	5/4.0
				Advised preparing for the lessons (how to give, what methods to use and so on.)	3/2.4
				Advised planning and organising education process	2/1,6
				Other important support	28 (22.4)
		Mentor's support is very big and useful	8/6.4		
		Advised, how to behave and socialise with pupils	6/4.8		
		Helped in case of complicated situations, solving problems	3/2.4		
		Mentor's help was various	1/0.8		
Improper mentor's duty performance	28 (22.4)	Poor mentor's role	15 (12.0)	Mentor's given support was minimal, partial	9/7.2
				Mentor gave support only when needed	4/3.2
				Mentor's support was unnecessary	2/1.6
		Unfavourable mentor's attitude to student	13 (10.4)	Mentor unwillingly socialised, collaborated, constantly had no time	8/6.4
				Mentor's attitude to students was negative	5/4.0
Support		Support knowing education institu-	9 (7.2)	Gave support putting in order the documents, getting acquainted with school activity regulating documents	4/3.2
				Mentor helped under-	3/2.4

participating in school life	12 (9.6)	tion		stand institution working model	
				Mentor introduced to education programme, education plans	2/1.6
		Support involving in school informal education	3 (2.4)	Helped organising various events at school	2/1.6
				Involved in events, activities, projects taking place in education institution	1/0.8

Analysing *mentor's given support during the internship in education institution*, 125 close in semantic meaning researchers' submitted answers were systemised, the meanings of which were generalised in three categories: *Support realising education process; Support participating in school life and Improper mentor duty performance*. The research data reveal situation, in which the biggest part (68.0 %) of students indicate experiencing a big mentor support during the internship: 22.3 % *support which forms the possibility to assure effective education process*. In this sub-category *mentor provided consultations, suggestions (8.0%); valuable didactic knowledge, other necessary information provision (4.8% each)* are discerned. Only a small part of respondents -2.4% noted, that *mentors shared the collected and accumulated didactic material*. On the part – 22.4% of research participant expressed opinion basis discerned sub-category *Support planning, organising and adjusting education process* allows noticing, that during the internship *mentors made adjustments to the education process, gave support and advice on how to improve activity, helped to solve problems (8.8%); provided support planning various activities (5.6%); for some students (4.0%) mentor helped to choose education methods and devices*. A few students highlighted complex support of the mentor: *some advice about lessons (how to give, what methods to use and so on)* and help *planning and organising education process*. In the sub-category *Other important help*, were integrated the expressed ideas of 22.4%

of questionnaire participants about mentor, who *constantly promoted, encouraged, motivated* the practitioner (8.0 %), *advised, how to behave and socialise with pupils* (4.8%). A part – 6.4% of students marked, that *mentor support is very big and useful*. Mentor support aspects highlighted by quite a small part of respondents (9.6%) were systemised in the category *Support participating in school life*, in which such sub-categories are distinguished: *support knowing education institution* (7.2% of answers) and *support involving in school non-formal education* (2.4 answers). In the first, such mentor support expressions are discerned as *support putting in order documents, getting acquainted with school activity regulating documents* (3.2%); *understanding the institution working model* (2,4%); *getting acquainted with education programme, education plans* (1.6%). In the second sub-category are highlighted: *Help organising various events at school* and *student’s involvement in events, activities, projects taking place in education institution*.

Having analysed the respondent expressed opinions about mentor, the corresponding categories were discerned (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Mentor characteristics

Categories	N (%)	Subcategories	N (%)	Statements	N (%)
Mentor personality competence	50 (38.0)	Professional personal qualities	34 (25.9)	Mentor has to be responsible, caring person	16/12.3
				Mentor has to be critical, be able to express criticism.	10/7.6
				Mentor has to be rigorous even meticulous	6/4.5
				Mentor has to be observant	2/1.5
		General personal qualities	16 (12.1)	Mentor has to be sincere and pleasant	8/6.0
				Mentor has to be reflecting	3/2.3
				Mentor has to be active	3/2.3
				Mentor has to be crea-	2/1.5

