

Are Educational Sciences useful in Teacher Education?

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Abstract

This paper deals with the question: are Educational Sciences (ES) useful in teacher education (TE)? The question draws its legitimacy from two facts. The first is of a historical nature: in Greece, ES found their institutional expression with the establishment of the University Departments of Pedagogy (UDP), whereby ES were integrated into initial TE. The second concerns the actual questioning of the value of ES in initial TE by students. The text attempts furthermore to investigate if the gap between theory and practice could be filled in the case of ES in the context of TE. To achieve this, we present an experimentation conducted in the European Educational Policy course of a UDP in the academic year 2019-2020. The experimentation seems to have been well received by the students, indicating that it is not impossible to fill this gap.

Keywords

Educational Sciences, Teacher Education, University, Students.

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Introduction

Educational Sciences acquired an institutional status in Greek universities in 1982. They were combined with teacher education in the University Departments of Pedagogy (UDP)³. The UDPs were created in 1982 and have been in operation since 1984, for the oldest. Their great novelty was to introduce teacher education (ex “teacher training”), even of Kindergarten, at university⁴. The coupling of Educational Sciences and teacher education has not been easy, since the lack of experience in Educational Sciences has been combined with the difficult history brought about by teacher education. Additionally, there has been little experience when it comes to university education for primary school teachers internationally.

Within Educational Sciences, the lack of previous experience has brought into conflict different traditions, usually from different social contexts. On the one hand, the pre-existing experience of pedagogy derived from philosophy, and especially from Herbart’s and Rein’s German tradition, with its existence as an independent course in universities for almost a century (Fragos, 1982; Papakonstantinou, 1984; Gotovos, 1984). On the other hand, Educational Sciences were promoted, in two different versions (French and English tradition), by scientists who had studied in France or in England, but without experience in the Greek reality (Stamelos, 1999). In this context, let us add the lack of research in the Greek context, which has been supplemented by translations from other social and educational experiences.

A difficult point seems to be the fact that Educational Sciences, part of the institutional framework for primary school teachers’ education, should be self-constrained to a domain smaller than the international field of Educational Sciences. Here, the staff of Educational Sciences, who came from studying abroad, played an important role, as their considerations and interests often exceeded the narrow school context, if they did not completely ignore it.

Initially, Educational Sciences dominated for reasons that will be explained below. However, in the second half of the 1990s, they began to come under pressure.

³ The use of “Pedagogy” does not signify any theoretical or methodological preference. It is used as a word of Greek origin. Moreover, “UDP” is a title which, in the Greek context, refers only to primary education.

⁴ In 1982, only 3% of the world’s primary education teachers received university education. As for kindergarten teachers, Greece was the first country in the world to introduce their education at university. Therefore, globally, for the university education of primary school teachers there was very little previous experience.

The controversy revolved around the fact that they had nothing to do with or they were not directly related to school reality and its needs.

Nowadays, Educational Sciences, especially macro approaches, are treated critically, especially by students, who are the main stakeholders. Students tend to view UDP courses as "theories" unrelated to school practice. This criticism must be treated as important because it concerns the recipients of the educational process.

On the other hand, it is true that many academics have no experience of school reality or are not interested in school reality, either because it is not part of their scientific interests or because they consider engaging in its daily needs alters their scientific identity.

Taking into account both the limitations placed on Educational Sciences by their institutional integration and the criticisms they receive, we will focus on the following question in this article: can Educational Sciences be useful in teacher education? Here we assume that the teacher is willing to negotiate the distance between Educational Sciences and the narrower field of teacher education and wants to bridge it without losing his scientific identity.

1. Brief history

The Pedagogical Academies (PA), existing since 1933 (1959 for Kindergarten), were post-secondary, non-university institutions. Their diachronic feature was their strict state control: curriculum, teachers, teaching methods, assessment methods, student selection, student life. The word "control" acquires all its meaning if it is considered in relation with political irregularities (two dictatorships [1936-1941, 1967-1974], a civil war [1944-1949] and a turbulent period [1949-1967]). It is no coincidence that the two dictatorships showed real legislative activism, regulating all normative aspects of the initial training of teachers (Stamelos, 1999).

From the fall of the regime of colonels (1974), the main demand was the "universitization" of initial training (Teacher Training [TT]), in the sense of its liberation of state control.

The first socialist government (1981) realised this "dream" despite the strong reluctance of universities, which reacted by claiming that this training was not scientific. Two lessons can be learned from this procedure: a) university autonomy is

not a panacea, b) strong links were established between the Socialist Party (SP) and the teaching profession.

In order to legitimise its decision, the SP brought together teacher training, now teacher education (TE), and Educational Sciences (pedagogy, in Greek), arguing that the scientific identity of graduates would come from Educational Sciences, insofar as they are above all “pedagogues”.

In conclusion, Educational Sciences (ES) have been used to "scientify" TE, to build an academic identity, and to respond to the concerns of universities. However, the operation also had another important objective: to liberate TE from state control (central mechanisms and hierarchical controls - inspection system) (Stamelos, 1999).

2. Must a “pedagogue” know the reality of a class?

The decade 1984-1994 is characterised by the creation of UDPs (18 in total) and the concern for academic integration and recognition. In reality, the UDPs aimed at their university integration by promoting the scientific nature of ES and thereby creating the "pedagogue". At the same time, these Departments found themselves involved in every public and/or scientific debate concerning education and legislative initiatives - considered as specialists- which gave them added social value (even visibility through mass media diffusion) with repercussions on the university governance as well.

