BEGINNING TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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The process of becoming a teacher is considered to be a part of teachers professional development The first section of the article describes the general nature of this development which is used as the framework for a longitudinal study on beginning teachers professional development The second section reports on the outcomes of this study which focussed on the development of teachers during their first four years of service Based on the outcomes of the study an experimental inservice programme for beginning teachers was developed which is described in the last section of the paper

The education and training of teachers, the teacher's probationary period, and early teaching experience cannot be considered in isolation from the teaching career as a whole Considering the teacher's career as a coherent whole, from initial education and training to retirement, a development in the teacher's professional way of thinking and acting during his or her career is obvious Professional development deals with the changes which teachers experience throughout their careers with respect to their functioning in practice (job skills, knowledge, and behaviours), their attitudes, expectations, job satisfaction and concerns, and career perspectives

At certain moments in a teacher's career, a coherent set of changes takes place in both the teacher's thinking about the profession and ways of practising These changes are both qualitative and quantitative in nature Such a development is not a simple, spontaneous process, but the outcome of a complex interaction between the individual and the various environments in which he or she participates Therefore, the nature of the teacher's professional development is located in the interaction between the teacher's own personal environment and the professional environment in which he or she works The teacher's personal environment is defined as being the factors in personal life that influence his or her professional functioning (e g , family, leisure activities, participation in non-professional organizations, individual dispositions, life stage) The

teacher's professional environment consists of several groups of persons with which he or she is confronted in the practice of the profession (colleagues, students, school administration, school board, local authorities, and parents) Each group has its own expectations concerning teachers' professional behaviour and will try to influence its development

Though the term 'development' denotes internally guided rather than externally imposed changes, we see professional development as being the resultant of a learning process which is directed at acquiring a coherent whole of knowledge, insights, attitudes, and skills that a teacher needs for the everyday practice of his or her profession[1] The learning process is life-long, every teacher is constantly confronted with new situations and challenges that provide opportunities to learn Learning is not only the result of schooling activities, it is also, and sometimes almost exclusively, determined by environmental and/or personal factors Preservice education is intended only to start the learning process Once the process is started, teachers have to maintain it on their own In this situation, education authorities can offer only support or guidance

This article presents research carried out on the process of professional development of beginning teachers and its implications for pre- and inservice education The first section is focussed on theoretical considerations, i e , the process of teachers' professional development In addition, a survey of the various stages in that developmental process are described The second section describes research on the professional development of beginning teachers, while the third section deals with the consequences of the research findings for the inservice training of beginning teachers

THE PROCESS OF THE TEACHER S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Views on the Teacher's Professional Development

Literature in the field of teachers' professional development reflects diverse views on the extent to which that development is influenced by individual and/or institutional factors (Feinman-Nemser & Floden, 1986) Broadly speaking, three views can be distinguished in the field In one view, professional development is considered to be mainly determined by the individual teacher's

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[1] This coherent whole of knowledge insights opinions attitudes and skills is often referred to as 'teacher perspectives The concept perspectives was originally used by Becker Greer and Hughes (1961) and was introduced to the field of teacher education by Lacey (1977) and by Tabachnic and Zeichner (1984) In our interpretation of the concept perspectives comprise both ideas and actions

characteristics, dispositions, and capabilities This view is referred to as 'the individual developmental paradigm' In a second view, institutional factors, such as education and training, schooling, and the expectations of the professional environment are considered to determine the teacher's professional development This view is referred to as 'the normative developmental paradigm' A third view considers the teacher's professional development to be the resultant of interactions between the teacher's individual characteristics and the institutional constraints of the professional environment This view is referred to as 'the interactional developmental paradigm' These views are not mutually exclusive, rather, each represents a different emphasis

In the first view, the individual teacher's characteristics are the central issues Good teaching is described in terms of such personality factors as autonomy, tolerance, flexibility, empathy, and understanding of individual differences This concept can also be found in various forms of humanistic education and teacher education (see Combs, Blume, Newman, & Wass, 1972, Simpson & Gray, 1976) Professional development in this view focuses on the way individual teachers learn, in interaction with their environments, to structure their role so that all individuals participating in the teaching and learning process (teachers and students) will function at an optimal level The key concept often used in this context is 'self-realization' In this view, supervision strategies will play an important role in the teacher's learning process

In the second view, the central issue is prospective- and/or beginning-teachers' adaptation to the attitudes, opinions, values, norms, and skills which exist among a particular group of teachers, students, school management, and parents, who together form the school community In this context, concepts such as 'teacher socialization' and 'professional socialization' are often used The teacher is seen as selectively acquiring the values, attitudes, interests, skills, and knowledge of the professional group of which he is, or seeks to become, a member (Lacey, 1977) The key question for the teacher becomes how does one master in the most effective way the norms, values, attitudes, skills, and knowledge of the professional environment to which one belongs?

