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*Practical Training as a Necessary Component of Future  
Professional Preschool Teacher's Training in Higher  
Educational Institutions in Ukraine*

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Praktyka jako niezbędny element przygotowania zawodowego przyszłego nauczyciela placówki  
wychowania przedszkolnego na wyższych uczelniach Ukrainy

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ABSTRACT

The article presents the part of research results obtained within the joint Ukrainian-Austrian research project “The quality of preschool teachers’ training in Austria and Ukraine: a comparative analysis” in 2023/2024 (UA 02/2023). The practical training content of the applicants of the first (bachelor’s) level of higher education majoring in specialty 012 Preschool education within the educational and professional program “Preschool Education” in Ukrainian universities has been analyzed. The organizational aspects of pedagogical internship of future preschool teachers are considered. It is substantiated that a pedagogical internship ensures their readiness for continuous improvement and professional growth. It is the key to professional competence formation. The types of pedagogical internships that students undergo according to the specified educational and professional program are characterized. The value of every kind of educational and work placement internship has been proven. It is shown that they differ in purpose, content, objectives, organizational and pedagogical forms, methods, and approaches to the integration of educational, upbringing, research, organizational, and methodical activities with children in the conditions of a preschool educational institution. The need to implement educational propaedeutic internships from the first days of students’ studies at the university is emphasized. As it is a key to the formation of a stable

interest in the chosen profession. It has been proven that work placement pedagogical internship, which has an active nature, creates conditions for the student's personality self-realization, ensures success in professional self-determination, and forms students' professional competencies, which are necessary for their independent performance of the functions of preschool teacher.

**Keywords:** practical training; pedagogical internship; preschool teacher; preschool educational institution; higher educational institution

## INTRODUCTION

The system-forming role in the educational process of preschool educational institutions in Ukraine is undoubtedly played by the preschool teacher, whose personal qualities, pedagogical skills, and social position are formed in the course of professional training in a higher educational institution. Today, preschool education needs an innovative teacher who is able to introduce progressive ideas into their activities, introduce innovations, experience new life trends, orient themselves in the priorities of modernity, and create conditions for preschool children's development and life competence formation. In this regard, the need to provide preschool educational institutions with well-trained, professionally competent personnel remains relevant (Czepil, 2021). An essential role in this process belongs to the pedagogical internship in preschool educational institutions, which acts as an organic part of the educational process, which ensures the combination of future preschool teachers' psychological readiness and theoretical training with their future practical activities (Mashkina, 2012; Mysyk, 2014; Vatamaniuk, 2023).

## NORMATIVE REQUIREMENTS FOR SCOPE AND CONTENT OF FUTURE PRESCHOOL TEACHERS' PRACTICAL TRAINING

A pedagogical internship in a preschool educational institution is a mandatory component of future preschool teachers' professional training in the preschool education system. It is a crucial stage of their professional growth. Practical training of bachelors majoring in specialty 012 Preschool education is a significant component of the educational and professional program "Preschool Education" and a normative part of the content of education, which aims at students' acquisition of professional competencies. It is worth noting that according to the Standard of Higher Education of Ukraine of the first (bachelor) level of specialty 012 Preschool education in modern educational and professional programs, 20% of the total amount of academic hours (240 ECTS credits) is allocated to the pedagogical internship (*Standart vyshchoi osvity...*, 2019). During four years of future preschool teachers' professional formation, various kinds of internships are provided. As a result, bachelor students acquire appropriate specific competencies (Telyczko, 2022).

