COLLEGIAL RELATIONS

in the

FIRST YEARS OF TEACHING

by

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Synopsis

First few years of teaching have long been recognized as a critical period for teachers and can be fairly traumatic for beginning teachers without adequate help and support. Today, the need of a specialized and effective form of in-service training, that is, an “induction program”, has been accepted all over the world. This qualitative study explores the central and important role of colleagues in induction and transition period of beginning teachers with the purpose of recommending some suggestions for the future’s induction programs. To be able to do that, firstly, it looks at the importance of first years in teaching from different perspectives and assesses the problems and needs of beginning teachers. Then it discusses the possible roles of colleagues in this critical period of beginners. After that, the case study conducted in an inner-city secondary school in Nottingham City area is presented and findings are discussed. In accordance with the findings of the study, attention is given to some implications for the future’s induction programs in the last chapter.
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Introduction

In any profession, transition from training into the workplace generates certain tensions and stresses for the newcomer. To reduce these stresses and tensions, in most professions, the neophyte takes small steps from simple to more demanding tasks and from small to greater responsibility under the supervision of persons who have attained recognized position within the occupation. Although teaching is one of most demanding professions total induction system of the teaching profession is not highly developed as it is in most other professions. Teacher drop out rates in first five years of teaching clearly prove that. Most teachers find teaching hard work because teaching requires high level of continuous performance and brings stress along with its heavy responsibilities. While experienced teachers find it difficult to cope with demanding aspects of teaching, it is much more difficult for beginning teachers whose responsibilities are the same as those of veterans, since they are in a physical and psychological adjustment period to their new work and workplace.

This is a critical period when beginning teachers are immersed in a set of rapidly changing events which they do not fully understand. They are unsure of their ability to control these events, though they know that failure to control them will inevitably have serious consequences for them. If they can master this phase in teaching, they will succeed to some degree as teachers.

On the other hand, benefits of colleague interaction for teachers are well documented by research. It has been proven that collegiality and collaboration
play major role in a teacher’s professional development and growth period. That is, for teachers, what goes on inside the classroom is closely related to what goes on outside it. Beginning teachers, in this sense, are at the beginning of their professional development period and collegial and professional relationships become much more significant for them. Their professional relationships with their colleagues will be one of the most important factors which will determine whether or not they will stay in the profession, and, if they stay, what kind of teachers they will become. Because, consciously or unconsciously, the beginning teacher sees his/her colleagues as potential models and uses them sources of support and advice.

Thus, in this dissertation, I would like to explore a) the importance of colleagues in adaptation and integration of the beginning teacher into the school and into the profession, and, b) the possible effects of professional relationships of the beginning teacher with his/her colleagues on his/her transition period and development. To be able to assess this issue in detail, both practical and theoretical approaches will be used with the purpose of recommending some suggestions for the future’s induction programs. Therefore, in the following, I will try to highlight importance of first years in teaching and the problems and needs of beginning teachers in these crucial period using my personal experiences as a student-teacher and experiences of new teachers both in literature and in my study. Then, colleagues’ role in the induction of beginning teachers will be discussed. In the third chapter, the case study conducted in an inner city school
will be presented and discussed. In the last chapter, using the data from the case study and from the literature, some implications will be made.
Chapter 1

The First Years in Teaching and Problems of Beginners

1.1 About the importance of the first years in teaching

It is obvious that being new and inexperienced in an occupation is a difficult period. At the same time this is also very crucial time for a person since his/her appropriateness for the job will be revealed in this period. No matter how good his/her pre-service education is, initiates into any occupation experience a “reality shock” when he/she takes on its full responsibilities. The experiences encountered during the first years of teaching are probably more crucial to the new teacher’s future career than is the case in many other professions. For the beginning teacher the transition period is one of great personal investment with serious consequences. If the beginning teacher negotiates the transition period successfully, he or she will be accepted into the profession and will assume that he or she has the skills necessary to live and work in this profession. It is not only the problem of whether he/she will stay or not in the profession, it is also a matter of if he/she stays, what kind of teacher he/she will become. That is, those teachers who cannot master it, who cannot cope with its challenges and its demands, will most assuredly fail as teachers, even though they remain in teaching (McDonald and Elias, 1980). From this point of view, to be able to emphasize the importance of first years in teaching, we can analyse the possible effects of the first years in teaching on a teacher’s career under several headings:
**Effects on teacher burnout and dropout rates:** Teacher stress and burnout have become common terms using in teaching profession. Cherniss (1980) explains this phenomenon as;

“Burnout involves a change in attitude and behaviour in response to a demanding, frustrating, unrewarding work experience. ... However, the term “burnout” has come to have an additional meaning in recent research and writing on the topic; it refers to negative changes in work-related attitudes and behaviour in response to job stress.”

(cited in Fullan, 1991, p.126)

Possible consequences of this burnout can be various; decline in motivation and effort, increasing discouragement, negativism, resistance to change, loss of creativity… McDonald and Elias (1980) believe that the seeds of “burn-out” are planted during this period. They think that some of resistance of inservice activities, to curriculum development activities, to other efforts to improve the complexity and level of teaching are born out of the experience of having survived the transitional period.

Inevitably, when the beginning teacher is unable to cope with the complex and challenging demands of teaching, the most common response to this “burnout” is to leave the profession. While most young teachers enter the schools with fervour and dedication, generally the beginners’ commitment to teaching as a long-term career is not high. Evidence for this is the teacher dropout rate during first years in teaching. Estimates show that 30% of teachers leave the profession during their
first few years as they find the occupation and working conditions unsatisfactory (Fullan, 1991). Of beginning teachers who enter teaching, up to 40-50% will leave during the first seven years of their career (Ibid). It is even more disheartening to learn that most of these teachers who do not remain in the profession are capable teachers, devoted to education. That is, these estimates can be interpreted as we are losing some of potentially best teachers due to lack of adequate help and support that available for them in this crucial period.

**Effects on Teacher Effectiveness:** It is widely accepted that the conditions under which a person carries out the first years of teaching have a strong influence on the level of effectiveness which that teacher is able to achieve and sustain over the years; on the attitudes which govern teacher behaviour over even a forty year career (Grant and Zeichner, 1981). It is truism among teachers and especially teacher educators that within the first six months of the first experience of teaching the teacher will have adopted his or her basic teaching style (McDonald and Elias, 1980). There is a simple logic here; for the beginning teacher surviving is the main goal, and the beginning teacher is likely to adopt the practices that help him/her survive. In this position, the beginning teacher may not be thinking entirely rational and clear-headed way. They just need to know what is going to work, and will try whatever suggested to them, or they will continue to use whatever they hit upon seems to work. Experience indicates that once a teacher’s basic teaching style has stabilized, it remains in that form until some other event causes change, and at the present time there are not many such events producing
change (Ibid, p.22). In these ways the transition period may be the critical period for determining the eventual instruction effectiveness of the teacher, that is, the transition period is the major shaping event in the professional life of the teacher (Kyriacou, 1993).

**Effects on Attitudes Towards Education and Teaching:** Much research has been done about the likelihood of attitude changes of beginning teachers during their training and in their first years of teaching (See; Hogben and Petty, 1979, Edgar and Warren, 1969, Gibson, 1976). A fairly consistent finding has been that students in teacher education programs tend to become more “progressive” in attitude during their college or university courses, but that this change is reversed once regular school teaching is experienced. Evidence from a number of sources suggest that beginners’ attitudes harden and become more conservative during the course of their first year’s teaching. For example, Taylor and Dale (1973) found that many beginners, who initially felt that their informal or progressive teaching approaches were being resisted by more authoritarian or formal approaches favoured by their colleagues may, by the end of their first year(s), have moved, consciously or otherwise, much closer towards these colleagues’ views. Where they feel themselves to be the odd man out in situations, they may experience considerable stress. Some of this may be both inevitable and desirable and can be seen as beginner’s learning experience, however, in other cases it may lead to disillusionment, lowered teaching standards and even wastage from the profession (Ibid).
In the study carried out by Bergman *et al.* (1976) 57% of the beginning teachers reported that they had changed their original student-centred teaching behaviours into a more authoritarian way (cited in Veenman, 1984). Studies of attitude changes seem to suggest that the impact of teacher education courses is “washed out” by everyday experience in the schools. The bureaucratic norms of the schools; cooperative teachers, principals, and others with evaluative power over beginning teachers, the structural characteristics of schools and the teachers’ work, the ecology of classroom, the reference group of colleagues, and pupils and parents all have been seen to play major roles in this shift (Ibid).

