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The relationship to knowledge in the initial education of primary school teachers in Greece: entering the students' mind

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Abstract
The aim of the present study is the contribution to the discussion on the investigation of the relationship of the future teacher to knowledge. We believe that the investigation into the above relationship is particularly important, as it refers both to the identity formation of future teachers and to the quality of the actual university studies in our country. Following the theoretical scheme of the French intellectual B. Charlot, and in opposition to other research on "rapport au savoir", we wanted to investigate the relationship of "good students" with their studies, in the context of a Department that trains teachers. Briefly, through our research it appears that the effect of the profession is of utmost importance.
Furthermore, we believe that it is particularly important that this study will allow us to identify and showcase the significance of the theoretical scheme of the French intellectual for the Greek educational reality.

Keywords
 "Rapport au savoir", identity, future teacher education.

Περίληψη
Σκοπό της παρούσας μελέτης αποτελεί η συμβολή στη συζήτηση για την διερεύνηση της σχέσης του μελλοντικού εκπαιδευτικού με την γνώση. Θεωρούμε πως η διερεύνηση της παραπάνω σχέσης είναι ιδιαίτερα σημαντική καθώς αφορά τόσο την συγκρότηση των ταυτοτήτων των μελλοντικών εκπαιδευτικών όσο και στην ποιότητα των ίδιων των πανεπιστημιακών σπουδών στη χώρα μας. Ακολουθώντας το θεωρητικό σχήμα του Γάλλου διανοητή B. Charlot και σε αντίθεση με άλλες έρευνες στο rapport au savoir εμείς θελήσαμε να διερευνήσουμε τη σχέση των «καλών φοιτητών» με τις σπουδές τους στο πλαίσιο ενός Τμήματος που προετοιμάζει δασκάλους. Συνοπτικά μέσα από την έρευνά μας φαίνεται ότι το εφέ του επαγγέλματος είναι καθοριστικής σημασίας.
Ακόμη ιδιαίτερης σημασίας θεωρούμε ότι είναι ότι η συγκεκριμένη μελέτη θα μας επιτρέψει να διακρίνουμε και να αναδείξουμε την σημασία του θεωρητικού σχήματος του Γάλλου διανοητή για την ελληνική εκπαιδευτική πραγματικότητα.

Λέξεις-κλειδί
"Rapport au savoir", ταυτότητα, μελλοντική εκπαίδευση εκπαιδευτικών.

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1. The aim and the importance of the study

Both the goal setting and the planning of the present study begin with the international literature on the study of the identity of future teachers (Paivandi, 2015: 76).

It is however especially important that the related concern has been developed from the research data and the conclusions that derived from an investigation of quantitative research, that was carried out in 2017 in the Department of Primary Education of the University of Patras. Characteristically, the data of that study demonstrates the focus on the instrumental choices such as the class and its functions (Stamelos&Evangelakou, 2018). Thus, according both to the international studies and to the abovementioned research, students show a strong preference towards and favour the skills that are directly related to the instrumental prospect of their professional orientation.

As we already mentioned, the previous orientations point us to life paths and professional expectations that are influenced more by experience and less by the systematic cultivation of knowledge, the mental autonomy, namely the participation in the daily reality of academic studies.

The aim of the study, in the context of the aforementioned concern, is therefore redefined, and focuses on the investigation into the relationship of the future teachers to knowledge. We believe that the investigation into the above relationship is particularly important, as it refers both to the identity formation of future teachers and to the quality of the actual university studies. Consequently, it would be interesting to seek the relationship of those students to knowledge, and the meaning given to academic studies.

In conclusion, the main question of the study refers to the relationship to knowledge of the "best students" in a University Department with strong professional orientation. As a result, in contrast to other research on the relationship to knowledge, we concentrate on students who achieve excellent results in their studies, attempting to focus on the feeling of connection with knowledge and the experience of their studies according to the theoretical prism of B. Charlot.

Therefore, we will continue by attempting to investigate the relationship of "good students" with their studies in the context of a Department that trains teachers. Through our research it appears that the influence of the professional expectation of the educational role is crucial.

2. The theoretical framework: the relationship with knowledge

The investigation of the relationship to knowledge, and also the effort to understand and interpret the meaning given to university studies by prospective teachers, require the investigation of three parameters: the investigation of the experience, the conception of meaning and the investigation of practice.

The success of the above requires that in the prospective teacher we identify motivation, activity and meaning.

Thus, as follows from the prerequisites that result from the goal setting and the question of the study, both the theoretical prism and the research tool of a sociology of the subject, as it is composed in the thought and work of the French intellectual Bernard Charlot (1997), are necessary.

More specifically, Charlot begins from the triptych of experience-meaning-practice. He tries to read the phenomena positively, namely instead of thinking about what the pupil is missing, one should think about what happened to a pupil, valuing their story and the way the subject acts in the world they inhabit. In the end, the pupil is not understood as a passive object. The pupil is first and foremost a child, namely three things: a) a human being, b) a social being and c) an unique being, in other words they act in and on the world, they search for learning and they are produced and grow in the world.

