

School internships as research-based hybrid spaces between university and school

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Research subject and questions

In Germany, teacher training is divided into two phases, theory at university and practice at school. In the course of this, the so-called theory-practice dilemma arises. An attempt to meet this challenge and to bring together the best of two worlds (a.k.a. the two phases mentioned above) in teacher education is the practical phase resp. the internship. These school internships are neither pure practice nor part of university and university teaching. By combining research-based learning with internships, both are interlinked. For this we use the picture of hybrid spaces (Christoforatu, 2011).

The discussion about research-based teaching and learning in this first phase plays a special role, because teacher education integrates different disciplines and has focused on professionalization debates. In particular, it is important to ask how research-based teaching and learning is implemented in teacher training (Reinmann, 2015).

The integration of research-based school internship has a high proportion of organizational integration between the two institutions university and school. The different terms used here, such as 'knowledge transfer', 'interlocking' and 'networking', indicate that actors from conflicting cultural spaces are cooperatively related to each other.

This results in the following research questions:

- Curricular anchoring:** How is the research-based school internship organized and integrated into the curriculum?
- Didactic modeling:** In which phase of the research process is the research-based school internship integrated and designed?

Methodology

Content analysis:

For the empirical review, an analysis of the structuring documents of the institutions (module manuals, study regulations) as well as self-descriptions of the projects and initiatives is carried out and evaluated with the content-structuring analysis (Kuckartz, 2016).

Embedded multiple case study:

Based on the design of the embedded multiple case study (Yin, 2014), two universities are compared in a contrasting manner for the present analysis.

Reason for case selection:

- Similarity: Designing practical phases through research-based teaching and learning
- Differences: Structural and organizational varieties of institutions (University/ Teacher Training College/ Technical University)



Results

- Connection with orientation internship:** Both universities combine research-based learning with the orientation internship, so that students can study in the introductory phase.
- Different patterns of understanding:** While the Freiburg University puts self-reflection as a main goal ("First, it is about a reflection of their own competence development and a (theory-based) reflection of key situations from a research-distanced attitude."), the University of Aachen aims at a research attitude concerning an object of observation: "Under the objective of a critical analytical examination of the school and teaching reality and the accompanying initiation of research learning, the students have the task, from the edited texts theory-based viewpoints for an observational task to be performed of the school internship."
- Space opening:** The research-oriented internship phase opens up a relational space at both institutions (Löw, 2001) in which science and vocational orientation are strongly linked to each other. This can be seen in the integration of other stakeholders. In Freiburg, they have the function of introducing students into schools and this procedure is negotiated together with the teachers: "Planning and arranging the schedule of the internship with regard to the various tasks (e.g. observing, instructing, interviewing)"



References

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