

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A NEW MODEL OF PRIMARY EDUCATION TEACHER TRAINING TO FULFILL THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE NEW GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM AT UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, THE UNIVERSITY OF DANANG

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**Abstract:** Based on the model of teacher education of some countries in Japan, the Federal Republic of Germany, the UK and Australia, given the task of reforming Vietnam's education system toward learners' competences, the paper introduces a new model for training primary education teachers in national key schools in order to meet the demands for high quality human resources and prepare for the task of implementing the new general education curriculum from 2018 onwards.

**Keywords:** Model, training model, primary education teacher.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the aim of reforming education radically and comprehensively toward learners' competences, high school teachers must have skills in designing and developing learning program; flexibly and creatively applying the contents, methods and organization of teaching to develop students' competences. It can be said that teachers are the key factors to guarantee the success in implementing the general education program and textbooks reform. Thus, primary teacher training programs can be divided into two training areas: 1) *training teachers for integrated and segregated teaching*; 2) *training teachers for specialized subjects*.

Thus, in addition to retraining in-service primary education teachers to meet the requirements of the new general education program, national major pedagogy institutions also need to design and rebuild the model of teacher training in general and elementary school teacher training in particular to train "teachers-to-be" with the full range of competences and qualifications since 2018.

## 2. CONTENT

### 2.1. Model of primary school teacher training

According to the Vietnamese Dictionary [1], "model" is defined as a combination of concepts and thoughts which is expressed in a form of physical existence and demonstrates an object's structure and activities. The structure of the model is used to illustrate the key features of the targeted object.

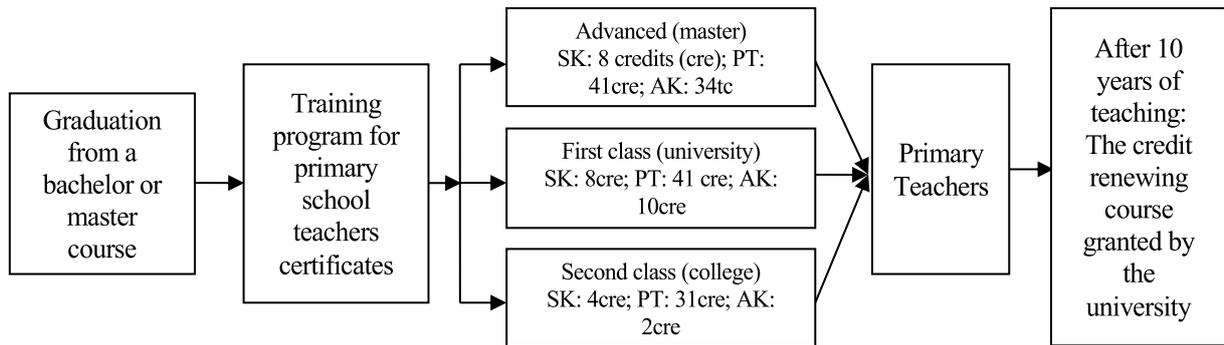
In this sense, a model of primary school teacher training is a structure that demonstrates the key features of the primary school teacher training process. It includes inputs (related to philosophy and training objectives,

curriculum and training content); process (related to methods of training organization and management); outputs (related to output standards, use of training outcome and post-training fostering) [3]. In which: - Training program is an overall plan for a training activity; - Methods of training organization and management are the means to implement the overall process of training and the process of targeted and organized stimulation on the subject; - The results of the training process are assessed through the level of output standards and job position; post-training fostering [3].

### 2.2. Some models of training primary teachers in the world

#### 2.2.1. Model of primary teacher training in Japan (see figure 1)

In Japan, the teacher training program consists of three parts: general education; professional education and knowledge of teaching profession. All public and private universities can take part in teacher training. To become a teacher, the learners must complete a undergraduate or master course in teacher training specified in the Law of Education Personnel Certification and take the teaching certification exam organized by the Education Councils of provinces and cities. These certificates are divided into three levels: Advanced, First and Second, depending on candidates' capacities. The certificates of teaching primary level are allowed to teach all subjects. In the system of teacher training institutions, colleges are allowed to issue second class certificates; universities with Education departments are allowed to issue first class certificates; universities with master courses are allowed to issue advanced degrees for teaching at preschools, elementary



(SK: Specializing knowledge; PT: Pedagogy training; AK: Additional knowledge)

Figure 1. Training model of primary teachers in Japan

schools, high schools and vocational schools [4].

