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NECESSARY BUT NON-EXISTENT: THE PARADOX OF TEACHER INDUCTION IN PORTUGAL

Necesaria pero inexistente: la paradoja de la inducción del profesorado en Portugal

*Maria Assunção **Flores**,*
Research Center on Child Studies, Institute of Education, University of Minho, Portugal
E-mail: aflores@ie.uminho.pt
ORCID ID: http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4698-7483

Abstract:

The induction of beginning teachers has attracted a number of scholars as it is seen as the fundamental link between initial and in-service teacher education. In this paper I examine the Portuguese case as far as teacher induction is concerned, particularly in terms of policy and research. The paper ends with the discussion of the key issues that need to be considered in future scenarios in which induction plays a pivotal role in the professional development of teachers. Issues of who, what and for which purposes are explored as well as the role of policy makers, teacher education institutions and schools. Implications for the design of induction programs are discussed.

Keywords: ***induction*; *beginning teachers*; *support*; *policy*; *research*.**

Resumen:

La inducción de profesores principiantes ha atraído a varios académicos, ya que se considera el vínculo fundamental entre la formación inicial y continua del profesorado. En este artículo examino el caso portugués en lo que respecta a la inducción de profesores, particularmente en términos de

política e investigación. El artículo finaliza con la discusión de temas clave que deben considerarse en escenarios futuros en los que la inducción juega un papel fundamental en el desarrollo profesional de los docentes. Se exploran cuestiones sobre quién, qué y para qué, así como el papel de los responsables de la formulación de políticas, las instituciones de formación de docentes y las escuelas. Se discuten las implicaciones para el diseño de programas de inducción.

Palabras clave: ***inducción; profesores principiantes; apoyo; políticas; investigación.***

1. Introduction

Much has been written about the transition from student to teacher over the last three decades. Researchers have investigated the process of becoming a teacher by examining the formation or transformation of the professional identity, the socialization process into the profession and the problems that beginning teachers encounter in the early years of teaching (e.g. Flores, 2008; Flores & Day, 2006). Mentoring schemes and support systems to guide and assist new teachers in the first years of teaching have also been investigated (e.g. Flores, 2004a, 2010). In particular, the induction of beginning teachers has attracted a number of scholars as it is seen as the fundamental link between initial and in-service teacher education with implications for retention, professional knowledge and the development of the professional identity (e.g Flores, 2006a; Flores & Day, 2006). Despite the growing number of publications in the field, more needs to be done if successful induction schemes are to be put into practice, namely regarding the role of the mentors and the conditions for effective mentoring and professional growth. The development of such support and guidance strategies involves the nature of induction including its goals and activities, its duration and content, and the role, selection and training of mentors, to name but a few.

The goal of this paper is twofold. It aims at examining the Portuguese case as far as teacher induction is concerned taking a diachronic perspective. It also discusses key issues to be considered in future scenarios in which induction plays a pivotal role in the professional development of teachers. I draw on my own work on the topic over the last 25 years and on existing national literature as well as on policies of induction. But first it is important to briefly present some key features arising from the international literature in order to identify trends and challenges as well as possible directions.

2. Induction and the early years of teaching in the international literature

Research on new teachers and on induction has attracted the attention of international scholars over the last three decades (e.g. Veenman, 1984; Kagan, 1992; Rust, 1994; Zeichner & Gore, 1990). The need to investigate the process of becoming and being a teacher along with the socialization process into the profession and the

transformation of the professional identity is well documented in the vast international literature.

Kelchtermans (2019) identified four different thematic lines in research on the early years of the teaching career: i) the difficulties and problems that new teachers encounter in their first years of teaching; ii) the socialization process; iii) teacher attrition and retention; and iv) support and help. The challenges, difficulties and problems of new teachers in dealing with the so-called 'reality shock' are well documented in extant literature (see Veenman, 1984; Flores, 1997, 2000, 2008). The shift from student to teacher entails a process of identity formation associated with the realization of the complexity and multifaceted nature of teaching, representing, therefore, a challenging and in some cases a problematic experience for early career teachers (see, for instance, Veenman 1984; Flores, 1997; 2000; Dicke, Elling, Schmeck & Leutner, 2015).