**Effects on Professional Development:** A few professionals think of teaching as a continual process of development, with the early years, especially, being an extension of university teacher education. The conventional view, probably the view of the majority of teachers and administrators, is that any fully licensed teacher should be expected to be a “completed” teacher, fully capable of meeting all the obligations and demands of a classroom. (Zeichner, Tabachnick and Densmore, 1987, p.38).

On the contrary, research literature acknowledge that beginning teachers still need supervision and support similar to that which was available in the student-teacher phase (Nias, 1998, Gold, 1996, Fullan, 1991, Grant and Zeichner, 1981, Huling-Austin, 1990, Calderhead and Shorrock, 1997). Such support enables beginners to continue to develop their teaching skills while confronting the adjustment difficulties of the first few years. From this transition stage, the teacher can then
proceed to a staff development program that provides opportunities for continued professional growth (Huling-Austin, 1990, p.535).

To be able to emphasize the importance of first years on professional development and growth, Grant and Zeichner (1981) identify three distinct phases in the education of teacher;

1. *Pre-service-* the four or five-year period preceding provisional certification

2. *Induction-* the first few years of teaching following completion of pre-service training and provisional certification, but proceeding permanent certification

3. *In-service-* the period following permanent certification and continuing throughout a teacher’s career.

(p.99)

This framework clearly proves that induction period lies at the heart of the development process.

From the same perspective, Fullan (1991) suggests that professional development encompasses what teachers bring to the profession and what happens to them throughout their careers. Induction period can bridge these two stages. He emphasizes that teacher education, or teacher as learner, from day one, must be thought of a career-long proposition. Teacher education or teacher development is a continuum of learning (Ibid, p.309).
Huling-Austin (1990) also explains teacher induction in this context of teacher education, which is often described as continuum, represented as follows;

Preservice-----Induction-----Inservice

Looking at the scene from this perspective, it can be said that programs to address the induction period need to function both as a logical extensions of the preservice program and as entry pieces in a larger career-long professional program (Ibid). Because of that induction period can be defined as a crucial stage in terms of professional learning and growth.

These are some crucial effects of the first years in teaching on a teacher’s career. Despite these realities, evidence shows that, for most of teachers, induction period is one of the difficult periods and most of induction arrangements are far from to meet beginners’ needs.

One of the important studies on beginning teachers and their problems is that of McDonald and Elias’s (1980) and at the end of their detailed study, they describe some of the “facts” about transition period as follows;

1. Existing preparation programs do not seem to prepare teachers adequately for this initial period, though programs for beginning teachers place teachers in a situation where they can be supervised more carefully while they are going
through the transition period. But no preservice or inservice programs adequately prepare the teacher for the initial experience, therefore the amount of assistance required is much greater than would be necessary.

2. Almost all teachers experience the transition period into teaching as the most difficult aspect of their teaching life and career. There apparently are some teachers who move into teaching smoothly and efficiently, but the majority report the period is one of great difficulty and even a trauma.

3. The major kind of problems and difficulties that teachers experience are readily identifiable. Most of them relate to the management and conduct of instruction. These problems are so critical that it is easy to overlook the equally obvious fact that the range of problems includes with evaluating pupils, being evaluated by the administration, working with parents, developing a consistent teaching style, finding how the school functions, knowing rules that must be followed, and variety of other problems.

4. The least studied aspect of this transition period is the fear, anxiety, and feelings of isolation and loneliness that appear to characterize it. There is sufficient information in existing reports to indicate that these feelings are not common; however, individual conversations with teachers are far more revealing than the current literature.

5. Almost all teachers report that they went through this transition period “on their own”. They had little or no help available, and found help only through their own initiative. This help usually took the form of seeking some other teacher in whom they could confide…
6. There is probably a strong relationship between how teachers pass through the transition period and how likely are to progress professionally to high levels of competence and endeavour.

(pp.41-42)

After having assessed the importance of first few years in teaching for beginning teachers and teaching profession, now it is time to look at perceived problems and needs of beginning teachers in this transition period.

1.2 My experience

Being a new member of a social unit or an organization is an experience that everyone faces at least once in his/her life. The experiences that one live through under the status of newcomer will certainly affect his/her future career in that particular organization. This is so demanding period that one should both fulfil his/her duties in completely strange environment and adjust his/her professional relationships with the other members of the organization. That is, there are two major concerns for the newcomer; a successful entry to the profession and gaining acceptance from both the administration and other members of the organization. It is unlikely not to face with problems in this period. Variety and complexity of these problems vary according to the profession, individual’s characteristics, organizational aspects, etc…
Teaching is a profession where one can intensively feel the problems of being a newcomer. Although I have never been in a school as a teacher, my experiences as a student-teacher have clearly proved it to me. Of course, one may think that, nobody can understand the problems of beginning teachers entirely while s/he is a student-teacher since realities of both sides are different. However, since there are also some similarities in positions you may experience similar problems and these may give some clues about the complexity of beginning teachers’ problems. Because of that, before assessing the problems of beginning teachers in the literature I will mention about my experiences to catch the idea of needs and stresses of new teachers.

As I have mentioned above, problems that one may face vary according to various factors and one of the important factors that determines these problems is the personal characteristics of the newcomer. Being from totally different culture and having difficulties in English as a foreigner were my obvious differences. These differences may seem to reader as primary sources of my problems (and perhaps they were to some degree), however, having these extreme differences may also show the degree of acceptability and assimilation capacity of the school culture to individuals from different backgrounds.

Like most new teachers, before I went to the school as a student-teacher, I thought that I have been very familiar with the school setting and being the teacher’s side of the desk should not be entirely different experience than being a student watching teachers. But during the first days I realized how wrong I had been.
When I went to the school, I found myself a stranger among the other staff. It seemed that everybody other than me know each other well. We were five student-teachers in the school and I preferred to stick others because they were simply in my position. We were equally vulnerable and lonely. I met with the staff-coordinator and then with my mentor. They seemed very approachable and friendly but I still did not know if the rest of the staff was like them or not. And at the end of my teaching experience period I still did not anything about most of them!

But it was when I first entered the classroom when I realized that being a teacher would not be the same as I had predicted. Even standing in front of 30 students was much difficult than I had expected. I felt a need to sit among them and wanted to hide myself.

During the first few weeks I spent my time by observing and engaged with the paper work to be filled. After that period I started to work with groups of pupils during the lessons I attended and problems began to arise. First of all I realized how poor I am at remembering the names of pupils. There were a lot of pupils and their names were completely strange to me.

Another problem was about subject knowledge. It was obvious that one may know quite a bit about the subject matter about to be taught, but one may not know it at the level that it presented in the secondary school. It was a big problem because most of time I was not sure if pupils had understood what I had tried to say. Maybe it was just a problem of language.
Adjusting social distance was another problem. Until that time I always believed that being a teacher should be the same as being a friend but it did not work in the real world. Pupils seemed to confuse at first and then they began to take advantage of it. This, of course, brought some problems in controlling pupils. I was desperate about my future days in the school because I thought while I even could not control a small group of children, how was I supposed to control a whole class when the time came?

Help came from the teachers from my department and from my mentor. I talked to them and they gave me advice. I also saw some good practices on the issues that I was experiencing difficulty. It helped a lot and I gradually felt better and comfortable even after. But there were still limited numbers of teachers that I could talk and almost all of them were from my department. All teachers were very busy and there was not enough time to spend together. Obviously a teacher spends most of his/her time with pupils in the classroom and there is almost no time for adult interaction within the school. The only available time for adult interaction is lunch time break but most of teachers spend limited time in the staffroom while having their lunch and then go back to their classrooms to organize things for rest of the day. As a newcomer your primary need is interaction with others because you need to prove yourself and to be accepted by others. The only way to do is to talk. If you fail to do this you find yourself “isolated” and “lonely”. This is exactly how I felt most of time during my experience.
These were my basics problems and experiences and I believe that they cannot compare to those of newly qualified teachers who has the same duties and responsibilities assumed by experienced teachers. As following sections of this dissertation will make it clear.