Professional environment can be understood in a limited fashion — i e , as limited to a certain school environment — but it can also be understood in a much broader fashion, as the profession as such In the latter sense, much research has been carried out on the teacher's professional attitudes, knowledge, and skills, as for example in the competency-based teacher-education movement (Houston, 1974) Basic to all such research is a belief in the existence of a set of value-free effective, teaching, and management skills which can easily be handled by all teachers for all subjects (Brophy, 1979, Gage, 1972, Heath &

Nielson, 1974, Houston, 1974, Potter, 1973) The identification of effective
teacher behaviours is based on both an indepth analysis of the teacher's role(s)
and task(s) (Heathers, 1968) and on a knowledge of effective teacher behaviour
as described in empirical research Professional development is directed at the
improvement of the individual teacher's repertory by either acquiring new skills
or by improving already existing ones

In the third view of professional development, such development is
considered to be a process that is not exclusively determined by either the
individual's characteristics or the professional environment Rather, it is seen as
the resultant of a process of mutual interaction between the prospective- and/or
beginning-teacher and the environment in which he or she functions
professionally (Vonk, 1984b) If one adopts interaction as the driving force of a
teacher's professional development, it is obvious that when a teacher enters a
new professional environment, both the teacher and the environment will
change The key learning question in this option for the teacher is how do I learn
to cope in the most effective way with the norms, values, skills, and knowledge
current in the school in which I am becoming a teacher?

A variant on the interactive developmental paradigm was adopted in the
research reported in this paper The professional development of teachers was
considered to be the result of learning processes, directed towards the acquisition
of an interrelated whole of knowledge, insights, attitudes, and skills which a
teacher needs for the day-to-day adequate practice of his or her profession in a
given school environment Thus, both the individual growth of the teacher and
his or her acquisition of expertise must be considered within the framework of
a particular school environment Furthermore, it is assumed that, regardless of
how the interactions between (beginning) teachers and the environment take
place, the interactions result in a substantial change in the teacher's opinions,
knowledge, attitudes, and skills The environment, on the other hand, only
changes a little as a result of these interactions

Phases in Teachers Professional Development

In the small number of systematic studies which have appeared concerning
the process of a teacher's professional development, seven phases may be
distinguished in a teacher's career

(i) *Pre-professional phase* The pre-professional phase of a teacher's career
encompasses the period of education typically associated with initial college or
university preparation leading to a teacher certificate However, the education
of teachers for their formal role actually begins long before they enrol in a
teacher-preparation programme Prospective teachers have been watching their

own teachers for at least 16 years One might expect that during this time they would have developed strong perceptions of the scope and nature of the teacher's role Whether these perceptions hold or not during initial teacher education is questionable On the other hand, research shows that many teacher educators promote through their way of acting the adoption of traditional perceptions of the teacher's role (Voorbach, 1985)

(ii) *Threshold phase* The threshold phase describes the first year when the beginning teacher is confronted with all the responsibilities of the teaching profession Many have described this stage as the 'survival' period of a teacher's career, when their concerns focus on the day-to-day mastery of their new job (Ryan, 1986, Veenman, 1984, Vonk, 1984a) Teachers in this phase strive for acceptance by students, their colleagues, and their school principals In looking at cross-cultural similarities in beginning-teachers' experiences, Veenman (1984) describes the first year of teaching as 'reality shock' He identified eight problems perceived most often by first-year teachers classroom discipline, motivating students, dealing with individual differences, assessing students' work, contacts with parents, the organization of class work, insufficient teaching materials and supplies, and problems of individual students (see also Vonk, 1984a) Teachers may experience these problems at several points during their careers as they move from one grade level to another or when changing school More experienced teachers will usually master these problems very quickly

(iii) *The phase of growing into the profession* Once teachers have overcome the hurdles of the threshold phase, their attention will tend to become focussed on improving their skills and competencies (Vonk, 1984a) During this period, teachers seek and try out new materials, methods, and teaching strategies (Vonk & Schras, 1987) Schnacke, Martray, and Adams (1982) note that this is the phase at which teachers are typically most open to suggestions and will be eager to attend workshops and conferences However, they may also overestimate their level of teaching skill