The analysis of the socialization process of beginning teachers into the school as an organization has also received a great deal of attention over the years according to Kelchtermans (2019). It involves the study of a wide array of variables and factors such as societal expectations, school culture and leadership (Flores, 2004a, 2004b; Curry, Jaxon, Russell, Callahan & Bicais, 2008; Gaikhorst, Beishuizen, Roosenboom, & Volman, 2017; Tricarico, Jacobs & Yendol-Hoppey, 2014). In particular, the professional relationships with individuals and groups (e.g. colleagues, principals, parents) in the school, with different interests and expectations (school culture, micropolitics) have been explored (see, for instance, Achinstein 2006; Aspfors & Bondas 2013; Caspersen & Raan, 2014; Curry et al., 2008; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Kelchtermans & Vanassche, 2017). As Kelchtermans (2019) stresses, the study of the organizational socialization is related to early career teachers' professional learning, particularly the development of their professional identity (see, for instance, De Neve, Devos & Tuytens, 2015; Flores & Day, 2006; Pillen, Beijaard, & den Brok, 2013; Rippon & Martin, 2003). As Feiman-Nemser (1983, p. 150) also argues, 'whatever beginning teachers bring to their first teaching situation, that situation will have a powerful effect on them, shaping them to fit the requirements of the role and place'.

More recently concerns with teacher attrition and retention during the first five years in the profession has led to further developments of research internationally (e.g. Craig, 2017; Ingersoll & Strong 2011; Struyven & Vanthournout, 2014). As Kelchtermans (2019) asserts, research on how to deal with teacher shortage and turnover in the early years has focused on issues of support (see, for instance, Burke, Aubusson, Schuck, Buchanan, & Prescott, 2015; Cochran-Smith et al. 2012) and of the interplay between organizational working conditions and teacher identity development (see, for instance, Clandinin et al. 2015; Kelchtermans, 2017; Schaefer, 2013; Watt and Richardson, 2008). Finally, Kelchtermans (2019) identifies research which looks at issues of help and support for early career teachers with particular emphasis on mentoring (see, for instance, Korhonen, Heikkinen, Kiviniemi & Tynjälä, 2017; Long et al., 2012; Orland-Barak, 2016).

Novice teachers whether or not in formal induction and mentoring programs identified 'peers' (including mentors, relatives, former teachers, etc.) as the factor they considered to be most supportive during their first year (Marable & Raimondi, 2007). In some cases, beginning teachers do not perceive support as being adequate (Jones, 2003) nor do they find adequate help and assistance from their induction tutors or mentors due, amongst other factors, to lack of time (Rhodes, Nevill & Allan, 2005).

In a study of mentoring in primary schools in England, Moyles, Suschitsky and Chapman (1999) examined the perceptions of mentors, new entrants and principals about formal and informal support structures for mentoring existing at school. The authors conclude that mentoring was judged to be most successful when the ethos of the school was characterized by genuine support systems for all staff. Where collaboration amongst staff was a key element in the school ethos, more informal mentoring was received and more staff members were involved in informal mentoring processes. In a similar vein, research conducted in China points to the existence of collegial cultures, teaching workload and style of mentor-protégé interactions amongst the factors affecting mentoring support in secondary schools (Lee & Feng, 2007). In England, Williams, Prestage and Bedward (2001) examined formal induction arrangements for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs), and particularly the significance of teacher culture to the experience of novice teachers during the first year of teaching. The authors found individualistic cultures to be problematic for NQTs in contrast to spontaneously collaborative cultures which provide novice teachers with highly supportive and development atmosphere regardless of mandatory induction arrangements.

In a review of mentoring beginning teachers, Hobson et al. (2009) concluded that the success of mentoring programs and mentoring relationships is dependent upon the existence of collegial and learning cultures and support for both mentors and mentees outside the mentoring relationship. Similarly, Wang, Odell and Schwille (2008), in a review of the effects of induction on beginning teachers' conceptions and practice of teaching and on their student learning, found that the different components of teacher induction do not independently influence novices' teaching and learning, but they are mediated by social, cultural and organizational contexts of the schools in which they operate.

