

Training Teachers' Perspectives of the Effectiveness of the "Academy-Class" Training Model on Trainees' Professional Development

Nabil Assadi

The Department of Mathematics, Sakhnin Academic College for Teachers' Education, Israel

Tareq Murad

The Department of English, Sakhnin Academic College for Teachers' Education, Israel

Mahmood Khalil

Sakhnin Academic College for Teachers' Education, Israel

Abstract—This study attempts to examine the effect of the new "Academy-Class" teacher training model on trainees' professional development according to the training teachers' perspectives. The participants were 60 training teachers who trained student teachers from the Arab sector from different departments (English, mathematics, science, and Arabic) who were in their third year of studies in the College of Sakhnin for Teacher Education in northern Israel. The training teachers who were chosen to participate in the "Academy-Class" program were from different teaching training schools. The research question was: What is the effect of the new "Academy-Class" model on the trainees' professional development from the training teachers' perspectives? In order to answer the research question, the researchers developed research tools involving a questionnaire and interviews to achieve the study purpose. A group of teacher education experts from the College validated these tools. The researchers also measured reliability of the tools after testing them on a pilot group. The participants filled out the questionnaire and were interviewed before and after participating in the program. The study findings show an improvement in the attitudes of training teachers from the beginning of the program to its end in all aspects: reflective mentoring; approaches in teaching and learning; and the integration of preservice teachers into the education system and co-teaching.

Index Terms—"Academy-Class" model, PDS, student teachers, teacher education, traditional model, training schools, training teachers

I. INTRODUCTION

For many years, teacher training researchers have been interested in developing college-school partnerships and trying to find ways of optimizing experiences for student teachers and their training teachers. Much of this research has focused on quality preservice teacher professional development that is afforded by the factors involved in the process of teacher education (Miller, 2015).

Recent research has consistently shown that close, ongoing relationships between pedagogical instructors from the academy and training teachers from the school can help in bridging the gap between theory and practice, and can enhance preservice teachers' professional development (Allen, Howells, & Radford, 2013; Miller, 2015).

However, the quality of teaching influences the cognitive and emotional development of learners in the education system, hence, the training of teachers must be qualitative, relevant and significant. The practical experience of the trainee must be fulfilled in real conditions, in preschools and schools, accompanied by the academic institutions that educate teachers so that the novice teacher will be able to integrate optimally into the education system (Ministry of Education, 2015).

Colleges for teacher education in Israel consider the internship in teachers' education as the basis of their theoretical studies that take place in these colleges and attribute great importance to preservice teachers' training (Khalil & Assadi, 2005). According to Khalil and Assadi, one objective of the training programs is to give the student teachers the opportunity to practice their teaching in schools under the supervision of professional, veteran and expert training teachers from schools and expert pedagogical instructors from the academy.

Colleges for teacher education combine different training models: traditional training; professional development schools (PDS); and "Academy-Class." According to the first model, which is used frequently in teacher education in Israel, the student teachers are sent to training schools and are accompanied by training teachers from the school for observation, and they experience lessons in subject matters that the students study at the academy. One drawback of this model is that the students from the college feel lonely because of the disconnection between the theories they study at the college and the practice they experience in the schools.

The purpose of the present study is to investigate the contribution of training teachers in the newly implemented “Academy-Class” training model in teacher education colleges in Israel to preservice teachers’ professional development. Another purpose is to test the influence of this training model on student teachers’ professional development from the teachers’/mentors’ perspectives.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

It should be mentioned that the traditional training of student teachers does have some advantages for school partners. When teachers act as trainers for the college students and receive appropriate support from college faculty, they feel rewarded and renewed, and this enhances their commitments to best practices. For example, Nugent and Faucette (2013) found that some teachers deeply regret losing their trainees when the program ends.

While school-university partnerships are a relatively new concept, they reemerged in the early 1980s in response to concerns about serious challenges in facing inner-city school students such as violence, drugs, and poverty (Hunzicker et al., 2012).

Goodlad (1990) states that in the PDS model, the academy sends a group of student teachers to a training institute together with a pedagogical supervisor from the academy. The institute provides a site for practical work, and the academy provides the theory, and both the school and the academy work in partnership and cooperation. Within this PDS framework, the academy members conduct professional development activities for training teachers and provide supervision for student teachers. The collaborative nature of the PDS environment enables continuous evaluation and growth of the preservice teachers. In this model, the preservice teachers not only learn from the individual cooperating and training teacher, but also from the system that has organizational and pedagogical restrictions.

