

Professional Identity and Induction Profiles of Novice Secondary Teachers: Initial Results of a Qualitative Study

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This article analyses induction processes of novice teachers in Swiss secondary schools. While initial pedagogical training plays an important role in preparing to become a teacher, student teaching experiences and the first few months in a classroom force the beginning teacher to look at how he/she defines and imagines teaching. If successful, this reexamination will lead the novice to integrate into his/her identity the attributes which will make him/her a teaching professional.

Established professions provide the mechanisms, more or less complex and lengthy, for training their members and for their induction into the workplace. The knowledge and competencies necessary for the exercise of any occupation necessarily change, as do the institutions in charge of preparing future professionals, and the social, cultural, and political contexts in which such training and employment take place. The teaching profession does not escape this reality. In fact, if there is a domain which undergoes profound transformations, either in its fundamental conceptions, in the way it trains its members, in the nature of its craft, or in the degrees of competencies and commitments that are demanded, it is the domain of the teacher in the classroom. The upheaval caused by the current reforms has modified the ways of educating and instructing, the ways of defining oneself as a teacher, and of understanding one's role within the school. This text will try to provide some answers to the questions being asked in this context: how are novice teachers being inducted into their profession and how well has their initial training prepared them to begin teaching?

Literature Review

The literature on beginning teachers is vast. What is common in selected studies is the centrality of teacher's narratives and biographies (Kelchtermans, 1994). Cattani (2002) argued that age and particularly gender often determine a teacher's social network with colleagues which, in turn, determine his/her access to power resources and influence as well as his/her vulnerability to outside control. A young teacher's authority is by definition limited. Cattani (2002) described the lives of six young White teachers working in California's urban public schools. She highlighted their paths toward instructional competence, professional competence, and cultural competence. All were working with children who had economic and/or racial backgrounds that differed from their own cultural experience.

As pointed out by Featherstone (1993), an important part of what a young teacher learns concerns one's teaching activity and the way one's character affects teaching. To learn is to be aware of the importance to respond flexibly to students and to take their moods and preferences into account. However, the process of teaching during the first years is a process of learning about oneself. Featherstone (1993) suggested that powerful stories of beginning teachers include some sort of encounter with the outside world. The real drama, however, is internal. In the same way, Feiman-Nemser (2001) argued that "new teachers have two jobs—they have to teach and they have to learn to teach. No matter

how good a pre-service program may be, there are some things that can be learned only on the job” (p. 1026).

Kepler (1984) made an interesting parallel between “Mothering” and “Teaching”. Perhaps the biggest shock in coping with both processes comes with the realization that perfection is impossible. Former images of what teachers/mothers should and should not do and what babies/students should and should not do need to be tempered by the realities, the complexities, and constraints of everyday life. Mistakes are inevitable, something to learn from rather than indicators of failure.

Kardos and Moore (2007) found that some new teachers work in a way that may be called veteran-oriented professional cultures, in which the modes of professional practice are determined by the veteran faculty. Although their veteran colleagues might be socially friendly, professional norms of privacy and autonomy prevailed. Thus, new teachers reported that experienced teachers rarely collaborated with them or discussed their work in any depth. As a result, these new teachers lacked the guidance of experienced teachers about what or how to teach. Other new teachers described what might be called novice-oriented professional cultures, in which the respondents were part of a large group of new teachers—usually in charter schools or reconstituted urban public schools. The views and values of new teachers dominated this professional culture, which was replete with idealism and energy. In many cases, Kardos and Moore (2007) found that experienced teachers simply were not present in substantial numbers to be influential in these schools. As a result, novice teachers operated without the benefit of the professional wisdom or expertise that experienced colleagues might provide. The experience of new teachers in novice-oriented professional cultures is quite different from that of new teachers in veteran-oriented professional cultures, yet the result is the same: new teachers lack the guidance of experienced teachers about what or how to teach.

This literature review on narratives of beginning teachers has highlighted the multidimensional, idiosyncratic, and context-specific nature of becoming a teacher. Teaching is a process that involves the complex interplay between different, and sometimes conflicting, perspectives, beliefs, and practices that are accompanied by the development of a new identity (Flores, 2006). The primary focus of the current study is the reconstitution of the beginning of professional lives of teachers.

Method

Research Design and Sampling

The present study used a one-group, one-time interview design of beginning secondary school teachers in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. It is part of a larger, longitudinal qualitative and quantitative survey concerning beginning teachers in preschools, elementary, and secondary schools in French- and Italian-speaking regions of Switzerland. A convenient sampling strategy of French-speaking students attending *Hautes Écoles Pédagogiques* (HEP – a teaching college) was used. An ethical review of the study was approved by HEP institutional review board.

Sample

The sample consisted of six female and one male teachers ($N = 7$), all of whom had received their teacher certification in the recently created HEP. All participants volunteered for the study and no compensation for participation in the study was provided. Table 1 reports the contextual elements of the sample, including pseudonyms used to report the findings. The age of starting out as a teacher varied greatly because the teachers interviewed attended university before beginning a program of professional training at the HEP. Four of the participants had a master's, one had a doctorate, and the other two attended a few years of university. In addition, several of them began their professional life in another domain or as substitute teachers. Four of the teachers were hired just after getting their HEP diploma while the others were hired even before completing their studies. At the time of the interviews, three teachers were working in several different schools at the same time; one was working in two different

schools, and the other three were working in one school only. The five teachers working at the lower secondary level (middle school) had between two and four different grade levels and between two and seven classes. One of the two teachers at the higher secondary level (high school) had five classes, the other had six. Four of the teachers worked from thirty-four to forty-two hours per week; one worked four to five hours per week; and the hours per week of the remaining two teachers were not noted.

Table 1
Professional Induction of Secondary Teachers in French-Speaking Regions of Switzerland: Contextual Elements

Teacher	Brigitte	Cécile	Laurence	Manuel	Mia	Oriane	Sabrina
Contextual Elements							
Age	38	26	43	28	27	33	29
Year of HEP Diploma	2005	2005	2006	2004	2005	2004	2004
Year of Employment	2005	2005	2003	2004	2003	2003	2004
School(s)	Several	1	Several	Not noted	1	2	1
Grade Level	7th and 8th	7th, 8th and 9th	7th, 8th and 9th	6th, 7th, 8th and 9th	High School	High School	7th, 8th and 9th
Number of Classes	2	3	7	4	5	6	3
Subjects	Economy, Accounting	Math, Physics, Physical Education, Physics and Biology Labs	English	French, English, German, Physical Education	French, Literature	Biology	Not noted
Hours per Week	4 to 5	42	34	42	42	Not noted	Not noted
Substitutes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
University Degree	Master's in Economy	A few years at university	Doctorate in 2003	A few years at university	Master's in French	Master's in Biology	Master's in French

Procedure

The interviews were conducted in the spring of 2007 and took place after the participants' first, second, or third year of teaching experience. Interviews were conducted by one interviewer (the first author). The audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed by paid student research assistants.

Analysis

The interviews were subjected to constant comparative analysis (Aktouf, 1987; Hughes, 1996; Patton, 1980; Strauss, 1992), a sort of back and forth between the pre-defined themes (or categories) and the transcription of the interview, until the exhaustion (or saturation) of the information contained in the transcripts (Bertaux, 1980). The predefined analytical categories revolved around the progression of induction and the construction of a professional identity, as well as the contribution to this progression and this construction by such factors as initial training, the infrastructures of induction for new teachers in secondary schools, and the collaboration between these beginning teachers and their colleagues. Beyond the themes explored, the objective was to elaborate a coherent and nuanced view – an emergent theory in the sense of Glaser and Strauss (1967) – of professional induction profiles and of the way in which the professional identities of beginning teachers are built.

Findings

Findings reflect two broad concepts: development and induction as depicted in a summary of the findings in Table 2. The development concept is presented first characterized by themes and activities. Then, induction profiles (the second concept) is illustrated by case examples. All of the findings are elaborated with research participant quotations identified by pseudonyms.

