

**TOWARDS A GENEALOGY OF THE MENTOR
IN EARLY CAREER TEACHER MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS**

by

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES
(Curriculum Studies)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

(Vancouver)

December 2021

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Towards a genealogy of the mentor in early career teacher mentorship programs

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Abstract

This dissertation is an exploration of the aims and effects of early career teacher mentorship and the role of teacher mentors in public education policy and program contexts. This project was provoked by an ethic of discomfort (Foucault, 1994) with how teacher mentorship is commonly framed as a strategy for addressing a variety of new teacher ‘problems’ including career attrition, isolation, ineffective practice and lack of collegial support. In particular, the study aimed to problematize the invocation of teacher mentorship as a site for cultivating professional growth and lifelong learning.

The purpose of this study was to construct a conceptual lineage of ECT mentorship in British Columbia, Canada in order to denaturalize normalized understandings of mentorship and mentor figures at work in one school district mentorship program. Through genealogical and discourse analysis of policy and programs documents and policy actor interviews generated between 1960-2019, the two research questions addressed were: 1) how a Foucauldian-inspired analysis of discourse-practices might illuminate dominant truths in circulation about the aims of ECT mentorship, and 2) how the teacher mentor is discursively constituted as a subject within mentoring programs and relationships.

This study’s genealogical policy analysis showed how mentorship became thinkable as a professional undertaking and was assigned various purposes across shifting historical and political circumstances in British Columbia’s public education system. Meanwhile, discourse analysis of policy actors’ and mentors’ speech and written statements illustrated how commonly circulated imperatives of early career teacher mentorship and the mentor role remained open to critical contestation and reformation. Analysis indicated how teacher mentors working with a formal program structure became subject to particular discourses of ‘growth’ as good and

desirable, as the improvement of instructional competency, and as a regulatory strategy committing both mentors and mentees to a trajectory of lifelong learning.

The study points to how those engaged in ECT mentorship research, policymaking and practice might submit normalized imperatives of ECT mentorship to regular critical interrogation and to reimagine mentors' potential roles as creative, critical and reflective educators.

Lay Summary

This study presents an exploration of early career teacher mentorship and the role of teacher mentors within public education. This project looked at how teacher mentorship is used to address a variety of issues including new teacher attrition, professional isolation, and classroom practice.

Set in British Columbia, Canada, the study examines how teacher mentorship was described in a variety of provincial policy documents produced between 1960-2019 and within interviews and documents gathered from one school district mentorship program. Analysis traced the emergence of the teacher mentor role in relation to historical and political shifts in public education and the teaching profession. Analysis also showed how mentorship program goals included improvement of new teachers' instructional competency and commitment to lifelong learning.

Findings point to why it is important to critically examine teacher mentorship research, policies and practices as well as teacher mentors' roles and influences within ECT mentorship programs.

Preface

This dissertation is original, unpublished, independent work by the author, Anne Catherine Hales. All research contributions herein are my own. I designed the research process, conducted all data collection and analysis, and wrote this dissertation with guidance from my supervisor and committee members. This research received a certificate of approval from the University of British Columbia, Office of Research Services on February 21, 2018. The UBC Behavioural Research Ethics Board certificate number is H16-01227.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	iii
Lay Summary	v
Preface.....	vi
Table of Contents	vii
List of Tables	xii
List of Figures.....	xiii
List of Abbreviations	xiv
Acknowledgements	xv
Dedication	xvii
Chapter 1: The Death of a Mentorship Coordinator	1
Chapter 2: The Imperatives of Teacher Mentorship in Research Literature.....	11
2.1 Chapter Overview	11
2.2 Mentorship and the New Professionalism	11
2.3 ECT Mentorship in Canada: Four Imperatives.....	16
2.3.1 Preserving Human Capital	17
2.3.2 Assuring Quality Teaching	18
2.3.3 Promoting Short Term and Life-long Learning	19
2.3.4 Transmitting Professional Knowledge and Culture.....	21
2.4 Towards an Ethic of Discomfort.....	23
2.5 Summary	30
Chapter 3: Theorizing Teacher Mentorship with Foucault.....	31

3.1	Chapter Overview	31
3.2	Discourse.....	32
3.3	Governmentality	37
3.4	Power	41
3.5	Subject.....	44
3.6	Summary	48

Chapter 4: Genealogical and Discourse Analysis of Mentorship in Policy and Program

Texts	49	
4.1	Chapter Overview	49
4.2	Framing a Genealogical Analysis of Education Policy Texts	49
4.2.1	Genealogy	49
4.2.2	Policy Documents	52
4.2.3	Analysis Methods.....	53
4.3	Discourse Analysis of School District Interviews and Program Documents	57
4.3.1	Policy Actor Interviews	57
4.3.2	Institutional Program Documents	60
4.3.3	Analysis Methods.....	64
4.3.3.1	Axis of Knowledge: Grasping Understandings of Mentorship.....	64
4.3.3.2	Axis of Power: Forms of Veridiction.....	65
4.3.3.3	Axis of Ethics: Positioning the Mentor Subject.....	67
4.4	Ethical Considerations	68
4.5	Summary	69

Chapter 5: “The long history of things:” Mentorship in British Columbia Education Policy

.....	71
5.1 Chapter Overview	71
5.2 Background.....	72
5.3 BC Royal Commission Reports (1960, 1988)	73
5.3.1 From Initial Qualification to Life-Long Learning	75
5.3.2 From Supervision to Induction	78
5.3.3 Induction and Mentorship as Technologies of Retention	82
5.3.4 Sighting Continuity and Change.....	84
5.4 Profiles of Induction/Mentoring Activities in Some Public School Districts in British Columbia (1994).....	86
5.4.1 Background.....	86
5.4.2 Untangling Induction and Mentorship.....	86
5.4.3 The Persistence of Voluntariness.....	89
5.4.4 The Emergence of the Mentor Figure.....	90
5.5 BC Teaching Standards (2003-2019).....	92
5.6 Minister’s Task Force on Teacher Recruitment and Retention (2017).....	97
5.7 Summary.....	100
Chapter 6: The Mentor as Subject in a BC School District Program.....	103
6.1 Chapter Overview	103
6.2 Mentoring for Growth: Between Improvement and Potentiality	104
6.2.1 Growth as Improvement	106
6.2.2 Disrupting Improvement Discourse: Growth as Potentiality.....	110

6.3	Growth and Mentoring Relationships: Navigating Support and Challenge	114
6.3.1	Support as Deprivatizing Practice.....	121
6.4	Subjectivization of the Mentor Figure	125
6.4.1	Accountability.....	125
6.4.2	Governability	128
6.4.3	Responsibility	130
6.4.4	In Search of the Good Mentor	131
6.5	Summary.....	132
Chapter 7: Towards Ethical Freedom in Teacher Mentoring.....		135
7.1	Chapter Overview	135
7.2	Research Questions Revisited.....	135
7.3	Thinking with Foucault.....	136
7.4	My Learnings	138
7.5	Contributions of this Research Study	141
7.6	Implications for Research, Policy and Practice	143
7.6.1	Suggestions for Further Research	143
7.6.2	Policy Considerations	145
7.6.3	Shifting the Mentor Stance	146
7.7	Limitations	147
7.8	The Emergence of an Author	148
References.....		153
Appendix: Interview Script and Prompts		171
	Interview Script.....	171

Interview Prompts 171

List of Tables

Table 1 Policy Documents	53
Table 2 District Mentorship Program (DMP) Policy Actors	57
Table 3 Institutional Program Documents	63
Table 4 British Columbia Teaching Standards 2003-2019.....	93

List of Figures

Figure 1 Focal Points of Experience.....	44
Figure 2 BC Ministry of Education (2017).....	99

List of Abbreviations

BC	British Columbia
BCCT	British Columbia College of Teachers
BCTF	British Columbia Teachers' Federation
BCPVPA	British Columbia Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association
BCPSEA	British Columbia Public School Employers' Association
CPD	continuous professional development
DMP	District Mentorship Program
ECT	early career teacher
FDA	Foucauldian Discourse Analysis
IEP	Individualized Education Plan
ITE	initial teacher education
NTIP	New Teacher Induction Program
NTMP	New Teacher Mentorship Program
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
SCOC	Supreme Court of Canada

Acknowledgements

I offer sincerest thanks to the individuals and educational communities that have supported me in bringing this project to fruition. I offer my deep appreciation to the faculty and staff of the University of British Columbia's Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy. I am grateful to the members of the Maple Ridge Teachers' Association and Teachers' Federation Employees' Union for securing the educational leave provisions that opened the space for me to pursue mid-career graduate work—and to School District 42 (Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows, BC) and the British Columbia Teachers' Federation for honouring those provisions.

