

CONCEPTUALIZING INDUCTION THROUGH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
ACTIVITIES: A CASE STUDY OF A NOVICE TEACHER'S ENTRANCE INTO THE  
TEACHING PROFESSION

by

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Under the Direction of PETER SMAGORINSKY

ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a case study of one novice teacher's induction into the teaching profession. It discusses the high attrition rate of novice teachers over the last twenty-five years despite the increased educational research focus on mentoring during the same period. The literature review focuses on methods of retention beyond mentoring. The results suggest that a bundling of supports including professional development, orientation, and observing other teachers would be a more effective approach to retention than mentoring alone. Shelly, the novice teacher participated in a professional development program during her first two years of teaching.

The professional development program supplemented the mentoring and other induction activities provide by Shelly's school. The case study analysis looked at the artifacts from three professional development program activities, concept maps, think pieces, and interviews. Using these artifacts, Shelly discussed her conceptualization of the induction process. She also used these artifacts as a source of conversation about teaching and induction with other teachers in the professional development collaborative.

The analysis discovered that during her first two years of teaching Shelly explored three teacherly spaces, her classroom, the wider school community, and the professional development group. During the first year Shelly focused inward on familiar influences and support as she learned to teach in her classroom. As a result, the space and colleagues of the professional development group were more important than the wider school community in her first year. It was only in the second year of her induction, as she became more confident in her abilities that she turned her attention outward to the support provided by the wider school community.

The implications suggest that multifaceted support both within the school community and from other educators outside of the novice's school might provide support that would produce higher levels of retention. Another implication is to study second year teachers to find out why they stay in the profession and how they felt supported during their induction. Why teachers leave is well documented. We need more documentation on the reasons novice teachers give for staying.

INDEX WORDS: New Teacher Induction, Professional Development, Mentoring, Orientation, Case Study, Systematic Multifaceted Induction, Participant Observation, Concept Maps, and Mediating Tools

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by

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## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my wife Dana for her generous support. Without her belief in my ability, the work on this dissertation project would never have happened.

I would also like to dedicate this to the roughly 4,000 students who patiently worked with me in my classroom for the twenty-three years before this endeavor. While they played along, I learned how to teach, a process that is still in progress.

I would like to include the many colleagues I worked with throughout the years. Their willingness to listen to my complaints, to answer my questions, and to endure my ideas over the years is a generous example of collaborative interaction that supported my professional development. Thank you.

I also dedicate this to my children and grandchildren. They believed in me and provided emotional support. Abbey and Walker deserve a special dedication for their willingness to transition into southern high school students for two semesters over two years. I hope they value the diversity in culture they experienced. I hope that all of my children and grandchildren find their own joy in the pursuit of knowledge. I hope that if they can see that their father and grandfather was able to realize a professional dream after so many years, that they too, will have the courage to pursue their own dreams.

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To Shelly, I extend my gratitude for her willingness to “play along” with my program so quickly after her graduation from college. Her frank conversations and willingness to share with her colleagues caught my attention early in the program. She extended that same candid attitude to me during interviews, member checks, and conversations over a two-year period. One of her interview responses about her identity shift from student to teacher changed how I talked with preservice teachers. I became more sensitive to their needs as students fulfilling assignment balanced by their attempts to masquerade as competent teachers in the classroom during their student teaching experience. She helped me realize, that for all our insistence as instructors that preservice teachers should see themselves as teachers, they were still in transition. They were, in fact, constantly monitored and evaluated, by university supervisors, students, mentor teachers, department chairs, administrators. When did we expect them to hold conversations with the adults in that setting as a colleague? She helped me see the oxymoron “Student Teacher” with a heightened sense of irony.

One of the great gifts of my graduate work was my research apprenticeship with Peter Smagorinsky. He involved me in the research process from the very beginning of my study. I worked by his side learning to analyze data and shape that analysis into a written report. Under his guidance I worked as coauthor on an article that moved to publication in my first year as a graduate student and worked as first author on an article that moved to publication by the end of my third year of study. Through his example I learned to write for publication. Before the end of my graduate studies I had two articles accepted for publication on my own and another one that I coauthored with my wife. Peter helped me to see that what had previously seemed allusive as possible.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

“I don’t know if I am going to teach again next year,” Anna reported (all names of the participants in this study are pseudonyms). I was surprised, but not shocked to hear this from Anna. Now that I have studied the attrition rates of new teachers and the issues surrounding their induction into teaching, I am equally surprised when new teachers decide to stay in the profession. I have known Anna for almost three years. She began course work on a teaching credential and on a Master’s degree in English Education as I began my work on a doctoral degree in English Education. I was one of the instructors of her cohort of teacher candidates. She was a fine student, thoughtful, collaborative, and diligent. When she was one of the first students to receive a job offer, none of the teaching cohort was surprised. In fact, a high school in the same small district of her student teaching offered her a job. Her mentor teacher knew the faculty and hustled her right over there when the job became available.

She participated in a professional development project the summer between her student teaching and the beginning of her first job. She worked for a week with other English teachers, including experienced teachers and other beginners, before diving into the school year. During the course of the program, the participating teachers discussed such issues as opening day activities, teaching poetry, teaching Shakespeare, assessment, and reading strategies, and they theorized about the issues facing new teachers. Although she expressed some nervousness about starting her first school year as a teacher, she was excited to greet her first group of students. In theory, Anna was in a good position to begin her career as a teacher. She graduated from a prestigious university program, and she was immersed in professional development from the beginning of her career (Feiman-Nemser, 2001a). So, after a year and a half of teaching, what happened to Anna? Did she really select the wrong career?

Since I supervised student teachers in her building, I had occasional contact with Anna during the first two years of her job. I could “check up” on her progress as I carried out my series of pre-service teacher observations. The reports I heard about Anna’s work from administrators, a department chair, and other teachers were glowing. She did a great job during her school’s scheduled observations, she fit in well with the English faculty, and she worked hard. The people who evaluated her and recommended her continuing employment liked what she was doing. No problems, she was doing just fine.

Anna’s perceptions of her efforts and of her success as a teacher, however, were quite different from the reports I received from others. During the second semester of her second year, I was in her building working with student teachers when she found me at the end of the day. I could tell from her body posture, slumped shoulders, downcast eyes, and forced smile that something was bothering her. “What’s up, Anna?” I asked, as she collapsed into, rather than sat at, a desk across from mine. She looked around the room and finding none of her colleagues she said, “I don’t know if I am going to teach again next year.”

Let’s rewind the scene for a minute. This story needs a flashback, something to conceptualize Anna’s experience from her point of view. What shaped her perceptions of her efforts during those first two years? I need to show her working in a new, but already crowded school; so crowded that some teachers in every department traveled. Guess who traveled in the English department? Anna. Of course, she has been promised a trailer, but until it arrived she pushed a cart from room to room. During her preparation period, she had to retreat to someone else’s classroom where Anna had a desk. Unfortunately, the other teacher also taught a class during that period. Anna reported, “It wasn’t that she didn’t want me there so much as I felt like I was imposing on her instructional time and I couldn’t really concentrate with her class in progress.”

Even while she was teaching her own students, the teacher assigned the classroom had to accommodate Anna, the traveling teacher; Anna just didn't have a class in tow. Anna had no real down time, no chance to unwind before she began that careful reflecting about her teaching that she was trained to do. She had no planning space that was hers. She felt like a burden on the other teachers, the ones that were established. They had rooms of their own after all. During the middle of her second semester, the trailer arrived. It was placed in back of the school and as far away from the English department as was possible. It was much longer than it was wide, clearly a trailer and not a classroom. Instead of allowing for the traditional six rows of desks five desks deep, it had ten rows of desks three rows deep. The school's hallways were wider. The extra chairs remained stacked in one corner of the room; they reached literally to the ceiling. She had her own space now, but it was removed from the rest of the department and the school.

Anna did have an assigned mentor teacher, but the school had no formalized approach to mentoring—no established meeting schedule for the mentor and the new teacher. To be fair, Anna's mentor often asked if she needed anything, but never made any formal plans to sit down and discuss anything with Anna. During year two, when she had no assigned mentor, Anna described that her mentoring felt "like pushing baby birds out of a nest...if I don't fly, it's my problem." Anna initiated all of the contact and she already felt out of place. In many ways she felt she was a burden on the other members of the faculty. She had asked for the tangible, physical things she needed to create a teaching space so often, that to ask for curriculum or planning assistance seemed to her like an imposition. She felt as if *she* was the imposition. She recognized the need for collaboration and assistance so she still asked for help, which increased her sense of imposition.

She claimed to struggle with class management. Imagine racing the students to class, barreling down the hallway pushing a cart that steers with all of the grace of a shopping cart.

When she got there, she was careful not to displace any of the materials that the home base teacher had around the room. Could she adjust the overhead, use the computer, erase the board, rearrange the desks, and catch her breath before the bell rang? She spent seven months trying to figure out if she could manage herself before she had a space of her own to develop into a classroom.

During Anna's second year she remained in the narrow trailer. She had a chance to arrange classroom decorations to match her personality. The desks' arrangement was still limited by a space that provided few options. She remained isolated and felt that her students were noisy even though she has no neighboring classrooms for comparison. She didn't have to race from class to class but the students did have to race to her; she was a long distance from many parts of the building. During her preparation time she was no longer an intruder into another teacher's space. Instead, she was truly alone. No one needed to run errands out to the lower forty during their preparation time. In order to get help or simply to gossip, she had to wander into the building. She couldn't shake the feeling that she was an imposter, the pretend teacher.

Debbie, a student teacher visiting her classroom for one of her several observations of other teachers, reported having a wonderful experience. The lesson plan and the student involvement were some of the most impressive she had seen. Nevertheless, Anna found Debbie at the end of the teaching day to apologize for such an unruly class. Debbie was shocked. She had witnessed classes in much more chaos than she saw in Anna's room. Classes right next to Debbie's student teaching assignment were often louder than what she experienced in Anna's room as an observer. In our discussions, Debbie expressed that if her own attempts at teaching mirrored Anna's control and teaching techniques, then she would be moving in the right direction. Is teaching a profession that eats its young?

### Subjectivity Exploration: Establishing My History

After 22 years of teaching high school English I entered graduate school in English Education with two goals in mind: first, to teach pre-service English teachers and second, to study professional development as a means of teacher rejuvenation. Over the years as a classroom teacher, I watched novice teachers struggle with the complexity of the teaching profession. They wrestled with their decision to become a teacher, and, far too often, capable and talented English teachers left the departments I worked in to pursue other careers. When they did stay, I watched them struggle, as we all did, with the need to stay fresh, to stay rejuvenated as the years rolled by.

I have often compared these observations of new teachers with experiences in my own teaching career. I considered my own pre-service education a solid foundation, but without much of a structure built upon it. During my student teaching, before the cement of that foundation had hardened, I was asked, when I would forget what I was taught over there (in the college of education) and focus on reality. This sentiment was echoed throughout my early career. I was left wondering if the foundation I had was worth keeping—It apparently wasn't an open topic of debate or conversation. As a result, I had few informative conversations about teaching pedagogy as it related to my own practice. It seemed like a dangerous thing to do. Instead I tried to figure it out alone. I was trying to pay my dues and prove my worth.

#### *Learning To Survive As I Go it Alone*

Despite a lack of help in my early years, I found I enjoyed the students and their direct, open responses toward my attempts to teach. During my beginning years, I gathered my experiences to build a framework of teacher knowledge on the foundation I had received in college. On my own initiative, I discovered satisfying professional development through the pursuit of a master's degree in literature and participation in summer seminars sponsored by the

National Endowment for the Humanities. Both venues allowed me to talk about books and how to teach them with other teachers. These teachers were willing and unafraid to share the anxiety they experienced as they struggled to improve their own teaching. I considered myself fortunate, especially when attrition rates of teachers have been so high across the United States for more than twenty years. I received no formal induction of any kind. Instead, the communities I encountered as I went back to school helped me survive.

As a new teacher, survival meant struggling with some of the “secrets” of teaching. How do you manage a class without the back up of a supervising teacher? How do you create lesson plans quickly? Which questions generate good discussion? What if group work makes me feel out of control? I remember the feeling of going it alone as the classroom door closed. I remember realizing that any organized educational activity that went on in that room depended on me. I had to get the ball rolling. I remember that sudden quickening of my heart as the principal walked in to observe and evaluate. I remember the less than subtle warnings that my students would need to pass the test, and it was my job to prepare them. I remember considering a move to a different career with less work to take home after the final bell and more money in the checking account at the end of each month. Fortunately, I found a few experienced teachers who shared their files and attempted to answer my questions. I stuck around the first two years while many other novice teachers in my school, and apparently around the country, did not. Ultimately, I felt included in a small community of teachers striving to teach the students who walked into their classes.

### *Going Back To College*

The lack of money drove me to work on a master’s degree. There is absolutely no denying that I looked at the pay scale as a second year teacher and realized that having that degree made a substantial economic difference. My story is all too familiar. While continuing to

teach and to coach soccer after school, I began the process of advancing my education and my paycheck. I applied and was accepted in the English department at the nearest university. I had no inclination that a master's degree in Education would help my career. I did feel, however, that developing my content knowledge would. I registered for any literature class that began after 3:30 in the afternoon. I burrowed into the books, and I emerged three years later with a master's degree.

My experience working on a master's degree provided me with more satisfaction as a teacher. Fortunately, I latched on to a group of other teachers who were also pursuing master's degrees. We studied for courses together and prepared for our written exams as a group. We often found that our interactions stimulated the conversation that we had when we returned to our classrooms. While we prepared for a degree in a traditional literature program, we found that we often discussed our classroom practices and together discussed pedagogy. For the last two years of my program, I was beneficiary of an unnamed, unrecognized professional development activity. As a group we didn't understand its long range potential. We finished our programs and immersed ourselves again in teaching the students in our various classrooms in various schools.

With five years of teaching under my belt and a newly acquired degree, I realized I was an experienced teacher in the department. At the beginning of my sixth year, only two of the thirteen teachers in the department had advanced degrees and more than half had less experience than I did. Many of the teachers I started with and a few who came after me were gone.

In my newfound position as a veteran teacher, I pondered the issues that had previously bothered me and wondered how they had slipped away. While the memories of my fears remained, other observations replaced them. I gradually recognized that I knew something about the secrets of teaching; I could manage a class, prepare a lesson plan, and conduct discussions. I found that getting students to work in groups didn't threaten my position in the classroom quite

as much as before. I recognized the empowerment of teaching alone in a classroom full of students. I recognized the excitement of beginning a line of inquiry that flourished into a discussion. I recognized my principal as an educational ally, not as my evaluator. I recognized my role as the instructor who led students through test preparation and used those tests as benchmarks of their achievement and not a blanket evaluation of my ability.

### *Finding More Collaborative Activity*

As time went by I had bouts of exhaustion and looked for renewal through activity that might replicate the energy and conversations of that earlier master's degree study group. Once again I was lucky. I read about a program sponsored by the National Endowment of the Humanities (NEH) in the *English Journal*. I applied and was accepted to participate. My experience discussing serialized Victorian fiction with fourteen other teachers and college professor was absolutely invigorating. The National Endowment of the Humanities quickly became my favorite government agency. After all, the program came with a stipend that covered my expenses and saved me from selling shoes all summer. During the span of fifteen years after my master's degree, I participated in five different programs and visited a variety of college campuses across the country in interesting locations.

While the settings of these seminars were exciting and culturally enriching for a boy from the deserts of the southwestern United States, it was the conversations with my colleagues in these seminars that enlightened me and provided the rejuvenation I sought as a classroom teacher. Even though these seminars were never intentionally dedicated to pedagogy, these conversations and experiences guided my reading and lesson planning for many years. It wasn't that these conversations and collegial opportunities didn't happen during the school year; they did. But the nature of a school day with bell schedules, lesson planning, paper grading, departmental and interdepartmental meetings, extracurricular activities, and sheer exhaustion at

the day's end pushed occasions for interchange among colleagues to the side. In my daily teaching experience, the opportunity for collaborative conversation and planning was rarely scheduled and, as a result, when collaboration happened in my work environment it was spontaneous and rare.

This isn't to say that I worked in English departments where goals weren't established and discussed; they were. Collaboratively, we discussed test scores, planned the scope and sequences for specific courses, and selected textbooks. The professional day-to-day obligations of the job always seemed to take precedent over the personal renewal of the teachers, the very people who were supposed to excite young minds with knowledge. Rather than serving the function of revitalization, departmental meetings felt burdensome. Compared to the enthusiasm of summer seminars discussions, the departmental discussions were often dull and boring imbued with the disinterestedness that comes after a day or a week of teaching. The tone of these in school meetings felt clerical and sterile, unlike the tone of a summer seminar discussion, which felt creative and alive. Free of time constraints and daily teaching responsibilities, seminar participants often carried discussions out of the meeting room and continued them throughout the day.

While I garnered value from my professional experiences outside of my school, the desire to share my experiences with other teachers continued to drive me. As a veteran teacher and eventually as a department chair, I tried to support novice teachers and provide meaningful professional development for all of us. I was never quite as successful as I wanted to be. Working on a doctoral degree fulfilled personal aspirations; nevertheless, I began and finished the pursuit with more than a little personal guilt. As a colleague I could have done more. While teaching often remained mysterious and often exhausting, even with years of experience, did I remember what it was like at the beginning of my career? What did those dull and clinical

departmental meetings feel like to the new teacher? I worked in a growing school district with a constant ebb and flow of new teachers. The novice teachers I worked with rarely found their voices in those meeting. I am sure as experienced teachers we rushed through the agenda. In addition, the novice teachers often received the most difficult and time consuming teaching loads. Teaching loads that I was often glad I didn't have. As an experienced teacher, I too often left them alone to fend for himself or herself while I went about my business. After all, as a survivor, I hadn't been eaten while young and I had certainly paid my dues.

I made a wise decision to pursue a Master's degree so early in my career; it kept me busy and involved with other teachers who were curious. Based on the statistics alone, I had a rare series of experiences with NEH seminars during my career. Few beginning teachers are exposed to any substantial content or pedagogical professional development. The following questions flowed from my personal experience and influenced my course work and the projects I worked on as a doctoral student. How do we, in the educational community, prepare and introduce novice teachers into the profession? What does our profession have to say about how we sustain and support all teachers at any point in their career, but especially in the beginning? Indeed, could both of my original goals of preparing pre-service teachers and studying professional development be pursued together? How do these concerns fit into the current research on induction?

#### What Are the Pressures During the Induction Period of Teaching?

As suggested earlier, I believe that teaching is a profession that eats its young. The teaching profession places high demands on its practitioners. These demands come both from within and without the education environment. Often the results of these demands are expected immediately. Nevertheless, teachers need time and hands-on experience to develop tools that facilitate professional performance. Unfortunately, novice teachers are often expected to perform

as experts during their first years in the classroom. Teaching in the secondary school setting might easily be considered a balancing act. Teachers often see more than a hundred students in a day. Not only must they try to meet the educational needs of all their students, they must meet the demands of the curriculum, the principal, the school board, parents, and the community in general. Novice teachers can spend a great deal of time developing a set of tools, both conceptual and practical, to assist them as they prepare to teach (Smagorinsky, 2002). Most would readily acknowledge that this is an ongoing process and is not finished with the completion of the requirements for a teaching certificate. When, I wondered, are novice teachers asked to prepare tools for their own development into the social and emotional context of the first job?

As a result of all these demands, the variety of tasks facing the novice teachers during a school day can seem daunting. Such tasks include: subject preparation, lesson planning, assessment, classroom management, departmental responsibilities, individual student issues, and time constraints, all of which are difficult and demanding. Understanding the characteristics of the age group being taught and interpreting and working with the various cultures that students bring to the classroom are elusive and slippery concepts. In addition, the ongoing problem of teacher isolation combined with the current political climate of standards based testing add to the pressure novice teachers must address. Novice teachers are often expected to perform these tasks immediately as if they were seasoned veterans. While perhaps not the only issues, those listed here certainly add to the high number of novice teachers who leave teaching. Present studies show attrition rates from between 20% to 30% the first year and escalating to between 40% to 50% after five years (Ingersoll, 2002; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Weiss & Weiss, 1999).

### *Importance of The Research*

New teachers offer a variety of reasons for leaving the profession. Among those most often mentioned are feelings of isolation (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2002), the lack of support in personal and professional areas (Gold, 1996; Wang & Odell, 2002), and issues of classroom management (Veenman, 1984). Other tasks such as lesson preparation, student assessment, developing a teaching philosophy, and understanding the requirements and expectations of a particular setting are not easy to accomplish. These dilemmas confront novice teachers during their introduction to the profession. Adding to these pressures, novice teachers must also demonstrate acceptable levels of proficiency during the first year's evaluations to assure the security of their job. Many novice teachers find that they must often learn their jobs and pass evaluations in isolated and unsupportive settings.

There is abundant research related to the issues of ushering novice teachers into the teaching profession. Currently, the primary foci remain on mentoring (Wang & Odell, 2002) and formal programs of teacher induction (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004) with additional attention being placed on professional development as an element of induction (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Darling-Hammond, Berry, Haselkorn, & Fideler, 1999; Feiman-Nemser, 2003).

Educational researchers have produced and continue to produce scholarly work in the areas of mentoring, induction, and professional development. Indeed, the American Educational Research Association (AERA) has two divisions that focus on teachers' daily issues: Division C, Learning and Instruction, discusses the methods teachers might employ in the classroom and Division K, Teaching and Teacher Education, includes a broad range of issues from teacher preparation to the continuing exploration of teacher knowledge. In addition, AERA sponsors a variety of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) that encompass the questions I have pursued; for example, Mentorship and Mentoring Practices and Research on Teacher Induction specifically

address the interests of researchers who trouble the problem of high teacher attrition by researching both mentoring and induction practices. A variety of SIGs address the issues that commonly appear in professional development activities. A few of these include Action Research, Classroom Assessment, Classroom Management, Self Study of Teacher Education Practice, and Teacher as Researcher. I bring attention to these organizations for several reasons. First, this list demonstrates the wide range of growing research directed at the mentoring and induction of novice teachers. Second, they demonstrate increasing research surrounding professional development activities often designed to rejuvenate teachers as well as to provide them with the tools to analyze the teaching and learning that goes on in their classrooms. Finally, the various research groups illustrate that there has been a plethora of research focusing on the issues surrounding induction. Nevertheless, the attrition rates of novice teachers have remained high over the last twenty years.

*Focusing The Attention On Mentoring, Induction, And Professional Development.*

An abundance of research discusses the problems that new teachers face as they prepare for the profession and take teaching positions (Britzman, 1991; Cochran-Smith, 2001; Fecho, 2000; Fecho, Price, & Read, 2004; Feiman-Nemser, 2001a; Lortie, 1975/2002; Shulman, 1987; Smagorinsky, Gibson, Bickmore, Moore, & Cook, 2004; Veenman, 1984). Studies that concentrate on how to usher teachers through those problems are less common. The primary focus of the research on any aspect of the induction process involves the role of mentoring as a support during the first few years of new teachers' careers (Wang & Odell, 2002). Recently, educational research has begun to expand the notion of assisting new teachers beyond the discussions and critiques of mentoring. These discussions migrate toward the exploration of complete induction, which includes a variety of components that might be bundled together to create more effective induction. Some of these components include orientation, professional

development courses, administrative supervision, the opportunity to observe other teachers, collaborative teacher learning groups, and the traditional mentoring. A brief overview of three issues—mentoring, induction, and collaborative professional development—is in order to situate the focus of this research project investigating the induction of novice teachers.

*Mentoring.* Mentoring of novice teachers has long been touted as a solution for the problems of introducing novice teachers into the profession (Feiman-Nemser, 1996; Gold, 1996; Gordon, 1991; Huling-Austin & Association of Teacher Educators., 1989; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; S. J. Odell & C., 1990; S. J. Odell & Ferraro, 1992b; Wang & Odell, 2002). However, mentoring itself has a mixed record of success as documented in the educational literature (Wang & Odell, 2002). Several variables that cloud the value of mentoring include mentor selection criteria, the quality of mentor training, the task of pairing a mentor with a novice teacher, the reporting and tracking of contact meetings, and whether or not meeting times occur during a common planning period or during non-contract time. Combined, these variables and the diverse nature of mentoring practices often confound which mentoring methods are effective in retaining teachers.

Another issue that troubles the value of mentoring is that many studies that demonstrate the benefits of mentoring use small sample sizes and focus on localized programs that may or may not be transferable to other settings. Wang and Odell (2002) argue that much can be learned from these reports (2002), yet a standardized program for successful mentoring of teachers through all school systems cannot be generalized from the reports and remains elusive and unrealistic. Wang and Odell (2002) continue to advance mentoring as a beneficial activity during induction but suggested it should not be the singular element in any induction program.

*Induction.* While many studies consider the general notion of induction, only a few studies discuss induction as a systematic program composed of a variety of elements, the most

common element being mentoring. Through their analysis of the School and Staffing Survey (SASS) data Ingersoll (2002) and Ingersoll and Smith (2003; 2004) suggest that teachers exposed to a variety of induction elements tend to stay in the teaching profession. Some of the elements they consider as potential components in a complete induction program include orientations, formal observations of other teachers, positive contact with the administrators in the building, opportunities to work with a team, and professional development activities. The element of induction most central to this dissertation study is the idea of formally providing professional development as a part of a purposeful systematic multifaceted induction program. Not only does the professional development provide activities that involve novice teachers in discussions of content and pedagogy with experienced teachers; it also functions as a form of collaborative mentoring. In addition, recent research reporting the findings of participants' perceptions of professional development (Birman, Desimone, Porter, & Garet, 2000; Garet, Birman, Porter, Desimone, & Herman, 1999; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001; Porter, Garet, Desimone, Yoon, & Birman, 2000) point to the benefits of such collaborative professional development.

Ingersoll (2002) and Ingersoll and Smith's (2003; 2004) recent studies of the retention of novice teachers provide the most concrete identification of characteristics for successful induction. They demonstrate that those novice teachers who are exposed to a larger variety of induction elements as part of a systematic induction program stay in the profession at a higher rate than those who are not. Without defining the specifics of any single component, they identify the types of elements that could be included in induction programs that are broader in scope than just assigning a mentoring teacher to the new arrival. Ingersoll and Smith (2004) refer to this combination of elements, whether intentional or not, as a "bundle." When these elements are intentionally grouped together, Bickmore, Bickmore, and Hart (in review) label this as

systematic multifaceted induction. While many induction programs rely almost solely on mentoring, orientation, or inservice activities, both groups of researchers suggest that a bundled approach to induction provides a more successful induction experience for novice teachers.

*Professional development.* Induction is frequently defined as occurring after preservice training and before the continued professional development of experienced teachers throughout their careers (Huling-Austin, 1989a, 1989b, 1992). With increased attention being placed on defining and using systematic multifaceted induction programs, this arrangement of terminology needs to be altered. Rather than define professional development as something that happens once a teacher has survived his or her induction and wishes to improve throughout a career, professional development is being viewed as a possible and purposeful element of a complex and comprehensive induction process (D. L. Bickmore, Bickmore, & Hart, 2004; Ingersoll, 2001, 2002; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003, 2004).

Wong (2002) brings attention to professional development as an integral element of induction:

Induction is a process—a comprehensive, coherent, and sustained professional development process—that is organized by a school district to train, support, and retain new teachers and seamlessly progresses them into a lifelong learning program. (p. 42)

Research suggests that novice teachers involved in professional development groups find greater satisfaction in teaching by understanding that teaching means mixing philosophy and practice (Kerrins, 1995). Cochran-Smith (1991) adds that professional development can be “occasions for group mentoring, expos[ing] novices to broad themes of reform through discussions of highly contextualized problems of practice” (as cited in Feiman-Nemser, 1996, p. 3). Johnson and Birkland (2003) propose “schools would do better to rely less on one-to-one mentoring and,

instead, develop schoolwide structures that promote integrated professional cultures with frequent exchanges of information and ideas across experience levels” (p. 608). In short, purposefully using professional development as an intentional element of systematic multifaceted induction programs would be beneficial.

#### *Induction Research As A Menu Of Possible Foci*

A brief description of the various perspectives on induction is needed in order to situate my specific focus on induction. A more thorough explanation will follow as part of the literature review in chapter two. For over a decade the induction period of beginning teachers was defined as occurring after preservice training and before the continued professional development of experienced teachers throughout their careers (Huling-Austin, 1989a, 1989b, 1992). This definition now seems dated and incomplete.

As noted previously in this chapter, early discussions of induction were based on the problems new teachers identify as obstacles to their success (Gold, 1989, 1996; S. J. Odell, 1986; Varah, Theune, & Parker, 1989; Veenman, 1984; Weiss, 1999). As a result, researchers began to investigate methods of addressing these obstacles as identified by novice teachers. Induction of novice teachers is a complex enterprise and suggests a number of foci for researchers to examine. Chief among the foci of those investigations was mentoring as part of induction (Feiman-Nemser, 1996; S. J. Odell, Huling-Austin, Association of Teacher Educators., & Kappa Delta Pi (Honor society), 2000; Wang & Odell, 2002). Others focused on the role of the school administrator (Brock & Grady, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Wong, 2004). Yet others are interested in researching what teachers know and how they attempt to implement that knowledge (Feiman-Nemser, 2001a, 2003; Freiberg, 2002; Smagorinsky, Cook, & Johnson, 2003; Smagorinsky et al., 2004; Smagorinsky, Lakly, & Johnson, 2002; Wang & Odell, 2002) There are several other areas of research focus including orientation (DeBolt, 1992; Kowalski, 1977),

professional development (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Feiman-Nemser, 2001a; Garet et al., 1999; S. J. Odell & Ferraro, 1992a; Wong, 2002), and the development of complete induction programs (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Tickle, 2000). Even with this large variety of ways to examine teacher induction, attrition rates of new teachers have remained high. The possible causes of these high attrition rates of novice teachers along with suggestions for possible solutions are among the most recent articles in educational journals (Breux & Wong, 2003; Ingersoll, 2001, 2002).

Gold (1996) has categorized various needs of novice teachers and their responses to them as reasons for dissatisfaction and satisfaction with teaching during the induction period. Gold categorizes needs into two groups—professional needs and personal needs. Professional needs for successful teaching, include knowledge, skills, and strategies in content, pedagogy, and personal reflection. Personal needs encompass new teachers’ “sense of self through confidence guiding, developing feelings of effectiveness, encouraging positive self-esteem, enhancing self-reliance, and learning to handle stress” (p. 561). Meeting both the personal and professional needs of a novice teacher are essential to their induction into the teacher profession. Clearly, it could be argued that many of the research foci concerning induction address several of these concerns; few, if any, address them all.

#### Subjectivity Exploration: From Program Developer to Researcher

In my first semester I was involved in a small grant from the Georgia Systemic Teacher Education Program (GSTEP) evaluating the induction programs of two middle schools. Through this small research study I began to investigate the literature concerning the current practice of induction. Could I envision a research project that would investigate induction in a way that avoided duplicating the traditional research on mentoring and allow me to consider a wider view of meeting the personal needs of teachers during the induction process? Specifically, I was

interested in creating a program that involved novice teacher in collaborative interchange with experienced teacher from the beginning of their careers.

A professor<sup>1</sup> encouraged me to write a Teacher Quality Grant implementing my own ideas about professional development. Nobody was more surprised than I was when the grant was funded. The grant, Groups of English Mentors: Developing a Community of Learners Between Novice and Experienced Teachers (GEM), combined my emerging understanding of induction, mentoring, and collaborative professional development into one program design to assist novice teachers during the induction process<sup>2</sup>. Through the GEM program, I deliberately attempted to bring both novice and experienced teachers together to ease the induction of the novice and provide the experienced teacher an opportunity for rejuvenation. After a year of doctoral work I was exploring first hand the challenges and excitement of directing a grant funded professional development program. The program was also the site of my emerging research. I was able to do the assignments from my qualitative research classes on my own data. I was immersed in the GEM program from two vantage points. I was a program director and a novice researcher.

### *Learning To Read With New Lenses*

“Anything can be a ‘text’ and thus is a possible candidate for deconstruction” (Collins, 2000, p. 53). If indeed, anything can be a text, something to be read and interpreted, I struggled to read my roles as a program developer and a novice researcher. I was a candidate for my own deconstruction. I troubled my performance as I strived to be a program facilitator and ended up,

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Sally Hudson-Ross graciously worked with me not only as a member of a teacher cohort for teacher candidates, but also mentored me as a graduate assistant with GSTEP. I learned a little bit about the world of grants and grant writing. Her encouragement and guidance provided the push I needed to write a Teacher Quality Grant. Receiving this grant has streamlined my PhD progress, including developing a site for my dissertation research.

<sup>2</sup> The GEM program was successfully completed during the summer and fall of 2003. A new grant, with the same name, was written and funded for the summer of 2004 and the 2004-2005 school year. More details of the design and activities of the program will be discussed in chapter three of the dissertation.

at times, ignoring the researcher's duties. Or perhaps worse, I tried to collect data in preparation to research every activity that occurred in the GEM program. I had to decipher my purposes in both roles. It felt a bit like wearing bifocals (another addition to my life during doctoral work). The lenses were blended together and I had difficulty looking through both at the same time. I planned and wrote both grants. I was also embedded in both seminars as a recruiter, a curriculum designer, and the program facilitator. As an experienced English teacher, I was also a co-participant in many of the daily activities of the summer and during the follow-up sessions. I was interested in how the participants negotiate the relationships that surrounded them and how they produced an identity in that environment.

#### *The Lens of the Program Director*

From the framework of libratory education, as a program director, I was interested in how teachers, especially the novice teachers, in the GEM program learned to exercise power among other teachers (Freire, 1970/2000; Shor & Freire, 1987). I was specifically interested in facilitating a collaborative community that encouraged if not promoted reciprocal relationships (Fecho, 2000; Feiman-Nemser, 2001a; Lieberman, 2000). I was aware of many of my preconceived ideas and opinions about the context of the grant. I wanted to find ways that enabled the participants, as well as myself, to stand on new ground and see the difficulties of beginning a teaching career with fresh perspectives. Lather reminded me that while "the never-ending self critique called for by Foucault can be paralyzing, it also offers the hope of developing more effective social change practices" (Lather, 1991, p. 100). Working in the context of the GEM program was invigorating. The conversations became more frequent and prolonged as novice and experienced teacher shared ideas and asked questions of each other. As a program director, I could see that collaborative interaction dominated the GEM activities.

The roles I employed as a program director: writing the grant, recruiting the participants, participating in program activities, and facilitating the grant activities were familiar. I had taken similar stances as a classroom teacher. Directing a professional development program required constant evaluation of the activity. I prepared the site, planned activities, reminded the participants of events, and participated myself. I saw the issues of the experienced teachers as well as the novice teachers. I knew this territory; it was reminiscent of my teaching experiences. For the past twenty-two years I have directed the “not knowing” and discovering of others. In doing so, I had misplaced my own experiences around the joy of discovery.

### *The Lens of the Researcher*

In the role of the researcher I tried on new lenses, lenses that allowed me to rekindle engaging methods of discovery and understanding. The mindset I employed as a researcher on my dissertation project I found very different from the “business” of the grant. Trying on the “business” of research was, however, unexplored terrain for me. Defining a specific research project from the large amounts of interesting data and refining the research questions often felt as though I was ignoring the larger picture of the entire grant project. While both roles informed each other, more frequently I found that the roles conflicted in purpose.

I found myself focusing my attention on a tighter group of questions. My own inquiry began to concentrate on the induction process of novice teachers as they explored their induction into the culture and climate of the first job. As a researcher, I pushed to the side the concerns and issues that dominated my thinking and attention as a program director. As a researcher, I had to collect data during activities. I recorded the questions of novice teachers even as I answered those questions or provided strategies for them to consider.

