



A Model of gradual Experience in Teacher Training at Kaye College: "Soft landing" or "baptism of fire"?

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Abstract

The paper presents a model for teaching practice developed at the Kaye College for Teacher Education, and implemented there, for the past six years, as a part of the first year learning program. This model based on the notion that practicing teaching skills during teacher education, should be done in a gradual manner and in a supportive environment. As a part of the first year program, the students encounter the field in various activities including observations in classes, peer teaching, individual instruction, small group instruction, and interview with teachers and pupils. The paper reports the findings of an evaluation examining the attitudes of students regarding this model of teaching practice. The evaluation collected both quantitative and qualitative data from students, in different stages in the training program. The findings shows that students in their first year of study have positive attitudes towards both gradual entrance to practice and the immediate entrance to practice, but they prefer the gradual practice model. Students in their second and fourth year of study show diversity in their attitudes towards the gradual practice model. Students in the second and the third year, see the contribution of the gradual practice components as relatively low. The paper discusses several explanations for these findings and recommends ways that may afford a coherent passage from the first year teaching practice to the second year practice.