Stakeholders' Perspectives on Induction for New Teachers:

Critical Analysis of Teacher Testing and Mentorship

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First Edition

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Acknowledgments and Dedication

Conducting a cross-provincial study is not an easy task especially given the distances that separated each of the three sites. In every respect, this project has been a joint effort among myself (as PI) and my co-investigators, Patrick Solomon (York University) and Donatille Mujawamariya (University of Ottawa). And, of course, we have been blessed by competent and enthusiastic research associates and assistants whom I sincerely thank for their assistance and insights. I also thank the participants in this research – new teachers, teacher educators and school administrators – who so generously offered their time. A special thank you to Laura Pinto for all the editorial work and for her type setting abilities.

I acknowledge the financial support we received from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), and I thank the individual institutions, the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, York University and University of Ottawa, that supported the research team in a variety of ways throughout this project.

This study was a sequel to an earlier report, *A Critical Analysis of the Ontario Teacher Qualifying Test: Teacher Candidates' Perspectives*, which was also a collaboration with Professor Solomon and Professor Mujawamariya. It has been a pleasure for me once again to work with these two colleagues. Unfortunately, towards the end of this project, Professor Solomon became very ill and passed away in October 2008. While we have missed the major contributions and the good nature of the late Professor Solomon, we continued to work in his spirit and we fondly dedicate this work to his memory.

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Executive Summary

Induction programs have been advocated by many as a way to convey essential knowledge to new teachers in different contexts (Cho & Kwon, 2004; Kennedy & Burnstein, 2004). Yet one needs to inquire into the nature of induction programs, criteria and procedures. This research project began in response to the introduction of Ontario's "teacher testing program," the Ontario Teacher Qualifying Test (OTQT). During the early stages of research, the OTQT was eliminated, and thus our focus shifted to the investigation of models of teacher induction with an emphasis on mentoring relating to Ontario's New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP). Our findings are based on the perspectives educational stakeholders gathered through 141 survey responses and in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 37 new teachers (NTs), 47 teacher educators (TEs), and 41 school administrators (SAs). In this way, our research provides three very different yet important perspectives, while offering insight into potential induction design features.

We reported stakeholders' conceptions of good teachers and good teaching, since an induction program ought to strive to help NTs become effective, "good" teachers. We found that all three groups favour the discourse of the charismatic subject (Moore 2004), featuring dispositions and personal characteristics such as passionate, enthusiastic, respectful and caring. They acknowledge that these qualities could not be captured in a pencil-and-paper test (the main reason for which they dismissed the OTQT as invaluable).

All participants acknowledge that some form of teacher induction is beneficial, and nearly all support a mentoring-type program to achieve this, with general agreement that induction should not be tied to certification or evaluation. Participants tend to express preferences for on-the-job and hands-on experiences dealing with classroom management, curriculum and planning as the foci of induction. Social justice was not prioritized as a component for induction, and indeed, responses tended reflect a superficial understanding of it. Viewed through a critical-democratic perspective, a transformative rather than reproductive model of teacher induction and certification is essential to the success of teachers and students if we are to achieve goals of equity, inclusion and social justice. Visibly absent are any competencies which imply or overtly address issues of democracy and social justice – their absence implies provincial priorities, and the type of teacher which NTIP intends to (re)produce.

This report serves as a starting point for discussions about the form and content of an effective teacher induction program. Along with reconciling the needs and concerns of the stakeholders interviewed in this study, we believe an open conversation about the purpose of and transformative opportunities within a province-wide teacher induction program is crucial. Important implications for policy emerge from our inquiry, analysis and discussion. Teacher induction and certification programs, if designed uncritically, privilege and therefore reproduce the status quo. Such reproductive induction programs hinder change, making it impossible to move from the schools we have to the schools we want. If Ontario schools are failing students, then reproductive models of teacher induction and certification will surely continue to stagnate any progress towards addressing these inequities.

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1. Purpose, Methodology, and Conceptions of Teacher Induction

This report summarizes the research findings of the five-year study, *The Validity of the Ontario Teacher Qualifying Test (OTQT): Stakeholders' Perspectives* (2003-2008). This project, sponsored by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), was headed by John P. Portelli (OISE/UT) as principal investigator, and Patrick Solomon and Sarah Elizabeth Barrett (York University) and Donatille Mujawamariya, (University of Ottawa) as co-investigators. They were assisted by the following research assistants/associates: Laura Elizabeth Pinto, Cindy Rottmann, Karen Pashby, Nathalie Di Francesco, Jordan Singer, Christine Cho, Fang Duan, Aparna Mishra Tarc, and Laura Lindo.

Purpose and Overview of the Research

In Ontario, Canada, the Ministry of Education, introduced a number of initiatives under the auspices of improving teacher competency through accountability commencing in 1996 and continuing for over a decade. These included: language competency tests, initial certification tests for new teachers (the Ontario Teacher Qualifying Test, or OTQT), an induction program for teachers in their first years of the profession, and performance appraisals to determine how well knowledge and skills are applied in the classroom.

This research project began in response to the introduction of Ontario's "teacher testing program," with the original intent of examining crucial aspects of the validity of the Ontario Teacher Qualifying Test (OTQT). During the early stages of research, the OTQT was eliminated, and thus our focus shifted to the investigation of models of teacher induction with an emphasis on mentoring.

The objectives of this study were:

1. to identify educators' perceptions about the validity and use of the OTQT
2. to identify what new teachers (NTs), school administrators (SAs), and teacher educators TEs) consider essential knowledge for teachers;
3. to identify what NTs, SAs, and TEs consider authentic assessment of teacher competence;
4. to make recommendations about the kind of teacher induction that would be most conducive to increasing teacher competence.

Educational Significance

Induction programs have been advocated by many as a way to convey essential knowledge to new teachers in different contexts (Cho & Kwon, 2004; Kennedy & Burnstein, 2004). Yet one needs to inquire into the nature of induction programs, criteria and procedures. It is crucial to examine the extent to which the stated aims are reflected in the procedures associated with the program, and the conceptions of good teaching embedded in the construction of such a program.

This report serves as a starting point for discussions about the form and content of an effective teacher induction program. Along with reconciling the needs and concerns of the stakeholders interviewed in this study, we believe an open conversation about the purpose of and transformative opportunities within a province-wide teacher induction program is crucial. Important implications for policy emerge from our inquiry, analysis and discussion.

Research Process and Data Collection

We utilized a mixed-method approach which combined the use of surveys and in-depth, semi-structured interviews. Individuals from three stakeholder groups—new teachers (NTs), teacher educators (TEs), and school administrators (SAs)— were contacted through e-mail invitations, advertisements in education magazines and newsletters, and personal contacts.

The research team developed three surveys, one each for NTs, SAs and TEs. The majority of questions were the same for all three groups, though some unique questions were posed to individual groups. The three surveys were validated through expert review, and were approved by the University of Toronto Ethical Review Committee. Respondents had the option of submitting their names separately if they wished to participate in a follow-up interview. Data were collected between May 2005 and February 2006 from 141 participants (62 NTs, 69 TEs and 10 SAs). To analyze survey data, frequencies and cross-tabulations were first conducted. Kruskal-Wallis analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were performed comparing the frequencies of agreement/disagreement with statements among different descriptive groups where the means were relevant. This determined if responses differed among the descriptive groups (NTs, SAs, TEs).

The research team also developed three semi-structured interview protocols, one each for NTs, SAs and TEs, to guide discussions with participants (Creswell 1998). These were validated by expert review and piloting. One hundred and twenty five in-depth interviews were conducted with 37 NTs, 47 TEs, 41 SAs. Participants included anglophone and francophone Ontarians from across the province, who represented all education levels (PJ, JI, and IS). Interviews were recorded and transcribed, and data was analyzed inductively, using the techniques described by Bogdan and Biklen (1998). Analysis of the data included process coding. The codes reflected the common and various themes that emerged from the data. It should be noted that the qualitative data analysis occurred simultaneously with data collection. The data was analyzed using what Tesch (1990) characterizes as "de-contextualization" in order to identify themes and coding categories and "re-contextualization" to present a unified and coherent picture.

The following limitations of this research design are recognized:

1. The population size and characteristics of NTs, TEs and SAs are unknown. This limits the degree to which the researchers can generalize to the population with confidence.
2. The accuracy of responses is limited to respondents' knowledge.
3. Finally, some respondents may give an answer that will result in their responses appearing more progressive, rather than being honest about their perceptions or knowledge (Bogdan and Biklen 1998).

Theoretical Stance

A theoretical perspective grounded in critical-democratic teacher education guides our research (Beyer, 2001). Specifically, critical democracy strives to establish a way of life that "should show us how to transform our form of life in an emancipatory manner" through lived experience (O'Neill 2000: 503-504). To that end: "critical democratic theorists seek to explore how contentious issues of moral and cultural pluralism might be dealt with in a way that minimizes the potential for oppression, alienation and violence" (O'Neill 2000: 505).

As illustrated by this passage, critical democracy necessarily leads to requirements of inclusion and empowerment, with particular attention to those who are often marginalized from political activity. Beyond traditional democracy's narrow concern with equality, critical democracy embraces equity as a goal -- genuine and inclusive participation that "seriously and honestly acknowledges the importance of equity, diversity and social justice" (Portelli & Solomon 2001: 15) is necessary.

This perspective values divergent and dialogical inquiry, open-mindedness, critical abilities and questioning, equity and taking alternatives seriously (Portelli & Solomon, 2001). Central to this framework is an understanding of education as an irreducibly political and philosophical pursuit, such that there are no neutral pedagogies (Freire, 1998), and hence one needs to examine the "taken for granted" (Simon 1992) in education (e.g., what and whose standards guide the OTQT or induction program) in order to raise questions about the social and political implications of the often unexamined, daily practices (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1998) (e.g., who benefits from the proposed induction program? Who may be marginalized? Do the criteria used in the program unwittingly reproduce current inequities?).

In the critical-democratic stance, social justice is a "praxis" which acknowledges internalized forms of oppression (e.g., exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence) and privilege, and enacts practical strategies to change social institutions to overcome inequity (Kohli 2005). According to Gerwirtz (1998), a full conception of social justice must expand beyond distribution of goods in a society (distributive justice) to include "all aspects of institutional rules and relations" (relational justice).

The current educational policy environment is characterized by an emphasis on a narrow notion of accountability (Pratte, 2001 and Biesta, 2006) which is at odds with these critical-democratic and social justice goals. Our perspective is that there is an intrinsic connection between education and democracy, and that policy making should not be centrally located; open discourses about equity and social justice would lead to different constructions of knowledge and

different forms of learning (Carr & Hartnett 1996, Darling-Hammond 1998, Levin 2000, Portelli & Solomon 2001) which are at odds with politicized accountability measures (Apple 2006).

Context: Ontario's Political Environment and Teacher Induction Policies

In 1995, the newly-elected Progressive-Conservative Government in Ontario introduced a series of significant educational reforms under the umbrella of the so-called Common Sense Revolution. These include:

- the elimination of the Anti-racism, Equity and Access Branch within the Ministry of Education (Carr 2006, Bedard & Lawton 2000)
- the creation of the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT), a self-regulatory professional body responsible for teacher certification in 1996
- The introduction of the OTQT for new graduates from initial teacher education programs in 2000

The resulting OTQT was a four-hour test, administered to all graduates of faculties of education in the province, consisting of thirty-six multiple choice questions and fourteen open-ended, short-answer questions tied to four case studies. Test content addressed two domains. First, candidates taking the test were required to demonstrate their knowledge in the domain of professional knowledge (curriculum policy, planning and instruction, childhood and adolescent development, classroom management, legislation, and use of technology). Second, content included aspects of a domain called teaching practice: instructional skills, strategies, and approaches, motivation and communication, diversity and students with special needs, parents and community, and reflections on teaching.

In 2006 the Liberal government eliminated the OTQT but in an effort to standardize the evaluation of recent graduates of teacher education programs and their transition to teaching, the Ministry of Education introduced the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) purportedly designed to "improve the skills and confidence" of and reduce the level of attrition among teachers.
The resulting new program, purported to be designed in response to needs articulated by stakeholders, includes the following elements:
- orientation for all new teachers
- mentoring by experienced teachers
- professional development and training in: Literacy and Numeracy strategies, student success, safe schools, classroom management, parent communication; and "teaching students with special needs and addressing the varied challenges of meeting the needs of diverse learners that require a broad repertoire of instructional strategies (these learners might include Aboriginal students, students at risk, English language learners, etc.)" (Ministry of Education, 2006a, p. 24, 2010).