The third model, “Academy-Class,” came to fulfill one of the most important objectives of Israel’s education system. The objective was to establish a partnership between the academic institution for teacher training and educational institutes in order to improve the quality of teacher training and teaching and professional development processes and to promote meaningful learning in educational institutions (Ministry of Education, 2015).

In order to achieve this goal, the Ministry of Education proposed expanding the PDS model, which already exists in several academic colleges for teacher education, organizing the teacher training program so that it enables the training experience of student teachers in real, intensive and continuous conditions. This training model would contribute to the integration of the novice teacher into the education system in a more effective manner (Ministry of Education, 2015).

In “Academy-Class” model,” the trainees would co-teach with the training teacher three days a week, between 12-16 hours. Some of the teaching processes surrounding the training experience will take place within the schools where the practicum experience takes place, and sometimes even with the teachers in the school as part of their professional development (Ministry of Education, 2015). This process, which will be carried out by the academic staff of the institution, will contribute both to significant training and development of school teachers.

“Academy-Class” is a new program in teachers’ education. Its ultimate objective is to change teacher training based on partnerships and collaborations between academy institutes and leading schools. The program’s aim is to improve the qualities of training processes, teaching, and professional development, develop meaningful learning in education institutes, expand partnerships between universities and schools, and enhance co-teaching (Ministry of Education, 2015). This instruction proposes broad collaboration between schools and universities and colleges for teacher training based on the PDS model, which has been implemented in Israel for decades (Assadi & Murad, 2017).

International reviews of exemplary teacher education programs highlight the significance of close relationships and ongoing collaboration between teacher education institutions and training schools in which student teachers teach and the critical role of well-designed extended practicum experiences (Darling Hammond, 2010; Levine, 2006; Hagger & McIntyre, 2006). Well-designed co-constructed practicum experiences develop communities of learning that help student teachers to implement the concepts and strategies they are learning in colleges within their practicum field and to make purposeful links between theory and practice (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Le Cornu & Ewing; 2008; Schleicher, 2012).

Two studies described by Abdal-Haqq (1998) and Pritchard and Ancess (1999) used surveys of administrators and state department officials to determine that preservice teachers graduating from programs involving PDSs were viewed as being more effective than those who did not graduate from such programs.

In one study involving comparisons of PDS and non-PDS preservice teachers through surveys and interviews, Conaway and Mitchell (2004) found that PDS student teachers reported using more positive, problem-solving approaches to solving behavior management problems than their non-PDS peers. Classroom observation data, however, were not available to determine the validity of their perceptions.

In another study, qualitative data were collected to document improvements in classroom practices and knowledge for teaching. Rock and Levin (2002) studied preservice teachers engaged in action research in a PDS, analyzing interviews, audiotapes of planning sessions and research reports. They found that trainees clarified their personal teaching theories, gained an awareness of themselves as teachers and their students’ perspectives and needs, acquired knowledge about curriculum and teaching, and gained an appreciation of the role of reflection and inquiry in becoming a professional educator.

Shroyer et al. (2007) documented how graduates of PDSs increased knowledge for teaching on the Principles of Learning and Teaching Exam; pass rates improved from 90% to 97% over a five-year period.

Assadi and Murad (2017) conducted a study to investigate the effect of the “Academy-Class” model on student teachers’ professional development. They found that the new training model contributed to the students’ teaching experience, skills and methods. The model succeeded to improve their abilities to teach school students inside the classrooms. In addition, the student teachers reported that the pedagogical supervisor had a significant effect on their success after the training; preservice teachers also stated the contribution of the training teacher to their training and professional development.

Ariav and Emanuel (2003) found that the PDS model contributes to the training teachers’ professional development. The training teachers note that despite the problems they tackled in this model, they benefitted from it. Insofar as specific contributions are concerned such as aspects of planning and feedback on the training work, the recognition is higher than general and unfocused contributions.