Research has pointed to the importance of colleagues in the induction process (Eldar et al., 2003) including the mentor who plays a key role in integrating the novices in the school context and its culture (Eldar et al., 2003) and the quality of interactions mentor/mentee (Rippon & Martin, 2003). Drawing upon research carried out in England, Jones (2005) argues that not only do new teachers have to become expert technically but they also need to develop the professional capability to establish positive relationships with their colleagues and reconcile their often idealistic expectations with school reality. Cole (1991), in research conducted with 13 new teachers on relationships at the workplace, found that beginning teachers'

socialization was facilitated because of a sense of belonging, security, support and learning from colleagues.

Albeit formal induction programs aim to increase effectiveness of new teachers and support them (Moir & Gless, 2001), a number of shortcomings have been identified, such as selection and training of mentors, mentoring time and difficulties associated with school administrations' awareness of its requirements (Kyriacou & O'Connor, 2003; Fresko & Alhija, 2009). Smith and Ingersoll (2004) also found that novices who are provided with mentors from the same subject field and who participate in collective induction activities (e.g. planning and collaboration with other teachers) were less likely to leave the teaching profession. Also reporting on a story of success, Hebert and Worthy (2001) found the following elements to be the most influential ones in the positive evaluation of a first-year teacher: i) a match between expectations, personality and workplace realities; ii) evidence of impact; and iii) using successful strategies to manage student behavior and enter the social and political culture of the school.

Other research has shown beginning teachers' challenges to maintain their initial beliefs and images as they became 'socialized' into the ethos of the school (Powell, 1997; Burk & Fry, 1997; Puk & Haines, 1999, Choi & Tang, 2005). Goddard and Foster (2001, 353), in research carried out in Canada, point to the ways in which novice teachers often feel overwhelmed by the 'realities of schools' and of their job as teachers and how they struggle with disillusionment and blaming. This lends support to research carried out elsewhere (Lima, 2003, in Portugal; Findlay, 2006, in England; Avalos and Aylwin, 2007, in Chile) pointing to novices' isolation within schools and sometimes within their own departments. The discrepancies arising from the mismatch between original expectations and reality in classroom (Jones, 2003) lead beginning teachers to a struggle in finding a balance between their images of the teaching profession and the reality of schools and, in many cases, a balance between conservatism and innovation (Flores and Ferreira, 2009).

In research carried out in the USA, Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman & Liu (2001) found three patterns of professional culture: veteran-oriented – in which modes of professional practice were determined by veteran faculty, prevailing norms of privacy and autonomy, and, as a consequence, lack of guidance for new teachers; novice-oriented – in which the views and values of new teachers dominated the professional culture which was marked by idealism and energy, but with no benefit of expertise from veteran teachers; and integrated professional culture – in which ongoing, two-way interaction amongst novices and experienced teachers was prevalent. The authors state that 'what was important was not that these structures were in place, but that they functioned within the context of an integrated professional culture' (Kardos & Johnson, 2007, p. 2088). In addition, novice teachers are more likely to remain in teaching and in their schools when they work in 'integrated professional cultures' (Kardos et al., 2001) in which frequent and reciprocal interaction amongst colleagues across experience levels, provision of

special status for novice teachers that recognize their needs and shared responsibility among teachers are prevalent.

Findlay (2006), in England, by adopting a narrative-biographical approach, has investigated the situation of newly qualified teachers in one school in regard to the context and learning factors enabling their professional growth as well as the place of formal induction within the broader experience of the first year of teaching. Drawing upon her findings, she advocates the need for mechanisms that facilitate collaboration at both departmental and school level if new teachers' feelings of alienation and isolation are to be countered.

In turn, Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002), in a study carried out Belgium, looked at the ways in which beginning teachers confronted with the micro-political reality of their job situation. They found that micro-politics entails struggle and conflict as well as collaboration and coalition building which were present in beginning teachers' stories of socialization into the school context and were manifested through a number of professional interests. The authors argue that 'the challenges of the induction period are to an important degree determined by the organizational contexts and the working conditions in which beginning teachers find themselves' (2002, p.160).

