



西方研究与理论 视角下的银川中小学 新教师培训

NEW TEACHER INDUCTION IN CHINA:
A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY OF PRACTICE AND EXPERIENCE IN
YINCHUAN CITY THROUGH THE LENS OF WESTERN LITERATURE
AND THEORIES AND CONCEPTS THEREIN

韩 煦 / 著



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韩 煦

1984年出生于宁夏银川，2006年毕业于天津外国学大学英语学院，获英语语言文学（国际信息方向）学士学位，于2006年赴英国爱丁堡留学，先后获得英国爱丁堡大学研究型教育硕士和教育博士学位，留学期间，担任爱丁堡大学教育学院研究生助教，获得了宝贵的教学经验。2013年回国至今，任宁夏大学国际教育学院讲师、国际项目部主任。在英期间，通过课程学习和研究实践，对质性研究方法产生了浓厚兴趣，认同解释主义(Interpretivism)对传统实证主义(Positivism)在社会研究方法意识形态和方法论方面的批判，并在导师指导下，探索叙事研究(Narrative Research)和灵活的叙事分析方法(Narrative Analysis)在教师职业化、教师职业身份认同以及职业发展研究中的可行性探究及应用方式。

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韩煦 著

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序

PREFACE

The current Teachers Law of the People's Republic of China came into effect on 1 January 1994. The extensive changes that have taken place in the PRC since then have, if anything, only deepened the demands made on the country's school teachers, who are ever more pivotal to ensuring an appropriate balance between change and continuity in society.

The research at the centre of this book adopted an internationally informed perspective to examine the experiences of newly qualified teachers in Yinchuan city as they progressed through their professional induction in their first year of teaching. One of the aims of the research was to complement other emerging studies of teacher induction that have tended to focus on Beijing and Shanghai.

By providing newly qualified teachers in Yinchuan city with an opportunity to give their own accounts of their experiences, hopes and aspirations, Han Xu not only documents the impacts that the first year of teaching has on the young teachers and how these affect their perspectives but also how mentors, school principals and local education officials see and respond to the resultant changes.

Thus, individual narrative accounts of the experience of the first year of classroom teaching interact with both insights into education officials interpretation of policy and with the expressed concerns that school principals and mentors have with the demands of the curriculum and subject knowledge requirements.

This book will therefore be of considerable interest to a wide range of readers including not only student teachers themselves but also school principals, mentors,

local and regional education officials and policy makers at the national level.

I am delighted to see Han Xu' s work published and very pleased indeed to have been associated with the research on which it is based.

Professor Brian Martin
Former Director of Quality
The Moray House School of Education
The University of Edinburgh
Scotland

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Equally, my thanks go to Professor Jim O'Brien for guiding me in my master's studies, for encouraging me to embark on the PhD journey, and for inspiring me in the deliberation about my area of research through his own work and conversations.

I would like to express my gratitude to all the participants of this study for sharing their stories with me and for their interests in my work, without them this thesis could not have been written.

Special thanks also to friends back in China, my friend Neil Gardner, and my dear colleagues at Moray House who have always believed in me and have made my life in Edinburgh even more enjoyable.

Finally, I owe thanks to my family, especially my parents, on whom I depend for so much and for so long. I hope that they will be proud of my work.

Abstract

The importance of designing and delivering comprehensive induction programmes for newly qualified school teachers (e.g. Draper and O'Brien, 2006) is widely accepted. In China, ongoing curriculum reform and teacher professionalization require such programmes to address issues such as teacher turnover, teacher performance and student learning outcomes. This thesis reports on the findings of a PhD project exploring induction of newly qualified teachers in Yinchuan city, China. The project centred on a qualitative case study involving new teachers, mentoring teachers, school principals and local education officials.

Against a background review of the relevant induction policies and provision, topic-focussed interviews were conducted in 2009–10 on two separate occasions in their first year of teaching with 23 new secondary school teachers from different subject departments across 7 schools of various type, and with 6 local education officials, and 17 school principals and mentoring teachers.