In the current research, the researchers investigate the effect of a new program in teacher education, “Academy-Class,” on student teachers’ professional development from the training teachers’ perspectives.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Subjects

The participants in the current study were 60 training teachers who trained student teachers from the Arab sector from different departments (English, mathematics, science, and Arabic) who were in their third year of studies in the College of Sakhnin for Teacher Education in northern Israel. The training teachers chosen to participate in the “Academy-Class” program were from different training schools. The college students went to these schools and co-taught with a training teacher three days a week, five hours a day. The training teachers attended courses that dealt with the principles and standards of “Academy-Class” instruction given by expert lecturers from the College.

Research Tools

The research question was: What is the effect of the new “Academy-Class” model on the student teachers’ professional development from the training teachers’ perspectives?

In order to answer the research question, the researchers developed the following tools to achieve the study purpose: a questionnaire and personal interviews. A group of teacher education experts from the College validated these tools. The researchers also measured reliability of the tools after testing them on a pilot group. The participants filled out the questionnaire and were interviewed before and after participating in the program.

IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The aim of this study was to examine training teachers’ perspectives regarding the influence of the “Academy-Class” model in teacher education on the students’ professional development.

In order to examine the research question, the training teachers filled out a questionnaire at the beginning and end of the academic year at the end of the program — the questionnaire comprised 44 quantitative items divided into four scales, which were analyzed quantitatively. Another six open-ended questions were analyzed qualitatively.

Quantitative Analysis

Four t-analyses were performed for pre and post dependent samples on the questionnaire scales:

1. Reflective mentoring: The training is accompanied throughout the training period with common instruction and reflective discourse of training teachers from the school and a training guide from the college. They help the student teachers understand their training experience in a reflective and meaningful manner.
2. Approaches in teaching and learning: These consist of the professional development of student teachers, planning teaching methods and designating professional identity.
3. The integration of student teachers into the schooling system: this includes sessions with school principals, meetings with the students’ parents, familiarity with the school system, participating in school trips, taking part in school activities, supporting the system and increasing mutual commitment.
4. Co-teaching: cooperation between the training teacher and the student teacher during the lessons, and imparting knowledge through cooperation and personal example.

The following table presents the results of the t-test.

TABLE 1:
RESULTS OF T-TEST

Scale	N	Average at the beginning of the program	Average at the end of the program	t ₍₅₉₎
Reflective mentoring	60	4.23 (0.40)	4.50 (0.33)	4.49***
Approaches in teaching and learning	60	4.20 (0.40)	4.49 (0.37)	4.67***
The integration of student teachers into the schooling system	60	3.41 (0.64)	4.01 (0.56)	6.07***
Co-teaching	60	4.23 (0.42)	4.53 (0.30)	4.97***

The results of Table 1 show that in each of the dimensions examined, significant differences were found at the level of $p < 0.001$. The researchers observed an improvement in teachers' attitudes from the beginning of the program until its end in reflective mentoring, approaches in teaching and learning, the integration of student teachers into the schooling system and co-teaching.

In a series of additional statistical analyses that were carried out, no significant effect of gender or discipline was found, nor was there a relationship between seniority of teaching or mentoring and the four dimensions of the "Academy-Class" program.

Qualitative Analysis

In addition to the quantitative questions, the training teachers were asked six open-ended questions before and after the program. The questions were analyzed qualitatively, and a number of key themes were found at each dimension.

Functioning of the student teachers who participated in the program

Before the program, the training teachers were asked if there were differences in the student teachers' performance in this program compared to other programs. They were also asked about a number of areas such as teaching, pedagogy, school integration, responsibility, involvement, and others.

Their answers were divided into three different themes:

- The integration of the students into the education system

This is the central and most common theme among the training teachers (88% of the participants). It is clear that prior to the experience, the trainers were positively surprised by the integration of the student teachers. For example, "The students' integration into the school is more active and more relevant than the traditional teacher education model," "They are more involved in school activities and have greater responsibility than the traditional model." Another example is that student teachers are more involved during the lessons, and they feel a greater belonging to the school and to the teaching area, and hence also take on more responsibility.

- Arrival at the school

A significant percentage of the respondents (15%) explicitly mentioned the contribution of weekly arrival times at the school. For example, "There must be a difference because the students come to school three times a week." Arriving one day a week according to the traditional model is less significant, efficient and effective.

- Those who did not see any difference

The least common theme, but also a significant one, related to those who did not see any difference in the functioning of the trainees at the beginning of the training (12%). For example, "I do not see that there is any difference," "The difference is insignificant," "The difference is not large; it depends on the nature of the trainee."

