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Mentoring Beginning Second Language Teachers: Perceptions of Challenges and Expectations of Support

by

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Dedication

To my parents, without whom this journey would not have been made possible.

And to my daughter, Ella "Bella" Katherine, who has brought me my biggest joy in life and inspiration to reach the finish line.

Abstract

Mentoring Beginning Second Language Teachers: Perceptions of Challenges and Expectations of Support

Today's beginning teachers are confronted with a variety of challenges and issues as they develop their professional identities. Their needs and challenges in specific subject areas are further misunderstood or unrecognized.

This qualitative research study focuses on the perceptions and expectations of mentoring as lived by three triads within an ATA local mentorship program. Beginning second language teachers, their Assistant Principals, and their off-site Mentor teachers were interviewed and offered responses to: challenges facing second language beginning teachers; how mentoring relationships contribute to a teacher's subject-area identity in second languages; how the perceptions and expectations of mentoring compare and contrast for beginning teachers, mentor teachers and assistant principals; and how challenges faced by second language teachers compare to those of other subject-area specialists. Participants reflected on their philosophy of mentorship and their expectations of being mentored or mentoring.

Key findings revealed that beginning second language teachers felt they got as much mentorship as they could from a series of people, and it was up to them individually to learn what they were missing or needed on their own. These beginning teachers also expressed a desire to belong in their school and feel a part of a community, as well as have their subject area fully recognized. In contrast, mentors frequently did not recognize beginning second language teacher needs

and therefore could not provide appropriate support. Mentors and Assistant Principals could benefit from knowledge about research on mentorship, needs of XXI Century beginning teachers, and specific needs of subject specialist teachers. Mentors and Assistant Principals in new positions or schools themselves may be more helpful to beginning teachers after they have settled in to their new responsibilities.

The second language beginning teachers in this study purported experiencing the same challenges as subject specialist teachers of music, art, drama and physical education, including; classroom management; experiencing isolation; administrative support; and specialized subject advocacy.

Recommendations for multiple stakeholders are offered for improvements to the mentorship program. Future research should focus on strategies for how to advocate in specialized subjects and how beginning teachers cope on their own to come to better understand marginalized subject-areas.

Acknowledgement

This study would not have been made possibly without the support of many people whom I wish to express my deepest gratitude:

First and foremost, I want to thank my mother and father, who together, were my first teachers and mentors, and who represent the single greatest influence on my life. Individually, you have inspired me and taught me to work hard and to persevere, even during the most difficult times. I could not have completed this journey without your implausible support.

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CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

My Journey to my Research Question[1] and Locating Myself

Mentoring, also known as induction[2], is a socialization process (Rippon &
Martin, 2006) that comprises how a teaching community acculturates its new
teachers (Wong, 2004; Wong, Britton & Ganser, 2005). Mentors often "act as
interpreters of the environment" (Daloz, 1986, p. 207), thus assisting the
integration of new members to that environment. This dissertation explores the
mentorship of beginning teachers (BT) of second languages (SL).

My journey to the research question explored in this study has been both
transformational and reflexive. Transformation requires one to engage in the
intensely frightening task of disregarding understandings of reality and self. It
takes courage and trust in believing and managing this process.   It is a different
kind of trust too; one that is decidedly more open and one which can no longer
depend on previous perception. As events, values, and attitudes of our biography
become conscious, our identity transforms and shifts and we realize how our
history, multiple interactions, background, interests, and passions have shaped

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[1] Note to reader: The reader will notice alternating fonts throughout this first chapter.   The author has
adopted a traditional font to represent a narrative account of her mentoring experience. This narrative is
interrupted throughout by italicized text that is intended to reflect the conceptual underpinnings that inform
my thinking around this experience. The alternating font is intended to reflect a conversation between lived
experiences and theory as a way of bringing meaning to lived experience. Alternatively, the reader may
choose to omit the theoretical components and read the text as an uninterrupted narrative.

[2] For the purposes of this study, mentorship is used to refer to both "mentoring programs" and "teacher
induction".

and continue to shape our entire being. In research, this process of reflexivity enables us to locate ourselves in our research.

> Reflexivity requires an awareness of the researcher's contribution to the construction of meanings throughout the research process, and an acknowledgment of the impossibility of remaining 'outside of' one's subject matter while conducting research. Reflexivity then, is an exploration of 'the ways in which a researcher's involvement with a particular study influences, acts upon and informs such research' (Nightingale & Cromby, 1999, p. 228).

The following vignettes reveal early moments in my life – critical incidents about being mentored – that permit the reader to see how I influence, act upon and inform my research topic. After writing this reflexive autoethnography, I was able to recognize distinct themes in my own experiences. They are represented in the subtitles.

Support, Courtesy, Respect and Fun

I have vivid recollections of my first time as a student. I was two years old and I remember sitting at the piano, learning "The Suzuki Method," playing one note, one finger at a time, from memory, which soon became two hands. My mother took me to my piano teacher's house and, during my lessons, my piano teacher, Nora[3], a young lady, was to my right, and my mother sat behind me. Before and after each lesson, Nora and I would bow to each other, as a sign of

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[3] All names used in this thesis are pseudonyms.

courtesy and respect for what we were about to work on together or had just completed.

My mother took me home and sat with me to practise daily in between lessons. She *made it fun to practise* and created a practice chart for me. Every day after I practised, I placed a sticker in the shape of a star on my chart. I also recall listening to the pieces I was working on and the ones ahead, which played endlessly on cassette tapes in the car, during meal times, and next to my bed every night as I slept. The tape played over and over at all times. Some pieces that were in the volumes ahead were not yet available on cassette, so they were heard on the record player. Every time I began a new book, my mother bound it with book tape and sat for hours, writing in every note name in pencil and putting in the bar numbers for each piece. To help me learn the notes, she covered a metal cookie sheet and created the staves. I used magnets as notes and placed them on the lines and in between the spaces to help me memorize my note names in the treble and bass clef.

Each time I completed a piece, Nora let me choose a sticker and place it on the front cover of my book. Book One was the most decorated book, covered in 'scratch and sniff' stickers as well as other stickers that emphasized words of *praise and encouragement*.

Socializing, Modeling, Challenging and Supporting

At the age of four, I entered "Les petits soleils," a French Immersion playschool. It was the beginning of my social and cultural exposure to the French language. Over the years, the immersion experience enabled me to live in the

language primarily at school, while learning how to read, sing, and celebrate "en français." I enjoyed living in between two worlds: French at school, English at home.

Back at the piano, my favourite moments were finishing a piano book. Either my mother would host a recital party in our living room or I would perform in a fancy dress at Convocation Hall. I played for other piano students and bowed to the audience at the beginning and end of the recital. At the closing, Nora came forward and presented me with a plaque of a classical composer, which my mother had engraved with the book number and date of completion. The recital was always followed by a party, where music was the theme. My mother made much-loved JELL-O music notes, music note cookies, a handmade piano cake and, during the celebration, music played in the background. My most special performance was upon completion of the series at eight years old, when I graduated from Book Six of "The Suzuki Method." My mother handmade piano invitations and I had a special recital at Nora's church. Nora and I also performed a duet on two pianos, four hands, which was a lot of fun, watching twenty fingers move so quickly. My father brought the video camera and taped the performance so I could look back on it years later.

Nora and my mother were my first teachers and mentors. They consistently emphasized *the positive*, kept me on track, and enabled me "to imagine the possible and then move towards it" (Daloz, 1999. p. 124). They were *guides*, who fostered a love of music within me. I observed, listened, and created music. *Through their modeling,* they proved to me that I could master the

art of learning to play. Furthermore, I later realized that all of it was made possible because of their endurance in *guiding me and believing in me*. Consequently, I became moved by an indescribable *intrinsic motivation towards music*: it combined the sense of *challenge*, yet it brought to me an aesthetic pleasure, and it was something that I had the opportunity to share with others. Such an appropriate combination of *challenge* and *support* fostered growth-producing experiences (Daloz, 1986).

My First "Teaching Experience"

During this time, when I was in Grade 4 at school, I spent some time in my father's Grade 4 classroom, which was located at a different school. Some days, he would pick me up after school and we would return to his school so that he could finish a few tasks or plan for the next day, or attend the occasional staff meeting. While he was busy preparing, I worked on my homework and then would enjoy my own teaching experience using the blackboard. I would teach a classroom of imaginary students and would practise math problems and spelling with them on the board. Assuredly, there were never any discipline problems in my classroom. When it was time for the students to work individually, I would sit at my father's desk and ask them to visit me if they needed additional help. I would mark their assignments and prepare lessons for the following day. One day, in early December, the principal of my father's school noticed me in the classroom. He knew that I played the piano and invited me to perform as a special guest at the end of the Christmas concert as part of a sing-along. I was honoured, and of course eagerly accepted. The evening of the concert, I had the

opportunity to meet and interact with the authentic Grade 4 students who sat in the desks in my imaginary classroom. We waited together for our turn to perform on stage. They weren't the perfect students I had imagined, but during this time I began to envision myself one day in my own classroom teaching music and preparing my students for their concert.

Using my Second Language

As the years progressed, I experienced opportunities to speak French outside of school. When my younger brother and sister joined me in their French language schooling, we had dinner conversations in front of my parents. We rejoiced in being able to fully communicate together in French: we joked and devised plans without our parents' understanding. Access to the second language was beneficial on multiple occasions. One summer, our family took a road trip out east. When we arrived in Québec, our mini-van had a burned out headlight. I remember my father asking me to tell the mechanic in French that we needed to replace a light bulb and borrow a screwdriver. Within moments, it was repaired.

Saying Good-bye

Over the years, my lessons and performances continued. When I turned 12, Nora announced that she would be moving her family to Dubai. I remember being very sad because I did not think that I would ever find another piano teacher quite like Nora. My piano lessons continued, but they were never the same without her. Nonetheless, I kept playing because I did not want to lose all that I had gained in working with Nora. She offered the right balance between

challenge and *support*. Now I realize, Nora was *socializing* me for the world of festivals and exams, which were yet to come.

Losing my "Self"

When I entered junior high, after school on Thursdays, I walked over to Lola's house. Lola, who had become my next piano teacher, was a much older lady, with a cat, which I despised. I told her of my animal allergies and my fear of pets, but she insisted that the cat would not bother me during my lessons. I did not agree. Almost always, about halfway through my lesson, the cat decided to jump up onto the keys while I was playing, which triggered my immediate response of charging from the piano and circling the living room, until Lola eventually put the cat away in another room. I simply could not concentrate during these lessons; I always felt on edge and afraid of the pouncing cat. I could not wait until each lesson was over.

Lola insisted that I perform Royal Conservatory examinations, as well as catch up on the complementing rudiments of music. I had never before experienced playing repertoire in which I would be evaluated, graded, and critiqued on my playing, and I did not have the necessary background in music theory to accompany the piano exams. I completed the requirements but not without complications. Around the same time, my personal progress in music started to falter. I was not used to the approach of being yelled at by my theory teacher when I did not comprehend his explanation. Nor did I respond well when my theory exam mark arrived in the mail. I had received a failing grade, at which point, I went about hiding it from my parents. It was not long before I had to

disclose my biggest musical disappointment. I was required to take the course over and rewrite the exam. Lola was displeased about my lack of success and I always wondered if her keeping the cat in the living room was her passive aggressive way of expressing this. It was then that I realized I was beginning to lose my love of music. I had doubts about continuing lessons in order to perform exams, was less than thrilled at the thought of doing more theory studies, and cringed at the notion of facing the cat every week.

When I turned 16, my parents had the idea of switching me to a more contemporary music teacher, Dallas. They thought that, if I tried some different music, I might enjoy it again. My repertoire of pieces went from classical to modern jazz. I was interested in learning some alternative music, but I quickly became offended by Dallas' rough style and her uncomfortable language. Sight-reading was not my forte since I had been trained by ear. Dallas cursed at me and raised her voice when I improvised instead of read the music. I felt that her language belonged more appropriately in the adult rock band that she played with in bars, instead of with a teenager in her studio. I did not want to tell my parents what had transpired when they picked me up from lessons. Dallas proved to offer me too much *challenge* in the absence of appropriate *support*. She began to drive me to retreat and cause disempowerment. I was experiencing a negative feeling about my sense of self: I felt significant tension and dissonance between my core self and musician self. Eventually, I started to beg not to go to any more lessons but had to justify my cause. My parents were of course upset that she had treated

me in such a manner. They decided that Dallas was not a good fit and agreed it would be best to end the lessons.

Throughout the years, I had the opportunity to learn from a variety of teachers, which exposed me to a diverse range of teaching styles and approaches. After some time, I began to realize two things: I wanted to teach other children piano in the same way that Nora had *patiently* taught and *mentored* me, and that I wanted to become a school teacher, like my father.

Inspiring Lessons from Nora, through her Modeling and Patience

When I turned 17, my parents built me a music studio in our basement, where I taught 15 students private music lessons six days a week throughout my university studies. I taught children aged 3 to 17. I loved to teach, and in teaching "The Suzuki Method", I was frequently reminded of my years with Nora, particularly her *modelling* and *patience*, most especially required in working with very young children with short attention spans. I had a student who suffered from Asperger Syndrome, and his parents were convinced that piano lessons would solve his problems and turn him into a child prodigy. While not a miracle worker, I did my best and the lessons proved effective for him. Hosting piano recitals for my students at the end of each year gave me the joy that I am certain Nora had felt each time she presented her students with a plaque at the end of each book. The feelings of accomplishment and pride were as uniquely felt by my students as they were for me.

Living in my Second Language

As I approached the completion of high school, I decided that I wanted to pursue my university studies within a Francophone setting, hoping that it would provide me with enhanced language skills and cultural occasions interwoven throughout my studies. As I began my first semester of courses, I suddenly became apprehensive about my oral skills in my second language. I was now integrated with Francophone students and professors, and suddenly realized that my level of spoken French identified me as a non-native French speaker, which hadn't ever been an issue before. I started to worry that my French did not meet their standards and that I did not fit in.

What helped me overcome my insecurity was participating and integrating in the various cultural activities offered on campus. Tuesday evenings were always fun, once I became a member and sang in the "Chorale Saint-Jean." It was a place where I could share my love of music and learn a variety of French traditional and folk songs. I met other students in the choir, who invited me to come to the bistros, poetry and music evenings, and theme dances, all in French. I embraced my evolving sociocultural image of the language, and with time, patience, and practice, my spoken French naturally improved and I no longer felt intimidated speaking to others in French.

I was fortunate to also take courses on the main campus. I experienced great joy in going to my private piano lessons in the Music Department. My two piano professors, Maria and Hazel, were outstanding instructors, but at that time, I also decided that I did not have my heart set on pursuing a performance program

and chose instead to teach others. During my final year of studies, I went on to

fulfill my student teaching practica, which were both unique experiences.

A Model of Leadership and Passion

At 20 years of age, I entered my first education practicum and knew I was

in the right place. I had found my musical inspiration: Mr. Baque. I remember

speaking with him on the phone during our first conversation when we introduced

ourselves. One thing that he said has remained with me always: "Teach to the

best, and the others will reach." In observing him, I clearly *identified* with him.

In between his music and computer classes, Mr. Baque put in *additional time* each

day, and began the morning at seven-thirty with honour band rehearsal before

school, led choir practice at lunch, invited students to come after school for

additional help, and Tuesday evenings he returned to school at six-thirty to

rehearse the jazz band.

The man was *passionate* about sharing his love of music with the students.

He *modeled leadership* for the students, and in turn, they became his assistants in

the classroom by helping with various tasks such as keeping the music scores in

order, taking ownership of the band trip, and being *ambassadors* outside of music

class. Mr. Baque was *enthusiastic and stimulating* and he projected his

enjoyment of teaching by *making music class fun*. His lessons often included

important *"life lessons"* which enabled the students to think about how what they

were learning or playing was relevant and important to working on a team. He

took the time to develop *a genuine interest in every student*. He *complimented*

them and wanted to get to know something special about each of them. I sensed

that individually, they felt valued as they returned the respect towards Mr. Baque and their classmates.

Mr. Baque trusted me as his student teacher to step into his classroom and take over, without any visible fear or worry that I could not do as good a job as he. He gave me the same *confidence* that he gave his students and inspired me to be the best that I could be, while enjoying what I loved. His leadership went far beyond the classroom, sparking the best in all of us. In making music together, we learned from each other. Some strategies I experienced during my time with Mr. Baque have been used with my own students, including the extracurricular music clubs, that I never had the opportunity to be a part of as a student myself. I have learned that *giving extra time* to the students goes a long way in helping them improve their own skills and confidence.

A Model of Poor Mentorship

The next semester, I completed my final practicum at a dual track school in which half of the courses were offered in French immersion. I learned quickly that Madame Brault accepted a student teacher to relieve her of her teaching responsibilities. She assigned me all her French classes to teach during the first week of my field experience, and she preferred that the students addressed me with their French questions instead of her.

Madame Brault really had no interest in getting to know her students. She was young, but rather eccentric. She decorated her classroom with glow-in-the-dark smiley faces, and frequently turned out the lights to have the students meditate when she lost control. Behaviour was a problem, and it only worsened

when the lights went out. I felt like I could not make much of an impact, considering I was only there for a limited time and things were already quite chaotic. One day, Madame Brault told me that I would be her last student-teacher. She shared with me that she would be leaving the public school system the following year to open her own school, where students would do what they want and learn when they felt like it, which did not surprise me. Truthfully, I could not wait until the practicum was over. I began to question my experience and wondered how different things could have turned out had I not previously spent time with Mr. Baque. I was happy I had the positive learning memories of my first practicum to reflect on. I needed *guidance* and *feedback*, *challenge* and *support*. I remembered all that I had discovered and why I felt encouraged when I had left my first field experience school.

"Surviving" and Searching for an Identity

The following September, at 21, I found myself in my own classroom, beginning a music program at a school with no instruments or supplies, nor any previous equipment. My teaching responsibilities also included teaching French, which was my minor, as well as science, in which I had no prior training or experience. As a beginning teacher, I spent countless hours at school. I was there every weekend and many nights late into the morning. It was "survival" and, at times, I was barely able to keep up.

Every day was filled with multiple *challenges* as I sought an *identity* in this very new role of teacher. I no longer had a sense of who I was or where I belonged. I was the youngest member on staff and I felt like I did not know much

more than the Grade 9 students whom I taught. Meanwhile, I had to *keep it together*, without divulging that in certain instances, for example in science, I really did not know what I was doing, even if I had rehearsed an experiment the night before. Little did I know that it was I who had caused the fire alarm to go off – not once, but twice – or that I would almost lose a finger in a mousetrap car. I was *pushed to my limits* and often beyond what was comfortable. The parents complained to the administration that I was too young and questioned how I could possibly get a band off the ground with the funds the parent council was willing to donate. *I consistently felt that I had to prove myself.* It was tough, and publicly, I could never show any signs of weakness.

Once I understood that the best course of action was to *seek advice* and *support* from motivated experienced teachers, I came to believe that, "If they could do it, so could I." Comparing my co-operating mentor teacher, Mr. Baque, to myself and observing his success proved quite effective for me. As I now recall my earlier observations of him, I realize how powerful an influence *modeling* was: I would use some of the ideas and strategies he naturally employed with his students. The vicarious experience served me well. I was determined and knew that, with time and practice, my confidence would improve and I would settle into a routine with my lesson planning and my teaching.

Seeking Support and Mentoring ... from Down the Hall

I was blessed with the invaluable *help and support* of the teachers who surrounded me at my school, in particular Sonia and Andy, who frequently popped their heads into my classroom at the end of the day, and sat with me for

hours, helping me try to figure things out. Very quickly, they became my mentor teachers (MTs). I believe it had to do with *close proximity*, in that they were situated in *my school*, *down the hall*, taught or had *experience in my subject areas*, and shared *similar personality traits*. If ever there were a serious problem or concern while in class, they told me that all I had to do was pick up the phone and they would be there within moments.

Sonia, a former band director, and Andy, a science teacher, were there for me in the difficult and *challenging* episodes when I was completely discouraged and overwhelmed. They *listened* and *encouraged* me, because as they saw that I enriched the life of the school when I brought the students on stage to play live music for celebrations: beforehand, the school had only played cassettes. It was not long before other teachers were visiting the band room to hear student progress.

It was my mentor teachers, however, who impacted me. Sonia brought her *organization* techniques to enhance running multiple band classes with minimal equipment in the beginning, and Andy, with his architectural background, helped convert the old science lab into a *functional* music room by *designing an efficient plan* for the contractors. The *conversations* and "pep talks" I had with my mentor teachers and the school administration definitely bolstered my confidence. They calmed me in my most stressful moments and they talked me through my *challenges*. They *understood my frustrations and trusted my ability to get through them.* I got advice and learned many tips and strategies from their experience because they were willing to take *time* with me.   Their

initial *support*, *encouragement,* and *leadership* enabled me to recognize that what I was doing was meaningful, which managed to sustain me in my most harrowing days as a beginning teacher. *I knew I was not alone.*

Rehearsing – A Community of Practice and Belonging

I met Mr. O'Brien during my third year of teaching. That year, I decided to send some of my strong musicians to audition for the district-wide band. The band was composed of key players from every junior high school that successfully completed an audition and was based on instrumentation. Four students from my school were successful in the audition, so to provide *encouragement* I attended many of the rehearsals to *support* them and to learn more about the band itself.

Mr. O'Brien was the director and an honorary music teacher in the district. He had taught several parents of current students and he was a legend to anyone who had ever been his student or colleague. Mr. O'Brien had high expectations and was demanding, but only because he wanted to instil in the musicians an understanding of the importance of *hard work and play.* He strived for the music to sound superior and for students to be proud of their results. Rehearsals were from seven to nine every Wednesday evening. He began and ended each practice with a reflection, reminding students to think about coming together and working with each other.

As a highly respected teacher, he utilized superior classroom management techniques, was regimented with being on time and requested the same of students, making certain that not one minute of the two-hour rehearsal was

wasted. As well, Mr. O'Brien ensured that the classroom environment was healthy and safe; and, sometimes on the podium, he gave a speech about what it meant to be "respectful" or a "musician". By remaining organized and *consistent* with discipline measures, the students knew exactly where they had to be and what they had to be doing at all times. After all, he had one hundred students and instruments to organize in one room and they only saw each other once a week.

From bringing his trumpet to rehearsals and playing it in between pieces, to telling jokes to give the students a chance to rest their lips, Mr. O'Brien's presence was felt by all around him. By engaging every student, teacher, and parent who came and listened to the rehearsals, *we felt that we belonged there* on Wednesday evenings and *became active* in the learning process. In watching Mr. O'Brien, I was able to transfer much of what I observed to enhance my own classroom and improve my own teaching. In return, the students in the district band strengthened our school band as well – Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development and community of practice in action!

Collaborating, Building and Strengthening my Skills

After a few years of experience, certain aspects of teaching had become familiar and less time consuming, while new ones offered *challenges*. Somehow, I felt my life as a student was not yet over. I was yearning for more. I sensed there were some serious gaps in my learning, and that these were evidenced in my teaching and in speaking with other colleagues. I chose to return to university part-time to pursue a Master's in music education.

When I had begun the music program at my school, I had not had any formal training or assistance in "how" to build it from a theoretical perspective, nor any practical guidance. Throughout my coursework, my classroom teaching was certainly enriched. I learned more about technology and took the time to compose music which my students were able to perform. What I found most beneficial was being in the classroom at the same time as I was a researcher, thus enabling me to implement what I was learning. I *collaborated* with many other music teachers in the process and we shared ideas along the way, which enhanced the learning and performance of my own bands.

Mentoring: Trusting, Respecting and Modeling

Five years into my teaching career, I desired a new opportunity; I agreed to mentor my first student-teacher, Allison. It was a teaching and learning experience for both of us. Allison questioned me as to why I did things a certain way, which at times made me question it myself - something I had rarely done before. As a very petite and quiet person, she had difficulty being firm and direct with the students to maintain control. I had to think of creative ways to *build her confidence* and maintain her interest in teaching.

Allison had doubts about continuing to teach which motivated me to *support* her, as I *sought to inspire* her. I *modelled* lessons and we created some strategies collectively. It was rewarding to see her plan interesting lessons and improve her connection with the students. Working together in the classroom reinforced the importance of *mentoring* prospective colleagues so that they can *learn strategies* to help them in the future when they no longer have a teacher by

their side in the classroom. It became the beginning of what enabled me to give

back to the profession. I had been *mentored* by so many others and now it was

my turn to *mentor* those new to the profession.

The following year at school, we had 10 beginning teachers on staff. In

my many interactions with them, I observed their *challenges* and frustrations and

was approached multiple times with several questions, in particular for assistance

with subjects in which they were not trained. It required me to work on building

relationships based on *trust*, to maintain *respect*, and, at times, remind them of the

unique skills and talents they brought to our school and students.

My definition of the role of a "mentor" has evolved by reflecting on what

assisted me to how I mentored beginning teachers through times of finding

meaning and challenging them to take the more difficult steps of evaluating and

re-evaluating their thought processes. The mentor teacher plays the role of

initiating dialogue and dialoguing with the beginning teacher. I have learned that

often the mentor goes through the process of discovery with the novice teacher,

but by observing the process from a distance, also provides opportunities for

inspiration and hope. As beginning teachers (BTs) deconstruct and reconstruct

their world, mentor teachers walk the path with them, providing guidance. In so

doing, mentor teachers help to model and inculcate the many values of great

teaching.

Throughout this section, I have highlighted how my own mentors

benefitted me. These qualities and values (*the italicized words*), as recognized by

my experience, can be summarized into three categories: (1) attributes of a mentor

teacher (MT) (ex. *courtesy and respect*; *listened and encouraged*; *close proximity, down the hall*); (2) modeling techniques and sharing passion (ex. *enthusiastic and stimulating*; *made it fun to practise*); and (3) key challenges as experienced by beginning teachers (ex. *sought an identity*; *appropriate balance of challenge and support*).

A Call to Leadership

An invitation is annually sent forth to all teachers who have been teaching for a minimum of five years in the school district, to consider submitting an application for training for a future leadership position. Although I had been eligible for some time, I thought about the invitation for a few years before I felt ready to learn more about an assistant principalship. After having served as a MT and having had more exposure in working with beginning teachers, I felt more open to look at other career possibilities, so I applied. My application was accepted into a leadership program for assistant principals (APs). Although I learned much about leadership styles and school culture throughout the year-long course, the most poignant part of my experience was connecting with other leaders in the district; we were separated into small groups and our facilitators were practising APs.

When the provincial economic downturn plagued educational settings at the beginning of 2009, some school jurisdictions faced cutbacks and elimination of some district programs. In one large district, funding for supporting a mentorship program for BTs was regrettably dissolved. However, the

professional association, led by the provincial local[4] of the Alberta Teachers'

Association (ATA), strongly recognized the value of continuing to support those

new to the profession and sought an interested teacher to lead and facilitate a

mentorship program for BTs.

While on leave, I was approached and invited to take the lead role as the

planner, co-ordinator, and collector of feedback for the steering committee of this

mentorship program. Through a needs assessment, the BTs and MTs provided

direction as to what they were seeking for information and sessions throughout

the year. Their feedback helped guide the planning of subsequent topics and

sessions so that the program could facilitate providing them with useful and

timely information, and what they were requiring, rather than the mentorship

program making assumptions about what the BTs and MTs were thought to be

needing. This experience led me to this study.

Thinking Critically

During the year that we had many new colleagues on staff, I had received

my calling to return to university one last time. During my doctoral coursework, I

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[4] For administrative purposes, the Alberta Teachers Association (ATA) is divided into 54 subsystems known as locals. Each local includes teachers employed by one or more school boards. Alberta has 54 regular locals which vary in membership and geographic coverage. The purposes of the ATA and hence of its locals are "to advance and promote the cause of education in the province, to improve the teaching profession, to arouse and increase public interest in education and to cooperate with other organizations having similar aims". Locals pursue these objectives while keeping in mind the needs of their own members. In addition to choosing delegates to attend the Annual Representative Assembly, submitting resolutions to the Annual Representative Assembly, and naming representatives to the convention committee and assisting with the annual teacher convention, locals supervise the activities of sublocals of the local association, conduct in-service and professional development activities, induct new members into the profession; cooperate with school boards in planning educational programs and ensure each bargaining unit within the local geographic boundaries has an economic policy committee which conducts negotiations and liaises with the local.

was motivated by a course in Policy Studies (EDPS 532), on Selected Topics in

Educational Supervision: Preparation, Mentorship and Evaluation of Student and

Beginning Teachers, given by Dr. Rosemary Foster and Dr. Rob McPhee. The

course enabled me to increase my understanding and critically assess how

preparation programs support the induction of student and BTs into the

profession. The course framed the relevance of mentorship according to many

stakeholders, including student teachers and BTs, MTs, school administrators,

school coordinators, consultants, university facilitators, graduate students, Deans

of Education, university institutions, policy makers, school jurisdictions, and

ATA locals, which helped me consider the complexity of mentorship itself.

In thinking back on the research I conducted during my Master's degree, I

realized that I did not remember much of the research experience – the findings

were simply the content that was required of me to finish my course work.

During this program, I was not yet at a place to be able to make any personal

meaning or generate a transformation of understanding for me, as the researcher.

I still yearned for engaging in a learning experience that promised "an intimate

relationship between the researcher and, what is studied" (Denzin & Lincoln,

1994, p. 4), one that would provide me with an opportunity to work

collaboratively as a researcher, and in the process, would lead me to a new level

of understanding.

As I moved further along in my studies, I was aware that I would be

taking a break from the practical teaching world to work on my thesis research.

Kolb's (1984) widely accepted model of the experiential learning cycle

demonstrated the process by which experience could be translated into learning, through time and space.

There must be a reflection on the experience followed by an understanding of what the new learning means to the individual and a conceptualisation of how it can be used in the future. Experience per se, is, therefore, only the first step in the learning process; and, from learning to be drawn from it, the experience must be followed by the vital step of reflection. The ability to reflect on an experience, and on initial reactions to the experience is the "missing link" that defines the relationship between experience and learning (Knutson, 2003).

Saddington (2001) emphasizes the importance of reflection to create meaning from our experiences:

> The assumption is that we seldom learn from experience unless we assess the experience, assign our own meaning in terms of our own goals, aims, ambitions, and expectations. From these processes come the insights, the discoveries, and understanding. The pieces fall into place, and the experience takes on added meaning in relation to other experiences (p.1).

Now, as a researcher, my interest continues to focus on mentoring, but more specifically, it centers on the experiences of both those being mentored and those mentoring.

Mentors and their Influence: The Purpose of this Study

Many years of personal experience as a secondary teacher of non-core specialist subjects, music and second languages (SL/SLs), have afforded me numerous opportunities to observe beginning teachers (BTs) as they entered the

profession. Recollecting the *challenges* I had experienced, I firmly believe that I would not have continued throughout the hardships of my first year of teaching without the adequate *support* of my mentors. However, not all BTs are fortunate enough to have mentors at all, let alone in their subject area.

The research literature is rich in stories of such loneliness and subject area isolation (see Ballantyne, 2007; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Macdonald, 1999, in Karsenti, Collin, Villeneuve, Dumouchel, & Roy, 2008; McCormack & Thomas, 2003). Although the significance of these factors is well documented from many perspectives, I discovered that no one was looking at how members of the profession influenced and shaped one another's identity during the first year of teaching. For example, I knew how I had been influenced by my mother, Nora, Mr. Baque, Sonia, Andy, and Mr. O'Brien, but how did their mentoring me influence them and influence how they mentored others?

Therefore, I sought to explore multiple anecdotes from participants about the experiences, beliefs, and feelings of three members of a mentorship partnership – beginning SL teachers, their off-site MTs, and assistant principals. Serendipity led me to become involved in a timely project that coincided with my research interest.

Background to the Study

There is considerable room for improvement to provide adequate socialization structures and build relationships with teachers in their first few years in the profession (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Joiner & Edwards, 2008; Mandel, 2006; Ryan, 1986; Ryan, Neuman, Magger,

Applegate, Lasley, Randall & Johnson, 1980). Efforts to address aid in building relationships have included adopting BT induction or mentoring programs to reduce isolation and increase teacher retention (Baril, 2006; Boreen, Johnson, Niday & Potts, 2009; Bush & Coleman, 1996; Cooley & Yovanoff, 1996; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Heider, 2005; Kilgore & Griffin, 1998; McIntyre & Hagger, 1996; Miller, Brownell & Smith, 1999) as well as increasing awareness amongst administrators in providing novices with support (Brock & Grady, 1997; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Hughes, 1994; Liebermann & Miller, 1994; Smith & Andrews, 1989). Fantilli and McDougall (2009) note that "[b]eginning teachers in difficult situations often feel like failures" (p. 814). Without adequate supports, only the strongest and most determined BTs are successful (Colbert & Wolff, 1992). Teachers are affected "by observing and working alongside people who have more or different expertise, and for forming relationships that might provide feedback and support" (Eraut, Maillardet, Miller, Steadman, Ali, Blackman & Furner, 2004, p. 9).

The Alberta Context

The economic situation in Alberta in the second decade of the XXI century required school boards to look at ways of stretching their services while reducing their budgets. Some schools were closed, departments were abolished, and funding for some programs was terminated all together. As some consultants moved into the schools to work as teachers, curricular support was being reduced and job security was wavering. School systems across the province faced

significant workforce planning challenges in the midst of Alberta's changing economy, including the impact of retirement:

> the number of educators who are eligible for retirement is at an all-time high; student enrolment is climbing in more than 80 percent of school jurisdictions in Alberta; the supply of qualified teachers available to teach in certain geographic regions and subject areas is decreasing and the attrition rate for early career teachers is an issue (Education Sector Workforce Planning Framework for Action, 2009, p. 3).

The Education Sector Workforce Planning Framework for Action (the"Framework") is currently supported and represented by Alberta Education, post-secondary institutions, the ATA, the College of Alberta School Superintendents, and the Alberta School Boards Association. The purpose of the Framework was to design a five-year strategic plan to provide proactive solutions to emerging demands in the education workforce and is intended to serve as a roadmap for change to provide Alberta students with access to high quality education professionals, now and in the future. Two strategic actions from the Framework are directly linked to my study:

- Strategic Action 1: "Elevate and promote the status of the teaching profession and related careers within the education sector workforce" (p. 6): to consider focused education recruitment efforts in high-demand/low supply areas, including SL teachers and teacher program candidates, and

- Strategic Action 7: "Support beginning teachers through the development and implementation of a provincial program of staged transition" (p. 14): to ensure "time" for BT learning and development and the provision of "mentorship" services for BTs are considered critical elements of the induction program; to develop provincial resources and professional development support for "mentorship" training.

If schools and jurisdictions in Alberta are to ensure support during these challenging times, it would be beneficial and of utmost value that they honour such recommendations from the many stakeholders, while embracing those new to the profession, in the hope of sustaining novice educators for many years to come. The research literature confirms that, when BTs are able to successfully build relationships to reduce isolation through experiencing support, they are better able to cope in the face of adversity (Baril, 2006; Boreen, Johnson, Niday & Potts, 2009; Bush & Coleman, 1996; Cooley & Yovanoff, 1996; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Heider, 2005; Kilgore & Griffin, 1998; McIntyre & Hagger, 1996; Miller, Brownell & Smith, 1999).

Changing Political Times in Alberta: new Leadership affects Schools.
During the Spring of 2012, Alberta elected its first female premier, Alison Redford, of the Progressive Conservative Party. Education was one of Redford's major platforms during the election. Redford promised to build 50 new schools and renovate 70 others over the following four years in growing communities in Edmonton and surrounding areas. However, "(T)hey not only have to build

schools but they have to hire teachers. The election promise was to build schools, but schools don't teach children how to read, teachers do" (Henderson, ATA President, in Sands, 2012).

Throughout the 2012 Progressive Conservatives' election campaign, education played, and has continued to play, a central role since Redford became premier in the fall of 2011. Redford stated her vision for Alberta Education funding prior to becoming elected:

We've got to support teachers. We have to honour teachers' contracts. We can't have teachers fired, particularly new teachers, who are skilled and enthusiastic and who want to be in the classroom. We need long-term, sustainable funding for education. We need extra supports in the classrooms and we need to make sure that school boards understand that they can have certainty, so that they can make the right choices about education for parents and families in their community (Redford, 2011).

When she took office, Redford followed through on a promise to immediately return $107 million to school boards to assist them in rehiring teachers and pay for programs. It was left up to the discretion of each school administration to decide how to apportion the money within their school (Sands, 2012).

The Education Budget for 2013 (released March 2013) saw funding for Kindergarten to Grade12 education increase to more than $6.1 billion in operating and property tax support to public and separate school boards. This was intended

to fund enrolment growth and maintain base instruction funding at 2012-13 levels.

Funding for school capital projects will be nearly $1.4 billion over three years. This includes $500 million as the first step in meeting Premier Redford's commitment of 50 new schools and 70 school modernizations, expected to have a total cost of more than $2 billion (Alberta Government, Budget 2013),

> This is a challenging budget and we had to make some tough choices to put kids first," said Education Minister Jeff Johnson. "Teachers and trustees urged us to find a way to fully fund enrolment growth and increase spending in priority areas like class size and inclusive education, and I'm glad we were able to do that. Even so, the fiscal reality is that many school boards will see fewer operating dollars this year compared to last year, and we will all need to work together to make sure kids aren't impacted in a negative way (Alberta Government, Budget 2013).

A unique public dialogue, namely *Inspiring Education*, was held with Albertans in 2009, directed by former Premier Ed Stelmach and Education Minister Dave Hancock and led by a 22-member Steering Committee. Although *Inspiring Education* predated Redford's premiership, one key author and co-chairs of pioneering the project is now the Education Minister, the Honourable Jeff Johnson. Its purpose was to discuss and propose a long-term vision for the future of education in Alberta to the year 2030 and determine how we position our education system. The input of thousands of Albertans was sought by means of personal conversations, regional community conversations, a provincial forum,

and ongoing on-line discussions/dialogue. Additional forms of engagement included blogs, Twitter, YouTube, wikis, podcasts and other social media. Although the report from the *Inspiring Education* dialogue is three years old, the document still fits the government's priorities today.

Inspiring Education sought to hear the voices from multiple stakeholders from numerous facets of Alberta's society, comprising the public at large, parents, community and volunteer organizations, education stakeholders, including trustees, educational organizations, including Aboriginal and Francophone, students, including diverse populations such as students with special needs and immigrant students, students who had not yet completed high school, youth who had entered post-secondary studies, post-secondary institutions as well as business and industry.

Policy was determined to be a blueprint for a consistent course of action, which will ultimately direct and shape Alberta's approach to education (Alberta Education, 2010). For such a vision of education to be achieved by 2030, the following shifts in policy would be required: policy – focused on education; centred on the learners; building competencies; and technology to support the creation and sharing of knowledge. Multiple themes emerged from this work, including leadership, life-long learning, supporting families, providing shared responsibility and accountability, and engaging communities.

As many changes and transitions have occurred in the provincial government even since *Inspiring Education* in 2010 and the provincial election of 2012, the new faces are likely to continue to bring about much change in Alberta,

which will ultimately affect administrators, teachers, BTs, their classrooms, and the students that they teach. Policy makers should always be asking: what is in the best interests of the child?

A Mentorship Program

In the current climate, schools are willing to explore how they can better address supporting BTs. Mentorship programs are representative of many ways to do so within the province. One particular example during a recent school year, is a large urban school jurisdiction's local of the ATA, which implemented a mandated mentorship program to support their district's BTs of all grade and subject levels for 58 K-12 novice teachers who were new to the district.

Each BT was provided with the opportunity to have a MT for support throughout the academic year. BT and MT relationships evolved in three ways: (1) Some BTs took the opportunity to seek their own MT (a teacher with whom they connected at their school, a former teacher from when they were a student, or a cooperating teacher from their student teaching experience); (2) At times, the principal or Assistant Principal (AP) selected the MT on behalf of the new teacher; and (3) By late September, when 39 BTs still did not have a MT, experienced MTs were invited to participate in the program. Because MTs came forward to assist from many schools, several of the BTs did not have an in-school MT and were paired with an off-site MT in another school. The selection of MTs would impact the success of the program.

BTs were ideally paired with a subject specific/grade MT; however, pairings did not always yield a perfect match. Unfortunately, none of

the beginning SL teachers had an in-school MT as part of the program, since they were likely their school's only SL teacher. Instead, they were paired with an off-site MT in another school and also spent time with their AP. Thus, the BTs had more than one mentor.

BTs were invited to engage and were financially supported (through the coverage of costs of a substitute) in three types of program activities: (1) attending six information and support sessions, (2) meeting with MTs, and (3) participating in school inter-visitations. The foci of the six sessions that emerged over the year were based on a needs assessment completed by the BTs in October. Program facilitators wanted to know the BTs' areas of interest so that the program could cater to the BTs' needs as much as possible. Sessions focused on the following topics which were generated though the feedback from the BTs:

(1) Preparing report cards and Individualized Program Plans (IPPs);

(2) Preparing for parent-teacher-student conferences;

(3) Dealing with parents;

(4) Developing classroom management strategies;

(5) Learning the school system's technology;

(6) Meeting the district consultants and learning about services and supports available within the district;

(7) Talking with their MTs;

(8) Dealing with staffing and contract status;

(9) Finding one's "identity" as a teacher; and

(10) Celebrating successes.

The MT and a school administrator (usually the AP) were likewise invited to some, or all the above sessions. The ATA local agreed to fund a total of 100 school-intervisitations (a half-day paid substitute to visit a teacher in another school), open to all teachers in the district, on a first-come, first-served basis. Some novice teachers and their MTs took the initiative to complete the paperwork early to enable them to meet for an inter-visitation, either at their MTs' school, the mentee's school, or in some rare cases in both schools, if one principal would have agreed to cover the cost of the sub in their school.

Although the BTs' principals and APs were invited to attend the mentorship sessions through e-mail, none of the administrators attended. Perhaps they did not see the value in further supporting their BTs or could not create the time in their schedules to attend with their BT. The APs should have recognized that the BT attended the sessions and was away from the school (through the daily teacher attendance record) and could have followed up with the BT about the session the following day or later in the week. However, no discussion was initiated between the APs and BTs about the sessions.

Mentorship programs, such as this one, are recent approaches being tested and adopted by Alberta schools in the current political and economic climate.

Triads: A Model for Effective Mentoring

The roles of MTs and administrative leaders in mentoring BTs has been well documented (Alvy & Robbins, 1998; Crow & Matthews, 1998; Daresh, 2001; Fullan, 2001; Jonson, 2008; Kardos & Moore Johnson, 2007; Sweeney, 2008), but little is known how they interact with one another and the BTs.

However, the literature has given some attention to the student teaching triad (Johnson & Napper-Owen, 2011) – composed of a student teacher, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor. Specifically, Johnson and Napper-Owen (2011) studied role perceptions of physical education student teaching triads and highlighted some important aspects of a successful triad:

> The formation of a collaborative group is essential for a successful and positive experience for the entire triad. Triad members need to acknowledge the formation of the triad and then learn how to function effectively within the triad. Tension, however, often exists among triad members because of a lack of clarity of the role of each member in the triad and the role expectations members have for their respective position (p. 45).

Johnson and Napper-Owen (2012) concluded that each member of the triad arrives with his/her own unique interpretations of what student teaching is all about, based on their past experiences and interactions in the world. There is a need for clearly defined roles for all three triad members to foster a better understanding of the student teaching experience (Duquette, 1997; Tsui, Lopez-Real & Law, 2001; Veal & Rikard, 1998). As articulated by Maria, one student teacher in the study: "We need to have everybody [the triad] get together before the student teaching experience to communicate the roles and expectations…otherwise the relationships can be difficult" (p. 53). Maria was part of a failed triad based on unmet perceptions and loosely constructed relationships.