The concern for scientific identity was such that some UDPs preferred to exclude internships and any sign of TE (previously TT) considered "retrograde". Thus, TE disappeared under the domination of ES. Let us keep in mind two things: a) the creation of the "pedagogue"/intellectual without strong relation to the school reality, b) the creation of the “pedagogue”/intellectual prepared to seek and criticise the misadventures (of the profession) of the past. This has two consequences: i) teachers who have not been appropriately prepared to face a class, ii) teachers who know the past but not the present. A present formulated by two characteristics: a) the weight of the past, b) a fuzzy knowledge of contemporary research through translations mainly from the international bibliography which concerned other social contexts. Finally, we ended up with a paradoxical phenomenon: new graduates arriving at school unprepared quite simply reproduced their school experiences, lived in the past, while being professionally integrated by colleagues already in function. Thus, the famous and highly desired

"universitization" and "scientification" resulted in the reproduction of what has been called "the persistence of the spirit of the Pedagogical Academies".

As for ES, they have been reduced to the domain of National Education.

3. From the "pedagogue" to the "didactician"!

From the second half of the 1990s, we began to experience reactions. Reactions came from both inside and outside the UDPs. The reactions from the inside originated from the fact that, because the UDPs were already well staffed and therefore a certain balance between TE and ES had been established, there was demand (and conflict) for more school-based activities. The reactions from the outside were due to a new national competition being introduced to select graduates to teach at schools, a competition focused on school subjects and preparation for teaching in a class. The results, published in the press, showed that some UDPs prepared better than others. Hence the pressure from society (stakeholders) on the UDPs.

Thus, in recent years, we have arrived at the domination of Didactics (general and specific), where everything that is theory is "nothing" (a waste of time) and everything concerning school subjects (and their didactics) is useful and is considered important. Indeed, students believe that their internship is the most meaningful component of their education and the theoretical subjects are not so important (Stamelos & Evangelakou, 2018; Stamelos & Kamarianos, 2020). In this way, the "pedagogue"/intellectual of the past has been transformed into a didactician who is interested in what is practical and useful in class. Consequently, and in a –still–paradoxical way, we are witnessing the resurrection of traditional characteristics of the profession, such as the famous quest of "recipes" for each classroom situation. Thus, we are no longer interested in theory –in any case, after 40 years at university there is no doubt regarding the scientific identity of this curriculum (TE)– but we are ready to accumulate recipes claiming to solve any practical problem in class.

In this spirit, internships and practical training are booming. Preparatory internships, short internships, long internships, internships by school subject, internships by class, a whole arsenal of internships which is in full expansion to the detriment of all that is ES. The "real" training is –finally– back! Despite this didactic domination today, paradoxical effects still appear. Academics in the UDPs prepare students for internships at school. However, student-interns are supervised by class teachers who act as their

mentors. In the class during the lesson there are the class teacher, (sometimes) the accompanying laboratory staff teacher (from the university), the trainee(s) and the pupils. Through a systemic paradox, validation of internship and professional socialisation are still done by the school teachers. As a result, for the student, who is a professional of the academic system, there are distinct spheres (Coulon, 1997): the preparatory (theoretical) sphere in the University, where one has to be in agreement with the didactic axioms, and the real-life (professional) sphere, where one has to accept their mentor's indications to guarantee their success in the internship (Fterniati & Frounta, 2018).

From this presentation, a remark emerges: the weight of tradition shows exceptional resistance in various social and educational circumstances.

As for ES, their perceived significance in teacher education programs is less and less. In any case, two contradictions emerge regarding ES, one old and one current. The old one concerns the fact that by being connected with teacher education they were trapped in the limited field of primary school education. The current one is about lifelong learning. Indeed, lifelong learning, as a requirement and as a fact, implies a learning process much broader than that of primary school teacher preparation. But this point is beyond the objective of this article.

Under these circumstances, the question is whether ES have something distinct to offer in TE, and if so, under what conditions. What seems doubtless is that if the necessity of ES is to be established, ways to make the links between theory and real-life more visible have to be discovered. The truth is that ES was the scientific field that once tried to bring research (the introduction of doubt and the generation of questions about educational phenomena and educational situations) into teacher education that was strongly normative (the famous "musts" of teachers). However, all the indications that exist show that, even today, the students of these Departments are not persuaded that research is part of their professional identity (Stamelos & Kamarianos, 2020). The need to respond immediately and urgently to everyday school situations often leads them to believe that the knowledge that contributes to tackling school reality is what determines the educational and professional substance of that professional field. Therefore, research is understood as a luxury and not a priority. Two additional issues should be mentioned. First, the exceptional resilience of reproduction of the profession with the additional difficulty of introducing changes and improvements on a timeless basis and under different historical contexts. Second, the way in which ES courses are implemented

often focuses more on the abstraction of scientific knowledge than on its tangible applications in everyday school practice. However, presenting research data without interrelating them with the social and educational needs that gave birth to them leads to the implementation of courses which push students only to memorise things, simply in order not to fail the exam. The student is transformed to a passive recipient and reproducer of sterilised information about a social and/or educational phenomenon. On the contrary, in the context of the internship, the student becomes, at least in part, under supervision, the actor of a situation (teaching). They are responsible for managing the class and the time, even if, in order to achieve it, they recall from their personal experiences from the time they were a pupil and follow the advice and encouragement of their mentor. Therefore, the big bet of ES is how they will be able to activate the student by showing them the ways in which what is presented as "theories" can be used in everyday school life by the classroom teacher, as well as how a teacher has to generate queries about school situations and phenomena.