				tive	
Mentorship competence	44 (33.2)	Communication and collaboration abilities	18 (13.5)	Teacher mentor has to be collaborative, open, sharing experience	12/9.0
				Mentor has to be pleasingly and easily communicating	6/4.5
		Positive mentor's attitude to student	12 (9.1)	Mentor has to be positive in respect to students	5/3.8
				Mentor has to be ready to help and advise students	5/3.8
				Mentor has to be tolerant with the student	2/1.5
		Mentor- councillor, helper, encourager	9 (6.8)	Teacher mentor has to be motivating, supportive	5/3.8
				Teacher mentor as adviser to student, helper	4/3.0
		Mentor- authority and leader	5 (3.8)	Mentor – it is teacher leader always ready to help student	3/2.3
				Mentor has to be authority (example) to student	2/1.5
		Professional mentor's preparation and relation with professional activity	38 (28.8)	Mentor- constantly learning personality	18 (13.7)
Mentor has to be curious and interested	2/1.5				
Mentor has to be initiative, always willing to find out something new	1/0.8				
Mentor- qualified and competitive pedagogue	15 (11.3)			Mentor teacher professional	6/4.5
				Teacher mentor has to be qualified/ competitive	6/4.5
				Mentor has to know his work well	2/1.5
				Mentor has to have big experience	1/0.8
Mentor's positive attitude to professional activity	5 (3.8)			Teacher mentor has to love his work	2/1.5
				Mentor has to be motivated himself	2/1.5

				Mentor has to be broad-minded	1/0.8
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Discerning mentor characterising spheres, it was referred to 132 student, having participated in the research submitted statement, having analogical semantic meaning, generalisation, on the basis of which three categories were discerned: *Mentor personality competence; Mentorship competence; Professional mentor preparation and relation with professional activity*. In these categories 38.0% of questionnaire participant expressed opinions are integrated in sub-categories *Professional personal qualities* (25.9% highlighted them), *General personal qualities* (12.1% discerned). In the first sub-category, 12.3% of students highlighted, that *mentor has to be a responsible, caring person*, 7.6% – *he has to be critical, able to express criticism*. In 1.6% opinion, *mentor has to be rigorous, even meticulous*, and for 1.5% of questionnaire participants it is important, that *mentor should be observant*. Students, who highlighted general mentor's personal qualities pay attention to the fact, that *he has to be sincere and pleasant* (6.0%); *reflecting and active* (2.3%), *creative* (1.5%). In the *mentorship competence* category four sub-categories are discerned. 13.5% of respondents expressed opinion are generalised in sub-category *Communication and collaboration abilities*. Here, the students emphasized, that *mentor has to be collaborative, open, sharing experience* (9.0%), also, he has to be *pleasingly and easily communicating* (4.5%). A part – 9.1% of the respondents expressed ideas, which were integrated in sub-category *Positive mentor attitude to student*. 3.8% each of the respondents claimed, that it is important for them, that mentor was *positive in students' respect, ready to help the student and advise*. 6.8% of questionnaire respondents emphasised mentor roles, which are generalised in sub-category *Mentor councillor, adviser, encourager*. In students' opinion, *teacher mentor has to be motivating, supportive* (3.8%) and *councillor for the student and his helper* (3.0%). In the sub-category *Mentor-authority and leader* it is emphasized,

that *mentor – is teacher leader always ready to help the student* (2.3%) and also, that *he has to be authority (example)for the student* (1.5%). 28,8% of respondents answers forming category *Professional mentor preparation and relation with professional activity* content comprises three subcategories. *Mentor-constantly learning personality integrates* 13.7% of researchers' highlighted thoughts about, that *mentor is teacher, who is open to novelties, ideas and improvement* (11.4%), *curious and interested* (1.5%); *initiative, willing always to find out something new* (0.8%). In the sub-category *Mentor - qualified and competitive pedagogue* 11.3% of students claimed that *mentor - is teacher professional, he has to be qualified/competitive* (4.5% each); *to know his work well* (1.5%); *to have big experience* (0.8%).

Also, 3.8% of students, having participated in the research, paid attention to the fact that *mentor's positive attitude is important to his professional activity*. The respondents' expressed opinions in this part generalised into analogical sub-category highlighted that *mentor has to love his work, to be motivated himself* and to be *broad-minded*.