Table 2
Summary of Findings

Concepts	Themes	Activities or Exemplary Cases
A. Development	1. Initial Training	a. transforming one’s vision of teaching b. revising expectations and comparing them with the realities of the job c. the test of student teaching and the first experiences of responsibility
	2. Self Re-Conversion	a. Going it alone b. Understanding one’s strengths and limits c. Having self-confidence
	3. Professional Competencies	a. Adapting and listening to the students b. Developing teaching strategies and organizational skills
B. Induction Profiles	1. Struggle	Brigitte
	2. Smooth Journey	Cécile and Sabrina
	3. Between the Two	Oriane, Manuel, Mia, and Laurence

A.1. Development: Contribution of Initial Training

Before becoming teachers themselves, new teachers will have spent years in schools as students. They have seen female and male teachers, some of whom have made an impression by their competence and some by their ability to create friendships. They will have developed images and ideas of what it means to be a teacher. During their two years of professional training at the HEP, they were exposed to different pedagogical trends, didactical methods for the different subjects they will be teaching, and ways of organizing a class, teaching, evaluating, and keeping discipline. They observed experienced teachers going about their job and prepared and gave lessons during their student teaching. What opinions do they have of the training they received at the HEP? What notions did they have of the profession before entering the HEP and what impact did their training have on this notion? To what extent did the classes and activities prepare them for their first steps in the profession? We hope to give answers, however

partial, to such questions with the responses of the seven teachers.

As we will see later, while some new teachers have a qualified, even critical, view of certain parts of their initial training, most see it in a positive light and value its contribution to the exercise of their profession. For Mia, for example, while the duration of the training was a bit long and the content of the classes was "a bit diluted", the time spent at the HEP was very helpful for learning the profession. "At the HEP I felt I learned more than at the university... I found that in this ambiance, that helped me a lot. I wouldn't have been able to teach like I do without the HEP." For Cécile, "I was very happy about what I received in terms of didactics at the HEP," while Brigitte noted, "I was very motivated by what we learned at the HEP; it helped me a lot."

a. Transforming one's vision of teaching. Most of the teachers interviewed had developed, over the years spent at school and university, a vision of teaching that could be qualified as idealistic. It is a vision that sees teaching simply as the activity of transmitting knowledge. The two years of training, the student teaching, the periods of substitute teaching, and the first year of teaching ended up transforming such an idealistic view of yesteryear into a more realistic view of the here and now. This new portrayal of teaching seems less centered on the subject to be taught and more towards the students who need to learn. Teachers in training now see students as less concerned with the mastery of knowledge and more in need of social recognition. Students ask their teachers to pay attention to them, to be present, to listen. They want to discover in the teacher's look an interest for who they are, for what they experience, for their difficulties, and their special needs.

In the case of Brigitte, who valued the teacher training that she received at the HEP, such training, combined with field experiences (substituting), completely changed her view of teaching, which she had seen simply as transmitting knowledge. Her education along with her first year of teaching a class of students with behavior issues, made her see teaching as a profession of human relations. Transmitting knowledge, she says, takes second place.

[Before teaching] I worked in a completely different field and [teaching] was mainly transmitting subject matter... And then, when I got here, when I substituted, I understood that it wasn't just subject matter. In fact there were a lot of other things... Especially [with] students in difficulty... subject matter, that came after. I was lucky to be able to teach in different grades... The students in specialized classes need a great deal of *recognition*. I was almost their mother, you know, mostly encouraging them, telling them, "No, you aren't useless"... You feel that you need to replace the parents and to teach simple rules, rules that were just understood when I was growing up, respect manners... The subject matter, there isn't any time for it. (Brigitte)

During her time at the HEP, Brigitte gradually discovered a side of the profession that had been hidden up to that point: teaching as being exposed and open to others, to students of different economic, sociocultural and linguistic backgrounds, to their needs, to their educational difficulties, and to their ways of learning and behaving. Any opening or exposure to others carries a measure of self-risk, she tells us as an aside. Brigitte had classes and activities at the HEP, which prepared her (somewhat) for this openness, for protecting herself and not feeling solely responsible when something went wrong in the classroom, for reassuring herself and her students, and for maintaining order in the classroom.

I was really motivated by what we learned at the HEP... This open-mindedness, having to do with the part that's not about transmitting knowledge, but the other stuff, the evolution of teaching, new methods, how to go about the job. There was also a good deal of psychology, how to avoid taking everything on you, because the students will put a lot on us. I appreciated this aspect, how to protect yourself, protecting the teacher. It wasn't just transmitting knowledge; there was a lot of other stuff. That all helped me a great deal later on, I could tell myself, "hey wait, it's not your fault". (Brigitte)

For Cécile, the contribution of her teacher training resides primarily in its didactical aspects, in the "common threads", points of reference of sorts. She was introduced to these at the HEP and was able to look them up on the Internet at a moment when, starting out, she needed concrete recommendations for preparing her first math lessons.

Regarding mathematics, I was happy with the didactical methods I learned at the HEP. It's true that there's a common thread here ... that you can look up on the Internet. So I went and looked for some of these common threads. We have these new math textbooks... For each chapter there are some suggested exercises and some follow-up exercises with objectives that were already identified with the first exercises... I had already learned how to do this myself at the HEP. (Cécile)

Obviously, initial training on its own is not a guarantee of a direct and totally harmonious induction into the profession. It is a starting point. It is in the first months and years of teaching that this training is looked at and thought of again in function of precise tasks and objectives. When it comes time to teach what one knows, it is necessary to rethink, revise, retouch, and transform the knowledge stored in one's memory, and in documents or textbooks into knowledge and know-how that is structured, intelligible, and interesting for the students to learn. For this, sometimes it is necessary to look again at didactical knowledge and pedagogical directives and to use them as tools for converting material that has been learned into material to be taught. What is needed is a framework of planning objectives to be reached; everything needs to be explained to the students while keeping room for the unexpected.

At the HEP we received this sheet with different points to take into account... and I used that during my vacation to highlight the important points... The first thing was the framework that I wanted to establish which was important for me, and I insisted on this with the students... So I took this common thread... I did the exercises myself, and I looked to see which ones really correspond with the objectives that I needed to achieve. It took me all summer to do this, just to get to the month of October. (Cécile)

The unexpected happens during the first days of teaching. Having to explain things that we are not used to, as Cécile puts it, having to introduce the students to school rules and the timetable that you are just learning yourself, there is enough for the beginning teacher to get a bit lost.

Next, as far as being in control of the class, I had to figure that out on-the-job... I had no explanation on the functioning of the school or the life of the school; we received all of this on Monday morning. Well, I had received the school rules just like the students. I had received the timetable which I needed to learn how to read since it was different than what I was used to, and then we had our staff meeting from 8:00 to 10:00. And from 10:00 to 11:00, I had my students and had to explain to them how things worked. It's true that the first day I was a bit panicked. (Cécile)

Added to an ignorance of the concrete working of the classroom and all of these small, but none-the-less important, aspects of classroom functioning and the students' timetables, there are the dreaded jitters that accompany the first days, the face-to-face with the students, which only the passage of time can lessen.

Oh terrible, those first lessons! I think the students felt my nervousness, but I would say... it was like university exams, [I was so nervous] it felt like that. And then after, well, little by little you get used to entering the classroom...you end up feeling at ease, it's totally different now, I feel totally different... (Oriane)

In short, as Mia so well summarizes, one learns quite a lot at the HEP, one acquires a good deal of knowledge, but this often remains abstract or too general. Day-to-day teaching is done with the "12,000 things" that need to be learned on-the-job. One is, she says, required to work up to sixty hours a week and during vacations to prepare and to get a bit ahead. In this way one has to wonder if teaching really is such a cushy job. According to the popular view teaching is a profession where one is well paid for very little work.