Thank you also to the educators who engaged as participants in this project, as well as the staff who granted permission and assistance to conduct my research in their school district.

I am forever indebted to my generous supervisory committee members Tony Clarke and Peter Grimmett. To my supervisor, Anne Phelan, my heartfelt thanks for graciously and impeccably walking the line between pushing onwards and yielding space to allow this work to unfold as it needed to. Thank you all for keeping the lights on and holding the door open long enough for me to finally bring this project home.

The completion of this life project could not have happened without the varied means of sustenance and support of many, many colleagues and friends. Special thanks to some who have accompanied me through the entirety of this long winding journey: Daniel Dunford, Lucy Guest, Marcia and Ray Shimizu, Sam Stiegler, my incredible colleagues in the BCTF Research Department and my SFU Wise Women Rhonda Philpott, Shirley-Ann Rubis, Awneet Sivia, Heather Tobe and Kathryn Yamamoto. Thank you all for the encouragement, counsel, sympathy, collaboration, walks, good company and conversation along the way.

Finally, I thank my large, lovely family—especially my siblings Angela, Davorka and Louis. This one’s for all of us.

Dedication

For my parents, Anka and Slavko Hales
Who journeyed far, laboured hard and endured much
To enable me to take up this work

Chapter 1: The Death of a Mentorship Coordinator

I write in order to change myself and in order not to think the same thing as before.

—Foucault, *Power*

This study constructs a conceptual lineage of early-career teacher (ECT) mentorship within one public school district mentorship program in British Columbia (BC), Canada. Drawing on Foucauldian conceptions of discourse, governmentality, relations of power, and the ethical subject, I consider how particular historical and political conditions shape the ebb and flow of dominant mentorship discourses, and how those discourses function to construct the aims of ECT mentorship and the subjectivities of the mentor figure. How and whom does ECT mentorship serve, bound up as it is within the historical context and power relations of BC's public school system and school district mentorship programs? What truths are produced by the mentorship discourses we take up and operationalize? What potential benefits accrue and harms perpetrated for beginning teachers and mentors within the mandates of mentorship? Are commonly invoked aims of improving practice, forming professional relationships and providing support always benign endeavours? What silenced or not-yet-thought forms of teacher mentorship may yet be brought to bear on the educational context in which we find ourselves—where, as I write, this region faces a pandemic, a critical teacher shortage, province-wide curriculum reform and austerity measures that collectively intensify and alter teachers' work? Following Arendt, I query not whether ECT mentorship *is* inherently good, but whether policy

actors' conceptualization and conduct of mentorship aims and practices are good for teachers and the educational worlds (Arendt, 1954) they inhabit.

I endeavoured to chart a genealogical inquiry into ECT mentorship and the mentor figure within the public education system of British Columbia. Using a range of Foucauldian theoretical and methodological tools, I aspired to put into circulation new thoughts about ECT mentorship and the subjectification of teacher mentors¹ through analysis of provincial policy texts produced between 1960-2019, and local program documents and policy actor interviews gathered in 2018. I situated my local inquiry within the teacher mentorship program of one public school district where educators endeavoured to make new teachers feel welcomed and supported in their profession and workplaces, and to provide collegial and material resources so that beginning teachers might feel “they are doing right in terms of [their] students, the teaching profession and themselves” (Santoro, 2011, p. 2).

ECT mentorship programs commonly aim to provide beginning teachers with pedagogical, relational and material resources needed to launch successful classroom practice and to extend the duration of their engagement in the teaching profession past the oft-cited and empirically-contested ‘first five years’ that commonly demarcates the danger zone of new teacher attrition (Kutsyuruba, Godden & Tregunna, 2014; Schaefer, Long & Clandinin, 2012; Weldon, 2018). School districts and education ministries look to ECT mentorship programs to cultivate a sense of professional competence, efficacy and collegiality, and generate the psychological resilience needed to survive that initial passage where the threat of attrition is

¹ ‘Teacher mentors,’ within the boundaries of this project, refers to public education teachers who voluntarily engage with early-career teachers who have completed their initial teacher education (ITE), received professional certification or qualifications, and have taken up initial teaching contracts within British Columbia’s public education system.

ever-present. What standards of competence and professionalism do new teachers feel obligated to attain and mentors tasked to deliver? And how do such truths influence how ECT mentorship programs are designed, managed, evaluated and inhabited? In other words, I queried “what is this 'now' within which all of us find ourselves” (Tamboukou, 1999, p. 202), debating the aims of ECT mentorship and what makes an effective teacher-mentor. And how did particular conceptions of mentorship, and not others, take root ‘here’?

This study has very much been shaped by my formation as an educator and researcher working within a particular historical, geographical and political context of Canadian public education. Part of the ‘work’ of this work has been deconstructing how my conceptions of ECT mentorship, mediated through my various positionings as classroom teacher, teacher educator, mentorship program coordinator and researcher, were produced and how ‘I’ continue to be written. This study involved efforts to “render the familiar strange” (Martinez, 2018, para. 10), investigating how mentorship discourses and those subjected by and to them are “actively legitimated and reproduced over time” (para. 10). Following Rabinow, coming to terms with how “diverse factors shape the emergence, articulation and circulation of [my] work” (Foucault, 1994, p. vii) produced suspicions about my conceptualizations of ECT mentorship and mentors, shaped by two decades of engagement on the rough ground of classrooms, teacher education programs and local and provincial mentorship initiatives.

Having long considered ECT teacher mentorship as an ideal professional bridge to scaffold British Columbia’s beginning teachers’ transition from initial teacher education (ITE) programs into their professional careers, I experienced both rewards and dissatisfaction with my efforts as a school district mentorship coordinator and advocate. Charged with the administration

of a K-12 public school district mentoring program for five years between 2006-2012, my responsibilities consisted of:

1. providing timely and varied forms of support to newly certified teachers by connecting them to voluntary teacher-mentors and material resources;
2. identifying and providing professional learning opportunities for mentors, most often focused on envisioning the aims and limits of their role, and acquiring mentorship skills;
3. advocating for continuing local school district funding through documentation of program access and impact;
4. establishing a broader network of professional colleagues who shared institutional responsibilities for mentorship initiatives in neighbouring local and provincial programs.

Despite my school district program's laudable aims to abide by "the principles of collegial support, peer collaboration and professional respect" (Hales, 2012, p. 1) while facilitating "teachers working alongside teachers to set a foundation for continuing growth and strong practice" (p. 1), austere funding in the mid-2000s meant routinely falling short of desired outcomes. Mentor-mentee partners or groups rarely had adequate time to engage in deep, sustaining conversations about their aspirations and teaching practice (Schaefer, Long & Clandinin, 2012). Rather, mentorship conversations, when they occurred, too often functioned as a temporary salve, or quick fix for launching beginning teachers into classroom appointments and retaining them despite a perpetual cycle of short-term contracts, layoffs and 'redeployment' to new schools.

Within my institutional context, mentorship imperatives encompassed facilitating rapid connections between newly assigned teachers and more experienced grade or subject level teachers who could provide them with 'nuts and bolts' resources and information needed for

‘start-up’ and short-term survival. The effects of mentorship were constrained by limiting policy and material conditions in which they were situated. Through engagement with Foucault’s theories of power and governmentality, I moved in this study towards recognizing these constraints not just as innocuous contextual conditions, but as broadly cast discursive and locally dispersed disciplinary techniques that produced particular “truths” about mentorship ideals and how best to enact them. Turning to Foucault (1981), I considered how educational organizations “impose” and “renew” (p. 54) particular educational discourses, and how certain truths about ECT mentorship are “reinforced and renewed by whole strata of practices” (p. 55) within an educational setting.