Ultimately, in the light of Charlot's theory, the question it poses arises as particularly important for our study: "what kind of relationship (rapport) to knowledge and to the world should the child (the young human being) construct with the help of the school?"

The above led us to corresponding grid analysis templates on matters such as the reception of the educational reality, the meanings the (senior) students-prospective teachers give to university and its structures, and the existence of a relationship of behaviour and expectation on an individualised strategies level.

Thus, four distinct sub-categories, established through research, were constructed, and they are the following:

- The future profession as an already lived-through experience

- The profession as a vocation

- Who the good teacher is and what they know how to do

- The university studies and the student's identity. Independence and responsibility.

As we already mentioned in our goal setting, we are going to attempt to satisfy the theoretical matters of interpretation that stem from the point of view of the French intellectual, in contrast with other research on the relationship to knowledge, focusing on the students that achieve excellent results in their studies, attempting to concentrate on the feeling of connection in knowledge and in the experience of their studies according to Bernard Charlot's theoretical prism.

We believe that this focus on the good students, contrary to other research, is significant and original as it will allow us to distinguish and showcase the importance of the theoretical scheme of the French intellectual for the Greek educational reality.

3. Methodological approach and research tools.

Following the methodological example of B. Charlot (1997), the study begins with the quantitative investigation of the particular subject (Stamelos&Evangelakou, 2018) and aims for answers after qualitative investigation of the research questions. Especially, the French academic designs his studies in a combinatorial manner. Thereby, the analysis arises as a result of a quantitative and a qualitative approach. The interview technique is often used, semi-structured and/or in-depth, while the sampling is based on socioeconomic characteristics.

Consequently, the present study in the light of its questions, its goal setting and its theoretical choices, namely following the methodological approach of a "sociology of the subject", adopts as suitable the qualitative approach using the semi-structured interview technique.

The comparative benefit of the interview, compared to alternative methods of data collection, can be found in the interaction between the interviewer, the interviewee and the framework of the interview. Hence, the researcher is provided with the necessary flexibility in order to investigate in detail, in depth and with increased validity, important aspects of the phenomenon in consideration.

The interviews undertaken for the need of the present research were in the form of semi-structured interviews, based on an interview framework that included the basic questions as well as a sum of secondary questions, functioning as a reminder, so as to ensure that all the planned sides of the topic would be covered and a combination of satisfactory consistency and free answer would be achieved by the interviewee. This type of interview (semi-structured interview) allows for the collection of in-depth

information and data, especially when it comes to the investigation of complicated social processes, behaviours, positions, values and views. Furthermore, it can lead to the emergence of topics that had not been predetermined by the researcher (Denzin & Lincoln 2008; Iosifidis, 2003 & 2008).

Specifically, both the educational condition and the theoretical framework led to the choice of the qualitative approach and the respective application of the technique of the semi-structured interview. Thus, we interviewed senior students (3rd and 4th year) that attended the course, who participated actively and were often evaluated on their coursework for the modules with high grades.

Finally, we investigated the transcriptions of the interviews that we conducted in the spring of 2019 with the 16 students from the same Department. The duration of the interviews varied from 25 minutes to 1 hour and 20 minutes. The average duration was usually 35-45 minutes. The names mentioned here are not their real names. They are the names the students themselves chose for this particular study.

4. Presentation of the empirical data

4.1 The future profession as an already lived-through experience

A distinctive quality of these pedagogical studies is that the professional space is already known and experienced. It is not something unknown. Furthermore, one of the characteristics of the students of this particular Department is that it undergoes significant professional reproduction. Indeed, the qualitative research showed that 1 in 6 students has at least one parent who is a teacher (Stamelos & Evangelakou, 2018: 254). In fact, in the specific interview sample this characteristic is more prominent. As a result, the professional space (school) had been experienced both itself and within the family by the parents, their conversations and the formation of their lifestyle. For example Alkisti says:

> *"maybe I was influenced because my mother was also a teacher so partly just since I was little, I mean I remember I liked that working with children, helping friends with their homework...".*

Efthimis says more or less the same:

"the department of primary education was the first choice […] I come from a family of teachers, my mother a teacher and my grandparents were also teachers…".

But whoever did not have parents who were teachers had had the experience of school as well (Dimitra):

"… yes, I wanted to be a teacher since I was little. I don't know, I loved my teachers since preschool. I just wanted to be in their position and to be the one who read the story instead of the teacher. I really liked that!".

From another point of view the experience was polysemous for Mirto:

"I had a teacher whose shouting was heard from here to further down than Rio³. That was unbearable, it really was… Generally, I try not to do what that teacher did to me".

We ought to point out though that this course was chosen as their first choice by the majority of students (55%), while 36% had it as a second or third choice (Stamelos & Evangelakou, 2018: 254)⁴.

4.2 The profession as a vocation

Through the analysis of the interviews it appears that there are students who give meaning to the educational choice and construct the expectation by adopting narratives that remind of biologisms, where nature and motherhood are connected with this particular profession. Aliki asserts that:

"but the profession of the teacher is something that from a young age… almost all the little girls play-act, namely we always wanted to be teachers […] we like showing someone that we are taking care of someone, that we impart something to them, we pretend to be mothers a little bit. I think that's what we like…".