The history of triadic relationships has been reported to be competitive and hierarchical with no real chance of the members working collaboratively (Caplow, 1968; Simmel, 1950; Yee, 1968). Veal and Rikard (1998) described problems within triads as coming from unclear or poorly defined roles. A triad may break down because of the confusion that results from different definitions of the individual roles within the triad.

I could find no literature on the relationship of triads specifically involving the BT, MT and administrator (Assistant Principal) as they work together. Examining the experiences of beginning teachers (BTs), mentor teachers (MTs) and Assistant Principals (APs) in real situations provides an authentic perspective, and through their accounts we are offered a new frame through which to explore mentoring. My doctoral research will investigate three mentorship partnerships to better understand all participants' experiences and challenges, and whether their needs were met.

As the autobiography of my lived experiences of being mentored on multiple levels at various times reveals, mentorship is complex. Each person's history, challenges, relationship to and communication within the mentorship relationship significantly impact the success and meaning that each member will draw from the experience.

It is additionally worthwhile to be cognizant of the numerous stakeholders involved in education that build the foundations and impact the day-to-day possibilities in jurisdictions, schools, and classrooms due to budgetary constraints, district and provincial policies, and governance. These determine the conditions

of teachers' practice such as the use of standardized testing, the composition of classes and the nature of the curriculum.

At the academic level, changes to induction and preparation programs can impact BTs for years to come (i.e. preparation programs that change and differ from how they were previously preparing students in their programs by changing practica experiences, coursework components based on major and minor specializations) and can greatly represent whether or not new graduates feel adequate expertise and preparedness to teach in their specified subject areas, or in general.

Research Questions

As my reading has progressed, I have had numerous questions. I also noted that my initial questions changed after having assessed the research and participant landscapes. My overarching question relates to how the triad of mentorship contributes to SL BTs. It is rooted in understanding the challenges, philosophies and expectations of each member of the triad as well as characteristics of each group within the triad. Thus, my research questions are:

(1) How do challenges facing SL BTs, as described in the research literature, compare to those described by recent SL BTs?

(2) How do mentoring relationships contribute to a teacher's subject-area identity in SLs?

(3) How do the perceptions and expectations of mentoring compare and contrast for BTs, MTs and APs?

(4) How do challenges faced by SL teachers compare to those of other subject-area specialists?

Thesis Structure

This thesis is organized into nine chapters. A review of literature in Chapter Two addresses background literature on: BTs; SL teacher challenges; specialist teachers of other non-core optional subjects[5]; studies and findings on mentoring; and administrative involvement in mentoring.

Chapter Three explains the qualitative research methodology, the study design, and a description of the participants.

Chapter Four describes each participant (BTs, MTs and APs) and the perspectives and expectations of each toward mentorship.

Chapters Five, Six, Seven and Eight individually answer each of the four research questions, respectively. Each chapter identifies the themes and discusses each by integrating corresponding research literature. In particular, it addresses gaps in the expectations of different members of the triad. The evidence suggests that MTs and APs need to be better informed about the anticipations and needs of BTs.

The final chapter presents recommendations, suggestions for future research, and a personal reflection.

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[5] A 'Specialist Teacher' in the context of this study refers to the broad category of 'optional/non-core specialist subject teacher'. It includes teachers of subject areas such as second languages, music, art, drama, and physical education.

CHAPTER TWO: Literature Review

Mentoring in Relation to Beginning Teaching

For the purpose of beginning this study and providing a framework for my early exploration and learning, I narrowed the focus of the formal literature review to three main areas: "Beginning Teachers," "Specialized Subject Areas," and "Mentorship". Literature on these topics has been organized into seven more specific areas:

(1) Beginning teachers: challenges and issues;

(2) Identity formation in non-core subject areas, specifically SLs;

(3) Parallel challenges faced by specialist teachers (music, art, drama, physical education) and identity formation;

(4) Mentoring: studies and findings;

(5) Administrator involvement in mentoring;

(6) Studies involving the AP in mentoring; and

(7) Dissertations that have studied mentoring relationships.

With this framework as a starting point, I was able to gain an initial understanding of mentorship, a process which is often misunderstood, and which requires effective communication, timely intervention, and sensitivity to colleagues' needs. It also provided a starting point from which to begin an exploration of possibilities.

Beginning Teachers: Challenges and Issues

As BTs progress through their first year on the job, they are confronted with multiple challenges that historically have been explained by Huberman's

study (1989) on the professional life cycle of teachers. New teachers often find themselves facing an unexpected "reality shock."

The First Year: Sources of Disillusionment

Despite being well-prepared and committed to teaching, BTs are often disillusioned by their initiation into the teaching profession (Le Maistre, 2000; McPherson, 2000). New teachers perceive major contributors to this disillusionment. Although several factors emerge as they transition from pre-service to in-service training such as managing behaviour and diverse needs of students, time constraints and conflicts with parents and other adults, (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009) of these concerns, workload is among the most significant (Dussault, Deaudelin, Royer & Loiselle, 1999; Goodlad, 1984; Hargreaves, 1992, 1994; Lortie, 1975; McLagan, 1999; Nias, 1989; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). A teacher's job is to carry out multiple tasks, which include planning, preparation, delivery of instruction, remedial work with students, school meetings, professional development, parent communication, and extracurricular duties (Fisher, 2011).

> While these pressures are true for all teachers, the situation for beginners is even worse. The expectations of placing newly certified graduates in the same situation as seasoned veterans, without giving them organized support is without a doubt, not surprising that all novice teachers survive and stay in the profession. (Le Maistre & Paré, 2010, p. 560)

Workload. Many BTs enter their first year of teaching with the same teaching load and responsibilities as teachers with many years of seniority

(Angelle, 2006). BTs may also be given the most difficult classroom assignments (Danielson, 2002; Ganser, 1996). Furthermore, new teachers are often expected to perform duties with the same level of expertise, efficiency, and efficacy as experienced teachers (Wildman, Niles, Magliaro & McLaughlin, 1989). Teachers' workloads have also become increasingly more complex; this complexity can be explained by a number of factors: (1) greater societal expectations and lower societal recognition; (2) pedagogical and curriculum changes being implemented at an increasing rate; (3) higher demands beyond pedagogical tasks; (4) greater accountability to parents and policy-makers; (5) additional need for technological competence; (6) increasing diversity among students; and (7) more administrative work (Dussault, Deaudelin, Royer & Loiselle, 1999; Goodlad, 1984; Hargreaves, 1992, 1994; Lortie, 1975; McLagan, 1999; Nias, 1989).

      Other factors that affect BTs' work. More recently, BTs' experiences are being recognized as being highly contextual and influenced by: (1) the culture of the teaching profession; (2) the nature of a teacher's work; (3) school related factors; and, (4) the communities in which the schools are located (Lauren, 2005; Steffy, Wolfe, Pasch & Enz, 2000). As these contexts change, so will the individual teachers' professional priorities, activities, and relationships (Lauren, 2005). A positive environment, characterized by competent administration, opportunities for professional development, and strong professional learning communities (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; McNeil, Hood, Kurtz, Thousand & Nevin, 2006) can reduce uncertainty and increase the chances that teachers will

achieve success and satisfaction (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). These key issues are central to the teaching career cycle, as I will explain below.

Fantasy and Survival: Beginning the Teaching Career Cycle

BT disillusionment can be understood as a natural consequence of the transition from student to teacher. Huberman (1989) described the career pathways of teachers in terms of phases, starting with *easy or painful beginnings*. These beginning years have been described as "the discovery and survival" phase of teaching (Huberman, 1993), characterized as either "easy" (marked by a sense of discovery) or "painful" (a focus on survival). According to Huberman (1993), "easy beginnings are consonant with a sense of discovery and enthusiasm (openness, inventiveness, creativity) and good rapport with pupils. Painful beginnings have to do with exhaustion … and coping" (p. 244). These two distinct types of beginnings eventually stabilize, moving either into a phase of increasing commitment to teaching or increasing disillusionment with the profession.

In a similar vein, Ryan (1986), drawing on and extending the work of Fuller and Brown (1975), proposed a four-stage process for the life cycle of a teacher: *a fantasy stage, followed by survival, mastery, and impact*. During the fantasy stage, newcomers imagine what teaching will be like and dream about being like the best of their own teachers. The fantasy is interrupted by practica undertaken while they are still in university, but returns for those who maintain their resolve to become teachers.

The transition from teaching as a trainee to a first job often proves shocking. The BT quickly discovers that, in various ways, past experience did not fully reflect the demands of the job. The pace, extent, and demands of a full teaching load all take their toll. The fantasy crumbles and the survival stage begins – a challenge to sustain professional qualities and to emerge with confidence as problems in the classroom, and in managing workload, intensify. Throughout these early years, solutions to most classroom problems are found in the shared craft knowledge of the staff room, and in the support of more experienced colleagues (Ryan, 1986).

Nonetheless, new teachers experience a tension between their initial idealised self-sufficiency ("the fantasy"), their need for professional guidance, and a reluctance to depend upon the advice of others. Researchers have suggested that the experiences of BTs in the first year of teaching have long-term implications for teaching effectiveness, job satisfaction, and career length (Bartell, 2004).

"Reality Shock": Practical Difficulties Faced by BTs

Research over the past thirty years consistently reports that, as a consequence of the personal and contextual challenges mentioned above, BTs experience a "reality shock" or "praxis shock" (Goddard & Foster, 2001) when they are abruptly placed unsupported in classrooms (Heck & Wolcott, 1997; Sudzina & Knowles, 1993; Veenman, 1984). "Many begin this transition filled with uncertainty, find their jobs more challenging than anticipated, and rethink their career choice" (Hebert & Worthy, 2001, p. 897). In addition to their

unrealistic expectations about teaching and students, BTs report planning lessons and working with curricula; a lack of reflection time; learning on their own through trial and error; and uncertainty about whom to approach about their problems or whom to ask for help, for fear of failure (Hebert & Worthy, 2001). They face challenges developing humane yet efficient routines to manage the daily business of the classroom and the hurried pace of school life (Veenman, 1984; Roehrig, Bohn, Turner & Pressley, 2008; Liston, Whitcomb & Borko, 2006) and often encounter "difficult workloads and are provided little formal assistance" (Hebert & Worthy, 2001, p. 898).

Jonson (2008) summarizes this well:

No matter how well prepared a beginning teacher may be on entering the profession - no matter how positive her preservice experience – the early years are always difficult. Issues of classroom and time management commonly cause significant stress. The tasks to be completed seem endless, and when a problem arises, the teacher, alone in the classroom, cannot turn to a co-worker for immediate support as another professional in another field might do. Too often during the first year of on-the-job training, teachers throughout history have had to master their craft by trial and error, in an isolated environment, with little feedback. (p. 4)

These challenges are often compounded, moreover, in the first months of teaching, as the ideals that the BT formed during teacher training are replaced by the reality of school life where much of their time and energy are transferred to learning how to survive in a new school culture.

The first year of employment is thus a tremendously important one for many reasons and has long-term implications for teaching effectiveness, job satisfaction, and career length (Hebert & Worthy, 2001). With this in mind, Heck and Wolcott (1997) examined factors that influenced teachers before they were officially hired in a classroom of their own. Their experience as students, their success as student teachers, and their academic standing are all factors contributing to whether or not they will be able to cope in the face of adversity when they encounter various challenges during their first year. Hebert and Worthy (2001) also reported that BTs face unrealistic expectations formed during their years as students; limitations of teacher education preparation programs; unrealistic student teacher experience; and school environments which fail to provide adequate support.

Just as important, BTs must deal with their own perceptions of the "stakes" of securing a continuing position. BTs normally begin in temporary contract positions (Couture & Servage, 2012). "Quite often, colleagues and administrators have little incentive to invest resources, time, and energy nurturing what they perceive to be transient staff members" (Couture & Servage, 2012, p. 7). To obtain a continuous contract, BTs may be required to persevere without asking for help, take on unreasonable workloads, and avoid rocking the boat. They may also receive limited, inconsistent, or no feedback, which results in them being uncertain as to what colleagues, administrators, students, and parents expect of them. These multiple factors cause BTs to feel unbalanced as they struggle to develop a professional identity. Much of the literature on BTs focuses on their

life as they gradually develop practices that will ultimately determine their

effectiveness as professionals (Day & Gu, 2010).

As a consequence, BTs report a wide range of emotional responses

throughout their early years. They feel exhilarated and exhausted (Liston,

Whitcomb & Borko, 2006; Renard, 2003; Harris, 1995), hopeful and cynical,

fulfilled and dejected, fatigued and compelled to balance between career demands

and family and personal life (Liston, Whitcomb & Borko, 2006; Kauffman,

Johnson, Kardos, Liu & Peske, 2002; Heck & Wolcott, 1997).

These feelings may have serious implications – and consequences.

Marable and Raimondi (2007) report that BTs frequently leave the profession due

to burn out, low salary, a lack of support from administration or peers, few or old

resources, and irrelevant training. An example of irrelevant training is when

teachers are asked to take on teaching a second language to fill their assignment

without methodological preparation, or perhaps because they had a small amount

of experience with the subject as a student many years ago. One cannot justly be

expected to teach a SL with limited competency and it is also not a fair example

for the students. Howey and Zimpher (1991) confirm that novice teachers often

leave the profession within 3-5 years because they either underestimate the

realities of teaching or refuse to cope with the difficulties. I will examine the issue

of BT attrition in more detail below.

The Local Context: BTs in Alberta

These concerns and challenges clearly affect BTs in Alberta's schools.

The province's education department reported in 2009 that approximately 3400

BTs were hired in 2008. Based on the 2011-2012 school year, 2000 new teachers were required for the increase in student enrolment in Alberta.   With projections that over 50 percent of BTs leave the profession within the first five years of teaching, the question of whether they will remain in the profession and provide support to future BTs is even more uncertain.

> The retention of first-year teachers is crucial to the future [of Alberta's] teaching profession. With one-third of new teachers anticipating that they will leave the profession in their first five years, it is important to understand the push–pull factors that influence teachers' future plans. In a 2008 survey done with Alberta teachers, 25 per cent of respondents said they would "definitely" leave the profession within five years, and 35 percent said that they "may" leave. (Couture, 2009, p. 53)

In 2008 Couture and Servage (2012) initiated a 5-year longitudinal study of BTs in Alberta. The study began by conducting 15-20 minute semi-structured telephone interviews with 135 participants. The study provides a unique glimpse into the lived experiences of the early-career teachers who have shared their stories with the research team. Some questions have been repeated annually to track changes and new questions have been added based on emerging trends. At the present time, the study is in Year 5. Of the 135 original participants, 105 took part in the Year 4 interviews. One commonality that emerged through the experiences of the study participants is the sense of hope and promise that the five-year labour agreement with the Government of Alberta has brought to the

education community. However, this period has also been "a roller-coaster ride of hope and frustration", as put by one of the BTs (Couture, 2011, p. 49).

Couture and Servage (2012) also concluded that participants in their study consistently emphasized that their colleagues, including administrators, had an impact on their quality of life and their ability to learn during their difficult first years of practice. As one participant stated:

Administration had the most impact on me, for sure. Last year we had temporary/acting administrators. The new administrator [this year] totally made the difference. I would follow this principal to another school. She gave me more responsibility and [helped me to understand] what she wants. The direction in the school has influenced my confidence in my abilities (p. 14).

A compounding factor for all teachers is Alberta's rapidly-changing demographics during the second decade of the 21st Century. All schools, both urban and rural, are traditionally composed of culturally diverse environments, which create classrooms with intercultural settings and a diversity of learner needs. However, the gap in achievement between students from mainstream culture and those new to it continues to grow. Intercultural understanding and patience is critical for teachers to connect effectively with all students.

As populations grow and change across the country and in Alberta, the population, moreover, is becoming increasingly diverse. Demographic trends have been noted by teachers and administrators in their schools and districts (Alberta Education, 2003). In Alberta, increasing immigration rates fuelled by

the province's strong economy, continuing urbanization, and growing Aboriginal population have had an impact on the province's education system. Because the system has welcomed an increasing number of children from other countries, traditions, languages, and cultures, high-diversity classrooms have become one of the defining features of Alberta's schools (Alberta Education, 2009). This change in population has created diverse classrooms in all grades, which are composed of a variance in cognitive, affective, physical, and communicative development, and students of varied culture, ethnicity, language, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

McQuarrie and McRae (2010) describe typical classrooms which may include students from varied cultural backgrounds; students who are reading below grade level; students with attention, behavioural and motivational problems; students with limited proficiency in the language of instruction; students who are classified as gifted and talented; alongside students with severe disabilities and those with specific needs, which could include language and communication disabilities, motor disabilities, limited vision, and learning disabilities. Evidently, these demographic changes create new challenges and opportunities for today's educators, who are faced with the responsibility of ensuring that each student reaches the highest level of achievement.

Teacher Attrition

Research on induction, attrition, and retention of BTs has been conducted from many perspectives and with groups of various sizes. New teachers encounter supports and barriers to their professional growth at many levels throughout the system of relationships and institutions within which they learn

their craft and forge their identities. Teachers take their cues from various elements in their environments, such as MTs, colleagues, administrators, students, and parents (Melnick & Meister, 2008). Such elements form a rich, if not always unproblematic, interpersonal dimension.

To date, the ATA longitudinal study (Couture & Servage, 2012) has revealed that these "relationships," which are at the core of teachers' work, play a significant role in determining the professional and personal growth of BTs. However, these relationships can obscure structural and systemic conditions that are beyond the control of individual teachers and even individual schools (Grossman & Thompson, 2004).

Teacher attrition in the early years of practice has been well documented in Canada, the United States and other countries (Hong, 2010); however, the causes of attrition are difficult to isolate. Studies on this topic frequently fall into three categories. In the first category, studies link attrition to difficult working conditions and nonexistent or weak induction practices. Empirical studies on the efficacy of new teacher induction are included in this category: this often leads to recommendations for improving induction practices and working conditions. These studies commonly focus on schools, where the majority of induction occurs, and on school districts, to a lesser extent.

The second category is explained by studies on attrition which focus on backgrounds and preparedness, as well as on the dispositions of the individual teacher. Some studies rely on objective demographic variables (Alberta Education, 2010) and others concentrate on the subjective experiences of new

teachers (Goddard & Foster, 2001; Hong, 2010). Subjective experiences may assess teachers on psychological qualities such as self-confidence, resilience, and efficacy. Teachers' social background, experiences at school, preservice training, race, class, and gender may be tracked by researchers as factors in assessing disposition (Achinstein, Ogawa and Speiglman, 2004).

This third category explores studies that focus on the individual, which may probe the sociocultural context of a school through examining how individual teachers develop interprofessional relationships and negotiate micropolitics (Day and Gu, 2010; Kardos & Moore Johnson, 2007; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002).

Specialist Teachers: Challenges and Issues

Although limited in volume, research results among teachers of specialized subject areas show significant commonalities. Given that most secondary schools are organized by subject matter, most teachers view themselves as subject matter specialists. The subject gives teachers a frame of reference, a professional identity, and a social community, all of which are reinforced by teachers' preparation, provincial curriculum framework, university admission requirements, and job availability. Within specialist subject areas, no exams are written by students, which unlike core courses (Math, Science, Social Studies and English) in secondary schools, exams often become a very competitive factor and high stress for core teachers, students and administrators. Schools often compare results and are sought out by students and parents based on their exam results.

Working within departments organized by subject, teachers affiliate with others in the same field in informal networks and professional organizations outside of their school. Thus, the capacity of teachers is limited not only by their relative isolation from one another in the school day, but also by the insularity of specialty subject and departmental boundaries. Given such barriers, specialist teachers have limited opportunity or reason for meaningful collaboration with teachers in other departments.

It is, therefore, important to explore the experiences of teachers within particular discipline areas and to consider the forms they take and their implications for BTs. There are valuable insights to be gained from looking at other fields. Although other subject specialties have their own unique challenges, together, they present key similarities. In the Alberta context, it will be particularly worthwhile to consider elective subjects including SLs, music, art, drama, and physical education, in which subject area specialists and BTs share some common struggles and challenges. I was unable to locate any studies in the literature which made such comparisons.

Indeed, BTs in subject specific areas, such as SLs, are not only expected to overcome the same challenges as all BTs (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Richards & Pennington, 1998), but they also face additional issues such as: (1) recognizing the state of their own language proficiency; (2) providing the support required to students facing the anxiety of learning a SL; (3) establishing standards for error correction; (4) planning with a lack of both SL learning resources and classroom space to create a SL learning milieu; (5) dealing with students who have no desire

to learn the SL in an optional subject; and (6) supporting the diversity of students in the SL classroom, including those with special needs.

Language Proficiency

BTs are placed in many different contexts and, at times, are given assignments requiring them to teach in subject areas where they have no experience whatsoever. While teachers can read novels to prepare for an English class over the weekend or learn a science experiment, they cannot learn another language in such a short time. SL teachers require "fluency, or at least the ability to communicate in the second language well enough that they feel comfortable in the teaching situation" (Carr, 1999, p. 157). However, teachers without any prior language background (or having completed junior or senior high level study of the language decades earlier) are often asked to teach a SL course. Most often, they are French teachers, since many schools in Canada are expected to offer French.

Student Anxiety

Spielmann and Radnofsky (2001) report that there is a common experience of tension or frustration correlated with learning a SL. This frustration can result in learners experiencing a sense of language anxiety, being apprehensive about communicating, and the stress of not being able to articulate meaning in their SL.

Myburgh, Poggenpoel and Van Rensburg (2004) likewise report that, since the 1960s, children reveal that the "lack of the ability to express themselves causes children to feel powerless and worthless" (Venter, 1962, p. 575), and that

fearing correction can yield low self-confidence and decrease the desire to continue learning. Learning a SL is hard work and a lengthy process (Nunan, 1989). SL teachers are at times concerned about the ineffective support that they are giving learners to enable them to cope in their SL learning. "The lack of understanding is manifested in the learners' inability to communicate effectively in class. Some of the learners show an apathetic attitude towards their school work" (Myburgh, Poggenpoel & Van Rensburg, 2004, p. 575). BTs, like all SL teachers, "need to create cognitive learning opportunities that are appropriately challenging and that would simultaneously help students construct their full-fledged second language selves" (Spielmann & Radnofsky, 2001, p. 275). Creating such opportunities requires skills that BTs develop either over time or through the guidance and coaching of others; but, likely, they have not yet acquired these skills at the onset of their first year.

Error Correction

SL teachers report that it is difficult to find the right balance between encouraging students to speak in the SL and correcting their utterances. "There are a number of ways in which the problem of accuracy, and especially a school's obsession with mistakes, can be reconciled with humanistic work" (Appel, 1989, p. 265). If fear of mistakes appears to be fear of assessment, it is helpful to point out to students that the objective of certain lessons is to communicate *something,* rather than to get every single word formally correct, whereas in other lessons the focus may well be on accuracy. In my own professional experience, I have shown students how it is possible to draw this

kind of distinction in terms of assessment criteria. "If fear of mistakes turns out to be fear of being ridiculed by the group, it might be useful to individualize the actual feedback on correctness" (Appel, 1989, p. 265).

The nature and benefits of this task are vastly debated, often without being resolved. Teachers may have very strong views about error correction, based on their own previous SL learning experiences. Error correction is described on a continuum ranging from ineffective and possibly harmful (Truscott, 1999) to beneficial (Russell & Spada, 2006) and possibly even essential for some grammatical structures (White, 1991). Brumfit (1984) reminds SL teachers that "different pedagogical practices have aimed at either accuracy or fluency as the prime targets of students' attainment of L2 proficiency" (Johnson, 1998, p. 3). Hammerly (1991) "advocates a 'balanced approach' to language teaching and learning in which the question of accuracy/fluency is perceived not as one of kind but degree" (Johnson, 1998, p. 3). He favours a greater emphasis on the teaching of accuracy in the beginning and intermediate stages of SL learning and fluency at the more advanced levels. BTs will require additional time to sort through their approach to language learning before they determine their own pedagogical practice.

Materials, Resources, and Space in SLs

The influential role of the SL teacher is determined not only by the explicit content of the lessons, but by the type of materials incorporated into a lesson, the methods used by the teacher, and the appeal of the milieu created in the classroom. Xu (2004) reports that there is often a limited number of SL

resources available in schools, as well as limited funds to purchase new materials.

When resources do not meet the students' needs, abilities and interests, SL

teachers are required to seek out activities, games, and instructional materials in

the SL or even to adapt, translate, invent or create their own, all of which take

time: this explains why Spielmann and Radnofsky (2001) state that the biggest

challenge that SL teachers commonly express is inadequate time to prepare for

their SL classes. Furthermore, SL teachers and at times BTs, are required to

develop and build a language program at their school, with non-existing materials

left behind by another teacher. With limited funds and resources available, SL

teachers often personally fund their materials out of pocket or need to be highly

creative with such a task. This exacerbates the planning time required of them.

Based on a National survey of French SL Teachers' Perspectives in

Canada, "only 35% of core French teachers reported that a classroom dedicated to

FSL was available to them. Many core French teachers do not have a classroom

dedicated to the teaching of French and must travel from class to class to teach in

the classroom of their students" (ACPI, 2006, p. 19). Classroom space is

additionally a concern for SL teachers of all languages, not solely French

teachers. This finding is particularly relevant for SL BTs who experience the

challenge of having "no home base". Not only are they required to plan their day

with their materials on a cart for multiple classes, but they are unable to create a

SL atmosphere conducive to SL learning, even if it is only hanging up SL

materials, instead of posters in English related to other subjects. Richards (2002)

suggests that the mere fact that the core French teacher is often without his/her

own classroom indicates that the SL is not taken seriously. "Without classrooms, teachers are denied privacy and control over the organization of their classes (eg. seating, class rules, board space, place for materials and a language-milieu on bulletin boards, and so on)" (in Lapkin, Mady & Arnott, 2006, p. 50).

Lack of Student Motivation

SL learning is often encountered by apathy and disinterest which is associated with the attitude that the SL is unimportant. It manifests itself in a failure to participate in class and in students dropping the SL as soon as possible. As Gonzáles and Melis (2000) note, "If you have no desire to learn the language, you will not do so. There also has to be an obvious need to learn any language" (p. 165). The effect of motivation on second language learning is critical. When combined with other factors, it can influence a learner's success (Norris-Holt, 2001). Gardner (1982) investigated motivation as an influencing factor in SL acquisition. He introduced a socio-educational model to identify a number of factors which are interrelated when learning a SL. The cultural or social milieu refers to the environment in which an individual is situated, consequently determining their beliefs about other cultures and language.

Within Gardner's model, motivation is perceived to be composed of three elements which include (1) effort, (2) desire, and (3) affect. Effort refers to the time spent studying the language and the drive of the learner. Desire indicates how much the learner wants to become proficient in the language, and affect illustrates the learner's emotional reactions with regard to language study (Gardner, 1982).

Many students are uneasy with having to undertake any complex communication other than in their own language. They often find endeavouring to learn another language in school as not being personally relevant, therefore they have no strong desire to do so apart from fulfilling a high school or university requirement, which is a relatively weak reason (González & Melis, 2000).

"Arguably, the biggest problem is posed by those pupils who are quite able but who do not want to learn a foreign language and make sure that the teacher knows it" (Chambers, 1993, in Macaro, 2003, p. 89). Poor attitudes are also a side effect of the difficulty or challenges students face in learning a SL. Motivation has boundaries and appears to interact with many other variables in language learning such as: "the usefulness of speaking another language; the influence of significant others such as parents or friends; the difficulty of the subject; its status compared to other subjects on the curriculum; world events; its 'genderedness'; one's social and cultural background; and contact with the target culture" (Macaro, 2003, p. 91).

Overcoming demotivation can include providing learning strategies. These are "the actions that learners take in order to decode, process, store and retrieve language" (Macaro, 2003, p. 109). One example of a learning strategy is a situation in which a SL learner decides to skip a word unknown to him or her in a text and returns to it later. This process, known as decoding, allows the student to take the learning process at his or her own comfortable pace. SL

teachers, including BTs, need to provide their students with challenging goals, but also with the appropriate tools with which to reach them.

Diversity of Students in the SL Classroom & Special Needs Support

SL teachers must contend with the issue of diversity of students in the SL classroom, where they encounter a wide range of students in one class, from those with varying SL abilities to English as SL students to special education students, to native speakers of the SL. SL teachers confront the "challenge of meeting the needs of all students including learning disabled, physically challenged (non-verbal) and gifted all in one class" (ACPI, 2006, p. 31) all while trying to meet the needs of the SL curriculum and speak in the target language.

A Canadian research report on teaching FSL (2006) stated that the challenge most often cited by FSL teachers concerned the diversity of students in their SL classroom. It appears that the range of students of different abilities (SL, English as a SL, special education, gifted) without adequate support represents their greatest difficulty. Meeting all students' needs including learning disabled, physically challenged (non-verbal), gifted, as well as various ranges of abilities and experience in the SL can present a very diverse challenge for one teacher.

SL teachers and administrators may need to demonstrate flexibility in setting the criteria for SL study in school settings (Schneider, 1999; Schneider & Crombie, 2003), however such flexibility requires the SL teacher to have additional support. Examples include release time for teachers to provide small group tutoring, funding for specialized tutors for after school support, curriculum schedules that allow for slowing the pace of SL content instruction, and

developing and implementing an alternative SL instructional program for at-risk

SL learners.

To date, there is evidence that students with language learning difficulties

can succeed in their study of a SL, especially if they have appropriate

instructional modifications (Ganschow & Schneider, 2006). Cummins (1989) is

concerned with how to provide a rich pedagogical SL environment for minority

students, while putting less emphasis on special education students. He notes

that:

> Academic activities associated with the most intensive and prolonged
>
> levels of task engagement drew heavily upon, and encouraged expression
>
> of, students' experiences, language background and interests. They also
>
> fostered feelings of success and price in accomplishment, gave children a
>
> sense of control over their own learning, and included peer collaboration
>
> or peer approval. Furthermore, they were holistic in nature in that they did
>
> not involve learning or drilling of isolated, decontextualized segments of
>
> information (Cummins, 1989, p. 6).

A small body of research evidence suggests, for example, that at-risk

students can experience success in classrooms that provide direct, explicit

instruction on language structure and extra time to master the subject matter

(Downey & Snyder, 2001; Sparks & Miller, 2000). Students should therefore be

encouraged to expose themselves to the study of a SL of their choice early in their

schooling, talk to their teacher about their language needs, and seek additional

help as soon as it is needed. The study of a SL may take extra effort on the part of

students, but it will provide them with an experience in linguistic and cultural diversity that is desirable today in our global society. Sometimes struggling students may need to take fewer courses or focus specifically on SL study.

Parallel Challenges faced by Other Specialty Subject Area Teachers

The following sections consider several challenges and implications which SL BTs share with teachers in other specialized subject areas, specifically music, art, drama and physical education (PE). The challenges common to all these subject areas include: (1) classroom management; (2) experiencing isolation; (3) administrative support; (4) specialized subject advocacy; and (5) subject identity formation for specialist teachers. A sixth challenge, facing only music, drama, and PE teachers was that of extracurricular demands and responsibilities.

Classroom Management.

Second Languages. A large assortment of journal articles and books published by accredited scholars and researchers identify "classroom management [as] perhaps the most critical factor involved in a lesson's success..." (Arbogast & Chandler, 2005, p. 7). McCormack (1997) states that

> ...the term classroom management refers to more than discipline or control; instead it spans a broad range of activities such as arranging the physical environment, establishing and maintaining classroom rules and procedures, monitoring pupil behaviors, dealing with misbehavior and keeping students on task in a productive environment (p. 102).

As approaches to teaching and learning SLs have become more eclectic and interactive, effective SL classes are characterized by pair work and small

group work, which require that teachers possess both confidence and skill in classroom management. BTs commonly experience the challenges of classroom management; it is easier for them to begin with cathedral-style teaching, in the course of which the teacher can see all students and keep them all on-task. Many BTs are reluctant to do pair work in SL classes for fear that the students may "go off task", and that as they circulate, they will not be able to see what all students are doing and thus lose control of the classroom.

Music. A parallel with classroom management was also noted between music and SL teachers. Brand (1977) asserts that classroom management problems in music classrooms are intensified due to large class sizes, the structure and activities characteristic of music classes, and the dependency of the ensemble members on each other during performance. Several studies have identified classroom management as an overwhelming stressor for music teachers (Hamann, 1985; Krueger, 1996, 2001; Mercer & Mercer, 1986; Miksza, Roeder & Biggs, 2010).

Art. As for SL, music, and drama teachers, classroom management is also a concern for art teachers, due to the structure and art studio set-up. Wood (2008) notes that many tools, materials, and avenues distract and potentially harm students, in addition to the multiple simultaneous activities which take place in the art classroom.

Drama. Classroom management concerns are shared among SL and drama teachers. Like SLs, drama requires a specific skill set, much background knowledge, and a different approach to classroom management, through which

McPhail (2004) acknowledges makes it rather difficult to improvise. The inexperienced and often unconfident drama BT has commonly been known to struggle with classroom management issues when poor support is received from colleagues and school administrators, and they will not make it through the next and most challenging stage – the survival stage (Ryan, 1986).

Physical Education. Classroom management was also noted as a key issue for beginning physical education teachers (BPETs) (Stroot, 1996). Additionally, it became a concern when BPETs were faced with large class sizes (Bain, 1990). Furthermore, classroom management can become one of the most significant challenges for physical education teachers when it comes to planning and organizing (Hill & Brodin, 2004).

In summary, classroom management is considered a primary concern for teachers in all specialized subjects of SLs, music, art, drama and physical education, due to the unique nature and structure of these specialized subjects. However, the precise way in which classroom management affects each subject area varies.

Experiencing Isolation. BTs report a sense of isolation and an intense desire to feel accepted by students, parents, teachers and administrators. Yet, finding a place in the school culture and establishing a network of professional relationships is challenged by the harried pace of school, physical isolation from other teachers, unfamiliarity with individuals, the school context, and the established social and political structure. Furthermore, specialist teachers face deeper challenges, because they are often an island on their own.

Second Languages. SL teachers often discover that they are the only specialists in their school. In small towns, they may be the only SL teacher in a large geographic region Folliott (2012), thus having no one to share teaching stories – of woe and triumph. "Without these means of contact, integration into the school team and jurisdiction takes longer and is harder to do. The direct consequences are isolation and alienation, which new teachers frequently have to bear" (Billingsley, 2004; Kirsch, 2006; Macdonald, 1999, in Karsenti, Collin, Villeneuve, Dumouchel, & Roy, 2008, p.17).

Other factors contributing to isolation include "a lack of team spirit and time, which can be obstacles to collegial support, resulting in a different kind of isolation. This isolation may be compounded: it is both inherent in entry to the profession and reinforced by teaching in French in an English-speaking environment" (Karsenti, Collin, Villeneuve, Dumouchel, & Roy, 2008, p. 45).

> Collaboration with colleagues will lighten the burden and make the efforts more fruitful and rewarding. Teachers of the less widely taught and used languages could well profit from such internet exchanges, helping them to overcome the sense of isolation many experience in their teaching situation (The Impact of New Information Technologies and Internet on the Teaching of Foreign Languages & on the Role of Teachers of a Foreign Language, 2002, p. 13).

Technology provides the advantages of being able to e-communicate instantly with others and to have instant access to sharing a wealth of information, such as websites, podcasts, and other interactive SL tools, which can help break

the feeling of being isolated as a SL teacher. Novice SL teachers need to be

aware of the consultants and resources available to them within their school

district, as well as other SL teachers teaching their language in other schools. If

professional development opportunities arise, it is critical that administrators

support their SL BTs in permitting them to attend such learning opportunities.

This will allow the BTs a chance to meet other SL teachers in other schools,

thereby being able to forge longer term supportive relationships from their own

classroom.

   Music. Music teachers report two facets of isolation – physical and

professional. Ingersoll (2012) recently found a link between BT participation in

induction programs and their retention. It was concluded that the strength of the

effect depended on the type of support BTs received. The factors with the

strongest effects were having a MT from one's subject area and having common

planning and collaboration time in that subject area.

   Thompson's (1988) American study identified beginning music teachers

relying primarily on other music teachers in other schools for help. An Australian

study, conducted by Ballantyne (2007) discussed that beginning music teachers

felt that it was due to the nature of the subject area, in being the lone music

teacher in the school and the limited number of music classes, that they saw

themselves as a "one-man band." McCormack and Thomas (2003) echo that

notion that such physical isolation from other music teachers exacerbates the

difficulties faced by early-career music teachers. Nimmo (1989) identified music

teachers feeling that "nobody cares" because they have no other teachers who can directly understand or offer support within their school.

Art. Like SL and music teachers, art teachers deal with isolation as one of their most profound and ongoing problems. As described by Wood (2008), "art teachers are usually loners in most school settings being the only teacher in their field." This is particularly true for BTs (Milbrandt, 2006). Although there are seminars, professional development workshops and calls for working with student-teachers, there is typically no interaction among art teachers. The limited number of art teachers employed in a school or district may compound the isolation issues for the overwhelming majority of art teachers, teaching in seclusion from other colleagues in the same discipline.

Drama. Similar to SL, music and art teachers, drama teachers are also commonly faced with the feeling of isolation, in being the only drama educator on staff (Anderson, 2003). Although this special status can be empowering, when a BT is struggling with the physical ecology and demands of the school, growth will not occur for critical reflection if they are consistently isolated (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992).

Beginning Physical Education Teachers. As in the areas of SL, music, art and drama, BPETs reported experiencing isolation and reality shock as they moved into their first teaching positions (Bain, 1990; Stroot, 1996). This is further intensified in the following two sections, which identifies marginalization of the subject matter and perception of the program within the school, as well as relationships with colleagues and parents.

In summary, isolation is considered a serious concern for teachers in all specialized subjects of SLs, music, art, drama and physical education, often because there are the only teachers of the subject area on site, and also because they are the only ones who understand the problems and issues related to the uniqueness of their subject matter. Isolation can be overcome to some extent by connecting with a similar subject area specialist located within another school site and in communication with the subject area consultant, if such support is available within the school district. The potential of e-communication remains to be investigated.

Administrative Support. All teachers need to know and feel that their administration supports and values the subjects they teach. Administrative support is even more vital for subject-area specialist teachers and for retaining their programs.

Second Languages. "School administrators need to be convinced that there is a relationship between second language learning and cultural appreciation" (Panetta, 1999, p. 4). In offering SL programs, administrators need to be made aware of how they can better support their SL teacher. FSL teachers, like other SL teachers, frequently report that there is a lack of moral support and respect for SLs by school administrators and non SL colleagues (Lapkin, MacFarlane & Vandergift, 2006). In their research on FSL in Canada, one FSL teacher commented that there is "A total lack of comprehension on the part of the staff" (p. 31). Administrators are known to place little value on their SL program. Lapkin, MacFarlane and Vandergift (2006) concluded that:

a lack of administrative support is manifested in many ways, including:

excluding core French from the planning process and cross-curricular

opportunities; loss of French time for other subject needs; lack of

administrative responsibility for misbehaving students; excluding core

French teachers from school events and meetings; and creating a

perception among core French teachers that their input was not valued.

Lapkin, MacFarlane and Vandergift (2006) additionally recognized the

following challenges in teaching a SL: timetabling of the SL, availability of

classrooms, class sizes and supply teachers. All these factors leave the SL teacher

overall with feeling a lack of school support. Administrators need to make an

effort to demonstrate to their specialist teachers starting early in the year that they

are valued and the subjects they teach are important. Administrators must also

create this feeling of acceptance and tolerance amongst all staff members so that

specialist teachers feel part of their school community and are seen and treated as

equals compared to their colleagues. It is most critical for beginning non-core

subject area teachers.

Music. Similar to SL teachers, music teachers report a lack of

administrators who have adequate knowledge of the music teaching context and

understanding of the importance of music programs (Schieb, 2004). The problem

is further exacerbated with new music teachers. Deal and Chatman (1989)

examined the adjustment strategies of 100 beginning music teachers in a large

urban school district. Seventy-five percent of those teachers reported trial and

error as their primary mode of adjustment to the school. Most described minimal

help from administrators. These teachers reported a reliance on students, rather than the school personnel, to gain fundamental information about the school.

The problem is further compounded when school music teachers who are unsatisfied with their professional life report feeling undervalued as music teachers (Nimmo, 1986) due to a perceived lack of support from their administration (Krueger, 2000), students, (Heston, Dedrick, Skinner & Cain, 1996) or parents and other teachers (Gordon, 2000).

Furthermore, Gardner's American study (2010) determined that music teachers' perceptions of the extent of support and recognition from their administrators had the most significant effect on retention.

Art. Comparable to SL and music teachers, art teachers, especially BTs, may often feel isolated within their departments, lack power and prestige amidst content specialists, lack opportunities for collaboration, and feel compelled to make our programs visible in order to receive support, especially in times of rising operational costs and declining faculty replacements (Henry & Lazzari, 2007, p. 50).

Art teachers' issues are linked to experiencing a lack of support from their administrators, who ultimately decide on the structure of their programs. Art teachers may lack the skills necessary to be able to educate administration and parents to justify their cause.

Drama. McPhail (2004) highlights the need for administrators to hire drama specialists in their schools. She remarked that, "if drama is not cut entirely, it becomes the subject that the new teacher [as a non-drama specialist]

receives in his or her timetable, or the subject given to the teacher who annoyed the principal most recently" (McPhail, 2004, p. 32), leaving teachers who had been trained to teach other subjects, "stuck" teaching drama. McPhail recommends that, "if schools want to offer drama, they should make it a priority to hire teachers with experience and/or training in drama, or commit to training the poor teacher who gets stuck teaching drama" (p. 32).

   Physical Education. Like teachers of SLs, music, art, and drama, PE teachers also report weak or non-existent administrative support. Stroot, Collier, O`Sullivan and England (1994) described PE teachers feeling a lack of respect for their subject matter because of how the subject was scheduled by administrators. Often, little concern is given to size of classes or appropriate groupings of students, which demonstrated implicitly that PE was rated quite low in the overall scheme of the school.

   In summary, administrative support is perceived as being extremely important by all subject specialist teachers; however, administrative support is frequently recognized as being weak for teachers of SLs, music, art, drama and PE. Perhaps it is due to the nature of the subject areas and the lack of background knowledge the administrators have in such fields or possibly, because they do not recognize such subjects as core courses. Subject-area specialists experience greater success with their programs and retention in the profession when administrative support is strong, resulting in them feeling valued and recognized within their school. In many cases, subject-area specialists find themselves having to justify their programs and educating their administrators.

Specialized Subject Advocacy. Advocacy is a critical task for all specialist teachers.

Second Languages. When preparing for a language teaching career, very few SL teachers thought that advocacy for language programs would be a critical part of our job. However, moving into the first year of teaching, our role as language teachers has invariably required us to quickly become articulate spokespeople for our field and to learn to speak up for language education (Abbott, 2009, p. 1).

During times of economic challenges and education cutbacks, SL teachers may be required to fight for the survival and expansion of their SL programs. BTs must learn quickly what their veteran colleagues do:

> (t)he reality is that on a daily basis, each of us is involved in advocacy for our craft, for our students, and for our programs, in both very visible ways — such as organizing school-wide programs that show off the talents of our students—to very small and seemingly ordinary acts, such as convincing a student to continue his or her language study the following year or enthusiastically telling someone what you do for a living and why it is so rewarding as a career (Abbott, 2009, p. 1).

Music. Advocacy is critical for music teachers as well. Gardner (2010) notes that the percentage of students taking music classes commonly decreases at the secondary level. Because music courses at this level are often not mandated by the state or province, they generally become elective coursework (Stewart, 1991) and are always at-risk. When music courses are electives, music teachers

could view their courses and jobs as expendable. In times of cutbacks, band

teachers often find themselves in a position of having to justify their cause due to

the costly expense of their programs, and having to fundraise for band trips and to

maintain their instruments. Band teachers may have to advocate that their subject

should exist in times of budget cuts and, furthermore, they may be met with

resistance from the students who are required to be in their class in mandatory

music programs.