(iv) *The first professional phase* Teachers in their first professional phase perceive themselves as highly competent and good teachers They experience a high level of overall job satisfaction and constantly seek new challenges to enrich their job At this stage, teachers are often helpful in identifying appropriate inservice education activities for their schools (Burke, 1987) Some teachers are able to maintain a high level of enthusiasm, as they move into career maturity as senior teachers, bypassing the subsequent career frustration and stagnation that others will experience Who are these thrivers? Allain (1985) believes they are teachers who derive profound intrinsic enjoyment from student

contact They are also the ones who are most often identified as mentors by younger, less experienced teachers   .

(v) *Phase of reorientation* Disillusionment with the teaching profession, frustration with the day-to-day demands of the job, and the lack of a balanced career perspective mark the phase of reorientation in a teacher's career Job satisfaction tends to sink to a career low and some teachers will succumb to job burnout (Prick, 1985) This phase has been called the crossroads of a teacher's career (Schnacke et al , 1982) Prick, in his study, identifies the period as mid-career perspective It is the point at which a sense of increasing isolation and decreasing support will force many teachers to leave the profession The way in which teachers in this phase will solve their problems with respect to their career perspective is very important for their further functioning in professional life

(vi) *The second professional phase* Teachers in the phase of reorientation have resigned themselves to entrapment In dealing with this problem, a teacher may either continue to feel bitter, cynical, and pessimistic or may try to develop a new professional perspective Those who describe the first form of adaptation often refer to this phase as the 'rusting' phase Teachers put in a full day's work but the joy and commitment to the job that once was there eludes them (Jorde, 1982) Teachers caught in this phase often tend to be passive and may appear to be just going through the motions, they also tend to complain frequently and are difficult to motivate Teachers who adopt the second strategy of adaptation, on the other hand, rekindle their enthusiasm for the profession and develop new activities

(vii) *The phase of running down* In this phase, teachers prepare to leave the profession For some, this can be a pleasant, reflective experience, others may feel bitter and resentful at being forced to stop working This phase may span several years or be as short as a few months During it, the teaching load may be gradually reduced (in the Netherlands, for example, starting at the age of 55) Early retirement at about the age of sixty is often taken

Though in this section I have considered all the stages in the teacher's career, in the next part, I will deal only with the threshold phase and the phase of growing into the profession

RESEARCH ON BEGINNING TO TEACH

The research reported in this section is part of a long-term research programme in which the process of becoming a teacher is examined The programme was started in 1980 and consists of various parts The first part

(1980-1982) was an in-depth analysis of the problems of a group of 20 beginning teachers and their professional development during their first year of teaching (threshold period) (Vonk, 1982, 1983, 1984a) The second part of the programme (1983-1985) was a follow-up study of the professional development of the same group of teachers during their second to fifth years of service (Vonk & Schras, 1987) The third part (1985-1987) involved the development of material for an inservice course for beginning teachers This was done at the request of the Ministry of Education and Science in the Netherlands and had as its aim the development of materials for an inservice programme for beginning and senior teachers in schools who were responsible for the guidance of their younger colleagues The material, which was concentrated around a number of topics or problem areas, was written and tested in an experimental inservice course In the following paragraphs I will provide a brief description of the programme

The Threshold Period

The objectives of the research were, firstly, to collect data concerning the experiences of a group of beginning teachers so as to establish insight into the problems of everyday school life and, secondly, to help beginning teachers to analyse the problems which they met in their particular environment and to solve the problems or to cope with them Space does not permit a detailed description of the research I will descr be briefly the research procedure and the results of an in-depth analysis of teachers' problems

A structured open diary was developed in which teachers could report on their everyday experiences (Vonk, 1983) The choice of an open diary was based on the principle that we wanted to know which experiences were important for the teachers Diaries, however, can convey only part of the reality of the life of the beginning teacher Hence, a student questionnaire was also developed The aim of the questionnaire was to collect information from students about the teachers' behaviour The questionnaire contained questions relating to five topics students' opinions about the content taught by the teachers, the teacher's instructional skills, the teacher's communication skills, the teacher-student relationship, and classroom climate