I felt conflicted. As a researcher, do I record the efforts of novice teachers seeking advice or do I stop and answer the question as a participant and experienced teacher. As the program

concluded, it became easier and easier to see the participants as sources of data. Without the need to plan another meeting or submit another expense sheet, I looked at data instead of looking forward to a collaborative conversation. While the offer was extended to share the data and collaboratively analyze any aspect of the program, the participants' focus returned to the issues surrounding their own induction or teaching responsibilities. It has been emotionally conflicting to know that the problems surrounding the induction of novice teachers that emerge from my data are the problems of people I know. They are people I respect and care about; they have trusted me with their writing, their ideas, and often their raw emotions. Now, as a researcher, I analyze data instead of facilitating an activity. I watch for patterns instead of answering questions.

#### Defining the Purpose of the Study

Enthusiasm for academic research combined with my interest in induction and mentoring issues led me to develop a site for my doctoral research topic. As previously explained, I proposed a Teacher Quality Grant that was designed as a professional development program for the collaboration of both novice and experienced English teachers. GEM combined my emerging understanding of induction, mentoring, and collaborative professional development into one program. From the first summer session in 2003, the participants were aware that the focus of the program was collaboration between all participants with attention to how the distinct activities and discussions might be used by novice teachers to facilitate their induction at the site of their first job. While activities varied from assessment to teaching Shakespeare, all participants were aware that some of the participants were preparing to teach for the first time. Other teachers, considered novice teachers, had taught for a year or two. This group was complemented by a similar number of experienced teachers.

### *Stating the Problem*

GEM could provide lines of investigation for several researchers and a variety of research topics. Some of the possibilities are the rejuvenating experience for experienced teachers, the value of collaborative mentoring, the evaluation of programs, an analysis of methodological tools and activities, and the potential of professional development over time. As program creator and facilitator, I constantly thought about these lines of inquiry and included them in the program activities. As a doctoral student trying to write a dissertation, I recognized the need to focus on a single line of inquiry produced by my engagement with the GEM program. My focus continually returned to the novice teachers as they navigated their way through their first year in the classroom. I eventually narrowed my attention to one novice teacher, the only novice who participated in both the 2003 and 2004 versions of the GEM program. This dissertation study situated the problem of induction around the personal needs that Shelly faced as she experienced the induction process. *Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative dissertation study is to investigate a novice teachers' conception of her induction process into the culture and climate in the setting of her first job and as a participant in a collaborative professional development program.*

### *Research Questions*

A large variety of participants from two different groups of teachers participated in both Teacher Quality grants; one funded in 2003 and one in 2004. While I analyzed the artifacts from Shelly, single participant, the two groups of participants provided background information and occasional data triangulation. As indicated by the research statement, the focus is on one novice teacher's experience as she participated in the GEM program and began her teaching career. The study looked at one teacher, Shelly, as she entered her first and continued into her second year of teaching at the same school. Shelly was a unique GEM participant in that she was the only

teacher, at any level of experience, to participate in both years of the program. Several research questions shape the investigation of this study:

1. How do this novice teacher's reports of her experiences and activities in the setting of her first job inform her conception of her induction into the culture and climate of her first job?
2. How does this novice teacher use the activities of the professional development program, GEM, as mediating tools to express her conception of induction during her induction process into the culture and climate of her first job?
3. How does this novice teacher use this conception of induction to navigate her specific induction experience as a beginning teacher?

While program activities and methods facilitated the collection of a large amount of data concerning all of the participants, I have narrowed the focus of this particular analysis to focus on the only novice teacher who participated in both GEM programs. Shelly's participation over the two year period provides a unique perspective unavailable from the other participants.

#### Focusing the Lens of My Theoretical Frame

A Master's degree in English literature and twenty years in the English classroom provided both the tools and the opportunity for me to use the language of literary criticism. I could apply a Marxist reading of a short story by Tillie Olsen or feminist reading of a novel by Henry James. I often asked my students to deconstruct the language and structure of a poem. At some level, I knew as I asked them to reconsider how they read literature that I was asking them to read themselves. During my methods classes on qualitative research I began to confront new critical language. What I had put in play with my students was now happening to me. Learning new critical jargon caused me to reread my understanding of the world and, as a result, myself.

Teacher education is firmly located in the language of social science research. I had been so thoroughly trained in my content area that I was slow to recognize the new language. I was learning to read old texts with new terms. I was inquiring into the world of teaching with a new critical lens. While some of the language terms--objectivism, subjectivism, social criticism, and even deconstruction--were familiar, I was employing them in new ways, on new texts. Instead of mining the meanings of literary text with a well-used set of analytical lens, I have adopted a new set of lenses. I have learned to look at people in social settings, primarily in the context of formal education. I am now interested in theories that can influence my thinking about the development of teachers. Not only am I interested in how they learn the pedagogical tools they need to teach the children that walk through the doors of their classrooms, I am also interested in how novice teachers negotiate their induction into the climate and culture of the teaching profession. It becomes important for me to identify the epistemology and theoretical framework that shaped my research.

### *Identifying an Epistemology*

Crotty (1998) divides epistemology into three broad categories: Objectivism, Constructionism, and Subjectivism. Constructionism is the epistemological stance I employed for the development of my dissertation research. Crotty (1998) defines constructionism as a belief that

Meaning is not discovered, but constructed. In this understanding of knowledge, it is clear that different people may construct meaning in different ways, even in relation to the same phenomenon. (p. 8-9)

I am interested in how teachers construct an understanding of their roles individually and collectively as they work in collaboration. The activities I developed for GEM were collaborative, spread over time, and content focused in nature. In sum, within the parameters of

the GEM program, the significance of any interaction was constructed over time through collaborative inquiry. It is in the context of the GEM professional development program that I conducted the research project for this dissertation. I retained the same epistemological focus while collecting and analyzing data. A thorough treatment of the methodology and methods employed during the project are included in chapter three.

### *Defining a Theoretical Frame*

Adopting Crotty's (1998) definition of constructionist epistemology influences the theoretical perspective, which in turn guides the methodology selected, and ultimately determines the methods chosen in the research design. The theoretical perspective in this examination builds out of critical inquiry and forms a theoretical frame I label participatory inquiry. Like Freire (1970/2000) I work with people in the hope that they will engage in the practice of working to improve the circumstances that surround them. The entire goal of the GEM seminars and their activities sought to dissolve what Freire labeled "the teacher-student contradiction" (p. 72) so that the participants, myself included, become "simultaneously teachers *and* students" (p. 72 emphasis in the original). Again, it is within the framework provided by GEM professional development project that the research was conducted. This dissertation will focus on the data connected to one novice teacher. However, all of the artifacts collected throughout the initial stages of the study are the result of participants working together in deliberate participatory inquiry.

Locating a specific label for a theoretical frame matching my understanding of participatory inquiry requires looking beyond Crotty's (1998) explanations of theoretical stances. Creswell (2003) collapses Crotty's labels of epistemology and theoretical perspective in a single category he calls knowledge claims. Creswell's knowledge claims include four broad categories,

—Postpositivism, Constructivism, Advocacy/Participatory, and Pragmatism—which seem to function as larger receptacles for Crotty’s three epistemologies and various theoretical frames. For the purpose of my work I adopted Creswell’s (2003) label of Advocacy/Participatory as a theoretical frame even though Creswell uses this label as a knowledge claim, a category combining epistemology and theoretical positions (p. 5-6). Advocacy/Participatory carries a title that suggests the influence of critical inquiry and defines more accurately the methodology of participatory inquiry in my research. Constructing Advocacy/Participatory as a theoretical frame in this manner allows me to incorporate the epistemology of Crotty’s (1998) constructionism and the theoretical perspective of critical inquiry while emphasizing the participation that motivates my actions as a teacher researcher. While participatory inquiry will be defined in more detail in chapter three, it concerns what Fecho (2003) labels an “inquiry stance” (p. 10). Participatory inquiry is the questioning activity produced in a collaborating educational community concerning the “teacher as learner and learner as teacher and what it means to call all [teaching] perspectives into question” (Fecho, 2003, p. 10).

### Chapter Summary

This chapter of the dissertation began with a vignette of a novice teacher’s struggle during her first two years in the classroom. I wish it were a fictional account or even a conglomeration of events from several novice teachers. Unfortunately, it is an honest rendering of the experience as Anna reports it. The focus of this dissertation is the induction process of Shelly, a different novice teacher. It would be easy to focus on a series of novice teachers who feel like they have failed in some way. I use Anna’s story only to introduce the problems and issues surrounding not only Anna, but also all novice teachers as they enter the profession. Shelly, as explained earlier, is a unique participant in the study. Her two years of participation in the GEM project give her a prolonged exposure to intentional conversations about the induction

process. Shelly, unlike Anna, is having a more successful transition into the teaching profession. It is more important to analyze a case of successful induction into the profession with the hope to present an understanding of how this teacher's conception of her induction into the climate and culture in her first job helps her navigate her own induction. It has been perhaps too easy in the literature surrounding induction to point at those who leave. Directing attention to the reasons novice teachers identified that helped them decide to stay might be a more effective way to address retention rates.

Furthermore, I have used this space to position my own subjectivity towards the induction of new teachers. During the course of my teaching career I have deliberately avoided a move to the roles of school administration. I felt connected to the classroom and to other teachers who struggle to figure out how to teach on a daily basis. I felt like my own induction into the profession was haphazard at best. I was lucky; my loquacious nature and occasional brashness allowed me a level of confidence early in my career that left me comfortable in the classroom and willing to ask questions of any one I perceived of as a knowledgeable other.

## CHAPTER TWO

### PURPOSEFUL AND COMPREHENSIVE INDUCTION

The need to retain teachers in an era of high teacher attrition has attracted the attention of educational researchers for the last 25 years. In the late 1970's Schelchty and Vance (1983) reported attrition rates of between 40% to 50% for first year teachers. The work of Mark and Anderson (1985), who followed the attrition rates of new teachers in 50 schools in the St. Louis, Missouri area from 1969-1983, supported Schelchty and Vance's findings. Mark and Anderson indicated attrition rates as high as 29% during the first year with another 30% leaving between the second and seventh years. Current research affirms attrition rates remained high through the last three decades when beginning teachers lacked exposure to induction programs. Present studies continue to show retention rates from between 20% to 30% the first year and escalating to between 40% to 50% after five years (Ingersoll, 2002; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Weiss & Weiss, 1999).

New teachers offer a variety of reasons for leaving the profession, which vary from setting to setting and with the amount of support they receive. As a result, identifying the single most common reason is difficult. Novice teachers often mention feelings of isolation (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2002), the lack of support in personal and professional areas (Gold, 1996; Wang & Odell, 2002), and issues of classroom management (Veenman, 1984) as reasons for their choice to leave the profession. Issues like these are not easy to resolve. This chapter illustrates how the research points to systematic, multifaceted induction (D. L. Bickmore et al., in review) whose elements address the difficult issues surrounding the retention of novice teachers. In a watershed article surrounding the issues of new teachers, Veenman (1984) concluded classroom discipline, motivating students, dealing with individual difference, and assessing students' work were the most problematic issues facing first year teachers. Veenman's meta-

analysis of 91 studies focused on teachers who had not received formal induction. Odell (1989) compares her findings, from a study based on novice teachers who had received formal induction, to Veenman's data. Her results indicated new teachers, with induction, prioritized their needs differently. In rank order, these new teachers placed concerns about instructional strategies ahead of personal and emotional support, advice on resources, information on policies and procedures, and additional techniques on classroom management (S. J. Odell, 1989). When comparing these two studies and their results, Odell hypothesized that

offering new teachers structured support at the start of their initial teaching year, school districts may help them diminish their discipline problems, with the results that new teachers, like veteran teachers, will be able to focus more on instructional than on disciplinary issues. (p. 22)

Veenman's and Odell's findings shifted the perceived needs of novice teachers from the issue of classroom management to instructional practice. With support from others in the teaching setting—mentors, teams, administrators, etc.—the perceived needs of new teachers shifted from their classic problem of classroom management to issues of pedagogy.

If support from others, during an induction period, shifts new teachers' perceptions, the question that brings focus to this change is: What is the nature of the assistance during the first year of teaching? In the last twenty years, educational literature has discussed mentoring of novice teachers as the method of induction most commonly practiced in schools. The educational literature provides significant evidence that mentoring helps novice teachers meet their perceived needs and concurrently improves retention (Feiman-Nemser, 1996; Gold, 1996; Gordon, 1991; Huling-Austin & Association of Teacher Educators., 1989; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; S. J. Odell & C., 1990; S. J. Odell & Ferraro, 1992b; Wang & Odell, 2002). Even though the most current Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) reports 79% of new teachers experience some form of

induction (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004), usually mentoring, methods of implementation vary across settings and research contexts. Variations include mentor selection criteria, the quality of mentor training, the task of pairing a mentor with a novice teacher, the reporting and tracking of contact meetings, and whether or not meeting times occur during a common planning period or during non-contract time. Because of the diverse nature of mentoring practices, these various mentoring variations combine and confound efforts to determine which mentoring methods are effective in retaining teachers.

Even with large numbers of mentors in place, attrition rates of new teachers remain high. Either mentoring alone is not sufficient to solve the ongoing problem of attrition, or the actual practice of mentoring is so diverse that it is difficult to identify what kinds of mentoring are effective. In a critical review, Wang and Odell (2002) demonstrated the range, diversity, and varied success of mentoring programs. They advanced mentoring as a possible beneficial activity during induction but suggested it should not be the singular element in any induction program. Recently, several researchers argued that more comprehensive models of induction could lead to more successful retention of novice teachers (D. L. Bickmore et al., 2004, in review; Ingersoll, 2001, 2002; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). Instead of isolating a single method of induction, studies that noted programs with multiple elements of induction reported much higher rates of retention (see Appendix 1 for list of potential element of induction). For example, in a summary for the National Partnership for the Excellence of Teaching (NPET), Serpell and Bozeman (1999) indicated that teachers were more likely to stay in the profession if they participated in induction programs with multiple elements such as orientations, professional development, administrative support, and mentoring.

Serpell and Bozeman (1999) included results from several NPET partner states. In Wisconsin 75% of participating new teachers announced they would stay in the profession after

five years, compared to 25% of new teachers who did not participate in these induction programs. The Montana report responded that 97% of new teachers with support remained compared to only 71.5% of the group without support. Information from the California New Teacher Project reported that 95% of teachers involved were still teaching after five years. Along with these studies, the current work of Ingersoll and Smith (2003; 2004) illustrates that complete induction programs promote teacher retention. However, critics of induction studies forwarded the notion that wide variation in sampling procedures may affect these results. (Gold, 1996; Ingersoll, 2001; Wang & Odell, 2002). The variations in the sampling of induction programs indicate a need for larger studies with shared definitions of induction and shared sampling procedures.

#### Definitions of Induction

The language of induction is confusing, confounding the discussion of induction research. In education, the induction period is generally perceived as the first few years in the classroom—after preservice training and before tenure or the end of probationary status (Bubb, 2002; Huling-Austin & Association of Teacher Educators., 1989). Many researchers (Bubb, 2002; Ingersoll, 2001; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Tickle, 2000) argue that induction occurs with or without organized support in any field as new members make their way through their first years. Some form of induction will occur, even without formalized programs, and the novice teacher will assimilate the culture and practices of the profession (Tickle, 2000) or return to what they observed as students (Lortie, 1975/2002). Tickle argued that accepted and workable definitions of induction in the educational community refer to a specific planned process that systematically inducts new teachers. Tickle's argument is important in that it solidifies a conceptualization of induction programs as a systematic process as opposed to the induction that would occur automatically.

From the late 1980s researchers evoked language that pointed to systematic programs put in place to assist new teachers during this induction period (Gordon, 1991; Huling-Austin, 1989a; Ishler & Edelfelt, 1989). In spite of best efforts to distinguish and define specific programs with various components, almost every attempt at helping new teachers—from a simple orientation to a complete program—become lumped together in the research under the label of induction. This lumping together included the naturally occurring induction of a new teacher enduring and surviving a first year in isolation, who still learns the culture of the school, to a novice who participates in a carefully planned multifaceted induction program.

#### *Definition of Induction*

Even though the sampling and focus of research studies have varied tremendously, the general definition of induction has remained relatively stable, exemplified by Veenman's (1984) conceptualization of induction as the “entry and the planned support the new teachers receive as it [induction] occurs” (p. 165) and Serpell and Bozeman's (1999) description of induction as “a formal program of systematic and sustained assistance provided to beginning teachers by professionals specifically assigned that responsibility” (p. 4). Together these two definitions demonstrate the consistency throughout the last twenty years of an understanding of induction as the planned and sustained assistance of new teachers. The definitions emphasize involving teachers over time in a variety of activities, but, perhaps, for a variety of goals. Such goals might include concerns previously identified in this chapter, including classroom management strategies, formal introduction in to the school climate, professional development, and an increased knowledge of pedagogical practices.

*Induction as defined in educational research.* Induction is frequently defined as occurring after preservice training and before the continued professional development throughout a career

(Huling-Austin, 1989a, 1989b, 1992). This induction period for new teachers is a transition from the guidance of teacher educators and before the complete adoption into the culture and climate of the teaching profession. The educational research definitions of induction are full of activities to do with, to, or for the novice teacher. For example, induction can be (1) “the entry of individuals to the teaching profession” (Brock & Grady, 2001, p. 8), (2) “a transitional period in . . . which assistance may be provided and/or assessment may be applied” (Huling-Austin & Association of Teacher Educators., 1989, p. 3), (3) “a systemwide, coherent, comprehensive training and support (Wong, 2004, p. 42), (4) “a formal, systematic effort to provide ongoing assistance” (Gordon, 1991, p. 9), (5) the development “in new members of an occupation those skills, forms of knowledge, attitudes and values that are necessary to effectively carry out their occupational roles” (Schlechty, 1985, p. 37), and (6) “the mastery of two tasks—effective use of the skills of teaching and adapting to the social system of the school” (MacDonald (1980) as cited in Varah et al., 1989, p. 83). Aside from choosing to enter the profession, these activities would be hard for novice teachers to accomplish on their own.

Mastering the skills of teaching during a brief induction period is hard to imagine, especially if the novice is left to sink or swim (Varah et al., 1989). Good induction, according to the definitions, should assist, assess, train, develop skills, and help the novice teacher adapt to the school environment. In short, to simplify the process of induction, the definitions suggest conducting induction in a planned systematic manner to assist new teachers in the acquisition of skills and the practice of professional development in the context of a school community. Evidence of inductions that match this definition is absent in educational literature.

Mentoring is not mentioned in these definitions. Not mentioning or identifying mentoring is not a selective oversight, but an indication that over the last twenty-five years the definitions

of induction rarely included mentoring. Unfortunately, researchers use mentoring and induction interchangeably (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Wong, 2004). Individuals responsible for the development of induction programs may read the literature and assume that if they have a mentoring program they have a complete induction program. Wong clearly defines the distinction:

Induction is a process—a comprehensive, coherent, and sustained professional development process—that is organized by a school district to train, support, and retain new teachers and seamlessly progresses them into a lifelong learning program. Mentoring is an action. It is what mentors do. (p. 42)

Mentoring is an activity inside an induction process. Mentoring is one component, one activity among a variety of components designed to assist new teachers. As reported previously in this chapter, mentoring can help new teachers succeed, as can orientations, observations of other teachers, professional development, and the practices of administrators. Mentoring alone is not a complete induction program as suggested by the definitions previously listed. Mentoring should, however, be a contributing element to a complete induction program.

*Defining effective induction.* While definitions of induction have continued to emphasize systematic, comprehensive, and multifaceted support in the development of new teachers, what constitutes effective induction is far more nebulous. Research concerning teacher induction is related to why teachers leave or stay in schools rather than focusing on which induction programs or elements actually work. The limited research related to effective induction focuses on the use of mentors in transitioning novice teachers into professional practice (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Feiman-Nemser, 2003; Gold, 1996; Wang & Odell, 2002). Few studies

examined how systematic, whole school approaches affect novice teachers' transition into the profession. This research is just beginning to emerge.

Johnson and Birkland (2003) propose "schools would do better to rely less on one-to-one mentoring and, instead, develop schoolwide structures that promote integrated professional cultures with frequent exchanges of information and ideas across experience levels" (p. 608). The data from school districts that report complete induction programs or those that are the subjects of research projects focusing on complete induction demonstrate high rates of retention. As a result, the proposal of Johnson and Birkland to lessen the reliance on mentoring in favor of a more balanced and integrated program of induction (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003, 2004; Wong, 2004) seems to be well supported. Less reliance on mentors and more focused attention on comprehensive systematic approaches suggest a shift in previous conceptualized notions of effective induction. As a result, it appears more research should concentrate on the effects of complete multifaceted induction programs on new teachers.

#### The Concerns and Goals of Induction Research

Schools planning systematic induction programs must carefully consider the concerns of the novice teacher as well as develop the teaching skills necessary to meet the instructional needs of the environment. Attempts to meet the needs of the institution without addressing the needs of the novice teachers might be counter productive. A focus on the needs of school with simultaneously addressing the needs of the novice might place the novice teacher in an even more alienated position. Novices might feel isolated in the midst of in-service and professional development if they cannot directly connect these activities to their own perceived needs. Indeed, their awareness of their need to grow and acquire new skills may overshadow the needs of the institution if they do not see how in-service or professional development meet both their

perceived needs and the needs of the work environment. These needs of the institution and of the novice teacher may be identical, but due to the lack of experience, a novice teacher may need to have these needs explicitly connected.

### *Meeting the Perceived Needs of New Teachers*

As mentioned earlier, Veenman (1984) found that teachers without induction reported classroom management as the most important concern. Odell (1989) countered this claim with a study indicating that teachers with induction listed teaching strategies as the number one priority. Ganser (1999) reexamined Veenman's findings by surveying three groups of teachers. Ganser's results indicated that time issues--lack of spare time, burden of clerical work, and heavy teaching loads--were ranked one through three, while classroom management and motivating students ranked fourth and fifth among beginning teachers. Bickmore et al. (2004, in review) found that time issues repeatedly surfaced as a concern in both survey and interview data, even though the novice teachers perceived the professional development, the planned mentoring, and team meetings that cut into their work day and created time issues as valuable.

Weiss (1999) examined new teachers' perceived needs using the 1987-88 and 1993-94 National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) data of 5,088 first year teachers. The findings of this study indicated first year teachers who experience autonomy and discretion were more likely to stay in teaching. Weiss defined teachers with autonomy and discretion as those who experienced input in developing curriculum, in selecting texts, content, teaching techniques, or discipline methods (p. 865). Weiss also found that when novice teachers feel they have influence on school-based decisions through participation in collaborative work (teams, school decisions, professional development, etc.), morale is higher,

commitment to teaching is greater, and these teachers report they plan to stay in teaching.<sup>3</sup> It is important to note that the activities in which novice teachers are included, who are defined by Weiss as having autonomy and discretion, match the activities of a comprehensive systematic induction approach as defined previously in this chapter.

Ingersoll (2001; 2002; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003) in the analysis of the 2000 School and Staffing Survey (SASS) cycles and corresponding Teacher Followup Surveys (TFS), noted departing teachers list poor salary (46 %), poor administrative support (34%), student discipline problems (23%), poor student motivation (22%), and lack of faculty influence (15%) as the top five reasons for leaving the profession. In a review of the literature on induction, Darling-Hammond (2003) categorizes four issues that affect teachers' intentions to stay in or leave teaching: salary, working conditions, teacher preparation, and mentoring support. Working conditions were further subdivided into three factors: administrative support, resources for teaching, and teacher input into decision making. The two most influential factors in teacher attrition were salary and working conditions. "Together with salary, these factors [working conditions] far outweighed the demographic characteristics of students in predicting turnover at the school level" (p. 9). While schools have limited power to affect salaries, they do have latitude to structure induction programs related to teachers' perceived needs.

Researchers suggest that a major factor in the effectiveness of induction programs is the emotional support of novice teachers (Breaux & Wong, 2003; Gold, 1985, 1989, 1996; Gold & Roth, 1993; Gordon, 1991; S. J. Odell & Ferraro, 1992b) . Odell & Ferraro (1992b) stated, "Providing emotional support to beginning teachers may have an efficacious impact on

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<sup>3</sup> It is important to note that salary did not appear as an important issue in the Weiss study. It does, however, appear as an issue repeatedly in large studies that survey new teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Ingersoll, 1999; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). While I, like many in the educational community, would love to see higher salaries that issue is usually beyond the influence of teacher educators and the people who design and carry out induction programs. The focus of this paper is, ignoring the economic obstacle, to evaluate what can be done to assist and retain new teachers.

subsequent teacher retention” (p. 203). These findings correspond to the findings of Gold and colleagues (1985, 1989, 1993,1996) who, in a series of studies examining teacher stress and burnout, concluded that support mechanisms in the school could help reduce this emotional turmoil.

Recent research on induction programs emphasizes the collaborative nature of their designs (Bubb, 2002; Feiman-Nemser, 2003; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Wong, 2004). In summary, a collaborative setting might meet the perceived needs of novice teachers faster. New teachers experience a positive sense of autonomy while collaborating with others and enhance their own development. They contribute to the goals of the school while learning their craft.

#### *The Needs of New Teachers as Expressed by Others*

As noted earlier, time pressures (including teaching to a standard based curriculum, forms for IEP referrals, mentoring meetings, professional development and team/department meetings) replaced classroom management or improving instruction as the primary concern for new teachers. Researchers suggest that the current era of standards based assessment intensifies the “praxis shock” of new teachers, identified by Veenman (1984) over twenty years ago (Smagorinsky et al., 2004). The requirements of a job often demand that a new teacher not only improves and assimilates into the teaching culture in appropriate ways, but must also do so with a growing list of expected outcomes for her students. Beyond the help they think they need, novice teachers need help in learning to develop the professional skills required to meet these increasing demands.

Several educational researchers (Darling-Hammond, 1998, 2000; Feiman-Nemser, 2001b, 2003; National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 1996) advance the idea that new teachers need to understand how to help students learn. Feiman-Nemser (2003) argues, “Providing emotional support is not as valuable as helping new teachers learn to create safe

classroom environments, engage all students in worthwhile learning, work effectively with parents, and base instructional decisions on assessment data” (p. 28). The research demonstrating how induction programs help meet the professional needs that enhance teacher quality with respect to student achievement, standards, and reform is limited (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Wang & Odell, 2002). The focus on standards and accountability appears to have moved the rhetoric. Retention is no longer seen as the singularly sufficient object of induction to retain new teachers; induction should meet new teachers’ needs and the needs of the school.

### *The Goals of Induction*

While an obvious goal of induction is to help novice teachers meet their perceived needs (if they are miserable they will leave), it is also important to have goals that go beyond perceived personal needs. As a result of a review nearly twenty years ago, Huling-Austin (1986; 1989) suggested five goals of induction:

1. To improve teaching performance
2. To increase the retention of promising beginning teachers
3. To promote the personal and the professional well-being of beginning teachers
4. To satisfy mandated requirements related to induction
5. To transmit the culture of the school system (and the teaching profession) to beginning teachers. (1989a, p. 9)

A chorus of researchers echoed these goals over the last fifteen years (Bubb, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Feiman-Nemser, 2003; Gordon, 1991; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003, 2004; Ishler & Edelfelt, 1989; S. J. Odell, 1989; Reinhartz, 1989; Tickle, 2000; Wong, 2004). Along with retention, the goals of induction programs should focus on the personal needs of the novice teacher, their professional needs, the conscious transmission of a positive school culture, and a variety of mandated benchmarks for new teachers. These benchmarks may include attendance at

professional development programs, demonstration of competency in their subject area, demonstration of state core requirements, and evaluations by department chairs and/or administrators. These goals often go beyond the reported perceived needs of the novice teachers. Indeed, these goals require the novice teacher to demonstrate specific skills and knowledge that might be unique to a school district or a grade level. For example, an administrator may use the proficiency of a teacher's students on a district exam as evidence of a novice teacher's mastery of district goals.

Assessment remains an important event during the early years of a teacher's career. Four of Huling-Austin's (1989a) categories emphasize providing assistance for the novice teacher, only one, meeting mandates, qualifies as an assessment. Even with a teacher shortage, there are individuals who are not suited to the profession (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). In addition, Sanders and Rivers (1996) indicate that "students who are assigned to several ineffective teachers in a row have significantly lower achievement and gains in achievement than those who are assigned to several highly effective teachers in sequence" (as cited in Darling-Hammond, 2000, p. 3). The individuals responsible for the induction of the novice teacher should clearly explain the nature of assistance and the nature of assessment.

Novice teachers need a strong collaborative system of support in order to merge into the community and practice of a school. Without this support new teachers slip over and over again into an apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975/2002). Most beginning teachers have spent approximately sixteen years of their lives in schools as students. The perspective they gain as a teacher can be quite different. "Beginning teachers frequently express shock that a world so familiar can appear so alien" (Brock & Grady, 1997, p. 56). Current studies warn that without the collaborative support of others in the form of study groups, cohorts, observations of their own teaching, and the chance to observe others, novice teachers have little hope of stumbling on

teaching patterns that allow them to work effectively in the high demands of a standards based climate (Bubb, 2002; Feiman-Nemser, 2001a, 2003; Freiberg, 2002; Wang & Odell, 2002).

#### Possible Components of Systematic, Multifaceted Induction Programs

The research has repeatedly pointed to induction programs that are systematic and multifaceted (Bubb, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Feiman-Nemser, 2003; Freiberg, 2002; Huling-Austin, 1989a; Huling-Austin, Murphy, & United States Office of Educational Research and Improvement., 1987; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Robinson, 1998; Tickle, 2000; Wong, 2004). Excluding mentoring, there is little research investigating the value and effect of the other individual elements of induction. Even studies that focus on a survey of literature concerning induction tend to focus on mentoring (Huling-Austin et al., 1987) or study the programs of specific school districts (Feiman-Nemser et al., 1999; Robinson, 1998). Research studies with small sample sizes and localized foci preclude generalization to effective supports for new teachers overall. This pattern holds true until the recent work of Ingersoll and colleagues (2003; 2004), which examined the SASS data and isolated the responses of new teachers.

While much has been written about well-planned mentoring programs, Ingersoll and Smith (2003; 2004) point out that effective mentoring is difficult to measure. What Ingersoll and Smith demonstrated was that induction programs that expose novice teachers to a bundle of components fare better than those exposed to a single element. While the 1990-1991 and the 1993-1994 SASS asked teachers if they had “participated in a formal teacher induction program, i. e., a program to help beginning teachers by assigning them to a master or mentor teacher” (p. 33), the 1999-2000 SASS survey “added a new and expanded battery of items designed to elicit information on the range and kinds of possible induction and mentoring supports received by beginning teachers” (p. 33 see appendix 1). Using the statistics from SASS for 1999-2000, Ingersoll and Smith found that teachers with no induction experienced a 40% turnover rate. The

following three levels of support produced these attrition rates: (1) three induction supports, 28%; (2) six induction supports, 24%; and (3) eight induction supports, 18%. Only 36% of the novice teachers surveyed received 3 or more supports, of the total surveyed only 14% received six or more supports. With more than twenty years of research outlining the importance of multifaceted induction, 16% of the teachers in the SASS currently report receiving no support and another 48% receiving fewer than three supports. In short, many novice teachers are left without adequate assistance to navigate the difficult and demanding job of teaching.

### *Identifying Elements of Support*

While there is a large body of literature surrounding induction, few studies collect data on the specific elements of induction other than mentoring. It is not that the literature does not mention items such as observations of other teachers, orientations, professional development programs, and the role of the administrator; nevertheless, studies focusing on these issues have yet to emerge as they have with mentoring. The findings of Ingersoll and Smith (2004) reinforce that multifaceted induction programs make a difference in the retention of novice teachers. Ingersoll and Smith isolated a variety of elements and demonstrated that “the strongest factors were having a mentor from the same field, having common planning time with other teachers in the same subject, having regularly scheduled collaboration with other teachers, and being part of an external network of teachers” (p. 35). The most effective factors involved working with others, which reduces one of novice teachers’ most common complaints, isolation (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2002). A brief summary of individual elements of induction and the possible directions for future research follows.

*Mentoring.* Researchers have addressed mentoring with more enthusiasm than any other induction element. The work of Wang and Odell (2002) is a comprehensive evaluation which considered the strengths and weakness of the current research on mentoring. The analysis

especially considered whether or not mentoring, as evidenced in the research, is meeting the needs of school reform and standards based education. In short, their findings implied that mentoring does not work in many instances. As a result, Wang and Odell suggested two practices in order to help both the novice and the mentor move towards more mutually beneficial mentoring practices.

1. Mentors should engage novices in examining their beliefs about teaching and learning to teach, challenge them to construct new images of practice, and help them to develop relevant dispositions for learning to teach. (p. 533)
2. Mentors need to learn how to help novices connect their inquiry and reflection to the general principles of teaching and learning to teach; mentors must also develop frequent dialogue about notions of good teaching. (p. 534)

Researchers indicate interactive mentoring with collaboration and reflection around teacher practice increases the retention rate and helps establish new models of teaching (Feiman-Nemser, 2001a; Johnson & Kardos, 2002; Serpell & Bozeman, 1999; Wang & Odell, 2002; Weiss & Weiss, 1999). These results push the understanding of mentoring by suggesting the advantages of an atmosphere that fosters a novice's interaction with others in a collaborative context.

*Other teachers and collaborative practices.* The most current literature discussing complete induction programs suggests mentors and other teachers observe the novice teacher while teaching and provide the opportunity for the novice to observe other teachers teach (Bubb, 2002; Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1992; Tickle, 2000). Darling-Hammond (2003) suggested involving the novice teachers with other educators in conversations about teaching and student performance from the beginning of their career. Many induction studies, while focusing on mentoring, constantly point to activities beyond those that a mentor alone could provide. A case

in point is a mentoring study by Odell and Ferraro (1992a); they stressed that the “concerns of beginning teachers can be reduced if beginning teachers are integrated into the social fabric and cultural norms of the school and surrounding community” (p. 57). The mentor alone can hardly integrate a novice into the complex social and cultural norms of a school. The collaborative influence of other teachers on the induction of novice teachers warrants more research.

*Professional development.* Professional development takes many forms from mandated in-service courses to self-selected participation in conferences, seminars, and university courses. Professional development can be a productive element of induction for novice teachers. Novice teachers involved in professional development groups find greater satisfaction in teaching by understanding that teaching means mixing both philosophy and practice (Kerrins, 1995). Cochran-Smith (1991) adds that professional development can be “occasions for group mentoring, expos[ing] novices to broad themes of reform through discussions of highly contextualized problems of practice” (as cited in Feiman-Nemser, 1996, p. 3).

Garet and colleagues (Garet et al., 1999; Garet et al., 2001) point to professional development as an opportunity to introduce novice teachers into a setting that values professional growth from the beginning of their careers. Garet et al. (2001) provided “the first large empirical comparison of effects of different characteristics of professional development on teachers’ learning” (p. 915). One of the most significant features of a professional development activity to affect teacher learning is the “collective participation of teachers from the same school, grade or subject” (p. 916). The initial findings on how professional development affects the induction, attitudes, performance, and retention of novice teachers warrants more attention in the research surrounding induction.

*Orientation.* Research is sparse on the effects of orientation days or orientation activities for new teachers. A variety of studies focusing on induction mention orientation (Bubb, 2002;

DeBolt, 1992; Tickle, 2000), but few, if any, elaborate on what that orientation entails and none evaluate what possible effects orientation has on novice teachers. One report provides samples of a variety of single day and multiple-day orientation programs, but no report on the effectiveness of the programs (Kowalski, 1977). With so many recommendations for orientation a need exists to validate its effectiveness through research.