In this text, an experimentation will be presented that was conducted within the compulsory third-year course, entitled "European Educational Policy", of the Department of Education and Social Work⁵ of the University of Patras, using the students of the spring semester of the academic year 2019-2020. It should be noted that this course has, in the past, been accused in students' evaluations as deviating from the curriculum and as having little to do with the other courses of the curriculum. The objective was to demonstrate how the "theories" that are presented during this course can be used in the classroom in order to develop citizenship competences in pupils.

4. The identity of the experimentation

The course within which the experimentation was conducted analyses establishment of the European Educational Policy (EEP) and at the same time explains how the EEP affects the national educational policies of its Member States. One of the thematic units of the course refers to European Citizenship⁶.

Because of the fact that nowadays both democracy and active citizenship face problems and sometimes young people question both democracy and the importance of participation in civic life, this particular focus was chosen (Papadakis, Kyridis, &

⁵The name of the Department reflects the evolution of a University Department of Pedagogy (UDP).

⁶This year the unit was taught by the doctoral candidate I. Gkotsis in three parts: two lectures followed by a "workshop". Due to the measures to reduce the pandemic, the implementation of this "insert" followed the distant learning model.

Fotopoulos, 2016). In this context, the overall goal of the experimentation was to raise students' awareness of the values of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (Charter) (European Parliament, Council of the European Union & European Commission, 2016), and to involve them in the process of transmitting these values to their prospective pupils. Specific objectives were set as follows:

“Students are expected to:

- i. get to know the content of the Charter,
- ii. realize that the values contained in the Charter are not merely theoretical but can be an educational subject,
- iii. "see" the transmission of these values to primary school pupils as something that concerns the teaching profession,
- iv. focus on one value of the Charter and plan a short unit of work (two to three teaching periods) that could be delivered to primary school pupils and
- v. enrich their potential educational techniques.”

5. The implementation of the experimentation

The first lecture (see footnote 4) explained what European citizenship is and how the EU came to its establishment⁷, why it is important and through what mechanisms it is promoted by the EU, and in particular how it is promoted in the field of EEP. There was a particular focus on the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, as the rights of the Charter are integral elements of European Citizenship.⁸ It was highlighted how important it is for the rights to be legal commitments of the EU institutions, which means that when they are violated, we can demand they be honored. The application of rights is therefore not self-evident; we must be active citizens and claim them. Figuring out what this requires brings us to the second lecture.

The second lecture served as a "bridge" for the transition from theory to practice. In order for EU citizens to be active with regard to the rights provided for them by the Charter, they should be aware of their rights, exercise their civil rights, and also claim

⁷European Citizenship is established in article 20.1 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union (ex-article 8 of the Treaty on European Union, Maastricht 1992): “Citizenship of the Union is hereby established. Every person holding the nationality of a Member State shall be a citizen of the Union. Citizenship of the Union shall be additional to and not replace national citizenship” (European Union, 2016: 56)

⁸ In article 6 of the Treaty of Lisbon “the Union recognizes the rights, freedoms and principles set out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union of 7 December 2000, as adapted at Strasbourg, on 12 December 2007, which shall have the same legal value as the Treaties” (European Union, 2007: 13).

their individual and social rights when they are violated. However, in order to have the desire to exercise and claim them, they must realize their value and at the same time feel that the rights in the Charter and the Treaties are not something unfamiliar to them. The latter presupposes that European citizens feel that they have a sense of identification with the community to which they belong in theory. It is the job of the teacher to build these conditions of the active European citizen.

Thus, it was explained to the students that it is their responsibility to apply the above "theory" within the school, according to the European Reference Framework for the eight Key Competences for Lifelong Learning (Conseil of the EU, 2018). In particular, Key Competence n.6 in this Framework is "Citizen Competence", defined as *"the ability to act as responsible citizens and to fully participate in civic and social life, based on understanding of social, economic, legal and political concepts and structures, as well as global developments and sustainability"*(Council of the European Union, 2018: 10). It includes specific knowledge (including knowledge and understanding of the European common values, as expressed in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union), skills (including critical thinking and constructive participation in community activities, as well as in decision-making at all levels, from local and national to the European and international level) and attitudes (including respect for human rights as a basis for democracy, willingness to participate in democratic decision-making at all levels and civic activities, support for social and cultural diversity, a readiness to respect the privacy of others, and to take responsibility for the environment). The Council of the European Union recommends that "member states should support and reinforce the development of key competences from an early age and throughout life, for all individuals, as part of national lifelong learning strategies" (Council of the European Union, 2018: 4). It is evident that "Citizenship Competence" is closely related to the values of the Charter. Therefore, as far as this experimentation is concerned, an effective teacher is one who manages to promote the values of the Charter to the pupils. The question of the second lecture, then, was how the teacher could transmit the values of the Charter to the primary school pupils, as the knowledge and adoption of these values is a prerequisite for an active European citizen, as well as how the teacher could develop their citizenship competence. This is also linked to the need to develop pupils' democratic behaviour, bearing in mind that many of them tend to speak out or act

against others, uncontrollably and without discipline, an issue that is closely linked to the basic mission of primary school, that of the socialisation of the pupils⁹.