The collection of data took place during three periods of ten consecutive days The first period was in the first half of September (the beginning of term), the second period was about the end of November and the third was at the end of February and beginning of March Teachers completed their logbooks each day and sent them to the investigators A daily report was considered necessary to gain insight into day-to-day problems and how problems arose At the end of

each of the three periods of the study, students in two classes completed the questionnaire As soon as the diaries and questionnaires were completed, they were analysed On the basis of this information, an interview was conducted with each teacher The interview had two purposes The first was to clarify and complete data in the diaries (the information-collection function) and the second was to help reach solutions for the problems encountered by teachers (guidance function)

In this way, data were obtained for two early comparable case studies The continuous comparison of the case-study method, developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), was used to come to more general conclusions Reports from the diaries and the interviews were divided into statements Each statement was then analysed and classified

As a result of this part of the research three major problem areas in the first-year teacher's professional development were identified

(i) Knowledge, attitudes, and skills with respect to the teacher's functioning at the classroom level relating to

(a) Curriculum Lack of flexibility in dealing with subject-matter, lack of familiarity with the content of textbooks and sequencing of material within the curriculum, lack of familiarity with differences in students' level of abstraction, misjudging the quantity of subject-matter which could be taught in one period problems with the translation of subject-matter contents from academic level to the students level of knowledge, starting lessons for students on a totally new subject, having easy problems, assignments, or games available when a class finished its activities earlier than planned

(b) Classroom management The organization of teaching and learning activities in mixed-ability groups the organization of class teaching (gaining attention, starting instruction, correcting homework), dealing with student's seat work, dealing with the last periods of the day and of the week, pupil control (how to react to commotion in the class, punitive measures, establishing and maintaining rules), problems with student motivation and participation

(c) Teaching methods Experimentation with alternatives, variation in methods, etc

(ii) Knowledge, attitudes, and skills with respect to the teacher's functioning in his or her contacts with (individual) students relating to participation in student guidance and in dealing with students' deviant behaviour

(iii) Knowledge, attitudes, and skills with respect to the teacher's functioning at school level relating to school management, colleagues, parents, participation in school activities (Vonk, 1984a)

Growing into the Profession

Following the completion of the first part of the study, 18 out of the 20 teachers expressed their willingness to continue to co-operate in a long-term project dealing with the professional development of teachers Both the results and the methodology of the first part of the study determined the methodology of the follow-up study A qualitative research methodology was again adopted

Because of time and budgetary constraints, we opted in the second phase for an interview-approach On the basis of the first phase, all items to be investigated were determined in advance Depending on an interviewee's responses, a particular item could be explored in more detail

The interviews took place in teachers' third and fourth years of service between October and February Where necessary, data from the first year of service had already been reorganized in such a way that they were comparable with those of the later interviews Unfortunately, the data collection during the second year of service was only fragmentary

The questions in the interviews dealt with teachers' professional environment, their functioning at school level, their functioning at class level, and their functioning with individual students In summarizing the findings, I will deal only with teachers' functioning at the classroom level Six major points emerged from the data First, teachers, after their first year of service, tried as much as possible to routinize their work in the preparation of lessons, in classroom management, and in control of students This was a crucial experience to most teachers Second, all teachers had built up considerable independence and freedom of action in their schools As long as their students' performance was acceptable and no disciplinary problems arose, teachers felt free to organize their lessons as they liked Third, during their four years of service, teachers had distanced themselves in their relations with their students They had become less personally engaged with students' problems and had developed a more professional attitude towards students Fourth, nearly all teachers tended to adapt to the existing learning materials and text books in the school As a consequence, their lessons became rather traditional Teachers seemed to be open to change in the curriculum and in their methods of teaching only when these were clearly related to their everyday practice and were supported by appropriate materials Further, the majority of teachers were prepared to experiment only if they were sure that this would not result in disciplinary problems Fifth, little changed in

teachers' approach to disciplinary problems over the years However, they had learned to react more quickly and to anticipate problems This gave them a feeling of safety Sixth, most teachers did not consider the teaching profession to be a life-long job Though many did not know how they would do it, all but three had the idea of leaving the profession after eight to ten years of service The subjects they had studied were considered to be their greatest problem in seeking a change of job

It would seem that environmental pressures on their professional behaviour had led to the adoption by these teachers of the standards, attitudes, and patterns of classroom behaviour common in their environments However, while most teachers' intentions were still student- and development-oriented, nearly half of them did not know how to introduce new patterns of behaviour into their classrooms They reported that they did not feel capable of resisting the pressure to conform to existing role patterns, either because of their lack of the knowledge and skills that would be required to introduce new teaching methods and/or change their own classroom behaviour, or because of lack of courage and fear of disciplinary problems

