Induction of Novice Teachers in Chile: A Case Study

Inducción de profesores novatos en Chile: un estudio de caso

Catherine Ximena Flores Gómez

Charles Sturt University, New South Wales, Australia

Abstract

The induction of novice teachers has become a burgeoning priority given existing Chilean preoccupations with the quality of teaching and educational standards. The objective of this qualitative research was to examine the perceptions of 29 novice teachers working in the three types of schools that comprise the education system in Chile. Drawing on face-to-face and follow-up email interview data from a qualitative empirical research project on teacher induction in Chile, this paper will show that novice teachers are expected to be classroom-ready while they are still in a process of learning to teach. Moreover, it will draw attention to the value of some formal and informal forms of induction in schools in the Chilean context. Implications for policy and practice are discussed.

Keywords: induction, practice, novice teachers, formal and informal induction practices

Post to:
Catherine Ximena Flores Gómez
Charles Sturt University, New South Wales, Australia
Camino La Brisa 14178-B, Lo Barnechea, Santiago.
Email: catherine_flores_2002@yahoo.com

Resumen

La inducción de los profesores novatos adquiere hoy particular relevancia dada la creciente preocupación en el país por la calidad de la formación inicial de los docentes y su reconocida relación con la calidad de los aprendizajes en las escuelas. El objetivo de esta investigación cualitativa fue examinar las percepciones de 29 profesores novatos que se encontraban trabajando en diferentes escuelas y liceos municipales, particulares subvencionados y particulares pagados de la ciudad de Copiapó. Utilizando información obtenida a través de entrevistas individuales y entrevistas de seguimiento por correo electrónico, este artículo dará cuenta de prácticas formales e informales de inducción presentes en los distintos contextos educativos. Adicionalmente, provee información acerca de las altas expectativas que enfrentan los profesores novatos en relación con su preparación para enseñar. Los datos mostrarán que, en general, se espera que los profesores novatos estén listos para la sala de clases cuando aún están en un proceso de aprender a enseñar. Se discutirán las implicaciones para las políticas y las prácticas educacionales.

Palabras clave: inducción, práctica, profesores novatos, prácticas formales e informales de inducción

This article concerns professional learning and in particular the induction of beginning teachers within the Chilean educational context. The process of introducing a novice teacher into a school system is a complex one. The learning task for beginning teachers not only involves the development of a professional identity, but also the continual acquisition of professional and practical skills and knowledge through continued learning.

Within the area of professional development, the induction of novice teachers has been widely recognized as one essential building block of the teaching quality (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Previous research evidence (Harrison, 2001) suggests that some aspects of the induction, such as having the support of a mentor in schools, enable novices to become effective teachers. In a similar vein, Rolley (2001) states that: «induction is the point in which the issue of quality teaching can be addressed in the most fundamental and practical way» (p. 37). She goes on to argue that these first years of appointment can be exceptionally difficult and that professional survival often depends on inner resources rather than systemic, supportive structures. Therefore, teacher induction programs are required to prevent novice teachers from leaving the profession or «stumbling forward without any feedback as to whether their practice is effective or not» (p. 40). Clearly, to be successful, novice teachers need support that goes beyond the theoretical and practical underpinnings acquired during their initial training.

In the light of the high attrition and turnover rates among beginning teachers cited in the literature (see, for example, Peters & Le Cornu, 2006), retaining committed and effective teachers requires the provision of the necessary financial resources and incentives for induction support and ongoing professional learning. At the same time, the teaching practices of novices are equally relevant if high quality education is to be sustained. Induction should endeavour to do more than increase retention rates through ensuring a smooth transition into the profession. It should reach beyond immediate measures to reduce stress and address immediate problems and be underpinned by a vision of sound teaching, directed at promoting teacher development, and encourage improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. (Anthony, Haigh, & Kane, 2011; Feinman-Nemser, 2001). Within the beginning teacher literature it has been widely argued that such properly devised induction has its potential.

Consequently, induction is now conceived as an important means of promoting professional growth and enhancing learning within the school setting as a whole. However, available evidence suggests that professional support through effective induction is not always provided and that many novice teachers are not receiving the level of support they need to function effectively after taking up their appointments. In order to help novice teachers to make a successful transition from their initial training to the world of school, many countries have developed policies of induction.