*Administrators.* In most settings, a school administrator will function as the evaluator of the novice teacher. The administrator will decide whether or not the novice teacher will continue in the position. Hopefully, someone (an administrator or a mentor) will explain the nature of his or her assessment to the novice teacher. Given this potential adversarial relationship, administrators can still play an important role in the induction process of novice teachers (D. L. Bickmore et al., 2004; Brock & Grady, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Freiberg, 2002). Administrators are often the major audiences of induction articles that appear in journals such as *NASSP Bulletin*, *Educational Leadership*, and *American School Board Journal*. In addition, research cites the administrator as a critical element in the induction of new teachers (Brock & Grady, 1997; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Feiman-Nemser, 2001a; Weiss & Weiss, 1999).

A major role of the administrator in induction literature is the development of culture (Brock & Grady, 1997, 1998; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Gold, 1989, 1996; Gold & Roth, 1993; Gordon, 1991; Hoy & Hannum, 1997). Research describes a healthy school culture as a place that has “teacher participation in decision-making, strong supportive instructional leadership from principals, and collegial learning opportunities” (Darling-Hammond, 2003, p. 12). These three descriptors correlate to three factors related to teacher's intentions to remain in the profession, “administrative support, resources for teaching, and teacher input into decision making” (p. 9). Administrators have direct influence on the development of environments that

support these conditions and “healthy schools have the best chance for creating successful induction programs” (Brock & Grady, 2001, p. 45).

### Summary of the Research on Induction

While the need to retain teachers continues, so does the pressure to improve their ability to teach. School reform issues, collaborative professional development activities, and standards based education all play a part in the ongoing demand and requirements for in-service training during induction and throughout a teaching career. In short, the job of planning and implementing systematic and comprehensive induction programs which ushers the novice teacher into the school’s culture and provides them opportunities for professional growth rests on the schools.

Huling-Austin (1986) cautions, however, that induction programs should not be considered the panacea for all of the problems inherent in retaining quality teachers. Program planners need to recognize several factors. First, unhealthy school climates and troubled schools present difficult hurdles for new teachers. Second, money may continue to be an issue. In reality no amount of induction may help the teacher who decides they can and will seek another career or position to make more money (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003, 2004). Third, induction programs cannot create highly competent teachers unless beginning teachers have the requisite abilities and attributes to become successful teachers (Brock & Grady, 1997). Last, induction programs that are designed to provide emotional support without fostering teachers’ development and improvement are missing the mark (Feiman-Nemser, 2003).

Realistic goals and expectation should guide the development of induction programs (Brock & Grady, 1997). To that end, several points are worthy of review. First, although the focus of much induction research, mentoring is not induction. A variety of research projects have demonstrated the value of mentoring in a variety of settings but is only an element of a complete

induction experience. Second, researchers suggest that induction should be defined as a systematic, multifaceted program of activity that engages the novice teacher as they enter the climate and culture of the school, but little research has focused on the elements that such a program might include. Third, too much induction research focuses on why teachers leave instead of examining what helps them decide to stay in the profession. Fourth, recent trends acknowledge that the goal of induction must reach beyond retention and involve training teachers in the practice of professional development designed to help meet the challenges of the classroom teacher. Finally, induction programs involving a variety of elements and people in a collaborative environment seem to promise the most successful models of induction.

### CHAPTER 3

#### THE METHODS OF PARTICIPATORY INQUIRY

*Any effort to fully detach oneself from one's own work is bound to be quixotic – Van Maanen (1988, p. xv).*

The elements of participant observation and participatory action research influenced the methodological stance I label participatory inquiry. The elements of close observation, inquiry, and collaboration were essential parts of my practice as a classroom teacher. My engagement in these practices was an asset as I prepared to be a teacher educator and researcher. My graduate work was motivated by the desire to participate with the induction of new teachers into the teaching profession. I valued my experience and as a result I echo Dewey's (1938) sentiments,

I do not know what the greater maturity of the teacher and the teacher's greater knowledge of the world, of subject-matters and of individuals, is for unless the teacher can arrange conditions that are conducive to community activity. (57-58)

While I had some knowledge of my subject matter and of students, as a researcher, I had to struggle my way through a maze of methodology.

I knew what I wanted to do. I worked backwards trying to understand what influenced the inquiry stance I wanted to take. I explored the tools of participatory action research to find that they are dependent on the practices and fieldwork of the participant observer. I label my research approach participatory inquiry. As a participatory inquiry researcher, I adopt the pattern of the *bricoleur* who purposefully gathers the tools from each methodology to cobble together a set of mutually supportive methods. For me, a participatory inquiry stance involves methods from the detailed fieldwork of the observer, the interaction of a fully involved participant, and the advocacy and collaborative reflection of the participatory action researcher. Participatory inquiry

is a methodology that includes a researcher in the field, who, in addition to observing and collecting data, joins with other participants in collaborative activities, including program participation, data analysis, and reporting the findings.

During the course of my dissertation research project, I found myself continually examining the practices that a participatory inquiry researcher might adopt as part of a research program. Researchers engaged in participatory inquiry are located within the framework of participant observation as a methodology rather than participant observation as a general description of all qualitative research (Wolcott, 2001). The methodology of participant observation implies a continuum of research activity from fully functioning participant at one end to a nearly detached observer on the other end. I frequently found myself located near the participation end of the spectrum, especially during the period of data collection. Instead of functioning primarily as a researcher collecting data, I vacillated between performing as facilitator and interacting as a participant. In the larger context of my research project, GEM, all of the participants wrote think pieces, created and/or discussed concept maps, and agreed to participate in interviews. As an embedded program developer and facilitator, I also wrote think pieces, discussed concept maps, and conducted interviews.

#### Revisiting the Purpose of the Study

I narrowed my dissertation research to a case study of one participant, Shelly, and the artifacts—concept maps, think pieces, and interviews—connected to her. As a result, I found myself examining my own engagement with the two Teacher Quality grants that provided the context of this study. Indeed, my interviews with Shelly often had elements of a formal program evaluation as she comments on and critiques specific activities. Especially during the interviews during the second year, our conversations often sounded like casual talk among colleagues. Shelly and I offered each other advice based on our shared experience in the GEM activities. I

have had many experiences as a teacher engaging in such conversations. It was clear that Shelly also felt comfortable both soliciting and giving advice based on her willingness to participate and the candid nature of her responses.

As the only teacher who participated in the program during both years, Shelly provided commentary on the first program during the initial two interviews that influenced my preparation of the second program. During the third and fourth interviews, she occasionally volunteered observations that compared and contrasted the two summer programs. While the interviews probed her understanding of her own induction process, they also took advantage of her insight as a participant in both incarnations of the program.

Shelly explained the moment when she discovered her insider status as a participant. An activity on the first day of her second year of participation was designed to encourage the cooperation of a group of people brought together for the first time. Shelly realized that she knew the activity and could indeed sabotage the process or feign full participation as she observed the interaction of the other participants. Her position during the activity was similar to mine as an observer. She remembered making eye contact with me in an attempt to say, “Are you kidding? How much do you want me to participate?” In that moment we both became joint observers of the activity rather than participants. Our level of participation on the participant observation continuum was as observers of the group collecting observational data rather than as contributors in the collective inquiry of the group.

### *Purpose of the Study*

This dissertation study focusing on Shelly is extracted from a larger data corpus as indicated in the introduction to this chapter. The larger data corpus includes an investigation of my own growth as an embedded researcher promoting participatory inquiry. The data corpus also includes the artifacts of the other 25 novice and experienced teachers who participated in one of

the two GEM programs and their conceptualization of induction and mentoring. These participants influenced and interacted with Shelly's changing conceptualization of her induction process, and their work will be referenced during the analysis when it specifically adds to the understanding of Shelly's induction process. My dissertation study situated the problem of induction around the personal needs that Shelly faced as she experienced the induction process. *Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative dissertation study is to investigate Shelly's conception of her induction process into the culture and climate of the setting of her first job and as a participant in a collaborative professional development program.*

This methods chapter describes the theoretical underpinnings and the activities used during the process of the research project. Several research questions shape the investigation of this project designed to inquire into the nature of Shelly's induction experience:

1. How do this novice teacher's reports of her experiences and activities in the setting of her first job inform her conception of her induction into the culture and climate of her first job?
2. How does this novice teacher use the activities of the professional development program, GEM, as mediating tools to express her conception of induction during her induction process into the culture and climate of her first job?
3. How does this novice teacher use this conception of induction to navigate her specific induction experience as a beginning teacher?

#### Goals of the Chapter

In this chapter, I look specifically at participatory inquiry work in a research site that I created and ultimately supports the investigation of the study and the research questions as reviewed in the previous section of this chapter. The GEM professional development workshop was designed to provide the opportunity for novice and experienced English teachers to discuss

collaboratively English teaching practices. While the discussions of teaching practices provided a framework, throughout the GEM activities a primary concern was the conceptualization of the mentoring and induction of new teachers. Novice teachers facing their first or second year of teaching posed questions and dilemmas, both imagined and real, for the more experienced teachers to consider. Adopting a stance that I label participatory inquiry defines my high level of participation without neglecting my inquiry into the nature of the induction of novice teachers.

To provide the context of my participatory inquiry project, this chapter will explain two aspects of the research—the theoretical framework and the context of the study. First, the theoretical framework will include: the process and framework for the GEM project from the beginning, a review of the epistemological and theoretical influence on the research project, a discussion of the methodological influences of participant observation and participatory action research, the traditional and collaborative methods that I derived from those methodologies as used in my research, and the analytical process. Second, the context of the study will include: a description of the setting of the GEM project for the 2003 and 2004 summer seminars, an overview of the characteristics of the participants from both groups, a description of Shelly's school setting, and a description of Shelly. During the discussion of the methods, I will describe Shelly's relationship with and/or production of specific methods. This will assist the reader to understand Shelly as a participant and develop her status as the focus of the research.

#### Building a Professional Development Program

In examining the methods of my research project, it is helpful to look at the epistemological underpinnings and the theoretical framework used in the construction and rationale of the Teacher Quality grant that funded GEM. The design of GEM builds from my interest in the induction and development of new teachers. Based on my own experiences as a new teacher, mentor, colleague, and department chair, I believe educational settings and the

people who work in them are often not successful at effectively inducting novice teachers into a teaching career. Current research on teacher induction supports my assumptions that novice teachers still leave the profession at alarming rates and often cite isolation as a major factor (Breux & Wong, 2003; Bubb, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Feiman-Nemser, 2001b, 2003; Freiberg, 2002; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003, 2004; Wang & Odell, 2002; Wong, 2004).

In preparation for a dissertation, I developed GEM as a professional development program that looked beyond the obvious need to retain teachers and sought to introduce the novice teacher into the teaching profession through collaborative professional development. The GEM program introduced teachers, who had just finished student teaching, into a setting that continued to promote the development of their skills in collaboration with other teachers (Feiman-Nemser, 2003). The advice presented in the findings of a large study evaluating the effectiveness of federally funded professional development programs serves as the structure for GEM. (Garet et al., 1999; Garet et al., 2001). Garet et al. (1999) outlined the following six features as key components in successful professional development grants:

1. Use of reform type activities—any activity that was not traditional workshops or conferences (study groups, mentoring, internships, teacher networks, etc.)
2. Increased duration of the program—total hours as well as span of time.
3. Collective participation—groups of teachers from the same school, grade, or academic department as opposed to individual participation from various schools.
4. A content focus specific to the teacher's interest—the degree to which the activity has a content focus (i.e. English, French, math).
5. Active participation—the extent to which the participant is engaged in meaningful analysis of teaching and learning.

6. Improved coherence—encourages continued professional communication and consistency to teacher's goals and alignment with state standards and assessment.

Few professional development programs, funded through federal grants, have had all of these features, but those that did had a higher rate of satisfaction among participants (Birman et al., 2000; Garet et al., 1999; Garet et al., 2001; Porter et al., 2000). Incorporating these features in the GEM project demonstrates how my epistemological stance and theoretical positions have guided the practical work I developed as an embedded program developer, active program facilitator, and participant observation researcher.

#### Epistemology and Theoretical Frames

In my experience as a graduate student, few tasks were as difficult as wrestling with definitions and varieties of epistemologies and theoretical frames. I am struck by the irony that one can function within the parameter of a particular framework and be ignorant of its governing influence. For example, as an undergraduate English major, I was thoroughly trained as a New Critic. I was trained in the methods of close reading, but not in the overarching philosophies developed by I. A. Richards, John Crowe Ransom, R. W. B. Lewis, Cleanth Brooks, Robert Penn Warren, among others that guided this movement of literary criticism. After I had graduated and had been teaching a few years, I attended a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminar about literary criticism and literature. During that six-week period I had epiphany after epiphany as I realized which theories I had attempted to implement for the previous six years. For the first time, I consciously placed theoretical frames around the activities I conducted in the classroom.

My work in the classroom was more purposeful and exciting, as I understood more of the theory I had struggled to enact. Knowing why I tried to have students read a poem in a specific manner allowed me to categorize the activity and understand its strengths and weaknesses. It

actually allowed for greater freedom of inquiry. I could compartmentalize a new critical reading. I could acknowledge meanings that a close examination of structure and prosody provided and place it to the side and ask the class a different question. For example, what do we find in this poem if we examine its cultural clues instead of relying just on the previous interpretive method? Understanding the framework for a New Critical interpretive practice allowed me to add to the structure already in place in my classroom.

In a similar fashion, I briefly discuss both epistemology and theoretical frames in order to provide philosophical clarity to the research activity I pursued as I adopted the methodology and methods of participatory inquiry. Examining this framework allows me to more accurately trace the influences that direct my practice.

### *Epistemological Stance*

Crotty (1998) divides epistemology into three broad categories: Objectivism, Constructionism, and Subjectivism. Constructionism is the epistemological stance I employed for the GEM project. Constructionism as defined by Crotty (1998) is a belief that

Meaning is not discovered, but constructed. In this understanding of knowledge, it is clear that different people may construct meaning in different ways, even in relation to the same phenomenon. (p. 8-9)

Garet et.al. (2001), on whose work I based my own professional development design, provided guidelines that support the constructionist perspective for future professional development programs. In preparation for the GEM program, I embraced activities that were collaborative, spread over a significant period of time, and were content focused. In sum, within the parameters of this program, participants worked with each other to understand the issue at hand. For the group, the significance of any interaction was constructed over time through collaborative inquiry.

### *Theoretical Frame*

I adopted Creswell's (2003) label of Advocacy/Participatory as a theoretical frame even though Creswell uses this label as a knowledge claim, a category combining epistemology and theoretical positions. Advocacy/Participatory carries a title that suggests the influence of critical inquiry and defines more accurately the methodology of participatory inquiry in my research. Constructing Advocacy/Participatory as a theoretical frame in this manner allows me to incorporate the epistemology of Crotty's (1998) constructionism and the theoretical perspective of critical inquiry while emphasizing the participation that motivates my actions as a researching teacher. While participatory inquiry will be defined in more detail as methodology and methods are discussed, it concerns what Fecho (2003) labels an "inquiry stance" (p. 10). Participatory inquiry is the questioning activity produced in a collaborating educational community concerning the "teacher as learner and learner as teacher and what it means to call all [teaching] perspectives into question" (Fecho, 2003, p. 10).

Adopting Crotty's (1998) definition of constructionist epistemology influences the theoretical perspective, which in turn influences the methodology selected, and ultimately determines the methods chosen in the research design. The theoretical perspective contributing to the formation of participatory inquiry builds out of critical inquiry. Like Freire (1970/2000) I work with people, specifically teachers, in the hope that they will engage in the practice of working to improve circumstances that surround them and their work. The goals of the seminar and its activities are to dissolve what Freire labeled "the teacher-student contradiction" (p. 72) so that the participants, myself included, become "simultaneously teachers *and* students" (p. 72 emphasis in the original). During the GEM program we sought to develop a reciprocal relationship, one that allowed us to fluctuate between teacher and student while engaging in learning.

As an experienced English teacher, I engaged in inquiry with other English teachers about the craft of teaching English. As a researcher, I was able to inquire into the issues of mentoring and induction facing new teachers as they participated in GEM and explored the context of their first job. Adopting the methodological label of participatory inquiry allowed me to investigate the multiple meanings and nuances of both participation and inquiry as an embedded and transparent researcher in a teacher professional development setting.

### Methodology

Distinguishing among the terminologies used in research to define methodology is not an easy matter. Boundaries blur as each theorist's textbook explains and clarifies research designs, each laying claim to its own set of labels. Silverman (2000) defines methodology as "how one will go about studying any phenomenon" and adds, "in social research, methodologies may be defined very broadly (e.g., qualitative or quantitative) or more narrowly (e.g., grounded theory or conversation analysis)" (p. 79). Silverman establishes the diversity of definitions of methodology from broad interpretations to more narrow ones. As a novice researcher, I longed for a direct description, a place to begin rather than a description of nuances designed to describe the specific activities of practiced researcher, each one with his or her own understanding of research practices.

Crotty's (1998) explanation of methodology is more helpful for a novice researcher seeking to structure a research design as a manageable task. For Crotty, methodology is "the strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods and linking the choice and use of methods to the desired outcomes" (p. 3). Following this definition, a beginning researcher can engage in a complete research project. I learned to analyze how the strategy, plan of action, and the process I outlined for the various sessions of the GEM

program suggested specific methodologies of both participant observation and participatory action research.

To work as a qualitative researcher means to define terms and set parameters (Creswell, 2003; Crotty, 1998; Patton, 2002; Silverman, 2000). For example, for a researcher to state he/she practices qualitative research has a broad, open meaning. To announce that he/she practices grounded theory or conversational analysis more narrowly defines the scope of the activity and research practices. Creswell (2003) avoids the term methodology in favor of the term “strategies of inquiry” (p. 5). Creswell explains that “operating at a more applied level are strategies of inquiry. . . that provide specific direction for procedures in a research design” (p. 13). In the realm of qualitative research all three, Silverman (2000), Crotty (1998), and Creswell (2003) cite not only participant observation and participatory action research but list other methodologies—phenomenologies, ethnographies, and grounded theory—as examples of additional methodologies. These methodologies are only a few examples; indeed, Wolcott (2001) diagrams 19 different qualitative research strategies.

The methodology I labeled participatory inquiry flows from Creswell’s (2003) Advocacy/Participant theoretical frame. I further define participatory inquiry as a *bricolage* of methodologies that place the researcher in the field, involve the researcher in collaborative activities with the other participants, and find the researcher in a collaborative relationship with participants in data analysis and the reporting of the findings. Participatory inquiry requires explicit explanation of the influences of two methodological traditions, participant observation and participatory action research.

### *The Influence of Participant Observation*

Participant observation, as a category, often carries an air of confusion for beginning researchers. In large measure, I find this confusion is caused “because it is used both as a cover

term to refer to all qualitative approaches and as one particular variant among them” (Wolcott, 2001, p. 89). Wolcott (2001) claims participant observation is the unifying activity of all qualitative work. Over time, the term began to double “as a synonym for fieldwork” (p. 91), including any activity that would place the researcher as a participant or an observer in any given project. The researcher’s task is to define specifically the degree to which he/she adopts and explains a label in any field of research. For example, a true ethnographer, in the anthropological sense of both methodology and practice, is also a participant observer. So why make a distinction? At some point researchers felt that some of the methods of ethnographic methodology could answer their particular questions without adopting all of the practices of ethnography, living in the cite of the study or visiting a school every day for a full academic year. As a result, they began to limit ethnographic practices, ultimately creating variations on a theme to the point that enough researchers were participating and observing but no longer attempting complete ethnographic studies. Looking for a methodology and methods that addressed the concerns of the research became more important than duplicating a specific methodology.

While ethnography may involve a larger commitment of time and a larger, broader collection of data and artifacts, ethnography is more narrowly defined than the larger, more general notion of participant observation. The researcher must determine to what degree he will participate in the activity of the setting; indeed in some circumstances that participation may change as the observation period progresses (Smagorinsky & O'Donnell-Allen, 1998). He or she may find that familiarity with the participants creates more frequent and varied interaction over time. This certainly became the case during the first incarnation of GEM because I found myself engaged in the activity and neglecting the role of observer. I participated in a small group discussion at one table and completely missed a discussion at another table. I found myself

privileging the role of participant so much that I requested funds for researcher assistants to attend the second seminar and function as observers rather than participants in the activities. They were able to observe the whole group and make notes about the conversations and presentations while I could participate more actively. During small group work my researcher assistants made notes about the activities of groups that did not include me as a participant. I still maintained the role of a participating inquirer in that group but was free from the burden of observing other groups.

Patton (2002) illustrates the complexity of pinning a specific description on the term participant observation. Patton references the activities of the participant observer but never treats it as a specific methodology as he does symbolic interaction, ethnomethodology, narratology, and grounded theory (p. 132). Nevertheless, one could learn a great deal about the activities of participation and observation that dominate the content of Patton's chapter 6, "Fieldwork Strategies and Observation Methods." Methods or activities drive Patton's description of participant observation:

The participant observer employs multiple and overlapping data collection strategies: being fully engaged in experiencing the setting (participation) while at the same time observing and talking with other participants about whatever is happening. (p. 265-266)

This description of practice could equally describe an ethnographer who has fully gone native and moved from the "they" to the "we" stance as Malonowski (as found in Van Maanen, 1988) suggested. Working within the broad methodology of participant observation requires that the researcher provide a detailed description of the epistemological beliefs and theoretical frames that guide this methodology. It is with this in mind that I have tried to highlight my conflicts and shifts as a both a participant and an observer during the narrative of this chapter.

### *The Influence of Participatory Action Research*

The variety of traditions that stem from Participatory Action Research “emerge in situations where people want to make changes thoughtfully—that is after critical reflection” (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000, p. 573). Patton (2002) adds “action research aims at solving specific problems within a program, organization, or community” (p. 221). Through these definitions it is clear that Participatory Action Research is a specific type of participant observation. Freire’s (1996) influence can also be noted in the references to thoughtful changes after critical reflection and in the focus on specific problems in a community. Kemmis and McTaggart (2000) survey and analyze approaches to participatory action research, and despite the various contentions among the approaches to this methodology, several common factors hold them together. Kemmis and McTaggart claim that, overall, this methodology “is best conceptualized in collaborative terms” (p. 595). Two reasons support their claim; first, participatory action research “is a social and educational process” and second it “is directed toward studying, reframing, and reconstruction practices that are, by their very nature, social” (p. 595). While schools can be considered sites of social interaction, I am interested in the opportunities that teachers are afforded to engage in social interaction for the improvement of their own situations. “Action research is less a separate culture of inquiry than it is a statement of intention and values” (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998). GEM is an action research endeavor in that it promotes the discussion of the value deliberate participation of novice teachers in their own induction process.

Collaborative inquiry guided by intention and values can lead to a liberating process, one in which participants are collaborating “in acts of cognition, not the transferals of information” (Freire, 1970/2000, p. 79). This activity of collaborative inquiry, or what Freire might call collaborative cognition, is mirrored in most definitions of participatory action research (Bentz &

Shapiro, 1998; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000; Patton, 2002). Participatory action research is linked to Freire's (1970/2000) notion of liberation, in which "liberation is a praxis: the action and reflection of men and women upon the world to transform it" (p. 79). This spirit of praxis influences participatory action research and consequently, the research stance and methodology that I identify as participatory inquiry.

*Participatory inquiry as modified classroom action research*

While Kemmis and McTaggart (2000) survey several approaches, classroom action research is the approach that most closely resembles and influences my methodology. This approach to collaborative research typically includes "interpretive modes of inquiry and data collection by teachers . . . with a view to teachers' making judgments about their own practices" (p. 569). The practice of classroom action research focuses on the practical application of what teachers discover and can make use of to improve their own practice as teachers and to improve their students' performance. Kemmis and McTaggart (2000) further suggest that classroom action research is "practical in Aristotle's sense of practical reasoning about how to act rightly and properly in a situation with which one is confronted" (p. 569). Classroom action research is generally considered research in and around the activity of students and teacher in the classroom setting. This definition, however, is too narrow; it excludes the work that teachers do in professional development activities that they self-sponsor or participate in over time. It excludes that work that reflective teachers might do over time in a National Writing Project group or in a study group. This exclusionary definition would overlook important discoveries might be made around teacher practice by looking at the work they do in their time away from the classroom setting. My work expands the definition to include both professional development activities, especially those that are self-selected by the participants.

For classroom action research to occur, the involvement of university researchers is not mandatory. When they are involved, they are often facilitators or “advocates for ‘teachers’ knowledge” (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000, p. 569). I interpret this level of participation by the researcher as similar to the role Dewey (1938) outlined for the experienced educator, “There is no point in his being more mature if, instead of using his greater insight to help organize the conditions of the experience of the immature [read inexperienced], he throws away his insight” (p. 38). The university researcher’s role as a mature addition to a program may sprout from multiple experiences such as classroom teaching, field research, and theoretical training. The researcher who can participate actively in discussions and activities can contribute to the inquiry process rather than just observe and report.

#### Methods

The methodology of participatory inquiry provided the foundation for both the methods and the activities of the GEM program. Often the activities of GEM doubled as research methods for my dissertation. Not only did the activities provide artifacts for future analysis, but also were useful as modes of inquiry into my research questions. Crotty (1998) defines methods as “the techniques or procedures used to gather and analyze data related to some research question or hypothesis” (p. 3). The six methods I employed for data collection fall into two categories: the first I labeled conventional and the second collaborative. The conventional category includes familiar terms in participant observation and participatory action research: fieldnotes, participation, interviews, and observation. While these terms are familiar, no one should assume that familiarity means universal comprehension. I will define the nature of these four methods as they specifically apply to the GEM project during the summer session and how I used them in the follow-up sessions.

The collaborative category includes two activities of the GEM project: concept maps, briefly defined as visual representation of ideas, and think pieces, briefly defined as written reflections shared in a collaborative group for the purpose of written feedback. These two methods may be readily understood as activities that might occur in any classroom or professional development workshop setting. Furthermore, they were not the only activities of the seminar; for example, reading poetry, brainstorming, group problem solving, discussing writing rubrics, discussing young adult literature, discussing and creating introductory classroom activities, and discussing assessment strategies were all part of the larger program. Any one of these could be considered methods under Crotty's (1998) definition.

The distinction I wish to make is that the two activities in this collaborative category of methods and the data they produce through community cooperation bear directly on a major goal of GEM. This specific goal of GEM was to usher novice teachers into the practice of self-selected professional development by providing them with the opportunity to participate in a co-mentoring project with experienced teachers during the early years of their careers. Both concept maps and think pieces produced prolonged collaborative engagement between novice and experienced teachers in the GEM project. Whether or not the effects of such collaboration encouraged any teacher, novice or experienced, to pursue future collaborative experiences would be impossible to determine within the framework of this research. What did fit within the parameters of the study was the manner in which Shelly discusses the value of these two methods during the course of her interview cycle. The issue of Shelly's use of concept maps and think pieces will be discussed later in the chapter.

#### *Conventional Methods as Applied in GEM*

In this chapter, I have explained the epistemology, theoretical frameworks, and methodologies that foreground my interest in fieldnotes, researcher participation, observation,

and interviews as methods; nevertheless, a description of these methods in the context of this dissertation project is in order. My ability to write thick description, participate in every activity, observe every interaction, and conduct lucid interviews, like every other researcher's ability, is limited. As a result, I define the parameters of the methods labeled fieldnotes, researcher participation, observation, and interviews as I used them in the GEM program and during the follow-up sessions.

*Fieldnotes.* Recorded head notes or mental observations written at a later time, description of the participants, of the setting, and of the activities are all fieldnotes. Fieldnotes also included the collection and description of artifacts. Artifacts include handouts produced by me, handouts produced by presenters, and the variety of material that participants duplicated and shared with each other. Other artifacts included the notes and journals that participants produced as they reflected on the experience<sup>4</sup>. A collection of emails that chronicle my communication with participants, presenters, and the grant coordinators also served as contextual information during the program's planning stages. In addition, any material I collected and my written reflections were categorized as fieldnotes.

I include artifacts as part of fieldnotes for the following reasons. In a collaborative inquiry setting such as the one created during the work of the GEM project, all of the participants are contributing to the development of the inquiry. The participants' written comments on think pieces, concept maps, their own personal notes, group discussions recorded on chart paper, and any other written commentary all served as observational data. These data corpus produced by

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<sup>4</sup> It is important to note in the discussion of methods that I refer to artifacts from all of the participants of the GEM project. While Shelly is the focus of the dissertation research, it is difficult to separate documents produced solely by her and ignore the others. Just as other participants discuss her contributions by commenting on think pieces or concept maps, she also commented on their work. As a result, all the work produced by the group has potential impact on Shelly's thinking about mentoring and induction as she navigates her own induction into the setting of her first job during her first two years as a teacher. Chapters four and five will refer to the specific artifacts produced by Shelly with supporting information from the artifacts of other participants.

the participants were as informative as any fieldnote I might have written after a session. Indeed, these comments written in the moment of a conversation or discussion provide ready insight into how participants respond to activities surrounding induction and/or mentoring. As a result, fieldnotes, defined in this way, function not only as a method of data collection that assisted me as a researcher to collect and classify my observation, but also served to amplify the importance of participatory inquiry as a methodology. Defining items as fieldnotes that might previously be categorized as artifacts legitimizes the *in situ* work of the participants in the project. Specifically, encouraging Shelly to revisit her own contributions opened up her conversation surrounding her induction process, including what she anticipated it to be and how she negotiated the reality.

*Researcher participation.* My participation in the activity of GEM had two distinct sides. I was the program facilitator as well as a participant in the activities of the program. In the role of program facilitator, I prepared activities designed to engage the participants with one another in collaborative inquiry about teaching English, the nature of mentoring, and the induction process of novice teachers. While participants were drawn to the program as English teachers interested in professional development and the induction and mentoring of new teachers, they did not know all of the other participants. Building trust in order to create an environment that fostered an open exchange of ideas was a crucial responsibility of the facilitator. This role most resembled my experience as a teacher. I provided a program outline, created initial activities, recruited presenters and participants, all with the hope of nurturing the creation of a collaborative community. The nature of such a role is not without its difficulties as I tried to move from facilitator to participant.

While in the role of participant in this project, I immersed myself into the activities with the other participants. A few of these activities in which I was a direct participant included sharing a favorite poem, discussing classroom management, providing examples of my

assessment practices, and brainstorming activities for the first day of school with other participants. The constant challenge of this role for me was to participate without being an overly dominant voice. I was constantly aware that my voice began and ended every day of the GEM program. I found it easier to participate casually in small groups as one of four voices rather than in the large group as one among 15 other voices. In the large group it was easy to place my comments as moderating the discussion. For example, if a discussion carried on for ten minutes my interjection could be seen as an attempt to end the conversation or transition to a new activity. In smaller groups it was easier to feel as if I was a natural part of the conversation. Nevertheless, at the end of the group activity it was too often my voice that interrupted the other groups and concluded the activity.

It was difficult to participate in some activities that involved discovery. When I created a puzzle or posed questions about a specific literary work, my participation would have only been a posturing gesture. For example, one activity involved the silent reading and commenting of six poems mounted on large pieces of paper in order to determine what they had in common or how they were distinctly different. I had selected six different villanelles by six different authors. My role as the facilitator and developer of the professional development project prohibited my honest participation as someone discovering, reading, and commenting on these poems for the first time. Instead, I fielded the silent written questions and validated the responses of the participants. I remained immersed in the activities rather than restricting my participation to just observation.

*Observation.* As a researcher involved in active participation, it was difficult to take notes as if I were an observer on the sideline of activity. As the facilitator, I opted not to record my observations during the course of the activities unless it was a natural activity. For example, if the participants wrote reflectively on our work during a specific activity then I would record my

observations of the activity as well. Occasionally, the obligation to prepare the next activity limited the amount of time I had to produce a written record during the day. I privileged the roles of participant and facilitator over the *in situ* recording of observation. This was the manner in which I worked during the GEM project of the summer of 2003. Observation was often difficult. I felt as if I lost moments when I tried to retrieve my head notes into a written format later in the day.

To assist my observation and capture events beyond my view in the midst of my participation, I requested money for two research assistants for the second version of the Teacher Quality grant submitted for the summer of 2004. Grant evaluators funded these research assistants. The research assistants attended the complete weeklong summer seminar and participated in an opening icebreaking activity so the seminar participants could get to know them. These assistants functioned as observers who inhabited a position on the participant observation continuum nearly the opposite of my position. While I participated nearly 80% of the time and formally observed perhaps 20% of the time during the program, the research assistants participated less than 10% of the time and actively recorded observational fieldnotes most of the time<sup>5</sup>.

As a result of their active note taking, I have additional insights on my activity as a facilitator, a participant, and as a researcher. I had conversations with each assistant at the end of each day, which added to my recorded reflections as I wrote out my own head notes and planned for the next day. They also wrote formal descriptions of the setting, the participants, and the artifacts that were collected. They were able to record bits of conversation during large group

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<sup>5</sup> This percentage was fairly easy to estimate. The course of the GEM program was divided into ten distinct activities. I actively participated in eight of the ten and directed the other two. The research assistants participated in the opening activity designed to help people get to know each other. This activity was approximately half or one activity or 5%. They participated in conversations from time to time for which I liberally assign another 5%.

discussions, each one focusing on activities in different parts of the room. During group activities they specifically focused on different groups in an effort to capture the conversational flow and the group dynamics that unfolded. Generally, their observations of group work focused on groups that did not include me as a participant. We adopted this plan because I knew I would be adding my own fieldnotes later in the day.

While I knew and recruited most of the participants for the program, these graduate assistants were unfamiliar with the other participants and described them with fresh eyes. This distinction between my involvement with the participants and their detachment is especially apropos in regards to Shelly. I had taught her as an undergraduate, discussed her student teaching with her and her mentor, recruited her for the first seminar, and interacted with her as a fellow participant. In addition, before the beginning of the 2004 GEM seminar I had interviewed her twice as one of the novice teachers from the previous group. Shelly's active engagement in the interviews and her ability to connect experiences from GEM to her practice prompted me to invite her to attend the second session. Shelly was not the only teacher from the first group to be invited to participate again. She was, however, the only one whose schedule permitted her to attend. I was aware that I was predisposed to see her involvement as valuable based on her previous participation. The two research assistants, Dana and Stergios, had no such preconceived notions since all of the participants were unknown to them before the seminar.

This rich data corpus of observational notes provided by additional eyes served to triangulate my own description of the setting, participants, and artifacts. Their record of the activity highlights Van Maanen's (1988) observation that "any effort to fully detach oneself from one's own work is bound to be quixotic" (p. xv). Their observation of my participation as a facilitator and group participant is invaluable information that documents my attempts to immerse myself in the activity of the seminar and act as an observant researcher at the same

time. As I worked on the initial analysis of the all of the data before narrowing the focus to Shelly, the research assistants' notes served as a reminder of my participatory roles throughout the project.

*Interviews.* I designed a series of semi-structured interviews to gather information focusing on the novice teachers' perceptions of several themes as presented during the course of the GEM program. From the beginning of my work with the Teacher Quality grant, I planned to interview novice teachers about their experiences with the summer professional development program, and then again after the completion of the follow-up meetings and near the end of their first year of teaching. By placing the interview at these two distinct positions, I hope to gain insight into how they felt the summer program had shaped and influenced their thinking before they actually began their first job and engaged in any induction or mentoring activities in that setting. For the first interview conducted shortly after the beginning the school year, I asked, "What activities, advice, conversation, and readings as a part of the program did you feel were helpful as you began your school year?" The timing of this interview also allowed me to ask what types of mentoring and induction they anticipated and expected in the setting of their first employment.

For the second question I asked, "How were the follow-up sessions of the GEM program useful as a mentoring tool during the first half of your school year?" In other words, did they find the opportunity to write and discuss think pieces, revisit the images and discuss the images on the concept maps, and to discuss the challenges of teaching in a neutral, supportive environment helpful in meeting their needs during their induction into the setting of their job? A last set of questions asked participants to consider how their induction into the profession was supported at their individual schools. For example, what types of formal induction activities were structured in their individual schools? Did they have the opportunity for collaborative conversations? The

two sets of questions in this second interview both help shape my understanding of novice teachers' conceptualization of their induction experience.