In other words, research suggests the crucial importance of the early years of teaching in (re)shaping teachers' understanding and practice of teaching (Vonk, 1993, 1995) during which 'intense learning' occurs. This learning experience impacts upon the ways in which professional identity is (re)constructed as personal beliefs, values and perspectives are revisited and challenged against the powerful influences of the workplace. Amongst other features, it is important to consider the relevance attached to induction in various contexts, the ways in which it is framed and implemented and its effects on teacher retention, identity and professional development.

3. The early years of teaching: Evidence from research in the Portuguese context

Like in other jurisdictions, existing research literature on new teachers in Portugal is multifaceted. Evidence from research has identified new teachers' problems and difficulties during the first years of teaching (Flores, 1997; 2000; Alves, 2001; Ponte, Galvão, Trigo-Santos & Oliveira, 2001) and the need for support to overcome them, namely through induction schemes (Flores, 1997; 2000; Braga, 2001). Amongst other aspects are difficulties in classroom management and student control, external and internal pressure to conform to school practices, leading to an outcome-led orientation to teaching (Flores, 2000, 2004a, 2005a). In a longitudinal study of 14 new teachers over a two-year period (Flores, 2006b), issues such as the loss of idealism and increasing compliance did apply, but four of them were still motivated in their second year of teaching and committed to teaching and learning. This was associated with student motivation and achievement, a greater knowledge

of the context and of the students, which was made possible by a supportive atmosphere and informative and collaborative school cultures and leadership existing in their workplaces (Flores, 2004a, 2004c, 2006b). Similar conclusions were found by other researchers (Faria, 2006; Cardoso, 2007).

Existing literature in Portugal points to beginning teachers' socialization as a process marked by isolation. Lima (2003) speaks of an 'isolationist process', stating that 'the way a culture welcomes and deals with its newcomers is a fundamental indicator of its nature' (Lima, 2003, p. 214). The image of 'landing' in a school is illustrative of the ways in which many new teachers enter the world of schools and classrooms (Flores, 2006b). Much of existing literature points to poor working conditions, lack of clarity and awareness of roles and expectations, associated with the isolated (and personal) ways in which new teachers get to know not only the 'practicalities' of the profession but also the more 'conventional' expectations and tasks related to teaching (Flores, 2004a). This is associated with a rather negative picture of teacher professional cultures which points to the lack of support, guidance and collaboration, the 'isolated' and 'personal' way in which beginning teachers are 'socialized' into the school culture, leading, in some cases, to feelings of being 'lost' (Lima, 2003; Flores, 2004a, 2006c). This is in line with what Lima (2003) describes as a professional 'gheto' in which many novice teachers are thrown in schools and, in some cases, also within the departments in which they work.

As far as professional relationships with colleagues are concerned, new teachers seemed to be 'a separate category' of teachers with minimal contacts with more experienced colleagues pointing to rather 'hierarchical' formal ties (Lima, 2003). The 'culture of separation', the lack of collaboration, and the distant and hierarchical working relationships amongst teachers are examples that can be found in research literature carried out in Portugal which clearly highlights the need and the relevance of induction programs (Flores, 2004a; Flores, 2007; Braga, 2001; Flores & Ferreira, 2009; Alarcão & Roldão, 2014). Recent research shows the role of the school principal in developing strategies to support the new teachers but also demonstrated the need for a more focused pedagogical leadership and the relevance of peer observation to foster teacher professional development (Almeida, Costa, Pinho & Pipa, 2018).

When beginning teachers are not supported they become more classroom-focused and adopt an individual survival strategy (Flores & Day, 2006) and may enter a process of 'unlearn' or 'relearn' in practice affecting their sense of professional identity (Flores, 2005a, 2005b; Flores & Day, 2006). When they do find a supportive and collaborative environment, they become self-confident and committed to their work (Flores, 2004a; Flores & Ferreira, 2009). Nevertheless, despite the evidence from research, teacher induction has never been a political priority in the Portuguese context.

4. Teacher Induction in the legislative texts in Portugal: recognition of its relevance or the missing link in the *continuum*?

A key legislative text regarding teacher education in Portugal was issued in the late 1980's as a result of the publication of the Fundamental Law of Education in 1986 (Law 46/86). The Decree-Law 344/89 entailed the legal framework for teacher education in which 'a flexible and dynamic structure' was adopted in order to enable the articulation of existing models. An important feature of this legislative text points to the relevance of the *continuum* of initial, induction and in-service education. Teacher induction is, therefore, clearly recognized in this legislative text (see article 26):

2) 'In-service Teacher Education is initiated by an induction period during which forms of support for the new teachers are to be developed by teacher education institutions, in light of their resources.'