### 2.2.2. Model of primary teachers training in Germany [2] (see figure 2)

German government stipulates that the primary school teacher training is divided into two stages:

- Stage 1: University Training includes: + Bachelor of Education: This period lasts 6 semesters, with 180

credits (on average 30 credits per semester, 1 credit equivalent to 30 hours of work including contact hours and self-studying time); + Master of Education: This period lasts from 2-4 semesters, equivalent to 60-120 credits.

- Stage 2: Internship Stage. On receiving a master's degree, to become a teacher, students must register for internship at the state department of education; the

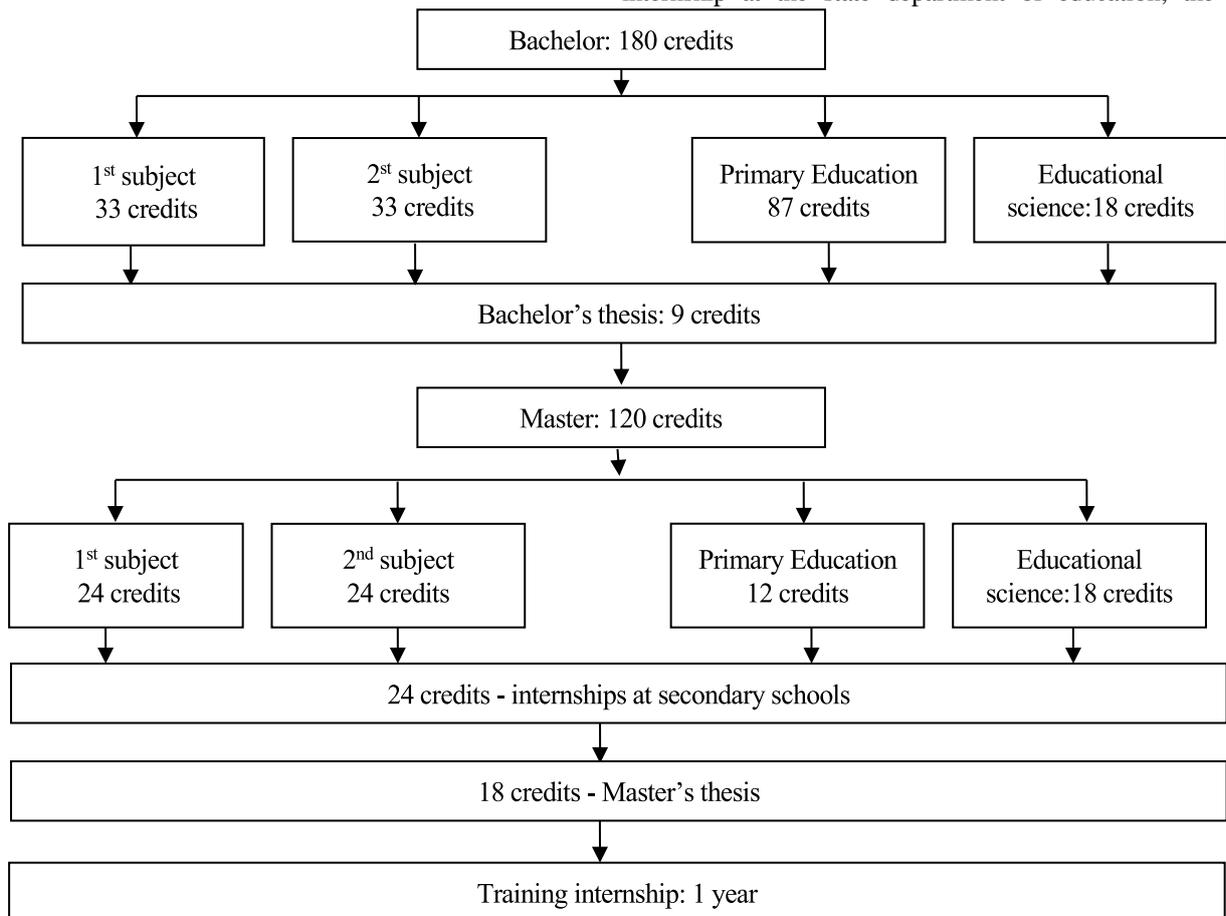


Figure 2. Training model of primary school teachers in Germany

internship duration is one year (in some states from one and a half years to 2 years). At this time, teacher students mainly train teaching as interns at local schools and then take national examinations to become teachers at schools. Specifically:

*\* Bachelor Internship:*

+ *Orientation Internship:* Throughout the first semester, in three weeks, students go to elementary schools for authentic experience every week; the main task is to observe the class. During this internship period, students work as a classroom observer with specific observation content such as how teachers open the lessons, or solve pedagogical situations. The observation is recorded by students and then explained by theoretical knowledge. The most important objective in this stage is to develop students' knowledge of teaching professional and observation competence.