　　　Art. Art teachers also find themselves in the position of having to justify

and explain the viability of the art education program, similar to that of SL and

music teachers. Champlain (1997) pointed out that art teachers do not want to

have to "sell" their programs. "Many art teachers, [especially BTs], lack the

knowledge and skills necessary to educate and enlighten principals, parents, and

classroom teachers in order to gain and maintain support" (Champlain, p. 19 in

Harrell, 2007).

　　　Drama. McPhail (2004) states that drama is one of the first "luxury

items" to be eliminated when cutbacks must be made and financial support from

the government has commonly been low. Drama teachers frequently have to

advocate for their cause and showcase their programs in order to maintain them

and attract students.

　　　Beginning Physical Education Teachers. Comparable to teachers of SLs,

music and art, PE teachers must continually take a stand for quality physical

education. BPETs frequently report having to justify the status of their program

and feel somewhat inadequate and unprepared to promote their programs to

parents, students, colleagues, administrators and the community. BPETs in O'Sullivan's study (1989) had problems establishing relationships with parents and colleagues. Both BPETs were bothered by what they perceived as the low status of their subject matter, in addition to the need to gain attention and respect from administrators and parents.

An additional concern for PE teachers was noted by Stroot (1996). He identified marginalization of PE as a subject area and concerns about legitimacy as serious issues among physical educators. As PE teachers struggle for legitimacy of their subject matter, they are in search of establishing their "place" within the school as a subject-area specialist. PE teachers likely want their subject matter to be judged on par with other subjects in the school. The paradox is that they struggle for something their colleagues in most cases neither understand nor support. Furthermore, the marginalization of PE is further compounded by the overshadowing effect of the prior experiences of parents, other teachers, and administrators. Sheehy (2006) determined that this was due in part to that fact that 40 percent of parents know "nothing at all" about their child's PE program. PE teachers need to take pride in their program and share information about it with others, including administrators, parents, and community members. Physical education needs to be seen as being an important aspect of students' overall educational experience.

In summary, subject-area advocacy is considered an imperative task and responsibility for teachers in all specialized subjects of SLs, music, art, drama and physical education. These teachers often have to justify the existence of their

programs, recruit students for subsequent years, showcase their students and fight

for their cause. At times, they are responsible for building a new program from

the ground up, with limited materials, sourcing additional funding or fundraising

to keep their programs going, and educating their administrators, students, parents

and other teachers about the importance and value of their programs.

Subject Identity Formation for Specialist Teachers. Teachers in

specialist fields have to be mindful of who they are, because much is to be gained

in knowing who they are behind their subject matter and the students whom they

teach. Identity formation is an important process for BTs – one meriting more

specific attention here.

From Olsen's (2008) perspective, novice teacher development is circular

even as it is also forward-moving: "a teacher is always collapsing the past,

present, and future into a complex mélange of professional beliefs, goals,

memories, and predictions while enacting practice" (p. 24).

"Learning to teach is always the process of becoming … a time of

formation and transformation, of scrutiny into what one is doing and who one

becomes" (Britzman, 1991, as cited in Johnston, 1994, p. 80). The shift from

student to teacher is always marked by a growing recognition of the new

institutional role and by the complex interaction between different and sometimes

conflicting perspectives, beliefs, and practices.

As BTs fail to meet school demands and personal expectations, they enter

a period of (re)discovery of themselves as teachers, trying to cope with the daily

requirements of their work and experience a "crisis" of identity (Flores & Day,

2006). Coping with the demands of teaching and its inherent tasks entails a continuous process of analyzing one's own beliefs and practices, which involves making sense of and (re)interpreting one's own values and experiences. Becoming a teacher requires the (trans)formation of the teacher and professional identity, a process described by Sachs (2001) as being open, negotiated, and shifting. She states that, "for teachers this is mediated by their own experience in schools and outside of schools as well as their own beliefs and values about what it means to be a teacher and the type of teacher they aspire to be" (2001, p. 6). A sense of professional identity will contribute to teachers' motivation, self-efficacy, commitment, and job satisfaction (Day, Stobart, Kington, Sammons & Last, 2003) and is, therefore, a key factor in becoming and remaining an effective teacher. A strong sense of moral purpose and positive emotional professional identity and agency are critical to teachers' own motivation and capacity to teach to their best (Day & Gu, 2010). Creating and maintaining identity entails a "continuing site of struggle" (Maclure, 1993, p. 313), which is located in a given social and cultural space (Coldron & Smith, 1999; Sachs, 2001), and is dependent upon teachers' views of themselves and of the context in which they work. During the early years in the profession, BTs develop their professional identities "by combining parts of their past, including their own experience in school and in teacher preparation, with pieces of the their present" (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p. 1029). This is associated with "a sense of purpose for teaching and being a teacher" (Rex & Nelson, 2004, p. 1317).

Questions of identity also play a key role as new teachers seek to learn situationally relevant approaches to their subject matter. Feiman-Nemser (2003) reminds new teachers that their "learning agenda is intimately bound up with the personal struggle to craft a public identity" (p. 26). Featherstone (1993) reiterates this point, noting that "the new teacher is constantly on stage and urgently needs to develop a performing self with whom he or she can live comfortably" (p. 101). Neophyte teachers are learning about their environments in addition to learning about classroom skills (Darling-Hammond, 1990). Lave (1992) makes explicit the relationship between learning and identity: "learning is, in this purview, more basically a process of coming to be – of forging identities in activities in the world" (p. 3).

Flores (2006) reminds us of the complicated process that BTs go through as they try to negotiate their stories to live by upon entering their new professional landscapes. She notes that identity shifting is "a process that involves complex interplay between different, and sometimes conflicting perspectives, beliefs, and practices that are accompanied by the development of a new identity" (p. 2021). Identity was recognized to be a major area of distress for the novice teacher, particularly for the subject specialty teachers of SLs, music, art, drama and physical education.

Second Languages. Language is part of one's identity and is used to convey this identity to others. As a result, SL learning has a significant impact on the social being of the learner, because it involves the adoption of new social and cultural behaviours and ways of thinking.

Non-core subject area teachers, in particular SL teachers, are positioned as the subject of their sociocultural activity, and language teaching is influenced by the nature of the authentic social, cultural, historic and political contexts within which teachers are expected to perform their role (Cross, 2006). Cross describes how teachers' identities reside in how they, as the subjects of their system, make sense of their roles within that system and how they act within it. The teachers bring to that system their own experiences, history, and background, from which they make sense of the system and make decisions on how then to act within it. "Who language teachers are – and by extension then, what language teaching is – is grounded within, and emerges from, their contextual, social, cultural, and historical circumstances" (Cross, 2006, p. 7).

This has specific implications for language teachers, who are positioned as the subject of their sociocultural activity. "Classroom language teaching, in practice, is influenced by the nature of the very real social, cultural, historic, and political contexts within which teachers are expected to perform their role" (Cross, 2006, p. 1). The literature has only recently asserted

> the need to know more about language teachers: what they do, how they think, what they know, and how they learn. Specifically, we need to understand more about how language teachers conceive of what they do: what they know about language teaching, how they think about their classroom practices (Freeman & Richards, 1996 in Vélez-Rendón, 2002, p. 465).

The SL teacher's identity resides in how he or she, as the subject of his or her activity system, brings to that system his or her own experiences, history, and background, from which he or she makes sense of his or her role within that system and how then to act within it. As Cross (2006) writes, "'Who language teachers are' and by extension, then, 'what language teaching is' – is grounded within and emerges from, their contextual social, cultural, and historical circumstances" (p. 7). It is equally important to look at how SL teachers' lives outside the classroom shape their teaching. Many SL teachers experience professional and even social marginalization, both in schools and outside them (Casanave & Schecter, 1997; Johnston, 1999; Pennington, 1992). Richards (2002) interviewed 21 core French teachers in Ontario, Canada to discover that the majority of them viewed themselves as marginalized. "Because core French teachers are often 'invisible' and not involved in interacting regularly with others in the school community, negative stereotypes may be formed about them and FSL in general" (in Lapkin, Mady & Arnott, 2006, p. 50).

The SL teacher's identity plays a role in the construction of classroom practices (Varghese, Morgan, Johnston & Johnson, 2005). Hence, "the teacher's own identity can be seen as a critical component in the sociocultural and socio-political landscape of the language classroom" (p. 22). Moreover, individual teachers arrive in the schools with numerous contradictions and tensions in their belief system. SL teachers additionally experience a process of being, which is inevitably filled with conflict and difficulty.

Loewen (2007) suggests that SL "teachers may be confronted with students' opinions about error correction since students are on the receiving end and often have their own views of it and how it should happen in the classroom" (p. 1). In some cases, students feel humiliated and uncomfortable being corrected. As well, some SL teachers must overcome their own feelings about having been corrected as a student (i.e. reconstruct their own identity within the structure of their school) in order to act as appropriate models of the language and as coaches who understand how to balance accuracy and fluency.

Teacher identity is profoundly individualized and psychological because it concerns the self-image and other-image of particular teachers. "It is a social matter because the formation, negotiation, and growth of teacher identity is a social process which takes place in institutional settings such as teacher education programs and schools" (Varghese, Morgan, Johnston & Johnson, 2005, p. 39). Ramanathan (2002) states that:

> it is crucial for all language teachers to engage in peeling away the layers that make up the common sense or the natural if only to understand how their knowledge/cognitions are being shaped. Encouraging this meta-awareness of their socialization process is the first step toward making them critical, proactive educators. (p. 65)

SL teachers must reconcile their identities as SL users (speakers, writers, readers, cultural brokers) and SL teachers, much as I did in describing my personal experiences in Chapter One.

Music. The struggle with identity also faces music teachers. Dust (2006) revealed how accomplished musicians who become secondary music teachers negotiate and reconcile their musician identity with their teacher identity. Her multiple case study approach examined six secondary school teachers who had extensive playing and performing backgrounds. Dust (2006) concluded that creating and maintaining a well-developed musician identity is the most fundamental and significant strategy participants used to negotiate the tensions between their musician and teacher identities. The study also determined that the "highest form of mutuality and reconciliation between the musician and teacher identities of the six participants is the amalgamation of their teacher self-concepts and musician self-concepts to form a music teacher identity" (Dust, 2006, xii).

Dalladay's (2011) study in Great Britain noted that "teachers come to their vocation via a range of routes." He studied secondary music teachers' definition of how advanced in music a learner has to get before he/she can be considered "a musician". He concluded that "who they are" as music teachers and how their biographies were formed, greatly shape their understanding of the musicality of young people.

Art. Acknowledging one's teacher identity is seen to be as critical for art teachers as it is for SL learners and musicians. Milbrandt (2006) describes art educators at all levels of experience in public schools as being confronted with issues of identity and purpose. Additionally, as beginning art teachers transfer their university coursework and field experiences into the art classroom (Valli, 1992), the BT often reverts back to childhood memories of favourite teachers,

imitates his or her own supervising MT, or relies heavily on pre-packaged art curriculums. Art teachers commonly struggle with bridging the connections between theory and practice, assisting students in interpreting, adapting, and translating what they have learned about art in coursework and how to use it in the classroom (Kowalchuk, 2000; Zimmerman, 1994).

  Drama. Similar to SL, music and art teachers, beginning drama teachers struggle with subject identity in their development during their first year on the job. Gold (1996) summarizes this feeling as a struggle for BTs between fantasy and survival, or the "loss of a dream" (p. 554-558). She argues that BTs approach their placements and first teaching assignments with "a dream" but that this dream may be eroded by poor pre-service training, poor practicum placement, poor initial teaching placement class management issues, and poor support from colleagues and school administrators. The inexperienced and often unconfident BT seems to be vulnerable at this dream stage and often does not make it through the next and most challenging stage – the survival stage (Ryan, 1986). In the survival phase, the BT is: "fighting for his or her professional life, and often for a sense of worth and identity as well. For most beginning teachers, the survival stage is the biggest challenge of their lives" (Ryan, p. 13).

  Physical Education. Likewise, identity also emerged as a major theme for BPETs, one similar to that of SL, music, art and drama teachers. "Teachers cannot separate their personal identities from their professional ones" (Estola, 2003, p. 181). Novice teachers experience complexities within themselves. Konukman, Agbuga, Erdogan, Zorba and Giyasettin (2010) allude to this shifting

identity as they looked at the conflicts that become apparent when physical

educators try to negotiate their role between teacher and coach. Flores and Day

(2006) reiterate this process as BTs struggle with negotiating their personal vision

of who they want to be within the structures of the school culture. At times,

Schaefer (2010) explains, BTs are negotiating their personal and professional

landscapes while hanging onto the imagined stories of who they wanted to be as

teachers. The stories of who they were going to be collided with who they

expected to be as BPETs (Clandinin, Huber, Humber, Murphy, Orr, Pearce &

Steeves, 2006).

In summary, teacher identity is a place where the individual discovers

balance, compromise, and adaptability with the requirements of teaching and the

personal self of the teacher. How teachers cope and reconcile this dilemma of

needing to change as a person to satisfy professional demands, and yet struggling

to maintain a clear sense of connection with the original person, is at the heart of

this study. Teachers shape their work, as well as being shaped by their work

(Britzman, 1991). Subject specialist teachers in the fields of SLs, music, art,

drama and physical education require time to shift from their personal selves in

their subject area, into their professional selves, and they need to be cognizant of

the shifting that takes place as they negotiate their new roles.

Extracurricular Demands and Responsibilities. Some subject-area

specialists experience a wealth of extracurricular demands, in addition to their

already challenging teaching assignment. Teachers of music, drama and PE

reported their additional responsibilities as being added stressors, thus leading

them to feel overworked.

Music. Beginning music teachers in an Australian study conducted by

Ballantyne (2007) emphasized the "high workload and multiple responsibilities

associated with the extracurricular music programme" (p. 184). Almost two

decades earlier Nimmo (1989) reported the same frustration by high school music

teachers, done to address this problem. Music teachers in Nimmo's study

identified too many evening commitments, too many athletic commitments, band

trips, not enough time with family and constantly being overworked due to the

need to continually prepare for the next performance.

Drama. Drama teachers can be plagued with being responsible for the

school play or musical, quite commonly with little staff support (Ramsey, 2000).

Concerns about the overloading of BTs certainly apply to drama educators,

leaving them feeling overwhelmed by their extracurricular expectations and time

commitments.

Physical Education. PE teachers equally expressed feeling overextended

with their extracurricular responsibilities of coaching and heavy time demands

placed on them (Bain, 1990). In addition to their in-class assignment, it can also

include intramurals, hosting tournaments, athletic events, and coaching multiple

teams.

In summary, specialist teachers of music, drama and physical education all

report a similar challenge of feeling overworked by their extracurricular duties. It

becomes a huge time commitment and takes away from their personal time before

or after school, or both. Perhaps, administrators and colleagues are simply

unaware of the additional "practice" time required behind-the-scenes to mount a

concert, stage a production or to rehearse a team before a game. For a subject-

area specialist, the extracurricular demands are unfortunately par for the course,

and without such rehearsals or practices, the school would not experience a

concert, school play or a championship trophy for the winning team.

This section has presented themes common to all teachers in the subject

specialized areas of SLs, music art, drama, and physical education. These mutual

themes include: *classroom management*; *isolation* from being their school's only

subject teacher; *administrative support*; *specialized subject advocacy*; and their

struggle with their own teacher *identity*, as they negotiate between their sense of

selves, and transition into their new role as 'teacher' within their isolated subject

area. *Extracurricular demands and responsibilities* were a common concern for

music, drama and physical education teachers. I also experienced these themes

when I myself was a BT, as noted in Chapter One.

As BTs, specifically those who are the lone specialists in their schools,

negotiate their "teacher" selves and make sense of their shifting identity, it is

valuable to examine whether or not they were able to forge any relationships with

other teachers, either formally or informally. We now turn to the process of

mentoring.

Mentoring: Studies and Findings

Mentoring as a form of new teacher preparation is based on human

relationships and cannot be easily quantified (or even qualified) by policy

interventions and educational bureaucracies (Little, 1990). The act of mentoring can vary depending on factors such as release time for teachers, compensation, and ability to access professional development activities (Achinstein & Athanases, 2006). An examination of the process of mentoring helps us understand the interpersonal dynamics of mentors as they examine the context and content in their daily work with novices.

Mentorship programs are designed to foster communication with, and develop skills of, BTs. Ideally, they provide BTs with the appropriate support and resources. Previous research has found that mentor support positively influences BT satisfaction in the teaching profession and workplace (Carter & Francis, 2001; Darling Hammond, 2003).

Historically, the teaching occupation has not had the kind of structured induction and initiation processes common to many white-collar occupations and characteristic of the traditional professions (Lortie, 1975; Tyack, 1974; Waller, 1932). To help teachers deal with the complexity of challenges they face, a variety of mentorship programs have been established internationally. Howe (2006) conducted an international review of exemplary teacher induction programs and concluded that those with the most exceptional features took place in Australia, Britain, Canada, France, Japan, New Zealand, and the United States. The most successful programs included opportunities for experts and BTs to learn together in a supportive environment promoting time for collaboration, reflection and acculturation into the profession of teaching.

School jurisdictions have recognized that they must take a more active role in mentoring and supporting novice teachers and are moving beyond the approach that assumes that professional development is the individual's responsibility. By offering mentoring as one means of addressing the current needs of both the leaders and the system, school jurisdictions recognize the value of mentoring and often collaborate with provincial teachers' associations to create pilot projects to explore mentorship.

Over the past two decades, mentoring programs have become the dominant form of teacher induction in the West (Fideler & Haselkorn, 1999). In Ingersoll and Kralik's (2004) review of 150 empirical studies, they report that mentorship programs provide teachers "a 'bridge' from student of teaching to teacher of students"(p. 3) and are designed for those who have already completed basic teacher training.

Mentorship programs have two basic approaches: "*one-shot mentorship*" and "*job-embedded mentorship*". One-shot mentorship activities include classes, workshops, orientations, seminars, and conferences while job-embedded mentorship includes working in grade group meetings, professional learning communities, and inter-visitations. The latter provides "newcomers with a local guide" (Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004) and is recognized as a more successful form of mentorship.

The BTs in this study were intended to experience both types of mentorship. "One shot" mentorship for these BTs entailed the sessions organized and prepared by the ATA local, in which the MTs and APs were invited to attend.

The BTs were encouraged to express their input through a needs assessment throughout the program, to address the types of sessions they valued and needed. The BTs were also anticipated to experience "job-embedded mentorship", in working with a MT(s) within or outside of their school, setting up meeting times on their own terms with the MT. Many mentorship programs include activities of both approaches, due to varied constraints faced by organizations (e.g. budget, availability of suitable personnel, duration and frequency of possible meetings, and program design).

Although Ingersoll and Kralik (2004) confirm that "current research does not yet provide for definitive evidence of the value of mentoring programs in keeping new teachers from leaving the profession" (p. 15), it is also clear that careful attention to how we nurture novice teachers through their first years of on-the-job training will lead to a better start in their teaching careers, producing more effective teachers, and far better learning outcomes for the students in their classrooms. In the words of Linda Darling-Hammond, "professionalism starts from the proposition that knowledge must inform practice; its major goal is to ensure that all individuals permitted to practice are adequately prepared" (1990, p. 288).

The Mentoring Institute (1997) describes a new mentoring paradigm involving today's novice teachers who, although better educated, "still need a mentor's practical know-how and wisdom (craft knowledge) that can be acquired only experientially. Therefore, many organizations are instituting formal mentoring programs as a cost-effective way to upgrade skills, enhance

recruitment and retention and increase job satisfaction" (Jossi, 1997, p. 52).

According to Ganser (2002), mentorship for BTs, which began to emerge about

30 years ago in the United States, has never been so common as today.

Mentoring BTs today may take many forms and depending on the context, it may

assume any number of shapes.

Other researchers have identified mentoring as a significant factor in

increasing feelings of job satisfaction (Carter & Francis, 2001; Darling-

Hammond, 2003; Evertson & Smithey, 2000) and reducing feelings of isolation

experienced by BTs (Schlichte, Yssel & Merbler, 2005). As with induction

programs, the characteristics and composition of mentorship programs vary

widely (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Furthermore, the roles, knowledge, and skills

associated with being a mentor range from informal colleague to trained,

knowledgeable advisor (Ontario College of Teachers, n.d.).

Numerous studies, including those of Algozzine, Gretes, Queen & Cowan-

Hathcock (2007) and Serpell (2000), have examined mentorship programs to

describe their effective characteristics. Hellsten, Prytula, Ebanks and Lai (2009)

consider the results from the studies above as suggesting that "compatibility

between a mentor and a BT becomes an important factor in effective mentoring

(Russell & Adams, 1997) as does the desire on the part of the BT for a mentor to

provide both instructional and emotional support" (Odell & Ferraro, 1992) (p.

707).

Despite more than 500 published education or management journal

articles focusing on mentorship throughout 1987-1997 (Russell & Adams, 1997)

and many more since that date, few established mentorship models exist. Many

mentorship programs inadvertently draw on the apprenticeship model

(Hargreaves, 1988) where an expert teacher passes on knowledge and skills to a

BT. Anderson and Shannon (1988) suggested an alternative model of educational

mentorship. Their early model based on the premise that mentoring in education

was "fundamentally a nurturing process" (p. 40), defined functions of mentoring

as teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counselling, and befriending. Maynard and

Furlong (1995) conceptualized the role of teacher mentors as a three-stage

developmental process: (a) working as a collaborative teacher; (b) acting as an

instructor through observation and feedback; and (c) positioning oneself as co-

enquirer, promoting critical reflection on teaching and learning.

Mentorship Alone is Not Enough

Although mentorship is often emphasized as being important for new

teachers, mentorship is only one piece of an effective induction program, as found

in the longitudinal study conducted by Couture and Servage (2012). Teacher

participants reported that, when their MTs proved ineffective, they turned

elsewhere to informal sources of support. For example, one participant

responded: "I just finished a three-year mentorship program. Considering that no

one teaches in my subject area, it was only somewhat helpful. I get much more

help from a group of teachers I get together with. But mentorship was helpful

with classroom management, organization, those kinds of things" (p. 25). The

study concluded that professional learning communities are as valuable, if not

more valuable, than mentorship in BTs' first year. Participants in each year of the

study commented that they turned to collaborative professional development when a mentoring relationship was ineffective or nonexistent. They drew on such communities to get advice, locate and develop resources, lesson plans, and become part of the school community.

In addition, Couture and Servage's study confirmed two themes that consistently emerged in the literature on induction and mentorship programs. Although "mentorship is a cornerstone of an effective induction program, it is not, in and of itself, sufficient to meet the needs of new teachers" (2012, p. 8). First, mentorship programs must have certain components if they are to be successful, which include being voluntary rather than mandatory; if both parties teach the same grade or subject(s); and if the MT and mentee have regular embedded professional development time to work together. Mentorship programs that do not embody these elements and are poorly run are, at best, neutral. At their worst, they create negative feelings and perpetuate substandard practice (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Second, mentorship alone is not enough to draw BTs fully and meaningfully into a professional school community.

Mentor Teachers

For a variety of reasons, an experienced colleague is particularly suited to the MT role. "The most available source of expertise is teachers themselves: to analyze their own teaching on the basis of objective data, to observe others' classrooms, and record data teachers cannot record themselves, to help one another analyze these data and make decisions about alternative strategies"

(Acheson & Gall, 1980, as quoted in Heller, 2004, p. 194). Jonson (2008)

describes the qualities which make a good MT:

> a skilled teacher has a thorough command of the curriculum being taught;
>
> is able to transmit effective teaching strategies; can communicate openly;
>
> is a good listener; has strong interpersonal skills; has credibility with peers
>
> and administrators; is sensitive to the needs of the beginning teacher; is
>
> not overly judgmental, demonstrates an eagerness to learn; and
>
> demonstrates a commitment to improving the academic achievement of all
>
> students (p. 11).

Mentorship programs can also "vary as to how they select, prepare, assign

and compensate the MTs themselves. How carefully mentors are selected is an

issue for programs, as is whether selection to be a mentor is really voluntary or a

semi-mandatory assignment" (Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004, p. 3). Some programs

include training for MTs and devote attention to the match between MT and BT,

by grade or subject-area; some do not.

Studies show that other desirable qualities in a MT include wisdom,

caring, humour, nurturing, and commitment to the profession (Hardcastle, 1988;

Kay, 1990; Odell; 1990).

Mentoring in the 21st Century

Feiman-Nemser (2001) proposed "educative mentoring" (p. 17), which

consists of emotional support (such as a comfortable relationship and

environment for the BT) and professional support based on understanding of how

teachers learn. Spindler and Biott (2000) shared a parallel view of mentorship,

where the relationship adjusts from "structured support" to "emerging colleagueship" (p. 281).

Glazer and Hannafin (2006) introduced a mentorship model which focuses on relationships between teachers in their professional learning development. Their model examines how to initiate collaboration and collegial support within a professional teaching and learning community. Elements of collaboration among teacher colleagues may involve sharing and even creating learning activities (Glazer & Hannafin, 2006; McCotter, 2001). One important finding is that MTs, in addition to their regular assignment and workload, are expected to provide the emotional and developmental support BTs need, but may not be willing to do so (Glazer & Hannafin, 2006). Although previous research suggests numerous benefits for both the MT and BT based on collaborative efforts, these models of mentorship falsely assume that MTs would always be willing to aid BT development.

The difficulty in establishing a mentorship model may be due to the lack of research focusing on the design and process of mentorship, in comparison to the many studies that examine the outcome of mentorship programs (Bozeman & Feeney, 2007). It is imperative that mentorship programs not only focus on the negative or positive outcomes of the programs themselves, but also on the components of mentorship, especially the characteristics and quality of the MT (Carver & Feiman-Nemser, 2008). The importance of establishing a mentorship model is a crucial step in providing a structured means to compare and investigate the effectiveness of current mentorship implementations.

Although mentorship has been described as a cornerstone of an effective induction program, in and of itself, it is insufficient to meet BTs' needs. Mentorship programs, according to the research, are more likely to be successful if they are voluntary, if both parties teach the same grade or subject(s), and if the mentee and the MT have regular embedded professional development time to meet and work together. Mentorship programs that do not embody these elements and are poorly executed, are neutral. They can even create negative feelings and perpetuate substandard practices (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

Many schools are viable learning communities. While not always geared specifically to meeting the needs of the BT, these learning communities tend to focus on developing resources, planning, and designing teaching strategies – all basic skills that new teachers need to master.

Administrator Involvement in Mentoring

School administrators play a significant and critical role in determining the school culture, and by extension, the way in which BTs coming on board will experience their work. When administrators' support is proactive and intentional, they have been found to be most effective. Some actions that supportive administrators have taken to facilitate new teachers, based on the feedback of BTs in Couture and Servage's study (2012), include: (1) helping the BT to build relationships with colleagues; (2) frequently touching base with the BT; (3) limiting extracurricular expectations; (4) creating embedded professional development time for mentorship, professional learning communities, and classroom observations; (5) ensuring that BTs have a school orientation; (6) reducing the

complexity of teaching assignments; (7) keeping an open-door policy for BTs to feel comfortable and having a safe space to discuss their concerns; (8) helping BTs access appropriate professional development opportunities such as district mentorship programs; and, (9) helping BTs with discipline issues and classroom management.

The administrators who were perceived as being most supportive of BTs were those who visited their classrooms, either formally or informally. Acting in a supervisory capacity, this confirmed their commitment to BTs' professional growth through ensuring that supportive learning opportunities and collegial relationships were available.

BTs usually experience either effective or ineffective support from their administration. Unfortunately, not all BTs experience strong administrative support, and at times, are left to experience their first year on their own. BTs recognize that administrators are quite often overloaded themselves, and it is not that they do not want to be helpful; they are simply managing their own workloads. From an intention perspective, they care and want to help; however, they often remain inaccessible. One participant in Couture and Servage's study (2012) commented: "It's not that [administrators] don't want to be helpful; they've just got such huge loads themselves" (p. 21). Another participant observed that administrators "can be very human but they're not accessible. They are so busy with their own stuff that you can barely ever talk to them about anything" (p. 21).

At times the administrator can be plagued by multiple responsibilities, including having to manage the school as well as teaching classes, which can stress him/her to the limit. This causes him/her to have difficulty providing active, visible support to BTs. Frequent turnover of administrators can also make receiving feedback and support rather challenging for BTs.

The administrative team is instrumental in creating and supporting a positive school environment for all staff and students. As Ferriter and Norton (2004) noted, administrators who are supportive and accessible are the most effective, and when these individuals develop positive relationships with the staff, everyone, including parents and students, benefits from the collegiality. Administrative support can greatly affect the rate of teacher attrition in a school setting. Leadership is reflected in how the administration sets the tone for how staff receive, regard, and support BTs. Ultimately, they have a trickle-down effect on their school culture.

Administrators Significantly Influence the School Culture and Climate

BTs report a lack of mentorship (Hebert & Worthy, 2001). Teachers may perceive their first years of teaching in a negative light because of the unrealistic expectations and beliefs teachers themselves have about teaching (Feiman-Nemser, 1983; Marso & Pigge, 1987), or alternatively, because of the unrealistic expectations that school administrators place on them (Allen, 2000; Romano, 2008).

When teachers feel a part of the process, they are often more willing to stay. "Administrators have a great deal of influence over school climate and

teacher efficacy" (Ferriter & Norton, 2004, p. 19). Administrators should support

and encourage open two-way communication, shared leadership, and allow the

teachers to feel a sense of empowerment (Minarik, Thornton & Perreault, 2003).

Darling-Hammond (2003) concurs, stating that effective school leadership has a

"magnetic effect" that is capable of attracting accomplished teachers who are

searching for environments that will allow them to reach their peak performance

level. A lack of administrative support has been identified as a key factor in

teacher attrition (Greiner & Smith, 2009). The retention and development of

quality teachers is the responsibility of the self and the administrator. The

administrative team is instrumental in creating a supporting environment, most

especially for BTs. Brock and Grady (1997) emphasize that it is administrators

who supervise teaching in general, allocate resources and funds, are involved in

extracurricular activities, communicate expectations to the teaching staff, and

implement a vision for the school as a whole. Their leadership skills – or lack

thereof – permeate their school's structure, evolution, and culture.

A school's culture provides a compass for its members because it defines

an organization's meaning and purpose. Loosely defined, culture pertains to what

the people in a particular school value. Shared values define the basic character

of a school and give it a distinctive identity (Hoy & Hoy, 2006). For new

teachers, understanding the culture and climate of their new school can be

daunting. Their perceptions of teaching are shaped by a variety of factors related

to their work location, including the beliefs, attitudes, and practices of the people

who work there, as well as the community's expectations (Bartell, 2004).

The influence of the school's culture and climate can be a strong factor for shaping practices and beliefs of new teachers. Sometimes, those cultural practices and beliefs conflict with what is learned in their teacher preparation program. School climate reflects the supportive working conditions, with both physical and human factors necessary for a learning community. Working conditions, characterized by meeting the needs of teachers (appropriate space, materials, and support), influence BTs' decisions to remain at their school site (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). Principal leadership is critical, providing the supportive and shared leadership and creating the opportunity for shared values and vision, regardless of whether the subject matter is shared or not.

Couture and Servage's study of BTs in Alberta (2012) indicated in Year 3 that administrators have a significant impact on the experiences of BTs. They also concluded that BTs have a particularly difficult time coming into a school in which the administrator is also new, which was jointly felt by one of the APs in this study.

According to Sergiovanni (2001), the principal is in a key position to communicate the collective ideology. Sarason (1990) suggests that, unless schools become places where teachers can grow and develop, they will not be able to create optimal learning conditions for students to grow and develop. Leaders in the building have the capacity and critical responsibility for providing initial and ongoing support to all teachers, beginning with those new to the profession.

Kardos and Moore Johnson (2007) suggest that principals and school leaders should promote professional cultures that support BTs by paying closer attention to the specific needs of the BTs in their schools. BTs require concise opportunities to improve their craft; they need access to additional help with their students, their teaching, and the encouragement to ask for such help from colleagues and administrators; and, they need opportunities to contribute their skills and talents to the school community.

Kardos and Moore Johnson's data (2007) concluded that for BTs to benefit from mentoring or any other support structure, that support must be embedded into an integrated professional culture. Their day-to-day experience is otherwise isolated and uninformed. This culture of professional support needs to be created by principals through the supply of resources such as money, time, space, supplies, and assistance such as mentoring, classroom observations, and collaborative planning time. The administrative team (principals and APs) must cultivate how best to encourage experienced teachers in the induction of BTs and for their own professional growth. Leadership, as well as participation of principals and experienced teachers, will determine the support to BTs. This creates workplace cultures in schools which will become viable workplaces for the next generation of teachers.

Disparities in Perceptions of Support: Critical Perspectives on How BTs and Administrators Receive and Provide Support

Andrews, Gilbert and Martin (2006) conducted research on BTs and school administrators across fourteen school districts in the United States to

examine perceptions of support, provided by administrators and received by BTs.

The purpose of their study was to determine which support strategies were

received and valued from BTs, and what strategies had been provided by their

administrators. The groups of BTs and principals were then compared to

determine whether BTs' perceptions were consistent with what administrators

said they provided. There was a noticeable discrepancy between the supports

given to BTs and those they valued. Administrators who took the same survey

were in some cases at odds with the BT responses.

For example, Andrews, Gilbert and Martin's 2006 study revealed that only

41.9% of BTs responded that they were given opportunities to observe other

teachers, whereas 84.8% of administrators reported that they provided this

opportunity to their BTs. In the category about co-planning time with other

teachers, 84.8% of administrators reported providing this support; however, only

45% of new teachers expressed having this opportunity.

This study revealed disparities between BT responses and administrator

responses, which may indicate a problem related to perceptions. Administrators

may have assumed that the opportunity for BTs to observe each other was

informally provided; however, BTs did not perceive this to be the case.

Administrators may consider departmental, staff, and student support meetings as

times for collaboration, whereas teachers may perceive them to be more about

business than about working together to improve their teaching. Although

administrators may believe that their expectations for professional collaboration

are understood, they are however, not explicitly expressed. Collaboration may

require logistical support that administrators simply do not perceive or, at least, underestimate. Andrews, Gilbert and Martin's study (2006) also concluded that differences between responses from administrators and BTs could also have resulted from the desire of administrators to portray school support of BTs in a positive light, even though the support strategies may not have consistently been provided. As well, their research also cautioned against optional open-ended comments to presume blanket assumptions about strategies.

Studies involving the Assistant Principal in Mentoring

Schools are organized in ways that distribute responsibilities between members of an administration team. In some schools principals take direct responsibility for mentoring new teachers, while in others this responsibility is assigned to an Assistant Principal (AP). The literature regarding administrators' roles in mentoring makes little reference to the AP, but three studies were found including Mallon (2004); Bearden (2005); and Foster, Wright and McRae (2008), which are indirectly related to this study, and all make mention of the AP.

Despite many challenges, Mallon (2004) completed a study of mentorship experiences in the Northwest Territories (NWT). The study reports on positive and less positive experiences. Experienced staff were matched with BTs, who were new to the profession and/or to the NWT, from different schools, but with similar assignments. One successful mentorship team consisted of a BT on Yellowknife Bay and an AP in Yellowknife. Throughout the school year, they met for half a day each month. The AP brought resource staff from his school to observe and suggest ways to maximize instruction. In the spring, the APs' Grade

8 girls' soccer team spent time practising with and coaching the BT's new team of boys. Both teams later competed in the soccer tournament in May and the mentoring relationship was found to be beneficial.

On the other hand, in the Sahtu region, two experienced teachers volunteered to mentor six incoming BTs, but felt that having three novice teachers, each with varying needs, was more than one MT could take on, given the MTs' full-time teaching loads. Another, more successful, interschool mentorship project in Yellowknife involved two Grade 2 classes getting together every month to participate in outdoor and cultural activities.

The NWT experienced high teacher turnover rates for teachers new to the profession, especially in some remote areas. In 2002, a northern administrator enrolled 10 of her staff in a mentoring program with Dan Garvey, an ATA staff member in Professional Development. The principal matched each BT with a trained MT. In the two years that followed, the school achieved 100 percent retention of all BTs. It was concluded that the program can be a valuable tool to both MTs and BTs. "For a brand new teacher, it is the perfect way to ease into the teaching profession. For an experienced teacher, it can be a reaffirmation of what it was that excited him of her about education in the first place" (Mallon, 2004, p. 32).

Bearden (2005) discussed a school district, located in rural Maine, where the AP was charged with developing a new teacher mentorship program. In 2003, BTs at Presque Isle High School entered a new teacher orientation two weeks prior to the official start day. The novice teachers were assigned a MT who

would be working with them for two or three years in assessing their professional

growth. The MT was also required to assist in developing a "Teacher Action

Plan" and to meet with the new teacher to discuss progress. The BT and MT were

required to report progress monthly to the district's Certification Committee. The

AP met with the "rookies" from the cohort two weeks after the beginning of the

school year to ask questions and comment on their initial experiences and

continued monthly meetings for the first two years of the BTs' careers. The

meetings with the AP provided direction and helped alleviate stress for the BTs.

With the expected number of retirements continuing, the teacher mentorship

program is considered one important piece of maintaining staffing stability.

One Canadian study, conducted by Foster, Wright and McRae (2008) in

Alberta, examined provincial leadership projects, entitled Alberta Initiative for

School Improvement (AISI), which were carried out in the province in three year

cycles within classrooms, schools, and jurisdictions between 2000 – 2008. The

purpose of AISI was to improve and sustain student learning. Foster, Wright and

McRae, a research team at the University of Alberta, reviewed 25 projects from

over 1600 AISI projects.

One key finding identified in their research related to formal and informal

leadership roles, characteristics, and practices. "Principal leadership is critical in

establishing the vision for the AISI project, promoting broad participation, and

championing the project over the three year cycle" (p. 14). AISI acknowledged

that school administration and principal leadership encompass the vice or AP,

although the principal most often assumes the formal leadership position. In

developing trust and commitment towards the work of school improvement, administrators were seen to be key in involving teachers, students, parents and the community. One case study presented in their research, specifically involves an AP, which is rarely the case in most of the literature on administrators.

Recognizing the key role administrators play in inducting and mentoring BTs into their schools, as well as into the teaching profession, Hughes, (1994) Lieberman & Miller (1994), Smith & Andrews (1989), Chester (1992), Lee (1994), and Sergiovanni (1995), report that principals need to better understand the problems of new teachers and the significance of their role in being able to provide appropriate support and direction to their new teachers. APs, as members of the leadership team, are integral participants and play as important a role as the principal in mentoring neophyte teachers.

Dissertations that have studied Mentoring Relationships

Doctoral research on a variety of mentoring relationships involving BTs has been conducted since the early 1990s. The following briefly discusses four dissertations on topics related to my study, including: an American study on "the mentoring relationship" (French, 1996); a Canadian case study on French Immersion MTs assisting BTs (Holm, 1991); an American study that examined mentoring relationships and pairings within SLs (Hemminger, 2001); and a Canadian study concerning principals' involvement in mentoring relationships (Dick, 2005).

French's (1996) research intended to develop an in-depth understanding of the mentoring relationship from the mentee's perspective. The purpose of her

study was to assess how first-year teachers perceived their mentoring

relationships or lack thereof. Her literature review found that deficits existed in

describing the relationship from the mentee's point of view. Establishing a

mentoring relationship can be blocked by insecurity; independence; fear of

rejection; or too low or high expectations. French additionally noted the difficulty

the mentoring literature had commonly defining the term "mentor", because it is

frequently found to have a wide range of definitions. She used narrative research

as the methodology to tell the stories of 17 American teachers in their first year of

teaching.

The findings concluded that the BTs were specific about what they were

looking for in a mentoring relationship. The participants expressed different

needs in a mentor in forming a positive mentoring relationship, including care and

empathy; someone with whom the BT could receive and share ideas and have

frequent contact; someone whom they could trust that would take them under

their wing; and an empathetic mentor, who would listen to their woes. In most of

the positive mentoring cases, the mentor initiated the relationship; and a crisis

proved to be the initiating event in many of the relationships. French also

concluded that asking for help is a crucial element in forming a person-to-person

mentoring relationship, and that not asking for help was a significant theme in the

stories of those who were not mentored. Although the participants in French's

study emphasized a mentoring relationship which fostered empathy, listening,

mutual trust, commitment, similar characteristics, attitude and acceptance, they

did not mention curricular expertise as an important element of the relationship.

Holm (1991) led a Canadian case study of experienced French Immersion (FI) MTs assisting beginning immersion teachers. The main purpose of her study was to assess the utility of induction to support four beginning FI teachers during their first year on the job. Through questionnaire responses from beginning FI teachers about their concerns, and useful types of assistance during their first year of teaching, Holm concluded that beginning FI teachers crave strategies to survive and function effectively. Beginning FI teachers appreciated the variety of support and types of assistance they received. The case study group found that peer coaching and MTs were useful aspects of the induction program.

Specifically related to research done on mentoring relationships within SLs, Hemminger (2001) conducted a descriptive study to examine mentor-protégé pairings, and whether or not beginning SL teachers were paired with SL, assignment-matched MTs. Fifty-six beginning American SL teachers and three of their principals were interviewed and surveyed. Issues addressed included to what extent the MTs of novice SL teachers were those provided by their schools; how the teaching assignments of the MT and protégé had been matched; the availability of the MT to the BT; and the job satisfaction BTs felt with their careers. Findings concluded that, although the majority of the BTs had MTs, fewer than half were provided by their schools. Five of the 10 SL BTs had language match MTs, which included a district MT and MTs from their respective departments in their building. Among those without language match MTs, two had district MTs, one had a building MT, and two had building teachers of other languages in their department as mentors. Also, half the mentor pairings were

consistent with assignment match and accessibility, the other half did not meet those criteria. Participants reported a wide range of experiences, from having a strong mentoring relationship, to resorting to other teachers for help.

Responses from SL BTs with non-language matching MTs or no mentors included positive and negative comments. SL BTs with non-language match MTs noted a lack or a slower rate or growth in their discipline area. They also said that seeking help from those outside their discipline gave them wider perspectives. Those without mentors noted lack of feedback, slowed growth, lack of content-specific guidance, and trial-and-error strategies that led to frustration.

Administrators indicated that they felt strongly about the necessity of providing MTs to their novice teachers, and tried to deliberately select the veteran teacher within their building whom they felt would provide the best match.

An important finding this study yielded was that although beginning SL teachers indicated a high level of job satisfaction, they did not attribute their satisfaction to their MTs. Also, having language-matched colleagues did not in itself ensure a strong mentoring pairing. Hemminger's study mentioned that BTs in other disciplines, such as SLs, physical education, special education, music and art are frequently without assignment-matched colleagues. "Nothing can replace a strong relationship with a skilled assignment-matched mentor." (p. 145).

Hemminger suggested that principals may be in a better position, compared to veteran teachers, "to assess the impact of mentors on the novices' careers, because they know the power of mentoring and may be able to identify its

impact in the early stages that may be taking place in the first or second year of teaching." (p. 143).

Hemminger's study proposed a program model of mentoring to incorporate mentoring support services from school districts and can be used for any discipline when suitable mentors are not available. The model calls for: "the provision of discipline-matched master mentors, scheduled meetings with release time for participation, university support to their graduates, and on-going research on mentoring for second language teachers" (p. 146). The model requests districts to provide a discipline-matched master mentor to facilitate a cohort of novices across one or several districts, and such an arrangement proposes to create a synergy capable of expanding professional awareness and skills. Additional studies are encouraged to be done in this area.

As for administrators' involvement in mentoring, Dick (2005) explored four principals' experiences of mentoring through a narrative inquiry in Canada. Because school administrators' work is consistently met with increasing demands and changing philosophies, Dick sought to focus on the lived experiences of administrators as well as her own, as they shared their school experiences and the role mentoring relationships have played throughout their careers. As the participants reflected on their layered journeys and experiences as teachers, APs, and later as principals, they explored stories related to both ongoing professional and psychological development, as well as career advancement. Participants highlighted personal qualities and relational characteristics that are critically important to the development of mentoring relationships and partnerships, which

included: sponsorship; exposure and visibility; coaching; role modeling; acceptance and confirmation; counselling; and friendship.