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³ Suburb of Patras.
⁴ We should of course note that there are students whose choice was due to obligation and the respective explanation of the choice of studies leads to other arguments.
For more see: (Stamelos & Evangelakou, 2018: 254).

4.3 Who the good teacher is and what they know how to do: The profile of the good teacher

Subsequently, the students were asked about the characteristics of the "good teacher". According to the French academic B. Charlot, the good teacher is communicative in a pedagogical relationship where the predominant distinguishing quality is mutual respect. They are also the one who explains and explains anew, without getting angry, "fifty or a hundred times" if necessary, until the pupil understands.

In the answers we received, the meanings given to the teacher are characterised by polysemy. A characteristic that shows the complexity of the conception of the role. This observation is important for the comprehension of the identity of these students, as, according to B. Charlot, the school story of these young people is formed thus in a sum of relationships, interdependencies and interactions, as a dimension of a more general life story in which these young people constitute sole subjects.

This story is also developed through the activities developed by young people around the world, including their school activities. Eirini's narrative is representative of this:

> *"you have to be a kind of role model […] a nice image for yourself, have confidence, be able to support your personality, what you say, your knowledge… A great deal more is needed than going into the classroom and just teaching them maths or Greek".*

According to Sofia, the knowledge of the teacher is directly connected with and depends on their ability to communicate this knowledge. Aliki explains:

> *"they can impart to you what they tell you. I still remember the teachers that had a very good relationship… very good relationships with them (…) [the good teacher] to engage with the child, not to leave it […]".*

The individualisation of the interaction of the teacher with the school class appears to constitute a target according to the meanings given by the prospective teachers that participated in the interviews.

Elli analyses the communicative dimensions of individualisation:

> *"[...] and definitely to be able to see the star of each child and to know what the child themselves is capable of, to orientate themselves in order to know what they want to do in their life [...]".*

Ultimately, according to the interviews, a characteristic of a "good teacher" is the ability to cover the multiple aspects – cognitive and communicative – of the role in an individualised relationship. Efthimis's narrative is representative of this:

> *"the good teacher to me was the one that on the one hand placed boundaries, but on the other hand was very close in their relationship and their interactions with the pupils. Namely, I would prefer the individuals who, on the one hand impart knowledge and have superior subject knowledge, but can also in this way create friendliness, a learning climate, a nice environment, a good relationship with their pupils, who are not detached and distant from the children".*

Concerns regarding the efficiency and evaluation of the "good teacher" are not absent from the narratives. Dimitra maintains:

> *"a good teacher is a teacher who is efficient [...] [but also] a kind of role model [...] mainly knows how to conduct a lesson [...] without chaos ensuing in the class".*

Whereas Ansi poses the question of evaluation and professionalism:

> *"They care about being good at what they do. They definitely get educated further. They self-evaluate. They are generally interested in this profession".*

What should maybe be the takeaway here is that the good teacher is not somebody who is merely knowledgeable, but they are somebody who understands pupils and is close to them but also functions in a regulatory manner as a "social role model". Maybe Amalia expresses this clearly:

> *"they will teach them 10 things that are basic and that will show not only in their grades, but also later, in their behaviour, in how you will form their character, certain values you will impart to them".*

4.4 The university studies

4.4.1 Before coming to university.

As the life paths of pupils constitute the focus of parent strategies and social practices, where the introduction to university constitutes a natural next step and a consequence of a successful educational path, the students now consider university as the natural next step after high school. According to the interviewees, this message seems to be passed on strongly both by their parents and by their teachers. Thus, university studies don't

appear to be the result of a well-stuctured decision, but more as something "obvious". Characteristically, Aliki claims:

> *"as a little girl in primary school I remember saying that my goal was to get into university, without knowing what university was back then".*

The linearity of the strategies and the one-dimensional element of the paths are indicative in Thaleia's narrative:

> *"The parents [...] I don't know firstly, and then the rest of the environment [...] whether it is the school, the teachers, the private tuition centre, the educators, etcetera. They all expected namely that you will finish that and we will go straight to university. In any case... so this was maybe a little predetermined and it was not so much that I wanted it".*

Despite the specialised and often costly parental strategies, and also the multiannual expectations, the conception of the institution of the "university" can be found in the the imagination and often with a disarmingly simple structure.

Petros says characteristically:

> *"something that is usually outside the rest of society that to succeed in being admitted you have to sit exams. I thought that nobody can come visit the university without having a reason to be here".*

However, there are also interviewees who through their ignorance were not so optimistic regarding the lightness of university studies. Niki explains:

> *"in the beginning I was thinking that it was something huge, that it was a step above school, that you would be a kind of genius when you finished. Because I had neither friends nor cousins who were older because I was the youngest in the family who went, so the first day I came everything seemed like I went to the Disneyland equivalent for the department [...] there was also the curiosity to see how it is or if it is indeed as hard as I thought it would be, because I thought it would be very hard".*

The admission to university constitutes a choice with instrumental-like deterministic characteristics for the social subjects.