NTIP requires two Satisfactory Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA) ratings within the first twelve months of teaching, thus indirectly tying induction to performance appraisal and to certification within a new teacher's first year of teaching. The key components of the performance appraisal framework for new teachers are:

- Competency statements to focus the appraisal on the immediate skills, knowledge, and attitudes that new teachers require to meet the OCT Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession.
- Appraisal meetings between the principal and new teacher. The principal must arrange a pre-observation meeting with the teacher in preparation for the classroom observation and a post-observation meeting after the classroom observation.
- A summative report to document the appraisal process, which becomes a vehicle for teachers to reflect on the feedback they receive and to monitor their own growth.
- A two-point rating scale (*Satisfactory*, *Development Needed*) and rubric to assess new teachers' overall performance and provide feedback.
- A process for addressing *Development Needed* outcomes.

The criteria for new teacher evaluation, established by the Ontario Ministry of Education, are organized into "Domains" (which reflect the OCT Standards of Practice), with corresponding "Competencies" as illustrated in Table 1 below.

Table 1: New Teacher Performance Appraisal Competencies

Domain	Competencies
Commitment to Pupils and Pupil Learning	Teachers demonstrate commitment to the well-being and development of all pupils Teachers are dedicated in their efforts to teach and support pupil learning and achievement. Teachers treat all pupils equitably and with respect. Teachers provide an environment for learning that encourages pupils to be problem solvers, decision makers, lifelong learners, and contributing members of a changing society.
Professional Knowledge	Teachers know their subject matter, the Ontario curriculum, and education related legislation.
Professional Practice	Teachers use their professional knowledge and understanding of pupils, curriculum, legislation, teaching practices, and classroom management strategies to promote the learning and achievement of their pupils. Teachers communicate effectively with pupils, parents, and colleagues. Teachers conduct ongoing assessment of their pupils' progress, evaluate their achievement, and report results to pupils and parents regularly.

Perspectives on New Teacher Induction: Testing and Mentoring

As emphasis on educational accountability continues to grow, invariably jurisdictions aim to address the issue of new teacher competence. Here, we highlight some of the salient points from the literature on two popular models of new teacher induction: testing and mentoring.

Teacher testing, at least to some degree, influences classroom practice since teachers are accountable to meet minimum "standards" in order to begin or continue teaching. Mandated prescriptive testing of teachers sets up "test-prescribed knowledge" as more valid than other forms of teacher knowledge. Hartnett and Carr (1995) argue that teachers ought to be "critical pivots between the state, parental power and institutional power and the development of democratic values and attitudes in each new generation" (p. 43), "but governments have moved them toward the role of operatives" (p. 46). Testing a narrow range of prescribed knowledge potentially deskills, deprofessionalizes and demoralizes teachers – thus accountability can work against professional excellence (Portelli et al. 2005).

A review of initial teacher testing has revealed some negative consequences of teacher testing. Flippo and Riccards' (2000) study of the Massachusetts situation revealed a high rate of failure, and that teachers colleges were threatened with decertification if success rate on tests did not improve. Cumulative data revealed the failure rate of racial minorities to be much higher than that of their white counterparts. Institutional options became: tougher admission standards, adjust the curriculum, prepare candidates for the materials on the test, and teach to the test. Flippo and Riccards (2000) conclude: "Teachers preparatory colleges are altering, or at least adjusting, their curricular emphases to teach to a test of dubious validity and perhaps inadvertently excluding substantial portions of their enrolment in an effort to boast their test scores" (Flippo & Riccards 2000: 36).

Research indicates teacher tests lower standards for teaching due to an oversimplification of knowledge to accommodate the tests (Verloop, Van Driel, & Meijer 2001). Also, few teachers and researchers feel that a written test predicts classroom performance or reflects essential teacher knowledge (Appleman & Thompson 2002; Barnett & Hodson 2001; Birch, Duplaga, Seabert, & Wilbur 2001). The teacher candidates in Portelli, Solomon and Mujawamariya's (2003) study noted that the test contradicted what they had been taught about what constitutes good educational practices.

Mentoring programs, on the other hand, have been well-received as a potentially more effective means of induction (Cho & Kwon 2004; Kennedy & Burnstein 2004; Roehrig & Luft 2004). Partly in response to empirical research which has shown that pencil and paper teacher testing does not adequately assess teacher performance or quality teaching (Portelli et al. 2005, Portelli et al. 2003, Cochran-Smith & Dudley-Marling 2001; Flippo & Richards 2000; Fowler 2001), the practice of including mentoring in teacher induction has gained popularity worldwide (Smith & Ingersoll 2004, Cullingford 2006).

While mentoring in Ontario has been "officially" framed as a means to increase teacher competence, its purposes in other jurisdictions vary, ranging from support, socialization, adjustment, assessment, and teacher retention (Cullingford 2006, Ingersoll & Kralik 2004). The format, structure and content of mentoring programs vary in different jurisdictions. While detailed description of these is beyond the scope of this report Ingersool and Kralik (2004) report that most teacher mentoring programs tend to be hierarchical, and concerned with acclimatizing new teachers to existing school and district structures. Moreover, an identification of fundamental issues and a thoughtful critical discussion of the mentoring practice is necessary; for, as Hargreaves and Fullan (2000: 50) conclude, "mentoring of new teachers will never reach its potential unless it is guided by a deeper conceptualization."

Research on mentoring programs (see, for example, Achinstein & Barrett 2004; Achinstein & Athanases 2005; Achinstein & Athanases 2006; Bullough & Draper 2004; Davis 2001; Strong & Baron 2004) reveals several issues that need to be considered arising from the complexities of enacting such programs. These issues include:
- conflicting conceptions of teaching held by mentors and mentees
- lack of preparation of mentors to support teaching for equity and diversity
- the tendency to follow traditional teacher development patterns that may unwittingly discourage or contradict teaching that meets the needs of diverse students

- emotional and personal challenges; and teaching contexts and conditions that discourage open professional development and develop isolation and disengagement.

Mentoring programs may actually reproduce the over-emphasis on technical and management issues rather than critical reflection on practice focusing on the needs of diverse learners. Likewise, popular mentoring structures which seek to acclimatize new teachers may reinforce existing values and ways of working. By contrast, according to Gless (in Achinstein & Athanases 2006), meaningful mentoring programs need to go beyond the "paradigm of novices in survival mode" that limits the possibilities of educative growth. Instead, she argues for transformative mentoring that encourages mentors and new teachers to be change agents who question and transform the status quo.

The literature raises a number of issues for policy and practice: How valid are planned tests, and is there correlation between test performance and job performance? What are stakeholders' expectations of teacher education? What tensions and contradictions emerge between teacher knowledge for mandated induction programs and teacher knowledge for democratic education? Our research sheds light on the issues raised by these questions based on the perceptions of stakeholders.

2. Survey Responses

The responses of 141 NTs, SAs and TEs were analyzed using several data analysis techniques detailed in the research methods section in Chapter 1. Overall, responses across groups tended to be consistent. Several themes emerge from the data collected:

- Overall impressions of the OTQT are not favourable
- The range of "what counts" as essential teacher knowledge is broad
- Certification and induction of teachers should be performance-based
- Testing does not ensure accountability

Overall Impressions of the OTQT

Across all groups, participants are critical of the OTQT. Specifically, they do not feel that it contributed to teacher knowledge. None of the groups advocate for the use of the OTQT in the hiring process.

Table 2: Overall respondents' perceptions about OTQT contributions to teacher knowledge

Statement		Agree strongly	Agree	Ambivalent	Disagree	Disagree strongly	Total
The OTQT requires preservice teachers to learn things that they would not otherwise be exposed to.	Observed	5	23	21	42	50	141
	% of Total	3.5%	16.3%	14.9%	29.8%	35.5%	100.0%
OTQT content reflects essential knowledge necessary for new teachers to perform competently in their jobs	Observed	6	39	26	34	36	141
	% of Total	4.3%	27.7%	18.4%	24.1%	25.5%	100.0%

Looking at the overall responses to questions which address the degree to which participants feel the OTQT contributed to teacher knowledge, the largest proportion of respondents disagree that the content reflects essential knowledge, and also disagree that it "requires preservice teachers to learn things that they would not otherwise be exposed to." This disagreement tends to be stronger among NTs and TEs than SAs. Also, it appears that TEs are less likely to perceive that OTQT content reflects essential teacher knowledge than NTs and TEs.

Overall, only a small proportion of NTs feel that the OTQT had a positive impact on their competence to teach. They were asked both about the role of preparation for the test (e.g., studying), and the process of writing it. They responded in the following way:

- 10% agreed or strongly agreed that preparation for the OTQT improved their competence as a teacher, while 78% disagreed
- 3% agreed or strongly agreed that writing the OTQT improved their competence as a teacher, while 87% disagreed

Respondents were asked a series of questions about the degree to which they perceive equity and diversity reflected in the OTQT. These questions, and corresponding responses, appear in Table 3 below. Respondents in this sample tended to perceive that the OTQT neither addressed nor included diverse perspectives and equity issues.

Table 3: Equity/diversity-related perceptions

Statement		Agree strongly	Agree	Ambivalent	Disagree	Disagree strongly	Total*
OTQT content adequately addresses issues of equity and diversity among teacher candidates	Observed	6	12	28	31	50	127
	% of Total	4.7%	9.4%	22.0%	24.4%	39.4%	100.0%
OTQT test format and structure adequately address issues of equity and diversity among teacher candidates	Observed	7	11	29	32	49	128
	% of Total	5.5%	8.6%	22.7%	25.0%	38.3%	100.0%
The test content reproduces the dominant knowledge forms/ideologies	Observed	22	47	21	17	22	129
	% of Total	17.1%	36.4%	16.3%	13.2%	17.1%	100.0%
The test content excludes multiple perspectives and different kinds of knowledge	Observed	43	36	19	19	10	127
	% of Total	33.9%	28.3%	15.0%	15.0%	7.9%	100.0%
The structure and type of OTQT case studies limits the range of possible responses	Observed	48	44	13	17	8	130
	% of Total	36.9%	33.8%	10.0%	13.1%	6.2%	100.0%
The multiple-choice questions on the test encourage divergent and critical inquiry	Observed	3	9	15	39	72	138
	% of Total	2.2%	6.5%	10.9%	28.3%	52.2%	100.0%

* The total is based on responses to each question.

Range of "What Counts" as Essential Teacher Knowledge is Broad

There is little absolute consensus of what constitutes essential teacher knowledge – the "list" covers many categories, and many of these would be difficult to measure. The following themes emerged from open-ended questions:

- subject-specific or topic-specific knowledge and pedagogy (especially literacy)
- diversity
- inter- and intra-personal, and self-awareness
- classroom management and planning
- communication
- professional conduct and professional knowledge

Among the items listed in the survey, the following yield over 70% agreement that they were "essential for teachers:"

- Providing modifications and accommodations of instructional programs and assessments to meet the needs of exceptional learners (85%)
- Ability to prepare daily lesson plans (77%)
- Ability to address issues of equity and diversity in classroom practice (76%)
- Creating or selecting assessment/evaluation strategies that are appropriate for all students and are aligned with the Ontario Curriculum (75%)
- Knowledge of conventional classroom management techniques (71%).

While, for most essential knowledge items, NTs, TEs, and SAs respond in similar ways, there is one exception. When asked about the relevant importance of "understanding major theories of human development," SAs tend to feel this was less important, while TEs tend to perceive it as essential.

NT Evaluation Should be Performance-based

Across all groups (TEs, SAs and NTs), respondents indicate in the open-ended questions that policy-makers should not be evaluating teachers. Rather, respondents believe that faculty members, teacher-mentors, and principals should be the evaluators.

Without a doubt, all respondents feel strongly that any sort of teacher evaluation must be performance-based. This is, by far, the strongest theme that emerges for this question. Ideas include: modified versions of the TPA process as described on p. 4 of this report in the province, classroom observations by faculty and/or school administration, and peer coaching. These suggestions tended to be "longitudinal" in that they would require multiple observations over time. As well, respondents suggest that these performance-based evaluations ought to be "holistic" and address many different aspects of teaching. Several respondents also suggest that input from parents and/or students would be valuable. Mentoring programs are also suggested by many respondents as a possible means of evaluation of competence to teach. While they raised the concept of mentoring, respondents do not articulate the nature of such a program.