Emerging stories draw the reader's attention to the importance novice administrators placed on trusting and caring relationships; the role mentoring plays in identity formation; the need to develop a more inclusive understanding of mentoring relationships; and their commitment to both lifelong mentoring experiences and lifelong learning.

In reading Dick's study, I am vividly reminded of my own threads of mentorship which evolved quietly, yet meaningfully as my identity shifted throughout my own experiences in trying new opportunities and roles. As I evolved from student to teacher, it was indeed a transformative process that involved a change in self-perception that no one other than myself could truly understand.

Further, this literature review has made me aware of the principles of the ATA local's mentorship program, of which I was a part and from which my research participants were drawn. Eight points mark its design:

(1) It provided opportunities for experts and BTs to learn together in a supportive environment promoting time for collaboration, reflection and acculturation into the profession of teaching;

(2) The ATA local recognized that mentoring and supporting novice teachers is not solely the individual's responsibility. As the associated school jurisdiction did not become involved and financially support

the mentorship program, the ATA local recognized its value and chose to financially take ownership of it in support.

(3) It included one-shot and job-embedded mentorship.

(4) It followed a nurturing approach and included a structure that could yield (a) working as a collaborative teacher; (b) acting as an instructor through observation and feedback; and (c) positioning oneself as co-enquirer, promoting critical reflection on teaching and learning.

(5) It did not prevent BTs from turning elsewhere for support.

(6) It sought skilled and experienced mentors in the form of both MTs and APs.

(7) It called for volunteer MTs.

(8) It involved administrators in the mentorship process.

Other shortcomings of the program included:

(1) It did not provide any orientation for MTs or APs. Thus there was no inclusion of research about mentorship programs either on how to initiate collaboration and collegial support within a professional teaching and learning community, nor any structuring of a program that would encourage MTs and APs to ask questions about "structured support" or "emerging colleagueship".

(2) It did not place at the forefront strategies for BTs to survive and function effectively.

The detailed volume of literature in this study needed to be examined in order to build a foundation upon which to position my research questions. In turning to my study, I seek to discover:

>   (1) the challenges recent SL BTs encounter, as described in the research
>
>   literature;
>
>   (2) how mentoring relationships contribute to a teacher's subject-area
>
>   identity in SLs;
>
>   (3) how the perceptions and expectations of mentoring compare and
>
>   contrast for BTs, MTs and APs; and
>
>   (4) whether or not SL teachers face similar challenges compared to other
>
>   subject-area specialists.

CHAPTER THREE: Methodology

A friend recently told me that no one would ever appreciate what I was writing and saying unless I changed my presentation: "You've got to impress people. Go for Big Data, like American academics, or Big Theory, as the Europeans do ... Stop sounding like a little girl just wondering about things", he said. "I wonder." Those are the words with which Anne Moody ends her book, more powerful than more explicit conclusions. Perhaps persuasion depends on leading the listener to discover the truth of what is being said somewhere in his or her own experience. (Bateson, 2000, p. 236)

Bateson's words help me appreciate the fact that sometimes, as we search for wisdom in grand theory, we come up with questions, observations, and wonders that bring us right back to our own backyards. It is important to locate and employ a methodology that offers the best fit for such research. Accordingly, Merriam (1998) suggests that the selection of a research design should be determined by how a problem is shaped, the questions it raises, and the end product desired. The following section describes my rationale for selecting a qualitative approach.

Qualitative Methodology: A Rationale

Given that the underlying purpose of educational research is the acquisition of new knowledge (Borg & Gall, 1989), a qualitative research approach is uniquely suited to uncovering the unexpected and exploring new avenues. Qualitative research "is an inquiry process of understanding a social or

human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting" (Creswell, 1994, p. 1-2).

The present study falls into the category of qualitative research design because it is not only trying to understand the "why" of a thing, but also the "how" and "what". This research also focuses on experiences, lived and understood by myself and the research participants. "'Qualitative' implies a direct concern with experience as it is 'lived' or 'felt' or 'undergone'" (Sherman & Webb, 1990, p. 7). Qualitative research is further defined by Bogdan and Biklen (1992) by adding that the goal is to better understand experiences and behaviour. Using qualitative research, I strive to accurately represent the participants' perspectives on their experiences as they mediate and interpret them. Such research also focuses on developing a deep understanding of the experiences of people in their worlds and the meaning that they have constructed.

Meaning, accordingly, is of prime importance (Creswell, 1994) and is gleaned from interaction with the participants, and probing questions encourage a conversation between the participants and me, as the researcher. Kvale (1996) refers to this method of data collection as a qualitative interview between the researcher and the interviewee. Qualitative research focuses on process, meaning, and understanding to create a richly descriptive product. Such rich description is conveyed by means of conversations, excerpts, and citations from documents, which assist me in discovering more about the phenomenon. To better understand

behaviour and experience is the goal of qualitative research (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

I understood at the outset that engaging in qualitative research would be a process involving ambiguity, complexity, difficulty, and uncertainty. The time frame for this research project was short and there were times when I had to resist my tendency to try to figure things out, which I owe in part to my personality and in part to my professional conditioning. It was important to adopt a "work in progress" attitude and set aside any preset agenda in order to follow unexpected developments. I needed to be respectful of my participants' lives and unfold knowledge on their terms, not mine.

Methodological Approach

The methodological approach I have selected to address this qualitative research will be narrative inquiry. I began the writing process in Chapter One with an autoethnography (Bochner, 2000; Ellis and Bochner, 2000) to situate myself within my work. My autoethnography is an account through which I tell stories about my own lived experiences, relating these to broader contexts and understandings in much the same way as life historians analyse life stories in the light of historical, sociological and/or psychological theories and perspectives. I employed literary devices to evoke identification and emotion.

I chose to approach my work within narrative inquiry. Narratives provide links, connections, coherence, meaning, and sense. "Narrative descriptions exhibit human activity as purposeful engagement in the world. Narrative is the type of

discourse that draws together diverse events, happenings and actions of human lives" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 5).

No story of a life or an aspect of a life, can be any thing other than an interpretation, a re-presentation. However, as Clandinin and Connelly (1994) so succinctly put it:

> stories are the closest we can come to experience as we and others tell our experience. A story has a sense of being full, a sense of coming out of a personal and social history… Experience … is the stories people live. People live stories and in the telling of them reaffirm them, modify them, and create new ones (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, p. 415).

Narrative inquiry is not what happened so much as what meaning I made of what happened. Qualitative interviewing required me to open myself up to explore, and to be surprised with what I learned. It meant taking a position of respectful curiosity, prompting open sharing in such a way that I did not overstructure and guide the conversation, but instead allowed participants to tell their own stories in their own unique way. This was remarkably difficult to do since often I had to surrender control and a position of authority; however I felt that this approach was the best fit for my study.

Overview/Analysis of my Methods

This study uses a qualitative research method which seeks to analyse and interpret focused interviews. Of the twelve participants invited to be included in

the study, eight agreed to take part, which equated to three triads (one AP had two BSLTs at his school).

I then began conducting individual interviews with each participant in a location of their choice, where they felt most comfortable, and gave each individual the right to opt out of the study at any time. The interviews were recorded and I had to ensure they were ethically and professionally conducted, while guaranteeing anonymity and confidentiality. I also took my own field notes during the interviews to frame the setting, context and non-verbal cues of the participants. Pseudonyms are used in place of all actual names.

I transcribed each interview by hand, read each full transcript several times, and followed up with a member check for every participant, respectively. Some participants informed me of additions to the transcript, some made changes, and others agreed to the transcript in its original form. I proceeded with thematically coding the data. I initially used NVivo, a computer software program, and then I additionally recoded each transcript manually. I compared and contrasted the themes found in the transcripts individually, within each group and amongst the triads to conclude my findings.

Interpretive Analysis

The most detailed and challenging aspect of this work was interpretation, seen as the artistic, creative side of qualitative work (Denzin, 1994; Wolcott; 1995). As part of the scholarly process, the qualitative researcher is required to interpret events and not just record them at face value. It was critical that I initially read the data for a sense of the whole. I began by immersing myself in

the data to form impressions. Then I reviewed the impressions recorded in my research notes to look for themes, and compared them with quotes from research journals. Following the multiple themes, I reviewed my notes to make connections and position hunches about what was taking place. I reread the data and coded places where interpretations were supported or challenged. Finally, to support my interpretations, I looked for gaps in the literature and included quotes to convince readers of well-founded, accurate interpretations. I also attempted to weave themes from the literature most especially in the findings. The following sections situate this interpretive work in the context of key theoretical and ethical variables, analyze the study design in more detail, and are strongly impacted by my autobiographical influences.

Role of the Researcher

As Patton (1990) explained, "the researcher is the instrument." I would be the musician carefully performing the melodies that were written by others and that would be heard by many. Prior to beginning the study, it was vital that I was self-aware of my own lived experiences. I needed to be reflexive of my own background as a SL learner and teacher, as well as my gender, color, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. It was important to reflect on my experiences as a BT, which included both positive and negative moments, to help situate how the BTs were feeling at the end of their first school year when I was talking to them. "An individual's belief system is closely interwoven with his or her identity and understanding of the world and is therefore extremely difficult to change" (Szpara & Wylie, 2005, p. 808). This implies that belief systems may be difficult for

teachers to change because beliefs are so interconnected to the fabric of who teachers are as individuals. Szpara and Wylie, 2005 stated that "education works best when those experiences that shape and penetrate one's lived realities are jolted, unsettled, and made of the object of critical analysis" (p. 811).

Although all teachers within this study are identified by gender and language, as though these might prove to be related to their developing perceptions of challenges and support in being mentored or mentoring, I was aware of other factors that are strongly related to a teacher's disposition in schools. The study did not consider the teachers', MTs' or administrators' gender, race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status. However, the omission of these factors is not to suggest that I am unaware or unconcerned about meeting the needs of such marginalized minorities within the mentorship triad. Addressing these additional factors which could potentially impact the SL mentorship relationship, experiences, beliefs and feelings was, however, outside the parameters of this study. I am motivated with the intent that this study will improve perceptions of supporting beginning specialist teachers in entering the profession, discover possible ways that perhaps affect their retention, and bring about an awareness of their identity as SL selves, knowing that the absence of these other factors are important, but will not be accounted for.

I expect that the MTs and APs may be more sensitive to the needs and concerns of their students earlier on in the school year (compared to the BTs), because of additional experience and perhaps previous existing knowledge about students or families within the school, except that they are further removed from

working with the students on a daily basis. The APs, however, may not understand the needs of SL students as greatly as SL teachers, because they do not spend as much time with the students to get to know and understand them better, and likely do not have the background SL and cultural sensitivity that the BTs have. Unfortunately, they may end up seeing the students when they are in need of help or if they are in trouble and learning about them in greater detail when difficult circumstances arise.

One factor to consider, however, is a BT in a poor school setting where he/she is the lone SL teacher, teaching a marginalized subject, which may be seen of little importance. When that BT is paired with a MT in a French Immersion or bilingual school (where everyone knows and speaks the language and uses it daily), he/she is in a very different school culture and does not relate to the needs and concerns of the BT, even though they have the same SL in common.

BTs who are 21 or 22 years old often have limited life experience to call upon to manage dealing with the multiple needs and differences, especially at the beginning of the school year, when they are already overwhelmed and do not know their students. BTs are already grappling with the multiple challenges and expectations placed upon them, and in addition, are expected to have reflection time to understand who they are, and to cope. Their own background may differ greatly from other students and they could struggle relating to them because of their differences. It was likely that BTs had a much deeper understanding of "who" they were as teachers when I interviewed them at the end of the school year, compared to had I spoken to them earlier in the year.

On the other hand, by being SL BTs, they would likely have a greater appreciation for other cultures and languages, and sensitivity to the many needs, backgrounds and beliefs of their students. It may simply take the BTs additional time to be able to recognize them within all of their students. The BTs need to reflect first and foremost and know who they are, before they can begin to understand and identify with their students.

It was also critical for me to think of my role as a researcher in being reflexive, while not imposing my views or experiences on the lives of BTs, as well as their senior colleagues. By being aware of myself, my culture, history, linguistic, and political forces that shape my inquiry, these many factors could indeed be critical in influencing my research findings. I was therefore required to be mindful of the social interactions I would have with my participants, because I positioned myself in a place of trust and integrity. I needed to be an insider-outsider and be clearly aware of my own thoughts, but not let them interfere with how the participants were feeling or not feeling.

> The qualitative researcher's perspective is perhaps a paradoxical one: it is to be acutely tuned-in to the experiences and meaning systems of others—to indwell—and at the same time to be aware of how one's own biases and preconceptions may be influencing what one is trying to understand (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 123).

The precision with which I identify myself reveals several of the lenses and the degree of sensitivity which would impact how I would go about collecting, viewing, analyzing, make meaning, and reporting the data.

My role as a researcher was to develop a relationship of trust, respect and caring to create spaces for the participants to feel safe as they accepted to share their anecdotes and experiences. I recognized that my role as a researcher was complex as both a participant in, and a facilitator of, the research (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). I was a participant by seeking out, confronting and admitting to any pre-conceived notions and prejudices that I possessed about the research question, the participant, or the data. The researcher's task is to add to understanding and not to pass judgment (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Thus, I became a facilitator of the research in the sense that I collected, reviewed, interpreted the responses of the participants, and summarized them. Such a task demands sensitivity to non-verbal information; it also requires a comprehensive knowledge of the entire context of the research setting, and diligence to process and clarification of the information accurately (Merriam, 1998). Listening intently to what was said as well as what was not said was important. Noting tone and expression in the voices of the participants, as well as the body language of the participants and setting of the interviews in addition to interruptions throughout, may offer further insight into how the participants' experiences were lived and perceived.

Equally important is the key role of language in understanding. We must be attentive to the language because we know little without understanding language. Smith (1991) noted that "we speak with the language into which we were born" (p. 193), and he urged researchers to take notice of how we, as well as others, use language.

As I conducted my research, I was required to be mindful of listening closely and speaking precisely to others, as well as careful observation throughout every interview. I accepted each mentoring experience as unique.

If we are to understand social life, what motivates people, what their interests are, what links them to and distinguishes them from others, what their cherished values and beliefs are, why they act as they do, and how they perceive themselves and others, we need to put ourselves in their position and look out at the world with them. Their reality may not be our reality, or what we think theirs is. (Woods, 1996, p. 38)

Theoretical Lenses – Being Reflective and Reflexive. Good qualitative research… requires careful record keeping as a way of connecting with important audiences. The first audience is self: The notebooks of the molecular biologist, the industrial sociologist, or the clinical drug tester help each keep track of what was done along the way, suggest ways of improving next steps, and give reassurance about the reproducibility of the results. (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 280)

Another important element of self-awareness that I tried to take into consideration over the course of the study was reflexivity. As Denzin and Lincoln (1994) note, because all research is interpretive, it requires guidance by a set of beliefs about the world and how it should be understood and studied. A qualitative researcher must be both reflective and reflexive.

To benefit from reflective and reflexive actions, it is useful to compare and contrast these two terms. To be reflexive is to self-examine, to consider

internal conversation, and use this voice to guide, support, and enhance work. Reflexivity is linked to introspection and the moment of action. Reflection is the act of looking upon the action after it has passed.

As explained by Sandelowski and Barroso (2002),

Reflexivity is a hallmark of excellent qualitative research and it entails the ability and willingness of researchers to acknowledge and take account of the many ways they themselves influence research findings and thus what comes to be accepted as knowledge. Reflexivity implies the ability to reflect inward toward oneself as an inquirer; outward to the cultural, historical, linguistic, political, and other forces that shape everything about inquiry; and, in between researcher and participant to the social interaction they share. (p. 222)

The process of being reflective and reflexive enabled me to examine my own behaviour as it occurred. For example, Ryan (2005) describes how the "the practicum demands that the student teacher judge actions as they occur to fine tune their performance introspectively" (p. 3). Similarly, after BTs may have spent a great amount of time planning and preparing their lessons in advance, they also may introspectively be required to adjust their future lessons, after having experienced and critically assessed how the lesson went. In time, the experienced educator will often change their practice due to their own self-examination (Ryan, 2005). Being reflexive when you are close to the data and, in fact, at times you are the data in many cases, it is vital to explore in any development effort.

Ryan (2005) explains that reflexivity is impacted by the changes in environment and the participants involved. Teaching, researching, changing and being reflexive often requires the deconstruction of praxis. In my reflexive practice, in deconstructing my own beliefs and recognizing my positive and negative experiences with teaching, learning, being mentored and mentoring in Chapter One, I discovered instantaneous collisions with my existing praxis. Through reflection, although it was difficult to go back and reminisce about the negative practicum that I experienced, the negative mentors that I had, and the challenges in being a lone teacher for many years in two specialized areas, I acknowledge the importance those incidences had in teaching me about myself, and in recognizing who I did not want to become. It highlighted, for me, the impact the positive role models and experiences have, and how strongly they had influenced me, and how much of an influence I may have on others. I am grateful that I embraced the positive moments and mentors and had them outweigh the negative ones. Through careful observation, the outcomes often generated fresh insights from each interaction. I hope that by being aware I will improve my own practice, and uncover my own ignorance.

As we examine and uncover layers of concern, we actually change because of our efforts. Becoming aware of the types of reflexivity and the relationship with reflection helps researchers make sense of their own reflexivity and reflections. I recognize that I think differently about my data now, compared to when I began collecting it. As I reviewed the interviews and spent time with the transcripts, I began to have a clearer sense of what the participants were

saying. Distancing myself from the data was important in order to have a clearer sense of understanding from the participants, while thinking about their responses and what they represented. I sought to thoroughly understand each individual participant, and make sense of each group of participants, before I was able to critically compare and contrast each triad.

Most importantly, I strove to study the personal beliefs and assumptions embedded in cognition. Nightengale and Cromby (1999) highlight some meaningful and impacting questions to give way to understanding, theory, and change:

> Epistemological reflexivity = requires us to engage with questions such as: How has the research question defined and limited what can be 'found?' Thus, epistemological reflexivity encourages us to reflect upon the assumptions (about the world, about knowledge) that we have made in the course of the research, and it helps us to think about the implications of such assumptions for the research and its findings. How has the design of the study and the method of analysis 'constructed' the data and the findings? How could the research question have been investigated differently? To what extent would this have given rise to a different understanding of the phenomenon under investigation? (p. 228).

What are the hidden assumptions that reflexive action can bring to the fore? The assumptions and desires I hoped would come to fruition, prior to interviewing the participants included: (1) the MTs would be available for the BTs; (2) an experienced SL MT would likely make a good MT; (3) administrators

are supportive and encouraging of their BTs; (4) matching a MT with a BT may

not always generate a successful mentoring relationship; (5) BTs need to be

involved in the selection of their own MT (based on my own positive mentorship

experiences – I chose my own mentors); and (6) mentoring is a reflective process

that requires experience, time and a relationship that generates some

commonalities. Assumptions can guide, impede or prohibit what ultimately I

would be able to conclude. That is why it was vital that, as the researcher, I was

vigilant and aware, diligent and sensitive at all times throughout the research

process, rather than solely at the end of the study, following the data collection.

Schön (1987) talked about pre-service students learning to teach and

suggested,

> any reflective practicum [requires] that they plunge into the doing, and try
>
> to educate themselves before they know what it is they're trying to learn.
>
> *The teachers cannot tell them*. The teachers can say things to them but
>
> they cannot understand what's meant at that point (p.1).

This parallels a BT at the start of the school year, or a researcher at the

onset of the data collection process. Before going through the experience, one

does not always think to see it from different perspectives or lenses, or perhaps

have the awareness to be able to do so. Even experienced teachers or researchers

cannot justly explain all aspects of their process to a BT or a junior researcher. It

must be individually lived and discovered on one's own, and it cannot be clearly

understood until one reaches enlightenment and discovery during the process.

The researcher is a "passionate participant" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 115) who engages in an interchange with the participant in order to reconstruct or understand his or her reality. I gathered rich descriptions from the participants and conscientiously applied tools of interpretation to understand the meaning of my experiences. Such interpretive tools included the context of the individual's life history, the clarification of the individual's reality, and the meaning of his or her language (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

My paradigm is shaped by an evolving shared understanding of reflection from my past experiences, best exemplified through the stories of mentors in Chapter One, and portraying my life as a journey of transformation. In returning to those words of my own experience of being mentored by my first piano teacher as a small child, I was moved by an indescribable *intrinsic motivation towards music*; it combined the sense of *challenge*, yet it brought to me an aesthetic pleasure. Such an appropriate combination of *challenge* and *support* fostered growth-producing experiences (Daloz's (1986) model of mentoring, Yee & Tang, 2003). However, years later, a different piano teacher proved to be too much *challenge* in the absence of appropriate *support*. She began to drive me to retreat and disempowerment. I experienced a negative feeling about my sense of self; I felt great tension within myself and dissonance between my core self and musician self. Eventually, I started to beg not to go to any more lessons. Indeed, it was a dissonant triad.

Daloz's (1999) theory of transformative learning suggests that, in learning from one another, we experience meaning and transformation in our lives.

"Transformations rarely, if ever, come abruptly. Rather, they slip into place piece by piece until they become suddenly visible, often to others first and only later to ourselves" (p. 59). Significant to our transformation, mentors "remind us that we can indeed survive the terror of the coming journey and undergo the transformation by moving though, not around, our fear" (p. 18).

I have undergone a significant journey, thus living through many transformations, as I have sought to explore the topic of mentoring relationships. As I have evolved throughout the process of doing research, I have sought solace and guidance in the researchers who have come before me. The mentors who continue to inspire me and those I have met on my journey, in addition to the reflections told by each of the participants, contribute to shaping my paradigm.

"*La culture est vivante; elle se modifie, se densifie, se dilue, se transforme au gré du développement des individus. La culture de chaque personne est une véritable construction qui impose continuellement des choix ...*" (Arpin, 1999). I have indeed been shaped by my own culture of teaching and by mentorship, and I have taken great note of the evolution of individuals who have been an influence in shaping who I have become. In this study, I seek to learn: (1) the challenges recent SL BTs encounter, as described in the research literature; (2) how mentoring relationships contribute to a teacher's subject-area identity in SLs; (3) how the perceptions and expectations of mentoring compare and contrast for BTs, MTs and APs; and (4) whether or not SL teachers face similar challenges compared to other subject-area specialists.

Theoretical Framework

I have acknowledged throughout this process that research methods and research methodology ought to be selected with explicit attention to my goals and the knowledge that I expect to learn or perhaps understand, construct, or create (Creswell, 2003; Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002). As such, I must closely consider a personal theoretical perspective or theoretical orientation (alternatively labelled as a paradigm) before embarking on the research journey (Creswell, 1998; Crotty, 2005; Lincoln & Guba, 2003). Hatch (2002) goes one step further, proposing that researchers need to make explicit their paradigm declaration, suggesting that "writing a paradigm declaration forces researchers to look closely at their assumptions about how the world is or is not ordered and how we can come to know about it" (p. 39).

Bogdan and Biklen (1998) suggest, "when we refer to a 'theoretical orientation' or 'theoretical perspective', we are talking about a way of looking at the world, the assumptions about what people have about what is important and what makes the world work" (p. 22). Similarly, Lincoln and Guba (1985) propose that a paradigm can be explained as a "systemic set of beliefs, together with their accompanying methods" (p. 15).

It is important that I am aware of any personal epistemological or ontological assumptions because they contribute to the way in which I view and conduct research, as well as construct theories. I recognize an important relationship between my own beliefs and practices, which have changed over time, based on my experiences. I confidently recognize that portions of my own

teaching philosophy and expectations as a researcher have been altered. My values remain the same, however I now have a different view of reality and how teaching and learning are acquired. It is not only the case that researchers have epistemological and ontological beliefs and assumptions, but that these beliefs and assumptions shape the way they view, and go about, their own work. In being aware that, in this sense, all research is theoretical, a researcher's worldview "affects the entire research process – from conceptualizing a problem, to collecting and analyzing data, to interpreting their findings" (Merriam, 1988, p. 53). Merriam adds that a researcher's theoretical perspective "affects the nature of the questions raised, which in turn determines the research design, which in turn influences the conclusions drawn" (p. 54). Bogdan and Biklen (1998) further clarify this point:

> Whether stated or not, whether written in what we come to think of as theoretical language, or not, all research is guided by some theoretical orientation. Good researchers are aware of their theoretical base and use it to help collect and analyze data (p. 22).

Guba and Lincoln (1994) emphasize that realities can be understood to be experientially based, local, and specific abstract mental constructions. Their identification of locally constructed realities recognizes that groups of individuals within particular localities (of both time and place) together might construct shared meanings. The acceptance of the presence of "multiple realities" allows individuals to harbour different conceptions of understanding while constructing and sharing a collective social knowledge at the same time.

In an educational context, one might contrast BTs' and MTs' constructions of "mentorship." Although, there is undoubtedly a socially constructed understanding of "mentorship" in which BTs are without individual constructions as well. For example, to contrast their understanding of their initial experience, some BTs might declare that their first year of teaching, within a mentorship partnership, is their opportunity for experiencing creativity and enlightenment within their own classroom and subject area, with their own students, and a unique time for learning and understanding their responsibilities and expectations through collaboration. Others might describe their first year as their most loathed, an occasion for discomfort, uneasiness, hardship, and a challenge fitting in and working with another. And so, although it is possible to declare that all BTs and MTs know what mentorship "is", they obviously also have different understandings about that construction, outside their shared understanding.

Sociocultural Theory: A Lens for Interpretation. Language learning is a process of adapting to a social-cultural-linguistic environment, in which meaning is distributed throughout the system rather than being locked into individual minds, and that what learners pay attention to – what they notice – is that which is potentially important to their integration and survival. (Atkinson, 2010, p. 35)

Sociocultural theory, built on several key ideas from Vygotsky (1978, 1987), recognizes that the mind develops through interaction with the world around us: "we do not act directly upon the world, but through the use of

mediatory tools and various cultural artefacts, (e.g. the language we use to communicate our ideas, and the implements we use to record them)" (Cross, 2006. p. 2). The sociocultural perspective maintains that behaviour and mental processes are shaped not only by prior learning experiences, but also by the social or cultural context. Understanding people and objects demonstrates that innovations emerge from joint thinking, exchanges among people, which emphasizes the role of the social dimension of creativity, according to the sociocultural perspective (John-Steiner, 2000). Sociocultural theory concentrates on the interaction of an individual within his/her culture or society rather than only on the individual. Within this paradigm, it is important to understand why people tend to show certain behaviour traits, in looking at the effects the person's community (e.g. in a school or school district) might have on his or her thought processes. This perspective tries to determine, for example, if a person behaves a certain way to be accepted by their society. Any activity we observe in the present can only be understood with reference to the wider social, cultural and historic context from which that system has emerged.

My sociocultural contexts were greatly significant throughout my experiences as a student and in being mentored. A few examples include: in thinking back to the "performances" I had at the end of each Suzuki Book, there was always a piano party, in which other students also performed following the graduating student, and we celebrated our music together, while socializing after the concert in a musical atmosphere. It was one of the few occasions we had to visit with other students and share our music outside of practising on my own.

During my university experience as a student at the Faculté Saint-Jean, the Francophone context and social *activités* such as the bistros, choir concerts, plays and movies contributed to my entire immersion experience. They enabled me to step outside of my comfort zone and interact with students and professors in my second language, away from my studies, in an authentic French context. They enabled me to not only use the language in realistic settings, but also to become more comfortable in doing so.

And as a BT, I found comfort in becoming an accepted insider by the more experienced teachers on staff, particularly my mentors. They were welcoming at staff meetings and made our socials extra special for myself as a BT, by making lots of jokes and checking in on me either in my classroom or in the staffroom. They laughed with me and tried to make my challenging moments feel natural. Through their humour and desire to socialize me, they encouraged me to participate more in staff events and feel more comfortable in my school amongst my colleagues and administrators.

Within this paradigm, mentorship provides opportunities for many collaborative forms of teacher development, directly relevant to teachers' professional lives. Key concepts in a collaborative approach to learning are Vygotsky's (1978) notion of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) and mediation. This former construct presents a view of learning as a process of "apprenticeship, where apprentices collaborate in social practices with teacher educators as well as mentors, critical friends and peers to acquire and construct new forms of interaction and thinking" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 12). Basing

Vygotsky's model of the ZPD, over time, BTs are believed to recognize themselves as legitimate members of a school community as they build mastery in teaching skills, assist their learners to become independent, and successfully collaborate with colleagues (McNeil, Hood, Kurtz, Thousand & Nevin, 2006).

Lave and Wenger (1991) acknowledge the "situated" and the social nature of learning. From this sociocultural perspective, learning takes place in specific contexts and evolves through the interaction and participation of the participants in that context. Teacher learning contexts throughout the school create a setting for "patterns of social participation that can either enhance or inhibit learning" (Burns & Richards, 2009, p. 4). Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept for learning involves induction to communities of practice and takes place within an organizational setting, which is socially constituted and which involves participants with a common interest collaborating to develop new knowledge and skills. "For novice teachers, their professional development involves socialization into the profession and adjusting their roles according to the teacher-learner needs" (Burns & Richards, 2009, p. 4).

A central aspect of the sociocultural perspective on teacher learning posits that identity is shaped and reshaped with the social interaction of the classroom. Identity refers to differing cultural and social roles teacher-learners enact through their interactions during the process of learning. These roles emerge through the social processes of the classroom. SL teacher-learners' identity is remade through the acquisition of new modes of discourse and new roles in and through the learning context. Teacher learning involves not only discovering more about the

skills and knowledge of language teaching but also what it means to be a language teacher. Teacher-learners negotiate their identity through the unfolding of social interaction of a particular situated community in their school, in relation to its specific activities and relationships. "Native-speaker and non-native-speaker teacher-learners may bring different identities to teacher learning and to teaching" (Burns & Richards, 2009, p. 5).

> In second language contexts, critical language teacher education implies raising teachers' awareness of power relations inside and outside the classroom, encouraging critical self-reflection activities on teacher roles and identities, and seeking critically informed ways to enhance classroom learning opportunities (Burns & Richards, 2009, p. 7).

Ethical Considerations

Merriam (1998) states that the purpose of a code of ethics is to "alert the researcher to the ethical dimensions of their work" (p. 37). Dilemmas may arise from either collections of data or the reporting of information and findings. The personal interaction between researchers and participants is crucial in data gathering by keeping in mind the research focus and being clear about the role of researchers. My perceptions of field situations are determined by personality and the nature of the interactions (Punch, 1994).

I must be mindful of a variety of factors. Merriam (2009) explained that the best way to achieve validity and reliability in qualitative research is through ethics. Merriam listed "items to be considered when engaging in qualitative research" (Merriam, 2009, p. 233-234):

(1) "Explaining purpose of the inquiry and methods to be used"

(2) "Promises and reciprocity"

(3) "Risk assessment"

(4) "Confidentiality"

(5) "Informed consent"

(6) "Data access and ownership"

(7) "Advice (who will be your counselor on ethical matters)"

(8) "Data collection boundaries"

(9) "Ethical versus legal conduct".

I took into account each of these items with the intent of producing the best study of which I am capable. It is crucial that some form of ethical guidelines are followed; after all, my reputation is on the line.

My role as learner includes having a sense of self from the beginning of the study. Acknowledging and considering my bias and pre-disposition throughout the study assists me in becoming a "curious student who comes to learn from and with research participants" (Glesne, 1999, p. 41). I needed to become a good listener to learn from the participants, instead of approaching the interviews as an expert. Being a researcher as learner places the investigator in a position to be constantly open to new thoughts and ways of looking at the data. I needed to reside in the researcher as learner role to create and maintain open communication with the participants.

Creswell (2002) states that, "in gaining permission, qualitative researchers need to be sensitive to the potentially intrusive nature of their research and

mindful of respect for individuals and sites, potential power imbalances, and 'giving back, or reciprocating'" (p. 218).

The qualitative researcher needs to be especially concerned about ethical issues during data collection. Ethical approval for this study was required by the Department of Secondary Education at the University of Alberta and by the participating school jurisdiction, prior to commencing the study. An e-mail invitation was then sent to prospective participants, which contained a comprehensive information letter and consent form. The letter clearly indicated that their participation was voluntary and that their consent would be a personal decision. The consent form clearly outlined the right of the individual to opt out of the study at any time. (See Appendix A).

Participants were also reminded at the onset of the interview that their anonymity and the confidentiality of the data would be of great moral and ethical concern to me, as the researcher, and that the data would not be discussed with any individuals other than my supervisor. The data is secured in a locked storage cabinet in my home. Pseudonyms have been used in lieu of the actual names of the participants and their schools, both in the transcripts and in draft copies and final copies of the thesis. More importantly, in reporting the interpretations, I have protected the identities of all participants. This meant not revealing some information about each participant.

In shaping the inquiry, I needed to guard against bias. Smith (1991) refers to bias as prejudice: "For Smith, prejudice (pre-judgement) is ... a sign that we

can only make sense of the world from within a particular 'horizon' which provides the starting point for our thoughts and actions" (Smith, 1991, p. 193).

By identifying preconceived beliefs and opinions, I was able to clarify how personal biases and experiences might influence what is seen and heard. I put aside my assumptions so that the true experiences of the participants were reflected, thus allowing their voices to emerge authentically. It is a privilege to "hear" the voices and "see" inside the experiences of another individual, but with it comes the enormous responsibility to be truthful in listening, transcribing, interpreting, and analyzing the shared meaning of the participants. As an educator within a school district and as a student researcher at the University of Alberta, issues of credibility and quality are of personal and professional obligation as a researcher. At all times, I was required to be observant of my lived experiences as I lived these dual roles at the same time, yet attentive and respectful as I was not able to discuss my findings or share my observations with any colleagues. Maintaining integrity and respect are paramount to conducting research that is accurate, ethical and meaningful.

Process of Developing Interview Questions

In framing and developing my interview questions, I considered the literature review and was cognizant of the fact that I planned to be individually speaking to three different members of the triad (BT, MT and AP). Each member contributed unique, yet different roles and came from vastly different experiences and histories. Given that I would eventually be seeking to compare each member of the triad's perspectives and responses, I needed to be aware that the questions I

would be posing would be fitting for each of the three groups, were specific, yet not too different.

As we are reminded by Sergiovanni (2001) and Sarason (1990), capacity building within a school begins from the ground up, with the leaders of the school having the most responsibility to provide support to their staff, starting with those beginning their career. This reminded me of the importance administrators play in being present to guide BTs in their first year on the job, regardless of the subjects or grades that they teach; I wondered to what extent they were aware of this. As echoed by Kardos and Moore Johnson (2007), all that administrators do daily within the school must support teachers, and this is made known by how they provide their staff with classroom space, monetary needs for resources and supplies, how they support their teachers with mentoring and classroom observations and, most importantly, with time for planning and collaboration. Without contact with their teachers, administrators do not have justifiable feedback.

In developing my interview questions, I was curious as to the history and teaching background the APs and MTs had for their job, how they were prepared for their roles in their own experience, how they felt prepared for their role as a MT, and whether they had experienced a mentor who had strongly impacted them. Second, I wanted to know what their interactions and meetings were like with the BT, how their mentoring relationship was lived, what their perceived expectations were of working with their BT, the benefits and challenges they experienced, and I was curious to learn about their perspectives of the mentorship

program. Third, I wondered what they would share about their specific experiences of SL mentoring, SL supports needed and received, and from whom. The BTs were asked similar questions, with additional information probing for their background preparation in SLs, and a greater emphasis was placed on the SL aspect of their experience being mentored, the challenges they faced, the supports they needed, and to what degree they were received. The review of literature also provided a foundation for assistance in composing the research questions, as it revealed gaps in areas that required further research.

Once agreeing to be part of the study, participants were sent the interview questions in advance, prior to the interview, so that they could reflect on their experiences and begin to prepare their responses.

Study Design

To gain a deeper understanding and hear the voices of the individuals within the mentorship partnership, this study followed the three triads previously described in focused one-on-one interviews. Because two of the BTs were from the same school, each teaching a different SL, the AP from their school was used in two of the triads. This yielded eight interview participants in total.

Selecting the Participants. After having been a MT, I was asked to assist a large urban district in preparing a framework for a mentorship program. I organized each session, developed the feedback instruments (surveys, feedback forms), wrote summaries of the meetings, and collected feedback in a systematic way. In this capacity, I met many teachers and administrators throughout the program, but did not establish a personal relationship with any of them. In

approaching research participants, I was cognizant of being open to participants about the fact that I was involved, but also that the new contact to invite potential participants was to be made for the purposes of research, and was in no way connected to or an extension of my former role. (See Appendices A and B). Also, the invitation to participate could not include everyone; I used purposive sampling – only potential participants that had been involved with the mentorship program and who fit the criteria for the study would be considered. However, a drawback of purposive convenience sampling is that the sample may be quite biased.

Data Gathering Tool: Face-to-Face Interviews. The main form of data collection consisted of face-to-face interviews. Interviews can help tell the story behind the quantitative research data, but only if done right. A good interview encourages the participants to tell their story, do the vast majority of the talking, and seeks to provide rich accounts of their experience, not yes/no answers. Ultimately, a strong interview seeks to know "how" and "why" the participants experienced certain events in their lives. As the interviewer, understanding the emotional reactions of participants to events is important, as is establishing trust. Interviewees should be made to feel as though they are helping the interviewer understand something important about their lives (Kvale, 1996). In addition, qualities that I was expected to possess included being knowledgeable, clear, gentle, sensitive and open.

Participants were sent an e-mail invitation and were asked to be interviewed at a location and time of mutual convenience. With the participants'

permission and informed consent (see Appendix B), the interviews, which ranged

from approximately 45 minutes to just over one hour in duration, were audio-

recorded and the participants were free to "stop" the tape if needed for breaks, an

intercom interruption, phone call, or for clarification. Participants were asked on

average twenty open-ended questions (see Appendices D, E & F) in an interview

process conducted during the final month of the school year. Interview questions

were designed to guide the conversation with each participant in order to be able

to compare and contrast responses between members of the mentorship triad and

were divided into three categories: general questions, questions about the

mentorship program, and queries related to SL mentoring.

During the interviews, I made every attempt to verify that I had correctly

understood the participants' meaning by probing to answer deeper questions

based on their responses and by paraphrasing their replies to provide clarification.

I transcribed each interview personally and sent transcripts to participants by e-

mail to verify accuracy and clarify meaning. Research participants were directed

to check for accuracy, and to change or delete any material they did not want

included in the study results. This process of "member checking" (Lincoln &

Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002) is a primary measure of credibility for the approval and

confirmation of the results by the participants. I exchanged additional e-mails to

check the details of participants' responses. Meaningful feedback from subjects

can rapidly expose gaps or flaws in any data gathering technique, working

hypothesis or emerging theory (Ely, Anzul, Friedman, Gamer, & Steinmetz

1991).

Field Notes. Keeping a journal of field notes throughout the interview process enabled me to document additional details and layers of granularity immediately following each interview, so that I would remember them at a later time. Without my notes, I would not have had the opportunity to jot down my impressions, or frame the context of the interview behind the scenes to recall the minute details, or most importantly, to return to my notes to verify what took place during the interviews. As well, because I was conducting the interviews all within a few weeks at various locations, it was important that I did not get confused by the interviews. Van Manen (1988) provides an eloquent description on field notes:

> To put it bluntly, fieldnotes are gnomic, shorthand reconstruction of events, observations, and conversations that took place in the field. They are composed well after the fact as in exact notes to oneself and represent simply one of many levels of textualization set off by experience (p. 223).

My descriptive field notes included a description of the setting of the interview. Drawing on background knowledge from having worked with administrators and in being a teacher, I recognized and recorded other details in the teachers' classroom or APs' office (visuals, student work, SL displays, certificates, artifacts representing personal interests, etc.) or in the participants' settings that I would not have, had I solely been a researcher. My field notes also included remarks about the circumstances of the interview and details about all contact with each participant and how the interview came about.

To disentangle the interpretive procedures at work as one moves across

levels is problematic to say the least … Little wonder that field notes are

the secret papers of social research (p. 223-224).

My field notes also provided me ever so slightly some distance, while

each interview was still clear in my mind. I referred to the field notes when I was

rereading the transcripts and gaining a holistic perspective on the

interview. Although I did not cite them in the findings, they played an important

role in my recording of data and conceptualizing themes.

Purposeful Sampling. Of the 58 BTs hired for the school year in which

this study took place, six were SL teachers. Four of the six beginning SL teachers

were teaching in a secondary setting. I felt it would be beneficial to invite all four

SL teachers located in a junior or senior high school, along with their AP and off-

site MT to participate in the study, to hopefully create a minimum of two, ideally

three, triads, in which their mentorship experiences could be compared and

contrasted. The BTs and their MTs were situated at different sites. The APs and

MTs would have varying degrees of experience at their locations. Selecting these

individuals would likely create a varied and enriched research opportunity

because of some shared commonalities in their mentoring, while the uniqueness

of each relationship would be illustrated.

 Merriam (1998) suggests that purposeful sampling be implemented in

information-rich cases so that much can be learned about the issues that are

central to the purpose of the research. "Purposeful sampling is based on the

assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned" (p. 61). Using this to guide me, participants for this study were selected on the basis of meeting several factors: (1) BTs had to have participated in the mentorship program and teach some SL; (2) MTs and APs had to have participated in the mentorship program; and (3) all members of the triad had to agree to participate in the study. Of the four triads invited to participate, three complete triads agreed (a SL BT, his or her AP, and off-site MT). One triad did not respond to the invitation to participate in the study. I manually transcribed all transcripts from each interview. Following the completion of each transcript, it was sent to the participant for a member check. (See Appendix C).

Contrasting the stories of those involved in the mentoring partnership with previous research about mentoring in general enabled me to identify areas that were the same/different for novice teachers in specialized subject areas, a perspective which is currently missing from the literature. Furthermore, bringing together experiences and perceptions from three parties in one mentoring partnership also added a new, deeper, and more enriched understanding of the experiences of mentoring.

Saturation. Saturation means that I must collect data until I note that the same types of comments (issues, concerns) are emerging. Saturation can also apply to conducting a literature review – I read until I was able to recognize that authors were making the same claims or findings were very similar.

In many qualitative studies, saturation determines the sample size, although other factors can dictate how quickly or slowly this is achieved. Jette, Grover and Keck (2003) suggest that expertise in the chosen topic can reduce the number of participants needed in a study. Charmaz (2006) suggests that the aims of the study are ultimately the driver of the project design, and therefore the sample size. She suggests that a small study with "modest claims" (p. 114) might achieve saturation quicker than a study that is aiming to describe a process that spans disciplines. The number of research participants in my study was limited by the number available of SL BTs and those willing to give consent to participate; this small sample size influenced saturation. For example, after beginning thematic coding of the interviews, I could see many parallels between my participants' experiences and the literature review and realized that I had reached saturation. I also relied upon rereading each transcript multiple times and reviewing my field notes many, many times to prepare for interpretation.

Thematic Coding. "Any researcher who wishes to become proficient at doing qualitative analysis must learn to code well and easily. The excellence of the research rests in large part on the excellence of the coding" (Strauss, 1987, p. 27). Patton (2002) suggests that I should choose "the right tool for the right job" because all research questions and fieldwork are context-specific.

After having conducted the interviews, I went through each participants' audio-recording and manually transcribed it myself using a foot pedal. While going through this process, I began to write additional comments in my field notes about each participant. I then separated each participant by group: BT; MT;

AP and began sorting through the data. I began with coding the BT interviews,

followed by the MTs and APs. As dozens of themes emerged for each

participant, I began to see the necessity for sub-themes. For example, under the

theme of "supports needed", the BTs required support from multiple sources,

which therefore helped categorize support from the MT; support from the

administration; support from the school district; support from the mentorship

program; support in SLs; support from a colleague; support from a family

member; etc. Once these sub-themes were created, it helped me see some of the

connections and differences between the triads, as many of the themes were

discussed by each member of the triad.