In Chile, as in many other countries, the quality of teaching has been shown to make an essential contribution to enhancing the quality of education and students' achievements. Therefore, a number of initiatives have been directed at improving the quality of pre-service preparation and raising the profile

and status of the teaching profession. However, the entry of beginning teachers and the support they need during the induction phase has received relatively little attention. Over the years, and as part of the focus on initial teacher education, there has been an examination of the connection between initial teacher education and the beginning years of teaching. As a consequence, the issue of induction has been placed on the educational agenda and some policy initiatives are under discussion (see, for example, Inostroza, 2007).

Although there is general agreement that induction includes the planned support for novices, there are obvious forms of support that are not part of these formal structured programs. Distinctive actions oriented towards the attainment of particular goals —to support novices during their first years teaching— can also be found in more informal forms of induction. In this range of conceptions of induction to draw on, this study will understand induction as a practice that encompasses the formal and informal support attempting to assist beginning teachers in making the transition from student teacher to professional teacher. In this study, formal induction, considers those planned, deliberate and structured forms of support. On the other hand, informal induction will address those informal, unplanned forms of support available to beginning teachers within the structure of the school.

Considering that at the time of this research Chile did not have a policy of induction (Panel de Expertos para una Educación de Calidad, 2010), this study used as reference the ideas of the researcher Feinman-Nemser (2001), who argues: «induction happens with or without a formal program, and it is often an abrupt and lonely process» (p. 1030). Therefore, the assumption here was that irrespective of the lack of induction policies in Chile, some formal and informal induction practices were in place within schools. It is pertinent, then, within the framework of national and international debate about the need to improve the quality of teaching, exploring the induction of novice teachers during their first years in the profession with the particular purpose of examining the factors that facilitate or impede their professional development.

Theoretical framework

In order to explore beginning teachers' induction experiences, it is firstly necessary to understand the nature of induction as a practice. This section provides an overview of induction as a practice, using the ideas of Stephen Kemmis as referential theoretical framework.

Drawing on his analysis of the nature of the practice, Kemmis (2010) provides a way to examine practice while taking into account the knowledge, self-understandings, values and skills of individuals, in relation to the culture and discourses, social structures and material-economic arrangements in which they participate as social human beings. Following this line, Kemmis, Edwards-Groves, Hardy, Wilkinson and Lloyd (2010) defined the practice as:

> …A coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity in which characteristic arrangements of actions and activities [*doings*] are comprehensible in terms of arrangements of relevant ideas in characteristic discourses [*sayings*], and when the people and objects involved are distributed in characteristic arrangements of relationships [*relatings*], and when this complex of sayings, doings and *relatings* 'hangs together' in a distinctive human social project (p. 4).

This definition of practice can be drawn on to understand induction as a practice that is subsumed within a wider practice of education. Against this background, it can be argued then that induction is a purposeful activity, constituted by relevant discourses and ideas (*sayings*); characteristic arrangements of actions and activities (*doings*); and characteristic patterns or arrangements of relationships (*relatings)* which hang together in a distinctive 'human-social project' (Kemmis et al., 2010, p.5) directed to support beginning teachers during their first years of teaching. So that, for example, discourses (*sayings*) that portray beginning teachers as experiencing difficulties when they make the transition into the workplace shape ways of *doing* things. The material-economic relationships shape ways of *thinking* about the design and implementation of induction programs, and the *relationships* between people participating in the practice of induction. These bundles form distinctive patterns or arrangements of *sayings, doings* and *relatings* when they become established as human-social projects (like activities oriented to instruct novices on classroom management, for example). Thus, one might describe as practice the work of induction which contributes in its own right to the practice of teaching. Induction is indeed a practice whose purpose is to induct novices into the practice of teaching.

The purpose of this study was to explore the induction practices from the perspective of novice teachers. As a result, this article focuses on major areas of concern and the induction practices that beginning teachers encounter in their workplaces, and how their experiences of these practices of induction both facilitate or hinder their professional learning and change over time. A key question then concerns: What kind of induction practices do novice teachers encounter in their workplaces and how do their experiences of these practices facilitate or impede their professional learning? In so doing, this article will identify: (a) what novice teachers say (*sayings*) about their experiences of induction, including the transition from teacher education to school practice; (b) what types of support actions and activities (*doings*) are available to novices; (c) what type of relationships (*relatings*) have been established during induction.