In order to make this semester's students understand and to convince them that the theory on European citizenship and the Charter is a useful element since it can be incorporated in their teaching, an example was first presented to them and then they were asked to prepare, on a voluntary basis, their own examples, so that some of them could be presented and commented on during the workshop: The asynchronous creation of these examples combined with the presentation of some of them synchronously, constitute a distance workshop, which aspired to bridge the gap between the theory taught in the two lectures and the students' future teaching practice. The theme of the workshop was: "The values of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union: transmitting them to the pupils through a short-term project".

In order for the teacher to communicate the values of the Charter to the pupils, laying the foundations for them to become active citizens, the pupils must first be aware of the rights of the Charter. Secondly, they have to understand their value, and thirdly they must learn how to claim them (three general goals). It was clarified to the students that these general goals are not achieved at the same time but in the long run. The teacher sets one goal at a time in relation to one of the values, and proceeds to the next goal after the first has been achieved. Each goal is pursued through specific activities, preferably involving group work, which the teacher assigns to the pupils. It was pointed out that with each activity the teacher should pursue a specific learning outcome¹⁰.

⁹According to a micro-survey carried out for the needs of writing a final year dissertation on the concepts of "racism" and "respect for others" in third-grade primary school pupils, it appeared that pupils, not being able to recognize and distinguish the everyday situations corresponding to the two concepts, tended to follow those classmates who talked a lot and intensely. Having watched a video where a young immigrant meets a(Greek) family, because he will become a donor to save their little girl from a rare disease, some pupils initially reacted with comments of racist logic ("gypsy", "ill" [because of his color], "he hurts others", "they were afraid [the family members] that he could kill them" etc.). The class seemed to share these views until one pupil said that "Antetokounmpo [Greek, born to Nigerian parents, famous NBA basketball player] is also black". Suddenly, the class was destabilized and accepted that "black" does not mean "bad". This shows the fluidity of pupils' opinions that, depending on who is speaking, can lead them towards one direction or another. At the same time, it turned out that teachers should make an active and systematic effort to establish basic human values in their pupils (Kannavou, 2020).

¹⁰Learning Outcome = a. What do I expect the pupils to learn? (which they did not know before), b. What do I want the pupils to be able to do? (which they did not know how to do before or could not do). Widely accepted is the following division of learning outcomes:

Short-term outcomes: what we *expect* to see during the project. Intermediate outcomes: what we *want* to see immediately after the project. Long-term outcomes: what we *hope* to see in the future (Free Management Library, 2020; Innovation Network, Inc, 2020; Kellogg Foundation, 2004: 2-19; Mc Cawley, 2011: 1-2).

In this context, students were presented with a short unit of work (duration: three class periods) on "Equality" (title III in the Charter), inspired by two videos (lasting 3' and 1') and aiming at serving the first general goal (and touching on the second). This short unit could potentially form part of a longer unit of work.

In the short discussion that followed, students were asked whether the videos would be effective enough in raising their prospective students' awareness and, if not, how this could be achieved more effectively. They were also asked if in their opinion the videos were suitable for sixth grade pupils. Finally, they were asked to evaluate this example (the suggested project) and explain whether they consider it applicable in the classroom. The aim of this discussion was to make students suspect the need to reflect on their teaching by asking questions about the lessons they are planning and in general about the school reality.

In order to be able to prepare their own relevant mini units of work, students had to be taught how to design a lesson plan in three phases: "Preparation" (selection and organization of inputs) - "Implementation" (implementation of activities using appropriate educational techniques, coordination of groups) - "Completion-Evaluation" (pupils' reflection, measurement of outcomes by the teacher). They were given guidelines to design activities as well as guidelines for the formulation of valid learning outcomes, based on the National Qualifications Framework of the National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP, 2015). Emphasis was placed on the consistency that should exist between the expected learning outcomes and the activities they are planning. It was also pointed out to the students that after each activity the teacher should be interested in whether the expected outcomes were reached, which is understood through assessment. The guidance of students, as well as the example presented to them, follow the theories of constructivism and in particular Bruner's (Bruner, 1996) sociocultural learning theory that uses "discovery learning" with an emphasis on the cultural and social context in which cognitive processes emerge.

Students were then asked, with a six-days deadline, to design a mini unit of work (one to three periods) on one of the six titles, namely values, of the Charter (titles I-VI: Dignity, Freedoms, Equality, Solidarity, Citizens' rights, Justice) or on one of the various rights found in the many articles of the six titles of the Charter. It was specified that each student's project should include:

- a. One of the three general goals, as defined above.

- b. One to three specific objectives.
- c. The use of at least two short videos (lasting 1-5 minutes each).
- d. The expected learning outcomes.
- e. Any worksheets the pupils would need for the planned activities.
- f. How the achievement of the learning outcomes would be assessed.

Students were given supportive material: The slides of the two lectures, a file with the example presented in the second lecture, a second example, bibliography and a (non-binding) list of websites to search for videos or other audio-visual material.