Each interview transcript was individually coded twice by themes that

emerged. The first time, the NVivo program was used to code the data. Once all

the data was broken into multiple themes, it was recoded a second time manually.

Some gaps were revealed, and some additional themes emerged which were not

evident when coded originally with NVivo. Welsh (2002) summarizes the

advantages and disadvantages of using NVivo:

> The searching tools in NVivo allow the researcher to interrogate her or his
>
> data at a particular level. This can, in turn, improve the rigour of the
>
> analysis process by validating (or not) some of the researcher's own
>
> impressions of the data. However, the software is less useful in terms of
>
> addressing issues of validity and reliability in the thematic ideas that
>
> emerge during the data analysis process and this is due to the fluid and
>
> creative way in which these themes emerge (p. 7).

Welsh (2002) cautions that it is important that researchers recognize the value of both manual and electronic tools in qualitative data analysis and do not settle on one over the other, but instead remain open to, and make use of, the advantages of each. I feel more confident with my findings because I coded both electronically and manually. Themes emerged first from each interview and then from the triad. Later they were compared and contrasted. Two examples of themes which emerged when I transcribed the data for the second time manually, but were not apparent using NVivo, include: "the BTs struggled to reach some of the students, even against the advice of colleagues" and "the BTs felt a lack of support from administration – they needed to feel welcome and comfortable."

Triangulation. "Rigor is needed in all kinds of research to insure that findings are to be trusted and believed" (Merriam, 1995, p. 51). Triangulation aims to deepen and widen one's understanding (Olsen, 2004). I hoped that the diverse viewpoints of BTs, MTs and APs would cast light upon my topic. I was aware that I offered an interpretation of someone else's interpretation of reality.

Data for my study was triangulated from multiple sources in a variety of ways. It began with a statement of my experiences, assumptions and biases at the outset of the study (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Merriam, 1988; Patton, 1991). This enables the reader to better understand how the data might have been interpreted by myself as the researcher.

Thereafter, the extensive literature review involved conceptual work and the analysis of meaning, prior to setting up the collection of further data (Olsen,

2004). As the literature review evolved, it began to reveal similarities and comparisons between the subject-area specialities.

My field notes throughout the interviews provided me with a space to record impressions and details of the setting, and a document to which I could return for reflection at a later time, following the interviews. Member checking is an additional form of triangulation (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Merriam, 1988; Patton, 1991). Data collected from participants and the written tentative interpretation was returned to the participants to ask if the interpretations were plausible.

Perspectives from three sources are provided from each triad and data is compared and contrasted within each group of participants (BTs, MTs and APs separately) and within each of the triads (one BT, one MT and one AP). Also, a Final Report on "The Mentorship Program for Beginning Teachers" for the school year was generated to the school district and ATA local involved in the research to highlight the background and timeline of the events which occurred throughout the year.

In obtaining multiple approaches as to how I was looking at the topic being studied, I was able to contrast my data in a variety of ways.

Trustworthiness. Merriam (2009) proposes that qualitative researchers promote trustworthiness within their studies. Trustworthiness is met through the following procedures, as I described above: triangulation ensures multiple sources of data evidence; member checks confer with the participants the description and interpretation of the data; saturation points to more data adding little to

consistencies that have already surfaced; and thick description provides rich detail of the context of the study. Because qualitative research designs are usually flexible, evolving, and may include a "general hunch as to how you might proceed" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 40), it is especially important to provide the information needed for readers to evaluate your conclusions or repeat the study, and have trust or not when acting on the implications. As noted by Lincoln and Guba (1985), it is the responsibility of the researcher to decipher why his/her "findings are worth paying attention to" (p. 290).

Transferability. Transferability recognizes that the findings have applicability in other contexts beyond the study. It asks me to clearly and comprehensibly describe the conditions under which the study was conducted and to provide sufficient information about that which has been studied so that the reader may determine for him/herself whether the research findings are adequately similar. In this way, he/she can ascertain if transfer to another context is possible and reasonable.

In this present study, I provide the type of thick description, gathered from a number of sources that can serve to provide the reader with a comprehensive, clear and rich view of the context and experiences of the participants and the process undertaken to gather, synthesize and analyze the data. The way in which I use the literature in this study is connected to enhancing its transferability. It is also hoped that the reader will determine the level of transferability or applicability to other contexts and extend the findings to make some

generalizations about teacher mentoring. I will provide recommendations to a variety of stakeholders in Chapter Nine.

Autobiographical Influences and Awareness about Conducting Interviews. To situate myself prior to working with potential participants, it was essential that I make sense of my own cultural, historical, and theoretical context, as well as my influences, motivations and the impact of my mentors, before I could probe so deeply into the mentorship experiences of others. My personal history greatly influenced how I approached participants, dealt with data, and related to them, without revealing any of my own identity, thoughts, or feelings. As I reflected on the experiences of being positively and negatively mentored described in Chapter One, I began to recognize how sensitive and vulnerable I was at times, and how I may not have wanted to share my thoughts, feelings or experiences with others during some of those times. In preparing to listen to my participants, I needed to be aware that I could not take sides, provide my opinions or persuade them in any way, particularly if I heard a response with which I did not agree. Also, I had to limit emotion in my responses. It was additionally important that as I would be learning about the personal histories of my participants, I had to be open to how they may inspire in me, a piece that could potentially shape my own history. Cisneros-Puebla, Faux and Mey (2004) illuminate that "Through interviews, we are able to bring together the research – the person – and the work. It is important to put a name, a face, with the research; it helps to humanize it" (p. 3).

Kvale (1996) has likened the qualitative interview to "wandering together with" the interviewee. He sees the interviewer as a traveling companion of the interviewee trying to elicit his or her "stories of the lived world" (p.4) – if we genuinely want to hear and understand an individual, we must provide a way for her or him to speak in a genuine voice. As a qualitative researcher, it would not do to simply ask questions and await responses. Rather, through conducting the interviews, I needed to be cognizant that they would indeed reveal the interviewees' stories of their lived world, in their genuine voices.

CHAPTER FOUR

Participant Contexts and Their Philosophy and Expectations of Mentorship

In this chapter, I introduce each participant in this research study, describe the interview context and present the perspectives of mentorship shared by each. I also provide a brief description of each school context in which the BT and AP worked. Because the MTs were all located off-site, their context is not so relevant to this discussion. The content of this chapter lays the foundation for answering each research question in the chapters that follow.

Description of the Participants

The goal of this study was to reveal multiple perspectives on SL BT mentorship. I seek to discover: (1) the challenges SL BTs encounter; (2) how the mentorship relationships contribute to a teacher's subject-area identity in SLs; (3) the connections between the perceptions and expectations of mentoring of SL BTs, MTs and APs; and (4) how challenges faced by SL teachers are similar/different from those of other subject-area specialists.

The eight participants in this study individually demonstrated unique qualities, both professionally and personally, and each described different experiences and backgrounds in their formation as teachers and school administrators. As participants reflected on their layered experiences and stories as teachers and APs, they shared moments and anecdotes related to both professional and personal development, as well as career advancement. Participants highlighted relational characteristics and personal qualities of

mentoring relationships through giving examples of mentors who had highly influenced their own development.

In this section, I will introduce these participants and briefly describe the interview meetings. As well, I will describe the philosophy and expectations of mentorship of each. In providing descriptions of the participants and background information, I aspire to frame the context of each participant so that readers have a greater understanding of their lived mentorship experiences and expectations. Each participant of this study is identified with a pseudonym.

Beginning Teachers

The three SL BTs in this study, Brandi, Sophie and Karolina, were all interviewed at the end of their first year of teaching, after having participated in the year-long mentorship program described in Chapter One. Each was asked to propose where they might like the interview to take place, thus assuring their comfort. Following the description of the BTs' teaching context is a summary of their philosophy on mentorship and their expectations of being mentored. Pseudonyms have been used.

Brandi – Context

The interview with Brandi took place in early June, as her first year of teaching drew to a close. She invited me to meet her in her classroom one day after school to have our conversation. She greeted me with her cheerful personality and I set up the tape recorder between us at the front of her classroom. Her room was indeed a space dedicated to the Spanish language, as it was brightly decorated with bold colours, student work, classroom vocabulary in Spanish, and

a piñata hung from the ceiling. Pictures of Spanish scenery and food decorated the walls as well as some science materials, which added to the inviting, comfortable, and professional space. We experienced one intercom interruption during our conversation.

Brandi openly shared experiences about her first year of teaching, even disclosing some personal embarrassing moments that happened to her over the year. For example:

This is a good one. I didn't know [be]cause I hadn't gotten communicated with [be]cause at the very beginning, you don't have your e-mail set up yet, and I did not know that teachers were supposed to be at school in I think it was August 29th and 30th? I was under the assumption that we started technically after the long break, and so I just happened to show up on one of those days, in the middle of the day, just to kind of get some classroom stuff done. And they [the administration] were like 'Where were you? You're supposed to be in meetings all morning!" So I completely missed my first technical day of work [be]cause I didn't know. So I ended up showing up, and I was just wearing something that I wouldn't wear to a job, you know. I was wearing street clothing and I ended up ripping my jeans as I sat down. It was one of those days where it was like 40 degrees outside, it was so hot and I was sweating [be]cause I was nervous, and then I ripped this hole in my pants in front of everybody, like all of the staff. It was a bad first day. And now, even in June, I'm finding myself telling that story. 'Like remember that very first day of

school when you guys just thought I was a slacker who sweat a lot?' [she laughs] Now that I've gotten to know my staff, it's gotten better, but that first week, I was really embarrassed.

Brandi's teaching assignment included junior high Spanish as a SL and science. She also informed me that she had been trained as an elementary teacher, with a minor in Spanish, and was now teaching in a junior high setting. Brandi volunteered to become highly involved with extracurricular duties, in addition to her teaching. She coached senior girls' volleyball and junior girls' basketball during their seasons, and was responsible for the Grade 9 Farewell Committee year-end video.

Brandi's Philosophy on Mentorship

Brandi valued mentorship:

I think there should always be something there at the beginning, cause it's tough just getting thrown into the job of teaching. It's not easy and it's not easy to learn on your own. But having someone that you know is always going to be there for you is useful. Everyone needs a mentor.

Brandi felt that having a MT in the background that you can contact in times of need and ideally connect with, was essential for BTs.

Brandi recognized the challenging job situation for BTs but felt that "since this year for jobs isn't looking great, I know that Spanish will probably be what will latch me on somewhere." She anticipated meeting with her Spanish MT to clarify "Am I doing this right? Am I not only teaching it right, am I structuring everything right? Because I know that's what's going to keep me – in." In being

a SL teacher, Brandi had a need for specialist expertise and was looking for support to assist her in teaching the language for the first time.

Moreover, Brandi sought support in confirming that she was "doing a good job as a first-year teacher." Brandi felt she could build her confidence in her classroom teaching if she was provided with such support.

Brandi thought that off-site mentorship "is tough because they [the MTs] don't necessarily understand the dynamics of the school or the class or the kids and what they gave you to work with in their school and in their time might not work here." Brandi felt that an off-site MT does not fully comprehend the school, students and issues that occur in another school site.

Brandi's Expectations of Being Mentored

Brandi felt that she "wasn't too sure" what she had in mind, prior to working with her MTs. She anticipated seeing "a familiar face, to automatically have someone that I could sit down and chat with" during the mentorship sessions. Brandi also recognized that she would be extremely busy and "I knew that I had resources in the school, and if I needed anything extra I could go out there." Brandi expressed her desire to become an insider, to belong, and to feel part of a community – with others.

Sophie – Context

The interview with Sophie took place in mid-June at the end of her first year of teaching. We met in the conference room of her school while her AP taught her class.

Sophie had been a French Immersion student in Saskatchewan. Upon graduation, she studied at Faculté Saint-Jean and completed her education degree and practica entirely in French. Her preparation for teaching and her first year of teaching differed from her preparation in that she did not have any training or experience in teaching French as a SL (FSL). She discussed many challenges and surprises she experienced during her first year teaching French and how different teaching FSL was from what she had expected. Sophie's teaching assignment included junior high FSL, Grade 8 social studies and physical education, for which she did not have any training. As part of her extracurricular duties, she coached junior girls' basketball and badminton.

Sophie's Philosophy on Mentorship

Sophie believed that an in-school MT is ideal, "just to understand the environment and the culture of the school, and to be closer to somebody that I can go to more on a daily basis." Sophie felt that by having someone in close proximity, who could understand how she was feeling, she could relate to more on a personal level, and that it would be easier to set up a meeting with that person while already on-site.

Sophie also recognized that "a lot of being a first-year teacher is just learning as you go. Obviously, you would like somebody to show you exactly what to do and how to do it, but that's impossible." She believed that BTs need to find their way by themselves, and learn to experience most things on their own, by doing. Moreover, Sophie felt that mentorship for her was not really subject-

related, rather "a lot of what I needed was advice on everything else about being a teacher."

Sophie's Expectations of Being Mentored

Prior to working with a MT, Sophie felt that she:

> didn't have huge expectations or perceptions, because I didn't really know what it was all about. I was just kind of hoping for somebody that I could go to if I had a problem or just somebody with more experience than I have, that could kind of help me through the rocky road of a first-year teacher. So I was just kind of open to whatever happens.

Sophie ideally sought wisdom and advice from an experienced MT to assist her in times of need when she encountered difficulty or a challenge during her first year on the job.

Ultimately, Sophie felt she needed support in "information, advice, and somebody to kind of, not really vent to, but be able to openly discuss things that I would like to say to the students that obviously I would never!"

Karolina – Context

Karolina was also interviewed in the middle of June, as she completed her first year of teaching. Because she did not have a classroom, we met in the conference room while her AP taught her class. We experienced one intercom interruption during our conversation.

Karolina's personal experience learning Spanish as a SL began when she was in high school and continued into university. In fact, she shared with me that her Spanish studies enabled her to additionally learn some Tagalog, which despite

being of Pilipino descent, she had no knowledge of. Karolina completed both of her practica teaching Spanish as a SL (SSL) in high school. She discussed the vast difference in teaching SSL in a high school setting as compared to a junior high context, most especially because of the additional need for classroom management strategies.

Karolina was only offered a part-time, point-four teaching assignment her first year, which included health, Grade 7 Spanish (SSL) and social studies Grade 6. Karolina additionally began teaching in a school without a Spanish program, so was expected to start it on a strong footing. She worked closely with the SL consultant at the beginning of the year to choose and order books, resources and to discuss the program of studies. When Karolina was not teaching classes, she was known as a "priority substitute teacher" within her school, which allowed her to work within her school and get to know the students better and improve her classroom management strategies. Her extracurricular activities included coaching junior girls' volleyball and basketball throughout their seasons.

Karolina's Philosophy on Mentorship

Karolina understood that a lot of being a first-year teacher was "just learning as I go along. And then some of the questions that I really wanted answered, or kind of build up the courage to ask I would ask, but for the most part, it's being on my own." She believed that the importance of a MT for a first-year teacher is to be able to ask "the silliest questions, even if it's about contracts and benefits."

As for an off-site MT, Karolina thought it could be "a really, really great experience to just ask questions outside of my school setting and to be able to see someone else's classroom."

Karolina's Expectations of Being Mentored

Karolina specifically sought a SL teacher whom she could "speak to about my assignment and how to organize my classroom." In working out of seven different classrooms, Karolina wanted help with managing the environment and making the space her own in that forty-five minutes. "I think getting some advice and help on that would be really useful." She recognized that she "needed help with resources, cause a lot of the times with Spanish, I found that I was making up my own resources, worksheets, and activities, so sharing of resources." Karolina also desired assistance with assessment, such as differentiating learning for the diversity of learners and levels in her Spanish classes – "how to manage them and keep them all motivated."

Karolina was "hoping to maybe meet [with her MTs] about once a week or once every two weeks, just to see how things were going." However, she anticipated that she would not necessarily be able to meet with her MTs. "I was hoping but I don't think I was really expecting."

Summary. In summary, the three BTs in this study all had diverse experiences and unique challenges, yet commonalities still emerged in their philosophies and expectations of mentorship. Sophie and Karolina both agreed that mentorship cannot really happen from one source or person, rather, it is up to the BT to find their own ways and to "learn as they go." This parallel led Jossi's

(1997) explanation of today's novice teachers, who need to acquire wisdom experientially. Both BTs felt they got as much as they could from a MT or series of people, and then it was up to them individually to learn what they were missing or needed on their own. Brandi, however, felt that being a BT was challenging when learning on one's own, therefore a MT is needed for support in the background, especially in the beginning.

Brandi and Sophie mutually felt that they were not really certain "what to expect" before they met with their MTs. However, they were hopeful that they would have somewhere to turn when they needed assistance, and have someone with more experience who could offer wisdom and advice.

Karolina and Brandi both strongly expressed the need for specialist expertise in the SSL. They sought someone with whom they could discuss SL resources, assessment strategies, and how to organize the classroom environment. Karolina admitted at the onset that she was not counting on meeting her MTs upon having been paired and believed this would be the case because of her MT being situated off-site, at another school.

Mentor Teachers

The three MTs, Jeff, Paula, and Camilla were individually invited to discuss their off-site mentorship experience, in mentoring the BT that they were assigned, as part of the year-long mentorship program described in Chapter One. Each MT was asked to propose where they would prefer the interview to take place, thus assuring their privacy and comfort. Following the descriptions of the MT's

context is a summary of their philosophy on mentorship and their expectations of mentoring. Pseudonyms have been used.

Jeff – Context

Jeff and I sat down in the counselor's high school office at the beginning of June to conduct his interview. He was the school counselor in a large high school and advised students on strategies and support systems throughout their high school years. Jeff has mentored many student-teachers and teachers throughout his own teaching career of ten years thus far. There were two phone call interruptions during our conversation.

Prior to Jeff's experience as a counselor, he had a decade of teaching experience in social studies and had also been a consultant for the school district, as well as having been seconded to the university as a School Co-ordinator.

Jeff's Philosophy on Mentorship

Jeff's interest in mentorship and his desire to become a MT was rooted in his own experience of being mentored during his first year of teaching. He shared with me that he had had both positive and negative role models in his school during his first year of teaching. Jeff realized he had a choice to make. He felt that if he had followed the poor teaching practices that were being modeled, it would have been detrimental to his career. Fortunately, Jeff also had positive mentors who encouraged and enabled him to move along in his career. This empowered him to see the value of what it meant to mentor another teacher.

The mentor has to be really good at sort of germinating a friendship and a relationship, like somehow I'm supporting you. I think it's important to be able to connect a little bit and chat, even through e-mails you know.

Jeff thought that, regardless of the amount of technology, face-to-face meetings are critical for mentorship. "This is funny to me, because I think with technology, a lot of people think first-year teachers can build mentorship on-line, and you can just e-mail back and forth, but it's tough."

Jeff found mentoring BTs exciting. "It's invigorating and it reinspires me." And having lived various experiences himself during his first year of teaching, he believed that a BT's colleagues are very influential in being a critical factor in whether or not they choose to have a long career in teaching or choose to leave the profession, which he felt is dependent on who supports them along the way.

Jeff's Expectation of Mentoring

Jeff and Sophie's (his BT) schools were located on opposite ends of the city. He recognized in advance that arranging to meet "would be difficult because of the time constraints" but important to meet early on in the school year. Jeff felt he would be able to listen attentively to Sophie's challenges and concerns, and extensively discuss classroom management strategies with her. Because he knew many teachers in the district and was unable to assist Sophie in teaching SLs, he arranged for her to observe a FSL colleague in another school.

Paula – Context

Paula invited me to visit her in her office. She had experienced two decades of teaching junior high science in four schools, had an acting AP position, and then moved into a consulting position, where she was able to visit a number of schools to work with many different teachers and students.

Prior to her teaching experience, Paula spent her first two years subbing, which she said was an invaluable experience. She thought "every new teacher should have to do a year of subbing". Rather than getting a contract or a position right out of university, doing a year of subbing to find out what teaching is really like "gives a reality-check to some of those kids (BTs)." In going to many different schools and classrooms, meeting different people, trying classroom management techniques and seeing multiple lesson plans, "I don't know how much stuff I gleaned off of teachers."

Paula's Philosophy on Mentorship

Paula began mentoring others when she started taking on student-teachers. She revealed probably having had fifteen student-teachers when she was teaching junior high science, and sometimes two at a time. She viewed her role as a MT not to give them all her materials, "but to guide them and say these are things that have worked for me, and to let them know the reality that I still crash and burn."

The affective side of leadership was emphasized by Paula as she talked about the enduring and valued relationships and individuals whom she considered as mentors. She referred to some colleagues and friends with whom she had worked, the influence they had on her and the varying ways in which those

particular teachers and administrators mentored her. I sensed the depth of

relationship Paula experienced throughout her career when she spoke of those

who supported her and that she learned from. She valued being a lifelong learner

and always keeping herself updated on how she could improve:

> I'm still going to pick up new stuff. I will never stop. It's in my blood.
> [As teachers,] we don't steal things. At a conference last year, we were
> given a binder with $600 worth of materials. Steve Spangler said
> 'Teachers don't steal things. Because you never hear a doctor saying well
> I went to this conference and I stole this new procedure on knee
> replacements. They say no we shared.' So as a teacher, I go and if I see a
> teacher doing something great, I'm going to share that with other people.
> That's not stealing – that's being smart and being a lifelong learner, so I
> think mentorship does that.

When Paula moved to her most recent school before becoming a

consultant, she had been teaching for 17 years. Being new to the school,

> I hooked up with the LA [Language Arts] department head because we got
> along socially. So she was my mentor in the sense that she helped me find
> you know, the ropes – where the photocopier was, how to do this, who
> was in charge of that, all of those things because I didn't really need any
> support per say in my subject area cause I've been teaching science for so
> long, but it was just someone that I got to choose, and it was just everyday
> stuff, and that's why I found it valuable that she was in my school, cause if

something went wrong that day or something, I could go to her and talk to

her right away instead of putting it in an e-mail or on the phone.

Regardless of Paula's years of teaching experience, she felt that, in being

in a new position, she still required a mentor.

Paula's Expectation of Mentoring

Paula initially thought that her central office position would enable her to

meet with her BT, Brandi, because she was not tied down to a school and could

be more flexible for arranging meetings.

Paula recognized that her role as a teacher is to be a continuous lifelong

learner.

My teaching is not just what I learned at university however many years

ago and it's in a little box. Because if you do that you're not going to

survive. So you pull something new from somewhere else, or you see

somebody do something or you talk to somebody and that's my

experience and so I can then pass it on to our new teachers.

Paula desired to continue learning from and sharing with her new

colleagues.

Camilla – Context

Camilla invited me to her Spanish math classroom in mid-June to conduct

her interview. She taught a new Spanish bilingual program at the junior high

level, specifically courses in math and Spanish. Camilla had seven years of

teaching in a Spanish bilingual program and mentored six student-teachers along

the way. She was the lone Spanish teacher of the school and was hired there to

start the program. "I haven't felt like I could go to anyone to help me in my cause. Nobody has ever done it before so I'm basically doing it – blind." Two interruptions occurred during our conversation, which included a classroom change and a knock on the door.

Camilla's Philosophy on Mentorship

Camilla had a few people in her life that inspired her to teach in languages. Specifically, she experienced instrumental support in SLs from the very first principal with whom she worked:

> He took me beyond the classroom because he made me realize that I have potential to influence not only myself but other people, because if he thought that highly of me, then obviously maybe I did have something to provide other people.

Camilla valued mentorship due to her own experience as a first-year teacher and in having heard from other teachers "how important it was in their career. I thought I should pass that on and help support the new teachers coming on board." Camilla also recognized mentorship as reciprocal: "I'm helping somebody but I'm also helping myself. I don't want to be stagnant in my job. I don't want to be doing the same thing over and over. I want to always be doing new things."

Camilla's Expectation of Mentoring

Camilla would have preferred to have been able to mentor a new teacher within her school, but because there was nobody there, she offered herself as a

MT outside of her school. "I think it's difficult to be off-site from one another; that's probably the hardest thing."

Summary. In summary, the three MTs in this study all had diverse experiences; however, some commonalities and differences emerged in their philosophies and expectations of mentorship.

While Camilla was situated in a SL context, Jeff and Paula were not. As for their mentoring philosophies, all three MTs spoke of an influential relationship or individual(s) who inspired them in beginning their career as teachers. Jeff discussed personal experiences of being both positively and negatively mentored himself. He felt his positive mentors encouraged him to want to mentor others in such a manner. Jeff also recognized that face-to-face meetings with the BT are critical, compared to simply exchanging messages through e-mail or on-line dialogue. Paula and Camilla chose to mentor because they saw themselves as being life-long learners and Jeff acknowledged that working with BTs was inspiring and exciting.

As for their expectations of mentorship, Jeff recognized initially that location presented a challenge, since his school and his BT's were on opposite ends of the city. Because he was unable to support his BT in SLs, he was determined to find a FSL teacher in another school to provide his BT with SL mentorship. Camilla expressed that she would have preferred to mentor a BT within her school, because she felt that off-site mentorship was "hard". Alternatively, Paula thought it would be easier to meet with her BT because her

position offered more flexibility in being able to travel to meet her BT during the school day, instead of having to rely on meeting after school.

Assistant Principals

The two APs, Lauren and Bob were individually invited to discuss their mentorship experience in mentoring the BT(s) at their school, during their first year on the job. Each AP was asked to suggest where they would prefer the interview to take place, to ensure their level of ease and comfort. Following the description of each AP's administrative context is a summary of his/her philosophy on mentorship and expectations of mentoring. Bob's unique model of mentorship at his school subsequently follows.

Lauren – Context

Lauren and I sat down in her junior high office in early June to conduct her interview. She was the AP of an elementary-junior high school. There were two APs in her school and she was responsible for the junior high division of the school. Lauren had been teaching for fifteen years and had six years of administration experience. She taught in a few different cities, Grades 2 through 7. Lauren was an FSL teacher, and this was the first year in twelve years that she was not teaching French. This was also Lauren's first year as an administrator of a junior high. Her role included timetabling, developing schedules, leading the junior high staff meetings, as well as teaching math. She was required to be on-site for much of the coaching that took place after school, as over half of the students were involved in extracurricular activities.

Lauren's elementary-junior high school of about 640 students was situated near the inner-city. The school housed a few sports academies, in particular hockey, soccer, and recreational activities. The academies began in Grade 3, and carried into Grade 9. The academy students were bussed in and the remainder of the students were mostly from the area. The academy and non-academy students were grouped in classes together, which at times provided some tension. Additionally, the school had a variety of high-needs students. Students were required to take a SL, of which both French and Spanish were offered.

Lauren experienced transition this current school year as she moved from being an elementary to a junior high AP. "It's just different discipline," she said,

> but the one thing that I found is in the way that you deal with kids, you're
> always still building that relationship and rapport with them. Whether
> they're younger or older, you just build it in a different way but that's
> what's still important so you kind of keep them on track.

Lauren's Philosophy on Mentorship

Lauren believed mentoring is "absolutely important in the profession". However, she was quite vague in her own explanation of mentorship. She felt that "mentoring would probably help me to grow more" and help her gain "the confidence" in her new role when she "did not know what it was like, like the demands or know the expectations."

Lauren was unable to articulate her own specific mentors based on her experience. She never identified one specific name.

You know, I never thought of it as like, even being mentored. I guess I just, I just had the open relationship with being able to talk to people and ask questions and you go there to answer them and guide you. I just ask when I'm not sure. I have a lot of colleagues that I can call, and some good friends too that are principals or assistant principals.

I interpreted Lauren's mentorship philosophy to be that BTs are expected to come forward, approach the administration, and seek support on their own when they felt they needed it. This approach is documented in the literature, but has also been shown to be inappropriate with current BTs. In fact, having heard the expectations of the SL BTs in this study, we see the similar disparities in perceptions of support between administrators and BTs as in the Andrews, Gilbert and Martin (2006) study described in Chapter Two.

Lauren's Expectation of Mentoring

Lauren values the importance of mentorship during the first year of a new role. "There is so much to learn, sometimes it's just about survival. I think just the encouragement of 'You know, you're doing a good job!' Just survive. That's all you need to do is survive this year." Likewise, that may have been how she was feeling in her own new position.

Lauren appeared to understand mentoring as it being up to the BTs to inform the administration as to how they were doing and therefore, mentorship would occur as needed, rather than the administration initially reaching out.

Bob – Context

Bob invited me to his junior high office in the middle of June to conduct his interview. He was the AP of an elementary-junior high school and was new to the school this year. There were two APs, but he was responsible for the junior high division of the school. Bob has been involved in the education system for thirty years. He was a teacher and a counselor for the first ten years, and then spent the next twenty years in various administrative roles, having worked in four different schools, ranging from Kindergarten through Grade 12. We were interrupted once during our interview by the secretary who needed to speak to Bob.

Bob's school had 515 students, with approximately 200 students in elementary and the remainder in junior high. The demographics of the community ranged from low to average family income, with high density homes and lots of subsidized housing, to some adjacent communities of million dollar homes. The people living in the area surrounding the school were transients; the neighbourhood faced social issues such as drugs, family violence, single-parent families, unemployment, and poverty. The students reflected a variety of backgrounds and had varied special needs. There was also a large population of ESL students.

Bob explained how he spent a great portion of his time as an administrator dealing with the culture and discipline problems in the school from last year. Bob's duties included scheduling, dealing with problems and concerns in and out

of the class, and handling all the curricular and staff professional development activities.

Bob's Philosophy on Mentorship

Bob described to me that as a new teacher or AP, he himself "never had any mentoring at all. This is a fairly new phenomenon over the last ten years." Bob shared with me about some of the influential mentors in his life, which were Mr. Frank and Mrs. Taylor:

> I have to say Mr. Frank mentored me in my high school years. The reason
> Mr. Frank would have been my mentor is because he always made you to
> be very important. He said 'You have to remember a principal – a
> principal is a person that doesn't administer, but facilitates
> administration.' That idea stuck with me because it makes a lot of sense.
> We don't administer administration, we facilitate administration. I think
> he was years ahead of himself. And now one of his degrees was in
> Philosophy, but that's why I believe that. He was very important to me
> because I saw him in various lights. I saw him as an administrator, I saw
> him dealing with crisis and what always was consistent, was that he was
> able to facilitate growth. Also Mrs. Taylor, because I was very impressed
> with her leadership skills and the kinds of things she did to build
> relationships.

Bob's philosophy in becoming an administrator was that he believed he could "develop relationships between the teacher, the student, the family and the community to provide more effective interventions." Additionally, he found that:

A lot of principals are still based on focused policy and policy only. You

have to deal with more than policy. Relationships of teachers, their

personal lives, students' personal lives, providing guidance to all. Too

often we're perceived more as a disciplinarian and with limited

mentorship roles. We're more than that!

Bob had always been a coach, and explained:

I've transferred some of my skills from coaching to teaching. I've always

coached different sports and you're always mentoring kids. When I was

counseling, counseling is mentoring. So all the skills I have, the skill set comes

from that, so that's why I went into administration.

Bob's focus was to distribute leadership in his school. "What I'm trying

to do is develop leadership within everyone, not one specific person." Bob

appeared to believe that mentoring meant developing relationships and supporting

people in their development.

Bob's Expectation of Mentoring

Bob did not feel that BTs are yet experienced enough or equipped to deal

with the multitude of issues in their classroom, based on their inexperience. The

BTs may still be living at home, they may be naïve, and may have never

experienced poverty or complex social issues within their own home. They

would therefore have difficulty relating to students who come to school from such

an environment. He felt strongly that BTs would require additional support and

encouragement. The following section describes the unique model of mentorship

Bob felt was critical to establish at his school.

Bob's Unique Model of Mentorship at his School

Bob's school had 10 temporary contract teachers in either their first or second year of teaching. The administration recognized that they were responsible for providing guidance, mentorship, evaluation and feedback for each one. To assist the many BTs in his school, Bob developed a model of mentorship. "If you think about it, we're evaluating and mentoring one whole entire little pot of teachers, like a brand new school. If they're not around, next year, you're starting all over again." (Bob, AP)

Bob explained that there were two parts to his mentorship program: 1) the administration team did the evaluations and developed a professional relationship with the BTs; and 2) the BTs formed their own pool of mentors amongst one another, their own little community, plus their outside contacts. Bob's rationale for the model was "not only for the survival of the teacher, but to make their year as positive as possible, a learning experience for them and for me." Apart from the required district evaluations, Bob's school went one step further. His model had three stages:

> (1) - the AP met with BTs in September
>
>   - the AP wanted year plans
>
>   - the AP had an informal discussion with each BT
>
>   - the BTs discussed the resources they needed
>
> (2) - in October, the AP facilitated the report card program
>
>   - in November, a process document was presented
>
>   - in December, professional development for all teachers was given on

"Assessment"

(3) - the BTs were then split up by elementary and junior high divisions (5

BTs/ AP)

- the APs met individually with the BTs before Christmas,

evaluationtimes were set up with the principal (2 times) and the AP

(4 times), followed by an evaluation self-reflection after each

classroom visit (pre-intake observations)

- the AP reviewed the evaluation reflection to see if theirs matched

- the AP met individually with each BT immediately after every visit

either later that day, evening or the next morning (formative

assessment session)

- a substitute teacher would be provided if needed, so that the

evaluation reflection could be reviewed immediately thereafter.

By having such a large number of new teachers at the school, Bob created

a special program to work closely with the BTs at his school, in addition to the

ATA local mentorship program. The APs split these teachers into two groups and

shared the evaluations and classroom visitations. " It's a team approach." Each

AP was responsible for five BTs. They observed and dialogued with the new

teachers more than is expected for their general evaluation. They scheduled pre-

intake observations and followed-up with a scheduled formative assessment

session. They provided time for all temporary contract teachers to spend with the

administrative team to discuss any questions related to the evaluation document or

concerns they may have had.

According to the literature review, clearly Bob was not aware of the research on mentorship. Bob's mentorship program addressed his need to evaluate the BTs, and he recognized their need to have support from one another.

Summary. In summary, the two APs in this study had very different background experiences, philosophies and expectations of mentoring the BTs in their schools. They shared the belief that mentorship is important, but understood mentorship differently. Lauren made no mention of specific mentors with whom she could identify, whereas Bob shared experiences of two memorable and influential mentors in his life as a student. Lauren was less experienced with her own philosophy than Bob, who clearly explained his belief in the importance of developing relationships between the teacher, student, family and community, and how he strived to pass on leadership roles within his staff.

The APs' expectations of mentorship also differed. Although Lauren recognized that BTs need encouragement, she felt that their first year is ultimately about survival, and that the BT would come forward and inform the administration about how they are doing. The AP would then respond, upon request and as needed. Conversely, Bob understood that BTs need mentorship because they are young and ill-equipped.

With this picture of the eight participants and their perspectives and expectations of mentorship, the next chapter looks at the general and SL-related themes which emerged and discusses each of them by integrating the voices of all three groups, thus exploring the triad. The focus of Chapter Five will be to bridge connections and differences between the literature and the findings based on the

description of the participants' philosophies of mentorship and their expectations

of being mentored in Chapter Four. Chapters Five, Six, Seven and Eight will

answer each of the research questions and will compare and contrast perceptions

and philosophies of different members of the triad.

CHAPTER FIVE

Key Findings: Beginning Teachers' Needs and Mentoring Relationships

As reported in the previous chapter, the eight participants in the study emphasized their philosophy of the mentoring process and shared their perceptions and hopes for being mentored or for mentoring. The interviews revealed that their experiences within the context of mentorship varied and did not always mirror these self-declared expectations. Coding the interviews with the eight participants generated two main areas of learning: (1) general needs of BTs and (2) SL BT needs. Each will be discussed in this chapter. Scholarly research has been integrated throughout in order to answer my first research question: How do challenges facing SL BTs as described in the research literature compare to those described by recent SL BTs?

In Chapter Two, I discussed challenges and issues facing BTs, namely disillusionment, surviving, and practical difficulties and pointed out the alarming attrition rates of new teachers. The general issues facing second language teachers were also reviewed: language proficiency, facing student anxiety, the stress of error correction, a lack of materials, resources and space in the school, a lack of student motivation, and managing diversity of students. Some of these issues are again identified in this chapter; others will be addressed in the chapters that follow. Some did not arise, suggesting either improvement in the profession or a need for more research. Moreover, the additional themes that arose from the BTs in this study may add insight to our current understanding of issues facing BTs. Chapter Eight will address concerns shared by SL, music, art, drama and

physical education teachers, namely, classroom management, feeling isolated, lacking administrative support, needing to advocate for the subject area, struggling for a positive identity as a specialist teacher and managing the time demands of extracurricular activities.

General Needs of BTs

BTs can be overwhelmed by the initiation to teaching. They have many needs and sometimes do not know what questions to ask to take appropriate action. The following themes emerged most frequently in conversation with the BTs: (1) managing the classroom**;** (2) being able to learn as you go; (3) establishing relationships and rapport with students (4) personal resourcefulness; and (5) balancing extracurricular responsibilities with the teaching assignment. Together, these themes represent significant challenges that BTs may encounter over the course of their working day. Connections to the research literature will be made when discussing each theme below.

Managing the Classroom

Couture and Servage (2012) conclude that one of "the basic skills that new teachers need to develop in their first year is classroom management" (p. 8) (see also Grossman and Thompson, 2004). BTs also need to develop effective time-management skills, to enable them to work "smarter, not harder" (Couture & Servage, 2012, p. 8). Sophie revealed that her biggest challenge was classroom management. "I talked to Jeff to get ideas on how to deal with the class, follow through on consequences and not reward the students but to give more positive feedback." (Sophie) Brandi explained that her "after-school coaching during the

first term of the school year was the most stressful for her, as she spent long hours coaching after school, and then still had to make time to plan and prepare late at night and early in the morning." (Brandi)

Learning "how" to effectively manage their students and time comes with experience and strategies learned as the year(s) evolves.

Being Able to Learn as You Go

Ball and Cohen (1999) report that new teachers frequently need to learn how to manage and cope with the many and frequent unexpected situations that occur while teaching. "Teaching requires improvisation, conjecturing, experimenting, and assessing. Teachers must be able to adapt and develop practice" (p. 10). Much of the time, BTs feel unprepared; however, only in the face of adversity will they come to know how they will individually cope with their challenges. BTs need to learn how to think on their feet, size up situations and decide what to do, study the effects of their practice, and use what they learn to inform their planning and teaching (Ball & Cohen, 1999).

The BTs in this study concluded that they could not truly prepare for every situation. However, when they were placed in a specific circumstance they were able to respond. As Sophie noted: "you do not really experience situations until you are in them, and every situation is different and you can't necessarily prepare until you see it or get there." (Sophie) Karolina and Sophie both resonate with Couture and Servage (2012), in that "(b)asic skills cannot, for the most part, be taught but must be acquired by doing" (p. 8), through experience.

Karolina agreed, stating that "a lot of it was just learning as I go along. And then some of the questions that I really wanted answered, or kind of built up the courage to ask I would ask, but for the most part I think I was kind of on my own." Karolina's words reveal both the need to learn on your own as well as an acknowledgement of the need to ask for help, despite some reluctance. In Couture and Servage's study (2012), BTs speak of going to great lengths to avoid being a "burden" to others. One teacher commented, "the more I can handle things myself and the more I can stay out of the way, the more valuable I am" (p. 25). BTs' levels of confidence in interacting with colleagues varies. Participants in the above study noted that new teachers can be hesitant in seeking support and need to learn "how to advocate for themselves" and "to ask for what they need" (p. 25) as well as be given time and space to learn as they go.

In short, none of the BTs in this study complained about their situation. They accepted the circumstances before them and tried to make the best of them. Like the BTs in Cherubini's study (2009), they either "sank or swam" and adapted to the respective school culture and it to them. Although Huberman (1989) describes BT disillusionment to be understood as a natural transition from student to teacher, Karolina experienced disillusionment in not receiving the SL support that she was anticipating and needing in building a new program. Throughout these early years of "survival" (Ryan, 1986), solutions to most classroom problems are found in the shared craft knowledge of the staff room and in the support of more experienced colleagues (Ryan, 1986). When support did not come from the source she was expecting (her SL MT), she opted to look

elsewhere and found what she required through the district consultant. On the other hand, had she not been so resourceful, she could have had a very negative experience.

While previous research highlighted these challenges, my study documents that BTs make good use of strategies to overcome them.

Establishing Relationships and Rapport with Students

Roberts (2006) described effective secondary teachers as "those who support students' interests and who provide challenging opportunities that help students make their decisions about their career interests" (p. 111). To support students in the decisions they must make in secondary school requires relationship building and additional time spent by teachers with their students. This section highlights examples of strategies the BTs in this study used to develop a good student-teacher relationship, and how connecting with their students as individuals outside of the classroom facilitated their work in the classroom. When students knew their teacher was interested in them on the volleyball court or in a club, they appeared to take their learning in class a bit more seriously. Thus, they were more positive in class, and this helped to influence the mood of the classroom. The BTs showed their interest in a variety of ways – including interpersonal dispositions such as friendliness and patience, which were characteristics that helped them build relationships with their students.

When Brandi had to deal with a challenging Grade 8 SSL class, she felt that being friendly with her students worked best for her:

My Spanish class has been separated into two homerooms and mixed
around, cause they were such a troublesome class, but they kind of forgot
to realize that for Spanish, they're all going to come back together.
Letting the students see that you're human, and if I make a mistake, I'd let
them know, I'd be like 'Oh, my bad!', and just letting them know that
you're down to earth, too. Then after you can joke around with them, be
sarcastic with them. I think that helps a lot because you have a base for a
relationship. (Brandi)

For some teachers, the best way to show caring is through patience and
tolerance. Sophie found that being patient and allowing relationships to evolve
over the year, was most productive for her:

I mean I think a lot of it was being a new teacher. They don't trust you
yet, they have to test their boundaries and especially at this school too, the
students are not bad students, but their backgrounds kind of force them to
trust people less I guess I could say, and so they have a hard time
connecting with new teachers, so it does take a while. But even after a
month, it had gotten a lot better, and they knew me and they understood it
wasn't 'Who is this girl trying to tell me what to do, like who does she
think she is?'. Yeah, it got better. (Sophie)

Sophie felt that her commitments of time outside the classroom in
coaching some students she taught enhanced these relationships by giving her an
opportunity to interact with them in a very different way in her SL classes:

It was nice to be able to be with the students without having to discipline them, cause they chose to be there, so disciplining them as a coach, was a lot different than disciplining them as a teacher. It was very different and a lot more relaxed environment. (Sophie)

Brandi echoed what Sophie felt with her coaching experience and she also believed that it helped her establish rapport and relationship with the students. "I think that's the best reason. Especially with the junior girls' basketball. It was just nice to get to meet other people. So in the hallways, I don't have all these unfamiliar faces." (Brandi) Through coaching, then, both teachers found that, as Gatz, Messner and Ball-Rokeach (2000) put it, "sports participation has offered them numerous moments of pleasure, healthy exercise, friendships . . . and lessons about achievement, cooperation and competition that spill over into nonsport contexts" (p. 2).

Brandi also volunteered to assist with the Grade 9 Farewell Committee to compile the year-end video.

I was doing the farewell video which I hate technology, like I hate it. Creating the thing has taken me – probably over 24 hours to make the thing, just getting pictures and it was so stressful. The Grade 9 Leadership Team was helping me with it and the girls came in and watched it yesterday and they looked at me and were like, 'Miss Wilson, you did a really good job!' and right when they said that, I thought it was all worth it! (Brandi)

Brandi took on an additional task with which she was unfamiliar and uneasy, completed it, and received recognition from her students, which helped her feel more appreciated and that her time was well spent.

Although Karolina coached volleyball and basketball during their seasons and spent some extra time with students, she never discussed challenges with time management, perhaps because of the fact that she was only assigned a part-time teaching assignment. On the other hand, she also expressed the most disillusionment at first and then learned to rely on her own personal resources to get through.