Preschool teachers' professional and practical training has a step-by-step and end-to-end structure for mastering professional knowledge, abilities, and skills. The educational components "Educational Propaedeutic Continuous Internship in PEI" (6 ECTS credits; the 1st and the 2nd terms), "Educational Psychological and Pedagogical Internship in PEI" (6 ECTS credits; the 3rd term), "Work Placement Pedagogical Internship in Early Age Groups" (6 ECTS credits; the 4th term), "Work Placement Pedagogical Internship in Preschool Age Groups" (9 ECTS credits; the 5th term), "Work Placement Methodical Practice in PEI" (9 ECTS credits; the 6th term), "Work Placement Pedagogical Practice in PEI" (12 ECTS credits; the 7th and the 8th terms) are mandatory in the structure of the educational and professional program "Preschool Education" of the first (bachelor's) level of higher education. Thus, during the study, bachelor students undergo 8 internships, including 3 educational and 5 work placement ones. At each stage, it is filled with new content, tasks, organizational and pedagogical forms, methods, and approaches to the integration of educational, upbringing, research, organizational, and methodical activities with children in the conditions of a preschool educational institution.

It is worth noting that the autonomy of higher educational institutions in Ukraine allows qualified teams from specialized departments to make annual changes to the names and content of the internship syllabus during the public discussion of the educational and professional program in the context of its renewal.

#### ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS OF FUTURE PRESCHOOL TEACHERS' PEDAGOGICAL INTERNSHIP

The preparatory stage of the pedagogical internship in preschool educational institutions involves:

- determination of the internship basis, preparation of the necessary documentation, and familiarization with it for students;
- conducting an orientation conference with the participation of a university or faculty administration representative, the head of the university internship department, the faculty internship head, methodologists of the relevant departments, and students.

At this stage, maximum information is provided about the internship terms, conditions, content, and reporting documentation.

The main stage of pedagogical internship in preschool educational institutions involves:

- general familiarization of students with the specifics of the educational process in preschool educational institutions;
- planning the types of work and drawing up an individual work plan for the internship period;

- performance of internship tasks according to the content modules.

Students have to:

- observe, analyze, and organize educational activities with children: carry out cognitive, physical, speech, and logical-mathematical development, familiarize with national traditions; organize classes, holidays, events, games, etc.;
- ensure observance of the daily regime, and organize play activities;
- produce visual didactic material for planned classes, games, holidays, sports and musical events, development centers of group room, etc.;
- perform individual research tasks (create slide presentations, video clips of classes, summarize a teacher's experience in a preschool educational institution, etc.).

During the pedagogical internship, students keep a diary of pedagogical observations, in which they record the information necessary for the performance of practice tasks, highlight the progress of their implementation (according to the individual plan of the internship), including studying and analyzing the documentation of the group educator. The dairy materials are used to report on the work performed during the internship.

The pedagogical internship ends with a final conference. During the conference, students report on their work during the internship in the form of a slide presentation, photo chronicle, or video collage, give a generalized analysis of its results, exchange experience, discuss the causes of difficulties, and make suggestions for improving their practical training.

#### CONTENT AND TASKS IMPLEMENTATION OF EDUCATIONAL AND WORK PLACEMENT PEDAGOGICAL INTERNSHIPS IN PRESCHOOL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The content of future preschool teachers' practical training is presented in the syllabi of educational and work placement pedagogical internships in preschool educational institutions. Let's consider the algorithm for its implementation, taking into account every kind of internship. Let's turn to the experience of organizing and conducting pedagogical internships of students majoring in specialty 012 Preschool education at Poltava V.G. Korolenko National Pedagogical University (Hnizdilova et al., 2022).

Educational propaedeutic continuous internship in preschool educational institutions, which is held in the first year and begins in October, gradually introduces the student to the world of the chosen profession, expanding the circle of professional knowledge, abilities, and skills. Their acquired vitagenic experience makes it possible to make sure that the choice of profession is correct. It becomes the basis for activating the students' cognitive activity during the study of professionally oriented educational components.

The educational propaedeutic continuous internship aims to form in students a holistic idea of a modern preschool educational institution, to acquaint students with the preschool teacher's work organization, with assistant teacher's work in the age groups in preschool educational institutions, with the functional responsibilities of pedagogical and other workers, to foster a sustainable interest in students to the chosen profession, the need for pedagogical self-education. During this internship, students can determine how correctly they have chosen the field of professional activity and discover the degree of professionally significant qualities formation.