3) 'The regulation of the induction period will be defined by the Ministry of Education.'

However, and unfortunately, the induction period was never regulated nor put into place, despite the existence of research in the Portuguese context which pointed to its need and relevance (Flores, 1997, 2000, 2002, 2006a, 2006b; Braga, 2001; Flores & Ferreira 2009; Cardoso & Ferreira, 2008).

In 1990, references to the induction period can also be found in the teacher career statute (Decree-Law 139-A/90), but up until today no policy developments in this regard occurred. This legislative text mentions teacher induction when it deals with the probationary year:

1) 'Probationary year aims at verifying the professional adequacy of the teacher to the functions he/she is supposed to perform. The probationary year is to be carried out in the school in which a given teacher works.

2) Notwithstanding the support defined within the induction period, during the probationary year the teacher is supported in pedagogical terms by a permanent post teacher of the same school according to the regulation to be issued by the Ministry of Education'.

Later, in 2007, within the context of the publication of the new teaching career (Decree-Law 15/2007), the probationary year was once again mentioned with a particular emphasis on the evaluation of knowledge, abilities and competencies of the new teacher. The same legislative text stipulates the following:

1) 'The probationary year aims at verifying the adequacy of the teacher's capacity to the required professional performance profile. It has the minimum duration of one school year and it is to be developed in the school in which a given teacher does teaching.

2) The probationary year corresponds to the first school year of the teacher entering the teaching career, notwithstanding nº 8 to 10.

3) In the probationary year the teacher is supported and guided, in didactics, pedagogy and scientific domain, by a teacher preferably holding specialized training in educational organization and curriculum development, pedagogical supervision and teacher education and being evaluated as Good or above in the last teacher performance evaluation exercise. The teacher is to be appointed by the head of the curriculum department or teacher council.

4) The teacher accompanying the teacher in his/her probationary year is supposed to: i) support the elaboration and monitor the implementation of an individual work plan for the probationary year teacher focusing on scientific, pedagogical and didactics component; ii) support the probationary year teacher in the preparation and planning of lessons as well as in the reflection about teaching helping him/her in improving it; iii) assess the individual work done by the teacher; iv) write the report on the activities developed including data arising from observation; v) participate in the teacher performance evaluation process of the teacher in his/her probationary year' (Article 31).

Thus, it is possible to say that although the reference to the induction period was included in the very first and important document regulating teacher education in Portugal in the late 1980s, the reality shows that more than 30 years later it remains to be very far from being a political priority. In the subsequent legislative texts related to the teacher career statute, it is possible to identify the probationary period instead of induction with a clear focus on the evaluative component rather than on support, although a supervisory and supportive role from the part of the senior teacher responsible for monitoring the probationary year is included. Another interesting feature of the Portuguese case is the institution responsible for induction. In the 1980's teacher education institutions were identified as the main responsible for organizing induction programs, whereas in the legislative texts in the 1990's and later schools are given such responsibility.

The need to develop induction programs is recognized in the Portuguese literature in line with international research. The probationary period and the induction period, at least in some contexts, may coincide but they also entail different purposes and functions that clearly point to the necessity of teacher induction (Ribeiro, 1993; Campos, 1995; Flores, 2000). Alarcão and Roldão (2014) also highlight the differences between the probationary period and the induction period. Whilst the former aims at verifying the existence of a given competency, the latter emphasizes the professional development of the teachers. Teacher induction is seen as a follow-up opportunity to foster the pedagogical practice of the teacher (Campos, 1995) enabling the new teacher to access 'information, advice and formative experiences that contribute to the consolidation of his/her capacity to judge and make decisions, independently and with a professional basis about

concrete situations in teaching and in the school' (Ribeiro, 1993, p.8). However, up until now, no formal induction programs have been implemented despite the recognition of their need in a report by the National Council for Education (CNE, 2016). It is, however, interesting to note that, in 2009/2010, a 'Program for Supervision, Support and Monitoring of the Probationary Year' was put into place for the first time but in the end, it represented a missed opportunity to discuss the possibility of future scenarios for induction.