Shelly's first interview cycle was the same as other novice teachers who participated in the first summer seminar. Her second interview cycle makes her different from the participants in either group. As the only participant in both seminars, she provided a unique commentary on the program during the second set of interviews. Her first two interviews investigated the questions as outlined previously in this section. She responded freshly to the first interview as she prepared to teach for the first time on her own. The second interview allowed her to respond to the influence of the first summer seminar and the complete cycle of follow-up session. In addition, she was able to report on the formal and informal induction activities she experienced during her first year as a teacher.

#### *Collaborative Activities as Methods in GEM*

A variety of activities developed for a professional development seminar could be methods for the collection of data for further research analysis. I wish to expand methods practices to include activities in which all of the participants in a participatory inquiry project engage. Indeed, all of the methods just outlined in the conventional methods section referenced activities that occurred throughout the meetings of the GEM seminar. Fieldnotes, for example, refer to whole group discussions, table discussions, and one-on-one conversations. Artifacts capture data concerning the teaching of poetry, writing instruction, literary discussion, and classroom management strategies and practices in the form of group generated lists and individual participants' notes. In a large study of the entire GEM program, all of the collaborative activities could also be considered methods. For example, group discussions of the obstacles facing novice teachers could easily be reframed as a focus group on the same topic.

I singled out both concept maps and think pieces because of their specific use as a tool to generate group discussions around the issues novice teachers might face during their induction into the teaching profession. Both methods are also useful for this dissertation topic because both are explicitly the work of a single person that is then presented to the group for discussion. Shelly's use of think pieces was consistent through both programs and tracked her engagement with the GEM group. Many of her think pieces reported incidents in her classroom during her first and second year of teaching that she considered worthy of discussion or that she deliberately placed before the group in order to receive advice. Her concept maps are important artifacts. Her first concept map was one of the two concept maps that generated the most conversation among the first group of participants during their follow-up sessions as documented by the number of written comments they produced during the follow-up sessions. They were also the two concept maps the group selected to represent their conversations during a conference presentation.

Shelly's second concept map, drawn as part of the 2004 GEM activities, was a direct commentary on her first effort and demonstrated a more complex understanding of induction and mentoring. This second concept map also stood alone for the second group of GEM participants as a straightforward description of how a novice teacher should approach her own induction into the setting of her first job. Shelly's concept maps and think pieces will receive more detailed explication in chapter four. In this section it is my purpose to explain the general practice of concept maps and think pieces within the GEM professional develop program.

*Concept maps.* My research assistantship with Dr. Peter Smagorinsky introduced me to concept maps. While analyzing data and writing up the analysis, I helped analyze the use of a concept map produced by a group of teacher candidates (Smagorinsky et al., 2004). We described them as follows: "the purpose of the concept map activities was for the participants to produce individual conceptions of their teacher education program's emphases and to then use

those conceptions to produce a group concept map” (p. 223). On the last session of the first GEM seminar I used the concept map activity in a similar manner. I provided participants with the materials to draw images or metaphors of induction. I invited all of them, if they felt inclined, to draw images of induction and/or mentoring based on their individual understanding of the concepts. Several gathered paper and drawing materials and began to draw as we sat around four large tables formed into one large rectangle.

After a discussion reviewing the week’s activities, anyone with a concept map was asked to present their visual representation to the group. We discussed the images and how they had captured in various ways the variety of issues and problems examined throughout the week. The presentation of these images echoed the discussion we had just finished. The concept maps provided a visual record of the concerns of novice teacher and the advice of experienced teachers as the group concluded the seminar. We made no attempt to create a group concept map. Instead we planned to use the follow-up sessions as an opportunity to discuss our developing notions of induction and mentoring based on our experiences during the first half of the school year.

During two of the three follow-up sessions of 2003 GEM program, we used the concept maps as an introductory activity. I placed the original drawings in the center of large pieces of butcher paper on separate tables and with a supply of markers and pens. For twenty minutes we roamed the room making silent comments in the margins of the paper. I was interested in how the participants would respond to the images now that they had begun their first year of teaching or returned to the classroom to work as mentors. Did the concept maps serve as concrete markers of how they collectively conceptualized induction and mentoring at the end of the summer session? Next, a discussion about the validity of the images in terms of the participant’s experience was audiotaped. Responses on both occasions were energetic as participants compared and contrasted the conceptualized images with their current experience and

understanding. These images functioned as touchstones, providing the group with common imagery for the discussion of their current understanding of induction and mentoring. In addition, these images served as a background against which the novice and experienced teachers could compare their own ongoing experiences with induction and/or mentoring.

During the 2004 GEM project with a new set of participants, I again provided the participants with the materials needed to draw images or metaphors of induction during the final summer session. We again recorded the group discussion of the images that were produced. Revisiting the concept maps was used as an introductory activity for two of our three follow-up sessions during the fall of 2004. Once again, concept maps provided a touchstone for marking how the group had been thinking about induction and mentoring at the conclusion of the summer activities. The comments and discussions during the follow-up sessions indicated how the novice teachers had altered or expanded their conceptualization of induction and mentoring as they negotiated their own induction process. As mentioned previously, Shelly produced concept maps in both sessions. The analysis of her changing conceptualization of induction and mentoring will be more completely addressed in chapter four.

*Think pieces.* The planned and systematic use of think pieces as a method were borrowed and adapted to fit the purposes of GEM. While working as a graduate instructor in an English methods course, I was introduced to think pieces. Classroom time was at a premium and while an hour of conversation on an issue facing a particular pre-service teacher might be informative and dynamic, the time frame limits the number of issues that can be presented and digested. Furthermore, while an individual may listen carefully and comment on the concerns of others, their particular concern may never be aired for the consideration and advice of the group.

Over time my university teacher mentors, Sally Hudson-Ross and Peg Graham, had designed the think piece “as an extended free-write on a topic that concerned [the pre-service

teachers]” (Graham, Hudson-Ross, Adkins, McWhorter, & Stewart, 1999, p. 113). These think pieces were used to extend the quality and variety of feedback that an individual received about her own concerns as well as the opportunity for exposure to the issues foremost in the minds of her colleagues. We exchanged papers for an hour of silent reading in which everyone read as many papers as possible while writing signed comments and questions in the margins. In this manner, an individual received feedback on her concerns from colleagues and, in turn, read and commented on the issues facing her peers. At the end of the reading period everyone retrieved his or her think pieces with the written comments. The group then conducted an hour of conversation after deciding which issues were most prevalent.

The GEM project also employed the same practice of writing the think piece, conducting a round-robin reading of the papers, writing comments, and then holding a group discussion. Because the group consisted of novice teachers and experienced mentors working in collaboration, the entire think piece activity was a form of co-mentoring. The group was small enough for everyone to read each think piece. The think pieces of the summer sessions were collected and copied as artifacts. In addition, the conversation following the silent reading was audio taped for further analysis. All three follow-up sessions during both GEM seminars included the think piece activity as a means to collect data. While the summer seminar promoted in depth discussion of pedagogy and theory, think pieces focused on teaching experiences and provided an opportunity for the group to provide advice or sympathy. Think pieces during the summer session shared information in two areas. The experienced teachers presented past moments in a teaching or mentoring situation that the writer felt warranted more reflection. Novice teachers tended to project concerns about issues that they might encounter during the first weeks of school. Their concerns were generated by their student teaching experience or by situations posed during the summer seminar that they had not previously considered.

Shelly, again, was unique. She had participated in think piece activities during her student teaching experience. The concept was familiar as she entered the first summer seminar. Although at the beginning of the second GEM experience she still saw herself as a novice teacher, sharing her experiences in a written format with colleagues was not new. Over her two-year participation with the GEM collaborative mentoring group Shelly produced eight think pieces. None of these were explicit discussions of her conceptualization of induction and mentoring. Her think pieces did, however, represent her concerns with her performance as a teacher. They capture her thoughts from the time she was hired and began participation in the summer seminar well into the winter semester of her second year as a teacher. In fact, Shelly reread her think pieces with the comments and provided a concluding commentary in early April of 2005, just a month before the completion of her second school year. They demonstrated her concerns, problems and her attempts to resolve them using the resources from the GEM group while in the setting of her first job. Shelly's think pieces will receive more attention in the chapter four.

#### Procedures for Analysis

As a graduate student I was introduced to a cycle of qualitative research course work that introduced data collection and data analysis in two distinct classes. I believe that this division is arbitrary and misleading to some degree. From the moment I began planning GEM as a possible dissertation project, I began to think about both data collection and data analysis simultaneously. I imagined group activities and the artifacts that they could produce. I began to think systematically about how I would organize those artifacts. The very nature of writing fieldnotes, selecting what to write about and what to leave out was a level of analysis. Stake (1995) suggests that researchers involved in the analysis of data in order to develop case studies use two forms of analysis. He contends that most researchers use a blend of interpretive strategies and coding strategies, although individual researchers tend to favor one over the other. In the following

section of the methods chapter I will discuss my interpretive strategies and coding strategies on all the artifacts that refer to Shelly as she participated in the GEM programs. First, I will explain my interpretive strategies on the interviews, concept maps and think pieces. Second, I will discuss the manner in which I specifically analyzed and coded the interviews, concept maps, and think pieces.

### *Interpretive Strategies*

The immediate and constant work of interpretation leads to what Geertz (1973) labels “thick description.” The moment of understanding is not necessarily the final counting of an occurrence in the data. The understanding of an artifact or of a participants point of view “seems to require continuous attention” (Stake, 1995, p. 43). I freely used interpretive strategies as I collected and familiarized myself with the data. I listened to Shelly’s interviews numerous times. I revisited them in the car on the way home from an interview, mowing the grass, riding my bike, and just taking a walk. I also listened to them again after receiving the transcriptions, while carefully gleaning the manuscript for errors and omissions.

During all of these listening episodes I was analyzing the data. I listened to individual tapes noting what themes and ideas Shelly returned to over and over during the conversation. By deciding what was interesting and privileged in the dialogue, I was interpreting the data. This level of interpretation also led to initial coding. I began to keep track of recurring themes in individual interviews. As I listened across the interviews, I recorded which issues reappeared throughout the collection of interviews. I practiced similar reviewing procedures with both the think pieces and concept maps.

While I couldn’t very well study concept map images riding a bike around town or mowing the lawn, I revisited them often. Over time, I developed familiarity with the artifacts Shelly produced. I took the opportunity in methods courses “to practice” analytical methods on

my own data. I compared Shelly's concept maps with the concepts maps of other participants. I looked closely at the images in her representation of induction to the images other participants produced. How was hers the same as the representations produced by other novice teachers? How did they differ from the concept maps produced by experienced teachers? What did the comments of the other teachers draw attention to? Were their comments echoes of the conversations that existed in our follow-up sessions? What about Shelly's concept map made it stand out for the group and for me? What did the images capture that was either evident or absent in her think pieces? These questions helped me consider my interpretation in preparation for a "thick description." These questions and their answers also guided the preparation of codes for my shift to the more concrete analysis I applied while coding the data.

Rereading Shelly's think pieces allowed me to listen to her ideas as she volunteered them as a representation of her concerns at that moment. I placed the ideas captured in the think pieces in a different position than the ideas in her interviews. The interviews were structured by my questions and took place at a time that was removed from the summer seminar and the follow-up sessions. When I listened to the interviews I was listening to specific instances suggested by me. Reading and rereading the think pieces was revisiting a reflection that Shelly had selected to share on her own initiative. Even though I had assigned the activity as the program facilitator Shelly always selected a topic that was an immediate concern.

As previously mentioned, Shelly was a willing participant in the think piece activity. She considered the journal she kept during her student teaching and her first year of teaching as "think piece" material: "The journal is like one long string of think pieces, I just didn't have the chance to share the whole thing with anybody." Clearly, Shelly valued the opportunity to share written reflections and to receive feedback about her specific concerns. As I read them I was not only analyzing and interpreting her experience, but also I was reconnected to the place and the

time of their presentation. Shelly's think pieces existed for me as snapshots of the GEM program that brought me back to the setting as I read her words and the comments of others that are scattered all over the pages in a variety of colors. Because her words repositioned me to the period of the program, they helped me remember the larger context and the specific reactions of others as well of my own.

Listening to interviews, viewing the concept maps, and reading the think pieces all contributed to my interpretation of Shelly's efforts to understand and negotiate her induction experience. Over nearly a two-year period, I have been revisiting these artifacts as I finished my doctoral course work and wrote my comprehensive exams. As I learned about qualitative research, I worked with data that I cared about. It was an opportunity to learn about and implement research tools in a context that had immediate usefulness in the work that I was doing. When I prepared to code the data I was familiar not only with the concepts of induction as outlined by the literature; I also had intimate knowledge of the interviews and the artifacts that shaped my understanding of Shelly's journey through the induction process.

#### *Coding Strategies and Practices*

From the beginning week of my graduate studies, I was involved in coding and analyzing data. Through my research apprenticeship with Dr. Smagorinsky, I was introduced to the importance of careful and systematic analysis of the words in front of me. Over a two-year period we coded, analyzed, and wrote two complete case studies (S. T. Bickmore, Smagorinsky, Ladd, & O'Donnell-Allen, in press; Smagorinsky et al., 2004). From the patterns learned from that apprenticeship, I developed codes for three other projects before coding the artifacts for my dissertation. Two projects I developed on my own and one was a joint project with my wife, Dana, who was also graduate student. The second project directly influenced my work on this dissertation project. Our joint project was an evaluation of the induction programs of two middle

schools (D. L. Bickmore, Bickmore, & Hart, 2005; D. L. Bickmore et al., in review). We administered a survey and conducted interviews with novice teachers and experienced teachers concerning the mentoring and induction programs in their schools.

Dana and I developed a typology influenced by our study of the research on both induction and mentoring. Our research further supported the finding reported by Smith and Ingersoll (2004) that teachers involved in a multiple number of induction elements have higher rates of retention. We coded our data on the middle school induction project looking for five elements of induction—mentoring, professional development, orientation, administrators, and interdisciplinary teams. We also connected the element to a specific need that the novice indicated was being addressed by a particular interaction. We categorized these needs as professional needs and personal needs as defined by Gold (1989; 1996) or as the need to be integrated into the climate of the school setting. From that research we asserted that multifaceted and systematic induction programs contribute to the induction prospects of novice teachers based on their perceptions of such programs (D. L. Bickmore et al., 2005, in review).

The coding typology used in my previous study lead me to develop the following code families—*personal needs* (PN), *professional needs* (ProN), influence of the *climate* (C), the specific *setting* of an activity or event (S), the *people* (P) and *miscellaneous* (M)—each code family contained codes from a variety of code categories. Code families are constructed from codes in code categories. Five code categories shared names of the code families because they directly attached to that family. Two additional code categories, *classroom activities* (CA) and *induction activities* (IA), are listed separately. Depending on the context of the individual codes within a code category they feed different two different code families PN or ProN. I examined how Shelly reported the conceptualization of her induction process into the culture and climate of her first job by applying this coding pattern to her interviews, concept maps, and think pieces.

I also explored how her involvement with a specific element of induction—the GEM professional development program—and the activities during that program provided her with information and tools that she used to navigate her induction.

Shelly adopted several of the reflective practices we discussed during the GEM program to mediate her understanding of induction. I also noted if her conceptualization of induction included references to or questions about other *induction activities* (IA) such as *mentoring*, *orientation*, or *observation* of her teaching by a supervisor. As a participant and facilitator in the GEM program I had first hand knowledge that a variety of induction elements and their possible influence on new teachers were discussed frequently. How Shelly employed these various elements of induction and their subsequent activities to assist her navigation through her induction process was also of primary interest. In short, I concentrated on activities at three settings, the two GEM programs and Shelly's first job.

I coded for the *induction activities* (IA) that Shelly encountered or identified at each site. I then identified if the passage in question concerned a specific *personal need* (PN) or *professional need* (ProN). I next determined if the passage was a comment on a particular *climate* (C). If specific *people* (P) were referenced they were also coded. Through the coding process it became clear that Shelly also discussed the climate of the GEM program and of her university training. I also coded for the specific *classroom activities* (CA) that Shelly referenced. Using these parameters I coded the concept maps, the think pieces, and the interviews using ATLAS.ti as a tool to track and sort the codes as the initial codes were assigned to specific quotations. Throughout the coding process I added new codes to clarify relationships and identify topics that were not anticipated in the original coding typology.

Eventually five major code families were identified *Climate* (C), *Setting* (S), *People* (P), *Personal needs* (PN), and *professional needs* (ProN). These five code families were built from

the codes from seven code categories. Five of the code categories shared the same names as the five code families and directly feed those code families. Two additional code categories with the, *classroom activities (CA) and induction activities (IA)*, feed into either the PN or ProN code families and as a result had independent names that indicated the focus of the codes in that category. Three other code categories were developed—*think piece commentaries (TPC)*, *narratives (N)*, and *interviewing (I)*—to highlight specific information or for future reference during a parallel study. In other words, code families are composed of code categories (see table 1). How these new codes helped me to understand particular aspects of Shelly's conceptualization of induction is discussed in chapter 4.

I coded a significant portion of each artifact group with a different researcher to insure reliability. All of the researchers who participated in the coding process agreed on the coding process as well as the interpretation of the codes during the process. I kept abundant notes during the coding of all data corpus in order to maintain consistency in the coding process and to label the rationale for the introduction of new codes. This proved to be especially useful when I switched from coding one artifact to coding a new artifact with another researcher. In each instance we were able to review codes and establish a context before coding a new data corpus.

*Coding the concept maps.* I coded all of the concept maps from the first GEM program and Shelly's second concept map with Michelle Zoss, another graduate student. Michelle was both an art teacher and a language arts teacher before beginning graduate work in language education. I recruited her help in order to discuss the coding of the participant's visual representation of induction. We openly discussed each image on each concept map until we reached an agreement. We essentially *read* the drawing as if it were a text using ATLAS.ti to record our analysis. We looked for repeated patterns in each concept map and across the groups of concept maps. We created a running comment page for each concept map. In addition, we

Table 1

*Code Families And The Code Categories That Feed Them*

Code Families	Abbreviation	Code Categories That Feed The Family
Climate	C	Climate
Setting	S	Setting
People	P	People
Personal Needs	PN	Personal Needs
		Classroom Activities
		Induction Activities
Professional Needs	ProN	Professional Needs
		Classroom Activities
		Induction Activities

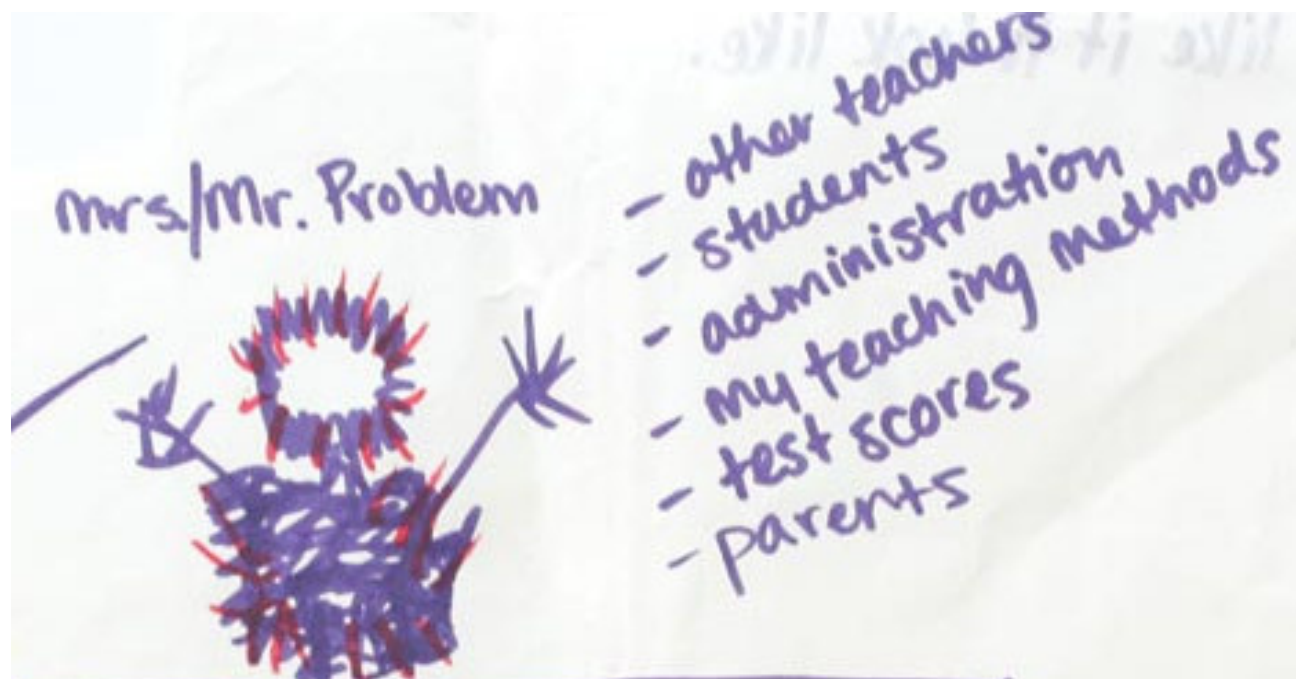
created a comment page for each segmented portion of the concept map in order to track our rationale for including or excluding images in that portion for coding. We adopted this procedure of isolating and coding images and groups of images in the same manner in which a researcher coding a written text might code for a single salient word, then move to the entire sentence containing the word, and finally might move to code the entire paragraph.

*Examples of the concept map coding.* Coding the concept maps was a process of looking at the overall picture and coding for the overall impression. Several questions guided our inquiry and analysis: Was the overall picture positive or negative? Were specific images in the picture labeled? And, were lists provided? After coding the entire concept map as a whole, we isolated specific images in the concept map and coded them as if that were a “quotation,” the ATLAS.ti term for a section of a primary document that receives individual codes. An example of a section of a coded concept maps come from the *The Tightrope*, Shelly’s concept map from the first GEM program (see figure 1). Michelle and I selected the images of Mrs./Mr. Problem and the accompanying lists and as the fourth segment in the concept map. The codes we assigned to this section were following 11 codes C: *Shelly's school climate*, CA: *teaching activities*, IA: *teaching methods*, M: *negative*, M: *obstacles/problems*, M: *personal Need*, M: *professional Needs*, P: *administrator*, P: *other teachers*, P: *parents*, P: *students*. This segment was assigned these codes for several reasons. For example, people were listed by Shelly and associated with an obstacle that she perceived as blocking her successful performance as a teacher. Even though the obstacle was drawn and labeled as a person, she also listed teaching methods and tests scores, which was identified in the specific code category of teaching activities. Much to my surprise throughout the coding, Shelly mentioned testing so rarely in any form that it did not warrant a separate code but was included with other activities that students performed in her classroom.

Figure 1

Excerpt From the First Year's Concept Map: The Tightrope

Mr./Mrs. Problem



We interpreted getting past an *obstacle* as both a generic *personal* and *professional* need. We were reluctant to assign the passage with specific codes such as *fear* or *insecurity*, because unlike a written quotation the words are not provided. We tried not to assume emotions that were not explicit in the image in some way. For example, Shelly saw problems in the future, but she might have had the confidence to overcome the problem without feeling fear or insecurity in this instance. Based on my long association with her as a teacher, participant observer, and program director, I was more inclined to not assume emotions of fear or insecurity.

*Coding the think pieces.* Think pieces were coded with Sharon Murphy, a different colleague. Sharon was specifically selected because of her familiarity with writing and using think pieces as a tool for reflection about teaching practice. She was also a member of the teaching cohort that instructed Shelly during her year of student teaching. In addition, Sharon participated in the 2004 GEM program as an experienced teacher. We worked together for three years as members of the same teaching cohort. We approached the coding of the think pieces with similar levels of familiarity with the process of using think pieces as a tool for reflecting on teaching practice in a collaborative format. We have also collaborated on a number of projects during our graduate work and had practiced negotiating shared understanding. Furthermore, we were both introduced to systematic coding of written artifacts through research apprenticeships with Dr. Smagorinsky. Our combined collaborative and independent experiences with Dr. Smagorinsky enabled us to review quickly the codes used on the concept maps and agree on their validity. Together we coded three of the eight think pieces produced by Shelly. We approached the coding by segmenting the think pieces into passages on the same topic. We then coded the passage. We only highlighted and coded individual words or sentences of a given passage when an idea stood out as unique or independent from the overriding topic of the passage.

After coding a single think piece, we also coded the comments written on the specific think piece by member of the GEM group who had read them and provided comments for Shelly's consideration. We interpreted these comments to be examples of individual moments when the GEM reciprocal mentoring community participated with Shelly in discussing her concerns during her induction period. She volunteered the problem or situation knowing that she would receive specific advice or comments. We wrote a number of coding notes to capture our thinking around new codes or ambiguous passages. I coded the remaining think pieces on my own following the pattern we had practiced. I also returned to this colleague for further clarification of the coding process if a specific passage eluded obvious interpretation.

*Example of coding the think pieces.* Sharon and I coded using the same body of codes that I had used with Michelle for coding the entire collection of concept maps. Sharon and I briefly reviewed the codes and the work that had been done previously. We anticipated that the codes might grow as we examined and analyzed written work as opposed to the drawings that Michelle and I had coded. Shelly was now free to use words to describe specific problems, activities, and relationships. Two coded passages from the second think piece, written as an activity for the fourth day of the first GEM summer seminar, demonstrate the codes we applied. One passage is a direct quote from Shelly's think piece and the second is a comment from GEM colleague. Both have been included to demonstrate how we coded the think piece itself and why we felt adding a code category to track the feedback from other participants was an important addition.

I will go ahead and state that my thoughts throughout this think piece will be random and I am not sure how focused, but that is where my thoughts are right now. I have received so much valuable information and I want to record it all, but then the amount becomes overwhelming. As I have already mentioned, a large concern of mine is how will I be in

this new and very diverse environment. I think that the solution to that would be with experience.

The following codes were assigned to this quotation IA: *advice from experienced teachers*, IA: *advice from novice*, P: *other teachers in GEM*, ProN: *diversity*, IA: *Growth*, M: *Personal Need*, PN: *expectation*. PN: *felt need as a novice teacher*, IA: *moments of confession*. There was no mention of specific people in the quotation, but the quotation referenced the summer seminar so we included both experienced and novice teachers who were participants in the GEM program, thus the code, *other teachers in GEM*, from the P code family. She talked about the advice she had received from the people in the program thus the codes for *advice from both novice and advice from experienced teachers* since she made no distinction. Next we coded for the *diversity* that she mentioned as an issue. She also expressed the notion that experience would aide her thus we coded for *growth*, *expectation*, and *personal need*. We also labeled the entire passage as a felt need expressed by a novice teacher. *Moments of confession*, the final code was an example of a code that emerged during the analysis and assigned to PN. Repeatedly, Shelly mentioned her *lack of experience*, *insecurity*, or that fact that she did not understand something that people assumed she should know. Her candid nature helped clarify many of her feelings and perceptions about her induction experience.

The following passage is an example of comment written by a colleague in the GEM program.

This is true-it is hard to break the ice because of preconceived notions. Even if you keep ignoring an open mind some students won't. Just remain positive. Everything will open up for you. Amber

The following codes were applied to the quotation, IA: *advice from novice*, TPC: *offer of remedy/answer/advice*, TPC: *offer of support/cheerleading*. This passage received the first code

because it is clearly advice from another novice teacher, Amber. Sharon and I further assigned the next two codes because they defined the specific nature of the advice that has been given. No code from the code family of *people* was added because the identification was obvious and not part of information that was provided by Shelly. The *setting* was not coded because all of the think pieces were part of the GEM program. Assigning another reference to the *setting* on the collaborators comments would be redundant based on the previous codes assigned to the think pieces artifacts.

Coding the think piece commentary provided an in-depth look at a moment of collegial interaction in a professional development setting. There was not only concrete evidence that they communicated but evidence of what that specific communication entailed. Shelly was able to reread all of her think pieces as part of a member check activity. A summary of her comments will be included in the findings chapter.

*Coding the interviews.* I coded the first interview in the cycle with two graduate students, Jill and Dana. I recruited Jill because she had a paid assistantship from the second Teacher Quality grant to work on the transcriptions produced from the interviews. Jill became familiar with Shelly's patterns of conversations after transcribing three of her four interviews. Shelly has an animated conversational style and talks quite quickly when she is engaged with the material. As a result, Shelly's interviews are all slightly less than an hour and each one produced about 45 pages of typed manuscript. Jill expressed interest in Shelly's conversation and was also interested in learning more about using ATLAS.ti for her own work with transcripts. The relationship was mutually beneficial. I was able to introduce Jill to ATLAS.ti and she was able to assist my coding efforts on the first interview.

I recruited Dana's help because we had previously coded a series of interviews concerning induction as part of an earlier research project. Since I was using that coding

typology as a starting point, I felt that her help coding Shelly's first interview would help establish the validity of the codes for this project. We were able to agree that the coding system was indeed working on the interviews as well. We also reviewed the new codes that had been used on the think pieces and the concept maps. Artifacts of this type were not used in our earlier study. Dana agreed that our previous codes and the new codes were in harmony and mutually informative.

I then coded the remaining three interviews alone. I did, however, consult with both Jill and Dana on difficult passages or when I introduced new codes. Having these two graduate students as resources was a valuable asset during the coding of Shelly's interviews.

*Example of the coding of the interviews.* The following passage is representative of the how codes were assigned during the analysis of the interviews.

I felt that the seminar came at an extremely opportune time for me. I had just accepted the job. I had just accepted the job three days earlier. So I was in this mode of, "Oh my God. I have a job. I have no ideas what to do with this." Then two days later we went to the session so I really was hanging on everything anyone was saying because I felt the need. If I needed the information then, I'm gonna listen and pay attention and really truly, because I'm sure you, Peg, Sally, and Sharon, said a lot of this stuff, but then I was just in school mode. So, I wasn't listening.

The assigned codes were C: *responsibility of teacher to students*, IA: *moments of confession*, IA: *professional development activities*, IA: *self-reflection*, IA: *self-help measure*, IA: *support*, IA: *transition from pre-service teacher to teacher*, P: *self*, PN: *felt need as a novice teacher*, PN: *insecurity*, S: *the summer seminar*. First, Shelly shared that with landing her new job she was concerned with her responsibility and we interpreted this as concern with her responsibility as a teacher to her students, thus the *responsibility of teacher to students code*. She then mentioned

the seminar, thus the *professional development activity code*. It is a moment of *self-reflection* and as a volunteer to the program we labeled it as a *self-help measure*. She was responding to the support that the seminar provided thus the *support code*. The next code—*transition from pre-service teacher to teacher*—was used to mark one of the first occasions in an interview when Shelly explained her shifting identity. The passage marked her insecurity at beginning the career, so we added the code, *insecurity*. We added the code, *self*, to mark her reference to herself. The *setting* was coded as the *summer seminar*. We also determined that her willingness to share and to listen to the advice she was received during the seminar was the result of her *felt need as a novice teacher*. Finally, we conclude with the code, *moment of confession*, to record another instance when Shelly revealed more than she would have to about her own practice as a student.

#### Context of the Study

A library is a place for books. Not just a place to store them but a place to put them in order. In a library books have purposeful placement, they can be found exactly where they are expected to be. In a library you can comfortably find Auden, W. H. before Eliot, T. S. and Austin, J. before Eliot, G. You know exactly what to expect around each corner. Information is stored in tight, orderly rows. A place where the tables and cubicles mirror the orderliness of the books themselves, as if sitting there, with a book ensures the transfer of knowledge. A library is, in theory, the perfect place to look for answers.

The media center at Lewis High School was a place for books. The large sections to the left and right as we entered the library were full of bookshelves. The center space had six square tables with seating for four people at each table and two larger square tables, under the arched window at the north end of the open area, with seating for eight people at each table. The library's color scheme was composed of earth tones. Since it was summer, nearly all of the shelves were topped with overhead projectors and videotape machines that teachers had returned

for inventory; one row of shelves for overhead projectors and the next row for videotape machines. Even in the empty time of summer, order was maintained in this library. Order was maintained in this space, perhaps to ensure a space for systematic learning and acquisition of knowledge. Surely, we could find what we were looking for in such a place.

It was in this library, a place of books and their suggested answers, that the participants of GEM gathered for a weeklong summer session of questions. The work of the seminar was designed to establish a small collaborative group of English teachers with the autonomy to select their own common readings and share teaching moments as opportunities for reflective critical inquiry about their own practice. All of the teachers described themselves as reflective practitioners. They were interested in professional development opportunities that matched their own interests and self-identified needs. They brought the questions of teaching to this common ground. During the course of the week, it became clear to me as a participant-researcher that we were located in an ironic place. This library appeared to be a place of answers, but while we asked questions we seemed to answer them with more questions.

While a school's library appeared to be a place of answers, the teachers participating in the GEM project were quite sure that a school's classrooms were places for questions. A place where teachers were expected to know the answers when they often knew that, indeed, they did not. A place where teachers monitored student behavior and in turn had their own behavior monitored. A place with a hope for homogeneous achievement with a heterogeneous population. A place of academic performance as well as a place of social display. A place designed for growth and achievement that often turned into a place of stagnation and failure. A place where the teacher can easily slip from the role of instructor to the role of the instructed. A place where the student can slip from the role of receiver of knowledge to the role of giver. A place where,

tragically, a student can enter full of confidence from success in a world outside the classroom to encounter a place full of bewilderment and failure in the classroom.

This sampling of confusion and contradiction that exist in a teacher's classroom fueled the questions these teachers asked about themselves and their profession as they struggled to find a place to negotiate moments of shared experience. Fleeting moments in which they found temporary common ground. The library with all its pretense of fixed knowledge became "a migrational space" (Stewart, 1996, p. 16) for exploring the questions posed by activity in the classroom. For a week we passed through this space and brought our questions.

### *Context of the GEM programs*

*Summer sessions.* Two Teacher Quality grants, one in the summer of 2003 and one in the summer of 2004 funded the GEM programs. Teacher Quality grants are designed to reinforce and expand the pedagogical practice of teachers in a content area. Previously, the Teacher Quality grants were called Eisenhower grants and were limited to teachers in math and science. Under the No Child Left Behind legislation a portion of the grant money became available to programs focusing on language arts and social studies. The GEM programs sought to bring together both novice and experienced English teachers for the mutual benefit of both groups of teachers.

As suggested by the vignette at the beginning of this section, the program, during both years, was hosted by a high school near the University and conducted in the school's library. It was a large comfortable space that allowed a relaxed atmosphere. The schedule allowed a one-hour lunch break. During lunch on the first day of each session all of the participants ate together in a local restaurant. After that first day the participants broke into smaller groups at several restaurants. Throughout the week the groups intermingled and transformed into different configurations. The practice of shuffling the participants in several groups allowed for a variety

of conversations. This lunch arrangement was deliberately designed to promote congenial conversation in a relaxed atmosphere away from school, exactly the opposite of how most teachers experience lunch during the school year.

*Follow-up sessions.* The follow-up sessions of both incarnations of the GEM program were not the same. Both had three follow-up sessions spread throughout the first half of the school year. During the first year, the program met after school at one of the participant's schools for three hours. The primary activities of the follow-up activities involved revisiting concept maps, reading think pieces, and discussing the main topics that surfaced among the participants. These afternoon sessions were problematic. Participants often had to leave their own schools as soon as possible and fight traffic in order to get to the meeting. In addition, the focus of their attention was often on the concerns of the school day.

