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Boyce, Arnold Napier

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From College to University to the Classroom — the needs of entrants to the Profession

NAPIER BOYCE

The conferment of qualified teacher status by formal certification should not lead employing authorities to assume that all entrants to the profession are fully competent. It is acknowledged by many that the education of teachers is a process of progressive professional development. Initial training constitutes the first stage of the process but however thorough the training may be, it can never provide a comprehensive preparation for all the tasks encountered throughout a teaching career. Evans (1977) has referred to the three I's of "initial, induction and in-service" as a "rhythm of professional practice".

In view of the short period of service of many young teachers, especially women, and the large investment of the State in the initial training of teachers, it is important to ensure that beginning teachers become professionally competent with a minimum of trial and error. Apart from such economic considerations, William Taylor (1978) has pointed out that the development of induction programmes will be justified if they lead to the removal of a certain amount of human misery and disillusionment experienced by beginning teachers.

It is the purpose of this paper to examine some of the supportive and conserving functions of the professional induction of young teachers.

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Reference to the bibliography at the end of this paper will indicate the increasing interest of educationists in England, Wales and Scotland in improving the systems of probation and induction. William Taylor (1978) has pointed out that the basic general criterion adopted in the evaluation of induction schemes has been the informed professional judgement of inspectors, administrators, school principals, experienced teachers, teacher-tutors and probationers; their views have been obtained through questionnaires, intensive interviews, case studies and observation.

Do beginning teachers in South Africa receive enough support, guidance and pastoral care?

The time has come to study measures necessary to improve the level of professional competence among teachers at the early stages of their careers.

WHAT ARE THE NEEDS OF THE BEGINNING TEACHER?

J K Taylor and I R Dale (1971) have asserted that the first year of a career in teaching is more crucial than the first year of almost any other career. He has pointed out that in a profession such as medicine, the periods of training and induction overlap and that those professions which require the serving of articles, such as law and accountancy, ensure that the fledgling acquires both the knowledge and the mores of the profession. The major difference between such combined training and induction processes and those found in teaching is that in teaching the transition from student to professional is more sudden. It is true, of coure, that the newly qualified teacher will have spent some time in practice teaching in the school situation but this forms (relative to the on-the-job training of solicitors and doctors) a small part of a teacher's training. Taylor points out that because practice teaching is usually quite separate in time and place from a teacher's entry into the profession its induction possibilities are severely curtailed.

As long ago as 1944 the McNair Report had identified the importance of the first year of teaching for the development of an individual teacher's career.

More recently the need of systematic support for teachers in the initial period has been recognised by the Department of Education and Science in England and Wales. The authorities have realised the need to make the induction process more effective and less daunting than it had been in the past. The James Committee concluded:

> Nothing has impressed or depressed us more than the gross inadequacy of the present arrangements for the probationary year ... the faults are faults of structure. It is because of the fundamental nature of the faults that reform will not be achieved by exhortation or encouragement alone: a new structure must be devised.

Taylor and Dale (1971) have drawn attention to the limitations of the induction programmes and declare that their potential is not being realised. The British Government's White Paper of December 1972 states:

> There is no major profession to which a new entrant, however thorough his initial training, can be expected to make a full contribution. The Government share the view of the James Committee that a teacher on first employment needs, and should be released on part-time to profit from, a *systematic programme of professional initiation, guided experience and further study.* (Paragraph 64).

The Government's Green Paper of July, 1977, confirmed the policy of the DES:

> It has long been recognised that newly trained teachers could benefit more from systematic help in overcoming the initial problems encountered during their first year of teaching. In 1971 the James Committee recommended improved arrangements which should include, among other things, release of new teachers from school duties for training for at least one fifth of their time. (Paragraph 6.17).