1.3 Perceived problems and needs of beginning teachers

The first years of teaching have often been called a “sink or swim” or “survival” situation for beginning teachers. As it has been mentioned earlier, beginning teachers still need supervision and support similar to that which was available in the student-teacher phase. On the other hand, although supporting students and beginning teachers has certain similarities, such as the skills of listening, questioning and giving feedback, there are also substantial differences since position and realities of both sides are different. As a beginning teacher in Capel et al.’s (1997) study points out;

“I never thought there would be so much to do, so much to learn about. I realized for the first time that life as a student teacher was easy; the classes were up and running; routines were established; books and materials were organized. You fitted in quickly because all the basics had been done by the class teachers before you arrived. As a NQT you have to start from scratch. Everybody else seems to know
exactly what to do. There seems to be so much to learn, so much to do and so little time. I found it exhausting.”

(p:7)

A young man or woman typically is a student in June and a fully responsible teacher in September. Beginning teachers are on probation and usually receive more supervision than their experienced colleagues, but their daily tasks are essentially the same. The beginning teacher has to able to manage a class on the first day, conduct basic instruction, organize sufficient material to carry out the instruction over several days, organize it in an orderly structure over time, and begin the process of evaluating pupils and communicating the results of those evaluations to the pupils and their parents (McDonald and Elias, 1980). It is a period of important learning where commonly the knowledge and skills of the professional undergo. Ryan (1970) gives some simple examples of things to be learnt:

“There is so much to learn. The beginning teacher must determine what his students know and what they do not know. What are realistic expectations for them? How much can they do? To what type of humour are they responsive? ....

The new teacher must learn how to organize ideas and at the same time deal with the dynamics of thirty students... He must learn to check students’ understanding... The beginning teacher must develop a good
pace for his instruction... Another skill that must be developed is the knack of interesting students in a particular task... Finally, the new teacher must learn to budget time. How much time should be spent on preparation? ....”

(PP.174-175)

Besides being an initiation into the profession, the first years of the teaching is also an initiation into the adult world with its responsibilities. From the freedom of student life the beginning teacher is moved to the restrictions and responsibilities of professional life making the first years a period of immense learning (Veenman, 1984, p: 148). New teachers find themselves surrounded with a range of responsibilities in addition to teaching a class of their own and high expectations from both their colleagues and management. Calderhead and Shorrock (1997) define this period as a time of transition when the novice’s acquired knowledge and experience becomes situated in a real life setting. The novice becomes socialized into a professional culture with certain goals, shared values and standards of conduct.

However, the organization and physical resources of schools and perhaps more significantly, the beliefs that are not only held and valued within the institution but have become embedded within its many taken-for-granted practices, inevitably exert a powerful influence upon the new teacher, which is sometimes referred as the “wash-out effect” (Zeichner and Tabachnick, 1981), and may cause the “reality shock” (Veenman, 1984) on the new teacher since they may dominate
and overrule the practices learned in college (Calderhead and Shorrock, 1997). In general, the concept of the “reality shock” is used to indicate the collapse of the missionary ideals formed during teacher training by the harsh and rude reality of everyday classroom life (Veenman, 1984).

The reality shock could be the result of different causes. Muller-Fohrbrodt et al. (1978) group them into personal and situational causes. Personal causes may be a wrong choice for the teaching profession, improper attitudes, and unsuitable personality characteristics. Situational causes may be inadequate professional training, a problematic school situation (authoritarian, bureaucratic, and hierarchical relationships, fixed organizational structures, inadequate staffing and shortage of materials and supplies, the absence of explicitly stated educational objectives, loneliness in the workplace, parents who lay special emphasis on the transmission of knowledge, the multiplicity of tasks that a teacher must fulfil) (cited in Veenman, 1984, p: 147).

As we have seen, transition from teacher training to the first teaching job could be a dramatic and traumatic one. There is a great deal of research on the problems and needs of beginning teachers.

In his detailed study, Veenman (1984) presents the results of 83 studies that have appeared from 1960 to 1983 on the perceived problems of beginning teachers in their first few year(s) of teaching. The most frequently perceived problems were (in rank order) classroom discipline, motivating students, dealing with individual differences, assessing students’ work, relationships with parents, organization of
classwork, insufficient materials and supplies, and dealing with problems of individual students.

At the end of the SPITE (The Structure and Process of Initial Teacher Education within Universities in England and Wales) project, O’Sullivan et al’s (1988) findings were more or less similar to Veenman’s. They found that the issue that caused more problems to teachers than any other was a difficulty in controlling individual pupils.

A total of 63.5 per cent had some problems with this, and 14.0 per cent had major problems. This was followed by difficulty in controlling classes, in which 57.0 per cent had some problems and 7.6 per cent had major problems. Some 63.0 per cent had occasional or major problems with the amount of marking required.

On the other hand, a recent survey carried out by Ganser (1999) has revealed different results. Data analysis of this survey has shown that lack of spare time, burden of clerical work, and heavy teaching loads as the three greatest problems. As it can easily seen, all of those problems focused on limited time whereas the three greatest problems in Veenman’s study focused on students (discipline, motivation, and individual differences).

No matter how accurate these classifications and whatever the sequence of the problems; it is obvious that most beginners face with problems and difficulties in every aspects of teaching. So far we have focused on the problems of beginning teachers that directly related to the classroom practices. Besides those, one of the major preoccupations of the teachers in their first years is the complexity of their relationships with their new colleagues.
1.4 Isolation

Being a teacher is not simply a matter of learning to cope with children in the classroom. The new teacher also has to learn to relate to an existing staff-group and to find ways of working satisfactorily within it. Not only s/he has to do this but s/he inevitably sees his/hers colleagues as potential models or as sources of support and advice. However becoming a member of an established staff group is certainly not easy and the new comer needs to develop an awareness of its structure and methods of communication. If newcomers do not accept existing norms and values of the faculty, they may find themselves isolated socially, deprived of any sense of group belongingness.

According to sociology, the ease with which a newcomer can fit into a group depends on two variables. One of these is the individual’s level of acceptability. This may range from inflexible attitudes and considerable suspicion of those who do not share them, which will make a person unfit for anything other than his own personal background, to a high level of sophistication where a person can refrain from showing surprise or disapproval at unusual attitudes and can make some adjustment quickly to any social unit. The other variable is the group’s capacity for assimilation which may vary from a low level to a very high level. There might be several factors affecting this capacity such as common history of the social unit, relations between existing group members, largeness of the group…(Fraser,1963).

Of course, this capacity also depends highly on the type of the profession. In some
professions, such as medicine, collegial relationships are crucial for the development of the profession and professionals within it. It seems that collegial relationships are valuable to teachers and the teaching profession, too. Yet, a number of studies, most importantly that reported by Lortie (1975), have consistently observed that collegial interaction is not commonly a part of teachers’ professional behaviour. Copeland and Jamgochian (1985) claim that it is rare for two teachers to meet together outside of class time to discuss substantive issues related to their students or their own teaching. Systematic analysis of teaching, exploration of alternative approaches, analysis of individual teaching and learning problems, and the generation and testing of possible solutions are all activities that typically occur at the individual teacher level, not among colleagues (Ibid). This lack of communication seems the main reason of “teacher isolation”.

Copeland and Jamgochian point out the institutional structure in which teachers work as one of the important reasons for teacher isolation. The schedule of the school day, the task description that teachers work to meet, and the concepts held by administration of what constitutes appropriate teaching behaviour, all represent structural constraints that work against regular, productive collegial interaction (Ibid). Cellular organization of schools also retards rather than enhances colleagueship. Surveys of teachers’ perceived in-service needs commonly reveal pleas for more time to talk with one another and to share ideas, pleas that usually go unheeded (ibid).

On the other hand, Lortie (1975) finds out the stems of isolation and lack of collegiality in teaching profession in the professional training courses. According
to him, courses in education are not “tough” enough to lead to collective strategies and deep sharing among students; the entry to work is person by person, each working in isolation from others.

In this scene, having faced the realities and difficulties of teaching, the beginning teacher turns to others for help, preferring the informal exchange of opinions and experience to reliance upon the hierarchy. But the cellular organization of schools constrains the amount and type of interchange possible; beginning teachers spend most of their time physically apart from colleagues. Since beginner spends so much of his time away from his/her colleagues, it falls upon him/her to realize problems, consider alternative solutions, make a selection, and, after acting, assess the outcome. So his learning is limited by his personal resources—the acuity of his observation and his capacity to take effective action (Ibid). Nias (1998) explains some possible effects of the cellular organization of schools on inexperienced teachers:

- feeling isolated and restricted to their own resources or those of a staff sub-group
- sense of enforced and unwelcomed independence
- sense of inter-adult competition and their own resulting insecurity
- being suspicious of proffered support and defensive or selective in their use of it.
This isolation from colleagues also creates uncertainty. It removes opportunities for praise and support and therefore serves to undermine confidence about the success or otherwise of one’s efforts.