The group discovered that they needed time to decompress from worrying about their students, preparing lesson plans, and grading papers before they could discuss their own concerns in a productive way. Participants explained that discussing teacher concerns in a harried manner for the group felt like the whining they often hear from their students. Indeed, one experienced teacher dropped from the program at this point. She indicated that with the pressure of starting a new school and driving over an hour for a follow-up session felt more exhausting than beneficial at that point. Her experience and advice were missed as several novice teachers mentioned specifically the value of her input during the summer session. The advice of the entire group at the end of the program was to request significant funding in a future grant for substitutes in order to have three follow-up sessions that allowed teachers to leave their building and engage in a more complete program.

The second grant proposal included a request for more funding to cover substitutes. A more complete explanation of the importance of providing ample space and time for a full

collaborative effort was provided. Fortunately, the additional funding was included. The follow-up sessions of the 2004 grant cycle were held on three separate Mondays, one each in September, October, and January. These follow-up sessions allowed time for more activities as well as the time to reconnect with colleagues that they had not seen since the previous summer. The activities included revisiting concept maps, reading think pieces, a book group, lunch, and discussions surrounding the issues of induction that were represented in both the concept maps and the think pieces. The participants arrived at these session refreshed after a weekend away from school. They were more prepared to discuss their own concerns rather than the immediate pressures of a school day that seem to dominate a teacher's thinking during the work week. The discussions were livelier than those during the previous group's follow-up sessions and teachers appreciated the time away from school to participate in their own renewal. They commented that the opportunity to spend time during their regular contract time was a rare experience.

### *GEM Participants*

The participants of both programs included teachers from several school districts in the vicinity of the University. All of the novice teachers were recent graduate for the university's language education program and were certified to teach language arts from grades 7-12. The experienced teachers had received degrees at a variety of institutions and taught in a variety of schools. Several of the experienced teachers had long standing relationships with the language education professors at the University of Georgia. Others, however, had no connection with the University and had taught in different states. A more complete description of the participants in each group follows.

*The GEM participants in 2003.* The 2003 GEM group of participants consisted of 13 teachers. Two of the participants were male and eleven were female. Four of the participants had just recently finished student teaching and had signed contracts for their first job. Three more

participants had slightly more experience with 1, 3, and 5 years of experience. While this group leaned toward the first group in years of experience, it was readily apparent by their contributions and questions that teaching experience was a distinctive factor. The last participant group included six women, at 8, 10, 15, 18, 22, and 25 years respectively. Together all three groups provided a cohort of participants with significant teaching experience at a variety of levels.

The age of the participants range from 21 to about 55. Five of the participants were under 30 and seven were over. Both the mean and the median of teaching experience happened to be the same. The group's years of teaching experience totaled 105, an average of eight years per participant. All were teaching within a hundred mile radius of the local university. Three of the teachers were working in suburban schools and the other ten were working in smaller more rural areas. All of the participants work within an hour of a large urban area. All of these teacher described themselves as reflective practitioners and looked for professional development opportunities that match their interests and self identified needs. The male teachers were new teachers, one was beginning his first year and the other was beginning his fourth. The female teachers provided the biggest range of experience.

*The GEM participants in 2004.* The second GEM group had 14 participants. Again the number of male teachers was only two and both were novice teachers getting ready to begin their second year in the classroom. The remaining 12 female teachers provided all of the experienced teachers. In this group five were considered experienced teachers with 8, 10, 17, 20, and 20 years in the classroom. The other seven female teachers had less experience. Four had just finished student teaching six weeks earlier and were starting new jobs. One teacher was from Shelly's student teaching cohort, but had finished a master's degree in the intervening year. Shelly, of course was beginning her second year. The final participant was beginning her third year of

teaching at a high school near the University after teaching in a smaller community about a hundred miles away.

The age difference in this group ranged from 21 to 45. The group had a divide of only three teachers in their forties, two in their thirties, and nine members of the group in their early twenties. The total years of experience in this group was only 84 years, giving the group an average of six years of classroom experience. While the previous years group had a larger range of age difference, this second group tended to have a clearer divide between who was experienced and who wasn't. This difference seemed to stem from the personality traits of the experienced teachers, all of who had worked with student teachers several times in their careers as educators. Nevertheless, the nature of the follow-up session, which were conducted as full day activities allowed them to bond and communicate in more actively social ways when compared to the previous GEM group.

None of the 2004 GEM participants worked in a large suburban school district. Several worked in the small town school district surrounding the university campus. Two teachers worked in a neighboring district that had transitioned from rural to suburban over the last ten years and had only a small minority population when compared to the state statistics. The rest worked in growing, but still relatively rural school district within a fifty-mile radius of the University.

### *Shelly*

Shelly is a young middle class European American. She is part of the largest demographic group of teachers working in America. Her university cohort, which consisted of 28 European Americans included four men and 24 females, demonstrates both the lack of diversity and predominance of women that exists in education throughout the United States. Shelly provided the following introduction that provided a snapshot into her personality.

I am from Georgia. I have lived here for 24 years, all my life, and I love it. I am almost over the fact that I am living in a college town and I no longer attend college. It was fun for the first year, but now it is slightly aggravating to hear people stressing over an 8:00 am class when anybody knows college students sit lifeless and copy whatever is written on the board. An hour later, they return to bed or do something equally as stressful such as lying out in the sun. Yes, I did it too.

Shelly attended private school for the first 6 years of school. It was a very small school where the entire 8<sup>th</sup> grade totaled 9 people. She valued the experience but was glad she made the shift to public school in the sixth grade. She went to public elementary school for one year, and then headed to an Atlanta area junior high school for 3 years. Shelly refers to her junior high experience as

an eye-opening and very necessary plunge into diversity. Here I saw my first fights, notice the verb “saw” and not the verb phrase, “took part in”. Here, I experienced every aspect of the awkward years of middle school. I felt that the school should have held a survival ceremony as opposed to the traditional graduation.

Shelly’s family then moved to what she described as “a suburban high school full of soccer moms and obnoxiously meddling parents.” The high school also participated in a minority to majority bussing project. Shelly claims that the influx of a diverse population that made for more tolerant and well-rounded experience. An experienced that placed her in contact with people who were different that she was and in some ways prepared her for the diverse setting of her first teaching assignment.

After graduating in 1999, she began “a fantastic freshman year at the University ” A fantastic year that included losing her scholarship by dropping below a “B” average. She returned for a second round, had even more fun, and earned her scholarship back. She graduated

in 2003 with a degree in Secondary English Education and an endorsement to teach ESOL. She took a job in the local university town at a middle school with a diverse population. Shelly claims to have “missed the memo that it wasn’t cool to stay in a college town for 5 or 6 years to make continued use of student football tickets.”

Shelly’s quick wit and candid nature allowed her to openly comment on her participation in the GEM program and her induction into to the climate and culture of her school during the data collection for this dissertation. She was also available for member checks and willingly reviewed drafts of various part of this dissertation. Shelly also participated in presentations at the Georgia Council of Teachers of English conference in 2004 and 2005 based on her concept maps.

#### *Context of Shelly’s Teacher Education Program*

The teacher education program at Shelly’s university was one of the nation’s largest. The English education program alone produced about 50 prospective teachers each year in two cohorts under the direction of the English education faculty. These prospective teachers spent considerable time in local classrooms taught by a field-based group of mentor teachers who met throughout the year with the university professors. Students in Shelly cohort were assigned to work with a group of mentors in their tenth year of collaborative work with University professors. While members of the mentoring group fluctuated, the core group of mentors remained stable and fostered a mutual exchange of ideas between classroom and campus. The university professors and the mentoring group supported the belief that pre-service teachers benefited from early exposure to classroom practices. As a result, the university students were placed with a mentor their entire senior year.

Each student in the cohort was assigned to one of the mentor teachers for a semester of apprenticeship followed by a semester of student teaching. Shelly and the other students in the

program spent two school days each week with their mentor teachers during the fall semester. They observed their mentor teachers throughout the semester, gradually participating in the teaching of students in preparation for a three-week practicum near the end of the semester.

The field experience in the fall was intertwined with four team-taught courses at the university. These courses covered young adult literature, teacher inquiry, writing instruction, and instructional planning and were taught in three four-hour blocks during the week. The team-teaching approach enabled the faculty to blend the courses rather than teaching them in distinct time segments. In the spring semester students took an intensive reading course completed before student teaching and participated in a campus-based planning seminar during student teaching to allow the cohort members to share experiences.

The faculty's emphasis with this program structure was to provide a forum for their theme of *making connections*. This underlying philosophy stressed understanding students' interests and teaching toward those interests. It also informed their program structure by suggesting the need to make connections between the university program and the practice in the schools. The professors at the university used the extensive field experiences, the mentor teacher cohort, and the continued meetings of the teacher candidates throughout their student teaching as a way for campus-based students and faculty to stay connected to the teaching practice of schools. Students would then be able to make connections between the theory of their own course work and the classroom practice of the mentor teachers they observed.

### *Context of Shelly's Teaching*

As previously indicated, Shelly began her teaching career in a middle school located in the school district next to the university she attended. It is home to 703 students. There are 469 African American students, 123 Hispanic students, 98 European American students and 12 students in what Shelly described as "that awful category—other." The faculty consists of 48

teachers with an average of eleven years of experience. During Shelly's first year, seven of the teachers or 15 percent were new to the building. The school also had an instructional lead teacher who provide Shelly and other new teachers with information through out the year designed to help their classroom practices, but also as a source of procedural information. Such information included, finding substitute teachers, contacting parents, and turning in grade reports.

The school was organized into sixth, seventh, and eighth grade interdisciplinary teams with two teaching teams for each grade levels. The team included a teacher in each of the following subject areas math, science, social science, and language arts. Students also enrolled in a number of connections courses including instrumental music, art, physical education, and foreign language. They attend the core subjects as a cohort of students but experienced some variation in classmates based on the elective course they selected. Shelly was well acquainted with the approximately 120 students assigned to her seventh grade team. While there were some attempts at developing cross-curricular activities among the team's teachers, the majority of their coordinated efforts surrounding the students were based on student discipline. On several occasions Shelly reported cooperative efforts in providing a student behavior modification plan or, in some cases, a plan to help track a student's academic efforts across several classes.

Shelly was actively involved in extra curricular activities. She was the assistant girl's basketball coach during her first and second year. During the second year, she added the responsibility of head soccer coach. When she wasn't coaching she taught courses after school for students who needed remediation. She enjoyed her involvement in the school and indicated that her role as a coach was an asset in getting her name around the school in a positive manner. More students knew her and validated her presence in the school with a greeting in the hall even though they were not her students. In addition, Shelly felt that her involvement in these extra

activities gave her credibility in the eyes of other faculty members and the administration. In the fall of 2005, she will begin her 3<sup>rd</sup> year teaching Reading and Language Arts at the same school.

#### Conclusion of Methods and Context

A participatory inquiry stance involves methods from the detailed fieldwork of the ethnographer, the participation of a fully involved participant observer, and the advocacy and collaborative reflection of the participatory action researcher. Participatory inquiry is a methodology that includes a researcher in the field, who, in addition to observing and collecting data, joins with other participants in collaborative activities, including program participation, data analysis, and reporting. I adopted the pattern of the *bricoleur* who grasps the tools from each methodology to cobble together a set of methods. In my conventional category, these methods included the collection of fieldnotes, active participation in program activities, observing and recording those observations, and conducting interviews. The next category, the collaborative category, considers program activities as methods. I analyze concept maps and write think pieces produced by the participants. The GEM group used these two activities as tools for discussing and expanding our understanding or induction and mentoring.

This chapter also provided an overview of the GEM program. I explained the research and theoretical frame that guided its construction. I also described the setting of the program activity. I then described the teachers who participant in both programs that created the collaborative environment that fostered Shelly production of think pieces and concept maps. I concluded the chapter with a description of Shelly and her school.

## CHAPTER 4

## RESULTS

While interviewing one of the novice teachers in the first group of participants from the Teacher Quality grant professional development program, Groups of English Mentors: Developing a Community of Learners Between Novice and Experienced Teachers (GEM), I was struck by a comment she made quite casually. With only student teaching experience, she participated in the summer seminar without ever having taught a class of her “own.” She said: “During that week of the seminar was the first time I ever had a teacher-to-teacher conversation.”

This statement was from Shelly, who spent two days a week in the fall semester in the same teacher’s classroom and then student taught for ten weeks with the same teacher in the spring semester. I knew that she had conversations with her mentor teacher. I had participated in a conference with Shelly and her mentor the previous semester. Yet, in Shelly’s opinion these communications had not counted as teacher-to-teacher conversations. Apparently, holding a contract in hand as she began her participation in the GEM program finally allowed her to feel as if she could have a “real” teacher-to-teacher conversation. Britzman reminds us, as teacher educators, that pre-service teachers are often conflicted “because they were caught in an oxymoron called *student teacher*” (2000, p. 34). Even though Shelly performed successfully throughout her student teaching experience and had open communication with her mentor teacher and university supervisors, she categorized all of those communications as student-to-teacher rather than as teacher-to-teacher.

Shelly’s statement prompted me to interview the three remaining novice teachers in the GEM group. How did they describe themselves along that sliding scale between student and teacher? When did they see themselves as teachers? And, what were they doing to assist their own induction process? In part, that was the purpose of conducting the GEM program, to engage

novice teachers in collaborative discussions with experienced teachers in order to “recognize that teaching involves both philosophy and practice” (Kerrins, 1995) and to reduce the isolation so often reported by novice teachers (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2002). It was at this moment in my doctoral studies that my focus narrowed. I began to examine how a novice teacher navigated the induction process into the culture and climate of her first job.

### Reporting the Findings

Apparently, Shelly had to slide very near to the teacher side of the continuum before she embraced an identity as a teacher. Shelly’s comment that she had finally engaged in teacher-to-teacher conversations during the summer session of GEM was the genesis of this case study. As a result, the purpose of my dissertation was to investigate Shelly’s conception of her induction process into the culture and climate of the setting of her first job and as a participant in our collaborative professional development program. Several research questions guided the collection of data and the analysis in preparation of an explanation of the results. These questions were:

1. How do this novice teacher’s reports of her experiences and activities in the setting of her first job inform her conception of her induction into the culture and climate of her first job?
2. How does this novice teacher use the activities of the professional development program, GEM, as mediating tools to express her conception of induction during her induction process into the culture and climate of her first job?
3. How does this novice teacher use this conception of induction to navigate her specific induction experience as a beginning teacher?

The purpose of this chapter is to report the findings of the analysis as related to these questions. The first two questions are directly related. The first focused on Shelly’s reports of her

experiences and activities in the school setting and the second on how the activities, especially concept maps and think pieces, of the two GEM programs served as avenues for her to express her understanding of her induction process. In her school setting, Shelly reports on experiences and activities in her classroom, with teachers, and with other non-teaching adults in the building. The activities and experiences included any formal or informal orientation, induction, and professional development programs provided by her school district. As part of the GEM professional development experience, Shelly participated in the activities of two summer seminars, six follow-up sessions, and attended two annual conference of the Georgia Council of Teachers of English.

Shelly reported about induction experiences at her school through activities of GEM. Activities specifically isolated and analyzed as artifacts in this study were concept maps, think pieces, and interviews. These are the activities referenced as mediating tools in question two. The third question investigates whether or not Shelly uses this information to navigate her induction process. In other words, is she proactive causing activities to happen in her behalf rather than waiting for activities to come to her. The answer can be determined through her reports and indications that she began to behave differently across her first and second year of full time teaching. Each artifact type—concept maps, think pieces and interviews—was placed into a separate data group. As a whole group, they represent a series of snapshots across the two-year period of the study, each artifact existing as a conceptualization of her induction at the moment of production.

In this chapter, I will present the findings of each artifact group across the two-year timeline of Shelly's participation in the GEM programs that she uses as a sounding board for her understanding of her induction as it takes place in her school. For example, the two concept maps mark her conceptualization of induction at two distinct yet parallel points during the two years.

Both were produced on the final afternoon of each summer seminar exactly one year apart, one in the summer of 2003 before her first year of teaching and the second in the summer of 2004 before her second year of teaching. In the same manner, the eight think pieces and the four interviews are snapshots of her conceptualization of induction across the two-year period. I will report the findings from the artifacts in this order—concept maps, think pieces, and interviews. This order was selected because the last artifact in each of the first two groups has an earlier ending date than the succeeding group. In other words, the final concept map was produced in June of 2004, the final think piece in December of 2004 and the final interview in early February of 2005.

### Findings From the Concept Maps

By visually comparing both concept maps, I was able to see the shift from the ambiguous representation of unknown obstacles to the more specifically identified avenues of help and support that were available to Shelly as a novice teacher. The systematic coding process allowed me to clearly see which codes either increased or decreased from one concept map to the next. Recording the codes created a process that demonstrated Shelly's shift in focus from her first year of teaching to her second year. The following interpretive description of the concept maps was guided not only through a comparison of the concept maps through an interpretive stance as explained in the methods chapter but also support by the coding process which labeled the discreet part of each concept map.

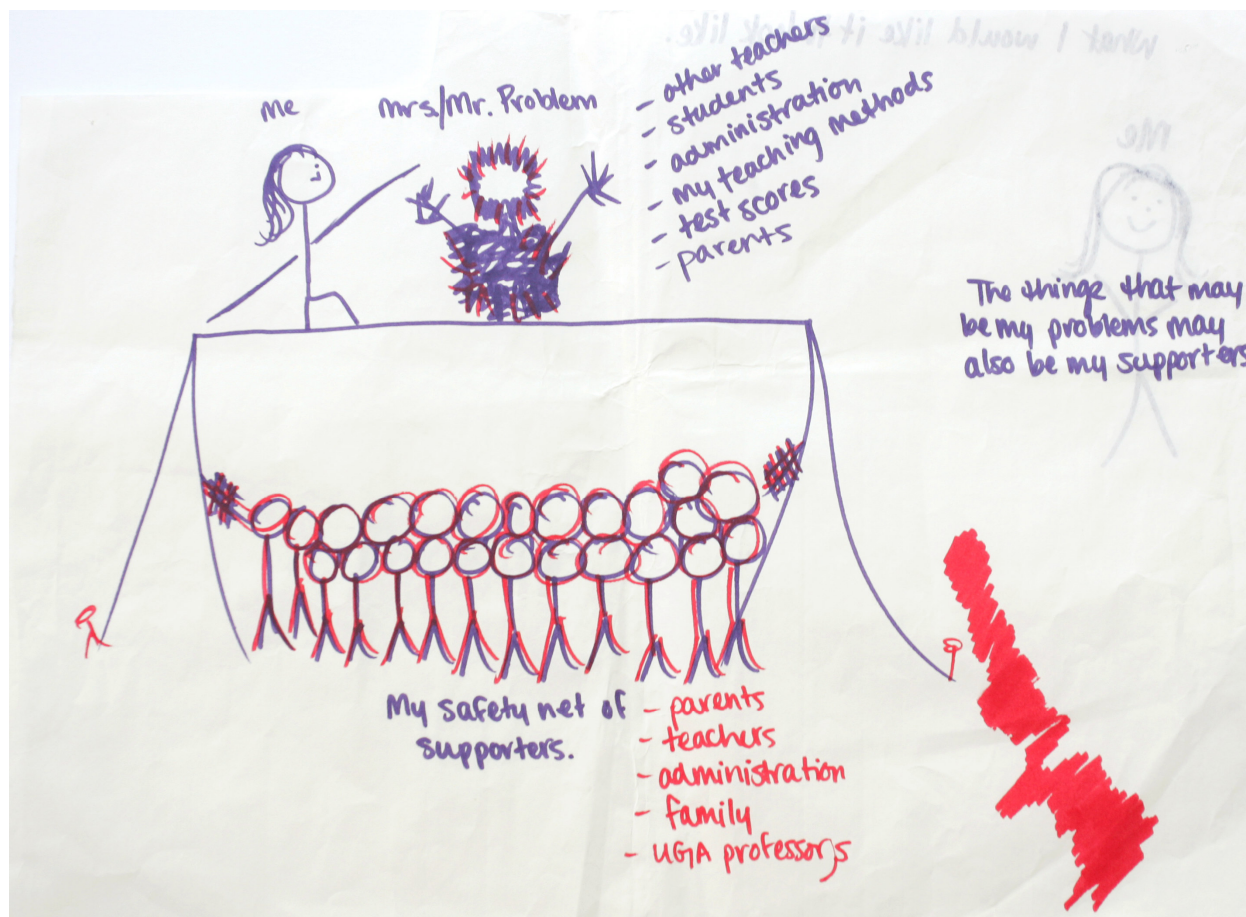
#### *Concept Map—Year One*

In the first concept map Shelly depicted herself crossing a tightrope with an obstacle in human form in front of her and a safety net of people below her (see figure 2). The image represented her expectation of a binary situation that depicted obstacles on one end and support on the other. Her identifying list of obstacles and supports contained some of the same people.

Figure 2

The First Year's Concept Map

The Tightrope



Teachers, administrators, and parents were each listed as possible obstacles and possible supports as she prepared to begin her first year of teaching. Shelly's list of obstacles included students, her teaching methods, and test scores. Her list of supports also included family and university professors. The single commentary on the image is the statement "The things that may be my problems may also be my supporters." Shelly's conceptualization of supports and problems during her induction to teaching in this image showed that she understood that both support and problems could potentially come from the same sources. The analysis showed a balance of codes representing both positive and negative influences.

Shelly also explicitly stated that she did not see problems and supports as coming from separate sources, she troubled the idea of a problem/support binary that was represented in the tightrope drawing. By listing sources for both sides of the binary in her lists, she muddied the separation of problems and supports. There was no complete division between the two nor, perhaps, could there be until she experienced her school's climate and culture. It was also interesting to note that students were represented as a potential problem for this novice teacher, not a support. Her focus on her potential support still leaned heavily toward her past experience as indicated by her identification of her family and her university professors as potential supports. This reference to family and recent university professors indicated that she depended more on the known entities, her family and university professors and less on the unknown, the students.

In fact, all of the people and other items in the problem list were unknown people or factors as Shelly entered her first year of full time teaching. She wanted administrators, teachers, and parents to present themselves as supports. "I'm hoping that this school, that there will be a group of people that support me." Nevertheless, she was ambiguous and listed teachers and administrators as potential supports and potential obstacles. Her focus was inward, not in a self-

centered manner, but in a manner that suggested that familiar people, situations, and experiences would be her primary assets. Shelly had not yet looked outward in a meaningful way at the resources available in the school setting nor could she until either formally or informally introduced into the culture and climate of the school. This tendency to focus on inward experience versus the outward opportunities that potentially could be found in a school setting was an essential key to understanding her first concept map. This first concept map foreshadowed the focus of the findings throughout the artifacts. As time went by, Shelly began to embrace outward influences and supports of the school over her own early sources of support.

The findings from the coding analysis indicated that Shelly referenced *professional needs* in a negative fashion. *Testing* and *teaching methods*, both codes in the *classroom activities* (CA) code category under the *professional needs* code family are identified as *negative* from the *miscellaneous* (M) code family. No *personal needs* (PN) are explicitly drawn or identified in the concept map, but the fact that she was on a tightrope as a teacher with the need for a safety net was coded as a *lack of confidence*, and as an example of *insecurity*, both codes in the PN code family. The *climate* of her school was *ambiguous* as opposed to either *positive* or *negative*. She was hopeful, but hedged the expectation of a positive climate by placing administrators, teachers, and students as possible obstacles to her induction as a teacher.

The first concept map was a snapshot of a novice teacher tentatively testing the strength of the tightrope that connected her to her first job, simultaneously anticipating help and obstacles. In her first concept map, Shelly did not draw an ideal entrance into the teaching profession, but rather a tentative one in which she depended on her past experience with her family and her university professors as supports. The family represented the support for her *personal needs* and the university professors represented the support for her *professional needs*. Personal needs indicated various emotional concerns of Shelly as a novice teacher, including the

need to belong, to feel competence, and the need to feel supported in this new environment. Her family and other people close to her had supported these personal needs previously. Professional needs indicated the need to manage students, prepare lesson plans, and assess student work. Her university professors had provided the guidance and instruction that had supported her early development in these areas.

During her first interview, a few weeks after drawing the concept map and before the school year Shelly points to the GEM participants as another sources of teachers who can provide her with help the professional needs area if the school community failed to meet her needs. “I am comforted by the fact that if there isn’t a group at my school that I’ve got this group to be able to talk to and draw ideas from.” She found comfort in the established community created by GEM and saw the activities there as a source of support during her induction into the teaching profession.

### *Concept Map Year Two*

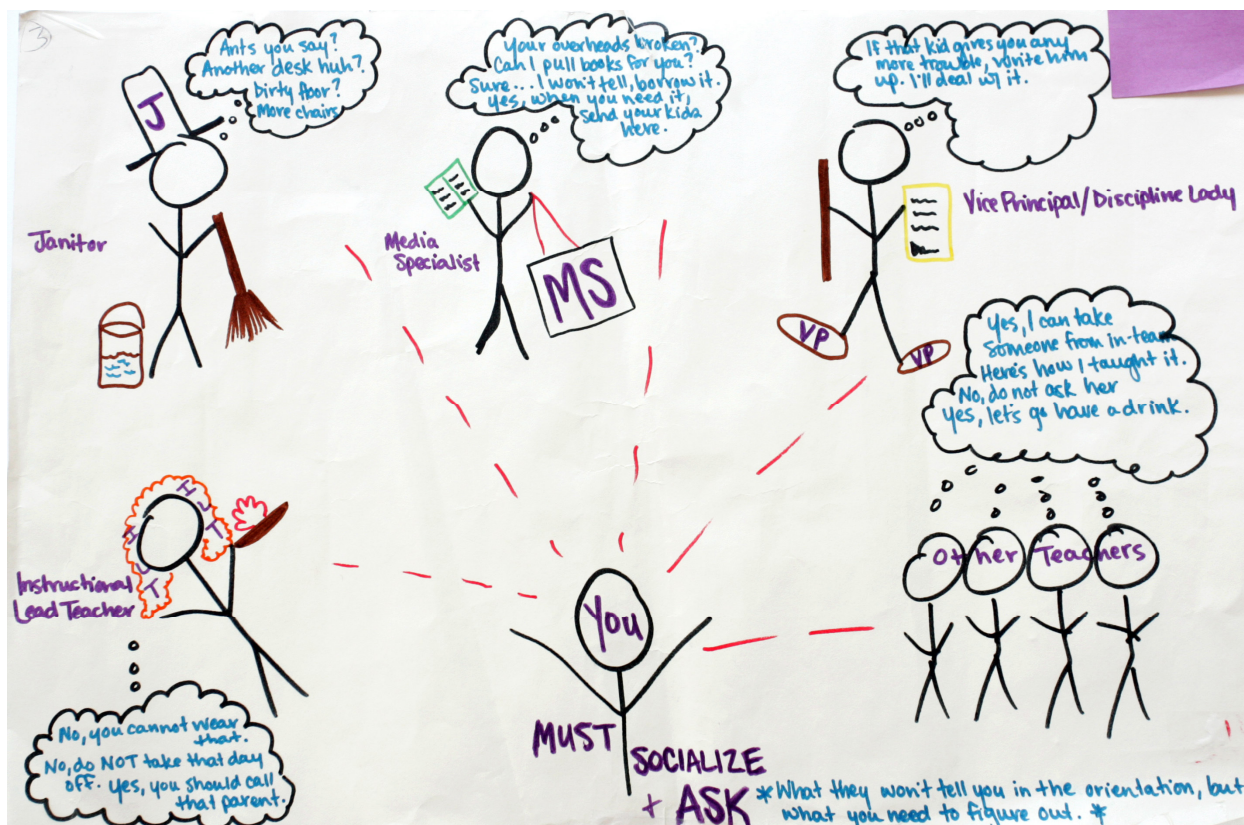
By sharp contrast, the second concept map contained no ambiguous messages about potential supports or potential obstacles (see figure 3). The explicit message of the second concept map was that help and support were available through a variety of colleagues. It depicted a central person in the middle labeled “you must socialize and ask.” During her presentation of the concept map to the whole GEM group, she identified the “you” as any novice teacher and still a representation of her own teaching persona—even after a year in the classroom. Radiating in an arch above the central figure was drawn a series of people. These were all clearly labeled and each figure or group had a voice bubble containing advice or the answers to questions that a novice teacher might ask from that individual or group.

For example, the bubble of the media specialist, a person in the school not depicted in the first concept map, contains several questions/statements that demonstrated the support Shelly

Figure 3

The Second Year's Concept Map

The Supporting Cast



received from this person during her first year. All of the information in these voice bubbles as coded as *advice from experienced teacher* and connected to *my school setting*. Both codes were major indicators of Shelly's shift focus across artifacts in the second year. The advice recorded was "Your overhead is broken? Can I pull books for you? Sure...I won't tell, borrow it. Yes, when you need it send your kids here." Shelly revealed multiple stories during discussions at the GEM follow-up sessions and during subsequent interviews illustrating how each of these comments represented an experience, or in some cases multiple experiences during her first year as a classroom teacher. The development of the media specialist was one positive example of support selected from all of the positive portrayals of people and their roles in Shelly's induction at her school setting presented in her second concept map. In addition to the media specialist, the collection of people who could and did support Shelly included the instructional lead teacher, the janitor, the vice principal/discipline lady, and other teachers. It is important to note that she commented that other people could have been included, but time and space forced her to limit her representation. When compared to the first concept map's representation of support, the second concept map's representation of support is more dynamic. Rather than an anonymous net below her, the support people radiated around her and had specific identities and provided specific kinds of support in voice bubbles that indicated Shelly's growing understanding of the climate and culture of her school.

At the bottom of the central image labeled *you must ask and socialize*, the following comment "what they won't tell you in the orientation, but what you need to figure out." She provided further insight to her conceptualization of induction by including this statement. She considered it important information that she did not receive in her own orientation. Even though this comment referred to her orientation it received a *negative* code. She had an orientation and felt that it had omitted important advice.

When the comment was placed in the larger context of the concept map, it informed the research team, who analyzed the concept map, about her eventual positive conceptualization of induction within the broader context of her school setting. Even though she indicated that her school/school district's orientation was insufficient, her inclusion into the school community was helpful as represented by the second concept map with its array of people, who were supportive as demonstrated by their advice written in the voice bubbles. As the GEM professional development group revisited the concept map during a follow-up session this particular concept map received recognition of an accurate proscription for novice teachers.

The concept map image in its entirety was coded as *positive* and as an example of *self-reflection* and as an example of *self-help measure* with in the professional needs code family. It also was coded as an example of *growth* within the PN code family. It was only within the space of the GEM professional development activities that Shelly was given the opportunity to represent and explain her understanding of what her induction entailed. She reported that she never received any formal opportunity from her school or supervisors to reflect or comment on her induction into the school setting.

Shelly demonstrated the understanding that receiving adequate support in her school setting depended on proactive involvement on the part of the novice.

I agree with that. One hundred percent. That if you don't ask, you're not going to get help. Very often people are going to be so wrapped up in whatever they're doing, unless you are their mentoring obligation. They're not going to come up and ask you if you need something.

This comment echoed and reinforced the conceptualization in the second concept map that a large portion of a novice teacher's induction into the school climate, as suggested by Shelly's experience, depended on the initiative of the novice teacher. This is not to say that the climate

was negative. On the contrary, the images with the accompanying comments were coded as a positive representation of the school's climate and its impact on the novice teacher. Whether or not a school supported a systematic induction program, does not mean that it might not have other components of its school wide operation that might would contribute to and create a positive school wide climate.

Shelly presented, with the second concept map, a more helpful conceptualization of induction as she was experiencing it. The second concept map depicted examples of various people, in the school community, supporting both personal and professional needs. In addition, this positive display of supportive people surrounding the novice teacher portrayed the school's positive climate. For example, personal needs are evident in several ways—*confidence* was demonstrated by the ability to ask questions, *belonging* was represented by the invitation to socialize put forth by the teacher group, *collegial interaction* was represented by the interaction between herself and the janitor, the media specialist, and the other teachers. Her personal need to be *autonomous* was clearly manifested by the willingness to seek answers to her questions and concerns.

The development of her professional needs was represented in the codes that were assigned to the voice bubbles of the lead instructional teacher, the vice principal and the other teachers. The lead instructional teacher (a position at her middle school held by a teacher to facilitate the teaching practices of all teachers) advised her on appropriate dress and on the need to contact parents. The vice principal provided an informational source on *student discipline*. The comments from the other teachers represented *professional collaboration* on teaching materials and *professional advice* on whom to consult and whom not to consult on specific matters.

*Summary of Concept Map Findings*

The most important finding represented by a comparison of the two concept maps was the reconciliation of the ambiguity of the first concept map. In the second year's concept map there was no ambiguity about who will be an obstacle and who will be a support as indicated by the positive portrayal of support personal in the school community. The first concept map also implied that family and university professors could provide support for her efforts at teaching. Both of these groups disappear from the second concept map entirely. Perhaps, this was, in part, due to her dramatic shift to emphasize the resources that are outward. In other words, Shelly's second concept map suggested that the support she needed was swirling out and away from her own realm of experience and located primarily in her school community. She needed to venture forth into the new environment. The first concept map suggested that teaching was a death-defying stunt only to be tried with a net, and that obstacles blocked success. The limited focus on the potential support and the dramatic portrayal of the obstacle in large chaotic swirl of black overpowers the image. As a result, the image of the novice teacher was unstable in the first concept map.

By contrast, the second concept map was direct and unambiguous. No obstacles are represented. Problems are acknowledged by the fact that the novice teacher was represented as asking questions and those questions were answered in the voice bubbles associated with each person. Specific sources of support were identified and the types of support available were amplified. The novice teacher was admonished with the advice to socialize and ask. Considering that Shelly constructed this image at the end of her first year, the second concept map was empowering and positive vision of the school climate while still providing space for mistakes and problems along the way.

My evaluation of the representation was that the presence of these questions implied a disposition toward embracing questions and attempting to implement the advice. Shelly confirms this evaluation in her last interview: “if someone gives you advice, if you’re having a problem and you go to seek advice, at least attempt the advice.” Her willingness to offer advice to others, through her concept map, was one of the first instances in which Shelly performed, in some marginal way, as an experienced teacher. She demonstrated a willingness to spin another plate, to experience a wobbling position (Fecho, Graham, & Hudson-Ross, 2005) away from the centripetal force of her own past experiences and observations (Lortie, 1975/2002).

A more complete conceptualization of the induction support available from the culture and climate of her school setting guided Shelly as she began her movement into the second year of teaching. This ability to look outward, to the experiences and the support other people in the school can potentially provide, represented a major shift in Shelly’s conceptualization of induction. She was now looking outward instead of inward, using and exploring, as the forces swirling around her as opposed to the forces pushing inward. Shelly favored, at the beginning of her teaching experience, people, experiences, and instruction that have become familiar and comfortable. As a new teacher, she was immersed in trying to figure out the successful daily operation of her classroom environment. Her attention stayed close to what was immediate and, if possible, recognizable. It was only later, as demonstrated through the findings of the remaining artifacts, that Shelly submitted to and eventually embraced the centrifugal forces into what was a collection of new socializations patterns and jargon designed to assist her but still foreign.

#### Findings From The Think Pieces

The two concept maps can be placed side by side in order to note the shift in Shelly’s conceptualization of induction from the summer before her first year teaching to the summer her second year. Her ambiguous rendering in the first concept map was replaced by a more dynamic

and interactive conceptualization of induction in the second. Whether or not this movement held true throughout the think pieces required a closer look at what was revealed in the code families by comparing the five think pieces from the first year as a group against the three think pieces from the second year as group.

The think pieces activity was first and foremost a purposeful collaborative activity in which every member of the GEM community brought a written reflection about some moment in their teaching experience. It might be an incident in a classroom, an interaction with another teacher or a student, or an experience with the mentoring or induction process. Shelly looked forward to the think piece activity as a safe, collaborative place to bring her experiences. In her first interview after the first summer session but before school began, Shelly pronounced:

I also think that, as a new teacher, I was very comforted with the idea that we would be meeting throughout the year cause I thought “Oh, good. Here is a group that I can talk with, as opposed to only the people at my school.”