The study

This study is part of a doctoral thesis composed of three interrelated studies, each of which seeks to explore different aspects of induction in the Chilean educational context. The First Study examines the contextual details and the key ideas framing induction policy and practices in Chile. The Second Study explores the perspectives of principals in relation to induction. The Third Study explores induction as it is experienced by novice teachers. It is precisely the Third Study that is presented in this article. This will present the results of a qualitative study that investigated induction practices experienced by 29 novice teachers in the North of Chile, in the city of Copiapó.

Participants. In the Third Study, 29 novice teachers with three or fewer years of experience, working in municipal primary and secondary schools, private subsidized and private paid schools, agreed voluntarily to be part of the research (see in Appendix A, Table A1 and Table A2). All teachers with three years of experience or less received a letter inviting them to participate in the study. Of the 34 novice teachers contacted, 29 agreed to participate (see in Appendix A, Table A3 and Table A4). Participants received written details about the research, including confidentiality measures of any information obtained during the study. All participants signed a consent form stating their decision to participate in the study.

Data collection and analysis. This study had two phases of data collection: (a) face-to-face individual interviews with 29 novice teachers; and (b) follow-up interviews by email with 11 of the 29 novice teachers that initially participated in the investigation (see Appendix A, Table A5). The initial interview used semi-structured open-ended questions. During the second phase of data collection, follow-up email interviews with beginning teachers were conducted in July, 2009 and December 2009. A third follow-up email interview was conducted in July, 2010. The follow-up email interviews captured changes in the experiences of novice teachers over a period of 15 months. The overall approach to data analysis was based on Lincoln's and Guba's (1985) recommendations about the steps that might be followed in data processing activities (e.g.: unitizing, categorizing and filling in patterns). Questions and participants' answers to each question were entered into an adapted version of Miles' and Huberman's (1994) contact summary form to summarise data and to facilitate the reading and re-reading of the data. Each piece of information, in the data summary form, was coded with the participant's pseudonym and the type of school he or she was working in. Significant sentences, words, and phrases —*units* of information— (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 344 authors' emphasis) in the transcriptions were coloured in order to define categories. The initial themes were further developed into categories, finding multiple indicators within the data to support a category and removing any categories not supported by sufficient indicators (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A thematic synthesis of beginning teachers' experiences will be presented. Pseudonyms are used in reporting the results.

Results

Despite the systemic and contextual differences, novice teachers in this study tend to share similar needs and require similar types of support during their first years in the profession. The analysis of the data shows that the common aspects of the school system are greater than the differences. In some occasions some differences were noted between primary education and secondary education levels. However, due to the small sample size, these results could not be generalized. In addition, through the follow-up email interviews, it was possible to obtain information about how novice teachers face the induction time. In this regard, the results obtained allowed to identify four factors that positively affected the induction

of novices. These were: (a) the experience and time on the job help novice teachers to adjust and feel more comfortable; (b) personal characteristics such as self-confidence; (c) effective professional practices; and (d) high levels of support from both inside and outside of school. These items are not going to be discussed in detail, since they go beyond the objective of this article.

The presentation of the results of the research will be divided into four parts. The first part will explore the perceptions of beginner teachers in their initial training. Then this article will present the greatest challenges faced by novice teachers during the induction. The third part will identify informal and formal induction practices both within and outside the context of the school. The final part is the discussion and conclusions.

The role of initial teacher education in preparing to teach

> Beginning teachers' knowledge and skill are usually taken for granted... people see us as «a ripe fruit». They do not realize that they cut the apples when they were still green. If we are not a finished product, we are thought to be faulty and it is not necessarily like that, because we want to learn… one knows the content but there is something missing so we need help (Pilar, Early Childhood, private school).

The metaphor used by Pilar provides an illustration of the critical growth period for teacher development faced by novices during their first years in the profession. As reflected in this beginning teacher's metaphor of an 'unripe apple', it makes little sense to expect a novice to perform as well as experienced teachers. It is well worth noting here that participants were not asked directly about initial teacher education. However, they spontaneously raised issues related to their preparedness to teach and the role accomplished by initial teacher education in this regard.