When the training teachers were asked the same question again after the practicum, the theme of "the integration of teachers into the education system" remained central. This time, it was more significant than the other themes such as "arrival at the school" and "no difference."

- The integration of teacher students into the education system

As mentioned above, this theme increased and was the most common and central among the training teachers (93% of the respondents), even after the experience. For example, "Responsibility for the school is stronger. They are more involved in the school in areas such as ceremonies, trips and meeting pupils' parents." Without a doubt, the trainees had a rapid integration and had strong commitment and responsibility after the program.

- Those who did not see a difference

Only a few teachers (7%) stated that they did not see any improvement. For example, "I do not see any change in the functioning of the teacher students." It can be concluded that the training teachers internalized and learned to evaluate the program during the year further. As a result of the program, they recognized the improvement and integration of the trainees into the education system. Few training teachers attributed the improvement to the actual arrival three times a week at the school, but rather to additional components of the program.

The work method and integration of trainees into the classroom

Other questions the training teachers were asked were: How do you plan your work? How do you help the integration of the teacher students into the classroom?

The teachers' responses were divided into three main themes:

- Co-teaching

This is the most central theme in this question (about 70% of the respondents). The training teachers planned to co-teach with the trainees. For example, "Planning the curriculum and implementing it together," "We coordinated expectations and plan to incorporate them in every step of my work."

- Responsibility

About 25% of the respondents stated that they plan on giving student teachers a great deal of responsibility, seeing them as additional teachers, and thus contributing to their experience. For example, "I will give her the stage so that she can feel the responsibility in the class," "I want to make sure that she will take responsibility so that she can feel like a real teacher."

- Passive learning

One third of the training teachers stated observations and passive learning of the teacher students. For example, "I plan that the trainees should participate in lesson observations at the beginning and afterwards do frontal teaching."

After the program, the work method and integration of the student teachers resulted in the following themes:

- Successful integration

About 80% of the training teachers reported successful integration. For example, "were amazingly integrated, both among the students and among the teachers," "She was very well integrated into the class, progressing very well in all fields."

- Co-teaching

Many of the training teachers related the integration of the student teachers to teamwork and cooperation with them. For example, "We worked in full cooperation, consultations, and open pedagogic discourse," "Partnership in all fields, in teaching, my trainees were very well integrated into the work, and we had excellent cooperation in the class and in the school in general."

- Serving as "another teacher."

Another theme that arose was that the training teachers saw the student teachers at the end of the experience as "another teacher." For example, "We divided the lessons between us. She came to teach pupils, for example, from the sixth grade. That day, I took fifth-grade pupils," "At the end of the year, she was very well integrated, and she was like the main teacher."

- Passive learning

This theme, which appeared at the beginning of the program as being central for about one-third of the training teachers, decreased when the program came to an end, and even then, they referred mainly to the beginning of the period. For example, "At the beginning of the process, the student observed the lessons and later began to teach in cooperation with me."

- Unsuccessful integration

About 10% of the training teachers reported unsuccessful integration. In these cases, the respondents attributed the lack of success to the personal aspects of the student teachers and not to the program. For example, "The integration was difficult, I did not see motivation on the part of the students," "There was some joint work due to the absence of the preservice teacher."

The Difficulties of Academy-Class Model

The third open question concerned the difficulties that training teachers expected to see during the year. The question was formulated as follows: What are the difficulties that accompanied the process from the beginning of the year until today? How did you cope with them?

This time, there were five main themes in the teachers' responses at the beginning of the year:

- Discipline problems in the classroom

Thirty-two percent of the respondents were concerned that the student teachers would encounter difficulties in imposing order in the classroom and in dealing with discipline problems.

- Integration into the school

Twenty-five percent of the respondents feared that it would be difficult for the student teachers to integrate into the school's social and daily life. For example, "Difficulty in taking part in what is being done in the school," "It is difficult to integrate into the school and with the teachers and the students," "There may be difficulties of integration or lack of coordination."

- Professionalism

Twenty-three percent of the training teachers in the schools referred to difficulties regarding the aspect of professionalism. For example, "Difficulties in his proficiency in learning material and in different teaching methods," "The difficulties will be great in the teaching field itself or during the course of the lesson planning," "Lack of experience in mastering the material being studied."