During my time as a mentorship program coordinator, the recruitment of experienced teachers to serve voluntarily as mentors for newly hired teachers proved challenging. Some teachers enthusiastically accepted mentoring duties ‘off the side of their desks,’ expressing their desire to assist ECTs by providing classroom resources, teaching advice, a ‘friendly face’ and collegial connection within their schools. Others viewed mentorship as a way to contribute to their professional community by paying forward collegial goodwill and generosity they had been shown. However, some teachers felt they had little to offer in the way of professional expertise or relevance to new teachers. Others worried that serving as a mentor signified acting in a supervisory role, casting a shadow of professional unpreparedness or deficiency on new colleagues, and an uncomfortable administrative mantle on themselves. Still others cited an inability to take on ‘one more thing’ in addition to their regular workloads, as the mentor role remains a voluntary undertaking in BC’s sixty public school districts, with widely varying contractual and financial recognition and organization.

Striving to coordinate the most personalized and least stigmatic mentoring support possible, my efforts felt perpetually insufficient and increasingly troublesome, or what Brookfield (1995) might characterize as “the traps of demoralization” (p. 2) that practitioners fall into when they work “innocently” (p. 2) to address problems not entirely of their making. My coordinator role involved applying numerous accountability measures, or disciplinary technologies as I call them now (Foucault, 1995): distributing program surveys, submitting expense forms for workshop costs and token honoraria, producing activity reports, and reporting regular attendance at district steering committee meetings. However, the fulfillment of these institutional accountability demands failed to stem the gradual reduction of mentorship program staffing and funding due to ongoing budget reforms over the course of my five-year tenure despite stakeholder (i.e., both district management and teacher union) acknowledgement of the value of beginning teacher mentorship. My work felt more like performing triage in a permanent state of systemic emergency than cultivating revelatory moments of reflective insight and empowerment for program participants. I observed myself moving through those work days with something akin to a “double consciousness” (Britzman, 2003, p. 221), attending to the immediate obligations of program management while growing suspicious of the institutional structures and practices that situate and objectify those beginning to teach and those cast as their mentors. Perhaps, with the help of different conceptual tools, I could begin to render strange a decade’s worth of entanglements in political power struggles and institutional practices and technologies associated with ECT mentorship activities.

In 2012, leaving my coordinator position and arriving at this doctoral work feeling “everything is dangerous,” (Foucault, 1994b, p. 256), I began to ply the second thoughts that had increasingly compelled me “to review and rearticulate meanings long taken for granted” (Phelan,

2015, p. 5) about the imperatives and effects of ECT mentorship. Two events revealed a conceptual reworking already in progress. Soon after commencing this project, I received an email from a local professional association requesting a brief article about BC teacher mentorship initiatives for its upcoming newsletter. I was asked to highlight “what type of professional learning teachers can do to elevate the [student] learners' experience” through mentorship programs, and “why it has a significant impact on student success” (personal communication, January 19, 2016). The following week at a regional teacher mentorship forum, school district administrators expressed concern that the absence of reliable data linking mentoring initiatives to improvements in student achievement might undermine their ability to advocate for continued program funding. These events compelled me to reflect on how well-worn perspectives on ‘desirable’ mentorship aims and ‘evidence-based’ outcomes felt rather more uncomfortable since committing to “thinking with theory” as a researcher (see Jackson & Mazzei, 2012), rather than the instrumental lens of a school district mentoring coordinator tasked with program stewardship. Newly visible “powers and dangers” (Foucault, 1981, p. 52) lay in discourses of datafication, teacher competence and instrumentalized applications of ECT mentorship, where measurable improvements in practitioner efficacy were integrally linked to student success. I was “no longer the detached spectator of mute-discourse monuments” (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 103) but grasped how I was “involved in, and to a large extent produced by, the social practices” (p. 103) I was studying. I required new theoretical and methodological tools for re-viewing how commonsense educational discourses shape and constrain the aims of mentorship and the needs of beginning teachers and how mentors are positioned to respond to both.

For this project, I drew from Foucault’s ‘toolbox,’ and those of interlocutors similarly concerned with discourse, governmentality, power and the formation of the subject to consider how particular conceptions of mentorship and the mentor figure are rendered thinkable, promoted, applied and contested. I also considered how teacher mentors are “made subjects” (Foucault, 1982, p. 778) within a particular political and historical context. As I reflected on the ‘what’ of mentorship and the mentor role, codified in particular institutional and embodied ‘texts,’ I wondered as to ‘why’ and ‘how’ certain regimes of pedagogical and professional truth are circulated as givens while other possibilities may be silenced or deemed problematic. Two questions anchored my resulting inquiry:

1. How might Foucauldian-inspired analysis of discourse-practices within policy and a mentorship program illuminate the dominant truths (i.e., normalized knowledges) currently in circulation about the roles and qualities of effective ECT mentorship and mentors in educational settings?
2. How is the mentor discursively constituted as a subject who exercises and/or submits to power/knowledge within a mentoring relationship and program?

Before turning to interrogating how commonly articulated truths about mentorship arrive and persist in educational discourse, I turned to research literature to examine prevailing and contested conceptualizations and measures of ECT mentorship aims and effects—themes which are outlined in Chapter 2. I provide a reading of discourses of ECT mentorship in research literature. I outline how ECT mentorship serves as a malleable tool for addressing a variety of early career teacher ‘problems’ such as occupational attrition, lack of professional support and connection, inadequate teaching preparation and lack of confidence in practice.

In Chapter 3, I foreground the theoretical concepts orienting this project. I discuss the concepts of discourse, governmentality, power and subjectivity as they relate to my inquiry questions as well as how these theoretical tools relate to the use of genealogy and discourse analysis as methodological approaches.

Chapter 4 outlines the methodological theories, data types and collection, analysis methods, ethical considerations and limitations underpinning this project. First, I describe genealogical methods used to trace the appearance of ‘mentorship’ and ‘mentor’ in BC education policy documents (1960-2019). Second, I outline how program document and interview analyses drew on Foucauldian conceptions of truth and forms of veridiction, and Fairclough’s three-stage critical discourse analysis. Together, these methods provided the tools for analysis of ECT mentorship discourses discussed in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 5 presents a genealogical reading of BC education policy documents produced between 1960-2019 to create ‘a history of the present’ (see Foucault, 1995; Garland, 2014) of current mentorship discourses. This analysis anticipates discourses of professional growth and implications for mentor subjectivities in Chapter 6 by tracing how mentorship truths ‘descend’ from historically and politically situated discourses to reach their contemporary manifestation in localized settings.

In Chapter 6, I analyze paperwork and policy actor speech within one BC school district mentorship program—referred to throughout this study as the District Mentorship Program (DMP)—to identify mentorship discourses in circulation. This chapter considers how certain institutional imperatives and practices come to be normalized and contested and how certain utterances and statements emerge as more authoritative than others.

Chapter 7 concludes this study by reviewing the aims and implications of this project's findings for the conceptualization of ECT mentorship and the constitution of the mentor subject. I review and look beyond normalized constructions of professional growth, relationships and support to imagine potential counter-narratives that might disrupt prevailing discourses of professionalism and regulation of and within ECT mentorship.

Chapter 2: The Imperatives of Teacher Mentorship in Research Literature

2.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter outlines common conceptualizations of ECT mentorship in research literature set within the context of neoliberal education policy. The chapter discusses the construction and assessment of mentorship as an ECT retention strategy, a mechanism of promoting quality teaching strategies and dispositions, a source of ‘triage’ support for beginning teachers, a life-long learning opportunity for experienced educators, and a site for the cultivation of professional relationships. Submitting to “an ethic of discomfort” (see Foucault, 2000, pp. 443-448), the chapter moves towards considering some potentially undesirable consequences of these seemingly desirable functions and normative research approaches while glimpsing disconcerting theoretical and material shadows cast “upon the ground of the familiar” (Harwood & Rasmussen, 2004, p. 307).