Out of the 29 novice teachers interviewed, 14 found that the teachers´work was more demanding than they expected it would be. Seven out of these fourteen were novices in their second month of teaching. In general, novices tended to blame pre-service programs for not preparing them for the reality of full time teaching. Some of the novice teachers of this study argued that the initial training did not prepare them to cope with the complexities involved in teaching, on the grounds that the realities that they found in the schools were much more complicated than they had anticipated. For those novice teachers, the confrontation with the complexities and responsibilities of a classroom still seems to provoke a form of "praxis shock" (Veenman, 1984). This finding is consistent with the literature in teacher socialization that has addressed the discontinuity between teacher training and actual practice (Chambers, Coles, & Roper, 2002; Feinman-Namser, 2001; Gold, 1996; Khamis, 2000). Therefore, beginning teachers' *saying*s about their preparedness to teach centred on initial teacher education and the perceived *fictitious* and *unrealistic* character of professional experiences. These ideas are represented in the following quote:

> Professional experiences are a little bit fictitious… … One teaches a class that has been preparing for a month. That is not real because at school one is working and teaching all day, teaching in all the periods and all the subjects. In addition, when one goes to school during practicum there is a structure so one has prepared everything, all the movements, the words... is like a controlled environment. The supervisor and co-workers are there too (Romina, primary teacher, municipal school).

Mayor challenges found during induction – *sayings*

Despite specific contextual and systemic differences, novices in this study tended to share similar needs and required similar kinds of support during their first years teaching. The interviews with 29 beginning teachers support earlier research about the concerns of novices. The main concerns of beginning teachers fell under three general themes: (a) In-classroom challenges; (b) Out of classroom challenges and conditions of work; and (c) Out of classroom relationships and professional isolation.

In-Classroom challenges. The most common areas of concern associated with in-classroom experiences were those involving pedagogical content knowledge, understood as the knowledge that encapsulates the transformation of content knowledge into the ways that best facilitates student learning and instructional pacing (Shulman, 1986), classroom management, managing school routines, and competence in teaching students with special learning needs (in that order). Additionally, six novice teachers mentioned their

concern with test pressure and test preparation regarding the national standardized test SIMCE[1]. Table A6 shows the number of responses for each category (see Appendix A).

Pedagogical knowledge. Although most of these novices consistently mentioned that they had strong knowledge of content, *sayings* regarding the difficulties involved in knowing how to teach such content were identified. While only 4 of the 29 novice teachers mentioned content knowledge as a concern, 12 reported pedagogical content knowledge as a key challenge. In addition to how to teach the content, novice teachers were unsure when to teach it or for how long.

The concern of the novice teachers in relation to the pedagogical content knowledge is represented in the following quote: «The biggest challenge has been teaching the subject… we are very well prepared in content knowledge but much less prepared on how to teach that content» (Ana, a primary education teacher, subsidized school).

These novices reported on the challenging task of making sense of the content and instruction they encountered in teacher education. Therefore, beginning teachers' *sayings* portray pedagogical content knowledge as difficult to implement once they are in the practical field.

Classroom management. Classroom management was the second most commented challenge that structured induction experiences. Classroom management is a predictable concern of beginning teachers and it has been widely reported in the learning to teach and induction literature. (Brock & Grady, 1998; Ewing & Manuel, 2005; McCann & Johannessen, 2004; Veenman, 1984). In this study maintaining classroom discipline appears as a predominant concern for high school teachers. While only 2 out of 16 primary school teachers reported classroom management as a concern, 6 out of 11 high school teachers reported having difficulties managing individual students' behaviour. The following excerpt provides a sense about these novices' perspectives on classroom management:

> One sometimes loses time so instead of beginning the class with energy, one begins the class angry and the anger makes you lose your temper. I spend all my time telling to the students «be quiet», «sit properly», and «stay quiet». It is complicated. I ask myself «what can I do?, what strategies can I use? », I feel that something was missing in the initial training (Esteban, secondary education teacher, subsidized school).

Managing of school routines: record attendance. Some beginning teachers expressed concern with school routines. Among the difficulties, *sayings* regarding administrative tasks such as managing the classroom book and taking the roll were identified. Each class has a book which considers not only curricular records but also records regarding pupils' school attendance, pupils' demographic information and individual behaviour. Taking the roll was particularly challenging to beginning teachers working in subsidized schools. While 7 out of 18 subsidized novices noted taking the roll as a challenge, five other subsidized novices mentioned the need to train student teachers on aspects related to recording students' attendance and content lessons in the classroom book. This can be explained by the fact that municipal and subsidized schools receive grants based on the number of students attending class each month. In the case of subsidized sector owners of the school receive the subsidy directly from the central government, a situation that increases school's owner control on student attendance.