> *"after a point I knew that if you don't go to university there is no chance to ever make a living [...] it is important to have proof [...] I decide to spend 4 years of my life and a significant amount of money definitely in order to learn*

something, in order to have proof, evidence, a state-awarded document anyway that says that you have learned something and after that you will work" (Nefeli).

Here we could detect the beginning of the instrumental character that we detect in the meanings given to university studies.

4.4.2 After coming to university

The admission to university constitutes a transition as well, a critical event of the life paths. The admission to a relationship with the world and with society. Mirto's narrative is typical:

"and suddenly I, the young one [she has four older brothers] am going to Patras! To a city that when we heard Patras we would say "okay" it doesn't have the best reputation! [...] when I realise I'm coming to Patras I thought I would get killed [...] I felt it was very heavy [...] after January when I calmed down, I am in university, I have a goal, we're going there, no place for sentimentalisms now. I understood that friends are a big thing when you don't have your family".

4.4.2.1 The student status

The transition means the emergence of a new aspect of identity as well. It is also interesting that different students focus on different points of the student status. Sometimes these refer to the studies and sometimes to student life. The relationship of study and student life constitute two axes of the new emergence. Irene argues:

"... certainly, means that you have grown up, you are not a child anymore. The student is not a pupil, you have let's say an upgrade as a concept [...] certainly has to do with the people you hang out with, that you have a wider social life compared to when you're a student, you have a different freedom, you have another I think responsibility towards things, you have to weigh in and have a say in certain things".

The relationship to life is the focus for the meaning given to the student's identity.

"[a student] I have that they live alone or cohabit with other students, that they have another life, that they have a different life, that they have another social life, they also have the social aspect, now I don't know exactly, they are a person who studies in another city, maybe not due to their origins [...]

they have their own responsibilities, they have their own obligations"
(Alkisti).

Referring to the new identity that emerges, Alexandros observes:

"[a student] as regards my obligations I knew [...] that I should go to my
classes [...] because it is solely up to the student to handle it". On the other
hand he adds: *"[...] the fact that you have succeeded in the panhellenic*
exams [...] is your own effort, the feeling is ethical [...] you can brag to
relatives and friends that you are a student [...] that I tried and I
succeeded".

However, Dimitra focuses on the stress:

"[being a student] means stress! It is the first thing that comes to mind [...]
okay it is not completely negative, it also means I'm learning things,
broadening my horizons, it's cliché but true".

The connection with the professional prospect is especially important too. It is
indicative that Aliki connects the status of the student with the later professional life:

"to me, being a student is connected in my mind with a period of grace,
because later comes a lot of work [...] it means I have obligations".

Through the conception of the obligations and rights, the comprehension of daily life,
namely through the relationship with the world, the identity becomes autonomous.

4.4.2.2 Independence and responsibility

Students focused heavily on independence and responsibility. These two concepts are
used both for university obligations and for wider student life. Dimitra asserts:

"University equals Autonomy".

Petros focuses more on the distance, spatial and symbolic, from the family:

"I managed to become independent from my parents, not financially
unfortunately [...] I managed to have some time and space for myself".

Related to this Eirini says in more detail:

"I didn't want to choose Athens because it was close to Megara, either way
I wanted to become independent [...] and I had no problem because I made
friends almost straight away [...] I started to think further ahead! You
mature because you understand [...] you have to become completely
independent and not just change home. In university you see that the

> *opportunities are given to you and some prospects are given to you too […] to be able to improve […]".*

4.4.4.3 The university modules

4.4.4.3.1 The personal dimension

While studying in university, several of the students were planning the educational path according to the subjective choices and orientations.

> *"in high school everything was protected, we come to university and see that everything is a personal choice […] if you want to you attend class, if you don't want to you don't attend, if you want you do this, if you don't, do that. One must prioritise their needs and prioritise their goals. Something that I believe is very hard to achieve in this transition […] namely we are not ready, I felt it" (Efthimis).*

The individualisation constitutes support when it comes to handling everyday life, especially in times of need:

> *"… I came a week later because the house was not ready […] and I go to the secretariat as if I was lost, as if I was in the first grade of primary school […] now I understood that you function autonomously there too. You don't have support there either. You fight alone there too. Traumatic experience!".*

4.4.4.3.2 The university course and the university classroom

The meaning given to everyday life in university is produced from an imaginatory conception both of the processes-the academic practices and of the subjective actions. In a lot of the interviews we analysed, the conception and the meaning given to everyday life in the university auditorium begin in the experience the students have internalised from secondary education.

> *"I thought that it would be an environment where we would be more relaxed… that we will have a lot of essays, a lot to study but it wasn't that stressful, it doesn't have as much as I thought it would, as many demands" (Niki).*

Efthimis gives meaning to his experience in the lecture hall with competition as the main value:

"a full classroom, without places, without seating [...] it is more impersonal [...] maybe there is an unexpressed spirit of competition [...] each person for themselves".