2.2 Mentorship and the New Professionalism

Within a neoliberal governance climate, public education has “moved from being a social policy to an economic policy” (Furlong, 2008, p. 728). In political contexts characterized by the application of free market economic principles to public sector management, public education serves a key role in ensuring national and regional prosperity through the cultivation of a literate and skilled labour force and citizenry where “an educated student is redefined as an employable one” (Eagleton, 2015, para. 17). Teachers, therefore, are “increasingly accountable to their schools, their parents and communities, and above all, to the government” (Furlong, 2008, p. 729) in the pursuit of improved student performance and economic security and sustainability. Traditional notions of professionalism, characterized by internalization of collective rules and accountability measures, specialized theoretical and procedural knowledge, and autonomy in

practice have given way to a ‘new professionalism’ where standards of conduct and competence are relocated to state and professional regulatory bodies (see Furlong, 2005; Jones, 1993; Wang & Odell, 2002). Within the discourse of new professionalism, the role of teacher education programs and early career mentoring schemes as *educational* processes—those “open to the unanticipated introduced by each new teacher” (Phelan, 2015, p. 1)—yields increasingly to the imperatives of state-imposed education aims and student achievement measures. Once in the field, new teachers are subject to regulatory and cultural influences that value “the public good” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2012, p. 2) and student “clients” (p. 2) over teachers’ professional autonomy. Within such an environment, teacher learning loses potential as a “key site for the re-formation of professionalism” (Furlong, 2005, p. 119).

ECT mentorship occupies a critical transitional space between the departure from teacher education programs and beginning teachers’ ‘arrival’ as experienced practitioners within school systems. The transition period from ‘new’ to ‘experienced’ is commonly measured as two to five years in research studies and mentorship program guidelines. However, it is not uncommon for beginning teachers in Canada to spend up to a decade moving between supply and temporary teaching assignments and multiple schools and districts before obtaining continuing or tenured status in terms of job security and salary, collegial relationships, and subject area/grade level expertise (see Ontario College of Teachers, 2014; British Columbia Teachers’ Federation, 2009). Therefore, the term ‘new’ is a moving target and problematic categorization in mentoring discourse, as even teachers with considerable local and international experience in public and private school systems possess employment histories punctuated by extended periods of part-time work or unemployment or cycles of disparate teaching assignments. In such an unstable work environment—a perpetual state of ‘new-ness’—many beginning teachers do not have the

opportunity or inclination to invest time in professional development activities that delve into theoretical issues. When teachers' learning is "crisis-driven" (Britzman & Dippo, 2000, p. 34) there is little room for "interminable questions" (p. 34). Portelli et al. (2010) point to beginning teachers' "superficial understanding" (p. 43) of social justice education concepts among participants in Ontario's New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) as an example of the technicization of mentorship program curriculum. Within a transmission model of ECT mentoring, the focus on technical knowledge and skills to help with "day-to day activities" (Portelli et al., 2010, p. 42) serves to reproduce existing professional practices and downplay the focus on "critical-democratic concerns" (p. 42) and teacher identity. Professional learning that appears "too theoretical" is set aside as impractical for the realities of the new teacher's classroom (Lortie, 1975, p. 69).

Apart from the 'praxis shock,' or the initial confrontation of "the realities and responsibilities of being a classroom teacher" (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002, p. 105) beginning teachers cite as a reason leaving the profession, early leavers describe persistent feelings of vulnerability and pressure to "do anything" (Clandinin et al., 2015, p. 1) to demonstrate their competence and willingness to meet institutional achievement goals and the needs of their students. They are expected to undertake the same responsibilities as veteran teachers while rapidly adapting to new work environments that do not allow for gradual increase in skills, knowledge and complexity (Lortie, 1975). New teachers are understandably occupied with meeting the demands of new courses and grade level curricula, orientation to successive school communities and cultural milieu, and the search for 'just-in-time' resources and strategies to create the most effective learning conditions for their students on short notice and for temporary periods.

Such sporadic employment patterns shift the locus of teacher professionalism from an individualized activity to a more “‘managed’ and ‘networked’” form (Furlong, 2005, p. 120). Beginning teachers face a challenging time claiming their place as full-fledged professionals if they do not have the opportunity to establish long-term collegial relationships and a degree of autonomy “justified by their expertise” (p. 120). Furlong argues this opens the possibility for state and local school authorities to focus on more practical forms of preparation in order to assist new teachers in meeting the immediate demands of their initial employment placements, with less time and opportunity for sustained self-directed professional inquiry.

If mentoring programs become an extension of state governance into the first years of newly-certified teachers’ practice to serve as a mechanism for promoting particular conceptions of competence and conduct aligned with state education and economic imperatives, beginning teachers may lose the opportunity to establish themselves as professionals in their own right by cultivating such qualities as “autonomy in decision-making” and “self-governance” (Grimmett & Young, 2012, p. ix). Under managerial professionalism, “teachers are placed in a long line of authority in terms of their accountability for reaching measurable outcomes” (Sachs, 2000, p. 80). Mentoring programs that operate within such a regulatory environment contribute to the normalization of the new teacher as a “professional who clearly meets corporate goals, set elsewhere, manages a range of students well and documents their achievements and problems for public accountability purposes” (Sachs, 2000, p. 80). Ferguson cautions that under such regimes, “new teachers’ capacities to act autonomously, work independently and most of all mount well-grounded challenges to managerial diktat are likely to diminish, and their sense of membership and solidarity of a larger body to be diluted” (Ferguson, 1994, as cited in Sachs, 2000, p. 80). When economic rationalism trumps professional judgment in education and teachers’ work is

reframed as an occupational activity, the very status of teaching as a profession is endangered (Grimmett & Young, 2012, pp. viii-ix). When “dissent, critique and debate is redefined as compliance, consumption and productivity” (Grimmett, 2009, p. 24) at such an early stage in teachers’ careers, the conditions and capacity for exercising critical and ethical judgment are perhaps irrevocably compromised.

Further, mentorship programs may contribute to the separation of beginning teachers from the critical tradition of universities (Cherubini, 2009, p. 192). When new teachers exit teacher education programs and move into the field, the theoretical and pedagogical effects of university-based curriculum are gradually erased once immersed in the discourses and requirements of daily teaching. Such erasure, if accentuated by instrumental mentoring experiences, can lead to the perpetuation of the status quo within the profession and stifle the generative possibilities that recent graduates carry with them (Cho et al., 2009) despite intentions to capitalize on the entry of “eager new teachers whose education in modern teaching methods equips them to take teaching excellence...to a new level” (Ontario College of Teachers, 2003, p. 2).

To what extent, then, do mentorship programs act as regulatory and normalizing mechanisms for promoting particular policy aims regarding public education and teacher work? When and how does mentorship serve a potential ‘educative’ purpose where ECTs “discover both their true selves as responsible professionals and the new knowledge that enables them to see possibilities in teaching that will lead to a redefinition of classroom realities” (Grimmett, 1996, p. 45)?

2.3 ECT Mentorship in Canada: Four Imperatives

New teacher induction and mentorship policies, aims and approaches vary tremendously across Canada. Ontario and the Northwest Territories (Ontario Ministry of Education, n.d.; Government of the Northwest Territories, 2010) offer provincially funded programs while the remaining provinces and territories present a patchwork of local programs with regionally diverse methods of funding, delivery and availability. In their pan-Canadian survey, Kutsyuruba, Godden and Tregunna (2014) found “[g]reat variance in the support for new teachers for induction and mentoring...with multiple avenues of support existing” (p. 24). Their study also “revealed differences in the theoretical arguments for the inclusion of mentoring within individual programs” (p. 28). In some cases, mentoring programs focus on “personal well-being, professional growth, and development” while others attempt to “improve teaching and learning” (p. 28). The implementation of ECT mentorship programs, including the nature of mentor/mentee identification and selection, administrative oversight, scheduling and budgetary provisions, is also highly variable. Mentoring occurs in formalized (e.g., regional workshops) and informal settings (e.g., after school chats in staffrooms), and in highly centralized (e.g., Ontario’s New Teacher Induction Program) and regionally diverse delivery formats. Such variance speaks to both diverse perspectives on the purposes of mentoring (Wang & Odell, 2002) and to the adaptability of mentorship as a ‘default’ response to a wide range of issues attributed to new teachers (Colley, 2002).

