

Professional Inductions of Teachers in Europe and Elsewhere

Edited by
Milena Valenčič Zuljan
and Janez Vogrinc

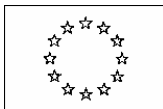


University of *Ljubljana*
Faculty of *Education*



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Foreword

Sometimes, the importance and the complexity of the role that we ask our teachers to play in our societies do not get full recognition. Teachers are asked to prepare our young people to be the citizens of tomorrow; to develop their talents and fulfil their potential for personal growth and well-being; and to acquire the complex range of knowledge and skills they will need as workers.

Moreover, in addition to their traditional skills, today we expect our teachers to make use of the latest technologies; to keep up-to-date with the latest developments in their subjects and in pedagogy; and to effectively manage their classrooms. Finally, in many parts of Europe today's classrooms are much more diverse than in the past. Classrooms tend to integrate pupils from different social backgrounds, different levels of ability and disability, and sometimes pupils with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. We know from talking to teachers that this can really be a challenge.

As a consequence, improving the quality of teacher education is vital to improve the opportunities of our young people and it will ultimately help the European Union in terms of both its social cohesion and competitiveness. The European Commission works closely with Member States to improve the quality of education and training in the EU, and has recently published a Communication outlining how Member States could improve the quality of the education that our teachers receive¹.

We would like to see a situation in which all teachers can engage in education and professional development throughout their careers, in a culture of reflective practice and self-evaluation. We believe that teachers should have an effective programme of induction during their first years in the profession and should have access to guidance and mentoring by experienced teachers or other professionals throughout their careers. Teaching is a demanding profession and our teachers deserve every possible support. If teachers are given access to a well-resourced, coherent and attractive support system from the beginning to the end of their careers, I believe that their performance will be improved, their job satisfaction will be raised, and they will be encouraged to stay in the profession for longer.

I therefore welcome this monograph which provides an important contribution to the Europe-wide debate on these issues.

Ján Figel
EU Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth
European Commission, Brussels



¹ »Improving the Quality of Teacher Education«, at http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/objectives_en.html

Extract from a Review

The main theme of this monograph - mentoring and induction of beginning teachers – is certainly highly relevant to the quality of future teachers in Europe and elsewhere. The contributions from different countries are characterised by a great variety, which is understandable as not only authors' positions but also their contexts – policies, development processes, and research traditions – vary a lot. However, most of the authors are highly competent in the field they present.

The citations and the use of literature sources reveal the usual »gap« between the dominant Anglo-research community and other linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Thus, some authors only cite literature in their mother tongue which cannot be accessed by »important others«. A publication like this can help in building useful bridges between the communities.

The contributions are logically grouped into two parts. The papers in the first part deal with the general context (system of teacher education) and topics such as developing teachers' general and specific competencies (socio-emotional competencies are important in this respect). Some descriptions of existing contexts show the complexity and dilemmas that are part of discussions and regulations in the field of teacher education across Europe and the world. Some examples: the »eternal« phase of transition in Italy, the negative role of central bureaucracy in Australia, etc. Also, some common topics emerge such as the central question of the relationship between theory and practice and of (lack of) coherence in initial teacher education, conflicts between the role of different subjects, between »subject matter« and the professional field etc.

The second part focuses on teacher induction – the system, models, theoretical backgrounds and research studies which represent an interesting mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches. The focus is thus constantly moving between the macro- and micro-level, between system variables and experiences of individual teacher novices and their mentors.

Some countries have developed a good system of induction and even education of mentors – others, for various reasons, do not have such a system and are trying to develop it. In most cases, there is no lack of supporting evidence, but there is a lack of political will. As regards models, a relatively new model (and one not easy to follow) is presented – the Canadian model, characterised by placing beginning teachers in inquiry groups functioning as learning communities.

In spite of such variety, there are some common themes emerging from research studies, like the urgent need for novice teachers to get qualified support in their first year of »regular« work in the school. Even areas where they meet most problems are similar in different countries, for example communication with parents,

classroom management, discipline problems, developing self-confidence and professional identity. Also, the need for qualified mentors (and also school heads) is apparent from the studies.

Thus, in spite of the variety of approaches and findings reported in the individual papers, this monograph can be regarded as an important stepping stone towards educating teachers better prepared to face the challenges of tomorrow, teachers who will be more satisfied and less inclined to leave the profession - if only the existing knowledge gets a chance of being put into practice. As one of the contributors from the other side of the world put it, »There is no lack of advice or understanding of the issues facing teacher education. There is a significant lack of political will in addressing them«.

*Prof. Ddr. Barica Marentič Požarnik
University of Ljubljana, Slovenia*

The research work of the authors in this monograph has aimed at finding what is going on in internationally in the area that is so crucial for quality professional activity of teachers – the induction of a novice teacher and further training. We get an insight into the key features of the teacher education teachers in countries ranging from Japan to Europe and the USA. Many of the authors (for example, the German contributor) provide a detailed insight into the system of education in their country and the role of teacher education in these systems. Unfortunately, none of the countries included in the volume are satisfied with their system of teacher development, even though in the recent year this field has been getting more and more attention.

The pedagogical concepts underlying individual approaches to induction differ considerably; in some countries they are clearly defined, in others only vaguely. In most of the systems, induction is viewed as situational, reflective and constructivist learning, and this is the basis for analysing the possibilities of developing the induction process and further education. An interesting perspective is provided by the contributor from Japan, where they insist on teacher candidates gaining as much knowledge and practical skill as possible in the pre-service period. Despite that, they consider induction the decisive phase of a teacher's career. One of the increasingly popular models is that of groups of novice teachers functioning as learning communities in which mentoring plays an important role in creating better conditions for teachers to enter into their profession.

To conclude this review, we wish to cite the paper on mentoring in anglophone Canada, which captures the gist: the problems and challenges faced by novice teachers are the same worldwide. Approaches used by institutions and authorities should be systematic and based on the needs of the novice teacher. Mentoring is considered adequate because an older and more experienced colleague, when the

right person is selected, is the most familiar with the problems faced by a novice teacher.

If we agree with the previous statements, the questions still remains to what extent such a model of induction supports and enables the transfer of learning into practice. Most researchers report dissatisfaction with how this problem is being solved in their context, which indicates a need for different models of induction. One of the possibilities is offered by Slovenia: a cognitive-constructivist model of induction focusing on cognitive conflict created by considering the novice's experience. It is also possible to consider using some solutions from the systems of induction in the fields of medicine and law.

The present monograph offers important findings in the area of teacher induction. The findings are important primarily because of the wide array of countries presented and the original approaches to researching the topic. I am sure that this will be an encouragement for researchers to embark on finding new, more effective models of teacher induction which, as is agreed throughout the world, is a very important phase of teacher development and needs more attention than it has received so far.

As I look at the facts presented in this book from a different angle and ask myself whether something could have been left out and neglected, I do not think that was possible. Even the parts which at first seem distantly related to the topic are valuable – precisely because they bring a different perspective that is just as important. To sum up, major work well done, and I am deeply convinced that the book will be of value to all educators. I am pleased to congratulate the publisher and the authors. May it benefit those whom it is aimed at.

*Prof. Dr. Grozdanka Gojkov
University of Novi Sad, Serbia*

Introduction

According to the authors of the Green Book on Teacher Education in Europe (Buchberger et al, 2001, p. 63), systematic induction of teachers into the professional culture of a school is a blind spot of today's teacher education. Many positive effects that are achieved during pre-service education are annulled in the initial phase of professional activity. Clearly, there is a need for a systematic model of a culture of induction of trainees and novices in the teaching profession in individual countries. At the same time this is a challenge for researchers and teacher educators at an international scale who are willing to cooperate, exchange experiences and findings, and build new partnerships.

In a broader sense building a culture of induction of novice teachers begins with a student's entry into a course of studies leading to a teaching qualification. The key factors here are the content and the methods, the overt and the hidden curriculum. Teacher educators also have to be aware of the specific experience our students bring to the program. Future teachers namely embark on their studies with more than the students of other academic disciplines – not just a desire to teach, but a wealth of memories which have shaped their deeply-rooted conceptions of instruction, learning and teaching. All the theoretical dimensions of instruction have been experienced through years of schooling – every future teacher has been a primary and a secondary school student, and this has a strong impact on their future professional activity.

More specifically, however, building a culture of induction begins with a novice teacher's first employment in an educational institution. The novice teacher's professional development is affected not only by the regulations concerning this period and the certification requirements, but also by the atmosphere within which induction takes place in a specific institution. A key person in the process of induction is the mentor, who should be appropriately trained, and the headmaster. From the perspective of lifelong learning and a modern model of mentoring, other teachers at the school and the staffroom climate also play an important role. Last but not least, cooperation between schools and the tertiary institutions educating teachers should ensure a high level of competence of novice teachers.

In Slovenia, a project was carried out in 2004/05 and 2006/07 entitled: "Partnership of faculties and schools: A model of systematic induction of trainees and novices in the teaching profession", which was co-financed by the European Social Fund at the EU and the Ministry of Education and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia.

The main aim of the project was to form and evaluate a model of systematic professional induction of teachers which will enable intensive professional development of novice teachers and prepare them for effective professional activity. For this purpose, the project team developed a description of the competences of a

novice teacher and the competences of a mentor, carried out a mentor training project, wrote a handbook for novice teachers and textbook for mentors ...

One of the key aims of the project was to shed light on induction as the sensitive period of a teacher's entry into the profession from a broader international perspective. We have invited various scientists in the area of teacher education to contribute to the present volume in order to exchange their findings on various aspects of induction; the legal aspect, the role of the mentor and certification. We were interested in recent research from different countries into the roles of the headmaster and mentor in the process of induction, the competences novice teachers should develop during the induction period, the competences of a mentor, the difficulties novice teachers face, the difficulties mentors face... We also wished to present proposals of organizational and normative change which researchers believe are necessary for a quality teacher induction.

The volume contains 22 papers from 18 countries. All papers were reviewed by two experts, and some of them by a third reviewer. Even though the scientific quality of the papers varies, the editors and reviewers agreed to publish all the contributions, since each of them presents a different perspective and thus contributes to the whole picture.

The volume is divided into two parts: *Teacher education: context, dilemmas, competencies* and *Teacher induction: models and research*. We provide here a brief introduction to each of the papers.

In his article, Richard Bates analyses the Australian teacher education. There are no national standards for teachers in the early childhood sector, no mechanisms for the certification or accreditation of the various courses, no registration bodies for professionals and no consistency in the occupational standards or award rates for employment. Primary and Secondary teacher education are almost always lumped together as 'teacher education' despite the fact that the trajectories and requirements for the two sectors are significantly different. Australian primary school teachers are required to teach across all (usually six or seven) curriculum areas with particular emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Secondary teachers typically teach within two curriculum subjects (although it often the case that they are required to teach outside their areas of specific content knowledge).

Franco Zambelli analyses teacher training and recruitment in Italy. The teaching profession in Italy is still in a state of transition, trying to find its identity and role. A teaching qualification is a *conditio sine qua non* for admission to the entrance examinations necessary to acquire a permanent contract. After passing this examination and being taken on in a school, a teacher has to undergo a (training) probationary year, after which he or she acquires permanent status. The trainee teacher receives information and training about his/her own subject, teaching methods, educational psychology and pedagogy, and managing learning dynamics. Some of the activities that the trainee is involved in are carried out as e-learning. The aim of at least part of this training is to refresh the trainee's knowledge about

recent developments in schools. During the training probationary year, the teacher carries out his/her normal full-time work as a teacher.

Two articles were contributed by Polish authors. Marta Wrońska's article is about relations between education and media. In her opinion media education is one of the priority aims of education in a contemporary school, and the process of training teachers and developing their skills in the use of information technology should be continuous. Media education in the process of teacher training should be based on the trio: education about media, education through media and education for media.

In the article of Ryszard Pęczkowski, the main assumptions of the educational model of vocational training through practice referred to as the "competence model" are presented. The basic area of activity in the proposed model is shaping competences understood as an ability to motivate to take action adequate to a situation and the knowledge possessed. Generally, two categories of teacher competencies can be distinguished. One of them is interpretative competencies which make it possible for a person to make sense of what surrounds us, to formulate the objectives of one's professional and other activity. Another category involves communication and proficiency competencies which are technical in character and which imply the skills of using various methods and means of activity.

Katya Simeonova stresses the need to assure transfer of learning for novice Bulgarian teachers as a two-part continuous process in which past learning affects new learning, which in turn will be applied to novel learning situations in the future. In Bulgaria there is no special induction period. Directors of schools in Bulgaria hire novices for a one-year period to assure themselves and the whole staff that the new teacher is good enough for their school's image and has acquired good professional skills during their pre-service education at universities and during this one year. Since that is the so called trial period, all young teachers view it as a trial period and as such it has a strong impact on their self-image.

Two contributions came from Malta. Valerie Sollars and Mario Camilleri state that the professional development of teachers consists of three main phases forming a continuum – the pre-service phase, the induction phase, and the in-service phase. Although pre-service teacher education in Malta is well-developed and has a long and honorable history, and ongoing in-service professional development is reasonably well catered for, there is as yet no support mechanism in the school itself to help new teachers gradually acclimatise to the teaching profession. On successful completion of their course, students are awarded a B.Ed.(Hons.) degree or PGCE certificate by the University of Malta. To date, new graduates are then given their teacher's warrant after one year of teaching. However, with recent changes in the Education Act, the warrant will be given after two years of teaching experience. In another article from Malta,

Chris Bezzina explores the perceptions of approximately 300 primary and secondary school teachers who are currently in their induction phase. The results

indicate the type of support that beginning teachers in particular need at the start of their teaching career. It provides feedback as to what the education authorities and schools need to focus on in order to support beginning teachers. The essential link between pre-service and continuing professional development is explored and identified as key to quality improvements at the school level. This paper aims to present the education authorities with data that reinforces other reports and discussion documents that show that we need to take induction and mentoring seriously.

Juan-Luis Castejón, Raquel Gilar and Nélida Pérez briefly present the teacher training in Spain and stress the importance of emotional intelligence in education. They present the results of a study on personal and socio-emotional competences of trainee teachers involving a sample of 126 subjects. The results of this study indicate the need to incorporate the development of socio-emotional skills, such as interpersonal relationships, group work, social responsibility and stress management, into teacher training programs, in accordance with the skill-based learning model to be developed within the framework of the European Higher Education Area. The authors conclude that 'skills such as these are beginning to be considered increasingly more necessary in the Spanish educational system, both for the professional performance of teachers and for the education of their students'.

Iztok Devetak and Saša Glazar present a study of mentors' opinions on beginning teachers' specific competences for teaching chemistry in primary and secondary school in Slovenia. The results show that mentors in general develop in novice teachers those competences that they deem important for a good chemistry teacher. They say that the novice teachers have adequate knowledge for assuring safety in the classroom during experimental work, they are qualified to interpret experimental data and they can apply this data in theory. The results seem to provide evidence that mentors usually offer only medium help to novice teachers during their preparation for teaching chemistry in classroom. It can be concluded that mentors should be adequately trained for mentoring.

The article of František Mezihorák and Alena Nelešovská is about a new subject, Introduction to the World of Work, which is being launched at secondary schools in the Czech Republic. This new subject requires qualified teachers. The subject matter has been included into Bachelor's and Master's programs of universities preparing teachers and tutors, but simultaneously it is necessary to enhance the qualifications of existing graduates. This is why, at the call from the Ministry of Education, a Team of Solvers has been established at the Faculty of Education of the Palacký University, whose task is to prepare a specialization course for secondary school teachers for the subject Introduction to the World of Work.

Roxana Diana Cruceanu from Romania analyses the methods and approaches acquired by Romanian students in Foreign Language Teaching. The stress is on training them to establish interpersonal communication in the classroom involving role play, simulation, debate, and discussion. With young children, they are

encouraged to use methods such as the total physical response or the direct approach, alternative techniques like suggestopedia etc. The analysis contains two parts: the first half makes reference to teaching English, and the second to teaching French.

Peter P. Grimmett examines the micro-level action of mentoring to articulate ways in which the induction of beginning teachers can be reframed around inquiry groups functioning as learning communities. The thesis advanced is that induction stimulates memorable and durable professional learning when the pre-service program musters the power of the cohort model within practice settings that foster shared inquiries within learning communities. Mentoring in this sense consists in establishing the conditions whereby new teachers are inducted into a profession characterized by continuous professional learning through shared inquiries of practice. This conceptualization of mentoring suggests that it is not a role involving hierarchical position with its accompanying agendas of power and control but a series of interrelated tasks designed to transform the experience into one that sustains a rich conversation about pedagogical possibilities by engaging beginning teachers in classroom action research and observation.

Ewald Terhart presents teacher induction in Germany between tradition and new perspectives. In the first part of the paper, the current system of teacher education in Germany is outlined. In the second part of the paper some results of empirical research on the induction process of teachers are sketched out. They show that – on the one hand – the whole endeavour of teacher education is driven by strong ambitions and hopes. On the other hand it must be admitted that the empirical support for these ambitions is weak or inexistent. Finally the author poses some fundamental questions concerning implicit assumptions of ‘productivity’ of teacher education for teacher expertise – and of teacher expertise for student learning. The paper ends with the question of which elements of teacher competence are responsible for what kind of learning experiences and learning outcomes on the part of the students and to what an extent. Fundamental and intriguing questions like these are often neglected in the ongoing hustle of organizing, researching and doing teacher education. Nevertheless they have to be posed.

Ulrike Prexl-Krausz, Katharina Soukup-Altrichter and Friedrich Buchberger analyse the Austrian system of initial teacher education and induction. No induction is foreseen for teachers of general subjects of compulsory education. Teachers of general academic subjects (“Gymnasium”) and teachers for the various branches of vocational education do have an induction based on their initial teacher education or another qualification. It results from interviews that there are no serious problems in the induction phase. In the large majority of cases novice teachers are “highly motivated, enthusiastic and positive”. However, sometimes it seems to be difficult for them “to switch roles” from student to teacher. They might have problems communicating with young children and finding problem solving strategies.

Shunji Tanabe reviews the organization of teacher education in Japan, with a special focus on the induction stage. Earning the required number of credits and graduating from a higher education programme are two fundamental requirements for a teacher qualification in Japan. A teacher training course can be provided by any faculty or private university, if it fulfills the condition of offering the required curriculum. All newly employed novice teachers in Japan automatically enter a 1-year induction period. A novice teacher is generally expected to do the same work as the experienced teachers, although the burden should be reduced (fewer teaching hours, less administrative work etc.).

Janez Vogrinc, Zvonka Krištof and Milena Valenčič Zuljan review the system of teacher induction in Slovenia. The authors stress that the systematization of the induction process, which is a framework and a basic condition for the quality of the work done by the headmaster, mentor and novice teacher, significantly affects a novice teacher's professional development. In the article, the authors present the legislation regulating teacher induction and certification and Slovenia in the last decade, and the results of the extensive project Partnership of Faculties and School. The study was aimed at exploring the role of the novices and mentors in shaping a plan of the induction process; finding out how novices and mentors view the shared planning and analysis of instruction, the length of the induction and the certification exam.

Ulla Lindgren shows how the Swedish teachers view their present work situation and how they experienced being mentored from the perspective of one year after their induction. The teachers in her study had developed a fairly realistic understanding of what is involved in teachers' work. They enjoyed their work and felt comfortable with their role as teachers, although they still felt insecure about some work situations. The teachers were not left on their own during their first year of work because they had mentors who gave them continual support and the possibility to ask questions that were of relevance to them. As a result, they had become aware of their professional practice, which indicates personal and professional growth. The author concludes that in order to develop mentoring, not only mentor training is needed but also on-going support to mentors during the mentoring process. Meanwhile, more national and international studies are needed in order to illustrate the optimal planning and implementation of mentoring programmes as well as the experiences and results of mentoring programmes.

Maria Assunção Flores presents research on the early years of teaching and examines its implications for the induction of beginning teachers. The situation in the Portuguese context is analysed in the light of the existing legal framework and recent empirical work on novice teachers. The experience of the transition from university to the workplace is also explored and implications of existing knowledge on becoming a teacher for teacher educators, policy makers, school leaders and induction providers are highlighted. The role of mentors and a number of key issues in the provision of meaningful support and guidance for new teachers are also identified. The author stressed that it needs to go beyond the mere practical advice

and socialization process whereby new entrants become members of a given professional culture, to include opportunities for self-questioning and reflection not only upon teachers' own practice, but also upon the values and norms underlying the educational settings in which they work.

Michele A. Marable and Sharon L. Raimondi report some of the findings of a study conducted in the western part of New York State. The goal of this research was to investigate the differences in the experiences and perceptions of teachers who had participated in a formal mentoring program and those teachers who did not participate in any type of mentoring program. Both groups cited the human factor as the most supportive factor during the first year. The mentor was identified as the most supportive individual for teachers participating in the MIP group.

Jim O'Brien, Christie Fiona and Janet Draper analyse the induction of new teachers in Scotland and England. Although recently introduced procedures are similar in structure, the Standards on which they are based reflect different conceptions of the nature of teaching and of professional development as well as contrasting political climates. In the article the results of the research are also presented. The research is part of a larger study into the implementation of the Induction Scheme. The probationers and their supporters were asked for their views on the Standard for Full Registration and their experience of how it was used day-to-day with a range of views and uses of the SFR emerging.

Milena Valenčič Zuljan and Cvetka Bizjak shed light on the role of the mentor as the provider of both support and challenge to the novice teacher in the area of reflection. The authors stress that reflection is a key element of a teacher's professional activity and growth. Teacher mentors are expected to be able to direct and encourage the reflection of novice teachers and stimulate their professional development. However, this ability requires that they themselves are reflective practitioners who know the principles and procedures of encouraging professional development, and also plan and direct their own development. In the article the authors explore how mentors, novice teachers and headmasters rate the capability of mentors for key individual duties that mentors have for the period of mentorship of novice teachers and to what extent mentors are trained to reflect on their practice and to encourage reflection in their trainees.

Ljupčo Kevereski attempts to present and diagnose the situation regarding the professional development of teachers in Macedonia, pointing out the key interventions, defining the directions towards change and offering some proposals for the future. The genesis of the motivation and orientation of the theoretical elaboration of this problem is a result of: critical analyses of the educational system in the Republic of Macedonia, the contemporary tendencies in the educational spheres, the negative practical implications which are a result of today's situation, research of the experiences of the educational systems of the highly developed countries, and the messages and recommendations of the international documents regarding the specific problem of teacher development.

The teaching profession is growing increasingly complex, which poses new challenges for teacher educators and creators of school policies. There is clearly a need for quality pre-service education, but continuous further education of teachers, in particular the period of induction, are no less significant. We hope that the present volume of papers will be an encouragement to the authors themselves as well as other researchers for further joint empirical enquiries into this field.

We wish to thank the European Social Fund at the EU and the Ministry of Education and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia whose co-financing of the project Partnership of faculties and schools enables this publication. We also thank all the authors who contributed their papers and the many researchers who provided encouragement in the process of the preparation of this monograph.

We owe special thanks to Mr. Jan Figel, EU Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, for his introductory words, and all the reviewers.

*Milena Valenčič Zuljan and
Janez Vogrinc*

Part one

**Teacher Education –
Context, Dilemmas, Competencies**

Australian Teacher Education in the New Millennium

Richard Bates

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In the past decade in Australia there have been no fewer than forty reports on various aspects of teacher education. All of them made recommendations for changes in entry, length, content, practicum, standards, certification, induction and continuing professional development. As the latest report (Standing Committee on Educational and Vocational Training, 2007) points out, following the submissions of the Australian Teacher Education Association (ATEA, 2005) and the Australian Council of Deans of Education (ACDE, 2005), few of the recommendations of any of these reports have been implemented. There is no lack of advice or understanding of the issues facing teacher education. There is a significant lack of political will in addressing them.

This stasis results, at least in part, from the chaotic patchwork of overlapping and contradictory jurisdictions and responsibilities associated with a federal system of government (Australian College of Education, 2001; Connors et al, 2007). While educational provision is constitutionally the responsibility of the six states and two territories, the fact that the Commonwealth raises some 80% of revenue through taxation while the states incur 40% of expenditures (predominantly on education, health, welfare and police) ensures that the Commonwealth can exert considerable pressure on the states by tying financial transfers to its own priority programs. Moreover, over the past three decades the Commonwealth has increased direct funding for private (non-government) schools to the point where it is now the source of 73% of their recurrent expenditure (Connors, 2007:7) In addition, competition between states, as well as ideological and program differences between states and the Commonwealth, leads often to considerable confusion in both conception and execution of educational policy. Currently there are loud calls for a clarification and separation of the policy and budgetary responsibilities of the Commonwealth and the states in order to redress the inefficiencies and confusion that currently characterise the 'system' (Connors, 2007). However, while Australia has a Commonwealth Government of one political persuasion and state and territory governments of an opposing persuasion it would seem unlikely that the Commonwealth Government would see its ability to exercise increasing central

control (through intrusion into state responsibilities via tied grants and the exercise of the ‘corporations’ power) as something to be readily surrendered.

Nonetheless, there has been a shift over the past two decades towards increasing Commonwealth control of education, particularly higher education. This is exercised, in large part, because universities are funded by the Commonwealth Government, although they are established under state legislation and have reporting responsibilities to the states. In the recent budget papers proposals have been made for these financial reporting responsibilities to be transferred to the Commonwealth (Commonwealth of Australia, 2007).

This proposal simply continues the movement towards what Marginson (2007) calls a strategy of ‘governed deregulation’ where devolution and deregulation of policy implementation are matched by significant increases in government oversight and the tying of money to specific policy initiatives and accountability processes. Such a policy simply develops further the ‘prescriptive managerialist and economic rationalist position’ described earlier by Knight, Lingard and Bartlett (1993). The objective of the Commonwealth seems to be to squeeze greater productivity from less and less resource. Evidence of this is the declining percentage of GDP expenditure on Higher Education (down from .73% in 1996-7 to .54% in 2003-4) and Research and Development (down from .43% in 1990-91 to .35% in 1998-99) with consequent deterioration in student staff ratios (from 1:13 in 1990 to 1:19 in 200) (ACDE, 2001, 2005). One of the consequences has been a serious deterioration in the numbers available for entry to the teaching workforce- a matter of great concern to state employing bodies.

Nonetheless, within this confused political context, there is general agreement that moves towards a more ‘national’ system of education are desirable, especially in terms of fundamental principles, curriculum, assessment and qualifications. This trend is encouraged by four major issues, increased communication, increased internal mobility, the need to address disadvantage and exclusion, and the pressure of global competition. Such issues, as well as the role education needs to play in creating socially productive persons (ACDE, 2001, 2005) encourage this process of cooperation and convergence.

However, two major issues inhibit this process. The first is the complex diversity of Australian society: life in the remote mining community of Kunanurra is rather different from that in the Aboriginal outstation at Ngurkurr in Arnhem Land, the depressed rust-belt suburbs of Adelaide, the affluent gated communities of metropolitan Melbourne, the canal-side ostentation of the Gold Coast, the ‘affluenza’ of harbour-side Sydney or the depressed multi-cultural communities of Western Sydney. A highly prescriptive, ‘one-size-fits-all’

approach to curriculum, assessment and qualifications might seriously constrain the professional responsibility of teachers to respond to such difference.

The second is a procedural problem: whether such agreement can and should be reached by negotiation within such bodies as the meeting of Commonwealth and state ministers (MCEETYA) and, as far as teacher education is concerned, through the Australasian Forum of Teacher Registration and Accreditation Authorities (AFTAA): or whether it should be reached by central direction of the Commonwealth through its tying of budget transfers to the universities and states to compliance with directives (such as its current demands for compliance regarding literacy and numeracy; the teaching of history; the imposition of performance pay for teachers and a national assessment and reporting system).

These general features provide the background to the following consideration of issues facing the preparation of teachers at various levels: early childhood, primary, and secondary.

Early Childhood Teacher Education

Early childhood education in Australia can only be described as a labyrinth. Differences in policy and provision at Commonwealth and state levels, combined with distinct, overlapping and contradictory provision through ministries of education and ministries of health, as well as a plethora of public and private profit and non-profit agencies, produce a situation of considerable confusion. As Elliott observes

The forces of history, combined with community beliefs about what is best for young children, plus a bewildering mix of national and state-based early childhood policy, funding and legislative requirements, have resulted in a labyrinth of childhood care and preschool services. There are complex layers and connections between government, voluntary and church groups, public education systems, independent, Catholic and other religious schools, community organizations, free-market forces, small business owner-operators and major child care companies, plus, of course families and children. So complex is the early childhood landscape that many people, including families seeking care, have difficulty negotiating the maze of early childhood services.

(Elliott, 2006:2)

Within this confusion three distinct voices are present. The first, and historically the dominant, voice has been that of the importance of the *mothering model*: the nurturing of mother-child relationships and bonding through the warmth of physical and emotional contact, whether by a mother or a mother substitute. The second, which developed in the early years of the twentieth century, was a *nursing model* focused on enhancing infant health and well-being. The third, which has gained considerable ground in recent years, is the *education model* which sees structured experience as essential to brain development and cognitive functioning and one which places a premium on such experience in the early years as an essential and un-recoverable foundation for later development.

These differences in approach are reflected in the preparation and employment of early childhood workers. While there are no nationally agreed standards for such workers, there are licensing requirements within the various jurisdictions that provide for minimum standards. These range from police checks as to suitability (or unsuitability) for employment, through one and two year diplomas, to three or four year degrees. Generally speaking, the older the children, the higher the qualification required. However, as Elliott indicates

Somehow we have arrived at a point where a ‘teacher’ in early childhood education can be someone with a degree level early childhood teaching qualification, a child care certificate or diploma from the VET sector, or no qualifications at all. Equally, the designation ‘child care worker’ can apply to a qualified early childhood teacher or a completely untrained staff member.

(Elliott, 2006: 36-7)

This is not to say that appropriate early childhood-*education* or child-*care* qualifications have been unavailable. Kindergarten Teachers Colleges provided childhood education qualifications from the 1900s until the 1970s when Colleges of Advanced Education and then Universities became the main providers of diploma and degree level qualifications. Alternatively child-*care* qualifications were provided through the Nursery Nurses Education Board in the early part of the century, mainly for those who would staff nurseries and crèches, rather than pre-schools or kindergartens. During the 1980’s and 1990’s the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector expanded to provide Child Care Certificates as a quicker and cheaper route to qualifications in response to a rapidly increasing demand for staff.

Despite these various offerings, there are no national standards for teachers in the early childhood sector, no mechanisms for the certification or accreditation of the various courses, no registration bodies for professionals and no consistency in the occupational standards or award rates for employment. Indeed, one of the problems in maintaining standards and ensuring appropriate levels of qualification are the low level of working conditions and compensation for early childhood staff who the Australian Confederation of Trade Unions found to be among the lowest among paid workers in Australia (ACTU, 2003).

Given the recent increase in public demand for both early childhood care and early childhood education there is an urgent need for a more coherent and professional approach to the preparation and employment of workers in the early childhood sector. As Elliott concludes on the basis of her comprehensive review:

With so many Australian children participating in early childhood services and a critical mass of centres, plus a well documented ‘crisis’ in early childhood staffing, it is timely to commit to national professional standards and guidelines, professional training, and good salaries and working conditions in the hope of securing the quality of early childhood educators in the decades ahead... There must be agreement on professional qualifications for early childhood educators that transcends the care versus education dichotomy and the construction of a comprehensive national framework for preparing, credentialing and rewarding early childhood educators.

(Elliott, 2006:44)

Increasing public disquiet about variations in standards of child-care and education as well as about the qualifications of staff may well lead to political pressure for the setting of minimal standards for qualifications and training. However, arguments over the private/public funding of such services as well as over the development of industry wide standards for remuneration may well inhibit attempts to reach such agreement.

Primary and Secondary Teacher Education

Some forty tertiary institutions in Australia provide some 200 pre-service degree and diploma programs in teacher education. Most of these are public institutions, although there are a small number of private, mainly religious, institutions that prepare teachers exclusively for their denominational schools. Some 16,000 students completed teacher education courses during 2005. Some

institutions have multiple pathways, while others have only one. Seventy per cent of students graduated from the fifteen largest institutions. (Ingvarson et al 2006:5)

Primary and Secondary teacher education are almost always lumped together as ‘teacher education’ despite the fact that the trajectories and requirements for the two sectors are significantly different. For instance, while it is now widely recognised that teacher preparation must include Knowledge of Learners and their Development in Social Contexts; Knowledge of Subject Matter and Curriculum Goals; and Knowledge of Teaching (Darling Hammond and Bransford, 2005; Zammit et al, 2007) these issues may be articulated quite differently at different levels. For instance, setting aside the obvious issue of differences in developmental stages, Australian primary school teachers are required to teach across all (usually six or seven) curriculum areas with particular emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Secondary teachers typically teach within two curriculum subjects (although it often the case that they are required to teach outside their areas of specific content knowledge). Consequently the patterns of preparation for primary and secondary teachers frequently differ. Moreover, with the emergence of Middle Schooling as an organisational pattern in schools, teacher preparation for the years spanning late primary schooling and early secondary schooling is receiving particular emphasis.

Primary teachers are most often prepared through three or four year pre-service programs which cover Knowledge of Learners and Knowledge of Teaching but also Knowledge of Subject matter across six or seven content areas as well as consideration of the ways in which such subject knowledge can be achieved through Integrated Studies. A small number of one or two year post-graduate programs are also offered.

Secondary teachers are more usually prepared through an initial three-year degree (focusing on subject matter content) followed by a one year Diploma in ‘teaching methods’. Such university qualifications do not result automatically in a license to teach. Graduates must also meet requirements for registration as a teacher.

As teacher registration is a state rather than a Commonwealth government responsibility, the various jurisdictions have different requirements. Some state registration bodies also accredit university programs for employment purposes. Others do not. The content and award of qualifications however, remain the prerogatives of the universities (Ingvarson et al 2006).

In recent years, as a response to both internal and external market forces, some universities have adopted a three-plus-one model for primary teachers. Others have introduced two-year post-graduate programs, some of which prepare and qualify students to teach in both primary and secondary schools. A couple of institutions have introduced one-year programs that claim to do likewise. Other institutions have introduced double degrees where students study for a degree in Education as well as a degree in Arts or Science simultaneously. This is particularly the case in those universities that have folded faculties of education into larger 'super' faculties. More recently, partly under the influence of the Bologna agreement, two year Master's programs have been introduced as initial teacher education following a three year generalist undergraduate degree (Melbourne University, 2007).

The result of this plethora of different offerings has been a growing concern with standards in teacher education programs. In particular, entry standards, course content (professional and subject-matter, including literacy and numeracy), and the length and quality of practical experience in schools have been examined. In response several subject associations have produced standards in, for instance, mathematics, English and science. Moreover, some individual states and territories have developed criteria for the registration or certification of teachers as well as the accreditation of university programs. Only two states (Queensland and Victoria) have implemented legislation requiring formal approval or accreditation of teacher education programs (Ingvarson et al , 2006). Other states are moving towards such legislated requirements, partly as a result of the development of a National Framework for Professional Standards in Teaching by the Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs (2003).

Partly as a result of the Ministerial Council's initiative the Australasian Forum of Teacher Registration and Accreditation Authorities is working towards the collaborative development of a *Framework for the Recognition of Approved Pre-Service Teacher Education Programs* (AFTRAA, 2006). This involves an examination of existing arrangements in order to reach agreement over how to implement agreed aims to:

- Provide common national understandings of what teachers need to know and be able to do in order to support and improve student learning;
- Describe levels of teaching quality to which teachers might aspire and ensure teacher development opportunities are available nationally to achieve these levels;
- Provide a national basis for recognition of the quality of teaching;

- Provide the basis for national alignment of standards for graduates of teacher education programs;
 - Strengthen initial teacher preparation and ensure national commitment to effective and adequate teacher preparation; and,
 - Provide a basis for ongoing commitment by Commonwealth and State and Territory governments to support teachers' professional learning.
- (AFTRAA, 2006:3)

The Commonwealth, however, has established the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (Teaching Australia) with a mandate to develop national standards for pre-service teacher education. Teaching Australia has developed its own consultation paper on an *Australia-wide accreditation of programs for the professional preparation of teachers* (2006) and is holding meetings throughout the country as a mechanism for gaining support for its proposals. While there is general agreement concerning the need for national standards, Teaching Australia is seen by many as a vehicle for the assertion of Commonwealth control of teacher preparation.

This move is being resisted by state based registration bodies through AFTRAA as well as by teacher unions such as the Australian Education Union, by the Australian Council of Deans of Education, the Australian Teacher Education Association and by the Australian College of Educators. Each of these bodies advocates a collaborative approach through negotiation between state agencies, professional associations and pre-service institutions.

However, even if broad agreement is reached over such professional standards, significant problems remain with regard to the division between Commonwealth and state jurisdictions. State agencies may currently have the legislative jurisdiction to mandate standards, but they no longer fund the institutions that provide pre-service teacher education programs: these are now funded by the Commonwealth through its grants to universities. Such division of legislative and funding responsibilities results in squabbles not only over standards but also enrolment and graduation numbers. As a result, there seems to be little coordination between the work force requirements of the various states (who employ the overwhelming majority of teachers) and the enrolment numbers and levels of funding provided by the Commonwealth.

In terms of numbers, the Commonwealth has been largely unresponsive to predicted and actual shortfalls of graduate numbers in various states. In terms of funding, education fares badly in comparison with programs with similar demands for placements and practical experience such as nursing (\$8,217 per head rather than \$11,280). The outcome is that universities are squeezed

between increasing demands (in terms of numbers and standards) on the one hand, and low funding and poor staff student ratios on the other.

These issues have been recognised in report after report, most recently by the *Top of the Class: Report on the Inquiry Into Teacher Education* (Standing Committee on Educational and Vocational Training, 2007) that identified the persistence of problems such as

- The current distribution of responsibilities in teacher education which results in a fragmented approach to teacher education
- Inadequate funding for educational research and for mechanisms to ensure that teacher education and teaching is research evidence-based
- A lack of investment in building partnerships that would help bridge the gap between theory and practice, particularly for practicum
- Inadequate funding for teacher education, particularly for practicum, and
- A failure of policies involving teacher education to reflect that teacher education does not finish at graduation from an initial teacher education course but continues through induction into the profession as a beginning teacher through to established, advanced and leadership stages.

(Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training, 2007:xxi)

There is general consensus that the Standing Committee's Inquiry got it right, in terms of identifying the key issues and in advocating appropriate policy responses regarding: program content and coordination; responding to diversity; school-university partnerships; funding of research; transition and induction; and continuing professional development. Such recommendations echo those of preceding reports.

There is increasing agreement over the content of pre-service courses around such issues as Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice, Professional Values and Professional Relationships (AFTRAA, 2006:3). There is also agreement that state registration and accreditation authorities will negotiate such content with tertiary institutions as a basis for their pre-service programs. Most institutions already comply with such requirements.

Two significant issues remain to be addressed, however. The first is the duration of professional studies. In many institutions pre-service preparation (particularly of secondary teachers) is limited to a single academic year of some eight

months, nine weeks of which are mandated as school experience. This leaves some six months within which to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes required by effective Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice, Professional Values and Professional Relationships. Reviews of research into such programs indicate clearly that in such ‘short term interventions...we saw little reported impact’ (Wideen et al, 1998; Darling Hammond & Bransgrove 2005: 393). It may well not be surprising that graduates of such programs report dissatisfaction with the adequacy of their preparation for teaching. By contrast, ‘longer-term programs....were effective when the teacher educators maintained a consistent focus and message (Wideen et al, 1998:151).

This raises the second significant issue: that of program coherence. This is increasingly recognised as a significant feature of successful preparation programs (Darling-Hammond & Bransgrove, 2005; National Research Council, 2001). Indeed:

That coherence should be important is not surprising. Studies of learning suggest that learning is enhanced when learners encounter mutually reinforcing ideas and skills across learning experiences, particularly when these are grounded in strategically chosen content and conveyed through effective pedagogies. Repeated experiences with a set of conceptual ideas along with repeated opportunities to practice skills and modes of analysis, support deeper learning and the development of expertise.

(Darling-Hammond & Bransgrove, 2005:393)

It is clear from a number of reports that the structure of many pre-service programs inhibits such coherence, with division of responsibilities between ‘discipline’ and ‘methods’ areas in many institutions being a major obstacle to effective pre-service preparation. As Ramsay argues, it is increasingly acknowledged that ‘Pedagogy cannot be separated from curriculum: the dancer cannot be separated from the dance’ (Ramsay, 2000:13). Together these two issues form the core of debate over the effectiveness of pre-service programs.

In terms of school-university partnerships most of the debate has focused upon the limited time students spend on ‘teaching practice’ in schools. Despite a number of innovative partnerships around the country which explore more complex and satisfying ways of approaching collaboration in school research and development alongside student involvement (Sharp & Turner, 2007), several problems seem generally unresolvable. The first is that industrial awards govern payments to teachers for supervision of teacher education students. Collectively these payments consume some 25% of Faculty of Education budgets, a cost that is increasingly difficult to bear. Secondly, schools are not

funded for time and effort spent in working with pre-service students who are often seen as distracting teachers from their primary responsibilities. Thirdly, while state authorities have responsibility for schools, the Commonwealth, through its' funding of universities, has responsibility for teacher education. Collaborative partnerships, and associated funding arrangements, are often, therefore, frustrated by disagreement between states and the Commonwealth over responsibility.

Several states are already concerned about the transition from university to employment in schools- especially about high attrition rates in the first five years of teaching. In Victoria and New South Wales, for instance, an induction year with reduced teaching load and the appointment of a mentor has been introduced.

However well intentioned such programs are, they face considerable difficulties because of other, particularly employment, practices. The problem is that such programs only succeed where the beginning teacher is appointed to a long-term position with their own class/es. Current employment practices, however, ensure that first year teachers are more usually employed on short term contracts or as casual teachers, conditions which preclude them from the intended benefits and encourage their early exit from the profession (Pietsch & Williamson, 2007).

In Victoria, for instance, new graduates apply for provisional registration and may proceed to apply, through the principal of the school in which they are employed, for full registration after twelve months. This is a particular difficulty for those who can gain employment only as short-term relief teachers. For those who have had continuous employment for twelve months the principal recommendation report must be accompanied by: records of three collegiate classroom activities; an analysis of teaching and learning; and a commentary on professional activities (Victorian Institute of Teaching, 2007).

While these induction processes are welcome and well-intentioned, the significant barriers to their effectiveness need resolution.

Conclusion

Pre-service teacher education in Australia could currently be said to be in transition at early childhood, primary and secondary levels. The issues of governance, finance, program length and coherence, school-university partnerships and induction into schools have been identified as significant, as

have the issues of diversity in the teaching population and the diversity of school requirements. The most recent Report (House of Representatives, 2007) has not only identified these issues but also suggested mechanisms for resolving them. It is a matter for regret, therefore, that the recent Commonwealth Budget 2007-2008 has made no provision for progress on these issues. It is also a matter for regret that the Commonwealth Minister for Education has failed to endorse or act upon the recommendations of the House of Representatives Report. As Sue Willis, the President of the Australian Council of Deans of Education, commented, the Commonwealth budget 'appears to give teacher training the worst possible deal. The overall result is probably as bad as it could be' (Willis, 2007). We can only hope that state governments and agencies will take up the cause of a more rational approach to teacher education, addressing the issues identified above in a collaborative and productive manner.

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Teacher Training and Recruitment in Italy: Is the Everlasting Transitional Period Finally Coming to an End?

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Introduction

In the past fifteen years, Italy has seen much debate and a great deal of thinking and re-thinking about how teachers should be trained, recruited, given stable positions and provided with in-service training. The first thorough approach to the question of pre-service, initial and in-service training for teachers was made with the Law 53 of 2003, which was finalized on the basis of the Law 341 of 1990 and the Ministerial Decree of 26/5/1998. However, successive legislative and administrative decisions have blocked the complete application of Law 53 and of Law 226 of 2005, with the result that an overall plan for the training and recruitment of teachers still has not been drawn up.

The teaching profession in Italy is still in a state of transition, trying to find its identity and role. Teachers consequently find themselves in a situation of uncertainty, not knowing what to do to acquire a definitive idea of who they are. In this chapter we will be attempting to explain how teachers are trained for positions at the various levels of schooling. First of all, the main features and present trends of the Italian school system will be outlined, with particular reference to the work and role of teachers. After this, we will look at the forms of teacher training, the recruitment of teachers, the people who are involved in the training, as well as recent developments in the field. The emphasis will be on general features rather than on training for teaching specific disciplines. Unlike other studies, which present comparative studies of teaching in various countries, we will concentrate on specifically Italian issues, in order to discover and examine the crucial problem areas regarding the school system as a whole and the teaching profession in particular – problems which will be examined in the concluding part of this chapter.

The national educational system and teachers

A – Facts and figures

The Finance Act of 2006 (legge finanziaria 296/2006) extended to 10 years the duration of compulsory education. Education in the school system is organised as follows. After three years of pre-school (not compulsory), a child goes to elementary school for five years, and then for three years attends “middle” or so-called lower-middle school, followed by five years of high or secondary schooling. Since compulsory education ends at the age of 15/16, it is possible to leave school after the first two years of high school, or alternatively after two years of vocational training. There are different kinds of high schools available: lyceum (classical, science, language and art branches); technical and professional (vocational) schools, which prepare students for various sectors of employment (industry, trade, crafts, agriculture, service industries, and so on). At the end of five years in high school, students take a school-leaving examination (esame di maturità), and having obtained this diploma they can enrol at any university faculty, although now many faculties (for example, medicine) require students to pass an entrance examination.

Italian state or public schools form a complex system. In the school year 2005/06 there totalled 43,371 state education institutions with more than 750,000 teachers, of whom 20,000 were employed on an annual basis and 100,000 for a limited period. The number of children attending state schools was 7,900,000, including both pre-school and the three levels of school previously mentioned (Figures from Ministry of Education 2006 a, p.V). A breakdown of the teaching staff in the school year 2001/2002 (Ministry of Education, 2005, pp.14 – 17) showed that a considerable majority of teachers are women (74%), the percentage reaching more than 90% in pre-school and primary schools, 70% in lower-middle schools and 60% in high schools. As regards age, 75% of teachers were found to be in the 40 to 60 age range. The age at which teachers have obtained stable positions within the system (*l'ingresso in ruolo*) has been steadily rising, from 30 years of age between 1979 and 1989 to 39 years of age at present. The average age of teachers on an unlimited work contract (*a tempo indeterminato*) is now almost 50.

In the past decades the Italian school system has been dedicating a great deal of attention to honouring the fundamental principles of the country’s constitution (articles 30,33,34 and 38) with respect to guaranteeing young people’s right to an education. This has meant making education open to greater numbers, offering more hours of schooling per day, providing appropriate solutions for students with special needs, and, more recently, promoting measures to facilitate the inclusion of young people from immigrant families. As regards

students with special needs, they have been fully integrated into schools since the 1970s, and over the years this kind of support has meant that such integration has continued up to university level. For these students there are specially-trained teachers, and indeed in the school year 2004/05 there were a total of about 80,000 such teachers working in primary and secondary schools. Since the 1990s, when immigration began to increase, measures of a similar nature have also been implemented for immigrant students. In the school year 2005/06 there were approximately 450,000 students who were not Italian citizens. In this situation, it was deemed necessary to help both students and their families by introducing courses of Italian language, also with the support of “cultural mediators”, experts in the language of the immigrant families. Alongside these importance advances, however, there remain a number of worrying phenomena that reveal what is not working. We will first look at a problem related to the poor results of the system, namely under-achievement and dropping-out of school; then we will consider another aspect, that is the imbalance in the expenditure for schools.

As regards the first question, it should be pointed out that the problem of under-achievement and lack of motivation is widespread. A signal that a student might risk partially or completely dropping out of school can be found in his or her having to repeat a year. This happens more frequently at the beginning of lower- and upper-middle school. In the school year 2004/05 (Ministry of Education, 2006 b, p.8), 2,9% of pupils beginning lower-middle school had to repeat the year, while the figure rises to 18,1% for those beginning upper-middle school. The overall drop-out rates for all classes of lower- and upper-middle school are 2,7% and 11,4% respectively. The percentage of girls having to repeat the year is notably lower than that of boys.

In the course of lower-middle school 0.5% of pupils (about 8,500) drop out, while in the upper-middle school the percentage is 3,7% (about 94,000). Drop-out rates at both levels of schooling differ considerably according to geographical location. The south of Italy and the islands (Sardinia, Sicily) have higher percentages, while the centre-north is less affected. This state of affairs can in part be explained, especially in the south, by the degree to which some children there completely miss out on schooling or at least do not complete the course of compulsory education, as can be corroborated by the phenomenon of child labour in these regions (Megale and Teselli, 2004, p. 9-10; Osservatorio sul lavoro minorile, 2003, p. 8).

As regards the budget of the Ministry of Education, it is allotted 3.6% of the GNP, which is in line with most industrialised countries in the EU. In addition to this, schools get funding and economic support from local governments. Over

the past few years, approximately 96 - 97% of this budget has been spent on the salaries of teachers and other school staff, whereas the average figure for the rest of Europe is 80%. Such expenditure means that there remains little room for other forms of investment in schools.

B – Organisation

The Italian school system has a centralised bureaucracy with the functions of planning, management and control, recruiting and managing teaching and directive personnel, and peripheral offices. There are administrative offices at regional (USR) and provincial (CSA) levels. In recent years, the school system has been shackled by huge costs and extreme slowness in bringing about concrete change; there is indeed a certain reluctance to work for change, the result of long periods of political conflict and/or unproductive consultation. In addition, in the Italian school system it has become customary to have recourse to emergency measures rather than to try to realize truly structural changes.

For many years, the syllabi for all levels of schooling were the same all over the country, being decided at central government level. At the same time individual schools have had limited power to introduce flexibility and thus to respond to the specific needs of students created by contextual and social factors. As regards the role and function of teachers, traditionally these were seen for a long time simply in terms of a formal and somewhat bureaucratic application of the programme decided by the Ministry of Education.

Some innovation was introduced with the D.L. 417/1974 and the Law 517/1977, which envisioned a more decisive role for teachers, who would have to plan and activate more individualised teaching, and then carry out an assessment of the process. In short, the national programmes should no longer be seen as regulations to be followed to the letter, but as a framework within which specific learning programmes should be worked out in response to the characteristics of students and of the world they live in. These changes can be seen in the many functions that teachers have had to take on in recent years to offer a more complete service to students. Such functions include a support teacher for students with special needs, a teacher experienced in educational psychology, a librarian and a guidance counsellor.

These changes have been made to try to help schools escape from the traditional organization they have had to organise themselves in for decades, and also to convince teachers that there are different career possibilities within the teaching profession. The teacher is no longer to be seen as simply the repository of knowledge a particular subject that he/she has to transmit in accordance with the

syllabus to be followed. Now the teacher is to be an all-round professional able to respond to the personal, relational and social needs of students and school through collaboration with colleagues.

The trend towards decentralisation, the integration of school's organisation and the assumption of responsibility by schools and teachers for the provision of a more flexible educational service is fully expressed in the Law 59/1997. This law introduced changes to reform public administration and to simplify such administration. As far as schools were affected, successive implementation of the law led in the school year 2000/01 to greater autonomy in decision-making about teaching, organisation and research. Important innovations were thus made possible. First of all, schools could, and indeed had to, plan class and school activities with greater freedom, and also in greater collaboration with local bodies and local authorities, thus opening up to the world outside.

The schools' flexibility increased thanks to the gradual implementation of project-based strategies in their educational frameworks; the flexibility of the teachers grew along with the opportunities to participate in a variety of educational projects. The role of teachers as simply a part of a formal hierarchy in the school system is now being overshadowed by the functions they can assume and the contributions they can make in the setting-up and completion of school projects.

Given the limited financial resources at a school's disposal, by opening up to the outside world and proposing projects requiring sponsorship or funding from local government offices or from local firms, it can have access to supplementary finances to make its projects work better. When a school shows it is improving its service year by year, it becomes more attractive, and thus more likely to be chosen when families have to enrol children in a new school, especially when moving from lower-middle to high school. Competition between schools has now become a fact of life, first of all to get access to greater resources and then to be able to offer better and more interesting educational possibilities (Romei, 1991, p.15). All things considered, even though the law about school autonomy was primarily meant to regard organisational concerns, it has come to acquire greater significance in the context of the overall school system, which still has to give full expression to the potential benefits that can be accrued.

All the same, such changes were bound to lead to important repercussions on the role of teachers, on the kind of training that they need and on the very image that the profession has now acquired.

Becoming a teacher: pre-service training, entrance examinations, probationary year, permanent teaching positions

We can now attempt to explain the procedures and the stages of recruitment that have to be gone through before becoming a teacher, and in doing so we will indicate some of the most important laws in this field. After this we will look at an aspect that has attracted little attention but which is nevertheless of great relevance, namely the issue of teachers on short-term “precarious” contracts.

Procedures for obtaining permanent teaching contracts

A teaching qualification (*abilitazione all'insegnamento*) is a *conditio sine qua non* for admission to the entrance examinations necessary to acquire a permanent contract. After passing this examination and being taken on in a school, a teacher has to undergo a probationary year, after which he or she acquires permanent status (and become *insegnante di ruolo*). During this year, each new teacher is followed by a tutor. The established teacher who becomes a tutor has usually had no specific training for this role, and so the situation is still not sufficiently coherent or convincing. Tutors are usually competent teachers designated as tutors by the Head of the School, and they are called on to carry out an important function, but often receive no extra remuneration for their work. Remuneration depends on the school's budget and on the decisions made by the school board (*Consiglio d'Istituto*). At the end of the school year, the newly qualified teacher has to present a report on his/her activities. The final assessment of the new teacher is made by the tutor, the head and the Assessment Committee (*Comitato per la valutazione*) of the school. If the judgement is positive, the teacher acquires permanent status. If not, the probationary year has to be repeated.

In the last fifteen years, however, there have been a large number of changes in the above-mentioned procedures. These changes affect the obtaining of the necessary teaching qualification and the probationary period necessary before acquiring permanent status. These changes have all been part of a wide-ranging policy of innovation regarding schools and teachers. Firstly, schools, especially secondary schools, have seen a large rise in the number of students, and as a consequence, a shortage of teachers. This led to a series of emergency measures for teacher recruitment that diverged from the customary examinations and tenders based on qualifications. This sudden increase in the number of teachers without recognised qualifications (*non abilitati*) led at the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s to the issuing of *ad hoc* measures to enable those teachers without appropriate qualifications to obtain them by following specific

training courses, with the likelihood of being taken on permanently as a consequence.

Recently the probationary year has been renamed *anno di formazione e prova* (training probationary year), thus emphasising its importance as a period of training. All new teachers, regardless of how they achieved their qualification, have to go through this year to be able to obtain permanent status. This period can be organised in various ways. On the one hand, it can be organised locally by individual schools or by groups of schools, on the other the ministry itself can arrange the training period on a wider scale. The trainee teacher receives information and training about his/her own subject, teaching methods, educational psychology and pedagogy, and managing learning dynamics. Some of the activities that the trainee is involved in are carried out as part of an e-learning approach (ministerial directive 29 of 20/3/2006). The aim of at least part of this training is to refresh the trainee's knowledge about recent developments in schools. During the training probationary year, the teacher carries out his/her normal full-time work as a teacher. This is because the year in question is to be considered to all effects a year of teaching experience, and there is no provision that the teachers should have a reduced work-load, or be further helped and supervised as part of any kind of induction training (Ministry of Education 2003, p. 87).

As regards legislative aspects, the Law 148/1990 introduced an important change in the working conditions of elementary school teachers, since it reorganised teaching at that level, replacing the class teacher with a "modulo", which is usually a group of four teachers of different subjects. In addition to the innovations in teaching it brought into play the need for greater coordination among colleagues, this decision responded also to the need to solve some of the employment problems for teachers.

Another important change was the privatisation of teachers' work contract (D.L. 29/1993). Teachers become state employees (*pubblici dipendenti*), but on a private contract. It is no longer the state administration that "nominates" a teacher, but it has become a contract between the two parties. On the basis of agreements made for the national contract, this means that it is possible to define locally, in so-called integrative contracts, other matters and procedures as for example teacher training. In the above-mentioned Decreto Legge a distinction is made between contracts lasting an undefined period (*a tempo indeterminato*) and contracts for a limited period (*a tempo determinato*).

Of particular significance is the law 341/1990, which outlined the degree courses required for future elementary school teachers and also created the SSIS

(Schools of Specialisation for Teachers). Both the new degree courses and specific courses in the SSIS were recognised as teaching qualifications and responded to the need for university training for future teachers, and for new measures for universities, as requested in the law.

Before the institution of degree courses for elementary school teachers and the creation of the Schools of Specialisation (D. M. 26/5/1998), respectively in the years 1998/99 and 1999/2000, only teachers who had studied in an *Istituto magistrale* (a secondary school which trains for elementary school teaching) were considered as having a valid teaching qualification for teaching in an elementary school. The situation was different for nursery school and secondary school teachers, who rather than having to acquire a specific teaching qualification, had to pass what was essentially a State examination to become a professional teacher, much as a lawyer or engineer has to pass an examination in his particular field to be a recognised professional.

It is then only after university preparation, either as part of a degree course in teacher training for the elementary school or of a School of Specialisation, that those who aspire to becoming teachers can obtain a valid teaching qualification thanks to the teaching practice which is an integral part of the courses just mentioned. In this way, obtaining a teaching qualification closely bound to pre-service training became an important structural element for Italian schools, and is also a streamlining of the process of becoming a teacher with a permanent contract.

The degree course in Educational Sciences for Primary Schools (*Scienze della formazione primaria*) is organised in such a way that studying and practice are not separated, as they are in the School of Specialisation courses, where during their degree course the students acquire the necessary preparation in the discipline they will teach and subsequently get teaching training activities. Both of these possibilities represent a new and more complete approach to teacher training, at the end of which students will have a valid teaching qualification.

Another effect of these innovations is that the training of primary teachers is made more similar to that of teachers at secondary school level. There is no longer the distinction, from the formal training point of view, between primary school and secondary school teachers, between those who have a degree and those who do not – which was in essence the legacy of a class-ridden, hierarchical society. Finally, there is no longer a gap between primary and secondary schools, both of which are part of a child's compulsory education.

The Law 509/99 modified the organization of university education. All faculties (with the exception of medical and veterinary faculties) offer a three-year

degree course in basic professional studies, followed by a two-year specialised degree course. Another exception is the above-mentioned Educational Sciences for Primary Schools (*Scienze della formazione primaria*) which remains a four-year degree course, since at the moment no definitive decision has been made about the system of training and recruitment of teachers.

Nevertheless, because of the change of government in 2001, the reform which had just been set up has not been put into practice because of the lack of the necessary decrees to set them in place. Between 2003 and 2005 the parliament approved some laws and decrees (L. 53/2003 e D. L. 227/2005) which tend to redraw the overall education system, including the training of teachers. A more integrated system seems to be on the drawing-board; greater integration between school and university regarding a number of key issues, such as the initial probationary year, the role of tutors, online-training, in-service training and the ties between teacher training and university research.

While these policies are being applied, a crucial problem that still remains is how to ease the transition from the old to the new forms of training and recruitment, and especially to find a solution to the situation of those teachers on short-term, “precarious” contracts, a situation that has existed since the 1970s. To solve this problem, special courses have been set up which will lead to the obtaining of a valid teaching qualification and thus will give those teachers as yet without such qualification the chance to have a permanent teaching contract. In addition, lists of already qualified teachers have been drawn up, following which these teachers would gradually be able to accede to a teaching post in the state system. This has proved to be necessary because, among the so-called “precarious” teachers, there are not only people who have passed a national examination to become teachers, but also newly-qualified teachers fresh from the recently established university courses.

The Finance Law for 2007 (296/2006) underlined the need to find a solution to the problem of the *precariato* of teachers as an essential condition for any kind of reform. Thus it confirmed that teachers in this situation can, provisionally, obtain permanent posts in two different ways: one for those who have already passed a national examination and acquired the necessary experience and/or qualification, and the other for the majority of teachers who are working on temporary contracts. The courses in question will enable teachers who have qualifications that are not valid for teaching (obtained before the institution of the new training courses for primary and secondary teachers) to acquire valid qualifications. The aim is to create the conditions that will make it possible from 2010 onwards to work with an organic system of training, recruitment and in-

service training that will no longer be hindered by large numbers of *precari*, and in a school system no longer burdened by a wasteful use of resources.

It will be necessary to prevent schools from being staffed by teachers who are not in line with the reform of the procedures for the training and recruitment of teachers planned to be effective in 2010. This will be done by having future teachers, coming from university training courses or from the SSIS, put on a list (*graduatoria*) together with teachers who are still *precari* and who have sufficient teaching experience (in terms of number of days of teaching). At the time this paper is being written (May 2007), the procedures decided for the drawing up of the above-mentioned *graduatorie* (separated into level of school and discipline) are still in progress, and no definitive data are available. The time that remains before the 2010 deadline should be sufficient for the setting-up of a definitive system for the training and recruitment of teachers that will allow graduates to be taken on as teachers in schools in a relatively short time with suitable forms of guidance and support.

It should be remembered that in the last legislature alone (2001/2006) approximately 150,000 teachers obtained permanent status on the basis of ad hoc emergency measures, and at present, as we have already pointed out, there are about 120,000 *precari* working in schools who should be given the opportunity for further professional development before 2010. According to trade union figures, however, the real number is double that. The different estimates may result from different readings (given by the Ministry on the one hand, and the unions on the other) of the minimum duration of effective service on a limited contract required by law for a teacher to be included in the lists. Those who would be excluded from the lists are in large part young people with a diploma or degree obtained before the institution of the new teacher training courses. These people now find themselves effectively forced to attend such courses to obtain the required teaching qualification.