It was clarified that the quality of their work would be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- a. Naming or not naming the general goal (selecting one of the three general goals set in the second lecture).
- b. Validity of expected learning outcomes (accuracy and completeness of formulation).
- c. Correspondence of activities to expected learning outcomes.
- d. Selection of videos (the pupils' grade and the relation of the videos to the subject of the lessons would be taken into account).
- e. Degree to which the videos were used in the activities as well as effectiveness of their use.
- f. Completeness, clarity and aesthetics of the worksheets.
- g. Correspondence of the evaluation methods to the expected learning outcomes.
- h. Originality and creativity of the project.

During the third period five projects were presented and commented on (out of a total of 32). Each student had 15' for the presentation. In addition, interesting points from two other projects were highlighted.

6. Summary of the experimentation

In a three-period unit on "European Educational Policy", we sought to show students ways to apply in the classroom the theory taught in this course, particularly the theory related to European citizenship, with specific goals and objectives. Furthermore, we attempted to convince them that what is taught as "theory" in the course is also useful for practical teaching, thus for school reality, and at the same time that it is their responsibility to apply it and – in this case – to pass it on to school pupils, while

pursuing specific learning outcomes.¹¹ This would assist in bridging the gap between studies (scientific theory and teacher education) and their profession (teaching in the classroom) in students' consciousness and at the same time be an example of adapting ES to the current needs of teacher education, which in recent years has become more and more pragmatic with a strong tendency to question or even reject the usefulness of theory.

We believe that the experimentation was, in general terms, successful, for three reasons.

Firstly, the students responded positively to the workshop both in quantitative and qualitative terms. Regarding the quantitative criterion, a total of 32 lesson plans (short-term projects) were designed by 36 students (4/32 were the result of group work, each group consisting of two students), i.e. by 48% of the 75 students who attended the three-period unit on European citizenship¹². Regarding the qualitative criterion, the students responded well to the framework set to them, which gave them some guidelines for the content of their plans and formed a kind of flexible “template” to assist with the structure of their plan. In general, we were quite satisfied with their work, given the short deadline (six days) and taking into account that for 70% of the participants in the workshop it was the first time they created a lesson plan (namely a short-term unit). It should be noted that all students received feedback and they had the opportunity (and were encouraged) to send back an improved version of their plans. The new deadline was set for five days after the workshop presentations. Thus, they had the opportunity to take advantage of the comments made on the five plans presented and integrate them in their own plans. 75% sent back an improved version. On the other hand, the main weak points of most plans are related to evaluation criteria b (validity of expected learning outcomes depending on accuracy and completeness of formulation), c (correspondence of activities to expected learning outcomes) and g (correspondence of the evaluation methods to the expected learning outcomes).

Secondly, about 50% of the participants in the workshop showed originality and creativity in terms of the inputs they used. For example, when it came to websites on

¹¹This is especially true when it comes to such a socially sensitive issue as the values and rights of the Charter, which directly concern the creation of tomorrow's active citizens who know their rights, realize their value and claim them.

¹²The task was optional, but as an incentive, as well as for reasons of boost, a bonus of 0.5 - 2 points, depending on the quality, was added to their final grade in the course of "European Educational Policy".

which they were to look for videos, they did not restrict themselves to the suggested links but freely sought sources for their material. In general, the videos were appropriate and their integration in the units effective. Furthermore, many of them did not limit the inputs they used to the videos, but used a variety of study material (text, photos, tables, etc.) in the activities they planned.

Thirdly, the students submitted positive to very positive feedback. Here is a short excerpt from a student's comment: *“All three of the lessons were particularly interesting and useful. [...] I really liked the theme of our assignment; it is the first time I have been involved in creating a unit of work. You have provided very useful instructions on how to do it and I feel much more ready to create a unit when the time comes. [...] Also, thank you very much for the material you uploaded, which in addition to rich information material, has many resources that I can use as a future educator as well”*. It is evident that in the student's consciousness the distance between theory and practice has been bridged and that the usefulness of the theory has been recognized.

On the other hand, it is worth noting that none of the 32 lesson plans submitted had as subject the "citizen's rights" (title V of the Charter) despite the fact that this was the subject of the first lecture (the "theory" that was taught was about European citizenship). One possible reason is that it was the first time that students were systematically taught about European citizenship, so they felt less familiar with title V of the Charter as opposed to titles I-IV, that they are more familiar with in their daily experience. In particular, the lesson plans submitted by the students were divided into the values of the Charter as follows:

Table 1

TITLE-VALUE	Total of lesson plans	Rights	
I. Dignity	5	Human Dignity in general or Prohibition of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (focusing on School bullying)	5
II. Freedoms	7	Right to asylum	2

		Right to education	5
III. Equality	13	Diversity - non-discrimination	3
		The rights of the child	7
		The rights of the elderly	1
		Gender equality	2
IV. Solidarity	7	Solidarity in general	1
		Environmental protection	2
		Prohibition of child labour	4
V. Citizen's rights	0		
VI. Justice	0		

7. Next steps

This experimentation had also the ultimate aim of helping to modify and/or enrich teachers' educational practices. In this sense, but also in order to evaluate in practice the usefulness of the submitted units of work, we suggest the idea of implementing some of them, within the framework of the internship of the students of the Department of Education and Social Work of the University of Patras. Although they were the product of an experimentation originating from the belief that theory can be practically useful in the teacher's profession, even an experimentation that seems to have convinced the students of the usefulness of the theory, they still remain theoretical lesson plans, not tested in teaching practice.