Competence to teach students with special learning needs. Seven out of twenty nine novices in this study showed preoccupation regarding their competence to accommodate students with special learning needs in instruction and assessment. They reported both insufficient preparation on these areas during their initial training and lack of actual school support. The experience of these beginning teachers in relation to teaching pupils with diverse needs is consistent with the literature (Brock & Grady, 1998; Ewing & Manuel, 2005; McCann & Johannessen, 2004; Veenman, 1984).

SIMCE pressure and concerns about students doing well. In addition to the common challenges faced by novices, six participants in this study mentioned the national test SIMCE as a preoccupation. Chile has administered a national census of student achievement (SIMCE) since 1988, with a different

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[1]   SIMCE: standardized test applied in the country to measure academic quality in schools.

grade assessed in each year. Moreover, since 1995 SIMCE test results have been published in the form of rankings or league tables. This has added a sense of competition resulting in more pressure on schools to perform well. These novices expressed anxiety and frustration when talking about the SIMCE. These emotions were rooted in the feeling that the SIMCE adds an extra pressure to their work as novices and in the belief that their role as a teacher is not 'teaching to the test'. The test imposes a special kind of stress on novices, who not only feel subject to pressure but also feel that the SIMCE distract time and energy from what they perceive as their most important tasks. This finding supports a growing body of research which shows that teachers report feeling pressure to improve students' test scores (Adcock & Patton, 2001; Shepard, 2000).

Novices' *sayings* regarding the SIMCE test showed their preoccupation no only for getting good results but also for the importance that these results might have on their image as teachers. Beginning teachers' *sayings* such as «the SIMCE test is complicated, the comparison that is made between teachers is unfair» or «a test does not show the type of teacher that one might become to be» show that the SIMCE test is an important feature of the practice that, somehow, is shaping the professional practice of novice teachers.

Out of classroom challenges: conditions of work. The most common areas of concern associated with out of classroom challenges were those involving the conditions of work. Novices' sayings concerning the lack of time to do the work demanded characterized their reports about induction. In particular, they expressed concern about the extent to which the workload encroaches on their private and family life. In addition, novices mentioned inadequate facilities and insufficient resources as a difficulty encountered in the performance of their work. In this line, novice teachers mentioned that aspects such as lack of teaching materials, poor access to technology, the lack of availability of laboratories and libraries, and the inappropriate design of classrooms constituted factors constraining their professional practice.

Working conditions. Statements about the too much work appear as an obstacle of novice teachers' professional practices. This is represented in the following quote:

> I have too much work and I need more time because I have a heavy teaching workload and insufficient preparation time. Teachers come to homes just to continue working. I use my free time to prepare my lessons; at the end I do not have time to spend with my family (Sombra, primary education teacher, subsidized school).

Facilities and resources available. Twelve out of the 29 novice teachers working across the three types of schools that comprise the study reported difficulties with facilities and /or resources and supplies. This result is consistent with the literature that highlights the need for more materials and resources. As suggested by Marable and Raimondi (2007), the lack of suitable supplies only adds difficulties to the already overwhelmed novice teachers and it is one factor of stress. The following quote is an example of the challenges faced by novice teachers.

> Aspects that facilitate my work... I don´t find any. For example, there is a laboratory but there is not enough space or supplies to do experiments. The design of the classrooms is not appropriate: it is too hot inside and the door is at the back of the room, allowing the students to go outside when I am writing on the board (Santai, secondary education teacher, subsidized school).

Out of classroom relationships and professional isolation. The interviews also revealed beginning teachers' sayings concerning establishing relationships with parents and /or guardians and other teachers working in the school. The analyses of the interview transcripts suggest that there is an expectation that beginning teachers must be capable of solving problems on their own. Beginning teachers' sayings centred on the lack of advice and assistance regarding teaching practice.

In this respect, some of them expressed feeling isolated without collegial support expected and required. In fact, many of these novice teachers were burdened by a sense of doubt, especially self-doubt regarding the effectiveness of their classroom pedagogy. Therefore, a number of them asked for ongoing support and continuous feedback as they grappled with the complexities of becoming members of the teaching profession. The concern of these novice teachers in relation to the lack of feedback based on their practice is evident in the following quote: "there is nothing special because I am a novice. Not because I am a novice I am going to have extra help. What I have been told is that I have to ask for help. They tend to put all the responsibility on me"(Alejandra, primary teacher, subsidized school).

In addition, the excerpts from the interviews illustrate a recurrent challenge faced by these beginning teachers when communicating and dealing with parents and caregivers when conflict arises. In this regard, beginning teachers criticised the lack of preparation provided by their initial training on this area but at the same time they expressed their dissatisfaction with the lack of school support to handle relationships with parents. Participants felt that the schools assumed the teachers knew more than they did. Therefore, they mentioned feeling lost particularly about the protocol for setting up parent meetings.