4.4.4.3.3 The job of the student and the demands of the professor

Everyday life in the university is normalised by the massive character of the Greek University. Due to this massive character of the institution, the subjective needs for an individualised approach are not satisfied. Thus, the educational practice in the university auditorium is differentiated from the respective experience the students had in secondary education. In the interviews, the student's job and the professor's demands are given meaning in the context of this inconsistency. The interviewees consider the individual ability to understand the demands in every module important. The feelings of individualisation of conception, of vagueness, of fluidity, but also of risk are present. Finally, the position regarding the flexibility of the student in the context is produced from the data.

As for university essays, students say:

"here you have to find out ... more on your own what you have to do and what you have to achieve [...] in high school they are more involved" (Ansi).

Niki and Eirini realise the individualised experience:

"no nobody! I understood it by myself and I understood it as I attended classes, because each module needed its own work and you were working differently for each module" (Eirini).

Risk constitutes a challenge for Mirto who says lyrically:

"I went into the sea and I swam without armbands".

And she is not alone…

"okay, whether you want to or not, you will sink or swim" (Aliki).

In her narrative, Nefeli showcases the triptych of individualisation, fluidity, insecurity, while explaining:

"[...] I think in first year the professors treat students as if they were children you have thrown into war! Or when suddenly grades come out and you're waiting for good grades and when you think you've done well but you haven't, each person has their own way they want you to write certain things... during the course I also look at the professor's face, namely if they emphasise something very strongly it will be something that's important".

1.4.4.3.4 The good and the useful course

The students also expressed themselves with regard to the characteristics of the good course (sometimes of the "bad course" too), and also with regard to whether the "good" course is the "useful" course. Specifically, the evaluative characterisation is produced in connection to the expectation that is instrumental-like in many cases, as it is connected with the dominant narrative about the connection of the degree with the job market. Thaleia believes that the good course is that which has a significant practical character:

> *"one that captures your interest. You want to attend and after you attend you realise it will also help you somewhere in practice".*

In any case communication is a goal.

> *"[...] when I feel really comfortable raising my hand and expressing the problems I face I like that, the interaction I think" (Aliki).*

> *"above all is the person! [...] it is very important to have a sense of humour. It is really important to be intelligent [...]" (Nefeli).*

Eirini's view on flexibility as a continuous pursuit is similar:

> *"[the good course], every course had a subject and conversation and talk happened around it and there was no standard line we followed… therefore this flexibility and this continuous pursuit for the essence let's say under what we were talking about, was to me the most interesting".*

On the other hand, the lack of reliability and communication in the relationship defines the "bad course".

> *"if a professor doesn't come at all or if they do come, they come late, without informing us […] when they don't communicate well with the students [...] when the students complain that they don't understand the professor and the professor just continues at their own pace" (Ariadni).*

Based on the previous information, the answers to the question whether the "good course" is the "useful" one was the following:

> *"there is a distinction to me. The useful course in the department of primary education would be that which is directly related to the educational practice. The good course is not necessarily also a useful course, because if to me personally these criteria are not fulfilled, even if the course is useful, that does not make it good" (Efthimis).*

Conversely, Dimitra claims:

> *"[the good course is] the useful course [...] it is something which I can use".*

1.4.4.3.5 The choice of courses

Based on the answers of the students there are different reasons for the choice of courses (in case of optional courses): interest for the subject, usefulness, obsession with grades, etc.

> *"in elective courses I usually pick the ones I believe will help me more later when I enter the classroom".*

The grade is important in choice orientation.

> *"they go depending on the previous grade in the course of the same professor".*

In any case, it seems that students like the ability to choose. Alkisti says:

> *"[a good thing] you can choose between courses, pick different specialisations [...] I always like the fact that I have choices".*

The interpersonal educational relationship of professor and student has a significant effect on the choice of course:

> *"to me how the professor functions in the class is important. From how they behave, from how they address people..." (Mirto).*

However, a determining factor for the choice is the profession's expectation. Ariadni records:

> *"Now I also choose those that I will be interested to explore in the future, such as the psychology courses [...] but it also depends on the demands of a course [...] I will try to choose something that will be simpler as a course, so that I don't have many obligations".*

4.4.5 Learning and knowledge

4.4.5.1 Learning

The process of learning in the narratives of the interviewees is directly connected with its usefulness, its value is defined through the experience of High School, while it produces understanding and transformation, that as a process takes place during the university course. It is also interesting that in certain narratives the awareness is connected with the usefulness. Thus, for Dimitra to learn means to acquire something useful. Amalia appears to believe the same:

> *"[to learn] to acquire some knowledge, but to remember it as well. And to be able to implement it".*

To Sofia, learning does not only have professional value. For Ansi "to learn" is to "transform", because for her to learn can mean "to also adapt to new situations". Aliki explains it as awareness. However, it seems that awareness is a process that evolves during the university course. Indeed, according to Alkisti:

> *"in the beginning you are admitted and you don't know, you read things that I believe you have to learn in order to learn them and I think later some things you learn because you understand they will be of use to you and you find their practical use".*

Let it be mentioned that, according to Alkisti, awareness is connected to usefulness.