- Difficulties of the training teachers themselves

Eleven percent of the teachers referred to their own difficulties as mentors in the program. For example, "The difficulty in having to be available all the time... the need to help the student teachers before and after class," "Difficulties in connecting the trainees to practical teaching and integrating it in school," "Time pressure, lack of professionalism in training, lack of responsibility from the student teachers."

- Contact with the training teachers

About 11% of the respondents mentioned difficulties in relationships with the students, which could be critical for the program's success. For example, "It was difficult to coordinate with him," "A lack of coordination between the two sides can be a serious problem. The most important thing is to be coordinated and work together according to the expectations of each side."

At the end of the program, the training teachers presented different difficulties than those predicted or experienced at the beginning; the most frequent theme was that there were no significant difficulties at all.

- There were no difficulties

About 35% of the respondents stated that there were no significant difficulties or no difficulties whatsoever. For example, "The program went by quickly," "There were no difficulties," "Everything was good," "There were hardly any difficulties."

- Discipline problems in the classroom

This is a recurring theme foreseen by the training teachers. About 26% of the respondents reported that during the course of the program, the teachers had difficulty with this aspect. For example, "Difficulty in solving problems with pupils who interfere and do not participate in class," "There was the difficulty of discipline within the class as they taught," "Difficulties of classroom management requiring a lot of experience."

- Load on the student teachers

About 20% of the training teachers noticed the load that the program placed on the student teachers, the difficulty of student teachers in dealing with the load and the demands. For example, "There was time pressure because of meetings with the student teachers, the instructor and the principal," "Many times the school schedule collided with that of the college, and this created difficulties."

- Timing within a lesson

The professional difficulty was the ability to implement completely the lesson plan prepared by the student teachers. Eleven percent of the respondents noted this difficulty. For example, "The first and main difficulty is the time allotted to convey the material studied in the lesson," "The difficulties were in dividing the time of the lesson process."

- Personal problems of the student teachers

Eleven percent of the respondents mentioned difficulties that stemmed from factors relating specifically to the student teachers they instructed. For example, "The student teacher was absent for many days; this shows a lack of seriousness towards work in school," "The trainees would not attend all classes; they would be absent for many days."

In conclusion, it should be noted that that the training teachers encountered problems with the trainees, such as class management, coping with discipline problems, time pressure, time division during the lessons and seriousness. Moreover, some training teachers were concerned about their relationship with the students at the beginning of the program; however, this disappeared at the end of the program. A new element that arose at the end of the program was the difficulty stemming from the burden of the program itself and integration into school life.

Contribution of the training teacher

The fourth open-ended question related to the teacher's contribution to the student teachers. The question was formulated as follows: How do you see your contribution to the trainees or the student teachers?

The training teachers had two main themes in their answers to this question:

- Teaching and learning approaches

Almost 99% of the respondents referred to the professional contribution they expect to impart to the student teachers, whether it be teaching methods and approaches, learning strategies or any other professionalization. For example, "I will contribute to the trainees regarding their ability to stand in front of a classroom while mastering the material and conveying the lesson in a skillful manner," "I plan to contribute through open theoretical and practical knowledge and ways of integrating them."

- Social, emotional contribution

About 25% of the respondents also included elements relating to the social, emotional field of the student teachers, such as self-confidence and integration into the school. For example, "It could contribute to increasing self-confidence, to the degree of authority to manage the lesson," "I will contribute to the trainees by being attentive to this," "Raising self-confidence and dealing with discipline problems."

At the end of the program, the same themes of contribution to the student teachers in terms of both professional and personal aspects were repeated. Only this time, the weight of personal contributions was higher:

- Teaching and learning approaches

Again, as in the beginning of the program, almost all of the respondents (about 95%) related to the professional aspect. For example, "I contributed to how to plan the lesson and convey it to the students in the most optimal way," "I contributed to the student teachers by imparting knowledge in both science and teaching."

- Social, emotional contribution

At the end of the program, about 50% of the respondents referred to personal and social aspects, twice as much as in the beginning. Those who treated these aspects perceived them in many cases as being no less important than the professional aspect. This contribution is expressed by encouragement, availability, paying attention and strengthening self-confidence. For example, "I supported her emotionally, I gave her love and then I helped her pedagogically," "I taught him lessons and gave him confidence," "I included her in the class to overcome difficulties," "Listening,

personal conversations, support, encouragement and comments are always helpful in order to improve and they develop a good relationship with teachers and students as well,” “I was always available; when we sat with her, we talked about her difficulties and professional development.”