Having analysed the respondents' expressed opinions about their performed functions during pedagogical internship, the corresponding categories were discerned (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Practitioner's performed functions during pedagogical internship

Categories	N (%)	Subcategories	N (%)	Statements	N (%)		
Practitioner organized education activities	128 (67.5)	Preparation for the lessons and giving them	43 (22.8)	Giving lessons	30/16.0		
				Lesson plan preparation	8/4.2		
				Preparation for the lessons	5/2.6		
		Support for the teacher in the classroom	39 (20.5)			Teacher supporter and helper	16/8.4
						Class register filling in	6/3.2
						Pupil occupation organisation during the breaks	6/3.2
						Various document put-	5/2.6

				ting in order	
				Pupil work correction (exercises and exercise-books)	4/2.1
				Pupil knowledge and ability evaluation	1/0.5
				Various stand preparation	1/0.5
		Activity knowing and ruling education process	30 (15.8)	Education process observation	16/8.4
				Education process organisation	8/4.2
				Education process planning	6/3.2
		Other activities	16 (8.4)	Practical task performance	10/5.2
				Children ability and need cognition	6/3.2
Practitioner's activity in community	62 (32.5)	Communication with education participants	31 (16.2)	Communication with pupils	15/7.8
				Communication with pupils' parents	8/4.2
				Communication with teachers	5/2.6
				Communication with school administration	3/1.6
		Non formal education and other activity	31 (16.3)	Various event organisation and giving	18/9.5
				Other teacher substitution	9/4.7
				Participation in meetings and other community activities	4/2.1

Generalising *Practitioner's performed functions during the internship* 190 semantic identity having statements were systemised, which were joined in two categories; *Practitioner's organised education activities* (integrated 67.5% expressed opinion) and *Practitioner's activity in the community* (comprises 32.5% of answers). In the first category, four sub-categories were distinguished. In the sub-category *Preparation for lessons and giving them* 16.0% of researchers noted *lesson giving*, by this highlighting, that giving lessons is the main their, as practitioners', function. Part of the respondents emphasized

separate with the lesson giving related aspects: *lesson plan preparation* (4.2%) and preparation for the lessons (2.6%). The opinions of a part (20.5%) of participants, having participated in the questionnaire are reflected in the sub-category *Support for the teacher in the classroom*. The functions of *Teacher supporter and helper* performed during internship indicated 8.4% of respondents. The other these sub-category components correspond to various other student mentioned activities: *class register filling in, pupil occupation organisation during breaks* (3.2% each); *various document putting in order* (2.1%); *pupil work correction (exercises and exercise-books)* (2.1%); *pupils' knowledge and ability evaluation* and various stand preparation (0.5% each). Sub-category *Activity knowing and managing education process* (distinguished 15.8% answer meanings) reflects such student performed functions, as *education process observation* (indicated 8.4%); *education process organisation* (4.2%); *education process planning* (indicated 3.2%). 8,4% of statements are systemised in sub-category *Other activities*, which comprises such student mentioned generalised activity functions, as *practical task preparation* and *children ability and need cognition*. The indicated activity functions of more than a third (32.5%) of questionnaire participants during the internship are related with *non-formal education and other activity and were generalised in a separate sub-category*, which comprised such students' highlighted this activity aspects: *various event organisation and giving* (9.5%); *other teacher substitution* (4.7%) and *participation in meetings and other community activities* (2.1%).

Having analysed the respondent expressed opinions about pedagogical internship “discoveries” and their certain experiences, the corresponding categories were distinguished (Table 4).

**Table 4.** The biggest pedagogical internship “discoveries”

Categories	N (%)	Subcategories	N (%)	Statements	N (%)	
Discoveries related with school and pedagogue profession	55 (52.5)	Pedagogue profession cognition	31 (29.7)	Pedagogue’s mission and meaning understanding	15/14.2	
				Pedagogical work complexity and combination perception	10/9.5	
				Particular mentor role understanding	2/2.0	
				Teacher flexibility importance, ability not to create “global” education problems	2/2.0	
				Teacher ethics importance	2/2.0	
		Discoveries based on communication	20 (19.0)	Teacher collaboration peculiarities	8/7.6	
					Communication and collaboration with parents	6/5.7
					Communication with pupils in non-formal environment	5/4.7
					Real and sincere pedagogue’s relation with pupils	1/1.0
		Education institution cognition	4 (3.8)	Acquaintance with various education institutions	3/2.8	
				Understanding, that school “produces” contemporary society “comfortable” generation	1/1.0	
		Discoveries related with preparation for teacher’s work	50 (47.5)	Discovery of self and personal ability	29 (27.1)	Self- cognition, discovery
Ability to work independently	10/9.5					
Ability to find new, interesting for children ideas	1/1.0					
Didactical discoveries	14 (13.7)			Ability to make children interested by various activities	5/4.7	
				Understanding of education integration importance	2/2.0	
				Understanding of education individualisation necessity	2/2.0	
				Children achievement	2/2.0	