She repeatedly emphasized the safety of being in an environment that was neutral and not focused on her immediate performance. “They aren’t my administrators. They aren’t my superiors. They’re other teachers.” Before she experienced the environment of her school setting it was the safety of this third space that she envisioned providing an outlet for her questions. The third space provided by GEM gave her a place to consult with colleagues and test her conceptualization of induction. The activity of bringing a think piece to a group and having other teachers read hers as she read theirs was part of her induction into the reflective practice of teaching. She conceptualized induction as a process of being included in purposeful discussions. Participating in purposeful discussions was an activity she experienced through GEM but such moments occurred slowly in the setting of her school as she found the courage to venture forth and ask.

This was similar to the image of the first concept map where known people and familiar experiences were labeled as supports and not problems. The space created by the GEM professional development program was a collaborative environment that she perceived as supporting her induction into teaching separated from the space of her classroom and the space of the school community. During the two years of her induction process the GEM program provided a third space that allowed her to voice her questions and issues applicable to the activities occurring in the first space of her classroom, the place that housed the activity of her primary concerns, and the second space of her school community, where the classroom was located.

The analysis of the think pieces over the two-year period revealed that Shelly duplicated the shift from an inward focus surrounding the concerns of her immediate performance in the classroom to a more outward focus as a participating member of the larger school community, a process that would undoubtedly have happened if Shelly remained in teaching. The difference was that as Shelly made this shift her conceptualization of induction was constantly placed before other teachers in the context of GEM. Such a context provided a continuing discussion of teaching that allowed her to critique what her school had to offer and how the school community was directly assisting her induction into teaching. She enters into the culture and climate of her school setting with more information. This was one of the primary advantages and purposes of the professional development provided through her participation in GEM. The following discussion will demonstrate how the analysis of the first year's think pieces illustrated a more inward focus including her previous experiences, classroom activities, and student discipline and management. Her focus then shifted to involving herself as a teacher, still one who is a novice and in need of advice and support, in the more complete school environment of her school.

*Think Pieces Year One*

The collection of think pieces from Shelly's participation in 2003 GEM group included five separate think pieces written between June 9, 2003 and December 16, 2003. Two were written during the summer seminar and three during the first semester of the school year. A review of the think piece topics, in the order in which Shelly wrote them, indicated her inward focus toward her ability to teach in the classroom. This inward focus concentrated on her immediate concerns as a novice and the day-to-day activities in the classroom preparing lessons and dealing with students.

*Year one think piece topic descriptions.* The first think piece explored her ability and preparation to teach in a diverse environment. The second think piece continued to express her insecurity about working in a diverse environment and added the confession that perhaps she needed a more thorough historical grounding of her content knowledge. The third think piece, written four weeks into the school year, discussed the difficulties of student management in general and then shifted to a focus on one particularly disruptive female student. The fourth think piece, written just after the ninth week of school, traced her attempt to reestablish rules midway through the semester and concluded with a narrative about her successful attempt to more closely monitor and control a young male student who was constantly in motion or making noise. The fifth think piece, written in mid December just a few days before the end of her first semester, explored two topics. The first topic was her frustration with teaching a packaged reading program mandated by the school that Shelly felt was monotonous. The second topic was another discussion of student management, especially what Shelly described as student drama.

*Findings of the climate, setting, and people code families.* The analysis of the think pieces during the first year in terms of the three code families indicating *climate*, *setting*, and *people* focused on inward concerns. Examining the results of *climate* code family demonstrated

that Shelly referenced her *classroom climate* 13 times in the five think pieces and the school's overall climate only four times. The *responsibility of teacher to students* was coded 11 times. By comparison, the two codes *responsibility of the school to the teacher* and *the responsibility of the school to the students* receive no codes in the first set of think pieces. In the *climate* code category 37 codes linked to the first set of think pieces. Of those codes, 26 linked directly to an inward focus on Shelly, her students, and GEM, while only 11 connected to the outward influence of the school.

In the *setting* code family, *school setting* received 12 codes all of which are cross-referenced to the classroom climate and not to the school at large. Indeed, in the first set of think pieces the school setting was synonymous with Shelly's classroom and could have been recoded as such. In every instance she described activities in her classroom and not the larger school setting. The classroom during much of the first year was her school. In reality, these five think pieces received 28 codes in the setting family, none of which directly referenced the school outside Shelly's classroom. Without triangulation from other data sources, specifically the interviews, it would be impossible to know that she taught a cohort of students in cooperation with an interdisciplinary team. The following passage from Shelly's third think piece demonstrates her evaluation of the school climate and her inward focus on the classroom as her primary concern.

Today was my day to take them to the library. Ahhhhh!! I hate leaving the room with my kids because I feel as if everyone is observing and evaluating how I can manage the classroom and although people might not be aware they are doing it—they are.

It would be hard to label the climate of the school as negative. New teachers are indeed watched and evaluated. Shelly was aware of this ongoing evaluation and felt more comfortable working with her students in the confines of her classroom rather than in the more open arena of the

school library. Her classroom was the positive representation of the school setting and other areas of the building were described as more tenuous. While Shelly feels evaluated in her school setting and seeks the comfort and isolation of her classroom, she freely shares her anxiousness with the other teachers participating in GEM. This ability to share with members of GEM was consistent with the manner in which Shelly represented people in her think pieces throughout the first year.

An analysis of the *people* code family also revealed a focus on herself and her classroom. The code, *self*, and the code, *student*, are the most frequent in the first set of think pieces each with 14 references each. All other references to other individuals in the school received a combined total of six references in five categories. All references to experienced teachers, 9 instances, in this category directly linked to the code, *other teachers in GEM*, and not to her colleagues. Even this reference to these teachers was due, in large measure, to the commentaries written by these teachers on her think pieces and not because Shelly, herself, referenced them. The people code category generated 54 codes over the first set of think pieces. Only ten of these could be directly linked to other teachers in the school setting. The other 44 codes were linked to Shelly, her students, university professors, or other GEM participants. Her focus was on the immediate influence of her classroom experience, the interaction with other GEM participants, and her past educational and professional development experiences. According to the think piece codes findings, only one reference—to send a student to guidance counselor—suggested that Shelly engaged in any educational activity with another adult in the building. Once again, triangulating the data with information from the interviews indicated a broader focus, but her voluntary subjects for discussion in the first set of think pieces was directed inward.

*Findings of the personal needs code family.* A description of the findings from the *personal needs* code family indicated a similar focus in the first year's think pieces. Individual

codes in the *personal needs* family describe situations, actions, or emotions that novice teachers tend to experience during their first years on the job. Two codes, *advice from novice* and *advice from experienced teacher*, received a total of 40 codes (13 and 27 respectively). All of these codes were linked to the other participants in the first GEM group and indicated Shelly's willingness to accept and acknowledge help. However, from the think pieces themselves it would appear to come from only known and familiar sources from past experience and not from her school environment.

The codes, *self-reflection* with 17 instances and *self-help measures* with 6 were both codes that demonstrated her focus on analyzing and solving teaching problems. Other codes that indicated Shelly's heightened concern about her personal needs in this first year were recorded with the following frequency, *expectations* 7, *fear* 5, *felt need as a novice* 12, *inexperience* 9, and *insecurity* 9. All of these codes represent common concerns among novice teachers. The important point in regard to Shelly's conceptualization of her induction was that these concerns were abundant and readily identifiable in her think pieces during the first year, and they diminished significantly during the second year. The following passage from Shelly's fourth think piece was representative of the candor that she used to talk about her efforts to grow as a teacher.

I thought that changing the schedules and moving all the kids around would be a bad thing. Who knew it would make today so wonderful. I also noticed how simply 9 weeks of experience made it so much easier to explain simple rules and procedures—again. I treated today as if it was the first day of school even though I was staring at the same precious little faces I see everyday.

Shelly realized that the end of the first quarter that she had not explained and clarified her classroom rules adequately. She took the opportunity at this breaking point when some students

in the middle school setting have schedules moved around to accommodate their exploratory classes to readjust. Shelly constantly shared moments like this in her think pieces. They indicated her constant self-reflection and her willingness to address her felt needs as a novice teacher, such as her inexperience and insecurity in the classroom. She was doing the best she could to meet her personal needs in order to teach her students more productively and she freely shared these incidents with her GEM colleagues.

*Findings of the professional needs code family.* The manner in which Shelly referenced instances of her professional needs followed a similar pattern. The *professional needs* category coded characteristics that teachers need to acquire to be successful including teaching strategies, interaction with students, and collaborative practice with other teachers. Separating those codes that concerned activities in Shelly's classroom with her students from those that focused on interaction with other professionals in the larger school community demonstrated, once again, that Shelly's focus was on the immediate practice of her classroom. For example, collectively, inwardly focused activities received 59 codes and any code remotely suggesting an interaction with another teacher in the building, even in a negative manner, received only 23 codes, a ratio of almost 3:1. Once again, GEM was providing a space for her to discuss and present her concerns with other teachers. Without the opportunity to write and share think piece would Shelly have had to the inclination to turn to the supportive of others in her building? I conclude that the process would have been much slower without the continual discussions in the GEM setting. Every indication was that she would only slowly ventured forth into a community that provided little if any formal support.

Based on evidence coded in the first year think pieces, Shelly's focus was on her activity in the classroom with her students. The examples she provided were primarily issues of classroom management and student discipline and not on the instruction of her students. It is not

that she was not self-reflective and capable of critiquing her work; she was. The code, *moments of confession* was recorded 15 times across the five think pieces. These confessions include such blunt statements as the following from her third think piece:

I really am concerned with one girl in my 4<sup>th</sup> period class... On the one hand, I am ashamed because of how much I cannot stand this child, how I loathe seeing her come in everyday and how I wish that she would truly be out of zone and moved to another school. On the other hand, I can't help but think that there may be a reason she is acting the way that she is.

Shelly's willingness to be open and candid with a group of teachers in a professional development setting was to be admired. She recognized her predicament and her responsibility as a teacher to the student she did not like. To say that Shelly received no counsel from within her school during that first year would be too simple; data triangulation indicated that she did. The point to be made from the analysis of the first set of think pieces was that she used the think piece activity as a tool to focus on herself and her immediate classroom problems in an inward fashion. She used the comfort of the GEM group, a community that was established before she began teaching, to frankly air her issues. GEM was a known entity from her previous experience on which she could and did rely for support.

The major shift between the think pieces in year one and the think pieces in year two was a shift in focus, punctuated by a dramatic drop in reference to both personal needs and professional needs codes that pointed inward and an increase in codes that began to point outward. This outward movement demonstrated Shelly's awareness and more active participation with the larger school community.

### *Year Two Think Pieces*

The collection of think pieces from Shelly's participation in the 2004 GEM group included three think pieces. Shelly missed the only session of think pieces during the summer for a doctor's appointment. The think pieces were spaced over the first six months of her second year of teaching, the first on September 13, 2004, the second on October 18, 2004, and the last on January 16, 2005. The second set was referenced with the numbers six, seven, and eight in order to keep immediate distinction between the set of think pieces from the 2003 program.

*Year two think piece topic descriptions.* The topics of the second set of think pieces covered different concerns than the inward concerns generally encompassed within the confines of Shelly's classroom and reported in her first year's collection of think pieces. Shelly's concerns about teaching caused her to stretch outward and to recruit the resources of the larger community to improve her teaching during the course of her second year in the classroom.

The sixth think piece, the first of the second year, confronted the school-wide issue of Special Education students and the need for all teachers to accommodate these students during the regular schedule in order to provide special education teachers their appropriate planning time. The seventh think piece was organized into four titled sections. The first section was entitled *My Gifted Class* and was a discussion of the idea that this group of students, like the students in her regular class, also needed discipline. The second section, *After School* discussed what Shelly was learning about the segment of the school's student population that required remediation as she volunteered to teach an after school classroom. The third section labeled *The New Teacher* was not a section about her own identity but a striking collection of comments about a first year teacher's know-it-all attitude. The fourth section was called *Assumptions* and was a brief discussion of how middle school teachers can act like their middle school students, especially in terms of how they talk about each other instead of talking with each other when an

issue arises. The eighth and final think piece discussed teacher accountability and professional behavior.

Even though the second year produced three think pieces as opposed to five think pieces from the previous year, the comparison of the two groups was not in total numbers of codes produced but in the shift of topics. Even with the difference in the total number of think pieces produced, the three think pieces from year two were longer than the five previous think pieces from the first year and produced more codes per think piece. If anything, the sharp decline of inward codes against the increase in outward codes was even more noticeable in the second year considering that she wrote fewer think pieces. In addition, the first two think pieces from year one are unique in their sense of anticipation due to the fact that they were written before she began teaching. Shelly had just received a job and both think pieces written in the summer demonstrated an abundant concern with her performance as a teacher in a school with a diverse student population. It was quite noticeable that Shelly did not mention the issue of racial diversity in the last three think pieces of the first year or in the three think pieces from year two. If this finding had been observed earlier, it could have been an interesting line of pursuit during the interviews. Expecting racial diversity to be an issue was such a prevalent sign of anxiety early on it would have been interesting to ask Shelly why it had disappeared.

*Findings of the climate, setting, and people code families.* The analysis of the *climate* code family in the second year's think pieces showed an increase in references to the *Shelly's school climate*. The first set of think pieces referenced this code only four times while the second year's set had eight occurrences of the code. An even more important finding was the shift in two codes. Previously, the *Shelly's classroom climate* and *responsibility of teacher to student* had 13 and 11 codes respectively in the first year and dropped to 3 each in the second year; a shift from a total of 24 four codes to 6 codes. Although one code, *environmental impact on teacher*

remained constant, 5 in year one and 6 in year two, this code was an example in which the decreased number of think pieces only heightened the shift from an inward to an outward contemplation of support and solutions. Overall 17 of 25 or 68% of recorded codes from the *climate* code family in the second year's think pieces focused on outward concerns as compared to only 11 of 37 or nearly 30% of the codes during the first year's group of think pieces. During the course of her second year of teaching, Shelly was repeatedly bothered by the lack of professional behavior she observed. The following quote captured the emotion that she repeated several times in think pieces and during conversations with other teachers in the GEM follow-up sessions.

We reiterate time and time again how they must be responsible for their actions and how, “with every action, there comes a reaction.” We stress the importance of not relying on others to represent how we feel or relying on others to do what we know to be our job... My question is, if we are constantly emphasizing this behavior and we see the importance of it for everyday functioning and were obviously taught it at some point in our lives, why do we completely ignore it when it comes to our professional lives?

Shelly spent the bulk of her first year with an inward gaze. She focused on teaching her students in her classroom. She felt that it was important to pull her own weight and to suffer the consequences of her failures as well as her successes. As she began her second year and felt more comfortable she looked outward at the teaching climate that existed in her school. She was quite critical of teachers who failed, in her opinion, to project and carry out a professional demeanor.

The *setting* code family also showed a shift toward outward concerns. Initially, the coding looked as if it had remained consistent in terms of the focus. As was the case with the *setting* code family in the first set of think pieces, I looked closely at the related links to the code,

*my school setting*. In the first year all of the code passages linked directly to Shelly's classroom. In the second year the exact opposite was true. All nine incidents of the code linked directly to the larger school community. One example was Shelly's report of a student from her class who was in the office on a discipline referral. "He was in the office, threatening to 'get me' and was storming down to my room only to be chased down by the police officer, that got him in a special seat at the school of alternative measures." Shelly heard about this episode after it was all over from the police officer. Her reporting of this event and others occurring in the school, but out of her classroom, demonstrated how her willingness and, perhaps, her ability to focus outward on events in the larger school setting had expanded. Indeed, most of the codes connected to school wide issues such as teacher accountability, school responsibility to special needs students, and student remediation. It was interesting to note that while Shelly frequently discussed her classroom problems with members from GEM, she rarely reported sharing her personal problems in the school setting. Her reports tend to be about public occurrence with students from her classroom that everyone in the building already knew about or broader public issues indicated by the codes just discussed.

The *people* code family provided the least amount of evidence toward an outward shift, with most of the codes remaining stable. For example, *self* moved from 14 to 13, *students* moved down from 14 to 8. However, the references to *other teachers in GEM* dropped from nine to four and *university professors* dropped out completely, 3 to 0. It seemed that the need to reference the past sources of support was dropping as the topics of her think pieces shifted out of the classroom to more school wide concerns. There was a slight increase in the code category *experienced teachers*. During the first year, this code category was exclusively connected to participants in GEM. In the second year, the frequency increased from eight to 14 and half of these codes connected to teachers in Shelly's building. The strongest support indicating an

outward shift in the *people* code family during the second year was evidenced through a comparison of the topics of the think pieces and their shift out of the classroom to the inclusion of other teachers/adults in the building. These reports of other teacher as previously mentioned captured her frustration with her attempts to teach responsibility to her students when she constantly notices irresponsible behavior in other teachers.

If we told our kids to have a paper in by January 5<sup>th</sup> and they turned it in 2 weeks later, not only would we not even look at it, but also we would have figured the zero into their average 10 days earlier. Where is the zero for the teacher that waits 2 weeks to do grades?

If you are told to be at a faculty meeting and you are not there. . . . where is the zero?

As a first year teacher Shelly felt watched and evaluated. She freely shared this anxiety with members of GEM. In her second her of teaching she openly critics other teachers in her building with her colleagues in the GEM professional development group. While attention has turn outward and she begins to observe and comment on other teachers in the building, there was little evidence that the open communication and sharing of frustrations and difficulties that was provided through the activities of the GEM collaborative was duplicated in her school environment. She noted her frustration frequently with others and me in the professional development setting but I wondered if the opportunity to discuss these issues that affect her perception of the climate, setting, and people within her school ever occurred.

*Findings of the personal needs family.* The findings of both the *personal needs* code family and the *professional needs* code family demonstrated a shift towards the outward concerns and away from the inward focus manifested so clearly throughout the think pieces of the first year. Most notable in the second year's collection of think pieces were the codes that did not appear. Except for think piece commentaries, *advice from novice* and *advice from experienced teachers* disappears from Shelly's written reports completely. Once again, data

triangulation from interviews indicated that Shelly did receive advice from other teachers in her building. However, Shelly did not reveal that she received advice from school colleagues in her written think piece reflections. Incidents of *self-reflection* dropped from 17 to four and *self-measure* move from six to zero. It is not as important for her to comment on her specific problems or inadequacies as a teacher. Further indications of this shift were found in the decreased number of codes specifically representing her insecurities. For example, the following codes all decreased: *expectations* 7 to 1, *fear* 5 to 0, *felt need as a novice* 12 to 5, *inexperience* 9 to 7, and *insecurity* 9 to 4. Some disappeared completely and others were reduced.

Shelly outlined her inexperience, but the fear and anxiousness apparent in the first year's think pieces were absent. An example of her inexperience was presented in the following statement and lacked any sense of fear or uneasiness. "The main problem I have right now is how to reward those that do not disrupt class usually ever, but are continually punished for the ones that do." This statement was direct and matter of fact without the hedging or qualification about her ability that characterized the problems in the first year.

Two additional codes emerged in the *personal needs* code family that had been absent in the first year. One code *transition: preservice teacher to teacher* was recorded four times and was a marked example of Shelly marking her growth and shift in identity from one who as learning to teach to one who was teaching. Shelly, in her transition from preservice teacher to teacher was increasingly aware that she could, in many instances, govern herself as illustrated by this think piece excerpt.

If I sit and watch people take days off before a holiday, when we have been told we are not supposed to and there is no consequence, I'm really" tempted to leave for Vegas that day early before Spring Break. It makes for a bitter environment amongst the staff.

While she was tempted, she didn't do it. She was irritated that others took advantage of their freedom; nevertheless, Shelly was trying to learn to behave responsibly as a teacher while she taught her students to behave responsibly as students. For Shelly her integrity as a professional was one of the things that marked her as a teacher.

The second code that appeared in the *personal needs* code family was *complaining*. This was an interesting code in the data set. It occurred a total of 20 times, but only 3 times in the first year and only in the interviews. The second year's think pieces contained seven examples of the code *complaining*. I interpreted this finding as a demonstration that she began to feel comfortable as part of the school. Shelly, no longer a newcomer observing the activity of the school, was a part of the school community with a right to comment on its activities and how they affected her and others in the environment. As previously indicated her main area of complaint was the idea that teachers should act as professionals and should be capable of self-government. The irony was that Shelly still felt young and was still living in a university town where she was able to behave socially much as she did in college. At the same time she was trying to understand the parameters of professional behavior and responsibility as highlight by the following quote.

I have no solution. Yes, the more mature and professional thing to do would be to continue doing what I know is right because I have my own personal standards that I am trying to live up to. Perhaps, I should simply sit back and enjoy for the first time what I always begged for in high school... a house with no rules.

Shelly was aware that a house without rules wasn't what she wanted. She demonstrated the importance of working and teaching within a controlled environment when she reintroduced her classroom rules at the beginning of the second quarter during her first year of teaching as reported in her third think piece. One of the difficulties of her outward turn towards the larger school community was that she found things that Shelly found conditions that confused her to

some degree. She found some teachers do things that led her to question their professionalism. Again, even though she began to find more support among her school based colleagues during her second year, did the school provide formal opportunities about professional behavior and responsibility similar to those she experienced in the GEM?

Overall the *personal needs* code family tended to emphasize Shelly's needs as a novice teacher in the first year and a reduction in those codes in the second year marked her shift in attention from her personal needs to the broader concerns of her participation in the entire school community. The first year's set of think pieces had 121 total codes attached to quotations from the *personal needs* code family. The second year's think pieces had only 39 total codes from the *personal needs* code family, a dramatic difference that represented her shift from a focus on what has been established as an inward focus to more outward concerns involving the entire school climate, a climate that in many instances found her questioning and complaining about the behavior of other professionals.

*Finding of the professional needs code family.* The *professional needs* code family was the largest code family with 45 codes from three code categories, *professional needs*, *classroom activities*, and *induction activities*. These codes tracked Shelly's growth in the behaviors and practices required of a teacher. These codes included such activities as managing students, working on a team, collaborative interaction with colleagues, lesson planning, participation in professional development activities, and a range of induction activities. All of these codes remained constant across both years of the think pieces with five exceptions. These five exceptions—*classroom preparation*, *classroom/student management*, *moments of confession*, *self-reflection*, *teacher accountability*—all demonstrated a shift of focus from the first space of Shelly's classroom that dominated the first years think pieces, to the second space of the larger school community in her second year of teaching.

Two codes, *classroom preparation* and *classroom/student management*, both indicated Shelly's concern with preparing for and managing her students within the classroom. Together they were coded 18 times across the think pieces of year one. Only *classroom/student management* survived in the second year with six coded passages. Shelly has no mention of classroom preparation in the think pieces of the second year. One possible explanation was the absence of a summer think piece opportunity. Nevertheless, just considering the drop from 14 to six in the code describing management indicated a significant transition. It is also important to note that her concerns with classroom management became more individually focused. She began to look for ways to reward instead of punish as one incident recorded in her second think piece of the second year demonstrated.

The main problem I have right now is how to reward those that do not disrupt class usually ever, but are continually punished for the ones that do...It would not bother me so much except for a parent that came in the other day to collect her son's cell phone that had gone off in class and in broken English, which only made the statement sound that much more heart wrenching said, "sometime Royal cry because things taken away from him. He good boy and sometime get frustrated because he do work." Needless to say, I felt like poo. So, I came up with a way to reward them with the option to go outside and read. As usual, the regular group that ruins everything did and I ended up with about 6 kids outside reading and the rest inside pissed off and quiet. It was an ok day and hopefully Royal shed no tears that day.

It was apparent throughout the entire collection of Shelly's think pieces that she tried to treat her students as individuals. The one remedy fits all description of teaching never really matched Shelly approach to her students and their needs.

Another code that experienced a pronounced drop from year one to year two was *moments of confession*. This code was connected to 15 quotations in the first set of think pieces and dropped to 7 in second set. Shelly's candid yet apologetic moments of confession began to diminish. In fact, all of the *moments of confession* codes in the second year occurred in the sixth and seventh think pieces. The eighth think piece was void of these revelations and, as described earlier in the chapter, was predominantly a commentary on teacher accountability. By the middle of her second year, Shelly felt quite capable of judging and commenting on the lack of professional behavior on the part of her colleagues. This was an entirely different type of candid reporting than Shelly had previously presented. I interpreted her critique of colleagues as an indication of her participation in the larger school community. Shelly demonstrated a resentment that unprofessional behavior on the part of others would reflect poorly on her and the rest of the school. The following passage illustrated the passion in which Shelly noted the irony that teachers will blatantly act in ways in which they would not tolerate from students.

If grades are to be in on December 17<sup>th</sup>, then why the hell are we returning to school after Christmas break with the urgent message announcing that grades must be finished no later than January 5<sup>th</sup>. What was the point in me staying until 4 on a planning day when everyone else was out by 1:00? ...If we told our kids to have a paper in by January 5<sup>th</sup> and they turned it in 2 weeks later, not only would we not even look at it, but we would have figured the zero into their average 10 days earlier. Where is the zero for the teacher that waits 2 weeks to do grades?

Shelly's complaint registered with emotions I had experienced as a former classroom teacher. The voice that told this story did not sound like the timid voice of a novice asking for advice; this was the voice of an experienced teacher actively complaining about the performance of her peers.

The think pieces in this study were acts of self-reflection. They were activities and incidents for collaborative reflection within the GEM professional development group. It was interesting to note the shift in focus, most notably in the code *self-reflection*. This code marked moments when Shelly brought attention to specific activities in her classroom or with her engagement with other people where she troubled the outcome based on her participation. Across the first year of think pieces 17 passages were coded as moments of *self-reflection*. The second year this code dropped to only 4. Even given the reduced number of think pieces this drop in frequency of the self-reflection code indicated a significant change. All of the think pieces were considered acts of self-reflection, but the code, *self-reflection* recorded moments of Shelly's concerns with her performance, not a moment of contemplation about the teaching concerns of her team or of the entire school. Again, a reduction in this code represented a shift in the nature of Shelly's focus. While she continued to be concerned with her growth and improvement, these concerns began to be situated inside the large context of the school and not just the confines of her classroom.

The most salient code indicating this shift from the inward focus to the outward focus from the *professional needs* code family was *teacher accountability*, which marked a teacher professional behavior and whether or not it occurred. This code only occurred once in the entire first year, and that occurrence was during the first interview. In this instance, Shelly recalled a moment of panic when, as part of the summer seminar session, a university professor suggested the other novice teachers could talk about standards:

She had us write questions to each of the standards. And perhaps it's the same feeling that students get when they get handed technical things. When you throw out standards and this and that, I am like, a deer in headlights. It scared me a lot. I'm like "Oh my gosh

I have no idea what to say. I've no idea. I have nothing intellectual to say about standards.

This excerpt was also a moment of confession about being caught not knowing what she assumed she should have known as a result of her university instruction. She, of course, holds herself accountable all of the time. In a broad sense every question, every confession, and every problem could be coded as accountability. Teaching is practice in motion.

The code, *teacher accountability*, recorded the moments of observation when a practice of teaching was made public. As noted this code had one occurrence earlier in the artifacts and occurred only four times in the second year of think pieces. Shelly was part of the larger school community who witnessed what was, in her opinion, poor teacher behavior. I interpreted this code and the instances around it as one of the indicators that Shelly was increasingly aware of what activity was around her. She was judgmental of other teachers who exhibited poor behavior.

The code *judgment about other teachers* was another code that emerged across the second set of think pieces. It was not isolated and found in junction with the other five codes from this code category and many of her quotations in the think piece findings illustrate this concern. For example, it directly paralleled the teacher accountability code. For better or worse, Shelly's act of judging other teachers and suggesting that they should be accountable places her persona as a teacher in the second space of the school community.

### *Summary of Think Piece Findings*

Just a comparison of the topics covered in the think pieces in each year demonstrated a more outward focus. To read the first five think pieces was clearly to visit the anxiety of a first year teacher. The language was often exaggerated as this quote, complete with her underlining in tact, demonstrated.

The thought of my first day of my first year at the first school I will be all on my own at for the first time is extremely overwhelming. Considering the mentoring theme of this week, I should remind myself I am not all on my own.

Unfortunately, the first five think pieces, if we discount for a moment that they were written for GEM, read as if she were solving problems alone in the classroom. The formal mentoring at her school was minimal. Her mentor had an accident early in the year and was absent for a substantial amount of time. She was not replaced and the mentoring relationship was not renewed. She selected an informal mentor at her school on the advice of experienced teachers in the GEM collaborative. She also engaged with her interdisciplinary team in the overall tracking and management of their students. Without data from other sources one could easily assume that she had no mentor and no collaborative interaction with a team.

The findings surrounding the first set of think pieces demonstrated Shelly's willingness to share her concerns with other teachers in GEM or *people* from previous experiences. The findings reported that the *climate* and *setting* most often referenced was that of her classroom and not the school. Furthermore, the findings that most clearly represents Shelly's anxieties and self-identified needs, of the *personal needs* code family were frequently coded throughout the first year's think pieces. The *professional needs* codes that were recorded across the first year's set of think pieces concerned activities in Shelly's classroom with her students in favor of those that focused on interaction with other professionals in the larger school community. Shelly's focus was on the immediate practice of her classroom. I have defined this focus on students in classroom rather than on interaction with teacher as evidence of Shelly's teaching persona functioning in the first space of her classroom.

It was not until the think pieces for the second year that Shelly began to focus more attention to the second space, the entire school setting. Reading these three think pieces from the

2004-2005 school year provided evidence that her classroom activity and her teaching persona existed within the large dynamic of an entire school community. It was not evident to what degree that the school community assisted that transition; nevertheless, based on the findings from the analysis of the think pieces, Shelly's focus demonstrated a sharp shift from what has been described as an inward focus based on her training, her past experiences, and her immediate needs as a classroom teacher in the first year's think pieces to a more outward focus demonstrating that her classroom activities and concerns exist in the broader context of her school's climate and culture in the second year.

The third space, participation in the two years of GEM, provided the opportunity for the production of these two sets of think pieces. Shelly was the only novice to participate in both programs and as a result the only one to write think pieces over two years. What the findings make apparent was that her concerns shifted from the first year to the second as did the tone and topics of what she chose to write about. Using the tool of the think piece, Shelly demonstrated that her conceptualization of her position in the school changed. In other words, her induction into the culture and climate of the school included a process, demonstrated by her think pieces, of moving from the inward focus of the classroom to the outward focus of the larger school community. Her slow, but steady movement toward more involvement in the school community was supported by her continuing engagement with members of GEM. The activities of GEM not only encouraged her production of self-reflective activities, but allowed her to be a contributing member of educational discussions.

### Interviews

Shelly was formally interviewed on four different occasions. The first two interviews were conducted as part of her participation in the 2003 GEM program. The last two were part of her participation in the 2004 GEM program. Three of the interviews were finished before I had

narrowed the dissertation study to her particular case. The concept maps and think pieces were produced in response to a single prompt or question. The interviews were a more dynamic, interactive mode of collecting information. Shelly was a willing participant who answered questions quickly. She was comfortable punctuating her responses with stories that clarified or amplified the points she wished to make. She would often stop in mid-sentence and change direction if another thought or example seemed more important. During the second year of GEM, she felt her insider position as the only participant who had attended the previous session. She was a ready critic of GEM openly comparing activities between the two programs. She also offered me advice about what she would do differently if there were to be a third variation of the Teacher Quality grant that had supported the firsts two GEM programs.

The findings from the concept maps and think pieces demonstrated a shifting focus from what has been described as an inward focus on her preparation, personal experience, and the immediate concerns of her classroom toward an outward focus that allowed her to envision her classroom and her performance as a teacher as part of a large school community. This shift was also apparent in the findings of the interview analysis. The interview format allowed follow-up questions and encouraged Shelly to freely comment producing a larger body of material to code.

I have characterized all of the artifacts as snapshots. In some ways the scope and depth of the pictures provided through the interview was more detailed. It was as if an amateur produced the snapshots from the concept maps and from the think pieces, while a professional produced the intricate pictures from the interviews. The interviews provided a set of pictures that framed the findings with better attention to the nuances of the surroundings and the experience. As a result, the findings from the analysis of the interviews demonstrated Shelly's shifting conceptualization of induction. This conceptualization was supported more fully by her engagement with other teachers both in the GEM setting and in the setting of her school. While

the findings in the previous two artifact types, concept maps and think pieces, were reported in terms of what codes were absent or emerged in the second year, the interview findings tended to demonstrate increases or decreases in code frequencies. The nature of the interviews gave Shelly greater latitude and more activities and people were mentioned in the interviews than were mentioned in the think pieces.

### *Interviews Year One*

The first interview was conducted on July 18, 2003, five weeks after her participation in the first summer seminar and three weeks before the beginning of her first job as a teacher. The second was conducted on May 15, 2004, just a few days before her school year was finished. The placement of the two interviews was purposeful. The first interview was positioned before she began teaching in order to record her perceptions on how she envisioned her participation in GEM assisting her through the induction process and what she anticipated finding at her school in terms of an induction program. The second interview was conducted at the end of the year to capture her perception of her first year of teaching and the corresponding induction process. Another purpose was to record her perception of her participation in GEM as a professional development activity designed to support her induction through collaboration with teachers in a neutral setting. She was invited to participate in the next session of GEM only at the end of the second interview.

The findings of the two interviews will be discussed as a group, following the format of the presentation of the findings established with two sets of think pieces. Obviously, looking at the findings of the first interview demonstrated how Shelly responded to the summer seminar but provided only anticipated reactions to her school since the interview was conducted before school began. The second interview, conducted in the middle of May 2004, foreshadowed the outward movement in more detail than did the first year think pieces. Indeed, Shelly's tone was

often one of satisfaction and relief at having survived. Combining the findings of both interviews from year one provided a broad picture. Considering the date of Shelly's second interview, I expected to discover less dramatic examples of Shelly's shift from the inward to the outward focuses previously described. Nevertheless, the findings demonstrated the shift across several codes in each code family. In the interview section of the this chapter, the report will discuss findings in the first year's interviews that stand out, especially in terms of how they changed in the second year's set of interviews. In other words, I will report what the codes tell about Shelly's focus in the first year in preparation for the findings that indicated how a code diminished or intensified in the second set of interviews.

*Findings of the climate, setting, and people code families.* The findings of the first interviews demonstrated that Shelly was not completely disengaged from the large school community. The findings of the first year's interviews still pointed to the inward concerns of her performance in the classroom but often included significant reports of interaction with other teachers as well.

In the *climate* code family, four codes stood out in the first year of interviews. The codes were, *Shelly's classroom climate* 17, *Shelly's school climate* 33, *environmental impact of the school on the teacher* 13, and the *responsibility of the school to the teacher* 10. The first code, *Shelly's classroom climate*, was an indicator of Shelly's conceptualization of the climate in the first space of her classroom. The 17 codes were divided between the first and second interview with 10 and 7 respectively. The first interview tended to emphasize her anticipated classroom issues, while the second interview recorded actual activities. The report of a conversation with a college classmate who was now teaching in high school and considering a move to a middle school captures how Shelly characterized the students and their behavior in her classroom.

Lynn asked me “how do you like middle school?” I said, “I love it, it’s great. “I love everything about it. I love the tears.” I love that there’s a part of them that still cares. It still means something when you say, “I’m disappointed. I thought better of you. I thought you could prove me wrong in this situation.” And they get upset. They still cry and they get upset that they let you down. And that’s something that I really like.

By the same token Shelly constantly revealed through her interviews and conversations with GEM participants that she was also trying to create a classroom climate in which she would not be seen as letting her students down. She worked hard to create a constructive classroom climate in order not to disappoint her students and her immediate supervisors.