Based on the results of our research, we set about developing the material and structure for an inservice programme for beginning teachers It was decided to test the material in an experimental inservice programme In the next section we report on that programme

INSERVICE TRAINING FOR BEGINNING TEACHERS

The starting point for the development of the inservice programme was our consideration that teachers' professional development is to a great extent determined by their command of professional skills Well-structured inservice activities might help teachers to either acquire new skills or further develop already existing ones Teachers in different phases of professional development, however, have different needs Therefore, the programme was split up into three courses for three different target-groups Course A was aimed at first-year teachers, Course B at teachers with two to four years of experience, and Course C at senior teachers who had responsibility for the guidance of beginning colleagues

Each course consisted of ten three-hour sessions Participants could request additional sessions Because of the experimental status of the courses, the number of participants was restricted to ten Course content and structure were the result of negotiations based on participants' questions, needs, and expectations and the project staff's ideas, experiences, and knowledge

Flexibility was an important aspect of the programme At any moment it was possible to change a planned programme in order to focus the content of a particular session on an issue which had become pressing for the participants

Course Content

Course A covered the following topics the investigation of one's own situations, discipline, rules, conflicts, and punitive measures, the organization, structuring, and execution of teaching and learning activities, in particular the various aspects of class teaching, teaching mixed-ability groups and the organization of the learning environment, how to motivate students and the improvement of classroom climate, an introduction to the tasks a beginning teacher has at school level, and some aspects of student guidance At the request of participants, two topics were added to the course recent developments in secondary education and their implications for teachers' career perspectives, and student assessment

Based on the outcomes of previous research, Course A was mainly focussed on the improvement of classroom-management skills This was partly to meet the needs of beginning teachers who had two major concerns regarding the behaviour of their students First, they were concerned with the control of misbehaviour Second, they wanted to gain the attention of their students and to ensure that students became, and remained, involved in the teaching and learning activities the teacher had organized The improvement of classroom-management skills was also of vital interest to students since a large body of research clearly indicates that the amount of time students are actively engaged in learning activities during lessons is a reliable and significant predictor of student achievement.

Course B contained a number of issues which were identified by our research on the professional development of teachers after their first year of experience The issues were teaching mixed-ability groups, in particular the organization of learning environments student motivation and the improvement of classroom climate, teaching procedures, sex differences in education, in particular how teachers' everyday behaviour in the classroom relates to these issues, and student guidance and teachability

The main objective of the course was to extend or to improve teachers' skills relating to classroom behaviour and management From our research, it had become clear that not all teachers continue to develop their skills after having survived the probationary period (Vonk & Schras, 1987) On the contrary, teachers tend to get stuck at the level of survival skills developed during their first year They need some help to continue to take new risks and to solve new

problems In the light of their previous experience, most beginning teachers just want to avoid these situations The course was developed to help teachers deal with them

The last course (Course C), which was aimed at senior teachers who were charged with the guidance of their beginning colleagues, could not be executed because of budgetary problems It had been envisaged that it would deal with classroom-observation strategies (in particular the collection of information to help beginning teachers), problem discussion (how to discuss with colleagues the results of observations and how to develop with colleagues approaches to deal with observed problems), and the assessment of beginning teachers

Course Structure

There was a session every two weeks, with ten or twelve sessions in total One staff member coordinated all sessions of all courses, which means that she took care of the general, but not the specialized, parts of each programme She was present at all sessions and acted as a connecting link This was of great importance for participants since matters from previous sessions could easily be incorporated into later ones For each topic, a specialist in the field was invited Since a permanent staff member was always present, the specialist could be informed beforehand about the group and its needs and problems The second measure taken to ensure that each session was attuned to participants' needs was that each participant was asked to submit written reports concerning one or more problems he or she had experienced between sessions, preferably problems which were related to the topic for the session These reports were often the starting point for a problem-solving process during that session

The following procedure was usually followed during sessions First, reports were presented of recent experiences and, in particular, of success or failure in implementing planned changes These reports were discussed in the group and, if necessary, alternatives were developed Second, the relevant content of the course booklet was discussed and one or more practical exercises were executed The last part of each session was always used to discuss problems which had been submitted and were relevant to the subject of the session Since it is obvious that not all problems can be solved instantly, we prefer to talk about teaching teachers to deal with the problems they meet, rather than solving them Anyhow, beginning teachers need strategies to help them tackle the problems they meet, and discussing problems with colleagues can be one of those strategies