Testing Does Not Ensure Accountability

Overwhelmingly, respondents discuss accountability as the reason or rationale for the introduction of the OTQT (see table 4). Some discuss the "political" nature of the decision to introduce the OTQT. However, respondents perceive the OTQT as an ineffective accountability tool. A key theme that emerges among responses is very well captured by this NT remark: "Fundamental to teacher testing is political expediency. In the guise of accountability." As well, respondents perceive a lack of transparency in the OTQT.

Table 4: Accountability-related perceptions

Statement		Agree strongly	Agree	Ambivalent	Disagree	Disagree strongly	Total
The qualifying test ensures educational accountability	Observed	8	11	15	21	85	140
	% of Total	5.7%	7.9%	10.7%	15.0%	60.7%	100.0%
The test meets the public's demand for more teacher accountability in schools	Observed	8	17	12	32	62	131
	% of Total	6.1%	13.0%	9.2%	24.4%	47.3%	100.0%

Unfavourable Perceptions of Test Consequences

Most respondents, regardless of their role (NT, TE or SA), identify varied negative consequences of the test. Among TEs, "anxiety" and "stress" among students is frequently identified as a consequence of taking the test. NTs mention stress associated with test taking. Related to this, TEs and NTs describe the test itself as a "nuisance" or an "inconvenience." Many TEs refer to the test as "a waste of time." Notwithstanding such negative consequences, some (%) NTs feel that the test increased knowledge based on self study, or served as a valuable "forced reflection" culminating my year's experiences."

SAs responses have a different focus than NTs and TEs. Rather than discussing issues of test effects on preservice teachers, their responses focus more on solving the perceived "problems" of ill-equipped NTs in their schools. Generally, the view is that a test such as the OTQT is not relevant, and that more practical experience is necessary. One writes: "Anyone can write a good answer; it doesn't take into account personality and how the candidate relates to students/parents/teachers/colleagues and community."

The ultimate elimination of the OTQT after survey responses were collected certainly reflects the preferences of respondents. Responses regarding essential knowledge for NTs and the inclusion/exclusion of divergent perspectives are relevant to induction program design, as well as analysis and critique of induction programs introduced. These themes are further explored in the chapters that follow.

3. School Administrators' Perspectives on Induction

We interviewed forty-one school administrators (SAs). Of these, twenty-seven were elementary SAs, four were middle school SAs, and ten were secondary school SAs. Seventeen of the participants were male and twenty-four were female; thirty-two worked in English-speaking schools and nine in French schools.

OTQT: Lack of Awareness

While the OTQT was administered by the Ontario Principals' Council (OPC), a professional organization to which all school principals in Ontario belong, none of the 41 SAs interviewed know a great deal about the OTQT. While all are aware of its existence, none knew the content or structure of the test. Consistent with survey findings, in the interviews, the SAs feel that test results were not particularly useful to them in their professional roles. Therefore, despite their professional affiliation with the OPC, participants were not involved in or apprised of the OTQT process. In light of the lack of awareness and perception that the OTQT is of little value to NTs and SAs, an investigation of "ideal" induction programs offers stronger insights into SAs views on NTs' needs, as well as the priority areas for NTs' learning.

Qualities of Good Teachers and Teaching

Highly related to both their impressions of teacher testing and induction are SAs' beliefs about what makes a "good teacher." These very personal conceptions of an effective teacher sheds light on what characteristics, dispositions and skills SAs prioritize as "essential knowledge" for NTs, and as well what they believe to be the priority areas to develop through mentoring relationships.

The Charismatic Subject

Overwhelmingly, the SAs tend to engage in discourse which focuses on dispositions and personal characteristics that make good teachers – what Moore (2004) refers to as a dominant discourse called the charismatic subject. Words often used to describe good teachers by SAs include: passionate, enthusiastic, respectful and caring. As some SAs point out, these qualities are difficult to measure by a pencil-and-paper test. Some representative quotes include:

> *The hallmarks of a good teacher again, are those sorts of unwritten things that are hard to measure. There has to be some accountability measure, but I think they [OTQT creators] keep missing the mark with these things… good teachers care.*

> *What makes a good teacher is empathy for kids; ability to get your message across verbally and in writing and the ability to care, to have presence in the classroom and to control, to have kids want to be there.*

> *Well the number one quality of a good teacher is they care. In my years as an administrator the teachers that I've had trouble with are the ones that it was just a job,*

and to try to deal with them around issues that are important around kids they lack that intrinsic, what I call caring.

The quotes above emphasize the personal qualities of empathy and caring as hallmarks of good teaching. As well, these quotes illustrate some level of thought (or at least awareness) of criteria that define these particular administrators' perceptions of good teachers. Some SAs discuss specifically how charismatic subjects as good teachers are born, not made. Two representative quotes illustrating this are:

Teachers either have it in their heart, in their souls or they don't have it…it's that simple. You are a good teacher because you love it, because you love children, and you are a good communicator. That will never show up on tests!! The competencies that we look for in teachers cannot come across in standardized tests.

A good teacher either has it or they don't. You can teach someone skills but if someone is going to be a great teacher, they either have it, it's innate or they don't. You can learn the steps – one, two, three, four, five, and it's funny because people say what is it? I couldn't tell you but a great teacher needs to be able to connect with the kids…If you are going to be a great teacher you either have it or you don't.

A problematic aspect of the "teachers are born, not made" belief is that it implies that some individuals, despite education, training and life experience, will never be able to achieve the status of good teachers. To an extent, this set of beliefs undermines the project of teacher education and on-the-job learning programs such as induction. Moreover, the reliance of SAs on this discursive model can lead to judgmental appraisals of teachers with little or no criteria for making an evaluative judgment.

The Competent Craftsperson

While the charismatic subject discourse is most prominent in our interviews with SAs, the discourse of the teacher as a competent craftsperson (Moore 2004) is also evident. Within this discursive frame, three particular areas of competency were frequently brought up, and discussed with great emphasis: classroom management/organization, teaching/learning to address learner differences, and curriculum/policy knowledge.

First, of these three competency areas, classroom management was discussed by all SAs. More important than the frequency with which they brought this up is the strong emphasis they place on classroom management as the most critical skill for new and experienced teachers. An analysis of their responses illustrates tremendous diversity in how SAs conceptualize classroom management – a diversity which is also reflected in the education literature (see, for example, the collected works in Evertson & Weinstein 2006).

Some SAs conceive of classroom management purely in disciplinary terms, synonymous with a culture of control in the classroom. For instance, one administrator, who said that classroom management was the "highest priority" of an NT, identifies tone, noise, and the number of pupils

sent to office as indicators of good classroom management. SAs' representative quotes of this position include:

> *My first bit of advice to new teachers, student teachers in fact is recognize that you are the alpha male when you step in there, and attend to those details… Everybody wants to please the alpha male.*

> *Good classroom management, I've always said if someone that has good classroom control can have their kids on the top end of the volume, the communication and intermixing sort of level and then how ever you bring them bring them back down sit at their desk and listen, and again, that's the students ok, so that's the teacher is in control…They say okay everyone now back to your desks and the kids . . . away they go…And again, that comes when the line is very clear as to who the adult and the authority figure in the room is and it is routed in respect for the teachers and respect for the students and an understanding that we are here to learn, and that we don't let those few people who want to control the class; they are learning off track, take control. That's up to teachers but again that's good discipline to me, that's how I assess it.*

The majority of SAs, however, have more tempered conceptions of classroom management. These conceptions balance less authoritarian control (rules, consequences) with some student engagement aims (challenging and engaging content or pedagogies). Representative quotes of this sort of relational control model within the classroom management spectrum include:

> *I think again different teachers have different styles which work for them and which work for the students so there's not one particular method. I think respect of your students and also students respecting you as the teacher is key. You need to establish respect in your environment. You need to set boundaries.*

Some SAs conceive of classroom management as situated mainly or fully in student engagement, which contradicts the disciplinary conception of classroom management. These conceptions emphasize relevant and engaging learning activities instead of a control-and-discipline focus. For example:

> *I would say classroom organization, like from its most subtle thing to the most open thing. First of all, just in terms of the sort of constructive feeling you get when you get to a classroom when you see that things are happening, kids are learning, the kids are learning, the kids are engaged, that they find things relevant. But even the more subtle things like, how do they move between one subject area and another? How is the classroom arranged? What sorts of things are up on the walls? What is the relationship between the student and the teacher? How does the teacher address difficult moments in the classroom where students are reluctant to engage in a particular exercise or there's things happening in the classroom that really weren't intended through the curriculum that's being addressed. So, I think it's pretty open, it's pretty big, it's not just 'sit down in your seat, shut up and do this.' But something more about how constructive is the instructional time.*

Second, most SAs recognize that learners have diverse needs, and thus emphasize the importance of adaptability to learner needs as a characteristic of good teachers. At the time of the research, the concepts of "differentiated instruction" and "universal design"[1] were extremely popular in the province, appearing in various Ministry of Education documents and frequently discussed at professional conferences. As a result, the emphasis for "individualization" discussed is on learning styles and special needs related to exceptionalities, rather than systemic social justice aims. For example:

> *Well, it's hard to prepare a new teacher walking in for all eventuality, but I think they have to have an understanding of what modifying a program looks like and what differentiating strategies look like.*

The third area of discussion with respect to the competent craftsperson was the importance of curriculum expertise in their conceptions of good teachers – though this is less frequently and less strongly emphasized than classroom management and modification to meet learners' needs. This aspect of competence focuses on knowledge of the subject, as well as understanding of provincial policy, especially pertaining to assessment and evaluation.

These SAs' perceptions suggest that they have extremely clear and concrete ideas about the competencies which they perceive to be essential to good teachers. While there is some overlap, those competencies preferred by SAs do not clearly align with the competencies in the TPA upon which NTs are evaluated.

While Moore (2004) suggests that the discourse of the reflective practitioner is popular among educators, and certainly in the literature (see, for example, Moore 2004), this dominant discourse was not well-represented among SAs interviewed in this research. We also note an absence of any discussion about what we call the discourse of "transformative teachers," in which the conceptualization of good teaching would be to challenge the problems with the status quo, including the structure of schools and society itself.

Induction through Mentoring: Who, What and How?

Interviews with SAs included guided discussion about what an ideal induction would include and how it would be structured. All SAs had strong views about NTs induction programs in response to our questions. All supported the idea of a concerted model of induction through mentoring for NTs, and saw many potential benefits – ranging from discouraging attrition among NTs,[2] to developing NTs' skills or knowledge, and ensuring that NTs conform to the norms of the school and board.

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[1] These terms refer to the practice of "differentiating" lessons to address students' differences: learning styles, preferences, special needs and/or strengths. Differentiation can be achieved altering any one of the following: content/topics, processes/activities for learning, assessment forms at the end of a learning unit (e.g., choose between an essay, a presentation, or a poem), and/or the environment.

[2] Researchers have investigated the effects of mentoring in other jurisdictions, and their data have suggested that it has resulted in higher teacher retention rates (see, for example, Odell & Ferraro 1992, Whittaker 2000, Smith & Ingersoll 2004).

Who? SA-driven Program

SAs express a preference for a SA-driven program, despite perceived workload concerns. As one participant noted:

> *Well, the principals are going to do it [mentoring roles] anyway because the principals are responsible for everything – we are accountable for everything.*

Because administrators are "in charge" of the school, many feel that they must ultimately control the program. As such, involvement of other stakeholders was perceived to result in inefficiency:

> *I mean everybody wants inclusion but you get to a point where it gets muddled. I don't know that at that point rather than just to keep [parents, students] informed on the decision.*

SAs often raise potential benefits or outcomes of a teacher mentoring program. First, there is a strong sense that mentoring would be an effective strategy to reduce attrition which is perceived as a major challenge facing the profession. The Ministry of Education stated that between 1993 and 1999, NTs left the profession at a rate of 22 to 33 per cent during their first three years (Ministry of Education, 2005). SAs see teacher attrition as a concern, and expected that mentoring could address it.