Effective training

The fifth open-ended question was: How would you define effective training? The training teachers' answers were divided into three main themes:

- Co-teaching

Most of the training teachers (about 60%) referred to the importance of teamwork between training teachers and trainees in the process of effective training. They emphasized the importance of close cooperation between the trainers and the trainees in the success of the training process. For example, “Effective training could take place through close cooperation between both sides,” “Effective training is expressed by a close and constant connection between the student teacher and me,” “Collaboration and a positive relationship between both sides is a must.”

- Reflective training

About 30% of the respondents see the importance of hierarchy between the student teacher and the training teacher when the latter is in charge of training and qualifying the former. For example, “Effective training is built on constant feedback that will be objective and constructive,” “Investing time and effort to help the trainees before and after the lesson to prepare notes while teaching so he knew exactly what to improve,” “Effective training will bring the students to a level where they can plan a good lesson and manage the class in the most efficient manner.”

- Encouraging independence

About 10% consider mentoring that encourages students as being effective training that leads to their independence. For example, “Effective training allows the trainee to be a teacher himself,” “Effective training brings the students to a level where they can cope on their own and be real teachers.”

After the program, the teachers were asked the same question again: “How would you define effective training”? The teachers' responses were reduced to two themes.

- Co-teaching

Most of the teachers (60%) still believe that effective training is training in which the students' cooperation is a leading value. For example, “Effective training is joint work between the trainees and the trainers,” “Training that involves cooperation between both sides, teamwork,” “A good relationship and coordination in advance with the teacher educator.”

- Reflective training

This time, the percentage of respondents who perceived the importance of the role of the training teacher in leading the training rose to about 40%. For example, “Effective training is training in which I empower the trainees and grant them confidence and strength,” “Close accompaniment and more time with the student,” “Contributing to the students and helping them progress on all levels, professional and emotional.”

Traditional Training vs. Training in the “Academy-Class” Model

The sixth open-ended question at the beginning of the training was: If you had been involved in training students in the past, please state memories and conclusions that you had from this period. The training teachers' answers were almost evenly divided into three groups: a positive experience, a negative experience, and was not a teacher trainer in the past.

- Positive experience

About half of the training teachers who had trained in the past positively remember the training period. For example, “I had only good memories of my past experience with my trainees, all of them were good professionally and in terms of their attitudes,” “The trainees learned the teaching methods very well, changed their attitudes toward the teaching profession for the better and improved student-teacher relations,” “Collaboration results in success for the students.”

- Negative experience

About half of the teachers who had trained student teachers in the past negatively remember the training period and already hint that the “Academy-Class” model today is better than the traditional training model. For example, “In traditional training, the trainers worked only with the trainees; the trainees would come to school for one day like guests and were not involved in school life. There was no pedagogic continuity in their experience,” “He was a student teacher who had little responsibility and sound knowledge, and his integration into the school was inefficient and irresponsible,” “The trainees did not have enough time at school and did not fit in well. They had no responsibility and poor motivation.”

At the end of the program, the training teachers were asked: “If you were offered a traditional training job, would you accept it? In addition, what would you try to add to traditional instruction from your activities/experiences in the “Academy-Class” model?”

The training teachers' answers to the first part of the question were divided in that the vast majority (65%) replied that they would not want to accept a job in traditional training and the minority (35%) answered yes.

- Training teachers who were not willing to accept a job in traditional training

After the effective experience of the “Academy-Class” training model, most training teachers were not willing to repeat training in a traditional model. For example, “I would not agree to train in the traditional model; “Academy-

Class” is more efficient,” “No, because the “Academy-Class” model is better and more beneficial than traditional training,” “No, training one day a week is not successful; you cannot empower the students and expect significant changes.”

- Training teachers who were willing to accept a job in traditional training

Those who were ready to accept a training job referred mainly to the fact that they like to train and guide student teachers, and they would combine elements from “Academy-Class” into a classroom with traditional training. For example, “Yes, I would have accepted a job but I would have added more time to the students,” “Yes, I would accept a job but I would add more time with the trainees and in integrating them into school life,” “Yes, I would accept a job, but I suggest adding hours or days of attendance by the trainees in the training school.”