Apart from the practical needs in teaching, emotional support is a very significant need for new teachers as their self-esteem is usually low because of their lack of confidence in mastering profession. During their first few years, teachers often experience disturbing emotions as well as practical difficulties. Among the most common are fear, anxiety, guilt, anger and frustration (Drummond, 1996). Besides these they want opportunities to share the moments of excitement, fulfilment and extreme happiness. Nias (1998) found that teachers want their colleagues to be sensitive to their emotional needs, to respond them with empathy, sympathy, and, occasionally, wise counselling. However, evidence shows that beginning teachers may not even be visited by another teacher during their first year. When they are visited, it is most likely to be by a member of the administrative staff who carries the aura of evaluation, no matter how personally supportive or interested that person may be (McDonald and Elias, 1980). As a result, their anxiety is increased by the limited support that beginning teachers receive in the demanding first years.

Consequently, problems in their teaching practices and in their relationships with other teachers drive beginning teachers to make changes in their behaviours, attitudes and personality. These changes are also indicators of the “reality shock” and possible sequence of them can be shown as follows;
- **Perceptions of problems.** This category includes subjectively experienced problems and pressures, complaints about workload, stress, and psychological and physical complaints.

- **Changes of behaviour.** Implied are changes in teaching behaviour contrary to one’s own beliefs because of external pressures.

- **Changes of attitudes.** Implied are changes in belief systems (e.g., a shift from progressive to conservative attitudes with respect to teaching methods).

- **Changes of personality.** This category refers to changes in the emotional domain (e.g., liability-stability) and self-concept.

- **Leaving the teaching position.** The disillusion may be so great, that the beginning teacher leaves the profession early.


However, we know that while some of beginning teachers suffer in their induction years from the problems mentioned above, some teachers experience this period more successfully. In the next section the condition that makes difference will be assessed.
Chapter 2
Can Colleagues Make a Difference?

Nias (1998) argues that a teacher’s colleagues play a central role in his/her development, meeting (or failing to meet) the need, in turn, for: practical and emotional assistance; referential support; professional stimulation and extension; and the opportunity to influence others. Teachers need their colleagues to help them survive their early encounters with the job or settle into it with a sense of personal fit (Evans, 1978, Little, 1990, Nias 1998).

Of course the head plays a major part in the induction of the beginning teacher. The head appoints the new teacher and he has the final responsibility for reporting on the new teacher’s competence at the end of the year. Furthermore, in the secondary school the head of department is also a key figure. S/he is usually responsible for arranging the new teacher’s timetable and is in the best position to know what the new teacher’s are likely to be. However, Hannam et al.’s (1976) findings show that head teachers and other senior staff are often seen by new teachers as threatening rather than supportive. The reason for that can be head teachers’ and other senior staff’s power and authority on the decision of the new teacher’s competence. Another reason for that administrator and senior teachers often are too busy to take the new teacher very seriously (Ryan, 1970).

Instead, when new teachers faced with problems, it is to their colleagues that they most often look for immediate assistance (Acker, 1991, Nias et al., 1992, Nias,
1998), it may be that, because they are less threatening, beginners can learn and get help more easily from them (Hannam et al. 1976).

On the other hand, when inexperienced teachers fail to find in their schools the kind of practical help which they crave, Nias (1998) states, it is almost always because the school culture is individualized or Balkanised rather than collaborative. It seems that teachers’ inter-adult relationships and issues of power, politics and micropolitics in a school become very crucial for new teachers in the transition period (Edgar and Warren, 1969). Zeichner and Tabachnick (1985) clarify that the interaction of formal and informal cultures determine the institutional constrains and opportunities for a beginning teacher. So, to some extent, the amount of help that new teachers receive and a successful transition for new teachers depends on the type of school in which they teach.

Evidence from research reveals that some schools are more successful than the others in respect of creating professional development and learning opportunities for their teachers. Rosenholtz’s (1989) depiction of “learning-enriched” and “learning-impoverished”, or in other words “moving” and “stuck” schools in her sample of seventy-eight elementary schools is clear about the difference between non-learning and learning schools. She observes, “… it is far easier to learn to teach, and to learn to teach better, in some schools than in others” (p.104). Rosenholtz has identified several characteristics for these schools; among those some of are relevant for this study:

In terms of beginning teacher transition “stuck” or “learning-impoverished” schools can be characterized by:
• teacher uncertainty
• teacher isolation
• insufficient guidance to teachers
• lack of positive feedback

On the other hand, “moving” or “learning-enriched” schools are characterized by:

• collaborative climate
• sharing ideas about practice among teachers
• awareness of common goals
• a sense of efficacy
• teachers’ involvement in decision-making process
• positive feedback

Not surprisingly, in the “stuck” schools, newcomers and their colleagues described the more common sink and swim socialization into teaching—an informal experience of the sort that, like a battle, results in many effects, helter-skelter: in aborted dreams, lasting pain, ill will, and most important of all, fugitive glories (Ibid). It was one of these schools Canfield (1970) experienced as a beginning teacher. He describes what it means to be a new teacher in one of these schools;
“... When one is a new teacher, he is looked upon as some kind of threatening animal which is ready to prey upon the older teachers, to turn the students against them, and to subvert the social order that they have carefully constructed over the many years that they have been there. Any innovation that one tries in the classroom or in operation of the school is looked upon as incompetence, negligence, malfeasance, or what is even worse, treason.”

(p.45)

On the other hand, in the “moving” schools, beginners seem to encounter a community of professionals whose basic thrust is helping students to learn. Through the flow of recurrent daily activity, observation, and conversation, newcomers learn that their professional aspirations coincide with the majority of others; that their enthusiasm has its place and is real, something to be brought to life and actually touched; and their own development is part and parcel of community growth (Rosenholtz, 1989, p.38). Equally important, they may find moral obligation to contribute reciprocally to their school’s collective enterprise (Ibid).

These schools are the schools which take the professional development and learning of teachers seriously and which, in consequence, build into their daily and weekly programs opportunities for teachers to see one another in action, to work alongside one another, to discuss curriculum materials or examples of children’s work.
Nias et al.’s (1992) study of whole school curriculum development in five primary schools in England shows the importance professional relationships in a teacher’s career. The obvious theme arising from Nias et al.’s investigation was the central importance of colleagues in teacher development. Since beginning teachers are at the beginning of their professional career these professional relationships are more crucial for them. In this study, Nias et al. identifies the colleagues as reinforcing agents off the conditions conducive to learning. As they observe:

“… seeing colleagues learning was an added encouragement, because individuals realized that they were not alone in their need to learn. Learning was regarded as a means of increasing one’s ability, not as a sign of inadequacy; the desire to improve practice also led to a constant quest for “good ideas”, that ideas that were relevant to classroom practice”

(p:76)

“… the experience of working together also enabled and encouraged teachers to challenge one another’s thinking and practice”

(p:88)
However, since these five primary schools that Nias et al. studied were small schools generalizations should be made with caution. Nevertheless, they also offer particularly good examples of the dynamics of collaboration (Fullan, 1993). In these “moving” schools helping new comers is perceived as a matter of both humanity (to beginning teachers and to the pupils they teach) and of teacher quality by experienced teachers (Fullan, 1991). On the other hand, there are also several other reasons for experienced teachers to help new teachers;

a) Experienced teachers look to new teachers for new ideas, stimulation and challenge,

b) They look to new teachers as the potential recipients of their own knowledge and expertise. That is, they come to realize that they can affect all the children through their colleagues.

c) Experienced teachers actively search for professional extension, viewing their colleagues as one means of achieving this.