Second, most SAs feel that more time in practicum situations is critical while teacher candidates are in faculties of education. Several SAs believe that NTs entered the profession lacking sufficient knowledge and expertise. Specifically, these SAs describe NTs' inability to write lessons, lack of knowledge of curriculum policy, lack of knowledge of "newest techniques in teaching," have a poor grasp of the language of instruction (both English and French), and have poor classroom management. They believe that a teacher induction program would address some of these perceived problems of lack of teacher competence. For example:

> *What I see fairly regularly is quite a difference between what a practicing teacher needs in terms of day-to-day skills and what I'm seeing from new teachers. For example, and this is a fairly new phenomenon, I'm going to say that this is in the last 10 years as opposed to the 20 years previous to that in my career things as simple as how you write a lesson.*

> *The quality of the candidates has been going down over the years regardless of what they wrote...If you want to do this job well you need to do ongoing training, you really do because things change. I mean multiple intelligence nobody had heard about it years ago, emotional intelligence, things that affect kids' learning. We know so much more about the brain and stuff like that.*

SAs tend to prefer principal-selection of mentors, rather than self-selection to ensure that exemplary teachers serve as mentors. For example:

> *First of all, I think it should require that the principal sort of signs off in terms of who's going to be a mentor to the mentee, because, I mean the quality of the mentor would be essential for having a good experience for the mentee in particular.*

Two SAs provided representative positions about the rationales to avoid self-selection:

> *When you ask people to self-identify, to act as mentors you get some very good people and you get some people that I wouldn't want to be mentoring any of my new teachers. And it's interesting because they are well meaning and good people and they are good teachers in their own right but they are not necessarily exemplary teachers.*

> *Any effective organization in the world doesn't ask people to identify themselves as effective people. They go to the people that are known to be effective leaders and they say can you select the effective employees, and that's what we need to do.*

As well, most SAs prefer to match mentors and NTs themselves, rather than allowing for self-selection or self-pairing. When asked about their views on preparing teachers to be effective mentors, SAs differ in opinions. Some believe that mentors selected do not need any training:

> *But at the end of the day we don't want to be telling them how to be a good mentor. We pick them because they know what they are doing.*

Others feel that mentors should receive some form of training or orientation. Among those who felt mentors ought to receive training, a workshop format was usually recommended, sometimes with the NT involved in the workshop. For example:

> *I would suggest that the mentor and the mentee might need some workshop in order to understand relationships.*

Among those who favour workshops for mentors, their recommendations for delivery of those workshops ranged from board personnel to principals.

Based on their responses, we can conclude that SAs wish to be involved in the decision making process about the structure of mentoring in hopes that the process might solve two perceived problems facing their schools: teacher attrition, and lack of NT preparedness.

What? Uniformity, Classroom Management, Curriculum and Lesson Planning

The SAs interview findings suggest that while there is much agreement about the need for a new teacher induction program featuring mentoring and that focuses on hands-on experience in the classroom rather than integrating with theory-based courses in faculties of education, there is a lack of consensus as to the content of such a program. SAs were asked to discuss the topics which ought to be covered in a NT mentoring program. Many SAs believe that teacher education is too focused on theory and that most of the 'real learning' happens in the schools. For instance:

So to me I guess there is a bit of (can't think of the work I need to think of) where there is a mismatch in what happens in theory and what happens at practice. And I think there's a lot of theory in teacher training from what I remember myself and from what I'm hearing people talking about and what actually goes on in classrooms. Like to me if a teacher could spend 75 percent of the year in a school or in several schools and 25 percent here at the university…

Only a small proportion of SA participants recognize a need to individualize mentoring based on each NT's particular strengths and weaknesses. This notion of individualizing programs works within certain groups of teachers as well. For instance, Francophone respondents tend to express a concern over the linguistic ability of those teaching in French and saw that as a main topic to be addressed by an induction program for those in need.

Without exception, classroom management emerges as the main priority, though often combined with other priorities. For example, one representative quote from a SA emphasizes that mentoring and induction:

…should be aligned with current practices in terms of quality of teaching and learning strategies and classroom management.

Classroom management is a big one because if you don't have management of your classroom in my opinion there is not a lot of learning taking place in there either.

This emphasis on classroom management is consistent with SAs' perception that classroom management is an important characteristic of good teaching. However, the participants' conceptions of what classroom management is and should entail vary considerably, ranging from teacher control with student silence to student engagement.

In addition to classroom management, teaching/learning strategies, curriculum policy and subject knowledge were also frequently cited as important topics for mentoring, as was lesson planning. With respect to teaching/learning strategies, SAs mentioned some specific examples of ideal pedagogies, including "brain-based" learning (that is, looking to recent neuroscientific research which points to classroom approaches), and the need for differentiated learning largely to address different learning styles. Based on their remarks, SAs see an understanding of curriculum policy documents as essential, as many SAs view part of their role in ensuring that teachers address all curriculum policy expectations in the courses they teach. SAs we interviewed did not interrogate or question the curriculum policy itself.

How? On-the-job Mentoring

Specifically, SAs favour mentorship or internship models as the ideal format for teacher induction. A strong preference for an "on–the-job-training" style of induction is considered the best way to prepare teachers for their profession.

Though SAs feel that mentorship is important to supporting the development of NTs, they strongly reject the notion of linking induction with certification. The primary concern is that

certification tied to mentoring would rely too heavily on centralized guidelines set by Boards of Education or the Ministry of Education – which many SAs feel would not address local concerns at the school level. SAs prefer to be left to organize for their particular school, but not necessarily provide opportunities for professional development. As the SAs interviewed see their role as central to the induction process, they perceive little to no role for other stakeholders such as students, parents or community members.

The actual mentoring process, in the view of SAs, might have many components. For example:

> There should be a lot of shadowing. There should be time set aside for planning. There should be assessment and evaluation, time set aside going through all of that.

Some feel strongly that workshops with common topics (e.g., assessment, classroom management, board policies and procedures) should be provided for all NTs:

> And I envision it where you have a series of workshops that are set up where your teachers are required to attend workshops and they will cover different issues.

The concerns and challenges of implementing an effective teacher induction program are framed by a particular understanding of mentoring. SAs express a concern about the amount of resources needed to support an effective induction program. In particular, they worry about how to account for the release time that would be necessary for both NT inductees and mentors. They explain that the time needed to release mentors and NTs would require financial resources for supply teachers and would also cause problems and disruptions in classrooms when teachers are absent from their students. In one SA's words:

> It's hard when you don't have any sort of concentrated periods of time, and one of the things we're struggling with in [this school district] is finding enough supply teachers. Even if you give them the time, teachers hate leaving their class to come back to a bigger mess.

An additional concern is the implication of increased responsibilities for teachers involved in mentoring programs. SAs apprehensions around the extra work that an induction program would entail for both NTs and mentor teachers reveal a perception among some of the participants that teacher federations are an obstruction to the implementation programs and change, and they foresee this with respect to mentoring, because, as one SA puts it, unions "severely modify or restrict reforms." SAs who share this sentiment describe the role of unions this way:

> …over the last several years from an administrative point of view it almost seems as though teacher federations run schools. And that is not only challenging from the administrator point of view but it is cancerous and it is hugely limiting in terms of what [types of changes and reforms] can get down in the school.

> …teachers have become labourers now and they operate like United Auto Workers. There's very little around professionalism, professional duties… there's nothing wrong

with unions protecting workers' rights. And I think it's good to have that piece. But just as we talk to students about rights, what are the responsibilities?

Finally, some express concerns about their own workload, and how it may impede successful administration of a mentoring program at the school level. For example:

> *And there's not a lot of time for [mentoring new teachers], I mean it's a busy day in a school. I know that everybody else would say that we are under worked over paid but in the day it's a busy day, it starts quick, it ends fast and then there's coaching to be done and then there's marking at night… there isn't time built in unless you really have a prep with somebody you don't connect sometimes at all in a month*

> *My biggest thing is from an administrative point of view is that again, it's a time issue. So if you want me to take a look at [mentoring] I think yes it should be a priority for any school because how good your students are doing is largely depends on who is in that classroom with them, so something has got to come off my plate. I don't see anything coming off the principal's or the administrator's plate.*

Equity, Diversity and Social Justice: Superficial Conceptions

Critical scholars view schooling as one piece of a larger struggle for democracy and social justice. In line with a critical-democratic perspective, we believe that attention to equity within the classroom, while laudable, is only part of the work that needs to be done. Discourses of "transformative teachers" should go beyond this to challenge problems with the structure of schools and society itself. To that end, we sought out SAs' perceptions on equity, diversity and social justice. We prompted all participants to discuss the role of equity and diversity and/or social justice as they relate to teacher testing, mentoring and induction.

The interviews reveal superficial, and at times contradictory, understandings of equity and diversity. Among SAs who participated in the research, equity definitions focused primarily on learning styles or special needs, ignoring important issues of race, class, gender, etc. In fact, often when asked about equity and diversity, SAs would end up speaking about classroom management strategies. For example, when one SA was asked how to assess whether a teacher deals effectively with equity, diversity and inclusiveness in the classroom, she went immediately to questions of assessment:

> *I look for the type of assessment tools…Am I only paper-and-pen? Do you put a variety of oral in there by having the kids produce various forms of work, presentations? What are you using to evaluate learning? That's from the equity standpoint, that's what I take a look at.*

While definitely assessment issues are relevant to equity and diversity, in this case, equity is confounded with a variety of assessment tools, focusing on narrow practical knowledge rather than broader discourses of social justice. Beyond their perfunctory understanding of equity and diversity, few SAs prioritize social justice, equity and diversity as part of essential knowledge for NTs, favouring instead classroom management themes.

Summary: School-Based Induction Preferences that Reinforce Existing Values and Culture

SAs favour school-based, administrator-driven mentoring models which give SAs autonomy over the process. Given the control granted to SAs through NTIP and particularly for the evaluation of NTs in the TPA process within NTIP, preferences as well as subsequent policy serve to increase SAs control over defining NTs, and as "gatekeepers" for those entering the profession. Moreover, few feel that mentoring should be individualized based on NTs' strengths and areas for improvement – rather, they tend to favour standardized topics, with particular emphasis on traditional models of classroom management as the highest priority. This increased emphasis on technical skills was coupled with an absence of attention to issues of equity, diversity and social justice, instead focusing simply on notions of inclusive learning.

Just about all SAs interviewed expressed concern over the need for additional resources to support mentoring. In particular, they cited release time, as the biggest challenge. Some also voiced concern over perceived obstruction anticipated from teacher unions. SAs varied in their understanding of equity and diversity, and, in most cases, this was not a priority for NTs in their perception.

The predominant theme uniting all responses is the reification of a culture of control. In terms of program structure, SAs favour an autonomous approach to selecting and pairing mentors with mentees and in managing much of the mentoring process. The SAs interviewed express a strong notion of mentoring as preparation, often within a culture of conformity that is characterized by standardization and control, surveillance, and evaluation.

This analysis raises two critical implications. First, SAs' relatively narrow conceptions of "good teachers" as charismatic subjects and competent craftspeople calls for greater professional and critical discussion and reflection among those in privileged positions of leadership. The constructions of good teaching, induction and mentorship favoured by SAs certainly marginalize teachers with divergent perspectives (that is, perspectives that differ from mentors and/or SAs). Coupled with the power that SAs hold in the NTIP process as a whole, those with divergent perspectives face potentially career-limiting consequences when being mentored or evaluated by others who have opposing points of view on good teaching, essential knowledge, and teaching practice.

Implications for policy-makers focus on the need for induction programs such as NTIP to be carefully considered. First, the apparent disconnect between SAs' conceptions of good teachers versus the criteria by which NTs are evaluated suggests that the TPA process may be flawed. As well, while today's policy-makers advocate for change to improve education and "increase student success," a transmission model of induction which reinforces dominant discourses will surely work against any significant critical-democratic change to the system which might make real progress in student achievement. Without addressing the ideals of critical inquiry and social justice, the needs of marginalized students – the very targets of many student success initiatives – will surely not be met. Space for the "transformative teacher" to flourish among the dominant discourses is crucial for this type of change to occur.

What an emerging democratic society needs is teachers who engage in liberatory pedagogies; those who provide a social environment that prepares the next generation of democratic citizenry (see, for example, Olssen, et al 2004, Darling-Hammond 1996, Gutmann 1999, Parker 1996). Within the critical-democratic ideal, good teachers need to be able not only to counteract aspects of the overt and hidden curriculum but also to mobilize their students so that they feel empowered to act (Freire 1998). This conception of a "good teacher" – the "transformative teacher" (Greenman 2004, Mockler 2005) – is very different from the current dominant discourses emerging from society, SAs, and the Ministry of Education.