4.4.5.2 Knowledge

Petros, who found himself in the Department of Primary Education after a failure to be admitted to the program of study he desired, records:

> *"To me, before I was admitted to university, knowledge was, for example in Medicine, to be able to diagnose something and help the patient. In essence, to recall things, that mostly, recollection of knowledge [...] in the end it doesn't just mean recalling. It means experiencing and it means making connections, making connections between different knowledge and often I rebuild the existing knowledge or ideas".*

Essentially, Petros here reminds us in his way that the perception of knowledge is not singular and it is connected with the content of each science.

Therefore, it is something one remembers and can be recalled and used.

For the end, we left Aliki's perception, which concentrates on the dipole right-wrong and treats it teleologically:

> *"that I don't believe it is right, that it is not fair [...] no better the right thing [...] to be fair, that's what I care about the most [...] that's what I connect with right, wrong. That! [...] knowledge is what is real [...] to me this is knowledge".*

Here we have a particular perception: knowledge is the "real" that is connected with the "right" and the "fair" and the one who diffuses it, the professor, is its carrier. Consequently, knowledge is something constructed, preexisting, that the student is asked to learn in order to be able to do the right thing and be fair!

Finally, Mirto connects knowledge with application:

> *"to be able to handle a situation, to be able to handle it, to prevent something".*

4.4.6. The internship: personal experience and critique in the program of studies

4.4.6.1 The personal experience

The evaluation of the personal experience seems to contain both the declaration of the personal value of the internship and a comparison of the university practice with the experience of the school classroom. In this comparison, the experience of the prospective teacher gives meaning to their action as trainee teacher.

4.4.6.1.1 The evaluation of the personal experience

On the evaluation of the educational practice as personal experience: Sofia introduces to us to the role of mentors and their importance in the internship as well. Sofia also introduces us to the comparison between the I-student and the I-teacher. An element that is a determining peculiarity of these studies. Characteristically she records:

> *"it was a good experience I was lucky I think because it was a nice environment I had a good relationship with my mentors. They were very helpful towards us [...] I had also used some things that I had learned, I tried to incorporate them into my teaching [...] things that happened in my time too that they continue to happen even though we learn new things in university, school isn't very different compared to how it was when let's say I was a student".*

As regards the comparison with the school classroom:

> *"with the theories we have done now here, that and especially in the Greek we did, the approach is quite different anyway, so… but certainly it is said that we the teachers do what our teachers did, I keep it in mind to teach lessons more consciously [...] [the difference] a lot of contact with the children during the lesson, individual let's say which... we posed the questions and were overseeing them to see how they answer... uhh we didn't sit on the teacher's chair at all... and in the lesson the approach of the pedagogy was different" (Ansi).*

The experience of Amalia's internship shows us the boundaries that can be placed by the mentor-teacher of the class and the obstructions they can produce when it comes to

the revitalisation and differentiation of the teaching even at an experimental level. Niki shows her disappointment by comparing yesterday and today:

> *"What I will say is very bad [...] but I don't think the manner and the structure of the lesson can easily be changed. Only something extra so we can play a different game [...] we will do reading, that doesn't change [...] I don't know had it been my class but from the moment that there is a teacher and it is their class and they have a certain routine I believe I ought to follow it [...] mostly I follow the existing model, I try to make my changes to the degree I'm able to, so that I don't become annoying to the teacher who accepted me".*

So, here we realise the importance of the mentor and "their" class that has learned to function a certain way. Alexandros attempts to explain:

> *"[practice] seemed to me easier than I expected [...] I saw that quite a lot of preparation is needed, that you need to have very strong foundations in the subjects you are going to teach too [...] because I realised that no matter how much I prepare for the lesson of the day there will always be a child who might say something stupid that might however be very useful [...] you need to be flexible, but have a goal depending on how the lesson goes [...] be able to answer everything [...] if not with the right scientific knowledge, because it may be a matter you're not familiar with, in the best possible way so that you don't make the wrong impression on the pupil".*

Comparing with his school years he records:

> *"it is different, if not fundamentally in the biggest part, because before I started the internship, I reflected and I wrote down the things that I as a student couldn't find. [...] I tried to use the projector not just as a simple magnifier of our book [...] showing other examples, playing games that were based, because they had been checked by my mentor, because all the years I was in primary school I had women teachers, so that screaming in the morning has left me a very bad memory".*

The interesting part is that mentors are not all cautious or even negative towards the students' innovative ideas. Here, Alexandros tells us that his mentor allowed him to do the lesson as he had planned it.

Eirini explains on the one hand the sensitive relationship between university and school, on the other hand the boundaries based on the development model of the internship. Accordingly, she continues with her own time as a pupil:

"[in her years] … there was a lot of noise. So it was very tiring… having this very strong memory I had decided that entering the classroom I don't want to allow noise to be made, not in a bossy way, but I was sure that I don't want that to happen [...] obviously because I had experienced it, I became furious and I decided that there is no way I will let that happen...".