The educational propaedeutic continuous internship involves familiarization with the organization of the educational process in preschool educational institutions, observation of pedagogical activities in early and preschool age groups, and gradual involvement of students in conducting routine processes and game classes from various sections of the current educational program for preschool children's development.

The pedagogical internship is an organic component of the educational process, during which there is a direct combination and implementation of theoretical knowledge that students receive in classes with their practical activities as preschool teachers. The educational component "Educational Psychological and Pedagogical Internship in Preschool Education Institutions," which is planned in the educational and professional program for the 2nd year (the 3rd term of study), provides for consolidation and deepening of students' knowledge acquired in the process of studying psychological and pedagogical disciplines; formation of abilities and skills in the organization of regime processes, various types of children's activities, classes taking into account the age and individual characteristics of children's mental development.

The content of students' activities offers the performance of tasks in preschool pedagogy and child psychology, which is the basis for training a future teacher of a preschool educational institution. The educational psychological and pedagogical internship provides an opportunity to deepen knowledge about the peculiarities of children's mental development, to understand the relationship between educational influences and the development of mental cognitive processes, the formation of personal characteristics, and the formation of various types of children's activities. Compared to the previous type, educational psychological and pedagogical practice is more active. It allows students to gain experience in diagnosing children's mental development using different methods (observation, survey, analysis of activity results). It allows, on the one hand, consolidating and deepening theoretical knowledge and, on the other hand, acquiring skills and abilities necessary for future independent work.

In addition, students learn to compare individual indicators of children's mental development within the same age group. They can recognize norms and

deviations, as well as apply methods for fostering mental processes. The content and objectives of psychological and pedagogical practice aim to enhance the future educators' ability to observe various children's activities, analyze and compare different forms and methods of child rearing and education, and grasp the components of a comprehensive educational process in preschool education institutions. During creative tasks, students develop their artistic abilities. For example, when organizing a theatrical performance, they compile a collection of costumes, update scenery, and create props. In theatrical games, aspiring educators portray the unique characteristics of each character through intonation, gestures, and facial expressions that correspond to the roles and actions.

It is also very significant to test the acquired knowledge, abilities, and skills of organizing the educational process in preschool educational institutions, which future preschool teachers can demonstrate directly in real work, which is a connecting link between theoretical learning and their future professional activities with preschool children. Students receive such an opportunity in the 4th term during the course of work placement pedagogical internships, during which they form professional skills and personal qualities necessary for their independent performance of the functions of a preschool teacher.

The purpose of "Work Placement Pedagogical Internship in Early Age Groups" is to deepen students' knowledge of professional disciplines ("Early Age Pedagogy," "Sensory and Cognitive Development During Early Childhood," "Speech Development During Early Childhood," "Child Psychology," etc.), mastering modern forms of organization of the educational process and methods in early age groups, the formation of professional skills necessary for the care, development, education of children of this age, the formation of work placement discipline and a responsible attitude to professional activity, the need to constantly replenish one's knowledge and creatively apply it in practice.

The educational component "Work Placement Pedagogical Internship in Early Age Groups" provides an opportunity to understand the peculiarities of the mental development of children of this age category and to master the specifics of organizing educational work with them, taking into account their age and individual characteristics. Students learn to plan and implement educational activities, conduct routine moments in the first and second half of the day, organize and implement various types of games with the help of a preschool teacher, select their topics and equipment, and organize personal-oriented communication with young children in different types of activities. This kind of practice is aimed at future preschool teachers' professional and personal growth.