The second code, *Shelly’s school climate*, with 33 connections to quotations, was a clear indicator that Shelly, despite her own representation of her experiences in her first year think pieces, was involved with other adults and activities in the school. The most salient example was her comment on teaming.

I love teaming. I think that they should put them in high schools... I understand that high schools are more spread out. And I guess it’s supposed to lead to more independence.

But. It’s so nice knowing that you automatically have four teachers that will back you up and defend you immediately.

It was clear that by the end of her first year the team was an important factor in providing her support for her teaching efforts. Other factors as well supported her interaction in the larger school community. Some were social and some were professional. She emphasized collegial interaction with her team and other new teachers, dreaded her principal’s observation, and commented on the pitfalls of dating a teacher in the building.

The third code, *environmental impact of the school on the teacher*, was evenly spread over the two sets of think pieces, five instances the first year and six instances the second the

year. In the first set of interviews, the code was recorded 13 times, ten of those in the second interview. These codes were all indications of how the school's environment had left a positive influence on her as a new teacher. She finished the year at a school that was often considered to have difficult teaching conditions for novice teacher. Only two of the seven novice teachers in the seventh grade core of teachers remained for a second year. When asked about her experience as a first year teacher, Shelly responded "It's fun. I say nothing negative about Carver, ever. And that's not typical for me." I concluded that Shelly had felt included overall in the larger school community despite the difficulty of pointing to any findings that would indicate a substantial systematic induction.

The final important code from the *climate* code family was *responsibility of the school*. This code tracked when Shelly expected the school to provide for her as a novice teacher. This code was absent in all other first year artifacts. The 10 code instances, 8 in the second interview, demonstrated her growing understanding that the larger school structure should be a source of assistance. From the second interview, when prompted Shelly reported on the various ways her school provided her with support. One clear example was her interaction with the schools instructional lead teacher.

S: There was also, an ILT. Are you familiar with the instructional lead teacher?

I: Mm hmm.

S: And she basically, the first day we came in, and said, you know, there's a counselor for the teachers. There's a counselor for the kids and there's a counselor for the teachers.

I am the counselor for the teachers.

I: Yeah

S: You know me, and I was like, well, I've got about 50 questions for you, so. And I know I drove her crazy the first week, but we've become real good friends, and I go to her all the time.

This example of the school organization reaching out to the new teacher was typical of the kinds of support that Shelly reported throughout her second interview. This code, *responsibility of the school*, grew noticeably through the interviews in the second year, as will be discussed in the findings of the second year's interviews.

The *setting* code family demonstrated two foci during Shelly's first year interviews. The first was that two codes, *the summer seminar* and *university*, are quite high, 43 and 15 respectively. The first code demonstrated Shelly's enthusiasm for her participation in GEM, which in many ways functioned as her mentor. Losing her mentor was, perhaps, not as big of an issue as it might have been since she knew she had a collaborative group of experience teachers to consult. The *university* code marked the influence of her preparation. Both of these codes had higher frequency in the first interview and point to her immediate concerns of classroom preparation and activities. By the second interview, their influence was in decline. The code, *the summer seminar*, moves from 36 to 7 and the code, *university*, moved from 11 to 4. These references to the university setting remain important in the formation of her concept as a teacher. The following quote demonstrated how a brief encounter with middle school students after student teaching at the high school level helped Shelly frame who she wanted to teach.

My middle school observations, the three days I had, completely changed me around and made me think, "This is what I want to be doing. This is what I like. These are the kids I want to teach. This is the age group I like."

Throughout her description of her teaching situation Shelly remains positive about the students she chose to teach. Nevertheless, the second interview, with fewer references to the university

and the summer seminar, foreshadowed the turn outward for information that was demonstrated consistently throughout the artifacts from the second year.

The last significant code in the *setting* code family was the code, *my school setting*. This code was seldom used to indicate the school community at large, as it did throughout the think piece artifacts. When *my school setting* was cross-referenced it was evident that the code meant Shelly's classroom during all years of the think pieces. Using this same system of cross-referencing with the findings of the second interview from the first year indicated that at the end of the first school year, the 31 coded references to *my school setting* primarily referred to the larger school setting. This finding at the end of the first school year represented a turn away from the first space of the classroom to the second space of the school community earlier than indicated by the think pieces artifacts alone. However, the turn was even more evident in the second year interviews where this code nearly doubled.

In the *people* code category, three codes remained consistent with the findings from the think pieces data set. In the first year's interviews references to the code, *other teachers in GEM*, remained high with 32 codes. The code, *students*, received 18 references. The code, *university professors*, was still an important presence with 19 instances. The *student* code remained steady in the second year. Both of the codes indicating adults from the past or previously established communities dropped in second year.

One code, *other teachers*, served as a reminder that Shelly was not completely turned inward during her first year. She cited her engagement with *other teachers*, 13 occurrences and other adult categories, *administrators*, 8, *interdisciplinary team*, 8, and *mentor*, 4 all joined together to sharpen the picture of Shelly's involvement in the second space of the school. The addition of *other teachers* in the interview findings was the most salient among the *people* code family, because it received only two references in the first year think pieces and then only

through a causal reference in the think piece not as part of the central report. During the interviews of the first year, this code drew attention to interaction with other teachers and the fact that other teachers were engaged with ushering Shelly into the culture and community of the school. These teachers looked over Shelly, as indicated by this episode just moments before her first unannounced observation.

We were getting ready to do SSR [silent sustained reading.] He [the principal] was down the hall, and the woman that's been my adopted mentor, she kind of, like ran down and was like, 'Mr. B is coming, Mr. B is coming.' And I was like, 'OK OK OK.' Well, I was getting ready to do silent reading. I had just said 'Read to yourself and you know, we'll talk about it in 30 minutes.' And he came to the door, and I said, 'Alright, what I'm going to need you to do is take out a piece of paper.'

This episode demonstrated that Shelly was not functioning in complete isolation and that other teachers building took the time to watch out for her.

Again, it has never been my intention, while reporting these findings, to indicate that Shelly suffered through her first year in silence and isolation. Anyone who knew her would find that hard to believe, as indicated by how she finally stood up for her position in an English department meeting.

We were in a meeting one-day and she just kept picking on every word. And I know you may be shocked, but I like to hear what I have to say, and I like to finish my sentence, and I intended to. And I don't like to be cut off, and I don't like to be interrupted in like, "no, no, no." ...I crumpled up a ball of paper because I'd just been so angry I crumpled it up and she went to speak and I threw it at her head and I said, "I would like to talk." It just broke everything. And she was like, ha ha ha. And she laughed and I laughed. And it

was like, all right, you stood up. Like, you know, and I was like, “I would like to finish this sentence.” And it was funny.

She was clearly able to make her presence felt even if it meant “acting like she was 13, instead of 22.” The point of tracking the inward and outward movement was to demonstrate that through the moments of self-reporting in the first concept map and in the first year of think pieces she had a tendency to report on activities in the first space of her classroom and not on the second place of the school at large. Her first set of interviews also supported this inward focus. The first set of interviews, because of their wider range of topics, demonstrated that she was aware of the fact that she was not alone.

*Findings for the personal needs code family.* The important finding from the *personal needs* code family was how codes shifted from the first year’s interviews to the second year’s interviews. Nearly every code group that demonstrated a dramatic increase from year one to year two in the interview findings actually began that shift in the second interview of the first year. In other words, that interview in May of 2004 was able to foreshadow and suggest shifts that think pieces from the previous fall did not. I will report the beginnings of this shift in this code family by marking difference in code frequencies between the first and second interviews of the first year.

Several of the codes in the *personal needs* code family record moments or comments that represented moments of anxiety. In the first interview, three specific codes—*felt need as a novice*, *inexperience*, and *insecurity*—all started high in the first interview and dropped by the second interview. The code, *felt need as a novice teacher*, had 37 coded quotations, 23 in the first interview and 14 during the second. The next code, *inexperience*, had 17 total codes, 14 in the first interview and only 3 in the second. The final code in this group, *insecurity*, had 20 total codes, 17 across the first interview and 3 in the second interview. As discussed in the analysis of

the other artifacts, these *personal needs* codes demonstrated concerns with how a novice will function in the immediate classroom environment. Initially, these codes linked to Shelly's anxiety as a classroom teacher and not to whether or not she would be accepted into the larger school community. She repeatedly expressed the desire to teach well in the classroom.

Two other codes in the *personal needs* code family represented the opposite shift. These codes, *preservice teacher to teacher* and *belonging*, demonstrated Shelly's growing levels of confidence. Personal needs tended to be demonstrated in two ways, deficits that needed to be put to rest or strengths that needed to increase. These two codes, *preservice teacher to teacher* and *belonging*, both indicated a shift in increased representation from the first to the second interview of the first year. The first code, *preservice teacher to teacher*, demonstrated the desire to take on the responsibility of a teacher. This code was not an identification of an activity that a teacher might do, but Shelly's recognition that she was doing it. This code shifted from 5 in the first interview to 11 in the second interview. The second code, *belonging*, spoke to the need of the novice teacher to belong to the school community. Again, this code recorded moments when Shelly mentioned that this was happening; it was not an interpreted understanding of an activity on my part as a researcher. For example, early in the second interview Shelly indicated how completely she felt that she was part of the team. "I think what's nice is that you get an induction in itself being in middle school. That it's a team. And the planning is all together. And it's all around you." *Belonging* received 0 codes in the first interview and 13 during the second interview, a marked difference. Shelly can begin to point to ways in which she has been included into the community.

Shelly reported a host of other personal needs in the first two interviews. Some remained balanced across the two interviews or demonstrated only slight decreases or increases. For example, both *self-reflection* and *self-help measures* decrease from the first to the second

interview. These two codes were more interesting when compared across the years as will be discussed in the findings of the second year's interviews. Other codes demonstrated a significant contribution of the GEM program. The importance of the GEM program was evident in the codes, *collaboration* and *collegial interaction*, when they were cross-referenced with the people involved. These two codes reinforced Shelly's reliance on GEM's collaborative community during the first year of her teaching. She repeatedly suggested the value of having access to experienced teachers who listened.

S: And, but the experienced teachers. And you had a good group of experienced teachers. And I don't know whether you selectively picked them on purpose.

I: I tried to get who would volunteer. That's always the trick.

S: Because it was a good group in the sense that it wasn't anyone that was dominant, you know, all of them are very helpful. They listened, they're patient on listening.

I: Mm hmm.

S: Then they make their comment back, and you're like, "hmm. OK." You're a little humbled..

But it's good, it's not a lecturing way, it's a like, well then this happened. You think, oh they do have experience.

Such reliance on a previously established community that she used repeatedly used as a sounding board corresponded to her inward focus on her immediate needs and their support through familiar resources. These two codes shifted to indicate more collaboration and collegial interaction as a matter of course with her colleagues in her school setting as did most of the codes in the *personal needs* code family.

*Findings for the professional needs code family.* Three code categories *professional needs*, *classroom activities*, and *induction activities* fed the *professional needs* code family.

These code categories under the umbrella of the *personal needs* code family tracked indications of Shelly's growth in the behaviors and practices required of a teacher. As previously discussed, this was the largest code family with many indicators of teacher behavior. Many of these code categories received a significant number of codes and most remained constant throughout both years' interviews. Shelly, as a novice teacher, was aware of the challenges of teaching and struggled to add teaching tools to her toolbox. She referenced one summer seminar activity that met a *professional need* and provided a *classroom activity* at length during her first interview and in conclusion she stated how it left her feeling more confident.

I: So did that activity make you more comfortable about teaching poetry?

S: Yeah, this is what it did. It made me see that I actually do probably know how to analyze a poem and that I can pull stuff out of a poem because I was saying the same things that these experienced teachers were saying and I was like, "Oh, Ok. Oh, she thinks that too. Oh, then maybe I'm not so bad at poetry." I actually, I got confidence in the sense that I thought, "Oh, you know how to do this."

This example of interaction with experienced teachers demonstrated that the professional development activities of GEM were not only opportunities for collegial interaction as previously indicated, but also provide her with teaching tools that allowed her to feel more confident as she entered the classroom. These few codes specifically demonstrated how Shelly started with an intense focus on the first space, her classroom that was reinforced by her participation in a professional community that directly supported her professional needs. Then, as indicated earlier in the discuss, as she began to perform adequately, she focused on new concerns.

Three codes, *classroom preparation*, *beginning day activities*, and *preparation for teaching*, showed the most radical drop. These codes indicated Shelly's concern with the reality

of beginning her first job. Her classroom would not be ready for students unless she decorated the room, arranged the desks, and collected the books. She also had to conduct the activities that would introduce the students to her and the students to each other. All three codes had higher frequency in the first interview and then practically disappeared from the discussion altogether in the second interview. The code, *classroom preparation*, had 11 codes in the first interview and 1 code in the second. The code, *beginning day activities*, had 10 instances in the first interview and 3 during the second. The third code, *preparation for teaching*, marked her reliance on her university training and had 15 codes during the first interview and dropped to 8 in the second. It was as if these particular concerns of beginning a school year caused high anxiety until Shelly had done it once and then it was no big deal. Her first think piece from the second year addressed this specifically.

It was obvious that the sticker on my forehead from last year's first day reading, "eat me alive, I'm new," has faded tremendously. I don't know if the kids are just better behaved this year, or I know a little more about what I am doing.

The anxiety of beginning was understandable. Shelly's need to focus on these two issues had dissolved, except for the occasional anecdotal war story that demonstrated her survival and signaled her beginning attempts at labeling herself a teacher.

Only two other codes, *professional development activities* and *moments of collaborative interaction*, that demonstrated her inward focus drifted downward between the first and second interviews during this first year. Those codes both addressed Shelly's involvement with the first GEM group through follow-up activities. The first code, *professional development activities*, had 34 marked quotations during the first interview and only 6 occurrences during the second. The second code, *moments of collaborative interaction*, had 13 instances during the first interview and dropped to 4 in the second interview. As Shelly began her teaching assignment, her

involvement with GEM participants was important. She referenced GEM frequently in the first interview on the first year when talking about the future.

I am comforted by the fact that if there isn't a group at my school that I've got this group to be able to talk to and draw ideas from and be able to say, you know, and that they aren't my administrators, they aren't my superiors, they're other teachers... I think it's a good thing to have because in no way are these people connected with hiring me, firing me. They don't work with me so they're not sitting there thinking, "I walk past her classroom everyday and it's da da da." They are just simply another person and I am whatever I present to them.

Shelly seemed comforted by the fact that a neutral group of people would listen to her ramblings and concerns in a non-judgmental manner. Ironically, this steady involvement in an outside professional development group, the third space, might have been the support she needed to make that final turn from the inward focus of the first space, her classroom, to the outward focus of the second space, her school community. The need for Shelly to talk about her involvement with the GEM program dropped dramatically across all of the second year artifacts, including the second year of interviews where her references to GEM became as much a helpful critique as an acknowledgment of support.

#### *Interviews Year Two*

I conducted the interviews from the second year with less time between the two than in the first year. In the first year the interviews were separated by more than eight months. During the second year the third was conducted August 1, 2004, just two weeks before Shelly began her second year of teaching at the same school. The fourth and final interview was conducted Jan 25, 2005. Shelly had completed all of the formal participation requirements of GEM with the exception of attending the GCTE annual conference during February of 2005. A report of the

findings from the second year's interviews was an important indicator of Shelly's shift toward the outward influences of the second space, the school community. She noticeably began leaving behind the concerns that dominated her inward focus of the first space, her classroom, as noted in the first year's artifacts. In most cases the second year's interviews did not reveal new codes as much as they revealed an increase in codes directly representing Shelly's involvement with the larger school culture and climate. Much of this section reports the increase of involvement in the wider school setting while also marking the diminishing, or even disappearing codes that have previously pointed inward towards her classroom and previous experiences.

*Finding of the climate, setting, and people code families.* The interviews allowed Shelly to expand and clarify her involvement with people in all three spaces—her classroom, the school, and the GEM program—in more detail. The findings indicated that Shelly was engaged in all three spaces as a novice teacher. Even though her involvement in her classroom and GEM dominate the early period of her induction, the interviews in the second year indicated that her involvement with the school increases as she becomes more confident. The findings from the first year's interviews clarified this relationship and established that while engaged in all three spaces, Shelly still focused her own reports inward, marking that early dependence on the familiar. Nevertheless, all code families in this section—*climate, setting, and people*—demonstrated that Shelly was increasingly involved in the school during her second year.

The *climate* code family has four codes that indicated the shift from the inward to the outward focus. One code demonstrated this shift in focus by declining and three codes by increasing in the second year's interviews. The code that dropped from the first year's interviews to the second year's interviews was *Shelly's classroom climate*. The first year's set of interviews had 17 coded passages and the second year had 10, only 1 in the third interview and surprising 9 in the fourth and final interview. The drop was anticipated based on all previous findings but the

increase during the final interview was unexpected. I looked once again at the context of the coded passages and discovered that Shelly's reason for talking about this was in response to a question about her concept map. Her response during the interview caused a discussion about her classroom climate based on an interview question not as result of her overt concern with this environment. Given that caveat, and then excluding those codes associated with that concept map conversation, the code dropped to three occurrences in the second year. This decline demonstrated that Shelly was more comfortable discussing educational issues and problems that extend beyond her classroom and into the larger school community, a shift that demonstrated her outward focus.

The three codes that indicated the outward shift through their increase, *Shelly's school climate*, *environmental impact on the teacher*, and *responsibility of the school to the teacher* all jumped significantly from the first year's interviews to the second year. Shelly was no longer a naïve participant in her school. Her discussions in the second year's interviews around climate demonstrated her involvement with the larger school community, and her issues with instruction and classroom activities became part and parcel of her existence as a teacher. The first code, *Shelly's school climate*, was coded 33 times in the first set of interviews and moved to 54 in the second set of interviews. The most proactive example of Shelly's participation in the school was the fact that she volunteered for the school's climate action a committee, a committee that according to Shelly planned the Christmas party and recognized people's birthdays. Her participation in this committee leads to the second code. The second code, *environmental impact on the teacher* had 13 references and jumped to 40 in the second year's interviews, 4 codes in the third and 36 in the fourth. Interviews made clear that the school's environment had made an impact. Shelly felt the need to make her presence felt outside the classroom during her second year of teaching in a positive manner as indicated by the following excerpt.

A big thing that I've done this year, I've done it on purpose, is to try and make myself a more evident value. You know what I mean? So kind of, like, volunteering more to do more things. And, you know, on the climate action committee taking over like, OK well, I'll do this and this. To get my name, you know, just to kind of have my name out there as helping in general. And I like to do that.

Shelly was aware that fitting into a school community often meant more than just teaching and managing her classroom.

The *setting* code family had three codes that demonstrated the shift from an inward to an outward focus. The first code, *my school setting*, was disaggregated repeatedly throughout the discussion of the findings to determine if, indeed, the specific code reference was to the classroom or to the larger school community. In the first set of interviews this code was recorded 35 times and in the second set of interview it moved to 61. Cross-referencing the code to determine if the code, *my school setting*, was the school or the classroom indicated that 45 out of 61 instances in the fourth interview referred to the school. Shelly had made a significant transition outward. Only a scattered few codes referenced the classroom, while the majority of codes from *my school setting* during the last interview catalogued her participation in the larger community including coaching, membership on the climate action committee, team meetings, and “bitching” sessions with a colleague.

I made a rule this year. [A friend and I] both made a rule this year, we said, all right, no bitching at school.... If I complain to anyone about anything it will be to you and we'll go walk. I mean, it's funny, it'll start at 8:45 we've been here 15 minutes, or it will be at 11:00 and she'll say, “We walking today?” I'm like, “Yeah, we're walking.” And she'll be like, “Great, because I have stuff to talk about.” You know, and it's like we know we need it.

Shelly's walking colleague was also a basketball coach and a fairly young teacher. They used each other as a way to cope with the stress of teaching.

Two more codes in the *setting* code family demonstrated a decrease in code frequency that illustrated that Shelly depended less and less on what has been categorized as the familiar situations that were her the greatest support as she started teaching. These two codes, *the summer seminar* and *university* both dropped from the first set of interviews to the second set of interviews. The first code, *the summer seminar*, had 43 codes as part of the first two interviews and was reduced to 20 in the second year's set of interviews. The second code, *university*, had 15 instances and dropped to only 2 the second year. Just as in the other sets of artifacts, the dependence on the familiar sources of support became less frequently mentioned.

The *people* code family had three codes with important shifts. Two codes, *other teachers in GEM* and *university professors* decreased in ways that were identically parallel to the two decreasing code categories of *the summer seminar* and the *university* from the *setting* code family. *Other teachers in GEM* had 32 references in the first year's interviews and 23 in the second year's interviews. Of the 23 occurrences during the second year, 8 were during the fourth interview and 5 of those were as part of a conversation concerning a concept map. The second code, *university professors*, had 19 references in the first year's interviews and only 1 reference in the second year's interviews and that 1 occurred in the third interview. By the time of the fourth interview, the once dominant influence of the university professors had disappeared.

The single code in the *people* code family that increased was *other teachers*, a code that directly tracked interaction with teachers in her building. Throughout the entire artifact collection this code occurred 58 times. The code was recorded 45 times across the interviews, 13 times in the first year's interviews, 9 in the third interview, 23 in the fourth interview. Across the interviews, Shelly's references to her colleagues increased. There were references to specific

individuals or groups across the interviews, mentor, administrator, and interdisciplinary teams that also supported her turn outward to include others from her school setting. The increase in frequency of these codes was representative of Shelly's willingness and desire to talk about her growing comfort in the school community. The following exchange in the final interview demonstrated her identity in the school.

I: If I was walking down the hall and said, 'Hey Shelly!' Would that surprise you? Or does it surprise you when somebody says, "Hey Ms. Taylor?"

S: Oh, "Hey Shelly!" would surprise me. Completely. I never hear my first name. So I'm Ms. Taylor. I'm a teacher, I guess. I don't know, I mean. Shelly sounds uncomfortable. I know that was just your example, but Shelly sounds uncomfortable. And even the kids will say Shelly about, like, a friend and I'm so thinking that they've called me by my name. You know, and some student, this is funny. I was in a classroom; I went to go visit another eighth grade teacher. And I went in, and there was a girl that I had last year. She was like, "Um." She said, "Hi Michelle." And I said, "Um. I don't care whether I'm your teacher or not, it's Ms. Taylor." And I thought, "Oh gosh!" You know, I feel more like Ms. Taylor than I did last year.

Shelly was becoming more and more comfortable as a teacher in her classroom and in the larger arena of the school in general.

*Findings of the personal needs code family.* As indicated the previous section, Shelly developed a sense of belonging in the community by the second year. The findings of the personal needs category continued to demonstrate that as she prepared to finish her second year as a teacher she volunteered more episodes about her involvement in the second space of the larger school community. Six codes in the personal needs code family, three by their decrease in

frequency and three by their increase, illustrated her transition to more outward pattern of reporting.

The three codes that decreased from the first year's interviews to the second year's interviews in the *personal needs* code family were *felt need as a novice teacher*, *inexperience*, and *insecurity*. All three of these codes pointed to vulnerable moments in Shelly's development. I interpreted her willingness to share openly and candidly to her comfort with the known entities from her past experiences. She initially counted on familiar people and experiences as a source of support to strengthen her practice as a classroom teacher. All three of these codes exhibited the same movement across the two years of think pieces and presented similar, if not more pronounced, changes across both years of the interviews with a larger total of occurrences. The first code, *felt need as a novice teacher*, was referenced 37 times in the first two interviews and reduced to 19 in the last two interviews. This significant drop of nearly 50% demonstrated the change of focus while at the same time indicated that Shelly realized she was not done growing. She was still willing to identify areas in which she felt the need to improve. One primary area that Shelly felt she the need to change during her second year was her level of participation in meetings. The follow passage indicated that her silence during the first year was counter to her nature but indicative of her initial insecurity.

Well, I think the biggest difference, too is that I'm not a quiet person. And I'm not one to just let things go by and me not say anything. And last year, I did. And I attended the meetings and I kept my mouth shut. And I was doing my biding my time. Toward the end of the year, was making a conscious effort to participate. At the beginning of the year, it was simply, "Oh my God. Let's not get through the day without someone telling me what I did wrong. Like let's just try to get through that."

The second code, *inexperience*, had 17 coded quotations in the first year's interviews and only 5 in the two interviews of the second year. The drop in this code was interpreted as a shift from feeling inexperienced to a need to grow and gain confidence, areas covered with other coded sources. Shelly, as suggested before, was now experienced to some degree as a second year teacher. She would probably hesitate to label herself an experienced teacher but would definitely claim the experience she had as valuable and informative. This code was a way to triangulate the fact that she had transitioned from the inexperienced preservice teacher she was before the first summer seminar to a "real" teacher by the middle of her second year. In the final interview she could still recognize and respond to her inexperience but she was more open. While she spent much of the first year with her door closed this passage with its reference to the open door signifies her ability to confront her growth during the middle of her second year.

I don't know. I feel like, I do feel like a student some days. Because I'm making those stupid mistakes still. I still feel everyday that I make the dumb mistakes. I know I shouldn't be doing that, but, you know I am. I keep my door open more often now.

Shelly admitted her mistakes, but also the fact that she will know leave the door open was emblematic of her willingness to be open and frank with others in her school community as she grew as a teacher.

The code, *insecurity*, remained present in the findings of the second year's interviews but not with the same rate of frequency that had occurred in the first year's interviews. The code was referenced 20 times in the first year's interviews and dropped to 11 in the second year's interviews. Again, the decreased number indicated that her focus was shifting but teaching in her classroom and venturing into the larger school climate still had it moments of wonder. Shelly knew that she had to take on more adult behavior and her spontaneous responses to students betrayed her inexperience and insecure stance in the classroom. She began to report her behavior,

captured in the following episode as an example of her insecure stance as the adult in the classroom.

I find myself talking to them, 50% of the time as a student, 50% as a teacher. And, it has come back to kick me in my butt many, many times when they're playing with me. I think, "Why wouldn't they be playing with me? I have been talking to them like I'm one of their peers." But then, when they play and call me player in class, I'm like, "no, no, no, no, no. I'm not a player." I kicked some kid out the other day because he was like, "don't get mad at me, player." And I was like, "hey player, I'm gonna need you to leave my room now." And the class was like, "AAHHHH!" And I thought, "great. I'm not being 22, I am being 13."

Shelly knew that she needed to improve her level of professional interaction with her students, whose social interaction often felt more familiar to her than that of older teachers.

The three codes in the *personal needs* code family that marked her outward turn by their increase, *belonging*, *competence*, and *collegial interaction*, all demonstrated sharp increases in the second set of interviews. The need to belong is repeatedly cited in induction literature as covered in chapter 2. In the first set of interviews this code, *belonging*, was referenced 13 times and tripled to 39 in the second set of interviews. I interpreted this sharp increase of belonging to Shelly's realization that she had survived and, perhaps, even thrived in her first year in the classroom. She began to take measures to ensure her inclusion into the larger school climate. Reporting these moments of belonging 28 times in the final interview might have been a way of her reporting on her efforts, if not her success, in this area to me—I someone who was a member of her initial personal needs support group. It was almost as if the message was a polite way of saying, "See, I made it. I belong here [in this school]. I am supported here."

The next code, *competence* did not appear as a code until the final interview where it was connected to 14 quotations. The need to feel competent was another example of a personal need that novice teachers reported as important in induction literature. In her first year, Shelly perceived that the number students she sent to the office affected how the office staff and the administration viewed her competence.

We have a system now where on their fifth mark you have to write them up. That's the only reason I wrote him up, you know what I mean? Like I've written one kid up... But last year I'd written like fifty up. So I understand where in the front office they were thinking, "Oh, here comes another one of Ms. T's." Like, you know? This is not the case. It wasn't this cut and dry. Because one message was "write the kid up, I'll deal with it." The real result was more like, "Oh, it's their first year. You know, they're not used to this behavior. And blah, blah, blah, blah, blah." You know?

Shelly was becoming more competent, as represented by her ability to control her students without sending them to the office, and this was an important issue to her.

The final code, *collegial interaction*, was another code that needed to be disaggregated in order to determine its impact on the inward—outward shift. This desegregation of data was used to determine if *collegial interaction* referred to the GEM group or the colleagues in her school. In the first year's interviews, *collegial interaction* had 24 codes and the findings indicated that most often it referred to the GEM program. In the second year's interviews collegial interaction occurred 42 times. The reference to members of the GEM program and school colleagues was equally divided. Shelly valued the collegial and collaborative activities with other teachers both for the social aspect and for the assistance it provided for her teaching. The frequency of the code grew primarily through the increase of references to her colleagues in the school.

*Findings of the professional needs code family.* In the *professional needs* code family four codes suggested that Shelly was adopting a more inclusive view of the value of her school colleagues in the development of her professional performance. These four codes—*interaction with a teacher in her building*, *judgment about other teachers*, *recognizing teacher behavior*, and *need to collaborate with colleagues*—all increased. All of these codes pointed specifically to the move from the first space of the classroom to interactions with others in the second space of the school community. They sometimes suggested her need to talk with other adults but increasingly Shelly mentioned teaming, curriculum planning, and patterns of teacher behavior that she either wished to adopt or openly critiqued. These codes had self explanatory names and the findings from the first year’s interviews to the second year’s interview moved as follows, *interaction with a teacher in her building* 5 codes to 16 codes, *judgment about other teachers* 10 codes to 35 codes, *recognizing teacher behavior* 6 to 18, and *need to collaborate with colleagues* 0 to 19. The first three codes all tripled the number of occurrence across both sets of interviews. The fourth code, *need to collaborate with colleagues*, had no appearance in any previous artifacts and has 19 coded quotations. Even if this response was prompted by an interview question, once it appeared in the interview it remained a consistent theme. In part, the existence of this theme was interpreted, as a response to the support Shelly perceived as part of her participation in GEM.

While the four codes just discussed were demonstrating a major shift, the findings from the analysis of the second year’s interviews also indicated that Shelly was presenting a more balanced view of her teaching. She was choosing to include reports from the second space of the larger school community while first space of her classroom and the third space of the GEM professional development group continued to remain represented throughout the second year’s interviews.

Evidence that the first space of her classroom remained important was indicated through several codes from the *professional needs* code family. She continued to reference *classroom/student management* with 11 instances, *student discipline/accountability* with 8 examples, and *teaching activities* with 6 marked quotations. Shelly continued to discuss the immediate concerns of her classroom environment as she turned outward and included the larger community in her sphere of support. She had not perfected classroom management or student discipline. Her tone when referencing this concern, however, held less panic and a more matter of fact response to situations.

Behavior was my entire focus last year. And I know that's why I'm able to step back this year and look at other things. I'm not having to spend as much time dealing with the drama in general. I mean, just in general, when students come into the class and then some are like, "I got your pencil, da, da, da, da." And I'd be like, "Ohmigod. They're screaming at each other." Now it's like, "Whatever. Y'all work it out. Have a seat." She was becoming more familiar with adolescent behavior. One code, *understanding/describing middle school students' characteristics*, remained consistent across the think piece and interview artifacts—year one think pieces (6), year two think pieces (8), year one interviews (9), and year two interviews (7)—supported her growing understanding of student behavior.

Her references to the second space were often directly connected to her attempts to recruit support for her immediate teaching concerns in the first space of her classroom. Reporting the findings that demonstrated an outward turn should in no way be interpreted as a rejection of or an abandonment of Shelly's intention to try to become a better teacher. I interpreted from the findings the exact opposite, that as she matured and explored the second space it was often in the service of providing better instructional practice for her students. Previously, Shelly had used the

GEM participants as sources of support for her teaching. Now, she was beginning to look for support in the environment that immediately surrounded her classroom.

In a similar manner, several codes from the *professional needs* code family also indicated that Shelly remained influenced by the third space of GEM and the professional development activities it offered. Three codes in the last set of interviews indicated that this continued importance of GEM, *professional development activities* with 25 references, *self-reflection* with 48 examples, and *support* with 35 instances. With rare exceptions, all references to professional development were reference to the activities of the GEM program. She referenced the summer session, follow-up sessions, the think pieces, and individual conversations with specific individuals. Other references to professional development included her participation in a course she needed for her “gifted” certification. From the findings across the data sets, there was only one reference to anything remotely resembling professional development sponsored by the school. This in-school professional development was a series of meetings for teachers new to the building that dissolved after the third meeting. Shelly clearly depended upon and valued the professional development activities but from the findings there was little indication that the school offered any formal or informal opportunities for teachers to participate in such activities.

Throughout the last two interviews, Shelly talked about moments of self-reflection often. The code was used a total of 97 times across the data set and 20 of those occurred during the third interview and 28 in the fourth interview. I interpreted that Shelly’s entire participation in the research project was an opportunity to reflect on her experience. I attributed the increase number of coded instances of self-reflection in the second year to the fact that she now had a year of teaching that served as a reference point to her current teaching activities. This code, *self-reflection*, was directly linked to the GEM activity because all of the requests for her to produce

artifacts that indicated self-reflection were generated by her involvement with the research project.

The code, *support*, remained steady across both sets of interviews; there were 33 examples in the first year's interviews and 35 in the second year's interviews. The findings of this code became important when the coded passages were cross-referenced with the people involved. In the first year's interviews, the code represented 20 quotations connected to people from the GEM program and 13 from Shelly's school. The code represented a reversal of the relationship in the second year's interviews; 21 codes referenced other people from the school and 14 indicated other participants from the GEM program. Shelly began to include references to people from her school community with greater frequency, but her connection to the people from the third space of her professional development community remained intact.

#### *Summary of Interview Findings*

If a willingness to identify and comment on the larger school community was a sign of induction into the culture and climate of the school then every indication from the findings in the second year's interviews was that Shelly had, indeed, been inducted. There was no evidence across all of the interview artifacts that her school provided formal induction for Shelly or any of its new teachers. The findings from all five of the code families indicated that Shelly increasingly referenced her interaction with her school-based colleagues. In the *climate* code family references to *Shelly's school climate* code increased by 21 references from the first year's interviews to the second year's interview. Similar increases occurred in *environmental impact on the teacher* and *responsibility of the school to the teacher*. Shelly was more frequently citing the school's climate and its impact on her as a teacher. The *setting* code family also demonstrated the inward to outward shift. Two codes dramatically dropped, *the summer seminar* and *university*, emphasizing the outward turn. The code that increased, *my school setting*, nearly

doubled from the first set of interviews to the second. As discussed, some of these codes still referenced Shelly's classroom but more demonstrated her attention to the larger school setting. In the *people* code family the drop in reference to *university professors* marked the trend significantly, by dropping from 19 to 1. At the same time, the references to *other teachers* increased from 13 to 32.

The *personal needs* code family marked the shift in focus from inward to outward by the sharp decline that indicated personal needs deficits and an increase in personal needs attributes. The three codes, *felt need as a novice teacher*, *inexperience*, and *insecurity* all declined. Her anxiety diminished and her ability to talk about her growth increased. Codes that marked her strength, especially, *belonging* and *competence* jumped. The code, *belonging*, tripled from 13 to 39 instances. The next code, *competence*, was non-existent in other artifacts and was referenced 14 times in the final interview.

The *professional needs* code family especially demonstrated the same shift in focus in four codes—*interaction with a teacher in her building*, *judgment about other teachers*, *recognizing teacher behavior*, and *need to collaborate with colleagues*. All four recorded Shelly's interaction with other teachers in the building. The code, *need to collaborate with colleagues*, especially demonstrated the shift; it, like the code, *competence*, had no previous reference and was connected to 19 quotations in the final interview of the second year. Other codes in the *professional needs* code family attested to the fact that while Shelly began to mention others in her building more frequently, she still included references to people in the GEM group. In addition, Shelly tied in references to her classroom activities and her students with the references to others in her building. It would be a tragedy if finding support in your own school community meant ignoring or abandoning previous systems of support. Even though

Shelly turned more frequently to her school community, her connection to her classroom and GEM remained strong.