The realization of this idea would require very good cooperation with (and of course the previous approval of) the class teacher. In this way, a student would proceed, having collected data from the implementation of their own plan, to reflecting on it and improving it, making it more realistic, with the aim of re-applying it in the future. At the same time, the classroom teacher would attend or even participate in an example of integrating the (often forgotten) theory to teaching practice.

Conclusion

The coexistence of ES and TE is neither easy nor obvious. This coexistence can function as a straitjacket that limits ES if it does not castrate them. Moreover, official policy is pushing for the professionalisation of studies and the direct connection of the curriculum with the immediate needs of the profession of primary education teacher. This is a trend that further compresses ES by proposing practical issues of school daily life leading to the restoration of a traditional perception of the profession, that of the Pedagogical Academies. However, the most important thing is that the students themselves seem to be convinced that the "theory" is useless and what matters is the reality of the profession in its physical space, the classroom.

We have the impression that if the indifference and the discomfort of students is not addressed, then ES will be marginalised if not eclipsed.

In this text, we started from the hypothesis that a teacher of ES believes that they should make an effort to impress the importance of ES (especially of macro approaches) upon future teachers. Thus, we conducted an experimentation to show students that what is taught regarding a major issue: the defence of democracy, active citizenship and basic human values, might not seem directly related to the traditional requirements of their future profession, but it may well find practical applications and become an integral and necessary part of school life. We understand that this is an effort that can be seen as distorting the original conception of ES. However, it gives a tangible perspective that ES are (or could become) necessary for TE, first and foremost in students' minds.

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Appendix

Here is one of the thirty-two units of work submitted¹³.

LESSON PLAN –SHORT-TERM PROJECT

THREE (3) TEACHING PERIODS

TITLE: "FREEDOMS".

[In the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union under Title II (“Freedoms”) it is written, regarding the right to education (Article 14), that "Everyone has the right to education and to access to vocational and continuous training"]

GRADE: 6th

SUBJECT: “Flexible Zone” [2 periods per week]

GENERAL GOALS:

Pupils are expected to:

1. Become familiar with the rights of the Charter.
2. Understand their value.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

Pupils are expected to:

1. Get to know and understand one of the values of the Charter: freedom.
2. Recognize their rights and in particular the right to education.

LAUNCH VIDEOS:

1st VIDEO: "Global Goal # 4: Quality Education"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ZxhZy64cvA>

2nd VIDEO: "A fight for education like you've never seen before"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N14_XNH8Mqs

3rd VIDEO: "The right to education"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WdPS-Z5aU_U&list=LL&index=7&t=0s

4th VIDEO: "Malala Yousafzai - The right to learning should be given to any child"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qu3aQMxkrc4&list=LLvnA9IOMtK7JX-YfGJYbCIQ&index=2>

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES OF ACTIVITIES PLANNED:

Pupils are expected to be able to

¹³ It is selected as one of the plans which fulfil the eight evaluation criteria. It is a simple and realistic plan with concrete and measurable expected outcomes.

1.write down at least two reasons why education is necessary.

2.explain at least two reasons why many children do not have access to education.

WORKSHEET 1 (For the first two periods)

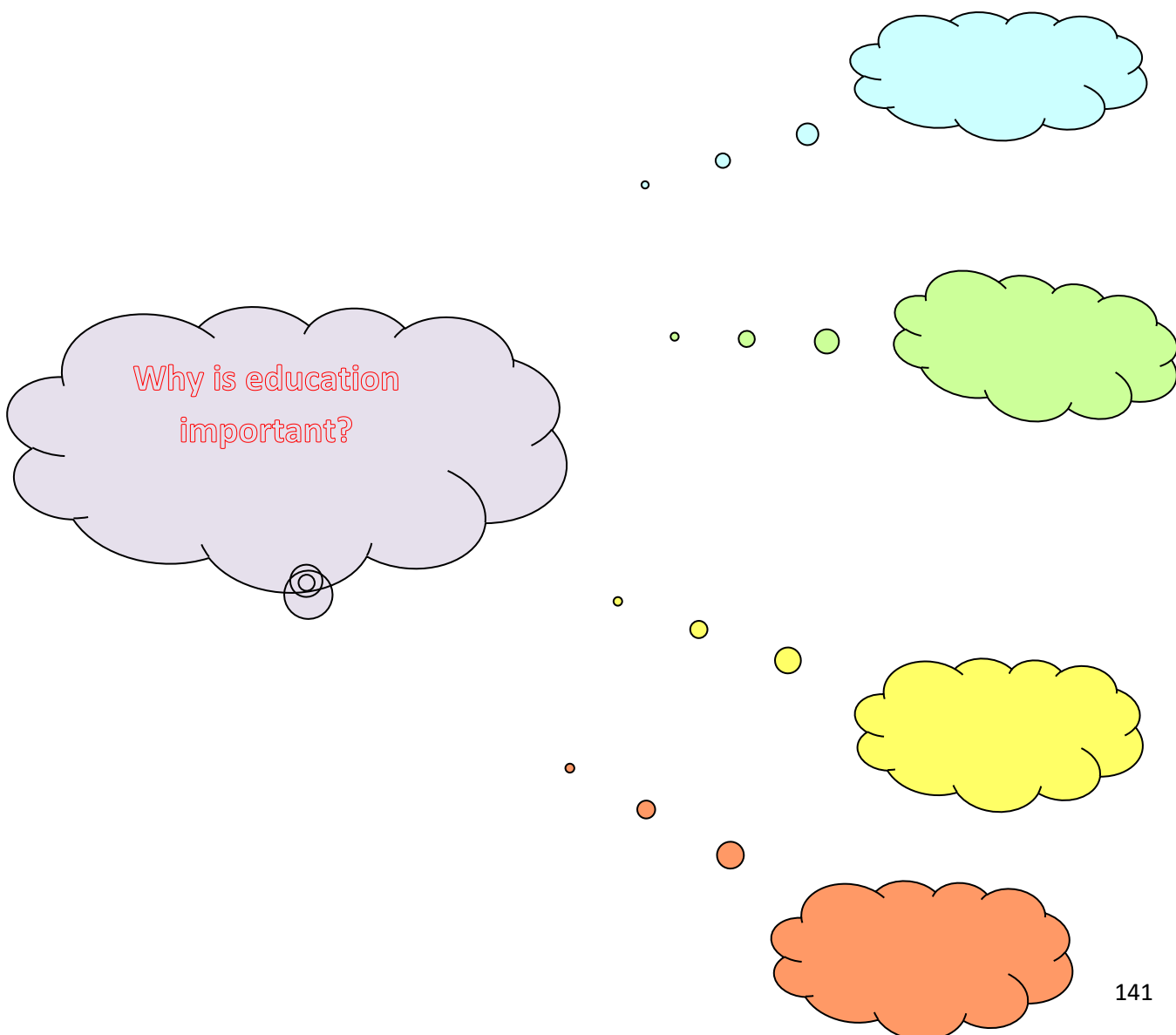
Hi children! Today we will deal with the right of all people to education. Initial questions to think about: Do all people have the right to education? Are there children who, despite their will, cannot enjoy this right?