(Nias, 1998)

Though, research evidence show that beginners are selective in the help that they accept, rejecting ways of teaching or relating to children which run counter to their view of themselves as people as well as practitioners. They are, therefore, happiest in a social setting where “sharing” and collaboration are the norm, allowing them to preserve their self-esteem by avoiding a one-sided sense of dependence (Ibid). In such setting, the beginning teacher can take comfort from
the compliance with normal expectations within the occupation; s/he can feel that he did everything possible within “the state of the art”. Thus the beginner can cope with unpleasant outcomes by sharing the weight of his/her failure and guilt; his/her inadequacy is part of the larger inadequacy of the school (Lortie, 1975, p.81).
Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Design of the study

During the period of September 1999-October 2000, I have attended the PCSE (Postgraduate Certification in Secondary Education) Course at the University of Nottingham as an observer to assess and examine the English Teacher Education System. Besides being an observer, I participated actively in all kind of activities that student-teachers in the course must take part. Since this course comprises a school experience program in a secondary school, I have been to one of secondary schools of Nottingham City area for my school experience as a student teacher. At the beginning of this period, because of my intention to carry out a study on beginning teachers and their transition period, I decided that the secondary school could be a good case for my study. My intention was welcomed by the head teacher and by the beginning teachers in the school. I started data collection immediately after taking permission by the beginning of October 1999 and it lasted by the beginning of April 2000 with subsequent interviews.

There were several reasons for me to use case study. First of all, case study is not a single research method but a research strategy; it may employ a variety of data collection methods. It is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between
phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1994, p.23).

Most studies assessing new teachers’ transition period have used quantitative methods to collect data. This procedure is useful for listing problems of new teachers and from whom they receive support mostly, but it does not give enough information about the features of educational situations that new teachers experience as problematic, about the psychological dimensions of meaning underlying these situations, and about the significant personal characteristics of beginning teachers which interact with these situations (Veenman, 1984, Nias, 1998). Since my main aim in this dissertation is to explore psychological and sociological dimensions of beginning teachers’ transition period and their relationships with other teachers, using quantitative methods such as questioners would not help me. On the other hand, the most important aspect of the case study is that it gives a chance to researcher to see the world from the actors’ point of view (Ball, 1980) and it makes easy for researcher to find out and interpret person specific and situation specific nature of events. So, it seemed that case study was the research strategy that I was looking for.

As data collection methods interview, participant observation and collection of formal and informal documents were used. During the first four months beginning teachers were observed in their classrooms and in staffroom. I also attended meetings that were parts of the schools induction program with the beginning teachers. During this period notes were taken about all kind of events related to the study. After that period, subsequent interviews were arranged with the
beginning teachers. These interviews were recorded on tape and analysed afterwards. In addition, to be able to look at the issue from the administrative perspective, available documents about school’s induction program (schedule of meetings for beginning teachers, etc) and informational documents about school and its activities (staff handbook, etc.) were collected and an interview with the staff development coordinator was conducted.

The school was an inner-city comprehensive school in a poor area of City of Nottingham. There were 45 teachers and about 900 pupils in the school. There were 3 beginning teachers (in this study, “beginning teacher” implies the teacher who has teaching experience less than three years), two of whom in their second year and one in her third year in teaching. During my student-teacher experience, I was able to establish good relations with these beginning teachers. One of them was my mentor during my student-teacher experience, so I spent most of my time in the school with her. One of the other teachers with two-year experience is the tutor of a year seven class to which I attached during my school experience, so I was with him at the registrations two times a day. I spend most of break times in the school with them and this gave opportunities to me to observe their relationships with the rest of the staff.

3.2 Participants
Before I started the study I had offered anonymity to participants and asked for fictional names, however (perhaps, since they were confident about themselves) they wanted me to use their first names instead of some fictional ones.

Anne

Although she was a beginning teacher in the science department with three years of experience, Anne seemed much more experienced than it is expected from a beginning teacher. There were two obvious reasons for this; she was 45 and she was a mother. Determination was one of her obvious characteristics and this helped her in making a critical decision at the age of 41.

“I was 19 when my son was born, and, my favourite part of being a mum was actually teaching. I was not the motherly type but I have enjoyed teaching and talking to him, helping him. I have always liked children, not babies and young children but young people, and I am interested in science. So, I have combined the two.”

So, she returned to university and got the qualifications to teach. But, making a decision about the type of school to teach was not difficult for her, because she had already made a decision:
“Even before I started my training I knew I wanted to teach in an inner city school. I did not want the type of school where the children are going to succeed regardless how good or bad teacher you are. I wanted to be somewhere where I would make an impact, where I have got to be good for them to succeed.”

She started teaching in 1997 in the school. Since then, she has been one of the important teachers for science department and for the school, so that, in her third year, she has proved herself to the administration that she can take the responsibility of student teachers in the science department. During my school experience she was my mentor and helped me a lot in solving my problems in teaching. And also, this situation gave me opportunities to observe a beginning teacher closely.

Neil

Neil has been teaching in both science and math’s departments for two years. He was 26. He did his first degree at Nottingham Trent University on chemistry and environmental management. In 1997, he has decided to become a teacher since (I can easily confirm) he felt he is good at working with children:

“I have always liked working with children. That was something I felt I was good at. I also enjoy when I see children achieving. It is also
good to feel seeing children being educated, seeing them acquire knowledge from me.”

He did his PGCE at Leicester University. Since he has been living in Nottingham for long time, he has decided to be a teacher in a school in the Nottingham city area and he did not want to travel too far because he thought;

“... my first couple of years would be difficult to settle into teaching environment”

And it seemed that he has settled into teaching quite good. Apart from his teaching duties in the school he is also supporting pupils from Black-Caribbean background within the school.

Michelle

Michelle was 25 and from a small town called Walsall. She teaches English and Media in the school. She has been teaching for two years. She says her father, who used to be a teacher, got her involved in working with the young people.

“I was really interested in that, I liked it. So I decided to go in teacher training.”
It was 1996 and after teacher training, since she had started to live in Nottingham Area, she applied for the job in the school. When she came to school for interview in July 1998, she decided to work in the school.

“When I came to school I liked the atmosphere of the school. People seemed to me very friendly.”

She has been teaching successfully since then.

3.3 Problems, difficulties and needs

Interviews and observations has suggested that while beginning teachers in the study had some common problems related to some general issues such as lack of spare time and dealing with the paper work, they had also specific problems proceeded from their situational and personal differences.

When King et al. (1988) assessed the stressful and satisfying aspects of being a teacher they have found out that the most frequently mentioned stressful aspect of being a teacher was “time demands, too much marking, ‘administrivia,’ deadlines” (cited in Fullan, 1991, p.124). Similarly, during the interviews, “lack of spare time” and “amount of paper work and marking” has emerged as the
biggest problems for all beginning teachers in the study. These two are obviously interrelated. Further analysis of the interviews has revealed that “amount of paper work and marking” creates the problem of “lack of spare time”, and consequently, this “lack of spare time” shows its effects by creating further problems on beginners’ teaching practices and by causing stress in their relations with colleagues. They clearly did not expect this part of teaching;

“What was quite surprising is the amount of paperwork involved, amount of accountability, and amount of report, writing just the admin part of it. That takes hours of my days… I can deal with them. It just takes far more time than I expected. I did not expect them to take three or four hours some weeks.”

Anne

“It was time and paperwork. It is just your first year not knowing what is expected and you have got virtually four teaching time-table to organize, you have got your tutor group, you have got everything else happening around you. You just need to fit everything into place. It just takes time.”

Neil

“I think the paper work was the biggest one. It is difficult especially in the English Department, because you can not just mark it, it is not like
math’s or whatever, English is more about interpretation, you have to read all thing and this takes time.”

Michelle

Hargreaves (1994) thinks of time as “the enemy of freedom… It is central to the formation of teachers’ work” (p. 95). It was also the enemy for beginners but not directly. For each beginning teacher in the study “lack of spare time” showed its effects by creating different problems and stresses from each other. Neil felt its effects on preparation to lessons and even on his transition period;

“Time is not very important issue when you are in PGCE. You are teaching, maybe, once a day. I mean you have got so much time to prepare everything, so you can get everything perfect; you can get a perfect lesson. But teaching five lessons a day, [pause], you cannot have that much time. Everything is more condense, you do not have time for making more worksheets, getting everything right, getting perfect lesson, even getting perfect transition…”

Neil

According to Anne, lack of spare time prevents inter-adult relations among the teachers within the school. The feeling of loneliness is an inevitable result of this “lack of adult-interaction”;
“The biggest thing that surprised me was how lonely a teacher can be. I mean you are talking to dozens of children in a day but you have very few adult conversations in a day. At lunchtime you might pass the time with a few people but you never converse or very rarely converse with adults. It is you and children. That was a bit of a shock. I did not expect that it would be so much me and my own, but I got used to it.”