Personal Resourcefulness

The BTs faced considerable challenges, but also found ways to endure them by **coping**, **remaining positive**, and **asking for help**.

Sophie and Brandi took the opportunity to engage with students outside of the classroom, even if it meant additional hours or coaching a sport with which they were unfamiliar, so that they could be seen as committed to the profession and in the process learned about the benefits of reaching out to their students and **remaining positive**. From this time out of class, Sophie and Brandi felt that the students saw them differently and responded better in the classroom. Sophie and Brandi also felt that their students saw them in taking an active interest in getting to know them outside of their studies. Also, though it might have been challenging at times, both Sophie and Brandi chose to **cope** with their extra commitments in addition to their teaching assignment.

Although Karolina had initially wanted a full-time position, she recognized the **positive** dimensions of her part-time position and substitute teaching opportunities in the same school, which ultimately enabled her to strengthen her relationships with the students and colleagues within the school, even if she herself did not explicitly recognize it as a direct benefit.

Karolina mentioned that one of her greatest joys as a BT was substitute teaching:

> I felt that I pretty much subbed for every grade in the school, and it's been nice to have experience in different subject areas like Math I had done a couple of times, Social Studies and Language Arts. It was a joy to become a familiar face in the school, so even though I was part-time, when I was walking down the hallways, students in Grade 4 knew me, and the students in Grade 9 knew who I was. I was able to develop a relationship different than the other teachers who would have them in their class. (Karolina)

As reported by Couture and Servage (2012), BTs need to be able to **ask for help** and feel comfortable doing so when they are in need. At the onset of the school year, one of Sophie's concerns was classroom management. During one of Sophie's early meetings with her MT, Jeff, they discussed her concern. They also made a plan to attend one of the ATA local's sessions on classroom management together. Throughout the year, Jeff and Sophie continued to meet for coffee to dialogue about how things were going for her, discuss classroom management strategies, tell stories, and laugh.

Jeff gave me new techniques to try out in my class. He's a counselor now, so he understands a lot of the student behaviour aspect of it and he told me that sometimes, it's hard to put yourself in the mind of a thirteen-year-old. He was very good in reminding me that you can't reason with them, the same way you reason with someone your age and so he definitely helped me in that way for sure. (Sophie)

Sophie thus shared her frustrations with her MT Jeff openly and explicitly **asked him for help** at the beginning of the school year, as she was seeking strategies and tips that could assist her. Sophie appears to have benefitted from building the initial rapport with Jeff: "I felt comfortable talking to him and I could tell him how I was really feeling" (Sophie). This comfort enabled her to express her own challenge with classroom management. Their trusting relationship reflects how Eraut, Maillardet, Miller, Steadman, Ali, Blackman and Furner (2004) depict teachers, who are affected "by observing and working alongside people who have more or different expertise, and for forming relationships that might provide feedback and support" (p. 9). Jeff was able to offer Sophie his strategies because he was perceived as being open, took the time, and had a bank of experience that he could refer to when providing her with examples.

We talked a lot about the classroom management piece for sure, because as a first-year teacher, that's probably number one. How am I keeping these kids? I remember sharing with her the story of my experience – making kids copy notes off the overhead or PowerPoint, which is a little old-schooled. But really, that it wasn't a good educational tool because

the students weren't probably learning as much as they could because they were trying to attune to writing and listening to the teacher talk, which most of the kids can't do. Some can, but some of your auditory learners can't. But I used it just to keep them busy, because even though I never really thought or questioned, (Is this a good educational practice?), I was just using it to keep 33 kids all working and behaving. And so that was the challenge for sure. How do we keep the balance between good educational practice and then also understanding how the classroom dynamics work? And as a young teacher, it's OK to make those mistakes. (Jeff)

Sophie could take Jeff's ideas, try them in her classroom and they could discuss their implementation and success during their subsequent meetings. Similarly, Jeff was curious to learn whether his suggestions worked for her.

I did talk to Jeff a lot about classroom management. He had lots of ideas for me. I felt like my first month, I was just yelling the whole time and I was constantly disciplining and I wasn't really able to teach what I was wanting to teach because I was spending so much time trying to manage the class. And so he had a lot of ideas and projects that would engage them more and so maybe they would act out less. (Sophie)

Sophie's ability and confidence to **ask for help** and follow up on the advice yielded positive results for her classroom management.

Conversely, although Paula and Brandi connected during the ATA sessions, they did not appear to have a chemistry which spilled over into their

individual meetings. What makes Jeff "get" the mentorship relationship, while

the others appear not to have it? Could it be that he is a counselor and has the

special training that goes alongside with connecting with others? Perhaps he has

more time for relationship development as a counselor? This topic merits future

research.

Each of the BTs in this study had different teaching assignments, and

although they were hired with one area of expertise that corresponded to what

they were teaching, they were individually also asked to teach subjects outside of

their formal background and preparation. They would have been required to do

additional preparation, learn the curriculum, and seek alternate resources and

mentorship. Of the three BTs in this study, two **sought specific help**. Sophie

requested assistance with classroom management at the beginning of the school

year, and found strategies through her MT, Jeff. Karolina searched for specific

SL resources to set up a Spanish program at her school and assessment strategies

for evaluating the multiple learners in her classroom. When she was unable to

access her MT, she **sought help** through a district consultant. Because her school

was unable to help with specific SL tools or strategies, Karolina felt that she had

to locate a helpful source on her own. On the contrary, Brandi sensed that she

was alright on her own. "By the time I had received contact from my MTs, it was

so late in the year that I was basically like you know, I think I'm pretty much set.

I've already figured everything out." (Karolina) Each BT **coped** with or without

additional support according to her context.

Although Sophie discussed her discomfort in teaching physical education, she did not dwell on it. The BTs did not emphasize or discuss unfamiliar knowledge or frustration in the subject areas that were new to them. Rather, they took the necessary steps to obtain what they needed on their own.

Balancing Extracurricular Responsibilities

BTs reported challenges balancing their extracurricular duties with their teaching assignments. Although they want to take on additional commitments and volunteer, and at times may feel that they are expected to say "yes" when approached to take on additional professional responsibilities, the BTs in this study will reveal in this section that in addition to classroom management and their teaching duties, their extracurricular activities were one of the stressors they experienced.

As such, BTs may not always be certain where to draw the line about taking on extracurricular activities without overextending themselves, especially in the beginning of their career. Because new teachers generally have temporary probationary contracts, they often feel pressured to "prove" themselves, as noted by Couture and Servage (2012), who also reported that new teachers tend to do whatever is asked of them in terms of extracurricular activities, even if the expectation is unreasonable. Jonson (2008) cautions that, although it is important for BTs to serve on committees and take part in extracurricular activities to gain acceptance in their new school community, overextending themselves will add to the frustration. When sacrificing too much of their personal time, the daily routine can seem like too much.

One of the BTs, Brandi, identified her involvement with extracurricular activities as one of the stressors she experienced in addition to her teaching duties.

> It was probably in October once it hit me. I was one of the coaches for the senior girls' volleyball season, which takes place at the beginning of the year, so we started tryouts and everything for September, we had our team up and running by October. So by then, I had given up four afternoons of my week – to volleyball until about 4:30 PM, so by the time I came back up and I did my prep for the next day, I wasn't getting out of here 'til 7:30 – 8:00 PM every day, and getting here at 7:15 in the morning to make sure I had everything ready for the day. So October was probably the worst, October – November, and then it was report card [time]. (Brandi)

Brandi's extracurricular duties interfered with arranging to meet with her MT. "With extracurricular stuff and everything else, I just didn't have time." (Brandi) Coaching took precedence over many things, including spending time with her MT.

Comparable to how Brandi was feeling about her extracurricular duties, Brown (2005) emphasized the multiple duties teachers are expected to carry out beyond teaching. BTs in Brown's (2005) study discuss being "spread too thin" and "wearing too many hats" (p. 644). New teachers may become concerned with the demands put on them that do not pertain to the promotion of actual learning in the academic areas.

Unlike Brandi, Sophie felt that her experience in coaching the junior girls' basketball team in their long season, was a good opportunity for her. Being in the

gym more not only helped with her comfort level in teaching physical education but also enabled her to develop a closer relationship with some of the students that she taught.

Because it was junior basketball, it was mostly Grade 8's, and because I teach Grade 8 Social, Grade 8 French and Grade 8 Phys. Ed., I see almost all the Grade 8's. Coaching them helped with building the rapport. The students were different in class when I was coaching them. They were definitely more productive [laughs] and more receptive to what I was doing in class. They engaged themselves a little bit more. In Phys. Ed., I did see a lot of change in the girls because they saw me as an actual Phys. Ed. teacher after that. (Sophie)

For Sophie, involvement in extracurricular activities was of great benefit to her teaching a subject that was outside of her comfort level and experience. It allowed her to build her confidence and to see her students in a different context, helping her build a stronger relationship with them in her classroom, thus giving her credibility. Extracurricular activities also allowed her the ability to negotiate her varied and complex teaching assignment. Unlike Brandi, Sophie was able to balance her coaching duties along with meeting routinely with her MT throughout the year.

In summary, BTs commonly encounter similar general needs in their induction year. The BTs in this study articulated concrete examples of situations which involved managing the classroom; being able to learn as you go; establishing relationships and rapport with students; and balancing extracurricular responsibilities with the teaching assignment. However, they also revealed

personal resourcefulness in the face of these challenges by remaining positive and learning to ask for help. These findings align well with current research.

Second Language BT Needs

Chapter Two identified the general issues facing second language teachers as: language proficiency, facing student anxiety, the stress of error correction, a lack of materials, resources and space in the school, a lack of student motivation, and managing diversity of students. The BTs in this study identified two specific challenges unique to the task of teaching second languages: (1) the challenge of differentiating instruction and motivating students in SLs and (2) the need to network with other SL teachers to experience mentorship. Other themes will be discussed in relation to second language teacher identity formation in Chapter Seven and include: lack of materials, resources, and space in school; isolation; lack of administrative support; the need to advocate in the specialized subject area; and the struggle for a positive identity as a specialist teacher. These SL BTs did not mention language proficiency, error correction or student anxiety. Additional research literature is integrated into the discussion of each theme below.

The Challenge of Differentiating Instruction and Motivating Students in SLs

Schools and school districts throughout the world are calling for and are undergoing significant changes. In Alberta, globalization manifests itself in schools in the form of increased diversity and "(a)n influx of ethnically diverse student populations in many schools has resulted in an urgent need to increase English as Additional Language programs. A culturally and linguistically diverse

student population is now common in many school districts" (Friesen & Lock, 2010, p. 2). The challenge of differentiating instruction and motivating students becomes a critical challenge for SL teachers and students, as the BTs in this study revealed.

Differentiating Instruction. SL teachers have the complex task of ensuring that all their students' learning needs are met within their SL classroom. This is both important and challenging because, as Norton (2000) writes:

> the pedagogy that the teacher adopts in the classroom will nevertheless
>
> engage the identities of learners in diverse and sometimes contradictory
>
> ways. It is only by understanding the histories and lived experiences of
>
> language learners that the language teacher can create conditions that will
>
> facilitate social interaction both in the classroom and in the wider
>
> community, and help learners claim the right to speak. (p. 142)

Accordingly, there may be a wide range of variation in the skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking levels; some students may be learning their third or fourth language, and may have limited use of the English language, as they might have recently immigrated to Canada. The SL teacher may also struggle with the appropriate use of the target language for giving instructions and directions. The SL teacher is thus faced with multiple challenges, including a new type of heterogeneity of student abilities.

> Differentiating instruction was a particular challenge for Karolina:
>
> I think with Spanish especially, I found that there's such a varying degree
>
> of students' fluency. I have two students who are native speakers,

completely fluent in Spanish. Then I have I think about five or six [students] that are just, they're completely beginners, they're new at the language and then about three to four [students] that are lower level learning, have ESL [English as a Second Language]. I also have one student who has FAS [Fetal Alcohol Syndrome], so I struggled with how to manage all of them and keep them motivated. (Karolina)

SL teachers are not alone in experiencing a diverse classroom composition; all teachers in all subject areas in Alberta are required to teach in classrooms which promote inclusivity. As the ATA (2011) notes, "the diversity of students in Alberta classrooms and the evolving expectations to teach and support all students within inclusive classrooms challenge teachers to reflect upon their knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (p. 7). The biggest challenge in this context is that learners in many classrooms can represent several grade levels of concept and skill development. This challenge is heightened for a SL teacher who is also required to teach and give instructions in the target language, and to motivate students to want to learn the SL. Teachers may also have to deal with compulsory instruction of the SL, when some students go out of their way to create conflict and attitude in their SL class (see Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Richards & Pennington, 1998). Although an American source, this is also applicable to some of Alberta's classrooms, where SL instruction is mandatory, creating tension amongst students who prefer to be elsewhere.

Brandi, accordingly, noted that different students had widely diverse levels of motivation depending on their attitudes to and perspectives on learning a SL:

A challenge would be specifically at a junior high level, where a language is mandatory, and they [the students] really only have their option between French and Spanish. I found it tough because you definitely get your kids who came here because they don't like French and that doesn't necessarily mean that they like Spanish, or learning a second language for that matter, but that they had to. Especially in my Grade 8 class, where Grade 9 Spanish becomes an option, whereas [in Grades] 7 and 8 it's mandatory, you usually only get 10 to 12 kids in your class in a Grade 9 option. So that means that in your Grade 8 class, you have 85 to 90% of your kids who know they're not taking Spanish next year, they don't want to take Spanish next year, right now their minds have already been set in the future, they can't even think how it would help them, and how they might take it again in high school; they're not even thinking about it at a Grade 8 level. There's no point in giving them homework because they don't study because they don't care, but then you'll have those ten people in Grade 8 who want to go to Grade 9 and they really like it. So there's a great diversity of kids to accommodate, and it's tough in Spanish to accommodate cause I can't necessarily move on to a whole new section if they don't understand this section first. (Brandi)

In addition to accommodating students with different levels of knowledge and motivation, SL teachers must also differentiate their teaching to accommodate students' different ability levels. They encounter the "challenge of meeting the needs of all students including learning disabled, physically challenged (non-verbal) and gifted all in one class" (ACPI, 2006, p. 31) all while trying to meet the needs of the SL curriculum and speak in the target language.

Sophie described the diverse composition of her FSL classroom and the ways in which she is required to make numerous adaptations:

> When you have students that are K & E [Knowledge & Employability] and really low in reading and they're in your French class, there's not a lot that you can do for them. I mean they struggle in English classes, so learning a second language is overwhelming to them, and sometimes I don't blame them for acting out in that situation because they're put in a situation that they cannot succeed. I make sure I can adjust things and modify them. I have to do that otherwise I would have four people handing in assignments out of the whole class! (Sophie)

SL teachers struggle with balancing individual learners' needs while appropriately accommodating all the students' SL levels in their class at one time. Although Sophie believes "learning a second language is so overwhelming to them [K & E students]", it is a myth that "children with language difficulties are often thought to be poor candidates for dual language learning on the assumption that learning two languages at the same time will put them at greater risk of language impairment than learning one" (Genesee, 2009, pg. 9).

As exemplified by Brandi and Sophie, SL teachers face a balancing act between providing suitable challenge and support for each individual student, as there may be a broad spectrum of SL learners within one class, thus creating many different levels of abilities to differentiate and scaffold.

Motivating students in SLs. As exemplified by Brandi's comments, student demotivation is a common challenge facing SL teachers. SL teachers frequently encounter apathetic learners (Gonzáles and Melis, 2000) and are confronted with ways to make the SL interesting, purposeful and engaging for them. They are often met with resistance (Chambers, 1993, in Macaro, 2003) and must be creative in how they can reach all learners and inspire them. A low opinion of the SL within the school creates an additional obstacle. Hence, BTs need to create cognitive and authentic learning opportunities to motivate their students in the language.

Personal motivation can influence a SL learner's success (Norris-Holt, 2001). As Brandi noted in her discussion of resistance cited above, "If you have no desire to learn the language, you will not do so" (González & Melis, 2000, p. 165). Many students often find that learning another language in school is not personally relevant; therefore, they do not have any strong desire to do so (González & Melis, 2000). Arguably, as Macaro (2003) states, "the biggest problem is posed by those pupils who are quite able but who do not want to learn a foreign language and make sure that the teacher knows it" (p. 89). Poor attitudes can also be a side effect of difficulty or challenges in learning a SL.

Further, negative attitudes can have a ripple effect on other students in the class, who previously did not show any signs of resistance to learning the language.

Karolina formerly mentioned that she "struggled with how to manage all of them [her students] and keep them motivated", based on the multiple needs of her students, which have to be met within one classroom. Likewise, Sophie expressed that she was "not sure what could be done to make students care more about French."

SL teachers may be at times concerned and frustrated about the ineffective support that they are able to provide to every student to enable them to cope with their SL learning. Although well-intentioned, teachers are simply outnumbered when teaching a lesson with such diversity of learners' needs to accommodate, and in being the single instructor or single person who speaks the SL, he/she cannot effectively help everyone as desired.

BTs, like all SL teachers, "need to create cognitive learning opportunities that are appropriately challenging and that would simultaneously help students construct their full-fledged second language selves" (Spielmann & Radnofsky, 2001, p. 275). Because SL BTs are new to so much in their first year, creating such opportunities requires patience and skills that can only develop over time, as well as through the guidance and coaching of others, which can be obtained through observing and networking with SL colleagues.

The Need to Network with Other SL Teachers to Experience Mentorship

The BTs discussed the importance of receiving mentorship from someone who "has been there before" and who has "experience as a SL teacher". Although

Brandi, for example, was the only BT in her school, she was fortunate to have been supported by a colleague who had formerly taught SSL. This colleague not only had experience teaching SSL, but was in close proximity for questions, guidance and reference. Accordingly, Brandi felt that she was able to overcome her feelings of isolation:

> My next door neighbour, she taught Spanish before. She gave me her huge book of resources to use which had tests and worksheets, etcetera, etcetera, and she's been a resource. I'm really happy I was able to find someone [to help] especially with Spanish specifically. (Brandi)

> On the other hand, SL teachers sometimes seek support but do not receive

it. Karolina struggled with the variety of learners in her classroom and was searching for ideas about how to assess multiple SL students, at multiple language levels. She expressed the desire to see another SL teacher's classroom to learn how it was set up to accommodate all the different learners. Unfortunately, she was unable to connect with her MT and was not able to see another SL teacher's classroom during her entire first year of teaching.

   Whether they perceived their approach as successful or not, all the BTs in this study said they sought to connect with other SL teachers for help in specific areas including: SL motivation, special needs students in SLs, assessment approaches, ideas for resources and lesson planning, classroom management, differentiating instruction, and to be able to discuss with someone else who "understood" the SL challenges they were experiencing in their subject area.

They wanted someone who could provide an ear to listen and who was willing to share their experiences and advice.

In summary, SL BTs have needs unique to their subject area. The coded themes identified by the BTs in this study include: the challenge of differentiating instruction and motivating students in SLs; and the need to network with other SL teachers to experience mentorship.

In returning to my first research question, some challenges facing SL BTs as described in the research literature compare to those described by recent SL BTs in this study; some did not. Differentiating instruction is becoming a greater concern and need as Alberta becomes more and more globalized, thus requiring SL teachers to have the skills to be able to support the multiple learners in their classrooms. As noted by American sources fifteen years ago (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Richards & Pennington, 1998), the issue of SL teachers teaching SL students who resist learning the language and who go out of their way to create conflict and attitude in the SL classroom still remains. Further, SL teachers continue to search for ways to motivate their students (Gonzáles and Melis, 2000; Spielmann & Radnofsky, 2001).

Although new specific strategies have not appeared in the literature to facilitate the challenges of differentiating instruction and to motivate students in SLs, these SL BTs identified assistance through networking with and observing other SL colleagues as helpful forms of mentorship. They desired help in specific areas including: SL motivation, special needs students in SLs, assessment approaches, ideas for resources and lesson planning, classroom management, and

differentiating instruction. Through discussions with a SL colleague who "has been there before" and who has "experience as a SL teacher", the SL BTs' problems can be decreased and ideas can be generated, which they can explore and experiment in their own classroom. Additionally, through dialogue with someone who understands and who can identify with the SL BT, ST BTs are able to successfully build relationships to reduce isolation, experience support, and are better able to cope in the face of adversity, as noted in the literature review (Baril, 2006; Boreen, Johnson, Niday & Potts, 2009; Bush & Coleman, 1996; Cooley & Yovanoff, 1996; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Heider, 2005; Kilgore & Griffin, 1998; McIntyre & Hagger, 1996; Miller, Brownell & Smith, 1999).

Closing. Some issues raised in the literature review of Chapter Two are again identified in this chapter. Some – language proficiency, facing student anxiety, and the stress of error correction - did not emerge in the interviews. This does not mean that the issues have been resolved; rather it raises additional questions for further research. Perhaps all SL teachers have had to reduce use of the target language with the heightened diversity and student needs to attend to in Alberta classrooms? With bilingual and immersion programs in many languages, perhaps recent SL BTs have greater confidence and competence with their language skills? Perhaps, because these issues were secondary to their survival, they were not raised? Or, perhaps more in depth questioning was required on my part. Additional themes that arose from the BTs in this study – disillusionment, surviving, lack of student motivation, managing diversity of students, and

managing the time demands of extracurricular activities – may add insight to our

current understanding of issues facing BTs.

From Chapters Four and Five, we can see that:

Sophie – received what she needed from Jeff who found her a SL teacher to

observe

Karolina – found SL support on her own from the central office SL consultant

Brandi – found SL support from a teacher in her school who had taught SSL

Jeff – recognized Sophie's needs and helped

Paula – did not perceive any specific SL needs

Camilla – recognized needs but was unable to provide support

Bob – recognized only BT needs, not SL needs

Lauren – recognized neither general nor SL BT needs

In recognizing the importance of building relationships and in working

with those who can offer their experience and expertise, we now turn to evidence

that will answer my second research question: How do mentoring relationships

contribute to a teacher's subject-area identity in SLs?

CHAPTER SIX

In this chapter, I answer my second research question: How do mentoring relationships contribute to a teacher's subject-area identity in SLs? Themes that emerged from interviews with the BTs focused on more than just the mentoring relationships and include the status given to the SL in the school, the BTs' need to advocate for SL instruction, and their need for belonging. They will be further discussed below.

Identity is not a fixed, stable, unitary, and internally coherent phenomenon but it is multiple, shifting, and in conflict (Gergen, 1991; Norton Peirce, 1995; Sarup, 1996; Weedon, 1987), and is transformative and transformational. Our entire biography – the events and people that have shaped our lives, our beliefs, dispositions, actions we have taken – contributes to the forming of our identity: the image we have of ourselves. Teachers will therefore be a product of their background and subject areas. This was evident with the SL BTs in this study.

The sub-themes in this chapter include: (1) the status of the SL within the school; (2) the need for subject area advocacy; (3) the lack of personal classroom space for SL teachers and specific SL resources; (4) needs of the SL BT (MTs' awareness and APs' perception); (5) BTs' need for belonging; and (6) teachers' subject-area identity.

Status of the SL

One significant and potentially damaging challenge for the SL teacher is the perception that SLs are not valued by students, colleagues, administrators,

parents, or the school community (Lapkin, MacFarlane & Vandergift, 2006). SLs

are often viewed as less important than teachers of math and reading and may also

carry with them a particular cultural stigma. López-Gómez and Albright (2009)

confirm that SL teachers endure the perception of teaching a "less important"

class. This type of attitude can often leave SL teachers expressing frustration at

the relatively low importance that students and even some colleagues seem to

assign to SL instruction, compared to other subject areas.

It was, accordingly, unanimous among all BTs in this study, that SLs were

often not highly valued or prioritized compared to other subjects (either core or

complimentary) in their school community by staff, students or administration.

As Sophie put it, "they're kind of treated like a joke." In this marginalized

climate, the BTs were required to advocate for the value of instruction in the SL

and negotiate with the students at times to engage them in learning, as well as to

re-examine their own SL identity.

Sophie and Karolina agreed that the lack of respect for, and the low status

accorded to, SL teaching in their school had a number of effects on teachers – and

on students. One primary cause for this disparity, Sophie said, was that "some

students did not really want to be in the SL class to begin with, which caused

immediate problems". Sophie expressed that "here it's not mandatory to take

French, but still a lot of students that don't want to take it end up in the class and

then situations arise. They weren't willing to put in the work - they didn't want to

be there in the first place". (Sophie) The low ranking of the SL subjects, a

problematic attitude in classes, and teachers' stress were direct consequences. As

Sophie explained, many students began the year by expressing their ambivalent attitudes:

At our school, French is just one of the options offered, so I think there's like 10 or 12 options, they [the students] put their top 3 picks every year, and then they [the administration] kind of place them according to that. So French usually is number 8, 9 or 10 on most picks, so the students that end up in it, are generally not really wanting to be there, not choosing to be there, but it just kind of ... they had to be put somewhere. Things are probably the same in every school. It's just kind of what I've taken on by teaching a language so, as much as I wish it were better, I know that it's hard. (Sophie)

As a result, Sophie noted, there is a wide difference in students' attitudes and behaviours in core subjects versus optional subjects, stemming from the fact that SLs are not perceived as important:

I mean I'll have kids that are angels in Social [Studies], and then as soon as they get into French class, it's like it's gone. They don't pay attention, they don't do their homework, because it's an option. French doesn't mean anything to them. Languages as an option aren't prioritized the way other options are, and I mean students are going to want to take Foods and Art before they're going to want to learn about French verbs. (Sophie)

Karolina agreed, noting that the culture of the school tends to support and reinforce students' negative perceptions:

In our school, second languages are sort of an "after thought" when it comes to resources, and special events like open house. Second languages

are option courses that are not deemed as "fun" or interesting and houses

students that were not able to join options such as Foods, CTS or Music

due to behavioural problems. (Karolina)

Sophie strongly sensed, moreover, that SLs are not perceived as important by

colleagues and administration:

I really think that schools need to do more to put the importance on the

language, whether it's French or Spanish or Tagalog, whatever language

they're offering, because otherwise the students don't take it seriously, the

staff doesn't take it seriously. It's just kind of, oh wait, we have to offer

it, so someone just has to teach it, which is really unfortunate because it's

hard as a teacher when your program isn't taken seriously and when you

know there's more importance on sports or the arts, not to say that they're

not any less important, but there's definitely NOT an equal balance.

(Sophie)

The way Bob, the AP at Sophie and Karolina's school, refers to these

negative perceptions suggests that, although SL courses need to be offered, they

are not priorities. The school, he said, "doesn't have enough interest from the

students for French and is just developing a Spanish program." Further, although

Bob was charged with developing a Spanish program in the school, Karolina had

to find her own support for information outside the school. Bob does not appear

to be a strong advocate for SL programs, be aware of the contributions of SL

learning to adolescent cognitive development or intercultural competency, or to

take pride in the fact that those subjects are offered within his school. Perceptions

of support will be explored more fully in the section on "the need for listening and awareness of SL teacher needs."

In learning more about how students select options, Sophie gained a greater understanding as to why each student was there, especially those who did not want to be. However, she felt that that the administration did not offer much support in helping create a SL classroom of students who had individually chosen the option and who wanted to be there.

The administration definitely was understanding of what my situation was and the way French is treated at this school, but at the same time, nothing was done to make it better. So it wasn't really helpful that they just understood it if they weren't going to do anything about it, or for the future. Maybe they could have a more selective process of who takes French. It's kind of weird with how it works with their options here because I mean, you pick your top three, and then they try and place you accordingly. But if you have behaviour problems, then you're not going to get your top pick, or you know if you're a threat to the safety of the class, then you won't be allowed into Foods or IA [Industrial Arts], so then you get thrown into the bottom options. (Sophie)

Sophie may have felt that the school administration and staff did not show much respect for her subject because they were simply "placing" students in her course if they did not feel that the students could "fit in" somewhere else, wanted another course, or had behavioural problems. "It's almost like a punishment to be in French sometimes," Sophie said, "and I know it's not meant to be that way, but it's kind of how it happens. And I know that Spanish is very similar." (Sophie)

This perception – and the kinds of classroom dynamics it produced – came as a surprise to Sophie, particularly in light of her own history and background:

> Because I came from French Immersion, I found FSL a really big
> challenge because I wasn't sure how I was supposed to teach 30 kids at 30
> different levels the basics of a language. I was kind of more used to
> students already knowing the basics of the language and further
> developing that. (Sophie)

Although Sophie was teaching a language she was familiar with, her FSL assignment presented pedagogic challenges she had not anticipated. Like some of her SL students, Sophie became discouraged. The low status of SL teaching at the school and the broad range of student abilities with French had a significant impact on Sophie's own identity as a teacher.

For Karolina, the low status of SL was reinforced by the lack of classroom space and shortage of learning resources. In North America, SL teachers commonly lack a designated classroom (ACPI, 2006; Richards, 2002; Lapkin, Mady & Arnott, 2006). When they teach as a "visitor" in a colleague's room, many additional discomforts may arise, such as being unable to have a space of their own in the teachers' classroom, additional management issues, and being unable to meet with students outside of class time. Under these conditions, SL teachers also have a minimal supply of resources available to them, which forces them to spend supplementary time seeking appropriate materials or creating their own, which can become quite time-consuming (Xu, 2004). Participants in this study revealed that these resource-related challenges were formidable for them; in some

cases, BTs sought support on their own, when MTs were not able to offer helpful solutions to problems that emerged. These two topics are discussed in more detail below.

Advocacy

In discovering the status of SLs, as viewed by the school community and administrators, SL teachers take on the additional role of having to advocate for their subject-area. As Abbott (2009) discovered in his study, the SL BTs in this study reveal that SL teachers are "invariably required to quickly become articulate spokespeople for our field and to learn to speak up for language education" (Abbott, 2009, p. 1). Advocacy for SL programs is a critical part of a SL teacher's job. In reality, SL BTs must quickly learn that that they have to stand up for their subject area, students and programs, at times by discretely doing small acts. Sophie felt that, "as flawed as the FSL program is, I just can't give it up. I think it's really important to teach that to students, even if only one person continues on."

Advocating for SLs is critical to ensuring the survival of SL programs, let alone building quality within it. The responsibility of the SL teacher is to promote his/her program, not solely to the students and parents, but also amongst the staff and administration to raise awareness of its long-term benefits and advantages. SL programs will not survive without strong support from the SL teacher. Once the school community is committed, the status of the SL can be heightened and accordingly, the SL teacher's identity strengthened.

Lack of Classroom Space

When SL teachers lack a "home base," it is also more difficult for students to meet for help outside of class. A "traveling SL teacher" is sometimes faced with additional problems of classroom management, establishing authority, and being viewed as an outsider by other teachers and students. Despite these known challenges, the majority of FSL teachers "travel": a National survey of French SL Teachers' Perspectives in Canada reports that "only 35% of core French teachers reported that a classroom dedicated to FSL was available to them and must travel from class to class to teach in the classroom of their students" (ACPI, 2006, p. 19).

These challenges certainly faced the BTs interviewed in this study – most specifically, Karolina. She worked out of seven different classrooms and did not have an assigned classroom within her part-time SSL assignment. She struggled with managing each environment and making the space her own during her forty-five minute classes:

So I have a cart and I have to take four classes worth of stuff on that cart. There's not a lot of room for me to leave things in certain places. I have a resource office, but it's actually in the elementary wing, and so I'm travelling all the way to the junior high wing. It's been a little problematic because I'd like to have students feel that they can get a hold of me and ask for extra help, but of course when I'm popping out and in here through the elementary wing and the junior high wing, it's hard for them to reach me. (Karolina)

Karolina often heard daily jokes about having "a classroom on wheels". Students called her "the 'Cart Lady' – resources, materials and objects mysteriously would go disappearing from the cart, and the students joked about having a cart bonfire at the end of the year." (Karolina)

She is not alone in this regard. Anecdotal evidence suggests that SL teachers are often forced to store their materials on a cart which gets wheeled around from one class to the next (Lipton, 1998). This can cause many SL teachers to spend their days with the frustration of being a "teacher on a cart" for a low-priority subject (López-Gómez & Albright, 2009). At times they are even faced with not being able to write homework on a colleague's whiteboard; "kids will often say don't write on there, we need that or don't erase," preventing BTs from posting notes or important SL texts (López-Gómez & Albright, 2009, p. 786). SL teachers in this situation may feel as though they are guests in their own school. In addition, a "teacher on a cart" spends the break time between classes navigating the cart through hallways crowded with students and is sometimes even greeted by unruly students who tardily enter one class after the next.

The Lack of Specific Resources

In establishing a new Spanish program, Karolina recognized that "one of the main things that first came to mind was help with resources. [Be]cause a lot of the times with Spanish, I found that I was making up my own resources and worksheets and activities, which was very time-consuming." (Karolina) She also sought ideas for assessing the multiple learners in her classroom. She was the

only BT in the study who mentioned needing help with specific SL resources and assessment strategies.

Karolina needed such help because she was building a new program and did not have any existing materials to work from. As Spielmann and Radnofsky (2001) noted, finding adequate time to prepare for language classes is one of the biggest challenges facing SL teachers. Karolina noted that she was not allotted additional preparatory time in her schedule to plan, source and create needed materials. She was expected to do this outside her assigned teaching and substituting time. This was made particularly challenging when Bob, her principal, required Karolina to prepare a budget for the new program at the beginning of the school year. She needed to create a detailed list of resources and costs so that they could be approved by her administration, prior to purchasing textbooks. Katarina found this to be a very "time-consuming" task.

Karolina did what she could in this regard, gathering some resources – including books and audio resources – on a visit to the district library. But she noted that

> working closely with the SL consultant at the beginning of the year to choose and order books and resources, and to discuss the program of studies, was most necessary for me to learn about how best to go about choosing appropriate SL resources for the school to have over the long term. (Karolina)

Working with a knowledgeable expert and who understands the needs of the SL program and students is critical when building a SL program or seeking SL

support. Karolina had never previously experienced the process of starting a new program and was unfamiliar with some of the decisions related to building the SL in her school. Without someone in the school who could directly assist her with her selections, she sought the help of the SL consultant, and was able to make informed choices and feel more successful. The SL consultant provided Karolina with needed mentorship.

Needs of SL BTs

As noted in the previous chapter, the perspectives of what SL BTs needed varied among the three groups. BTs said they needed the following: their subject/language to be recognized and acknowledged within the school; their own classroom and support with resources; a feeling of inclusion or belonging on staff; strategies to help differentiate SL instruction and motivate students; and to network with other SL teachers.

As BTs crave connection (Wong, 2003), the BTs turned to those with whom they felt most comfortable. They felt the greatest support from those whom they trusted and had established a prior relationship with or shared something in common, such as another SL teacher, or another BT, whom they felt was experiencing a similar situation and challenges.

MTs' Awareness of SL BTs' Needs

The off-site MTs mentioned little about the specific SL needs of BTs. Jeff and Camilla never articulated any specific SL needs that their BT may have needed. Paula mentioned that she was rather unsure of what Brandi's SL needs were, although she was not a SL teacher: "I never had the chance to see her

Spanish class and she never talked about if she was struggling or if it was going well." (Paula) The specific SL needs identified by the BTs were not understood or recognized. Did the BTs not reveal their needs to their MTs? Given the competitive job market, might they have felt that they were expected to know what they were doing at all times? Or were they perhaps reticent to reveal their uncertainty without having first developed a trusting mentoring relationship?

APs' Perceptions of SL BTs' Needs

Although the BTs were explicit about what they considered important in their first year of teaching, the APs, like the off-site MTs, offered little on the topic. Bob, an AP with ten years of administrative experience, had no knowledge of SL teaching. In addition to running a generic mentorship program for ten BTs, Bob's priority was to "get the Spanish program up and running".

The district was therefore responsible to send us a suitable candidate and we then received Karolina, a Spanish teacher. Since we did not have a lot of resources, we had to sit down and do a budget. Karolina had to come to me with a detailed list of resources and costs so that I could get it approved by the Principal. Then I had to make sure it followed the curriculum and tied in with the consultants' criteria. (Bob)

Bob was unsure or uninformed about the resources available for SL teachers, so much so that he asked me during the interview: "What [does the system] have for second language mentors? Are they teachers themselves or consultants?" It seems a bit surprising that an experienced administrator would never have had to inquire about the needs of SL teachers. Bob's comments

further add credence to the BTs' perceptions that SL are not a priority subject area.

When asked, Bob was uncertain whether BTs were receiving enough support in teaching their SL. "I don't know if they did or not," he said. "I can't answer that accurately." But he was sensitive to the fact that SL teaching is uniquely challenging and that SL teachers need to have SL competency:

If you're a language person, I think you need to have somebody that you can depend on, because I think there's more challenges in a language program … Because I think you need to know the curriculum a little bit better, where there's not that much here. (Bob)

Bob recognizes that SL teachers need to be competent in their understanding of the SL, meaning they must have achieved language mastery. However, Bob may/may not be a SL learner himself; therefore it is unclear as to whether he recognizes that this requires competence in the four skills: reading, writing, speaking, listening, and how to teach a SL. It also includes being able to have a spontaneous conversation in the SL, provide authentic experiences, and understand the process of learning a SL. Although he comprehends SL teacher concerns to some extent, in that "second language BTs most definitely need second language mentorship because second language programs have other challenges, and most often second language teachers are isolated in their schools", Bob seems to have offered the BTs very little to help them overcome being isolated in their subject area.

Despite the fact that Lauren had been a former FSL teacher, her comments about the needs of beginning SL teachers seemed equally scant. When asked what type of support Brandi may have needed in teaching the SL, and where she could have received that support, Lauren simply responded: "I think she was pretty good. As far as I know, she can speak Spanish, so?!" Lauren seems to believe that speaking the SL provides enough knowledge to be able to teach it. Lightbown (2000) explains such perceptions, in that "[o]ur pedagogical intuitions are partly shaped by the theories of language acquisition on which our own training was based" (p. 453). Therefore, the APs' perceptions of the needs of SL BTs are likely based on their own background and training in being SL students, and how they experienced acquisition of a SL, either positively or negatively. Additionally, having had opportunities and been required to use the SL outside of school, could have contributed to the APs' personal strengths or weaknesses with a SL. Based on their own SL studies, this could greatly influence how APs identify or not with SLs and with those teaching SLs.

As a result of her preconceived ideas about SL teaching, Lauren seems not to have thought much about Brandi's need for support or mentorship. When asked about it, Lauren responded: "I'm not sure. Maybe she just had other friends that she tapped into, I'm not sure." (Lauren) She did not make mention of any/the type of support needed by BTs/SL BTs and felt that Brandi was confident enough and had adequate knowledge of the SL to be able to teach it. Lauren never once mentioned the supports available from the SL consultant either. Since Lauren was new to the school, she may have been unaware that another colleague across

the hall from Brandi, had taught Spanish during the previous year and was able to assist her.

Would Lauren not have previously experienced herself some of the same challenges in being a solitary French teacher on a staff? Even as a more experienced French teacher, she would likely have initially had some of the common challenges that beginning SL teachers encounter.

Need for Belonging

The need for physical teaching space was important to the BTs in this study; however, a desire for emotional proximity to the school was even more crucial. Each BT quietly expressed a desire to belong in their school and to feel part of a community. As Brandi mentioned in describing the mentorship sessions, "[I was looking for] a familiar face, to automatically have someone that I could sit down and chat with." (Brandi)

For Karolina and Sophie, this feeling was jeopardized by the fact, as noted previously, that they sensed that their subject areas were not valued or considered equal to other subjects – by their students, staff and administration. This created a barrier to practices that, as Burns and Richards (2009) suggest, are key for supporting critical language teacher education: "raising teachers' awareness of power relations inside and outside the classroom, encouraging critical self-reflection activities on teacher roles and identities, and seeking critically informed ways to enhance classroom learning opportunities" (p. 7). These BTs identified these power relations (or loss of power) and sensed that they were not equal with their colleagues and administrators. Administrators in their schools seem to have

been unsuccessfully encouraging critical self-reflection and equal integration between all staff and subjects taught, which would have helped promote more inclusive relationships amongst the entire school community (nor had they set this as a goal of their mentorship).

Belonging, a basic human need and critical component of identity formation, is created by promoting and building such relationships. People crave connection (Wong, 2003). BTs want more than a job. They want to experience success and feel that they are a part of a community. To achieve this, they need to be provided with effective leadership, while being involved in key instructional decisions and given opportunities to learn from one another. The BTs in this study could have received enriched instances to work together to build relationships and connect with their colleagues and administrators in their school sites.

Teachers' Subject-Area Identity

Hanson (2011) defines identity as what an individual understands as his or her relationship to the world. "Teachers' perceptions of their own professional identity affect their efficacy and professional development as well as their ability and willingness to cope with educational change and to implement innovations in their own teaching practice" (Beijaard, Verloop & Vermunt, 2000, p. 750). The status of the SL as perceived by the school community corresponds directly to the SL teachers' identity. Moreover, it makes a special impact on a BT, whose teacher identity is constantly shifting as he/she negotiates his/her beliefs,

personality, character, uniqueness, perhaps his/her own SL, and sense of self on a

daily basis. As noted by Fajardo Castañeda (2011),

> the concept of identity engages the meanings surrounding the person, as
>
> well as her/his experience as a member of a social community. Our roles
>
> and personalities may also correspond to those varied settings and
>
> interactants. Our affiliation with broader social structures and cultures
>
> may also be part of this. As a result of these processes, identity is
>
> constructed, shaped, or transformed (p. 18).

Morgan (2004) explains that "teachers' identities are always implicated in

the types of social futures imagined and produced through schooling" (p. 174).

Therefore, when SL BTs enter the profession, they have an ideal or image of what

teaching their learned SL will be like, including memories of how they

experienced learning their SL as students in school. The SL BTs in this study, as

noted above, were frustrated about the low status of their subject area and that

their identity as SL teachers was not fully recognized by the school community.

This reflects, in a profound sense, Morgan's (2004) cautionary note about

"indirect and long-term influences" (p. 176) on teacher identity. The effects of

such influences could include teachers no longer desiring to teach SLs in the

future, or not choosing to advocate for the language within the school, because it

is perceived to be of little importance, and eventually facing the cancellation of

the program at the school due to low enrolment and interest. "The principles for

language teacher education have become fundamental in understanding who a

teacher is and how others acknowledge her/him" (Fajardo Castañeda, 2011, p. 34).

The BT's identity is constantly at play in the language classroom. The teacher's identity is "a critical component in the sociocultural and socio-political landscape of the language classroom" (Varghese, Morgan, Johnson & Johnson, 2005, p. 22) because it is a place where the individual discovers balance, compromise, and adaptability with the requirements of teaching and the personal self of the teacher. Through the BTs' students, their challenges, triumphs, successes and fears, the SL BT negotiates "who" they are and how they are able to cope, reason with, overcome diverse moments, and recognize when they are in need of seeking additional help (and where/to whom they can go to obtain that specific support).

The BTs at Bob's school chose to collaborate and work together as much as they could. They were fortunate to have one another; unlike Brandi who was the only BT at her school. Ultimately, collaborating with peers and experiencing a sense of belonging have a strong influence on the creation of the BTs' professional identity.

Summary. In returning to my second research question, how mentoring relationships contribute to a teacher's subject-area identity in SLs, the BTs in this study experienced a shifting of their professional and SL identities within the school.

The status of the SL within the school can be damaging to a BTs' developing identity (Lapkin, MacFarlane & Vandergift, 2006). As Sophie

experienced, frustration can set in at the perception of teaching an unimportant subject by students and colleagues (López-Gómez & Albright, 2009). Karolina experienced lacking a classroom space of her own and had the additional responsibility of building a new SSL program, which required her to spend additional time sourcing and creating materials (Spielmann & Radnofsky, 2001). When the BTs sensed they were experiencing teaching a marginalized subject, they recognized the need to advocate for the importance and benefits of SLs (Abbott, 2009), as well as re-examine their own SL identity. Lightbown (2000) provides some perspective on how the MTs' perception of SL BT needs and language acquisition is based on our own training. No literature was found documenting the awareness of SL BT needs on behalf of the MT/AP, thus this can be seen as a new contribution to research literature.