Aliki on the other hand focuses on her stress:

"the internship I was very stressed and especially when I had seen the classes I would have first and sixth grade how will I manage? […] I like it very much now that three weeks have passed, I am having a great time… I really like that I'm a teacher. I get up on the board, I now have a sort of confidence too, I have started to get used to it a little bit […] but the first lessons were hard".

Here, the crossing from the student status to the teacher status which is so clearly explained by Aliki is important.

Alkisti balances between stress and professional awareness:

"it made me understand why I am in the department of primary education […] you enter the practical part".

The commonplace answer of fluidity and the need for survival exists in Eirini's narrative too:

"it was a nice experience! On the university's side it was completely disorganised, it was like they were sending you and telling you now you have to survive by yourself […]".

Finally, Eirini's critique of the program of study based on the effectiveness and justification of the usefulness for the profession of the teacher is especially noteworthy:

"[…] they were giving you the possibility to study and become familiar with numerous scientific fields. I believe however that we studied these fields more than we needed to as teachers [...]".

Lastly, Nefeli would like to enter the classroom from first year:

"[…] I think the period was very short. I believe we should be in the classroom from first year […]".

4.4.6.1.2 The critique of the program of study

The critique of the program of study is often focused on the need for practical application.

> *"what I imagined was something a lot more practical, let's say! ... and not so much sitting at a desk and writing all the time" (Nefeli).*

Dimitra is convinced that:

> *"I would like [...] more didactics courses [...] I always liked natural sciences [...] I found it more interesting to learn how I will teach them to the children than doing something a little more abstract like psychology and such [...] I would rather have twice as many didactics courses. Namely, for someone to tell me in practice that there are certain theories and techniques possibly that you could apply to your teaching of the subjects".*

Fani alleges that in the first years there were a lot of theoretical courses, also she appears to make an important distinction between the "scientific level" and "practice".

> *"I think that the first years were a lot of theory, on a scientific level and not so much in practice".*

Petros claims:

> *"I believe they seemed useful to me particularly when it comes to the courses of Greek and mathematics. The psychology courses I can't say that until now they have seemed very useful to me. Also the sociology courses were the stimulus let's say for me to start thinking differently about education [...] yesterday I showed the children pictures from Google Earth to show them how small Greece is and I showed them that as a stimulus for a lesson on loanwords, the children themselves were interested to ask on their own why loanwords exist [...] while I remember at my age the situation was more... the book says it, that's it and it's an absolute truth. Now children question".*

Thaleia and Elli declare bluntly:

> *"I put the internship in first place [...] I wish I went to school every day and we didn't need to go to the courses at university! [...]*
> *It's like if a person doesn't know how to boil an egg and you go and show them what poached eggs are!" (Elli).*

5. Summarising and discussing

The ulterior aim of the study was the contribution to the conversation on the investigation of the relationship of the future teacher to knowledge. We believe that the investigation of the above relationship is especially important, as it refers both to the formation of the identities of the future teachers and to the quality of the actual university studies. In this light and following the theoretical scheme of the French intellectual B. Charlot (1997), we attempted to focus the conversation on three axes: on the investigation of experience, on the conception of meaning and on the investigation of practice. The investigation in the end referred to social subjects and specifically the characteristics of the motivation, of the activity and of the meaning given by the prospective teachers who participated in the interviews.

In contrast with other research on "rapport au savoir", we wanted to investigate the relationship of "good students" with their studies in the context of a Department that trains teachers. We began from the triptych experience-meaning-practice and we tried to understand – in a positive interpretation of the phenomena – what happened to the students. Essentially, we gave value to their story and to the way the subject reacts in the world it lives in. In the end, in the context of the study, the student was not viewed as a passive object, but as a subject that acts in and on the world, it searches for learning and it is produced and grows in the world.

Firstly, to the question on what kind of relationship (rapport) to knowledge and to the world the child (the young human being) constructs with the help of the school institution, through our research it seems that the effect of the profession is of utmost importance.

Here two particularities must be noted. Firstly, that the future profession is already a lived-through pupil experience. Secondly, because they are female-dominated studies that lead to the handling of young children, motherhood as a concept and condition seems to insert itself. Furthermore, a significant group of students seems to come from the reproduction of the profession, having at least one parent who is an educator. In conclusion, these particular studies are, primarily, in the students' mind, professional studies.

This leads to a differentiation between theoretical (occasionally scientific) knowledge and applied (useful knowledge). The former is scorned while the latter is glorified. However, there is another aspect to the specified differentiation as well. The applied

knowledge is that which activates the subject and transforms them from passive receiver to actor (from student to teacher). Conversely, theoretical knowledge is connected with memorising by heart and with passivity. As a result, knowledge is given meaning as "doing something further than memorising by hearτ" and as "doing something in relation to a profession".