In the system of professional training of future teachers of preschool educational institutions, an important role belongs to work placement pedagogical internship. The objectives of the work placement pedagogical internship are to deepen the student's knowledge of child psychology, preschool pedagogy, and

professional methods of preschool education; the formation of independent planning skills and conducting frontal, subgroup, individual classes with preschoolers with the introduction of various methods that activate children's cognitive activity and correct their psychophysical development; creative application of the acquired theoretical knowledge and practical skills during the implementation by trainees of various forms of work and the organization of diverse kinds of activities in the conditions of the actual educational process of the preschool educational institution; determination of the effectiveness of one's pedagogical influences; monitoring preschool children's development; the formation of skills for working with a children's team, taking into account children's age and individual characteristics, as well as working with parents. This type of internship is designed to foster an optimistic professional attitude in undergraduate students, a desire for professional self-improvement, and a desire to actively and creatively implement the best achievements in the field of preschool education into the practice of preschool educational institutions; to develop future preschool teachers' professional abilities, interest in the teaching profession.

In contrast to the previous types of practice, industrial pedagogical practice in preschool age groups is based on students' design skills. It involves planning their own educational and research activities to implement the pedagogical practice program, selecting content, methods, forms, and means of teaching and raising preschoolers, as well as drawing up plans for classroom activities, educational events, routines, etc.

In the process of organizing and conducting "Work Placement Pedagogical Internship in Preschool Age Groups" (the 5th term), students majoring in specialty 012 Preschool education are practicing the formation of professional and pedagogical skills in building an educational process with preschool children in different age groups, mastering modern forms and methods of organization educational activity in the field of preschool education, the study of methodological support of the group. This type of internship allows students to orient themselves professionally and make another choice of further educational and professional routes. This program is designed not only to plan and implement the teaching of mathematical and grammatical elements to children but also to systematically incorporate physical education and recreational activities for preschoolers, organize various forms of physical and health education for children, and promote a healthy lifestyle among them.

During the 6th, 7th, and 8th terms, an active pedagogical internship is carried out, which has an activity character and allows to create conditions for the self-realization of the student's personality, involve in solving creative tasks, competently designing the logic of the pedagogical process, using various forms, methods, means, innovative pedagogical technologies; identify problems that are relevant for children of a specific age group. At this stage of professional training, the student is given the right to choose the base of the internship.

The content of the work placement internship during the three terms changes due to the increase of tasks from various aspects of pedagogical activity and their complexity. Students independently conduct a system of modern classes, implement educational work, organize play activities with children of younger, middle, and older age groups, carry out physical, mental, cognitive, speech, logical, and mathematical development of preschoolers, familiarize them with the nature of their native land, Ukrainian folk traditions and public holidays.

The effectiveness of their practical activity is ensured by the ability to plan their own educational and research activities for the implementation of the pedagogical practice program; develop plans-summaries of classes, and educational activities according to age groups and the program according to which the preschool educational institution works; choose the most optimal forms and methods of educational work; produce visual didactic material for planned classes, games, holidays, sports and musical events; to update and replenish the development centers in group rooms according to children's age; organize pedagogical communication with children, colleagues, and parents based on mutual understanding, respect, and partnership.

Work placement pedagogical internship in a preschool educational institution also has a research orientation, which involves the implementation of research tasks for writing a term paper. In the process of practical training, future preschool teachers also select diagnostic methods for studying the specifics of the development of cognitive processes (perception, attention, memory, thinking, imagination), the personal sphere (self-esteem, motives, emotions, feelings, volitional qualities, etc.), the study of speech, logical-mathematical development, the formation of motor, health-preserving, environmental and natural science competence of a preschool child, diagnose and predict mental development, analyze various mental phenomena, establish patterns of their occurrence and course, select and conduct games and exercises based on the results of the diagnosis with visibility for the development of cognitive mental processes, correction of a preschooler's personal sphere.

In the course of performing research tasks, students diagnose children's knowledge and skills; study best practices in educational work with preschoolers; form the ability to implement the data of experimental research into the practice of a preschool institution, family, develop methodological recommendations and proposals for using research results in the educational process.

In the 8th semester, in contrast to previous types of practice, students delve into the detailed responsibilities of a preschool education institution director and a teacher-methodologist. They also analyze the regulatory documentation governing the educational environment within the institution. This occurs during the "Industrial Organizational and Methodological Practice in Preschool Education". Here, students reinforce and deepen their theoretical understanding



of partnership pedagogy, management psychology, and management in the field of preschool education.