As newly certified teachers take up employment in Canadian public schools, some seek out support to assist in their transition to classroom life while others hesitate to ask for assistance, believing teaching to be the realm of “the self-made, isolated expert” (Britzman, 1986, p. 456), where showing uncertainty becomes a threat to one’s authority. Obtaining support

within their workplaces can be a frustrating process in terms of availability and access or if it is extended in ways that negatively impact new teachers' sense of autonomy and expertise (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). Four ways mentorship functions as an institutional strategy—retention, technicization, regulation and socialization—demonstrate its multipurpose mandates and applications.

2.3.1 Preserving Human Capital

The provision of mentorship programs is commonly associated with human resources policies for attracting and retaining new hires. Professional isolation and untenable workloads cause a significant number of new teachers to leave the profession within their first years of practice (see Auletto, 2021; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Hellsten, Prytula & Ebanks, 2009; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Weldon, 2018). Mentorship support promotes increased retention and staffing stability as “teachers who are mentored have been found to be less likely to leave teaching and less likely to move schools within the profession” (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011, p. 210). One of the justifications for the implementation of Ontario’s New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) was the concern that “the most talented beginning teachers” (Kutsyuruba, Godden & Tregunna, 2014, p. 2) are most apt to leave. Retaining “the best, most creative teachers” (Alberta Teachers’ Association, n.d., p. 14) is one of the potential benefits of mentoring programs.

Kutsyuruba, Godden and Tregunna (2014) find accurate assessment of attrition rates is problematic given “inconsistent statistical information” (p. 2) due to regional and systemic variations. They suggest estimates of attrition in Canada within the first five years of certification range from 30% to as high as 60% higher in certain fields such as French Immersion instruction, with further disparities between urban/rural and provincial/territorial catchments. Mentorship

provides a personalized response to a fiscal and pedagogical problem, as improved retention rates serve to reduce “the waste of resources and human potential associated with early-career attrition” (p. 4), which is both costly and “detrimental to student learning” (p. 4). As Auletto (2021) states, “resources that may have otherwise been dedicated to improving working conditions or professional development are redirected toward hiring and supporting new staff members” (p. 2) due to high staff turnover.

However, while mentorship may alleviate some immediate ‘on the job’ stressors for some early career teachers, broader systemic factors that erode teacher retention are not necessarily addressed by mentorship programs. For example, recent surveys indicate over 40% of British Columbia’s teachers at various points in their careers consider leaving the profession due to heavy workload, and inadequate resources, safety provisions and mental health supports (British Columbia Teachers’ Federation, 2021; Gadermann et al., 2021).

2.3.2 Assuring Quality Teaching

In the discourse of new professionalism, quality instruction and teacher competence are viewed as significant factors contributing to student achievement. The province of Alberta’s *Teaching Quality Standard* (2018), as an example, suggests ‘quality’ teaching occurs when teachers’ “ongoing analysis of the context and...decisions about which pedagogical knowledge and abilities to apply, result in optimum learning for all students” (Alberta Government, 2018, p. 3). Such claims effectively shift responsibility for student learning from students to their teachers, where “the teacher's individualized effort appears as the sole determinant of educational matters” (Britzman, 1986, p. 448). Proposed federal legislative amendments in the United States take that linkage one step further, holding teacher education programs accountable for their graduates’ eventual classroom results. If passed, continued funding of university-based teacher

education programs will be determined in part by “using student growth data for students of new teachers” (US Department of Education, 2014, p. 71831) and a teacher preparation program will not be deemed effective “unless it has satisfactory or higher student learning outcomes” (US Department of Education, 2014, p. 71859). In a regulatory context, mentoring of early career teachers may serve an instrumental role in cultivating particular notions of teacher quality and promoting teaching strategies perceived as improving student performance according to state curriculum objectives.

In mentoring programs that include an evaluative component, as is the case with Ontario’s New Teacher Induction Program, administrators and teacher mentors may find themselves working at cross purposes as they fulfill both the evaluative and educative aims of the program (Cherubini, 2010, pp. 24-25). Beginning teachers may feel “somewhat suspicious and reluctant” to engage in mentorship as a form of professional learning, “even as they are supposed to rely on it,” (Cullingford, 2006, p. xiv) when the onus is on them to prove personal competence as they are seeking assistance. Prescriptive program criteria compromise the mentoring relationship as a potential space for inquiry while promoting state education goals and locating responsibility for student success to individual teachers (Sundli, 2007, p. 211).

2.3.3 Promoting Short Term and Life-long Learning

Another primary characteristic of mentoring programs is assisting beginning teachers in developing their instructional and classroom management skills, and ability to manage their time and workloads (Hobson et al., 2009, p. 209). In a “situated apprenticeship model” (Wang & Odell, 2002), mentors focus on providing classroom resources, instructional and classroom management strategies to address the immediate ‘survival’ aspects of beginning teachers’ work. This “methods as ends” (Britzman, 1986 p. 446) model of teaching recasts the complexity of

pedagogical activity as a technical process. The reduction of teaching practice to its most technical applications has been variously conceptualized as an effect of neoliberal education reforms as well as more micro-level factors such as mentor availability. In British Columbia, policy changes regarding class size and preparation time have “had an effect of redistributing teachers’ energies and focus in a manner that militates against their entering into the deeply collaborative exchanges” (Grimmett & D’Amico, 2008, p. 26). Between 2002-2016, the BC Government enacted several key legislative bills exerting extended managerial control over educational governance and funding (Slinn, 2011). In this context, teachers held less institutional authority or decision-making power in matters of curriculum development and implementation and self-regulation. Further, a system that restricts opportunities for critical conversation to collectively construct professional understandings threatens to cast teachers as technicians rather than critically reflective professionals and “transformative intellectuals” (Giroux, 1988, p. 125). For example, the BC Government’s introduction of *Bill 11, the Education Statutes Amendment Act* (Fassbender, 2015) proposed to increase alignment of teachers’ professional development with provincial curriculum objectives. The proposed amendments were intended to provide the Minister of Education with “authority...to establish a modern framework for teacher professional development and put a stronger focus on accountability for student outcomes” (BC Ministry of Education, 2015, para. 1). *Bill 11* provides an example of movement towards system-wide regulation and narrowing of teachers’ professional learning activities (“BC Teachers,” 2015). Recent revisions to British Columbia’s K-12 curriculum (Province of British Columbia, 2019a) and teacher standards (Province of British Columbia, 2019b) further entangled teachers’ initial and in-service learning with managerial discourses of continuous professional development (CPD) and life-long learning.

Besides state level policies which frame teaching as a technical activity, mentors themselves may hold a ‘transmission perspective’ on teaching and learning and lack the time, interest or confidence to incorporate theoretical insights into their work with mentees (Hobson et al., 2009, p. 211). Mentors often take on the role voluntarily in addition of their regular teaching duties with minimal training or financial compensation (Hobson et al., 2009, p. 210). The “disequilibrium” (Britzman, 1986, p. 456) new teachers often confront, and which mentors might be able to engage through reflective inquiry and dialogue, may instead be dealt with through provision of strategies for performing the work at hand—rather than dwelling in, and exploring the revelatory potential of, uncertainty. Daily pressures of school life within an environment of ongoing curriculum reform and competitive results-oriented student assessment (Furlong, 2005) limit opportunities to engage in sustained conversations about the nature and intent of curriculum, assumptions about ‘best practice’ in instruction and assessment, and the positioning of beginning teachers as increasingly managed occupational workers.