The BTs expressed a desire to belong in their school and to feel part of a community. They yearned to belong and to have their subject area and their identity as SL teachers be fully recognized by the school community. Collaboration with peers (subject-specific and others) to experience a sense of belonging could have a strong influence on the creation of the BTs' professional and SL identity.

Because I am aware of my own reflexivity, I am cognizant of the qualities and values (*the italicized words*) of a MT, which were present in my own experience, as noted in Chapter One: *guide*; *support*; *positive*; *patient*; *model*; *confidence*; *support*; *encouragement*; *understood frustration*; *was not alone*;

collaboration; and *taught strategies*, all of which helped develop and contribute to my own identity.

CHAPTER SEVEN

In this chapter, I shall answer my third research question: How do the perceptions and expectations of mentoring compare and contrast for BTs, MTs and APs? To do so I shall draw upon a coded analysis of interviews with the BTs, MTs and APs of three mentoring triads through the following themes: (1) perspectives on meeting with the off-site MT; (2) forming relationships – how the BTs mentor one another; (3) what the MTs/APs said versus what they did; and (4) the significance of the MTs' background and experience. In presenting each group's perspectives, the gaps in perception emerge which represents a new contribution to the literature.

Perspectives on Meeting with the Off-Site MT

Examining all three case studies provides useful insights into the value of mentoring and ways to improve mentoring relationships. Among the three triads interviewed about meeting with the off-site MT, one triad appeared more successful than the other two. A few reasons likely contributed to the overarching success of this triad: the BT and MT met at the onset of the school year (in September); they both attended the mentorship sessions together, when possible; the MT was unable to help the BT in SLs, but found her an alternate resource; and the MT took interest in the BT and wanted to develop a comfortable relationship as colleagues. The MT (Jeff) really took the time to "listen" to what the BT was having problems with so that he could provide strategies for improvement throughout the year (i.e. classroom management). Although this triad was the

most successful of the three, the AP (Bob) was involved in a very limited way within this triad.

The outcome of each triad was likely based on each participant's philosophy and expectations of mentorship. A summary will now compare and contrast each participants' diverse expectations of mentoring, based on their individual philosophy and what they perceived would occur. Each outcome of mentorship bridges a connection to what the individuals believed would transpire, and greatly was affected by their prior experience of being mentored or mentoring.

The BTs' Perspective. The BTs experienced various kinds of face-to-face support with their off-site MT. Some BTs were able to meet with their MT and foster successful relationships; others were not. Those who connected with MTs found the meetings rewarding – and, at times challenging.

The first BT, Brandi, met only irregularly with one of her two MTs, and she began the meetings halfway through the year. Even so, she benefited from the experience, gaining knowledge of both resources and strategies from the MT. Her description of interactions with the MT also revealed an insecurity that could be felt by numerous BTs: a need to protect herself from criticism.

At the beginning, she explained, she received an e-mail invitation to participate in the mentorship program.

I never e-mailed back, [be]cause honestly, I was kind of like, no I'd rather not just [be]cause I'm too busy, so I didn't answer back. But then I got an

e-mail a month later, saying okay, we've set you up with these two mentor teachers. I was like okay?! (Brandi)

Brandi likely felt an obligation to participate after having been paired with two off-site MTs, one for Spanish and one for Science. She noted that it was rather challenging to meet because they each taught and lived on opposite ends of the city. "It was just hard for us. It was location. It was ridiculously far. And then just with all my extracurricular stuff, I just ... didn't have time." (Brandi)

Brandi met with one of her MTs (Paula, her Science MT) for the first time in March at Starbucks for coffee. Shortly thereafter, Paula came to her classroom to see her teach and to provide her with some ideas. She felt comfortable talking with Paula, but felt that meeting her after school was more of a burden because of the distance between their locations and Brandi's extracurricular commitments. Brandi also expressed that, when talking with Paula, she had to mask her feeling of incompetence:

> If we would have had time to maybe get to know one another better, or
> gotten together more, I would have felt more comfortable asking her every
> question, whereas this time around, I'm kind of just [asking her] little bits
> at a time, [be]cause I don't want to make her think that I don't know what
> I'm doing. (Brandi)

Brandi noted that she needed more time to build a relationship to increase her confidence in becoming at ease and willing to openly discuss and share with Paula, someone whom she really did not know. Although Brandi sensed that she could divulge certain challenges that she was having, she felt unable to discuss

with Paula everything that she would have been experiencing, for fear of appearing incompetent. This could also be related to a feeling that she is expected to know more by mid-year, after having had some experience.

Brandi heard from Camilla, her SL MT for the first time in February. They both decided that "we should just get together, one of those [things] that never happened." It seems that neither one of them felt strongly enough to make the meeting take place.

Brandi did not appear to have high expectations for mentoring and although she received some mentorship through Paula part-way through the year, it was not a priority for her. Brandi sought "support in confirming she was doing a good job as a BT". This was not achieved; however, she did find SL support from a teacher in her school who had taught SSL.

The second BT, Sophie, successfully met with Jeff, her MT:

I had a really, really good mentor. He took time and met with me quite a few times and that was good, 'cause I know a lot of people had mentors, or the mentees didn't really contact one another much, so that was good. The only thing was that he was at a different school, so setting up times to meet was sometimes tricky and it didn't happen as often as we would have liked, but it was good. It was very helpful and I got a lot of good advice from him. Even though he wasn't [a teacher of] second languages, it was hard for him to help me in that area, he still he paired me with somebody else who was a second language teacher, and I went and chatted with her for a day. She teaches FSL too so that was really good. So although in

this area he wasn't able to help me, he found some ways to get me what I

needed. (Sophie)

Sophie thus felt that she benefitted from meeting with Jeff, even though he

was not situated within her school, or able to personally help her with the SL.

Because Sophie met Jeff early in the school year, she experienced success as she

was able to discuss her concern about classroom management with him

immediately and therefore implement Jeff's suggestions. Sophie sought "wisdom

and advice from an experienced MT to assist her when she encountered a

challenge or difficulty".   This was achieved through Jeff, and he found her a SL

teacher to observe.

The third BT, Karolina, was unable to meet with – or to benefit from –

her SL MT. "I wasn't working closely with a mentor with the Spanish program,"

she reported. Her initial anticipations were correct: that she would not necessarily

be able to meet with her MTs. "I was hoping but I don't think I was really

expecting." I had signed up for the mentorship program but it didn't really work

out. "My MT didn't get back to me", although Karolina made attempts to contact

her SL MT, Camilla never got back to her.   Regrettably, she did not receive

support from a MT, let alone one in the SL, even as she faced the additional task

of establishing a new Spanish program. Karolina "wanted help with managing

the environment and making the space her own in that forty-five minutes, and

help with resources and assessment in differentiating learning for the diversity of

learners in her classroom." Karolina found SL support on her own through the SL

consultant, with whom she worked throughout the year and whom she considered her "actual mentor".

All the BTs appreciated having a MT, whether assigned or self-discovered, but also recognized whether or not their hopes and expectations had been achieved.

The MTs' perspective. On meeting with the BTs, the MTs provide another perspective.

Jeff, Sophie's MT, explained that they introduced one another through e-mail and then met:

> We then made arrangements to go to Second Cup for coffee so I could meet her, [be]cause I didn't even know what she looked like. So we went and met and got a chance to chat about her school. [From the beginning,] I thought you just need someone who's going to be there. We got a chance also in that first discussion to talk lots about classroom management. That was a concern for her with her Grade 8 & 9 French classes. She was struggling with the behaviour and rambunctiousness of the boys, so we talked a bit about strategies and what works and what doesn't – especially with boys, junior high boys. (Jeff)

Jeff continued to meet with Sophie throughout the year (about once a month) and attended some of the mentorship sessions with her. He was eager and successful in assisting Sophie early in the year. Jeff achieved his expectations of mentoring.

As for Paula, she remembers meeting with her BT, Brandi, three times outside of the mentorship sessions. She noted that she struggled for a few months to connect with Brandi:

> We had coffee once, and then we met – I met at her school. And then another time. [Be]cause you know it was very difficult, because she didn't correspond until the end of December because she said she was coaching. (Paula)

Regardless of not hearing back, Paula kept trying to correspond with Brandi until eventually, they were able to connect; by then, however, only a few months were left in the school year. Paula initially thought that her position had sufficient flexibility for her to meet with Brandi. Regardless of Paula's challenge in meeting earlier and more frequently with Brandi, she tried her best to share and learn from Brandi. Paula somewhat achieved her expectations of mentoring.

In contrast, Camilla had two BTs, Brandi and Karolina. She explained that, although she did attend most of the mentorship program meetings (as substitute costs were provided by the ATA local), she was "only able to talk [with one] (Brandi) over e-mail, but you know, I put myself out there and she seemed interested, but I'm sure that it was just a matter of not having time. Meeting up never came to fruition." From Camilla's point of view, she recognized that the BTs are:

> very very busy, understandably, so I find it kind of difficult to set times to meet with them, and I find that this year in particular, I myself feel isolated and very kind of on my own. There wasn't a chance really for me

to get out there and try to do things where I could meet them, or find them, let's say at conferences, because I've been doing my own thing here and that's kept me busy. (Camilla)

Although Camilla accepted the role as a MT, she was struggling with her own school assignment, and found leaving the school "difficult". Camilla initially said that she made herself available, then expressed that the BTs were busy in their new role. Although Camilla may have had good intentions, she acknowledged that she was herself feeling isolated and too consumed by the workload within her own school to make her MT role a priority. She also mentioned that she needed mentorship (which she did not receive). It did not appear that Camilla made any contact with Karolina, or perhaps forgot that she was paired with two BTs. Camilla was unable to achieve her expectations of mentoring.

Off-site mentorship seems to have been a challenge to this ATA mentorship project. Due to minimal volunteer MTs, the SL BTs were paired with non-SL MTs who worked in schools "on the other side of the city". The challenge of meeting the BT may reflect the different responses of each MT and the unique rhythms of each school – extracurricular responsibilities (e.g. when practices and games take place) – as well as school location and travelling time. Nevertheless, the persistence of two MTs did result in fruitful meetings and learnings for the BTs.

The APs' perspective. Lauren, Brandi's AP, was also asked if she knew if Brandi had been in contact with her MTs or whether she was aware that Brandi had met with them. Lauren responded: "She said it was hard. She tried at the

beginning but, because they were way on the other side of the city, she said it didn't really work. They were just too far away, that they couldn't." (Lauren) Lauren was unaware that Brandi had been in contact with her Science MT, Paula, and that she had visited the school to help her.

Lauren was also asked if she was aware whether Brandi went to any of the mentorship meetings during the year. Her response was: "I think she did. I think so, but I don't know."

Because Lauren was a first-year AP in a new school, and new to the junior high school curriculum, she was trying to survive herself, and therefore, mentoring her BT seemed low on her action list. In fact, like Camilla, she may herself have needed mentorship.

Inquiring with AP Bob as to whether or not his BTs, Karolina and Sophie, were able to meet with their off-site MT, he replied "I think they did, yeah." He then continued, "Yes, I'm aware that they met with their off-site MTs, but can't make any comments as I'm not involved." Bob never took the time to attend any of the ATA local's mentorship meetings. Bob took responsibility for and was invested in his in-school mentorship program; however, he seemed less informed about the ATA local-district initiative, because his concerns were mostly evaluative and he could not see what else mentorship could entail. He was therefore unable to provide the SL BTs with additional support and encouragement.

The one case in which the BT successfully met and fostered an effective relationship with the off-site MT throughout the school year was that of Sophie and Jeff; the AP (Bob), however, was unsure and unaware that his BT had received mentorship from the MT. To maximize benefits of the ATA local's mentorship program, organizers might structure an initial meeting of all members of the triad and encourage more active and explicit support and integration by administrators.

In the other two cases, Brandi found it challenging to meet with Paula because she was occupied with extracurricular duties after school and felt overwhelmed with traveling the distance after school to see Paula. Although Karolina reported that she had tried to receive help from Camilla, her MT, but could not connect with her, Camilla believed that the BTs were too busy for mentorship, and then acknowledged that she was struggling to meet responsibilities within her own school.

Both APs were uncertain as to whether the SL BTs were being supported or not outside of their school. But, as Lauren articulated,

> If I had known, then it would definitely be something I would go 'So how was your meeting? and what did you talk about?' That would be something that I would have done with her. Had I known, I would have reached out. (Lauren)

The APs' lack of knowledge of the BT-MT relationship calls us to return to their philosophy of mentorship, as described in Chapter Four. Neither believed that a teacher/AP needed to have training in order to mentor. Further, the system,

as reflected in the mentorship program, does not provide any supports or orientations for AP mentorship – learning neither how to mentor, nor how to improve mentoring skills.

Like Bob, Lauren's investment in the mentorship program seems to be minimal, perhaps reflecting not only her beginnings as an AP in a new school, but also the top-down initiative of the ATA local's mentorship program. The degree of investment of stakeholders greatly affects the support given to BTs and the value attributed to off-site mentoring. Further, like teachers, MTs tend to mentor as they were mentored and they mentor for the way they were taught, similar to cloning their own way of teaching, even if it might have changed over time.

In returning to each participant's philosophy and expectations of being mentored, it was obvious that their background and experience with being mentored and mentoring was the foundation for setting them up for success or not. The only MT who provided successful mentorship was Jeff, and Sophie, was the only BT who received support at the onset of the school year (from her assigned off-site MT). Jeff's philosophy recognized that BTs needed support upfront. Sophie was willing to accept his support and they both continued to build the relationship throughout the year. Since Bob, Sophie's AP, was occupied with running his own mentorship program and with his other responsibilities, he did not recognize that Sophie had received this strong support outside of his school.

Paula wanted to help her BT, however Brandi felt that she was too busy to accept the support during the first half of the school year. Paula was persistent

and continued trying to meet with Brandi, even though she was unsuccessful for several months. Although they finally did meet and Paula visited Brandi in her classroom, it was intriguing that her AP was completely unaware. Lauren was too busy finding herself in the school, as a new AP. Her lack of experience being mentored was likely a strong influence as to why she was unaware of how to mentor Brandi, suggesting that just as teachers tend to teach as they were taught, so do mentors. Further, just as teachers need to experience opportunities in which they can critically evaluate their own beliefs about teaching, so, too, might mentors. Perhaps an orientation for MTs and APs would be helpful in the future of the mentorship program for the participants in this study.

Camilla may have had good intentions of wanting to mentor; however, she was entirely consumed by the challenges within her school. Unfortunately, Karolina, her BT, likely needed the support the most, in establishing a new Spanish program. Fortunately, Karolina was determined to seek support on her own, and formed a strong connection with the district consultant. Her AP, Bob, appeared to be more concerned about getting the Spanish program going, rather than what resources and support were required to make it happen.

Forming Relationships: How BTs Mentor One Another

Relationships with mentors are just one form of collaboration essential to BTs and helps them to overcome isolation. As Field (2008) notes, young professionals benefit from:

making connections with one another, and keeping them going over time, people are able to work together to achieve things they either could not achieve by

themselves, or could only achieve with great difficulty. People connect through a series of networks and they tend to share common values with other members of these networks; to the extent that these networks constitute a resource (Field, 2008, in Day & Gu, 2010, p. 172).

New teachers long for learning communities that have, at their heart, high-quality interpersonal relationships founded on trust and respect (Wong, 2003). BTs quickly begin to recognize where and with whom they feel most comfortable building relationships and establishing a sense of trust. It likely varies with each individual, based on connections and commonalities shared. Relationships with MTs, however, were not the only (nor even the primary) source of support and encouragement for the BTs in this study. The BTs were also resources for one another, particularly when there were a few BTs in one school and were strongly appreciative of the support of those colleagues around them. They drew strength from one another, embraced learning together and felt comfortable exchanging their strengths and weaknesses. Kardos, Moore Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, and Liu (2001) stated that the new teacher's work-life is centered upon his or her relationship with fellow teachers in terms of validating membership within the school's culture. "Whether the novice can count on these colleagues will depend largely on the prevailing norms and patterns of interaction that exist within the school" (p.251). Daley (2002) reintroduces the importance of genuinely engaging a membership into what he terms an "occupational community" where social identity is said to be "central to the self image of the individuals within that community" (p.81).

For example, Sophie said that mentorship for her "kind of just happened."

> I'd been here for I think a week or two and there's quite a few first-year
> teachers at this school, and so a lot of them were going to this PD for first-
> year teachers. I was like 'Oh, I should go because it has useful
> information' and so that's kind of how I got involved. (Sophie)

Karolina acknowledged that she did not have one specific mentor. She recognized that once she became comfortable with the BTs in her school and got to know them, she shared her joys and challenges with them.

> I think we just kind of banded together and were kind of a support system,
> where if we wanted to ask those silly questions at the beginning, we could
> ask one another, and maybe just piece things together, or one of us would
> build the courage to ask somebody else. (Karolina)

BTs have been known to learn from one another. As noted by Melnychuk and Melnychuk (2002), BTs frequently express a deep appreciation for opportunities to meet regularly to share ideas and become resources to learn from one another. Through collaboration and shared experiences, BTs have come to realize that much can be learned from one another as well as from veteran teachers.

The BTs in this study gleaned a great deal from working both with one another and in forming relationships. They felt most comfortable discussing with someone who shared similar challenges (i.e., other BTs) or who had related subject-area expertise (an off-site SL MT), or a teacher within their school who could mentor them about the school culture, even if it was not subject-specific

support that they were able to receive. The BTs recognized that forming a variety

of relationships on multiple levels was critical and that they often had to initiate

or seek support on their own, as it would not always be offered.

What the MTs/APs said Versus what they Did

In the previous chapter, the philosophy and expectations of mentorship of

each participant were described. However, what the MTs and APs "said" about

mentorship did not correspond to how they enacted mentorship, either in their

own words or as implied by the BTs.

Jeff. In Jeff's philosophy, he recognized that, as a MT, it is important to

"germinate a friendship and a relationship" with the BT. He understood the value

of "face-to-face meetings as being critical for mentorship" and he knew that

mentorship had to take place early on in the school year. In mentoring Sophie, he

was able to assist her early on and continue throughout the year to help her with

her challenges and concerns. He also attended the ATA local's mentorship

sessions to support Sophie as much as possible. Jeff viewed Sophie as his

colleague and he experienced success in becoming "invigorated and reinspired"

through his mentoring, just as he was hoping.

Paula. In Paula's philosophy, she spoke greatly of her own mentors, with

whom she had established "enduring and valued relationships". She believed in

being a "continuous lifelong learner" and she wanted to know how she could

improve her teaching. Paula thought that, because she was not tied down to a

school, her schedule would provide her with more flexibility in arranging to meet

with her BT. Paula was unable to experience the frequent visits and meetings

with Brandi, her BT, as she was hoping, because Brandi was preoccupied after school with her coaching commitments. Paula would have liked to have been able to mentor Brandi earlier in the school year, which would have helped them build a deeper relationship as colleagues.

Camilla. Camilla, the lone Spanish teacher at her school, was hired to start a Spanish program. She mentioned that: "I haven't felt like I could go to anyone to help me in my cause. Nobody has ever done it before so I'm basically doing it – blind." Camilla recognized "how challenging it was for [her] not to be at the other schools to help the beginning second language teachers and thought about it constantly." She claimed that she did not receive a response from Karolina when she contacted her, and although she corresponded with Brandi over e-mail a few times, the meeting they discussed never took place, and oddly, neither of them spoke of seeing each other at the ATA local's mentorship sessions.

In describing her philosophy, Camilla felt strongly about wanting to mentor:

> I thought I should pass that on and help support the new teachers coming on board. I'm helping somebody but I'm also helping myself. I don't want to be stagnant in my job. I don't want to be doing the same thing over and over. I want to always be doing new things. (Camilla)

Although Camilla discusses wanting to mentor, she does not have a concrete vision of what it will entail. She sees the value for herself, but does not state how she might go about helping a BT. Ironically, she was experiencing the same

isolation in her new school as the BTs in theirs. Although this was her second year teaching at her current school, Camilla felt that she no longer had any other staff members with whom she could dialogue. Perhaps with only seven years of teaching experience and no administrative background, Camilla required more "training" as a MT.

Lauren. In Lauren's philosophy, she values mentorship for BTs in their new role, in that "there is so much to learn, sometimes it's just about survival". Although she thinks "encouragement of 'You know, you're doing a good job! Just survive'" is what BTs need, Lauren does not follow through with providing that to Brandi. The first time she checked-in on Brandi was during report card time, at the end of November. Therefore, Lauren was unaware of thinking about Brandi in her first three months, prior to report cards.

Lauren's not working very closely with Brandi appears to correlate with her understanding and expectation that BTs need to take the responsibility to inform the administration about how they were doing and whether they needed support. This outdated philosophy of mentorship further supports the need for mentorship orientation or preparation for APs.

Bob. With a large number of BTs in his school and in recognizing their "inexperience", Bob created a special program to work closely with them, in addition to the ATA local's mentorship program. Bob boasted of his "open door policy" and "professional responsibility" for BTs and the additional time he spent with them after school.

There are many times the Spanish teacher would sit here for an hour [after school]. In fact, one time I had all first-year junior high teachers in this room, sitting around, and we'd just talk about everybody's challenges and successes. It was interesting because I found that there was more dialogue when the ladies were together. (Bob)

Bob wanted to build trust so that the BTs felt they could "bounce things off of [him]". "I think they saw me as not only one that would be very honest regarding their instruction, but at the same time, I can help them move to their next stage of teaching." (Bob) Sharing in the evaluations and classroom visitations of BTs with the second AP in the school, Bob failed to consider the power he had over the BTs. Although Sophie and Karolina mentioned the school mentorship "model" that Bob described in great detail, they mainly stated that Bob had told them that he had additional expectations for them. Although Bob may have felt that the BTs came to him, Sophie and Karolina mentioned that they sought most of their support from other BTs.

The interviews revealed the MTs' and APs' actual experiences within the context of mentorship varied and did not always reflect the expectations which they had previously stated, either in their own words or as implied by the BTs.

Significance of APs'/MTs' Background and Experience

There seems to have been an assumption in the triadic mentorship program that experienced teachers, like the MTs and APs, had the necessary skills and understanding to be able to mentor and to know what BTs need. Because they were once BTs and had been mentored, formally or informally, they each

developed a philosophy about what BTs needed and how to help them transition into their careers. However, given the gaps between what they espoused and how they enacted their philosophy and the fact that none of the MTs or APs described the same needs of SL BTs as the BTs themselves, experience alone may not be sufficient mentorship training.

One role of the school principal is to identify and mentor teachers for future educational leadership roles (Alberta Education, 2009). In having the responsibility for leading and mentoring teachers, the system places the expectation on administrators that they will carry out this role which includes mentoring the BTs in their school. The role of mentorship often lies with the assistant principalship. Aspiring leaders might hope to find the type of mentoring that will assist them in developing the breadth and depth of skills necessary for a smooth, confident and effective transition into future principalship. Crow and Matthews (1998) identify the responsibility and suggest, "An important goal for the assistant principal is to acquire the knowledge, skills, behaviors and values of a competent administrator in a relatively short time…" (p. 84). However, the reasonableness of such expectations is difficult to ascertain since individual experiences in this role vary widely.

Generally the responsibilities of the AP are determined by the particular principal and, as "[t]he role of the assistant principal is one of the least researched and least discussed topics in professional journals and books focusing on educational leadership" there appears to be limited understanding of and lack of consistency in this unique position (Weller & Weller, 2002, xiii). Ideally, the

principal will serve as a "guide and model while the [assistant principal] actually performs leadership tasks and gains practical experience. In this role, leaders [can] encourage, inspire, tutor, and mold their charges into future leaders" (Weller & Weller, 2002, p. 16).

The APs in this study had very different experiences working with the BT(s) at their school. The approach each took was based on the APs' philosophy, background, well-being and level of experience in their role, as well as what each felt would best assist their BT, if they were aware of the assistance their BT required. Both Bob and Lauren discussed that, during their time as APs, their work offered a number of learning opportunities. Under the tutelage of experienced leaders and with time, they were able to develop skills and attributes necessary for school administration. Further, when they first moved into their current position, despite having been formally or informally mentored, they were required to take on the additional role of mentoring BTs, even if it was not explicitly laid out as one of their required duties.

Lauren greatly struggled to mentor the BT in her school and recognized that her struggle was due to the fact that it was her first year as an AP in a junior high school setting. Her previous administrative experience was in elementary schools.

> Being new myself here this year, I couldn't do it, and I didn't. You know, you're just learning and you're just kind of watching and seeing okay, well that's missing, or that I would do different. So I have a feeling it was just one of those things that just never came through and probably just in

everything else that was happening, they just decided well you know what,

we can't take this on this year. Maybe knowing that I was new, they

didn't maybe want to ask me to do it. You know it's kind of hard to

mentor in a school where I'm still learning how to get from class to class,

and new to junior high! I mean I can certainly help in making people

feeling comfortable, but I don't know the resources yet, you know all the

different, the whole junior high and how it works. (Lauren)

Being new to her role, Lauren was still trying to decipher her

responsibilities within the system. She felt overwhelmed throughout her year in a

junior high setting, and was learning as she went along, so much so, that the first

time she followed up with Brandi was during report cards, at the end of

November. Lauren also mentioned that she had never previously had the assigned

role of a MT to a new teacher, or chosen to voluntarily offer support to a

beginning colleague.

In contrast, Bob was able to apply what he had learned from being a sports

coach, and counsellor to mentoring, and has more years of experience as an AP.

He explains:

I've transferred some of my skills from coaching to teaching. I've

coached different sports and you're always mentoring kids. When I was

counseling, counseling is mentoring. So all the skills I have, the skill set

comes from that, so that's why I went into administration. (Bob)

Bob's focus is to pass on the leadership roles within his staff. "What I'm trying to do is develop leadership within everyone, not one specific person." In doing so, "teacher[s] learn that some valuable leadership skills can't be taught."

As a seasoned, experienced AP, Bob appears to have understood his responsibility and role within the system. He also had a large number of BTs at his school, for whom he felt a sense of responsibility; even if he could not guarantee them a job the following year, he could at least strive to ensure they were supported throughout their first-year. Bob explained that "you must provide guidance, mentorship, evaluation, and feedback for each one of these over and above all other staff, both teachers and support. That in itself can translate into a very laborious undertaking." Bob recognized that the BTs needed general mentorship and was willing to offer them what he could. The BTs likely chose to go to whom they felt most comfortable with to discuss their various questions and concerns, regardless of whether or not Bob had an "open-door."

The MTs revealed particular details about their own mentors and how they described their experience also revealed some unique beliefs. Paula recognized that she has had numerous people who individually mentored her and that continue to do so. Paula appears to have experienced several meaningful mentoring relationships throughout her career, when she speaks of those who have supported her and that she has learned from. She appeared, however, to not see the BTs as her colleagues, but rather closer to her students: mentorship "gives a reality check to some of those kids [BTs]."

Camilla spoke of an influential principal who inspired her teaching in second languages. He excited her about being a language teacher and provided her support to create "the best classroom environment for you and your students." He listened to her and took her "beyond the classroom because he made me realize that I have potential to influence not only myself but other people." (Camilla)

Although Camilla recognized that she had been offered the support she needed early in her career, she did not receive adequate training about how to help others, even though she may have had good intentions and wanted to do so. Camilla's unsuccessful mentorship experience helped her learn about herself. "I can't rely on the other person and I shouldn't rely on the other person to ask for help, so really it was more of a selfish reflection that I have learned something from." Camilla also recognized that, in her inactivity, if she decides to mentor in the future, she needs to be more proactive about following up with her BT and she would greatly benefit from receiving some assistance in "how" to help a new teacher.

A MTs' background and experience is relevant in being able to successfully mentor a BT. First, based on the comments of the MTs and APs in this study, there is a need for structured training in "how" to mentor a new colleague. Simply wanting to mentor does not compensate for the skills needed to do so. Because the lived experiences in having been mentored were driving factors in how the MTs and APs mentored their BTs, reflection upon these

experiences in the context of research about mentorship might yield some of these skills.

Closing. In summary, this chapter sought to answer my third research question: How do the perceptions and expectations of mentoring compare and contrast for BTs, MTs and APs? Most importantly, the MTs' and APs' actual experiences within the context of mentorship varied and did not always correspond to their philosophy or expectations of mentorship, either in their own words or as implied by the BTs. Ironically, only Sophie and Jeff, who had similar perceptions of mentoring, mutually experienced a successful mentorship partnership. Unfortunately, Bob, Sophie's AP, was unaware of their interactions.

The most common themes that emerged included perspectives on meeting with the off-site MT; what the MTs/APs said versus what they did; and the significance of the MTs' background and experience. The bulk of the literature that corresponds to this chapter relates to one of the themes in this chapter: the importance of forming relationships (Wong, 2003; Field, 2008; Kardos, Moore Johnson, Peske, Kauffman & Liu, 2001; Daley, 2002; Melnychuk & Melnychuk, 2002).

No literature was found documenting meeting with the subject specialist off-site MT, the MT and AP perceptions of mentoring versus how they enacted mentorship, and the significance of the MTs' background and experience in being a MT. Together, these themes represent new findings in the literature.

Chapter Eight will provide a discussion about how the challenges faced by SL teachers compare to those of other subject-area specialists.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Chapter Eight will answer my final research question: How do challenges faced by SL teachers compare to those of other subject-area specialists?

The literature review of Chapter Two presented challenges shared by specialist teachers of SL, music, art, drama and physical education including: (1) classroom management; (2) experiencing isolation; (3) administrative support; (4) specialized subject advocacy; and (5) subject identity formation for specialist teachers. Extracurricular demands and responsibilities was an additional shared challenge amongst teachers of music, drama and physical education (PE). These common challenges experienced by subject-area specialists will be considered another contribution to the literature. This chapter presents ways in which the SL BTs in this study faced subject-area specialist challenges.

Classroom Management

Classroom management affects each specialized subject area in a variety of ways (Hamann, 1985; Krueger, 1996, 2001; Mercer & Mercer, 1986; Miksza, Roeder & Biggs, 2010; Hill & Brodin, 2004; Brand, 1977; Wood, 2008; McPhail, 2004). Issues such as group work and the structure of the class, the materials and equipment used, and inexperience with the subject-area which would enable the teacher to provide specific subject management were seen as common challenges for all of these subject areas.

As noted by Sophie, classroom management was her initial main concern in teaching SLs. Karolina and Brandi also experienced some challenges; however, Sophie spoke about it most extensively. Fortunately, she was able to

seek support through her MT Jeff, who offered her strategies and suggestions. Jeff gave her lots of ideas, strategies and tips to help engage her students more so that they would act out less, and therefore, Sophie would not have to yell at them as much.

Karolina recognized her substitute teaching experience within her school as enabling her to get to know the students better and improve her classroom management strategies.

Experiencing Isolation

BTs report experiencing isolation and yearning to feel accepted within the school community by students, parents, teachers and administrators (Karsenti, Collin, Villeneuve, Dumouchel, & Roy, 2008; McCormack & Thomas, 2003; Anderson, 2003; Bain, 1990; Stroot, 1996). As specialist teachers experience physical isolation from other same subject-area teachers, their desire to feel equal and included is even greater.

When BTs experience isolation, they quickly begin to recognize with whom they feel most comfortable building relationships and establishing a sense of trust. Although relationships with MTs were not the only source of support for the BTs in this study, BTs spoke highly of seeking out their own support. For example, Brandi felt that she was able to overcome her feelings of isolation through her next door neighbour, who had taught Spanish before. Brandi felt that "she's been a great resource".

The BTs were also resources for one another, particularly when there were several BTs in one school. Making connections with one another helped the BTs

overcome isolation (Thompson, 1988; Field, 2008; Melnychuk & Melnychuk, 2002). Karolina acknowledged that once she became comfortable with the BTs in her school and got to know them, they shared their joys and challenges with each other: "I think we just kind of banded together and were kind of a support system." (Karolina)

Another form of isolation emerged in this study by one of the SL MTs, Camilla. "I thought I should help support the new teachers coming on board", said Camilla, and although she expressed strongly wanting to mentor in her philosophy, she did not appear to have a concrete vision of what it would entail. While she saw the value of having been mentored herself, she did not state how she might go about helping a BT. Although Camilla had received the support she required early in her career, she did not receive appropriate training in how to assist others. Camilla recognized that she learned a lot about herself and that she "can't rely on the other person and I shouldn't rely on the other person to ask for help."

Ironically, she was experiencing the same isolation in her new school as the BTs in theirs. This may contribute to understanding why her mentoring relationships with either Karolina or Brandi were unsuccessful.
All BTs desire to feel accepted within the school community by students, parents and administrators. Although subject-specialty teachers are often physically isolated from other specialists and are the only SL teacher in their school, they yearn to form relationships as a source of support. BTs in this study were resources for one another. When BTs do not have others at their school with

whom they can exchange their challenges, frustrations, and ideas, it is critical that they are knowledgeable about the resources available within the school district. Karolina was able to experience the mentorship she needed through the district consultant. Subject-area specialists need to also be familiar with the supports and services available to them and how to network with specialists in other schools.

Administrative Support

Administrative support is critical for retaining the programs of specialist teachers. The initial perception of support for subject specialty programs needs to begin with administrators, since they ultimately decide on the structure and timetabling of all programs. It is also a strong determining factor in how specialty subjects are perceived by others (staff, students and parents).

Although administrative support is perceived as being extremely important by all subject specialist teachers, it is frequently recognized as being weak for teachers of SLs, music, art, drama and PE. Perhaps it is because administrators do not recognize such subjects as core courses and do not see them as critical when competing with other schools. Bob believes that his school "doesn't have enough interest from the students for French and is just developing a Spanish program. BTs needs to have another segment, (subject area) not just Spanish or French. Spanish does not make a full-time position." Or perhaps, without any SL skills themselves, they do not really understand either, the value of learning a SL, nor the values of having learned one.

The BTs in this study discussed how their SL courses were perceived. When equal status (compared to core courses) is not given to specialty subjects,

they can appear to be "treated like a joke", as described by Sophie. Through her frustration with how the option selections were scheduled at her school, when the administration placed students in French if they did not get their top three picks, Sophie recognized that some of the students just ended up in it, chose not to be there, but had to be put somewhere. She acknowledged that this situation is likely what she had taken on by teaching a SL. The negative outcome is that Sophie noted there was a wide difference in students' attitudes and behaviours in core subjects versus optional subjects, stemming from the fact that SLs are not perceived as important. Karolina agreed, noting that the school culture tends to support and reinforce students' negative perceptions, in that SLs appeared to be seen as an "after thought" in terms of resources and special events. Karolina equally noted that SLs are "option courses that are not deemed as "fun" or interesting and houses students that were not able to join options such as Foods, CTS or music due to behavioural problems." (Karolina) Bob, the AP at Sophie and Karolina's school, recognizes that although SL courses need to be offered, they are not priorities.

Karolina's lack of classroom space in working off a cart in seven different classrooms, and shortage of learning resources caused her to experience a low status for teaching Spanish. Under such conditions, since she had a minimal supply of resources available and in being required to build a new program, she was forced to spend supplementary time seeking appropriate materials and creating them on their own, which can become quite time-consuming (Xu, 2004).

Administrative support was seen as a definite challenge by the SL BTs in this study, and as it appeared in the research literature, it appears to be of equal concern for specialist teachers of other subjects.

Specialized Subject Advocacy

All specialty subject area teachers reported having to justify their existence since they may not be recognized as important as the core courses offered within their school. When their courses become electives in secondary school settings, they are always at risk (Stewart, 1991; McPhail, 2004). During times of economic challenges and education cutbacks, they may be required more than ever, to fight for the survival and expansion of their programs.

Resistance from students may also be a concern when students are placed in mandatory programs, such as SLs or music. Brandi noted this resistance in her Grade 8 Spanish class, when students did not want to be there, but were required to take the course: "There's no point in giving them homework because they don't study because they don't care." (Brandi)

Subject-area advocacy is considered a critical task for teachers in all specialized subjects; as they may be required to recruit students in order to offer courses in subsequent years, showcase their students, and source additional funding to support their program. They frequently lack the experience and expertise in knowing how to approach their administration to be able to do so (Harrell, 2007; O'Sullivan 1989). Specialist teachers may also experience their subject as receiving a low status and respect from administrators and parents (O'Sullivan, 1989).

As experienced by Karolina in developing the Spanish program, they may also be responsible as a BT for building a new program from the ground up, with limited materials, sourcing additional funding or fundraising to keep their programs going, and educating their administrators, students, parents and other teachers about the importance and value of their programs. SL BTs learn quickly that they have to stand up for their subject area, students and programs, at times by discretely doing small acts, as noted by Sophie, "even if only one person continues on," which appears to be a commonality with the other specialty subjects as well.

Subject specialty teachers, in particular BTs, mentioned extensively having to advocate for their program. For example, Brandi mentioned that: "it was tough because they [administrators] don't necessarily understand the dynamics of the class or the kids." (Brandi)

Sophie also expressed similar frustration in that:

although my administration definitely tried to be understanding of what my situation was, they didn't really know how to support me. And unless you've taught a second language as an option, you can't really understand how hard it really is. (Sophie)

The BTs expressed having to justify the status and existence of their program, and recognized they were responsible for recruiting students for subsequent years when their subject became an option. Problems were heightened in establishing relationships and by the perceived low status of the subject from administrators and parents. Another concern was that subject

specialists often felt unprepared to dialogue with their administration (Schieb, 2004), particularly during economic cutbacks, when they are required to fight for the survival of their program.

Subject Identity Formation for Specialist Teachers

Subject specialist teachers in the fields of SLs, music, art, drama and physical education require time to shift from their personal selves in their subject area, into their professional selves, and they need to be cognizant of the shifting that takes place as they negotiate their new roles.

It is important to look at how teachers' lives outside the classroom shape their teaching. Many SL teachers experience professional and even social marginalization, both in schools and outside them (Casanave & Schecter, 1997; Johnston, 1999; Pennington, 1992), as experienced by Karolina and Sophie in this study. As exemplified by Lapkin, Mady and Arnott (2006), because core French or SL teachers are often "invisible" and not involved in interacting regularly with others in the school community, negative stereotypes may be formed about them and FSL or the SL in general. For example, Sophie recognized her subject area as being seen negatively: "It's almost like a punishment to be in French sometimes, and I know it's not meant to be that way, but it kind of is how it happens." (Sophie) Karolina frequently chatted with Sophie about SLs within the school: "We had a lot of talks about the languages programs here and how they are not seen as a priority." (Karolina)

As already discussed in Chapter Six, teacher identity is profoundly individualized and psychological and concerns the self-image, other-image of

particular teachers and school community (Cross, 2006; Dust, 2006; Dalladay 2011; Milbrandt, 2006; Gold, 1996; Estola, 2003; Konukman, Agbuga, Erdogan, Zorba & Giyasettin, 2010).

Daley (2002) reintroduces the importance of genuinely engaging a membership into what he terms an "occupational community" where social identity is said to be "central to the self image of the individuals within that community" (p.81). An example that took place within this study was when Sophie explained that mentorship for her "kind of just happened." Sophie had been at the school for only a week or two, and she noticed that the large group of first-year teachers were all attending a professional development session for BTs. She decided that she should go as well, because it would probably have useful information. That is how she became involved in being part of the mentorship program, based on the community of BTs at her school, not from her AP. The social identity within her school likely influenced and strengthened her professional identity.

A BTs' identity is shaped and formed by his/her school community, and through the perception of those around him/her. As subject specialists negotiate their subject-area identity as lone teachers in their school, it is important that they be socialized and treated as equal colleagues, otherwise they will experienced feeling marginalized as they struggle with trying to "fit in".

Identity was a major area of distress identified by subject specialist BTs. SL teachers must reconcile their identity as SL users (speakers, writers, readers, cultural brokers) in an English-speaking environment, similar to how musicians,

artists, actors and athletes/coaches must reconcile their identity when they begin teaching in their subject area specialty. One's biography greatly shapes who they become as a teacher. Teachers are unable to separate their personal identities from their professional ones. The shifting identity creates conflicts and requires time as subject specialty BTs negotiate their new roles.

Extracurricular Demands and Responsibilities

In addition to their already challenging teaching assignment, extracurricular demands and responsibilities were confirmed to be added stressors to specialist teachers of music, drama and physical education, causing them to feel overworked (Ballantyne, 2007; Nimmo, 1989; Ramsey, 2000; Bain, 1990). New teachers tend to do whatever is asked of them in terms of extracurricular activities, even if the expectation is unreasonable (Couture and Servage, 2012).

Although this was not a common theme experienced by SL teachers, SL teachers are often teachers of other subject areas, and possibly two subject specialty-areas. Extracurricular demands and responsibilities emerged as an additional challenge by two of the SL BTs in this study because they were teaching subjects in addition to their SL.

Brandi described her involvement with extracurricular activities as one of the stressors she experienced in addition to her teaching duties. Unfortunately, Brandi's extracurricular duties interfered with arranging to meet with her MT, as coaching took precedence over many things. Brandi felt that, at times, she was "spread too thin" and "wearing too many hats", as noted by Brown (2005), which

caused her to have to make choices, such as eliminating being able to spend time with her MT.

In contrast, Sophie's involvement in extracurricular activities was of great benefit to her teaching a subject (PE) that was outside of her comfort level and experience. It allowed Sophie to build her confidence and to see her students in a different context, thus helping her build a stronger relationship with them in her classroom and giving her credibility. It also allowed her the ability to negotiate her varied and complex teaching assignment. Unlike Brandi however, Sophie was able to balance her coaching duties along with meeting routinely with her MT throughout the year.

Summary. The SL BTs in this study purported the same challenges as other subject specialist teachers: classroom management, isolation, lack of administrative support, specialized subject advocacy, and subject identity formation. Extracurricular demands and responsibilities were a common stressor for specialist teachers of music, drama, and physical education.

Administrators need to be cognizant of these challenges when hiring specialist teachers with a formal training and a background in their specialized subject area. They should not assign complimentary courses, such as SLs or drama to any given teacher without adequate training, simply to "fill" their schedule. This creates additional classroom management problems when teachers are expected to teach specialized subjects they are not formally trained in, need for additional advocacy, increased peer isolation, and added challenges to teacher identity development.

Administrators also need to recognize how they can better support their specialist teachers after they have been hired. This includes providing them with classroom space, materials and equipment necessary to successfully run their program. Specialist teachers need to feel part of their school community and equal to their colleagues on staff. As such, specialist teachers should be included in planning and curricular opportunities; accepted as specialist teachers in school events and meetings; supported with misbehaving students; and valued in their input, such as timetabling.

These six challenges commonly experienced by subject-area specialists will be considered another contribution to the literature.

In Chapter Nine, I will conclude by reflecting on the ATA local's mentorship program; suggest a revised mentorship model; discuss limitations and delimitations of the study; reveal my assumptions; make recommendations for a variety of stakeholders; and provide suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER NINE

Discussion

At the outset of this dissertation, I set out to explore stories about the experiences, beliefs, and feelings of three members of a mentorship partnership – beginning SL teachers, their off-site MTs, and APs. I sought to understand their conceptions of mentorship, hoping to identify conditions and strategies for a more appealing, inclusive vision of mentorship. As I noted in the introduction, this research was inspired by my own mentorship experiences as a learner and a teacher – experiences that suggested the importance of mentorship that offers personal support and encouragement; that models techniques and allows participants to share their passion; and that helps BTs to overcome key challenges. In particular, I described personal experiences of positive and not so positive mentorship.