The *precariato*

Teachers are employed for many years (even more than ten years) on a temporary contract (*a tempo determinato*) and have to live in these conditions before they can begin a training and probationary year and acquire permanent status. As time passes, the probationary year is faced by teachers at an increasingly older age and after many years spent in a situation of difficulty and uncertainty as regards work prospects and economic questions. This long wait often has a negative effect on the teaching delivered. Students are often unhappy with a temporary teacher, who develops little classroom authority and consequently helps generate behavioural problems, which in their turn become

generalised against the school as a whole and cause preoccupation amongst parents.

The perspective of a *precario* is of necessity rather limited, since they are often changing students and thus they are often constrained to using ‘survival techniques’. Even amongst teachers in a school there is a clear demarcation between those who have a permanent position and the *precari*, creating a clear hierarchy in the relationships between them. This of course does nothing to help collaboration between colleagues as regards the behaviour and the strategies to adopt with students, a collaboration that would be useful not only to the teacher at the beginning of his or her career, but also to the more expert teacher. The consequence is a clear difference in the way that the two groups look upon the task of teaching (Pattaro, 2004, p.66-70).

The *precario* exists in a state of perpetual expectation, worsened by economic difficulties and with few satisfactions. All of this makes it very difficult for the teacher to maintain the high motivation that might have led him /her to choose the profession, and ultimately lessens the enthusiasm for the job. The *precario* tends to isolate him- or herself and to be rather closed and reserved with colleagues (Zambelli and Tamai, 2005, p. 156). It is in these conditions that the *precario* has to deal with the many difficulties of teaching.

For these reasons, the year of training and probation might turn out to be of little use as an experience as far as a real teaching contribution is concerned. At the same time, during the years of service as a *precario*, a teacher certainly has gone through some form of training, even if without any assistance or organisation to help him /her in learning the job. Efforts to resolve this situation, both from the legislative and the organisational points of view, are still underway, and the long period of transition that the teaching profession in Italy has to suffer does not seem about to come to an end.

We will now examine the organisation of the degree courses in teacher training and as part of the SSIS, both of which really constitute important stages in teacher training.

University teacher training courses and training experience during the pre-service period

A regular school-leaving qualification (after five years of secondary school study) enables students to sit the entrance examination and thereby access a course in teacher training for primary schools. This is a four-year course and trains teachers for nursery and primary schools. The course includes a two-year

period common to all students and another two years specific to the subjects to be taught in school. Teaching practice begins during the first year, while students attend courses, and usually entails experience in school and also with simulations. At the end of this four-year course the student has to write a thesis and a report on the teaching experience.

The dispositions regarding the course of studies, laid down by the D.M. of 26/05/1998 and integrated by individual universities as part of their own regulations, concern the minimum standard of accepted results, the teaching units with credits relative to specific areas and disciplines, and also the forms of testing and assessment.

The aims of the course for primary school teachers and also for the SSIS course for secondary school teachers regard the development of aptitudes and skills required for professional teaching (see D. M. 26/5/1998 - Attachment A, in the appendix), specific training in subject content, teaching methods and styles, professional collaboration, assessment and so on. As regards the content of the course for primary teachers (see D. M. 26/5/1998 – Attachment B – *Contenuti minimi qualificanti del Corso di laurea in Scienze della formazione primaria*) the dispositions of all universities indicate the following as basic competencies and knowledge required:

Lessons and relative credits in the following areas and subject areas:

- Area 1: teacher training – this includes the acquisition of necessary aptitudes and competencies (as laid out in Attachment A) in education, educational psychology, teaching methods, psychology, social anthropology, health and hygiene, and the treatment of pupils with special needs.
- Area 2: content of primary school teaching – this includes knowledge of and adherence to the syllabus and teaching indications for kindergarten and primary school, the acquisition of necessary aptitudes and competencies (as laid out in Attachment A) regarding the basics of the subjects chosen and the operative skills in the field of language and literature, mathematics and computers, physical, natural and environment sciences, music and communication through sounds, motor sciences, modern languages, history and social geography, drawing and figurative arts.
- Area 3: Workshops – this includes the analysis, planning and the simulation of teaching units and activities related to the contents of areas 1 and 2 (article 1, section 1, letter e) with particular reference to the specific educational content of the chosen disciplines.

Area 4: Teaching practice – this includes the teaching practice carried out in school to put theory into practice and test the competencies acquired (article 1, section 1, letter F).

In particular, the workshop and teaching practice activities include concrete teaching situations both inside and outside the faculty, organised in suitable locations and with the presence of the tutor – in this case, these are school teachers temporarily working with the university – who supervises small groups of students. External activities take place in the classes of host teachers and are regulated by appropriate agreements.

The activities carried out in various situations and locations, especially workshops and teaching practice, are of very varied nature, which makes it difficult to compare, analyse and assess the different models of training that are adopted. All the same, we can mention the experience of teacher trainees who have been hosted by a school for their probationary year. This kind of experience has been shown to be of great value for the solid teaching skills that have been acquired and the degree of learning achieved through professional collaboration with other teachers (Sambo, Bergo and Rizzo, 2001, p. 50) or the two reports on the Corso di Laurea per la formazione primaria dell'Università di Padova (Galliani and Felisatti, 2001; 2005). The first report analyses the initial stages of the degree course based on the curricular model for the development of competencies. Through a process of action research involving a number of teachers and the teaching practice tutor, two critical problem areas are identified: the integration of educational and subject-related competencies, and the integration in the curriculum of theory and practice in the initial stages of training. This second area is examined as a process of assessment research into the coherence of the model adopted, and the research is carried out through interviews with students and focus groups of teachers; also examined are the problems related to the partnership between school and university.

The D.M. (Ministerial Decree) of May 1998 outlined the kind of education and training that universities have to follow in their Schools of Specialisation (SSIS). These schools award a post-graduate diploma after two years of study, organised according to the consecutive model. The diploma that is awarded is recognised valid as State certification and as a teaching qualification. Also for the SSIS the studies and training experience are organised in four areas similar to those proposed for the degree course for primary school teachers. Only the second area is different, since subject content has already been studied during the preceding degree course; instead, here students have to do in-depth studies of the teaching of their chosen subjects, with particular reference to epistemological aspects and socio-cultural aspects of their subjects.

As was the case with the degree courses, also the SSIS courses reveal very different scenarios from one university to another, due to the autonomy of each university. According to the Law (L. 53/2003) the SSIS should be replaced by two-phase courses of study: a three-year first-level degree course plus a two-year second-level degree course. In this case, too, the dispositions of all universities (see D. M. 26/5/1998 – Attachment C – *Contenuti minimi qualificanti della Scuola di Specializzazione per Insegnanti della Secondaria*) indicate the following as basic competencies and knowledge required:

Lessons and relative credits in the following areas and subject areas:

- Area 1: teacher training – this includes the acquisition of necessary aptitudes and competencies (as laid out in Attachment A) in educational sciences and in various aspects of a teacher’s functions going beyond strictly teaching duties.
- Area 2: educational content of specific disciplines – this includes the acquisition of aptitudes and competencies mentioned in Attachment A related to the teaching methods of the disciplines involved, concentrating on the logic, the genesis, the historical development, the epistemological implications, the practical significance and the social function of the special area of knowledge.
- Area 3: Workshops – this includes the analysis, planning and the simulation of teaching units and activities related to the contents of areas 1 and 2 (article 1, section 1, letter e) with particular reference to the specific educational content of the chosen disciplines.
- Area 4: teaching practice – this includes the teaching practice carried out in school to put theory into practice and test the competencies acquired (article 1, section 1, letter f).

There has been a great deal of debate around the question of the SSIS, particularly concerned about the juridical aspects of the status of the training regarding the place that SSIS graduates should occupy in the list that will influence teaching careers. There has not been, however, much debate about the training itself, nor on how to mulate research into issues pertaining to the present-day situation.²

Research contributions are still few and far between, and since they often treat very diverse questions and are carried out according to different methods and with differing perspectives, it is very difficult to compare their results. However, the function of tutors in the SSIS and the relative pre-service training

² Some reflections and points for discussion can be found in the review “Didatticamente. La voce della SSIS”

experiences of the teachers have been analysed quite systematically, even though they deal with very different contexts (Bondioli, Ferrari, Marsilio and Tacchini, 2006; Negri, Caspani and Arpini, 2004). Likewise, some aspects of the experiences of secondary school teachers in their first years of teaching have been studied (Zambelli and Tamai, 2005). Research carried out by teachers themselves is still not very widespread and has not received any recognition. In other words, teachers have not developed a practice of research that could be considered as a field of professional development and which could also stimulate newly-qualified teachers to reflect on their own practices and the experiences that they have shared with pupils, colleagues and tutors (Dutto, 2003).

Concluding remarks

To conclude, we would like to pick up on some issues that still remain open, and discuss the implications they may have for future developments in the field. They regard both the national education system and the situation of teachers. More specifically, we will look at schools as contexts in which teachers work, and also at the training of teachers, their entrance into the school system and their professional development.

Schools as contexts for teacher action

Problems that emerge immediately when one examines the school system are on the one hand the slowness of decision-making at ministerial level – many years usually pass between the passing of a law and the executive decree – and on the other the excessive and centralised bureaucracy which permeates the system. What needs to be done is to stimulate the process of autonomy, which has been initiated with some degree of success at school level, to lead to greater simplification of the links between the central bureaucracy and schools. This is particularly important if our aim is to renew the recruitment procedures and opportunities for professional development of teachers, which can no longer continue to be based on bureaucratic and administrative procedures as are the present *graduatorie*, which do not take into consideration the assessment of a teacher's effective teaching skills.

There are many situations of disparity and imbalance in school, which seem to result from differences in how well schools operate in different parts of the country and from a lack of continuity between the various levels of compulsory schooling. These situations reveal the urgency of more effective action on the part of those who manage the system, in order to assess the real effectiveness of school institutions and intervene in good time when necessary. Schools

themselves, at their various levels, should increase their efforts to collaborate in shared planning operations. At the moment distinctions are still made between primary school and secondary school teachers, as if the two groups worked in completely different and separate worlds. There should also be provision for the presence in schools of experts working on projects concerned with the integration, support, career guidance and counselling of students. Italy is one of the few countries in Europe that does not have in its schools permanently employed educational or school psychologists.

The risk remains that primary schools will tend to offer simply courses that are preparatory for what will be studied in secondary schools, with all the focus on subject learning, also as a result of the presence in the teaching module of teachers who specialise in particular subjects. In this way, primary schools could lose their specific role of identification and early treatment of learning difficulties and lack of motivation, which reveal themselves in worrying proportions during successive phases of compulsory education when students fall behind and then begin to drop out of school. Problems like this risk being treated when it is too late, and in this way the very effectiveness of the school's educational actions is severely limited for many students at various levels of schooling.

Another series of problems regards the spaces that schools have available and the time-spans they find themselves operating in. Both of these essential elements are often excessively compressed. In an effort to squeeze as many lessons as possible into the morning timetable, especially in secondary schools, the effective duration of an "hour" of contact time with a teacher is fifty minutes or even less. Even though the effort put into their jobs is not lessened by this, it means that teachers lose contact time with their students. The teachers themselves begin to economise on time, structuring their lessons in such a way as to contain a variety of tasks (such as correcting homework, giving explanations, doing practical work, carrying out tests), but thus jeopardising the real participation of students in learning experiences (AA. VV., 2006, p.30).

What should be done is quite the opposite. Students should be allowed more time at school, not only by reorganising the duration of lessons, but also by making it possible to use a school's premises and facilities outside the times usually given to lessons. More laboratory work could be organized, as well as practical work, in specific and limited periods of the year replacing lessons that are spread all through the year. More meaningful learning experiences should be encouraged for students, who would at the same time, thanks to this different approach, be able to stimulate their teachers in their turn to work out different teaching techniques and methods.

On the one hand, schools at all levels are being asked to offer more answers and opportunities for the individual and social needs of students, also respecting cultural differences; on the other, schools are no longer the only repository and channel of learning and knowledge, now that the outside world offers such a wealth and diversity of specific learning possibilities (Scanagatta, 1999, p. 359-60). The ever-increasing access of students to resources of new information technologies helps to underline the validity of more personalised and engaging learning processes and content, which often prove to be very different from those possible at school, which are shown to be lacking in precisely those qualities. However this is not a reason for schools to conclude that they no longer have the duty to provide adequate tools for cultural and technical learning as students move towards the conclusion of different phases of schooling. The possibility to make available to students such personalised and engaging learning processes, which enhance the acquisition of personal and social responsibilities, should directly involve schools in appropriate action, since they remain centres of educational resources and have the capabilities and the duty to accept such challenges.

Consequently, the present trend to make school experiences purely cognitive should be carefully reviewed. Students and teachers should be stimulated to go beyond text books, especially now that in all schools information and communication technologies are available, which offer enormous possibilities for researching and constructing texts and other materials. They enable teachers in particular to share teaching materials and best teaching practices. These issues concern aspects of schools that should be born in mind both for their importance for organisation and innovation in schools and for their relevance to the pre-service training of teachers, especially the experiences of teaching practice which should take place in innovative and meaningful contexts.

Training of teachers, their entrance into the school system and their professional development.

As regards teachers, they are still waiting for some definitive decisions about the training procedures and forms of recruitment envisaged for 2010. The debate that is going on at the moment, regarding primary school teachers, seems to point towards a change from the present four-year degree course to one which is a combination of a three-year and a two-year degree. The question regarding secondary school teachers still seems to be wide open.

The law 53/2003 and the D. L. 227/2005 give this picture of the training for secondary school teachers: three years of study in the chosen discipline, followed by two years of training that focuses on the teaching of that discipline, on questions of psycho-pedagogy, organisation and personal dynamics and

relations. Adapting this solution to the proposed reform would mean reducing the overall training to five years (3 plus 2) in comparison with the present seven (3+2+2) necessary for the two-tier degree course and the School of Specialisation. In this way the duration of teaching training would be the same for primary and secondary school teachers, and the latter would no longer have to go through one of the longest periods of teacher training in all of the EU (Luzzatto, 2005, p. 97-98). Another hypothesis has also been put forward, as an alternative to the one just mentioned. This proposes a five-year period of discipline-related study and training, followed by two years of specialisation in studies of psycho-pedagogy, methodology and organisation, these courses presumably being organised on the model of the SSIS.

The solution which envisages a three-year plus two-year training period seems preferable, with a system of debits and credits and a wider choice of possibilities than is at present offered to students for their programme of studies. Clearly the present and a future system of training and recruitment have to be closely linked. Equally clear is the urgency to arrive at a solution to the problem of the so-called *precari*. A solution is needed which would enable young people to enter the school system as permanent teachers within a clearly-defined time period, after going through a process of training and job-finding which would support new teachers in the difficult task of facing new professional experiences and the construction of a professional identity. In particular, the necessity of a year or probation and training should be questioned, given its purely formal and perfunctory function. A trial year should be more closely connected to the pre-service training provided by the university and it should be a natural development of the workshops and teaching practice of such courses. Consequently, alternative procedures should be worked out, favouring a period of real training in the practice of teaching and then effective facilitation in the process of obtaining a permanent teaching contract; a solution this which should not exclude those working on temporary contracts.

The determining factors will be the overall shape that the university-level teacher training will take on for 2010, and the future developments in the links between schools and universities.

On the one hand, we need to eliminate the present separation between university courses for primary school teaching preparation and SSIS courses for secondary school teaching preparation; a distinction which implies that compulsory education finishes with primary school, and that the two groups of teachers that are being trained will in no way be collaborating in the future in combined actions of education and instruction.

The organisation and provision of courses strictly related to the practice of teaching could, for example, be a task shared by different faculties, rather than one belonging to specific faculties. This is a possibility to bear in mind when the matter is discussed not only with university teachers but also with the tutors involved in workshops and teaching practice and even during the first year of teaching.

On the other hand, there is an important role to be played by university centres of education and teaching research, which are still to be set up in Italy. Mention is made of them in the law L. 53/2003 and in the D. L. 227/2005. It is important that any law which in effect does make provision for them, should remember these points and should develop them bearing in mind the experience that has already been gathered in the Centres for learning and teaching and the Disciplinary centres that now exist in many universities all over the world (Messina and Zambelli, in press). In this way, it will be possible to link university research in education and teaching to its effective delivery in schools, and it will be possible to involve such research, in partnership with schools and other educational organisations, in projects on issues of importance, related to pre-service training, the initial stages of teaching and in-service teacher training.

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Appendix

D. M. 26/5/1998 – Attachment A, Training objectives of the degree course in Educational Sciences for Primary School Teaching and of the School of Specialisation per Secondary School Teaching

The following list of aptitudes and competencies which distinguish the teaching profession constitute the training objectives of the degree course and of the school of specialisation; the list can be integrated and further specified in the university regulations:

- Possess adequate knowledge of the chosen discipline, even with reference to historical and epistemological aspects;

- Listen to, observe, understand students during learning activities, being receptive to their educational, psychological and social needs in order to promote the construction of their personal identity, male or female, together with their autonomous career choices;
- Exercise proper functions in close collaboration with colleagues, families, school authorities, and local training, productive and representative bodies;
- Apply, with a mind open to cultural interaction and awareness, disciplinary skills and knowledge in differing educational contexts;
- Continue to develop and increase professional knowledge and competencies, paying constant attention to new scientific advances;
- Make learning activities meaningful, systematic, complex and motivating through flexible curriculum planning that includes decisions regarding objectives, areas of knowledge, teaching methods;
- Involve students personally in their acquisition of the knowledge and experience that they are dealing with, in a way which is suited to their progress in school, to the specific contents, to the relation between content and method, and also to the integration with other areas of learning;
- Organise time, space, materials, including multimedia, teaching technologies to make the school into a place for learning for all;
- Manage communication with students and interaction between them as essential instruments for the construction of attitudes, abilities, experiences, knowledge and for the increase in pleasure in expressing oneself and in learning, and of the confidence in acquiring new learning;
- Promote innovation in school, also in collaboration with other schools and with the world of work;
- Test and assess, also using the most up-to-date testing techniques, the activities of learning and teaching and the overall educational activities of the school;
- Assume one's role in the context of an autonomous school, with the awareness of the duties and rights of a teacher and of the relative organisational problems, with due attention to the cultural and civil context (both Italian and European) in which the school operates, and to the necessary openness to other races as well as to the specific problems of teaching to students of languages, cultures and nationalities different from Italian.

Teacher Training through Practice as an Important Element of the System of Teacher Training in Poland

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Teacher training belongs to the sections of educational reality under reform in Poland in which there are a lot of open issues and relatively many questions. Reform of organisation and syllabus of Polish schools started in 1999 brought about a number of critical remarks on the system of teacher training. Criticism mainly relates to the following (*R. Pęczkowski, 2003:105 – 106*):

- Mass character, traditionalism, autocracy and bureaucracy. A teacher training candidate is not treated as an independent entity who can enter a dialogue but rather a subject of more or less justifiable actions of others and a recipient of knowledge and system of values.
- Predominance of theoretical content in the curricula of teacher training. More importance is ascribed to the knowledge of facts of the type ‘*I know that...*’ than the knowledge of the type ‘*I know how ...*’ or ‘*I know why...*’. The current curricula are a result of historical development of pedagogical research rather than rational action of persons responsible for professional work. The basic criterion of selection of content is not the structure of occupational functions but the traditional division into scientific disciplines, with the justification that knowledge collected through centuries is versatile and reliable. The knowledge a student receives within the process of vocational training does not comply with the basic regulatory functions and does not influence the dynamics of rational actions.
- The process of teacher training is realised through a set of varied subjects. This set includes numerous courses which are characterised **first of all** by a clear dominance of theoretical courses over practical ones; **and secondly**, certain subjects have been recognised as important (lack of a clear criterion) which is evident by the necessity to take examinations in these subjects while other subjects are treated as less important and they are finished with a credit only; **thirdly**, knowledge acquired during many unrelated courses is atomised and dispersed;
- The side effect of this mode of vocational training which is very important from the point of view of the needs of educational system is the unification

of educational plans and curricula. The aim is to unify curricula, at the same time losing the specific character of a given institution of teacher training, the specific nature of a local community, its potential and needs.

- Social tradition is definitely more important in teacher training than learning from one's own experience; active methods and independent search for solutions referring to personal knowledge and experience of a teacher candidate have been substituted with verbal messages lacking reflection.
- Insufficient inclusion of practice in teacher training. It does not refer to the settlement of the eternal dilemma of whether 'theory or practice is more important in teacher training', but to the necessity to change the quality of training through practice. Practice in its present form, consisting of getting to know particular educational institutions and creating model educational situations, does not fulfill its function. When they start their professional life, graduates of studies in teaching specialisations face the reality which substantially differs from the reality they have been presented with during vocational training.

The opinions above presented resulted in a number of actions intended to reform the Polish system of teacher training with the main aim of introducing organisational and curricular changes. One of the significant results of this was the introduction of a standard of teacher training in B.A., M.A. and post-graduate studies in teacher training in 2004. M. Wrońska has characterised this standard; her description is included in this monograph. In her reflections, she focuses on the issues related to the preparation of a future teacher in the area of skills shaped through pedagogical practice.

T. Husen states: *'one of the weaknesses of teacher training is inadequate coordination of fundamentals of psychology and pedagogy with the methodology and practice of teaching'* (T. Husen, 1972). Research conducted in the 1990s shows that during the period of job initiation, graduates of studies with the teaching specialisation experience a lot of negative emotions referred to as 'vocational shock' (B. Jodłowska, 1991: 67 -79). One of the elementary factors determining this shock is a low level of practical preparation of future teachers. Practice in its present form, consisting of getting to know particular educational institutions and creating model educational situations, does not fulfill its function. Graduates of teaching studies who have just started their careers face the reality, which is substantially different from the reality they had been familiarised with in the course of training for their future job. I will now present the main assumptions of the educational model of vocational training through practice referred to as the 'competence model', without analysing in depth the existing way of training future teachers. My consideration is based on

the tasks and objectives ascribed to education. Synthetically, they can be named in the following way:

- acquiring knowledge;
- shaping intelligence and developing a critical sense;
- getting to know oneself better and conscious recognition of one's skills and limitations;
- acquiring the skill of fighting one's undesired impulses and destructive behaviours;
- acquiring an ability to communicate with other people;
- learning to take a responsible role in social life;
- helping others adjust to changes and preparing them for these changes;
- making it possible for each person to formulate their own versatile and holistic point of view;
- developing efficiency and readiness to solve numerous new problems. (A. King, B. Schneider, 1992: 202)

The basic area of activity in the proposed model is shaping competences understood as ***an ability to motivate to take action adequate to a situation and possessed knowledge***. (R. Pęczkowski 2003:108). Generally, two categories of teacher competencies can be distinguished. One of them is interpretative competencies which make it possible for a person to make sense of what surrounds us, to formulate the objectives of one's professional and other activity. Another category involves communication and proficiency competencies which are technical in character and which imply the skills of using various methods and means of activity. The theoretical perspective for a model of competence training through practice is determined by constructivism understood as the theory of knowledge. Two elementary theses form a basis of these reflections. The first one assumes that knowledge is actively constructed by a cognitive entity, while the second one is the claim that acquisition of knowledge is a process of adaptation in which the experienced world is organised. Constructivism emphasises the activity of an entity and as a result an entity constructs their own picture of a surrounding reality. An entity which learns in an active way constructs their own knowledge and does not absorb it as a ready product transmitted by a teacher. Such an entity does not register information transmitted by others but constructs knowledge from available information using the possessed information. Teacher training should consist of providing a candidate for a teacher with ready recipes and procedures of methodological and educational action that guarantee, in the opinion of people transmitting these recipes, success in future work. This solution is also a result of a lack of one theory with which everyone would agree, one single teaching method which could always bring good results; one curriculum which could fit

each subject taught; one action all results of which could be predicted or one element of learning all results of which could be directly observed (D. Fish, H. Broekman, 1992).

Taking into consideration the above, training through practice understood as a process of conscious and purposeful activity of a student, academic teacher or teacher in a specified time and educational reality should lead to getting to know the reality of education and to shaping competencies necessary to perform the job of a teacher. The aims of this process have been specified through reference to the taxonomy of learning results by Z. Włodarski (Z. Włodarski, A. Matczak, 1987: 70 – 78). The author claims that in people's behaviour we can distinguish two kinds of elements: innate and acquired elements. Acquired elements are learnt and they differ by being either old or new to the preceding behaviours. The Author enumerates three kinds of behaviours: habitual, stereotypical and creative behaviours. The lowest level is occupied by habitual behaviours which are characterised by no rule steering their execution³. The higher level is represented by stereotypical behaviours which are mainly characterised by the always-old rule and new elements related to performance. The highest level is creative behaviours which are characterised by the fact that the rule steering their performance is new.

The realisation of the above accepted aims in developing various behaviours requires: 1. giving up education consisting of getting to know particular educational institutions for education based on solving specific real problems of methodological and educational nature; 2. training through practice should first be carried out on a small scale and in conditions safe for the trainee, and then proceed to increasingly complex situations. The *sine qua non* condition for this model is on the one hand strict mutual cooperation on the line: student – academic teacher – teacher/mentor in a school and on the other hand offering a wide array of various forms of classes taking place at school and out of school. The proposed model of education through practice has substantially influenced the radical change in the organisation of teaching practice. The whole process has been included in four modules specified in the following way: '*simple contacts of a student with pupils*'; '*student as an assistant of a teacher*'; '*student as an accompanying teacher*'; '*student as an independent teacher*' (J. Miąso, R. Pęczkowski, M. Wrońska, 2002: 87 – 97).

³ According to Z. Włodarski, in the actions of human being which are the result of learning there can be two basic elements: performance and rule. The first one, depending on the kind of activity, takes varied forms and is generally easy to observe so it can be registered in some way. The other one is directly expressed in words (Z. Włodarski, A. Matczak, 1987: 71).

The above presented order creates, in my opinion, the conditions for step-by-step acquisition of educational experience. It allows students to analyse various methods applied by teachers active in their profession when solving practical educational and methodological problems (from simple to more complex ones), to learn from pupils how to solve tasks and get to know the way to create new innovative reactions to the learning situation. Moreover, it allows them to gain orientation in the whole of professional activity of a teacher, provides the patterns of constructive performance of these actions, makes them aware of the unique character of educational situations and makes it possible for them to construct a vision of themselves as future teachers.

The starting point for the realisation of the first module is the assumption that teacher training candidates who undertake certain actions within the curriculum possess the knowledge and experience and exhibit a number of behaviours which are a result of previous functioning in the system of education, but these behaviours are individualised and gathered in different places and situations. Therefore, the basic task of a student, academic teacher and teacher – mentor is the recognition (diagnosis) of resources introduced into the process and taking them into consideration in the proposed educational activities. Additionally, at this stage it should be remembered that a student should be given a chance to have an insight into their own skills, abilities, predispositions and motivation in the context of future professional work. The second module is about creating conditions that allow you to have insight into the essence of teachers' work through getting to know educational reality in natural situations which take place in school. The activity of a student should be directed at gaining orientation and knowledge about the structure and organisation of school and teacher activities conducive to preparing a lesson in a given subject. This stage is a careful and rational initiation of a student into the role of a teacher which is supposed to prepare a student for independent planning and conducting lessons. The basic activity of a student relies on observation of various educational situations as well as assisting a teacher in their actions related to planning and conducting classes. Knowledge, experience and competence acquired by a student in modules one and two constitute a springboard for module three. Gradually a student takes actions intended as practice of their pedagogical skills. However, before a student takes over responsibility for independent lesson execution, they should participate in a lesson conducted by an experienced teacher during which a student can act as an assistant. This participation should be active so we should give a student a chance to prepare and conduct a certain fragment of a lesson. In the course of the carrying out of this lesson fragment, a student should be observed by a teacher and after the lesson a teacher should analyse the student's performance, paying particular attention to positive and negative solutions and possible changes in that part of

the lesson. The final stage in the proposed structure of the educational process through practice constitutes a basic element of teacher training. The essence of this module is about independent preparation and lesson execution in the subject the trainee will teach in the future. This should be a proof of a student's readiness to begin independent educational activity in which they will use both the knowledge and competence acquired within studies and experience gained in the process of realising the three stages preceding their preparation for work. The duration of each module is different and should be tailored to the needs and predispositions of an individual student. The decision in this respect should be taken by the three participants of the process.

The proposed model of training through practice is dynamic in nature, i.e. in case of changes in the educational system or in accordance with the needs of this system it can be quickly adapted and specific solutions can be adjusted to a current situation.

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Bulgarian Novice Teachers' Attitudes towards Transfer of Learning: Expectations and Reality

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Abstract

This paper promotes the necessities to assure transfer of learning for novice Bulgarian teachers as a two-part continuous process in which past learning affects new learning, which in turn will be applied to novel learning situations in the future. In this respect it has roughly got two parts: a theoretical part and a practical one representing the findings of a research study.

Introduction

The emergence of teachers who are conscious of the direction of their professional career path is one of the most important steps in the evolution of Bulgarian teacher education in our European society. Once young professionals discover the direction of their professional development, they can use it to guide their own cognitive, psychological and behavioural evolution. If they know where their development as professionals is going, they can work out what will produce success in the future, and use this to plan how they will evolve in their teaching practice.

Novice teachers, however, can try to deal with the future by making changes in their communication with the students, parents and colleagues and seeing how the changes work out in practice. But this takes a lot of costly trial-and-error process during their most significant first year as teachers, particularly when their future as teachers is uncertain, complex or changes rapidly.

The alternative is for the novice teachers to steer their professional development by forming a picture of how it is likely to unfold in the future. They can try to find trends and patterns in this evolution that might affect their future chances of staying at their professional workplace. They can then use these patterns to

see how they must change themselves and the way they are organised in order to continue to be successful.

Much of the problems for the Bulgarian novice teachers arise because of the unsuccessful transfer of learning which, as a two-part process (which will be elaborated later), concerns the holistic perspective that all knowledge is created within a cultural context and that the "facts" are more than shared points of view. It encourages the transfer of learning across separate academic disciplines during the university training and across experience during on-the-job professional development.

The process of induction in Bulgaria

In Bulgaria there is no special induction period. The induction period is in fact the first year of the novice teachers' employment.

Directors of schools in Bulgaria hire novices first for a one-year period to assure themselves and the whole staff that the new teacher is good enough for their school's image and has acquired good professional skills during their pedagogical training at the pedagogical faculties and during this one year. This is the usual practice in new teachers' employment in Bulgaria. Since that is the so called trial period, all young teachers view it as a trial period with significant reflection upon their self-assessment. This fact explains why it is a common that novice teachers during the trial period are found to manifest too much assiduousness in their teacher experiential learning that supports student learning.

That period is associated with the process of applying the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that were learned in one situation – the university pedagogical course of training - to another learning situation – the real classroom and school situation. This increases the speed of learning and even makes a shift in the process of learning and gaining real instructional experience. The trial period in fact involves far transfer tasks, with skills and knowledge being applied in situations that change. Far transfer tasks for the novice teachers require “instruction for the profession” where learners are “trained” by the circumstances in their work environment to adapt “guidelines” of this environment to changing situations or environments. Although this type of training is more difficult to “instruct”, it does allow the learner to adapt to new situations.

Good future teachers should want to have a clear idea of what they want to do with their lives and have an even better idea of how faculties of education and teacher training is going to help them figure it all out. And here comes the big

problem for the Bulgarian teacher training – most of our students wanted to become something more prestigious and since they dropped out from the lists of the desired majors, they decided to stay at the university and to receive a kind of teacher training. And if some of them remain stubborn and resentful for the lost opportunities, others decide to follow their intuition and curiosity. They choose the way to find out what makes the great teaching great. (It will always seem fascinating and strangely meaningful to me that no pedagogical or psychological science can capture this.)

Bulgarian novice teachers' attitudes towards transfer of learning

This survey involved 57 Bulgarian novice primary school teachers who are graduates of “St. Cyril and St. Methodius” University of Veliko Tarnovo. Their average age was 24,6. The survey used e-mail and live research interviewing.

During my interviews with the novice teachers I found that most of them (67%) have adopted only one-part process of transfer of learning – that in which past learning (their university teacher training) affected their new hands-on learning in the school setting. Transfer of teacher learning was connected with the teachers' ability, competence and role as far as university training gave those primary notions to them.

Almost all of the teachers (93%) worried about the techniques of teaching, classroom management and discipline techniques. Almost all of them (91%) realized that professional knowledge and skills can become incorrect, incomplete or outdated over time, making them less effective as individuals, as employees, as professionals, as partners, as parents, as social performers. They (93%) expect to face having to change, and that change would be in fact the right transfer of experiential teacher learning (91%).

All those young people have missed the second-part continuous process of applying the new learning to novel learning situations involving students, parents, co-workers and others in the future.

33% of the participants held the view that mindful transfer involves deliberate effortful abstraction of experience gained through professional development and a constant search for connections. This is a valuable holistic perspective since it regards professional development during the induction period as a whole.

Those young people have a vision that school and their work setting is a self-knowledge-centered environment. They do not view their professional development in the subject matter as the primary vehicle for learning; teachers

learn how to successfully teach students and themselves by focusing on their own experiences as learners and applying them to further experiences for personal and professional growth. For those novice teachers it is a deep understanding that to teach means to be ready to learn, that teaching involves lifelong learning and constant application of that learning. It involves “connecting the dots”. Transfer of learning is adopted as transfer of self-training - effectively and continuously applying the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that were learned in a learning environment, the job environment.

According to the term attitude (which is defined within the framework of social psychology as a subjective or mental preparation for action) and the results received from the research, the individuals' prevailing tendency to respond favourably or unfavourably to transfer of learning can be described in terms of three components:

- cognitive component, which is the knowledge about transfer of learning, whether accurate or not;
- affective component, which is the feelings towards transfer of learning;
- behavioural component, which is the action taken towards transfer of learning in their professional practice.

The cognitive component is related to a lack of confidence about subject content, i.e. transfer of learning. The affective component is the emotional (like-dislike the process of transfer of learning) component of an attitude. And the behavioural component comprises the overt behavior of the novice teachers towards the transfer of learning. This research clearly indicates some kind of lack in the cognitive and behavioural components of attitudes towards transfer of learning in novice teachers. These components will be further researched and elaborated.

Conclusion and further research

According to novice teachers, transfer can be thought of as a two-part continuous process in which past learning affects new learning at the workplace and has to be applied to novel learning situations in the future for successful adaptation to new students, new social and economic conditions.

Much of the practice with hiring novice teachers shows that the successful strategy is to hire for attitude towards transfer of learning and then train for competence. This is so because professional success at work as a teacher is a complex product of having the right knowledge, the right skills and the right

attitude towards flexible transfer of all knowledge gained through professional experience.

Some of the questions for further research have been outlined:

What is the direction of Bulgarian teacher development?

Where is the novice teachers' development headed?

Is the direction of change progressive, in the sense of personal and professional advancement and improvement as time unfolds?

Is the direction of professional change fruitful with reference to the successful transfer of continuing informal learning?

If it does progress, in what way do novice teachers improve?

The teachers our society trains need to be aware that transfer is a basic learning principle and that according to it skills and knowledge they gain must transcend bases.

Partnership of Universities and Schools A Model of Systematic Professional Induction of Teachers

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In the following paper, background information about the education system as well as detailed information about the B.Ed. (Hons.) degree programmes is given. Since there are differences between primary and secondary schooling, the paper is broadly divided into two sections for ease of presentation.

National system of education

Education in Malta is regulated by the Education Act of 1988⁴, and is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education.

In Malta, children enter compulsory schooling at the age of 5. This makes Malta one of the four EU countries with such an early start to formal education. Primary schooling lasts for six years. This is followed by compulsory secondary schooling which lasts for five years. Apart from the eleven years of formal education, about 98% of children start attending school at the age of 3. Kindergarten facilities are available and attached to all state primary schools in every town and village on the island. State KG provision for 4-year olds was introduced in 1975 and extended to 3-year-olds in 1988.

There are three forms of education provision parents can choose from. Children can be educated through the State schools, Church schools or Independent private schools. State schools are free of charge, Church schools accept parents' donations whereas Independent schools charge fees. The language of instruction is Maltese in state schools whereas Church and Independent schools tend to use English. However, a bilingual education is offered in all schools.

⁴ Available online from
http://docs.justice.gov.mt/lom/legislation/english/leg/vol_7/chapt327.pdf

A National Minimum Curriculum (1999) guides the syllabi and programme of activities which are adopted in schools.

Teacher education

There are two primary qualifications which lead⁵ into the teaching profession in Malta - a four-year B.Ed.(Hons.) degree in either primary or secondary teaching specialization, and a 1-year PGCE (Post Graduate Certificate in Education) which is currently only offered to prospective secondary school teachers. Both qualifications are offered by the Faculty of Education at the University of Malta. Courses are full-time day courses – at present there is no provision for part-time or evening teacher-training courses in Malta.

Pre-school education and staff

To date, staff working with 3 and 4-year-olds do not receive any formal training or qualification at tertiary level. For many years, kindergarten assistants who were employed to work with 3 and 4 year-olds received about six weeks of training just before starting their work with the children. Since these employees do not have the same status or training as teachers in compulsory education, they are called kindergarten assistants. However, this is a misnomer since each KG assistant is solely responsible for her own group of children⁶.

Between 1993 and 2003, the Education Division organized a two-year full-time course leading to a Certificate in Pre-school education. This was the recognized qualification for employment in the sector. The course consisted of a theoretical and a practical component. Since 2003, a different institution has taken responsibility for a child-care course. The Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST), geared towards vocational education, offers the BTEC National Diploma in Child Care. This is a two-year full-time course, which prepares students to work with newborns to five-year-olds. Apart from the theoretical aspect of the course, students have work placements with babies as well as under three-year-olds in child-care centers. Students who are planning to

⁵ In Malta, only persons in possession of a teachers' warrant may exercise the teaching profession. Warrants are issued by the Council of the Teaching Profession. Besides persons in possession of a B.Ed.(Hons.) degree, a PGCE or other professional qualification, the Education Act entitles anyone in possession of a Master's degree or a Doctorate to a permanent warrant provided they follow a pedagogy course organised by the Directorate for Educational Services.

⁶ The maximum number of three-year-olds with one KG assistant is 15; the maximum number of four-year-olds is 20.

seek employment as Kindergarten assistants are being offered a further 12 weeks of training with 3 and 4-year-old children.

Teacher training for compulsory education

Having a B.Ed.(Hons.) qualification is compulsory for individuals who are interested in working with 5 to 11-year-old children. The Department of Primary Education, within the Faculty of Education is responsible for this teacher training degree programme.

The four-year full-time programme is divided into a number of components including: core content modules; professional studies; research methods and a dissertation; field placements; education studies and a number of optional and elective modules.

The core content modules prepare students for teaching the eight compulsory subjects in the children's curriculum including Maltese, English, Religion, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education and Expressive Arts. Professional studies focus on general issues of interest to teachers working with young children, such as assessment, psycho-social issues and their implications for classrooms, disability issues, bilingualism, literacy, ICT and environmental studies. Many areas are not dealt with exclusively from a theoretical perspective but often, students are requested to undertake and complete assignments which are closed linked to classrooms and children.

Training Secondary School teachers

Secondary school teachers in Malta are trained to teach specific subjects within the secondary school curriculum. There are two principle routes into the teaching profession for secondary school teachers – either a 4-year B.Ed.(Hons.) degree in either 1 or 2 teaching areas (i.e. subjects), or a 1st degree followed by a 1-year PGCE. Both B.Ed.(Hons.) and PGCE courses are offered by the two secondary departments within the Faculty of Education – the Department of Arts and Languages in Education (DALE) and the Department of Mathematics, Science and Technical Education (DMSTE). The department of Psychology also offers these courses for teachers specializing in Personal and Social Development (PSD).

The B.Ed. (Hons.) route

Students taking languages, history, geography, art, music, and religious education are required to choose two teaching areas to specialize in, while students taking science, computing, home economics, mathematics, physical education, and technical design and technology specialize in only one teaching area.

Over half the course is dedicated to the chosen teaching area or areas – including both subject content and methodology – while the rest consists of credits in educational studies (sociology, philosophy and educational psychology) and field placement. Students also have to complete a dissertation in an area of education of the student's choice usually, but not necessarily, related to the teaching area of specialisation.

During the first two years of the course students concentrate almost exclusively on the content of their chosen area or areas, in many cases taking units with other Faculties from the relevant B.A. and B.Sc. programs. During this part of the course, students' contact with the teaching profession is minimal, being limited to one morning's visit to a school once a week to carry out observation tasks (school experience) and, at the end of the second year, delivering a few lessons.

The 3rd and 4th years of the course are almost exclusively dedicated to credits in the area of education – subject methodology (including general credits in educational resources and ICT), educational studies, and two 6-week teaching practice periods (one in each year), together with the dissertation.

The PGCE route

Students reading for a PGCE specialize in only one teaching area, which is normally expected to have been a major component of their first degree. The 1-year course is very tightly packed, with credits in subject methodology and educational studies, three periods of school observation, and two 6-week teaching practice sessions. Students must also complete a long essay in education typically related to their chosen teaching area.

Teacher Induction

The professional development of teachers consists of three main phases forming a continuum – the pre-service phase, the induction phase, and the in-service

phase. Although pre-service teacher education in Malta is well-developed and has a long and honorable history, and ongoing in-service professional development is reasonably well catered for, as yet there is no support mechanism in the school itself to help new teachers gradually acclimatise to the teaching profession.

Once students graduate and are entrusted with a full teaching load at primary or secondary level they are left entirely on their own to pursue PD (professional development) opportunities.

Bezzina, C. (2002 p.59)

Thus the only form of monitored and supported teaching experience prospective teachers get is during the field placement components of their pre-service training course – School Experience and Teaching Practice. Schools normally appoint a senior member of staff (usually an assistant head or a subject coordinator) to oversee students on field placement, and the student is paired with one or more class teachers who help the student acclimatize to the teaching situation. Such arrangements however are informal and non-systematic, and as yet there is no special training which the members of staff concerned need to undergo to fulfill their mentoring role.

School Experience

School experience in both the B.Ed. and PGCE programmes serves as an induction into schools. Both the primary and secondary specializations require students to attend weekly observation visits to schools coupled with tutorials focusing on topics relevant to the classroom contexts in which students are specializing. This serves to introduce students and help them acquire familiarization with life in schools and classrooms. This experience enables students to learn about school routines and procedures, how to get to know learners, the basics of classroom practice, different learning styles, motivation, communication, classroom management and lesson structures, including planning, explanations and questioning, reflections and evaluations.

Students are in schools every Wednesday for classroom observations linked to the topics which would have been discussed during the tutorials.

School Experience in the Primary B.Ed. course

In the Primary course, school experience is done exclusively in the first year of the course. Students are divided into groups of about five students and assigned to tutors. With their respective tutor, each group of students has two hours

tutorials each week. During these tutorials, students discuss, observe, research and report about particular topics.

Students are given a school experience handbook. For each of the topics under review, there are specific aims and objectives which students are expected to achieve; issues to consider and discuss; tasks and activities to be done in the classrooms. They are assigned to a particular classroom for the entire year with some opportunities to see other classrooms periodically. Towards the end of the academic year, on five consecutive Wednesdays, students start taking over the classroom gradually. They would have prepared lessons according to recommendations made by the class teacher as well as following advice from the tutors.

In the last two weeks of the School Experience module, students take over the classroom entirely. They have to prepare lesson plans, schemes of work and resources as well as deliver the lessons with the children they have been monitoring and following over the year. During this two-week block teaching practice, the students are supervised by their university tutor.

School Experience in the Secondary Specialisation courses

In the Secondary B.Ed. course, students have school experience in the first two years of the course. The model is identical to that adopted in the Primary course, except that the 1st year school experience component focuses on general topics related to teaching in a secondary school context and does not include any teaching.

The second year School Experience component concentrates on topics directly related to the students' chosen teaching area or areas and requires students to take charge of the classes they have been assigned during the last 5 Wednesdays of the school experience period (usually in February and March). During this teaching practice period, two separate tutors visit the student on 4 occasions – although the students' performance in class is assessed, the primary objective of the tutors' visits is to help the student develop basic class management and pedagogic skills.

The PGCE School Experience component aims to give the student a crash course in how to survive in the secondary classroom. It is divided into 3 distinct phases – in November, in February and in April. Between these phases the student is out on 6-week Teaching Practice placements.

Teaching practice

During the TP placements, students are given a minimum of four visits by university-appointed tutors. To date, schools do not have much input through mentoring, although where necessary and possible, schools are asked to support the students. At the end of each visit, students are given a report which highlights their strengths and weaknesses together with areas which they are expected to improve upon in subsequent visits.

According to the existing regulations, students can fail one teaching practice with the opportunity of repeating this failed component in an extra year of the course.

Teaching Practice in the Primary B.Ed. course

During the second, third and fourth year of the B.Ed. (Hons.) course for primary school students, a compulsory component of the programme is a six-week teaching practice placement. In the second year of the course, this occurs before Easter whereas in the third and fourth years, students are on teaching practice in the first term, prior to Christmas. Across the TP placements, efforts are made to ensure students get diverse experiences and this is partially achieved by sending students to state, church and independent schools.

A detailed list of criteria are available against which tutors advise and assess students. The criteria consider skills and competencies which students are expected to demonstrate in their professional work with the children in their class as well as other members of staff. These skills and competences are of a formative nature and from one TP session to the next, new ones are added. Students are assessed on their ***professional knowledge***, including how well they know the National Curriculum and the two official languages – Maltese and English. They are also assessed on the content and developmental stages of their ***schemes of work***; their ***lesson planning and preparation*** including clarity of objectives, well-sequenced stages in the plan, appropriate key questions which are balanced between open-ended and closed ones, modifications to plans according to the needs of the children; the ***learning environment*** they are working towards achieving in the classrooms: the variety of resources they are planning to use, the availability of specific resources in class, how they have arranged resources, whether ICT is being incorporated; the ***lesson delivery***, with specific criteria focusing on the introduction, development and conclusion of the lesson together with ***classroom management issues***: ability to motivate and maintain pupils interest, pace of the lesson, voice projection, skills in managing the class or groups of children and ***pupil profiles***: work. accomplished with

children; correction/marking of student's work, the class profile and individual pupil profiles. In this documentation, students are invited to observe and write about the strengths and weaknesses of a number of pupils, think about possible intervention strategies to support these children and work towards achieving a target.

Teaching Practice in the Secondary Specialisation courses

The B.Ed. secondary specialisation programme follows the same Teaching practice model as the primary programme except that there are only two Teaching Practice periods – in the 3rd and 4th years of the course.

In the PGCE course there are two Teaching Practice periods – one in November/December and one in February/March. However, in reality only the second teaching period is assessed – the first teaching practice fulfils an advisory role.

Course completion

On successful completion of their course, students are awarded a B.Ed.(Hons.) degree or PGCE certificate by the University of Malta. To date, new graduates are then given their teacher's warrant after one teaching year. However, with recent changes in the Education Act, the warrant will be given after two years of teaching experience. It is also worth noting that the Faculty of Education has absolutely no say in students' employment placements after graduation.

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Personal and Socio-Emotional Competences in Trainee Teachers

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Introduction

Recent research (Fer, 2004; Jaeger, 2001; Mayer & Cobb, 2000; Reiff, 2001; Schreier, 2001) indicates the need for educators to explore the role of emotional intelligence in students and teachers.

We know that in Spain there is talking about emotional intelligence on the curricula and its repercussions for teaching, learning and student adaptation, thanks to research broadly based on human intelligence, emphasising the scientific viability of affective teaching (Bisquerra, 2002; Carpena, 2001; Extremera & Fernández-Berrocal, 2003, 2004; Fernández-Berrocal & Extremera, 2002; Melero, 2000).

By maintaining that “all citizens should attain the maximum possible development in all their individual, social, intellectual, cultural and emotional capacities” Spain’s 2006 Education Act has the importance of our proposed research related to its first fundamental principle.

Although the standards that govern the educational process in Spain all refer to the integral development of students, teaching practice and reality show that not enough classroom time is spent on dealing with these matters. However, in the school environment, demands concerning social competence do appear (Bernart, 2006; López, 2006; Topping, Bremner & Holmes, 2000). It is, accordingly, necessary to revise what is being taught in schools and to propose new courses of action (Ortega & Mora-Merchan, 1996). Many studies underline the potential utility of emotional intelligence in the academic context and of integrating emotional teaching in schools (Elias, Chan, Caputi, 2000; Gil-Olarte, Palomera & Brackett, 2006; Lopes & Salovey, 2004), analysing the role of the emotions and emotional regulation in behaviour problems and social skill (Eisenberg & Fabes, 2006; Loukas & Prelow, 2004; Ortega, 1997; Ortega & Lera, 2000) and underlining its importance in preventing conflictive behaviour and improving the emotional processes involved in interpersonal contexts (Guil, Gil-Olarte, Mestre & Nuñez, 2006; Mestre, Palmero & Guil, 2004).

1. The concept of Emotional Intelligence

Over the past century, educational institutions have focused primarily on two types of intelligence: logical and linguistic (Fatt & Howe, 2003). Academic intelligence has normally been related with general or analytical intelligence, defined in psychometric terms as IQ (Sternberg, 2000; Strenberg, 2003,a).

Epstein (1994) pointed to the existence of rational intelligence and experiential intelligence. Goleman (2005) made a similar distinction, pointing to the existence of two minds: the rational mind and the emotional mind.

Our mind operates in three ways: cognition, affect and motivation. Cognition includes functions such as memory, reasoning, judgment, and abstract thought. Affect includes emotions, moods, evaluations, and other feelings. Motivation is the sphere of the personality, and includes biological or learned goal-seeking behaviour (Fer, 2004).

The term “emotional intelligence”, in turn, covers two different concepts (Bar-On, 2000; Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2000,a,b). One has been proposed by authors such as Bar-On (2000), Goleman (1995, 1998) and McCrae (2000), who consider emotional intelligence to be a combination of a series of attributes other than IQ very closely linked with personality and related to skills referring to academic achievement. Mayer, Caruso & Salovey (2000), and Mayer, Caruso, Salovey & Sitarenios (2003), on the other hand, define emotional intelligence as the capacity to perceive and understand emotional information.

Mayer & Salovey (1990) understand emotional intelligence as a self-perceived or real capacity to perceive, understand and control one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, and to use this information for one’s own thoughts and acts. They suggest a model of emotional intelligence covering five skills/competences: knowledge of one’s own emotions, control of the emotions, the capacity to motivate oneself, empathy and social skills. The first three skills refer to the area of intrapersonal intelligence, while the final two refer to interpersonal intelligence (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). According to these authors, the emotionally intelligent person is skilled in four abilities: (1) perception, appraisal, and expression of emotion, (2) the facilitation of thinking by emotion, (3) understanding and analyzing emotions or employing emotional knowledge, and (4) reflective regulation of emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer & Cobb, 2000; Mayer & Salovey, 1995; Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

According to Bar-On (1997) emotional intelligence is a series of non-cognitive capabilities, abilities and skills that influence our ability to successfully face up to environmental pressures and demands. In this scheme, emotional intelligence

consists of different factors: Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, Stress Management, Adaptability, and General Mood.

2. The importance of Emotional Intelligence in Education

Several studies attach great importance to certain non-intellectual aspects of intelligence in the prediction of academic, professional and life achievements (Bar-On, 2000; Bernard, 2006; Dulewicz, Higgs & Slaski, 2003; Epstein, 1994; Goleman, 2005; Kihlstrom & Cantor, 2000; Ryan, 2005; Salovey & Pizarro, 2003; Sternberg, 2003,b; Sternberg, Grigorenko & Bundy, 2001). From our own research, we can point out that we have obtained empirical evidence of the role played in academic performance by factors other than general intelligence (Castejón & Gilar, 2006; Castejón, Gilar, Bermejo & Mañas, 2004; Castejón, Gilar & Pérez, 2006; Gilar, 2004; Gilar, Martínez & Castejón, 2006; Sánchez, Gilar & Pérez, 2006).

We can improve our emotional intelligence by learning not only to develop our intellectual abilities (The Heart Skill Coach, 1999), but also our social and emotional skills (Pfeiffer, 2001). Hamachek (2000) points out that intellectual ability is essential in order to be successfully educated and to become a contributing member of society. Emotional intelligence is also essential because it can help people to study towards their potential and to develop healthy interpersonal relationships.

It is important to consider ways of integrating emotional intelligence skills into each student in order to obtain increased success. With students developing emotional intelligence skills more effectively, this would also help to create a more caring, supportive, and successful society. In this sense, we need emotional intelligence skills in our classrooms, both for us as teachers and for our students (Fer, 2004).

Many researchers have argued that emotional intelligence might be as important as IQ for success in both school and life (Brown, 1996; Goleman 1995; Hamachek, 2000; Mayer & Cobb, 2000; Reiff, 2001; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). These indicate that emotional intelligence affects not only how individuals get along with others, but also how they succeed in life, including academic achievement as well as personal and professional success. Accordingly, teachers have an important role in helping learners to expand their IQ and emotional intelligence potential.

3. Teacher Training in Spain

Royal Decree 1440 of 30 August 1991 establishes the official university degree of *Maestro* (Primary School Teacher) and the general guidelines for the study plans leading to this degree.

Teachers are trained at University Teacher Training Colleges and Education Faculties and the degree course lasts three years.

The teacher training profile is established on the basis of the professional profile of the job, defined by the following parameters:

- Teachers must organise the interaction between the students and the subject matter.
- Teachers must act as intermediates to ensure that activities are meaningful and stimulate the development potential of each student in cooperative group work.
- Teachers must be able to design and organise activities within the core discipline and at cross-disciplinary level and collaborate with the world outside the school.
- Teachers must be capable of analysing the context of their activity and carrying out the corresponding preparation in response to a changing society.
- Teachers must be able to act as tutors, guiding students and evaluating their learning process.

Bearing in mind this professional profile, initial teacher training involves more than studies with a high level of “content”, whether this be scientific, cultural, psychological or sociological. Future teachers must have:

- A profound knowledge of the cycle or stage in which they are going to work.
- A complete knowledge of the subject or subjects they are going to teach, and the capability to design coherent core discipline and interdisciplinary plans.
- Training based on a methodology coherent with the teacher/researcher paradigm.

In short, training that allows them not only to impart knowledge, but also enabling them to draw up curricular projects adapted to the characteristics and needs of their schools and their students. Teachers must also constantly redefine what they teach and how they teach it within the context of their school.

On the other hand, we cannot ignore the fact that the functions of teachers have increased considerably as new contents demanded by society are incorporated into the school system. These new requirements are reflected in new requirements in the training process, and include:

- Emphasising the practical nature of teaching studies and the relationship between theory and practice.
- Emphasising the training of teachers as responsible professionals, capable of taking innovative decisions through teamwork at the school.

- Ability to act, seeking synergies with other social agents that may contribute to the success of the work carried out in schools: families, associations, organisations, educational authorities.
- Knowledge acquisition and access to information.
- Training to perform their work in the knowledge society.
- Knowledge of new training processes provided by information and communication technologies.
- Need for personal and social skill training: aspects such as self-knowledge, self esteem, the capability to establish constructive group relationships, and an attitude of solidarity and democracy.
- The social skills needed to exercise leadership over the groups of students under their guidance.
- Being prepared to work in a team with the rest of the teaching staff.

One of the main subjects making up the core of the study programs is the *Practicum*, a series of work experience exercises.

The *Practicum* is a fundamental subject of the Study Program for the degree of Primary School Teacher. It covers 320 hours and is studied in the second semester of the third course.

This work experience program embraces receptive, participative, reflexive, active and critical elements. On this part of the course, students observe and participate in classroom dynamics under the supervision of a Mentor, students design and develop a series of units, subjects or projects for the class group, and he analyse and reflect critically on the experience.

The aim of this program is not merely the application of theoretical concepts and strategies, but also to allow future teachers to undertake research into the activity and reflect on their experience, merging and integrating theory and practice in an activity that will make them true professionals.

In short, the *Practicum* is an essential component in the training of future teachers, giving meaning to the other teaching components on which it is, in turn, based. Its basic characteristic lies in linking theoretical and practical training.

Its aims are established in the regulations that govern the *Practicum*, and consist of:

1. Relating theory with educational practice.
2. Connecting with professional reality by putting acquired knowledge into practice.
3. Understanding the social, cultural, educative, etc. reality in which future teachers are to act.

4. Identifying, describing and analysing the School's Educational Project.
5. Developing a symmetrical capacity for observation and a mastery of different procedures, in order to enrich the capability for critical observation with an open, constructive attitude, comparing what they observe in practice with theoretical reference models.
6. Planning, performing and evaluating specific educational activities (with the collaboration and support of their supervisor).
7. Participating in teaching activity by becoming involved with the school and through prolonged classroom performance.
8. Encouraging and favouring a critical, reflexive attitude with regard to educational activities and their own involvement therein.
9. Taking an investigative attitude and acquiring research habits with regard to possible educational challenges in their practice as future professionals.

In order to achieve these aims, these work experience students are helped by Tutor Teachers from the Faculty of Education and are assessed by teachers at the teaching centres, known as Mentors in Teacher Induction and with extensive experience in the subject.

The mentors who supervise this work experience program are selected by the Joint Committee, on the basis of their involvement in training and inspection report programs.

The function of the mentors can be summed up in four basic aspects. First of all, to inform, guide and direct trainee teachers in observing and analysing school reality; secondly, to inform and tutorize trainee teachers in observing and analysing classroom reality; thirdly, to advise, guide and help trainee teachers in designing and developing the units, subjects or projects they have to undertake in the real teaching situation; and, lastly, to monitor and evaluate the trainee teachers, terminating in a final evaluation at the end of the work experience period.

The University Tutor draws up the scheduling, content and evaluation of the work experience program, within a series of weekly seminars throughout the work experience term.

4. The relevance of personal and socio-emotional competences in teachers

Along with teaching theoretical knowledge and civic values, teachers are involved with another, equally important aspect: shaping and adapting the affective and emotional profile of their students in the classroom. According to Abarca, Marzo & Sala (2002), the educational practice of teacher includes activities such as:

1. Affective stimulation and the regulated expression of positive and, what is more difficult, negative feelings (anger, envy, jealousy, etc.);
2. The creation of environments (school work, teamwork dynamics, etc.) for the development of socio-emotional skills and for the solving of interpersonal conflicts;
3. Exposure to experiences that can be solved using emotional strategies;
4. Teaching empathy skills by showing students how to pay attention and how to listen to and understand the points of view of others.

Moreover, emotional intelligence skills are advantageous for teachers at the preventive level. In other words, the capacity to reason about our feelings, to perceive them and understand them, as an intrinsic human skill, at the end of the day implies developing processes to regulate our feelings, helping to moderate and prevent the negative effects of teaching stress to which teachers are exposed daily (Extremera & Fernández-Berrocal, 2004).

As Abraham (1999) and Hein (2001) pointed out, emotional intelligence helps teachers to identify the feelings and fears of students, recognising their feelings and seeing to their unmet emotional needs. Much research has connected emotional intelligence with achievement, productivity, leadership, and personal health (Goleman, 1995, 1998; Epstein, 1998; Sternberg, 1996; Gardner, 1993; Weisenger, 1998; Low, 2000; Nelson and Low, 1999, 2005), identifying the need to provide emotional intelligence instruction as part of the curriculum, in order to improve academic and professional success. Goad (2005) and Justice (2005) have indicated the importance and value of emotional intelligence in teacher preparation programs. Emotional intelligence skills were linked to both classroom management performance and teacher retention factors for new and novice teachers.

Effective teaching requires emotional and empathic skills (O'Connor, in press)

Teaching and learning are socially situated practices that are deeply embedded in emotional experiences (Hargreaves, 1998). In fact, reason and emotion are interdependent because our reasoning depends on emotional choices (Zembylas, 2003).

Emotionally more intelligent teachers, i.e., teachers with a greater capacity to perceive, understand and regulate their feelings and those of others, will have the necessary resources to better face up to stressful events in their work life and to deal more effectively with the negative emotional responses that often arise in their interactions with work colleagues, parents and the students themselves.

Emotional intelligence offers many benefits for both teachers and students (Fer, 2004). Using emotional intelligence helps students to learn emotional

vocabulary and feel cared for rather than controlled. It also helps teachers to identify the feelings and fears of students, recognizing their feelings and seeing to their unmet emotional needs (Abraham, 1999; Hein, 2001a). Furthermore, emotional intelligence may be of importance in the dynamic preparation and training of both novice and expert teachers (Byron, 2001).

Research suggests that teachers may obtain considerable benefits from programs focusing on emotional intelligence and socio-emotional learning (Byron, 2001; DiNatale, 2001; Fer, 2004; Ross, 2000; Walker, 2001).

UNESCO published the *Delors Report* in 1996, underlining the role of the emotions and the need to educate the emotional side of persons along with their cognitive side.

The Bologna declaration established the bases for the *European Higher Education Area* and underlined the importance of students acquiring *abilities, skills, competences and values*, using a new methodology aimed at *learning skills*, including socio-emotional skills.

Emotional skills are associated with professional performance in many jobs, beyond other abilities such as academic intelligence (Goleman, 1998; Van der Zee, et al., 2002). Accordingly, university training programs in the US and Europe are gradually incorporating the planning and development of socio-emotional skills.

Method

Participants

126 subjects participated in this study, 63 trainee primary teachers and 63 practising teachers. The trainee teachers were all in their final degree year at the University of Alicante Faculty of Education and doing work experience at several centres in the province of Alicante (Spain). The 63 practising teachers all have wide experience and act as trainee teacher mentors, working at several centres in the province of Alicante. The educational centres at which the practising teachers teach and where the student teachers were training cover a wide range of the educational centres in Alicante and may be considered as a representative sample of the schools in the province.

Female teachers comprised 52.6% (n=199) of the practising teacher sample and 53.3% of the student teacher sample. Ages ranged from 35 to 54 (M= 41.34; SD= 4.76) in the practising teacher sample, and from 20 to 24 (M= 21.62; SD= 2.56) in the student sample. All subjects gave their informed consent before taking part.