What we had at the HEP and what really helped me a lot was the theoretical part, as I've always really been someone into the theoretical part, and then I needed to put it into practice and that was another ball of wax. So each week, I was confronted by new things, how to deal with parents, how to deal with these groups, all of these 12,000 things that I never imagined in the teaching profession. For me the big shock I think was to realize the size of the workload and to understand how the work was perceived by the society. I have the impression that there was a huge difference. So the idea I had of it, I thought there were teachers who worked, but not more than that. And that first year, I found myself working about 60 hours per week, with practically no social recognition. People would say, "Man, you're really well paid for doing nothing, you're always on vacation" while in fact I was always working during my vacations, and at the beginning that really made me mad, and now, well, that's just how it is, I've learned to deal with it... (Mia)

This questioning of the image of teaching is certainly connected with the changes, which take place during the first years in one's self-concept, in how a person views his/her potential and limits. It also opens up a reexamination of the expectations beginning teachers have harbored since the time they were students or student-teachers: expectations of themselves or of the students.

b. Revising expectations and comparing them with the realities of the job. The interviewees' accounts of their first year of teaching often contain high expectations and recount the challenges and constraints they had to face. They show the difficulty of being left on their own in front of a group of students without being observed or evaluated. There are no teachers from the HEP, no teacher-trainers from within the school, no one to tell them how to do things, no example to follow. In other words, they need to make their own teaching decisions, they need to learn to be autonomous, the need to accept their responsibilities, and they need to learn how to deal with classes with students who do not always meet their expectations.

I was shocked! I was shocked because I didn't know they would behave like that, I had no idea! I had asked the substitute who was there before me if I could observe for one or two classes with him just to see what it was like, to have an idea of how they were, what they did, how they learned, how the substitutes taught etc. And I remember being rather shocked, and I said to myself "what strange behavior, they are really excited". This lesson I observed, given by a sub, it wasn't really great, because substitutes, well, it's well known, the students do whatever they want most of the time, so I didn't have a very good example. And after I didn't really know how I could do it on my own, I was a bit thrown into the fire... (Laurence)

As the teachers recount their experiences as beginning teachers in their first year of teaching, two principle themes emerge. They come to realize that teaching is an activity that is more complex than they had thought and that they are lacking the knowledge necessary for the exercise of their new role at the school. They are confronted by the many and varied aspects of the teaching job. It is a profession subject both to the demands of the curriculum and to local and institutional constraints: to make a place for oneself in the establishment, to be heard by one's colleagues, to learn the vocabulary used by the senior teachers, to keep up with the rhythm, to know how to start the first lesson, and to plan a few weeks ahead to have a bit of "margin". The words spoken by Manuel and Mia illustrate this learning process, these first moments where they can be seen making, still hesitantly, their first weapons, their first strategies to extricate themselves from the professional pitfalls that appear in front of them.

They [senior colleagues] just don't realize, like this year there's a new colleague who's here and I see that it's hard for him because, like me when I was starting, well, the others just assume that everyone is informed and they go from there, they speak as if everyone knows what they're talking about and then, well, it's a lot of work to have to take care of the person who's lagging behind and to show him what we're doing, why, how, where to find such-and-such, we speak of a text that's called such-and-such and everyone knows it but we don't! And

it's not a good moment to say that we don't know what text they're talking about because then they'll just say, "Ah, we'll show it to you!" It's really a pain. It's really a pain. (Manuel)

I thought about it for months...then I really studied the curriculum, but really my first lesson I asked myself, "Ok, how are we going to get to know each other?" and this was my big dilemma. I didn't want to just do a roll call or... so what I did, I looked for the etymology of all of the first names that I had and I called roll according to the etymology and that created a good contact, after that we were able to discuss and since I teach French we were able to dive right into what use it could be to explain words. I gave them my opinion on what I thought of school, studies, teenagers and it worked really well. Ok, concerning administrative tasks... I spent two weeks of my summer planning my classes, what I would do, how I'd do it and I prepared lesson plans for the first few weeks at least, so I'd have a bit of leeway. (Mia)

During initial training one does not learn, except during student teaching, to feel what one really feels on the first day in front of a classroom full of real students. One asks oneself, with the knot that is taking shape in one's stomach, if one is really made for this job. Once out of the icy water of the first professional baptism, one waits for the next, little by little, realizes that as time passes the situation becomes easier to bear.

Before entering the class my stomach would be all in knots. Now it's no longer like that, it's been a while since I felt like that, well, unless there's something a bit special, like a bad situation in a class and then...sometimes I still can have knots in my stomach but it's kind of rare. Not long ago I wondered if I wasn't going to have to deal with that my whole life! I'll quit this profession if it's like that. Just before stepping into the class to have my stomach all in knots! Now it's okay. It took a while though. (Laurence)

If, in the words of Manuel, a large part of the theoretical training from the HEP is not very helpful for the beginning teacher, the specific didactics of different subjects are much more helpful in actual teaching practice, in choosing an approach, and in classroom management.

In general, a large part of what I heard [at the HEP] was information that was of little use later on. Sometimes the information was interesting, but often we were given theoretical ideas in a way that contradicted what was being said. With the exception of one teacher or another, in general, it was academic or ex cathedra teaching at the HEP. In subject didactics however, it was much more interesting for actual teaching, we were shown ways of dealing with things... the different approaches you can have with the students. But we still had a large quantity of theoretical information which was occasionally interesting... For example we were told that it is very good to work in groups but we were told this by someone sitting at a desk in the front of the classroom. (Manuel)

c. The test of student teaching and the first experiences of responsibility. Student teaching experiences, done in the course of initial training and under the supervision of HEP teachers, are one of the key moments in learning the profession and of the journey towards creating a professional identity. As it did with Cécile, it can happen that one discovers for the first time the gap that exists between the preparations received and needs of actual teaching in real classrooms.

Cécile was affected by an incident that occurred during her student teaching. This episode, which had to do with discipline in the classroom, led her to discover the gap between classes at the HEP and the demands imposed by teaching realities.

During the student teaching there was a gap between what the HEP asked of us and...our cooperating teachers were looking for something else. There was always an unmet expectation at the school where I was teaching, as far as what I was doing, but everything was okay with the HEP. I survived this and now I'm fine. (Cécile)

It was the same experience for Mia who, even if she feels "overwhelmed" by trying to keep discipline in the class, will also not give up.

It was my second year at the HEP and I was absolutely terrorized. I wanted the students to like me. I think that was a big mistake. I started off by telling myself that I didn't want any conflicts, that I wanted the students to enjoy being in school and I think I gave less importance to learning. This led very quickly to me feeling overwhelmed. I had a class of 25 students... It was an especially difficult class... I felt totally overwhelmed. I asked myself if I was really meant for this job. I re-evaluated the situation and changed my attitude. I talked to the students and after it went much better. So my first experience... was to learn about myself, to learn about this profession where what is stressful for me is classroom management and relationships... (Mia)

This lack of synchronization between the expectations of the future professional, developed during initial training, student teaching, and the first work experiences, and the reality of the teaching terrain leads, as we have seen, to a revising of personal beliefs, to a deconstructing of the image one had of teaching, and to a reconstruction in terms of the demands of practice. Beginning to teach then seems like a crucial moment in the transformation of one's identity. In a new role and in contact with institutional and situational demands, the identity of the student progressively gives place to that of the professional. We will come back to this issue of a period of transition in the second part of this text, but we can already observe that the development of this identity happens through the revision of one's image of teaching and the modification of expectations one has towards the students, oneself, and one's capacities. In this redrafting, teaching is seen as a profession with multiple facets, with the relational component being one of the most important. The students are not how one imagined them to be. They can be excited, strange, shocking, uninterested, and one needs to adapt and to accept them as they are. One must also be aware of this crucial moment of transition from the status of student to that of novice teacher. One must understand one's limits as a teacher and prepare oneself to undertake the role of authority and supervisor that this implies. But how does one become this teacher?

A.2. Development: Reconversion and Learning of the Profession

In analyzing the accounts of the seven teachers, one sees a common path for each of them: the students who get a degree from the HEP and begin teaching all go through a sort of initiatory itinerary marked out by operations on oneself and one's environment, hesitant or decisive steps, stumbles from which they stand up and which show them a lot about themselves, a process of practical modeling and learning which lead them gradually to go from the status of apprentices to that of workers, from that of students to that of teachers. Put in other words, beginning teachers move from one definition of oneself and one's ways to its exact opposite. In short, it is a conversion.