In this way, one can understand the great value attributed to the internship. At the same time though, the "classroom stress" appears. Responsibility for this "stress" is quite often placed on the program of study that does not include enough didactics courses and has a lot of theoretical courses (mainly Sociology and Psychology). Thus, we have a shift towards "a conservative shift towards the traditional profession". Let the durability of older beliefs, that this work is not a profession but a vocation, be noted here. Indeed, it seems that even today there are students who believe the teacher should be a role model and mould consciences. In this way though, one wonders whether the universitatisation of these studies had the expected results and whether it was a successful reform in the end. The truth is that what shows is the dominance of professional traditions over scientific knowledge, if that is understood as the posing of questions and the effort to understand them through investigative research.

On the other hand, though, the university environment (not necessarily of these particular studies) pushes students to a bigger sense of autonomy and responsibility, at least for this particular group of students. Let it be noted that, because these studies are particularly interdisciplinary, the effect of the professional field seems to be especially weak, which on the one hand contributes to the prevalence of the professional aspect, on the other hand it increases the difficulties of the "job of student" to the degree that the demands of each professor seem to be different from those of the others.

In this light, the relationship to knowledge for these particular students appears to be determined by what they believe are the demands of the profession, and actually from a rather traditional point of view. That is maybe consolidated not only through their pupil experience, but also through the limitations placed by the way the internship is implemented, and the central role of the mentors that seem, in most cases, to act as guardians of the routines of the profession.

Finally, we believe that this focus on "good students" – capable of high achievement and evaluation in the courses –, in contrast to similar research, is important and original, since it will allow us to distinguish and showcase the importance of the theoretical scheme of the French intellectual for the Greek educational reality.

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Appendix

students' profile

High school location	High school evaluation	Opinion on teachers	Teachers' effect	Self-evaluation	Panhellenic exams results	Clear Dream	Dream	Father's education	Mother's education	Father's occupation	Mother's occupation	Home	Childhood	Student's finances
Patras	focused on Panhellenic exams	neutral	no	top of the class, 19.3	18	no	Department of Primary Education (influenced from mother's tradition)	Higher	Higher	Military	Educator	family owns home	happy	no struggles
Ag. Theodoroi	very good	positive	from Junior High School (pilot)	18.8	15.5 and 12 (two fields)	yes	educator's influence (civil engineer)	Higher	Higher	Civil servant	Educator	renting	exceptional	no struggles
Karpathos	neutral	mixed	no	Mediocre in high school	14.5	no	no (first choice English Language and Literature)	Post high school non-university	High school	Municipal civil servant	Not permanent (super market, tourist shops)	family owns home	Neither positive nor negative	struggling
Patras	positive	positive	yes	18	17	no	between Philology and Primary Education	High school	Post high school non-university	Business (bakery)	Nurse	renting	lovely	Depends on the season (works occassionally)
Patras	negative	negative	no	16.5	9.5 and then 15	yes	Psychology	Primary school	Primary school		Private employee (Kitchen porter)	renting	lovely (divorced parent)	no struggles
Patras	positive	positive	yes first year of high school	18.1	16.5	no	Psychology	High school	Post high school non-university	Municipal civil servant	Nurse	family owns home	perfect!	struggling
Nafplio	positive	somewhat positive	yes	18-19	almost 16	yes	English Language and Literature or Primary Education	Higher	Higher	Lawyer/ University professor	Educator	family owns home	happy	sometimes struggling
Paros	mixed	mixed	no	just over 13		yes	Mathematics (she got into the Mathematics Department she did not enjoy it and years later she came back for Primary Education)	Primary school	Primary school	Restaurant owner	Working in the restaurant	renting	negative picture	struggling
Messini	negative	negative	yes	19	18	yes	Medicine	Higher	Higher	Educator	Educator	family owns home	happy	struggling
Salamina	positive	positive	yes (3rd grade of primary school)	18.9	15.8 and 16	yes	Primary Education	High school	High school	Private employee (shop with sanitary goods)	Homemaker	family owns home	bad as a child better later	struggling
Megara	positive	positive	yes	17.5	13.6 then 16	yes	Paramedical professions	Higher	Higher	Educator	Educator	renting	happy	as much as needed
Kalamata	relatively positive	issues with teachers	yes first year of high school	18.2	15.3	no	Primary Education (despite the family's protests)	Higher	High school	Civil engineer	Secretary in a private company	family owns home	with a lot of stress!	struggling
Keratsini	very positive	generally positive	yes	17.8	16.2	yes	Primary Education	Higher	Primary school	Priest	Homemaker	family owns home	happy	borderline manageable
Ilion	negative	negative	no	18.3	15.525	yes	Primary Education	Primary school	Junior high school	Navy	Hair stylist	family owns home	really good	satisfactory (except around carnival time!)
Milos	very positive	very positive	in all grades!	17.9	15.7	no	Psychology and then Primary Education	Junior high school	High school	Builder, then bakery owner	Bakery employee	family owns home	happy	satisfactory (works occasionaly)
Gastouni	negative	negative	no	19	16.95	no	Psychology and then Primary Education	Higher	Higher	Educator	Nurse	family owns home	both happiness and sadness	struggling (works occasionaly)