The improvements now being implemented in the programme of induction will be appreciated if it is understood that the term 'probation,' which is still used, has been reconceptualised: The term probationer refers to teachers who, although they have completed their initial training and are qualified, are still subject to probation. (White

Paper paragraph 67). The term probation introduces:

> The further, though subordinate, idea that the period of induction is also one of assessment which when successfully completed makes the teacher a full member of the profession. ... Teachers who have successfully completed the period of probation will be described as 'registered teachers,' (Paragraph 64.5).

The Government's Green Paper refers to the need to insist on a higher standard of practical competence for the passing of probation than was feasible during the years of severe teacher shortage.

> The status awarded on the successful completion of training should be an interim one, and that the full achievement of status, as a passport to a teaching career, should await the satisfactory completion of probation. The teacher's permanent appointment might also be deferred until that time, his probationary service being undertaken on a separate contract reflecting his interim status and lightened responsibilities. (Paragraph 6.20).

As has been mentioned, the concept of probation is changing and the emphasis is on the positive training and learning aspects rather than on assessment functions (Wm Taylor, 1978).

PROBLEMS

THEORY AND PRACTICE

The overwhelming concern of beginning teachers is with the practicalities of their own teaching situation and they often require highly specific and practical advice. It is at this stage of their careers that they will need to reconcile the theory of their college courses with the practical realities of the school and classroom. Research in Britain shows that between three-quarters and nine-tenths of probationary and experienced primary and secondary teachers think that their initial training has given "too much emphasis to theory," while a negligible number think that the emphasis was too much on practice. (Wm Taylor, 1978, p 192).

Bolam (1973) recommends that the bread aim of induction programmes should be to offer practical and individualised help to probationers and that the main focus should be on problems and opportunities facing them in their own classroms. Bolam continues:

> This is not to subscribe to any false antithesis between theory and practice: it is to assert the view that theory has to be perceived as being relevant by the probationers if it is not to be rejected by most of them. (p 176).

Another report points out that it is necessary for the newly qualified teacher to:

> Relate the opportune, the immediate and the practical to the theoretical and philosophical questions which underlie the teaching process.

The report asserts that if there is any one point at which theory and practice ought to be working most closely together, it is towards the end of the period of probation. Then the young teacher can:

> Engage in serious reflection on his training and bring theory to the bar of his experience for judgement.

At this stage, that is, the end of the period of probation, a teacher should be in a better position to appreciate the relevance of some of his theoretical studies, especially his course in education and educational psychology; active steps need to be taken to help the beginning teacher in the "task of drawing together the threads of theory and practice."

> Colleges must make every effort to keep theory and practice in step but the schools, for their part, must assist the process by refraining from over-stressing the practical side of training at the expense of the theoretical.

METHOD REVERSION

The difficulty of adapting their general training, including the theory, the philosophy and sociology of education, to the realities of the classroom imposes a strain on the young teacher.

It is a common experience for beginning teachers to be told by older staff members to forget what they have learned at college. Wall and May (1972) have asserted that:

> A gap exists between teacher preparation courses and the schools in the sense that schools often lag behind in their willingness to accept innovation and changing patterns of teaching more appropriate to the times in which we live.

Hanson (1976) claims that many probationers "perceive that the demands of the institutional order contradict that which they believe to be educationally desirable" and that in consequence

> the only way apparently open to probationers was to conform to the conventional wisdom and recipe knowledge of those around them, and this was largely an accumulation of the indigenous traditions and folkways of the staff room.

Waller (1967) has asserted that educational theories are learned in colleges but probationers learn how to teach from "horny handed men who have been teaching a long time."

Some researchers in Britain believe that there is among many young teachers a *reversal of attitudes* fostered in college — this is a phenomenon known to research as "method reversion." Evidence shows that probationers' attitudes harden and become more conservative during their first year of teaching because their informal and progressive teaching methods are discouraged by their more authoritarian colleagues.

> It is in the very nature of things that the new teacher will have left college equipped to use the most up-to-date methods, and often these seem startling or disturbing to the long-serving teacher who is suspicious of anything which involves a child moving out of his desk. Many of these teachers have come to equate the word "project" with chaos, not to say bloody flux. (Haigh, 1972).