+ *Pedagogical - Psychological Internship:* May take place anytime from the third semester to the fifth semester, with the internship time of 3 weeks. During this period, students are asked to conduct a pedagogical activity such as leading a group of music or sports activities or going to students' houses for educational purposes or supporting students to solve their homework. The expected products are internship reports and presentations. The targeted competences are administering and managing a pedagogical activity.

+ *Teaching Theory Internship:* This internship period is often organised during the final semesters of the Bachelor course. Each week throughout the semester students will go to school for one day, each group consists of 3 students, when one student teaches, the other two students will observe the class together with their instructor, then they will evaluate and learn from experience.

Thus, this is the first time that students have the opportunity to sketch a lesson plan and anticipate unexpected situations, conduct and evaluate a lesson. The objective is to develop students' professional competences.

*\* Master Internship:*

+ *Psychological Diagnosis Internship:* At the beginning of the Master course, in about one week, students not only have to observe the class but also need to develop the ability to diagnose students' psychological problems through contacting students outside the classroom. The focus of this process is the competence to observe students, the ability to use the questions and exchanges to diagnose students' psychological problems.

+ *Teaching internship in elementary schools:* This internship period is held during the third term of the Master course, with the duration of 14 weeks. During this internship stage, students observe the classes, carry out the lessons with the guide of university lecturers, and eventually conduct their own lessons. Each student must teach 30 periods for each subject, and complete a description of the internship process. The focus is complex training in 5 areas of teacher competences.

*2.2.3. Primary school teacher training model in the UK and Australia [2]*

The primary school teacher training program in Australia is designed for four years of study, with 450-500 credit points (1 credit is worth 15 credit points). The UK program is designed for 3 years, with only 5 modules per year, but each module has 10 to 20 credits.

*Table 1. Primary teacher training models from a number of universities in England and Australia*

Distribution of knowledge	UK	Australia
Basic knowledge	0%	8%
Specialized knowledge	4%	2%
Pedagogical teaching	84%	75%
Pedagogical internship	14%	15%

*2.3. Current reform trends in primary education*

Research on the situation of teacher training in many countries around the world shows the imbalance between the training of professional knowledge and pedagogical teaching, between theory and practice. The time allocation for internship in teacher training also varies. For example, Japan rules for 3 weeks, 6 weeks in China, 4 weeks in Korea, 10 weeks in Singapore, 3 weeks in Taiwan and 10 weeks in Vietnam. Therefore, there is an urgent need for a primary teacher training program which can ensure a balance between theory and practice and pedagogical training in the current context.

On the other hand, international education reformation is taking place in the following trends: from teacher-centered to student-centered; from transferring knowledge to developing learners' capacity; applying information technology into teaching, especially in the context of the 4.0 revolution which is going on strongly; education for sustainable development, especially in the context of globalization.

Thus, the reform of general education, and especially primary education is a critical mission of Vietnam. In order to train a generation of primary school teachers sufficient for the whole new comprehensive education curriculum [6], it is necessary to renovate primary teacher training programs. The new curriculum needs to

be both critically inherited from the previous system and evolved to meet the requirements of radical and comprehensive education reformation from knowledge-transition approach to competence-based approach. [7].

#### **2.4. Recommendation for the new model of primary education teacher training at University of Education - University of Danang**

The above analysis has provided an overview of the model of primary teacher training in some countries in the world. Regarding both parallel and consecutive training models, the latter is preferred by more countries. Teacher trainee graduates take part in a supplementary program to be eligible to participate in the test to become teachers.

In Vietnam, in the model of primary education teacher training, training program and contents in general are divided into 3 main categories: *basic knowledge, professional knowledge and pedagogical knowledge*. In fact, pedagogical internship is highly emphasized in the training program in many countries around the world, accounting for between 14% and 15% of the training time. However, in many Vietnamese primary teacher training colleges and universities currently, the internship time is only about 8 weeks which is equivalent to 6-8 credits, accounting for about 4-6%. This is quite low in comparison with the total training time as well as the internship time of some other countries in the world. Consequently, newly-graduated teachers have insufficient pedagogical competences to meet the requirements of primary schools, especially the requirements of the general education innovation after 2018.