Instruments

The Bar-On EQ-i questionnaire (1997) published by Mental Health Systems Inc. was used to evaluate the aspects of emotional intelligence taken into account. We used the Bar-On EQ-i Short Version, consisting of 52 items.

The five scales of the EQ-i are covered (Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, Stress Management, Adaptability, and General Mood) and also provide a Total EQ Score.

The Intrapersonal EQ scale assesses the inner self. High scores on this composite scale indicate individuals who are in touch with their feelings, feel good about themselves, and feel positive about what they are doing in their lives.

The Interpersonal EQ scale taps interpersonal skills and functioning. High scores in this domain signify responsible and dependable individuals with good social skills who understand, interact, and relate well with others.

The adaptability EQ scale helps reveal how successfully individuals cope with environmental demands by effectively “sizing up” and dealing with problematic situations. High scores in this composite scale identify people who are generally flexible, realistic, effective in understanding problematic situations, and competent at arriving adequate solutions.

Respondents with high scores on the Stress Management EQ scale can withstand stress without losing control. People scoring high on this component can handle stressful or anxiety-provoking tasks or tasks involving an element of danger.

The General Mood EQ scale measures one’s ability to enjoy life and one’s outlook on life and overall feeling of contentment. High scores generally indicate cheerful, positive, hopeful, and optimistic individuals who know how to enjoy life.

The average Cronbach alpha coefficients were high for all subscales, ranging from .69 to .86, with an overall average internal consistency coefficient of .76. These results indicate good reliability, particularly considering that internal consistency procedures tend to underestimate actual reliability (Guilford & Fruchter, 1978).

Procedure

The procedure varied for practising teachers and trainee teachers. Trainee teachers were tutored at the University by one of the authors of this study, inviting them to take part voluntarily during one-hour weekly tutorials held at

the University. Of the class, only 2 decided not to take part in the study. The Bar-On test was carried at a Faculty tutorial, after explaining the aims and general procedure of the study.

The practising teachers who took part in the study were chosen intentionally as trainee teacher mentors with extensive teaching experience. They were contacted by letter, explaining the general lines of the study and emphasising the need to know the socio-emotional characteristics of teachers, due to the importance being given to these aspects in teaching and to the skill-based training programs required within the new framework of the European Higher Education Area. 65 of the 70 questionnaires sent out were returned, although two had to be rejected due to missing data.

Design and data analysis

In accordance with the aims of the study and the general procedure followed, the design used was basically correlational. The two groups were compared following two statistical analysis procedures, the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) technique and the discriminant analysis technique. The two techniques were used complementarily; while the analysis of variance shows which factors of the Bar-On questionnaire, taken in isolation, show significant differences between the two groups, the discriminant analysis made it possible to establish the discriminant function that differentiated the two groups overall and the percentage of cases classified correctly in the two groups.

Results

The results are presented independently for the two techniques used.

a. Results of the one-way analysis of variance:

Table 1 gives basic descriptive statistics for each group and for the total sample in each of the variables considered.

As we see, the trainee teachers had a lower average score in most of the variables relative to the socio-emotional competences evaluated by the Bar-On test. The greater differences can be appreciated in the interpersonal factor, stress management and total EQ.

Certain assumptions are required for correct application of the ANOVA test. Independent samples from normally distributed populations with the same variance must be selected. The assumption of homogeneity of variance was tested with the Bartlett F-Box test ($F= 1.357$, $p= .259$). This significance level

indicates that the variances do not appear to be unequal, so the hypothesis that the population has the same variance cannot be rejected.

Table 1
Descriptive statistics, mean scores and standard deviations for the total score and the five factors of the EQ-i.

Variable	Group	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Error
Intra-personal	Trainee Teacher				
	Practising	63	34.89	5.54	.698
	Teacher	63	36.76	5.14	.647
	Total	126	35.82	5.40	.481
Inter-personal	Trainee Teacher				
	Practising	63	41.80	3.16	.398
	Teacher	63	44.42	3.35	.422
	Total	126	43.11	3.50	.312
Stress Management	Trainee Teacher				
	Practising	63	27.92	4.41	.556
	Teacher	63	29.85	4.59	.579
	Total	126	28.88	4.59	.409
Adaptability	Trainee Teacher				
	Practising	63	27.15	3.89	.490
	Teacher	63	27.20	3.27	.413
	Total	126	27.18	3.58	.319
General Mood	Trainee Teacher				
	Practising	63	37.90	4.48	.565
	Teacher	63	39.20	6.25	.787
	Total	126	38.55	5.45	.486
Total EQ	Trainee Teacher				
	Practising	63	33.93	3.10	.390
	Teacher	63	35.49	3.16	.398
	Total	126	34.71	3.21	.286

The results of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), summarised in table 2, also show statistically significant differences in the interpersonal factor ($F_{(1,124)}= 20.31, p =.000$), stress management ($F_{(1,124)}= 5.81, p =.017$) and total score ($F_{(1,124)}= 7.76, p =.006$). In all aspects evaluated, the practising teachers had higher scores than the trainee teachers.

Table 2
Abstract of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA)

Variable	Source	Sum of squares	d. f	Mean squares	F	p.
Intrapersonal	Between groups	110.50	1	110.50	3.86	.052
	Within groups	3543.65	124	28.57		
	Total	3654.16	125			
Interpersonal	Between groups	216.07	1	216.07	20.31	.000
	Within groups	1319.14	124	10.63		
	Total	1535.21	125			
Stress Management	Between groups	118.12	1	118.12	5.81	.017
	Within groups	2520.31	124	20.32		
	Total	2638.44	125			
Adaptability	Between groups	0.071	1	0.07	0.006	.941
	Within groups	1604.73	124	12.94		
	Total	1604.80	125			
General Mood	Between groups	53.36	1	53.36	1.82	.182
	Within groups	3671.74	124	29.61		
	Total	3725.11	125			
Total EQ	Between groups	76.22	1	76.22	7.76	.006
	Within groups	1217.17	124	9.81		
	Total	1293.39	125			

b. Results of the Discriminant analysis

Discriminant analysis was also applied, using the two groups of teachers as discriminant groups and their scores in the socio-emotional variables as differentiation variables.

Unlike univariate testing, in discriminant analysis the emphasis is on analyzing variables together, rather than one at a time. In discriminant analysis, a linear combination of independent variables is formed and serves as the basis for assigning cases to groups.

Once the equality of the covariance matrices has been verified (Box M= 19.91, $p = .212$) the discriminant function between the two groups was calculated. It proved highly significant (Wilk's lambda = .797, $p = .000$), using the Mahalanobis distance method to select the variables. The Mahalanobis distance, D^2 , is a generalized measure of the distance between two groups.

The canonical correlation, a measure of the degree of association between the discriminant scores and the groups, was equal to .45.

Table 3 gives the standardized coefficients, computed to assess the contribution of each variable to the discriminant function. Table 3 shows that the inter- and intra-personal factors and stress management appear to be the variables with the greatest standardized coefficients.

Table 3
Standardized canonical discriminant function coefficients

Variable	Function 1
Intrapersonal	.471
Interpersonal	.968
Stress Management	.467
Adaptability	-.323
General Mood	-.580

Another way to assess the contribution of a variable to the discriminant function is to examine the correlation between the values of the function and the values of the variables. Table 4 shows the pooled-within-groups correlations between discriminant variables and canonical discriminant functions. The variables are ordered by size of the correlation within function. These values indicate that the interpersonal factors and stress management have the highest correlation with the discriminant function.

Table 4
Pooled-within-groups correlations between discriminant variables and canonical discriminant functions

Variable	Function 1
Interpersonal	.803
Stress Management	.430
Intrapersonal	.350
General Mood	.239
Adaptability	.013

When there is only one discriminant function, the classification of cases into groups is based on the values for the single function. Table 5 shows the classification results as a confusion matrix. This table gives the number of correct and incorrect classifications for each group. The overall percentage of cases classified correctly is 70.6% (89 out of 126).

Table 5
Abstract of the classification results

Actual Group	Number of cases	Predicted group membership		Total	
		Trainee teachers	Practising teachers		
Trainee Teacher	63	Trainee teachers	44	19	63
		Practising teachers	18	45	63
Practising Teacher	63	Trainee teachers	69.8	30.2	100.0
		Practising teachers	28.6	71.4	100.0
	%				

a. Percent of grouped cases correctly classified: 70.6%.

Discussion

Taken as a whole, the results show significant differences in socio-emotional skills between practising teachers and trainee teachers. Practising teachers display greater interpersonal skills, greater stress-management capacity and greater overall emotional intelligence, due mainly to their higher scores in the two former aspects. The two aspects where the least difference can be appreciated are adaptability and general mood.

Accordingly, these results show the need for trainee teachers to improve their interpersonal skills and tolerance of stress, for two main reasons. On the one hand, these skills are part of the professional capacities required for effective professional development in the Spanish educational system, as mentioned above. Interpersonal skills are part of an effective teacher's tools, along with group work, coordinating teams, interaction with other teachers and with students and the treatment of individual, social and cultural diversity, among others.

Likewise, the ability to handle stressful situations in the face of interpersonal conflicts deriving from school conflicts, bad classroom behaviour, and even from dealings with colleagues and the demands made on one's self, is a highly important professional skill in order to reach effective professionalism within the Spanish system, where quite a high percentage of teachers suffer from problems such as depression and burnout, among others (Ortega & Lera, 2000).

Moreover, as the practising teachers have extensive experience, most of them acting as trainee teacher mentors, this phase of training should be used to improve the skills of the trainee teachers by taking advantage of the experience of their mentors, who, as we have seen, display greater socio-emotional skills. Under the current system, the training and evaluation of trainee teachers mainly emphasises professional and cognitive skills and abilities, such as the ability to plan classes, subject knowledge and the academic results of the students - conceptual and procedural knowledge. Nevertheless, teacher training and evaluation programs should include the development and evaluation of the socio-emotional skills discussed here, while the teachers themselves should include emotional education targets in their educational schedules for their students. This, though contemplated within the regulatory framework of the Spanish primary school curriculum, is not being put into practice (Byron, 2001; DiNatale, 2001; Fer, 2004; Walker, 2001).

On the other hand, the lack of significant differences between practising teachers and trainee teachers in adaptability and general mood shows that trainee teachers are able to adapt to new situations as well as the practising teachers are. This is a positive result, as the trainee teachers some day hope to work as teachers within the educational system, facing up to new situations and responding to new demands in a constantly changing environment (Fernandez-Berrocal & Extremera, 2002; Gil Olarte, Palomera & Brackett, 2006).

In short, the results of this study indicate the need to incorporate the development of socio-emotional skills, such as interpersonal relationships, group work, social responsibility and stress management, into trainee teacher programs, in accordance with the skill-based learning model to be developed within the framework of the European Higher Education Area.

Skills such as these are beginning to be considered increasingly more necessary in the Spanish educational system, both for the professional performance of teachers and for the education of their students.

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Teacher Training and In-Service Training in Poland – Media Competences as a Determinant of a Modern Teacher

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Dynamic cultural, economic, scientific and technological changes enforce transformations in educational processes. School and educational system in its wide sense function in a specified social reality in which mass media are a particularly significant factor. Media influence directly the educational system through the content carried and indirectly through their recipients who affect it. At present education and learning are not simple fields and they surely are not always pleasant experiences. It needs to be pointed out that education increases the capacity of society to absorb knowledge which has always been important but which has now become vital for efficient functioning in the global world in which a new formation emerges. T. Goban – Klas calls this formation ‘mediated society’. Relations between education and media are stronger now than ever before. At present we can observe a two-way relation: media in education, education in media. Thus, coherence of the two elements is important. Education is the most important tool for constructing a better, more peaceful world, and the second such tool is the mass media. U. Eco states that new information technologies entail a new way of thinking, studying and presenting ideology. At the same time, W. Skrzydlewski emphasises that people who have no competence in the use of media are doomed to playing the role of poor emigrants (Skrzydlewski, W. 2004:42). Among the components forming media competence he enumerates technological literacy, that is the ability to make use of new media, particularly the Internet, with the aim of ensuring efficient access to and transfer of information; information literacy – abilities related to gaining, selecting and evaluating information as well as forming proper opinions (Skrzydlewski, W. 2004:43).

In this situation it seems obvious that education cannot have a passive or indifferent attitude towards technological progress. New technologies, if applied in a well-considered and systematic way, can contribute to increasing the effectiveness of a pedagogical and educational process. These media are tools for learning about the world, but they only serve well those people who know how to make use of them and in what circumstances. Contemporary media are

characterised by interactivity, mobility, interchangeability, compatibility, omnipresence and globalisation (Toffler, A. 2003:490). These characteristics clearly show that media cannot be underestimated or their usefulness cannot be denied.

Information technologies are also a key factor conditioning the rate of change and the level of social development. At the beginning of 1970s, Toffler rightly claimed: 'Changes in today's technological societies are so fast and merciless that what was true yesterday has become fiction for today and best educated and most intelligent people admit to have difficulties in keeping up with the inflow of new knowledge, even in extremely narrow fields' (Toffler, A. 1974:160).

Currently, if students possess only the information or knowledge from within the school curriculum, it may lead to their alienation from reality, which is often described as a syndrome of information shock and media shock. So the educational system has the important for communicating and using mass media efficiently, for self-evaluation and self-improvement. Furthermore, the school which makes use of rational modern information technologies must change the organisation of the process of teaching and learning. The teacher can help a student in a different way: not by transferring detailed information or specific knowledge but by indicating what can be done with this knowledge. The process of learning is not about implementing the curriculum in a rigid way but about reacting to emerging problems and about the ability to create suitable conditions for solving these problems. Frequently, it is the students themselves who indicate what they do not know, what is a problem to them, and this is exactly the impulse for the teacher to show them what they should do during a lesson.

Traditional education aimed only at memorising and recalling from memory as large an amount of information as possible is not effective. The educational model consisting of transferring knowledge from a teacher to a student and then checking how much information a student has remembered is no longer attractive either to the student or to the teacher. What is more, children who have well-developed thinking skills but lesser abilities in remembering are classified on lower positions. All this does not contribute to building positive teacher-learner relations, which are to a large extent decisive to a future career of a learner.

Knowledge and science and research activity supported by information technologies have become a significant developmental force in the modern society⁷. Constructive use of media in educational processes is an indication of

⁷It is important to distinguish between: *information technologies* and *computer technologies*. *Computer technologies* involve primarily all computer means and tools

efficient work of a teacher with a student. It is important to bring education closer to reality, which does not function without electronic media any more. As it is pointed out by Ryszard Kapuściński, the electronic revolution has created a new world: the world of the computer, media, Internet, virtual reality, with which the young generation identifies. However, the older, 'pre-virtual' generation either does not feel strong enough or is unable to find interest in cyber space. As a result, the two coexisting generations inhabit two different realities (Kapuściński, R. 2002:361).

If a teacher is to be attractive to a student, they cannot treat media as a threat or competition, especially due to the fact that among the young a computer attitude, as R.Kapuściński has coined it, is becoming prevalent. It is not a common pathetic passivity but rather waiting for someone to say something or encourage them to do something. It is an attitude of a reception-oriented person, an attitude of a viewer and listener. And so, just like in a computer, everything will function perfectly on the condition that someone presses a key (Kapuściński, R, 2002:361). The role of a teacher should not be limited to this operation. The teacher's task is to create optimal conditions for helping a student organise and evaluate their learning, accept more and more responsibility for learning, develop the ability to search for information in different sources, organise and use it, and exploit modern information technology effectively. Therefore, it is very important for the Polish school to be perceived as a promotor of modern theory and practice. It is thus important to aim at creating new quality in education linked to suitable values which both students and parents will be willing to follow. The system of teacher training in Poland is a particularly important factor. The educational reform started in 1999 has brought an interdisciplinary view of the process of teaching. Such a school is responsible for ensuring that a student does not feel uncomfortable when entering adult life in which it is important to be able to negotiate, to communicate effectively with other community members, to have a common model of acting, to be able to defend one's own point of view. These are difficult tasks for which a teacher needs to be perfectly prepared.

The presently applied standards for teacher training in Poland were introduced by the regulation of the Minister of National Education of 7th September 2004 r.⁸ The regulation became effective on 1st October 2004 and is still valid. This legal act introduced significant changes in the curriculum of teacher training for future teachers. In the act we can read as follows: 'Higher education institutions

(hardware and software) and the fundamentals of calculations, e.g. mathematical calculations. The term *information technology* refers to the use of these means and tools.

⁸ See: Dz.U.of 22nd September 2004, No 207, item 2110.

conduct teacher education within teaching specialisation in vocational degree courses, post-bachelor studies, unified M.A. studies and post-graduate studies. The curriculum of studies in the teaching specialisation includes requirements specified in this standard so as to make it possible for a graduate to gain not only content-based knowledge within a specified major but also training in teaching a subject (conducting classes) and vocational qualifications⁹.

Vocational degree courses in the teaching specialisation are conducted in two directions: main teaching specialisation and additional teaching specialisation. Post-bachelor studies and unified M.A. studies are conducted within one (main) teaching specialisation or two teaching specialisations (main and additional).

The choice of an additional teaching specialisation depends on majors organised by a higher education institution. The main teaching specialisation prepares students for teaching a subject (conducting classes) equivalent to a major; it is realised in compliance with requirements included in the standards of teaching in particular majors specified in separate regulations. Additional teaching specialisation prepares students for teaching another subject (conducting classes); it is realised within the scope that ensures content-based preparation for teaching a given subject (conducting classes) in accordance with core curriculum for pre-school education and general education in particular types of school, specified in separate regulations, in the combined amount of 400 hours (vocational degree courses) and at least 550 hours (post-bachelor studies and uniform M.A. studies).

Vocational degree courses, post-bachelor studies and uniform M.A. studies in the teaching specialisation conducted as part-time studies involve at least 80 % of the overall number of hours of courses in major subjects for full-time studies with curriculum content of these studies, and at least 60% as extra-mural studies. In case of part-time and extra-mural studies with two teaching specialisations (main and additional one), an additional teaching specialisation is realised within the size of courses for full-time studies¹⁰.

The standards specify in detail ‘*a profile of a graduate*’ of studies with a teaching specialization, who should be prepared to carry out the educational, pedagogic and protective role of a school in a complex way. Therefore, a teacher should have completed training in:

⁹ Ibidem

¹⁰ The details of the whole educational system are included in Dz. U. of 22nd Septemebr 2004, No 207, item 2110.

- selected teaching specialisations so as to be able to transmit the acquired knowledge in a competent manner and to broaden and update this knowledge and integrate it with other fields of knowledge;
- psychology and pedagogy so as to play a pedagogic and protective role, to support the development of students, to individualise the learning process, to satisfy the educational needs of students, to organise social life at the level of class, school and local community, to cooperate with other teachers, parents and the local community;
- methodology of a subject so as to conduct classes effectively, to arouse cognitive interest and to support intellectual development of students through a skilful selection of methods of activation, teaching techniques and didactic means and to examine and evaluate students' achievements and one's own teaching practice;
- application of information technology, including its use in teaching a subject (conducting classes);
- advanced command of a foreign language.

Additionally, a graduate of studies and post-graduate degree studies in the teaching specialisation should be prepared to:

- cooperate with students and teachers, family environment and out-of-school social environment of students in the realisation of educational tasks;
- undertake educational tasks that go beyond the scope of a subject (classes) and tasks related to extraschool education;
- create and verify independently the projects of own actions and undertake actions aimed at the popularisation of good pedagogic practice;
- direct one's professional and personal development and taking in-service training, also in cooperation with other teachers;
- make use of legal regulations related to educational system and professional status of teachers.

Within '*Required competencies*' teacher training should lead to acquiring competences of the following kinds:

- methodological;
- educational and social – related to the skill of recognising students' needs and ability to cooperate in interpersonal relations;
- creative – expressed by the skill of self-development, innovation and non-standard actions together with abilities of adaptation, mobility and flexibility;
- praxeological – evident in efficient planning, control and evaluation of educational processes;

- communicative – expressed by effective verbal and non-verbal behaviours in educational situations;
- information and media competence – evident in the ability to use information technology, including its use in teaching a subject (conducting classes);
- linguistic – expressed by an advanced command of at least one foreign language¹¹.

Standards also include groups of subjects and the minimum number of hours realised within studies as well as the curriculum content for specific subjects. With regard to the content-based field included in the title of this article, I would like to place particular emphasis on the subject *Information technologies*. A graduate of studies with a teaching specialisation should be prepared to make use of information technology and to use it in teaching a subject (conducting classes). The training should involve knowledge and skills in what follows:

- Fundamental use of terminology (concepts), equipment (means), software (tools) and methods of information technology.
- Information technology as a component of teacher's skills and tools.
- Role and use of information technology in the field proper for the subject taught (classes conducted).
- Humanistic, ethical and legal and social aspects of the access to and use of information technology.

Shaping and improving teacher competences, particularly the information and media competence, has a particular significance due to the interdisciplinary classes called "media and reading education" introduced in 1999. The main role of these interdisciplinary classes is to prepare children and teenagers to move in a global world filled with technical media. Media education is one of the priority aims of education in a contemporary school. Realisation of media education in the process of teacher training should be based on the trio: *education about media - education through media – education for media* (Dylak, S., 1997:472-473).

Education about media means a tool approach: media are treated as both an object of learning for students and content of education but also as a tool supporting the educational process. In this content field both knowledge about media and mechanisms of their influence and the ability to operate technical devices should be paid attention to. *Education through media*: media is an attractive area for taking various actions in school and out of school by students (future teachers). In this sense media can be both a tool for operationalisation

¹¹ Dz. U. of 22nd September 2004, No 207, item 2110.

and subject interpretation. *Education for media* – introducing future teachers to media culture understood as an environment for living and creating artefacts, preparing students for critical reception of media content within an ability to analyse and understand media messages. Mediating in getting to know the world and communicating with it, media prefer their own language and create a specific community with its separate style and way of living.

Therefore, the thesis of the necessity to educate future teachers in effective use of information technologies remains undisputed. A modern teacher, a ‘teacher with media’ should be able to create their own methodological curriculum based on information and skills related to the use of multimedia technologies.

In order to meet new civilisation challenges, a new specialisation was opened in the academic year 2006/2007 at the Rzeszów University within the pedagogy major: media education, which is very popular with students. Full-time and extra-mural undergraduate studies last 6 semesters (3 years) and are completed with a bachelor’s degree. These studies form two simultaneous directions. Firstly, they equip a student with basic philosophical, sociological, psychological and pedagogical knowledge which enables them to understand social and cultural contexts of education in broad terms. Secondly, they provide the skills necessary to start working on the functioning of modern media. This is achieved by offering such courses as for example Psychology of Media; Pedagogy of Mass Communication; Communication Studies; Social and Cultural Influence of Media; Theory of Mass Communication; Design and Realisation of Various Media Transmissions; Information Technologies; Design, Implementation and Evaluation of Media Education Syllabus; Methodology of Media Education. Apart from that, within the programme of studies students complete teaching practice and vocational internship. The latter is realised in press editing offices, radio stations, television stations and electronic media, e.g. internet portals.

Graduates will be equipped with basic knowledge needed to understand processes in media education, in critical analysis of media messages which takes into account specific features of the language of a given message, the influence on recipients’ health and mentality, the use of available messages in the work of educational institutions. Completion of studies in the major of pedagogy with a teaching specialisation will create possibilities to take up work in educational institutions as a specialist in the use of information technology in educational processes, in the organisation of school information and methodological centres, in marketing and the creation of an image of an educational institution; also in self-government offices at all levels (commune, powiat, province), government institutions, sector of non-governmental organisations etc. dealing with educational issues in a wider sense; in mass

media, press editorial offices, radio and television stations and electronic media as educational specialists. During their studies students have the opportunity to get ECDL-European Computer Driving Licence which is uniform across Europe and which is aimed at preparing European citizens for living in the Global Information Community, at raising the level of abilities related to the use of microcomputers in professional work and everyday life, at introducing and making uniform the basic level of qualifications independent of the major and level of employees' education, at making it possible for employees to be mobile and move between different countries within the European Community. Gaining a bachelor's degree enables a graduate to continue their education within supplementary graduate studies and to get a master's degree.

The process of training teachers and developing their skills in the use of information technology should be constant. Certainly the mere skill of operating a computer will not suffice in today's world. It must be supplemented with the knowledge of legal, social and ethical aspects of access to these technologies and the use of these technologies. Teachers must be aware of the fact that human knowledge and science evolve extremely fast. The more they know about modern technologies in the educational process, the more attractive they become for their students. To conclude my consideration of the media competence of teachers I would like to quote part of my research which confirms the need to educate teachers in this respect. The research was conducted in 2005 with the use of survey as a diagnostic tool (Wrońska, M. 2005:287-294 and Wrońska, M., Pęczkowski, R., Miąso, J., 2006:343-347). The whole research was conducted in the Department of Media Education and Information Technologies where I work.

The research question with a significant meaning for my reflections was: *If you were to choose a) to learn with the use of a computer at home or b) to learn with a teacher who is familiar with information technologies at school, what would you choose?, underline the answer you choose and justify your choice.*

The number of responses received amounts to 526 opinions from urban and rural schools. The data obtained shows no differences between the environments under research. *Learning at home with the use of a computer* was chosen by 185 students, which constitutes 35.17 % of middle students, ***while learning with a teacher, so staying at school in a group of peers was chosen by 64.83% (341) students.*** Lower school students justified their opinions in various ways. Most answers were within the following style: *'I like going to school', 'I like my teacher', 'school is fine', 'I have an opportunity to meet my friends'*. Apart from that, I would like to enumerate some more interesting statements from within the group of learners who said that they preferred a computer: *'a computer does not give electric shock, but it once happened to me*

that a wire sparked, *'global access to lots of information*', *'you can chat with your friends*', *'I find lots of new friends in the net in discussion forums*'. Within the group who was in favour of a teacher the following answers were noted: *'a computer is a soulless device*', *'it is difficult to find valuable information on the internet*', *'not everyone can afford to buy a computer but learning at school is free*', *'a teacher draws our attention to what is important in learning*', *'you can ask a teacher about various things and they answer your questions eagerly*'.

On the basis of opinions of middle school learners from both urban and rural environments the answer to our question sounds optimistic: **'Teacher with a computer at school'** and this imposes on teachers the duty to broaden their theoretical, empirical and practical knowledge of information technology on a constant basis.

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Chemistry Teachers' Mentoring in Slovenian Primary and Secondary School

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Abstract

Teachers' conceptions of teaching develop, among other ways, through their direct experiences in the classroom, and mentoring is required for effective teaching. The situated learning theory represents a theoretical framework for interpreting and enhancing the classroom and broader school experiences of novice teachers. Mentoring provides opportunities for novice science teachers to obtain support and guidance. The basic aim of the research presented in this paper is to show mentors' opinions on beginning teachers' specific competences for teaching chemistry in primary and secondary school. A total of 48 primary and secondary school teachers participated in the study. A questionnaire was used to assess mentors' opinions about mentoring practices concerning the competences of effective teaching. The results show that mentors in general develop in novice teachers those competences that they deem important for a good chemistry teacher. They say that the novice teachers have adequate knowledge for assuring safety in the classroom during experimental work, they are qualified to interpret experimental data and they can apply this data in theory. A comparison between the novice teacher qualifications and mentors' views of their competences shows that the ratings of specific competences differ significantly. The novice teachers are not well prepared to meet the standards for effective chemistry teaching in some other competencies which are also important. The results seem to provide evidence that mentors usually offer only medium help to novice teachers during their preparation for teaching chemistry in classroom. It can be concluded that mentors should be adequately trained for mentoring. The conceptions of mentoring held by experienced chemistry teachers should be considered when organizing in-service professional development programs for mentors.

Introduction

Approaches to learning and the outcomes of learning are interconnected and related to differences in how learning is conceptualized (Marton et al., 1993). Teachers' conception of teaching is developed, among other ways, through their direct experiences in the classroom (Larsson, 1986): effective teaching is at the centre of effective learning, and unique mentoring is required for effective teaching (Hudson et al., 2005).

Many sources contribute to beginning teachers' understanding of teaching, but none surpasses actual classroom experience (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). When involved in classroom experiences, novice science teachers have the opportunity to observe others teach, interact with students, teach lessons themselves, and reflect on teaching experiences and students' learning (Van Driel et al., 2002; Koballa et al., 2007). According to Volkmann and Anderson (1998), the mentor must provide opportunities for novice teachers to experience classroom conflict and the dilemmas of teaching.

The situated learning theory represents a theoretical framework for interpreting and enhancing the classroom and providing broader school experiences for novice teachers. Situated learning is education that takes place in an authentic context (the science classroom) and involves social interaction and collaboration, so that construction of knowledge about teaching occurs. This construction of knowledge is supervised by the experienced teacher – mentor (Brown et al., 1989; Cobern, 1996).

Studies of teachers at different levels and across different teaching fields have shown that teachers conceptualize their teaching in characteristically different ways (Koballa et al., 2000). Conceptions of the role of mentor include coach, model, instructional supporter, evaluator, confidant, information source, feedback-giver, and explicator of personal teaching knowledge and beliefs (Cameron-Jones & O'Hara, 1995), and also following responsibilities, introducing novice teachers to school life, school customs, and school culture, stimulating them to reflect on their own teaching; and bridging the gap between theory and practice (Zanting, Verloop and Vermunt, 2001, cited in Koballa et al., 2007).

The beginning teachers' conceptions developed during their involvement in classroom experiences, pre-service or in-service, serve as referents and have an influence on their decisions and actions in their future classroom practice (Koballa et al., 2007). During this process, the experienced teachers' mentoring plays an important role in the professional development of the beginning teacher. Mentoring provides opportunities for novice science teachers to obtain the support and guidance not readily available to them through other means

(Luft et al., 2003). Mentoring is often linked to the retention and continued success of all beginning science teachers through the development of competencies in teaching, assessment, and classroom management (Wang, 2001). Mentoring also benefits the experienced teachers who serve as mentors by enhancing their commitment to teaching and providing them with insight into their own professional growth (Hunter & Kiernan, 2005; cited in Koballa et al., 2007). Novice and mentor teachers should have an active and productive role in the process for the mentoring to be successful (Hudson et al., 2005).

Mentors hold strong conceptions about the role of mentors as well as the goal and content of mentoring of beginning teachers in science education (Franke & Dahlgren, 1996; Vaisanen, 2002; Koballa et al., 2007). These conceptions are: (1) mentoring is personal support; mentors provide emotional support, offer encouragement and counselling for the beginning teachers and they feel valued and comfortable about themselves as teachers; (2) mentoring is apprenticeship; the mentor is a model, guide, and leader and his/her craft knowledge, experience, instruction, advice, and example is mediated to the novice teacher who feels knowledgeable; (3) mentoring is co-learning; the mentor and the novice teacher function as collaborative partners, co-investigators and co-designers, they both learn when engaged in this mentoring relationship through inquiry, reflection, and problem solving, and the novice teacher feels empowered (Koballa et al., 2007).

According to Hudson, Skamp and Brooks (2005) and Hudson (2005) there are five key factors describing effective mentoring in science teaching: (1) personal attributes; complex personal interactions between novice teacher and mentor, novice teacher and students, mentor and students and between students themselves take place in the classroom environment; (2) system requirements; provide the direction and the framework for regulating the quality of science teaching practices; (3) pedagogical knowledge; novice teachers have to develop the knowledge for teaching science with the guidance of an experienced teacher; (4) modelling; the mentor is expected to effectively model the teaching practice with high levels of teaching competency (i.e. rapport with the students, lesson planning, syllabus language, hands-on lessons and classroom management) so that the beginning teacher can learn from it; (5) feedback; it is a vital part of the mentoring, novice teachers have to reflect on their own teaching according to mentors' oral or written feedback to improve their teaching practice.

For experienced teachers to become active leaders of novice teachers' first steps in teaching experience, their education for mentoring is also very important, especially through "expert mentors who are recognised for their expertise in

mentoring and teaching in order to have credibility within the teaching profession" (Hudson, 2005, p.1733).

According to Slovenian laws, novice chemistry teachers can begin their teaching in two ways after they graduate at the Faculty of Education (for primary school chemistry teacher; pupils aged 14 and 15) or at the Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Technology (for secondary school chemistry; students aged 15 to 18). The teacher mentors finished a two- or four-year program at the university, and their school practice is the most important aspect of their mentoring competences. According to regulations, the novice teacher does not teach but prepares for teaching under the guidance of a mentor. Alternatively, the beginning teacher teaches independently, but a mentor's guidance is still necessary. After the ten months of induction, the novice teacher has to take a certification exam after which s/he can teach independently and with no further supervision from a mentor (see Valenčič Zuljan et al., 2006).

Purpose of the study

The study presented here is a part of a larger-scale research into mentors' views on the mentoring practices in developing beginning chemistry teachers in Slovenian primary and secondary schools. The basic aim of the research presented in this paper is to show mentors' opinions on beginning teachers' specific competences for teaching chemistry in primary and secondary school. Learning more about the conceptions of mentoring held by mentors may lead to a better understanding of how to foster pre-service chemistry teacher education and how to educate mentors to become more supportive in novice teachers' initiation into the teaching profession.

Research questions

The questions asked in this study are:

- (1) How successful do the mentors consider themselves to be in mentoring the novice teachers regarding their educational background?
- (2) What competences do mentors think a chemistry teacher should possess to be an effective teacher?
- (3) How do the mentors rate the beginning teachers' actual competences for teaching chemistry?
- (4) What kind of help should mentors give to a beginning teacher for him/her to become an effective chemistry teacher?

Methodology

Sample

A total of 48 primary and secondary school teachers - mentors (91.7% females; 8.3% males) participated in the study. 77.1% of the teachers teach in primary school, and 22.9% in secondary school. 60.4% of them finished a two-year programme, and 39.6% of teachers participating in the study finished the university program. Most of them finished the four-year programme at the Faculty of Education and became chemistry and biology teachers (70.8%), others finished the Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Technology (16.7%) or other courses at the University (12.5%). Three teachers also hold an MA in chemistry or chemistry education. The teachers participating in the study had an average of 23.1 years of teaching experience ($SD=7.96$ years). All teachers had taught more than 6 years, but 70.8% of them had taught chemistry more than 20 years. According to Slovenian school legislation, a teacher can become a mentor to a beginning teacher after receiving the title of 'mentor', 'adviser' or 'councillor'. In our sample, 16.7% were mentors, 72.9% were advisers and 8.3% were councillors. Hereafter in this paper all teachers will be referred to as mentor, regardless of their actual title obtained after a promotion. The mentors had had an average of 2.7 ($SD=1.71$) beginning teachers under supervision in their career; most of the mentors (33.3%) had one beginning teacher, 25% had two and 14.6% had three or more. 39.6% of beginning teachers did their beginning teaching according to Article 2 of the Regulations on Traineeship, and 60.5% according to Article 46.

Instrument

The 107-item questionnaire assesses mentors' opinions about mentoring beginning chemistry teachers and the competences for effective teaching. The questionnaire had two parts. In the first part mentors had to provide some personal data (e.g. gender, places of employment and length of teaching experience, professional title ...). In the second part they had to provide their views about: (1) their mentoring competences; 24 items (e.g. Knowing the characteristics of learning and of adult teaching; Help and guidance in the lesson preparation of a beginning teacher...); (2) beginning teachers' general teaching competences; 33 items (e.g. Ability to prepare different teaching materials; Structuring a lesson according to specific teaching methods ...); and (3) competences for chemistry teaching; 36 items (e.g. Developing the ability of scientific reasoning; Knowing, understanding and applying the concepts of science ...). For the purpose of this paper only the first part (mentors' personal data) and the competences for chemistry teaching in the second part of the questionnaire (36 items) were used.

For gathering the responses to each item (competences), a five-point Likert-type scale was used anchored at 1 = not important, 2 = less important, 3 = medium important, 4 = rather important, and 5 = very important. The internal consistency (Cronbach α) of the part of the questionnaire used in this paper (specific competences for chemistry teaching) was .90.

Research design

The research was designed as a non-experimental, cross-sectional and descriptive study. The questionnaire was designed specifically for this study. After interviews with two mentors, a preliminary questionnaire was developed and used on a pilot sample of mentors. The analysis of the results of the pilot study showed that in the preliminary questionnaire too many general competences were included at the expense of the ones specific to chemistry teaching. The questionnaire was modified according to this data and sent to a representative sample of chemistry teachers in Slovenian primary and secondary schools. It was distributed to 250 primary and secondary schools via ordinary mail as a printed document. After the questionnaire was completed, the teachers who had been mentoring a beginning teacher sent the questionnaire back to the university. Only 19.2 % of the questionnaires were returned, due among other factors to a very low number of teachers who had experience as mentors.

Descriptive statistics (M, SD) were obtained for illustrating the competence characteristics. For determining differences in competences and in mentors' views about chemistry teachers' competences, the paired-sample t-test was used. The ranges were also used for illustrating the importance of specific competences according to the mentors' opinions. A statistical significance ($p \leq 0.05$) was determined for all differences between the means that were calculated.

Results

The findings are reported in three sections that correspond to the four research questions: 1) How successful do the mentors consider themselves to be in mentoring the novice teachers regarding their educational background?, 2) What competences do mentors think a chemistry teacher should possess to be an effective teacher?, 3) How do the mentors rate the beginning teachers' actual competences for teaching chemistry?, 4) What kind of help should mentors give to a beginning teacher for him/her to become an effective chemistry teacher?

The first part of the results shows mentors' ratings of their efficiency in the mentoring process. More than a half (58.3%) of the mentors think that they are very successful in mentoring beginning teachers; 41.7% of them feel that they

achieve medium success in mentoring. The differences between the two groups of mentors (regarding their self-rated success in the mentoring process) in terms of the significance of specific competences for an effective chemistry teacher, the novice teacher actual competences and mentors' help in attaining a higher level of competence are not statistically significant.

Between the two groups of respondents with different qualifications, the differences in mentors' views of the competences achieved by novice teachers and the competences necessary for becoming an effective chemistry teacher, and the mentors' own help to novices in developing in a specific competence, are not statistically significant either.

In the second part of the results, mentors' views are presented to illustrate their opinions of specific competences that are important for an effective chemistry teacher (*Table 1*). Mentors largely agreed that for being an effective teacher the competences listed range from rather to very important.

Table 1: Mentors' opinions of competence relevancy

<i>Competence</i>	<i>M / R</i>	<i>SD</i>
C1: Development of science reasoning ability.	4.75 / 10.5	0.526
C2: Knowing, understanding and applying science concepts, their connections and theories.	4.75 / 10.5	0.526
C3: Connecting macroscopic observations with submicroscopic explanations and symbolic records.	4.65 / 6	0.601
C4: Understanding and solving basic qualitative and quantitative problems.	4.60 / 4.5	0.610
C5: Evaluation, interpretation and connecting information and data.	4.56 / 3	0.616
C6: Developing visualization abilities for presenting and understanding substance structure.	4.60 / 4.5	0.610
C7: Qualification for safe handling of substances, safe experimentations and ability to evaluate safety risks.	4.79 / 12	0.459
C8: Experimental data interpretation and their connection with theory (and vice versa).	4.73 / 8.5	0.536
C9: Experimental work organization and management.	4.73 / 8.5	0.536
C10: Mathematical knowledge for problem solving and ability to evaluate the results of calculations in chemistry.	4.27 / 1	0.644
C11: Understanding the influence of chemistry and chemical technology on society development.	4.50 / 2	0.583
C12: Understanding environmental problems and measures for solving these problems.	4.71 / 7	0.582

According to the mentors, an effective chemistry teacher should develop the following competences during their pre-service education (level over 7): those related to experimental work in the classroom (C7, C8 and C9) and those that

refer to developing science reasoning (C1) and understanding chemical concepts (C2).

The third part of the results (*Table 2*) refers to mentors' opinions of novice teachers' existing qualifications for an effective chemistry teacher. They think that beginning teachers are rather well educated only for assuring safety in the classroom during experimental work (C7), but the ratings vary more than for other competences ($SD = 1.044$). That means that mentors had different opinions about these novice teachers' competences. Novice teachers are also considered well prepared to interpret experimental data and its implications for theory (C8). As for other competences, the mentors felt that the novice teachers had not developed them to a sufficient degree in their pre-service education (ratings do not exceed 4 - rather good). The novice teachers are deemed the least competent in: understanding the influence of chemistry and chemical technology on society development, (C11), Experimental work organization and management (C9), developing visualization abilities for presenting and understanding substance structure (C6), connecting macroscopic observations with submicroscopic explanations and symbolic records (C3) and evaluation, interpretation and connecting information and data (C5).

Table 2: Differences between mentors' views of novice teachers' competences for teaching chemistry (qualification) and competence relevancy (importance).

<i>Competence</i>		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
C1: Development of science reasoning ability.	qualificat ion	3.9 0	0.83 1	47	6.7 6	< 0.001
	importan ce	4.7 5	0.52 6			
C2: Knowing, understanding and applying science concepts, their connections and theories.	qualificat ion	3.9 0	0.77 8	47	6.7 6	< 0.001
	importan ce	4.7 5	0.52 6			
C3: Connecting macroscopic observations with submicroscopic explanations and symbolic records.	qualificat ion	3.7 5	0.78 6	47	7.9 7	< 0.001
	importan ce	4.6 5	0.60 1			
C4: Understanding and solving basic qualitative and quantitative problems.	qualificat ion	3.9 8	0.83 8	47	5.4 9	< 0.001
	importan ce	4.6 0	0.61 0			
C5: Evaluation, interpretation and connecting information and data.	qualificat ion	3.7 9	0.77 1	47	6.8 6	< 0.001
	importan ce	4.5 6	0.61 6			
C6: Developing visualization abilities for presenting and understanding substance	qualificat ion	3.7 3	0.89 3	47	7.4 4	<

structure.	<i>importance</i>	4.60	0.610			0.001
C7: Qualification for safe handling of substances, safe experimentations and ability to evaluate safety risks.	qualification	4.13	1.044	47	4.74	< 0.001
	<i>importance</i>	4.79	0.459			
C8: Experimental data interpretation and their connection with theory (and vice versa).	qualification	4.02	0.785	47	5.78	< 0.001
	<i>importance</i>	4.73	0.536			
C9: Experimental work organization and management.	qualification	3.60	0.939	47	7.94	< 0.001
	<i>importance</i>	4.73	0.536			
C10: Mathematical knowledge for problem solving and ability to evaluate the results of calculations in chemistry.	qualification	3.85	0.799	47	3.52	0.001
	<i>importance</i>	4.27	0.644			
C11: Understanding the influence of chemistry and chemical technology on society development.	qualification	3.58	1.007	47	5.84	< 0.001
	<i>importance</i>	4.50	0.583			
C12: Understanding environmental problems and measures for solving these problems.	qualification	3.83	0.907	47	6.32	< 0.001
	<i>importance</i>	4.71	0.582			

The paired-sample t-test, used to compare the differences in mentors' opinions of how developed a specific competence was in their mentees and of the importance of a competence for effective chemistry teaching, showed that the differences are in all cases statistically significant ($p \leq 0.001$). This means that, according to the mentors, in no specific competence are the beginning teachers sufficiently educated to meet the standards for an effective chemistry teacher.

The fourth section of the results is devoted to the experienced teachers' help in developing an effective chemistry teacher. Mentors, according to their opinions, offer medium help to novice teachers regarding specific competences (*Table 3*).

Table 3: The difference between mentors' help to novice teacher regarding the competences for effective chemistry teaching and beginning teachers' qualifications

Competence	Effective chemistry teacher M / R	Novice teacher qualification M / R	Mentors' help M / R
C1: Development of science reasoning ability.	4.75 / 10.5	3.90 / 8.5	3.15 / 9
C2: Knowing, understanding and applying science concepts, their connections and theories.	4.75 / 10.5	3.90 / 8.5	3.08 / 8
C3: Connecting macroscopic observations with submicroscopic explanations and symbolic records.	4.65 / 6	3.75 / 4	3.25 / 12
C4: Understanding and solving basic qualitative and quantitative problems.	4.60 / 4.5	3.98 / 10	3.06 / 6
C5: Evaluation, interpretation and connecting information and data.	4.56 / 3	3.79 / 5	3.06 / 6
C6: Developing visualization abilities for presenting and understanding substance structure.	4.60 / 4.5	3.73 / 3	3.19 / 10
C7: Qualification for safe handling of substances, safe experimentations and ability to evaluate safety risks.	4.79 / 12	4.13 / 12	3.02 / 4
C8: Experimental data interpretation and their connection with theory (and vice versa).	4.73 / 8.5	4.02 / 11	2.94 / 2
C9: Experimental work organization and managing.	4.73 / 8.5	3.60 / 2	3.21 / 11
C10: Mathematical knowledge for problem solving and ability to evaluate the results of calculations in chemistry.	4.27 / 1	3.85 / 7	2.81 / 1
C11: Understanding the influence of chemistry and chemical technology on society development.	4.50 / 2	3.58 / 1	3.06 / 6
C12: Understanding environmental problems and measures for solving these problems.	4.71 / 7	3.83 / 6	3.00 / 3

Beginning teachers get the lowest support from mentors on those competences that are connected with experimental work, especially interpreting experimental data (C8; R:2), and assuring safe laboratory work (C4; R:4), using mathematics in solving chemistry problems (C1; R:1), and topics in environmental chemistry (C12; R:3). The novice teachers get more help from the mentors in developing students' thinking skills (scientific reasoning (C1), visualization (C6), developing teaching strategies (C2), connecting the three levels of chemical concepts (C6) and the ability to plan experimental work in chemistry lessons (C9). It is important to emphasise that, comparing the results concerning the competences important for effective chemistry teaching, novice teacher qualifications and mentors' help, the novices get more help from mentors in those competences which mentors feel are not well developed in the novice

teacher (macro, submicro, symbolic - C3; visualization - C6), but at the same time these are not very important for effective chemistry teaching in the mentors' opinions. The reasons for this situation can be found in emphasising the importance of these two competences by teacher educators and science researchers, but neither novice nor experienced teachers see the significance of these competences for good chemistry lessons. Chemistry teaching incorporating these two competences is new to experienced teachers and some of them do not know how to proceed in implementing these strategies in their chemistry lessons, and how to mentor beginning teachers in this aspect.

Comparing the mentors' ratings of the competences, it seems that nevertheless mentors think that beginning teachers are not well prepared for effective chemistry teaching and do not offer a great deal of help to them.

Conclusion

The results can be summarised by answering the research questions. The first research question was: How successful do the mentors consider themselves to be in mentoring the novice teachers regarding their educational background? It can be concluded that more than half of the mentors consider themselves quite successful. They develop in novice teachers those competences which in their view are important for good chemistry teaching in primary or secondary school. Those who consider themselves very or fairly successful mentors, and mentors with different qualifications (two or four years of university education) also estimated very similarly the significance of specific competences for effective chemistry teaching, the actual beginning teachers' competences in different areas of chemistry teaching and their own help to novice teachers during their postgraduate practical preparation for independent teaching.

The second research question was: What competences do mentors think a chemistry teacher should possess to be an effective teacher? Mentors largely agree that for becoming an effective teacher, the competences listed - from rather (grade 4) to very (grade 5) - are important. Mentors think that a good chemistry teacher should have developed competences that are connected with experimental work in the classroom and competences for developing students' reasoning abilities and understanding chemical concepts.

The third research question was: "How do the mentors rate the beginning teachers' actual competences for teaching chemistry? It can be concluded that according to the mentors' views, the novice teachers have quite well developed knowledge for assuring safety in the classroom during experimental work, they are qualified to interpret experimental data and they can apply these data in

theory. On the other hand, novice teachers do not have enough competences in other areas of effective chemistry teaching (see Table 2). A comparison of the novice teacher actual qualifications and mentors' views of the competences for effective chemistry teaching shows that the ratings of specific competences differ significantly. It can be concluded that in all competences the novice teachers are not prepared well enough to meet the standards for an effective chemistry teacher.

The last research question refers to the mentors' help to the novice teachers. The results seem to provide evidence that mentors usually offer only medium help to novice teachers during their preparation for independent teaching. There are some grounds for suspecting that the beginning teachers get more help from mentors in those competences which mentors feel are not well developed in the novice teacher, but on the other hand these are the competences mentors believe are not very important for effective chemistry teaching. This contradictory result could be due to the fact that chemistry teacher educators and subject specialists strongly emphasise the three levels of chemistry concepts (macro, submicro and symbolic level) and visualization methods in developing students' mental models of chemical phenomena, but neither experienced nor novice teachers see the significance of this to classroom teaching. The mentors have difficulties in implementing these new strategies in the educational process because they are not used to teaching chemistry using the connections of macro, submicro and symbolic levels with different visualization elements. The beginning teachers are more familiar with this approach, but they do not have enough experiences to adequately put it into practice. It would seem that mentors think that beginning teachers are not well prepared for organizing the educational process, but they don't offer enough help for them to develop adequate competences for effective chemistry teaching.

Overall, the data of this study seem to provide evidence that mentors should be adequately trained for mentoring novice teachers. The findings suggest that mentors should develop the ability to detect a novice teacher's problems during their classroom interactions with students. In the next step, mentors should learn appropriate interventions strategies to help the novice teacher develop more effective teaching strategies. In this process the mentor must be able coach, model, support, evaluate, give information and feedback to the novice teacher.

The findings of this study imply that the conceptions of mentoring held by experienced chemistry teachers should be considered when organizing in-service professional development programs for mentors. The institutions that educate teachers, especially university lecturers of subject didactics, should prepare programs that consider the mentors' and novice teachers' views on the mentoring process. The results of this study suggest that in the process of

developing mentor training programs, novice teachers' opinions of the mentoring process must be obtained. The findings also indicate that mentor training should be contextualised and draw on the real problems that mentors and beginning teachers face in classroom practice. Teacher trainers should stress the development of a harmonious and productive relationship between a mentor and novice teacher, and mentors should be aware that the role of the moderator in this relationship is theirs.

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Teaching Competences for the World of Work

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Abstract

In connection with the growing urgency of unemployment problems, the Ministry of Education of the Czech Republic has decided on launching the subject Introduction to the World of Work to educational programs of secondary schools. This means a need for specific teacher training. Thus a specialization course that should provide the secondary teachers the necessary competences is being prepared by the Department of Social Sciences at the Faculty of Education of the Palacký University in Olomouc. This course contains topics such as educational systems, working with information, choice of career, job and enterprise, labour market, state policy of employment, regional specific features, rights and duties of the employee and employer, EU employment area, tax and pension systems, health and social insurance, psychology and sociology of work, methodology and didactics of the subject Introduction to the World of Work. The secondary teachers who are interested in these matters will have a chance to get acquainted with these exceptionally difficult topics of the labour world in a combined form of study that will be based on an adequately structured textbook and, after accreditation, offered to Czech teachers by the Centre of Lifelong Learning of the Faculty.

Even in the beginning of the 21st century the most developed countries of the world are not able to solve the problems of unemployment, which results in far-reaching economic, social, political, psychological, cultural and other impacts. This is true also of the countries united in the European Union, although the employment policy is one of the highest priorities there. Growing working migration (only in EU there are about 5 million people who moved to another country within this Community due to employment) is the typical feature of the labour market and this trend will be undoubtedly increased with all its positive and negative impacts. It is not only by chance that the year 2006 was declared the Year of European Workers' Mobility by the EU. Thus all countries are looking for methods of solutions; the way of upbringing and education is one of the basic methods.

In the Czech Republic, the Ministry of Education decreed in the year 2000 the introduction of career counselling in primary schools, and now also a new

subject, Introduction to the World of Work, is being launched at secondary schools. But this new subject requires qualified teachers. The subject matter has been included into bachelor's and master's programs of universities preparing teachers and tutors, but simultaneously it is necessary to enhance the qualifications of existing graduates. This is why, at the call from the Ministry of Education, a Team of Solvers has been established at the Faculty of Education of the Palacký University, whose task is to prepare a specialization course for secondary school teachers for the subject Introduction to the World of Work.

The first phase of the project was a situation survey carried out at ten state and private secondary schools (Grammar School, Technical Schools, Business Schools, Schools of Enterprise and Services). The survey revealed that the topic was only taught as a separate subject at one of the schools; everywhere else, its individual subtopics were incorporated to a smaller or larger extent into other subjects – Civics, Basics of Social Sciences, Economy, Family Education, practical subjects and supplementary activities etc. Teachers of Civics, Basics of Social Sciences and educational consultants are the most common providers. In our opinion, however, with regard to the importance of this subject matter for students' future life, its teaching within a separate subject is the most suitable. Generally it seems that the importance of this part of up-bringing and education has not been fully appreciated yet and that some teachers believe it is not necessary to spend time on their development in this area.

After the needs analysis we started to work on program contents, using the materials of the institute *Národní ústav odborného vzdělávání* (the National Institute of Technical and Vocational Education) in Prague. This institute was able to acquire the Austrian experience with a similar teacher training project. Together with the agency Kulturkontakt Austria and with the financial support of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture of the Austrian Republic, the Austrian-Czech educational activities were started. Initially, many lecturers were provided by the Czech Pedagogical Centres, but unfortunately these centers, whose task was to coordinate and methodologically regulate teacher education, were subsequently closed down, which significantly reduced the effect of the training. A further resource was the European Project Phare, which enabled us to complete our project of training providers of teaching and consultancy for career decision and orientation in the labour market. The proposal of an educational program for secondary school teachers was drawn up, which was an important basis for the creation of our specialization course. According to the methodological guidelines of the Ministry of Education, teachers of the subject Introduction to the World of Work should be properly qualified in order to provide their students competences that will enable them to make decisions concerning their future professional and educational orientation,

their entry into the labour market and enterprise, protection of their rights and fulfilment of their duties.

This specific teacher profile should contain competences which would allow the teacher to provide students with orientation in:

- the system of education (informing students of alternatives / most suitable educational possibilities for graduation in the field of their studies)
- the world of work and ways of asserting themselves professionally after graduation in a chosen field
- the rules and main development trends of the labour market, and the importance of labour market indicators
- retrieval and assessment of information concerning the offer of colleges and universities
- retrieval and assessment of information concerning other professional education
- retrieval and assessment of information concerning career opportunities
- the skills of written and verbal personal presentation needed for entry into the labour market
- the main labour-law relations, social, safety and health problems connected with employment
- problems of private enterprise
- the state policy of employment.

In our opinion it is necessary that such a teacher's profile should also contain the necessary knowledge of the EU working area or psychological and sociological topics as well as methodological and didactic competences. Based on all this, we created a course program of fifty lessons covering the following topics:

- | | |
|---|------|
| 1. Educational systems in the Czech Republic and EU. Lifelong learning. Work with information. (4) | 10 % |
| 2. Choice of career. Employment and private enterprise. (8) | 15 % |
| 3. Labour market. Unemployment. Employment bureau – state policy of employment. Regional situation and special features. (11) | 20 % |
| 4. Rights and duties of the employee and employer. (5) | 10 % |
| 5. EU working area. (2) | 5 % |
| 6. Entrance to the labour market. (5) | 10 % |
| 7. Tax and pension systems. Health and social insurance (4) | 10 % |
| 8. The psychology of work. (2) | 5 % |
| 9. The sociology of work. (2) | 5 % |
| 10. Methodology and didactics of the subject „Introduction to the World of Work“. (7) | 10 % |

We have called in specialists in individual topics, authors of textbooks, teachers from primary and secondary schools, and we also invited the cooperation of the Employment Bureau. In the next phase, the project will be presented to selected secondary school teachers, and if they find it interesting, the course will be carried out in a combined form by the Centre of Lifelong Learning of our Faculty. We have prepared an adequately structured textbook in the range of 100 pages. As an example we give the fifth chapter about the EU employment area in the supplement.

We will then submit this specialization course to the Ministry of Education for accreditation. If our work is assessed positively, it could become a small contribution to the lifelong learning program and to the solution of a cardinal question, the importance of which will undoubtedly increase in the future.

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Websites for support of schools in the area of career consultancy and education www.startnathprace.cz

Supplement: One of the ten chapters of the textbook “Introduction to the World of Work”

5. The European Union as an Employment Area

Chapter Objectives

The study of this Chapter should enable you:

- to get an insight into the problems of the European Union
- to quickly find information concerning the European labour market
- to find suitable employment abroad
- to put together the necessary documentation
- to know your employee’s (entrepreneurial), social and health rights and duties

Use especially the electronic sources given in the following text.

The Abstract of the history of European integration, its present state and main problems is the required input knowledge.

ABSTRACT OF MAIN TOPICS

Free movement of persons of all member states is one of the most important principles of the European Union. Article 39 of the European Community Agreement – *The Amsterdam Agreement* states: „The free movement as for employment, remuneration for work and other working conditions includes cancellation of any discrimination between workers of the European countries based on nationality.” But actually some so-called old members are still applying the so-called *transition period* against the citizens of the new members, which restricts their opportunities of asserting themselves freely in the Union labour market; this restriction affects Czech citizens as well. At the moment it is possible to work without any restrictions in Ireland, Finland, Portugal, Spain, Great Britain and new countries, Belgium and France are also fairly open. The European Parliament is pressing very much for a quick elimination of barriers also in the remaining countries (including the non-member countries that are integrated into the European Economic Space - Iceland, Norway and Switzerland). Today only those EU countries who signed the *Schengen Agreement* ensuring a common security policy can have absolutely uncontrolled movement of persons (these are the 10 original EU countries + Iceland and Norway).

It is necessary to **know the basic information sources** in order to make use of the opportunities provided by a common employment and enterprise area. These are:

- **websites** with summaries of jobs in individual countries and employment areas – www.najdicestu.cz – Section Work Abroad
- **EURES** (European Employment Services – Evropská služba zaměstnanosti) – <http://portal.mpsv.cz/eures>
- **Eurodesk** – information network giving the information concerning working and study conditions as well as concerning European programs especially for young people - www.eurodesk.cz

Opportunities are also found in employment advertising and **offers of private agencies** but here it is necessary to be very cautious – to check on <http://portal.mpsv.cz> if a certain private agency is officially registered.

The easiest **employment opportunities** can be found in highly qualified branches (such as computer technology, medicine), in scarce craftsman jobs, and in the area of completely unskilled labour (for example, in agriculture or services).

The EU supports **acquisition of international qualifications** in many programs such as *SOCRATES*, *LEONARDO DA VINCI*, *Lingua* etc. Also the programs of the European Social Fund are important.

Young people searching for short-time work that is eventually connected with studies or travelling have a lot of opportunities at so-called au-pair services, hotels, restaurants and farms. There is also a specific and in principle non-profit form of work - **voluntary work**, which is usually for the benefit of the public and often organized in the form of international youth work-camps – see www.youth.cz, <http://tandem.adam.cz>, www.workcampy.cz.

Usually, the length of a work stay is proportionate with the level of required qualifications and payment (the shorter the stay, the less payment and less qualifications are required). Another principle is the higher an applicant's professional qualification and better knowledge of languages, the better the working conditions and earnings. There is, for example, currently a demand for about 500, 000 workers in the area of information and communication technology in the EU.

Many professions belong to the so-called regulated ones – i.e. requiring fulfilment of certain conditions by the applicant (skill, work experience, state of health etc. –

http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/qualifications/does/contacts-points/info_points_eu.pdf. As for **qualification acceptance – validation** see

www.msmt.cz/uok - the required qualification should be not only proved but also validated.

During searching for work abroad, a **Czech unemployed person** can ask for transfer of unemployment compensation to a foreign country (for a period up to three months)

Prior to travelling abroad for work it is necessary to have ensured the necessary travel **documents** – a passport or new identity card, vaccination (especially against tetanus, typhoid fever and hepatitis), medications (to check the compatibility of those you are using with the ones that would be available abroad), starting money and discount cards (ISIC, ITIC, ALIVE etc.) – www.alive.cz, tickets – www.bei.cz, accommodation – www.ihf.org, www.gtsint.cz and health insurance. It is also necessary to pay careful attention to the Employment Contract – an exact written record of all the important aspects of the agreement with the employer – working hours, wage etc.

After return from a foreign country it is possible to ask for validation of the qualification acquired abroad – www.msmt.cz, and eventually for a refund of income tax – www.taxback.com.

The so-called Europass (it does not substitute a passport) opens doors for studies and work in Europe. It contains a biographical part and mobility part (with certificates of finished stays, scholarships etc.) on EU forms, a certificate of secondary qualification (it is issued by the institute *Národní ústav odborného vzdělávání* – The National Institute of Technical and Vocational Education as a supplement to the school-leaving certificate or certificate of apprenticeship) and a diploma supplement (issued by universities – <http://europass.cedefop.eu.int>). (At the moment about 5 million people are taking the opportunity of free movement of workers within the EU.)

In order to support the creation of new jobs, the Union also strongly supports the **development of enterprise** – especially of small and middle-sized companies. The EU is trying to eliminate the for enterprise activities within the EU, decreasing taxes and taxes on wages and providing financial support for business plans.

Within its **employment policy**, the EU puts emphasis on **minimal European standards** of employees' rights – working hours, protection of health at work, collective agreements etc., but in addition to these minimal standards individual countries can also apply their own legislation that is binding for the foreign worker as well. Regardless of this, there the basic requirement of **no discrimination** based on sex, race, age, religion, nationality etc.

Since this area is complex, problems can arise despite the protective legislation. The EU has established the **Information Centres Europe Direct** (<http://citizens.eu.int>), which anybody can contact through many Employment Bureaus with **Euro consultants**, who can provide complete information and help to job applicants.

According to the Union legislation, foreign workers have **the same rights and duties** as domestic workers even in the social, health and pension areas. Since 1992 the **Maastricht Agreement** has established the EU citizenship that gives every EU inhabitant the right to move and settle anywhere in the Union, to have full rights there (even to vote to the European Parliament and municipal authorities, to turn to the European Court, European Parliament, European Ombudsman etc.).