2.3.4 Transmitting Professional Knowledge and Culture

Where socialization experiences are “potent” (Lortie, 1975, p. 56), entrants to a professional group are more likely to “merge with the values and norms built into the occupation” (p. 56). Mentorship is described as a way of transmitting “the collective wisdom of experienced teachers to the new generation” (Ontario College of Teachers, 2003, p. 2) while imparting knowledge of common teaching practices (Alberta Teachers Association, n.d., p. 67). Mentors play a critical role in the socialization of novice teachers, “helping them to adapt to the norms, standards and expectations associated with teaching in general and with specific schools” (Hobson et al., 2009, p. 209). Where new teachers endeavor to ‘fit in’ to a particular school

community, mentoring relationships are a key mechanism for enabling new teachers to learn the cultural expectations of a particular work setting (Cullingford, 2006, xiv).

However, in the hierarchical mentor-mentee relationship, veteran teachers may be invested with more authority or responsibility than the collective community, leading to a patronage model of professional initiation (Cullingford, 2006, p. xiv). In such cases, the mentor-mentee relationship works in isolation from the larger professional community and limits beginning teachers' opportunities to draw from a broad range of collegial interaction to constitute their understandings of what it means to be a 'good' teacher and 'competent' professional. Uncomfortable mentoring pairings, where the beginning teacher feels at odds with the mentor's beliefs or practices, may lead to feelings of resentment and disempowerment. Long et al. (2012) noted integrating veteran and novice teachers within collaborative learning community "were most successful in retaining beginning teachers" (p. 22).

Beginning teachers may find themselves subjected to acts of "mundane violence" (Phelan, 2015, p. 43)—such as the dismissal of a question or suggestion during a staff meeting or an unsolicited correction or offer of assistance—if their conduct or methods are viewed as *unprofessional*, contrarian or 'strange' within a school culture. While mentors mention "gaining 'new ideas' and 'new perspectives'" (Hobson et al., 2009, p. 209) as a professional benefit of mentoring relationships, enhanced professional status generated by their role as expert teacher mentors derives in part from upholding a body of expertise sanctioned by their community of practice and maintaining the boundaries of the profession according to established norms (Phelan, 2015, p. 43). Thus, both mentors and mentees may find themselves "trapped in a cycle of cultural maintenance" (Britzman, 1986, p. 454), each positioned by an inherited professional past rather than engaging in dynamic exchange and generative inquiry.

Drawing on Foucault's conception of governmentality, or government as the "conduct of conduct" (Gordon, 1991, p. 48), Fournier (1999) positions professionalism as a regime of "government at a distance" (p. 298) where professionals are situated within a matrix of accountability structures such as the articulation of 'professional competence.' Fournier suggests professionalism can act as a disciplinary mechanism which governs the conduct of autonomous professional labour. Professional 'competence' is defined as a possessing a distinctive knowledge and demonstrating certain acceptable forms of conduct. "Being a professional," Fournier posits, "is not merely about absorbing a body of...knowledge but is also about conducting and constituting oneself in an appropriate manner" (p. 287). If beginning teachers come into the 'profession' lacking the knowledge and awareness of conduct more experienced teachers are expected to possess, the role of the inspector/supervisor/mentor becomes one of ensuring the boundaries of professional conduct are maintained. "It is through their 'professionalisation'" Fournier argues, "through their inscription into systems of expert knowledge, that individuals become the targets of... government" (p. 284). Once beginning teachers are certified as professionals, they become visible as objects of governance mechanisms, and disciplined to ensure they are "the sort of person who can be trusted with truth" (p. 287) and "worthy of the 'professional label'" (p. 285).

2.4 Towards an Ethic of Discomfort

Early career teacher mentorship remains a contested theoretical concept and multi-functional educational practice. Mentorship programs can be used as a managerial response to a range of issues associated with beginning teachers from the short-term triage-like provision of 'survival' tips and resources to more formalized issues of employee retention, teaching competence, and collegial care. The wide scope of intentions associated with ECT mentorship

“affirms the importance of context to conceptualization” (Colley, 2002, p. 265) as the functions of mentorship are as complex, fluid and varied as Canada’s diverse provincial and territorial jurisdictions, and the individuals engaged in daily mentoring conversations in school staffrooms. As a macro-political activity, exemplified by institutionally mandated programs such as the NTIP, mentoring may serve education ministries’ regulatory goals and promotion of specific conceptualizations of teaching practice associated with ‘quality’ instruction and student achievement. For professional bodies such as teachers’ colleges, mentorship may serve as a vehicle for inter-generational “transmission of cultural capital” (Colley, 2002, p. 265) and the preservation of historically negotiated standards and pedagogical values. In what contexts, and in what discursive moments, do beginning teachers ‘appear’ as agents of their own making, as subjects of their own narrative and not as constructed objects of politically and professionally directed policies? Colley suggests researchers explore the mechanisms by which mentorship is legitimated and made powerful and “the ways in which mentees may themselves exercise agency rather than act as passive recipients of the process” (p. 270). In this study, I considered how mentorship programs transport organizational blueprints outlining what new teachers *ought* to be learning, as mentors endeavour to place the particular needs of mentees at the centre of mentoring conversations while responding to urgent classroom pressures and institutional mandates.

When mentorship functions as a technical response, limited to improving teaching techniques, and providing immediate resource support for the job at hand, beginning teachers may find temporary respite and may even get past the ‘at-risk’ period where attrition occurs. But such an apprentice perspective (see Wang & Odell, 2002, pp. 495-497) does not sufficiently address what Clandinin et al. (2015) describe as a process of identity formation that transects

work life and personal life. Beginning teachers' experiences are as much a "life-making process" (p. 3) as they are a 'skills-growing' period. Acknowledging that beginning teachers' lives are complex, efforts to reduce attrition must acknowledge both the personal and professional aspects of teacher subjectivity. Clandinin et al. (2015) caution that "perhaps what is imagined as support is not" (p. 6) if combatting attrition does not take broader contextual factors into account. One significant attrition factor, for example, is "tensions around contracts" (p. 1) and new teachers' willingness to "do anything" (p. 9) in order to maintain continuing employment. Even when they felt supported by their school and home communities, over 60% of participants in Clandinin et al.'s study of 40 second- and third-year teachers in Alberta, Canada indicated they had serious doubts of staying in the profession for the long term due to uncertain employment conditions. Mentoring activities must acknowledge, accommodate and critique contextual issues as well as individual teachers' development as practitioners. In the case of overwork, beginning teachers often feel "a strong sense that they were on their own" (p. 5) as they struggle to adapt to their work conditions, suggesting mentoring discourse did not ask or 'make possible' the consideration of systemic conditions that contribute to heavy preparation and assessment loads in the first place. The beginning teachers' mantra of "I can get better" (Clandinin et al., 2015, p. 11) positions them as being responsible for finding own ways of coping with time demands, new subject knowledge and instructional approaches, and building professional relationships. If mentoring exchanges stop at providing 'coping strategies' and emotional support—what Wang and Odell (2002) characterize as a "humanistic perspective" (p. 493) without acknowledging broader discursive influences on teachers' work—mentorship efforts may stem attrition without querying the ethical legitimacy of inadequate working conditions and staffing policies. Valorizing the mentor-mentee relationship renders "the institutional constraints which frame the

teacher's work” (Britzman, 1986, p. 448) as less important while shifting greater responsibility for systemic and student improvement to teachers’ individualized efforts, preserving “a facade of power in a seemingly powerless situation” (p. 454).

Wechsler et al. (2012) queried whether “induction programs can make teachers considerably more effective—both during and after the induction period” (p. 388), suggesting that empirical evidence to date remains “uneven” (p. 388). Wechsler et al.’s mixed-methods study of 39 state-funded induction programs in Illinois concluded ECT induction contributed to new teachers’ “sense of efficacy” and “professional growth” (p. 412) but revealed no link between induction and improved teacher retention or student achievement. Rather than viewing these findings as “troubling” (p. 412), however, the authors attributed the inconclusive findings more to the difficulty of isolating induction as a measurable variable in complex education environments where teachers’ classroom effectiveness and student learning are influenced by economic, policy and social factors that undermine any potential effects of individual teacher induction (p. 412). The authors concluded that teacher induction cannot be conceptualized as a discrete program with mentors solely tasked with the mandate of ECT retention and improved student learning outcomes. Rather, inducting a new teacher “takes a professional community” (p. 412) where “relegating sole responsibility for teacher induction to a mentor fails to draw on the set of skills and knowledge of the entire faculty and school administration” (p. 412). Induction becomes seamlessly integrated as “a schoolwide effort and collective responsibility for the growth of new teachers” (p. 413). While acknowledging that “dramatically raising student achievement gains” cannot be left entirely to “veteran teachers down the hall,” (p. 412) this reconceptualization maintains mentorship as part of a school improvement apparatus and discourse.