What happens when one goes from one state to another, from one lifestyle to another? From a young person living at home who does not have to worry about cooking dinner because the parents, usually the mother, take care of that; who does not have to worry about washing clothes, keeping the house clean or paying the electric bill, about the type of conversation to keep at the table or what time to go to bed; what type of transformations take place in the behavior and the personality of the young person once he/she becomes an adult with an apartment, freedom, large and small concerns of adulthood, work hours to respect, several meals to prepare each day, shopping to do every week, sheets to wash and shirts to iron, the end of the month to make it through and the rent to pay? What happens when one goes from being single to being a spouse, from being a student studying to be a teacher to being a working teacher?

In all of these situations, a series of transformations takes place, more or less profound, which progressively affect the entire personality, ways of seeing and of conceiving, of being and of behaving according to the new context in which one finds oneself, and with the individuals with whom one lives and works. In teaching, it is these changes that take place in the first years that become the characteristics of the teacher; these changes make the beginning teacher aware of his/her role and of the multiple demands of this role which must be satisfied, sometimes alone and sometimes with the help of the

administration, of more experienced colleagues or of counselors. Put roughly, these new characteristics have to do with self-perception, with one's capacities for doing the job one has studied for, to teach, obviously, but above all to manage the class, to find within oneself the energy to persevere, to question, if necessary, the effectiveness of one's actions and to correct them as needed.

a. *Going it alone.* One of the first things a beginning teacher must learn is to count only on oneself in certain situations, especially in regard to questions of discipline. In such cases, Cécile says it is best to figure things out on one's own. The administration, according to Oriane, is mainly invisible.

No, from the administration it was pretty much figure it out yourself. One time I went to see the assistant principal, the former assistant principal, because there was a student who had a... who was playing with a lighter in class and there were one or two things that were really on the limit, he started to burn the table and all... He told me that it was up to me to deal with it and I really just couldn't believe my ears." (Brigitte)

For example, if I have a problem with some students, the principal is not the one who's going to reprimand them. He'll be nice to them and tell them that it's not a big deal and that they'll do better next time. Things like that. (Cécile)

Yeah, the administration, in any case we hardly see them, unless there's a problem, something, or they just show up unexpected... (Oriane)

Although there seems to be a common path, the process of learning the ropes of the profession, and becoming part of the group of people who practice is not a linear process with the same time in each stage, but varies from individual to individual. Very often it is a long process and depends on experience, individual rhythm, and the degree of cohesion of the group in question. If it involves colleagues teaching the same subject and having worked together for a long time, the integration of a new teacher can take longer, as was the case for Mia.

I think that maybe it was because it was such a good team that it was difficult to enter into it. I took about a year I think to really be a part of the school... I would be there in the teachers' room and would listen to what was being said but I wouldn't really participate. They often organize dinners but I would never sign up. So it's not so much that I was left out but I think that I was... I felt like an outsider, I felt... I was the same age as some of their children so I wasn't really at ease, but little by little it changed. After a year I began to participate in their discussions, but in the end I was the one who had to make the effort. (Mia)

b. *Understanding ones' strengths and limits.* Mia speaks of learning about herself:

I learned that I'm not who I thought I was, that I don't know as much as I thought I knew, but that this doesn't mean I'm a bad teacher. I had to work very hard, had to learn to be more humble and accept my imperfections, and that made me surer of myself... I can't know everything. I can't be perfect and totally exceptional as I'd like. It doesn't make you a bad teacher if you can't do everything. I know that teens do better if they are guided and led in a relatively strict way. I know that I'm not very laidback in the classroom; I like to have total silence at times and a real working atmosphere. I had to learn this. I thought I was much more flexible but I realize that I'm not really. I also always have typos in my texts... there are questions that I just can't answer... That helps to keep my pride in check... It was a real challenge for me to teach, to learn four different programs for four different levels with eighteen-year-olds who already know a good deal... I needed to work really hard and this helped me a great deal and made me more humble, and, paradoxically, surer of myself. (Mia)

c. *Having self-confidence.* It is not from one day to the next that one gains confidence in one's ability to teach, nor is it always by completing large projects. Generally, it is in discovering one's abilities in resolving certain difficulties or by trying out new ideas. For example, Oriane used Play-Doh and miming with seventeen-year-old students. When such ideas work and help to overcome certain difficulties, the teacher feels a bit stronger, a bit more relaxed, and more confident.

It comes from the confidence that you gain little by little in teaching. I've noticed that there are different channels... you'd think that you're throwing yourself against a wall but instead it goes really well. I mean, I used Play-Doh with 17 year-old students! To make chromosomes... I've used miming; I have them mime cellular respiration, protein synthesis, by having them act things out with embroidered aprons, and I mean, it works. (Oriane)

Sabrina says that it is also with the passage of time and by having positive feedback from colleagues and students that the doubts go away, that one becomes confident and at ease in one's chosen profession.

Even if it was a choice [to teach] I had made a long time ago... I had a lot of doubts. I doubted my ability to really do it well. The further along I went the more I realized that it was possible, feeling at ease and getting positive feedback, either from colleagues, students or their parents, to understand how you're perceived. As this went well, that helped my confidence. (Sabrina)

Self-confidence, however, is never fully achieved. It happens, says Manuel, that one can get different results from similar groups of students. It is hard to understand why this would be and it raises a lot of questions about the effectiveness of one's methods. But even in such a situation, concludes Manuel, one ends up rendering unto Caesar that which is Caesar's by correcting one's errors without accepting total responsibility for the failure, by having doubts without letting oneself drown in them.

Is my teaching effective? I'm teaching German in two classes at the same level and in one class the results are positive and in the other they aren't. I wonder about this a lot because I'm not really at ease with it. At the moment I'm able to tell myself that it's not all my fault, because looking at it I notice that there are a certain number of reasons that are a bit outside of my influence, but there are certainly a series of reasons which are under my control too. I'm thinking a lot about this so that it doesn't happen again. If I do find myself confronted by such a class, at least for my part I won't make the same errors in the same way again. (Manuel)

If this self-reconversion takes place at the same time as the development of actual professional competencies, it cannot lead to a distortion of one's identity. As Mia puts it, one needs to accept the changes that are taking place without forgetting what and who you are. It is necessary to learn to practice one's profession in your own way, not by imitating others. As Mia puts it, "What I learned above all is that you need to be yourself, that you can't want to be like the teacher you admired and adored in high school. It took me some time to understand this."

A.3 Development of Professional Competencies

Recent research and educational policies have put forward a certain number of competencies that teachers use, or need to use, in their daily work. Some of these competencies are partially acquired during initial training and developed, updated, and renewed throughout one's career. Other practical competencies are formed when entering a classroom, when coming in contact with the students and with the school environment. These interviews, as has already been seen, show how much these beginning teachers have been struck by the diversity of the students, of their needs, and their learning rhythms, and by how much they have felt the need to adapt themselves to this diversity in order to properly practice their profession. Adapting to the students, and learning to listen to them in order to do this is the most important competence for all seven teachers interviewed. Furthermore, these teachers speak of the need to develop organizational skills, pedagogical strategies, teaching routines or techniques, their capacity to fit

into a subject team, and to seek the support of the administration or of more experienced colleagues when necessary.

a. *Adapting and listening to the students.* A beginning teacher is not only afraid of not having enough time to teach what needs to be taught, but also of not being ready, of not having enough material for the available time. There is a fear of not having enough to say, of looking like someone who does not know enough about the subject. There is a fear of emptiness, of dead time due to class indiscipline. For this reason, one prepares several weeks in advance to have a cushion of sorts. "If you realize that the students are not following," says Brigitte, "you can slow down, repeat, give additional exercises."