5. The probationary year: a missed opportunity?

A probationary year was put into place, for the first time, in 2009/2010 within the 'Program for Supervision, Support and Monitoring of the Probationary Year', after the publication of the new Teacher Career Statute (2007). The goal was to supervise, monitor and investigate the first year of the implementation of the probationary year in Portugal. The program included: i) monitoring and supporting the process through data collected with the participating teachers and through help provided to solve existing problems; ii) training of the mentors; iii) involving the school principals; iv) writing materials and publications to support the various stakeholders; v) evaluating and reporting on the probationary year; vi) investigating teachers' professional development and supervision. The program involved 89 teachers teaching different subjects, 85 mentors and 81 schools.

Findings from this project show the initial resistance and negative reactions from the part of the teachers involved in the program and the need for the mentors as well as the teachers doing their probationary year to belong to the same subject group. However, positive effects were also found in terms of teachers' professional development, collaborative work and professional knowledge in areas such didactics and teacher performance evaluation (Roldão, Reis & Costa, 2012a, 2012b; Reis, Gonçalves & Mesquita, 2012; Alarcão & Roldão, 2014). The same authors identify positive features such as the role of the mentor and the importance of individualized support, collaborative work and networking, the formal- classroom observation – and the informal situations, and relational conditions offered by the program. However, organizational issues related to the teachers' schedules and the selection of the mentors emerged as negative features. Added to this was the lack of information and/ or difficulties in managing the information at the school level which was to be attributed to the ways in which the Ministry of Education handled the program. The geographical location of the schools throughout the country has undermined a more closed and direct contact with the participants (Reis, Gonçalves & Mesquita, 2012).

This experience would represent an important step to think and frame induction but the truth is that it failed to do so. In a review of the literature on teacher education in Portugal, Esteves (2006, p.155) states that: 'After Initial Teacher Education, the career entry needs to be supported by an induction period which needs to be organized in a formative way. Although it is established in the law

and despite the wide number of empirical studies which have emphasized its relevance, the induction period has never been put into practice'. Alarcão and Roldão (2014) identify the factors influencing the success of induction programs, namely institutional support through the quality of mentors, training focused on the professional activity, self-training, peer collaboration, and school climate. As such, reflection on induction both in terms of design and process of implementation needs to be addressed, particularly in the Portuguese context.

When discussing induction programs, a number of questions need to be considered, amongst which are those presented in Figure 1. These questions stem from what is known about induction programs in existing literature. Induction varies both in terms of content and form. It may entail various levels of formality and organization as well as a wide array of participants and activities depending on its degree of flexibility and coherence. For instance, in Estonia, the implementation of the induction scheme was mainly led by universities as a kind of continuity of teacher education (Eisenschmidt & Poom-Valickis, 2020). It aimed at i) supporting beginning teachers to adjust to the school organization; ii) developing the basic competencies of new teachers: iii) providing support in solving problems. Induction included learning and development in the school with mentor support as well as a two-day, quarterly peer meeting at the university.