Formal and informal induction support practices – *doings*

Although the section discussed previously pointed out that these novice teachers reported lack of support during induction, beginning teachers' responses showed that there was some support available to them. In some ways there is a sort of contradiction when beginning teachers first reported not receiving any support to acknowledge later that in fact there were several people helping them. Therefore, in this study the induction seemed to encapsulate both: (a) school-based support practices whose primary role seems to help novices to cope with administrative and technical issues; and (b) out of school support practices concerned with teaching.

People involved in induction inside the school - *relatings.* The data showed that the most common form of induction came from informal relationships with colleagues, especially those who teach in the same level or subject, followed by members of the school management team, such as the head of UTP and the general inspector (in that order). This induction forms part of an informal unstructured situation that relies on the goodwill of colleagues to assist novices along the way. The school principal was the least mentioned; he was seen mostly as a model for teacher behavior rather than as a provider of direct pedagogical support. Teacher meetings constituted another instance of support for these novice teachers.

Technical and pedagogical support - doings. The support includes sharing professional resources and materials, solving immediate problems, explaining school policies and practices, filling the classroom book, and providing some advice in relation to the curriculum. In spite of the fact that the support is varied; this mainly focuses primarily on technical aspects of teaching. The following quote illustrates the perception of novice teachers in relation to the support received: «I was told how to fill out the classroom book and how to write the content. I also had a very good induction in administrative affairs» (Manuel, secondary education teacher, subsidized schools).

Whilst novices acknowledged this assistance as an important source of administrative and technical support, some asked for a support that goes beyond helping them to acquire the techniques and skills for teaching, Beginning teachers in this study requested support that focuses on helping them to develop different instructional strategies to vary approaches or to evaluate student performance, for example. Indeed, novices requested assistance focused on issues concerning classroom pedagogy. The following quotes exemplify novice's request for support focused on classroom pedagogy.

> The head of UTP provides some help but is not an aid that could help me improve my pedagogy. The head of UTP does not tell you how to do things. The support is more about reviewing assessments that one is going to apply, or give you permission to photocopy material (Eileen, primary education teacher, municipal school).

> «I need some kind of feedback on how I am doing my classes, I need to know what should I improve» (Pilar, nursery school level, private school).

Since one of the main in-classroom concerns reported by newcomers in this study relate to their perceived lack of competence on pedagogical content knowledge, and more importantly, a number of the concerns were beyond the classrooms, it raises the questions: What do novices do to get the support required? Who or where do novices get this help from? The next section will discuss the informal and formal support given to novice teachers by different structures and people outside the school settings.

Induction outside of school: support networks for beginning teachers. Often the assumption is that induction support takes place within schools, overlooking the reality that for a variety of reasons (e.g. novices' reluctance to disclose their difficulties to colleagues in their own school) valuable induction support is also available outside the school contex. Emerging from the data was an understanding that

school support was readily available for the functional demands of the job, but more significantly, that the novices seek help particularly on issues concerning pedagogical content knowledge, content knowledge, and class preparation outside the school context. For example, beginning teachers in this study have rich networks (*relatings*) including connections with Higher Educations Institutions —particularly lecturers— other school teachers and novices, and web based educational portals. These networks are individual and personal to each novice.

Also, to overcome difficulties, some novices in this study decided to take specializations and graduate courses related to their professional development needs. The option of designing their own professional development helps novice teachers to feel more comfortable in their role and opens the door to continuous learning.

Getting help outside of school: the role of university lecturers, teachers, and novice teachers – relatings. Twenty-two out of the 29 participants in this study highlighted the support provided either by lecturers, experienced teachers, or novices who were located at different schools from them. The following quote illustrates this situation (Sofia receives help in the contents and methodology):

> I usually phoned my lecturers at the university, and I ask them to give me private lessons. For example, I call a very prestigious teacher here in Copiapó who worked at the university and she teaches me at her home. My methodology teacher also teaches me (Sofia, primary education teacher, subsidized school).

Catrina recognizes that she gets help from her primary school teacher on aspects such as content knowledge or pedagogical knowledge: «Generally, I am looking for help outside of school. For example, if I need help with the content or with how to teach something I seek help from my primary school teacher» (Catrina, primary education teacher, municipal school).