“...we have two fifteen-minute breaks a day and you spent five minutes down there throwing a cup of tea to your throat. And a 55 minutes lunch time but you spend most of time organizing things. You are lucky if you down there for twenty minutes. So there is not a lot of social life.”

Anne

Other than these common problems for all three beginning teachers, they had some specific problems proceeded from their situational or personal differences. For example Anne had some problems in her teaching subject. As it has been mentioned that she is a science teacher and because of that she teaches biology, physics and chemistry. However, although she is quite good at biology (because biology was her subject in university) and chemistry she had some problems in teaching physics. But throughout the first two years she focused on physics and although there are still some parts of the subject that she has not taught yet, she
feels quite confident about it now. Another problem of Anne was her poor memory. She has some difficulties in remembering the children’s names. She thinks that is a weakness that she will always have.

There is no doubt that classroom management is one of the major concerns of all beginning teachers as it was one of Neil’s.

“Children seemed too much more difficult to control. I have got a lot of children messing around, disrupting lessons…”

Neil

During the classroom observations, Neil’s classes seemed to more difficult classes in terms of maintaining discipline than the other two beginners’. However, as it has been said earlier, he is really very successful in managing the pupils.

Michelle experienced a quite different difficulty in her first weeks. She explains;

“In the first weeks it was quite hard because some of my classes had been used to have a teacher who worked in the English Department before I came. A lot of children had been missing him. That was a problem for me. And at the beginning it was difficult to get children to listen.”

Michelle
To overcome this problem, Michelle has established an after-school drama club with pupils and getting to know them helped a lot.

### 3.4 Relations with other teachers

Since the main aim of this study is to explore the colleagues’ role into the transition period of the beginning teacher, during the observations and interviews focus was on this issue. Of course, any attempt to measure other teachers’ friendliness towards beginners is necessarily a delicate and difficult task since this comes close to involving beginners in making judgments on their colleagues. However, in this study it did not create a big problem since beginners’ attitudes towards their colleagues were highly positive. On the other hand, interviews have revealed that beginners’ approach to the issue is different from each other. That is, their personal characteristics and situational realities play a significant role in determination of quality of their inter-collegial relationships. For example, Anne prefers to describe her relations with other teachers in a “professional” base;

“There is a friendly and impersonal life in the school. I think a lot of schools are quite cliquey. In most of them you have some colleagues doing everything together here and some other colleagues doing everything together there. Of course there are some groups that have socialized together but generally speaking relationships are less informal, they are very professional. There are not really close friends, if you’d like, they are colleagues and just friends probably.”
Anne Nias (1989) argues that women who had been at home for some years with young children tended to get the most enjoyment out of the comradeship of the staffroom, however, Anne was not in this situation since, as it has been mentioned earlier, “lack of spare time” prevents close relationships among colleagues in the daily life of the school. Furthermore, Anne’s responsibilities as a wife and a mother made it difficult to keep her contact with her colleagues after the school.

“I can be at the school all day and I cannot say anything to even the people in my department. I do not have time to meet other people after the school because of my commitments.”

Anne

Despite that, she was very happy with her relationships with the other teachers within the school, especially within her department.

“Within the department it is quite good. We work quite closely together. Since I have been here we have been having some problems of long-term sickness. We had to a kind of shift together and that brought us together a lot.”

Anne
However, she did not conceal her feelings about several “cynical” teachers;

“*Within the school itself, generally speaking I get on very well with the staff. There are one or two who are cynical. We do the minimum to get by, who I have not got a lot of time for. But I think you will always have teachers like that, one or two should have left the profession years ago but still here.*”

Anne

On the other hand, Neil described the climate of the school and relations within the school “warm” and “friendly”. Neil is a warm-hearted person and his dynamic character becomes obvious in his relations. He said that at his first visit to the school when he was interviewed, he decided, “this is a warm school”. He thinks that his socialization period into teaching and into the school has been successfully completed thanks to his colleagues.

“I have just fit it right. I think it could have taken too much longer than two years. But now we usually arrange social events after school, which is I think so important. We play football for example. We also have staff social-meetings when we all go out, have a drink, and, discussion and talk about, you know, how school is at the present moment.”
According to Neil, these things are more important for a teacher and for a school;

“This is actually why I like this school, beside the things happening inside the school, there is a lot of things take place outside the school. These events bring the staff closer. We do not see each other on working basis; we see each other on social basis, too.”

Before Michelle began to work in the school she had had some worries about her relations within the school. Because she describes herself as “shy” and she thinks that her shy character creates some problems in her relations with the people around her. But this does not worry her any longer because she says her colleagues have accepted her as she is and encouraged her in her relations. So she feels very comfortable when she is in the school.

“I think making friends in this school is very easy. I would imagine that in some schools it is more difficult because, I know from my teaching practice, there is some backslapping, but in the staffroom, you know, everybody talks behind everybody... But in this school it is quite easy to make friends and people easily accept you. I think they
have been even more supportive than they would be. I did not expect them to be as supportive as they have been.”

Michelle

3.5 About the help received from others

Interviews have revealed that, when beginners in the study came across a problem or difficulty related to their teaching practices they turned to their colleagues for immediate help. Sometimes they received help through their initiatives whereas sometimes help came without asking. Colleagues that they received help were in various positions; sometimes it was head of department sometimes the next-door teacher. They received help directly by talking or indirectly by observing the others in their classrooms. They all think that they received help and support from their colleagues about their problems and difficulties as much as possible. Anne remembers her problem in marking GCSE work in her first months and her old head of science from whom she received help mostly;

“The person who did help me a lot was the old head of science, before he left. Within a very short time, after I started teaching, I had to mark a lot of GCSE work, and that was something that I had not come across before. He was a tremendous helper. I was marking them and he was re-marking them to make certain I had got it right. And also, occasionally, at the topics that I could not work out, which was best
practical to do, he would advise me of the common practical, the most likely to work.”

Anne

Besides this continuous help from head of department, in troublesome situations, there was always someone.

“I remember first time had a fight in my classroom. That was the only time I had a fight in my classroom. Two of the students, six feet, were fighting each other. I stood between them but I was not very effective. At the end of it, when it was sorted out, when I pulled apart them, I was quite shaky. One of the other teachers, a math’s teacher, came to give me a hook, said “Are you alright?”. Because I was really [pause] “intimidated” if you’d like, knowing that something is going on and you can say “stop it” but you can not back it up physically. She just checked me out rest of the day because I was a bit shaky. That was the only fight in my class, [she smiles] hopefully the last one.”

Anne

Neil used his colleagues and their approaches to various situations as references of his behaviours. Since he is very sociable person he usually used “talk” and “observation” to get help. He just picked up from them and tried to implement that way.
“I spoke to experienced teachers. When I found something difficult I looked at the way they approach things. These experiences I learned from them just making life so much easier. For example at the beginning it seemed that I was marking all the time compared to other teachers. I was marking every week. I spoke to Mike [a teacher in Humanities Department] about it. He showed me the best way of marking. Now I am marking once in two weeks and it is not a problem for me anymore.”

Neil

Seeing experienced teachers in classroom was very crucial for him. Thanks to the school’s induction program he has found a lot of chance to observe experienced teachers.

“I have had a lot of chance during my NQT year. I observed several teachers in this school and in that year I was sent out to a school in Clifton to observe a very experienced science teacher teaching.”

“When you look at an experienced teacher you can see how he confident in his subject knowledge, you can learn everything about class levels, about the case he is teaching, how he is dealing with interrupting and cope everything. As a NQT you can see how much
more there is you can improve on. A NQT do set the standards when he looks how they teach.”

Neil

The situation was not different for Michelle;

“I spoke to Wendy who second in Department in English and I spoke to my head of department, Neil, he is always helpful and very approachable. They gave me advice, for example, on how to handle certain kind of pupils and on how to deal with pupils’ problems. As I said they were very supportive.”

Michelle

3.6 The school’s induction approach and induction program

During the study, to be able to understand the school’s approach and beginners’ response to this approach, an interview was conducted with school’s staff development coordinator and official and informational documents related to school’s induction program were collected.

In the school, Scott has general responsibility of induction of beginning teachers as staff development coordinator. He is a Physical Education teacher with ten-year experience. He is also head of PE. His basic duties as staff development coordinator are to oversee newly qualified teachers, initial teacher training
program and the professional development cycle within the school. He has been working in this position for three years. Other than Scott, one of the Deputies has overall responsibility for budget allocation and then Scott coordinates it and uses the funds. There are teams of mentors within departments, in English, science, math’s, languages. However, Scott says since it is a “big and vital issue” almost all school staff takes some responsibilities.