At University of Education - The University of Danang, since 2015, the teacher training program in general and the primary school teacher training program in particular has been reformed. The reform involves all stages from inputs, outputs as well as training process, especially changes completely the form of observation and internship periods into the form of satellite pedagogical internship with the duration of 20 weeks instead of 8 weeks as before. From the 6th and 7th semesters, students alternatively go to class as a student and go to the primary schools as an intern teacher every week. The new model has helped them adapt and become more capable in their professional activities at primary schools.

In addition to innovating the input of the teacher training model, the University of Education - University of Danang has organized many workshops with related parties to investigate the demand, set training goals and student outcomes for primary education students as well

as renovating the training process, increase the proportion of pedagogical knowledge and implement satellite pedagogical internship model.

In the following part, the author presents a summary of the process of developing the student outcomes of the training program for primary school teacher at the University of Education - The University of Danang involving the renovation of the training program and the model of satellite pedagogical internship.

##### *2.4.1. The student outcomes of the primary school teacher training program*

The student outcomes for a university education program is the quality of the program's graduates; including the requirements for expected students' knowledge, skills / attitudes / abilities / qualities at the end of the course. Thus, the student outcomes are the quality standard of education and training activities.

The process of developing the student outcomes usually consists the following steps: - *Step 1*: Establish a think tank of professional experts and education specialists of the training sector (including testing and assessment experts, program designing experts); - *Step 2*: The think tank discusses the basis and principles, etc. to propose the drafts of student outcome for the primary education teacher training program; - *Step 3*: Organize workshops and ask for comments on the first draft from 4 groups of participants: 1) Lecturers; 2) Leaders and managers of pedagogical institutions; 3) Employers; 4) Educational specialists; - *Step 4*: Revise the first draft, then organise workshops for discussions and comments on the second draft from the above groups on a larger scale; - *Step 5*: Finalize and publish the student outcomes; - *Step 6*: Develop evaluation tools for graduates of primary education teacher training courses based on the student outcomes.

Thus, the student outcomes comprehensively reflect the requirements of competences/ qualities of primary school teachers. The student outcomes of the primary teacher training curriculum consists of eight standards with 40 criteria. Standard 1: Qualities and ethics of teachers, including 3 criteria; Standard 2: Competency to study learners and educational environment, including 5 criteria; Standard 3: Educational competency including 8 criteria; Standard 4: Pedagogical competency including 10 criteria; Standard 5: Communication competency including 3 criteria; Standard 6: Evaluation competency in education including 4 criteria; Standard 7: Social competency including 3 criteria; Standard 8: Profession developing competency, including 4 criteria. In addition, students must ensure the output standard for foreign

languages and Basic Applied Computing.

#### 2.4.2. Recommendations for primary education teacher training programs reform

From the model of primary education teacher training of some developed countries in the world, given the trends of education reform, the new general education curriculum and the student outcomes, the researcher recommends a new model for primary education teacher training to complete the educational mission of Vietnam after 2018.

10-15 lessons and managing the classes as head teachers, the product is the internship report and assessment from the primary schools. For the first 4 weeks, students go to primary school for 2 sessions. In the third and fourth year, students go to primary schools for at least 2 days per week.

### 2.5. Piloting the new model of primary education teacher training at the University of Education - University of Danang

#### 2.5.1. Purpose of piloting

Table 2. Training programs for primary education teachers after 2018

Term	1 <sup>st</sup> year		2 <sup>nd</sup> year		3 <sup>rd</sup> year		4 <sup>th</sup> year		Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
General knowledge	0	7 CO	9 CO	2 CO	3CO	0	0		21CO
Basic and Specialized knowledge	17 CO	14 CO 4 CE	8 CO 2 CE	2 CO 2 CE	4 CO 2 CE	2 CO 2 CE	6 CO 2 CE		53 CO 14 CE
Pedagogical knowledge	0	0	4 CO 2 CE	17 CO 4 CE	12 CO 2 CE	12 CO		6 CS	45 CO 14 CE
Pedagogical internship		2 weeks		2 weeks	6 weeks		10 weeks		6 CO
PE	1 C	1 C	1 C	1 C	1 C				5 CO
DE		4 weeks							4 weeks
Total	17 C	25 C	25 C	27 C	23 C	16 C	8 C	6 C	153

(C: Credit; O: Obligatory; S: Elective)

The ratio between theory and practice in the modules is 60-40. Total training time is 4 years with 135 credits, of which 125 obligatory and 10 elective. In particular, pedagogical internship is conducted from the second semester of the first year and the total time of internship is 20 weeks. In addition to class meetings at the university, students go to primary schools at least 2 days per week to work as an intern (note: pedagogic internship is described specifically in the Satellite Pedagogical Internship Regulation [8] of the University of Education - University of Danang, the number of credit for physical education and National Defense Education is not included in the sum of 153 credits. Students receive their own certificates for those subjects as a part of graduation prerequisites).