I'm always prepared two weeks ahead of time and then I'll readjust... I would tend to go too fast at the beginning and the students would tell me I was going too fast, so then I would adapt, I'd give extra exercises or things like that. I'd repeat things at the beginning of each lesson and I'd try to give exercises that I made myself, since, well, we had required books... I'd make extra exercises. (Brigitte)

It sometimes happens that the students do not have the basics that would allow them to keep up with the program. It can also happen that the new teaching methods are less effective for certain subject matter. In such cases, according to Cécile, there is a need to reinforce the basics, to go back, if necessary, to old "tried and tested" teaching methods.

The first chapter I worked on [in the math textbook], I realized that they didn't have the knowledge that they should have had and so I needed to adapt. Seeing as these were eighth grade students I went over things from the seventh grade so we could go forward. It's true that I had everything ready and at the same time I was reassured, I was still able to use what I had prepared, but little by little I needed to look for things elsewhere, and it's true that I often use the old methods to have exercises that are a bit more sequenced and a bit better constructed than the methods we have now. (Cécile)

If it is necessary to adapt to the students, it rarely happens right away but is a gradual process, paced, according to Cécile and Brigitte, by the balance that happens between knowledge and relationships, between authority and listening. For Cécile, the establishment of a relationship of confidence with the students, teenagers "really connected to the person", is an important ingredient in the teaching and learning situation.

You really need to listen to the students, they often have questions that to us seem a bit strange, or we don't understand the problem, but by listening to them you're able to figure out what's not working and to go from there. I think it's important to be able to connect... to create a relationship with them to be able to teach them something. They're at an age where they're really connected to the person rather than to what's being taught. (Cécile)

Adapting to the students also means, according to Brigitte, teaching in another way, listening, varying, preparing one's classes well, and putting oneself in the place of the students to anticipate their problems and to deal with them.

For me the subject matter, it depends on the class, it depends on the level. It's clear that during the transition, at the beginning of the year, I absolutely wanted to transmit you see, and then, I found myself in front of a wall. I needed to find something else, I needed to have them work in groups, I needed to diversify and all that. I always said that I was ready to listen to them... I always told them that if they had a problem they could come and talk to me... I'm very centered on the students, but I don't know if that's a good thing or not... I always put in a lot of effort, I'm always asking questions, always wondering if they'll understand this, what is the best way to present that... I spend hours and hours preparing. (Brigitte)

The ability to adapt to the students and to listen to them would seem then to be one of the first qualities that novice secondary teachers try to acquire. By identifying themselves with their subject matter, beginning teachers discover the students' resistance to school subjects. Teaching appears then, in the eyes of Cécile, to be a vocation, a giving of oneself.

You really need to love the relationship with the students; you need to want to convey something; to want to build something with them. I don't think that everyone has this capacity, that everyone has what you need to become a teacher. It's not simply given to everyone. (Cécile)

At the same time, for Laurence, it is necessary to hold oneself back, to stay solid, to not give in to a feeling of guilt, to keep a distance from what they might say, to keep some self-confidence to not be shaken up by their unkind attacks. If the students don't all get good grades it is not always the fault of the teacher. The students certainly play a part in this.

You need to be solid. I think that you need to have self-confidence, not confidence in your ability to teach, but general self-confidence. To believe in yourself and to tell to yourself, since we're totally exposed we can't be sensitive to things like, "Ma'am, you have a stain under your arm!" or "Ma'am, you're always wearing the same sweater!" Or the opposite, "Ma'am, your hair really looks nice today!" Ok, that's kind of nice, but maybe things like that and also things like, "They aren't learning, is it my fault?" When you begin to say, "Oh man, it's my fault, they aren't learning anything", you need to be strong enough to say, "No, I'm doing what I'm supposed to do, if things don't go the way they are supposed to go it's not necessarily... maybe I'm partly responsible but maybe it's not me that's useless". (Laurence)

For Manuel, like for the others, the needs of the students are not only school related. Some are dealing with family problems, like the sickness or death of a loved-one. Such problems influence their concentration and their learning. This is why the teacher needs to be attentive to notice a student's suffering "even if it's only to send them to a school counselor."

I listen. If a student has a problem or a difficulty, I think he/she'll feel at ease to come and talk to me in private and then we can figure out some type of solution. I've let two students leave the school because they had a difficult situation and needed to talk because they had just learned that someone was dying of cancer or really hard things like that. So I let them go for a walk outside of the school; they stayed close to the school... I'm not only here to teach the subject matter, to help them learn, but if there is a problem I can be an ear to listen, even if it's only to send them to a school counselor. (Manuel)

b. Developing teaching strategies and organizational skills. The preoccupation that was discussed second most often by the beginning teachers interviewed had to do with finding appropriate strategies to maintain necessary class discipline. In Sabrina's opinion, there is not one way of doing things that works for every situation. For this teacher there are two possibilities or two types of activities: the ones where the teacher needs to work with what is already there, pre-established programs with defined objectives, and those which start from a questioning having to do with what the students need to learn from the point-of-view of the teacher. In the first case, the teacher needs to keep in mind the pre-determined objectives of the curriculum and to try them out, to be aware of the progress the students are making, to work in the short-term, to deal with the unforeseen events of the short-term, while remaining ready to readjust one's strategy.

We'll follow a pre-established program, established either in the manual that the students have at their disposition, or in a program that I distributed at the beginning of the year, I'm thinking of verb conjugation for example... Honestly, for each lesson I don't spend three hours asking myself about the objective etc. Here we're in a dimension where we have a basic theme with exercises to do. It will change according to how the students progress,

understand. This, I'd say it's almost a task, at least personally, that I do short-term, from one week to the next. Or I'll also look at their rate of understanding, the progress etc. and I'll readapt just after, at each moment. The objectives then are defined. They are general objectives... that have been defined at the outset and then we move forward with the subject and I don't have to ask the question for each lesson. (Sabrina)

In the second case, the one of long-term teaching, Sabrina constructs her classes on the basis of what she wants her students to learn and remember of the subject matter she teaches. It is this questioning and this way of anticipating the learning of the students over time that gives coherence to school, according to this teacher.

On the other hand there are other types of activities where I really go from the idea of what they need, what do I want them to really be able to do or to remember in this way and I'll construct the activity in function of this. Here I'm mainly speaking of history. Or maybe of French, regarding all that concerns expression, understanding texts, and here, for each lesson, at the beginning I need to tell myself "okay, I want them to understand this idea"... This is a long-term activity that needs to be prepared long-term so that the progress stays coherent. So there are really two types of possibilities. (Sabrina)

While the teacher needs to listen to the students and to find ways to adapt to them, the students themselves must behave and follow the rules of the school. Pedagogy was born from a need for order (Gauthier, 2005). Without order in the classroom, without an attentive ear on the part of the teacher, no learning is possible. Novice teachers learn of this fundamental principle in their first days of teaching. In order to be listened to, they try out different methods and reach into their own past. Using "little techniques" for Laurence or to "look the students in the eyes" while thinking mean thoughts for Cécile are examples of strategies, routines or tricks of the trade that are discovered or perfected in order to hold the reins of an excited classroom or to bring rebellious students to order.

I have these little techniques that I use. I always enter first and then I have the students come in the classroom and I look at them. Like this I'm at my desk and I can see what they are doing. Before I would just let them in but that doesn't work... I'm there, I let them in, they remain standing, that's how we do it now. I say, 'Good morning!' They need to reply, 'Good morning!' otherwise they get rapped on the knuckles, it's not polite, they need to respond to the teacher when she says, 'Good morning!' These are things that I didn't do before and I have seen a difference! Each time we correct, we correct, we show them that it's not okay and in the end they do it the way we want. (Laurence)

One of the pieces of advice that I had received was to look the students in the eye, to not just talk to the class in general. Even if it's that, to always target a few students. It's true that by doing this, it really works extremely well. Another piece of advice I had received no so long ago, because I was having a hard time with students who were always talking back, was to give them a mean look, at least having mean thoughts, not saying them, having mean thoughts on these students, and that calms them down, it's rather impressive. (Cécile)

In order to conserve one's strength without hampering the learning or the growth of the students, the beginning teacher, states Mia, needs to develop his/her capacity to anticipate the consequences of his/her actions, to estimate the potentially negative effects of these actions on the students.

