

Reviewer's Report on

Mgr. NIAN Zhaohao's Dissertation Thesis

A Comparison Study of Preparing Kindergarten Teachers in bachelor-level teacher education programs between Czech Republic and China: Focus on the Field of Kindergarten Arts Education

The doctoral thesis *A Comparison Study of Preparing Kindergarten Teachers in bachelor-level teacher education programs between Czech Republic and China: Focus on the Field of Kindergarten Arts Education* is mainly focused on pre-service bachelor teacher education study programmes for future kindergarten teachers and how they are constructed and realised with respects to arts-related subjects. The author aims to look for and compare dimensions of teacher education programmes for kindergarten teachers.

In the first chapter, the author introduces basic information about the two countries whose teacher education programmes are to be compared: the Czech Republic and China. Towards the end of the chapter, the theoretical framework is also introduced, most prominently the Situated Cognition and Learning Theory and a set of dimensions of teacher education programmes; subject courses (with respect to educational theory), professional guidance from teacher educators (i.e., mentoring), field practice (the role of future teachers' own experience), and teachers' reflection. The research questions are also introduced (p. 30–31), and main terms defined. I consider Situated Cognition and Learning Theory a sound and solid theoretical framework. I feel it would have been interesting to see more of the framework play part in the final presentation and comparison of the data. I consider the set of dimensions fitting and responding well to the research questions that I find appropriate.

The second chapter serves as a review of current literature on how kindergarten teachers are perceived in the two countries in question. The review of Czech literature is extensive, however the author had to rely heavily on translations (note on p. 56), which may have problematised the way the concepts are understood and interpreted. Some of the ideas presented in this chapter and also in the general introduction (chapter 1.2) seem overly

simplified. The review also relies almost entirely on theoretical and political (i.e., non-research) literature. I also believe it might have been beneficial – apart from Czech and Chinese original approaches to kindergarten teacher education – to include also models, concepts and theories from other cultural contexts (introduced in professional literature available in English).

In the third chapter, the methodology (research sample, modes of data collection and data analysis) of the thesis is introduced and validity, reliability, ethical issues, and various limitations discussed. To generate research data, the author used textual analysis, participant observation and (focus) group interviews (case studies). Chapters four and five present data and their analysis from both cultural contexts, the Czech Republic and China, respectively. Even though some parts of these chapters introduce the general methods of educational research instead of concrete research techniques and approaches employed, I consider the methodology adequate and well-used.

In chapter six the author introduces the juxtaposition and comparison (according to Bereday's model) of the analysed data to arrive at similarities in and differences between the two cultural contexts. Even though the author names inspiration for Chinese teachers as the main motivation for the findings have a more general impact and bring interesting and mutually inspiring information about the Czech and the Chinese systems of bachelor-level education of future kindergarten teachers. In some instances, the author formulates generalisations (e.g., about the heterogeneity of Czech classrooms) beyond what the generated data allow, but when presented as case studies the data are interpreted correctly.

The brief chapter seven serves as a conclusion and summary of the entire work. The thesis includes all and every standard elements: abstract, acknowledgement, list of references, list of tables and graphics, and a set of appendices.

The language of the text is advanced, albeit the author employs unexpected word order and occasionally unusual word choice. Formally and technically, the text suffers from inconsistencies and typographic errors that I presume can be attributed to translations between writing systems (missing and redundant spaces before and after punctuation marks and between words). On occasions there are editing issues with accidental repeating parts of sentences (twice on p. 45 and then on p. 95).

Despite the reservations that I formulated above, on the whole I conclude that Mgr. NIAN Zhaohao demonstrated the required professional skills and I recommend the dissertation entitled *A Comparison Study of Preparing Kindergarten Teachers in bachelor-level teacher education programs between Czech Republic and China: Focus on the Field of Kindergarten Arts Education* for defence.

To stimulate discussion at the dissertation's defence I suggest the following topics:

1. Do you see a relevant theoretical model or any other inspiration in the English-written literature on kindergarten teacher education?
2. Terminologically, do you see a significant difference between the English terms *competence* and *competency* with respect to your research?
3. Methodologically, which parts of the text could serve as a source for tabular or textual juxtaposition?

Brno, May 6, 2023

doc. Mgr. Petr Najvar, Ph.D.