Young teachers who leave college with ideals and good intentions may discover that because of the organisational and administrative climate and structure of the school they are obliged to revise their ideas. Consequently, as Hanson (1976) asserts, the real agency for change in education is the school and not the college.

> What teachers *are* doing is learned in school, and if in college there is some consideration

of what teachers *should* be doing, this is not sustained later.

The conclusion appears to be that, if colleges hope that schools will change their approaches to teaching, the first-year or beginning teachers are but frail and ineffective change agents. Innovations cannot be brought about by isolated individuals. Taylor and Dale (1971), who have investigated the extent to which, and the ways in which, beginning teachers have moved away from college or department of education approaches or methods, have expressed their doubt whether the conservative attitudes of older and more experienced teachers in schools cause probationers to abandon the more modern and perhaps more permissive methods in approaches encouraged by colleges. Although more than half (55 percent) of all interviewed probationers stated that they no longer used the same methods as they had on teaching practice, Taylor and Dale are of opinion that there is little support for the picture which depicts the average probationer as one who feels that his more progressive college approaches are being stifled by the more controlled approach of the school. The changes in approach merely imply a moving away from college approaches, the changes being initiated by the probationers themselves and not prompted by principals, colleagues or inspectors. (Taylor and Dale p 139).

DISCIPLINE

In the course of their early experience young teachers encounter a number of problems. Taylor and Dale (1971), Bolam (1973), Hanson (1974) and other researchers claim that the most common difficulties experienced are those related to discipline and control of classes, the problem of becoming aware of children's previous learning and teaching groups of mixed ability, and the lack of specific techniques such as the teaching of reading. Taylor and Dale point out that principals regard class discipline as the major problem facing probationers whereas the latter, in response to questionnaires, did not rate this as the most serious. Taylor suggests that the reason for this is that discipline is so central and crucial an issue to the beginning teacher because of their self esteem and morale that they prefer not to mention or discuss it.

Frank discussion of such problems among teachers should not be inhibited: a more frank and open attitude is required if there is to be less stress and anxiety during the probationary period.

Within the limitations of this paper it is impossible to describe the many common problems experienced by young teachers in their first post. Some will be fortunate, as one authority describes the situation:

> Chance may put him in a school where his colleagues will transmit techniques and inspiration in a thoroughly professional way as part of his day-to-day contact with them. He may be under the guidance of a head teacher and promoted staff who have an established training policy.

But the writer continues:

> He may land in a situation in which his colleagues are reluctant to seem to interfere, his school has no policy for the training of new staff and the education authority has only a rudimentary induction programme or none at all. The probationer in a small school or in a remote school may have a reduced chance of professional advice . . . much guidance and training during the probationary period is haphazard and incidental. *The result is that many probationers do not gain nearly as much in professional accomplishment from the two years of probationary service as they should.*

ATTITUDES TO INITIAL TRAINING

The attitudes of probationers during this period of professional initiation are significant. The completion of their initial training may produce a reaction against immediate and further contact with the college or university department: they are keen to undertake the responsibility on their own and reject the support of anyone not currently teaching. Some will turn to the "teacher next door" but others seem to accept that they should "stand on their own feet" and believe that progress will depend on their own initiative. One group of educationists have suggested that:

> While we would not wish to see probationers become too dependent on a system organised for them, and we applaud the vigour with which many of them set about the task of becoming more professionally competent, we feel that there is a need for all concerned to consider how these two years (of probation) might be more fruitfully spent. (Paragraph 47).

What do probationers think of the training which they have received? Taylor and Dale's research (1971) revealed that while most probationers found their training adequate, a substantial minority (25 percent) considered that it had been no more than barely adequate, and that those trained at colleges tended to think more highly of their course than did the trained graduates. Taylor and Dale's research provides an analysis of what the sample of 3 000 probationers considered to be deficiencies in their initial training. But while some probationers claimed that they had been inadequately prepared for their responsibilities, college lecturers affirmed that they were concerned with making young teachers

> aware of long term, fundamental attitudes and approaches as much as equipping them with a set of short term, practical skills or techniques. (Taylor and Dale, p 240).