				evaluation	
				Mastering of new teaching methods	1/1.0
				Learning to fill in the e-register	1/1.0
				Useful didactic tips	1/1.0
		Work with the class experience	7 (6.7)	Class control experience	6/5.7
				Event organisation and presentation experience	1/1.0

Generalising student expressed ideas about “discoveries” during the internship105 semantic identity having units were found, systemised in categories *Discoveries related with school and pedagogue profession* (integrate 52.5% of answers) and *Discoveries, related with preparation for teacher’s work* (integrate 47.5% answers). In the first category has been distinguished the sub-category *Pedagogue profession cognition*, which comprises 29.7% of student insight. In it is highlighted *pedagogue’s mission and meaning understanding* (14.2%); *pedagogical work complexity, combination perception* (9.5%); *particular mentor role understanding, teacher flexibility importance, ability not to create “global” education problems and teacher ethics importance* (2.0% of answers). Subcategory *Discoveries based on communication* highlights, that students during internship discerned *teacher collaboration peculiarities* (7.6%); *enriched communication and collaboration with parents experience* (5.7%); *perceived communication with pupils in non-formal environment meaning* (4.7%), accentuated the importance of real and sincere teacher relation with pupils. In the second category, which comprised discoveries, *related with preparation for teacher work* were discerned three sub-categories. In the sub-category *Self and personal ability discovery* were integrated 27.1% of students’ expressed statements. 16.6% accentuated, that during the internship they *found and better cognised themselves, identified their ability to work independently* (9.5%), were able to find *new, interesting for pupils’ ideas* (1.0%). In the sub-category *Didactic discoveries*, such researcher

discovery insights were highlighted: *ability to make children interested in various activities* (4.7%), *education integration importance and individualisation necessity understanding*, *children achievement evaluation* (2.0% each). Also, some students indicated *new teaching method mastering*, *learning to fill in e-register* and *getting useful didactic tips* during the internship. In the subcategory *Work with the class experience* some students accentuated *class management* (5.7%) and *event organisation and presentation experience* during the internship.

### **Discussion**

The research results showed, that mentor plays an important role during pedagogical internship. The main qualities of a mentor are communication and collaboration. However, it is a mutual process. Also, student-practitioner initiative and interest in internship effectiveness are necessary. For this, a more detailed mentor experience, opinion, position analysis is necessary. The carried out research show, that teachers-mentors working with the students-practitioners developed confidence in risk-taking and experienced professional growth (Forbes, 2004). One can reasonably assert, that lack of communication and collaboration with practitioners is one of the factors, conditioning internship quality. Of course, it remains one of the most visible problems touched by this research, which needs to be solved. On the one hand, it is purposeful to make adjustments in pedagogical study programmes, including more models, meant for realisation of communication and collaboration in educational environment. For example, it is purposeful to suggest the students “Communication psychology” a freely chosen subject, and also more responsibly choosing teachers-practitioners, ready to be a mentor in a proper way. The other researchers accentuate this aspect too. The practice and issues of selection and preparation of mentors, also defining the essence of mentor training programmes are crucial elements in pre-service teacher education (Krull, 2005). Moreover, according to Bankauskienė & Masaitytė (2015) the whole country

society qualitative change, ability to constantly correspond to changing world challenges in a great part depend on teacher's qualitative readiness for the activity. The research also showed, that the students consider mentor's personality competence as the most important thing, in the structure of which professional personal traits have crucial weight (25.9%). The research carried out by Romanian researchers showed, that students believe that a good mentor is dynamic, professional/specialist, rigorous, reasonable, sensitive, passionate/enthusiastic, appreciative etc. (Popescu-Mitroi & Mazilescu, 2014).

Nevertheless, essential questions remain: Who, in reality, is a teacher-mentor? Is every teacher/can every teacher be a mentor? How can proper mentoring strengthen future teachers' motivation for pedagogical activity? One has to agree with the position, that professional mentor preparation is necessary, because being an effective teacher does not make you an effective mentor (Ambrosetti, 2014).