Regarding the second part of the question, although only a few teachers responded to it, most of the answers appear to relate to three themes:

- Integration of student teachers into the education system

“Even in traditional training, it is desirable that student teachers be integrated into all of the school’s activities,” “I would add more participation by the school teachers in trips, meetings, ceremonies, meetings with the principal, etc.”

- Arriving at school for more days

“I wanted to add another day of the traditional model so that the student teachers would have more days at school to learn more,” “I would add more days to traditional training.”

- More time accompanying the trainees

“I would add more time accompanying the student teachers.”

If so, one could be impressed that the attitudes of the training teachers to the “Academy-Class” model are much more positive than to traditional training. At the beginning of the program, it was apparent that the teachers’ experience from previous training sessions was divided: half of the training teachers had negative experiences in traditional training. At the end of the “Academy-Class” program, most of the teachers said that they would not accept a job to return and instruct using the traditional training model; in their responses, they referred to the many advantages they found in the “Academy-Class” model. Those who would return to guide student teachers according to the old traditional model would add elements such as more days, longer training time and integration of the trainees into school life. These elements are taken from the new “Academy-Class” model.

V. CONCLUSIONS

After discussing the findings, the researchers drew the following conclusions:

- Improvement was observed in the attitudes of training teachers at the end of the program in reflective mentoring, approaches in teaching and learning, the integration of student teachers into school life and co-teaching.

- The training teachers reported that the students’ integration into the school is more active and more relevant than the traditional teacher training model. They are more involved in school activities and have greater responsibility.

- The training teachers referred to the importance of teamwork between them and the trainees in the process of effective training. They emphasized the importance of close cooperation between trainers and trainees in the success of the training process.

- The training teachers encountered problems with the trainees, such as class management, coping with discipline problems, time pressure, time division during the lessons and seriousness. Moreover, some training teachers had been concerned about their relationship with the student teachers at the beginning of the program. However, this feeling disappeared at the end of the program.

- The attitudes of the training teachers regarding the “Academy-Class” model were much more positive than to the traditional training model.

- At the end of the “Academy-Class” program, most of the training teachers said that they would not accept a job offer to return to instruct in the traditional training model.

- Training teachers who would return to train using the old traditional model suggested adding elements such as more days, longer training time and better integration of the trainees into school life, elements that are taken from the new model.

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Nabil Assadi was entitled his Bachelor of Arts degree from Haifa University in 2002 in Statistics. He received his Master of Arts in Education Teaching Specialization in Teaching Mathematics in 2006. He has been teaching mathematics in High Schools since 2003. He has also been teaching math instruction in the Sakhnin Academic College for Teachers' Education and he is a Pedagogical Instructor since 2010. His research interest is in Pre Service Teachers' Education. He is a candidate for a Ph.D. with a research proposal on the implementation of geogebra program into initial mathematics teachers' training in Israel.

Tareq Murad has been teaching English as a foreign language in high schools since 1990, and he has been teaching linguistic courses at Sakhnin College, Academic College for Teacher Education since 2001. Recently, he holds a position in the College: The head of the pedagogical training department. Courses: Intro to linguistics, Second language acquisition, Morphology and Syntax, Semantics and pragmatics. He has BA in English linguistic and literature from Ben-Gurion University, MA in English Linguistics from Haifa University, Pedagogical supervision from Machon- Mofet. TA and PhD in English curricula and Instructions. Research interests: pragmatics: speech acts, second/foreign language acquisition and task-based language teaching (TBLT). The author has published papers in international and national refereed journals, textbooks for high schools in Arabic and English.

Mahmood Khalil is a Professor of Science Education and Biology. He serves as the President of the Arab Academic College for Teacher Education in Sakhnin, Galilee, Israel. He received his B.Sc. in Biology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and his M.Sc, Ph.D., and Certificate of Teaching from the Department of Education in Technology and Science at the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology, Haifa, Israel. His research interests lie in the areas of science teachers education and the integration of new pedagogical methods of instruction in teaching biology (STS and STEPS). In addition to presenting his research studies at international and national conferences, he has published papers in international and national refereed journals, textbooks for high schools in Arabic, English and Hebrew, and books on education and science education for teachers and student teachers. He is a member of the editorial boards of journals both in Israel and abroad, and serves as a member of national education committees for science curriculum development, education for gifted students, and in-service teachers education.