The interviews, like the concept maps and think pieces, demonstrated a shifting focus from what has been described as an inward focus on her preparation, personal experience, and immediate concerns of her classroom toward an outward focus that allowed her to envision her classroom and her performance as a teacher as part of a large school community. Again, the outward shift in focus represented a focus that caused her to include more resources to her support system and not an abandonment of a concern with her performance in the classroom.

### Conclusion of the Results

Even when prompted, Shelly had little to say about formal induction activities at her school. As mentioned previously, her mentor was absent for a significant period of time and she adopted a teacher from her interdisciplinary team as an informal mentor, even though she taught a different subject. Much of her involvement in the larger school community was a result of her work as an assistant coach with the girl's basketball team. This extracurricular assignment provided her with an opportunity to interact with other adults outside her team. Her coaching assignment was the source of most of her conversations with the principal. If the majority of her contact with the principal is non-academic, were other adults in the building supporting her in ways that enhanced her professional development? So, what caused her to return for a second year of teaching? Or did she return because she felt supported personally and support for her growth as a teacher was still a secondary concern?

The findings across the three different data sets demonstrated that Shelly was involved in what has been described as three spaces. The first space was her classroom. The second space was the larger school community. The third and final space was the professional development group provided by her involvement in GEM. This space was the most fragile; as the research

projected concluded, so did the grant that funded GEM. If Shelly remains a teacher, she will always have the first space, a class to teach and it will in all likelihood be connected to a school. A professional development group, however, is not always provided. They are also not necessarily easy to navigate. They are often events or activities that take place outside the school day and with little, if any, monetary compensation for the participating teacher. Yet, in Shelly's case there was ample evidence that her involvement in this third space provided her with much of the support and resources she looked for as she began to teach. Even the think pieces and her interviews provided her with the opportunities to reflect and discuss her growth as a teacher.

When Shelly began as a novice teacher, she demonstrated the excitement of teaching for the first time, but this excitement was accompanied by anxiety as demonstrated across the findings of the three data sets of the first year. Her initial concept map was a demonstration of concerns. It graphically displayed the question "Who will support me and who will be my problems?" The think pieces from the first year also demonstrated her focused attention on her performance in the first space of her classroom. Classroom management, student discipline, and teaching activities all repeated themselves during the first year's data sets. The solutions for those issues were almost always connected, according to her own reports, to colleagues and activities connected with the third space.

It was through data triangulation with the interviews, primarily the second interview of the first year, that Shelly demonstrated that she was connected to other teachers in her building during that first year of teaching. The second place of the larger school community was present in the first year when she was questioned. Most of her voluntary information connected her concerns of the first space, her classroom, with answers from the third space of the GEM activities.

The findings from the three different sets of artifacts connected to the second year demonstrated her turn outward to include the resources of the second space, the larger school community. Over and over again, across the second year's artifacts, the codes indicating her involvement with the second space increased. At the same time, the codes demonstrating her inward focus in the arena of the first space as isolated or connected only to the third space dramatically diminished. The most obvious example was Shelly's concept map from the second year. It was a representation of the second space. Neither the first space of the classroom nor the third space of the GEM program was represented in the drawing. Instead, Shelly as the central figure was shown with a variety of supporting people arching over her. This movement outward continued to develop across the think pieces of the second year. Finally, the set of interviews from her second year demonstrated that Shelly saw her school as a place that could provide support for her efforts in the classroom.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

While it is important to note that the implications from a single case study cannot be generalized to larger populations, Shelly, as a white middle class female, was representative of the largest category of teachers that teach in schools across the United States. In this chapter, I will review the purpose of this dissertation study and the questions that guided it. I will further identify Shelly's teacherly spaces as characterized during the presentation of the analysis in the results. I will suggest how the findings from the study have answered each question. I will also make suggestions for further research surrounding the induction process of novice teachers and their direct involvement in early career professional development. In addition, I will suggest practical implementation for induction policies in schools and school districts.

#### Purpose Of The Study

When my studies and research as graduate student narrowed, I eventually elected to use the professional development group I had developed as the source of my dissertation research. The program was entitled Groups of English Mentors: Developing a Community of Learners Between Novice and Experienced Teachers (GEM). GEM was funded by a Teacher Quality grant and was designed to bring together both novice and experienced English teachers for the mutual benefit of both groups. The program held the potential to assist novice teachers in answering their questions about teaching during their induction period and allowed experienced teachers the opportunity to rejuvenate their practice by engaging in discussions around instruction in the English content area.

This dissertation study situated the problem of induction into the teaching profession around one GEM participant, Shelly, and her experiences. *Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative dissertation study was to investigate a novice teachers' conception of her induction*

*process into the culture and climate in the setting of her first job and as a participant in a collaborative professional development program.*

Shelly was a unique GEM participant in that she was the only teacher, at any level of experience, to participate in both years of the program. As a result, the research looked closely at Shelly's teaching practice as she began her first year and continued into the last semester of her second year. The following research questions guided the study.

1. How do this novice teacher's reports of her experiences and activities in the setting of her first job inform her conception of her induction into the culture and climate of her first job?
2. How does this novice teacher use the activities of the professional development program, GEM, as mediating tools to express her conception of induction during her induction process into the culture and climate of her first job?
3. How does this novice teacher use this conception of induction to navigate her specific induction experience as a beginning teacher?

During her first two years, Shelly participated in three educational settings, her classroom, her school, and GEM. An analysis of how Shelly attempted to spin the plates of all three spaces, as reported through Shelly's participation in the activities of GEM as mediating tools, provided the findings used to answer these questions.

### Shelly's Teacherly Spaces

From my perspective as a participant observer researcher engaged with Shelly over a two-year period time, it became clear that Shelly was learning to function within three *teacherly* spaces. The first space was the classroom in which she taught. Shelly discussed her practice as a teacher in this space in her concept maps, her first and second year think pieces, and all four interviews over both years. She explained classroom activities including—teaching lessons,

classroom preparation, and student discipline. The second space was the culture and climate of the larger school community in which she worked. All beginning teachers, unless they are situated in rare and unique situations inhabit both the first space of the classroom and the second space of the larger school community. Like Shelly, as beginning teachers, they navigate those spaces whether or not others assist them in the school. All teachers experience an induction into the teaching profession. The questions that might be asked of all novice teachers are two fold. First, was a novice teacher's induction intentional and purposeful? Second, what did the novice teacher do to understand and assist that induction? These two questions get at the core of the problems of teacher induction. Namely, do teachers have a formal induction and do they understand it and use it to meet their needs?

As the research questions suggest, Shelly was involved in a third space, a professional development program that was deliberately designed to engage her in discussions around mentoring and induction as well as provide her with the opportunities to reflect on her own induction process. Over a two-year period, Shelly participated in activities—concept maps, think pieces, and interviews—generated by the third space. The first two concept maps and think pieces were designed as a discussion tool for the participants in GEM. They used these activities as a way to present their ideas and frustrations about teaching with their colleagues in the professional development group. Shelly, like many of the novice teachers in the group, often used these occasions to talk about the ideas she encountered as a new teacher in the two spaces previously mentioned. In addition, these activities served to record her induction into the culture and climate of her school and, by extension, represented her involvement with a professional development program. Furthermore, GEM supported an ongoing discussion of her conceptualization of induction during its follow-up sessions. It was through the analysis of Shelly's participation in the GEM activities that I will address the research questions.

### Answering The Questions

At least partial answers can be applied to each of my research questions. As often happens in life, what I originally thought was a logical sequence of the research questions was not the best way to address the data or answer the questions. Now, I am quite sure that the order of the research questions could be rearranged. I will address each question in the chronological order of Shelly's involvement with the context and intent of each question. Of course, any attempt at pure linearity is also arbitrary. Shelly's induction into the teaching profession is a back and forth navigation and exploration of the three teacherly spaces previously discussed in this research study. While the research questions suggested that the context of Shelly's induction was the school, the school, in reality became two spaces as Shelly presented it, her classroom and the wider school community.

Rather than begin this discussion with the first question, I will first discuss *question number two* that addressed Shelly's involvement with the activities of GEM which began before she started teaching in the fall of 2003 and continued into the early spring of 2005. This question explored Shelly's use of GEM activities as mediating tools to navigate and understand her own induction process into the culture and climate of her school. In large measure, chapter 4, the results chapter, was an in depth discussion of how Shelly used the mediating tools of concept maps, think pieces, and interviews to reflect on her induction experiences. I will then turn to a summary of the analysis of these activities to examine the answer to *question number one* that asks how Shelly reports on her conceptualization of induction into the culture and climate of her first job. I will then address the final question, *question number three*, that asked how Shelly used her conceptualization of induction to navigate her specific induction experiences.

*GEM's Mediating Activities In Shelly's Conceptualization Of Induction: Question # 2*

The GEM program, complete with summer seminars and the follow-up activities from both the 2003 and 2004 incarnations, was the third space that Shelly experienced during the first two-years of her induction into the teaching profession. This was a teacherly space that engaged Shelly in professional development from the beginning of her career. The first summer seminar provided a place in which Shelly could pose questions based on the problems and situations she imagined from her experience as a student in public schools, a preservice teacher during her student teaching experience, a student in her courses as an English education student, and from the various tales that she had heard from veteran teachers involved in GEM. In addition, she listened to the questions of other novice teachers. Perhaps most importantly, she discovered that yes, indeed, even experienced teachers had questions and insecurities that they hoped to resolve. For example, Shelly reported the following about an interchange with Mitchell, an experienced teacher:

One of the first things Mitchell said when he sat down was “I don’t think I know how to do this.” You know, not ‘I don’t think I know this’ but ‘I don’t think I have it all together.’ So immediately he knocked a bit of his guard down and let me be able to open up to him when he wrote a think piece. I felt like I could give him some sort of advice and he wouldn’t think, “Who is this? Some new teacher is telling me how to run my class?”

As an experienced teacher Mitchell provided Shelly an opening, an opportunity to share in a collaborative fashion with a colleague. He didn’t expect her to hide behind her inexperience. She perceived that her advice would be welcomed and considered.

This was a different situation than the think pieces collaborations she had experienced with her fellow preservice teachers. The responses in that setting, as Shelly reported, were often moments of commiseration in which answers were offered tentatively:

I felt more comfortable with the UGA group saying, “How, in the world, do I discipline a classroom if I don’t have this?” ... With the UGA group it was just, more of “You’re right. I can’t do it either.”

As preservice teachers, Shelly’s particular group allowed each other the room to be noncommittal. During the GEM sessions, experienced teachers ushered Shelly and other novice teachers into collaborative discussions among “real live” teachers who had their own questions and knew that they had to attempt some solution when they returned to the classroom.

In this third space, a safe space of collaborative professional development among other teachers with a variety of experience levels, Shelly was able to report on her progress as a teacher in the two other *teacherly* spaces of her classroom and her school. From the experiences at her school, she learned that another adult rarely visited her classroom. Her performance in the space of her classroom depended on her own willingness to improve by confronting the problems she encountered. The third space of the GEM activities repeatedly provided activities to measure her own growth and development while she continued to seek answers to her questions.

Shelly reported receiving help during both her first and second year from colleagues at her school. However, she more frequently referenced the advice and collaboration with other teachers from GEM during her first year teaching than she did teachers from her building. In the artifacts collected during her first year, Shelly repeatedly reported using the advice of GEM participants for classroom management, student discipline, and teaching a variety of literary topics. She also shared with this group her initial anxiety about teaching in a school with a mainly African American student population. She maintained a confident air in her school setting

as she began teaching but was able to let down her guard and ask questions in the GEM setting. These questions and concerns were documented in the concept maps, think pieces, and interviews, all of which were activities of the GEM professional development program. These activities became mediating tools for her understanding of induction experience. In addition, other GEM follow-up activities including informal conversations, book group discussions, and discussions of mentoring and inductions practices all added to her developing understanding of induction. The fact that Shelly valued the experience of GEM from the first year was amplified by her willingness to continue her relationship with the program for a second year.

Shelly clearly valued her participation in GEM, as demonstrated by all of the artifacts from both years. Shelly's shift in topic focus, between the artifacts of the first year and those of the second year, indicated her changing conceptualization of induction most dramatically. During the first year, she repeatedly demonstrated that she focused on the first space of her classroom and not the second space of the larger school community. Her personal need to feel confident as a teacher dealing efficiently and appropriately with her students in order to help them learn preoccupied the topics she discussed across the artifacts of the first year. To meet those needs, the first year's artifacts demonstrated her reliance on the participants and the activities associated with GEM.

I interpreted this as Shelly's strong sense of comfort in the familiar. Familiar people, activities, and experiences were sources of support. This reaction is quite similar to what Lortie (1975/2002) framed as the apprenticeship of observation. I would include an apprenticeship of participation as well. From my vantage point as a participant observer and as one of Shelly's university instructors, I watched Shelly participate in a collaborative teacher education program in which she watched four instructors plan and teach together over the course of the year. Group work was encouraged and nurtured. Shelly frequently engaged in think pieces discussions with

other preservice teachers as one of many activities that allowed them to work together during their teacher training. In addition, they were encouraged to adopt reflective practice as part of their teaching persona. She participated in collaborative reflective practices such as think pieces, dialogue journals, and the construction and critique of lesson plans as a preservice student.

Immediately, upon graduation, Shelly was recruited into GEM, a professional development program that privileged these same modes of collaboration. The largest difference between her preservice instruction and GEM was that a significant number of English teachers with a variety of experience levels were part of the mix. Shelly witnessed collaborative interaction and reflection as something that real teachers did and she was participating. This third teacherly space was actually the first space that Shelly experienced as a young teacher. She anxiously engaged in GEM's activities as a way of exploring her anxieties as a first year teacher in the classroom.

The analysis of the artifacts from the second year, beginning with her second concept map, demonstrated a marked shift away from her engagement with the GEM group and the support of family and university professors she anticipated in her first concept map. She used the mediating activities created by the third space—a second concept map, think pieces, and her interviews—to demonstrate her more frequent participation in the second space of her school community. If anything, as she became more comfortable there the first space, her classroom, became a more integrated natural piece of the second space, the larger school community.

In a summary of how Shelly used the activities of GEM as mediating tools, it is important to note several indicators of their use. First, she continued to participate in GEM activities throughout the entire course of both GEM programs. Second, she voluntarily produced the artifacts. Third, the artifacts from the second year demonstrated the importance she placed on gradually including the second space of the larger school community. She began to include

evidence, through the second year's artifacts, that her focus was also beginning to move outward while still working to improve as a classroom teacher.

A brief comparison of the concept maps serves to illustrate how she used the artifacts across both years. For example, the concept maps were not a requirement in either year. The participants were invited to sketch as the group discussed mentoring and induction on the last day of the summer seminar. Only 8 of the 14 participants of the first year contributed a drawing. In the second year 10 of the 13 participants drew a concept map.

Her first map used only two colors, red and black, and included fits and starts. The beginning of a map on the back was clearly visible when looking at her finished product. The first map also had a section that had been scribbled over. It showed the novice teacher posed on a tightrope with a problem blocking her path. A safety net of people was below her. The problem image had a list of labels indicating potential problems she expected to face in her first year. The safety net was accompanied by another list that identified her potential supports. As described earlier, supports included the known people—university instructors, family, and teachers. The first concept map was a presentation of ambiguity, she was not sure what she would encounter as she began to teach.

After looking at and discussing her first concept map for a year, Shelly was anxious to replace it. In the middle of the week during the second GEM program, she asked if we were going to do it again. When we began she gathered up a variety of colored markers. By contrast with the first, the second map was more colorful and organized. The figures were all clearly labeled as people who supported her in her school during her first year as a teacher. There were no false starts; she knew who she expected to help her and she wasted no time depicting problems. At the beginning of her second year of teaching, Shelly had a new conceptualization of induction. During her explanation of the drawing to the group, she indicated the concept map

was a representation of what she planned to do more frequently as a second year teacher. She also used the opportunity to explain that it was also advice to all novice teachers. The central figure was labeled, “You must ask and socialize.” The second space of her school community and culture was central to her conceptualization of induction by the beginning of her second year.

Shelly seemed comforted by the fact that a neutral group of people would listen to her concerns in a non-judgmental manner. Ironically, this steady involvement in an outside professional development group, the third space, might have been the support she needed to make that final turn to participating in the larger school community. GEM, at the very least, provided the avenue through which she reported her growing involvement in the second space of her school.

*Shelly’s Conceptualization of Induction at the Site of Her First Job: Question # 1*

Shelly’s movement from the existing inward forces to explore and “try on” the outward forces existing in her school setting was manifested in the comparison of the two concept maps. It was also indicative of the major findings in the analysis of all artifact groups when compared across the two years of the study. One of issues not adequately considered in the construction of the research question was the variety of places within a school setting that a novice teacher functions. What became increasingly evident from the findings was that Shelly needed to adjust to the climate and culture of her own classroom before she could venture forth into the larger school community. She was in charge of the educational activity in her classroom and was learning to work in that space. Learning to function in the classroom space was often a process of exploration and discovery that exposed her weaknesses.

Without a formal system of induction in place at Shelly’s school to acknowledge that learning to teach was a process, she felt judged. In addition, she lost her mentor early and

depended on the GEM group to provide her support. On several occasions Shelly's reports echoed the following quote, "I think it [GEM] is a good thing to have because in no way are these people connected with hiring me or firing me." She also learned, from associating with GEM participants, that sending too many students to the office was a sign of incompetence that she quickly remedied. During her first year of teaching, Shelly conceptualized induction in two very specific ways. First, questions or looking for help that made you look incompetent were to be answered in the third space, a safe place of the GEM collaborative group. She returned to the familiar as a source of support.

Her second conceptualization of induction took place gradually. Shelly increasingly understood that her involvement with others in the school community could provide her with support. Her relationship with the other girl's basketball coach developed into a friendship where they both supported each other by listening to frustrations and difficulties. This relationship continued into Shelly's second year of teaching. Her association with her interdisciplinary team provided repeated and consistent contact with teachers who were instructing the same group of students. The teacher she selected as a mentor when her assigned mentor disappeared came from this group. While these people were rarely mentioned in the first year of the artifacts, they were the people who emerged as individuals and as a group in the reports from the second year's artifacts. She also volunteered for the climate committee for her second year of teaching and saw that as a proactive move to establish herself as a contributing member of the school community.

Most of Shelly's portrayal of the support she received from the school community was linked to her proactive engagement with the community. Volunteering to work on the climate committee, teaching a remedial course after school, and throwing paper at a colleague during a department meeting in order to finish speaking were all examples of moves Shelly made toward

the community. Even learning that sending students to the office as a last resort after all you could do on your own demonstrated her understanding of the school's culture.

All of this evidence begs the question; does successful induction into the culture and climate of a school depend mainly on the proactive engagement of the novice teacher? If so, perhaps teacher educators and educational researcher should include a course in aggressive proactive behavior designed to teach preservice teachers how to insert themselves into the community. Much of the evidence provided by Shelly suggested this was exactly what she did.

To be fair, her second concept map depicted an array of people who could and did help Shelly throughout her first year. The images were, however, accompanied with a voice bubble that depicted them answering questions and not directly offering advice. The figure of the novice teacher also had a statement written by its side, highlighted with an asterisk, which reads, "What they won't tell you in the orientation, but what you need to figure out." Again, Shelly's conceptualization of induction included the notion that, yes, there was help at the school she worked in but she learned to find it herself.

Shelly's focus on her engagement with the second place of the wider school community increased dramatically during the last interview of the second year. This interview occurred several weeks after her last think piece and in many ways was a concluding commentary on her entire induction process. She reiterated over and over the need to belong and cited several examples of her growing competence as a teacher. I concluded that Shelly felt included in the larger school community despite the difficulty of pointing to any findings that would indicate a substantial systematic induction.

### *Using The Artifacts To Assist Her Induction: Question # 3*

As Shelly prepared to finish her second year as a teacher, she volunteered more episodes about her involvement in the second space of the larger school community. The most vivid

example of how Shelly used the artifacts to demonstrate her shift from the inward focus of her concerns as a classroom teacher to the outward activity of the larger school culture and climate was seen in a side-by-side presentation of her two concept maps. In the first concept map, she presented a problematic image of the induction process. She imagined herself on a tightrope confronted by a problem. As she faced the problem she was unsure exactly who or what would be her problems. According to the image, the safety net was a mass of faceless heads and legs. Both the problem and the safety net were accompanied by a possible list of identities. She underscored the image with the statement, “The things that may be my problems may also be my supporters.” Many experienced teachers may site this statement as an astute statement of truth. The truth was Shelly did not wish to portray an idealistic picture of a school with simple solutions to problems, but she really was unclear about where she would encounter either problems or solutions. Her first concept map was quite astute depicting a complex vision of problems and solutions that await Shelly as she began her teaching career.

The second concept map was a clear answer to the first. It was positive and skipped a portrayal of problems. At the beginning of the second year, she drew a full depiction of people in her school that had provided answers. Each figure included an accompanying voice bubble containing an answer to several questions. She knew where to find many of the answers. The fact that she was still asking questions indicated that she was still growing and seeking solutions to problems along the way. This pattern of recognizing more clearly the value of the support from the outward space of her school, a pattern of an inward to outward shift in focus, was maintained across the artifacts.

A side-by-side comparison of two think pieces also demonstrated how Shelly used the artifacts to reflect on her immediate problems. The first think piece of the first year, and the last

one of her second year were nearly polar opposites in their topics. The first one contained all of the angst of the novice teacher still excited that the opportunity to teach would soon arrive.

The thought of my first day of my first year at the first school I will be all on my own at for the first time is extremely overwhelming. Considering the mentoring them of this week, I should remind myself I am not all on my own.

The first think piece was full of questions as was true across the first year's think pieces. She was comfortable sharing experiences and asking questions that she knew would be read and discussed by other members of GEM. Her think pieces were moments of reflection about her teaching. The think pieces generally captured specific moments with specific students in her classroom. Overtime, especially during the second year, think pieces began to cite examples that increasingly demonstrated her engagement with the larger school community.

The last think piece of the second year was a poignant example that her concerns had expanded beyond the limits of her classroom. This think piece was a detailed discussion of teacher accountability and professional behavior. She was critical of teachers who failed to meet deadlines and failed to hold themselves to the same standards that they would demand from their students. This was a far cry from a teacher who was worried about her first day of teaching as mentioned in her first think piece. The last think piece had a completely different topic than the first but it was still used as a reflective tool in a collaborative setting with teachers she trusted. The think pieces became an important artifact that, as snapshots across time, captured the important concerns that occupied her attention at the moment of their production. At the same time, they remained a right of passage into a collaborative community where her self-reflection was valued.

Balancing the first interview from the first year with the last interview of the second year also demonstrates her growth and shifting conceptualization of induction. They marked her

concerns and indicated in what direction she gazed as she imagined future problems and issues. As has been mentioned throughout the study, Shelly valued the collaborative activity of GEM as a collective of people who would listen to her and, rather than judge her, offer her immediate feedback. Perhaps more importantly, it was a space where her opinion was also valued. As documented in the first interview during the summer of 2003, Shelly began to see herself, as someone who contributed to the group. Even though she frequently framed GEM as a place where she was comfortable offering up her own problems, she also reported on moments during the first summer when experienced teacher listened to her ideas.

When I was analyzing the findings from the last interview, I was repeatedly struck with how often she used the interview to reaffirm her sense of belonging in the second space. She felt that she was a part of the school. She cited her coaching, teaching a remedial class, participating on the climate committee, developing a novel unit with all seventh grade English teachers, and working on a new discipline plan with the entire seventh grade core of teachers as evidence of her involvement. She prized the fact that she was a friend with the police officer; a relationship that she explained meant that he did not see her or her students as a problem in the school.

During the last interview, she also repeatedly talked about the desire to collaborate with others in the building. As Shelly's collaborative episodes with GEM were ending, she was replacing them with activities in her school. She cited past collaborative efforts in the school and focused more on the plans that her interdisciplinary team had for the future. As the interviewer, I felt a little bit like I was being dismissed. Indeed, as a participant observer I was leaving the research site and GEM was dissolving as funding ended and as I finished my graduate studies. Instead of me offering apologies for leaving, I was getting the message that she felt fine moving on. She was finding the support she needed within the climate and culture of her school.

The interviews functioned for me as means to gather data and conduct my studies. Shelly used them as reflection and as an educational check up. She told stories about her problems and how she resolved them. When we started the project I was a source of information. I was her former teacher, a professional development instructor/facilitator, and a researcher with whom she graciously shared her beginning struggles and concerns. I represented her inward turn to the familiar; I existed firmly in the third of her teacherly spaces. During the final interview, I felt most of these roles drift away. I was now a colleague who was privileged to listen to her progress and discuss the issues of the day that still hovered around edges of her practice. I was, however, not an integral part of the second space, other colleagues who taught down the hall or on the other side of the building were increasingly becoming familiar sources of support.

### Implications

As a result of this study several implications for further research and for implications for induction practices and policy surfaced. I will first discuss possible research topics and then outline possible implications for practice and policy.

#### *Implications For Future Research*

Several lines of research are suggested by the research of this dissertation study. One implication is that instead of focusing research on the induction of first year teachers, who continually leave the profession in high numbers, the focus could shift to a study of second year teachers who have chosen to stay teaching. There is significant research that novice teacher who receive high quality mentoring stay in the profession in higher numbers (Serpell & Bozeman, 1999; Wang & Odell, 2002). Yet, there are still teachers who stay without such mentoring. What are the experiences of second year teachers who received little or no mentoring and still feel inducted into climate and culture of their schools? Where do they get the support they need? Or do they just stick out?

If mentoring alone is not the magic bullet to insure successful transition from preservice training into the teaching ranks, what might be? Ingersoll and Smith (2004) suggest that a bundling of formal induction activities produces much higher teacher retention rates than dependence on an individual component, like mentoring. In fact, when novice teachers are exposed to higher numbers of induction components the retention rates in those instances are higher. The second implication from the investigation is to study other individual components of induction. Professional development that specifically targets and includes novice teachers could be more thoroughly studied. Researchers might look at programs like GEM that deliberately seek to engage novice teachers in hands-on collaborative professional development as they began teaching with continued support throughout the school year. Studies on professional development might also include an analysis of yearlong orientation meetings provided at individual schools or school districts. Another professional development program possibility is a study group designed to engage novice teacher with experienced teachers at their schools over the duration of the school year. The GEM professional development model is certainly a model for such professional development activity.

Shelly's experience, as well as that of other novice middle level teachers, suggests looking more closely at middle level interdisciplinary teams as a formal induction tool to assist novice teachers (D. L. Bickmore et al., 2005) in the culture and climate of their particular schools. Middle level educational philosophy values the collaborative interaction of teachers to support the high academic achievement of middle level students (National Middle School Association, 2001, 2003). Another possible research study might be a large study comparing the attrition rates of novice teachers fully involved in middle level interdisciplinary teams with novice teachers who are teaching in more isolated and independent circumstances. This

investigation might help determine the value of systematic sustained involvement with experienced teacher as novice teachers begin their careers.

This research study investigated whether or not Shelly was inducted into the culture and climate at the school of her first teaching assignment. It was not a study of that specific culture or climate, but whether or not she felt like she was ushered into the environment. Furthermore, it was not a study or analysis of whether or not being inducted in that particular climate and culture was a good thing. This leads to another implication for further study. Should teachers be systematically inducted into poor teaching environments and what is the effect of their teaching if they are? This question leads to another. Who determines what is a good school in terms of culture and climate? It might be argued that low performing schools have the highest need for new teachers, but that these schools are low performing because of a negative culture and climate. What would be the purpose of systematically inducting teachers into such a climate?

Another dilemma of induction is the instance in which a school may indeed be labeled as high performing. The school may have several indicators of success: a high graduation rate, high tests scores, and high collective grade points averages, all of which, in many instances, may be the result of social, economic, and other environmental factors. Yet, outside observers may consider the teaching practices of the school or of specific departments to be contrary to recognized appropriate teaching strategies. What would be the effect of induction into such a school on the practices and philosophies of a novice teacher with an education that privileged different practices? Case studies could certainly be done to address such issues but large-scale studies would be difficult. Tracking the type of education that a large group of novice teacher received as well as determining the culture and climate of the large numbers of schools would be a difficult task, but one that potentially could be valuable.

*Implication For The Practice And Policy Of Induction*

One of the most obvious implications for practice within schools should be to make absolutely explicit what resources are available to the novice teacher. Qualified mentors should be assigned to novice teachers to introduce them to the culture and climate of the school and assist them with teaching and planning activities. In addition, schools should provide a systematic method of involving novice teachers in collaborative professional development opportunities throughout the entire school year. Several educational researchers suggest that involving novice teachers in such professional development activities encourages their professional growth (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Feiman-Nemser, 2003). It is an obvious statement, but novice teachers often do not know what they do not know. They may hear good advice and not know what to do with it. Working alone in isolation does not lead the novice teacher to methods of improvement. Elmore suggests “privacy of practice produces isolation; isolation is the enemy of improvement” (2004, p. 67). This is why professional development opportunities should be specifically embedded in the work place and the novice teacher should be allowed to interact with the people. Novice teachers should be allowed to share their emerging practice with the people who support them in a reciprocal relationship.

Another implication is that schools should provide the novice teachers with collaborative discussions around educational issues with teachers other than the assigned mentor. It would be better to establish them in a community of learners rather than as a project to be fixed. To this end a systematic meeting of all new teachers and their mentors focused on professional readings and discussions of education literature appropriate to the school setting might be helpful.

Novice teachers often feel that they are being observed and critiqued by the principal and other teachers responsible for overseeing their teaching performance and improvement. This is what I consider justifiable paranoia. They are, indeed, being watched and evaluated. Their job is

on the line and their evaluations count. I am not suggesting that the observations and evaluations should not be conducted; they should be. Some novice teachers should leave the profession and seek other more suitable employment. What I am again suggesting is that the novice should be observed often and also allowed to observe other teachers. They should be observed by people who are present to specifically evaluate them and by people who are there to help them. The difference between the two observations should be explicit. The opportunity to be observed and then discuss the results of that observation with someone who is helping them would serve to include them in professional discussions about their own teaching practices.

One final suggestion for schools is to provide the entire group of novice teachers with a central mentor who does not have the responsibility to specifically supervise them. Monthly or quarterly meeting of all of the novice teachers would provide them with the opportunity to share their feelings of both frustrations and success with others in similar situations. The neutral mentor can also serve as arbitrator in the relationship between a novice and a mentor when the relationship is not working. Many beginning teachers have had many successful experiences with school as students. They are college graduates and may be surprised by the difficulties of teaching. If their mentor is in the position of constantly pointing out the professional areas that need improvement, a neutral mentor might be needed to meet the novice teacher's personal needs so that they novice experience immediate successes as well.

This role of the neutral mentor is similar to the role that GEM group played during Shelly's induction. The collaborative group of teachers offered a safe, nonjudgmental arena in which Shelly could bring her concerns and listen to advice. Upon further analysis as a familiar experienced teacher from Shelly's past educational experiences I functioned in the role of a neutral mentor. Shelly knew she was participating in a researcher project but she freely shared concerns and problems with me. At several points in every interview, I functioned as an

experienced teacher offering advice from my own experience and ceased, for a moment, being an interviewer.

### Conclusions

Looking outward did not mean that Shelly was neglecting the students in her classroom. The inward/outward binary, established throughout this paper, was a way to explain where Shelly focused her attention for support as she began to teach. Shelly's concerns were placed squarely on her practice as a teacher in her classroom environment. This has been repeatedly described as Shelly's first teacherly space. While growing as a teacher she looked inward for support to what was described as familiar people, places, and experiences as she tried to provide for her personal and professional needs as a novice teacher as she identified them (Gold, 1996; Wang & Odell, 2002). This was a centripetal pull focusing her attention inward and in many ways disregarding any pull to the outward influence of the school.

Shelly was lucky. There is very little research that novice teachers are engaged in purposeful professional development; despite the call from several educational researchers that such involvement in a variety of professional development formats would be beneficial (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Feiman-Nemser, 2003; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Johnson & Kardos, 2002). Teacher isolation has repeatedly surfaced as a problem for the novice teacher (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2002). Regardless of what was happening in her school, Shelly, through a collaborative professional development program was provided with a support system throughout her first two years of teaching. The community was established in the summer before she began and had periodic opportunities for the group to gather and share their experiences and feel supported throughout the school year. A third teacherly space existed and Shelly identified it as a source of support before she began teaching. As demonstrated in the presentation of the findings, Shelly repeatedly used the activities of the GEM program as a mediating tool. For most of her

first year of teaching, the third space and the people associated with it were her reservoir of support.

During the second year of Shelly's teaching, the second space of the culture and climate of the school becomes increasingly more important. Initially, she reported that the school environment could be an intimidating place with contradictory messages. She was not wrong to establish in her first concept map that people and things that could and should be her supports might also be her problems. Sure, you can send kids to the office but if you do it too often it sends a message about you as a teacher. In department meetings it was difficult to have a voice and be heard. She felt more accepted as a coach in a middle school setting than she initially did as a teacher. She discovered that her teaching was rarely observed and that most of her issues could be discussed in the neutral setting of GEM. She worked hard and freely shared her concerns. She discovered that most of teaching practices actually got easier. She could plan lessons complete with goals and rationales faster than she ever imagined as a preservice teacher. She survived her first year and began her second.

Shelly's second concept map demonstrated that she had found a way to generate support at her school. She found that if she was friendly and asked the right questions she generally received answers. Shelly's confidence grew and she felt less vulnerable in the school environment. As she felt more comfortable in the first space of her classroom she turned outward for support from the immediate environment of the school. Eventually, she was not only comfortable seeking support; she was also comfortable critiquing what she felt were the faults of her colleagues. She was irked when she stayed late at night to meet a deadline before the winter break only to find out when she returned in January that many teachers simply failed to comply and the deadline was extended.

In many ways, the centripetal force of the third space pulling her inward to the familiar continued to lose ground to the centrifugal force of the second space that pulled her outward toward the influences and support of the school's climate and culture. It was unfortunate that these two forces were characterized as oppositional. In the ideal induction of a novice teacher support would be abundant from a variety of sources. Instead of feeling pulled from one to the other, all of the supports ought to swirl around the first space of the classroom. The novice teacher should be able to select advice and support from all sources in an attempt to create the appropriate tools to meet the specific needs of the moment.

As suggested in the implications for practice and policy, school should make it absolutely clear to the novice teacher what supports are available and how to access them. The novice teacher is often in the situation of not knowing what they don't know. Formalized methods of placing novice teachers with the people who can be their supports throughout the induction process should be automatic.

Teacher educators, along with all the other instructions that they give preservice teachers, should provide them with the questions they can ask to get the help they need. Instructing the preservice teacher to remember what they have learned and engage in meaningful reflective practice is difficult to do in isolation. A novice teacher can only engage in individual navel gazing for so long. They need to step back into what they learned in theory before they had any practice and reevaluate what that theory has to offer now that they have experience. Formalized professional development could be more deliberately directed towards novice teachers and supported by local schools, school districts, state offices of education, and institutions of higher education.

Obviously, mentoring is not enough. Attrition rates, over the last twenty years have remained high, while the discussions, and suggestions, and implementation of mentoring have

increased. Nevertheless, Shelly survived and thrived with very little if any formal mentoring from the school in which she worked. The argument could be made that her formal involvement in a professional development activity was her mentor. She was able to voice her concerns and problems. In addition, she was able to participate in collaborative discussion about educational issues with experienced teachers that in turn allowed her to practice being experienced. In the collaborative activities of GEM, Shelly went through the motions that helped her build the skills to navigate her own induction and to participate as member of a teaching community.

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