The support obtained by novice teachers outside of the school seems to be beneficial. In fact, the relationships established with other novices and teachers who understand and are familiar with the challenges and difficulties they are facing, seem to help them develop their pedagogy without necessarily being exposed to criticism. These more cooperative relationships (*relatings*) are the product of a less hierarchical relationship between teachers working in other schools and beginning teachers in this study.

Discussion and conclusion

This study investigated the process of induction from the perspective of beginning teachers. The intention was to examine the practice of induction in terms of both the agency and actions of individuals and, in terms of the cultural-discursive, material-economic and social-political enabling/constraining preconditions that frame induction practices. In the three sections discussed in this article, three categories were identified: (a) *sayings* that constitute the practices of induction in its cultural-discursive dimension; (b) *doings* that constitute the practice of induction in the material-economic dimension; and (c) *relatings* that establish connectedness among people involved in induction. The results of this study suggest that it is expected that novice teachers are classroom ready or «a ripe fruit», while they are still in a process of learning to teach. Similar to previous studies (Avalos & Aylwin, 2007, Brock & Grady, 1998; Ewing & Manuel, 2005; Flowers, 2006; McCann & Johannessen, 2004; Veenman, 1984) novice teachers struggle with classroom management, meeting the individual needs of students, assessing students' work, and managing the curriculum and resources. The establishment of relationships with parents/guardians and colleagues is one of the main concerns of novice teachers. Additionally, beginning teachers in this study report feeling pressure to improve students' test scores. More recent research has identified the pressure to improve performance on standardized tests as an additional challenge for teachers in general (Adcock & Patton, 2001; Shepard, 2000). The results of this study seem to provide empirical evidence and be in line with this approach.

The analysis of the interviews revealed a key *saying* concerning the material-economic conditions framing beginning teachers' induction. These include time allocation and facilities and resources. These material-economic features of practice are part of the arrangements that, according to beginning teachers' recounts, are constraining their induction into teaching. In this regard, Martinez (1994) places greater importance on the contextual aspects of the beginning teachers' placement stating that «while beginning teachers continue to be placed in schools which are inherently loaded with difficulties, no induction programs will be able to redress such impossible contextual givens» (p. 179).

It is well worth noting here that beginning teachers' *sayings* portrayed induction in connection to other practices, particularly initial teacher education and teaching. When asked about their experiences of induction, beginning teachers' *sayings* centred on their preparedness to teach. Some beginning teachers participating in this research evaluated negatively their initial training. They pointed to the common theme of lack of congruence between pre-service and the first year of teaching. In this regard, beginning teachers talked about professional experiences as an idealised practice rather than a real practice.

In this regard, the literature shows a great coherence with regard to the crucial role that meets the practical component in the training of future teachers (Alexander & Galbraith, 1997; Chuan Goh, Wong Choy & Inn Tan, 2009). Professional experiences are considered an essential part of the initial training and a critical component in terms of giving students the chance to understand how theory and practice are two interdependent factors (see, for example, Avalos, 2005). These allow students to reflect on and implement their emerging philosophies about teaching and they make the right time to make the necessary connections between theory and practice (see, for example, Feinman-Nemser, 2001). However, the crucial integration in practice of all the theoretical constructs acquired by students during their initial training does not seem so easy to realize.

Induction in this study, is constructed by a particular kind of discourse that define beginning teachers as 'novices' in need of support; a particular kind of actions composed of activities focused on technical and administrative support; and a particular kind of social organization such as the weekly teaching meetings which involve teachers working together. Within the social space of school novice teachers relate to colleagues, the head of UTP and the general inspector. It is through these relationships (*relatings*) that the practice of induction takes place.

An important contribution to the literature provided by this study is the discovery of informal networks of induction developed outside of the boundaries of the school. These personal networks have made an important contribution to the professional development of these novice teachers, particularly in terms of pedagogical content knowledge. This adds a new dimension to induction showing novice teachers as active subjects capable of influencing their practice transforming induction practices.