4. Teacher Educators' Perspectives on Induction and the Meaning of Competence

Thirty-five Teacher Educators (TEs) were interviewed for this study. Participants were chosen to maximize diversity in subject specialization, institution, gender, culture, ethnic background, and language of instruction (English and/or French) as well as geographical region. Questions concerning the Ontario Teacher Qualifying Test (OTQT) focused on TEs' knowledge of its introduction, implementation and impact on teacher education. Questions pertaining to a mentorship/induction program focused on: what specific skills and knowledge base(s) are necessary for teaching; how contemporary issues of ethnocultural equity and diversity in the Ontario context (inclusive of race, class, gender, ethnicity, and so on) can be addressed; the characteristics of a good mentor; and appropriate and productive administration and assessment.

OTQT Perceptions: Poor Measurement Tool

Generally speaking, TEs are in agreement that the OTQT was not designed to measure what should be measured. Also, several TEs convincingly argue that the OTQT fails to take account of ethnocultural equity and diversity issues.

Twenty-seven out of thirty-five TEs describe the test as knowledge-based only. Thus, what the OTQT measured was the acquisition of a particular type of codified knowledge. Yet, almost all of the TEs describe good teaching as *not being about the acquisition of knowledge*. TEs characterize the test as ignoring the inter-subjective, contextually analytical, proactive, performative, responsive, and experientially based creative skills and competencies which "good" teaching demands. In addition, they regard important aspects of the teaching and learning process such as collaboration, lesson planning and delivery, classroom practice, reflection, actualization of assessment, and various other forms of professional learning as extremely difficult (or impossible) to measure, especially with short answer/multiple choice-type questions. In one TE's words,

> *The results wouldn't really tell us much about how well a person [teaches] ...I wonder if doing well on this test would actually [mean doing] well in the classroom. Teaching entails gaining knowledge that is applicable in 'the real world'... I have to look at learning strategies, and how am I going to reach this kid. What strategies will affect this particular child and how are you going to change your strategies to meet the needs. And I don't know that pencil-and-paper tests [capture] that.*

Eighteen respondents strongly believe that the OTQT is inadequate to address the social aspects of teaching while it simultaneously contradicts the government's rhetoric of improving teacher education. As well, TEs suggest that the test also contradicts what is taught in the faculty. For instance, many faculties of education focus on learner-centred pedagogy, ethnocultural equity, and constructivist epistemology whereas the importance of these issues, concepts, dynamics and processes were both implicitly and explicitly negated by both the nature and content of the OTQT. Regarding the dynamics of teaching one respondent says:

> *[The] most important thing in the educational equation was the relationship between the learner and the curriculum. The curriculum ought to match the needs of the learner. So the idea of there being one standardized way in which you could figure out whether teachers were competent, struck them as contrary to what we were teaching and yet we were also supposed to be the people who were preparing them to teach this. I also, in my work around equity social justice, emphasized the extent to which one size does not fit all. So to say that you could have one instrument that would answer the question of what makes a good teacher, this finite instrument struck people as odd.*

Many TEs speak about valuable time lost in "teaching to the test," while others express frustration at preparing candidates for a qualifying test which made social justice issues seem extraneous. The result is that some TEs had to employ subversive pedagogy to "sneak" a social justice orientation into their teaching without being seen as resisting students' desire for pertinent test preparation.

Qualities of Good Teachers and Teaching: The Charismatic Subject as a Role Model

Like NTs and SAs, the charismatic subject discourse (Moore 2004) is prominent in TEs' conceptions of good teachers. As such, they tend to begin their descriptions of good teaching by describing dispositions and personal characteristics. For example:

> *When I go into a classroom I watch for that teacher candidate's ability to relate to those children. Do they speak to them in a way that is respectful? And is it reciprocated? Is there a rapport? Is there mutual respect? Is there a care in how they are spoken to or how the teacher responds to the students? Is there love, care and fun?*

> *..values like: caring, empathy, and a deep appreciation for people in different situation, I think are terribly important values to begin to embody in their practice and not just fill in on the questionnaire or cite in an appropriate place in a meeting, but to actually have that become part of who they are as teachers.*

The ability to relate and to build relationships, many TEs made clear, cannot just be limited to the classroom. They called for knowledge and skills about developing "positive good constructive collegial relationships," and most importantly, "learning to relate with the community." One participant suggested that teachers unable to relate to parents could be a detriment as they would be unable to provide support for children labeled "problem children." She believed that "it is incumbent on all of us to learn about the community we're servicing," which may involve some specific training.

However, TEs' conceptions of good teachers and good teaching go beyond this single discourse. They also include some aspects of Moore's (2004) competent craftsperson discourse. Like SAs, and consistent with the Ministry of Education's formal position on NT priorities, TEs place very strong emphasis on classroom management.

With respect to views on classroom management, TEs' differences are at times substantial, although many agree that successful classroom management involves teachers' ability to openly and empathically co-operate and relate to their students, their school colleagues and with parents from their school's community. A few TEs support a discipline-focused view of classroom management consistent with that of SAs and the government's conception. For example, one TE emphatically states, "if you're not able to manage your classroom time efficiently and effectively, then there will not be any learning." For this TE, classroom management means behaviour management, routines, and effective classroom activity transition. For another participant, classroom management entails student involvement in making rules and regulations and be able to follow through with them. *S*he stated,

> *At the very beginning of the year, there have to be guidelines and rules that are set and I think it's important to involve the children in setting these guidelines and these rules, because when they're involved, it's more significant to them and means more to them.*

Despite these examples, the majority of TEs prefer a more inclusive version of classroom management. When asked about classroom management, one TE describes situations in which teachers are told to keep their classes quiet, to keep their lessons tidy, though he firmly believes that these "rules" contradict classroom management which is tied to student engagement through sometimes boisterous or messy activities. He says:

> *So, silence and cleanliness are not indicators you need for signs of good management. I would think, look at the kids, look at whether they're working productively and whether they're pleased or happy or settled with what's going on and whatever they're doing willingly instead of being coerced. I think those are signs of good management and some teachers are geniuses at it, you just wonder how on earth they do it.*

This particular TE raises the tensions between conventional, "chalk-and-talk" classroom management which appears to be valued by SAs in this research, and a more constructivist model which appears to be valued by TEs in the province.

Vision of Ideal Induction: Board-Administered Mentoring

TEs overwhelmingly support the idea of an induction program for NTs entering the education system. They prefer a mentoring program, which might be school-based, or include mentors from outside of the school system, though they recommend it be administered at the school board level. They envisage that the school board would be responsible for identifying the best teachers for the job, and formulating and communicating the expectations for the program, as well as assessing its progress. Despite the preference for boards to play an administrative role, most TEs believe that other education stakeholders – especially faculties of education – should share responsibility for induction. As one TE put it, "school boards are partnering with the local universities and there should be some flow back and forth."

Most TEs agree that a mentorship/induction program might be the place where teacher education programs and the school boards could collaborate and provide support to guide mentors. They believe that mentors themselves ought to be mentored prior to assuming a support role for NTs.

TEs believe that mentors need to be assessed to ensure that they meet certain requirements set up in the program. Two respondents suggest a "tri-partnership," involving multiple bodies outside the school system, such as a Faculty or the Ministry.

> *I think you need someone outside of the school that would work with the mentor and work with the new teachers to look at different scenarios…to group problem solve, but where you have an outside different school board level person who can say, "well, perhaps a technique that you could use is 'x'.*

Interestingly, only two TEs suggest that the University/Faculty of Education take charge of an induction/mentorship program. In their view, only the university has the theoretical and practical resources required to build the link between NTs' training and practice. In contrast, three TEs explicitly expressed their doubts about having TEs or faculties involved in the process because they believe that what the student teacher really needs at this stage is to hear from someone in the field. For another participant, the faculties' disconnection with teaching practice disqualifies them from the process.

What? Induction Priorities: Classroom Management, Communication, Social Issues, and Critical Thinking

All TEs agree that any type of induction program should focus on classroom management, communication, social issues, and critical thinking. However, not all TEs agree on the meaning of these common-place terms nor whether theory should be privileged over practice. Most TEs emphasize that the induction program should explicitly address the changing demographic context in Ontario. Most agree that teacher induction should address issues related to anti-oppression such as: attention to social class, anti-racism, gender, anti-homophobia. Many contrasted a student population comprised of ethnic and social class diversity with the homogeneity of white middle-class teachers and wondered how NTs could be initiated into understanding and relating with students from diverse ethnocultural, racial and class-based backgrounds. In contrast, two TEs strongly disagreed that consciousness-raising about social justice issues should be included in the induction program. One believed that issues of diversity and equity should arise from a particular moral orientation rather than a set of rules and values. The other rejected explicit inclusion of social justice issues by contending that "teachers are not social workers" and "when we try to turn teachers into social workers, we have people who are not very good social workers and not very good teachers."

The differences in their responses lie in both the hierarchical significance of classroom management in relation to other aspects of an induction program and what methods are considered most appropriate and effective.

TEs point out an incongruous relationship between theory and practice in teacher education, and believe that this imbalance will likely be reflected in any induction program. Most TEs place greater emphasis on theoretical knowledge and many expressed their fears that teachers may become preoccupied with teaching techniques. One participant asserts,

Every student needs to be able to understand all of the "isms," at least get acquainted with seeing different types of difference and how to respond to it… And I think that should be part of the induction process because other than the Urban Diversity Program, there's just too much of this hands-on practical stuff that is pushed forward and not the thinking part. The inquiry is being lost and then we wonder why teachers are technocrats. … Why are you teaching what you are teaching? What is the basis for your programming? Think deeper, like what is it about the curriculum that seems to be so static?

In contrast, another TE emphasizes that teacher mentorship/induction programs should place more emphasis on practicum rather than on theory. He suggested that:

You'd need to have hands-on experience -- that's the way you become a better teacher. You don't become a better teacher by sitting in a classroom. … Teaching is doing. You have to immerse yourself in it.

Who? "Master Teachers" as Mentors With Variety and Flexibility

TEs generally warn against one-to-one relationships between mentors and mentees "to avoid the possibilities of personality clashes." For one participant,

[It] would be better to not pair everybody with an individual mentor, but rather look at small problem solving groups for new teachers, which are facilitated by people of outstanding ability. So it may be a teacher at another school, it may be board-level personnel who have the skills in adult counseling… to provide the emotional support, but also have outstanding classroom skills so that they can really do some problem solving.

The advantage of having multiple mentors for the novice teacher is that the latter "can have that ease in and ease out as [he/she] finds out what people's strengths are."

All TEs believe that mentor teachers could be someone in a school, in a faculty of education or in the Ministry of Education as long as they have demonstrated mastery and excellence in teaching, and are aware of complex interpersonal dynamics and are willing to mentor. As one TE put it:

Mentorship is partnering new teachers with those who've demonstrated excellence; those who have shown that they've achieved particular outcomes with students' successes and have been able to move students from point A to B…a mentor should have displayed a level of readiness and openness to receive someone who doesn't know as much as he or she does.

For other TEs, retired teachers and principals are good resources, although they are skeptical about having the same mentor all the time. For them, retired teachers, with their obvious advantages of time, energy, and experience, could be a great asset for the program. Thus, "the most effective way would be to have retired teachers or newly retired teachers that would be

interested in coming into these classrooms." However, the same TEs also suggest that it would be better if these teachers rotate to the different schools on a regular basis.

Most TEs believe that the principal should select mentors because "he knows his teachers" whereas another group of TEs suggest that a committee of people from the universities and schools should work together in selecting the right mentors. Many express their concern about having a principal in charge of mentor selection. They are worried about what kind of mentors the principals would select, given their position in the school hierarchy. For example, one TE believes that in many cases school principals act more like CEOs managing their business and do not necessarily have the right foundation for mentoring or even education. In his words:

> *I'm not sure they're the best people to be doing it, because so often ... there's an old, old book called "The Peter Principle"; the idea that people get promoted to the level of their incompetence. So, people who wind up as principals often have been disasters as teachers So I'm not sure I'd like the principals looking after it.*

Some TEs suggest that mentors ought to self-identify and volunteer, because "they need to want to do it." For instance:

> *The potential mentors write down what their skills are; their curriculum areas or the specific areas they feel are their strengths and have the inductees do something similar – although often the inductees don't really know what they need. So in some ways it might be good for them to identify what their strengths are because they'd be more comfortable with what they know they know.*

Other TEs believe that in an ideal induction program, mentoring starts with the teachers themselves according to their own individual interests and needs. In one TE's words,

> *To me a mentor is someone you choose to learn from. So I guess my first thought was the new teachers need to be able to choose who their mentors will be. Maybe they give them the first 6 months to be at the school and then they select someone they want to work with. If they were forced into a relationship then that is not what mentoring means to me.*

Many TEs believe that mentors should have a strong critical sense. These TEs are concerned with what they see as a widespread deficit in this regard. One respondent contends that "there needs to be a critical mass of mentors with the knowledge to carry the roles out and it is not there." He believes that in the current Ontario context, many minority students have suffered because of that deficit. Specifically, he laments that many teachers in his district are not recognizing minority students as unique learners:

> *Currently, in [our] context a lot of our minority students [teacher candidates] have suffered greatly...because many of the teachers in the county are not recognizing them as unique learners. I'm [also] concerned about administrators and the kinds of mentors they will choose. Would they become more like institutional mentors in comparison to an intellectual and professional mentor?*

As this TE suggests, induction programs if designed with an equity and social justice focus, can play a role in encouraging and supporting teachers as they learn about and pursue goals related to more equitable and socially just education for their students.