However, if beginning teachers' needs are central to the conception, content and delivery of effective professional supports, who and what determines a 'need' and how do new teachers come to believe they 'need' something? New teachers respond more positively to mentorship offerings when they feel their 'voice' has been heard (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000, pp. 4-5). However, "the voice of the novice teacher" (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009, p. 815) is modulated by its context. How a teacher constructs personal gaps in knowledge, judgment and skill is shaped by the professional 'truths' in circulation in their professional community. Such perceptions "do not come from 'inside' an already-constituted speaking subject" (Maclure, 2013, p. 660). When mentoring aims appear institutionally contrived or narrowly focussed, new teachers might retreat into "personal, private experience" (Tickle, 1993, p. 204), reinforcing a sense of professional isolation. In jurisdictions where new teacher induction is constructed as a transmission model, implicitly conveying "conformity and assimilation" (Barrett et al., 2009, p. 684) in a probationary atmosphere, novice teachers face increased stress with little or no space for critical reflection and professional growth (Tickle, 1993, p. 197).

Where beginning teachers do not embrace mentoring support, it may be because asking for help is seen as a sign of "weakness" (Britzman, 1986, p. 445) in a profession characterized by the myth of "rugged individualism" (p. 448). Perhaps, turning away also provides a break from unwanted advice and coaching. After the intense evaluative gaze of university faculty and cooperating teachers within teacher education programs, the "privacy" (Descombe, 1982, p. 257) of one's own classroom comes as a welcome detachment from constant collegial interactions rather than an undesirable isolation. Seeking out help from more experienced colleagues sometimes creates "increased feelings of anxiety and stress associated with constantly seeking alternate sources of guidance and/or assistance from teacher colleagues" (Fantilli & McDougall,

2009, p. 823). Beginning teachers are sometimes reluctant to ‘burden’ or ‘bother’ busy colleagues with their questions or needs (Manchanda, 2021). Mentors endeavour to create an environment where ECTs feel “welcome to ask for help” (Hellsten, 2009, p. 715) rather than perceiving requests for assistance as an imposition on colleagues. However, unwillingness to ask for support may be read as hesitation, intimidation or a failure of mentorship safeguards. How is it that teaching in solitude (as opposed to working ‘alone’) outside of the institutional gaze, where “privacy becomes valued as a source of teacher autonomy” (Britzman, 1986, p. 445) and through which new teachers might begin to imagine themselves differently, becomes marked as a sign of questionable professional judgment? The ‘deprivatization’ of teaching practice as a desirable condition of mentorship is examined further in Chapter 6.

Situated within the context of neoliberal educational policy, mentorship programs often privilege state regulatory and public accountability aims over that of teachers’ collective professional learning priorities, and their personal and educative aspirations. While mentors and program administrators offer helpful site-based orientation, opportunities for collegial interaction and community building and acquisition of professional development and classroom resources, mentoring activities and intentions must be re-examined as a complex process of professionalization and socialization that may not always serve as an inherently ‘caring’ form of collegial support. Beginning teachers and mentors are both the objects of and actors within competing mentorship discourses. In this study, I queried the ‘commonsense’ assumptions by which mentoring programs are characterized and assessed to examine deeper contextual and discursive forces affecting beginning teachers’ appearance and silencing as professionals. In what ways does mentoring provide beginning teachers with opportunities to develop “an independence from clinging to certainty” (Britzman & Dipppo, 2000, p. 34)—certainty codified in

curriculum objectives, ‘how to’ workshops, and mentor-mentee protocols? The extent to which mentoring activities serve as a practice of freedom (Fornet-Betancourt et al., 1987) or as a technology for reproductive enculturation depends on the interplay of macro- and micro-political enactments of power, knowledge and judgment.

Mentoring encounters can provide beginning teachers with the means of claiming and disrupting professional practices, teaching spaces and common-sense notions of ‘best practice.’ Cullingford (2006) suggests the mentor-mentee relationship can exist as a private and unstructured activity in an otherwise highly regulated context, bringing attention to otherwise “unspoken and unacknowledged failures of the central system” (p. xiii). Thus, while mentoring programs can contribute both to the technicization of teaching practice and promotion of specific conceptions of professional conduct, they may in particular moments also provide a means to query and disrupt prevailing relations between state and the teaching profession, mentors and mentees, and teachers and their practice through an “activist professionalism” where “trust, obligation and solidarity work together in complementary ways” (Sachs, 1980, p. 81).

Given continued interest in and practices of developing and implementing mentoring programs in British Columbia’s public school system, the application of a universal ‘one size fits all’ provincial model may appear a professionally effective, fiscally efficient and publicly responsible means of inducting and ‘skilling up’ beginning teachers to attain measurable standards of consistency and quality of teaching practice across large populations of students. As policymakers consider the creation of provincial and local mentoring frameworks (Ministry of Education, 2017) at the same time as teacher education and professional learning are subject to increasing provincial regulation, it is especially important to maintain theoretical openings for

critical examination of ECT mentorship as a discursive container holding an accumulated set of functions.

Querying the regulation of teacher learning through strategies such as ECT mentorship acts as a necessary disruption of neoliberal discourses of professionalism and public accountability within BC's education sector. Subjecting the conceptualization of beginning teacher mentorship as an inherently benign endeavour to examination may yield vital insights and cautions as to how and where mentorship generates both normalizing and disruptive effects in BC's K-12 public education system. In the spirit of Foucault's (1994) ethics of discomfort, remaining "vigilant for those shadows that cast an illusion of new ideas upon the ground of the familiar" (Harwood & Rasmussen, 2004, p. 307), this study aimed not to become more certain about ECT mentorship aims and practices but to destabilize commonplace understandings enough "to corrupt the pleasantry of certitude" (p. 308) that marks prevailing mentorship discourses.

2.5 Summary

This chapter outlined common conceptualizations of ECT mentorship aims as a retention strategy, an assurance of teacher quality, a program of short-term triage and life-long learning and as a mechanism of professional socialization. Within a broader neoliberal context, ECT mentorship potentially serves multiple governance functions and produces varying effects on beginning teachers and mentors, some of which may produce unintended consequences for teachers' professional learning and relationships. In the next chapter, I lay out the methodological approaches used in an effort to capture 'shadows' and 'corrupt' normalized conceptions of ECT mentorship and the teacher mentors engaged within it.

Chapter 3: Theorizing Teacher Mentorship with Foucault

3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter describes the Foucauldian-inspired conceptual framework adopted for this study and discussed the theoretical concepts of discourse, governmentality, power and subjectivity as they relate to my inquiry questions. First, I discuss how a Foucauldian usage of *discourse* describes the field of knowledge that produces ‘what can be said’ (McHoul & Grace, 2015, p. 26) about ECT mentorship, making visible the historical and institutional conditions through which certain understandings and conduct of individuals involved in mentorship programs are repeated, produced and constrained through language. Next, I outline how engaging Foucault’s conception of *governmentality*—the term encompassing a broad understanding of government as all of the “rationalities and technologies of governing human beings” (Lemke, 2019, p. x)—provoked consideration of how discourse and political technologies relate to produce and maintain particular versions of ECT mentorship and, in turn, mentor figures. Foucauldian conceptions of *power* further inform analysis of mentorship as both disciplined and disciplinary technologies—where ‘discipline’ is understood as the techniques by which particular mentoring practices are normalized and where program actors both speak and act out certain truths about the way mentorship occurs. Finally, I engage Foucault’s *axes of experience*—knowledge, power and subjectivity—to consider how mentorship might be grasped as a “focal point of experience” (Foucault, 2010, p. 3).