Although informal learning through relationships with colleagues was of great significance for these beginning teachers, more importantly, the data in this study revealed that beginning teachers feel reluctant to disclose their difficulties on areas such as content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge to colleagues in their own school. Therefore, for these beginning teachers it seems easier to share their difficulties in these areas with lecturers, other teachers and novices with whom they have built up relationships over the course of their studies. This finding indicates that induction support on classroom pedagogy was offered to these novices in a form that did not follow the traditional planned support proposed by induction programs.(see, for example, Bickmore & Bickmore, 2010). Indeed, most of these novices were able to enhance their pedagogical content knowledge by essentially creating their own induction support despite teaching in schools that do not provide induction support focused on classroom pedagogy. It is noteworthy that beginning teachers appear as independent subjects who take responsibility for their own learning. Indeed, beginning teachers in this study appear as agentic subjects who are capable of actively creating an outside support system when necessary. It can be argued then that beginning teachers in this study are framing practice as well. This finding reveals a sort of paradox. Whilst the literature argues for more formal school-based induction support focused on pedagogy, beginning teachers do not seek induction support focused on pedagogy within the formal structures of the school. This type of induction might mean loss of face which might explain beginning teachers' creation of their own personal network for pedagogical support outside of the borders of the school.

Additionally, this study has identified issues related to the evaluation and support of beginning teachers during induction. One of the important implications is to develop a balance between these two processes. Achieving a balance between the demands of system evaluation to ensure teaching quality and support practices that assist beginning teachers to develop their skills and confidence will be crucial for both policy makers and principals to consider.

Linked to the above point is the need to articulate and value formal and informal support for beginning teachers. This study has identified the importance of informal support, yet questions remain regarding the types of formal school support for building the skills of beginning teaching. It is clear that beginning teachers in this study wanted help with their teaching practices, but they were sometimes ashamed to ask for it. One of the reasons that can explain this is because they are being evaluated and they do not want to appear 'faulty'. Therefore, the formal induction needs to be articulated in the school in ways that balance evaluation and support. This has implications for role articulation and the definition of responsibilities. In order for this to take place, instructional leadership roles need to be clarified. It is crucial to define who can take responsibility for both supporting learning about teaching and being a teacher, and also evaluating what beginning teachers are doing. The articulation of roles and responsibilities is crucial in helping establish a school culture in which novice teachers can make connections between learning in-school and out-of-school learning, and so move towards a continuum of professional learning that encompasses both initial teacher education and the early years in the profession.

For this to be carried out, it is necessary to clarify the instructional leadership within the school. It is crucial to define who shall assume the responsibility of supporting novice teachers in the process of learning to teach, and who will perform the process of assessing what the teachers are doing. If the induction is understood as a vehicle to improve teaching and learning, it is necessary to base the policies and practices of induction on ideas that recognize novice teachers as apprentices, to recognize the nature of induction focused on pedagogy, and the role of schools in the induction of novice teachers in the profession.

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Appendix A

Tables

Table A1
Schools in the Copiapó province, Chile

	Schools in Copiapó		
	Municipal (public)	Subsidized (private)	Private
Primary	21	4	2
Secondary	2	5	
K- 12 grade	1	6	2
Other type of schools [1]	7	7	
N of schools	31	22	4

N of schools = 57

Table A2
Schools in the study

Institutions	N	%
• Primary	3	30
• Secondary	2	20
• K- 12 grade	5	50
Geographic Region		
• Urban	10	100
• Rural		
Students socioeconomic level *		
• Low	3	30
• Medium low	1	10
• Medium	2	20
• Medium high	2	20
• High	2	20
Number of days		
• One		
• Two		
• Three	10	
Dependency		
• Municipal	2	20
• Private subsidized	4	40
• Private paid	4	40

*According to the data provided by the schools' principals.

Table A3
Novice teachers in the study

	Municipal (public)	Subsidized (private)	Private	*N*
Preschool education			2	2
Primary education	5	7	4	16
Secondary education		11		11
N	5	18	6	29

Table A4
Teacher distribution by gender, age and teaching time

	N	%
Gender:		
Male	5	17
Female	24	83
Age		
25 and less	11	38
26	5	17
27	6	21
28 +	7	24
Teaching time		
2 months and one year	23	79
2 years	5	17
3 years	1	4

Table A5
Participants in the follow-up email interviews

Teaching time at the time of the first individual interview

Dependency	2 months	1 year	2 years
Municipal (Mu)			1
Subsidized (Su)	5	1	
Private (Pr)	1	3	
N of teachers	6	4	1

TableA6
Challenges inside the classroom identified by novice teachers

Category	Total
Pedagogical knowledge (including knowledge of the curriculum and the timing and sequencing of content)	12
Behavioral management	8
Management of classroom routines: take attendance	7
Students with special educational needs	7
SIMCE	6

Note: verbalized answers by the participants.