Wm Taylor (1978) quotes a survey of the DES in 1966 which showed that while only a small percentage of first-year teachers judged their initial training to have been seriously inadequate, and three-quarters reosonably satisfied, most were able to identify particular deficiencies. The survey also exposed many weaknesses in the induction process: many beginning teachers were not given information of the kind that would facilitate their adjustment to the classroom e.g. over 25 percent obtained knowledge of the syllabuses and schemes of work to which they had to teach only within a week of starting work, while another 18 percent obtained information on these matters on the day they began teaching.

WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY IS IT TO GUIDE THE BEGINNING TEACHER?

At least three parties should consider themselves responsible for counselling and encouraging be-

ginning teachers: the employing authorities, school principals and their experienced members of staff and, thirdly, colleges or university departments of education.

Advisers or inspectors in Britain have been required to visit and assess probationers as one of their many duties, but Taylor and Dale (1971) have pointed out that because of their assessment function, probationers have tended to regard advisers or inspectors, the very persons who have the greatest potential for developing the positive aspect of probation, as "threat" figures.

In Scotland it has been the practice for the pastoral care of probationers to be increasingly recognised as the responsibility of senior staff in the schools with inspectors adopting a supporting role, but as their contact with individual probationers has declined inspectors and advisers are playing a more active part in arranging in-service courses, seminars and conferences for probationers after school hours.

In Scotland there is a tendency in secondary schools for some senior staff to regard the period of probation as a time of testing for young teachers, that is, they are required to prove their competence and therefore repeated requests for advice or assistance are interpreted as a sign of weakness and consequently discouraged. Fortunately for the young teacher, most senior staff are more sympathetic and realise that a probationer upon completion of his initial training is not necessarily a fully competent teacher, but is at a critical stage in his professional development and may require advice, guidance and encouragement from his colleagues. Teachers should therefore be willing to participate in the professional training of the younger colleagues.

Until recently colleges of education in Britain have tended to regard the induction of young teachers as being the responsibility of the schools and have been reluctant to venture into this field except to give assistance when requested. In the latter part of this paper it will be seen that the full participation of colleges and university departments of education in induction schemes should be regarded as essential. The involvement of colleges in induction is likely to have beneficial effects for college courses and lead to the adoption of measures which will bridge the gaps between theory and practice and between colleges and schools.

Taylor and Dale (1977) have suggested that a possible solution to the problems and tensions created by the assessment of probationers would be to relieve principals and inspectors of this duty and delegate it to a General Teachers' Council. Although the implementation of this policy would have far-reaching administrative and professional consequences, it would have the effect of freeing the inspectorate to carry out more positive work and of according the teaching profession some degree of control over entry into the profession.

Induction programme in Britain

Reference has been made to the recognition by the James Committee of the need for a period of systematic induction. The ideal induction has been stated in the James Report:

> The young teacher coming fresh from college or department of education, has been given some of the basic skills. He now needs practice under genial and expert supervision to develop these skills, to mature his style, to relate the theory he has mastered to the practice in which he is now involved. His college teachers maintain a lively interest in him; his wise seniors in his first school introduce him, by example and precept, to an understanding of professional attitudes and an appreciation of what his particular school is, how it works, how decisions are taken, how parents are involved. The specialist adviser of the LEA helps him, introducing him to other young people working in similar fields, involving him in a programme of further training and consolidation. An enlightened headmaster ensures that both the weight and character of the time-table given to the young teacher reflect the special conditions of his first year of salaried employment.

In the Green Paper of 1977 the Secretary of State announced the Government's intention to

> devise more comprehensive arrangements for supporting teachers in their initial period of service on entering the profession and for assessing their progress during that period.