In the near future the possibilities in the employment and enterprise areas (even now very wide and varied) should be without any restrictions for citizens of the Czech Republic. **The year 2006 is the European year of Workers' Mobility.**

Basic Terms

The Amsterdam Agreement, European Union, European Economic Area, Eurodesk, Eures, Europass, Euro Consultant, E-mail Addresses, The Maastricht Agreement, Qualification, Validation, Portal, Employment Area, Transition Period, Regulated Professions, The Schengen Agreement, Labour Market, Employment Bureau, websites

Check Questions

1. What is the present state in the area of free movement of workforce within the EU?
2. What are the basic necessary steps for the applicant for a job abroad, what documents does he/she need?
3. Where can the necessary information and help be found?

Task

Find an employment opportunity in Ireland and elaborate your Europass for its acquisition.

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Methods and Approaches Acquired by Romanian Students in Foreign Language Teaching

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Abstract

In a European country, the use of modern techniques and procedures in foreign language teaching is compulsory. That is why Romanian students preparing to become English and French teachers are being taught at present to focus on active and participative approaches in the process of second language learning. They are encouraged to show flexibility and consider important factors such as learning habits, needs, educational level, interest, age, background knowledge, trust etc. The stress is on training them to establish interpersonal communication in the classroom involving role play, simulation, debate, discussion, which was not practiced in the past. With young children, they are encouraged to use methods such as the total physical response or the direct approach, well known abroad but relatively new in Romania. With other pupils, alternative techniques like suggestopedia are more than welcome. In addition, music is a channel functioning at any age that future teachers must know how to utilize properly. On the whole, foreign language students are being made aware that in order to meet the three essential elements within the classroom: comprehension, functioning and evaluation they have to introduce and promote natural exchanges.

Part and parcel of a continent which has significantly changed and progressed, Romania is trying to fit European norms, to become an international country from all points of view. Globalization and openness are now the ideologies which have become familiar to our people. Not only did we give up the idea of uniqueness and singularity, but we also became proud of our Europeanness.

It is hence obvious why the whole process of education, foreign language teaching included, acquired a different dimension in the third millennium. The well-known traditional methods of teaching a second language according to strict grammar rules taught deductively, endless vocabulary lists, and sentences to translate, are nowadays a remote memory. If in the past terms like ‘creative noise’ or ‘group work’ were dismissed as inappropriate - and rigid, silent, individual work was preferred - it is particularly the use of such approaches that is most appreciated in classroom activities at present. Moreover, when selecting

methods and procedures, modern teachers show flexibility and consider important factors such as learning habits, needs, educational level, cultural formation, perception, trust, interest, age, background knowledge, etc. Besides these criteria, Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences is taken into account more and more and can be successfully exploited by foreign language teachers.

The aim of discussing current methods in what follows is that of proving the advantages they bring about not only for pupils, but also for novice teachers who at the beginning of their career may feel confused or insecure. A demonstration of how such techniques can be practically applied will be included and will refer to the utilization of suggestopedia. The research was made on English teacher trainees, University students of between eighteen and twenty years of age. The group of thirty people – who were not familiar with suggestopedia yet – was asked to give feedback at the end of the course. As for the results, they will be presented further on, after starting our foray in teaching modalities.

Starting from these considerations, the present paper will focus only on the newer active and participative approaches to be acquired by Romanian students who train to work as qualified English and French teachers. It is not the process of formation in itself that we are concerned with, but the presentation of the techniques and their practical utility, information representing a must for this category of students. The analysis contains two parts: the first half makes reference to teaching English, and the second to teaching French.

An important step in the promotion of English in the Romanian school system was its introduction in kindergartens, where children who can neither read nor write are introduced to communicating in a language that is not their native one. Although this is an age when learners have little cognitive capacity, the advantage is that they accept the rigours of a different linguistic system extremely naturally. Furthermore, it is considered that pronunciation is “learned more easily by younger children”(Ur 1996, p. 286) than by those who are more mature. Their acquisition will be a purely intuitive one, based on the instinct of ‘feeling’ the language. That is why activities should be selected carefully in this case, as preschool boys and girls reject everything they consider monotonous or uninteresting and display boredom and lack of motivation. ‘Playful’ is the key word when choosing the methods of working with them. Thus, approaches like the total physical response or the direct method are the most appropriate.

The total physical response is not very demanding and creates a positive state of mind. The different commands given to the pupils by the teacher can be combined in a humorous way and the physical movement, which is compulsory here, is highly appreciated by these restless children. Short stories accompanied by pictures have both the role of explaining and of maintaining their attention.

The direct method, on the other hand, aims to make children think directly in English and communicate in the target language. Though it is rather difficult to achieve such an objective, the rich use of drawings, pictures and mime can convince them to cooperate and learn in a creative way. Their play becomes constructive, children progress little by little without even realizing that they are involved in a teaching – learning process. Teacher trainees are made aware that by using this method they become ‘playmates’ who introduce information naturally, in accordance with their pupils’ level of understanding.

Of all the types of intelligence presented by Gardner, four of them are no doubt especially privileged with kindergarten children: the visual / spatial, the corporal / kinaesthetic the interpersonal and the musical / rhythmic one. Very small pupils could never learn without the help of images, as the visual channel is a powerful means of stimulating creativity. In addition, their body can become a powerful tool in the hands of an imaginative teacher. As mentioned above, children mime naturally, or invent movements to explain something. Besides, they are not ashamed of expressing feelings and thoughts by using their own body. They love dancing and playing roles, are dynamic and energetic. As far as interpersonal relations are concerned, they are sociable, care about the others and are willing to work in groups. Last but not least, music is an extraordinary gift the teacher can benefit from. Songs taught in a constructive manner constitute a pleasant, relaxing, not to mention useful occupation. Children can be taught songs at any time, as they love them, consider them amusing and more importantly are willing to learn everything a song can teach.

If teaching English in kindergartens and using such methods - well – known abroad, but relatively new in our country - is a chapter of our recent European identity, innovation in teaching foreign languages is present in the case of older learners as well. English as a second language was introduced in our schools a long time ago, but the teaching methods have taken an important switch in recent years. The focus is on participation, awareness and involvement on the part of the pupils. Positive thinking and motivation are decisive factors to be seriously considered by future teachers.

A good illustration in this respect would be suggestopedia, a rather non-conformist and special approach and one of the ways of creating a relaxed English course. The principle set forth by this technique is quite simple:” in order to make better use of our mental reserves, the limitations we think we have need to be ‘dissuggested’. Suggestopedia, the application of the study of suggestion in psychology, has been developed to help students eliminate the feeling that they cannot be successful and, thus, to help them overcome the barriers to learning” (Larsen – Freeman 1995, p.72). It is no doubt a method

designed for adults or high school pupils, as learning is achieved in a quiet, calm atmosphere, which is almost utopian with children.

Although more difficult to put into practice in a normal classroom, it is not impossible to apply. The teacher may not be able to offer armchairs to his / her students, but can ask them to relax and sit comfortably in their chairs, provide a pleasant musical background, dim light and display posters with useful information on the walls, as required in this case. The receptive phase in which the teacher offers explanations and introduces new material by matching his / her voice to the rhythm of the music is meant to activate both hemispheres of the human brain. Again, a soft melody can be very helpful, even if it does not constitute didactic material to be used in a concrete sense. Peripheral learning, ensured by the displayed charts with grammatical explanations, is another device to make students learn in a non-threatening way. This technique is based upon the idea that people perceive much more in their environment than that to which they attend consciously. It is therefore considered that students can acquire or consolidate knowledge discretely. All these characteristics of the receptive phase enforce the direct or indirect message the teacher transmits to make pupils feel successful. It is very important to break down the barriers to learning that they might bring with them and make them feel at ease. The activation phase then becomes a natural process, without pressure or stress. The students gladly engage in various activities designed to activate the new material. They accept interaction and are confident about their actions. Their vocabulary is enriched, communicative activities are emphasized.

An experiment involving English teacher trainees was carried out to check learners' reactions and comments regarding the utilization of this approach. The testees were first year students. The theme of the practical course was essay writing techniques and oral presentation, a topic to be studied for eight hours (four course sessions). The learners were invited to arrange their chairs in semicircles and adopt a relaxed posture. They were then asked to choose one of the three musical backgrounds offered and voted for Vivaldi's *Seasons*. In order to avoid monotony, they were also offered other musical alternatives, all soft and relaxing. The posters on the walls concerned the subjunctive and modal verbs. During the first course, they were explained each step in the creation of an essay. They were familiarized with writing the thesis, the paragraph and the sentence in a correct manner. They were taught how to link their ideas cohesively, coherently and make a good presentation afterwards. The whole teaching process avoided producing any sensation of burden or constraint in the mind of the students. In the second phase, they were asked to work in pairs, cooperate, produce various parts of the essay and discuss presentation variants. In the last part, the essay had to be finished and each pair was supposed to perform. They could use different names, assume new identities,

which helped them feel more secure. The other students evaluated the work of their peers by expressing opinions and offering suggestions.

After the last lesson, they were asked to give written feedback on the development of the English classes, and they all appreciated this method. Their general impression was that the course had become something different. They were not tired, they amused themselves and enjoyed working. More importantly, they did not feel trapped in a rigid teaching – learning process. This proved that such a method, which however cannot be used permanently, brings about mobilization and motivation.

An important task of a teacher which is now constantly stressed to our teacher trainees is to combine different techniques and approaches, to show flexibility and capacity of adaptation. We should not forget that teachers work with heterogeneous classes, in which aptitudes and intelligence vary. Besides the disadvantages of facing mixed abilities and learning capacities, this aspect is an advantage, too. A good English teacher exploits any resources and gives priority to innovation. Personality is encouraged and worked with. The teacher is a guide, a friend or an adviser, with a discrete but significant presence. Pupils know they can rely on him / her and thus feel stronger.

The theory of multiple intelligences, which has already been mentioned in this paper, may very well be the key to a perfect combination of methods. Let us not forget that older pupils often exhibit linguistic intelligence as some of them are passionate readers, like creative writing or enjoy talking and participating in debates. Others have logic / mathematical talents which the young English teacher should not neglect. Such students love logical succession, analogy, argumentation, interrelations. With those who prefer intrapersonal activities, their powerful motivation and superior thinking must be utilized. They evaluate themselves, know which are their strong points as well as their limitations and can achieve excellent results in individual work. Of course, interpersonal intelligence is highly appreciated by English teachers, as such learners are talkative, cooperative, easily integrated within a group, willing to communicate, be they children or grown-ups. At the same time we must keep in mind that some older students may prove reluctant to show their kinaesthetic intelligence even if they possess it. Here the teacher has to manage to convince them that the connection between mind and body is natural and often necessary in learning a foreign language. As far as visual intelligence is concerned, this is very important for both younger and older students. Images have a great impact on people, they represent one of the key stimuli.

Similarly, musical intelligence does not know age barriers. Adults like music just as much as children. Some may feel ridiculous or embarrassed in the beginning, but in the end gladly accept the childlike feeling that using music

induces. Songs constitute an important source of vocabulary, an opportunity for the teacher to catch the mood of the class, deal with lexical aspects and for the pupils to acquire a set of words and expressions. They should be introduced when “students are tired, or need cheering up, or when you are near the end of the term. You may then be able to teach them as much without their realising it, as when you press them to learn.” (Haycraft 1992, p.96).

In order to develop creativity and reinforce oral and written expression, what can be more interesting than contemporary music in French teaching also? The young Romanian students are interested in the music of the moment and when they go through the chapters dedicated to the culture and civilization of the second language, learning can be accompanied by pedagogic booklets meant to disclose the originality of the French musical world. Another gain would be that the multiple geographic and cultural origins of the French population, life styles and religious or political beliefs coexist and are found in music. As a matter of fact, musical genres mingle and make boundaries disappear, the themes speak about personal stories, dreams, expectations, social anomalies and many other things.

In the classroom, music introduces a non – linguistic universe and the comprehension of the text comes afterwards. Learning a foreign language through songs means opening up to the world, discovering different modalities of expression, of action and interaction and finding pleasure in the process of acquisition. To do so, the CAVILAM (Centre of Living Languages and Media) in Vichy proposes a dynamic approach centred on communicative activities and on the pleasure of listening (<http://www.cavilan.com>).

The preliminary stage that Romanian novice teachers must not skip is *the pre-listening activities*:

They can:

- Write the word “song” on the blackboard and invite the pupils to explain what this word could mean for them (a melody, music, instruments, rhythm etc.);
- Enumerate the instruments they are able to name in the foreign language;
- Establish together a semantic field based on the theme of the song under study.

The discovery of the song constitutes the second stage.

The objective of this stage is to arouse interest, the curiosity of the pupils, by creating a connection between them and the song to discover. Here, the teacher has the freedom to choose the exercises by adapting himself / herself to the level and requirements of the group. The objective aimed at is to turn listening into a

more conscious process, considering that this first discovery is accompanied by several tasks:

- Recognize the musical instruments in the song;
- Name the type of music in the song and specify, if possible, the characteristics of the recognized musical type;
- Circle the words contained in the song in a list of words given previously;
- Listen to the song and count the number of instances when a certain word is heard.

Since the first discovery of the song involves the linguistic aspect only roughly, it is necessary to continue with *the discovery of the song and words*. Songs often speak about isolated moments, impressions, feelings. They may refer to certain facts or persons that only the authors know. Extreme prudence is required when texts are interpreted. The young teacher should ask himself / herself some fundamental questions: What do the pupils understand? How and why do they understand the songs? The role of the teacher is to stay marginal, yet to animate the pupils' effort of thinking. Here are some types of activity that future teachers are being trained to use: *reference points, classifications, looking for precise details, generic questions meant to enforce comprehension* without paraphrasing the text. In order to achieve this, it is possible to:

- Look for the characters in the song;
- Find in the text all the words and expressions talking about feelings;
- Discover the words containing certain sounds;
- In pairs, the pupils can tell what they were able to find out about the characters;
- Speak about the actions of the characters and explain them;
- Explain different expressions and their signification.

The third stage introduces *the oral and written expression*, namely the learner's *creativity*. During this stage, the teacher can invite the pupils' creative contributions or propose some very interesting and varied creativity exercises such as:

- Expressing their agreement or disagreement with the attitudes of the characters and explain their choice.
- Debating if songs have to transmit messages that have a social impact (the fight against racial discrimination, the social dialogue, the pursuit of one's dreams, the theme of love and many others).
- Comparing the life of young people abroad with the life and preoccupations of young Romanians.
- Writing compositions inspired by the song under study.

- Creating a motto for the CD of the song, presenting it and justifying their choice.

The teacher trainees are being told that songs are not isolated documents, they can be inserted in the study of other materials: literary texts from the handbooks, other songs, research reports from the Internet. Songs may be part of the topics studied in the classroom too, and thus there is a harmonious connection between them and the course, which broadens the pupil's horizons and capacity of reflection. Another idea would be that of comparing the song with other songs, or to associate the text of the song with a literary one, a newspaper text or a film. According to M. Boiron, "originally, the song is not meant to be used in the classroom. Its first function is to amuse, to divert attention, to denounce, to tell a story, to make people dance etc. The proposed pedagogic tracks were conceived with the intention to enrich the class with communicative practices and to fully give to the language under study its status of living language [...]. The didactic objective confines itself to a simple phase: providing the mood to learn" (Boiron, <http://www.leplaisirdapprendre.com>)

To conclude, let us also remind the readers that the level of linguistic difficulty of these activities should correspond to the levels of competence in a foreign language as defined by the European Common Frame of Reference and acknowledged by all language students:

- A1 The *débutant* level, which is concerned with validating a level of "discovery"
- A2 The *elementary* level, situated in the same perspective, but validating the level of "prolongement"
- B1 The *intermediate* level where there is a qualitative and quantitative leap of the competences, characterized by the capacity of interacting and coping with the problems of everyday life.
- B2 The *advanced* level or the level of the independent user, concentrated on the efficiency of argumentation, on the good utilization of social discourse and on a new degree of language awareness.
- C1 The first level of *perfection* or of experience and autonomy based on a communication characterized by ease and spontaneity.
- C2 The second level of perfection or proficiency defined - by a high degree of language knowledge, without the ambition of rivalling a native speaker.

These are the levels that all handbook authors and all Romanian teachers must have in mind and go through during their courses, in order to adapt better to the rigours imposed by Europe.

The techniques that can be used in the classroom are obviously far more numerous than those mentioned here, but we decided to discuss those which are

still perceived as ‘more daring’. The first obligation of the English teacher is to avoid a singular direction and combine approaches according to well-established criteria. He / she may choose the eclectic method which has the objective of meeting all learning styles. By doing so, the teacher of a larger group eliminates the fear that his /her pupils will not be effective enough in using the language actively and practically. Creating the proper mood in an original, spontaneous and creative environment is everything.

Future teachers learn that the pupil of the present represents a permanent challenge, requires research and innovation on the part of the teacher. In a world where the teacher – student relationship has taken a different direction based on communication, trust and understanding, techniques are richer and more flexible. Suggestions from learners are needed and accepted. Feedback given to the teacher is a must, as it checks the pulse of the class. In short, innovation, constructive imagination, is the secret in teaching English / French and foreign languages in general.

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Part two

**Teacher Induction:
Models and Research**

Mentoring Teachers in Anglophone Canada: Building Learning Communities

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Abstract

This paper examines the micro-level action of mentoring to articulate ways in which the induction of beginning teachers can be reframed around inquiry groups functioning as learning communities. The thesis advanced is that induction stimulates memorable and durable professional learning when the pre-service program musters the power of the cohort model within practice settings that foster shared inquiries within learning communities. Mentoring in this sense consists in establishing the conditions whereby new teachers are inducted into a profession characterized by continuous professional learning through shared inquiries of practice. It goes against the grain of hierarchical supervision by involving mentors in building a culture of inquiry, exposing new teachers to alternative views and practices, and providing organizational support for beginning teacher study groups.

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Introduction

In Canada, education is a provincial jurisdiction. Each province has its own system, the organization of which differs slightly from that of other provinces. As a country, Canada has two official languages (English and French), is large in geographic area, and characterized by cultural diversity. Immigration accounts for a good deal of the ethnic and racial diversity across the country, with many of the immigrants to Anglophone Canada in the last two decades coming from non-English-speaking countries in Asia. Hence, there is an important need for the provision of English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) services that has accompanied a policy commitment of “mainstreaming”, the integration of learning-challenged students into regular “inclusive” classrooms.

Teacher preparation is also a provincial jurisdiction. In all provinces, a professional teaching certificate is normally issued to graduates of university pre-service preparation programs. Most Canadian teachers therefore possess a first degree. Governance of teacher education falls under the provincial government except in British Columbia and Ontario where the British Columbia College of Teachers (BCCT) and the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) respectively act as professional self-regulating bodies that control certification and establish professional standards.

Despite the cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity across Canada, all provinces have taken considerable interest in the induction of teachers. There is concern about attrition rates because losing new teachers within the first five years of teaching is not deemed a good return on the investment of resources in teacher preparation. Hence, there has been a good deal of action at the policy and practice levels to address the need to enhance the professional induction of new teachers. Cole and McNay (1988) first brought attention to induction programs in Ontario and this led to Cole and Watson (1993) examining how Ontario policy was influencing induction practices, with Beynon, Geddis, and Onslow (2001) compiling cases for use in induction programs. In British Columbia, Andrews (1987) first called attention to induction and Bowman (1991) exhorted the newly-formed College of teachers (BCCT) to support teacher induction, a stance supported by Housego’s (1992, 1994) research examining ways in which new teachers felt prepared to enter teaching. Subsequent work by Riecken and Clarke (2000) and by Clarke and Collins (2007) has opened up important discussions about how cooperating classroom teachers can be central players in the mentoring of new teachers. Johnson, Ratsoy, Holdaway, and Friesen (1993) described the policy commitment of the Alberta government to professional induction, documenting the various aspects of the “Initiation to Teaching”

project that took place in that province during the 1980s. Long after the Alberta policy commitment had ended, Sanford and Hopper (2000) described how they used mediation as a way of transforming student teaching supervision into mentoring to help beginning teachers in their induction. In Saskatchewan, Ralph (1993, 1994a, 1994b, 2000, 2002, 2004) studied different ways of helping new teachers through the transition to teaching by means of “contextual” supervision. Scott (2000) and Gill (2004) described the successes of induction programs in New Brunswick, and Covert, Williams, and Kennedy (1991) characterized the needs of beginning teachers in Newfoundland.

The history in Anglophone Canada, then, has been one of professional concern about losing new teachers in the first years of teaching (Veenman, 1984) because they lack important professional support at a critical stage in their career (Britzman, 1991). This problem has been addressed through policy by the provision of induction programs (Cole & Watson, 1993). Cole’s subsequent research on induction (1990a, 1990b, 1991a, 1991b) described the workplace relationships that came into being in school-based support programs for beginning teachers but she also noted that, while there was considerable talk about support, there was a lack of attention paid to mentoring in a formalized way. Glassford and Salinitri (2007) confirmed this in their examination of the evolution of policy over two decades, concluding that modest attempts at implementing induction programs had fallen short because of a lack of careful focus on mentoring. Yet earlier, Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) had articulated clear directions for mentoring:

Mentoring is a means to a larger end: that of creating a strong, improvement-oriented profession . . . [moving] in the following directions:

- from being performed in pairs to becoming an integral part of professional cultures in schools,
- from focusing only on classroom work with students to developing the ability to form strong relationships with colleagues and parents as well,
- from hierarchical dispensations of wisdom to shared inquiries of practice,
- from being an isolated innovation to becoming an integrated part of broader improvement efforts to reculture our schools and school systems. (p. 55)

The purpose of this paper, then, is to grapple with how the practice of mentoring of new teachers in Anglophone Canada can be reframed so as to move it in the directions that Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) suggested. In so doing, it delves beyond the macro-level action of induction programs to explore at the micro-level what Glassford and Salinitri (2007) characterize as the important but missing link of mentoring. It reports the conclusions about mentoring from a study of 48 pre-service teachers at Simon Fraser University who were inducted

into teaching through immersion in teacher inquiry groups. The thesis is that induction stimulates memorable and durable professional learning when the pre-service program musters the power of the cohort model within practice settings that foster shared inquiries within learning communities.

Theoretical framework

Many studies show that, when schools function as learning communities, the professional induction experience becomes a powerful force in enabling new teachers to develop classroom practices that focus on student learning processes and outcomes. (Alvarado, 1998; Fullan, 1991; Hargreaves, 1994; Newmann, Smith, Allensworth, & Bryk, 2001; Resnick & Hall, 1998). Building such learning communities are more important than ever in Canada in the 21st century because rapidly changing societal and school contexts are affecting teaching and learning in ways not hitherto experienced. For example, a diverse student population in a multicultural context confronts teachers with widespread differences in learning needs that, together with class composition, are challenging conventional teacher didacticism. Moreover, the introduction of new strategies of teaching, the integration of information and communications technologies, and the public press for standards and accountability systems (Lessard & Brassard, 2005, Hargreaves, 1994) all create pressure for educators continually to learn and adapt their practice. Hence, it is possible to argue that meeting this broad range of challenges without supportive induction through professional learning no longer seems feasible.

Some of the challenges arise from demographic changes. In addition to a diversification of the student population, approximately 40% of the current teaching workforce in British Columbia, the most western province of Canada, is projected to retire between 1995 and 2005¹² (Grimmett & Echols, 2002). To help experienced teachers meet the evolving challenges facing them and to build an infrastructure that might support new educators' initiation to the field, a number of schools and districts have been working on fostering productive learning communities among their staff. However, how do educational leaders and mentors act to build professional learning communities in schools as important conditions for the induction of new teachers?

Professional Learning Communities

¹² The numbers are 8,172 actual retirements between 1995 and 2001, and 6,435 projected between 2002 and 2005 for a total of 14,607 in the 1995-2005 decade, numbers subsequently confirmed by Hawkey (2006).

Twenty-five years ago, Little (1982) provided an early example of this approach when she showed that the successful implementation of an innovative program was linked with norms of collegiality and experimentation within a school. She found that, in schools in which administrators and teachers engaged in reciprocal observation, risk taking, and reflective critique, the traditions of privacy, practicality, and isolation were replaced by shared ownership of instructional issues and problems of practice, a willingness to consider alternatives, and a commitment to work and inquire together as colleagues. Later in that decade, Rosenholtz (1989) found a strong relationship between the structures, norms, and pattern of interactions in the work communities of schools and the potential for the kind of teacher development that positively influenced student learning. Specifically, she found that support in the form of teacher networks, cooperation among colleagues, and expanded professional roles increased teacher efficacy for meeting the learning needs of students. This prompted Fullan (1991) to call for policy initiatives to "redesign the workplace so that innovation and improvement are built into the daily activities of teachers" (p. 353).

McLaughlin and Oberman (1993) confirmed the findings of both Little and Rosenholtz. They found that opportunities for experienced teachers to engage in collaborative inquiry about student learning resulted in a body of wisdom about teaching that could be widely shared. In addition, Darling-Hammond (1996) found that, in schools where structured time was provided for teachers to work together in planning instruction, observing each other's classrooms, and sharing feedback, shared decision-making became an important factor related to curriculum reform and the transformation of teaching roles. In Canada, the work of Grimmitt (1996) and Grimmitt and Dockendorf (1999) confirmed the power of collaborative inquiry among teacher research groups to impact positively on student learning and achievement.

Senge (1990) first coined the term "learning organization". The idea of a learning organization "where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together" (p. 3) became central to the implementation of educational change because it was seen as a way of increasing organizational capacity and creativity. This characterization of learning organizations has been re-formulated in the educational literature as "professional learning communities" (Bryk, Camburn, & Louis, 1999, Gordon, 2004; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001, 2006, Resnick & Hall, 1998). Such communities are framed around an unequivocal professional commitment to reference teachers' work to student learning within a context of collective inquiry and shared leadership (Grimmett & Dockendorf, 1999). That is, the

focus of teachers' interactions and collaboration is on joint productive work (Little, 1990) that is anchored in the improvement of both student achievement and teacher practice (Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001).

What then is the relationship between professional learning communities and student achievement? Lee, Smith, and Croninger (1995) reported findings on 11,000 students enrolled in 820 re-structured secondary schools across the USA. In those schools that were characterized as professional learning communities, the educators had worked together to transform their classroom pedagogy. They engaged students in high intellectual learning tasks, and the students in turn achieved greater academic gains in math, science, history and reading than students in more conventionally organized schools. Moreover, the achievement gaps among students from different backgrounds were smaller in these "learning community" schools than in conventional ones. That came about because teachers held themselves accountable for student learning and shared a collective responsibility for the success of students. In such schools, "teachers and other staff members experience more satisfaction and higher morale, while students drop out less often and cut fewer classes. And both staff and students post lower rates of absenteeism" (Lee, Smith, & Croninger, 1995, p. 5).

Sykes (1996) maintained, "an invaluable resource for teachers is a professional community that can serve as a source of insight and wisdom about problems of practice" (p. 466). McLaughlin and Talbert's (2001) findings from their longitudinal study of sixteen high schools in California and Michigan substantiate Sykes' claim. They reported that that "participation in a professional community . . . supports the risk-taking and struggle entailed in transforming practice" (p. 15) because working with teacher groups in professional communities "offer[s] the most effective unit of intervention and powerful opportunity for reform" (p. 18) by providing opportunities for colleagues to observe new practices and give supportive critique. Such communities encourage teacher consideration of curriculum goals and their meaning relative to the students and the subject matter they teach. They provide substantive support for the transformation of teaching because, as McLaughlin and Talbert (2006) have reported, teachers' ideas of good teaching and classroom practice are defined in discussion with colleagues in a learning community. Neumann and Wehlage (1995) summed it up this way:

The most successful schools were those that used restructuring tools to help them function as professional communities; that is, they found a way to channel staff and students efforts towards a clear and commonly shared purpose for student learning: they created opportunities for teachers to collaborate and help one another achieve the purpose: and teachers in those schools took collective responsibility for student learning. Schools with strong professional communities

were better able to offer authentic pedagogy and were more efficient in promoting student achievement. (p. 3)

Professional learning communities, however, have to be built. They do not just appear. What, then, makes for a successful learning community? Neumann and Wehlage (1995) suggest that four key factors—student learning, authentic pedagogy, school organizational capacity, and external support—are also necessary. Teachers need to agree on a vision of high quality student intellectual work. They facilitate this high quality work by using an authentic pedagogy that brings the vision to life in their classrooms. The school's organizational capacity must reinforce the kind of professional community that promotes such quality learning and pedagogy. And critical financial, technical, and political support needs to come from external sources.

The question this paper seeks to address is: How can mentors conduct their work in order to build learning communities that support the professional induction of new teachers? Put differently, how can they engage beginning teachers in a focus on improving student learning through the provision of authentic pedagogy and assessment? How can mentors channel new teachers to work together with colleagues toward a clear and commonly shared purpose for student learning? How can they create opportunities for inductees to pursue collaboration with colleagues as a way of working toward taking collective responsibility for student learning?

Reframing the leadership role of mentors

How then can mentors act in ways that centrally frame new teachers' induction around student learning? The thesis advanced here is that mentors need to provide new teachers with the conditions of a learning community so that they can learn to do what is necessary and of value for the important needs, abilities, and interests of increasingly diverse learners. One way to achieve these ends consists in sponsoring and facilitating teacher inquiry. In this manner, mentors can begin to enable new teachers to develop their practice in ways that are framed around the process of learning and the students it serves. Mentors would thus set out to change the normative culture of supervision from one in which they act strategically for purposes of personal, institutional, and political power to one in which they deliberately go against the grain of traditional, hierarchical, and controlling approaches to the professional development of teachers (Grimmett, Rostad, & Ford, 1992). Such a direction would involve mentors in building a culture of inquiry, exposing teachers to alternative views and practices, and providing organizational support for teacher study groups.

Building a Culture of Inquiry

Building a culture of inquiry involves sustaining blocks of uninterrupted time for teachers to inquire together in group settings. The nature of teacher inquiry demands self-disclosure, and mentors need to take time to develop a sanction-free environment in which teachers feel safe to take risks to disclose themselves and their practice. The aim here is to have beginning teachers (not mentors) initiate the inquiry process, in response to a particular practical situation or dilemma that they face. The mentors' responsibility is to facilitate the process through sensitive and supportive questioning, to crystallize, and focus the discussion. One of the mentor's purposes would be to ensure that the "wisdom of practice" (Shulman, 1987) and teachers' "craft knowledge" (Grimmett & MacKinnon, 1992) is valued and respected in a manner that permits authentic professional development (Grimmett & Neufeld, 1994). A further purpose would be to ensure that teachers articulate their dilemmas of practice. Mentors thus help teachers frame the issues or dilemmas that they face. They listen to what teachers describe and attempt to help them reframe the issue in terms of student learning and its facilitation. In so doing, mentors supportively probe, prod, clarify, focus, and generally provoke new teachers toward an inquiring sensibility.¹³ But what specifically could mentors do to build a culture of inquiry through teacher inquiry groups? Their specific actions would revolve around framing the conditions of inquiry, accepting tension and dealing with conflict, modeling collegiality and experimentation, focusing teacher talk on action, enabling teachers to frame their inquiry, and connecting action with student learning.

Framing the Conditions of Inquiry

Mentors could make use of the framework used in British Columbia (Grimmett, 1996). Participants are invited to engage in reflective writing about issues of pedagogy and problems of practice that are troubling them. They then talk to colleagues about their respective issues and problems. These professional conversations become an important vehicle for developing inquiry questions that teachers can pursue both individually and collectively. To enable this collaboration, mentors coordinate consulting/work sessions with beginning teachers designed to frame the conditions of their inquiry.

¹³ Kohl (1988, p. 57) writes about teachers developing a "teaching sensibility", knowledge of student levels of sophistication and how they focus their energy on learning and growth. "Inquiring sensibility" takes this notion to a different level wherein the primary learners are the new teachers and mentors themselves attempting to discover how teaching can be transformed from the learners' perspective.

It is, however, important for mentors to realize that each group of inquiring teachers will have different dynamics, with its own distinctive qualities. As mentors, it is critical to understand and value the different qualities of each group. Mentors could implement a similar framework for beginning teacher inquiry groups meetings yet recognize that such a framework can only serve as an heuristic and never as a predictable agenda. Mentors will need to be flexible, responsive and willing to change the focus based on the needs of a particular group of inductees at any given point in time. Although each inquiry group is distinct, they typically require a similar set of conditions to be effective. It is important for all groups to have a trusting environment, to sustain interpersonal relationships and to focus on collaborative action as primary conditions for healthy teacher inquiry. Individually, inquiring teachers bring with them a reservoir of ideas and prior experiences and the mentor's function is to tap into that. Another necessary condition is that participants feel comfortable expressing the uncertainties and questions inherent in their daily practice. Without this comfort with discomfort, meaningful and compelling questions of professional learning rarely materialize. And one of the ways mentors can nurture this condition is by continually modeling the acceptance of tension and conflict as basic to their own and others' practice.

Accepting Tension and Dealing with Conflict

Collaboration between teachers permits the negotiating of the details of inquiry as professional learning. For some teachers this may lead to a conflict between working together and at the same time retaining individuality. In some cases, partnerships might dissolve and new relationships emerge. These tensions could cause anxious moments for mentors who could become caught between their more traditional role in which they essentially forged connections for teachers and controlled situations, and this suggested role as facilitator in which they permit new teachers to work through any conflict among themselves and for themselves. One way to enable this is to model collegiality and experimentation.

Modeling Collegiality and Experimentation

In building a professional culture, mentors need to reinforce those beliefs and values that constitute the normative basis for action in a culture of interdependent collegiality (Grimmett & Crehan, 1992) through taking risks and making commitments. They could attempt to become a member of as many groups of new teachers as is feasible, taking part in the rigorous discussion of teaching and learning that accompanies the observation of classroom practice. Moreover, from time to time, they could bring up their own dilemmas of

practice; and their own practice (even their teaching) could be observed and critiqued in a challenging but supportive way. In short, mentors could set out to model norms of collegiality and experimentation in their work with new teacher inquiry groups. This then sets the tone for focusing teacher talk on action.

Focusing Teacher Talk on Action

A further way for leaders to build a culture of inquiry is to ensure that the focus of the teachers' talk is on the action of their classroom practice as it affects student learning. This focus facilitates a process that builds shared meaning through action and reflection and ensures that student work, rather than inquiry *per se*, becomes the agenda for new teachers' work. In the initial stages of inquiry, many new teachers are tempted to begin with questions that revolve around observing other practitioners, other classrooms or aspects of teaching and learning not connected to their own practice. Here, the task facing mentors is to ensure that the inquiry starts from teachers' own experiences and from their own frames of reference in the action of their practice. The closer teachers' questions and deliberations are to the action of their classroom, the more compelling their inquiry.

Enabling Teachers To Frame their Inquiry

When new teachers have a question to pursue, the mentor's responsibility is to ask questions, provide resources or suggest alternatives for designing the inquiry project. Teacher commitment to the project increases when they make their own decisions, not only in relation to the question, but also in relation to the inquiry process. New teachers and mentors need to discuss possibilities for data sources as well as ways to record the data that would essentially address participants' inquiry questions. They can analyze data together by looking for patterns and categories, and refining the questions as new data are gathered. Frequently, the analysis of new data will reshape the original question or raise new questions. Mentors can also bring in professional literature as a resource with which to discuss the inquiry questions and to stimulate conversations that respond to issues raised in previous sessions. In the consulting/work sessions new teachers could be encouraged to bring in articles they have found interesting or controversial. In this way, teachers and mentors alike could begin to discover that inquiry activities are acts of listening and dialogue, a much more reciprocal way of relating than previous, more traditional professional induction experiences that were deep-rooted in the "telling" stance.

Connecting Action with Student Learning

A further task for the mentor is to make explicit connections between classroom actions and student learning as new teachers engage in a process of identifying issues, dilemmas or questions. This process frequently entails focusing, re-directing, or provoking conversations that connect the action of teachers' inquiry with student learning. Mentors need to ask constantly: "Is what we are doing in our practice making a difference to student learning? If it is not, why are we doing it? How do we change the action in our practice so that it is? If this is making a difference, how do we reshape it to continue to improve it? Mentors also need to support teachers as they work with learners to construct knowledge through the process of inquiry, in ongoing examinations of the issues raised by the teachers themselves. This process would enable inductees to accumulate, evaluate, and disseminate knowledge about teaching and learning. Collegially, mentors and teachers need to examine core ideas, principles and practices. They need to make sense of competing theoretical claims and conflicting evidence to develop practical applications to address the new teachers' questions of inquiry.

Exposing Teachers to Alternative Views and Practices

In order to facilitate experimental action in classrooms, mentors can provide teachers with frameworks that sensitize them to examining critically the daily dilemmas of teaching, to reflect on the taken-for-granted societal and personal assumptions that pervade their action, and to reframe problems of practice from the perspective of the learner. Beginning teachers, like all practitioners, are prone to overlook the basic premises that underwrite their classroom action. Sometimes these premises are really humanly constructed distortions which teachers have uncritically accepted as valid. At other times, such premises constitute outright biases about teaching and learning that have little justification. Because change in practice is so dependent upon change in beliefs and values, it becomes necessary to help new teachers examine collaboratively those beliefs and values that they take for granted.

Like all practitioners, beginning teachers do not change their instructional practices nor do they enthusiastically begin collaborating with one another to create a fresh vision for such change without first being challenged to think differently about the daily dilemmas of practice that they face. Mentors can provide such challenge by exposing them to alternative ways of viewing practice. The purpose of this is to prevent what Hunt (1987) has termed "a hardening of the categories", that is, teachers becoming entrenched in a narrow and shallow way of looking at their world and their work. Exposing new teachers to alternative forms of practice is one way in which mentors can challenge them supportively. These different forms of practice may or may not

be part of a mentor's repertoire (in the sense that he or she may or may not always be able to demonstrate them) but different approaches to instructional dilemmas are usually a vital component of a mentor's acquired knowledge. Consequently, mentors can orient new teachers to different practices (sometimes evident in other teachers) with which they can experiment in classrooms.

Providing Organizational Support for Beginning Teacher Inquiry

Providing organizational support for new teachers to be inducted through inquiry would involve mentors in acting as an advocate at the school, district and state level for the allocation of appropriate resources, both fiscal and human, to restructuring schools around inquiry. This advocacy could also include a focus on improving policy so that it supports and not counteracts the practices associated with such development. Mentors could also set about initiating new teacher inquiry networks. Initiating inquiry networks generates both local "inside" knowledge developed and used by teachers and their immediate communities, and public "outside" knowledge which can be shared with schools and the larger community. Mentors can facilitate the creation of these networks by linking new teachers and their work to larger networks of school reform. As district, state, and national networks develop, new teachers begin both to share information and build knowledge that enlarges their vision of teaching and learning. Moreover, as networks evolve, the concept of teaching as research (Duckworth, 1986) becomes recognized as a viable way to add to the knowledge base in teaching and learning (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1993). Teachers typically appreciate and value the network connections that mentors create. These networks are important because the outside ideas of others are being worked through the inside knowledge of the various beginning teacher inquiry groups. It is also important for mentors to build networks between the various teacher inquiry groups and the State Departments of Education whose policies support educational restructuring and school reform.

Supporting the continuous investigation of classroom practices, the systematic exploration of central issues in student learning, and the reporting of inquiry findings to a wider community, is one way in which mentors can attempt to bring about social/political, pedagogical and personal change in beginning teachers. By publicizing their work, mentors can establish the conditions under which new teachers can become change agents in education reform.

Final Word

The inquiry groups used in this study provided learning community settings that enabled the pre-service teachers to embrace diversity among themselves as well as among the student population. They began to acknowledge and integrate the tension between individual and group, and eventually possessed effective strategies of conflict resolution that enabled individual preferences and needs to coexist within the context of shared beliefs, goals, and values. This context also enabled the individual pre-service teachers to examine the problems they faced and enlist the advice and perspectives of colleagues. Professional development occurs at all levels of a teacher inquiry group when individuals challenge one another, evaluate their own thinking, and construct practice and principles together. In so doing, the teacher inquiry groups developed strategies for critical review and reflection. They attempted to recognize that shared beliefs can sometimes be shared delusions and opened themselves up to and, indeed, welcomed scrutiny and feedback from their colleagues on a regular basis. Consequently, the teacher inquiry groups exhibited high levels of trust and teamwork. They made the settings a safe place in which to examine practice, to try out new ideas, and to admit disappointment. They provided a setting of collective endeavor and reliable alliance, rather than isolated, individual effort; they created and fostered interdependence. Ultimately, they achieved the difficult combination of low anxiety and high standards essential to learning (McLaughlin, 1994). Finally, they attended actively to the on-going renewal of their own work community. The pre-service participants would not tolerate passive allegiance but exhorted one another to see themselves as having a positive, on-going responsibility to nurture and reconstruct their community. An important part of this reconstruction was affirmation (McLaughlin, 1994). And they validated their community continually through ceremonies, symbols, and celebrations. Each time they met, they found ways of rewarding themselves and strengthening bonds, whether through lunch time conviviality before the sessions or through comments and ceremonies that recognized innovative risks taken to enhance student achievement.

Mentoring thus consists of building a culture of inquiry, exposing beginning teachers to alternative views and practices, and providing organizational support for teacher inquiry groups. This conceptualization of mentoring suggests that *it is not a role* involving hierarchical position with its accompanying agendas of power and control *but a series of interrelated tasks* designed to transform the experience into one that sustains a rich conversation about pedagogical possibilities by engaging beginning teachers in classroom action research and observation. The primary task of mentoring is thus pedagogical, working with teachers to help diverse learners in a rapidly changing social context by

collaboratively addressing the vexing questions and perplexing dilemmas inherent in daily practice.

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Teacher Induction in Germany: Traditions and Perspectives

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Abstract

In the first part of the paper, the current system of teacher education in Germany is outlined. The strong connection between the different levels and tracks of the German school system and the different types of teacher is stressed. Then the deficits of the German teacher education and the critical arguments against it are presented. One consequence of this criticism is the integration of teacher education in the “Bologna Process” aimed at an integration of the traditional (concurrent) teacher education into the (consecutive) Bachelor-Master-system. In the second part of the paper some results of empirical research on the induction process of teachers are sketched out. They show that – on the one hand – the whole endeavour of teacher education is driven by strong ambitions and hopes. On the other hand it must be admitted that the empirical support for these ambitions is weak or inexistent. Finally the author poses some fundamental questions concerning implicit assumptions of ‘productivity’ of teacher education for teacher expertise – and of teacher expertise for student learning.

Teacher Induction in Germany: Traditions and Perspectives

1. The System of Teacher Education in Germany

The German School System

As in all countries, the system of (initial) teacher education in Germany is linked to the structure of the school system. This can roughly be outlined in the following way (Terhart 2006a):

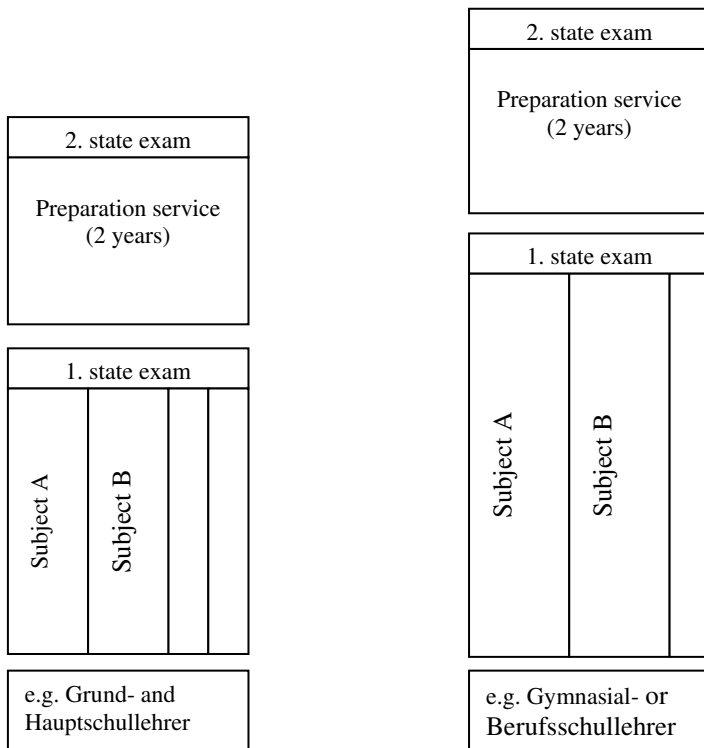
- Germany is a federal state; all responsibilities for education and schooling are with the 16 *Bundesländer*. So we have 16 systems – but these do resemble each other very much and are coordinated by the Standing Conference of School Ministries (*Kultusministerkonferenz*).
- Educational institutions and services for children from 1-6 are *not* regarded as part of the school system. The personnel in these institutions is not trained at tertiary level, but at upper secondary level; the body responsible for its administration and governance is not the ministry of schools, but the ministry of family or the ministry of social affairs.
- At the age of 6 a child enters *Grundschule*. After four years, at the end of the *Grundschule* and at the age of 10, children are ‘tracked’ to three different school forms: *Hauptschule* (lowest track, 5 or 6 years), *Realschule* (middle track, 6 years) and *Gymnasium* (highest track, 13 or 12 years, *Abitur* as the qualification to go to *Universität* or *Fachhochschule*). Some *Länder* have integrated the Haupt- and Realschule, some *Länder* have built up *Gesamtschulen* (comprehensive schools). *Hauptschule* and *Realschule* end at the age of 15 or 16; with good results it is possible to shift over to the Gymnasium. Roughly spoken each of these three tracks has 1/3 of the student population (14 year old); the portion of the lowest track, the *Hauptschule*, is getting smaller and smaller. Those students not entering a Gymnasium at 16 attend *Berufsschule* (vocational school) and get a vocational training. A growing part of these vocational schools also has introduced pathways to the *Abitur*.
- There are special schools for children with handicaps and special needs (*Förderschulen*, *Sonderschulen*). About 4-5% of students attend these schools.

The traditional system of teacher education

According to the structure of this system Germany has six types of teachers: *Grundschullehrer*, *Hauptschullehrer*, *Realschullehrer*, *Gymnasiallehrer*, *Berufsschullehrer*, *Sonderschullehrer*. There are six respective types of teaching qualifications and six different programs for initial teacher education. This is the basic structure; some *Bundesländer* have established certain combinations of the different types of teachers and their training (Terhart 2003).

Another important element of the German system of teacher education is its division into two parts or phases (see Fig. 1): The first phase is the university training, leading to the 1st teacher examination. The 2nd phase is called *Vorbereitungsdienst* (preparation service), and is the more practical part in a special seminar and a training school. This preparation phase ends with the 2nd teacher examination. (Both teacher exams are performed according to rationales and administrations of the school ministry, *not* the university). After that a qualified teacher can apply for a free teaching position in the *Bundesland* he has been trained in, but also in all other *Bundesländer*.

Fig. 1: The traditional system of teacher education in Germany



- *University phase:* There are no specific admission selection procedures (beside the results of the *Abitur*) for those who want to enter teacher education. Only those who choose music, arts or physical education as one of their subjects have to pass an entrance exam. During teacher education at the university the future teacher has to study two (or three) subjects, the *Fachdidaktik* of these subjects (*Fachdidaktik* is related to the question of

teaching maths, science, history etc.; it is close to the concept of pedagogical content knowledge), *Bildungswissenschaften* (education and socialization, teaching and learning etc.), and some practical teaching experience (*Praktika*). 70 to 90 % of the whole study time is devoted to the study of the subjects – the rest is devoted to *Bildungswissenschaften* and *Praktika*. The 1st teacher examination consists of a thesis (60-100 pages), 5 written examinations (*Klausuren*) and 3 oral examinations). The average time spent at the university in teacher education is roughly 4-6 years. All students who have passed the 1st phase successfully have the right to enter the 2nd phase. Both phases *together* define a complete initial teacher education. Of course, the German universities are changing in the Bologna process. In this process, teacher education also is being transformed in accordance with the Bachelor-Master-system (see below).

- *Vorbereitungsdienst*: This 2nd phase lasts two years, and during these two years the students get paid (about 1,000 EUR). Training staff in the *Studienseminar* and advisors in the school (*Mentoren*) introduce the young teachers to their professional duties and competencies. The novices are constantly evaluated and counselled by their trainers and by peers. For a certain part of their time these teachers-in training already work as fully-trained-teachers. In the *Bundesland* Northrhine-Westfalia, four of them in a school substitute one full teacher position! This 2nd Phase, the *Vorbereitungsdienst*, can be viewed as the central induction phase of teacher education in Germany. After having passed the 2nd teacher examination successfully, the ‘new’ teacher is assigned to a free teaching position by school administration (individual schools have no say in this process; traditional procedure) or can apply for a free teaching position, and the school chooses the best candidate (new procedure; for an empirical evaluation see Schaefer/Terhart 2006). In general, teachers in Germany are civil servants (*Beamte*) and get tenure three years after entering service.

Related to the two main models of teacher education in Europe (concurrent and consecutive; see Buchberger et al. 2000; for teacher education in Europe in general see Moon et al. 2003; EURIDICE 2002; Grassner 2002), *up to now* teacher education in Germany has been concurrent during the 1st phase, that is: *all* elements (subjects and pedagogy etc.) are studied from the beginning. But if we look at the whole process of initial teacher education (1st and 2nd phase) we have a somehow consecutive structure, that is: the 1st, university phase is theory- and knowledge-oriented, whereas the 2nd phase is practice- and skills-oriented. Both phases together have to be regarded as initial teacher education. The German system of teacher education absolutely stresses initial teacher

education and the importance of several examinations during and at the end of initial teacher education administered by ‘the state’ (i.e. school administration). Once a teacher has reached a position in school there will be only very few efforts towards in-service-teacher training or supported teacher development. This is one of the central pitfalls of the German teacher education system (OECD 2004a).

This outline gives an impression of the traditional standard procedure of teacher education in Germany. But you have to consider an important point: Germany is a federal state, and schooling and teacher education lie in the hands of our 16 *Länder*. Of course each of our *Länder* follow the basic architecture of teacher education just outlined, but nevertheless all of these 16 have established some *Länder*-specific features. In general all *Länder* do accept the teacher certificates of the others, but sometimes and in certain cases problems show up if a teacher moves from one to another.

So one can say that the system of teacher education in Germany is highly developed and highly expensive: To enter teacher education you have to have the highest school certificate (*Abitur*); during the first phase all teachers are educated at university for *in fact* 4-5 years; then they enter an additional practical preparation phase (2 years); they have to pass two state examinations, and after a short time of being a teacher they get tenure. Compared to other countries, German teachers get high monthly salaries, paid also during holidays - and (up to now) 13 times a year.

But this is just the bright side. The German teacher education system is also affected by serious problems (Terhart 2004, 2006b).

- When our fully trained teachers take up a teaching post, they are much too old: in 1998, the average age of teachers entering service was 31,8 years.
- The first university phase is not very closely directed and oriented towards the needs of the later teaching position.
- The contents of the first and second phase are not really aligned to one another; there is little chance for cumulative learning.
- The system of pre-service teacher education is very ambitious and expensive both as far as time and money are concerned; the system of in-service teacher education (“3rd phase”) is only very poorly developed.
- The length (amount) and proportion of educational and didactical studies differ very considerably among the *Länder*: In the southern parts of Germany a teacher student who wants to become a *Gymnasiallehrer* has to devote just 5% of his total workload to this element of his teacher education

at the university; in the western and northern *Länder* he has to devote around 25% to educational studies.

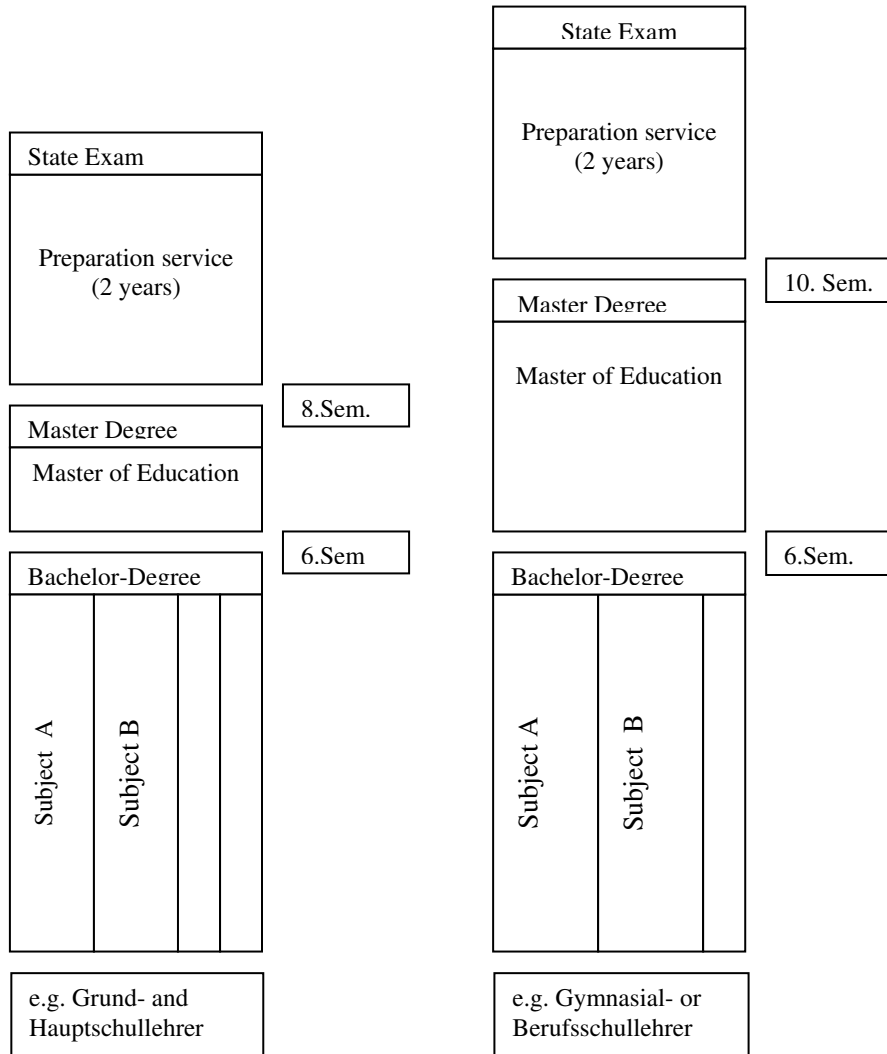
- Some German universities are very large. The University of Cologne has about 50,000 students; 11,000 of them want to become teachers. How is it possible to organize an efficient/sensible initial teacher education for 12,000 in one institution?
- The system of the different teaching licences is strongly connected to the different school types; there is no flexibility which would allow a teacher to change to another type of school and no flexibility which would allow the administration to place a teacher in another type of school.

In 2004 the *Kultusministerkonferenz* has defined standards for teacher education. These Standards result from a comprehensive picture of the central duties and necessary competencies of teachers. They are defined as a hierarchy of competencies at two steps of the teacher education: the end of the 1st (university) phase and the end of the 2nd (preparatory & induction) phase. By defining standards, the necessary competencies and abilities are presented in a differentiated and controllable way (Terhart 2005).

The Reform of Teacher Education and the Bologna Process

Since 2002 some German *Länder* started to reorganize the traditional system of teacher education according to the system of Bachelor and Master (“Bologna Process”; see Mitter 2004). Although there are different models being developed, it is possible to outline the basic principles of teacher education according to “Bologna” (see Fig. 2).

Fig.2: Teacher Education in the Bachelor-Master-System



Entering university, the students are enrolled in three-year Bachelor-programs. These include one or two subjects and some general studies and lead to a Bachelor-degree. The Bachelor is *not* directed to the teaching profession – it consists of more general, ‘polyvalent’ studies to reach “employability”. It is expected (planned) that most of these Bachelors leave university and enter work life. Bachelors can apply for a Master program leading to a teacher qualification; they can also apply for other Master programs (one or two years).

This ‘Master of Education’ will take over the function of the former 1st state examination. With the Master of Education, the 1st phase of teacher education is finished, and students change over to the 2nd phase, the *Vorbereitungsdienst*. All *Länder* agree that *all* teachers must have a Master degree when entering the *Vorbereitungsdienst* – up to now. But there is a strong political will to organize the education of *Grundschullehrer* (primary teachers) and perhaps also the education of *Hauptschul-* and *Realschullehrer* (teachers for the lowest and middle track of secondary schools) in a way that a four-year-program leading to a Bachelor-degree is sufficient...

Practical Experiences in Initial Teacher Education

During the 1st phase of teacher education – be it the traditional (concurrent) system or the (consecutive) Bachelor Master System - there are only very few elements of field-based experiences for teacher students. Often there are two *Praktika*: the first (4 weeks) is a more general *Praktikum* in schools to get introduced to the teachers’ workplace. All aspects of working as a teacher, of being a teacher are of importance (with contacts to students, colleagues, principals, parents, first attempts at teaching, organisation of extracurricular activities etc.). This *Praktikum* is prepared by a special seminar at the university. The teacher student has to write a report, and this report is evaluated. The second *Praktikum* (8 weeks) is completely devoted to teaching in the two (or three) subjects. It is also prepared by a university seminar, organized by professors and docents in the subjects and the *Fachdidaktik*. Again a report has to be written, and again this report is evaluated. The performance results of the *Praktika* are not integrated in the final examination result.

The 2nd phase is regarded as the *preparation* of the young teacher for the practical teacher’s work. In fact it is some kind of induction process to professional practice, but the aspect of *preparation* is of more importance than the aspect of *induction*. According to the logic of the German teacher education system, an induction process has to follow the preparation: First you are prepared for, and then you are ‘induced’ into professional practice. So some few *Länder* (e.g. Hamburg) organize a *Berufseingangsphase* (phase of entering the profession) after a young teacher has gained a position at a school.

2. Research on Teacher Education and Professional Development

Although there is an intense discussion about the quality of teacher education in different respects, this discussion and also the reform options and innovations based on it suffer from a lack of robust empirically proven information about the situation concerning the processes and the effects of teacher education. The whole endeavour of teacher education and even the critical discussion about its effects etc. is based on a certain hidden assumption of a long-ranging chain of – maybe causal, maybe correlational - effects: Better teacher education -> better teachers & teacher behaviour -> better student learning and experiences. It is obvious that in educational contexts all stakeholders have to *trust* in the effects of education, and especially of effects of the education of educators. But what do we *really know* about the stability of the mentioned chain? Do we have robust empirical evidence – or do we just have practical experiences, some intuitions and in the end: hopes? I would like to point out some research evidence from German research on teacher education (see Terhart 2001; Allemann-Ghionda/Terhart 2006):

- *Entering Teacher Education*: In general the performance indicators of those students entering teacher education are – in average – lower than students in other academic fields (medicine, psychology, computer science). In former decades, this was especially the case with those students entering teacher education leading to a teaching position in primary school, but nowadays this difference is no longer existent. – There is clear evidence that teacher students are mostly characterized by a problematic pattern of dealing with job challenges and job stress. In other study courses the portion of these ‘problematic’ students is much smaller.
- *Experiences at the University*: Students in teacher education believe that they are viewed by their professors and lecturers as somehow mediocre; not the ‘genuine’ students of the discipline. When asked retrospectively, experienced teachers estimate the studies in their subjects (math, geography etc.) much higher in their academic dignity and in their worth for their practical work as teachers than the courses in education, psychology and sociology etc. The *Praktika* are estimated very much – as some kind of test of the person standing in front of students. When looking back to their university studies, the teacher education program is judged as some kind of badly organized patchwork learning without structure and centre, and with low academic levels in the educational parts. But these are post-hoc judgements and self-estimations. What they *really* have learned in general,

and what they have learned for their work as teachers has so far not been measured by objective tests or competence scales.

- *Preparatory Service (Referendariat)*: During the second phase, placed between university and full service as a teacher, the former teacher students/future teachers suffer – and develop! Experienced teachers estimate the preparatory function of this phase much higher in comparison to the university teacher education. The two years of *Vorbereitungsdienst* are very strenuous because beginners feel insecure in their new position: In their training school they have to act as teachers; in the training seminar they are still learners. This insecurity is felt during the work in classrooms and in staffrooms, but is also felt in relation to the trainers. The trainers integrate and advise the beginning teachers in the work of a teacher, and they also evaluate the development of the professional performance of the beginners. The standards of evaluation are not always clear, overt and stable. Very often they result from the idiosyncrasy of trainers/evaluators. At the end of this phase the future teachers think that they have gained competences in teaching, competences concerning their classroom. In many other aspects of a teacher's work (talking to parents, assessing learner achievement, cooperating with colleagues, dealing with multiculturalism etc.) they do not see so much growth of competence. As the individual examination result is important for their chances of getting a teaching position later on, there sometimes is strong competition between the beginning teachers.
- *First Years of Service*: After having gained a teaching position in a school, the real process of becoming a teacher starts. And in this process the beginners are left alone! As a response to stress and insecurity, they often adapt to the level of professional practice and competence they observe and experience when looking at their colleagues. This adaptive process has often been criticized by researchers. On the other hand it has to be accepted that this process of adapting to classroom practice also includes some gains in professional competence, albeit in the beginning on an elementary, simple level of “surviving in the classroom”. After this level of competence has been reached it is possible to move to a new level etc. But this needs support, in-service-training based on models of continuous professional development, organized in collaborative action between teachers at different level of professional competence.
- *In-service teacher education*: The system of in-service teacher education is not developed very well in Germany (Abs 2004; Terhart 1999). In 2002 about 190 EUR were spent – on average – per teacher on in-service training.

It is estimated that about 30-40% of all teachers take part in these programs. In the *Bundesland* Northrhine-Westphalia, each teacher has spent 3.2 days in in-service training (average). Efforts are made to strengthen this continuous teacher education, and some *Länder* are planning to make it compulsory. In effect this would mean that a teacher loses his/her licence to teach if he/she has not taken part in in-service training. There is a strong tendency to combine in-service training with teacher cooperation and the development of teaching at the level of an individual school.