In pedagogy internships of the first and second year, the students mainly observe lessons in primary schools, the training product is the report; in the third year internship, there is an additional task of a head teacher, and teaching one or two lessons, the product is the report, instructors' assessment; in the fourth year internship, students mainly focus on educational activities, teaching

Verifying the appropriateness and feasibility of the new model of Bachelor elementary education teacher training and experimenting Module of satellite Pedagogical Internship, assessing the effectiveness of using satellite Pedagogical Internship model for students in primary education department.

#### 2.5.2. Survey and experimental subjects

The overall model is tested by expert methods. Testing subjects are university managers and lecturers who have participated in the management and training of primary education teachers; managers and teachers at primary schools, primary education student enrolling in 2013, 2014 at the University of Education - University of Danang.

#### 2.5.3. Content of the experiment

We conducted the assessment of satellite Pedagogical Internship model to assess feasibility and effectiveness of the implementation of the training model.

#### 2.5.4. Experiment method

We distribute questionnaires for intern students in the

satellite Pedagogical Internship and teachers in primary schools for assessing the feasibility of the model; interview students and teachers about satellite Pedagogical Internship model to evaluate the effectiveness of the model as compared to traditional ones; organize workshops to collect feedbacks from experts on this model of primary teacher training and model of satellite Pedagogical Internship.

#### 2.5.5. Organising the experiment

The model of primary teacher training has been piloted in the enrollment courses in 2015 and 2016 and adjusted for the 2017 enrollment course. We conducted the first trial with 30 students enrolling in 2013 and the second with 68 students enrolling in 2014. At present, we apply publicly for students enrolling in 2015 at two satellite schools: Huynh Ngoc Hue Primary School and Nguyen Van Troi Primary School.

#### 2.5.6. Analysis of experiment results

Evaluating on the model of satellite teaching practice in December 2016 at the University of Education - University of Danang, 100% of the respondents (including 5 managers, 26 teachers, primary teachers and the 30 final year students in the primary education department) confirmed that the proposed model is modern, reasonable, up-to-date and suggested replicating this model to improve students' professional experience. In terms of feasibility, 27/31 managers and trainers confirmed that the model was practically possible, accounting for 87.1%. However, some (13.3%) doubted the "idealness" of the model, suggesting that more policy conditions be needed.

On the other hand, to evaluate the feasibility of the new primary teacher training model, on December 15, 2017, we designed two sets of tools (for pre-service and in-service elementary school teachers), experimenting with over 30 primary school teachers in some elementary schools in Da Nang City and 90 primary education teacher students and many education specialists. Results analysis of this experiment also showed that 98.4% respondents agreed that the pedagogical institution provided sufficient information, regulations, and forms on satellite pedagogical internship model. 86.7% agreed that the content and objectives of satellite pedagogical internship model met the disciplinary student outcomes, in accordance with the requirements of education reform, satisfying the needs of society. 79.2% agreed that the new pedagogical training model and satellite pedagogical internship model have clear goals and outcomes, meeting learners' needs, connecting primary

schools with pedagogical institutions. 96.6% of respondents agreed that satellite pedagogical internship has helped students gain timely access to local school practice; 70.8% agreed that the 20-week period and 2-day-a-week primary school attendance was appropriate; 80.8% agreed that the satellite pedagogical internship model helped students develop competences of designing lesson plans and more time to learn from their teacher instructors.

### 3. CONCLUSION

The proposed model of primary teacher training has been piloted since 2015 in the Faculty of Primary Education, the University of Education - University of Danang, annually assessed and adjusted to apply for the following courses. This training model has demonstrated remarkable advantages. Primary education graduates not only meet the student outcomes of primary school teachers but are also highly appreciated by employers for their professional competence meeting the requirements of the new general education curriculum after 2018. Students trained in a new paradigm can experience more professional activities, which helps them adjust their learning as well as boost their confidence in their future professional activities. It is hoped that this model will be replicated in teacher training colleges to train sufficient human resources meeting the requirements of the radical and comprehensive education and training reform.

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