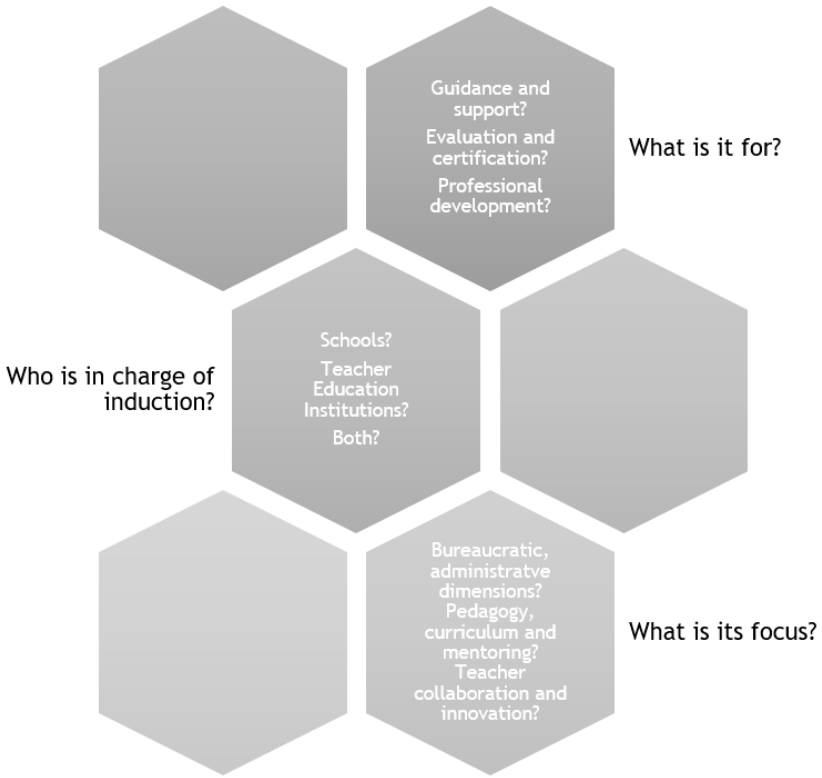

Figure 1. Key issues in thinking about induction. Source: author.

Who should be responsible for the design and implementation of teacher induction schemes? School or Teacher Education institutions or both? Is induction

mainly used to check teachers' compliance with the required demands for the job, focusing on evaluation and certification, as the probationary year suggests, or does it aim primarily to provide guidance and support for the new teachers and to foster their professional development? Does it entail a bureaucratic and administrative logic or does it involve the consideration of issues of pedagogy and curriculum? Does it focus on classroom work or does it go beyond it? How is mentoring understood in such context? What about teacher collaboration and school development and innovation? These questions deserve careful consideration in the design and implementation of induction schemes. In the next and final section, I look at some key aspects that need to be reconsidered, particularly in the Portuguese context.

6. Final thoughts: Advocating for the need for induction

Despite the widespread research interest on the induction phase, more needs to be done in this regard in order to better understand it in all its complex and diverse variables but also in terms of the kinds of responses needed to address the specific nature of the early years of teaching. The underpinning principle would be the professional development of the teachers in detriment to a deficit approach based on 'survival strategies' (Ribeiro, 1993). Also Kelchtermans (2019) warns that many existing induction practices have focused on a deficit thinking and on a remedial perspective. He advocates that there is a need to move beyond this approach and suggests three alternative representations: the early career teacher as a sense-making agent, as a networker and as an asset to the school. Kelchtermans (2019) argues for the importance of considering these three representations for developing an agenda for research, policy and practice that promotes more sustainable support for early career teachers' professional development. This is line with the perspective of other researchers who stress the need for mentors to appreciate the knowledge of new graduates (Schaefer, Long & Clandinin, 2012, p. 117):

> Beginning teachers need mentors that value the knowledge and past experiences they bring to the professional landscape. They also need mentors who are skilled in helping them learn in, and from practice. Induction policies need to focus attention equally on new teachers and on their mentors. (Schaefer et al., 2012, p. 117)

The need to further explore the effectiveness of the induction process and other school support processes has also been identified (Johnson, Sullivan & Simons, 2019) especially in contexts in which participation is voluntary and in which equal access to formal induction and quality mentoring schemes is compromised (Bjerkholt, & Olsen, 2020).

In a recent review of reviews focusing on induction programs, Frederiksen (2020) found that they vary a great deal both in terms of content and context. These include elements such as mentoring schemes, collaborative work with colleagues, networking with peers (both new and more experienced teachers), peer-teaching

observation, management of support and assistance, leadership support, seminars, courses, workshops, team teaching, joint planning, etc. The same author also identified issues of salary conditions (namely for mentoring), time compensation and the training of mentors. Despite the limitations, positive effects on new teachers' professional development were identified which are associated with the duration of induction, the social, cultural and organizational context in which it is situated and the qualities and training of mentors (see, Frederiksen, 2020).

When looking at the induction phase it is clear that there is a need to move beyond the survival strategy. The lack of attention to induction in the Portuguese context parallels the situation in other jurisdictions (see, for instance, Frederiksen & Bonde, 2020, in Denmark). A systemic and global view of the *continuum* of initial teacher education, induction and in-service education requires much more than the discourse of the recognition of the importance of the early years of teaching. It entails the involvement of all stakeholders (policy makers, teacher education institutions and schools) and practical consequences as well as a clear political priority (see Figure 2).