Sometimes it's a good idea to anticipate because I have five classes. Like an idiot all of a sudden I need to correct 80 papers because I assigned all of the papers on the same week! Things like that. Yes, organizational competencies [are a must]... Also in inter-relational competencies, I think I can be hurtful sometimes for the students, like the student who felt attacked with a 2.75. I ask myself, did I really need to give him a 2.75, for such a weak student who isn't going to pass anyway, did he really deserve a 2.75 or wouldn't a 3.25 have been better for his self-esteem. Lots of questions like that. (Mia)

To conclude this first section, we can retain the following points concerning this group of seven teachers:

- Access to the initial training of an HEP takes place relatively late and after a certain professional experience, usually as a teacher but sometimes in another area.
- Some of the teachers we interviewed began teaching the same year they received their diploma while others already worked in schools before being certified.
- Some beginning teachers value the theoretical classes in psycho-pedagogy they took at the HEP, while others have mixed thoughts about this element of their training. However, they all acknowledged the contribution of student teaching and didactics classes for their subject matter in their preparation for the profession.
- The passage from what can be termed a romantic representation of the teaching profession to a more realistic conception takes place progressively through a series of changes that occur to the individual and his/her environment, by the gradual mastery of pedagogical, didactical, and organizational competencies, and by the discovery of the different aspects of the profession.
- Initial training has an important impact on the conceptions they had of teaching and on their expectations towards themselves and their abilities as well as towards the students. In short, this training left them more realistic, pushed them to be less demanding and to concentrate more on the students' social needs and their learning rhythms rather than simply concentrating on the subject matter to be taught.
- Novice teachers learn to become real teachers by learning to trust themselves in situations which challenge their psychological well-being, by protecting themselves from the searching, demanding, sarcastic, and malicious looks of their students. Little by little they swap their student or student teacher identity to carefully take on that of a professional, a professional who listens to his/her students and who develops the attitudes and skills that allows him/her to accomplish his/her mission; to support, as much as possible, teenagers in need of recognition, and to instruct and educate them.

B. Induction Profiles

The comments collected from the seven beginning teachers of our study provide a more-or-less clear image of how induction takes place in the world of education. Induction appears sometimes like a relatively well-known and easy path by the person following it. Another times, it is like a mountain path, with deep drops and climbs, here and there a ramp, a rest point, someone, a colleague, an idea, some advice that helps faltering steps find footing towards the eventual goal, to hold onto in front of the uncertainties and fears of confronting a classroom, a path that everyone follows with their own personal rhythm, that can be taken and followed for a part of one's life or, on the other hand, left at any intersection, wherever the difficulties appear insurmountable, wherever one realizes that he/she does not have the proper footwear to continue on, where one is disappointed in oneself and one's abilities, in the students or in the school atmosphere, where there is a large risk of ruining one's health or of not being up to the task.

We can say, in other words, that the induction of beginning teachers emerges on two extreme points of a continuum, both characterized by the feeling of being, or not being, at home in the classroom and wanting to remain or to leave, by the pleasure or the displeasure one feels, by executing a task that does or does not meet one's expectations, by harmonious, conflicting or tenuous relations with the administration, colleagues, students and their parents, by future prospects, or lack thereof, of a career, the number of schools and classrooms in which one teaches, by the sociocultural and psychosocial characteristics of one's students, and by one's ability, or lack thereof, to deal with the numerous stressful elements of the profession. In a completely provisional way, and without claiming to account for the richness of the seven interviews and of the meanderings of the itineraries, we can outline two professional

induction profiles that represent the two extremes of the continuum. Between the two, there is a wide range of possibilities.

1. Induction as a struggle. As a subtitle, this profile is one of suffering, of disappointment, of frustration or of waiting with little hope, often choked by a laugh, a hesitation, a silence, a recording pause, *ums* and *hmms* to gain time. In plain language, this profile corresponds with facts that accumulate during the entire path: substitute teaching, few hours and not being sure of having any hours in the near future, working in many schools and many classrooms, a large student diversity, dealing with "problem" students, bad experiences and misunderstandings with principals, an inability or impossibility of making contacts with colleagues. In short, a winding and unstable journey where moments of dissatisfaction weigh more than the achievements and pleasure one gathers from one's work.

The case of Brigitte corresponds closely with this profile. With a master's degree in economics, Brigitte had her first experience with a private company before taking a sabbatical year out of the country. After returning to Switzerland, and after giving birth to her first child, she went looking for work. She did some substituting, developed a taste for teaching and enrolled at the HEP. In this way, at the age of thirty-eight, she began teaching. With little trouble she got her first job, a part-time position that got smaller and smaller as time went by. As more time passed, the horizon got smaller and smaller as well.

My first [job], it's quickly seen. I was placed by the HEP for my student teaching and after that they kept me for a year... After that I spent three years [in another school] and the principal asked me how many hours I wanted to work. I told him I'd like a few hours, I said eight hours, and he said that he could only give me six. I told him that six hours was fine. A month after I asked again and he told me maybe it was only four or five, and then three or four. Finally he said, 'Oh, I don't know, maybe not, I don't know.' It finished like that. He didn't even have the guts to say, 'Listen, with the budget cuts I just don't have hours for you'. Yeah, it finished like that. (Brigitte)

Underneath the surface of Brigitte's words bubbles seeming bitterness, a disappointment that her words are unable to hide and a feeling of revolt barely contained towards the tribulations of the work and the weight of conflicting relationships that she had with the principals she had to deal with.

I didn't want to do it anymore, I had all of the comments from the principal, I didn't have his way of doing things and that pushed me to apply for a job as substitute in another school. So I became a sub. (Brigitte)

Why is it like this? Brigitte brings up the economic question: some schools prefer hiring young student teachers from the HEP who are less expensive (in Switzerland as age increases so does salary – e.g., two teachers at the same level of experience will have different salaries because of age with the older teacher earning more than the younger one). But this, she says, has its consequences on the work environment and even the mission of the school.

At that school you feel like merchandise. They hire kids from the HEP because... obviously they are less well paid... It's clearly the strategy; it's really a bit disturbing. The teachers complain, the other teachers, they say, "We're sick of always seeing new faces" and that doesn't help the atmosphere. There is no more passing on of knowledge; the faces are always changing. (Brigitte)

The economic reason, however, is not the only one. There is something that the remarks of Brigitte suggest or conceal. Several times the interviewer asked a question about her work, the first days at the school, the first lessons she gave. She always dodged the question with a laugh, a silence, a witty remark or, most often, by talking about something else. Brigitte's induction profile is a bit atypical among the six others.

2. Induction as a smooth journey. On the opposite end, one can speak of a smooth induction, one that is not, however, totally free from any suffering or uncertainty. Several indicators come together to give the significant factors of this profile: having worked in one establishment, having worked full-time, not having to deal with learning or behavior-challenged students, non-conflictual dealings with the principal, a self-confidence and confidence in one's ability to listen to and be listened to by the students, to adapt to their learning rates and to respond to their social needs, to establish connections with colleagues and to be able to find help if needed. In short, straight and stable journeys where moments of pleasure and achievement are numerous and ones of uncertainty and disappointment are rare. Several of the teachers interviewed correspond, in varying amounts, to this profile. We will give the examples of Cécile and Sabrina.

From as early as primary school Cécile wanted to be a teacher. She chose this profession and teaching is her future, she would say, even if familial obligations might force her to take leaves of absence for raising children. At twenty-six, she is in her second year of teaching, with both years being full-time. She already had a teaching certificate and had replaced several teachers for quite some time before enrolling at the HEP. Like most of the teachers interviewed, Cécile teaches several subjects.