This study sought insights that would inspire improved mentorship programs – a need previously identified in the literature (Certo, 2005). In her study of the support for BTs and their MTs and their challenges, she identified the importance of additional research documenting both positive and negative mentorship experiences. My particular research responded to Certo's need for additional research. In having such research available for school and central offices, ATA locals and administrators, educators will be better able to assist in recruiting appropriate MTs and developing their own high-quality mentorship programs. This information can be available for prospective MTs and policy makers to read, and have a four-fold effect. First, teachers that are already MTs

could learn from other MTs' experiences. Second, prospective MTs would become aware of the amount of skill, time and energy required to be a mentor and provide support to a BT. Thirdly, MTs and prospective MTs would become aware of the possible impact they could have on someone new entering the profession. Further, a training or orientation program for MTs would contribute to providing long-term capacity building and sustainability.

As Alberta continues to manage its 2013 deficit, (as proposed in the Framework of the five-year strategic plan in 2009 and described in Chapter One), and since two of the strategic actions are linked to my study (Strategic Action 1 (to promote SL teachers and teacher program candidates) and Strategic Action 7 (to support BTs through the development and provision of mentorship services for BTs, including the development of provincial resources and professional development support for mentorship training)), the results of this study could be of interest to the province as politicians assess areas and revise strategic actions.

Reflections on the ATA Local's Mentorship Program

I will now revisit the mentorship program within which this study was supported and developed. On pages 109-110, I noted eight points about the ATA local's mentorship program including: (1) opportunities for experts and BTs to learn together; (2) mentoring as not solely the individual's responsibility; (3) one-shot and job-embedded mentorship; (4) following a nurturing approach and structure; (5) allowing BTs to turn elsewhere for support; (6) seeking skilled and experienced MTs and APs; (7) volunteer MTs; and (8) administrators. I will now

address each of them and three others as a way to reflect upon the ATA local's mentorship program.

(1) The mentorship program did indeed provide opportunities for experts and BTs to learn together in a supportive environment promoting time for collaboration, reflection and acculturation into the profession of teaching;

(2) The school jurisdiction recognized that mentoring and supporting BTs is not solely the individual's responsibility. Although the school district may have recognized it, it did not take ownership of the program: the ATA local did instead. Although the ATA local recognized it was a shared responsibility, there was not sufficient direction for administrators. More collaboration is required.

(3) The mentorship program included one-shot and job-embedded mentorship, but because the teachers in the program did not all take part in school inter-visitations and most of the mentorship occurred off-site, it appeared to be more like one-shot mentorship. Only when a BT and MT have regular embedded professional development time to work together would a program follow suggestions in the research literature.

(4) Although the mentorship program had the potential to follow a nurturing approach with the SL BTs, it only successfully occurred between Sophie and Jeff. Sophie experienced an empathetic mentor, someone with whom she could receive and share ideas and have frequent contact, as well as someone whom she could trust to take her under her wing and listen to her woes (French, 1996). Jeff provided her with elements of collaboration and

he created learning activities for her to use in her classroom (Glazer &
Hannafin, 2006; McCotter, 2001), as well as the emotional and
developmental support she needed. Although Paula made an effort, the
lack of connection between her and the BT did not foster supportive
mentorship. With off-site MTs and no MT training, it was challenging to
(a) work as a collaborative teacher; (b) act as an instructor through
observation and feedback; and (c) position oneself as co-enquirer,
promoting critical reflection on teaching and learning.

(5) As exhibited by the BTs in this study, the mentorship program did not
prevent them from seeking support when needed on their own. If their
assigned MT did not provide what they needed, the BTs sought the
support required on their own.

(6) Although the program found experienced MTs and APs, none was trained
or seemed informed by research about mentorship. Research is needed
about programs that include training for mentors and devote attention to
the match between MT and BT by grade or subject-area. The influences
of assigned versus self-selected MTs also merit further research. The APs
and MTs require mentorship skills – they need the knowledge and skills
on the practice of mentoring teachers more so than they need the
knowledge of the research on mentoring.

(7) Although MTs were volunteers, many BTs were assigned MTs that were
off-site, outside of their school, and in different subject areas. This

resulted in a non-job-embedded mentorship situation with numerous

challenges of arranging meetings and making contact.

(8) Although the administrators were invited to be involved in the mentorship

process, very few attended the mentorship sessions. The APs interviewed

in this study were completely unaware of any mentoring that did take

place between the BT and off-site MT.

(9) The mentorship program began late in the school year (October was the

first session); the literature documents clearly that BTs require early and

regular mentorship support. They need the most intensive mentorship at

the beginning of the school year and, in particular, at the beginning of

their careers. Unfortunately, the infrastructure of the system often

prevents mentorship within the early days of the school year or even the

week before classes begin.

(10) The mentorship program did not place at the forefront strategies to

survive and function effectively. For example, BTs need to know that

they should ask for help, and not wait for someone to check in on their

progress or needs. Sometimes the support may not be found where

anticipated (French, 1996; Hemminger, 2001).

(11) On-going research on mentoring SL teachers must continue (Hemminger,

2001).

Although only three of fifty-eight BTs were involved in my study, it

seems clear that a desire to mentor alone is not enough to support BTs fully and

meaningfully into a professional school community. The structure and outcomes of the ATA local's mentorship program could be better informed by research.

Mentorship Model

The difficulty establishing a mentorship model may be due to the lack of research focusing on the design and process of mentorship, in comparison to the many studies that examine the outcome of mentorship programs (Bozeman & Feeney, 2007). My previous reflections on the ATA Local's Mentorship Program proposes to provide insight.

Recognizing the key role administrators play in inducting and mentoring BTs into their schools, as well as into the teaching profession, Hughes, (1994) Lieberman and Miller (1994), Smith and Andrews (1989), Chester (1992), Lee (1994), and Sergiovanni (1995), report that principals need to better understand the problems of new teachers and significance of their role in being able to provide appropriate support and direction to their new teachers. Although these studies are over twenty years old, mentorship on behalf of administrators still needs attention. APs, as members of the leadership team, are integral participants and play as important a role as the principal in mentoring neophyte teachers. Administrators can provide a great support system for the BT. Based on feedback from the BTs in Couture and Servage's study (2012), administrators need to: (1) help the BT build relationships with colleagues; (2) frequently touch base with the BT; (3) limit extracurricular expectations; (4) create embedded professional development time for mentorship, professional learning communities, and classroom observations; (5) ensure that BTs have a school orientation; (6) reduce

the complexity of teaching assignments; (7) keep an open-door policy for BTs to feel comfortable in having a safe space to discuss their concerns; (8) help BTs access appropriate professional development opportunities such as district mentorship programs; and, (9) help BTs with discipline issues and classroom management. In Couture and Servage's (2012) study BTs considered administrators to be most supportive when they visited their classrooms, either formally or informally. Acting in a supervisory capacity confirmed their commitment to BTs' professional growth as did ensuring that supportive learning opportunities and collegial relationships were available. Unfortunately, the BTs in this study did not experience such frequent interactions with their APs, even though they were responsible for evaluating them. The BTs in this study confirmed comments of BTs in in Couture and Servage's study: "It's not that [administrators] don't want to be helpful; they've just got such huge loads themselves" (p. 21).

Limitations and Delimitations

No conducted research is without limitations; as Patton (1991) notes, "There are no perfect research designs. There are always trade-offs" (p. 162). The following limitations are noted. Because research is concerned with self-knowing, self-understanding, and observation, a collection of all possible documents was beyond the scope of this study.

This study relies upon the truthfulness, the knowingness, the understanding, and the openness of its participants. These limitations are related to the process by which the teachers were selected for participation in this study

and possibilities for descriptive themes in the findings. Further, it is also important to make clear delimitations concerned with the (purposeful) omission of many other important factors related to perceptions of challenges and support in mentoring beginning SL teachers.

Based on my knowledge of relevant related literature and personal interpretations of multiple forms of data (and of course, personal experiences), it can be suggested that some of the results will be applicable to most beginning SL contexts and mentoring interactions. I have already found relevance and relatedness between my experience as a SL specialist teacher and the reports in this literature. However, although many of the suggested findings may be easily recognizable as especially appropriate for the schools, as well as the triads of teachers and administrators that participate in this study, these claims cannot necessarily be made for all situations.

Data was coded and categorized according to the themes discussed by participants. At times they shared their personal perceptions of school experiences, but their individual values, attitudes, and belief systems about education may have varied greatly. When searching for patterns or categories in coded data, I grouped things together not just because they were exactly alike or very much alike, but because they also had something in common – even if, paradoxically, that commonality consisted of differences.

The sampling of beginning SL teachers was limited to secondary specialists who had been hired as new teachers in a large urban jurisdiction during one academic school year. Of the possible six SL teachers, two taught in

immersion elementary schools. The other four were secondary SL specialists, often the only teacher in his/her school who could use the target language and were frequently teaching an option class (as opposed to a core or compulsory course). The four teachers commonly worked in isolation and most often did not have anyone else at their school teaching the same SL, which were important factors that impacted this study. Of the four SL BTs invited to participate, three chose to accept the invitation. Two BTs were in a unique situation and were both teaching SLs within the same school – one teaching French, the other teaching Spanish. Although this purposive sample was as large as it could be, no generalizations should be drawn from a group of only three SL BTs.

The study is limited to what participants were willing to share of their experiences. This study explored BTs during an economic downturn, in which school districts have experienced deep economic cutbacks that will continue to take place over the next few school years. The timing of the data collection might not have been the most ideal as many BTs would not be returning to their schools and would likely find themselves without a teaching position or at a different school in the following September. The BTs may have felt jaded or upset by the future status of their jobs. As well, comments by the APs may have been influenced by the fact that the data was collected at the end of the school year when they were very busy in their schools.

Another limitation is potentially the use of technology, because I used the NVivo research tool, a computer assisted qualitative data analysis program, which allowed me to interrogate the data at a particular level. Much debate has been

noted surrounding the issues of improving the rigour of the analysis process by validating or not some of my own impressions of the data (Welsh, 2002; Kelle & Laurie, 1995). However, I additionally coded the data manually, which did reveal some themes which had been missed in using the technology alone.

An additional limitation I acknowledge, in retrospect, is that I could have integrated my field notes into my reporting of the data, which would have been helpful.

Furthermore, I recognize that additional interviews with each participant may have yielded different results.

I was also limited in the amount of contextual background I was able to provide about the working lives of the participants to preserve their anonymity.

Finally, opening my life to the scrutiny of others both established and maintained a relationship of trust based on an ethic of caring (Noddings, 1984) throughout the research project, and also made me feel very vulnerable. This vulnerability may have influenced my interpretation.

My own assumptions and desires, which I hoped would come to fruition prior to interviewing the participants, included: (1) the MTs would be available for the BTs; (2) an experienced SL MT would likely make a good MT; (3) administrators are supportive and encouraging of their BTs; (4) matching a MT with a BT may not always generate a successful mentoring relationship; (5) BTs need to be involved in the selection of their own MT (based on my own positive mentorship experiences – I chose my own mentors); and (6) mentoring is a

reflective process that requires experience, time and a relationship that generates some commonalities.

My Assumptions were Revealed

My discoveries led me to realize that my assumptions were often incorrect: (1) MTs were often unavailable for the BTs. The off-site aspect of them not being located within the BTs' school and available for immediate, proximate concerns and assistance, often led the BTs to search for other MTs; (2) an experienced SL MT did not in and of itself equate to being a good MT. MTs might have experience teaching and specifically in the SL; however, they may lack experience mentoring or being mentored, which significantly impacts their ability to be strong, competent and available MTs, who know "how" to mentor and understand what is needed; (3) administrators are likely well-intentioned, and desire to support and to encourage their BTs; however, some appear to get overwhelmed by their multiple tasks within the school, and appear to struggle with beginning mentorship early on and throughout the year; (4) matching a MT with a BT does not always generate a successful mentoring relationship. Although the MT may desire wanting to mentor the BT, the BT may not accept the assistance, or the MT may vary involvement during the year. For example, perhaps the MT volunteered to mentor the BT; however, he/she did not realize what would be required as part of his/her role; (5) BTs absolutely need to be involved in the selection of their own mentors, as they will recognize and identify with whom they work best. Mentoring relationships cannot be imposed, rather they must be created and sustained out of a mutual desire; and (6) mentoring is a

reflective process that requires experience, time, and a relationship that generates some commonalities. Both the BT and MT must contribute equally to the relationship. They must both desire the relationship and be willing to put in the time to make it successful. In doing so, they will likely experience some commonalities and reap the benefits of the relationship.

Recommendations

APs

As noted in this study, APs were not cognizant of beginning specialist teachers' needs and in not knowing or making an effort to know what specialist BTs require, they were unable to provide them the support needed, especially when the AP was not familiar with the subject area. Thus, APs must become informed not only about the needs of BTs in general but also of specialist teachers.

Although administrators may feel strongly about the necessity of matching MTs to their novice teachers, BTs may be more successful when they select an appropriate MT and make a connection on their own. Additionally, APs need to be aware that they set the tone in the school for specialist teachers and be able to support them in the specialty programs that are offered within the school. Specialist teachers want to feel valued and treated as equals alongside all other staff members. Specialist teachers are a reflection of the school and they offer and develop unique skills and talents to the students and school community.

Finally, an area that was not mentioned in this study was whether APs at the MTs' schools were aware that their MTs were mentoring BTs off-site. When

APs in all schools are informed about the mentorship program they will be able to be more active and contribute to a stronger outcome for all involved.

MTs

Experience as a teacher does not necessarily develop ability and knowledge about how to mentor. Wanting to mentor is simply not enough; MTs need to have specific training in "how" to provide mentorship. They also need to have the additional time required to spend with BTs, especially if they are located off-site.

BTs

BTs wanted someone who could provide an ear to listen, relate to their experiences and offer practical advice. Although BTs desire to hear about experiences through MTs, MTs seemed to want to share their "wisdom", which may come as generalizations and take "un-hearable" forms. The BTs appeared to be anticipating stories/narratives about "What did you do?", "How did you handle it?" rather than words of encouragement. Further, the BTs in this study sought subject-specific support in SLs.

School Jurisdictions and ATA Locals

School jurisdictions and ATA locals need to work together to support each other and to better inform and invite their administrators to attend preparation for mentorship sessions. School jurisdictions and ATA locals also have to make a greater effort to begin the mentorship programs they offer at the beginning of the school year, if not before.

Teachers in Other Subject Areas

Teachers in other subject areas need to recognize their specialist colleagues as equals on staff. They need to reach out to BTs on staff, regardless of the subjects they are teaching. Teachers of other subject areas need to offer support, an ear to listen, and help the BT with extracurricular activities, given that as experienced teachers, they may have run such activities in the past, or at least know how they work. Although they may not be able to directly help specialist teachers, through their experience and connections with teachers in other schools, they may be able to guide them in finding a resource or a similar subject specialist in another school.

Suggestions for Future Research

Based on the themes in this study, I suggest the following areas for future research.

(1) Specialized Subject-area Advocacy. Teachers in all specialized subjects of SLs, music, art, drama and physical education often have to justify the existence of their programs, recruit students for subsequent years, showcase their students and fight for their cause. They may be responsible for building a new program from the ground up, with limited materials, sourcing additional funding or fundraising to keep their programs going, and educating their administrators, students, parents and other teachers about the importance and value of their programs. More qualitative studies focusing on how teachers in specialized

subjects advocate could assist BTs and administrators in providing strategies to help support specialized teachers and programs.

(2) **Professional and Social Marginalization.** As experienced by the BTs in this study, many SL teachers experience professional and even social marginalization, both in schools and outside them. There is a need to document and respond to this phenomenon.

(3) **Hesitancy to Ask and Asking for Help.** Brandi experienced a feeling of discomfort in working with her MT, and felt that she could not always be honest about how she was feeling and what she was needing, for fear of feeling incompetent. How BTs can overcome issues of power while meeting their survival needs merits further exploration.

(4) **Learning on Own.** Karolina felt "a lot of it was just learning as I go along. And then some of the questions that I really wanted answered, or kind of built up the courage to ask I would ask, but for the most part I think I was kind of on my own." More research is needed in looking at what BTs experimented with on their own and how. Was it classroom management? Cooperative learning? Diversity? Differentiation? How did they best learn – from experience? Colleagues? Websites?

(5) **Teaching Subjects without Background Knowledge.** The BTs did not emphasize or discuss their unfamiliar knowledge or frustration in the subject areas that were new to them. Rather, they took the necessary steps to obtain what they needed on their own. Perhaps teaching core subjects was not problematic for specialist teachers; but how would core teachers experience teaching specialist

subjects? More research needs to be done on inquiring how BTs cope and manage to teach subjects or grade levels when they do not have the specific subject or grade background preparation or training.

(6) Interviewing Other Non-core Specialist Subject Teachers.

Although I did not include and interview any other non-core specialist subject BTs in music, art, drama or physical education, further research should be done in these subject areas to identify in detail how these non-core specialist subject BTs experience similar challenges in comparison to SL BTs, as noted in the review of literature in this study.

Closing Thoughts

I have come to recognize and understand that teachers' identities are greatly influenced and shaped by the environment in which they live and work, as well as the background experience, preparation, and history each individual brings to his/her initial assignment. I comprehend why BTs often revert back to childhood lessons from favourite teachers, imitate his or her own supervising MT, or rely heavily on what they experienced as a student; writing my autoethonography was critical in developing my understanding of my values, attitudes and strategies as a mentor teacher.

Fullan (2001) stated that sustained success is never just one special event, meeting, or activity; rather it is a journey of recursive decisions and actions. I remember pondering how to initially begin my dissertation, how to weave my experiences and paradigm with my own questions – (What would be my questions and was I asking the right ones?), and then tie everything together with

my findings, impressions, interpretations, and, finally, I contemplated how I would close, and where I would leave off.

Reflexivity is a hallmark of excellent qualitative research and it entails the ability and willingness of researchers to acknowledge and take account of the many ways they themselves influence research findings and thus what comes to be accepted as knowledge. Reflexivity implies the ability to reflect inward toward oneself as an inquirer; outward to the cultural, historical, linguistic, political, and other forces that shape everything about inquiry; and, in between researcher and participant to the social interaction they share (Sandelowski & Barroso, 2002, p. 222).

Reflections about my experience led me to summarize the qualities and values (*the italicized words*) of a MT into three categories: 1) attributes of a MT (ex. *courtesy and respect*; *listened and encouraged*; *close proximity, down the hall*); 2) modeling techniques and sharing passion (ex. *enthusiastic and stimulating*; *made it fun to practise*); and 3) key challenges as experienced by BTs (ex. *sought an identity*; *appropriate balance of challenge and support*). Although I recognized them through my own experience, I was struck by how they also emerged through some of the experiences of the BTs in my study.

Returning to how mentorship and its strong values were modelled and which benefitted me so profoundly, I was struck by how similar they were to the experiences of the participants in my study. Although the MTs and APs did not exhibit all of the attributes that I recognized a MT had for me (*courtesy and respect*; *listened and encouraged*; *close proximity*); or the *modeling techniques*

and *passion*, which my mentors displayed, most had experienced some of them

and were left with strong memories. As I reflect now, I realize my vivid

mentoring experiences embrace the multiplicity of my experiences – both positive

and negative – and they are positioned within and upon the multiple landscapes of

my life.

As a BT myself, I was part of a community that supported and challenged

me as both a professional and an individual. Whether I was immersed in an

examination of my own teaching practice, struggling with a particular student,

delivering the curriculum or seeking a sense of camaraderie, my mentors provided

me with a safe place to ask questions, try new possibilities, and garner the

feedback and support I needed to develop into the teacher I wanted to be. These

relationships were essential and fundamental roots to bridging my confidence as a

new teacher, but also to adjusting to my new identity. "As you get older, you

realize that the true mentors are there in spirit as well as in body… I don't forget

them" (Dick, 2005, p. 212). In the end, my SL experiences have been my greatest

mentors.

My reflexivity and interpretation of the participants' interviews enabled

me to answer my research questions:

(1) How do the challenges facing SL BTs, as described in the research

literature, compare to those described by recent SL BTs? The SL BTs in

this study identified two specific challenges, including differentiating

instruction and motivating students in SLs, and the need to network with

other SL teachers to experience mentorship. These SL BTs did not

mention language proficiency, error correction, or student anxiety, as found in the literature review. Sub-themes these SL BTs also experienced included lack of resources and space, isolation, lack of administrative support, and the need to advocate as a specialist teacher.

(2) How do mentoring relationships contribute to a teacher's subject-area identity in SLs? The status of the SL within the school can be damaging to a BTs' developing identity, and frustration at the perception of teaching an unimportant subject by students and colleagues can occur. SL teachers express a desire to belong and to have their subject-area and their identity as SL teachers be fully recognized by the school community.

(3) How do the perceptions and expectations of mentoring compare and contrast for BTs, MTs and APs? Diverse perceptions and expectations of mentorship were experienced by the triad. Most importantly, the MTs' and APs' actual experiences within the context of mentorship varied and did not always correspond to their expectations of mentorship, either in their own words or as implied by the BTs.

(4) How do challenges faced by SL teachers compare to those of other subject-area specialists? Specialist teachers of SL, music, art, drama and physical education described similar challenges as noted in the literature review, including: classroom management, the need for additional advocacy, administrative support and peer isolation, which were added challenges to teacher identity development. Extra-curricular demands were a shared challenge for music, drama and physical education teachers.

Personal Reflections

   With the vivid memories of my key challenges as a BT (ex. in *seeking an*

identity and an appropriate balance of challenge and support), I can relate to

each of the BTs in my study. After having a few years of experience in the

classroom, I can also recall how I was transformed and how I made progress in

each of these areas. My classroom management was initially rusty, but improved

tenfold after having more practise, similar to what Sophie experienced. I was also

required to establish a new music program without any formal background in

planning and preparation and recognize the feelings of frustration, loneliness,

isolation of Karolina. Like Brandi, I recognize how important it was to

participate in additional out-of-school activities to get to know the students in a

different context. It was challenging to take on extra activities and learn how

much involvement was enough and how much was too much. However, initiating

music activities such as choir during lunch and after-school bands was pivotal in

getting to better know my students and seeing them in a different light. Learning

to cope with a challenging assignment which required of me to teach the

unfamiliar subject of Science pushed me outside my comfort level. I clearly

understand the discomfort Sophie described in teaching physical education.

Although thirteen years have passed since I was a BT, it appears that the same

types of challenges remain.

   In remembering my SL BT experiences, I can relate to of each of the SL

themes identified by the BTs in this study. For instance, I know what it felt like

to be "selling" my FSL program to my colleagues and administration, and to be

underlining its value as to why it had to be featured during Open House. I lived

the experience of teaching FSL out of multiple teachers' classrooms. I know

exactly how it felt to be the "only" one teaching a specific subject in the school.

There was no one to whom I could run when I had a quick or an important

question. I lived the experience of teaching those large classes with diverse

learners, filled with those who loved learning the language and those who would

rather be anywhere else. And I quickly learned the importance of finding an

experienced colleague with whom I could connect and share SL teaching ideas.

No one else in my school really understood.

Having experienced being a French "teacher on a cart", borrowing other

teachers' classrooms, running up five flights of stairs between 1-minute class

changes, I not only empathize with Karolina, but can vividly picture that scenario

as I arrived to the classroom sweating, hoping that I had all of the required

materials for the following class. I understood exactly what she was feeling, and

have difficulty understanding why administrators cannot better facilitate this

problem, especially for a BT. In not giving a SL BT a classroom of their own, it

diminishes the status of the SL in the eyes of the BT, as viewed by their

administration.

In reflecting on my identity as a beginning SL teacher, I did indeed share

similar feelings with those of Brandi, Sophie and Karolina. I often wondered why

certain students were in my FSL class, when it was clearly evident that they did

not want to be there. I questioned how they even ended up there in the first place.

Indeed, it was several of the same factors as mentioned by Sophie, based on how

the option process unfolds. Unfortunately, it can create a downward spiral which can spill over into how the other SL students (who initially felt positive about learning a SL) end up feeling about the subject, how SL teachers become frustrated about something they are passionate about, and how the SL is perceived by the school community in general.

In eliciting my own layered journey as a SL student, followed by my subsequent experiences as a SL BT and eventual involvement as a MT, I am reminded of relevant personal qualities and relational characteristics that were critically important to the development of my mentoring relationships. In recognizing the many ways that I have been influenced by my social interactions, and historical, cultural, linguistic and political forces, I begin to see the connectivity between how perceptions and expectations are formed based on one's own understandings, interpretations, and relationships. Context and experience are significant factors; however, living in another's situation enables one to better relate and empathize.

Second, time and timing are critical factors in mentoring. Brandi did not receive the names of her MTs until the end of October. She felt that she most needed mentorship before and at the beginning of the school year. The multiple needs of a BT are most prevalent during the first month of teaching (in September, if one is hired at the beginning of the school year). The overwhelming shock of adjusting and meeting all of the students, staff, and learning everything new in a school, including possibly teaching unfamiliar subjects, taking on extracurricular responsibilities, and learning the culture of the

school, causes the BT to have the most questions and concerns at the beginning of

the school year. Although the remainder of the school year is still a steep learning

curve, if support can be provided at the onset, knowing where to turn makes the

rest of the year much more manageable.

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Appendix A: Information Letter to Invite Participants

June 3, 2010

Dear Potential Research Participant,

I am a doctoral student in Secondary Education at the University of Alberta. I also acted as coordinator and chair for eight months of the school year for the new teacher mentorship program (involving beginning teachers, MTs and administrators) in the Edmonton Catholic Teachers' Local of the ATA. Now that the program has concluded this year, I would like to explore its efficiency in a new context, in my doctoral dissertation.

Research has consistently shown that when beginning teachers successfully build relationships and experience support, they reduce isolation and are better able to cope in the face of adversity; however, how these relationships contribute to a teacher's subject area identity, especially in a non-core subject area such as a SL, is not known. No study has examined beginning SL teacher mentorship from multiple perspectives. Because of my interest in mentorship, I am inviting you to participate in a doctoral research study concerning this topic. Your opinions are important for this study. The influence mentorship has on the retention of beginning teachers and the effect this partnership has on experienced teachers and school leaders is a core area of investigation for this research. This study is in partial fulfillment for my doctoral degree.

The knowledge gleaned from this study will be provided to beginning SL teachers, MTs, as well as administrators to enhance collegial sharing and reflective practice, as well as to provide a greater understanding of the role of all parties in mentorship, particularly the AP. Therefore, I would appreciate the time to discuss this mentorship relationship with you. I would request an interview that would be semi-structured (questions are attached) so that you can describe details about your experience. There will be three sections of questions that will be asked: General questions, questions about the Mentorship Program and questions about SL Mentoring.

The interview will take approximately one hour and it will be scheduled at a time and place that is convenient for you. It will be audio-recorded so that I can write

down a summary of your responses and experiences, and you will have the right to ask that the tape be stopped at any point during the interview. If this happens, the transcripts will be destroyed and tapes erased at that time. The written summary will use pseudonyms for your name, the name of your school and any other people mentioned therein. This will keep your identity anonymous and your comments confidential. I will personally transcribe the tape and the summary will be sent to you by e-mail within a two week period so that you can read and approve it; you can make any changes or deletions you like. Only my project supervisor and I will have access to this information. Your name and school will be changed so as to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. You are free not to respond to any question and also to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Your involvement in the study is voluntary. Identifiable information, tapes and transcripts will be securely stored (in a locked cabinet in a locked room) at the University for a period of five years, at which time they will be destroyed. There will be no monetary compensation for participating. You may be asked for clarification or new information throughout the participation of this study.

Please see the interview questions attached. There will be three sections of questions that will be asked: General questions, questions about the Mentorship Program and questions about SL Mentoring.

Two copies of the invitation letter and consent form are provided. As a participant, you will be asked to sign and return one copy of each to the researcher and keep one for your own records.

Thank you for your consideration of this research request. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Kristina Kastelan-Sikora

Ph. D. Provisional Candidate

University of Alberta

Secondary Education,

Second Languages

This study is being conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. The information will only be used for educational purposes such as thesis preparation, and education papers and presentations, maintaining the same standards of confidentiality and anonymity.

If you have any questions regarding the process or the purpose of the research and your potential involvement, please call me at (780) 619-7059 or e-mail me at kkastelansikora@ualberta.ca. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Olenka Bilash at (780) 492-5101 or e-mail her at olenka.bilash@ualberta.ca. I look forward to working with you if you decide to participate.

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by the Faculties of Education, Extension, Augustana and Campus Saint Jean Research Ethics Board (EEASJ REB) at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Chair of the EEASJ REB c/o (780) 492-2614.

Appendix B: Research Participant Consent Form

University of Alberta

Department of Secondary Education

Mentoring Beginning SL Teachers: Perceptions of Challenges and Support

Investigator: Kristina Kastelan-Sikora, PhD Candidate

Project Supervisor: Dr. Olenka Bilash

Dear Participant,

Please read both the information letter and this consent form carefully. Since your signature below indicates that you consent to participate in the study, as described below, please do not hesitate to ask for clarification before signing it.

I, _____, hereby consent to be included in the research study entitled "Perceptions of Challenges and Support in Mentoring Beginning SL Teachers" and consent to being interviewed and tape-recorded by Ms. Kristina Kastelan-Sikora.

I understand that:

I will be interviewed for about one hour.

The interview will be taped and I will have the right to ask that the tape be stopped at any point during the interview. If this happens, the transcripts will be destroyed and tapes erased at that point.

The interview will be summarized –transcribed and sent to me within a two week period.

I will be able to add, delete, or elaborate on any parts of the summary and return the revisions to the researcher within a ten day period.

I may choose not to respond to any question.

I may withdraw from the research at any time without penalty.

My involvement in the study is voluntary.

My identity (and that of my school) will be kept confidential and anonymous. Pseudonyms will be used in the research summaries and final documentation. I will not be identifiable in any documents resulting from this research.

The researcher and the project supervisor are the only individuals who will know of my participation.

The researcher will personally transcribe the tapes. Identifiable information, tapes, and transcripts will be securely stored in a locked place at the University for a period of five years, at which time they will be destroyed.

The data from my interview will be used for the research dissertation, and in presentations and written articles to other educators, maintaining the same standards of confidentiality and anonymity.

There will be no monetary compensation for participating.

I may ask for clarification or new information throughout my participation in this study.

This study is being conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

_____   _____

Print Name   Signature

_____

Date Signed

If you have any further questions concerning matters related to this research, please contact Kristina Kastelan-Sikora at (780) 619-7059 or through e-mail at kkastelansikora@ualberta.ca. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Olenka Bilash at (780) 492-5101 or through e-mail at olenka.bilash@ualberta.ca.

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by the Faculties of Education, Extension, Augustana and Campus Saint-Jean Research Ethics Board (EEASJ REB) at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Chair of the EEASJ REB c/o (780) 492-2614.

Appendix C: Member Check Letter

Date

Dear _____

Thank you again for your help with my study. Please find enclosed a copy of the transcript-summary of our conversation. It is important that your thoughts and ideas are accurately represented in this study.

Please read this transcript to ensure that it captures the tone, nature, and key ideas presented during the interview. If you feel that changes are necessary, please add, delete or elaborate on the document. You may do this by hand or by computer (E.g. by using the tracking function). Please return this to me within ten days by e-mail or, please contact me and I will arrange to pick up the edited version.

Once again, I truly appreciate your participation and thank you for your time and effort in assisting with this study.

Yours truly,

Kristina Kastelan-Sikora

Ph. D. Provisional Candidate

University of Alberta

Secondary Education, SLs

Appendix D: Questions to Guide the Conversation

(Beginning SL Teacher)

PART 1 – General

1. What background preparation did you have for your position as a SL teacher? (E.g. attended immersion, SL methods classes, Faculté Saint-Jean, practicum experience in your SL)

2. How and why did you become involved in being mentored?

3. What were your perceptions or understanding of the role of a mentor before you began working with your MT?

4. How were you matched with your MT?

5. How many times did you meet with your MT? Where? What did you discuss?

Please describe one of your meetings.

6. How did you find working with your mentor? Tell me about your mentoring relationship. (E.g. What were your expectations of working with the MT? Did they come to fruition? Were there benefits from the mentoring relationship that you had not anticipated? Were there challenges in the mentoring relationship that you had not anticipated? Is there anything you wish the MT/having a MT had done for you and why?)

7. How has mentoring affected your experiences as a beginning teacher and your understanding of the profession?

8. What has been of most and least benefit to you in your mentoring relationship and why?

9. Tell me about the mentorship program. (E.g. What did you expect from the mentorship program? What stands out as the highlight and lowlight of the mentoring program? What has been of most and least benefit from the mentorship program and why?)

PART 2 - The Mentorship Program

10. As a beginning teacher, what type of support did you need and receive from the following:

	Needed	Received
Your school Administration		
MT		
Mentorship program (activities, meetings)		
the school district		
Anyone else? (Please specify)		

11. What do you wish the Mentorship program had included and why?

12. What is your opinion of off-site mentorship and why?

PART 3 - SL Mentoring

13. What mentorship did you receive as a SL teacher/in SLs?

14. Tell me about your challenges and joys as a SL teacher. (E.g. What kind of support did you receive, how was it offered and by whom? With whom did you share your joys and triumphs of the year? If you taught other subject areas, how did the joys, challenges and support compare?)

15. a. What support did you need as a SL teacher?

    b. Did you receive it?

    c. And from whom?

    d. And how often?

    e. What has been of most benefit to you and why?

    f. Least beneficial and why?

    g. What type of support do you wish you had had and why?

16.   What is your opinion of unmatched subject area mentorship and why?

OVERALL:

17. How did mentorship impact you during your first year on the job?

18. What could be done to have made your first year of teaching better?

19. Do you think you will stay in the teaching profession? Why or why not? As a SL teacher? Why or why not?

20. Would you consider participating in the mentorship program in the future? Perhaps as a MT? If so, how would you do things differently?

Appendix E: Questions to Guide the Conversation

(Mentor Teacher)

PART 1 - General

1. How long have you been a teacher?

2. What were your perceptions or understandings of the role of a mentor before you became one?

3. How and why did you become involved in mentoring? What were your understandings of the mentorship program you were involved in? Who had responsibility for what?

4. What made you feel prepared to take on this role?

5. How were you matched with your Beginning Teacher (BT)?

6. How many times did you meet with your BT? Where? What did you discuss? Please describe one of your meetings.

7. How did you find working with your BT? Tell me about your mentoring relationship. (What were your expectations of working with the BT? Did they come to fruition? Were there benefits from the mentoring relationship that you had not anticipated? Were there challenges in the mentoring relationship that you had not anticipated?)

8. How has mentoring affected your experiences as a MT and your understanding of the profession?

9. What has been of most and least benefit to you in your mentoring relationship and why? What stands out as the highlight of the mentorship process and why? The lowlight?

10. What do you wish had happened with the BT and why?

PART 2 – The Mentorship Program

11. Tell me about the mentorship program. (E.g. What did you expect from the mentorship program? What stands out as the highlight and lowlight of the mentorship program? What has been of most and least benefit from the mentorship program and why?)

12. Thinking about the beginning teacher, what type of support do you think s/he needed and received from the following:

	Needed	Received
BT's school Administration		
MT (you)		
Mentorship program (activities, meetings)		
the school district		
Anyone else that you are aware of? (Please specify)		

13. What do you wish the Mentorship program had included and why?

14. What is your opinion of off-site mentorship and why?

PART 3 – SL Mentoring

15. As far as you know, tell me about the challenges and joys your beginning SL teacher experienced. (E.g. What kind of support did they receive, how was it offered and by whom? Whom did the BT turn to when he/she had joys or triumphs of the year?)

a. As far as you know, what support did the BT need as a SL teacher/in SL teaching?

b. Did they receive it?

c. And from whom?

d. And how often?

e. What has been of most benefit to the BT and why?

f. Least beneficial and why?

g. What type of support do you believe the BT wishes he/she had had and why?

16. What is your opinion of unmatched subject area mentorship and why?

OVERALL:

17. How did mentorship impact the BT during their first year on the job?

18. What could be done to have made the BT's first year of teaching better?

19. Would you consider being a MT again in the future? Why or why not? Please elaborate.

Appendix F: Questions to Guide the Conversation

(Assistant Principal)

PART 1 – General

1. How long have you been an administrator?

2. Why did you choose to become an administrator?

3. What were your perceptions or understandings of the role of an administrator before you became one?

4. How were you prepared for your responsibilities of your role?

5. How and why did you become involved in mentoring? What were your understandings of the mentorship program you were involved in? Who had responsibility for what?

6. What made you feel prepared to take on this role?

7. How were you matched with the Beginning Teacher (BT) at your school?

8. How many times at school did you meet with your BT? Where? For how long? What did you discuss? Could you please describe a typical meeting.

9. How did you find working with your BT? Tell me about your mentoring relationship.

(What were your expectations of working with the BT? Did they come

to fruition? Benefits? Challenges? What were some of the unanticipated benefits from the mentoring relationship? The unanticipated challenges?)

10. How has mentoring affected your experiences as an AP? Your work with other teachers or projects in your school? Your understanding of the profession?

11. What has been of most benefit to you in your mentoring relationship and why? What stands out as the highlight of the mentorship process and why? The lowlight?

12. What do you wish the BT had achieved and why?

PART 2 – The Mentorship Program

13. Tell me about the mentorship program. (E.g. What did you expect from the mentorship program? What stands out as the highlight and lowlight of the mentorship program? What has been of most and least benefit from the mentorship program and why?)

14. Thinking about the beginning teacher, what type of support do you think s/he needed and received from the following:

	Needed	Received
Beginning teacher's school Administration (you)		
MT		
Mentorship program (activities, meetings)		
the school district		
Anyone else that you are aware of? (Please specify)		

15. What do you wish the Mentorship program had included and why?
a. What has been of most benefit from the Mentorship program and why?
b. Least beneficial and why?
c. For the BT?
d. The MT?
e. You?
f. The school?
g. The district?

16. What is your opinion of off-site mentorship and why?

PART 3 – SL Mentoring

17. As far as you know, tell me about the challenges and joys the beginning SL teacher experienced. (E.g. What kind of support did they receive, how was it offered and by whom? Whom did the BT turn to when he/she had joys of triumphs of the year?

a. As far as you know, what support did the BT need as a SL teacher/in SL teaching?

b. Did they receive it?

c. And from whom?

d. And how often?

e. What has been of most benefit to the BT and why?

f. Least beneficial and why?

g. What type of support do you believe the BT wishes he/she had had and why?

18. What is your opinion of unmatched subject area mentorship and why?

OVERALL:

19. How did mentorship impact the BT during their first year on the job?

20. What could be done to have made the BT's first year of teaching better?

21. Would you consider being a mentor AP again in the future? Why or why not? Please elaborate.

_____

Appendix G: Glossary of Terms

Beginning Teacher (BT): includes a broad spectrum of members of the teaching profession.   The ATA (2009) defines a first-year BT as someone with no teaching experience or someone who is new to the profession, to their school, and/or to the grade level curriculum. Alberta Education (2009) defines a BT as someone who has successfully acquired an Interim Professional Certificate (IPC) or temporary contract and has moved into contractual employment (full-time or part-time) as a teacher in Alberta (Anderson, 2009). In research literature, a BT has been defined as: a student teacher, a teacher in his/her second and third year of teaching (Veenman, 1984; Boreen, Johnson, Niday & Potts, 2009), a newly hired teacher who begins part-way through the year, a teacher who may have a teaching assignment for which he/she was not specifically trained during his/her university preparation courses, or an experienced teacher assigned to a new school, grade level or division. Garvey (2003) describes a BT as "One who is mentored by another; a person to whom another is protector or patron." For the purposes of this study, a *beginning* teacher will be referred to as a teacher in his/her first year of teaching, with no previous classroom teaching experience. However, he/she would have had some sort of prior experience student-teaching, and perhaps alternate experience teaching one-on-one, such as a piano teacher, tutoring a student, or instructing small groups, such as a swim or soccer team coach. (Also referred to as 'mentee', 'neophyte teacher', 'new/novice teacher', and 'protégé'.)

Induction: although multiple definitions of *induction* are offered in the literature, induction, as cited by Griffin, Winn, Otis-Wilborn & Kilgore (2003) typically means: (a) a phase in teacher development that occurs during the first year of teaching and focuses on novices' concerns and problems of practice: (b) a time of movement from teacher preparation to practicing teacher that emphasizes the people and the place where the new teacher is inducted, (c) a meaning that is steeped in the socialization literature; or (d) a formal program. Ingersoll & Strong (2011) define *teacher induction* as "a variety of different types of activities for new teachers – orientations sessions, faculty collaborative periods, meetings with supervisors, developmental workshops, extra classroom assistance, reduced workloads, and especially mentoring" (p. 203).

Mentoring: as defined by Ingersoll & Strong (2011), "mentoring is the personal guidance provided, usually by seasoned veterans, to beginning teachers in schools" (p. 203). Tasks for mentoring include teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counseling, and befriending (Anderson & Shannon, 1988) colleagues and are complex and intense. Bey (1995) adds that "the tasks, of course, vary among mentors as their work changes according to teachers' needs and levels of preparedness. Added to these factors are time limits for mentors to complete responsibilities" (p. 12).

Mentorship: a "learning partnership between two or more individuals who wish to share or develop a mutual interest" (Carruthers, 1993, p. 9). Bey (1995) adds that "it cultivates human interaction, the transfer of values and beliefs, and the interchange of information about the social, instructional,

psychological, and philosophical aspects of teaching. Mentorship partnerships serve as communicative links for individuals to transmit practitioner knowledge, the nuts and bolts of practical experience" (p. 12).

Mentor Teacher (MT) : a leader of a learning partnership, which identifies them as a guide, adviser, counselor, and protector (Anderson & Shannon, 1988; Galvez-Hjornevik, 1986; Phillips-Jones, 1982). As role models, MTs acknowledge the mentee's talent (Galvez-Hjornevik, 1986) and show an interest in the mentee's concerns (Anderson & Shannon, 1988). Bey (1995) adds that well-informed mentors also need to possess ingenuity and motivation to work effectively with adults. MTs frequently share the same grade level and/or subjects as their BT or ideally, have previous teaching experience in such grades or subjects.

Off-site Mentor Teacher: A MT located in another school, away from the principle area of activity, yet ideally as close to the BTs' school as possible. This term was not located in the literature, however all of the BTs in this study were paired with an "off-site mentor", as MTs were each located outside of the BTs' schools.

Optional/Non-Core Subject: Ministerial Order (#004/98) *School Act*, Section 39(1), optional subjects are those parts of the school program that are based on outcomes other than those outlined for core subjects. In Alberta, they are any subject-area that does not have a provincial achievement exam. Students

are expected to understand and appreciate literature, the arts and the creative process.

Personal Relationship: (rationale for selecting participants). Although I needed to be cognizant of my insider-outsider role as the interviewer and the space between the participants, I did not enter into any personal relationships with any of my participants. Asselin (2003) suggests that it is best for the insider researcher to gather data with her or his "eyes open" but assuming that she or he knows nothing about the phenomenon being studied. She pointed out that although I might be part of the culture understudy, I may not understand the subculture, which points to the need for bracketing assumptions.

Subject Area Specialist Teacher: as defined by Alberta Education (2010), a specialist teacher refers to a teacher with expertise, experience and skills in a specific field of education, most likely in the individual's subject area (Setting the Direction Framework, 2009). In some cases, this may require a rudimentary interest or aptitude in a particular subject area or a subject major or minor, while in others, the individual teacher may have certification in a specific area. Individual teachers may be identified by their school jurisdiction collective agreements as being a "Specialty Teacher" as some receive additional salary compensation based on their additional training. These definitions vary from school district to school district. The ATA (2010) refers to a specialty teacher according to his major area of specialization in his university degree. Although areas of options are referred to as speciality such as art, Career and Technology Studies (CTS), drama, home economics, industrial arts, music, physical education

and second languages, there is no special requirement other than wanting a good

program, which would suggest that the subject teacher have an appropriate

background and area of expertise.

Triad: a group or set of three related people or things (Oxford Dictionary,

2012). In this study, they are three distinct members (BT-MT-AP) who are

"expected"/presumably working together.