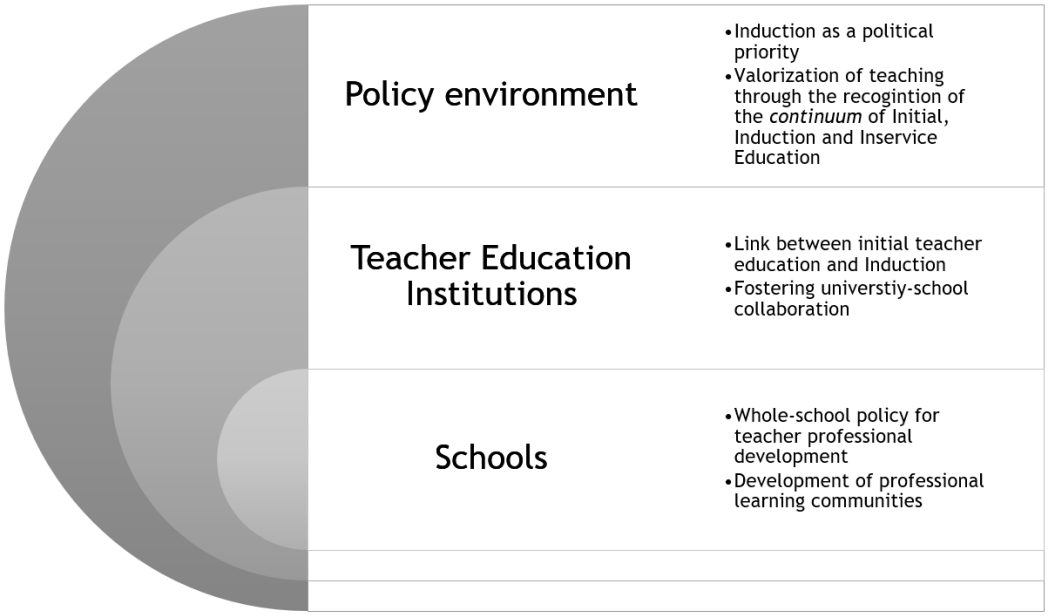

Figure 2. Developing induction in the Portuguese context. Source: author

At a time when the teaching profession in Portugal is facing a complex situation mainly due to the ageing of the teaching workforce and to a significant decrease in the number of teaching candidates, along with the implementation of Teach for Portugal (derived from Teach for All following the trend existing in other countries), induction seems to be a clear asset in several ways. It would bridge the gap between initial and in-service teacher education as a 'logic extension' of preservice education (Huling-Austin, 1990). It would enable the continuity of new teachers' professional development from the part of the teacher education

institutions through a more consistent partnership with schools beyond practicum in light of a hybrid 'third space' where theory, research and experience meet and diverse rationales can be negotiated (Zeichner, 2010). This is even more important within the context of a more condensed teacher education program (a two-year Master degree, replacing the five-year integrated undergraduate program) as a result of the Bologna process.

In turn, schools need to develop more inclusive policies for teacher professional development, including activities specific for new teachers but also considering the conditions for supporting and nurturing the development of broader professional learning communities with implications for curriculum innovation and school improvement. In addition, induction would represent an important asset to socialize beginning teachers into the profession in the present context by integrating and recognizing the contribution of experienced teachers in such transition process but also acknowledging the contribution of the new teachers. Up until now, the government has never paid attention to the induction of teachers. Teacher education institutions have not invested in it either. In addition, schools do not in general develop strategies to guide and assist new teachers, nor do experienced teachers understand this matter as an important part of their responsibilities in the workplace (Flores & Ferreira, 2009). Support and guidance provided by school leaders in the workplace is far from being responsive to new teachers' needs as research has shown (Flores, 2010). Not investing in the induction phase may represent an unrealistic optimism or an ingenuous approach to the transition from student to teacher that does not take into account the complexity of the socialization into the profession. But, more importantly, it also shows the importance attached to the teaching profession.

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