Drawing on an autobiographical approach, personal accounts from the participating teachers were subject to narrative analysis to explore the extent to which teachers' perspectives changed during the first year of teaching. The conditions under which perspectives were more likely to change were also considered and three main themes emerged: job motivation, self-image and subjective educational theory. Within each of these themes, sub-themes with respect to the relational context in which teachers' worked were identified as contributing to developing teachers' professional identity.

By using a voice-centred relational analytical method to allow flexibility in taking advantage of different types of narrative analysis methods, the data revealed interesting issues concerning new teachers' expectations and perceptions of the teaching profession and the induction programme offered. The narratives were further explored based on the theoretical considerations of teacher's professionalism, early professional learning (McNally, 2004) and various factors influencing teachers' professional identity (Day and Gu, 2007). This study aims to deepen and further the emerging studies on teacher induction in China which mainly focused on large-size cities such as Shanghai and Beijing, and to identify some of the key characteristics of induction programmes by locating the study in the unique context and essential conditions of Yinchuan city, a medium-size city in China. It also attempts to benefit from a narrative approach and innovative analytical methods which give voice to the participants which hopefully would contribute to a more humanistic approach in looking at the phenomenon of new teacher induction in China.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1. Statement of the Problems

Beginning teacher induction has attracted increasing attention across the globe in recent years (Berliner and Tikunoff, 1976; Calderhead, 1992; Draper, Fraser and Taylor, 1997; Goodson, 1992; Lo, 2000; Tickle, 2000; McNally, 2006). Studies by such as Lacey (1977), Goodson (1994), Kelchtermanns and Ballet (2002), McNally (2006) have revealed problems and areas for improvement in the process of continuing to learn to teach when in employment. Many researchers are concerned with the survival needs of beginning teachers and the effects of induction on beginning teacher performance, retention and student learning (Gold, 1996; Smith and Ingersoll, 2004). As Whisnant, Elliott and Pyncheon (2005) point out, even beginning teachers who have gone through the best preparation are in need of quality support as they need to be able to respond to the constant challenges of their profession. And, beginning teachers are more likely to experience burnout and eventually leave the profession if they feel that the support is inadequate (Strong, 2008).

Researchers also focus on the socialisation process that melds beginning teachers with the established culture of teaching and schooling system (Schempp, Sparkes, and Templin, 1990; Goodson, 1994). These studies advocate a broader focus looking beyond solely ‘practice’ into teachers’ lives and the context in which they work. Thus, researchers have addressed issues such as the vulnerability of beginning teachers (Bullough, 1995), the micro – politics of beginning teacher

socialisation (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002), contextual factors that influence teachers' work and effectiveness (Day and Gu, 2007).

Attention has also been paid to induction as a comprehensive process of systematic support and assessment and to the characteristics of effective induction programmes across different contexts (Christie, Draper and O'Brien, 2003; McNally, 2006; Britton, Paine, Pimm and Raizen, 2003). Britton, Raizen, Paine and Huntley (2003) suggest that beginning teachers tend to have more needs than teacher induction programmes address and they thus call for (a) more variety of induction activities that allow individual and local flexibility, and (b) more extensive research into the process of induction.

Features of studies dominant in the Western English – language literature include the conceptualisation of the teaching profession as beyond technicality and the recognition of the multi-faced and multi-dimensional nature of professional learning and development for beginning teachers (Hargreaves, 1998; McNally, Boreham, Cope and Stronach, 2009). For China, the extensive changes of recent decades, the education reforms linked to these changes and the declared importance of education to China's future together with the disparity between regions due to economic, cultural and historical factors make the country an interesting site for inquiry into teacher induction. In addition, increasing awareness of the need for a humanistic approach in looking at teaching indicates that research is required in this sphere (Huang, 2004; Lo, 2000; Xu, 2009). This study will therefore attempt to explore existing induction practice in China, through a case study in one local setting. In doing so, it will draw on and at the same time critique the Western English language literature that dominates both research and discourse on teacher induction, worldwide.

1.2. Purpose and Significance of the Study

The term 'induction' is relatively new to Chinese teachers and as a concept it is largely imported from Western literature (Ma, 1992). Of course, schools in China have a tradition of developing and implementing in-service training activities