The intention is to provide newly-qualified teachers with more systematic support than has been the case in the past. Provision will be made for the work-load and level of responsibility to be reduced during this period of "practical apprenticeship," as the Green Paper refers to it. The teaching duties of beginning teachers will be more closely defined and there will be no necessity for more difficult teaching tasks to be assigned to them. The Secretary of State has also announced that designated experienced members of staff will be given responsibility for supervising the work of young teachers. (6.19).

The White Paper (paragraph 68) envisaged that the probationers would be released for not less than one-fifth of their time for in-service training and that they would have only three-quarters of a full teaching load. It will be the responsibility of the local education authorities to engage the additional teachers to make this possible.

The White Paper also announced that in accordance with the suggestions of the James Committee the teaching profession itself would play a major role in the induction process: professional tutors or *teacher tutors* would be appointed and trained for this purpose and a net work of professional centres established based on existing training institutions and teachers' centres.

The White Paper also proposed that pilot schemes for a new style induction process should begin in 1972-3 with a view to the training of professional tutors and the launching of a national scheme in 1975-6. For economic and other reasons, however, only two of the pilot schemes were established: one in the urban setting of Liverpool and the other in the more rural environment of Northumberland. Arrangements were also made for these two official projects and other official schemes to be evaluated by a team based on the University of Bristol School of Education. The report of R Bolam entitled "Induction Programmes for Probationary Teachers" is one example of the evaluation sponsored by the DES at the University of Bristol. David Hill (1975) who was appointed to evaluate the Liverpool project has also provided useful information.

EVALUATION OF INDUCTION SCHEMES

PROFESSIONAL CENTRES

Centres have been established at colleges of education in the Liverpool region. These centres are responsible for helping probationers by drawing on appropriate expertise in the area and by giving new teachers a chance to share their experience with others: the centres are "points of reference independent of the probationers' schools and employers." (Hill, 1975, p 34).

Coordinators or wardens have been appointed to the professional centres to organise preparation courses for teacher-tutors and induction courses for probationers. Teacher-tutors and their probationers are attached to specific centres, the tutors meeting and working as a team wherever possible. Bolam (1973) recommends that these teams should not be composed exclusively of professional tutors, who would have to be senior persons, but should include a proportion of younger teachers and persons from a variety of institutions.

PROFESSIONAL TUTORS OR TEACHER-TUTORS

Hill (1975) has drafted a list of the suggested responsibilities of the professional tutor, more generally referred to as the teacher-tutor. There has been a continuing debate about the nature of his duties, however, because of a potential conflict between his roles and the possibility of friction between principals and tutors.

Wm Taylor (1978) has raised the following questions:

> Should the teacher-tutor adopt a primarily confidential counselling role, and take little or no part in the final assessment of the probationer? What should be the relationship between the teacher-tutor, the head and the local authority adviser? Should the role be limited to the provision of advice and guidance to probationers, or did it extend, as recommended by the James Committee, to the coordination of all the in-service training and education activities of members of staff?

Should the teacher-tutor's duties be pastoral only and therefore should he not intervene in the classroom? The Scottish Report (paragraph 76) asserts that the tutor should be a person both competent in educational theory and convinced of its importance and assist the probationer to draw together the threads of theory and practice. The same report recognises the value of having an identifiable person among senior staff in each school who will provide help and encouragement to students and probationers and who will act as a link between school and college staff. The Scots prefer to call such a person a "regent." (Peck and Archer, 1977).

Layard (1977) in suggesting ways of raising the standard of teachers, proposes that a senior member of a school staff should be appointed to be responsible for student teachers during their teaching practice and should have a formal position of appointment to the staff of the relevant college or university department (as well as his full-time school appointment) and receive a small honorarium in addition to his regular salary.