How? A Call for Flexibility Over Standards-Based Accountability

A major concern for TEs is how government calls for accountability, through evaluation, will be understood and implemented. They believe that Ontario College of Teachers' "Standards of Practice were written broadly for a reason." However, they are concerned that others will interpret these standards in a manner that lacks flexibility and may reflect a one-size fits all mentality, leading to the exclusion of other assessment methods that are plausible from diverse perspectives. In one TE's words:

> *I do believe that we ought to be responsible for, be accountable for showing some evidence of that growth. I think the critical piece is who determines how much, and what it is that you're wanting to show evidence. To whom and for what are the mentor and mentee accountable. How can such intangibles such as commitment outside of the school be measured?*

Most TEs support the practice of self-directed induction, and therefore accountability or assessment mechanisms ought to be ones that NTs deem important and which arise from within their own contextual realities. One tool they suggest which could address these realities is portfolios. TEs agreed that the main purpose of portfolios is not for evaluation but rather to elicit conversation about NTs' improvement and growth over a period of time. They suggest that "at most their [portfolios'] use should only function as one small aspect of assessment." TEs agreed that, if used sensibly and continuously, portfolios could be a good instrument in NTs' self-directed professional development through demonstrating their competencies around certain standards of practice (see, for example, Bohen, 2001). TEs are aware of several potential disadvantages and misuses of portfolios, especially if they are not well integrated into a holistic approach to induction.

Beyond Superficial Conceptions of Equity, Diversity, and Social Justice

Of the three groups interviewed, TEs offered the most robust understanding of equity, diversity and social justice, as well as some insight into perceptions about the role they ought to play in teacher induction within the existing school system. In particular, several TEs raised the issue of systemic barriers to full integration of social justice. For example, one TE points out an absence of support and resources to support social justice work among educators at multiple levels, including school, board, and post-secondary. Because of this, she observes:

> *... a huge problem [of] finding good schools that can actually provide positive rather than negative examples [of social justice] is a big issue [and] ... a lack of courage to take an explicit social justice perspective. You know, we can say that [a university] stands for social justice and everything – it does, but there's no institutional resourcing, there's no democratic mechanism for faculty to have to debate out what their responsibilities are going to be, there's no explicit rewarding for people who take risks in their teaching in*

*order to push students, if anything, you just carry the burden of your own time of trying
to do this.*

Thus, while individuals may promote social justice, equity and diversity aims in their practice as
educators, the shortfall of institutional support makes their work particularly difficult, and in
their view limits the number of resources and mentors to which TEs and NTs can turn to learn
more about these issues. Moreover, SAs' overall failure to prioritize social justice, evidenced in
the previous section, contributes to perpetuating institutional norms.

Summary

TEs agree that the OTQT was an inappropriate way of evaluating a candidate's teaching ability
because it created counter-productive and contradictory tension in Bachelor of Education
programs and, signified a disturbing and unwarranted government initiative/intervention.
However, while no TE endorsed the test, a few did draw attention to what they consider to be
positive aspects. In general, major concerns among TEs include: potential lack of autonomy;
unnecessary standardization which, in turn, leads to marginalization; and a lack of focus on
learner-centred pedagogy, ethnocultural equity and constructivist epistemology.

Like SAs, TEs privilege charismatic subject discourse (Moore 2004) in their conceptions of good
teachers, emphasizing personal characteristics and dispositions rather than learned skills or
knowledge, and over transformative and liberatory pedagogies. Both SAs and TEs talk about
good teaching as charismatic, and predominant characteristics they identify are "caring" and
"loving." Though they also recognize a skill component, particularly related to classroom
management, TEs' perspectives on classroom management offer some diversity of thought, and
contrast the SAs' views on classroom management by tending to unanimously support the
introduction of an induction program.

TEs recommend a mentorship-based program which ought to focus on classroom management,
communication, social issues, as well as critical thinking; though their conceptions of these terms
varied somewhat. As for the program's administration and evaluation, the respondents stated
clearly that an induction program should be run by the school board, though they advocate for
partnerships with faculties of education and the Ministry of Education. All TEs believe that
mentors should have demonstrated mastery and excellence in teaching and have a strong critical
sense. Their recommendations also included a strong overall preference for flexible models of
matching mentors and mentees, including models with multiple mentors (rather than one-to-one).
While TEs support school-board run mentoring, some expressed concern over SA control in the
selection and matching process, and TEs were the only group to emphasize a need for
partnerships with universities and ministries.

TEs strongly felt that an induction program must be about genuine teacher improvement and
growth, rather than accountability and standardization. Indeed, they see the mentoring
component as requiring a critical component to encourage reflective practice and incorporate
equity, rather than merely defaulting to institutional mentoring focusing on day-to-day tasks and
survival. As well, TEs are more prone than other groups to recognize the need to allow for
divergent points of view in mentoring to avoid assimilation models.

5. New Teacher Perspectives on Induction

Thirty-seven new teachers (NTs) were interviewed. The sample of NTs interviewed was divided as follows; 11 were elementary teachers and 26 were high school teachers and 17 were male and 20 were female. In addition, four worked in French schools and 33 in English schools, which allowed a proportionate representation of the population in Ontario. All NTs had at least two years of full time teaching experience and had completed the OTQT at the end of their training before the Ontario government abolished it. In general, they expressed strong opinions about the OTQT process as well as the validity and reliability of this type of assessment to evaluate NTs.

OTQT Experience: Questionable Validity, Political Need for Accountability

The 37 NTs interviewed unanimously viewed the OTQT as an invalid measure of teaching competencies and felt the preparation and process contradicted what faculties of education were encouraging as best practice in education.

Consistent with survey responses, most NTs felt that the OTQT offered an opportunity to review information learned throughout the year however expressed strong concerns about the validity of assessing teacher performance or competencies with a written test. They felt that a written test could only assess theory-based knowledge and not true teacher competence which would include reflective analysis of situations. Participants reported that someone without any teacher preparation could study a textbook and pass this type of test, but this sort of test could not capture teaching ability.
One NT stated:

> *I think you could take probably even the worse teacher from a classroom environment, give them the test and they could probably do the test very well if they have the theoretical knowledge. So then are you telling me that just because they did the test well, they're going to be a good teacher? No. Teaching is about interacting with people, not interacting with paper.*

NTs emphasize the importance of the practical dimension of teaching and some NTs believe that no testing can really capture the complexity of teaching:

> *Teaching is trial-by-fire, so no matter how much you write or study I think it's the practical situations that you have to do well with, or handle poorly…But the trial is when you get in the classroom.*

> *I don't think the score would necessarily reflect how good a teacher you are…There are a lot of other things that you need in order to be a good teacher that you could never test.*

And yet, some understand that such a test would help in having teaching recognized as full-fledged profession*:*

> *My understanding is that it serves as professional licensing type exam. Akin to what other professions might have to complete their certification process. For example, a nurse or doctor would finish their university program and then they write a government test.*

NTs agreed that educational theory could be assessed with a written test but that the practical applications of these theories could only be assessed effectively through classroom observations. In their view, an authentic assessment of teacher competence could only be conducted through numerous classroom observations.

They also tended to raise the observation that it takes time for a NT to be able to consciously apply theoretical perspectives into practice. At this point in their professional development, they appear to conceive of a one-to-one relationship between theory and practice, and have not necessarily arrived at a point where they are comfortable critically assessing theory, nor looking to possibilities. Despite their concerns about the validity of the OTQT as a measure of teacher competence, NTs interviewed acknowledged that a written assessment could be useful for one particular aspect of teaching: policies and regulations. They recognized that for information which can only be memorized such as rules, policies, and regulations, a written assessment could be a valid means to ensure that teachers are able to define existing policies and regulations.

NTs view the political purpose of the OTQT as a form of accountability to ensure that teachers certified meet some minimum standard of competence and that teachers would be responsible for their actions. The following two quotes are a fair representation of the responses on this topic:

> *They were making sure that the minimum requirements were met for giving you your teaching – well, allowing you to teach.*

> *I guess the Conservative government was thinking that it was a way to bring accountability in to the profession. I think that's basically how they sort of spun it.*

As mentioned earlier, some discussed the OTQT as an attempt to professionalize teaching in the way that professions such as law or medicine have licensing exams. Some believe the attempt to professionalize teaching was a major aim of the OTQT on the part of the government. None of the NTs appear to have questions the notion of professionalism implied in such a view.

A handful of NTs (two or three) describe how taking the OTQT underscores the problems with standardized assessments, and conflicts with current Ministry of Education assessment policy. One particular NT states:

> *I think for me it taught me number one that I would not use pencil-and-paper assignments. It reinforced the idea that it's not the only form of assessment. It reinforced the whole idea that if I feel this way and I got this sick over a test then what would a 12-year-old student do?*

The negative experience of writing the OTQT led to positive collateral learning: the awareness of the limitations of a paper-and-pencil test.

Qualities of Good Teachers and Teaching: The Charismatic Subject as a Role Model

In their elaboration of why the OTQT is not an effective measure of teacher competence, NTs conveyed their beliefs about the qualities of good teachers and good teaching.

Like SAs, NTs engaged in the "charismatic subject" discourse (Moore 2004) when describing the qualities of a good teacher. Characteristics cited by NTs had a strong recurrent theme, and the use of words such as caring, passionate, dedicated, approachable, adaptable, open to change, and genuine. NTs reported their perceptions that these characteristic are not only difficult to describe, but more importantly, difficult to learn and to assess, particularly with any sort of paper-and-pencil test. Representative quotes include:

> *The good teacher is somebody who is creative, innovative, looks to see how the students respond to the teaching and makes changes as is necessary. He desires to see as many students succeed as possible and another quality is that they really care about the students. ……really want to see the students do well not merely intellectually, or with marks, but as people.*

> *I think you can tell a lot from a teacher mostly from watching him or her in action. The charisma, their ability to establish rapport with the students and – there are so many things. But you can only see – it is subjective and it is an art.*

Although many NTs mention the need for teachers to be knowledgeable about the subject matter, this was secondary, and they consistently emphasized personality traits, values, and beliefs as critical over pedagogical knowledge. In this way, they prioritized the charismatic subject discourse of good teaching more so than their SAs counterparts, and certainly more so than TEs.

Ideal Induction: Who, What and How?

Unanimously, NTs agreed that an induction program with a mentorship component is both necessary and vital to help teachers transition from teacher preparation to their own classrooms. They recognized that they lacked practical experience and needed compulsory guidance during their first years and were therefore delighted at the prospect of a mentorship program.

Although they considered themselves to be knowledgeable after their training, they reported feeling unprepared for the realities of a classroom, and felt they lacked practical strategies to deal with situations that may occur in the classroom. NTs described that stated they often feel lonely in their process and often feel embarrassed to ask questions or ask for help since this reveals that they do not have the answer to or strategy for everything leading them to feel incompetent. Two representative quotes describe the NT perspective upon entering the profession as a "sink or swim" situation (at least three NTs used the term "sink or swim" in their interviews, another refers to "different things new teachers need to know to survive"):

> *I think a lot of new teachers, just from literature and speaking to new teachers, feel like it's sink or swim their first year.*

I would like to just see a little bit more than, 'okay there you go, get going, sink or swim'. I think sink or swim type of mentality, though it's a common thing, it's just destructive, its setting people up to fail, but to be realistic no one is really going to fail getting it.

Another representative quote described how NTs find it useful to connect with a mentor to overcome the loneliness, and seek practical advice.