Being that I teach science I had more luck... than for literary branches. I applied... had an interview... and was hired. It was very quick... I have several subjects to teach this year. I needed to work really hard to prepare all my classes... By working full-time I didn't think it would take up so much of my time. I asked to work less next year seeing as I'm going to have a baby, but even without a baby I'd ask to work less. I did realize how much work there was, I really have the impression of never catching up. (Cécile)

Cécile immediately felt at ease in her workplace and quickly integrated into the teaching corps. During her first work meeting with the teachers in her subject Cécile understood that even with her shyness she would be able to give her opinion and already "make her mark".

We (four teachers starting with Cécile) immediately found a place. In any case, I teach math and three of us teach math, so I wasn't taking anyone's place... I don't really find it hard to become integrated in a teaching group. I'm someone who volunteers easily; I do a lot of extra stuff and that's always welcome. So it's true that, even here, you need to take the time to make your mark. I was surprised that, after the first teacher's meeting... I realized I could... already clearly say what I wanted to, what worked and what didn't work. So I really quickly felt at ease here. (Cécile)

We noted in the first section that, during her initial training, Cécile was influenced by an incident that took place during her student teaching. This incident, which had to do with discipline in the classroom, led her to discover a gap between the classes at the HEP and the demands of teaching, but this discovery did not discourage her. Cécile kept with it thanks to her tenacity, to her capacity to assert herself, and to adapt, but also thanks to the aid of her teachers at the HEP, especially concerning subject matter didactics, like in physics where she was not fully prepared. This support and the experience gained as a substitute were real assets in her professional induction.

The path of Sabrina is similar to Cécile's. Sabrina also decided to become a teacher very early on, as she "always felt at ease in school" and had many teachers who "helped her want to do this job". Like Cécile, she had no trouble getting her first position while still at the HEP. Her first teaching experiences were very smooth. She went from one contract to another without having to deal with much paperwork.

The first year, I student taught elsewhere. Then I filled out an application for this school in my second year at the HEP. I sent a cover letter and my résumé etc. I was hired at three days a week, working with another teacher. Three days a week was the maximum allowed... The rest happened really easily since I was already there... I wasn't asked to do all the paperwork; I didn't need to send another cover letter and my résumé and all that. It happened orally with the principal and then I signed a temporary contract. I'm still under this contract,

and now I officially asked for a full contract. That's how it happened, it was really easy.
(Sabrina)

It was during her second year that her induction into the profession began, "slowly, little by little" she says. Like Cécile, during her transition, Sabrina enjoyed the support of teachers from the HEP. She asked for this help and listened closely to the comments of her colleagues and her students concerning her work.

I think that it started during this second year, slowly, little by little, even if during this second year... teaching instructors would visit my class, I felt like I was still a student, but I still think I am... people would come, would make some comments, and would analyze how my lesson went. After, there aren't any more visits, but I kind of do this myself. I would always ask my students to evaluate my teaching at the end of the year, and still do." (Sabrina)

Slowly and little by little the feeling grows of being right for the profession. Even if she had some doubts about her teaching aptitude, this choice that she made early in life finds confirmation in the positive comments she gets from colleagues, students, and parents.

It's true that it started during the second year. Finally, the first year after having received my teaching certificate, I think I can say that I really felt like a teacher... I felt that... Even if it was a choice I had made a long time ago, I didn't really feel... I had a lot of doubts. I doubted my ability to do it really well. The further along I went the more I realized that it was possible, feeling at ease and getting positive feedback, either from colleagues, students or their parents... that helped my confidence. (Sabrina)

Above all, Sabrina loves her profession and her students. Even if she is sometimes exasperated by the behavior of the students, the affection she has for them gives her the energy to continue to "be there" and to help them.

I think I really love what I do. That's the first thing. I think that you can see that, too. The students, most of the time, watch us, examine our slightest acts and gestures. I'm someone who is pretty enthusiastic and dynamic. I enjoy this job and I come to work with energy, with a desire to be here and to help my students, to give them structure. I like my students and really enjoy working with them. Of course, these are teenagers and there are moments I'd like to throw them through the window. (Sabrina)

She appreciates her work as a teacher, how it stirs her senses and the opportunities it gives for reflection and refreshing her knowledge. The out-of-school sporting and cultural activities in which she participates also offers the human richness.

I also enjoy the subjects that I teach... By teaching yourself, you know and understand more, you go deeper in certain things, you think about the best way to present this to students and what activities to use. What I really like in this job, it's everything that goes along with the life of the school. Cultural activities outside of the school, ski camps, performances, activities that we can organize. I quickly got involved in the life of the school, either with teachers or with students, organizing different things which are part of the life of an institution. I really enjoy this a lot. (Sabrina)

At the same time, the school where Sabrina teaches has been shaken by a "serious problem of mobbing". There was an atmosphere of harassment that had repercussions on teacher interactions leading to the involvement of the school board, whose decisions, in turn, were objected to "by the majority of the teaching body". The conflict is not over. But this does not discourage this teacher who still has faith in the profession she has chosen.

What this means is that the feeling of belonging to a professional body is not dependent on just one factor. Teachers act like rational beings, weighing the elements of their situation, estimating losses and gains, pleasures, and sufferings, and, doing this, create an idea of who they are, of what they want to do and of what they can do. Sometimes, as in Sabrina's case, a teacher can be "an inch from slamming the door" on a job. But, once we add it all up, we are happy, she says, to not have left. To sum it up, the

dominant characteristic of teachers who have had a smooth entrance into the profession is an atmosphere of happiness that permeates their conversation.

3. *Between the two.* Between these two opposing profiles, between professional induction experienced as a struggle and an agreeable entrance into the teaching world, there are other possibilities, other paths which, moreover, closer resemble that of Cécile and Sabrina than of Brigitte. These are the cases of Oriane, Manuel, Mia, and Laurence.

Oriane speaks of becoming a teacher basically by accident. She is working in three different establishments, including a professional training center. She enjoys her profession and will remain in it as long as she continues to enjoy it.

I didn't do anything [to find a job]. In high school someone got in touch because they needed someone to cover a couple of classes. At this time I was working in three different places. I accepted the job just to help out. I wasn't looking; I didn't apply. For the professional training I did apply because it's something I really wanted... I was lucky to get it, but it's all a bit by chance,[if] I'd come looking two years later the position would have been filled by someone else... I feel completely free to do something else. I'm not looking five or ten years into the future; for now I know I'm enjoying it. If I come to realize that I've had enough, I'll look for something else if I can. (Oriane)

Manuel will keep working "a while longer" as a teacher, at least until he discovers something that "fascinates" him and that this fascination is strong enough to lead him to change careers.

I see myself working in this profession a while longer, until there's something else that fascinates me and that I want to explore, strong enough to stop teaching, at least for a while, I don't know. But I really see myself teaching for many years, no doubt. (Manuel)

Mia is hesitating in the face of a long-term commitment to teaching. She likes what she is doing, finds her profession "really comfortable", and sees herself "continuing in this school". Perhaps she will spend more time with afterschool activities.

My big question is whether or not I'll be teaching in twenty years. For me it's a profession that you need to love to do. I hope I'll have the courage to leave if I don't love it anymore. You know, it's really comfortable. I see myself continuing in this school. For now it's a pretty sure thing. Who knows, maybe I'll spend more time doing other things, connected to the school but afterschool and such. I just signed up for the United Nations for young people, this type of thing. (Mia)

Similar thoughts from Laurence who, in the long-term, sees herself more involved in tasks related to teaching like education projects or belonging to a school board.

Always in teaching. I can see myself, if the possibility arises, doing things connected, not necessarily teaching, but related. Not necessarily administrative, but, for example, being part of a school board or projects. Sometimes there are projects connected to teaching. I can really see myself doing things along parallel lines with teaching. (Laurence)

Discussion

The mechanisms and pathways for becoming a teacher are many and varied. In the present study, we found some common characteristics and a continuum of pathways that student-teachers become teachers. Below, first we talk about these findings as they relate to professional development and induction. Then, we discuss how our findings may relate specifically to a teacher's "identity" before presenting some limitations of the current study and drawing conclusions.