Wm Taylor (1978) suggest that provision will have to be made for the more systematic training or preparation of teacher-tutors and provision for on-going support of them as they tackle the problems of students and young teachers. Bolam (1973) has concluded that teacher-tutors will have a key role to play in the implementation of an induction scheme and has suggested that his duties might be shared by a school-based appointee (e.g. a deputy head) and a peripatetic tutor based at a professional centre.

SCHOOL-BASED INDUCTION

The advantages and disadvantages of school-based as distinct from centre-based programmes have been considered in Britain. Bolam (1973) found that school-based programmes were favoured by most teachers as they focused attention on the needs of individual teachers in their own classrooms but McCabe (1978) claims that, although a young teachers' feelings of helplessness are countered by knowing that the school can support and help him and therefore a teacher's worries are reduced, "where school-based support is weakest, helplessness and lack of confidence are greatest."

Bolam (1973) has concluded that an integrated scheme is best, that is, a balance between school-based induction and courses at professional centres. Courses based predominatly upon the release of probationers from school to attend in-service courses at professional centres are frequently disappointing because of the "high level of generality of approach" which characterises such courses. Conversely, courses which are school-based face the risk of seriously disappointing probationers because they tend to provide "restricted, employer-orientated" and "atheoretical experience."

McCabe (1978) is of the opinion that the success of induction, as in all in-service work, depends upon its being accepted and supported within individual schols.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The search will continue for an optimal pattern of the induction programme in Britain and the time has come for educationists in South Africa to give serious attention to the subject.

Bolam (1973) asserts that because the profession has been content to cope merely with probation it has been a period of missed opportunities; the probation period, he states, ought not to be "characterised as a *crisis situation*."

> The opportunities (of the probationary year) will be fully grasped only when the profession as a whole accepts that *initial, induction and in-service training* ought to be seen as a continuous process and that this implies that all teachers ought to be learning throughout their careers. (Bolam, 1973, p 176).

A systematic induction scheme will confer benefits not only on beginning teachers but on the profession as a whole. Hill (1975) has shown in his account of the Liverpool project how educationists from a variety of institutions have been forced into interaction with each other and how this has led to increased levels of mutual understanding.

If the induction period is seen as a bridging period between initial training and a comprehensive in-service programme during which established

teachers and tutors are prepared both to guide and learn from beginning lecturers, professional standards will be raised. Bolam (1973) recommends that induction should be regarded as the beginning of a continuous process of in-service staff development. This staff development, he points out, should have two principal aspects: the personal career development needs of individual teachers and the needs of the school's strategy of planned educational change.

Hill (1975) also claims that the Liverpool project

> Although concerned with the induction of new teachers, creates deeper reverberations both in the structure and content of teacher education courses and among the profession generally.

This account of the professional induction of young teachers has emphasised that the education of a teacher is never complete and that the three I's of professional development — initial training, induction and in-service course — form one continuous process.

Teachers in South Africa have come to appreciate the in-service courses provided by their education department. Wm Taylor (1978) has pointed out that:

> It is probably fair to say that almost any experience that provides the teacher with fresh information about himself or the world he lives in, that increases his understanding and enhances his judgement, can make a contribution to the improvement of teaching and learning in schools.

Most teachers should have a commitment to the continued improvement of their own education which, as Taylor points out, is not necessarily the same thing as a willingness to attend courses arranged especially for teachers.

> The man or woman who is widely read, has informed and cultured tastes in art, music, literature, and a civilized life style, brings qualities to the classroom which advanced professional training may focus and enhance, but for which it can never be a substitute. (Taylor, 1978, p 99-100).

This kind of commitment to self-improvement needs attention during initial training as well as in the in-service stage. Teachers today have access to resources of a wide variety in professional libraries and need never lack for ideas and inspiration.

> The aim of any national system of post experience provision (i.e. in-service education) should not be simply to make available courses, conferences and other professional study opportunities, but also *to develop the teacher's own responsibility for learning* and to encourage such self-educative efforts as the teacher is able to make on his own behalf. (Taylor, 1978, p 100).

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