… it is very important that new teachers have someone they can touch base with on a regular basis and someone on whom they can bounce ideas off of. Someone who can give them some guidance and offer them their confidentiality and that they are trustworthy…I think it is really important for them to get that assistance because it is difficult when you first start teaching But also, someone that you can say 'hey this isn't working well in my classroom can you help me or direct me to someone who can be of assistance.' To help them further or set up the time for them to go and observe and experience.

Based on their responses, NTs view mentoring as an effective way to help them deal with the "sink or swim" mentality which appears common among NTs. However, in addition to a mentoring component, some NTs feel that an effective NT induction program must incorporate additional components. In particular, they call for practical workshops, and collaboration among a variety of community partners (faculties of education, the Ministry of Education, students and parents) to round out their ideal induction program. In the sections that follow, we describe how NTs envision effective induction.

Who? Experienced, self-selected charismatic subjects as mentors, and community collaboration

NTs strongly emphasize the need for experienced and practicing teachers as mentors since, in their opinion, they are the only professionals that could offer practical and realistic strategies to use in a classroom.

I think where a mentor can help is to really help them understand where one goes in the school for what and every school is different - identifying the key players and I think that needs to be done through a mentor. My mentor tells me who to go to if I need this or that – how the school operates. Knowing this is a big part of how successful you will be as a teacher. So yes they should understand the process and the values of the school and how they do things and that will include special ed, inclusiveness.

NTs emphasize the importance that mentors have successful classroom experience and that only expert and experienced mentors should be involved in the induction. They suggested that too many people who do not have enough practical experience are guiding them and they feel experienced teachers who are still in the classroom should be involved in the induction program. Only experienced teachers, experienced in the same grades levels or subjects, could truly guide and support them, was a recurrent statement from NTs. From their viewpoint, only someone with extensive classroom experience could offer "real" classroom strategies. They expressed that they did not feel that the "researchers," "experts," "theorists," or administrators could really help them in their everyday realities in the classroom. Several representative quotes include:

The other thing about it these people haven't taught in quite a few years, they have administrative roles, which doesn't always bode well when they are giving advice to a new teacher, what do you know you are a principal. You haven't taught in 20 years, so I don't know what an answer would be, but there has to be something, maybe just have a lot of fail safe measures in place that if something does go wrong - a host teacher whose place you can go.

The people who work for the ministry are not teachers unfortunately… if they don't know what they are talking about, they can try to develop a test but they risk leaving out important things.

In addition to mentors being experienced teachers, NTs express the importance that these experienced teachers embody the characteristics of a "good teacher" so they can learn from the best. They are also concerned about confidentiality – that the mentors will not use their mistakes against them. As one NT put it:

I think it needs to have people who are relatively experienced teachers – at least five years experience and are trustworthy – you know people you can share things with who don't take it to others.

NTs repeated the sorts of characteristics which are consistent with Moore's (2004) charismatic subject discourse as ideal mentors: caring, passionate, dedicated, approachable, adaptable, reflective, open to change, genuine, and knowledgeable. Of the characteristics described, NTs tended to view approachability as the most important mentor characteristics. NTs explained that in order for them to truly learn and feel comfortable about asking questions pertinent to them the mentor must be approachable.

Most NTs suggest that participation in an induction program should be mandatory for all teachers, since they tend to perceive that others experience the same challenges. Unlike SAs preference that mentors and matching be carried out by senior administrators, most NTs feel that experienced teachers should volunteer to be mentors. In their view, this ensures that mentors are motivated, willing, and ready to advise a NT. NTs disagree with the notion that a principal or other professionals should make the decision as to who should be a mentor or even be responsible for pairing mentors and NTs. A NT noted that:

The new teacher has to feel very comfortable telling the experienced teacher or the mentor things that are happening around the job, or how they are interacting with the other teachers or the parents. So it is a position of trust.

NTs believe that mentors should not be pushed into such positions, or else their role as mentors would not be effective:

So if the principal comes up and says, "you've got to be a mentor." I'll say "fine," but is anything going to happen? If the person does not buy into the idea, nothing is going to happen, so it wouldn't work that way.

NTs prefer to choose their own mentors according to their compatibility to ensure a collaborative relationship. They prefer that their mentors are open to their approach and teaching, but most importantly that they get along in a collegial fashion. The ability to select their own mentor from a list of volunteers would allow them to better choose a mentor who could provide them with the type of support they need, and based on the NT's priority areas for development (e.g., specific to a grade level, pedagogy in general, extracurricular activities, or Union issues, etc). This would also allow a degree of individualization, rather than a standardized or consistent mentoring approach to topics.

> *You need to be able to match up a mentor with a new teacher they're compatible with and that mentor needs to be willing to be a mentor and not just download it on the new teacher because they are the mentor....When you have a new person in the school you don't know what the network and the connections are, so you have to build some kind of trust.*

Some NTs suggest a need for collaboration among schools/boards, faculties of education, and the Ministry of Education in NT induction to create continuity as they transition from faculties to employment. A few NTs also suggest that in some cases, parents and students might be able to offer NTs valuable information and perspectives that reflect the population and school culture. For example:

> *I would say that the university should definitely be involved in it. Especially since they are the ones preparing teacher candidates for this…There should be some kind of continuity from that into the mentorship program. The schools need to definitely be a part of that and the government maybe just overseeing it more than being involved in the specifics.*

> *Number one I think first and foremost students and parents. I know that people would say that's really strange but I think it would be interesting for parents to come in and say what do they want for their kids, what do they see Education as because what a teacher sees as education and what a parent sees as education are two different things.*

While most NTs believe that school boards should govern and manage induction to ensure local needs are met, some NTs see a role for faculties of education and the Ministry in order to offer workshops or training sessions which might be beyond the board's knowledge or scope, particularly for new theory, research, and so forth.

What? Focus of Induction

NTs felt strongly that individuals entering the profession require two main themes in induction programs. First, they tend to identify a gap between what they call "theory" which they learned in faculty of education, and "practice," which refers to the day-to-day operations of the school. Some examples of practical matters as defined by NTs include*:*

> *....how to know where to file your report cards and what time and those things.*

... questions just about the day-to-day things that I'm sure I could learn.

...we might know what an IEP looks like we may not understand the purpose of it, we may not understand how to write one, we may not understand how do we do the best with the student that's on an IEP.

NTs claim that working with a mentor will create efficiency and eliminate wastes of time.

In other words there's a lot of things that a lot of people could tell you in a very short space of time that could save you from re-inventing the wheel and a lot of time wasting and energy wasting and that's where a mentor could come in because a mentor seems to be on a much more casual level and could be even more candid and realistic.

The notion of "practice" that emerges from the NTs is different from the actual practice of teaching (e.g., student engagement, pedagogy, assessment, etc.). Rather, their use of the term practice is administrative details, such as how to complete report cards, file them, fill out forms, and so forth. Many suggested that these tacit areas of knowledge could be addressed through workshop offerings.

As a beginning teacher, you know what I have to say that I think one thing that would be helpful is more workshops – more practical workshops and a little bit less this frivolous theory written by people that are not in the classroom.

NTs express a desire to discuss problems with a mentor, to gain insight and possible solutions. As previously noted, NTs wish to have confidential conversations with mentors, with assurance that their problems or mistakes will not be relayed to others and used against them. While some NTs propose an ongoing conversation with other NTs as part of induction, the primary focus of their meetings with mentors takes a reactive form, that is one that simply deals with immediate burning problems.

Sometimes they're just going to be there as a kind of life jacket in case you metaphorically fall off the boat rather than someone has to be hands on, rather than someone who has to issue official papers to say that you are learning what you are learning, just someone who can make you feel comfortable and address any needs but more in a make-shift way rather than some kind of structured textbook formula.

Such a reactive mode, however, seems to reproduce and reinforce the "sink or swim" phenomenon, which, as noted earlier, they do not like. We suggest that a proactive mentoring format would be more conducive to worthwhile professional development.

A less prominent theme points to the importance of mentoring as a means to learn about (and fit into) the existing school culture.

Entering a new school ...as a new teacher coming in there is always this question of how they are going to be assimilated into the school culture and to the staff.

While one may appreciate a NT's perceived need to assimilate into a school's culture in order to feel a sense of belonging, such enculturation may hinder the NTs from raising worthwhile critical issues and questions about the school.

How? Multi-faceted and Structured Induction with Adequate Time Allotment

All NTs believe that an induction program should not be tied to teacher evaluation and/or certification. They report that they do not need to be re-evaluated after their training but did need the support and guidance at least during the first year.

I would not like to see a mentor do an assessment on a first year teacher and somehow that stunts how they do in their teaching...I'd be more willing to express my vulnerabilities to you if you cannot take advantage of them.

I am inclined to say again that we already underwent that training; we went to teachers' college. We earned our degree so I think yes in fact we are certified teachers and then I just think that the induction program will be a nice way to move a new teacher, or make the transition a smooth one for the brand new teacher.

I like the idea of first being certified and then getting mentored. The reason being that if you are mentored before you are certified, it might set up conditions where the mentoring process becomes very evaluative. And it would be nice if you were a teacher and then mentored maybe all that other baggage with trying to get your degree to be a teacher and all that evaluation stuff would be thrown away a little bit.

According to the NTs if the induction program would be conducted in a professional development format (e.g., practical workshops, meeting with expert teachers) and constructive in nature (i.e., determined by the needs of each NT), it would ensure intrinsic motivation, commitment, and maximum progress.

As the previous sections illustrate, NTs see mentoring as a central feature of an ideal and effective teacher induction program. However, most NTs feel quite strongly that mentoring should be but one facet of an induction program. In addition to being paired with a mentor, NTs express a need for practical workshops to bridge the gap between their theoretical knowledge and their practice. They viewed the mentorship program more as a support and professional development than a continuation of their teacher education program or as an evaluation of their competencies.

[In addition to a mentoring component,] it should be a workshop-driven induction where I'd want to be there as a teacher because I am developing my skills and knowledge in the area of teaching. It is not just something where someone is watching over me from a tower and I have to be worried about what I do.

Like SAs, NTs had concerns about sufficient time being allotted for teacher induction programs. All NTs suggested that an effective mentorship could only occur if there is time allotted to mentor and mentee to meet. Teachers are constantly overwhelmed and NTs felt that if a specific amount of free time is not allotted to both, nothing productive will come of it.

> *Yes they want to help a new teacher, but the fact of the matter is during the day they have very packed schedules, they have to pick up their kids from elementary, day care or whatever and then they have an elderly parent at home that they have to take care of. So realistically for some teachers, even though they have the heart, they may not be able to volunteer [to be a mentor]. So if no release time is given it is quite challenging for some teachers to do it…The job itself is very demanding and maybe because I'm a beginning teacher. I find that it is very demanding. I've given up all my friends… I think being given time is important.*

NTs are concerned with the mentorship role being "dumped to the classroom teachers." This might result in un-committed mentors unable to meet NT needs.

Equity, Diversity, and Social Justice: Theoretical Knowledge Lacking Application

While NTs were prompted to discuss the role of equity and social justice, not all engaged in the discussion. Among those who did discuss it, most reveal that although they believe they possess varying degrees of theoretical knowledge about equity, diversity, and social justice from their faculty of education experience, they do not enter the profession with an adequate understanding of how to incorporate social justice into their own classrooms. For example, one NT describes how she "did write a lot, did a lot of research on equity and things like that" while studying at the faculty of education, but it was a challenge for her once she had her own class with diverse needs. Another NT describes how anti-oppression workshops at the faculty were useful, but not sufficient for him to understand his students and their families. He explains:

> *I did not come from the community or actually the numerous communities that my students come from. I'm middle class...I'm trying to give an example – it's not something you can be trained in to say, okay these are the circumstances in somebody's life and hence like they cannot follow through on certain commitments, I don't know. I don't think the four sessions we got were enough.*

The lack of discussion around these issues points to the need for additional research to determine the extent to which faculties discuss or promote equity and social justice, and what new graduates from those faculties take away with respect to these issues upon graduation. To an extent, this is consistent with some of the remarks from TEs, particularly about a perceived absence of institutional support in universities and in school boards.