“You are bringing in new blood, different approaches to the profession so I think it is an area that vital and need to be well funded.”

Scott

His relations with new teachers are very close and all beginning teachers seemed to be very satisfied with his efforts for them. According to Scott, there are a number of issues about teaching practices that beginning teachers usually experience as problematic.

“One of them is preparation and planning, organizing the lessons, I mean organizing the flow of lessons. Stating of learning objectives is one that usually comes out. Classroom management is always an issue. It is part of learning of the skills so that is what the practices all about, you develop your classroom management skills but of course this takes some time.”
The school offers a systematic support to beginners to be able them to overcome the problems and stresses that they encountered during their first years. Although this support more intensive in the first year, they see the transition period of a teacher as the most important period of his/her professional development and growth period and accept its central importance for school improvement. Scott explains some basics of their induction program;

“This begins with a tour of the school and covers a number of activities. These activities aim to improve the beginners’ ability to work with senior staff and other teachers, explain their roles as form tutors, classroom managers, teachers and learners. We talk them about curriculum, how it is set up, we talk them about support mechanisms that are available within the school, these cover guidance and support, learning support. These are major things we go through in terms of induction. There are also other activities directly related to the professional development activities and beginners also take place in those activities such as using information and communication technology in curriculum development. What we do beyond that is allow them to flag anything up they feel they need help with and our second term program includes these things. What I have described so
far is about first term program. Anything else is picked up in second term with review meetings on a regular basis within that time frame.”

Scott

The most important aspect of this program is that it gives opportunities to beginners interact with their colleagues. As it can be remembered from beginners’ comments, “talk” and “observation” play a central role in their transition and learning and school’s induction program has been grounded on these activities. Meetings with beginners give them opportunity to raise their problems. Firstly, there are weekly meetings with the mentor. Choosing mentors is not a problem for the school, because there are usually many volunteers for this position. Most of teachers believe that “being a mentor would be a good way forward to develop yourself”. There is also range of specific purposed meetings (about curriculum, classroom management strategies, ICT, …) throughout the year (Appendix 1). Frequent formal and informal meetings with staff development coordinator are also available for beginners. But, since all teachers are really “approachable”, Scott says, “anytime they need help there is always someone around”. School also promotes interaction between colleagues not only for beginners but also for all staff as well by creating opportunities within and out of the school to support social life of the school. Because they believe that creating a “common culture” where “sharing” is the norm is a necessary condition for success of both teachers and pupils.
“We play football on Fridays. We quite often try to have a social event at the end of each term. We have got a number of staff areas where people can go and talk. The school provides drinks and refreshments for these areas to promote the interaction between staff. Of course there are irregular meetings outside the school, you know, go to a pub and relax by chattering and drinking a beer…”

Scott

Arranging meetings for beginners in the school with other beginners from different schools to give them opportunity to discuss common problems and seek solutions together is a crucial part of the school’s induction approach. Neil explains his satisfaction;

“Induction program that Scott was in charge of was brilliant. He sent us out to meet other newly qualified teachers. We talked and discussed about our experiences in our first term at school. We had also meetings in the school, we exchanged ideas, discussed our problems with fellow teachers. Michelle and I were only two NQTs at the school at that time. We spoke to each other about our problems. Everything seemed going fine. I mean probation period was excellent. The school seemed to set up it well compared to other schools. Most of them have not got induction arrangements.”
Neil

The school also serves a program of observation within departments and also gives the opportunity to see other experienced teachers with good practice in other subject areas. Observation of beginners’ classroom performances and giving them feedback by mentors and other related staff is another point that the school carefully focuses on. Research shows that most teachers, even the experienced ones do not want to be observed by others to avoid criticisms. To be criticized is the last thing that a beginning teacher wants since this may lower his/her self-confidence which is already in a critical point. So, “observation” of beginning teacher is a sensitive issue. The school’s approach to this sensitive issue is clear;

“I was doubtful at first because you have come from being a student-teacher having been watched almost every week and you think that is over. When you see it you say, “Oh, no, I will be watched again”. But actually it is in the completely different capacity. Because while you are being watched as a student-teacher people can be quite critical, whereas, when I came here as an NQT, it was not critical, it was more supportive.”

Michelle
To conclude, all beginning teachers in the school seemed satisfied with the induction program offered by the school;

“Generally, I found my first year very enjoyable and it is, maybe, what keeps me on teaching. I know a lot of people from my NQT period, because of the problems of first year, they have finished teaching completely. They have gone to other jobs. I think it is important to have an adequate induction period in your first year, because I think this is the time when teaching really starts.”

Neil

3.7 Summary of findings

In summary, findings of the study can be summarized as follows;

a) The study has revealed that “amount of paperwork and marking” was the common and the biggest problem for all the beginners in the study. It seemed that too much paperwork and marking resulted in “lack of time” for beginners. Obviously “time” is very important for every teacher, especially for beginning teachers since they need time for their adaptation into teaching and into the school culture in which they will live and teach. In the study, this “lack of time” has shown its effects both on beginners’ relations with other teachers by constraining
interaction time and on beginners’ teaching practices in different ways such as by not giving them enough preparation time for their classes.

b) When the beginners faced any kind of problem about their teaching practices, they usually turned to their colleagues for help and assistance. All of them emphasized that they had adequate help in response.

c) “Talk” and “Observation” has emerged as the common and most helpful means for beginners to get help.

d) Beginners used talk and observation of experienced colleagues as a way to set up their teaching standards.

e) Other than helping beginners in their problems in teaching practices, colleagues played a central role in beginners’ socialization process into the profession.

f) Beginners’ experience of schools as organizations of adults as well as children was coloured by experience in them as people as well as role-occupants. Informal relations between staff were more important for beginners than formal relations. However, personal characteristics and responsibilities played a major role on beginners’ participation and response to these informal relations.

g) Friendliness and openness were more valuable for beginners than any organized formal support system.

h) Experienced teachers in the school perceived formal and informal mentorship as an opportunity for their professional development and growth.
i) Other than interaction with experienced teachers, interaction with other beginning teachers in the induction period increased beginners’ self-confidence by giving them opportunities to share their problems and support each other.

Chapter 4

Implications

The difficulties associated with the first years of teaching show clearly that teachers entering the profession without adequate help and support would probably face and suffer ‘reality shock’ in which there is a collapse of ideals in an isolation under the pressures of classroom teaching. Today, the need of a specialized form of in-service training has been accepted all over the world. This specialized form of in-service training, that is an induction program, has been seen as a way to mature beginning teachers faster, to retain teachers by acquainting them with the system, and to avoid the type of frustration which invites good teachers to give up teaching. Different induction programs that are based on different conceptual paradigms have been implemented or offered (See; McCabe, 1979, Schleclty, 1985, Bolam, 1987, Gibson, 1995, Shaw et al. 1995, Henry, 1988). Some of these programs have a strong assistance emphasis, some focus on assessment, some emphasis the idea of transition into teaching or
socialization into the profession and some put training as their basis (Huling-Austin, 1990).

The results of this study have proved the central role of colleagues and collegiality in a beginning teacher’s transition and socialisation process. When we consider the results of this study and the other similar studies conducted in this area, several implications can be made for the future’s induction programs.

First of all, research findings show that preservice training is not linked to subsequent teacher induction. Unlike the other preparation offered in many other professions, teacher education programs do not typically require their students to interact with one another in the course of their professional education (Copeland and Jamgochian, 1985). Most teacher training courses usually focus intensively on teaching practices and strategies and courses in education are not “tough” enough to lead to collective strategies and deep sharing among students; the entry to work is person by person, each working in isolation from others (Lortie, 1975). If collaborative skills and continuing learning are essential for teachers, they must be fostered from the beginning in teacher preparation programs explicitly designed for that purpose (Fullan, 1995). Adding “colleague training” components to teacher education courses would be a great step to solve teachers’ “isolation” problem and to encourage collaboration among teachers. Such training requires a program that accommodates and encourages dialogue among prospective teachers. For example, Copeland and Jamgochian (1985) present a program evolved by teacher Education Program of the University of California. In this program a set of methods has been added to a number of classes, exercises
and experiences, so that colleague training and collegial learning have become a significant part of the program. They report variety of advantages of such program to the teacher education process.