Participants

All participants were secondary-school teachers Some had a university background while others had had their initial education and training in a polytechnic For Course A, two different groups started The members of one group (ten) were all first-year teachers at the same school Their subjects were Economics, German, Music, French, English, Dutch, Physics, and Biology The second group consisted of ten teachers from different schools Apart from the subjects mentioned above, it also contained teachers of Greek, Latin, and Sociology In Course B, ten teachers of Dutch, Latin, Mathematics, Economics, English, and Biology participated All were teaching at the same school

Feedback Instruments

Two instruments were used to collect data about the functioning of the teachers in their classrooms — a student questionnaire (Vonk, 1984a) and a classroom-observation instrument, designed to measure the degree of involvement of a class in teaching and learning activities These instruments were used in the first place to provide feedback to the teachers and secondly as data collecting instruments for our research The objective of the research was to check whether teachers' management skills were really improving as a consequence of the course Based on information from the instruments, the staff member, who was responsible for the programme as a whole, discussed with each teacher indices of adequate and inadequate teacher behaviour, as well as strategies to improve various aspects of classroom behaviour These discussions formed a substantial part of the training course

Evaluation of the Course

The aim of the project was to develop material for inservice courses for teachers which would be attuned to the problems which teachers experience in their first five years of service A second aim was to develop a suitable structure for these courses To check whether or not objectives were being reached, an open questionnaire was developed and completed by participants after each session In the first part of the questionnaire, general questions were asked about teachers' expectations, whether or not they could identify with the goals of the session, the amount of time they had spent on preparation for the session, etc In the second part, the teachers were asked 'what did you learn from this session?' There were also questions concerning teachers' strong and weak points in classroom behaviour and the extent to which knowledge acquired in the course and the feedback and training provided had been helpful in improving or in providing insight into behaviour The third part contained questions about the

material (booklets), the structure of the session, and about the presentation of the staff member in question

All the booklets for both Courses A and B, except two, were evaluated as being very good The texts were judged as being clear, to the point, practice-oriented, and easy to read These judgments had not changed by the end of the course The selection of topics and the size of the booklets (40 - 45 pages) were also evaluated positively On average, participants spent one hour between sessions reading the material The two booklets which were criticized (one dealing with teaching mixed-ability groups and the other with working procedures) were considered to be too theoretical Both booklets contained too few practical examples Further, the theme of teaching mixed-ability groups was considered to be of little relevance because of the nature of textbooks in use in schools Thus, the problem of teaching mixed-ability groups and the development of adequate materials was considered to be a task not for the individual teacher but for the school as a whole

Teachers said that they received a lot of valuable feedback from the student questionnaires They also said that as a result they had changed their classroom behaviour in positive ways The observation instrument had similar effects Although teachers said they had been afraid of student feedback at first, in the end they were very happy with the information contained in the feedback questionnaires

The course structure, in which one or more sessions were devoted to a particular theme and were presented by a specialist, worked satisfactorily The presence of a coordinator ensured that there were no overlaps and no breaks in the programme Participants, in particular the first-year teachers, reported that the course which had started in November had been a great help to them in dealing with problems during their first year

CONCLUSION

The programme described in this paper set out to obtain insight into the nature of beginning-teachers' professional development and into the factors which determine that development It also had as its aim the development of strategies and materials that would influence that development Looking back over the results of the various activities in the programme, it seems reasonable to conclude that, to a large extent, it met its aims Nearly all teachers who participated in the first two parts of the programme obtained permanent appointments and are functioning well in their schools Based on the evaluation reports of the teachers who participated in the courses, we may conclude that

the courses met both the expectations and the needs of first-year and beginning teachers First-year teachers asked for a continuation of the course during the next year They all reported that their participation in the course had been a great help to them in overcoming difficulties they had encountered during the first year They also said that they had developed a clearer professional perspective and they felt more self-confident

The reports of participants in Course B were more varied When one is dealing with a group of teachers who all come from the same school, school problems are likely to play an important if not obvious role Our guidance approach, however, was basically person-oriented While the school environment was taken into consideration, the individual teacher's development was the main focus In retrospect, it would probably have been beneficial to have investigated the school environment in greater detail beforehand This would have helped to throw light on the extent to which different school environments lead to differences in professional development

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