Summary: Local Induction Preferences to "Survive" and Acclimatize to Existing Values and Culture

Like SAs and TEs, NTs define good teachers largely as charismatic subjects, and therefore tend to equate teaching with personal characteristics, rather than training, knowledge, reflection, or even concern for social justice. As a group, NTs interviewed perceive the first year of teaching as a "survival" year in which they either "sink or swim." Many are also concerned about the challenges of NTs acclimatizing to existing school cultures. To address these perceived challenges of entry into the teaching profession, NTs overwhelmingly support an induction program, while rejecting the value and validity of a pencil-and-paper teacher test.

While NTs have some differences with respect to a perceived "ideal" induction program, most view a combination of mentoring and workshops as the most potentially effective format for induction. While NTs emphasize the need for some flexibility in the mentoring component to address individual needs, strengths and weaknesses, they see the mentor's role as fulfilling two principal functions: first, providing "practical" advice on day-to-day, largely administrative matters such as forms, report cards, and so forth; and second, providing confidential advice on "problems" and "challenges" the NT faces, without disclosing mistakes to others.
A third, less prominent function of the mentoring relationship is to help the NT adapt to the school culture. NTs emphasize the need for time allotment for induction to take place, in the form of release time for workshops, mentoring meetings, or classroom observation.

Though NTs tend to perceive themselves as possessing theoretical knowledge of social justice, equity and diversity, many claim to lack adequate knowledge and skills to bring their theoretical knowledge into the classroom. Interestingly, despite this claim, when asked about social justice and equity issues, as a group NTs did not raise this as a crucial topic or theme for induction activity.

In general, it seems that the conception of theory and practice that NTs have relies on a traditional, narrow conception of either. In other words, they believe that there is a rigid dichotomy between theory and practice, that there ought to a one-to-one correspondence between theory and practice, in which theory stipulates to practitioners what to do. If this is correct, then overall, NTs do not see the role of theory as a means to question and enrich practice, but they expect theory to solve problems. It is no surprise, then, that they do not envision induction as a genuine professional development opportunity, but rather, a source of help for menial, day-to-day tasks as a way of surviving the daily routines of teaching and coping with their fear of failure.

NTs appear to be accepting the predominant mainstream thinking about education, which prevents them from engaging in serious critical reflection on social justice equity and justice. They recognize that there may be tensions and disagreements between their view on teaching and mentors and SAs in the schools. From a critical democratic perspective, this kind of tension needs to be brought to the fore and supported in a meaningful way as professional development. In order to be able to do this job well, SAs and mentors must understand the crucial nature of this kind of professional development.

6. Conclusion

In the current education policy environment, the structure, content and aims of teacher induction and certification become increasingly salient as teachers and school systems are held more accountable for student performance. What counts as "essential knowledge" and "good teaching" are narrowed within a centralized, accountability-focused policy structure, cloaked in the discourse of "quality improvement." These concepts not only affect teachers' entry into the profession, and have the potential to exclude those with divergent views on teaching – but also shape how education happens in the province. Our research investigated how three distinct groups – SAs, TEs and NTs – responded to the introduction and dissolution of the OTQT as an induction program, and how they conceptualized an ideal induction program to address the needs of teachers entering the profession. In this way, our research provides three very different yet important perspectives, while offering insight into potential induction design features. As well, our research led to understandings about SAs', TEs' and NTs' views on characteristics of good teaching, as well as their conceptions of the nature and role of social justice in induction.

All participants in our research acknowledge that some form of teacher induction would be beneficial, and nearly all support a mentoring-type program to achieve this. All agree that induction should not be tied to certification, and should avoid any type of evaluation.

We reported NTs', SAs' and TEs' conceptions of good teachers and good teaching, since an induction program ought to strive to help NTs become effective, "good" teachers. We found that all three groups, NTs, SAs, and TEs alike, favoured the discourse of the charismatic subject (Moore 2004), though with some variation in the specific characteristics. Listing dispositions and personal characteristics to describe good teachers, they acknowledged that these qualities could not be captured in a pencil-and-paper test (the main reason for which they dismissed the OTQT as invaluable). To a lesser degree, some skills and knowledge possessed by "good teachers" are mentioned. SAs placed particular emphasis on the importance of classroom management, as did some TEs.

The characteristics of good teaching identified by NTs, SAs and TEs raise the question of whether the content of the newly-introduced NTIP addresses the perceived priorities identified. If dispositions such as caring, respectful of students, and enthusiastic, cannot be learned, then what ought to be the focus of a teacher induction program? As we described earlier (see p. 5), the Ministry of Education defined teacher competencies to guide NTIP. Those within the Commitment to Pupils and Pupil Learning domain could arguably be dispositions, perhaps more closely tied to the charismatic subject discourse as defined by Moore (2004). The remaining competencies with the last two domains focus on more tacit or technical knowledge and skills, very closely aligned to Moore's (2004) description of the competent craftsperson discourse. Visibly absent are any competencies which imply or overtly address issues of democracy and social justice – their absence is a clear indication of the province's perceived priorities, and the type of "good teacher" which NTIP intends to (re)produce. As such, the NTIP reflects a knowledge transmission model of induction, whereby the focus is on conformity and the transference of so-called "expert" knowledge. The transmission model of induction is characterized by an emphasis shepherding NTs through the difficult transition from student to teacher (see, for example, Feiman-Nemser 2001). While there may be an emphasis on student

success, it is through relational and individual action that this is to be done. The system in which the teacher and students work is left largely unexamined or, at least, as given and unchangeable. Thus, this model is reproductive, since it reinforces existing values, behaviours and structures without establishing their value and considering their justification. Societal inequities that enter the classroom with the students, such as racism, sexism and classism, are dealt with on an individual basis for the sake of individual achievement and smooth classroom processes. The NT is not encouraged to question the role of outside institutions or schooling itself in such societal ills but rather, at best, to simply monitor his or her own biases (Henry & Tator 1994). In other words, no explicit attempt is made to bring about critical-democratic transformations in either NTs or students in general.

Moreover, the defined competencies have the dangerous potential to limit NTs' perceptions of areas for personal and professional development to those privileged items identified in the evaluation policy. Opportunities to explore divergent perspectives, competencies and skills become limited at best, or even nonexistent. This results in a de-skilling of the profession resulting from the lack of professional autonomy (Bates 1992, Jones & Moore 1993). More importantly, the narrow focus of the TPA competencies, coupled with the power granted to principals in applying the TPA, leaves teachers with divergent perspectives marginalized and powerless. Within the competency model proposed by the Ministry of Education, concern for issues of equity and social justice are not included, which leaves those who share these critical-democratic concerns in a marginalized (if not abnormalized) position.

NTIP is also intended to address the transition from student to teacher. NTs in our study describe how they had felt overwhelmed in their first years teaching with very few supports. They want a program that can be personalized and based on individual needs, and to help them with day-to-day activities. SAs and TEs are skeptical about how the provincial program would unfold, and wonder about adequate funding to allow for release time. They did not necessarily believe that a one-on-one mentor-mentee relationship was ideal. TEs discussed the need for careful selection of mentors, as well as selection of those with whom they will be partnered. This selection should be undertaken to ensure that NTs were able to challenge the overwhelming pressure to conform. This pressure that many TEs purport is a direct consequence of the increasingly standardized teaching environment. They suggested that one way of fighting this pressure to conform is to set, as an essential criterion of mentor teachers, that he/she be an "emancipatory teacher" (see, for example, Beista 2010).

The structure of an ideal induction program had some common recommendations from SAs, TEs and NTs. All perceived that induction should be school- or board-based and administered, though SAs had the strongest preference to control the program themselves. As well, SAs were the least open to education stakeholders' (faculties, Ministry of Education, parents, students) involvement in the process.

All participants in this research felt that an ideal induction program should not tie certification and evaluation to mentoring. The precise connection between mentoring and the TPA within NTIP is not articulated in any literature released by the Ministry – in fact, the TPA identifies roles for the SA, the NT, and school boards, but the role of the mentor is not mentioned. Thus, there is no overt relationship between certification and evaluation within the NTIP process.

Moreover, while the OCT is notified of NTIP completion, NTs receive full OCT certification upon graduation from accredited faculties of education without having completed NTIP. What is particularly critical is the role of the SA, who is solely responsible for applying these criteria in the evaluation of NTs under her/his supervision through the TPA process. In reality, NT evaluation through the TPA process could lead to revocation of their OCT certification if they are deemed not to have met the minimum requirements. Hence, ultimately considering the lived experience of NTs and the power of SAs, NTIP could have a real effect on certification. Thus, the competencies defined in NTIP and in the TPA – and SAs' application of them – become "high-stakes." The role of the SA is particularly salient, since it is her/his sole responsibility to apply these criteria in the evaluation of NTs under her/his supervision through the TPA process. SA conceptions of good teaching and how those perceptions relate to the competencies defined by the Ministry are therefore privileged. These competencies – and SAs' and districts' applications of them – become "high-stakes," since poor evaluations appear on the teacher's Certificate of Qualification. Consequently, SAs' conceptions of good teaching and how those perceptions relate to the competencies defined by the Ministry are privileged.

Because our research was guided by a framework of critical democracy, we sought SAs', NTs' and TEs' perceptions about the role of social justice and equity in induction. The responses reflect a superficial understanding of these concepts among many (but certainly not all) participants. Social justice was not prioritized as a major component of an induction program. However, several responses point to a desire among NTs to strengthen their understanding of how to apply their theoretical understanding of social justice. Viewed through a critical-democratic perspective, a transformative model of NT induction and certification is essential to the success of teachers and students if we are to achieve goals of equity, inclusion and social justice. Visibly absent are any competencies which imply or overtly address issues of democracy and social justice – their absence implies provincial priorities, and the type of teacher which NTIP intends to (re)produce. The NTIP reflects a knowledge transmission model of induction, whereby the focus is on conformity and the transference of so-called "expert" knowledge.

Teacher induction and certification programs, if designed uncritically, privilege and therefore reproduce the status quo. Such reproductive induction programs hinder change, making it impossible to move from the schools we have to the schools we want. If Ontario schools are failing students,[3] then reproductive models of teacher induction and certification will surely continue to stagnate any progress towards addressing these inequities.[4]

The problem with the OTQT and subsequent NTIP is that they narrow conceptions of what constitutes "essential knowledge" for good teachers, as well as what criteria or characteristics define "good teachers." These types of transmission models have the reproductive potential to socialize (or even indoctrinate) NTs into established ways of knowing and pedagogy. This knowledge transmission could lend itself to conformity and maintaining the status quo. Indeed, conformity goes against the notion of critical democratic teacher education and the need to

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[3] See, for example, *King Report: The Double Cohort Study, Phase Four*, which illustrates the high rates of failure and dropout among secondary school students following the enactment of Secondary School Reform.
[4] In 2009, the Ontario Ministry of Education released two policy documents which suggest a concern with equity, including *Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119: Developing and implementing equity and inclusive education policies in Ontario schools*, and *Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy*, which is to be enacted over four years.

engage in divergent and dialogical inquiry, critical questioning and open-mindedness (Sleeter 2008; Darling-Hammond 2005, 1998; Freire 1998; Portelli & Solomon 2001).

In opposition to transmission models cloaked in the language and values of neo-liberal ideologies, transformative models provide a reconstructive alternative which allows for transformation of the educational system towards a critical democratic ideal. Transformative conceptions of teacher induction are a much more complex endeavor than a transmission model because they must balance the particular and individual needs of the NT with larger societal issues (Jones 2006).

The question of who schools serve needs to be examined and challenged (Barton 2001) along with societal structures which perpetuate racism, sexism and classism (hooks 1994) – concepts deliberately omitted from neo-liberal education policy. Teachers themselves need to learn not only how to counteract aspects of the overt and hidden curriculum but also how to mobilize their students so that they feel empowered to act (Freire 1998). In other words, a transformative model of teacher induction must go beyond helping NTs avoid reproducing social inequity, helping them become liberatory teachers themselves, and critically questioning the system that employs them.

It is crucial to identify and critically discuss both practical and theoretical issues that arise from the implementation of a mentoring program. Without open and critical exploration and analysis it is not possible to determine to what extent such programs are fulfilling the aim of ensuring teacher competency and that of equity in education. It is vital to examine both school contexts in relation to such programs as well as the insular worlds in which TEs, SAs and NTs work. Such an examination is vital to ensure that the implementation of a mentoring program is not counterproductive to the goal of forming a bridge between teacher education programs and the classroom. Given that NTIP and mentoring were introduced after our data collection was complete, we were not able to investigate how mentoring relationships are taking place within NTIP. Further research is necessary to gain a better understanding of the structure, nature and outcomes of NTIP mentoring.

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