Professional Development and Induction

Professional induction into teaching has provoked a growing interest, especially with the changes taking place in teacher training in the past few years and the large number of beginning teachers. This research stems directly from this interest. The notion of professional induction has to do with two dimensions that have often been looked at separately by researchers. In some studies, induction is defined and analyzed as the collection of steps in the search for one's first employment. In this instance, we are dealing with a process, whose length depends on economic and demographic conditions, which begins from the moment of receiving a teaching certificate and ends with the acquisition of stable, even permanent, job. In other studies, induction is looked at as the introductory phase in the teaching profession or as the first step in a teaching career. It is the period when the young teacher learns to master different aspects of the job, to discover his/her own resources and limits, and to build a collection of knowledge and skills coming directly from experience in the teaching profession. Here, the accent is not on looking for work and the process of entering the labor market, but on learning how to do the work once employed. It is this learning of the teaching activity which is at the center of our interviews. What connections can be made between the results of our analysis and the major conclusions to be found in the scientific literature of this field? We will briefly try to give an answer to this question in the following paragraphs.

Lortie's study (1975) *Schoolteacher* is considered to be a classic in this field. This researcher tried to show that the personality of the teacher is the essential factor in his/her professionalization. Developing what he termed the "multidimensionality and the simultaneity of teaching", Lortie believes that what beginning teachers know about teaching is based more on their personality and intuition rather than on explicit and well-learned pedagogical principles. The data from our interviews reinforce this opinion. At the start novice teachers draw heavily on their memories, deploy conceptions of teaching and pedagogical relations that have been formed when they were students themselves, and imitate teachers they have known and appreciated. However, ideas and personal ways of doing things are quickly reworked in light of classroom reality and in terms of the feedback that beginning teachers receive from their students and their peers.

The analysis carried out here also finds common ground with the studies in Swiss schools by Huberman (1989) on teacher life cycles. Here we are only interested in the first of the five steps that punctuate a teaching career. It has to do with a crucial moment in the decision to continue or to stop that all novice teachers must make at one time or another. It is a moment that will also influence one's way of being in the profession, one's choice of pedagogical methods and the construction of effective teaching techniques, and one's style of classroom management. When they leave the teaching college, they are in the midst of a transformation that few of them really understand. They are full of enthusiasm, full of models, recipes, and images that they have collected their whole lives and full of the desire to do like or unlike some of the teachers they have had. It is during student teaching or substitute teaching, especially in the first days and weeks of their first true teaching position that everything gets shaken up. This can be for a short while or for the rest of their career. Van Zanten and Grosperon (2001) rightly observed that this initial phase in a teacher's career is characterized by a certain initial *destabilization*, one which can last for a long time. A destabilization, as we have noted, happens both from putting into question what Huberman calls personality, that is knowledge that was previously acquired and successfully utilized, but which is not working in the here-and-now, or is not working like expected with these particular students, and the difficulty of translating the theories and knowledge learned at the teaching school into didactic processes or into classroom action.

Identity! Professional Identity!

Building on the concept of a teacher's personality, this process may be further explained as professional identity development. Can identity be defined? With difficulty, wrote Frege in 1894, since "any definition is an identity, identity itself cannot be defined." Psychologically speaking "in its literal sense of *absolute similarity*, personal identity (*I am me*) doesn't exist! Interpersonal identity (*I am*

another) also doesn't exist, even in the case of true twins. Collective identity is equally impossible, the members of an *us* being, at most, *similar*. And yet variations cannot exist without some structural invariants allowing comparison. From this it is necessary to take into account the paradoxical character of identity, which is built through confrontation, similarity, and difference" (*Encyclopædia Universalis*, Identity article).

Anthropologically speaking, to speak of a professional identity of beginning teachers, we would need a definition of an ideal teaching identity, an ideal type, a representation of the characteristics that are unique to the men and women who practice this profession: unique and shared by the whole of the profession and relatively stable as time goes by. If we had such a definition we could compare, feature by feature, the attributes of the beginning teacher with those of the ideal type to see how they are similar and different to established teachers.

Unfortunately, such a definition does not exist. We need to return to this idea of identity as likeness and to try to find the similarities and differences between novice teachers. There is another dilemma. Can we describe the identity of a person after having spent an hour or an hour and a half speaking with this person and asking questions about school and work experience? Can we piece together snatches of a teacher's conversation like we would put together the pieces of a puzzle to uncover a landscape, an image, a unique representation which gives meaning to each of the pieces, an idea close to who beginning teachers are and the work they do?

Yes, such an undertaking is possible if we accept to do, not a finished portrait but a drawing of what beginning teachers seem to be, a sketch which highlights certain features and leaves areas of shade and gray which can be filled in little by little, when the longitudinal study provides new information with which to fill in the gaps.

If we accept to define in this way, and from the fragmentary data analyzed here, professional identity would appear like a second-skin superimposed on the first identity, a pre-existing self as a social entity, an individual conscious of being, thinking, and acting. The two identities are the result of the socialization process of which the principle building zones are the family, school, friends, colleagues, and ambient culture.

At the moment that it was recorded, during an hour or an hour and a half, the professional identity of beginning teachers reflects the incomplete state of their socialization as teachers. It is made of a collection of features, more or less affirmed, that announce that this man and these women are in the process of changing from a situation of apprenticeship to that of professional.

In the recorded remarks, professional identity is first a feeling, or rather a conjunction of feelings and facts: one loves teaching, one is satisfied with one's way of working, teaching is enjoyable, students and colleagues give us positive feedback on our teaching. Facts then match these feelings, which reinforce and give them a material base on the exterior of the individual. Harmony exists among who one is, what one knows, believes and thinks, what one does, and how one does it. Appropriateness is sensed among one's vision of ideal teaching, what one does in the classroom, and how one connects with the students. Finally, a feeling is shared with other women and men working in the same profession.

In any case, as we have seen, the conception one has of oneself, of teaching, the students, colleagues and education, in general, changes under the impact of real practice in the profession and under the influence of the relationships that are created with the students, colleagues, and the school environment. It is necessary to add to these factors that influence one's self-definition and one's actions, and threaten their stability, the onrushing curricular reforms and those of teacher training, as well as pedagogical, technological, and technical fads and fashions. Such changes are always meant to amend, to paraphrase Nietzsche (1974), the men and women who practice this profession, to make them better, more efficient, flexible, specialized, or versatile. All of this to say that if a professional identity exists, it is changing manifold, sometimes wavering and never definitive.

Limitations

Findings presented here represent the first year of a longitudinal study and the number of interviews analyzed is incapable of covering either the diversity of teaching situations or the variety of induction itineraries of beginning teachers. Consequently, while the findings do not invalidate the initial intuitions of the researchers nor do they contradict the best known findings in international research in this subject, the induction profiles and the professional identities uncovered in this text are still at the early stage and will not be complete until the longitudinal study is finished. This analysis of the discourse of seven novice secondary school teachers is part of a longitudinal qualitative and quantitative study concerning recently certified preschool, primary, and secondary teachers in French- and Italian-speaking regions of Switzerland. It needs then to be confronted with the results of the larger study.

Conclusion

Limitations withstanding, we can already draw some provisional lessons. Participants' discourse provided evidence of struggles, continuities, and discontinuities of "becoming a teacher". Novice teachers are confronted by the quantity and variety of school tasks that, combined with a lack of support and advice, force them to learn on-the-job at the same time as entering the profession. This learning process of becoming a teacher and of affirming oneself as a professional leads one to make sense of teaching tasks, to act on teaching conditions, and to reinterpret one's initial beliefs and values. In short, recently certified secondary-school teachers experience a professional context with strong implications for reconstructing their personal identities. The confrontation with the unexpected complexity of teaching, and with the dynamics of the school and the classroom, has led these novice teachers to revisit and restructure their initial beliefs and representations on the subject of teaching and, consequently, has pushed them towards a transformation of their identities. Their vision of what it means to be a teacher has changed due to the interaction of their institutional roles in the workplace.

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