The research shows, that pedagogical internship is undoubtedly useful for future teachers, because they can try themselves in various roles, acquire new competencies, supplement theoretical knowledge with personal "discoveries", make one's mind about the choice of teacher's profession and create one's own teacher's model. It is important, that during internship future teachers would be encouraged to critically think, adequately value teacher's work practice, develop ability to feel into the problems typical to contemporary pupils, on the one side, and together understand teacher's work subtleties, on the other side. During the pedagogical internship student's individual efforts are very important, taking over accumulated experience of a certain professional activity sphere, teacher-mentor efforts, helping him to do this. The research showed, that pedagogue profession cognition and discovery of self and personal abilities are of the most significant student experiences. This coincides with the other researchers' position, that pedagogical internship has the potential to be a catalyst for personal and professional growth from a novice into an informed young educator (Romm et al., 2010).

## **Conclusions**

It has been stated, that more than three fourths of practitioners value a lot good communication with mentors. The respondents noted safe, professional atmosphere having dominated during the internship, acknowledged, that it was useful to work with experienced teachers and to learn from them. Thus, mentor's ability to communicate and collaborate with students, to convey them his knowledge and abilities guarantees the internship quality. This creates harmonious teaching/learning environment, allows implementing pedagogical internship programme, reflect on the acquired experience. It has been noticed, that there are also accidental mentors, lacking communication skills, tolerance for the young and inexperienced colleague. The causes of these failures might be mentor's indifference, irresponsible attitude to one's duties, not having time, lack of motivation, poor common activity goal knowledge, on the whole, insufficient readiness for mentorship.

The research shows, that mentors accept a lot of various functions, provide universal help for students: from preparation for the lesson to pedagogical situation management and problem solution. Speaking about mentor characteristics, one has to say, that future teachers are mostly attracted by mentor's personal qualities. Mentor's responsibility, strictness, acuteness, criticism are considered essential qualities, which match very well with sincerity, creativity and activeness. The respondents most often ground the mentorship competence of a mentor through the prism of mentor's communication and collaboration, positive attitude to student, leader, able to inspire, motivate, and if necessary also to console a young man. The mentor, who has conformity of subject preparation with devotion to professional activity, is appreciated. Not only mentor's possessed experience, competence are important, but also openness to novelties, initiative, aim to improve.

During the internship at school practitioners most of the time devote to education activity in class (preparation for the lessons, giving them, support

for the teacher in class and so on). Relatively less time is devoted to activities outside the classroom boundaries, i.e. in the community (substitution of the other teachers, non-formal education, communication with school administration and so on).

During pedagogical internship the practitioners experienced different kinds of “discoveries”. Most frequently accentuated “discoveries” are related with school and future profession, for example, the changed attitude to teacher’s work. For having performed the internship, much deeper is perceived teacher’s mission, more exhaustively is understood the complexity of this profession and so on. A lot of “discoveries” are done communicating with colleagues, teachers, pupils, pupils’ parents. The other part of “discoveries” is related with preparation for teacher’s work. Most often it is related with personal quality improvement and their revelation. Pedagogical internship is perceived and valued as a proper “field” to acquire didactic experience. New teaching and achievement evaluation methods are tried in it and it is being learnt to individualise pupils’ work, one gets involved in a project work and so on.

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✉ Prof. Dr. Vincentas Lamanuskas  
Department of Education and Psychology,  
University of Šiauliai,  
25 P. Višinskio Street, LT-76351 Šiauliai, Lithuania.  
E-Mail: [v.lamanuskas@ef.su.lt](mailto:v.lamanuskas@ef.su.lt)

✉ Dr. Rita Makarskaitė-Petkevičienė  
Faculty of Education  
Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences,  
39 Studentų Street, LT-08106 Vilnius, Lithuania.  
E-Mail: [petkeviciene.r@gmail.com](mailto:petkeviciene.r@gmail.com)

✉ Ms. Vilhelmina Lukavičienė  
Department of Education & Psychology,  
University of Šiauliai,  
25 P. Višinskio Street, LT-76351 Šiauliai, Lithuania.  
E-Mail: [luk.vile@gmail.com](mailto:luk.vile@gmail.com)