- *Support system:* It seems absolutely urgent to build a support system for teachers to prevent them from being overwhelmed by stress. According to empirical studies in the field of psychology of work more than 50% of all teachers show a somehow problematic pattern of dealing with job stress and run the risk of slowly gliding into a pathway to professional burn-out. This must not necessarily be the case; it can be prevented. But to prevent this, a support system has to be established. – All programs to support teachers through in-service training, collegial cooperation, individual coaching etc. are accompanied by costs, and in the end there must be a political and administrative will to invest the necessary resources into the right place.

Regarded in a realistic manner, there is no clear and robust research-based evidence to prove that better teacher education ‘produces’ better teachers. The problem is that teacher education consists of a lot of elements and takes a lot of time, so that it is not clear, which of these different elements is (more or less) responsible for the success or failure of the whole endeavour – whatsoever “success” means in this context, and whenever “success” can be estimated. Students entering teacher education already have a lot of experience with the school system, and there is clear evidence that those interested in becoming a teacher differ systematically from those striving for other academic professions. So there are clear indicators of a selective ‘intake’ of teacher education. The effects of initial teacher education are often washed out or fade away during the course of teacher induction and during the course of further professional development of teachers. Pre-service ‘theory (or: knowledge)’ is replaced by in-service ‘experience’. Own experience and personal knowledge in classrooms and staffrooms are – in the long run - more sustainable than the courses in formal initial teacher education.

The connection between teacher education and teacher expertise in the classroom is just the first insecurity. The second insecurity is the impact of teacher qualification or teacher expertise in ‘producing’ learning results on the side of the students. It is evident from experience and from empirical research,

that “teachers matter” (OECD 2004b) – but *how strong* is the effect of teacher competence in general and in certain fields of learning? And asked in a more differentiated way: Which elements of teacher competence are to what amount responsible for what kind of learning experiences and learning outcomes on the part of the students? Fundamental and intriguing questions like these are often neglected in the ongoing hustle of organizing, researching and doing teacher education. Nevertheless they have to be posed.

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Professional Induction of Teachers in Austria

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Abstract

An outline of the Austrian system of initial teacher education and induction is provided. No induction is foreseen for teachers of general subjects of compulsory education (around 60 % of the teaching force) due to a school practice component during their initial teacher education programme that is perceived as excellent (“one phase approach”). Teachers of general academic subjects (“gymnasium”) and teachers for the various branches of vocational education do have an induction based on their initial teacher education or another qualification.

Interviews with key persons concerned with induction have been performed. Possible “recommendations” are provided to make this phase in the career of a teacher a “professional induction”.

1 Outline of initial teacher education

Decisions as to the structure and organization of initial teacher education (ITE) in almost all aspects (e.g. institutions, duration of programs, course structure, exam regulations, certificates) are taken by the Parliament and Government (e.g. Ministry of Education, Ministry of Science). Institutes of Higher Education for Pedagogical Professions (Paedagogische Hochschulen = PH) have to follow national laws and decrees, which define the structure, aims, subjects or academic awards of ITE programs. Although the law guarantees (academic) freedom (of teaching) to universities, national laws and decrees by the Ministry of Science define the basic structures, aims and fields of study of ITE programs at the university. Thus all institutions of ITE in Austria are fairly similar in structure. Another characteristic of teacher education in Austria is that the structure and organization of ITE are geared towards the different types of schools and categories of teachers required there.

Institutes of Higher Education for Pedagogical Professions (PH) and Universities are the two providers of ITE. PH have their origin in former teacher seminars (“seminaristic tradition”). From 1967 to 2007 (non higher education based) College for Teacher Education (Paedagogische Akademie) had to educate teachers for compulsory education. Since 2007, the PH has followed a three-year program (180 ECTS) which ends with a Bachelor degree:

- A concurrent model of ITE, in which the four components of the programme (educational sciences, two “academic” studies, two subject didactics, teaching practice) have to be studied parallel.
- A one-phase approach which implies that graduates of PH have the status of fully-fledged teachers. A “probationary period” was abolished in 1962 – therefore: no induction.

Starting in 2007, vocational teachers have been trained at PH and several other university institutions. Vocational teachers receive a certain form of induction.

ITE for teachers of general subjects at lower and upper secondary level of the school system (grades 5-8 and 9-12; “gymnasium”, “Lehramt an Hoheren Schulen”) at University is rooted in an “academic tradition” or the Humboldtian principle of “Bildung durch Wissenschaft” (literally translated as “education through sciences”). It is focused on the study of “academic disciplines”. This model of ITE is divided into two parts:

- The first part is organized by the University (270 ECTS, Masters).
- The second part is organized by Local Education Authorities (one year). Courses are provided by the PH. The second part focuses on teaching practice and it only a positively assessed teaching practice leads to full teacher certification.

Unfortunately, kindergarten teachers are not subject to decrees of teacher education. They receive their education only at upper secondary level. Systematic induction is not visible (cf. F. Buchberger / H. Seel 1999).

2 The system of teacher induction

2.1 Teachers for compulsory general education (grade 1-9)

Teachers for primary schools / Volksschulen (grades 1-4), lower secondary schools / Hauptschulen (grades 5-8), poly-technical schools / Polytechnische Schulen) and special education (grades 1-9) receive their teacher education at

PH through separate courses. The courses comprise 180 ECTS and end with a Bachelor's degree.

ITE includes a rather high amount of teaching practice in special training schools and field practice (approx. 25 %). There is no further phase of induction offered after having finished the studies at PH. After their three-year ITE, graduates may apply for a teacher position. They are considered formally qualified to take on a full teacher's job. No distinctions between novice and experienced teachers are made with respect to teaching load or tasks. No formal phase of teacher induction is offered in order to support novice teachers in coping with the demands of their new job. However, there are a few schools which have developed special in-school induction programmes designed to familiarize new members of staff with special organisational and, in particular, educational features of the school.

2.2 Teachers for vocational education (grades 9/10-12/13)

ITE varies widely according to different subjects and school types. In some models, mentors are provided for supporting the novice teachers' induction. Recruitment, qualification and remuneration of mentors vary between the different teacher education programmes: For instance, there are mentors which support novice teachers in their first year in teacher training courses for compulsory vocational education. They are recruited by self-selection or by the headmaster of the respective training school and do not have any special qualification for their role.

2.2.1 Teachers for compulsory vocational education (*Berufsschule*; grade 10-12/13)

With respect to the qualification needed we may distinguish two types of teachers for compulsory vocational schools:

- Teachers of the first type have completed a vocational qualification and have acquired a school leaving certificate with university entrance qualification (Abitur) and two years of experience in the profession they want to teach.
- The second type is qualified as a master craftsman and needs three years of experience in the profession they want to teach.

All of them start their teaching career without any initial teacher education. Instead, they enrol in a three-year part time in-service teacher training when they start their job. During their first year (combining on-the-job training and

in-set teacher education), their teaching load is 23 lessons weekly, which is the same as the workload of experienced and qualified teachers. Additionally, they have to attend an in-service course once a week (about 8 lessons per week). In their second year, they can devote their full time to their studies at the former College of Vocational Teachers Education (still being paid as a teacher). In their third year, they return to their schools with a full teaching load and, at the same time, complete their part-time studies at the college of teacher education.

Regarding in-school induction, novice teachers in the first year are supported by a mentor. The specific kinds of support differ from school to school and from mentor to mentor. The work of mentors is not paid as a rule. However, a small award may be given, if the headmaster of the school applies for it.

Since teachers in compulsory vocational education start their career without any ITE, their induction period takes place alongside and within their ITE. Basically, they learn teaching on the job. In the case of being well supported by their colleagues (e.g. by planning documents and work sheets etc.), they might capitalize on the experience of other teachers. Some teachers in this field say that the first year was like jumping into cold water without knowing how to swim.

Beginning with October 2008, the training programme for these teachers will be changed. As a consequence of becoming part of the new PH, the number of lessons of obligatory training will dramatically increase.

2.2.2 Teachers of word-processing, ... (Berufsbildende Mittlere und Höhere Schule, grades 9-12/13)

Teachers of word-processing, nutrition and home economics, practical training and specialised theory at commercial and technical schools have been receiving their teaching diplomas at PH since September 2007. They are entitled to enrol after several years of prior work experience.

2.2.3 Teachers of business subjects (grades 9-13)

These teachers qualify for their profession by a nine semester university course (270 ECTS) which awards the academic Master's degree (Mag. rer. soc. oec.) Besides the theoretical study element, two practical training phases at schools are integral parts of these courses. During the first phase they have to teach 30 lessons, during the second one 150 lessons.

After receiving the Master's degree, these candidates have to acquire practical experiences by working in business for two years before they can be employed as a teacher. This replaces an induction period focused on teaching.

2.2.4 Teachers of technological subjects (grades 9-13)

After having gained a technical degree (at least on Master's level) from a university, these teachers have to complete a one-year part-time course during their first year of teaching at an in-service training college. They are awarded a teaching diploma and the degree "International Engineering Educator" (Ingenieurpaedagoge; Ing. Paed.).

2.2.5 Teachers of law, economics and specialised theory (grades 9-13)

After having completed a university education (at least on Master's level; 240 ECTS), these teachers enrol in a part-time course for newly recruited teachers (Neulehrerseminar) at an in-service training of PH during the first two years of their teaching.

2.2.6 Teachers of general subjects (grades 9-13)

Teachers of general subjects (e.g. mathematics, English, history, German etc.) in vocational schools are recruited from the pool of graduates of the respective university teacher education courses. These teachers have to enrol in a part-time course for newly recruited teachers (Neulehrerseminar) at an in-service training college during the first years of their teaching.

2.3 Teachers for lower and upper secondary schools / Allgemeinbildende Höhere Schulen; grades 5-8 and 9-12)

As mentioned above, ITE for teachers of general subjects at Höhere Schulen (grades 5-9 and 9-12) is carried out at Universities. It is constructed as a model consisting of studies in two subjects (such as mathematics, English, history), educational studies, and subject-specific pedagogy (*Fachdidaktik*). In addition to that students are required to take approximately 120 hours of practical studies in school. Finally education graduates obtain a Master's level diploma (270 ECTS; Lehramt an Höheren Schulen).

This Master's degree does not yet fully qualify the graduate for definite employment as a teacher. University graduates must take an additional year, the so called "Unterrichtspraktikum" as an induction period. Only after this

training, the graduate has reached the full status of a teacher. The induction period lasts about one year and is carried out at two places:

- At schools, where the novice teachers do a practical training and
- at PH, where they have to pass a theoretical exam.

The overall responsibility for this one year of induction rests with the Local Education Authorities in cooperation with PH, which is fully separate from University. The Local Education Authority administrates a list of mentors in different schools who are authorized to supervise novice teachers.

Having obtained the Master's degree, the trainee subscribes at PH and gets into contact with the Local Education Authority in order to ask for a school where s/he could do the practical training in his subjects. Finally, after having obtained the certificate of PH and the certificate of the school, the novice teacher can ask for employment as a fully certified teacher. At this moment in time, although certified for teaching, they will not usually get a job immediately (teacher surplus).

2.3.1 The theoretical part of the induction phase

The theoretical phase is organised by experts of PH (e.g. academic degree and school practice). It earns the applicants 12 ECTS.

The main tasks of the theoretical parts are to develop competences in preparing, giving and evaluating lessons, both sequences of single lessons as well as planning lessons for the whole year. The competences are completed by studies on education-related law issues and other teacher duties in schools, for example organising project work or excursions. To give more detail, the theoretical phase is split into several steps:

- Introduction: this period is held before the official beginning of the school year. It focuses mainly on organisation and group formation.
- General didactics: 32 lessons in class at PH and 32 lesson-supported learning and literature studies.
- Subject-specific pedagogy: 64 lessons in class and literature studies.
- Legal advice: 32 lessons.
- Application guidance.

Each course has its own grading system. There is no final assessment in order to pass the theoretical part. Having passed the courses, the trainee obtains a certificate.

The 64 lessons in specific didactics are mostly held by teachers of *Höhere Schulen*, who are known as specialists in their subjects and who are responsible for in-service training for teachers in a whole region (*Arbeitsgemeinschaftsleiter*). They do not get additional funding for giving lectures, because this is part of their duty as regional subject managers. Currently regional subject managers are granted a one lesson reduction out of the 20 lessons a week they are obliged to teach in their school. The responsibility of the ministry is to provide all the finances for the induction phase.

2.3.2 The practical part of the induction

The practical induction takes place in schools, where novice teachers have to lecture the subjects they are qualified for and where they are inducted by an experienced teacher who takes the role of a mentor. Mostly they can choose the school, but the choice depends on the teacher availability as in some subjects there is only a low amount of positions.

Novice teachers are obligated to teach one class in each of their subjects, with the restriction that it must be one class in grade 5-9 (lower secondary level) and one class in grade 9-12 (upper secondary level). For example, if the trainee is educated in philosophy and history, s/he will possibly teach history in grade 5-9 and philosophy in grade 9-12.

The teaching load of the trainee varies depending on the subject and the class s/he teaches as the amount of lessons per week in a subject depends on the curriculum. The working load of the novice teacher is not strictly regulated. For example, if s/he teaches English in grade 6 s/he will have to give four lessons a week. If s/he teaches in grade 10, s/he will only give three lessons. However, schools have been autonomous in making changes in the curriculum and therefore the hours per week in a subject can vary from school to school.

The head of the school decides in cooperation with the mentor in which classes the novice teacher can do the training. Novice teachers are not allowed to teach in grade 12 and they are not supposed to teach in grade 9, because in these grades there should only be qualified and experienced teachers.

2.3.3 The role of the novice teacher in the school

Novice teachers have the full responsibility of teaching. They do all the work which the regular teacher – now in the role of a mentor would do. They plan and run lessons, prepare teaching material, provide a supportive learning environment, take care that the pupils make good progress, develop tests,

prepare assessments, give feedback, talk to parents, argue, grade, write the final report and so on.

Novice teachers are paid for their work by the Ministry of Education. They are not offered a very high salary. Nevertheless, there is a regulation that they have to be paid for a year including the holidays.

2.3.4 The role of the headmaster/mistress

It is the headmaster's/mistress' accountability to provide classes and lessons for the induction period. S/he is responsible for organising the class and the schedule for the novice teacher. The mentor provides feedback on the lessons the novice teachers give. S/he has to make sure that the relationship between the novice teacher and the class as well as the relationship between the novice teacher and his mentor works. If there is any problem, the headmaster/mistress would interfere in strong cooperation with the teacher mentor. It is not laid down, however, how often s/he should see the novice teacher.

The headmaster/mistress also has to take the role of a mentor and supervise the young teacher, but s/he would not do this without the mentor. It is the headmaster's/mistress' task to supervise lessons of the young teachers, also to give feedback and to evaluate his/her achievement and to award certification. However in most cases the certification paper is written in cooperation with the mentor. Grading is based on the system of "high pass", "pass" and "fail".

2.3.5 The role of mentors

The responsibility of the mentor is to give help and information to the novice teacher. Mentors are not responsible for the grading of pupils, as this task is one of the novice teachers' duties. The only responsibility of the mentors is to supervise.

In order to do this job they have to take a course at PH with a working load of 6 ECTS. This extra training is paid by the Ministry of Education and the Local Education Board.

Part of the course is training in conflict management. Instead of a final exam participants have to produce a portfolio document presenting what they have learned throughout their studies. Additionally they have to carry out observed lessons, asking their colleagues for feedback. Then, having finished the course, a qualification certificate is awarded by the Local Board of Education. This certificate entitles one to be a mentor and to be put on the list of mentors at the Local Educational Board.

Mentors are offered funding by the Ministry for supervising novice teachers (Interview A). The amount corresponds to the payment they would get for substitute teaching. According to headmasters, the role of a mentor is generally “a very nice role, unless there is a serious problem, such as parents of pupils complaining about the lectures of the novice teacher” (Int. C). If there is any problem with the quality of teaching, the mentor will come to the headmaster and ask him to help solve the problem.

2.3.6 Problems in the induction phase

It results from interviews that there are no serious problems in the induction phase. In the large majority of cases novice teachers are “highly motivated, enthusiastic and positive” (Int. C). However, sometimes it seems to be difficult for them “to swap their role from student to teacher”. They might have problems communicating with young children and finding problem solving strategies (Int. B).

In terms of the mentor-trainee relationship, most of the interviewees have not experienced serious problems. But in case of difficulties, the headmaster and the Local Education Board can decide whether the practical training should be continued under the supervision of a different mentor. The training can also be stopped if Local Authority decides that the novice teacher is not qualified enough. Other problems could arise if mentors supervise too much and are too restrictive, “so that the novice teachers do not dare to try anything new “ (Int. C). On the other hand some mentors only give very little feedback.

PH and the Local Education Board are rather confident with the existing system of teacher induction. Throughout the interviews, a headmaster complained about the lack of information on the courses mentors have to take at PH. He also asked for continuous professional development of mentors.

3 Proposals for enhancing the quality of professional induction

The first years of teaching are seen as a critical period in the professional biography of teachers. It is the time when novice teachers have to cope with a broad range of new demands and to develop their professional identity - a time characterized both by a duality of “just surviving” and “discovery of new potentials” (M. Huberman 1991 quoted in K. Hoffmann et al. 2002, p. 7; B. Biddle et al. 1997, H. Vonk 1994). The term “practice shock” (Praxischock)

was coined in the 1970es to describe the situation of novice teachers confronted with the - sometimes overwhelming - complexities of practice. Obviously, many novice teachers do not feel well prepared for their work by teacher training (e.g. Germany). The difference between very little practical training in ITE (e.g. in Austria until 1990 sub-optimal) and the real situation of teaching and educating is still substantial.

In German-speaking countries “induction” was not appreciated as a critical period in a teacher’s biography for many years. However, more thorough reflection on this phase of a teacher’s career seems to be urgently necessary, since we know that expertise in teaching is only reached after several years of practice and reflection on it, and that, in particular, early experiences as a novice teacher are most crucial. D. Lortie (1975, quoted after M. Schratz 2002, p. 31) has demonstrated that young teachers are confronted with the same task complexity as experienced colleagues - unlike many other professions which grant their novices some period of gradual progression from easy and peripheral tasks to the more complex and central tasks of the profession (cf. J. Laver / E. Wenger 1991). According to recent studies (cf. K. Hoffmann et al 2002) the main problems of the induction phase are: classroom management, collaboration with parents, working with behaviour-creative children, (lack of) staff collaboration, and, last but not least, (too) high aspirations regarding teaching and differentiation that novice teachers demand from themselves.

Thus, new induction programmes are to be developed for supporting the work of novice teachers and, at the same time, for giving them opportunities to exchange and reflect their experiences in a stimulating collegial setting. The main features might be:

- Initial teacher education has to provide a sound, coherent and professional *school practice component* that is supported by a curriculum, different places of training and mentors (cf. F. Buchberger et al. 2000, F. Buchberger / I. Buchberger 2003). The school practice component should last a minimum of 30 ECTS (cf. for ECTS manual: J. Gonzalez / R. Wagenaar 2007).
- V. Weiss (2002) argues for bringing together *multi-age teams* that plan and reflect on their work. Young teachers bring new ideas and experienced teachers help to translate these ideas into action (L. Darling-Hammond 1994).
- *Reduction of the teaching load* and special support within the first years of practice: This would mirror the situation in other professions and give young teachers the opportunity to ask questions and discuss practical problems.

- Some years ago a “*Novice circle*” was devised at Laborschule Bielefeld. Once a week, school management and all new teachers meet for exchange of experiences and professional development.
- Another model *couples* an experienced teacher and a novice teacher. Together, they are responsible for one teacher’s position. Some of their lessons they do in team teaching, other lessons they do on their own. Together they plan and reflect on their work, discuss problems and invent further activities.
- Still another model is based on a close relationship of a novice and an experienced teacher who works as the novice’s coach and helps him or her to elaborate an *individual development plan* and to put it into practice. They start with asking questions such as “What competences did I acquire in my teacher training? What additional competences do I want to develop for teaching? etc.” Afterwards individual development plans are formulated and contracted as clear work packages. Data-based evaluation is also part of the concept (cf. M. Schratz 2002, p. 32).

“Forget all that you have learned at the teacher training college!” was one of the first hints we got when we started as young teachers. This statement might show that induction is not only a personal problem of novice teachers, but also an organisational problem of managing the interface of initial teacher education and the school. Both systems might follow different organizational logistics and hold sometimes contradictory concepts of good schools or learning processes.

Much communication between newcomers and experienced teachers, mutual appreciation of their respective knowledge and their learning needs, and some capacity to handle conflict situations is needed in induction phases in order to overcome the pre-conceptions partners bring with them, to focus on the specific potentials of the situations at hand and, thus, to make learning happen.

To sum up the argument: At the very beginning of their teaching career novice teachers are to be confronted with demands that they can handle. Their first practical experiences are to include both opportunities for sharing experiences and reflecting on them, and quick as well as uncomplicated support from colleagues when necessary.

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Professional Induction of Teachers in Japan

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Abstract

In Japan, teacher education has recently been recognized as one of the key elements in implementing educational reform. Policies have been aimed at renewing initial training programs and systematizing teacher education in general. It has been emphasized that teacher candidates need to acquire much knowledge and a lot of practical skills through the initial training program. Moreover, an initiative has been set up to refine the standards for issuing qualifications of professional competence.

The period of professional induction is the most crucial stage of a teaching career. At the very beginning of his /her career, each teacher experiences not only the excitement of a fresh start but also a ‘reality shock’. It is a critical time when young teachers face surviving or failing. Improving induction would mean not only building successfully on initial teacher training, but also ensuring successful continuous professional development through a whole teaching career.

1 Introduction

In many countries, attempts of reforming schools in order to make them more accountable and to raise academic standards have been continuing for over a decade. We can probably say that continuous educational reform is a global phenomenon. Japan, too, has been involved in reform attempts which have continued to bring major changes to the structure, organization, and content of the Japanese educational system. One of the symbolic reforms, for example, was the reduction of the school week in public schools from 6 days to 5 days a week in 2002, which was followed by a modification of curricular standards at all levels of schools.

In the context of Japanese education, it has always been considered that ‘the success of formal education depends on the recruitment and placement of well-qualified teachers’ (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2007). The Central Council for Education issued a report titled “Redesigning Compulsory Education for a New Era” in 2004. The compulsory education reform has been initiated on the basis of the recommendations in this

report. One of its intensive strategies, which is being carried out now, is enhancing the quality of teachers in order to gain the trust of the public.

In this article, I review the organization of teacher education in Japan, with a special focus on the induction stage. First I give an overview of the current education system in general, then I present the system of teacher education, including the mentoring system and qualification exam. In the final part, I provide some proposals for teacher education based on the Japanese experience.

2 Education system in Japan

2.1 Pre-school

Pre-school institutions offer education based on national standards of educational content to children from the age of 3 to school age. This is not provided free of charge, and it is different from day nursery which provides care for children of the same age groups.

2.2 Compulsory Education

All children between the ages of 6 and 15 are required by law either to attend the primary school (6 years length) and the lower secondary school (3 years length) or to attend the special needs school for the visually impaired, the hearing impaired, or the otherwise handicapped. This period of 9 years is formed as the compulsory education term.

The primary school is intended to provide children between the ages of 6 and 12 for 6 years with a primary general education in accordance with their mental and physical development.

The lower secondary school aims at providing children between the ages of 12 and 15 with a secondary general education in accordance with their mental and physical development, and builds on the general education given in the primary school.

2.3 Upper Secondary Education

The upper secondary school, a 3-year programme of post-compulsory education, provides children who have completed compulsory education with general and specialized upper secondary education. The courses in the upper secondary school include general educational courses and specialized education

courses, such as industrial, commercial, and others. Almost all graduates from the lower secondary school in Japan go to upper secondary school.

A new system of ‘a unified secondary school,’ where students can go straight from the lower secondary school to the upper one, was introduced in order to offer a variety of educational options for secondary education in 1998.

2.4 Higher Education

University provides 4-year programmes, and junior colleges 2-year programmes. The latter have been gradually declining.

In addition, a college of technology was established to provide 5-year coherent education to graduates from lower secondary schools. This is classified as an equivalent of higher education, but with specific purposes, since it offers mainly courses in engineering and merchant marine studies.

Figure 1 shows a diagram of the educational system in Japan.

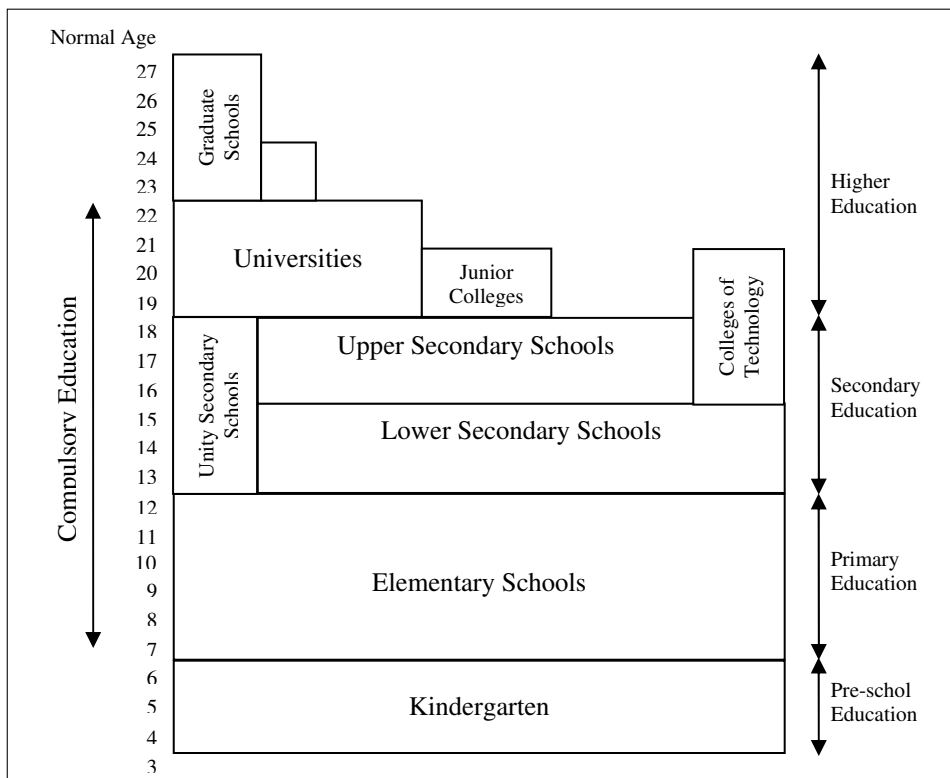


Figure 1: Educational system in Japan

3 System of teacher education

In order to become a teacher, it is necessary to obtain a teaching certificate for a particular type of school, such as pre-school, primary school, lower secondary school, or upper secondary school. Teachers at the special needs school are recommended to hold a teaching certificate for the special needs school.

Teaching certificates are issued to graduates of those higher education programmes which have a teacher training course accredited by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). Earning the required number of credits and graduating from a higher education programme are two fundamental requirements for a teacher qualification. In providing a teacher training course, universities are restricted to neither the Faculty of Education nor the national university. In other words, a teacher training course can be provided by any faculty or private university, if it fulfills the condition of offering the required curriculum.

The credit requirements of a teacher training course are set by legislation ('the Education Staff Certificate Law'). The law outlines the basic content requirements, classified by school type from the pre-school to the upper secondary school. Fulfilling these requirements, each university is allowed to structure an individual training program in detail.

Almost all primary school teachers in Japan are class teachers trained to teach all subjects. On the other hand, secondary school teachers teach one specific subject. Therefore, the structures of the training programs for each profile differ to some extent.

A training program generally has two main components: general/subject training and professional training. General/subject training is "devoted to general courses and mastery of the subject(s) that trainees will teach when qualified," while the professional training "corresponds to the theoretical and practical part of training devoted to teaching as such". Teaching practice "includes short and (usually) unremunerated in-class placements" at the school (Eurydice 2002, p.43).

Figure 2 shows the outline of credit requirements for teaching certification, set by legislation for each type of school.

		Pre-school	Primary school	Lower Secondary school	Upper secondary school
General/subject training unit		6	8	20	20
Professional training unit	Mission of teaching profession	2	2	2	2
	Fundamental theory	6	6	6	6
	Didactics	18	22	12	6
	Guidance theory	2	4	4	4
	Comprehensive seminar	2	2	2	2
	Teaching practice	5	5	5	3
Either subject or professional training unit		10	10	8	16

Figure 2: Credit requirements for teaching certification

During the initial teacher training, students are “encouraged to have a sense of mission, areas of strength, and the capability to deal with issues in actual situations” (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2002).

4 System of teacher induction

All newly employed novice teachers in Japan automatically enter a 1-year induction period. It is acknowledged as the starting point of teacher professional development. A novice teacher is generally expected to do the same work as the experienced teachers (classroom teacher or a subject teacher), although the burden should be reduced (less teaching hours, less administrative work etc.) The induction term is officially a conditional contract period. If the employer finds some undesirable and negative factors concerning a certain novice teacher, he or she can be dismissed through certain procedures.

The teacher induction program is carried out both inside and outside of school. The regional board of education, which is the authority appointing teachers, sets guidelines for the whole program based on the outline provided by the educational ministry. These guidelines define the content of teacher induction outside of school, while the school where the novice teacher works defines the content of the program inside school. The outside school program takes place

about two days a month, whereas the inside school program should be carried out under the guidance of a mentor teacher for roughly 10 hours a week. Altogether, the outside program takes 25 days per year, and the inside program 300 hours per year. In addition, a 3-4-day residential program has to be planned within the outside-of-school program.

The outside-school program is offered by the regional board of education and carried out at the teacher education center in each region. It provides a series of lessons concerning teaching ethics, class management, teaching methodology, and some urgent educational issues. Furthermore, it contains a variety of experiential programs such as social activities, volunteer work, and visits to schools of other types than the one where the individual works.

The inside school program is set up by the individual school where the novice teacher works. Each principal should draw up a year-round plan of teacher induction if the school has a newly employed teacher. In this way, the details of the program differ between schools. In general, it consists of class management and subject lessons, arranged by the mentor teacher. In dealing with the administrative and organizational work the novice is also supported by other members of staff whenever necessary.

The regional board of education provides plenty of teacher education programs not only for novice teachers but also for experienced teachers. The programs are mostly financed by the board, so professional development opportunities for teachers are free of charge.

5 Role of mentors

A mentor teacher is appointed by school authorities; a mentor at the primary school and the lower secondary school is appointed by the local board of education, whereas one at the upper secondary school is appointed by the regional board of education.

There are two types of appointments. One option is that the mentor teacher is posted at the same school where the novice teacher works. An advanced mentor, however, is responsible for several novice teachers not only in the same school but in the neighboring schools as well. The system has gradually been shifting to the latter and more and more mentors have been issued an advanced mentoring licence.

Before appointing a mentor teacher, the board consults with the principal of the school where the novice teacher works. The mentor teacher is chosen from the teachers within the same school, considering their individual professional career and competence. The advanced mentor teacher is also appointed by the regional board of education. Until now, there has been no specific mentor training program before and after taking this responsibility.

The main task of the mentor is to supervise the newly employed teacher, which involves coaching and consulting the novice according to a year-round supervision program authorized by the school principal. The mentor is expected to facilitate any aspect of teaching and administrative work that a novice is responsible for, and to occasionally provide exemplary classroom lessons. Moreover, the mentor should make sure that every communication between the novice and the principal or other members of staff are effective and systematic.

Mentoring is one of the jobs that can enhance the effectiveness of the school as a whole. Therefore, there is no reward system in place for mentoring at this point in Japan. The mentors, however, do have a reduced teaching load compared to those teachers who do not work as mentors. Advanced mentors even do not teach any regular classes at all, so they can entirely devote themselves to the supervision of the novice teachers inside school and the neighboring schools. With the help of mentors, all novices are expected to get a smooth career start.

6 Qualification exam

The procedures of final teacher qualifications are defined separately in each region. A regional board of education sets up a recruitment policy and determines what competences each teacher should have and which aspects should be stressed in that particular region. In accordance with this policy, the board conducts a final teacher qualifications exam once a year. It takes account of the applicant's ability, skills, and attitudes.

It should be noted that all staff in public schools, teachers as well as principals, are rotated within the same region. Therefore, they move from one school to another after a certain period. The whole plan of staff allocation is announced by the regional board of education once a year, at the end of school year. This system of rotation is based on the concept that school staff should serve not only an individual school, but also the region as a whole (Tanabe 2000, p.130).

Even if it is emphasized that teachers are expected to enhance their teaching skills continuously through daily work and individual learning, there is in Japan at present no qualification exam for teachers at later points in a teaching career. What is required by legislation is only that every teacher with 10 years of teaching experience should take a certain training program. This requirement was initiated in 2003. Types of this training program differ, and each teacher takes a program according to his /her ability as evidenced by past performance records.

In the future, however, there will be a new system implemented, which will require teachers to renew their teaching certification every 10 years. Teachers will be required to collect a certain amount of credits at a specified institution, mainly the university. If they fail to fulfil this requirement within a certain number of years, they will not be able to renew their teaching certification, which means they can not keep their teaching licence. At this moment it is not known yet when this system will come into effect, but there are calls for introducing it as soon as possible.

7 Proposals for successive and successful professional development

7.1 Enlarging 'the meeting point' of academics and practice in initial training

There has been a continuous argument about the effectiveness of initial teacher training in a university setting, but there are no easy solutions to the controversy between academics and practice. The advantage of the university is in constructing academic-based knowledge and skills. According to Martin, the university can provide “the most advanced subject-matter knowledge due to extensive training periods and research exposure in their discipline”, when the university conducts “research on applied educational problems, they can contribute to a meaningful integration of theory and practice”, and “through innovative teaching methods”, the university “can overcome the theory-practice divide” (Martin 1999, p.46-47).

On the other hand, there remains strong criticism of the state of initial teacher training program in higher education institutions. “University curricula tend to have a high degree of specialization and fragmentation”; “educational theory without direct linkage to practice is irrelevant for the professional development of teachers”; “university-based teacher training often does not impart the knowledge and skills necessary to start the teaching career” (Martin 1999, p.46-47).

The meeting point of theory in practice in initial teacher training, such as practical training, should receive much attention. The aim of practical training in the initial training program is that student teachers themselves link theory and practice, for example by bringing issues from practice to be discussed at their campus, but this has so far rarely been the case.

As Klus- Stańska claims, teachers may fall into a ‘blindness to problems’ due to taking a technologist approach (Klus-Stańska 2003, p.136). To overcome this tendency, it is necessary to enhance young teachers’ ability to recognize new perspectives and question the existing solutions. Practical training is a good meeting point of higher institutions and schools, and it could also further the development of educational research jointly between both the responsible agents (Tanabe 2007).

7.2 Enlarging ‘the meeting point’ of teachers as for professional development

Each school employs a number of teachers, all of whom usually hold a teaching license, a public credential. However, we could say that holding a teaching license is a necessary but not a sufficient condition. What this implies is that “the professional development of teachers is a lifelong *process* which begins with the initial preparation” and “continues until retirement”. In other words, “learning how to teach, and working to become an excellent teacher, is a long-term process that requires not only the development of very practical and complex skills under the guidance and supervision of experts, but also the acquisition of specific knowledge and the promotion of certain ethical values and attitudes” (Villegas-Reimers 2003, p.8).

Each teacher has responsibilities concerning a certain subject and certain learner groups, which implies certain limitations, but at the same time teachers should be independent in respecting these responsibilities and limitations. Preserving professional autonomy is very important. However, it sometimes leads to isolation, particularly when problematic issues arise. A lack of integration of two concepts: “I – teacher” and “teachers as a professional group” is widely present (Kwiatkowska 2003, p.285).

Being accustomed to ‘observation study’ or ‘lesson study’ at the school site is crucial to professional development. The process is quite simple: “if you want to improve education, get teachers together to study the processes of teaching and learning in classrooms, and then devise ways to improve them” by sharing “what they observed and provide their reflections and suggestions.” It is an effective way for “not only a means of improving the skills and knowledge of

teachers, but also a way to improve the knowledge base of the teaching profession” (Fernandez & Yoshida 2004, p.ix-x).

If these activities are fostered within the organizational culture of schools, teacher induction within the schools can become a part of their routines. Observation study should be developed as a key way to exchange and share professional knowledge and skills at the workplace.

8 Conclusions

Every teacher goes through a period of intensive experience at the beginning of their career. It is a time of a fresh start, but also a demanding time, as many novices are shocked by the gap between the theoretical view of teaching gained in the initial training and actual reality at the school. For novice teachers, this is surely a time of both survival and further discovery. The concept of enlarging the meeting point of theory and practice is crucial to successful continuous professional development from the initial training through the whole teaching career.

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The System of Teacher Induction in Slovenia

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Abstract

The induction period is an important phase of a teacher's career. How much it will contribute towards the teacher's professional development depends on several factors. One of the key factors is a systematization of the induction process, which is a framework and a basic condition for the quality of the work done by the headmaster, mentor and novice teacher. In the present article, the authors present the legislation regulating teacher induction and certification and Slovenia in the last decade, and the results of the extensive project Partnership of Faculties and Schools, carried out at the Faculty of Education of the University of Ljubljana with the financial support of the European Social Fund and the Slovenian Ministry of Education and Sport in the years 2004/05 and 2006/07. The article presents part of the results of this study on 'induction' (the induction period), with a focus on the reflections of the mentors, novice teachers and headmasters on the organization and content of the induction process.

1 Introduction

More than ever before, teachers in modern schools are expected to render quality service. Slovenian teachers and educators, too, face great change in their field. The teacher's role is becoming increasingly demanding, since s/he no longer just transfers knowledge, and the expectations of learners, parents and the public are changing and increasing. Qualified teaching is the basis of a teacher's professional competence, but, as Terhart (1997) emphasizes, long-term competent activity and professional development of a teacher require much more than just 'good teaching' for today. They also require social, ethical and other competences such as diagnostic competence, the ability to interact effectively with colleagues, parents and the headmaster, the ability to contribute to the development of the professional culture at the school, and the ability to observe oneself and reflect on oneself as a teacher. Teachers are expected to

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become professionals in the sense of new professionalism, which, according to Niemi and Kohonen (1995), has the following key aspects:

- dedication to the encouragement of learners' personal growth and learning,
- professional autonomy, based on the teacher's competence and sense of responsibility,
- a dynamic understanding of learning and both teachers and learners,
- cooperation and interaction for the teacher's professional development in the interest of the immediate and broader community.

In Slovenian primary and high schools most teachers hold four-year university degrees. In primary school, which lasts nine years and is divided into three periods of three years, grade teachers teach in the first three grades. In the first grade, it is now common to have a tandem of two teachers (two grade teachers or a grade teacher and an elementary teacher). All elementary teachers have a three-year university degree. From grades 4 to 6, the number of teachers gradually increases, so that the pupils get used to several different teachers. Subject teachers teach in the upper three grades of primary school and in high schools. The education of primary and high school teachers is equal in duration. Moreover, the study program is the same. The education of grade teachers is carried out at three Faculties of Education. The education of subject teachers is carried out at the three Faculties of Education and also at other higher education institutions such as Faculties of Arts and the Biotechnical Faculty. At some of these faculties students get the necessary teacher training as part of their undergraduate studies. Those students who have not attended such programs have to take a special 375-hour teacher training program after graduating from their subject field. Educational professionals can also continuously pursue further education provided by a system of courses and seminars offered annually. They can also pursue various other activities to expand and upgrade their knowledge; by doing so they can gain promotion credits (for promotion to one of the three successive professional titles of *mentor*, *'advisor'* or *'counsellor.'* and pay rises.

The school year 2003/2004 denoted the beginning of the so called “Bologna process” which should incorporate Slovenia into a unified European higher education system by the year 2010. The document *Common European Principles* states that the teaching profession should require a diploma from a higher education institution. Teachers must have education in their subject area and adequate teacher training. The document also states that a teacher education program must be available at all three levels (Bachelor, Master, and Doctor). Furthermore, it is crucial to encourage teachers' willingness to research and demonstrate their own professional practice for the development of new

knowledge. The *Common European Principles* offer a starting point for a modernization of study programs for the field of education with their four key principles and three categories of competencies (Zgaga 2006). The principles are: (1) teaching as a highly qualified profession (2) teaching set in the context of lifelong learning, (3) mobile and reasoned teaching, and (4) partnership in education. The three categories of competencies are: (a) ability to work with others, (b) ability to work with knowledge, and (c) ability to work with and in society (ibid).

Modernization of study programs, however, depends on a paradigm shift “which is typical of the postmodern curriculum: the shift from the input aspect of a study program that is based on the contents and goals determined by the teacher to the output aspect – learner achievement expressed in terms of competencies gained by the learners through the program.” (Tancig and Devjak 2006, p. 9).

Slovenian teacher educators strive to support the teachers in meeting the demands of the new professionalism (Caldwell and Spinks 1998; Buchberger et al 2001; Marentič Požarnik 1990, 1996, 2000; Kalin 2001; Resman 2002) or the so called collegial professionalism (Hargreaves 2000). A more demanding role of the teacher namely implies more challenge and new tasks for teacher educators as well. One of such tasks is providing a quality transition of teacher trainees to independent professional activity. We agree with Assuncano Flores (2004, p. 297) that “The shift from student to teacher is always marked by the growing awareness of the new institutional role and by the complex interplay between different and sometimes conflicting perspectives, beliefs and practices”. How a teacher will develop at the very beginning of his/her professional career depends to a large extent on the organization of the induction process and the competence of his /her mentor.

In the rest of the article we will present the induction and professional certification of teachers in Slovenia as defined in the Regulations for Induction and Certification of Education Professionals (The Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 30/96) which were valid until 2006, and the changes that were introduced in March 2006.

Taking into consideration the comments of practitioners and educationalists that the position of educational workers in their initial career phase should be regulated, the Slovenian educational authorities, in 1996, passed the Regulations for Induction and Certification of Education Professionals (The Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 30/96). The Regulations introduced considerable changes into the process of induction and the professional certification exam. The most important changes compared to the previous Regulations are: anyone who fulfills the conditions for the post of an

educational worker in a school or kindergarten must be guaranteed an induction process in the duration of 10 months. A mentor is assigned to each novice who has to have had the professional title of 'mentor' 'advisor' or 'counsellor.' for at least three years. The induction process follows a program prepared by the mentor and approved by the headmaster. Each novice has specified rights and duties. Among the mentor's duties is the observation of the novice teacher's lessons. Five of the lessons taught by the novice teacher have to be observed by the headmaster as well. After the end of the induction period the mentor and the headmaster assess the novice's readiness for independent teaching (according to previous legislation, this was the task of a national committee). Other content of the Professional Certification Exam is assessed by a national committee (knowledge of educational legislation and the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, human rights and the child's rights, and mastery of the Slovenian language).

An important novelty is also Article 2 (as the new form of induction has been nicknamed), which determines that a novice is attached to a mentor and does not teach independently but is gradually introduced to teaching. This is in accordance with the recommendations of educationalists (Marentič Požarnik 1990; Marentič Požarnik 1991; Intihar 1991). The first five years after the passing of the Regulations were considered a transitional period in which Article 46 allowed a mixed form of induction as well – the novice teacher was hired to teach independently and full-time, but with the help of a mentor. Unfortunately financial and workforce conditions made it impossible to carry out the induction of all Slovenian novice teachers according to Article 2. Both practitioners and educationalists drew attention to this already at the passing of the Regulations (Marentič Požarnik 1997; Bizjak 1997). In response, the authorities extended the possibility of induction according to Article 46 until March 1st 2007 (The Official Gazette 19/2002). To take the Certification Exam, it was enough to have taught for ten months and have a record of 5 assessed lessons (Article 19).

Using research data, the authors (Bizjak, 2000; Krištof 2003; Valenčič Zuljan et al 2005, Valenčič Zuljan and Vogrinc 2005, Valenčič Zuljan et al 2006) have been stressing that many novice teachers, particularly in secondary schools, have gone through the induction as described in Article 46 or taken the Certification Exam as provided by Paragraph 2 of Article 19 of the Regulations. In 2004/05 the institutions that were included in the research presented in this article had an average of 0,6 novice who was going through induction as per Article 2 of the Regulations (teaching together with a mentor), 1,03 novice going through induction as per Article 46 (teaching independently), and 1,1 novice on a regular teaching contract who has done enough teaching as

prescribed but has not yet taught the five assessment lessons obligatory before taking the Certification Exam (Article 19).

Since headmasters have often been forced to employ a candidate without appropriate qualifications (when no appropriately qualified candidate applied for a teaching post), novice teachers have often been helped by experienced colleagues, but have not been officially assigned a mentor whose work would be compensated financially and by means of promotion credits by the Ministry of Education and Sport.

The mentors and headmasters in charge of a novice teacher and responsible for guaranteeing that the novice is ready to teach independently have also pointed out that in Slovenia there is no approved list of competencies which would help a novice teacher, his/her mentor and the headmaster to determine whether the novice is developing in the right direction and to the required extent. The urgent need for valid standards of competence for the teaching profession has long been stressed by various educationalists (Erčulj and Roncelli Vaupot 1996; Marentič Požarnik 1997; Bizjak 1997; Bizjak 2000; Razdevšek-Pučko 2000). Often this lack has been solved by using lists of competencies prepared abroad.

The Ministry of Education and Sports changed the legislation concerning teacher induction and professional certification in 2006. Article 110 of the Organization and Financing of Education Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia No. 79/03) defines a novice teacher as any professional who first assumes a teaching post in a school or kindergarten corresponding to his /her professional qualifications with the goal of gaining the competence for independent professional activity. According to this law, induction can also be carried out on a voluntary basis. The number of induction posts is decreed by the Minister of Education. Details about the induction process and the certification exam are defined in the Regulations for Induction of Education Professionals and the Regulations for the Professional Certification Exam in Education (both: Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia No. 23/2006), which became valid on March 18th 2006.

Compared to the previous legislation, the new regulations have the disadvantage of allowing only some novice teachers to train gradually and with the help of a mentor – candidates have to apply and be admitted by the Ministry of Education and Sport. The law namely also allows headmasters to employ, under certain conditions, a novice teacher who is on a full-time contract and only gets assigned a mentor for two months.

The Regulations for the Professional Certification Exam in Education (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia No. 23/2006) has also brought some changes. In addition to the content specified in the previous Regulations,

candidates now have to demonstrate knowledge of the institutions of the European Union and its legal system. Candidates with 2, 3- and 4-year university degrees and other professionals can apply for the Certification Exam after at least 6 months of teaching.

The changed legislation means an ideal career start for those teachers who are assigned to novice posts by the Ministry of Education and sport. (If more candidates apply than there are available posts, a selection process is carried out using pre-defined criteria). These novices are guaranteed a financial compensation of 70 % of a full-time teacher's salary. The novice is also entitled to other types of income as defined by the law and the collective contract such as salary additions for vacations, meals and transportation to and from work, coverage of job-related travel costs etc. Volunteer novice teachers, too, are assigned to their induction posts by the Ministry, but they do not get any financial compensation.

Neither regular nor voluntary novice teachers teach independently but are introduced to teaching gradually and with the help of their mentors. Under his /her guidance and the supervision of the headmaster, the novice has to carry out tasks through which s/he learns how educational activity and a school or kindergarten is planned, organized and executed. These tasks include:

- planning and carrying out thirty lessons or teaching sequences in the mentor's class
- substituting for the mentor as needed
- participation in field trips
- mentoring of students' research
- one-on-one work with students at least two hours weekly
- participation in planning and execution of student assessment.

However, the total duration of time spent on all these tasks should not exceed one half of the induction period since the novice teacher has to also pursue other activities to expand his/her knowledge of subject pedagogy, psychology and instructional science and other areas of professional knowledge, the knowledge of the Slovenian language and the relevant Slovenian and European legislation. The mentor and headmaster can adjust the novice's tasks in accordance with an individual's characteristics and needs. Of course, the induction includes the novice's meetings with the mentor and other professionals as per the individual induction plan, and also independent study, whereby it is the mentor's duty to provide the necessary literature.

Unfortunately, the situation is quite different for those novices who are not assigned to induction posts by the Ministry but are employed as beginner teachers on full time contracts. These novices mostly have a full teaching load

and only 2 months of mentoring financed by the Ministry. As a result, some schools (mainly vocational and country schools) which are understaffed and thus forced to employ novice teachers without full financial support of the Ministry have difficulty providing quality educational service. The novices and the 2-month mentors themselves (Krištof 2006) point at many problems they face. One of the mentors in our study for example said that she cannot leave the novice to her own devices for eight months (until Certification), so they solve the most urgent problems together as they go along to ensure quality service for the students.

2 Research questions and methodology

The present article answers the following **research questions**:

- (1) What is the role of the novices and mentors in shaping a plan of the induction process?
- (2) How do novices and mentors view the shared planning and analysis of instruction and their other activities?
- (3) How do novices, mentors and headmasters view the length of the induction?
- (4) How do novices, mentors and headmasters view the certification exam?

Research method

The empirical study is a combination of qualitative and quantitative pedagogical research. We have used a descriptive, causal, non-experimental method.

The sample

The study included novice teachers who were in their induction period in the school year 2004/05 or passed the certification exam in 2003/04 or 2002/03, the mentors and headmasters at primary schools, vocational and grammar schools, kindergartens and other educational institutions. The questionnaire was answered by 331 mentors, 361 novice teachers and 77 headmasters. The average age of the novice teachers was 21,05 years.

The sample of the headmasters consisted of 14 (22,6%) headmasters of kindergartens, 23 (37,1%) headmasters of primary schools, 8 (12,9%) headmasters of grammar schools, 6 (9,7%) headmasters of vocational schools, and 11 (17,7%) headmasters of other educational institutions (e. g. special education schools, adult education centers). The average length of job experience of the headmasters was 23,6 years, and the average time of working as headmaster 7,7 years.

Of the novice teachers surveyed, 158 (51,8%) was undergoing induction in the year in which the study was carried out, and 147 (48,2%) had already passed the certification exam. Of the latter, (43,4%) passed it in 2004, 24,5% in 2003, and 18,9% in 2002. 13,3% of the novices passed the exam before 2002. Most of the novice teachers surveyed (22,2%) were training to be grade teachers in primary schools, 21,0% as subject teachers in primary schools, 14,2% as grammar school teachers, 13,9% as vocational school teachers, and 10,5% as kindergarten teachers. 18,2% of the novices surveyed worked at other educational institutions.

Data gathering

The study presented in this article was a part of a broader project "Partnership of faculties and schools" carried out at the Pedagogical Faculty in Ljubljana. The gathering of data for the quantitative part of the study presented here took place in February 2005 by means of questionnaires for novice teachers, mentors and headmasters. The questionnaire, apart from asking for general personal information about the participants, contained five scales referring to:

- how well informed the novice teacher was about the induction process
- the tasks and competences of the mentor
- the necessity of the certification exam and its component parts
- the importance of certain competences for the quality of teaching
- the level of the novice teacher's competence in certain areas

In addition to the five scales mentioned, the questionnaire contained a scale for the headmasters about the tasks and competences of a headmaster, a scale about the needs for further education of headmasters toward specific tasks related to the induction process. The questionnaire for mentors contained two additional scales: one about the help the novice got from the mentor in developing individual competences, and one about the needs for further education of mentors toward specific tasks related to the induction process. The questionnaire for novice teachers additionally contained a scale about the tasks and competences of a headmaster and a scale about the tasks and competences of a mentor, again referring to the novice's experience in developing individual professional competences.

Data processing

The data gained through the survey was processed at the level of descriptive and inferential statistics. We have used the frequential distribution (f , $f\%$) of the attributive variables, the basic descriptive statistics of numerical variables (measures of central value, measures of dispersion), χ^2 -test of the independence

hypothesis, the Kullback $2\hat{I}$ test (where the condition of theoretical frequencies was not fulfilled and thus the Chi-square test was not possible). The data are shown in the form of tables and diagrams.

3 Results and interpretation

3.1 Formulating a plan of the induction period

The induction regulations require that the school (the headmaster) and the mentor prepare an individual induction plan together with the novice teacher. We wanted to find out what the role of the novices and their mentors is in planning the induction process.

Table 1: Responses of novices and mentors to the question: 'Who formulated the induction plan?'

		The mentor him/herself	Mentor and novice	Novice him/herself	The novice not familiarized with the program	Other	Total
novice	f	67	163	46	35	39	350
	f%	19,1	46,6	13,1	10,0	11,1	100,0
mentor	f	56	241	12	2	14	325
	f%	17,2	74,2	3,7	0,6	4,3	100,0
total	f	123	404	58	37	53	675
	f%	18,2	59,9	8,6	5,5	7,9	100,0

It is encouraging to see that in 59,9% of the cases the novice and the mentor planned the induction process together. Most novices (46,6%) and mentors (74,2%) said that they shared the planning of the induction and also adjusted it as needed. Shared planning and flexible adjustments of the original plan are much more appropriate than planning done by either the mentor or the novice him/herself. It is interesting, however, that the number of mentors who claimed shared planning is considerably larger than the number of novices who claimed the same (74,2% vs. 46,6%), while in all other categories the number of positive novice responses exceeds that of the mentor responses. A fifth of the novices (19,1%) said that the plan was formulated by the mentor him/herself and familiarized the novice with it (17,2% of the mentors answered the same), a tenth of the novices (13,1%) said that they wrote the plan themselves and showed it to the mentor (only 3,7% of the mentors said the same). As much as 10,0% of the novices answered that they were not familiarized with the

induction plan at all (only two mentors said the same), or, as one of the teachers wrote: »During my induction no one told me anything, no one helped me, no one familiarized me with anything or introduced me to anyone. I was completely on my own.«

The next question was about the extent to which the actual induction process was carried out according to the plan.

Table 2: Responses of novices and mentors about the extent to which the actual induction process was carried out according to the plan

		Completely	We revised the plan as we went along	Did not follow the plan	Other	Total
novice	f	121	182	24	18	345
	f%	35,1	52,8	7,0	5,2	100,0
mentor	f	84	230	3	3	320
	f%	26,3	71,9	0,9	0,9	100,0
Total	f	205	412	27	21	665
	f%	30,8	62,0	4,1	3,2	100,0

Here, too, the novice and mentor responses largely overlap (52,8% vs. 71,9%): the program is a blueprint for the induction process which is continuously adjusted and revised. The results in the table show that more novices than mentors (35,1% vs. 26,3%) estimate that the induction process went entirely as planned.

3.2 Novices' and mentors' views of the shared planning and analysis of teaching and other activities

Coping with the many challenges of the first year of teaching and the development of a teacher's professional identity is a demanding process involving making meaning, clarifying teacher beliefs and acquisition of skills. To encourage a teacher's professional growth the conceptions and actions / skills need to be connected in the process of reflection. Communicating about practical experiences enables a novice to interpret his/her own experience, get to know him/herself as a teacher and thus grow as a professional. The mentor and other teachers at the school play a key role in this process (Bullough & Stakes, 1994, cited in Stanulis et al, 2002). Kajs (2002) terms this the situational context of mentorship.

For the novices professional development the time spent in dialogue with the mentor, planning and analysing lessons and other educational activities, is crucial. That is why we asked both groups how often the mentor and the novice planned and analysed lessons and other aspects of teaching together. We also wanted to know if they consider the frequency of their meetings adequate, too frequent or too rare.

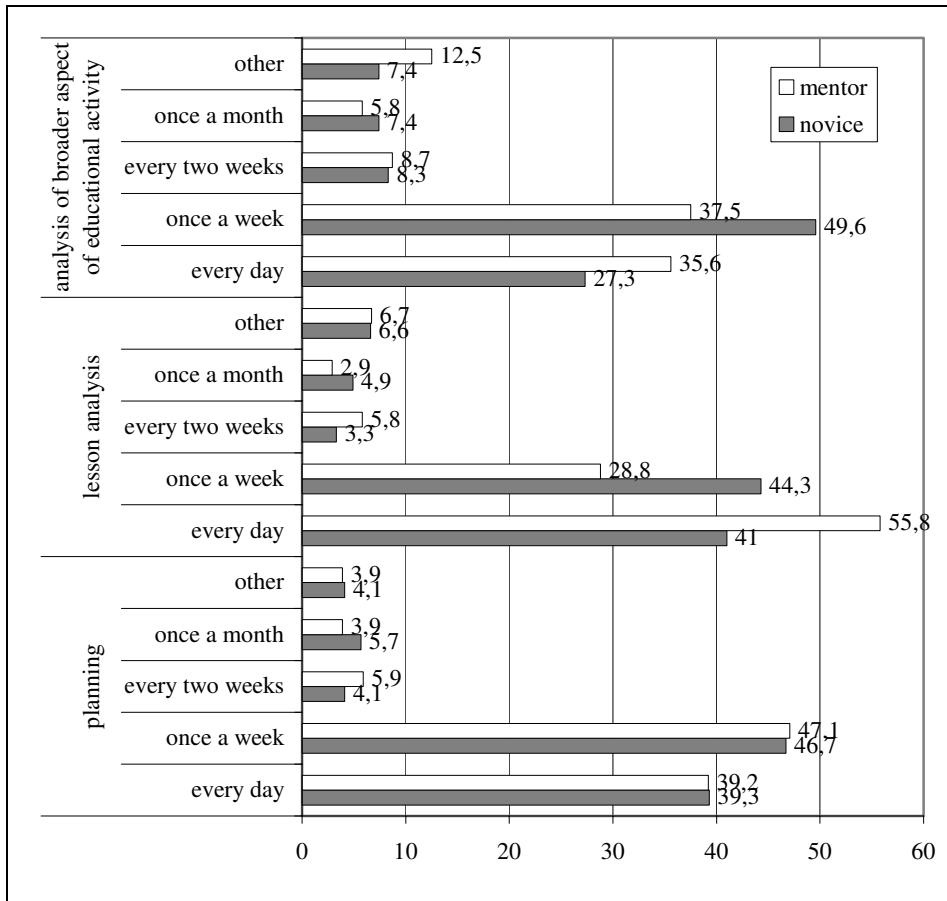


Figure 1: Responses of novices and mentors about how frequently they plan and analyze lessons and other activities together

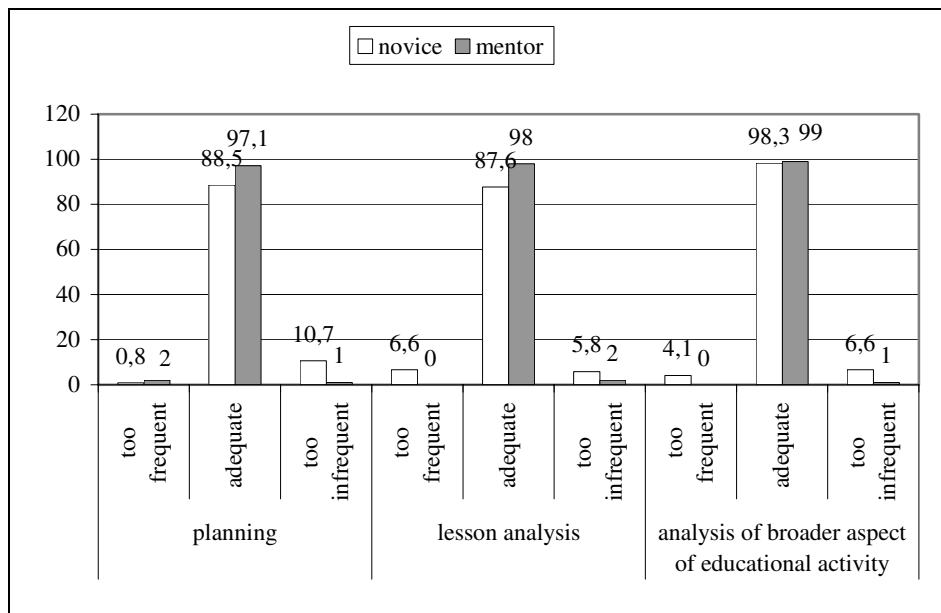


Figure 2: Mentors' and novices' assessment of whether the amount /frequency of their working meetings is adequate

As Figure 1 shows, most mentor-novice tandems planned lessons together once a week (response by 47,1% of the mentors and 46,7 % of the novices). Most of the novices (88,5%) and almost all mentors (97,1%) feel that this is enough (Fig. 2). 10,7% of the novices wish that they could plan activities together with the mentor more often than they did. It is commendable that over a third of the tandems plan lessons together every day.

The responses of the mentors and novices differ somewhat on the variable of shared lesson analysis. Most novices (44,3%) said that s/he and the mentor analysed lessons / other activities together once a week, while most mentors (55,8%) said they did that daily. Both groups felt that the frequency they stated was adequate.

Most mentors (37,5%) and novices (49,6%) also analyse the broader educational aspects of their work (development of personality and ethics in students) once a week and consider that adequate.

We can see that the responses of novices and mentors overlap the most when it comes to the question of shared lesson planning, which is most frequently done

once a week and quite frequently on a daily basis. The biggest discrepancies occur in responses to the question of analysing lessons, where the mentors mostly said every day, whereas the novices mostly said once a week.

3.3 Views of the mentors, novices and headmasters on the duration of the induction

The complexity and demands of the teaching profession require quality preparation with in-depth induction of adequate duration. One of our research questions was aimed at finding out whether the current duration of induction was deemed adequate by the headmasters and mentors. It has to be noted, however, that the research was carried out before the latest changes of legislation in the area of teacher induction, which means that the persons surveyed were referring to the period of 9 months.