Moreover, students familiarize themselves with the regulatory framework of the institution of preschool education, the development of an educational environment in the methodological office and the principal's office, and the organization of educational interactions with children's parents. Future educators acquire practical methods for collaborating with modern families, employing pedagogically suitable approaches when working with parents, taking into account the diversity of family types.

Throughout this practice, students hone their ability to establish partnership and professional relationships with teaching staff, parents, and the community. They enhance their organizational and pedagogical skills, demonstrating their capability to creatively apply theoretical knowledge in methodological practice.

This practice also emphasizes intensive self-education and self-improvement by future educators, testing their readiness for professional work in real-world settings. As part of their preparation, future educators participate in webinars, masterclasses, and online conferences to deepen their professional expertise. The formation of future preschool teachers' professional competence is facilitated by systematicity, continuity, complexity, and continuity of pedagogical internship.

## CONCLUSIONS

Therefore, educational and work placement pedagogical internship plays an important role in forming the unity of future preschool teachers' theoretical and practical training, ensuring the comprehensiveness of the system of psychological and pedagogical knowledge and organizational skills, which currently leads to the formation of future preschool teachers' professional competence. The pedagogical internship is an indicator of how deeply and consciously students have mastered the theoretical foundations of child psychology, preschool pedagogy, professional methods of preschool education, and mastered practical skills and abilities. During the internship, the process of future preschool teachers' professional formation, self-education, and self-upbringing is intensified, the level of professional readiness for pedagogical activities is checked, personal self-improvement takes place, and the professional position is activated.

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#### LEGAL ACTS

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#### ABSTRAKT

W artykule przedstawiono fragment wyników badań uzyskanych w ramach wspólnego ukraińsko-austriackiego projektu badawczego „Jakość kształcenia nauczycieli przedszkolnych w Austrii i w Ukrainie: analiza porównawcza” w roku 2023/2024 (nr UA 02/2023). Artykuł analizuje treści kształcenia praktycznego kandydatów pierwszego (licencjackiego) poziomu szkolnictwa wyższego kierunku 012 Wychowanie przedszkolne w ramach programu edukacyjno-zawodowego „Wychowanie przedszkolne” na uniwersytetach Ukrainy. Rozważono organizacyjne aspekty praktyki pedagogicznej przyszłych nauczycieli placówek wychowania przedszkolnego. Udowodniono, że praktyka pedagogiczna zapewnia im gotowość do ciągłego doskonalenia, rozwoju zawodowego i jest kluczem do kształtowania kompetencji zawodowych. Scharakteryzowano rodzaje praktyk pedagogicznych, jakie odbywają studenci studiów wyższych zgodnie z określonym programem edukacyjno-zawodowym. Udowodniono wartość każdego rodzaju praktyki edukacyjnej i wychowawczej. Wykazano, że różnią się one celem, treścią, zadaniami, formami i metodami organizacyjno-pedagogicznymi, podejściami do integracji działań edukacyjnych, wychowawczych, badawczych, organizacyjnych i metodycznych z dziećmi w warunkach placówki wychowania przedszkolnego. Podkreślono potrzebę realizacji edukacyjnej praktyki propedeutycznej od pierwszych dni studiów studentów na uczelni, jako klucza do kształtowania trwałego zainteresowania wybranym zawodem. Udowodniono, że praktyka pedagogiczna, która ma charakter zadaniowy,

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stwarza warunki do samorealizacji osobowości studenta, zapewnia sukces w samostanowieniu zawodowym, kształtuje kompetencje zawodowe studentów szkół wyższych, niezbędne do samodzielnego wykonywania przez nich funkcji wychowawców dzieci w wieku przedszkolnym.

**Słowa kluczowe:** kształcenie praktyczne; praktyka pedagogiczna; nauczyciel; placówka wychowania przedszkolnego; uczelnia wyższa