

„The Notion of Teaching Grammar Between University and School – Students' Approaches During their Internships at School“ by Maria Geipel

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A five-month school-based internship is an essential component of the teacher education program in Jena in order to gain field experience. During this period, students are exposed to multiple, and partly contradicting, influences in terms of school and university. Facing the gap between theory and practice (cf. Holtz, 2014) they are forced to make decisions during the phases of planning and realization lessons. What seems to reveal a special potential of cognitive conflict is the planning of grammar lessons in terms of subject matters. Subject-related topics have been taught on a high level in lectures and courses, whereas educational reconstruction is necessary at school to adapt to pupils' competences.

By now, in the field of German Language and Literature Education, little attention has been given to students' first contact with reality at school. Those few studies about the first phase of teacher education are focused on the survey of linguistic knowledge without raising the question concerning the effects on thinking and acting in classrooms (cf. Bräuer/Winkler, 2012, p. 87). Therefore, we need to examine how student teachers manage the described balancing act of planning a lesson on the grammatical constituent subject.

The qualitative research design is composed of three phases: To identify the specific state of knowledge the student teachers have to do a test, whose results are put in relation to their planning concepts. With guided interviews, the student teachers are encouraged to provide an insight to their selection decisions and its reasons. To analyze the reflection processes after testing the concept in a classroom, further interview will take place.

The pilot stage with six students of the *Jenaer Modell der Lehrerbildung* shows that the majority of the participants offered incorrect or limited concepts regarding syntactic categories. Furthermore they only could identify prototypical constructions (e.g. subjects in typical positions). These deficits could not clear up during planning the lesson. To look into the grammatical topic subject, influencing factors like textbooks or web portals were used instead of “inefficient” (Pilot 1) specialist literature. Despite an explicit request to make a detailed analysis of the content, the study participants placed the focus on methodological considerations especially to stimulate the motivation and interests of learners. These observations are validated by the first results in the main survey, which was done with seven student teachers. Particularly noteworthy in this context is that those participants did not retrieve concepts from grammar moduls taught at university, but rather they offer explanations which reflect consolidated school traditions. This information could help to adapt academic studies to the learning conditions of teaching students.

References

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