This study has clearly proved that the main characteristic of any induction program should be teacher interaction. As it has been emphasized many times in this study, beginning teachers need their colleagues for both practical and emotional support, so they need to spend time with their colleagues. To increase the interaction time, load reduction for beginning teachers and support teachers is a necessary condition. Furthermore, induction programs should be prepared in accordance with the practical and emotional needs of beginning teachers. To be able to do that beginning teachers should be encouraged to participate in the planning, decision making and implementing of the induction activities.

It is obvious that a successful induction program can operate only in a place where the culture of shared responsibility among experienced teachers to help beginning teachers is the norm. When the beginning teacher’s professional experiences are enriched and supported by experienced teachers, many of the problems facing them during the transitory stages of their first years of teaching will be lessened (Andrews, 1987). So experienced teachers should be encouraged to take part in induction activities.

Despite a widespread belief among those who train teachers and among experienced teachers that one learns to teach by doing, it is highly likely that much of learning required to be at least minimally competent can be accomplished by watching an experienced teacher. It may well be that far more
than that which is required for minimal competence can be learned by observing appropriate models (McDonald and Elias, 1980, p.120). McDonald and Elias emphasize that if beginning teachers are having so much difficulty mastering the transition to teaching, one cannot help but suspect that they have had apparently not very effective opportunities observe teachers who have mastered the same problems. Although almost all induction programs include an observation program of experienced teachers, it seems that most of these observation programs are planned and organized inadequately. Evidence from research has shown that observation of experienced teachers is a delicate issue and its conditions should be arranged carefully.

Two conditions are necessary about the observation of experienced teachers:

- the teacher observed must be a model of some aspects of effective teaching
- the observer must be cued to look for those practices which are effective and which are most likely to be useful to the beginning teacher.

(Ibid, p.121)

The central importance of observational learning for beginning teachers is obvious and if we met these essential conditions for observational learning, which have been specified above, beginners’ learning would be less random and be less dependent from learning from mistakes (Ibid).
One of the important people in induction process is mentor (induction tutor). Mentors are critical because they are involved on a daily basis with the beginners and are to act as role models, help beginners solve problems, and provide formative growth experiences. They are crucial components of all induction approaches, however, no widely accepted definition of mentoring has been articulated. Kay’s (1990) definition of mentoring can be given here to catch the idea of mentoring: “Mentoring is a comprehensive effort directed toward helping a protégé develop the attitudes, and behaviours (skills) of self-reliance and accountability within a defined environment” (cited from Gold, 1990, p:573). However, it seems that there are more important issues related to mentors and mentoring other than its definition. Selection criteria of mentors have been one of the most crucial issues in mentoring. Most induction programs put experience, availability, expertise, knowledge, commitment, ability to reflection and friendliness as the crucial aspects for mentors. For example, in England, The New Teacher Induction Program introduced under the Teaching and Higher Education Act clarifies the selection criteria and the role of the induction tutor as:

“The induction tutor should be fully aware of the requirements of the induction period and should have the necessary skills, expertise and knowledge to work effectively in the role. In particular, the induction tutor should be able to make rigorous and fair judgments about the NQT’s (Newly qualified teacher) performance in relation to the requirements for satisfactory completion of the induction period and to
In spite of this kind of written selection criteria, Moskowitz and Stephen (1997) inform us that mentors tend to be chosen based upon job position, or because it is thought by school administrative staff that they will do a good job. Training of mentors is another important issue. Research evidence show that mentors rarely receives more than minimal training (Moskowitz and Stephen, 1997, Gold, 1990, Ballantyne et al., 1995). It is also the case that mentors and mentoring programs are not allocated enough resources and most mentors do not receive additional compensation (Moskowitz and Stephen, 1997). If we created the optimum conditions for mentors and mentorship, benefits would be great for beginners and mentors, and, consequently, for teaching profession. For beginners, the functions of mentor could be many and varied, including providing orientation, giving information of various types, providing access to resources, role modelling, assisting in planning, counselling, coaching, encouraging reflection, and helping the new teacher understand the school culture. Mentorship could be also an opportunity for experienced teachers to develop themselves professionally. A number of studies have described and evaluated the implementation of mentoring approaches in educational context and these have consistently reported strong support for the concept of mentoring from both beginning teachers and mentors (Ballantyne et al. 1995, Gold, 1996).
Most beginning teachers are the only first-year teachers in the school. Seminars arranged for beginning teachers may provide the opportunity for the beginners to meet away from the school and to discuss their problems with other persons having similar experiences. Beginners can learn from each other and share perceptions and ideas about how to deal with these problems. To create this environment for beginning teachers, higher education institutions, school districts and schools should cooperate. Evaluation of data of the existing NQT Support Program in Nottingham (Fisher et al., 1999) run by the University of Nottingham has shown the possible benefits of bringing beginners together. The support program is offered without cost to over 90 secondary schools in the East Midlands region of England. The design of the program involved a framework of meetings at the University, with a sequence of focuses to be determined by the novice teachers. These focuses would themselves emerge from classroom observations, undertaken ideally in the context of a “peer-pair” of novice teachers. Fisher et al. report that most novices found the program and environment “motivating”, “responsive”, “positive”, “practical”, and “helpful”. Two of their findings make it clear:

- Even in schools with very active NQT programs participants benefited from attending a course provided by an outside agency.
- NQTs indicated a strong need to talk to others who understood their situation, especially other NQTs.

(p.3)
Of course, all these conditions suggested this section require time, effort and money. But as Fisher et al. state; “Our new teachers deserve no less”.

Conclusion

The transition period is obviously a challenge to anyone who has to go through it, and there seems to be no obvious or simple way to avoid that initial experience. It
is obvious that those teachers who cannot master it, who cannot cope with its challenges and its demands, will most assuredly fail as teachers, even though they remain in teaching. However, it is also obvious that, in some schools beginners experience this period more smooth and trouble-free than others. Although almost all schools have some sort of induction program for beginners, successful schools are those schools where it is accepted that the introduction of the beginner to the profession can only be a result of a collaborative effort that each individual in the school takes active roles. In those schools openness, kindness and accessibility are perceived as more important than any formal support. Those are the schools that managed to put collegiality and collaboration as the main component of their induction program. And those are the schools that perceive successful teacher induction as a crucial way for school improvement, consequently, for development of education.

Throughout the study collegiality and collaboration has been supported in beginning teachers’ transition period, however I have not discussed the possible problems that could emerge as side-effects of superficial examples of collaboration, such as contrived collegiality that is characterized by a set of formal, specific, bureaucratic procedures and extreme collaboration which could create stereotypes. The reason is that my main concern in this dissertation is to explore the supportive features of colleagues and collaborative cultures in beginning teachers’ transition and adaptation period. Besides, the schools with such superficial and extreme types of collaboration are counted as unsuccessful schools in terms of beginning teacher induction.
In recent years, some positive policy initiatives have been made in terms of beginning teacher induction all around the world. There is also a great deal of research on development of teachers in collaborative cultures and the central importance of colleagues has been well documented (See; Fullan, 1991, Hargreaves, 1994, Day 1999). What is needed next is to place a collegial learning and training approach adequately and effectively into induction programs. If we accept that transition experience has paramount influence on how the teacher develops, what their concept of effectiveness becomes, how they see the world of teaching, then it ought to be treated as the event around which training and assistance is built (McDonald and Elias, 1980).

It is clear and sad that until improved induction processes are widely implemented many talented persons who have chosen to become teachers will undoubtedly leave the profession prematurely, due to problems encountered in their first years. Obviously we cannot afford to loose these potentially good teachers. Because it is worth remembering that if we wish schools to change their teaching approaches, if we wish an “educational change”, then new teachers are necessarily frail change agents.
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and collegial friendship, only a small percentage of the teachers support their colleagues in respect to professional-wise. © 2016 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd.

4. Do the years of teaching experience of the participants affect their collegial reactions to faulty pronunciation of teachers?

3.1. Participants. The participants in this study were 30 (10 male and 20 female) Turkish teachers of English working at different universities such as Bulent Ecevit University, Hacettepe University, Baskent University and Gazi University in the statements and it was divided into 3 parts. The first part included 6 statements and it investigated reactions in terms of professional. The second part consisted of 10 statements and it investigated professional efficiency of non-native teachers.