We will watch some videos and discuss them.

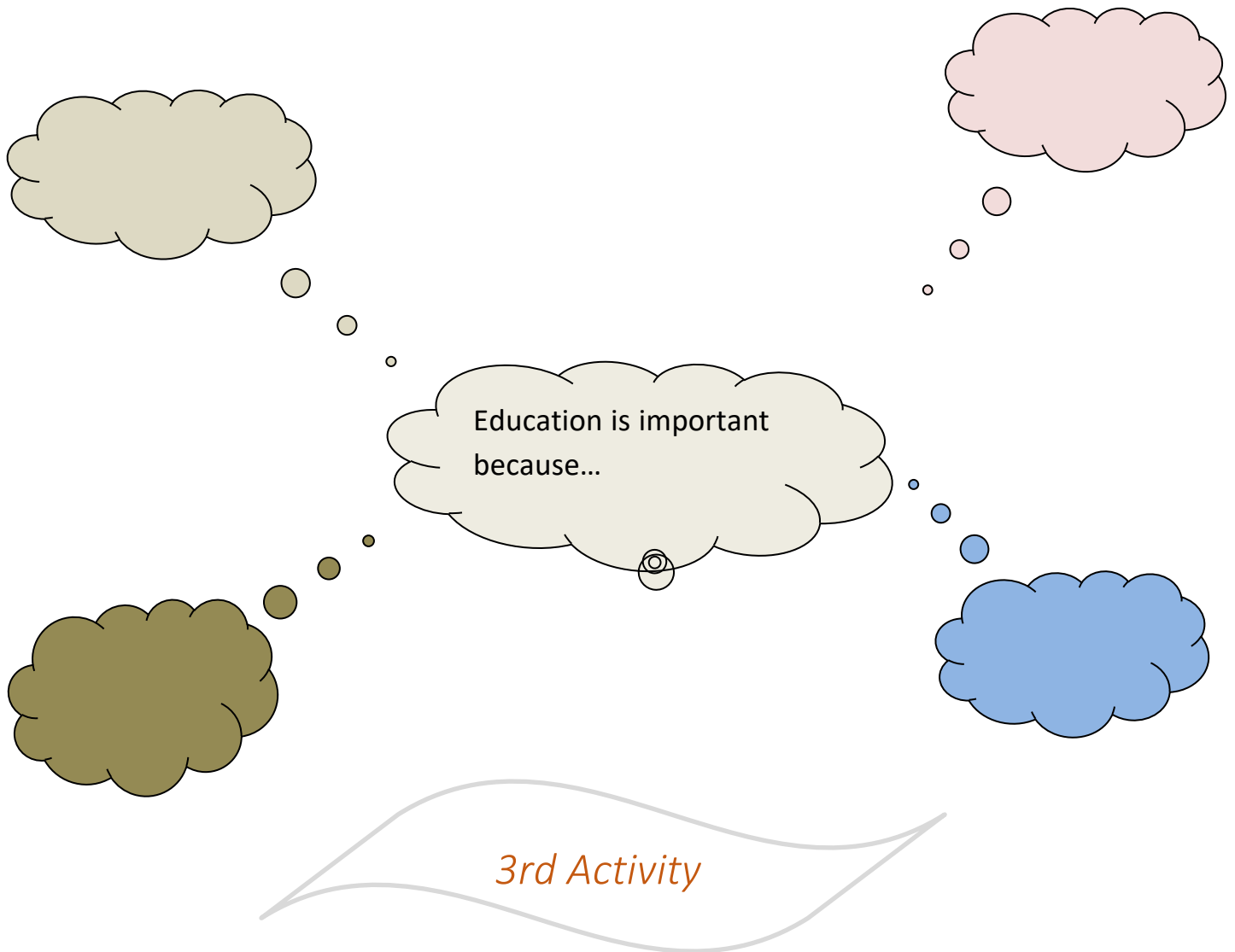
Let's get started.