		Just right	Too short	Too long	Total
mentor	f	264	28	16	308
	f%	85,7	9,1	5,2	100,0
headmaster	f	62	7	4	73
	f%	84,9	9,6	5,5	100,0
Total	f	326	35	20	381
	f%	85,6	9,2	5,2	100,0

Table 3: Differences between headmasters and mentors in their views of the duration of induction

The Chi-square test of the independence hypothesis ($\chi^2 = 0,029$, $g = 2$, $\alpha = 0,985$) shows that there were no significant differences between the mentors and headmasters in their views on the duration of the induction. Most of the headmasters (84,9%) and most of the mentors (85,7%) believe that the current duration is adequate. Only 9,1 % of the mentors and 9,6 % of the headmasters would like to lengthen the induction period. The percentage of mentors (5,2 %) and headmasters (5,5 %) who consider a ten-month induction too long is negligible. In inducing a novice teacher into the profession it is very important that the novice teacher has the opportunity to observe the educational process and the learners through an entire school year. Any shorter induction period would mean depriving a novice teacher of specific experiences typical of certain times of the school year (for example the finalizing of learners' grades at the end of the school year, the end-of-year excursions, the parent meetings at the beginning of the year etc.).

3.4 Views of the mentors, novices and headmasters on the need for the certification exam

Tabela 4: Differences between the mentors', novices' and headmasters' views on the need for the teacher certification exam

		The teacher certification exam is ...			Total
		absolutely needed	needed	not needed	
novice	f	71	228	46	345
	f %	20,6	66,1	13,3	100,0
mentor	f	75	224	21	320
	f %	23,4	70,0	6,6	100,0
headmaster	f	44	32	0	76
	f %	57,9	42,1	0,0	100,0
Total	f	190	484	67	741
	f %	25,6	65,3	9,0	100,0

Most respondents (65,3 %) feel that the certification exam is absolutely needed, a quarter feel that it is needed (25,6 %), and only 9 % feel that it is not needed.

The Chi-square value ($\chi^2 = 58,337$, $g = 4$, $\alpha = 0,000$) is statistically significant. At a less than 0,1 % risk we claim that the differences between the responses of the headmasters, mentors and novices are statistically significant.

The headmasters tend to feel that the exam is absolutely needed (57,9 %), with no single headmaster stating that it is redundant. Since the headmaster is responsible for the hiring and personnel policy of the school, a successfully passed certification exam probably provides important information in the process of deciding whether to employ a teacher candidate.

Mentors and novices mostly feel that the exam is needed. However, as many as 13,3 % of the novices and 6,6 % of the mentors feel that it is not needed. These respondents include novice teachers going through induction as per Article 19, who often hold the same opinion as the following teacher: *'In my case (I have taught for 9 years) I think I have gained enough knowledge and practical experience. This exam is just a necessary evil.'*

Here are some other qualitative responses concerning the certification exam:

- In working with children you mature as years wear on. Teachers need practical experience and a feeling for children. The exam is not a realistic reflection of one's competence.

- The exam is necessary for the teacher to gain knowledge in all the professional areas and become capable of leading a class, making independent decisions and steering relationships with the learners and their parents.
- The teacher becomes familiar with all the legislation concerning educational work... but for classroom teaching, one also needs other competences (working with people, empathy, teamwork...).
- The exam is necessary because the novice, in planning and carrying out the assessment lessons, faces situations for which s/he must always be prepared in this profession.
- You become more aware of the responsibilities this profession entails.

We also wanted to know if there were differences in how necessary the certification exam was considered as by the novices who had already passed it and those who were in the process of induction.

Table 5: Differences in views on the necessity of the certification exam between the novices who had already passed it and those who were in the process of induction

	Very necessary		Necessary		Not necessary		Total	
	f	f %	f	f %	f	f %	f	f %
Passed the exam	38	26,4	89	61,8	17	11,8	144	100,0
In the process of induction	26	17,0	104	68,0	23	15,0	153	100,0
Total	64	21,5	193	65,0	40	13,5	297	100,0

The Chi-square result ($\chi^2 = 4,047$, $g = 2$, $\alpha = 0,132$) is not significant. The novices who had passed the exam and those who were in the process of induction saw the necessity of the certification exam similarly, the differences were not significant. Most of those who had passed the exam (61,8 %), and most of those who were being induced in the year of the research (68,0 %) believed that the certification exam was necessary. The table shows that the number of novices who had already passed the exam and deem it necessary is slightly higher than the number of those who were in the process of induction and believed the same (26,4 % vs. 17,0 %). That the exam is not necessary was more frequently claimed by the novices in the induction process (15,0 % vs. 11,8 %).

We also wanted to find out how headmasters, mentors and novices assess the value of the individual components of the certification exam. The responses are presented in the following figure.

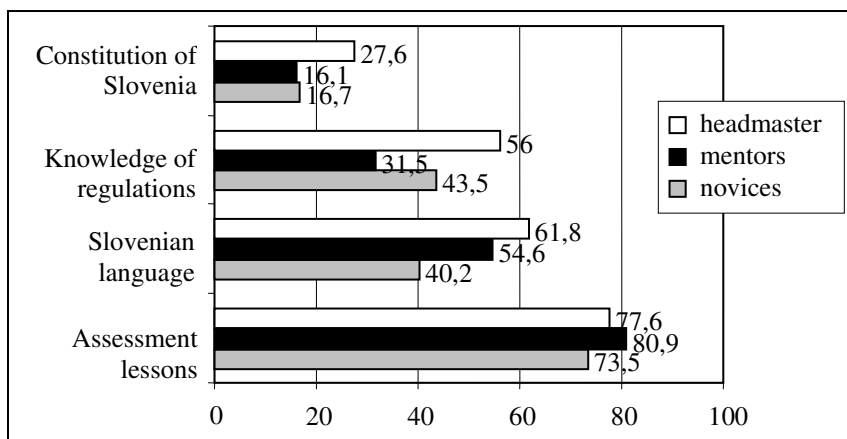


Figure 3: Views of headmasters, mentors and novices on the value of the individual components of the certification exam

The results show that educational professionals mostly support the practical part of the certification exam, which has received the highest number of assessments as »absolutely necessary«. Further 22,1 % of the novices, 21,1 % of the headmasters and 16,4 % of the mentors consider it necessary, and only 4,4 % of the novices, 2,8 % of the mentors and 1,3 % of the headmasters consider it unnecessary. The least supported part of the exam is the exam on the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia. All three groups of respondents mostly said that this was necessary (62,4 % of the novices, 66,8 % of the mentors and 65,8 % of the headmasters). 21,0 % of the novices, 17,1 % of the mentors and 6,6 % of the headmasters consider this topic to be an unnecessary part of the certification exam. It has to be noted that at the time of the research the exam did not include questions on the institutions of the European Union and its legal system. The more distant a certain exam content is from immediate educational practice, the less support it enjoys among practitioners. It is also interesting to see the differences between the three groups of respondents as to the value of the individual exam components. The novices, for example, ascribe much more importance to the exam in legislation than the mentors. As many as 43,5 % of the novices, 56,0 % of the headmasters and only 31,5 % of the mentors consider it important to examine the novices' knowledge of the regulations in the field of education. Only 8,1 % of the novices and 3,1 % of the

mentors and 2,7 % of the headmasters consider this to be an unnecessary part of the exam. We could explain this result with the beginner insecurity of novice teachers who need to rely more on the regulations than experienced teachers. Mentors, on the other hand, ascribe more importance to the knowledge of the Slovenian language than the novices. 40,2 % of the novices, 54,6 % of the mentors and 61,8 % of the headmasters consider knowledge of the Slovenian language an absolutely necessary part of the exam. 11,8 % of the novices, 6,5 % of the mentors and 3,9 % of the headmasters consider it unimportant. The results indicate that novices need to be made more aware of the fact that the development of learners' language competence in the mother tongue is the responsibility of every teacher. It is also interesting to see the differences between the assessments of the headmasters and the mentors. The former ascribe more importance to familiarity with the legal system, while the latter stress classroom teaching.

We can conclude that both the headmasters and the mentors and novices consider the assessment lessons as the most important component of the certification exam, followed by the language, knowledge of educational legislation and finally knowledge of the Slovenian constitution. The assessment lessons are rated somewhat more highly by the mentors, while all the other components are rated more highly by the headmasters than the novices and mentors. There is, however, still the dilemma of whether the practical part of the certification exam should remain the responsibility of the school (the headmaster and the mentor, who assess the level of novice teacher's competence and readiness for independent teaching), or whether it would be better to reintroduce external assessment (an assessment lesson, portfolio interview...). The gist of the teaching profession is the teaching itself, and the certification exam should reflect that. As Reynolds points out (1992), the certification exam serves, among other things, to protect the public from the damage that could be done by an incompetent teacher. A teacher who is not capable of effective planning, execution and assessment of instruction (preactive, interactive and postactive tasks of teaching) namely exposes their students to a higher risk of learning failure.

4 Conclusion

The Slovenian legislation provides for quality teacher induction, but unfortunately not all novice teachers can be included in this system since the headmaster is allowed to employ a novice teacher without a certification exam and assigns them a mentor for only two months.

Quality organization of the induction process is a precondition for quality learning and professional development of a novice teacher. A program of induction shaped jointly by the mentor and novice is a basis for quality induction. The study showed that this is most often the case in practice. Most of the novices and mentors believe that the required induction plan is a blueprint for the process which is revised as the process unfolds. However, there are still 10,0% of the novices who claimed that they were not familiarized with the program of their induction.

Another factor influencing the quality of the induction is its duration. In the study we enquired whether the novice teachers, mentors and headmasters consider its duration adequate. The differences between the groups were not statistically significant. Most of the headmasters (84,9%) and most of the mentors (85,7%) feel that the present duration of the induction period is adequate.

A further crucial aspect of a quality induction process is the time the mentor and the novice spend in professional dialogue, planning and analysing lessons and other educational activities. The study shows that planning is most often claimed to be done once a week, while lesson analysis is mostly claimed to be done on a daily basis (47,8%). It is commendable that over a third of all mentor-novice tandems plan their work together every day.

Last but not least, quality induction is not possible without competent mentors and headmasters. The induction process should be a development opportunity for all its participants: the novice, the mentor and the headmaster. The novice should develop the competences of a quality teacher, while the mentor and headmaster can develop their mentoring competences. To provide quality induction, they should consider the characteristics of adult learning and the needs of the novices (Strong & Baron, 2004). As Hargreaves and Fullan point out, (2000) good mentorship involves helping teachers work effectively with adults. It is very important to encourage cooperation and teamwork among teachers – it contributes significantly to their lifelong learning and professional advancement.

To encourage a novice's professional growth, those responsible should encourage his/her self-knowledge, (becoming aware of his /her conceptions, personal theories, levels of skills and knowledge) (Valenčič- Zuljan, 2007). This should be followed by a phase of cognitive conflict and reconstruction or formation of a new conceptual framework of thinking and action. This is a demanding process which can be carried out through a partnership of teacher education institutions, schools and the Ministry of Education. All novice teachers should be provided with quality professional induction, which would

significantly affect their further professional development as well as the development of all other staff of educational institutions and the quality of the Slovenian educational system as such.

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Studies

Mentoring can Make a Difference – some Novice Teachers' Perspective on Mentoring Support

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Abstract

It can be difficult for novice teachers to be prepared for the complexity of their new profession and the reality in the schools of today. As a result, it is common for novice teachers initially to feel insecure and uncertain about what is expected of them. After two years at work, the teachers in this study had developed a fairly realistic understanding of what is involved in teachers' work. They enjoyed their work and felt comfortable with their role as teacher, although they still felt insecure about some work situations. The teachers were not left on their own during their first year of work because they had mentors who gave them continual support and the possibility to ask questions that were of relevance to them. As a result, they had become aware of their professional practice, which indicates personal and professional growth.

Introduction

The professional role of teachers has changed during the last years, to a big part due to the increased tasks and demands on teachers. Even the fast social changes have had their influence and contributed to a learner diversity which is now greater than ever. As in-service training for student teachers often differs a lot from classroom reality, the feelings of being unprepared for meeting pupils' needs, classroom management and understanding school culture are common in beginner teachers (Stanulis, Fallona & Pearson, 2002).

Teachers often face unpredictable situations where their work as well as themselves are judged and evaluated continuously by pupils, co-workers and parents. For new teachers this can be extra hard to handle as they often have difficulties in applying the theoretical knowledge from their education to the reality they face as new teachers. Their focus is often more on themselves and their performance as teachers than on pupils' learning (McLaughlin, 2002).

Furthermore, it is not uncommon for teacher students to be expected to be leaders in the profession from the first day of their career, as a consequence of both pupils and parents expecting a competent teacher (Lindgren, 2003).

Probably, much of the subject knowledge that new teachers gain from their teacher education can be applied to their work as teachers. But a relevant question is how well they are prepared to handle the consequences of the rapidly changing society, which concerns work as well as family conditions and is reflected among students, parents, colleagues and school management. There is reason to reflect on this matter given that teacher education programs, with increased focus on theoretical studies, have minimized the possibilities for development of the teacher role.

In a study of Swedish teacher students, it was shown that they had a lot of insecurity about their future professional role mainly with regard to students with special needs, communicating with parents and worries about not being popular and respected (Jonsson, 1998). At the same time they were significantly less insecure about their knowledge of subject content. Only a small number of the students felt some anxiety over not having sufficient subject knowledge. According to the author, this showed that the insecurity was mainly due to a lack of confidence in the teacher students' own ability when meeting students and parents.

Similar reflections have been made by Callander (2004), who pointed out that practical experience of classroom work has received less emphasis in current teacher education programs compared to earlier teacher education programs and consequently, the professional identity of teacher students has been affected. Therefore, it is not surprising that teacher students do not really know what the most essential aspect of their education is, even if they have gained an increased understanding of teachers' work as well as roles during the course of their education (Jonsson, 1998).

In the learning society, where the school is being challenged by different stakeholders about what is relevant knowledge and consequently having its traditional authority questioned, the professional role of the teacher as well as their assignments and duties are changing. Students, parents and colleagues each have their own opinions about the work of new teachers and are usually willing to express them. As a consequence, it is often difficult for a new teacher with a weak professional identity to distinguish opinions about them as a teacher with various assignments, roles and expectations from them as a person (Cullingford, 2002). This may lead to situations where teachers blame

themselves and/or believe they have made the wrong choice of profession, as feelings of insufficiency grow.

New teachers may feel stranded at their first position without sufficient knowledge of the complexity of the teacher role and a lack of tools to handle it (Gannerud, 2001; Bergsvik, Grimsæth & Nordvik, 2004). Therefore, it is fully understandable that new teachers use methods and strategies of adjustment from their own experience as learners. Lortie (1975) and Jordell (1986) found that the socialization of teachers is based on their own experiences from school and that the shaping of the teacher role occurs primarily prior to and after teacher education.

Often the transition from being a teacher student to being a professional teacher takes place rather radically and without any concrete preparation during the educational period and without any real introduction to the new workplace. Since it cannot be reasonable to expect that a newly graduated teacher should act competently and be fully adjusted to the reality of teaching from day one, expectations of students, colleagues, parents and school management of new teachers should be examined and problematized in an effort to try to find strategies for supporting new teachers during their introduction period (Lindgren 2003).

Finding working forms for this kind of support has to be given much emphasis since it has been shown that many new teachers find the first period of working as a teacher (the teaching, unrealistic demands, students with special needs and lack of time) critical for understanding the teacher role and the motivation to continue working as a teacher (National Union of Teachers in Sweden, 2001). As this is a well known phenomenon among more experienced teachers and school managers, it is not a good strategy to allow novice teachers to start their working life without any constructive support (Fabian & Simpson, 2002; Lucas, 2002). The fact that many new teachers do not stay in the profession may be due to the difficulties adapting to the teacher role, which may not be congruent with the role that teacher education programs support or with the ideas about the teaching profession that the students bring with them (Wenestam, 1999). From a lot of international studies it is obvious that new teachers need emotional, practical and educational support and there is still a lot to be done in this supporting process of becoming a teacher (e. g. Jordell 2002; 2006).

Mentoring

Mentoring has a long tradition, and is frequently used today in industry and the public sector as well as in higher education as a tool for both personal and professional development. A good mentor relationship, where an experienced, judicious person and a mentee meet regularly for discussions according to the needs of the mentee, is built upon openness and confidentiality (McGee, 2001). One of the cornerstones of mentoring is analytical dialogue between mentor and mentee. The dialogue helps both mentor and mentee gain a deeper understanding of their own ways of acting as well as situations at work, and facilitate describing their thoughts and ideas, which contributes to a more reflective way of working (Lucas, 2001; Alvarado, 2006).

The mentor is not supposed to be a problem solver or a judge of the mentee's opinions. Instead, the mentor's task is to question the mentee in order to support the reflective process. Lick (1999) and Alred and Garvey (2000) stress that a special goal of mentoring is to contribute to learning. To make that happen the mentee, as the learner, ought to be engaged and have a constructive self-awareness. Objectivity and distance, as well as the ability to expect and receive constructive criticism are necessary in a mentoring process (Dedrick & Watson, 2002). To develop a rapport and gain as much knowledge as possible from the mentoring process, the mentor and the mentee ought to have regular meetings during the mentoring period. The goals of the mentoring project, as well as the novices' personal goals, should be the basis of the reflective talks and the mentor should take an active part in the discussions (Lindgren, 2006).

Mentoring of novice teachers is different in its nature from supervision of student teachers. While mentoring is typically voluntary, supervision is included as a paid service in teacher's work. Normally a supervisor has mandate to control the outcome of the student. In contrast to a supervisor, the mentor has no appraisal or reporting obligation. What the mentor and the mentee talk about is not shared with anyone else. The task of the mentor is above all to listen, support and develop the thinking of the mentee for his or her constructive progress, not to tell the mentee what the right thing to do is or to give the right answers. However, the most important difference between supervision and mentoring is that supervision is a dependent relationship while mentoring is an independent relationship (Lindgren, 2000).

Mentors ought to encourage novices to learn from their own experiences in order to develop a vision of good teaching (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). This can be done using the technique of visualisation. A desirable goal of mentoring is that

the mentees gain increased knowledge about the teacher role and effective teaching methods. To facilitate this progression, the mentee needs to be able to clarify their own expectations towards mentoring, prepare questions in advance for the mentoring discussions and also take notes in a journal. The mentor can support this process by summarizing the discussions afterwards as well as follow up when necessary (Lindgren, 2006). Sometimes a mentor can feel that it is easiest just to give practical or emotional support. Ganser (2002) advises mentors to be aware of this tendency and to remember that mentoring novice teachers should be more than just emotional guidance.

Furthermore, mentoring has another important task. Usually there are no courses in basic academic education concerning social competence, individual maturity, ability of conversation and professional development. Therefore, it is the student's own responsibility to develop these abilities. This reality has also been internationally noticed, for example by Hulbert (1994): "I am concerned that we in higher education are not doing a very good job of guiding and nurturing the next generation." (p. 261). A mentor has good possibilities to focus on social competence in the reflective talks, and a progressive mentoring process should support the development of professional skills such as building relationships, establishing trust and encouraging reflection in others (Alvarado, 2006).

Method

This study is a follow-up to an earlier study where seven new teachers, five women and two men, working in a medium-sized town in the northern part of Sweden, were interviewed four times during their first year as teachers. The criteria, which were to be fulfilled for participation in the study, were that the participant was a recently graduated teacher, was working with children aged 7-16 and had been assigned a mentor. A total of ten of the novice teachers who had been employed in the municipality that year matched the criteria and seven of them agreed to participate in the study. The teachers who were not interested in participating claimed insufficient time and/or too trying work situation as reasons for not participating. When the current study was carried out in 2004, the seven teachers had two years of teaching experience and the mentoring period had taken place one year before.

The purpose of this study was to highlight how the teachers viewed their present work situation and how they experienced the mentoring one year after it was ended. The interviews were semi-structured in such a way that the primary

questions were similar for all the individuals but there was an opportunity for follow-up questions and a chance for the teachers to give an independent account. Each interview took approximately 45 minutes. None of the teachers had read the questions prior to the interviews but were informed about the aim of the study. The interviews were recorded and transcribed in their entirety. The analyzing process was directed towards the two main questions of the study. To protect the identity of the individuals their names have been replaced by numbers from 1-7 and their gender is feminine regardless of the reality.

Results

The teacher role

It was obvious that the familiarization of work conditions and assignments had increased for the teachers during their second year. All of them claimed to have adjusted to the professional role and felt good about their choice of profession. Despite the fact that the teachers seemed to have increased confidence in their own abilities with regards to practicing their profession, there still existed some insecurity with for example parental contacts and identifying and prioritizing their duties as teachers.

... parental contact, development talk and meetings with parents. Naturally, you will always feel nervous about them, but somehow you learn having them. You find some sort of role and then, after learning to know the parents, all gets easier and the longer you have the class the better relation you get with the parents. You know with whom you talk to, for example in the phone and you know what that person looks like. (T 1)

You often feel a bit insecure. If a parent doubts one a lot, it sometimes feels like they are hunters and you are a prey, not a hunt for me personally, but for teachers in general, like to prove we are wrong /../ I think it is common that the parents become defensive and only listen to their children, etc., and I think then it feels really tough. (T 2)

...at the same time you feel some stress for not having time left for the nicely prepared classes, as I have ambitions for /../ The insecurity is there sometimes. But I have learned to sort out what is teacher work and what is not. That discussion comes up more and more and that is what I think we should discuss more frequently. (T 4)

Interruptions in the classroom

All of the teachers were fully aware of the fact that it is not always possible to follow a lesson plan, mainly due to different interruptions in the class. Common interruption factors were:

- conflicts and conflict handling
- students with special needs
- student absences and late arrivals
- misestimated time consumption
- technical problems

The above factors give a fair picture of the every-day work situation at school. On the basis of flexible teaching, which exists at most schools today, usually there will be a lot of other factors as well. It is possible that the ones that the teachers mentioned above were the factors they remembered the most. It is also plausible that the factors they mentioned were experienced as most interrupting of the teaching.

Although these factors could be experienced as something frustrating, there was no mention of any insecurities or hesitations about not being able to carry out the teaching as planned. Two of the teachers said they begin by adapting their original plan to compensate for the interruption.

Well, then I will get an alternative plan. [And where is this plan?] Somewhere in the back of my head...maybe I have to lower my level of ambition. (T 6)

Sometimes you see that you have not planned it the right way, like it is too easy or too hard and then you have to change what you first planned to do. (T 5)

For two of the teachers, the interruptions resulted in having to find opportunities for the students to make up for lost time.

I am trying to be as flexible as possible ././ You know that there always will be something coming up so you are kind of prepared ././ I have also got a longer perspective on things. If I notice that a class has frequently been affected I try to re-get that lost time. (T 7)

Lack of concentration of the students was treated by one of the teachers with relaxing activities prepared in advance.

It depends on how the students are ././ it could be that someone is really tired and has not got the energy, so then you have to do something else. To have something up my sleeve like a game or something so you do not need to use your

concentration or that you simply go out and take a short break and then come in again and try to get the right level of concentration. (T 2)

Regardless of what was interrupting the teaching, it seemed that the teachers were aware of the fact that interruptions that interfered with the original teaching plan are part of the daily work. None of the teachers felt overwhelmed or had to ask a colleague for assistance when the plan was interrupted. Instead, the teachers seemed to understand that interruptions are indeed part of the job and that there has to be some preparedness to handle them.

Stress symptoms

However, frequent, unexpected interruptions of daily work can be a source of frustration; although, a certain adaptation to the current work situation normally happens over time. On the basis of being relatively new to the profession and therefore having a lack of insight to the meaning and complexity of the teacher role, it was not surprising to find that all of the teachers periodically experienced stress symptoms such as *insomnia, frustration, forgetfulness, feelings of insufficiency, chest pain, headaches* and *stomach problems* that were related to school and work situations. Of all of the symptoms that were stated, insomnia was the most common symptom followed by irritation/frustration, forgetfulness and feelings of insufficiency.

Areas that need attention in teacher education

Based on the teachers' experiences of their first two years at work it was interesting to enquire if they had missed something in their teacher education. All of the teachers said they would want one or more areas in teacher education to be improved. Five of the teachers stated that they would want to be better prepared for parental contacts, which is normally part of the teaching profession.

I thought that you somehow would practice it in some way or get exposed to the reactions of the parents, that you should know how to handle them. I don't know how to do it, maybe to have some kind of discussion model or something with role-playing, I don't really know. You show a lot of your personality, you cannot be someone else and be a teacher at the same time. (T 2)

A completely new thing is parental contact /.. / that is something that is not really included in the education...if you did not experience it during the practical training, then you do not have the insight how the parental contact might look like. (T 7)

Four of the teachers thought education about conflicts and conflict resolution was lacking.

I think conflict handling. I am not quite sure how my colleagues work and think and what traditions they have got. In some way it felt that the practical training was affected. They were short periods and you did not get the right picture of how both the work functions as well as the colleagues work. (T 3)

One teacher thought that reflection on the teaching profession had not received any attention.

On my practical training I got a fairly good picture of the school, but reflection should have received more importance. It is important to reflect on things; what, why and how. (T 5)

Another teacher thought there was a lack of teaching about the importance of motivation in the learning process.

I am surprised that there is not enough leisure and preschool methodology in the education, that the motivation for learning is not stressed. (T 6)

The statements show that the teachers had gained an increased awareness about the complexity of teachers` work. An interesting question is if teacher students can be prepared in advance for all different situations that will appear in school.

Recommendations to novice teachers

To get a better understanding of what the teachers thought about the teaching profession, they were asked what advice they would like to give new teachers. Four of the teachers stated that being flexible is very important for teachers.

You have to be very flexible and that can be both a good and a bad thing. You show a lot of your personality. What you like is what you find useful. For example, if you like acting, then you can find a way of using your abilities. You are independent when planning your classes and you see that your possibilities are not as limited as you initially thought. (T 2)

Improvisation and flexibility are equally important as good planning. Of course, that means a lot more than those deep subject studies that you have been doing during your teacher education. (T 3)

Four of the teachers mentioned the importance of not having too high ambitions or demands towards oneself as a new teacher.

When you have finished your teacher education you have many thoughts and ideas and lots of visions ././ The first year is a so-called “tough year”, many new things...you feel insufficient when you see that nothing is working like you thought it would. But you can get some experience on your own about such things. ././ Visions are always good; of course, you should always have a goal, and do your best and not work until you drop. [Otherwise it is easy to blame yourself?] Exactly! *Why do not I handle this? Am I that bad, etc.* [But that is not the case, you are not that bad?] No, you should not think like that, otherwise everything will go down the drain. (T 1)

I have seen many colleagues that have been working between 11-12 hours per day and who definitively do not look well and who cannot handle it. The initial year will give you a lot of extra work and then it is especially important not to demand to have everything under complete control. ././ Maybe you do not need to be fully prepared...that takes too much time and effort ././ to get used to the fact that you do not need to have 100 per cent of control over both what the students are doing and how the classes should be. (T 3)

Three of the teachers stated that new teachers need to be aware that the teaching profession might be more demanding than they expect.

You never know what will happen. You can do your best with planning, but still you do not know for sure what will come up. That can be really tough. (T 6)

One teacher mentioned the importance of being aware of one’s professional role.

You have to be aware that you have to be a person in authority, that you will not always get positive answers or that you know what to say. You always have to be prepared for bad things. Things you have to work on concerning your personality, your method of working and so on. (T 2)

It is apparent that the teachers had gained new insights into their profession including a more realistic understanding of what is involved in being a teacher and what is expected of them.

Experiences of the mentoring

During the mentoring year it was recommended by the project leader that each mentor/mentee pair should meet one hour per week or two hours every second week. Gradually this was accomplished, although the number of meetings as well as hours varied. After the mentoring period, mentor meetings were not scheduled any longer. Only one of the teachers was still in touch with the mentor, even if it not as often as during the mentoring year. Three teachers met

their mentor just as a colleague among others and three other teachers did not stay in touch with their mentors any more.

When the teachers were asked about how they experienced the mentoring, six of them saw the discussions with the mentor as the most important.

The best thing about these discussions was the chance to talk about one's work. The reflections were so good. They are really needed but, were they a part of your daily work? (T 4)

It is such a good idea to get a mentor, to have somebody to ask, to get feedback, as being a teacher can be quite lonely work. Being freshly employed it is an advantage to have a person to ask as much as you want and need. (T 6)

Unfortunately, even if the novice teachers' trust in mentoring in general was high, one of the teachers was disappointed about her mentor and the result of the mentoring, mainly due to the mentor's low level of engagement.

What the teachers remembered as the most positive experience was that they had been given opportunities to analyse different, sometimes overwhelming situations with an experienced colleague and that the talks with the mentor made it possible to solve problems.

Three teachers emphasised the opportunity to share their opinions and discuss their thoughts from different perspectives together with an experienced teacher. Two of the teachers stated that the mentoring had helped them understand things that initially had been unclear, for example planning and structure of parental contact and development discussions.

That you started to understand the work and could ask someone who wasn't that stressed and whom you could ask anything. (T 2)

Four teachers mentioned specific effects concerning increased reflection and self-confidence. One teacher experienced increased security in the professional role.

I hope and think the mentoring has contributed to making me a confident and better teacher. Without the mentoring I probably would have struggled with things that would have taken a long time to solve, but now there was someone I could ask directly. (T 5)

One of the teachers also mentioned the routine of structuring dialogue / writing down questions prior to the discussions with the mentor. This had contributed to

an increased awareness of the importance of working with one's own thoughts and questions.

Unmet mentoring needs

According to two teachers, nothing was lacking in the mentoring process. We assume that the performance of the mentor had met their expectations. Another explanation can be that over a long period of time, only the positive experiences are remembered.

One teacher had not missed anything during the mentoring year but later on, she missed the opportunities to sit down and reflect together. She saw the need for reflection, but also realized that there was no space for it as the days were so filled with different tasks. Another teacher wanted better planning prior to the meetings, and blamed herself for this. She understood later on that preparing in advance could have made the mentoring talks more effective.

The teacher whose mentor was in the same work team thought that a mentor from another work team could have brought in a new perspective.

Maybe you shouldn't work together with your mentor, because before you learn to know each other well...you don't want to hurt anyone and you want to be good. Maybe there are other goals that govern, but it could be a good idea to meet another mentor outside your work team. (T 6)

One teacher had wished for information about practical things, which is often unfamiliar to new teachers.

Yes I missed a bit, but not in the mentoring itself, but rather as an introduction to the work place later on. I don't think anything has been missing in the mentoring, but other important information which has taken some years to emerge. (T 7)

The opinion of the mentee was that it was not the mentor's responsibility to give this information, but that supposedly there was a minor disappointment with the school management and/or colleagues, who had not felt any responsibility to inform her about practice and actual routines.

The teacher with the passive mentor thought that as a mentee she could have demanded more from the mentor and partly blamed herself that she did not get out of the mentoring as much as she could have. At the same time she thought that the mentor ought to have shown more initiative and engagement.

Kind of support

According to for example McGee (2001), mentors should act on an emotional as well as professional level, and consider primarily the wishes of the mentee. Six of the teachers thought they had got good support during their mentoring period, while one teacher did not experience that at all. Two teachers thought they had had a good professional support.

Professional. Maybe that was my choice. Initially it was not the idea, it should have been on a higher level. /.../ but at that time I needed support and it was not always possible to get support from the work team, so I thought it was good I could ask someone. (T 5)

Three teachers stated they had had emotional as well as professional support.

With the subject itself I hadn't had too much support, although purely professional, since general questions about teaching were discussed. But also purely emotional if you faced unsolved conflicts or issues. (T 7)

For one teacher the emotional support had been of high importance:

Mostly emotional, I think. How I experienced things and how she had experienced things when she was new and how she experienced them now. But it was not too emotional so that you had to express your feelings. We talked mostly about that and what you thought about things. (T 1)

Both previous and current experiences will influence the kind of support a novice teacher needs and variation is falling out of that, which was also made clear by the teachers' statements. It was obvious that the teachers who had experienced support were satisfied with the mentor's empathy and engagement independent of the nature or the support.

Recommendations for future novice teachers

When asked about what to inform future colleagues about, two teachers wanted to make clear the mentees' right to appointed meetings and to govern the discussion based on their own current needs. Three teachers wanted to stress the importance of putting aside time for the mentor meetings.

To really take some time. Not to give up because it is hard or there is not enough time. You should demand getting some time. It can be hard to prepare questions, often it is linked to a certain situation you have experienced. (T 6)

Two other teachers stressed the importance of preparing for the discussions and carefully considering what to get from them. They were aware that the mentee can choose the subject to be focused on during the talks.

It is important to think about things you not yet have been subjected to, and how to prepare for things in case they occur. You should use the mentoring to help prepare for bad things that might happen. (T 2)

That the novice should take the mentoring meetings seriously and prepare herself. It is individually if you write it down or whatever you do. Whatever meeting or discussion you attend, for a good result, you should prepare at least mentally. (T 3)

One teacher recommended taking notes of unexpected things when they occurred in order to discuss them with the mentor later on.

As something comes up, quickly write it down so you can ask your mentor about it later on, because once you meet you have forgotten what you wanted to ask. Write down every single thing. (T 5)

Another teacher thought it was important as a novice to clarify her own expectations about the mentoring. Three teachers said that a mentee should ever accept a mentor who showed no engagement.

Leave the meeting if the mentor keeps complaining or can't understand you, because the meeting should be based on the mentee's demands and needs. [You mean to speak your mind if the mentor doesn't seem to show any engagement?] Yes, I do, and ask the principal if there isn't anyone else. (T 7)

The different statements express a desire to make future mentees aware of the fact that they can get a lot out of mentoring, but this calls for conscious effort. Probably, if they are given a new chance to be mentored or if they become mentors themselves, they will have this advice in mind.

Conclusion

After two years of working, it was obvious that the teachers in the study described in this article had gained a fairly realistic picture of what teaching involves. They enjoyed their work and felt comfortable with their role as teachers, although they still felt insecure about some work situations. The awareness of the complexity of the profession was mirrored in insights into the importance of being flexible and having strategies to handle interruptions and

create a functional work situation. This suggests that there has been a progression in their professional development. As these teachers were assigned mentors during their first year, they were given continual support and had the possibility to ask questions that were of relevance to them during their introductory period. Most likely that has been of importance in the shaping of their attitudes to and opinions about the teacher role as well as school work.

None of the teachers claimed to have a lack of subject knowledge or skills for teaching specific subjects from their education, which agrees with Jonsson's (1998) findings. Instead one of the teachers stated:

I am educated for compulsory school and right now I am working at a high school...there is no way that the theory is causing me any trouble. I do have more subject knowledge than what is demanded at the high school level. (T 3)

Lack of confidence about parental contact and what duties are included in teachers' work is also reported in earlier studies (e.g. Gannerud, 2001; Bergsvik, Grimsæth & Nordvik, 2004). Therefore, it was not surprising that education about parental contact and conflict resolution was mentioned in this study as something lacking during the teacher education.

The insecurity is probably not only due to insufficient experience but also to the present societal changes, which affects families, schools and working life as well as the difficulties that teacher education programs have in adapting to the current reality. Since conflict situations and parents' actions can be different and even unpredictable, an interesting question is how the demands for more knowledge about parental contact and conflict resolution can be provided for during teacher education. One way to get new teachers feeling better prepared can be by having teacher students actively and frequently take part in parent cooperation and also reflect together with experienced teachers on situations that can occur. But how should education about conflict resolution, unplanned parental contact and teachers' duties be organized so that it is relevant to future professional activity? While waiting for an answer to this question, new teachers should not be left alone when handling more complex situations.

Only one teacher requested further education on reflection during teacher education, which can indicate that the awareness about the importance of reflection was low among the teachers. The complexity of the teaching profession requires teachers to reflect on their work on their own and together with colleagues. There are a lot of opportunities in teacher education programs to provide teachers with the tools to develop a reflective practice, so that

reflection becomes part of their daily consciousness upon graduation. However, the question remains as to whether or not this is a priority in teacher education?

The advice that the teachers wanted to give to new teachers also reflect areas that should be incorporated into teacher education programs in order to better prepare new teachers for their profession. The importance of being flexible and not expecting too much from oneself is perhaps evident to experienced teachers, but not necessarily to new teachers. There are sufficient reasons to assume that the lack of this awareness has contributed to feelings of insufficiency and stress symptoms, which all of the teachers experienced.

Although none of the teachers at the time of the interviews was sick due to stress, the fact that stress symptoms do exist is a serious warning signal for municipalities as well as teacher education programs. Even if the group of teachers in this study is too small to make a generalization, one can consider if the results from this study apply to other novice teachers as well. School management and colleagues ought to be more involved, feel a greater responsibility for supporting new teachers, and notice how they are experiencing their work. That could greatly influence new teachers' ability to handle stressful situations and their motivation to keep working in the teaching profession.

At the same time, emphasis needs to be put on the capacity of teacher education to adjust to and incorporate today's school reality so that new teachers can be more adequately prepared for their future work situations (Wenestam, 1999; Callander, 2004). It is hoped that teacher education programs can increase the awareness of students about the importance of reflecting on the teaching profession, the teacher role and the reality of schools in order to bridge the gap between teacher education and their professional life. Bergsvik, Grimsæth & Nordvik (2004) stated that being a competent and professional teacher involves the ability to handle the complexity that is so characteristic of teachers' work.

Although specific work experience usually contributes to professional development, it is desirable to create a platform of knowledge and experience already during teacher education programs, so that new teachers feel more secure in their professional role upon graduation. The question remains as to how to further develop the practical education that already exists in teacher education programs.

Mentoring

Mentoring novice teachers may lead to an increased awareness of and security in the teacher role. To make this happen, it is important that the mentees are clear about the goals of mentoring, have a realistic picture of what is likely to be expected through the process and are aware of the need to be prepared in advance.

Through being sensitive to their mentees and able to understand their situations, the majority of the mentors in this study seem to have made the transition from being a teacher student to a new teacher a lot easier for their mentees. Six of the teachers appreciated the mentor as an interested discussion partner who gave support in specific situations and guided them with advice. They felt that they could choose what kind of support they wanted, which is the kind of flexibility that is expected in mentoring, as it is the mentee's needs that should be in focus. It was evident from the mentees' statements that the mentoring had made a difference to them, either personally, professionally or both and that their work had been made much easier.

In contrast to other studies on mentoring (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Ganser, 2003; Morton, 2005), none of the mentees said anything about their goals in being mentored or expected results. Despite of this the mentors seem to have succeeded in meeting their mentees on a suitable level and showed an interest in the questions and topics that were important to the mentees. However, it is possible that clarifying project and personal goals of the mentoring in advance, questions related to curriculum, policy, teaching goals and changes in the professional role could have also been included in the discussions. However, certain topics may have been discussed during the mentor talks but were not given any particular attention.

There was no explanation given as to why the mentor discussions for the majority of the teachers not were prepared in advance. One explanation can be that the work situation of the new teachers was so stressful that the mentor discussions were not given priority. Another explanation can be that the mentor did not ask the mentee to be prepared for the meetings. Furthermore, even if there are clear goals of mentoring and questions prepared in advance, often the most important need for novice teachers is the possibility to discuss and get advice about current situations. For example, one of the teachers gave the following piece of advice to future novice teachers:

Choose the topic! Is it about practical things you want to talk about, bring it up at the very beginning, for example if you have some problems with a group and

want some help and support. If you don't get the opportunity to talk about it, you aren't open to anything else either. (T 4)

To discuss acute problems and frustrations that have been experienced while teaching seems to have had priority in the mentor talks. Probably topics prepared in advance have low priority in those situations.

The advice to future colleagues to carefully put aside time for the mentor discussions and to prepare for them show that the teachers had experienced the mentoring positively and that they were able to see both the advantages of and the need for mentoring. Results shown by international studies concerning the importance of mentoring for beginner teachers' professional development (e.g. Dedrick & Watson, 2002; Ganser, 2003) is to a great extent confirmed by the novice teachers in this study.

For future mentoring projects

The teacher who experienced a lack of engagement from her mentor and was disappointed is a reminder of the importance of careful mentor selection and training as well as the provision of ongoing support to mentors during the mentoring period. Mentor training and ongoing support can contribute to an increased awareness about the mentor obligations such as to show interest and take the mentee's questions and ideas seriously. Otherwise it is difficult to create a mutually beneficial relationship between mentor and mentee.

Mentors have the opportunity to share their knowledge and experiences with new teachers and to guide them through the transition from being a student to becoming a teacher. However, mentoring in itself does not guarantee quality and development because the results depend on various factors, for example well planned programmes, clarified goals, trained mentors and above all, engaged participants. Support for new teachers can make a difference for their professional development, their attitude towards their profession and their will to stay in the profession they are educated for. To make mentoring a key factor to the success of a novice teacher, it is of great importance how future mentoring programmes are organized.

New teachers' professionalizing process can be made a lot easier by making the mentoring goal related and ensuring that the mentors are aware of the importance of not only being a support in acute situations but also a reflective discussion partner that expects students to come prepared with thoughts on predetermined topics. Evaluations of mentoring programmes could then focus on set goals. In order to develop mentoring, regular support to mentors, besides

mentor training, is needed during the mentoring period. Meanwhile, more national and international studies are needed in order to illustrate the optimal planning and implementation of mentoring programmes as well as the experiences and results of mentoring programmes.

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Looking at Induction of Beginning Teachers in Portugal: Meanings and Paradoxes

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Abstract

In this paper, research on the early years of teaching is examined as well as its implications for the induction of beginning teachers. The situation in the Portuguese context is analysed in the light of the existing legal framework and recent empirical work on new teachers. The experience of the transition from university to the workplace is also explored and implications of existing knowledge on becoming a teacher for teacher educators, policy makers, school leaders and induction providers are highlighted. The role of mentors and a number of key issues in the provision of meaningful support and guidance for new teachers are also identified.

Introduction

'Over the last two years I was confronted with a great deal of diverse situations which helped me to acquire more experience at different levels. I put into practice some of the theories I learned while at university regarding how to behave and relate to students in different situations, and I realised that most of those theories do not work. (...) I also realised that teaching is maybe the most demanding profession when it comes to being versatile in dealing with human relationships. At the beginning of my first year of teaching, I had this idea that when I applied a given strategy successfully in order to deal with student misbehaviour, then whenever the same situation occurred again I could use it. This is not true. Even with the same student in similar situations, different strategies may have to be used.' (New Teacher at the End of Second Year of Teaching).

'I think it's funny... I think that this year I am facing many problems. That's why I liked being a student. Every time I had a doubt I wrote it down on a piece of paper, and then I asked my teachers, and they had to answer me, because they were teachers. Now I have doubts and, sometimes, I don't know where to look for the answers. Sometimes I look in the books and everything... but many of my doubts still remain.' (New Teacher at the Beginning of First Year of Teaching)

'As a student I thought (and actually it's a common sense idea too) that as a teacher you don't have much to do! I also thought that I would complete my Initial Training knowing everything that I was supposed to teach and I wouldn't need to investigate and study anymore ... I was wrong, because if I want everything to work, it isn't only about having ideas and mastering the topics, but it's also about organising things. So, it has been a surprise and a challenge for me ... There are things that I didn't realize as a student...' (New Teacher at the Beginning of First Year of Teaching)

These quotations illustrate well some of the daunting realisations of beginning teachers as they assume full teaching responsibilities: teaching is a demanding and multifaceted profession for which there are no 'recipes' or 'one best way' of doing things, and the fact that theories learned at university do not (always) apply to classroom reality; in short, the mismatch between 'ideals' and 'high expectations' and 'real world'. They also show that new teachers go through a process of revising and challenging their own (ideal) beliefs and (real) practices as they are confronted by the complexity of their job and their role as teachers, with implications for the (trans) formation of professional identity.

The transition from student to teacher has been the subject of a wealth of research over the years (see, for instance, Marcelo, 1991; Kagan, 1992; Arends, 1995; Bullough, 1997; Wideen, Mayer-Smith and Moon, 1998). Becoming and being a (new) teacher has been investigated from different theoretical stances, ranging from the development of expertise to the existence of a 'rite of passage', and from the evolution of teachers' concerns to the analysis of the socialisation process (e.g. Fuller and Bown, 1975; Eisenhart, Behm and Romagnano, 1991; Arends, 1995; Pigge and Marso, 1997).

Regardless of the different approaches, literature on becoming a teacher has emphasised the richness and complexity of the process (Marcelo, 1991; Arends, 1995; Bullough, 1997), which encompasses a wide array of idiosyncratic and contextual factors (Flores, 2001). The shift from student to teacher is always marked by the growing awareness of the new institutional role and by the complex interplay between different, and sometimes conflicting, perspectives, beliefs and practices, which are accompanied by the development of a new identity. Thus, it is important to understand new teachers' experience at the beginning of their careers in order to provide them with support and assistance deemed necessary at this important phase of their professional lives. In this paper I look at research on the early years of teaching and I examine the ways in

which induction has been investigated in the Portuguese context in the light of recent empirical work¹⁴ as well as existing legal framework.

What Does the Literature on the Early Years of Teaching Tell us?

There is voluminous literature on the initial phase of the teacher's career, especially on the first year of teaching. Over the last decades, research has been carried out world-wide in order to illuminate the process and the nature of becoming a new teacher (see, for instance, Vonk, 1983; Vonk and Schras, 1987, in the Netherlands; Vera, 1988; Marcelo, 1991 in Spain; Bullough, 1989, 1992; Bullough with Baughman, 1993; 1995; Bullough and Baughman, 1997; Karge, Sandlin and Young, 1993; Hebert and Worthy, 2001, in the United States; Flores, 1997, 2000, 2002, 2004a; Silva, 1997; Couto, 1998; Alves, 2001; Braga, 2001; Oliveira, 2004; Faria, 2006; Silva, 2007 in Portugal; Bennett and Carré, 1993; Tickle, 1994; Calderhead and Shorrock, 1997; Hardy, 1999, in England; Olson and Osborne, 1991; Hargreaves and Jacka, 1995; Goddard and Foster, 2001, in Canada; Cooke and Pang, 1991, in Hong-Kong; Nimmo, Smith, Grove, Courtney and Eland, 1994, in Australia).

Most of the studies have highlighted the sudden and sometimes dramatic and traumatic experience of the transition from student to teacher. Many researchers have emphasised the abruptness with which new teachers take on the full responsibility of their roles as schoolteachers (Lortie, 1975; Lacey, 1977; Pataniczek and Isaacson, 1981; Hall, 1982; Huberman, 1991; Vonk, 1993). Vonk (1993, p. 4), for instance, contends that:

‘from the first day on beginners have exactly the same responsibility as their colleagues with many years of experience and pupils, parents, colleagues and management often expect them to act as full professionals.’

Added to this is, in most cases, the lack of support and assistance that new teachers receive at school from their colleagues and school leaders (Flores, 2004b). On the contrary, sometimes they are left with the most unpleasant tasks, the most difficult classes or the least desirable timetables and activities (Pataniczek and Isaacson, 1981; Huberman, 1991). Feelings of isolation, powerlessness and frustration mark, therefore, many of new teachers' lives at the beginning of their careers, a period during which professional development

¹⁴ For more details, see (Flores, 2000, 2002, 2004a, 2006a, 2006b)

becomes ‘an odyssey with an uncertain and irregular path’ (Hall, 1982, p. 53). According to Feiman-Nemser (2001, p. 1026):

‘new teachers have two jobs – they have to teach and they have to learn to teach. No matter how good a pre-service programme may be, there are some things that can only be learned on the job’.

The way in which beginning teachers cope with day-to-day difficulties is well-documented in the literature, which points to a ‘sink or swim’ approach (Lortie, 1975; Lawson, 1992; Johnson, Ratsoy, Holdaway and Friesen, 1993) and to a ‘baptism of fire’ or ‘trial by fire’ experience (Pataniczek and Isaacson, 1981; Hall, 1982). Others refer to a rite of passage (Vonk, 1984; Huberman, 1991; Eisenhart, Behm and Romagnano, 1991) during which new teachers strive for personal and professional acceptance from pupils, colleagues and administration and tend to develop a ‘survival kit’ and a set of ‘coping strategies’ (Vonk, 1993) in order to handle the complex tasks inherent in being a teacher with full professional responsibilities. In other words, a practicality ethic and a trial-and-error approach to teaching (and learning to teach) prevail (Veenman, 1984, 1988; Olson and Osborne, 1991; Marcelo, 1994).

The mismatch between idealistic expectations and classroom reality constitutes the hallmark of the difficult transition from student to teacher, alongside, in most cases, the aforementioned lack of support and guidance. This has been described in the literature on beginning teachers as the ‘reality shock’ (Veenman, 1984), the ‘transition shock’ (Corcoran, 1981) or the ‘praxis shock’ (Vonk, 1993).

When new teachers fail to meet their own expectations and school expectations, along with a heavy workload and little time to reflect upon their work, they feel overwhelmed and become unsure of their ability to solve the problematic situations they encounter. Feelings of uncertainty and inadequacy emerge which impact upon their sense of self-efficacy and professionalism. This leads, in some cases, to rethinking the career choice and to leaving the profession prematurely¹⁵. In the United States and in England, for instance, high drop-out rates have been identified for teachers leaving the profession in the first years of teaching (Weiss, 1999; Hardy, 1999; MacDonald, 1999). Attempts have been made to prevent teacher attrition in England, USA and elsewhere by introducing induction programmes and by providing new teachers with other support and guidance materials, such as handbooks (Arends, 1995; Borich, 1995; Capel,

¹⁵ For an in-depth account of teacher attrition from an international perspective, see MacDonald (1999).

Leask and Turner, 1997), and by establishing email networks for them to share teaching experiences (Merseth, 1991, 1992).

However, the early years in the profession can be also seen as a less negative and less traumatic experience. The existence of ‘easy’ or ‘painful beginnings’ (Huberman, 1989) seems to be related to the balance between coping with difficulties and feelings of professional fulfilment (Alves, 2001) arising mainly from the psychic rewards of teaching (Lortie, 1975). In addition, the influence of the school context as well as the personal background experiences during pre-service education seem to be also important variables to take into account in the assessment of the first teaching experiences (Hebert and Worthly, 2001). Reporting on a story of success, these authors found the following elements to be the most influential ones in the positive evaluation of a first-year teacher: i) a match between expectations, personality and workplace realities; ii) evidence of impact; and iii) using successful strategies to manage student behaviour and enter the social and political culture of the school.

Lacey’s study (1977) points to the existence of three phases through which new teachers move during their first teaching experience: i) the honeymoon—characterised by euphoria which relates to the transition from university to school and to the initiation into classroom life; ii) the crisis – when new teachers feel that they are not in control of the teaching situation and fail to teach the students; iii) learning to get by – marked by survival and coping strategies. Similarly, Huberman (1993) refers to the career entry as a period of survival and discovery. On the one hand, new teachers face the uncertainty and complexity of classroom life and the discrepancy between ideals and reality (the ‘reality shock’); on the other hand, they feel enthusiastic about being a teacher in a position of full responsibility.

It is clear from the literature that the early years of teaching are crucial in shaping teachers’ understanding and practice of teaching. As Day (1999) argues:

‘these first few years of teaching have been described as a two-way struggle in which teachers try to create their own social reality by attempting to make their work match their personal vision of how it should be, whilst at the same time being subjected to the powerful socialising forces of the school culture.’ (p. 59)

Although most of the studies report on new teachers’ experience during their first year, it is widely accepted that the initial phase of teaching comprises the first three years of teaching (Pataniczek and Isaacson, 1981; Hall, 1982;

Veenman, 1984, 1988; Huberman, 1992; Imbernón, 1994; San, 1999), after which there is a consolidation period (Vonk and Schras, 1987).

Much of the research on beginning teachers has focused on the concerns and problems they encounter when they start teaching and on the strategies to help them deal with these effectively (see, for instance, Vonk, 1983, 1985; Veenman, 1984, 1988; Vera, 1988; Marcelo, 1991; Cooke and Pang, 1991; Thomas and Kiley, 1994).

In a review of research on new teachers' problems, Veenman (1984, 1988) identified the following as the most often perceived during the initial phase of teaching: classroom discipline, motivating students, dealing with individual differences, assessing students' work, contact with parents, the organisation of class work, insufficient teaching materials and supplies, and problems of individual students. Similar results were found by Marcelo (1991) in Spain; by Houston, Marshall and McDavid (1993), Thomas and Kiley (1994), Charnock and Kiley (1995) in the United States; by Cooke and Pang (1991) in Hong-Kong; by Vonk (1983, 1984) in the Netherlands; and by Flores (1997) and Silva (1997) in Portugal. However, other problems were found, such as pressure of time to develop the content to be covered, large classes, lack of time, knowing if one's teaching is effective, lack of information about students' background, identifying students' prior knowledge and dealing with students with special learning needs and with slow learners (Marcelo, 1991; Cooke and Pang, 1991; Charnock and Kiley, 1995).

Research has also attempted to identify the support needs and the areas of assistance for beginning teachers in order to provide them with effective induction and other guidance strategies. Charnock and Kiley's study (1995), for instance, has identified the preferred assistance strategies of beginning teachers: opportunities to observe other colleagues, the existence of a mentor, better materials and resources at school and the existence of workshops and discussion groups in which new teachers might share their experiences and concerns (especially regarding discipline, classroom management, and dealing with students with special learning needs).

Similarly, Cooke and Pang (1991) also concluded that new teachers would welcome assistance and guidance in the following areas: discipline, teaching (methods, resources) and school as an organisation (school policy, school expectations and administration). Similar conclusions were drawn by Barrett and Davis (1995) who found that new teachers' support and training needs focused mainly on student motivation, classroom management, dealing with disciplinary problems, and with student diversity.

Also Huberman (1991) has identified in his study a number of aspects which helped or would have helped in overcoming teachers' initial difficulties: technical and administrative help (e.g. teaching materials); psychological help (e.g. positive feedback from students or colleagues); report on improvement in one's pedagogical performance (e.g. successful classes); and personal factors (e.g. acceptance of oneself as a teacher). Additionally, emotional support was also referred to as a valuable aspect in the initial phase of teaching (Houston, Marshal and McDavid, 1993; Flores, 1997, 2000).

Literature on new teachers has also highlighted the complex and interactive socialising factors which impact upon their making sense of first teaching experience and on being a teacher. As I have emphasised elsewhere (Flores, 2001), both beginning teachers' background as students and their first teaching experiences are key influential factors in their process of becoming a teacher. In this respect, Bullough (1997) stresses that:

‘Midst the diversity of tales of becoming a teacher and studies of the content and form of the story, two conclusions of paramount importance to teacher educators emerge: prior experience and beliefs are central to shaping the story line, as is the context of becoming a teacher.’ (p. 95)

In other words, during the early years in the profession, novice teachers need to consolidate their professional identities by “combining parts of their past, including their own experience in school and in teacher preparation, with pieces of their present” (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p. 1029) which is associated with ‘a sense of purpose for teaching and being a teacher’ (Rex & Nelson, 2004, p.1317)

In an authoritative study of teacher socialisation conducted in England, Lacey (1977) suggests the concept of ‘social strategy’ to describe teacher socialisation into the profession, which he depicts as ‘a constant flow of choices facing an individual’ (p. 68). He distinguishes three different strategies which individuals may employ to respond to situational constraints:

1. Internalised adjustment – which is portrayed as the social strategy through which individuals comply with the situational constraints and believe that these are for the best;
2. Strategic compliance – refers to the response where individuals comply with the ‘authority figure’s definition of the situation’ and the constraints of the situation but at the same time retain private reservations about them;
3. Strategic redefinition – which ‘implies that change is brought about by individuals who do not possess the formal power to do so’ (p. 73).

Zeichner and Tabachnick (1985) elaborated Lacey's conceptual framework by broadening the notion of strategic redefinition to comprise both successful and unsuccessful attempts undertaken by individuals to change the status quo. They claim the need for a more thorough examination of the individual choices and responses to the situational constraints and they are critical of earlier studies of teacher socialisation because:

'On the one hand, first-year teachers are seen as prisoners of the past (either anticipatory socialisation or pre-service training), and on the other hand they are seen as prisoners of the present (institutional pressures emanating from the workplace).' (1985, pp. 3-4)

Similarly, Vonk (1993), within an interactive view of the socialisation process, identified three major adaptation strategies of teachers to the school culture based on research carried out in the Netherlands. He found that: i) teachers who feel familiar with the existing school culture simply adopt it; ii) teachers who feel the need to demonstrate to their colleagues and pupils their ability to operate in the existing school culture, before attempts to change their teaching, adapt strategically to the school culture; and iii) teachers who disagree with the existing school culture decide to follow their own pace.

In research conducted in Belgium, Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002), adopting an approach which combines the narrative-biographical and the micro-political perspectives in the study of teacher socialisation, identified five categories of professional interests: material, organisational, social-professional, cultural-ideological and self-interests. Based on the idea that teachers' actions are oriented by professional interests, they concluded that micro-politics play an important role in teachers' views of their early teaching experiences.

Other studies conducted in the United States (Bullough, Knowles and Crow, 1992; Kuzmic, 1994; Stallworth, 1994), in Spain (Marcelo, 1991), in Portugal (Silva, 1997), in Australia (Nimmo et al, 1994), and in Canada (Cole, 1991) have also shown the complex interplay between idiosyncratic and contextual factors in the process of teacher socialisation. It is argued that more in-depth biographical studies are needed in order to explore further the influence of prior experiences, and especially of former teachers, on professional socialisation and to inform the design of Initial Teacher Training (Lortie, 1995; González, 1995). Also needed are deeper accounts of the influence of workplace situational and institutional constraints and new teachers' response to these (Zeichner and Gore, 1990; Kelchtermans and Ballet, 2002), which will impact upon their professional development.

The Situation in the Portuguese Context: the Relevance of Research and the Lack of Investment in Induction

‘No period is more important for the development of teachers than the initial induction into the profession. For too long, and in sad contrast to most other professions, many new teachers have been left to struggle with the complex and challenging demands of their first job completely by themselves, in professional isolation. Soldiering on without assistance, often with classes and in rooms that other teachers do not want, they have had at best to overcome indifference or neglect from more senior colleagues. At worst they have had to prove their mettle as organisers and disciplinarians by overcoming the trials of fire it is felt all new recruits should endure.’

(A. Hargreaves, 1994, p. viii, foreword)

Despite the recognition of the peculiar traits of the initial phase of the teacher’s career, which is believed to have long-term implications for continuing professional development, little attention has been given to new teachers, especially in the Portuguese context in which the picture portrayed in A. Hargreaves’ quotation (see above) is still valid¹⁶. Although recent research has demonstrated the relevance of formal induction, new teachers are left alone with handling all the tasks and duties required of them as full-time teachers, most of the time in isolation and in changing educational settings¹⁷ (Silva, 1997; Flores, 1997, 2002; 2004a; Couto, 1998; Alves, 2001; Braga, 2001, Oliveira, 2004; Faria, 2006). Also the support and guidance provided by school leaders in the workplace is far from being responsive to new teachers’ needs, as evidence from research has emphasised (Flores, 2006b). The following quotations of

¹⁶ The lack of a systematic attention to this period of the teacher’s career has been described in the literature as the missing link (Hall, 1982), the great omission (Vonk, 1994) and the weakest link (Mahoney, 1996). Although this picture is no longer valid in some countries (e.g. USA, England, The Netherlands, Japan, New Zealand) where such induction programmes do exist and where research into the first year of teaching has received increasing attention, it still remains the case for the contexts where this issue has not yet been addressed effectively (e.g. Portugal), in spite of recent research in this field which has highlighted its relevance (Silva, 1997; Flores, 1997; 2000, 2002, 2004a, 2006a; Couto, 1998; Alves, 2001; Braga, 2001; Oliveira, 2004; Faria, 2006).

¹⁷ Because of teacher surplus and teacher recruitment policy (which occurs mainly at the national level) in Portugal, new teachers have to move from one school to another during the first years of teaching, most of the time to different (and distant) regions of the country. This was the case of the teachers participating in a longitudinal study carried out by Flores (2002).

some of the new teachers I have interviewed in my research (Flores, 2004a) are illustrative of this:

'I felt lost at the beginning of the year. There is nobody to support you. Nobody explains anything to you. You have to find your own way by asking other people; otherwise you won't know anything. Up until today I knew nothing about the school regulations. I don't have the booklet yet. I felt very uncomfortable at the beginning of the year, because I didn't know anybody in the school and I wasn't comfortable in asking people about the way the school operated'. (New Teacher, Beginning of Second Year of Teaching)

'There wasn't a specific support for new teachers, I mean for teachers teaching for the first time (and in this school we are quite a few), and we were a bit in the dark. I think there wasn't any support at all'. (New Teachers at the End of First Year of Teaching)

'To be honest with you I felt a bit lost. There was no formal induction or welcome activity.' (New Teacher at the Beginning of Second year of Teaching)

'I think that a teacher faces several difficulties when s/he starts teaching. When this happens, the teacher starts to feel alone and isolated, and s/he feels that s/he has to do everything by her/himself. Either s/he devotes her/himself deeply to the work (which is hard to do, because s/he has to be on a permanent search for solutions), or, without any kind of support, s/he gives up. I believe that there is something missing in teacher education, I mean support after the teaching practice period. They say that there are in-service teacher education activities, but, what I hear people say (I haven't had that experience yet) is 'Oh! I have to go to that activity tonight...' It seems that it is just one more boring thing. It looks as if they are not going to learn anything. I think that there are many things one could learn, even after becoming a full-time teacher. But, apparently there is no way to do it!' (New Teacher at the Beginning of First Year of Teaching)

This picture is corroborated by the principals I have interviewed in the context of the same study as they described the experience of beginning teachers at school, the lack of formal induction and the importance of providing them with support and guidance:

'Maybe we should pay attention to new teachers and provide them with support and guidance. Actually I think there is something missing here, because they are 'sent' to the labour market on their own. There is nobody to support them'. (Principal in a large urban secondary school)

'I think new teachers are a bit lost, because we don't have the best conditions to provide them with the basic information and support they need. That's why I think your work will contribute to developing our understanding about the initial phase of the teacher's career'. (Principal in a small rural elementary school)

'I am going to be honest with you. Maybe your visit to the school will be useful, as we may become aware of the need to think about new teachers, because we don't pay special attention to them.' (Principal in a large urban elementary school)

'They [new teachers] get disappointed... because they are young and enthusiastic, and they think that they are going to change the world, and the school as well. Then they start to realise that there are problems, which have to be sorted out. They wouldn't think of them as problems in the first place. The bureaucratic dimension is too strong within a school, and they get disappointed. They realise that the reality is different from their own expectations... They have idealistic perspectives, and they cannot put them into practice, because of a wide array of reasons: the students, the teachers... Sometimes their colleagues are older. They have got used to the reality, and they are not willing to change. New teachers would like to do different things in a school, but they face many obstacles.' (Principal in a suburban school)

Although it has been recognized as an important phase of the teacher's career, with long-term implications for teacher learning and professional development (see, for instance, the Ministry of Education regulations about Teacher Education), neither the institutions of Higher Education nor the Teachers' Centres have organised specific activities for beginning teachers so far in the Portuguese context. In other words, induction has not been a priority both at a political and at an institutional level. Schools and teachers also do not recognise the importance and the intense formative process beginning teachers go through when they enter the teaching profession (Flores, 2004b). Indeed, school leaders and teachers do not see support and guidance of new teachers as being part of their role at the workplace (this is particularly the case of teachers playing a coordinating role). Such views are however valued in the context of supervision (e.g. teaching practice and internship) of trainees (which have specific purposes different from induction). Apart from this, support to new teachers is rather scarce depending on the initiative of the new entrant to the profession in looking for help and assistance at school or elsewhere (see Flores, 2002, 2004a).