Write in as many **bubbles** as you can why in your opinion education is important.



We will all watch a video together now (1st VIDEO) entitled "Quality Education" (If you have an unknown word, do not hesitate to ask). Then, fill in the following **bubbles** with the reasons why, **according to the video**, education is important.



After watching the 2nd VIDEO entitled "A fight for education like you've never seen before", please answer the following questions on your sheets:

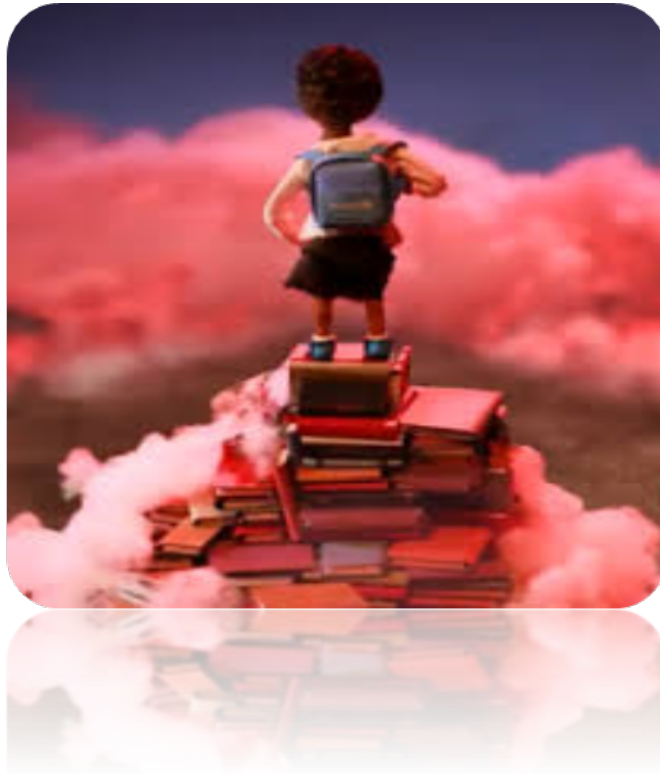
What difficulties did the little girl in the video face?

1 2

3 4

How did she deal with the above difficulties?

.....
.....
What did the narrator mean by the sentence: (Each group: Discuss, exchange opinions, be prepared to answer this question orally)



"But the story (of the girl) is not over, in fact, it has just begun"

4th Activity

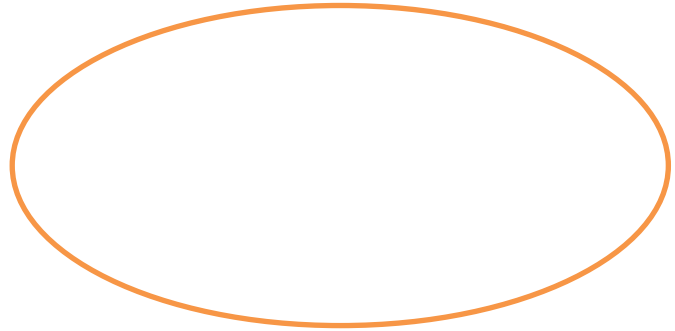
Let's watch another short video now (3rd VIDEO) entitled: "The right to education"

In the video above we met the following emotions.

✚ Which of these feelings did the (brunette) girl feel?

Write down these feelings in the circle and explain orally why she may have felt them.

1. Joy
2. Regret
3. Indifference
4. Hope
5. Annoyance
6. Excitement



WORKSHEET 2 (For the third period)



Let's watch the last VIDEO (4th VIDEO) entitled: "Malala Yousafzai - The right to learning should be given to any child - The right to learn should be given to all children" (We will watch the video twice in case you miss any answers!)

Please look at the following **possibly unknown words**:

Bit complex = λίγο περίπλοκο

target = στόχος

U.N. = Ηνωμένα Έθνη

child labor = παιδική εργασία

duty = καθήκον

(In case of more unknown words do not hesitate to ask!)

You will answer the following questions orally. However, you can keep notes.

According to Malala Yousafzai:

1. How many children do **not** go to school?
2. Why aren't these children given the opportunity to be educated?
3. What do we need to do to help these children?
4. What was it that Malala saw every morning that made her sad?



[EVALUATION SHEET: (included in the third period)]

Reflection: What did I learn in the previous activities?

1. I learned that education is an integral of somebody’s personality and a factor in one’s life.

Education offers people a lot such as:

- A.
- B.
- C.

2. I see that for many children education seems to be set aside and considered as less significant:

- a. Because they do not want to go to school
- b. Due to problems they face such as: war, child labor, widespread poverty, ill-treatment, etc.
- c. They do not consider education necessary

3. Fill in the blank:

1/3 of children in developing countries do not go to school because:

- A
- B
- C



GOOD LUCK!