Thus, as far as the Portuguese context is concerned, induction is an issue that has not yet been addressed effectively despite the increasing number of studies which have highlighted its relevance and usefulness (Silva, 1997; Flores, 2000, 2002, 2004a, 2006a; Couto, 1998; Alves, 2001; Braga, 2001; Oliveira, 2004; Faria, 2006). Furthermore, support and guidance provided by school leaders in the workplace is far from being responsive to new teachers' needs, as evidence from recent research has also emphasized (Flores, 2004b; Faria, 2006).

In Portugal, references to induction do exist in policy documents. Overall, it has been recognised as a key element in linking Initial Teacher Training and In-service Teacher Education by promoting collaborative professional learning

opportunities in the workplace (Campos, 1995; Pacheco, 1995; Pacheco and Flores, 1999) within a career-long view of professional development (Ribeiro, 1993; Flores, 2000). For instance, in the legal document regulating teacher education, issued in 1989, induction is referred to as follows: ‘In-service education of teachers is initiated by an induction period during which the institutions of teacher training provide support strategies to new teachers according to their possibilities’ (Decree-Law no 344/89, article 26th). Induction is also subject of attention in the Teacher Career Statute issued in 1990, but so far it has not been a priority of the government in terms of its regulation.

In a recent review of the Teacher Career Statute, issued in 2007, profound changes are introduced with implications for the teaching career, namely moving from the idea of “one career” towards differentiation and hierarchy and the existence of two teacher categories (senior teachers, i.e. *professores titulares* and classroom teachers, i.e., *professores*) – the former being responsible for coordinating roles at school and supervision of other teachers. The introduction of evaluation mechanisms is also a key issue in the new legal text (Decree-Law 15/2007)¹⁸. Another important initiative relates to the conditions for accessing the teaching career: from now on an “exam” on “knowledge and competencies” is needed for all entrants to teaching. A “probationary year” (in order to verify the abilities of the new teacher regarding the requirements of the profession) is also needed during which the new entrant is accompanied by a senior teacher with specialised training in educational organisation and curriculum development, pedagogical supervision and teacher training. The role of the senior teacher is to: i) support the design of an individual plan of work and to monitor its implementation in the scientific, pedagogical and didactic areas; ii) support the teacher in the probationary year in preparing and planning teaching as well as in reflecting on the pedagogical practice, helping him/her improving it; iii) evaluate the individual work of the teacher in the probationary year; iv) write a report on the activities developed including data drawn from observation; v) participate in the evaluation of the new teacher. Moreover, the new entrant to the profession attends training activities, observes classes, and gets involved in team work suggested by the senior teacher responsible for accompanying his/her probationary year. Despite this, teacher recruitment

¹⁸ These changes were not without controversy. Teachers’ unions claim that the new regulations go against an important characteristic of the teaching profession in the 1980s in regard to the existence of “one career” for all teachers, which was associated with issues of equity and security.

remains a centralised and bureaucratic system (by the Ministry of Education)¹⁹. Along with this is the existence of teacher surplus in Portugal which makes it difficult for new teachers to find a place in a school. It is important, however, to clarify the distinction between the probationary year and induction²⁰, as Bolam (1987) also recognises, the former assuming a more evaluative purpose assessing the professional performance of the teacher, the latter being directly related to the support, assistance and guidance provided to the new entrant to the teaching profession (which implies a clear recognition of his/her formative time).

However (and in clear contrast with evidence from empirical work), up until now, induction programmes have not yet been put into practice in Portugal. Campos (1995) stresses the geographical distance between teachers' workplaces and corresponding teacher education institution as one of the main obstacles. Added to this are issues related to the training of mentors and the financial support that such programmes would involve.

In England, Tickle (2000) asserts that induction constitutes 'an unsolved problem' which he attributes to a number of pragmatic and structural reasons, amongst which are: i) the paradox of Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) 'being inducted into old practices, traditions and circumstances in which behaviours are prescribed and performances assessed while expecting and being expected to participate as reformers in search of solutions to endemic educational problems' (p. 7); ii) logistical difficulties (problems in tracking NQTs as they move from different pre-service programmes into diverse locations of employment); iii) the existence of different agencies in the provision of support for NQTs and, therefore, the existence of different interpretations of its role and conceptions of NQTs' needs; iv) the varied nature of NQTs' educational background and their personal dispositions, their individual contexts of work and the range of responsibilities they hold.

¹⁹ In order to face the high rates of teacher mobility, the Central government has decided to change the period for the allocation of a teaching post. From the present year teachers will be placed in a school for a period of three years instead of one year.

²⁰ This idea was clearly stated in the Teacher Career Statute (in 1990): "the probationary year aims to verify the professional adequacy of the teacher to the roles he/she is expected to do in a given school" and "regardless of the support given to the teacher within the context of the induction period, during the probationary period he/she is supported as far as pedagogical matters are concerned by an experienced teacher in the school..."

A collaborative strategy, through partnerships, between universities and schools appears as a way of overcoming the practical and situational constraints related to the implementation of induction programmes. Nevertheless, a political decision also needs to be made through the formal recognition of an induction programme for all entrants to teaching. As Esteves (2006, p.155) stresses: ‘After Initial Teacher Training, the career entry needs to be supported by an induction period which needs to be organised in a formative way. Being established in the law, the induction period has never been put into practice, although the wide number of empirical studies which have emphasised its relevance’.

High quality teaching and learning depend greatly on high quality teachers. Therefore, it is essential to provide them with support deemed necessary at different phases of their careers, with resources and opportunities to develop professionally. This is even more crucial during the early years of teaching.

Implications and Recommendations

Becoming a teacher is a complex and idiosyncratic process. It entails the processes of learning to teach (sometimes associated with the more technical aspects of teaching), teacher socialisation (seen as the interactive interplay of person and context) and the formation of the professional identity, described by Sachs (2001, p. 5) as ‘the way people understand their own individual experience and how they act and identify with various groups’.

In this respect, the first years of teaching are seen as intense learning opportunities (Veenman, 1984; Marcelo, 1994) and as the ‘foundation’ for further development (Ribeiro, 1993) with long-term implications for teacher commitment. It is essential, therefore, to deepen our understanding of how new teachers learn, develop and change and how these processes occur in the early years. As Feiman-Nemser and Remillard (1996), note:

‘Researchers, policy makers, and teacher educators are beginning to recognise that understanding more about teachers as learners, what they need to know and how they learn their craft, can help in clarifying the role of formal teacher education in learning to teach.’ (p. 63)

How teachers learn and what they learn may affect what and how they change with implications for their professional development. How they change (or do not change) and in what way they do so may influence their learning and professional growth throughout their careers. This is even more crucial during

the early years of teaching for, as Fullan (1993) states, ‘learning is critical for the beginning teacher because of its formative timing’ (p. 15).

A growing body of literature highlights the uniqueness and the complexity of the induction phase and stresses the need for adequate support and guidance during the first years in the profession (Tickle, 1994; Hardy, 1999; Flores, 2000, 2006a). Bolam (1995, p. 613) defines induction as ‘the process of support and training that is increasingly being seen as necessary for a successful first year of teaching’. Schools, therefore, provide new entrants to the profession with a kind of systematic assistance and guidance which help them to deal with day-to-day difficulties inherent in teaching, fostering at the same time their professional growth through reflection.

In a review of induction programmes, Huling-Austin (1990) identifies five major goals that are in general inherent in its rationale:

- ‘to improve teaching performance;
- to increase the retention of promising beginning teachers during the induction years;
- to promote the personal and professional well-being of beginning teachers; by improving teachers’ attitudes toward themselves and the profession;
- to satisfy mandated requirements related to induction and certification;
- to transmit the culture of the system to beginning teachers’ (p. 539).

As for the strategies being put into place to provide new teachers with support and guidance, they vary and may include workshops, classroom observation, seminars, regular meetings with mentors, or provision of teaching material (Marcelo, 1988; Wilson and D’Arcy, 1987; Wubbels, Créton and Hooymayers, 1987; Huling-Austin, 1990; Barrington, 2000). However, a central element in these induction programmes is the existence of a teacher-mentor at the school where new teachers work (Huling-Austin, 1990). In this sense, it is important to clarify the role, qualities and status of mentors, sometimes described as the ‘antidote’ to reality shock (Marcelo, 1994). The importance of effective mentoring is well-documented in the literature, which highlights not only personal characteristics but also professional competencies (Vonk, 1993; Marcelo, 1994; Field and Field, 1994; Klausmeier, 1994; Ballantyne, Hansford and Packer, 1995; Ganser, 1995; Adey, 1997).

Regardless of the broader or narrower view of the definition, mentors are usually more experienced colleagues who are responsible for providing help, directly or indirectly, to beginning teachers (Bolam, 1995). Their role may include giving general information, observe classrooms and feedback,

promoting and engaging in discussion groups, providing liaison with other staff, Local Education Authorities or university, evaluating new teachers' performance, and locating materials (Huling-Austin, 1990; Marcelo, 1994; Bolam, 1995). Personal and moral support is also identified as being an important element in mentors' work (Ballantyne, Hansford and Packer, 1995; Adey, 1997). Without any guidance new teachers may enter a process of unlearn or relearn in practice affecting their sense of professional identity most of the times towards a more traditional and conservative perspective (see, for instance, Flores, 2005; Flores and Day, 2006).

By and large, existing empirical work carried out in Portugal and elsewhere (Flores, 1997, 2000; 2004, 2006a, 2006b; Couto, 1998; Braga, 2001; Oliveira, 2004; Faria, 2006; Silva, 2007, among others) highlights the difficulties and expectations of new teachers as they move from university to the workplace stressing the need to invest in a formal induction period. Despite this, Fullan (1993, p. 106) contends that 'induction programmes to support beginning teachers are still very much in the minority, and good ones are rare, despite our very clear knowledge of needs of beginning teachers'.

Evidence from these studies points to a number of key issues which need to be taken into account if meaningful induction programmes are to be provided with implications for school leaders, teacher educators, policy makers and mentors. Flores (2006a) identifies, among others, the following: i) the need to give more attention to the training of mentors and school leaders. Different needs for different teachers in different contexts exist with implications for the type of support strategies and professional development opportunities provided to teachers, especially in the early years of teaching, and ii) the need to invest more in the induction period and to rethink the role of teacher educators and universities in the preparation of teachers (the first phase of their career-long professional development) and in fostering the kinds of partnerships with schools conducive to a collaborative engagement to enhance the potential of both institutions, through reflection and research bringing together teacher educators, mentors, and teachers.

From the review of extensive research on the topic, other suggestions may be added: iii) a need for policymakers, teacher educators, in-service courses providers and school leaders to recognise the intense and crucial process of learning occurring in the early years of teaching (especially if new entrants to teaching have to move from one school to another, as in the case of Portuguese newly qualified teachers) and to provide support and meaningful opportunities for professional growth. Induction may be indeed the bridge linking Initial Teacher Training and In-service Teacher Education; iv) the idea that induction

and mentoring are complex and broad processes. They need to reflect the personal and professional needs of the participants but also the contexts in which they work. Thus diversity and adequacy are key issues in defining the strategies within the induction period and in defining the role of the mentor; v) the need to overcome the paradox of recognising the importance of the teachers for enhancing the quality of teaching and learning and, at the same time, the lack of interest (especially from a political and institutional point of view) in investing in them (in their continuing professional development, including the induction period). Thus informed (and clear) decisions need to be made in this sense in order to articulate policy, research and practice as far as induction is concerned.

Overall, an induction policy needs to be framed and organized within a broad perspective of professional development of teachers (Day, 1999) for the mentoring relationship contributes to the professional development of both the mentor and the beginning teacher, as it boosts the quality of their professional practice (Vonk, 1993). It needs to go beyond the mere practical advice and socialization process whereby new entrants become members of a given professional culture, to include opportunities for self-questioning and reflection not only upon teachers' own practice, but also upon the values and norms underlying the educational settings in which they work. Importantly, Tickle (2000) argues for a 're-conceptualisation' of induction. He advocates a perspective of induction which acknowledges the potential of new teachers in making a contribution to the education of students if they are empowered themselves. Ignoring that the beginning teacher faces difficulties when he/she assumes full responsibility as a teacher and that he/she is in a crucial learning period of his/her career may be seen as an *unrealistic optimism* (Huling-Austin, 1992) from those who have responsibilities in teacher education.

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Beginning Teachers' Perceptions about their Induction in Malta

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Abstract

This paper explores the perceptions of approximately 300 primary and secondary school teachers who are currently in their induction phase (i.e. their first three years within the teaching profession). The methodological approach adopted for this study was a questionnaire survey followed by in-depth interviews of around 18 teachers. The results indicate the type of support that beginning teachers in particular need at the start of their teaching career. It provides feedback as to what the education authorities and schools need to focus on in order to support beginning teachers. The essential link between pre-service and continuing professional development is explored and identified as key to quality improvements at the school level. This paper aims to present the education authorities with data that reinforces other reports and discussion documents that show that we need to take induction and mentoring seriously.

Introduction

Reform practices, especially over the past two decades, have been emphasising a move towards greater devolution of authority to the school site (e.g. Johnson 1997; Whitty et al. 1987). Malta is no exception. Major initiatives have been undertaken with the intent of becoming more inclusive (Ministry of Education 2001). The educational climate within the Faculty of Education too has witnessed a shift from individualism to social relationships (Bezzina & Camilleri 2001). The B.Ed. (Hons.) / P.G.C.E. teacher education programmes are based on the following main features: 'participation, consultation, support, collaboration, reflection, motivation, openness and empowerment'. Various initiatives have been undertaken (e.g. Tomorrow's Teachers Project 1997, 1998) which have helped to nurture a culture of discursive practice which up to now has been lacking (Fenech 1992).

The Faculty, at the same time, encourages and supports undergraduate and post-graduate studies in various areas that have to do with various aspects of the

course. These provide us with valuable researched information as to how we can improve our programmes. The intent is that such information is then disseminated through various means. In fact, we have introduced opportunities through seminars and showcases for undergraduates and postgraduates, to present their research findings in formal, organized sessions. This helps to create the appropriate environment for healthy debate.

This paper reports from one such study (Bezzina & Stanyer 2004). Understanding what teachers experience once they have embarked on a teaching career as well as their perceptions regarding their preparation and ongoing professional development will help not only the Faculty of Education in its drive to constantly evaluate and improve its courses but also to present findings to substantiate concerns that have been presented over the years for the need of induction and the continuing professional development (CPD) of teachers to be seriously addressed by the education authorities (Bezzina 2002, 2003, 2006; Bezzina et al. 2005).

The main intent behind this study was to shed light on what beginning teachers experience in their initial years of full time teaching; how the teacher education courses in the island state of Malta can be improved, altered and enhanced in order to help newly qualified teachers settle down in schools, and to identify those areas that may need to be improved within schools to support the induction and CPD of beginning teachers. The following four questions were central to this study:

- What are the current perceptions about the teacher training programmes given the experiences gained in school as full-time teachers?
- What problems do teachers face once they commence full-time teaching?
- What qualities or skills do they value as beginning teachers?
- What opportunities do teachers have to develop professionally?

Given the nature of this publication this paper aims to explore only the findings that are related to the area of induction.

Before we start exploring the findings it is the author's belief that it is important to review the historical context in which teacher education, in particular pre-service and CPD, have been addressed over the years in the Maltese Islands. These raise particular issues which can and do have a bearing on the responses one can get in research work carried out with teachers serving in schools.

Professional Development of Teachers in the Maltese Context

During the last decade, Malta has been moving away from a highly centralized and bureaucratic system to one that encourages broader involvement in policy making and more collaboration among stakeholders. As a result, educators and schools have greater responsibilities to determine the way forward and to develop schools as learning communities. Moving from a highly centralized system of education to a more decentralized mode of practice demands hard work. Given that one of the principles behind the National Minimum Curriculum is that of Decentralisation and Identity such a study will help us to see what support teachers are being given once they join a school can also shed light on the realities of school life.

A study of the Maltese context shows that the pre-service education of prospective teachers is the sole responsibility of the Faculty of Education within the University of Malta. The Faculty runs a four-year Bachelor's degree in Education [B.Ed. (Hons.)] and a one-year P.G.C.E. course. On completion of either of these two courses teachers are certified as graduate teachers and can seek full-time employment in the elementary or secondary/high school sector.

On the other hand, the continuing professional development (CPD) of teachers is of two kinds:

- **Professional education** – this entails the widening and deepening of a teacher's theoretical and research perspectives by undertaking advanced studies at the University (e.g. diploma, master's and doctoral degrees). The University also provides a variety of courses (e.g. certificate and diploma and master's programs), aimed at enhancing the professional skills and aptitudes of participants.
- **Professional training** – this is aimed at the development of teachers' knowledge and skills relating to daily work (e.g. INSET courses, seminars). The Education Division (similar to a Local Education Authority in the United Kingdom) is the main agent as it provides teachers varied opportunities to extend their skills and knowledge base in specific areas. The Malta University Services, a business enterprise within the University structure, also offers training opportunities in specific areas throughout the school year.

As stated back in 2002, this model, whilst catering for two important phases – the pre-service phase and the CPD phase, it has two main shortcomings. First, there is no link between the pre-service and ongoing PD of teachers. Once

students graduate and are employed in the State or Non-State sector they are entrusted with a full teaching load as from day one. It is left entirely in their hands to pursue PD opportunities. Teachers are not provided with support mechanisms at the school site that help them settle down and be gradually induced into the teaching profession. Thus the induction phase is currently non-existent in Malta. Second, there are no organizational structures at the school-site that encourage and facilitate opportunities for immediate and sustained practice, classroom observation, collaboration, peer coaching and mentoring (Bezzina 2002).

The mismatch between pre-service education and CPD opportunities, as highlighted elsewhere (Bezzina & Camilleri 2001, p. 161), lies at least in three areas:

1. Whilst the Faculty undertakes research in various fields of interest, members of the Education Division, as yet, do not have the facility to undertake their own research and neither do the schools. As a result, numerous policy decisions lack the research needed to help give the direction to determine policy making. Often, policy decisions are purely politically motivated rather than research-based.
2. Issues such as inclusive education and gender equity are taken very seriously by the Faculty, by, for instance, providing specific courses to students in the areas, and by encouraging school- and classroom-based research. Teachers, unfortunately, do not have the same opportunities, given the roles they currently have to undertake and the organizational systems in which they operate.
3. In the deployment of teaching staff, teachers fill in vacancies sometimes without looking at matching the needs of the school with the expertise, qualifications and qualities of the teachers seeking employment. (Within a context where, in most areas, there is now a greater supply than demand, this practice may be stopped).

Another important issue is the conditions of service and the organizational culture which graduate teachers find themselves in on graduation. Teachers working in the primary sector are expected to teach for around 27¹/₂ hours per week. Secondary school teachers have around 19¹/₂ hours of student contact time. Conditions of work, furthermore, do not look into areas like preparation work, collegial work, extra-curricular duties, school-based development initiatives, planning and other areas that could involve work outside normal school hours.

Teachers are not provided with support mechanisms at the school site that help them settle down and be gradually induced into the teaching profession. Thus

the induction phase is currently non-existent in Malta. Second, there are no organizational structures at the school-site that encourage and facilitate opportunities for immediate and sustained practice, classroom observation, collaboration and peer coaching (Bezzina 2002). Worthy of note is the launch in 1988 of in-service education and training (INSET) programmes for teachers and school leaders. These courses were offered on a voluntary basis to all those who wished to attend. These courses were between three and 10 days in duration (i.e. 12 hours to 40 hours). Since then, the provision has been extended and the reorganization agreement of 1994 brought about a provision for compulsory attendance at in-service courses. State school teachers are now obliged to pursue at least one course per year. The duration of these courses has gone down to 3 days (i.e. 12 hours). Certificates of attendance are offered to course participants. No in-depth evaluations have been carried out to explore the impact that these studies are having on teachers, as participants, and more so the effect on the quality of the teaching and learning between teachers and students.

It is within this context that we have to view this study, the findings and the recommendations being made. We will start off with a brief review of the literature which will help set the scene and also provide the Maltese authorities with a clear picture of developments abroad especially within the European context, given that Malta is now a member.

The induction of teachers: a brief review

The quality of a teacher's experience in the initial years of teaching is critical to developing and applying the knowledge and skills acquired during initial teacher training and to forming positive attitudes to teaching as a career. There is a general acceptance of the value of good induction processes for the beginning teacher, but, as Coolahan (2002) argues, there has tended to be a lack of coherent policy on its implementation, despite "the high probability that solid induction programs represent one of the most cost-effective preventative strategies around" (Fullan 1993, p.106).

The entry of newly qualified teachers into full-time teaching is widely acknowledged as problematic. The beginning teacher is often 'thrown in at the deep end', with a full-teaching load and associated responsibilities. She/He often has few, if any, support structures to draw upon and can feel isolated, stressed and anxious. Research shows that poor induction can have serious consequences (Freiberg 2002). On the other hand, beginning teachers who are provided with a system of support are able to overcome initial problems of class

management and planning and focus on student learning much sooner than others (e.g. Breaux & Wong 2002; Darling-Hammond 1998; Lieberman 1995). The purpose of induction is the further development in newly qualified teachers (NQTs) of those skills, knowledge, attitudes and values that are necessary to carry out those roles effectively. Induction forms a bridging process between their initial teacher education programme (i.e. pre-service phase) and getting fully established as a confident and competent practitioner. Coolahan (2002, p.26) has expressed concerns that whilst there have been a number of research studies conducted and experiments undertaken in the area there has tended to be a "failure in follow-up consolidation". Hopefully, the recent study introduced by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) research into 'Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers' across a number of European countries will help to address these lacunae.

A number of these reports help to highlight some major developments taking place in various European countries. Some of these developments are presented here with a focus on the induction phase.

In the United Kingdom the induction arrangements in all four countries (i.e. England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales) have been substantially revised and developed in recent years and so for various reasons. As Ross & Hutchings (2003, p. 53) report, the main pressures for these developments have been the following: it has been argued that securing an early foundation for continuing professional development is a necessary element of successful career development; that newly qualified teachers need particular attention and support that will build on their initial teacher training; that induction support will help teacher retention in the first year; and that a probationary period acts as a further check on teacher competence. In all cases the revisions relate to a general move to see professional development as a continuous process throughout the teaching career. Teachers in their induction build on the various competencies and standards that they would have been introduced during their initial teacher training. In Northern Ireland this is part of a continuous process of development extending into the second and third years of teaching.

The induction policy has two main principles: an entitlement to support and professional development for newly qualified teachers (NQTs), and assessment against defined national standards. NQTs have an individualized programme of support during their induction year from a designated induction tutor. This takes account of the NQTs strengths and areas for development as set out in the Career Entry Profile that each NQT brings from initial teacher training to the first teaching post. The programme includes observation of their teaching, watching more experienced teachers in different settings, and a professional

review of progress at least every half term. The headteacher of their school plans that the NQT does not teach more than 90% of a normal timetable during the induction period. (In Scotland the amount of time that inductees have for teaching and professional development is 70% and 30% respectively.) This allows for the other professional activities to take place. Initial studies (Totterdell et al. 2002) show that for many NQTs the induction period is a supportive and positive experience, and acts as an incentive to stay in the profession. However, implementation is not uniformly good, and a minority of inductees experience lack of support leading to stress and disaffection.

An interesting development in the UK is the introduction of Early Professional Development Schemes (in the second and third year of teaching), which follow the induction year. This is meant to serve as a bridge between induction and continuing professional development. In Wales, teachers get funding for this, whilst in Northern Ireland what is covered and developed may be submitted to gain accreditation towards postgraduate qualifications.

In France, one of the most recent developments is that newly qualified teachers are to benefit from at least five weeks of training at the University Institutes for Teacher Training (IUFM) during the first two years of service (Cros & Obin 2003, p.40).

During the initial year of teaching, Chinese teachers are on “probation”. They have a lighter teaching load in comparison to that of “experienced” teachers (Paine 1990), although one notes that even experienced teachers have a relatively “light” load, having 6 to 12 lessons a week. The lighter load is meant to help teachers adjust to the school environment and to give beginning teachers more time for preparation. Schools are very helpful in the induction phase – the process of helping novice teachers is an active part of a school’s faculty. Teachers work in teams – in groups containing a mix of teachers with varied experience. There is also a lot of mentoring in order to aid the beginning teacher (Paine 1990).

In Japan, the boards of education provide induction training for beginning teachers. This takes place at education centres and within schools (internship training programmes) under the guidance of an experienced teacher selected by the school head (San 1999).

Beginning teachers are faced with a number of challenges as soon as they take on full-time teaching in a school. Research shows that they are overwhelmed and exhausted dealing with non-teaching duties (Moreira 1996; Humphrey 2000). They also realise just how difficult it is to address students’ diverse learning needs (Bullough, Knowles & Crow 1989; Grudnoff & Tuck 2001;

Humphrey 2000). Novice teachers feel inadequate with their lack of understanding of students they are about to teach, maybe reflecting different home backgrounds, different views and expectations about education (Schernpp et al.1998).

Lack of curriculum knowledge (coverage and depth) (Elliot & Sinlarat 1999; Parkinson & Rea 1999) classroom management concerns (mainly discipline) (Grudnoff & Tuck 2001), large number of students and disruptive or unmotivated students were other major challenges (Bullough, Knowles & Crow 1989; Featherstone, 1993; Moreira 1996; Fisher et al. 1999; Serow, Eaker & Forrest 1994). Novice teachers also tend to be inflexible, that is they find it difficult to improvise or change plans to suit students' needs and behaviour (Featherstone 1993; Schernpp, Tan, Manross, & Fineer 1998). They also report finding it difficult to plan long-term and to select suitable material.

Beginning teachers often feel isolated and are reluctant to ask for help (Featherstone 1993). They desire more assistance regarding school policies, procedures and teaching responsibilities (Wilkinson 1997). This situation is further complicated when administrators are unresponsive and/or parents are uncooperative (Serow, Eaker & Forrest 1994). This highlights an important point raised in research conducted by Bleach (1999) and Earley (2001) about the importance of novice teachers having time to establish relationships with experienced teachers or mentors. Beginning teachers also face problems when there is a lack of teaching materials and school resources such as lack of labs or equipment for experiments (Bullough, Knowles & Crow 1989; Moreira 1996).

Another 'environmental difficulty', as Gordon & Maxey (2000) describe it, is that beginning teachers go through what is known as 'reality shock'. According to Veenman, 'reality shock' is "the collapse of the missionary ideals formed during teacher training by the harsh and rude reality of classroom life" (1984, p.143). This is caused by the beginning teacher's realization about the world of teaching and her lack of preparation for many of the demands and difficulties that teaching brings with it. The discrepancy between the beginning teacher's vision of teaching and the real world of teaching can cause serious disillusionment (e.g. Armstrong 1984; Braga 1972; Cameron 1994). Corcoran (1981) found that 'transition shock' can lead to a state of paralysis that renders teachers unable to transfer to the classroom skills they learned during teacher education. The realization that their vision of a creative, dynamic and autonomous professional may be in conflict with the harsh realities of prescribed curricula, textbooks or materials may be a daunting experience.

These findings provide an informed picture of the professional needs of NQTs.

Other studies also help to highlight not just the needs of beginning teachers but also what the novice teacher brings with him/her. In Greece, for instance, “*good qualities*” of the teachers are specific attributes of people’s mind or character like kindness and honesty. (Peters 1977, as quoted in Standa 1996, p. 115). In New Zealand, a paper by Grudnoff & Tuck (2001) shows particular qualities or strengths of beginning teachers such as enthusiasm, commitment, dedication and personal and professional worth. Beginning teachers tend to share ideas and work in teams as well as possess positive interpersonal skills. Chinese beginning teachers highlight ‘knowledge mastery’ as the main prerequisite; however, this is followed by character and affective skills (Paine 1990). Japanese beginning teachers also perceive ‘professional attitude’ to be the most important skill for a teacher to have (San 1999, p. 22). Teachers wish to be role models; they want to appear enthusiastic and to ‘perform’ well. Another important skill is to treat all students equally (Paine 1990). Dedication and investment of time and energy are also considered to be important qualities in a teacher.

A number of studies reviewed supports the argument that no initial teacher training programme can fully address the needs of prospective teachers. Neither should it be expected to do so. Often many, even within the teaching profession, assume that NQTs should be able to handle the myriad of responsibilities that make up school life. This supposition, by its very nature, goes against the principles of lifelong learning. Whilst appreciating the need to have a teaching force of high quality we need to bear in mind the ongoing nature of teaching as a vocation/profession and address them from a holistic perspective (i.e. addressing the pre-service, induction and ongoing professional development together rather than as separate entities) (Bezzina 2002).

The sense of disappointment and powerlessness reported by novice teachers (e.g. Elliot & Sinlarat 1999) have to be addressed within such a scenario, for as a beginning teacher stated there is a difference between being prepared to teach and actually teaching. There are some things such as management and daily routines which are important but they can not be necessarily taught in teacher education programmes (Grudnoff & Tuck 2001, p. 12). The study by San (1999, p.22-23) in Japan helps to contextualise such a view. Japanese beginning teachers (especially primary teachers) are concerned with a number of education-related items such as class management, student guidance, understanding students, school management and relationships with home and community. Secondary school teachers tend to be more concerned with subject related items such as subject knowledge, basic teaching techniques and the study and use of teaching aids. With experience novice teachers tend to overcome initial concerns and challenges.

However, what this study helps to emphasise, whilst reaffirming findings from other studies, is the focus on character and attitudes. The teachers' level of experience did not seem to make a difference regarding the following concerns: teacher's professional attitude, subject knowledge, basic teaching techniques, use of information materials, study and use of teaching aids, relationship with other teachers, and understanding present situations of school education. The personal disposition one has and adopts can be crucial and these may be issues of relevance across the different teacher training phases. For as Coolahan (2002, p.13-14) argues:

The teacher needs to have a deep understanding of her/himself, and of the nature of her/his work. She/he needs to have developed a wide range of professional skills in teaching, planning, assessment and personal relationships. She/he needs to have flexibility, be open to self renewal and be a life long learner. ... be prepared to co-operate as a team member. ... It is only intelligent, highly skilled, imaginative, caring and well educated teachers who will be able to respond satisfactorily to the demands placed on the education system ...

The induction phase involves schools helping newly qualified teachers to settle down in the classroom and into the teaching profession. This is a crucial period in the teachers' lives, since the outcome of the transition between university and the world of work will determine the teachers' attitudes throughout their career. According to Bleach (1999, p.11) the induction programme should include the following:

- Pre-employment induction (involving at least a day in school following appointment to begin to get to know whole-school and departmental procedures)
- A statement of entitlement, setting out school aims with regard to newly qualified teachers, the commitments and expectations
- Use of Career Entry Profiles
- A programme of internally offered INSET
- Encouragement to pursue externally offered INSET
- Observation of more experienced colleagues in order to explore good teaching and learning practice.

Newly qualified teachers go through various kinds of processes and developments during this stage. Kagan (1992, in Fisher et al. 1999, p. 136) noticed that novice teachers undertake three main tasks:

- Acquire knowledge of pupils
- Use that knowledge to modify and reconstruct their personal images of self as teacher

- Develop standard procedural routines that integrate classroom management and instruction.

What has all this got to say about teachers' ongoing professional development? In Kagan's study teachers were interviewed in order to find out what they think about professional development and they admitted various concerns. They argued that sometimes the content they learnt was inappropriate for schools or the quality of training was poor or not suited to all teachers. Moreover, follow up activities or coaching on practice in schools is rare. Professional development is often not given priority by headteachers, therefore the organisation and infrastructure dedicated to professional development is poor. Usually, professional development is targeted by centrally imposed innovations, therefore schools do not actually have a say in choosing a professional development programme. These interviews showed that teachers had clear ideas about what professional development should include. The main criteria by which the teachers judged INSET courses were that it should be relevant and appropriate to their needs and level of knowledge and skill, therefore supplying them with practical advice and suggestions for action (McMahon 1998).

The study

Given the local scenario and the growing literature which emphasises the importance behind induction this study comes at an opportune moment. First and foremost a thorough review of the literature helped us to appreciate the difficulties that beginning teachers face, especially after graduation and the importance that schools can play in nurturing a culture of professional support and collaboration that beginning teachers (but not exclusively) need. Whereas Malta, unlike quite a number of countries, does not, as yet, face problems of retention, we do lack a culture of collaborative practice and schools do not have any formal structures or systems to support beginning teachers. Some studies conducted in Malta have also enlightened our discourse. According to one study (Lia & Mifsud 2000) newly qualified teachers are of the opinion that the B.Ed. course does not adequately prepare them for most of the realities found in schools. The notion that teacher education should reflect reality was also brought out by Vassallo (2000). Her findings emphasise that since Teaching Practice provides the student teacher with hands on experience in schools, it is often the most valued experience during the four-year course. She argues that during teaching practice the student teachers are often under undue pressure since they have to develop competences which are often not practised in the schools themselves. On the other hand, from the study conducted by Astarita & Pirota (1999), it resulted that other newly qualified teachers see the teaching

practice phase as somewhat artificial and it did not provide realistic training in gaining control in the classroom.

Similar to findings in international studies, Maltese beginning teachers experience difficulties in discipline, classroom control and work overload. The transition also involves stress, uncertainty, frustration, and sometimes despair. Teachers feel that they do not have enough support and sometimes they feel embarrassed to ask for help (Astarita & Pirota 1999).

Within this context conducting a study that would help the Faculty of Education understand what in fact Maltese beginning teachers face was deemed important. It was assumed that going back to cohorts that were in the induction phase (i.e. the first three years of teaching) would provide us with valuable insights into current practices in two main areas: teacher preparation and teacher professional development. In the next section, an outline will be given, regarding the methodology used in order to carry out the research study. It will give an overview of the methods used and the cohort involved in the research.

Methodological approach

The decision was taken to conduct a questionnaire survey followed by semi-structured interviews (Bezzina & Stanyer 2004). The questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first section dealt with the teachers' perceptions of their preparation (the B.Ed/PGCE course). The second section asked teachers to identify desirable skills and to identify the challenges they came across in their induction phase. The final section dealt with teachers' opinions about the importance of professional development and the opportunities available for teachers to develop as professionals.

Beginning teachers' perceptions were measured either through a ranking system (1 being the most important), or teachers were asked to select as many as they desired from a given list. Most of the questions were close-ended, although the respondents were given the opportunity to present suggestions or elaborate on what they answered.

The teachers involved in the particular study were selected from the cohort of teachers who graduated between 1999 and 2001 by adopting a random sampling procedure. There were 978 teachers in the cohort (B.Ed – Primary and Secondary, PGCE - Secondary). Questionnaires were sent by post during February 2003 to 480 teachers. It was decided to mail to the participants' home address the questionnaires so that the respondents were free to answer in the comfort of their own home and probably had more time to reflect before answering. 261 (i.e. 54.4%) teachers responded to the questionnaire.

The majority of respondents came from those having three years experience with very low response rates from those having one or two years experience. They are definitely not representative of the cohort of graduates. This paper aims at presenting the main findings not across all the identified four variables (i.e. course followed, gender, school level and school type) but reports findings relevant to the area of induction and professional development.

After the questionnaires had been analysed, 18 interviews were conducted. The interview questions were chosen, in order to elaborate on information derived from the questionnaires. This article will not explore the findings of the interviews as another paper is envisaged to do so. This paper will only explore the teachers' opinions about the qualities and skills needed of beginning teachers; the major challenges they are facing at the start of their teaching career; and the support they felt they should be getting to develop professionally.

Some results

Beginning teachers were asked to select (from a list) the qualities or skills they felt necessary for teachers to have. They were asked to rank three qualities in order of importance. The majority of teachers felt the '*ability to motivate students*' was most important (93,1%) This was closely followed by '*being well-organised*' (91,2%). '*Good relationships*' with students and '*voice projection*' were the third most popular choice (90,4%) followed by '*efficient classroom management*' (89,3%). Quite a high number of skills/qualities were selected by more than 50% of the respondents. With regards to years of experience, the choices were not so different. However, teachers with one year of experience tended to perceive qualities and skills related to relationships with students as being more important (the ability to motivate students, the ability to make students comfortable especially low achievers and the ability to help students overcome difficulties). The teachers with two and three years of experience focused more on the importance of organisational skills and character (voice projection, efficient classroom management and leadership skills) although they do feel the importance of having good relationships with students. Whilst the ranking of the three most important qualities did not bring out any salient differences between the three cohorts one notes that the respondents with more experience gave less importance to issues such as: patience, flexibility, ability to evaluate one's performance, focusing on the positive and friendliness. Qualities which were actually highlighted more by the respondents with three years of experience were: ability to control one's emotions, putting students' needs first and charisma.

The teachers were asked whether they wished they had more support as soon as they embarked on their career. The majority expressed the need for more help. A significant difference in the responses was observed when the group was categorised according to sector, that is, private and government. 81% of State school teachers identified the need for support as against 69% of private school teachers.

Asked to identify what support would address their needs, the three main preferences were 'resources', 'teamwork', and 'an experienced colleague'. Again, a marked difference was present in the results for private and state school teachers. The percentage of state school teachers who chose resources was twice that of private school teachers. Teamwork and experienced colleague were considered more important by the state school teachers (47.3% and 42.4% for state school teachers as against 32.9% and 30.3% respectively for private school teachers).

Analysing the results according to years of experience showed that teachers made similar choices. Teachers with one year of experience felt the need for a mentor (35.7%) much more than their colleagues with two (15.9%) or three years (17.8%) years of experience respectively.

Discussion

Induction

As stated above, the majority of teachers felt that a teacher needs to be able to motivate, be well-organised, be a person who establishes good relationships, needs to have good voice projection and is able to manage a classroom efficiently. Whereas teachers with one year experience emphasised qualities related to establishing good relationships with students, those with two or three years of experience focused more on the importance of organisational skills and character. Perhaps teachers with more experience find it easier to build relationships with students, that is, they have more experience on how to act and react to students' needs and discipline. Secondary school teachers chose leadership skills and the need to like the subject more than primary school teachers. These differences make sense. Secondary school teachers face a wide variety of students with different abilities and needs. Managing students during adolescence and motivating them is challenging. Secondary teachers also teach a specific subject - their love of the subject (or lack of it) is easily apparent and will affect the way they relate with students.

Another difference between primary and secondary teachers is that primary teachers gave more importance to letting students learn in their own ways. Primary teachers get to know their students better than teachers at the secondary level (they spend the whole day with the same group whereas secondary school teachers teach a variety of classes), therefore they are more likely to discover the particular learning styles that students have. In the case of private and government schoolteachers, the difference in choice is more one of degree. Private school teachers marked the qualities more than their state school colleagues. This difference emerged prominently with regards to the following qualities and skills: humour, being a good listener, having confidence, making sure students understand, showing that one likes teenagers, the ability to focus on the positive, keeping the matters shared by students private, and students' ability to evaluate one's work. This could be related to the different school environment that private school teachers find themselves in. Private schools tend to set higher expectations for their students. This in turn leads teachers to have their own personal high expectations. Since the students are more receptive, it is easier to try out new ideas and to relax (be humorous, develop relationships with students, and so forth). With regards to gender, the difference was that females gave more importance to these qualities. This difference could be related to the different upbringing that females and males have. Females give more importance to having good relationships with the people they are working with (in this case the students). Males tend to be less affected by those around them. However, the low regard for these qualities and skills contradict an earlier result, where males' desire for relationship skills (as a university study unit) was higher than that of their female colleagues.

The major challenges facing beginning teachers identified included 'class discipline', 'coping with mixed ability classes', 'curriculum demands' and 'physical exhaustion'. 'Class discipline' was identified by PGCE graduates as more problematic than B.Ed graduates. Given the fact that the PGCE course is shorter, the exposure to teaching practice and work in schools is limited and concentrated to one academic year. This, therefore, goes against the formative nature of the teaching profession per se. The Bologna Process and its effect across Europe and teacher education programmes in particular may help to address this concern.

Private school teachers emphasised fitting into the school system more than state school teachers. The school organization in government schools and private schools are quite different and teachers who have had no experience in private schools (during the pre-service stage) may find it difficult to adapt and accept different ideas, different cultures and structures. Within a system which is still centralised (Bezzina 2005) State schools are still operating within a

framework dictated by the education authorities but more so determined by State and trade union agreements. Within a context which is highly unionised the State school sector has to operate within the mandates of central authorities. It is also to be noted that teachers are employed by central authorities and deployed to schools. On the other hand, private schools have no such restrictions as they hire (and fire) teachers, determine their own management and organisational structures, and how to run their CPD programmes amongst other things. Teachers in State schools felt the challenges of discipline and the sense of surviving from day to day more than those in private schools. The more challenging schools will not be easy for any teacher to settle in, let alone a beginning teacher. Survival becomes a central concern and hence this relates to the importance that respondents gave to establishing relationships as this will help them to be accepted by students. Teaching comes later. Worthy of note is that teachers with two and three years of experience felt the same. This goes to show, on the one hand, the difficulty of settling down in challenging schools, and more so that as the years go by, other factors come into play in determining how teachers relate to students.

This finding comes as no surprise. Whilst private schools have mixed ability intakes throughout compulsory school age, the State school operates round competitive and selective examinations which determine which schools students can attend. As a result, students who score below a certain percentile are admitted to particular secondary schools. Thus, these schools end up with students who have been facing academic difficulties and with these other factors such as family socio-economic problems.

Concluding remarks

This paper has presented some of the results of this study, focusing only on the induction phase. A number of salient points and issues and possible explanations were sought. In brief, this paper has highlighted the following areas:

- After graduating the majority of teachers wanted more support mainly in the form of resources, teamwork or an experienced colleague/ mentor.
- Teachers wanted more support especially in the form of co-operation amongst teachers within the school.

This study, although far from conclusive, has helped to identify a number of issues that will help the Faculty of Education in its discourse and also reinforce concerns and proposals that have been made over the past few years in relation to induction and CPD (Bezzina 2002, 2003, 2006; Bezzina et al. 2005).

At the same time this study provided us with insights which can help us not only improve the teacher education programme from a number of levels, but it also helps to highlight ways and means of bringing the Faculty of Education closer to schools, identifies areas for further research, and also indicate clearly the need for the induction phase to be formally introduced.

Teacher education is continuous and certification marks only the beginning of a career in education (Bullough & Gitlin 1994; Tickle 2000). Teaching is formative in nature. The need to link the pre-service stage with the induction phase and CPD is identified as crucial and reinforces the conclusions of research studies that call for mentoring schemes and other forms of professional support for beginning teachers (O'Brian & Draper 2003). A call for on-the-job support is emerging as a challenging theme in educational circles (Draper, O'Brian & Christie 2004; Martin & Rippon 2003). The Maltese education authorities need to take this theme seriously especially in a context of devolution and deregulation of authority to the school site (Ministry of Education, Youth & Work 2005). I hope that this study goes some way at highlighting the concerns of beginning teachers and lead to the institutionalisation of the induction phase for teachers.

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The Role of the Mentor and the Administrator In Teacher Induction

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Abstract

In the United States, mentoring for new teachers has been implemented in many states since the 1980s. Using mail-in surveys, teachers who participated in a formal mentoring program as well as those who did not receive formal mentoring were asked to identify factors deemed most and least supportive during their first year on the job. This article reports the findings in terms the role the mentor and the administrator played in the teacher induction process. The human factor was cited as most supportive, and in the absence of a formal mentoring program, training and materials were listed. Issues teachers faced that were considered least supportive are discussed in relation to the mentor and the administrator. Finally, factors identified by these teachers that would have been beneficial are discussed with emphasis placed on the role of the administrator and the mentor. In particular, teachers recognized the importance of quality and integrity when developing and implementing a mentoring program. In their absence, the program does not prove beneficial.

In the United States colleges and universities are charged with the training of future teachers. Most teacher candidates take this route that includes at least a four-year academic journey culminated in a supervised student teaching experience. In some cases, teachers can bypass higher education and apply directly to their state's education department for teaching certification. Typically, these are individuals who have changed careers or who seek certification in an additional area. Regardless of how a teacher obtains certification, these individuals must meet certain criteria for Highly Qualified Teachers as established by No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), a federal initiative. As mandated by NCLB, all teachers in the United States must possess: (a) a Baccalaureate degree, (b) full state certification or licensure, and (c) prove that they know each subject they teach (typically this means passing a state exam in a content area). States may also develop an alternate way to assess content knowledge (e.g., creating a teaching video).

Unfortunately, regardless of how teachers enter the school system, they tend not to stay in the classroom. Over 50% of teachers in the United States leave the field by the end of their fifth year (National Center for Education, Statistics, 2001); thus creating a tremendous challenge for school districts. Even higher attrition rates exist among those teachers who receive an alternate teaching certificate from their state and/or teachers of students with disabilities. While the reasons for leaving are many, novice teachers often report feeling unprepared to meet the variety of needs of their students (Byrnes & Kiger, 1996). In the United States, future teachers often complete a semester of student teaching under the guidance of a veteran teacher. In spite of this quality of this experience, it cannot prepare future teachers for the unique demands placed on a first year teacher. Ryan (1992) describes the experiences of new teachers as riding a slightly out-of-control roller coaster. New teachers often elaborate on their lack of confidence (Stanulis, Fallona & Pearson 2002). They report “feelings of isolation, interest in not abandoning university teacher preparation, and the need to learn from mentoring” (p.79).

Mentoring is among the many strategies used to support teachers and keep them in the classroom. Mentoring was introduced in the United States in the early 1980s. While mentoring programs vary in the United States and there is no standardized approach to mentoring, we describe mentoring as a process whereby a veteran teacher systematically supports a newly hired teacher in an individualized and confidential approach. Currently, some type of teacher mentoring program is mandated in over 30 states (Feiman-Nemser, 1996), and implemented in some form by at least 47 states (Brown, 2003).

This article will share some of the findings of a study conducted in the western part of New York State (Marable & Raimondi, 2007). The goal of this research was to investigate the differences in the experiences and perceptions of teachers who had participated in a formal mentoring program with those teachers who did not participate in any type of mentoring program. This article will report on the qualitative findings that sought to determine if teachers who participated in a mentoring program felt more supported and satisfied. Using mail-in surveys, teachers (mentored and non-mentored) were asked to think about their first year of teaching. Specifically, they were asked several questions; three reported here: *“What was most supportive during your first year in teaching?”*, *“What was least supportive the first year of teaching?”*, and *“What supports would have been helpful during your first year of teaching?”* This article will illustrate how teachers viewed the role of the mentor as well as the administrator in the induction process and discuss what these teachers felt was most and least supportive.

Method

In the United States, public schools mostly rely on taxes to cover operating costs. It is not uncommon for school districts to share resources especially those with insufficient tax basis or when costs are prohibitive because services only address the needs of a few students. For example, in New York State, suburban and rural school districts often share resources to meet students' needs through a state wide system titled Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). The sample for this study consisted of teachers who had been employed by two BOCES Districts. Services provided by the BOCES include career, alternative, and special education classes that are housed in public schools in those same districts. The two BOCES Districts were chosen due to their similarities, as well as the fact that since 1988 one BOCES District required new employees to participate in a Mentor-Intern Program, (MIP), while the other district did not (non-MIP).

The MIP district offered a mandatory mentoring experience for all first year teachers. Mentors were chosen from the pool of tenured teachers who met criteria established by the district administration and teachers' union. All mentors were provided extensive training and were required to document bi-monthly meetings with their interns. Confidentiality was emphasized in that documentation reported date, time, location and broad topics of meetings, but was devoid of any details discussed. Joint meetings for mentors and interns addressed topics relevant for all pairs and provided consistency for all. Mandatory topics included orientation to the district, overview of policy and procedures, explanation of the paperwork process, communication skills, and peer review. Individual meetings addressed issues identified as relevant to the mentor-intern pair.

Surveys were mailed to 326 employees from the two BOCES, 165 survey packets were returned resulting in an overall response rate of approximately 51%. These response rates are consistent with commonly noted return rates (Heppner, Kivlign, & Wampold, 1999). Of the 165 surveys completed, 41 were omitted from the analysis as they were completed by employees other than teachers (i.e., speech therapists, occupational therapists, or physical therapists).

Respondents were predominately Caucasian females who had been employed an average of 10 years. The majority of respondents were special educators; an equal number reported teaching on the elementary and secondary level. At the secondary level, educators reported that they were certified to teach in specific content areas such as business, foreign languages, health, the arts, or career education. The specific content areas were equally divided with no one area dominating the responses.

Instruments

Marable and Raimondi (2007) developed a survey to capture teachers' perceptions of the complexities of the first year. While these teachers on the average had been teaching for 10 years, the authors surmised that the first year of teaching is one not easily forgotten and the reflections would in fact accurately reflect perceptions of the first year. As discussed earlier, teachers were asked three questions: (a) "Please describe the factors you consider most supportive during your first year as a teacher." (b) "Please describe the factors you consider least supportive during your first year as a teacher." and (c) "Please identify factors/services/resources that would have been beneficial during your first year as a teacher." Other questions were asked, but are not reported in this article. See Marable and Raimondi (2007) for the entire study.

Data Analysis

Once responses were transcribed and checked for accuracy, they were printed on two colors (MIP and non-MIP), and cut into strips. Text strips were organized by question and included verification of question number and district code. After coding responses individually, the researchers combined categorized responses into themes and then compared their findings. Discrepancies were discussed until the researchers came to consensus on the final themes and categories. As a final step, frequency counts were determined from each district for each category and theme, and categories were included in the findings if there were apparent for a large number of respondents. Also, differences between the two districts (MIP and non-MIP) were noted as appropriate.

Findings

The results of Marable and Raimondi's (2007) study are briefly discussed below. They are organized around the three basic questions and include recommendations from participants in both the mentoring and non mentoring group.

Factors considered most supportive during the first year

Both groups (mentored and non-mentored) cited the human factor. Any person – an administrator, a mentor, a colleague in the same certification area, or a teacher in close proximity were cited as being the primary support. In some cases participants mentioned relatives, former teachers, and paraprofessionals. Some indicated that they felt so isolated that they sought support from anyone who would listen.

The mentor was identified as the most supportive individual for teachers participating in the MIP group. Those not participating in a formal mentoring program also identified a mentor as an individual who was most supportive. We can only presume that these teachers found at least one person that they perceived or identified to serve in the role of a mentor as no formal mentoring occurred in that district. More frequently, however, the individuals in the non mentoring group mentioned a variety of other individuals including relatives, former teachers, and paraprofessionals. This group felt the most isolated.

Both groups also equally identified the value of administrative support. This support was evident in a variety of ways: classroom observation, written feedback, providing planning time, and administrative supervision.

Interestingly, teachers from the non-MIP group identified “training” and “materials” as supportive at a higher rate as those in the MIP group. In the absence of mentoring, these factors were identified twice as frequently, they were only mentioned a few times by participants from the MIP group.

Factors least supportive during the first year

Marable and Raimondi (2007) report the several themes that emerged from their research. Notable was the fact that factors teachers listed as most supportive were also listed as least supportive reflecting the importance of quality.

According to their findings, about one-fifth of the participants criticized almost every aspect related to an administrator’s role including: policies, procedures, confidentiality, support, guidance, supervision, or contact. While this study did not specifically investigate the role of the administrator in the induction process of new teachers, it was strongly reflected in the responses. The need for highly qualified administrators to provide support for new teachers cannot be overlooked. Districts need to place new teachers in supportive environments that include expert administrative support.

In some cases, teachers reported that mentors were not supportive. This occurred when there was a mismatch between the teacher and mentor’s certification area or expectations. For example, teachers expected weekly contact, observations, and feedback. Also, teachers were dissatisfied when mentors breached confidentiality. This was most frequently cited and a serious issue. The literature supports that the mentor-teacher relationship should remain confidential and should not be used for tenure decisions cite here.

A few teachers reported that peers were the least supportive during their first year of teaching. These teachers reported that unless they specifically asked for help, colleagues did not approach them to offer help. In our experience, this is not uncommon. Perhaps teachers are so involved in their day-to-day

responsibilities that they forget the demands placed on a first year teachers. In another section, respondents discuss how administrators can encourage teachers to support each other.

Factors that would have been beneficial during the first year

Marable and Raimondi (2007) found that teachers were quite vocal as to what would be more helpful during their first year of teaching. These are discussed in terms of mentoring and administrative support. Although the section on administrative support includes several areas, they are all within the responsibilities of the administrator.

Mentors

Overall, the group exposed to mentoring highly valued these experiences. Those not exposed to a mentoring program commented on how they would have appreciated participating in a mentoring program.

Taken as a whole, teachers indicated that they wanted mentor support. They expected a mentor to share ideas and materials to help them succeed in their job. This support, however, needed to be continuous and ongoing, perhaps even weekly. It was also important that conversations between the mentor and first year teacher remain confidential and were not part of the evaluation process. Teachers wanted mentors who would listen to their issues and provide non-judgmental feedback. To increase the value of the mentoring, teachers recommended that mentors be carefully matched with new teachers and possess the same or related certification. Not only would this increase the richness of conversations, but would also allow the mentor to serve as a demonstration teacher who models effective instruction.

Administrators

Teachers value administrative support and note it high on the wish-list of desired factors for their first year. Teachers had several recommendations as to how administrators could offer this support. Some dealt specifically with the administrator's role, while others addressed support for new teachers with a mentoring program, training, and resources. These are consistent with many of the recommendations highlighted in the literature and are included in the discussion of recommendations for the administrator as they are conceivably his/her responsibility.

It seems that teachers want more individualized support from administrators than they currently receive. Surprisingly, teachers want support in the form of more informal classroom observations with follow-up feedback, discussion, and written suggestions. They would appreciate more positive reinforcement and

less focus on the negative. They also wanted to have a clear understanding of expectations including an explanation of district policy, procedures, planning and grading systems, the tenure process, and help with disruptive students. Teachers expected administrators to be visible and maintain regular contact. Teachers in both groups wanted administrators to really listen to them, to offer encouragement, guidance, and to help them resolve problems or direct them to the proper channels.

Teachers also provided suggestions as to how administrators could support a mentor program. They wanted administrators to establish a mentoring program that allowed sufficient and flexible time for the mentor and first-year teacher to work together as well as time for the mentor to observe the new teacher. Housing the mentor in the same school was a distinct advantage. Also, teachers wanted the mentor's role clearly defined and delineated. They also thought extra time in the beginning of the school year to work with their mentor would be beneficial.

In addition to providing suggestions as to how administrators could support first year teachers with mentors, teachers also had other suggestions regarding their colleagues. Teachers recommended that administrators create new teacher focus groups that included second-year and veteran teachers. Teachers also felt that administrators should arrange time for new teachers to visit exemplary teachers within and out of their district. Obviously, time to meet was also suggested. More time for just about everything was on the list: time to meet, talk, team-teach, network, collaborate, complete paperwork, or just "bounce ideas around".

Training was also of primary importance. Teachers wanted on-going staff development based on their needs and targeted specifically to first year teachers. Information regarding district/school policies and procedures, classroom management, curriculum development, organizational skills and strategies, and specific skill sets related to their area of certification were mentioned.

Teachers also recommended that administrators provide a basic start-up kit of classroom materials that contains a handbook for new teachers on district policies and procedures. A lending library for new teachers was also suggested. In the United States, the use of technology and access to the internet as a resource and a teaching tool is pervasive in more progressive districts. These teachers recommended that all new teachers are supplied with appropriate technology (e.g., computers, assistive devices, or educational software) and access to the internet.

Discussion

The administrator and mentor both play significant roles in the first year teacher's professional life. In the midst of the overwhelming responsibilities facing new teachers, the support of a mentor, and the understanding of an administrator cannot be underestimated. Marable and Raimondi (2007) assert that considerations for administrators include: carefully constructing a high quality mentoring program, providing high quality in-service training that targets the needs of first year teachers, and providing support in both a supervisory and facilitator capacity.

According to our findings, mentoring programs should ensure that mentor/teacher pairs work in close proximity to each other. This allows many important, yet unplanned conversations to take place on a regular basis. When issues arise, new teachers need quick access to a supportive and informative ear, often with a quick solution to the problem. In the absence of a mentor close by, new teachers resorted to others to help solve their concerns. Also, mentor/teacher pairs should hold the same teaching certification. Some participants reported a 'disconnect' with their mentor because their teaching assignment differed. They felt that someone with similar background and experience would better meet their needs, and may provide opportunities for the intern to observe the master teacher. A third issue reflected the issue of trust and open relationships. Both mentors and interns felt strongly that their relationship was collegial, not supervisory. Further, they stressed the critical importance of confidentiality, and in its absence, the failure of the pairing.

In terms of staff development, new teachers benefit from high quality in-service training highlighting topics targeted to specific demands of the new teacher, including input from them. In terms of supervisory support, teachers seek observation, feedback, visibility, contact, clear expectations, and one-on-one time with their administrator. The administrator as facilitator needs to arrange times for "informal get-togethers" for teachers, focus groups, networking, and arrangements for classroom observations.

Finally, an important note for administrators reflects allocations. New teachers stressed the importance of building an inventory of teaching materials, thus perhaps needing more money than their veteran counterparts. The lack of provisions seemed to add to the already overwhelmed new teacher, and was cited as yet another form of stress.

Conclusion

In our opinion, the issues and challenges before first year teachers are shared internationally. Regardless of the country or location within the country, the issues are real, complex, and demanding. District-wide and building-specific approaches must be systematic in addressing the needs of new teachers. Assurances of quality and integrity are paramount. Mentoring seems to be a viable option as it appears the human factor is of primary importance to new teachers. As our research indicates, new teachers want the guidance and support from a mentor, and they want the assurance that it will be dependable. To develop effective mentoring programs school districts must should keep in mind the findings and recommendations discussed above. In addition, the role of administrators should not be overlooked. Their role is crucial; new teachers seek administrators' input for guidance and support. An effective mentoring program and strong administrative support must work in synchronization. It takes a great deal of persistence to meet the complex demands placed on the first year teacher. Their success is contingent on the quality of the support provided, and in its absence, they may leave the profession.

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Induction Standards and the Assessment of Beginner Teacher Competence: a UK Perspective

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Abstract

Although recently introduced procedures for the induction of new teachers in Scotland and England are similar in structure, the Standards on which they are based reflect different conceptions of the nature of teaching and of professional development as well as contrasting political climates. The Scottish Standard for Full Registration (SFR) is based on a broad conception of teaching and is couched in vague language that allows a variety of interpretations. The Scottish Induction Scheme resulted from profound dissatisfaction with previous arrangements in the context of wide-scale changes to teachers' conditions of service, including improved pay structures. In contrast, the English Induction Standards have a narrower, more sharply defined focus and are part of the Government's policy of raising pupil attainment by the close political control of schooling. These two forms of induction will be reviewed by drawing upon theories of professional learning, including situated, reflective and constructivist learning, to analyse the opportunities and scaffolds for development that they offer for both the induction period itself and beyond. As well as contrasting the two sets of standards, this article reports research carried out into the use of the SFR in Scotland during the first year of the new induction arrangements.

Introduction

Diverse approaches to a range of educational issues, policy and practice are emerging in the separate educational systems within the United Kingdom (Menter, Mahony & Hextall, 2004). The distinctiveness of Scotland's system of schooling has been strengthened by the re-establishment of the Scottish Parliament as part of the devolved political settlement while the establishment of the Welsh Assembly has allowed the Principality to develop education policies of its own. However, the issues facing teacher education are common throughout, and induction, for example, is now viewed by all in the UK as

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instrumental in the drive to attract and retain teachers, an issue also of concern to policy makers and the profession beyond the UK. Induction is commonly identified as an important stage of professional learning where understandings and skills are honed and tested by extended practice in the ‘real job’ and where habits about the place of, and commitment to, professional development in teaching are formed in practice. Policies developed in response to concerns about retention and professional development reflect the political and educational realities of the local context and illustrate fundamental differences in the way schooling is perceived by politicians, the teaching profession and wider society in different parts of the UK.

Teacher Induction in Scotland

In Scotland, despite research outlining the problems and difficulties probationer teachers faced (Draper, Fraser, Raab and Taylor, 1997), teacher induction had largely been neglected by government, employers and the profession itself. The long-established two-year induction period had become a fragmented and destabilising experience for many probationers, with little in the way of planned and sustained support. McNally’s research (2002, p. 150) indicated a number of possible reasons for this:

...the falling school rolls of the mid 1970s, followed by a tough economic climate; the right to supply cover in the teachers’ contract of the mid 1980s; rights of supply teachers within employment legislation; delegation of management of staffing to schools; two reorganisations of local government; teacher surplus and shortage. The effect of these was that vulnerable new teachers became increasingly used for short-term supply work...

A national induction project was established in 1999 under the auspices of the Scottish Executive and the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) to improve the situation. This initiative was boosted by the unequivocal views on induction of the McCrone Committee (SEED, 2000, p. 7) which

... was dismayed to discover that in far too many cases newly qualified teachers received quite inadequate support... [They] could find themselves teaching in a multiplicity of schools on a supply basis. This gave them insufficient opportunity to get to know the either the pupils or the staff with whom they were working... The Committee views this situation as nothing short of scandalous. It is no way to treat a new entrant to any profession...

The McCrone Committee had been set up in September 1999 to find a way out of an impasse that had developed in teacher pay negotiations. Their Report,

entitled *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century*, led to further negotiations which issued in an Agreement on new conditions of service and pay for Scottish teachers. The Teacher Induction Scheme introduced in Scotland in August 2002 was one of a series of changes in teachers' conditions of service to emerge from this Agreement, signed by teacher employers and professional bodies in January 2001. The Scheme offers new entrants to the profession a year's stable employment, together with a reduced timetable and guaranteed support from an induction tutor with a view to the completion of the Standard for Full Registration (SFR) (SEED, 2001; SEED, 2002).

The Teacher Induction Scheme and the SFR are part of an emerging Professional Development Framework (Christie & O'Brien, 2005; Purdon, 2003). This Framework includes a set of Benchmark Statements for Initial Teacher Education (ITE), a Standard for Headship and the Standard for Chartered Teacher, a post-registration qualification for teachers who wish to remain in the classroom (see Table1).

Table 1: Outline of Scottish CPD Framework

Career Stage	Programme/Qualification	Associated Standard
pre-service	Initial Teacher Education	The Standard for ITE in Scotland Benchmark Information
first year	Teacher Induction Scheme	The Standard for Full Registration
established teacher	Chartered Teacher Programme leading to Chartered Teacher Status	Standard for Chartered Teacher
senior management	Scottish Qualification for Headship	The Standard for Headship

Induction in England

The requirement that Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) in England and Wales complete a probationary year was abolished in 1992 (Bleach, 1999). The Conservative government of the day issued replacement non-mandatory and less specific guidance on induction and introduced market principles to the provision of professional development (Sidgwick, 1996). The result was induction practices which could be described as fragmentary and inconsistent (Jones and Stammers, 1997; Williams, Prestage and Bedward, 2001). A statutory Induction Year was reintroduced in 1999 (Tickle, 2001; Williams et al,

2001) to serve the New Labour aim of raising educational standards by means of close bureaucratic control (Tickle, 2000; Gillard and Mahoney, 2002; Kyriacou and O'Connor, 2003).

Elements of the Induction Year are an individualised induction programme for each NQT, a 90% teaching load, a Career Entry Profile as starting point for development, observation, Professional Review of Progress, summative assessment meetings and a designated professional tutor (Barrington, 2000; Tickle, 2000). NQTs must work towards meeting Induction Standards, a series of competence statements first issued in 1999, with the addition in 2001 of a requirement to pass the national test for teacher training candidates in numeracy. (Teacher Training Agency [TTA], 2001). Slightly modified Standards were issued subsequently (TTA, 2003a). The Induction Standards are one of a series of documents that cover Standards for Qualified Teacher Status (TTA, 2003b), Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (TTA, 1998a), Special Educational Needs Specialists (TTA, 1999), Subject Leaders (TTA, 1998b) and Headteachers (Department for Education and Skills [DfES], 2004).

The Induction Year has been positively evaluated, with the observation requirement being singled out as being of particular value (Barrington, 2000; Harrison, 2001; Williams et al 2001; Heilbronn, Totterdell, Bubb and Jones, 2002; Totterdell, Heilbronn, Bubb and Jones, 2002; Williams and Prestage, 2002, Parkinson and Pritchard, 2005). Induction was found to be most effective in schools where a strong staff development cultures was already in place (Harrison, 2001; Heilbronn et al, 2002). However, inconsistencies have been identified in the implementation of some of the requirements of the Induction Year. For example, a minority of NQTs was not given the 10% timetable reduction or was using the 'free' 10% as general non-contact time rather than for a tailored programme of induction activities (Heilbronn et al, 2002; Totterdell et al, 2002, Parkinson and Pritchard, 2005). There is a lack of consensus about the nature of the role of Induction Tutor and the purposes of induction (Williams and Prestage, 2002). Concerns have been expressed, too, about the nature of professional learning taking place during the Induction Year, with one study finding "little evidence of staged progressive induction training or induction processes that produce challenge and deeper reflection on professional practice" (Harrison, 2001, p. 277). One survey found that the new arrangements made no impact on schools at the extremes of the individualistic/collaborative spectrum, either because they were on the individualistic end of the spectrum and were incapable of providing support or were collaborative schools where support would have been provided anyway. Only schools in the centre of the individualistic/collaborative spectrum were positively affected by the new requirements (Williams et al, 2001).

Induction: Policies and procedures for professional learning

Of particular relevance in exploring induction as a learning experience are the concepts of situated learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991), communities of practice and associated legitimate peripheral participation, social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1962; Bruner, 1999) with its focus on scaffolding new learning and the role of self evaluation and reflection in learning as explored by Schon (1983) and Eraut (1994). While school experience is highly valued during the initial professional preparation (pre-service) stage, actually working in teaching offers vastly extended opportunities for learning: the context becomes familiar with experience, the engagement with pupils and with curriculum planning and colleagues is also extended and responsibility for pupil learning is significantly increased. This offers scope for situated and embedded learning, but legitimate peripheral participation may only be feasible in relation to the wider educationist context (Keddie, 1971) and the collegial community of practice in school, while the classroom responsibility of the beginning teacher requires full participation with a different community of learners: pupils. A supportive context in this model of professional development will allow for the new teacher to learn *in situ* as part of a collegial community of practice.

The design of the induction processes explored here can also be considered through the lens of social constructivism. Much of the beginning teachers' work is conducted in a social context of pupils on the one hand and mentors and other colleagues on the other. There is feedback from pupils for all new teachers, regardless of induction arrangements. What these induction systems are intended to provide is guidance and scaffolding from experienced teachers to support beginners through their early professional development in post. In social constructivist terminology they scaffold new teachers through their zone of proximal development. However, scaffolding may support a new teacher's development as an individual teacher or as a clone and it remains to be seen whether there is scope in induction systems to go beyond or to vary from the guidance and support which is offered.

An alternative way of viewing the induction process is as a setting for learning through self evaluation and shared reflection, through observation and mentoring with time available to enable feedback and reflective discussion. The success of this approach will depend on the provision of adequate time and mentoring. Totterdell et al's 2002 study for example found that some new teachers did not receive either the time nor the personnel to support their development, and Harrison's work (2001) questioned the extent to which the support offered was a true developmental experience.

It could be argued therefore that while notions of effective learning are embodied in the design of these induction processes, their implementation may fall short of their developmental potential. Kennedy's recent analysis (2005), which located models of professional development along a continuum from transmission to transformational learning, identified coaching/mentoring and community of practice models as transitional, with the potential to reflect either end of that continuum. The role of Standards in beginning teachers' experiences of induction must also be taken into account, and this approach she also classifies as transitional. This raises the question whether Standards and their associated induction systems offer potential for individual and personal professional development, or whether instead they offer a narrow pathway with a set script for development.

The Use of Standards in Early Teacher Development

In seeking to regulate different stages in a teacher's career using standards, Scotland and England are part of an international trend towards competence-based teacher education and development which began in the United States in the 1960s (Tuxworth, 1989). Statements of expected competence have been developed by Education Departments of nations, individual states within nations and professional bodies. Examples include New Zealand: the *Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions* (New Zealand Teachers' Council, 2003), Australia: *A National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching* (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment Training and Youth Affairs, 2003) and the American National Council of Teachers of Mathematics: *Professional standards for the teaching of mathematics* (1991).

However widespread their use has become, the use of standards in early teacher development remains controversial. Tickle (2001) is concerned that the English Induction Standards reflect too narrow a view of teacher expertise and that their use could mean that induction will become assessment rather than development-led. This tension between developmental and regulatory uses of Standards is noted too by Mahony and Hextall (2000). In research in the USA, Delandshere and Arens (2001) found evidence that the use of standards in ITE was beginning to limit the range of discourse possible.

In Scotland the standards and competences model has general acceptance but it could be argued that this is a result of a government approach which has stressed the 'common-sense' nature of the range of competences and introduced competences in a manner which suggests little additional workload for Scottish teachers because they are essentially a "consolidation of existing good practice" (Drever and Cope, 1999, p.103). Stronach, Cope, Inglis and McNally (1994),

responding to an early set of competency statements developed in Scotland for Initial Teacher Education, described the debate on competences as being polarised: seeing competences either as a tool of political control or as a utopian and unrealisable vision of the perfect teacher.

The Scottish Standard for Full Registration and the English Induction Standards: a comparison

A comparison of the Scottish Standard for Full Registration (SEED, 2002) and the English Induction Standards (TTA, 2001; TTA, 2003a) reveals there are both superficial and more fundamental differences between them. The Scottish SFR document maps the 23 statements of the Standard against the Benchmark statements of the Standard for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in an appendix, showing where a competence should be extended, consolidated or whether it is new but there is no requirement in the Standard itself that a registered teacher should also fulfil the terms of the ITE Standard (SEED, 2002). In contrast, the English Induction Standards make explicit the link to the standards for the award of QTS. There are six Induction Standards but to complete the induction period satisfactorily a Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) must also “continue to meet the standards for the award of QTS, consistently and with increasing professional competence” (TTA, 2003a, p. 1).

These superficial structural variations aside, more fundamental differences between the two sets of documents can be identified. The English documents, particularly the standards for the award of QTS, explicitly define the required competences in terms of a range of related documents, while the Scottish SFR only refers by name to two other documents, neither directly concerned with schooling, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Children (Scotland) Act 1995. The English Standards reflect a view of teaching that is primarily concerned with classroom performance and pupil attainment. In contrast the Scottish SFR seems to be based on a broader but fuzzier view of the role of a teacher.

Making Explicit v. Making Assumptions

The positioning of the English QTS and Induction Standards within a much wider framework of political control over schooling is most clearly seen in the section on knowledge and understanding. The “secure knowledge and understanding” required is defined in the standard for the award of QTS in terms of the relevant stages of the National Curriculum Programme, National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies, Key Skills as specified by QCA and so on.

In contrast, the Scottish SFR merely lays down “detailed” and “sufficient” knowledge of the “relevant” areas of the curriculum, leaving a judgement on what such knowledge entails to probationers’ supervising teachers.

Both sets of documents refer to teachers’ responsibilities in the realms of personal, social and health education but again the English standards for QTS relate each field to other documents (e.g. the Programme of Study for Citizenship and the National Curriculum Framework of Personal, Social and Health Education). The Scottish SFR requires merely “sufficient” knowledge in these areas.

The statements relating to teachers’ responsibilities for pupils with special educational needs further illustrate this point:

Registered teachers identify and respond appropriately to pupils with difficulties in, or barriers to, learning and seek advice in relation to their special educational needs.

(Scottish Standard for Full Registration, Standard 2.1.4: illustration of professional practice)

They understand their responsibilities under the SEN Code of Practice, and know how to seek advice from specialists on less common types of special educational needs.

(English standard for the award of QTS 2.6)

It is clear, therefore, that the English Standard documents leave less to the professional discretion of teachers using them for assessment purposes than the Scottish SFR. The Scottish SFR instead uses a range of highly contestable adjectives, such as *sufficient*, *sound*, *appropriately*, *important*, apparently in the confidence that teachers will use their own professional judgement in assessing against them. It could be argued that the value to teachers of the SFR is extremely limited, if indeed the SFR depends on there already being a consensus among Scottish teachers about the meaning of these words.

Narrow and sharp v. broad and fuzzy

Central to the English Induction Standards and the Standards for the award of QTS is the view that teaching is chiefly concerned with classroom performance and pupil learning while the Scottish SFR envisages a broader role for teachers. English teachers are “... concerned for their [i.e. pupils’] development as learners,” (QTS Standard 1.3) while Scottish teachers are to “show commitment to promoting and supporting the individual development, well-being and social competence of the pupils...” (SFR, illustration of professional practice 3.1). In the relationship with parents or carers, English teachers are to “liaise

effectively...on pupils' progress and achievements," (English Induction Standard (d)) and the QTS standards stipulate that teachers recognise "their [parents or carers] roles in pupils' learning" (QTS Standard 1.4). Compare this with the parallel statement in the SFR in which interaction with parents or guardians may include reporting on "children's progress or their personal, social or emotional development" (Scottish Standard for Full Registration, Standard 2.1.5: illustration of professional practice).

The broader conception of the role of a teacher in Scotland is illustrated too by the central place given to *theory, reflection, research, professional dialogue* and *a critical approach*, all absent in the English Standards. The Scottish Standard also refers to knowledge of the educational system and involvement with the wider community, including knowledge of environmental issues and the promotion of healthy lifestyles.

In Abstract, although much of the same ground is covered in the areas of classroom practice and professional knowledge in both English and Scottish Standards, the two sets of Standards reflect different views of the role of a teacher. The English Standards are based on a narrow and technical conception of teaching and reflect the concern about standards, school effectiveness and pupil attainment that dominates the political discourse in education south of the border. The Scottish SFR has a very broad, almost utopian view of the teacher's possible realms of influence.

Implementation of the Scottish SFR

The research reported on here is part of a larger study into the implementation of the Induction Scheme that included school case studies, a questionnaire survey of Education Authority staff responsible for probationers and a web-based survey of probationers. For a Abstract of the methodology and the research results see Christie, Draper and O'Brien (2003). The data covered in this chapter is taken exclusively from interviews carried out in 12 secondary schools selected as case study schools.

Results

The probationers and their supporters were asked for their views on the Standard for Full Registration and their experience of how it was used day-to-day with a range of views and uses of the SFR emerging. In addition, sections in the interviews on the processes of assessment and observation led to a picture being built up of the tacit assumptions about the nature of teaching that supporters fell back on as they worked with the probationers.

1 Views of the SFR

Attitudes to the SFR ranged from very positive to downright hostile. Those who welcomed it did so because they felt it provided a framework for the evaluation of probationers which had been absent previously and that it was of particular use in cases where a probationer's competence might be in question:

It [the SFR] gives us a good, well-structured framework from which to base our professional judgements on.

EA co-ordinator

It [the SFR] was a positive boon in that previously while we talked about professional status and professional attitudes there was nothing clearly written down, there was no standard by which probationer teachers and supports/mentors could actually gauge people against in a concise written form that you could say well this is the particular aspect that you are falling down on....

Whole School Co-ordinator

...if we had probationers who were really struggling and we were not confident that they were meeting the competences required then I think we would have needed much closer references to these [the SFR statements].

Whole School Co-ordinator

Many probationers and supporting staff were highly critical of the language of the SFR, branding it clumsy, unwieldy and jargon-ridden:

I think getting through the jargon is the thing that is quite time consuming....

Department Supporter

I think it is an excellent scheme but, as with so many initiatives which come from higher up the language of communication is in my opinion bad. I am amazed what should be really simple instructions or guidelines somehow or other becomes cloaked in a language which is very, very complicated and seems to run for page and page and page....

Department Supporter

For one whole school co-ordinator, the Standard was utopian:

It makes you feel that you'd have to be an absolute paragon to get all of it and the idea that you have to meet all of this is just ludicrous.

Whole School Co-ordinator

2 Use of the SFR

Although many staff admitted scarcely using the SFR, it was used by some teachers in four main ways: as the basis of observation, in assessment, to provide guidance as to what should be provided in the way of CPD and in quality control.

There was an expectation in the documentation accompanying the Induction Scheme that the SFR should be used as the basis for the observed sessions that were meant to be held nine times throughout the year, and an observation schedule was provided which listed the SFR statements. Staff did report using the Standard in this way:

I stuck rigorously to the materials, for example, I would open it up and I would look and take maybe three or four [statements]. It would maybe...“observe how you interact with children”, or “do you create a safe environment”, “how do you answer the children’s questions” and “how do you deal sensitively with...”, or the organisation things.

Department supporter

When I am sitting...either myself or the principal teachers will be looking at aspects of the Standard when they are making their comments, and I’ll be giving feedback on the basis of aspects of the Standard so that if the trainees [=probationers] are asked to take action on a particular area it’s quite clearly marked out what that is.

Whole School Co-ordinator

However, there was widespread unhappiness with the observation schedule provided, and many authorities and schools reported having adapted the form to suit their own purposes:

The classroom observation record in the GTC thing is a heap of hokum, the most disastrous looking thing I’ve ever seen...

Whole School Co-ordinator

And [the EA co-ordinator] produced a self -evaluation form that broke it down in nice simple English and it made it so much easier. It was like a tick list and I know it sounds terrible, the main headings and you understand it and you’re “oh, I’m a bit weak there” and “I’ve got to work on that”, whereas in that document you are like “where on earth do I start?”.

Probationer

As well as being intended as a framework for observation, the SFR also forms part of the Interim and Final Profiles, the instruments of assessment for the

Induction Year that are completed by the probationers in conjunction with their supporter and headteacher in December and June. The SFR was therefore widely used in composing the comments made about the probationers although some of those who used it in this way conceded that they had not gained any familiarity with its contents:

Well, when you say are we using them, we certainly referred to them when we were looking at completion of the profile to make sure we were addressing everything. So using, in a sense, yes, as a reference, I would say that.

Whole School Co-ordinator

I would have to say that having looked at the official document if you asked me what the sort of key contents of it were I would not be able to tell you...I have been asked to write reports. I have done that and I have looked at guidelines and heading that you have to talk under, I have done that, but if you asked me to recall at this moment I couldn't.

Department Supporter

A few teachers reported using the Standard to design development activities and the one or two staff we spoke to who had responsibility for probationers at Authority level saw the SFR as being at the very centre of their programmes of activities.

I used the Standard as development stuff - pupil support, learning support....

Whole School Co-ordinator

... every single course that we deliver as an Authority we refer to the Standard for Full Registration and How Good is Our School....

EA co-ordinator

Some staff used the Standard specifically to quality assure their programmes:

Q: Finally, how is the school quality assuring what it does for probationers?

A: Again by going back to the standard we continually go to the standard and try to ensure that we are fulfilling the requirements of the standard in such a way that the probationers themselves can meet the criteria.

Whole School Co-ordinator

Finally, some members of staff and probationers admitted that they hardly used Standard at all and had little knowledge of it:

To be perfectly honest I do not have time to sit and go through that blooming document, time and time again, because it has taken us so long to get used to where everything is and what it all means and I don't have time, I really don't.

Probationer

...functionally, it's not really something that we've looked at. I know that the principal teachers, some of the principal teachers looked at it when they were selecting their comments for the interim report. So there's that kind of reference to it, but it's not something that guides our weekly work. I think it's because it looks a bit overwhelming...that's maybe why.

Whole School Co-ordinator

3 How probationers were actually assessed

Although the SFR covers a range of professional practice, it became clear from the interviews with probationers and their supporters that summative assessment was based almost exclusively on classroom performance, particularly in the context of the formal observed lessons:

Q: Can I ask about assessment...who was involved, and how did you find it as an assessment procedure?

A: I don't think it really was a procedure, I think it was just taking into account your observed sessions....

Probationer

In one or two cases supporters reported that they had made judgements early on in the year that their probationers would achieve the Standard by the end of the year, but they did not elaborate on the criteria used in making that decision:

We are fortunate that none of these folk were actually going to struggle. They are all at various levels of ability but it was clear that they could all pass their probation, you can sense quite early on.

Whole School Co-ordinator

Other supporters felt that they could 'read' a classroom situation quickly, perhaps even walking past or through a probationer's classroom:

And sometimes he's [the probationer] in a room which is maybe two rooms away from me, so I don't know exactly what's going then. If he's in the room next door, it's easier to monitor things.

Department Supporter

I've also, it's been fair to say, as I go round on my patrols...I'm in and out of their [the probationers'] rooms quite a bit. Now I know from watching students. I can pick up signs quite quickly, I feel. I try not to form opinions too quickly, but you get a feel....

Whole School Co-ordinator

4 Assessment of observation

Supporters were asked what they were looking for when they carried out observations. Only a small minority answered this question in terms of the Standard even although many had said they did use the Standard as the framework for observation. However, the majority of supporters listed a set of classroom practices that, although not framed in the language of the Standard, could be placed under the second heading in the Standard, Professional Skills and Abilities. A close examination of the suggestions made revealed that virtually all the examples of practice suggested could come under only 6 of the 23 statements in the Standard: lesson planning (2.1.1), communication and interaction with pupils (2.1.2), using a range of strategies and resources (2.1.3), pacing (2.1.4), classroom management (2.2.1), discipline (2.2.2) and reflection on practice (2.4.3). Ironically, this narrow view of what constitutes the basics of teaching is closer to the beliefs about teaching articulated in the English Induction Standards than in the SFR.

In one or two cases, following the school's policy in certain classroom practices was cited as a matter for observation, which could conceivably come under statement 1.2.2: 'detailed working knowledge of...the school...and their professional responsibilities within them'. In another couple of cases, supporters said they used observation in a formative rather than a summative way:

I am also probably looking for...things that I can give a little bit of advice from...maybe just little tricks of classroom management or behaviour management.

Department Supporter

This was confirmed by several probationers who were very appreciative of the constructive and developmental nature of the feedback they received.

In several cases, one focus mentioned was on the pupils' response to the teaching rather than the probationer's performance:

...the class are paying attention and taking part...just that...and working atmosphere in the class and pupils being involved in their work, that sort of thing....

Department Supporter

Finally, some supporters reported using a more holistic approach to observation. In one case, there was an explicit rejection of competence-based assessment in favour of a more intuitive and personal response to the teaching:

...if I had a daughter in this classroom would I be happy that you [=the probationer] are actually teaching them and would she feel safe within the classroom and if I do feel that coming out...it's very hard to define because there are a list of competences, benchmarks, they give you, you can say, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, you can go through them all but if you don't get that feeling when you are in that classroom and I don't mean the perfect teacher because nobody is, nobody is. You've got that feeling that people are aware what's going on and are taking responsibilities for themselves and they are not dependent on somebody else doing it for and you are looking for the person maturing into the role...

Whole School Co-ordinator

This discovery, that teachers seem to be using quite a limited and intuitive conception of teaching in their assessment of probationers, came as a by-product of research whose main focus was on how a policy change was implemented. It is not possible to be too dogmatic about these answers: given greater scope to define their beliefs about teaching, Scottish teachers may well have come up with definitions of the job that came closer to the one described in the SFR. However, it does seem clear that the over-reliance on classroom observation as the source of evidence of beginning teacher competence may mean that a truncated version of the SFR is in fact in operation.

Discussion

Given this evidence, what effect is Standards-based evaluation of beginning teachers having on conceptions of teaching north and south of the border? In England, the Standards for Qualified Teacher Status and the Induction Standards are instruments of a broad political strategy to raise standards in education that involves control over every facet of the curriculum and every stage of a teacher's career. The battle for professional autonomy for teachers has long been lost. In Scotland, there is a greater emphasis on presenting recent changes in the structure of CPD as an opportunity for greater professionalism for teachers although that is not to say that the rhetoric of raising attainment is absent.

It must also be noted that the nature of induction systems may lie as much in the culture, and its embedded expectations, in which new teachers experience their induction. The cultures within which the teachers in Scotland and England find themselves are characterised by many differences, albeit that there are also many similarities. There are different degrees of competition between schools, different funding systems, different routes into teaching, differing degrees of consensus about the purpose and desired outcomes of schooling. In consequence the role and purpose of the teacher may also vary and any

comparison of induction systems must acknowledge these differences. The following discussion thus focuses on the Scottish findings reported above.

Using the framework of models of professional learning outlined earlier what can be said about the developmental experiences of new teachers in this new induction system? It is clear that there are variations in the induction experiences of these new Scottish teachers. There is evidence to here to suggest that, at most, the SFR was only part of the scaffolding for learning about teaching for many. For some the SFR determined the framework for all support and assessment, especially in relation to observation, but for many this was not the case and for some it played only a very minor part and did not drive the agenda of support and assessment. Language was part of the reason for this. The relative inaccessibility of the SFR and especially of the associated documentation robbed the Standard of some of its potential to shape and direct the professional development of beginning teachers. The question arises therefore whether the Standard enables the effective ‘utilization of cultural resources’ for developing teaching, which Bruner (1999, p. 4) advocates. In relation to situated learning, the key focus of assessment was classroom performance, with all the social contextual complexity of managing simultaneous relationships with pupils and supporters that offered effectively no scope for peripheral participation. Although support and opportunities for reflection were offered and used outwith the classroom there was a strong focus on classroom performance for assessment purposes. In Abstract, while understandings of professional development may have informed the original design of the induction system, its realisation in practice clearly did not guarantee ‘appropriate’ experiences for all new teachers. In failing to do so it may however offer scope for the development of more autonomous professionals!

From the data gathered on the first year of the Induction Scheme there are three possible consequences for Scottish education of the greater reliance on standards for assessment and professional development.

One possibility is that there will be little or no effect on practice. The staff involved in supporting probationers who have had to engage with the SFR are by no means the majority and may not support subsequent probationers in successive years. The result may be that many supporters forget and then re-learn the requirements of the SFR, never really internalising them, while teachers entering the profession may be glad to consign the SFR to a filing cabinet once the hurdles of the Induction Year are overcome. With little or no professional development on assessing against the SFR, teachers will continue to base their assessment on their own common sense and intuitive notions of the

job, manipulating the fuzzy language of the SFR to fit their own conceptions of teaching.

A second possible outcome is that the SFR begins to have a limiting effect on professional discourse. As the SFR beds down and becomes more widely used, teachers may begin to see teaching only in terms of what can be defined in SFR statements. Practice that cannot be assessed in terms of the SFR will not be valued. Little by little competing discourses will be squeezed out and uniformity encouraged. However, since the SFR permits multiple interpretations, which will in turn be shaped by differing school contexts, wholesale uniformity is an unlikely outcome.

Finally, the introduction of the SFR may, over time, have a positive effect on the views of teachers about the nature of teaching. As teachers begin to engage with the SFR, they are forced to articulate and defend their intuitions about what constitutes competence in terms of the SFR, particularly when there are disputes or when a probationer has to be prevented from going on further in the profession due to perceived incompetence. The present tendency to view teacher competence merely in terms of classroom performance may be challenged by the broader conceptions espoused in the SFR with positive effects for future generations of beginning teachers.

Conclusion

In England, with teacher resistance to bureaucratic and managerialist approaches to education on the wane, the Induction Standards, if fully implemented may improve the induction experiences for NQTs while failing to develop the flexible, constantly developing teachers needed for the 21st century. In Scotland, a less explicit standard may have the same effect despite the obvious successes of establishing and funding a unique scheme of support and professional development valued by the teaching profession.

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A Mentor Between Supporting and Challenging a Novice's Reflection

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Abstract

Reflection is a key element of a teacher's professional activity and growth. Teacher mentors are expected to be able to direct and encourage the reflection of novice teachers and stimulate their professional development. However, this ability requires that they themselves are reflective practitioners who know the principles and procedures of encouraging professional development, and also plan and direct their own development. In the present article the authors provide insight into the role of the mentor in the mentoring process. The article is a part of a broader study which was carried out within the project Partnership of universities and schools at the Pedagogical Faculty of the University of Ljubljana in 2004/05 and 2006/07.

1 Encouraging a novice's professional development

The mentor plays a key role in supporting the professional development of a novice teacher.

The Regulations in Slovenia for the period of in-service teacher training stipulate who may act as a mentor for a novice teacher, and define the following tasks and duties for those teachers acting as mentors for novice teachers: mentorship of a novice teacher can be carried out by teachers who have advanced to the title of 'mentor' and have had the title for at least three years, as well as those who have attained the title of 'advisor' or 'counsellor.' Mentors are determined by the headmaster. The mentor's tasks are:

- in cooperation with the headmaster, to prepare a teacher training programme and help the novice teacher in fulfilling the requirements of the programme
- to cooperate with the headmaster, the school's pedagogical counselling service, and experts from the subject departments and various other school organs

- to keep track of the novice teacher's preparation for lessons and his /her journal of reflections)
- to observe the novice teacher's lessons
- to write a report on the process of the novice teacher's education in the period of his/her in-service training and on his/her ability to carry out independent work
- after completion of training, to provide an evaluation of the novice together with the headmaster.

The modern science of teacher education is directed towards the concept of a teacher as a reflective practitioner. This concept was first formed by Schon's work (1983) »Reflective Practitioner or how professionals think in action«. The work introduced a new concept of professionalism, an alternative to technical rationalism. This implies a new challenge for teacher mentors – the challenge of encouraging reflection. The ability of reflection, which is a means of developing a reflective teacher is a skill which has to be developed systematically. That is why it is encourage and develop both in students in pre-service education and in teacher trainees during the induction period:

- an openness and responsibility for their own professional development, which means lifelong active learning,
- the skills of observation and lesson analysis and other teacher activities,
- cooperation skills.

The term reflection stems from the Latin 'reflectere', which means 'to reflect', 'to think about', 'to decide'. Our ability of reflective thinking is rooted in our metacognitive processes. In attempting to understand metacognition and where it comes from, a useful starting point is the theory of symbolic interactionism by H. M. Mead, in particular his description of the structure of personality and its dynamics. According to Mead (cited in Ule, 1986), personality is shaped in processes of social interaction, but at the same time a formed personality is a pre-condition for an individual to enter social interactions as independent, yet part of society. An individual develops a personal self (I) and a social self (Me), with a reflective relationship between the two. Mead (cited in Ule, 1986) describes two phases of the social formation of identity. The first phase is the period when an individual develops the ability to empathize with another, when s/he begins to leave behind the Piagetan egocentrism. When the child connects past, present and possible future stimuli and reactions as perceived in other people, s/he gradually becomes aware of the intersubjective meaning of his/her actions. Roleplaying, to Mead (cited in Ule, 1986), proves the occurrence of the first patterns of symbolic activity. In playing roles, a child gains distance from

his/her self and learns to observe 'from the outside', from the perspective of other people and things. When the child is capable of putting him/herself into the shoes of any other group, the second phase begins – the formation of the social self (Me). This process begins in smaller groups, particularly with significant others. An individual's personality as identity is marked mainly by two characteristics: ability of empathy (Me) and the specific and unique individuality which evades any attempt of complete social determination and control (I). The »Me« is marked by all perceived expectations of other people about the individual, and their system of values and norms. This part of the personality is also referred to as the generalized other or the social self. It enables an individual to understand the social situation in which it is placed, and particularly the expectations other people have towards him/her. It is a basis of responsible action.

Mead (cited in Ule, 1986) also postulated a third dimension of personality – the mind. The mind is the reflective consciousness which Mead counts among cognitive processes. With the help of this consciousness one can internally evaluate one's own actions as well as the intentions and actions of other people. Symbolically, mentally, one can imagine a model of a situation and act according to an accepted method, which indeed delays his/her reactions, but makes them richer and more intelligent. The ability to reflect or symbolically model a situation inhibits spontaneous immediate reactions suggested by the personal self. This indeed decreases the unpredictability of reactions, but also broadens the scope of possible reactions. The reactions become alternatives a person chooses from consciously. The reflective consciousness, to Mead (in Ule, 1986) is not passive observation of oneself in interaction, but the ability to critically appraise oneself and the situation. Identity thus does not only include self-awareness. It refers to a socially formed personality with all the components that enable self-reflection: the personal and social self, and the reflective consciousness as the conscious internal interaction between the personal and social self.

A similar definition of reflection has been proposed by Van Manen (1991). He defines reflection as mental action which enables an individual to gain distance from a situation and see it more objectively. The process of reflection involves experiential learning based on an in-depth analysis of one's own practice and the cognitions that drive one's thinking and action (the metacognitive process). Reflection can be individual, as when a teacher pauses for a moment or longer to shed light on a classroom situation, or an interactive process in which a teacher uses the help of another person (critical friend) to resolve dilemmas, ask questions and gain a deeper insight into his/her work and the cognitions behind it (Bell et al. 1993).

There are different types of reflection according to:

- the object of reflection,
- degree or depth of reflection,
- relationship between reflective thinking and action,
- the time of reflection (before, during or after action),
- the social aspect – the goal toward which the reflection is directed...

Even though the concepts of reflection and reflective teaching are generally accepted, there is no unified definition (Grimmett, 1988; cited in Korthagen, 1993; Calderhead, 1989, cited in Korthagen, 1993). In practice, we thus come across various explanations of reflection, and these give rise to different models of reflective teaching and different strategies of educating reflective teachers. It is interesting, as Korthagen (1993) points out, that this lack of clarity and diversity of definitions is a socio-pedagogical rather than a cognitive-psychological issue. Different definitions of reflection namely stem from different conceptions of the aims of education, of instruction and the teacher's role in general. What is at issue, then, is normative concepts and standards – what is important and valued in the process of education.

Zeichner and Liston (1986) (according to the model proposed by Van Manen) describe three levels of teacher reflection: technical, social and practical.

At the technical level, the goal is transfer of theoretical knowledge into practice for the achievement of exactly specified goals. Teachers think about the most efficient ways to achieve their goals, which procedures, methods, techniques and aids will produce the best results. They focus solely on the technical aspect of teaching (the choice of teaching strategy), while the teaching aims and the context are prescribed in detail from the outside and are as such beyond the scope of the teachers' reflection.

At the practical level the teacher reflects on the broader context of teaching, on the causes and motives that guide his/her action, for example a choice of method. In the process of reflection, light is shed on the broader personal, institutional, social and historical context of the teacher's thinking and activity. This level of reflection goes beyond the question of how to achieve certain goals and focuses on the meaning and value of the goals themselves.

At the social level, reflection is directed into the broader socio-pedagogical framework of schooling and teaching. At this level, teachers critically reflect on the goals and dimensions of the school system and evaluate their practice from the point of view of achieving these broader goals. Teachers are

encouraged to look at their own practice and the experience of others from various perspectives. The key question is whether the goals, activities and experiences are directed at values such as justice, equal opportunity etc.

A similar description of three levels of reflection is given by Handal and Lauvas (1987):

1. The level of immediate practice: WHAT was going on, what will I do in the future?
2. The level of arguments: WHY I did what I did, why I will do the same in the future (personal and professional arguments).
3. The level of ethics: WHY I did what I did, why I will do the same in the future (ethical viewpoint, mission, vision).

Reflection is the basic factor of a teacher's professional development, defined as *»the process of significant and lifelong experiential learning in which student-teachers develop their conceptions and change their teaching practice; the process involves the teacher's personal, professional and social dimension and moves the teacher toward critical, independent, responsible decision-making and acting«* (Valenčič Zuljan, Vogrinc 2007 b). Although teacher development is a unified process, its course involves two levels: the level of conceptions, which we understand *'as a personal, implicit construct formed in an individual's personal history as a kind of sediment of his / her experiences and lessons learned from them, functioning like compasses in an individual's life, which is demonstrated in qualitatively different ways of understanding, interpreting and acting in different individuals* (Valenčič Zuljan 2007 a) and the level of action, which includes the acquisition and perfection of professional skills and gradual growth of confidence and routine. It has to be stressed that both levels of the process of reflection are closely interconnected – a teacher's conceptions and actions are reciprocally connected (Clark and Peterson 1986). An individual teacher's conceptions of knowledge and instruction significantly affect his/her understanding and interpretation of the context of instruction and his /her own decisions and actions (Ramsden 1992, cited in Trigwell and Prosser 1996). In turn, any pedagogical action affects the conceptions – they are the starting point for an analysis of conceptions (for their reinforcement or change) and the change of pedagogical action. Quality reflection thus connects the changing of ways of understanding and ways of acting by answering two key questions: *»How will I use the knowledge I gained in the process of reflective thinking about a certain experience in my future work and why will I act that way?«*

For the process of encouraging reflection to be successful, the mentor has to bring together and flexibly coordinate support and challenge (Daloz 1986, Martin 1996, McNally & Martin 1999, Daloz 1999). On the one hand a teacher

trainee needs support, emotional safety and confidence, but on the other hand the mentor should provide situations with the appropriate level of cognitive conflict and challenge. It is also extremely important to encourage a professional vision and stage planning of the trainee's development. To fulfill these functions, the mentor should be familiar with research on the characteristics of novice teachers, and the models and factors of teachers' professional development (Veenman, 1984, Kagan, 1992, Berliner, 1992). The mentor should also be aware of the importance of individualization and adaptation to the specific needs and characteristics of an individual novice (his/her levels of competence, confidence etc) (Strong & Baron, 2004).

2 Research questions and methodology

We will answer the following research questions:

- How mentors, novice teachers and headmasters rate the capability of mentors for key individual duties that mentors have for the period of mentorship of novice teachers
- To what extent mentors are trained to reflect on their practice and to encourage reflection in their trainees.

Research method

The empirical study is a combination of qualitative and quantitative pedagogical research. We have used a descriptive, causal, non-experimental method.

The sample and data gathering

The study was a part of a broader project called Partnership of the Faculties and Schools, which was carried out in 2004/05 and in 2006/07 at the Pedagogical Faculty of the University of Ljubljana. In the study we combined qualitative and quantitative procedures.

The sample for the quantitative part of the research included 331 mentors, 361 novice teachers and 77 headmasters. The instrument used was a questionnaire.

At each school from the chosen sample we carried out a case study aimed at:

- Planning the tasks of schools in carrying out the induction process.
- Evaluation and support of the work of mentors, trainees and headmasters in the process of induction at schools, guidance and evaluation of the work and the professional development of a trainee from the entry into the teaching profession to the Professional Qualification Exam. The meetings with them were aimed at teaching them various strategies for developing teacher competences in trainees: lesson observation, feedback sessions, advising and developing mentors' reflective abilities.

The qualitative part spanned two years. In the first year, the sample included five mentor-trainee pairs and two headmasters, who all kept journals which were then analysed. In the journals, we looked for the strategies used by the mentors and headmasters in developing a trainee's competences. In the second year we studied four mentor-trainee pairs and three headmasters.

The qualitative part of the study included the following procedures of data collection:

- a) semi-structured interviews,
- b) analysis of journals written by mentors, trainees and headmasters,
- c) conferences and reflective minutes of meetings / reports
- d) document analysis
- e) analysis of sound and video recordings.

Procedures for Examining the Data

The data from the questionnaire were examined by means of descriptive and inferential statistics. The statistical procedure employed were: frequency distribution, χ^2 -test of the hypothesis of independence, Kullback, univariate analysis of variance, Levene's test for the homogeneity of variance (F test), Brown-Forsythe test for equality of arithmetic means (when this was not fulfilled by the homogeneity of variance test previously carried out), T test for the independence of subjects.

The qualitative data were categorized according to the Handal and Lauvas taxonomy (1987).

3 Results and Interpretation

3.1 The mentor's role in the period of in-service teacher training

We were interested in the judgement of mentors, novice teachers and headmasters of the mentors' ability to carry out the key duties that mentors have in the process of in-service teacher training. Twelve mentor duties were to be judged on the basis of a scale of one to five, with one representing very limited ability and 5 representing very good ability.

Here is how the individual group of surveyed individuals rated the ability of mentors to carry out the specific duties.

Duty and Capability of Mentor	Rating			Difference	
	Mentor	Novice Teacher	Headmaster	Mentor – Novice Teacher	Mentor - Headmaster
Awareness of the characteristics of teaching adults	3.26	3.67	3.25	0.000***	0,955
Expertise in teaching individual subjects	4.30	4.49	4.21	0.002**	0,397
Ascertaining the needs of the novice teacher and planning the work programme with the novice teacher	3.62	4.18	3.54	0.000***	0,504
Aiding and guiding the novice teacher when preparing for lessons	4.08	4.21	4.17	0.05*	0,418
Purposeful and structured observation of the novice teacher's teaching	3.77	4.16	3.56	0.000***	0,105
Skill at team planning, carrying out and evaluating teaching	3.94	4.33	3.72	0.000***	0,081
Analysis of the novice teacher's work, support for reflection and providing feedback	3.91	4.27	3.68	0.000***	0,074
Ability to assess the novice teacher's progress and forming of stages to guide professional development	3.65	4.15	4.13	0.000***	0,000***
Aiding the novice teacher in resolving conflicts	3.92	4.30	4,18	0.000***	0,013*
Assessing the novice teacher at the end of the in-service training period and producing a final report	3.72	4.38	4,11	0.000***	0,000***
Awareness of the school and educational system	4.09	4.54	3,95	0.000***	0,180
Good communication skills and an aptness for interpersonal relations, empathy and support	4.18	4.51	4,47	0.000***	0,005**

* difference between groups is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$

** difference between groups is statistically significant at $p < 0.01$

*** difference between groups is statistically significant at $p < 0.001$

The average scores of all mentor duties are above average (the calculated means are above 2.5), and we can therefore say that in the opinion of mentors, novice teachers and headmasters the mentors are, on average, quite capable of fulfilling the individual duties that they have in the period of the mentorship of novice teachers. The average score given by the novice teachers for the ability of their mentor for individual duties is approximately in the 85th percentile; the average score with which mentors assessed their own ability for the specific duties was in approximately the 77th percentile.

Among the novice teachers and mentors the T test for independence of subjects (in consideration of the presumed homogeneity of variances) showed a statistically significant difference in the ability of the mentors. The table shows that on average the novice teachers rated the ability of the mentors for the specific duties more highly than the mentors rated themselves. Only the

mentor's ability to teach adults scored less than 4. This item was rated lower by mentors, and lower still by headmasters.

In the opinion of the novice teachers the mentors were most capable (1) in their awareness of the school and educational system, (2) they have good communication skills and an aptitude for interpersonal relations and (3) are most capable in their teaching of individual subjects. The novice teachers rated the mentors lowest (1) in their ability to assess the novice teacher's progress and forming of stages to guide professional development as well as the (2) awareness of the aspects of teaching adults.

The mentors estimated that they are most capable (1) in teaching individual subjects; (2) they have good communication skills and an aptitude for interpersonal relations and (3) have a good awareness of the school and educational system. In their own opinion they are least adept (1) in knowing how to teach adults and (2) are also less able in their aptitude for assessing the novice teacher's needs and in planning of the work programme.

3.2 Mentors' competence in reflective thinking

Research warns that the level of reflection in the process of mentoring is low. Harrison (2002, cited in Harrison et al. 2005) found „little staged progressive induction training or induction processes that produce challenge and deeper reflection on professional practice”. The author stresses the need for greater clarification of roles and responsibilities for induction, and also “more professional support for the induction tutors themselves”.

Since mentors' role is to encourage reflection in trainees, we were interested in how competent they are in reflection themselves. Five pairs of mentors and trainees kept a journal for 10 months which the researcher read before every group meeting, which was aimed at analysis and discussion. The analysis of the journals focused on describing strategies which the mentors and headmasters used to develop the trainee's teaching competences.

The responses and journal entries were categorized according to the taxonomy of reflective thinking by Handal and Lauvas (1987) as either the level of immediate practice, the level of arguments or the level of ethics.

Journal analysis showed that mentoring consists mainly of activities at the first level of reflection – the level of immediate practice. This is reflected in entries such as: *'I told him what to do', I told him what he did well and what he didn't*

do well.', 'I showed him what he can do in this situation.', 'I suggested to the trainee what to do in order to...' etc.

There was practically no record of activities which would describe the second level of reflection (with a few exceptions), and no verbs signifying the third level of reflection in any of the journal entries.

We can conclude from the data that the conceptions of the mentor's role are fairly narrow – the mentor is considered a model, and his /her task is to offer strategies and advice rather than encouragement.

We can therefore assume that the mentors in the study mostly developed in their trainees the first, lowest level of reflective thinking. That of course does not mean that they do not follow ethic principles in their work or that they do not develop professional ethics in their trainees. On the contrary, their suggestions for trainee's action were always professionally and ethically sound. What we can claim on the basis of our results is that the mentors in the process of mentoring did not encourage the two higher levels of thinking in novices, which means that they did not systematically develop reflective thinking which would lead the trainees to articulate the professional and ethic arguments for their action and in this way enhance their professional growth.

We should realize that we may claim to reflective practitioners, but even complete acceptance of the model of the best 'good teacher' does not go beyond the apprenticeship model, because the trainee is not encouraged to clarify his/her basic conceptions, does not look for the reasons and alternatives of a certain course of events, does not discuss dilemmas and experience conflict.

The results of the study point at the assumption that the mentors do not have a well-developed competence of planned reflective thinking about their own practice. For this reason, the second part of the study involved providing four mentor-trainee pairs intensive training of strategies for developing a trainee's teaching competence. We met for several three-hour training sessions where special attention was paid to developing the mentors' reflective thinking. As the case study moved towards completion, our hypothesis was confirmed. The mentors initially had very poor reflective skills. The faults in reflective thinking which showed during the initial training sessions were grouped into three categories: describing of events, thinking about other people, discussing theories. Let us look at each of the categories in more detail.

Describing events

Describing an event or state is the starting point of reflection, but it has to be followed up by an analysis of the situation, its personal meaning and conclusions concerning future action.

Thinking about other people

In their reflective thinking the mentors most often described the actions of their trainees, and sometimes they thought about the learners. However, the reflection that drives professional development always consists of thinking about oneself because we can only change ourselves. When we change, that usually induces a change with the other person with whom we are in a relationship. Thinking about other people should be directed at how we perceive them, which, again, means that we are thinking about ourselves.

Discussing theories

Everyone has their own personal mental image of their work which consists of different conceptions, beliefs, values and viewpoints connected into a more or less coherent whole. We call this an individual's personal theory of teaching. Reflection is a way of making this theory explicit, which is important because it is the 'hidden' beliefs that guide his /her action. If an individual – including professionals – wants to better understand him/herself, they have to think about their personal theory of teaching. Once this is made explicit, it can be compared to professional knowledge accumulated by others, and both can be connected into a coherent whole.

To encourage reflection we used the technique of unfinished sentences (Lipton & Wellman, 2001) and conversation. The instruments used are based on understanding reflection as a form of internal dialogue which looks for genuine answers to the right questions. 'The right questions' are the content of the instruments for encouraging reflection.

In small group discussion, an expert guided each mentor individually towards deeper levels of reflection: from the level of immediate practice to the level of argumentation and ethics (Handal & Lauvas, 1987) and from the technical level to the social level (Zeichner & Liston, 1986). The other goal was to develop the 'I can' perception in mentors. In the beginning, namely, some were quite insecure and sceptical about their ability to think reflectively, which changed through the process of reflective meetings.

An important goal of the meetings with the mentors was to raise their awareness of their mentoring role. In order to be effective, a mentor has to be aware of what conceptions they hold of their mentoring role and answer questions such as: Why did I become a mentor?, Is mentoring a challenge for me?, What is a

mentor's role?, What is expected of me?, Do I have any doubts or concerns about being a mentor?, How will I deal with these?, Who can I turn to? ...

It is very important that mentors have a chance to cooperate with other mentors (Harrison et. al. 2005), exchange their views, experiences and dilemmas – this contributes significantly to their professional development as mentors. The mentors participating in our project, too, pointed this out. A good mentor does not only have to be a good teacher (Lindgreen, 2005), but needs special mentoring competences. We could say that the mentor, too, in his/her role, advances from a beginner to an expert. A mentor's development, too, is significantly affected by the competences of reflection and teamwork, and these need to be paid special attention in the process of mentor training.

The training in mentors within our project was designed as an experiential learning experience, since we were aware that for mentors to be able to fulfill the many and various roles and tasks of mentoring, they have to be offered the same support and attention in the process of their training as we expect them to later be able to offer to their trainees (Williams & Prestiague, 2002).

At the end we have to stress that the conclusions we drew from our study are based on a small sample of teachers and are not generalizable. Despite that, the question arises of how well developed the reflective thinking of Slovenian teachers are. Teacher mentors who themselves do not have well developed reflective thinking, cannot develop the same in their trainees.

4 Conclusion

The mentor plays a key role in supporting the professional development of a novice teacher. The mentor's role can be effectively carried out only by a mentor who values his/her own professional development. Only a teacher who is aware of the importance of life-long learning will be prepared to promote this in the novice teacher as well. A mentor who reflectively analyses his/her pedagogical practices can greatly aid a novice teacher – for example in uncovering his/her own way of thinking, carrying out the fruit of planning or interpreting concrete occurrences – and thereby also support the younger colleague. Important is unveiling the background of perceived occurrences (considering why this is so, how else...), the promoting of reflection in the novice teacher and helping the novice teacher in the acquisition of 'carefully considered certainty of action.' S/he must be capable of systematically observing and analysing teaching as well as providing feedback in a constructive manner. The specific duties of mentorship call for a specific

educating of mentors for the role of mentoring as well as the acquisition of a suitable licence or expert qualification.

Our study showed that the mentors deem themselves most capable of teaching individual subjects and least capable of recognising the characteristics of teaching adults – in addition to being less capable of determining the needs of novice teachers and planning co-operation with novice teachers. Although mentors are more critical of their own abilities in comparison with novice teachers, at the same time they do not see a need for further professional qualification in order to carry out the role of mentor. Is the opinion that a good teacher is necessarily also a good mentor for a younger colleague still rooted among teachers?

The results of the qualitative analysis point to the problem of low reflexivity in mentors, from which we can conclude that this trainees do not develop this skill. How can we change this situation? We can look for answers in different directions: by improving pre-service teacher education, by thorough mentor training ... Certainly reflection skills need systematic attention both at pre-service level and during the induction period.

An important function of reflection is bringing an individual's conceptions to the surface of consciousness and their gradual reshaping. This process consists of turns of cognitive conflict and modelling. A trainee thus needs to be helped to see the conflicts and faults in his /her own conceptions and feel the need to change them. According to the cognitive-constructivist model of instruction, a certain social-cognitive conflict stemming from an individual's experience is necessary. This conflict can arise at different levels of specificity, in different time frames and at different levels of personal involvement. A mentor can induce such a conflict by providing the trainee with specially selected information which is not in line with the trainee's viewpoints, or by mirroring, which enables the trainee to see a problem from a different perspective, by making the trainee aware of the inconsistencies in his /her viewpoints etc. Only awareness of an inconsistency between beliefs or between beliefs and reality leads to the insight that something has to change, and that is the best basis for planning change and for the development of new conceptions. For a novice teacher to develop as a professional, his /her planning and action has to be related to the learners' results, i. e. the level of attainment of educational goals as well as with the broader aspects such as further educational opportunities, democratic style etc. This refers to a demanding aspect of the mentor's role: encouraging higher-order levels of reflection in a novice, which, as our study shows, is rarely present in the mentor-novice interactions.

The phase of cognitive conflict is followed by a phase of 'modelling' and help, but not in the sense of forcing a trainee to follow the "model", but in the sense

of “adapted support ” in the trainee's search of his /her own teaching style, which means an integration of conceptions and scientific theory.

A novice teacher's development is not only affected by the mentor but also the headmaster and the entire school staff. However, this is not a one-way process: in a school where the lifelong learning of all the members of staff is valued, a novice teacher with their ideas, questions and dilemmas can significantly boost the cooperative learning of all. To conclude, as Hargreaves and Fullan point out, (2000, 50), mentoring can be an important aspect of transforming the teaching and learning profession if it follows these principles: “from being performed in pairs to becoming an integral part of professional cultures in schools; from focusing only on classroom work with students to developing the ability to form strong relationships with colleagues and parents as well; from hierarchical dispensations of wisdom to shared inquiries into practice; from being an isolated innovation to becoming an integrated part of broader improvement efforts in our school in school system. This is certainly a challenge for schools, for teacher educators and educational politics.

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Apprenticeship in Education in the Republic of Macedonia Between Theory and Practice

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Abstract

In this work, based on official programmes and documents of the Republic of Macedonia as well as on the author’s theoretical and practical experience, the author attempts to present and diagnose the situation regarding the professional development of teachers, pointing out the key interventions, defining the directions towards the change and offering some proposals for the future.

The genesis of the motivation and orientation of the theoretical elaboration of this problem is a result of: critical analyses of the educational system in the Republic of Macedonia (the segment which is in focus), the contemporary tendencies in the educational spheres, the negative practical implications which are a result of today’s situation, research of the experiences of the educational systems of the highly developed countries, and the messages and recommendations of the international documents regarding the specific problem of teacher development.

The basic document used is the National Programme for the Development of Education in the Republic of Macedonia 2005-2015.

The reflections and implications of the analysis are an indicator of the needs, directions and models for designing the professional development of teachers, and in the same context, apprenticeship in education. The main aim of this work is to sensitize the relevant institutions and subjects in the Republic of Macedonia to modern approaches to treating the numerous questions related to teacher development.

Introduction

Education represents a fundamental component of the human development. Contemporary educational systems worldwide are attempting to construct effective educational models in which the educators will be able to develop their psychological competence. The questions of competence, assessment and improvement of certain aspects of the teacher’s personality, role, place and functions in the educational process have a long socio–historical tradition. The

dynamic transformations and the changes in the socio-economic, scientific-technical, socio-cultural and other spheres of society are directly or indirectly reflected in the education in the schools. The school as an institution of societal interest is undergoing its own process of transformation particularly in the new states and transition societies. If we look at the development of pedagogical theory and practice, different dominations of the pedagogical, psychological, didactical and methodological and other issues can be seen.

If we try to systemize the basic notions and phenomena in pedagogical theory and practice from the aspect of knowledge, priority and complexity, we have to agree that they are the following: the teaching process, teacher, student, educational technology and others. In this context we can observe the necessity with a pedagogical-psychological dimension - giving an image to and redesigning the role of the teacher in the newly created circumstances. Kevereski, L., Nikoloska, N. (2007:11). The new reform orientations in education certainly aren't possible without providing better educational preparation to the teachers for the modern educational trends. For that purpose the considerations about the innovation of the forms and content of professional development of teachers is one of the priorities that will enable more efficient adaptation of the teacher in the educational process.

The Theoretical Approach

The intensive changes in the social, economic, socio-cultural and other relations, as well as the new knowledge in the fields of pedagogy, psychology, instructional science etc. bring new educational standards that define the status of the teaching profession. The new reform orientations in the sphere of education certainly aren't possible without enabling better educational preparation of teachers with modern courses in education. That is why contextual innovation of the forms of teacher development is one of the priorities in the educational process. Towards that goal, the tendency of educational experts is to reshape the image of the professional development of teachers so that it will be in accordance with the needs of a modern teacher, students and education.

Without a detailed analysis of the conceptual problems of today's education in the Republic of Macedonia, we will point out the one that has direct implications for the teaching process. That is the absence of practically developed and elaborated system of pedagogical-psychological preparation of teachers in almost all phases, especially in the phase of apprenticeship. That

evident problem has resulted in the necessity of redesigning the system of professional improvement of teachers.

Why professional development of teachers?

There are many theoretical and practical reasons, and some of them are: the teacher is the most important subject of the educational mosaic, her/his continuous education is her/his immanent need which determines the qualitative dimension of the educational process; s/he can strengthen the educational process as a whole; all of the educational technology and other aspects of the educational process can become insignificant if teacher development falls behind.

The situation in the Republic of Macedonia

When it comes to the programme documents dealing with the professional development of teachers, in the Republic of Macedonia that is the National Programme for the Development of Education 2005-2015. Its integral document is the programme for professional development of school staff (321-373). It analyzes the current situation and trends in teacher development, the issues concerning their initial and continuous education, and the needs for establishing a system of career development as a key assumption for the successful realization of the teachers' role. The document provides a critical view of the current situation and points out the key areas for intervention and innovation. The National Programme thus lists the following imperfections of the professional development of teachers in Macedonia:

- Absence of ascertained policy of professional development;
- Spontaneous individual initiatives;
- Insufficient material resources for funding schools and teaching staff;
- Formalization of the mentoring system for apprenticeship;
- Absence of standards and criteria for professional development;
- Absence of initiative for the teachers' professional development;
- Undefined training system;
- Need to redesign the system of teacher education;
- Need to design an accreditation system;

These imperfections show that the question of the phases and stages of the teachers' professional development deserve a more serious approach. Considering an integrated reform of the professional education of teachers and emphasizing life-long learning, six mission statements were formulated at an

educational conference held in Macedonia in 2000, one of them being the need for greater investment into human resources (Petkoski, K., Trajkova I., 2004: 5).

Apprenticeship – the notion, functions and meanings

Apprenticeship in the context of teacher development is understood as an institutionally organized and planned process of continuous theoretical and practical education in introducing a beginner to work after finishing his/her initial education. Organizing an apprenticeship is the first step and the basis for the development of skill and competence needed for teaching and other professional activities. It is a practical qualification for independent work in the profession under the supervision of another person, which means cooperation and team work. Its fundamental function, considering the increased and changed needs of the educational process, is to enable the teacher a faster, easier and more effective adaptation (Kevereski, L. 2007:20).

An organized system for the entry of beginners into the educational process has both pedagogical and psychological dimensions. The pedagogical dimensions refer to the methodological, pedagogical-psychological, organizational and other adaptations in the educational process. The personal dimensions are related to gaining self-confidence, certainty, integrity and some other characteristics of the teacher that are of exceptional importance to better adaptation.

A beginner should respect the existing ideas, but improvement of the educational process is only possible if teachers' professional development involves training structural thinking (Eyre, 2002 , Maksic, 2006:190).

Without unduly stressing the negative aspects, we can list some other imperfections in the educational practice that refer to apprenticeship: a formalized approach in determining a mentor for the apprentice, bias concerning choosing mentors from among the older teachers, poor motivation of mentors, insufficient cooperation between the mentor and the apprentice, unsystematic approach to the training process, excess formalization of the final certification exam. All these conditions have negative implications.

The current situation (positive examples and educational practice)

The Primary School “Grigor Prličev” in Ohrid, (Annual school program 2006-2007: 7) in its system of institutional functioning, carries out teacher apprenticeship according to internally defined procedures. The system comprises: filling in a specially constructed questionnaire intended to identify the abilities, affinities, skills, preferences and other characteristics of the apprentice; officially introducing the apprentice to the competent organs in the school; assigning a mentor from among the teachers with a record of adequate pedagogical and psychological performance regardless of age and length of job experience; defining the obligations of the mentor and the apprentice including the content and dynamic of the cooperation; continuous supervision and assessment of the apprentices’ development and the entire apprenticeship process by several subjects in addition to the mentor (the principal, the school psychologist etc), who also offer pedagogical, psychological and technically-administrative support; public promotion of the final certification exam in front of the teachers’ board. All this, as we have said before, enables faster and more efficient pedagogical and social integration of a young teacher into the educational process as well as into the staff and culture of the school.

Another positive example is The Pedagogical Faculty in Bitola, where the professional development of teacher candidates after finishing their initial education is a subject of particular concern. This is realized in two ways.

1. Pre-service school placement

“No reform has been successful without teachers’ support and engagement”.

Делор (1996:135)

There is a team of professors and assistants at the Pedagogical Faculty in Bitola whose task is to supervise the process of school-based practice for teacher candidates. At the beginning of the school year they make a net plan for its realization. Based on the experiences of the previous years, groups of candidates with dates for their placement are assigned to specific schools. The plan also lays out the content, forms and principles of their school-based experience, the methods of qualitative and quantitative evaluation based on the existent indicators (the candidates have to submit reports to the Dean and the teachers’ Board). Of course, cooperation between the Faculty, the schools and other professionals involved is crucial.

2. The induction phase

After the teacher starts working, her/his school informs the Pedagogical Faculty in Bitola that they have employed their graduate. Then starts the process of cooperation between the faculty and the school, between the Faculty team in charge of school placements and the mentor or the team at the school responsible for the process of apprenticeship. The continuum, the content and the dynamics of further cooperation of these two institutions depend on the level and the overall functioning of the primary school as well as on some other objective and subjective preconditions.

The National Programme for the Development of Education 2005-2015

It is important to also mention the good practice regarding teacher development as proposed in the National Programme for Education (The Nat.Prog. .334-344). The key points are:

- Evaluation and improvement of the programme for teacher training;
- Creating efficient professional and institutional support for the teachers education system
- Forming a Board for the Professional Development of Teachers;
- Forming a Committee for accreditation
- Professional training, defining the career development of the teacher;

The above listed suggestions are a basis for a system for professional development which is necessary in educational practice.

Conclusion

In the attempt to draw conclusions from the theoretical elaboration presented in this article, we start from an assumption that is typical of education in Macedonia as well as of other educational systems, and that is that theory always goes before practice. That means that the previously quoted opinions, tendencies and responsibilities that arise from the official documents are only implemented in school practice very slowly, inefficiently, or they aren't implemented at all. On the basis of theoretical and empirical findings and experiences with professional development of teachers and their apprenticeship, a few final recommendations and instructions with both micro and macro dimensions at the institutional and national level can be defined. These

recommendations would be of great significance for a quality institutional process of educational improvement:

- create a general programme of teacher qualifications;
- analytical creating or keeping documentation;
- provide qualitative description of the roles of a mentor and apprentice;
- continually trace the contents, the phases, dynamics and other components of the professional development process;
- jointly prepare documents about the finished process of apprenticeship which are needed for applying for the certification exam;

For designing its own system of professional development, The Republic of Macedonia should:

- consider the trends of the existent training systems in Europe and strive towards better compatibility with those systems;
- innovate the legal frame and other motivational mechanisms;
- motivate the mentors;
- institutions must stand against vulgarization and improvisation of the process of professional development;
- define the levels and quality of professional qualifications;
- enable external evaluation of each single phase of the process;

These are only a few from the repertoire of the complex needs and changes in the process of building a practical and functional system for professional education of teachers at different institutional levels. The suggested news that are part of the Programme for professional development of school staff as an integral part of the National Programme for the Development of Education in the Republic of Macedonia, as well as the suggestions listed in the final part of this paper are a real basis for building a system of professional development of teachers which from there on must be innovated and must follow the contemporary trends in the education.

At the end, we can say that we can not approach the professional development of teachers and the process of apprenticeship technically and mechanically, but pedagogically. They are not only institutional or individual, they are both institutional and individual processes where interactive relationships and relations dominate and where success is shared.

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