3.2 Discourse

The term ‘discourse’ is employed ubiquitously in educational research and carries such a wide range of contested meanings and semantic functions as to render it both theoretically and methodologically problematic. Mills (2003) defines discourse as “a linguistic communication seen as a transaction between speaker and hearer...a message coded in its auditory or visual medium” (p. 4). However, when invoked in a sociocultural frame, discourse is “speech or writing seen from the point of view of the beliefs, values, and categories which it embodies,” where beliefs “constitute a way of looking at the world, an organization or a representation of experience” (p. 6). Foucault’s conceptualization of discourse varied across his various projects. In this study, I invoked discourse not as a linguistic form or system but a field of knowledge that produces ‘what can be said’ (McHoul & Grace, 2015, p. 26). I analysed mentorship as a discourse as a body of knowledge or truths and as a set of disciplinary practices by which institutions and individuals such as school districts and staff persons mobilize discourses of mentorship to subjectify teachers. In doing so, discourse governs what is thinkable, doable, possible and prohibited for teachers as mentorship actors. Opening up discourse of mentorship to include consideration of relations of knowledge and power invites political and ethical critique of teacher mentorship as a strategy and technology of educational governance in order to “describe and critique the discursive worlds people inhabit and to explore their implications for subjectivity and experience” (Willig, 2013, p. 344).

Foucault’s definition of discourse, in its broadest sense, is “the general domain of all statements” or “utterances” (Mills, 2004, p. 7) which have some meaning or effects in the real world. Discourse also marks the convergence of certain words or statements around common signifiers and illustrates the conceptualization of discourse as “groups of utterance which seem to

be regulated in some way and which seem to have a coherence and a force to them in common” (Mills, 2004, p. 7). Conceptualizing a discourse of mentorship as the coagulation of coherent utterances potentially points to exclusion of ‘incoherent’ or ‘uncommon’ utterances, rendering certain understandings of teacher mentorship ‘thinkable’ while others are circulated out of common usage to become ‘unthought.’ In these moments, Mills suggests, discourse “constrains our perceptions” (p. 54), functioning as a system which structures the way that individuals perceive reality.

Commonly invoked mentorship imperatives such as cultivating professional growth and providing support immediately appear less reified, more contingent and open to contextual influence when viewed within such discursive constraints. Brinkmann (2017) suggests Foucauldian discourse analysis attempts to “unsettle” (p. 116) normalized concepts of mentorship and the mentor figure by drawing attention to tensions in texts, setting variations of terms in relation to each other and letting “inner tensions and oppositions” (p. 122) play themselves out, which would allow one to grasp what constructions of mentorship and the mentor appear or are made visible. Returning over and over to the ‘same’ texts to grasp their shifting meanings points to ever-dynamic systems of negotiated thoughts and silences.

Discourses are only “equipped with a truth value” (Jager, 2011, p. 6) for a certain time and in a specific context. Shifting educational policies, changing institutional pressures, economic and demographic flows, and the perpetual (re)formation of educators invoke continual re-examination of the ways in which discourses effect mentorship programs function, and the ways in which teachers enact mentorship. In other words, this study’s discourse analysis revealed how “meanings float, and possibly involves suggestions and invitations into other ways that meaning may appear” (Brinkmann, 2017, p. 121). How the mentor figure was envisioned by

authors of Royal Commission reports on BC's education system or by school district staff developing mentor training sessions was highly contingent upon contextual and localized circumstances. Institutional and program documents commonly circulated and accepted as official statements of principles and aims became more contingent upon further examination.

'Discourse' implies a more fully developed convergence, no longer just a grouping of coherent statements but "a regulated practice which accounts for a number of statements" (Mills, 2004, p. 7). Gee (2005) distinguishes between this type of 'D'iscourse' and more loosely structured associations. Big 'D' discourse is comprised of both common language elements but also "associated ways of thinking, believing and valuing that are connected with membership in that discourse" (Rogers et al., 2005, p. 370). For example, 'professionalism' may be considered a Discourse whose 'truths' are continually contested. Various labels such as "new" (Furlong, 2005), "managerial" (Ball, 1990), "liberal" (Jones & Moore, 2003), and "democratic" (Sachs, 2001), the discursive hue of professionalism depends on the particular contexts in which it functions and the ways it, in turn, constitutes the subject and activities associated with its enactment. Foucault, Mills (2004) suggests, was more interested in the "rules and structures" (p. 7) that produce discourse than the actual 'utterances' that remain in circulation. Dreyfus and Rabinow (1982) suggest Foucault remained interested in both forms but became more focused on how discourses enable and constrain what can be said, by whom, where and when as his conceptualization of discourse evolved from its archaeological beginnings towards his genealogical interests. "As a technique," Dreyfus and Rabinow suggest, "archaeology serves genealogy" (p. xx) through the archeology's concern for how language constitutes social and psychological life.

Discourse structures social relations through a collective understanding of a discursive logic that defines an object. This logic is related to a broader *episteme*, historically situated

within the period from which it arises (Foucault, 2002). Therefore, knowledge of a particular historical period is necessary. Discourse disqualifies certain meanings and interpretations by reducing contingencies and eliminating differences that destabilize a normalized discourse. As a discourse is repeated, it normalizes certain forms of knowledge to create an epistemic reality and become a technique of control (Adams, 2017).

Whether discourse functions reproductively or generatively depends on how “stable and rigid, or flexible and open” (Fairclough, 2010, p. 131) power relations are within a discursive system. For example, if ECT mentorship is invoked as a regulatory activity for inducting new teachers into a dominant discourse of institutional mandates where the knowledge and practice of teachers is subject to the imperatives of an educational organization, mentoring texts such as program handbooks and school district policies may serve to reproduce social relations between administrators and teachers as well as mentors and mentees. However, mentorship may take on a more creative and unpredictable function where the matrix of power relationships is open to disruption. Critical linguistics concerned with “the way certain people’s knowledge is disqualified or is not taken seriously in contrast to authorized knowledge” (Mills, 1997, p. 149) point to the potential of discourse analysis to unhinge prevailing practices of power. Some discourses are so entrenched as to become ‘common sense’ and teachers may find them very difficult to challenge (Willig, 2013, pp. 380). At the same time, Willig suggests “it is in the nature of language that alternative constructions are always possible and that *counter-discourses* [sic] can, and do, emerge eventually” (pp. 380-381). Therefore, another aim of this study was to gain insight into how the discursive practices produced within a particular localized institutional structure reproduced and disrupted common sense constructions of mentorship and the role of mentors.

As Hook (2005) cautions, “remaining ‘within the text’, to be preoccupied only with the contents of discourse means analysts...will be insufficiently aware of how discourse is instrumentalized precisely because they will lack reference to... material and institutional instances” (p. 9). Within Foucauldian approaches, Willig (2013) outlines, discourses are not conceptualized “simply as ways of speaking or writing” but are “bound up with institutional practices – that is, with ways of organizing, regulating and administering social life” (p. 381). Foucauldian analysis is “interested in studying how some bit of text emerged as meaningful (what are its background conditions?) and not only in analyzing what the bit means on its own terms” (Brinkmann, 2017, p. 131). Discourse contextualizes the knowledge formations of mentorship and the mentor and their effects on power relations within the practice of a mentorship program. For example, as examined in Chapter 6, interviews with four policy actors (Ball et al., 2011) associated with the District Mentorship Program (DMP) surfaced varying perspectives on the mentor recruitment process. Contested rationales for mentor selection were an effect of an interplay of shifting material *conditions* (a growing population of new teachers), organizational *processes* (decision-making through a mentorship advisory committee) and prevailing *knowledges* in circulation about the dispositions and functions of mentors within a mentorship program. “Analysis of text and talk,” Fairclough et al. (2004) maintain, “is not an end in itself, but rather social analysis with a focus on the moment of discourse” (p. 5). Therefore, it is necessary to not just examine signifiers but to consider the material and historical conditions by which their meanings are produced.

As a critical reading of discourse, McHoul and Grace (2015) suggest Foucauldian analysis “offers possibilities for social critique and renewal” (p. 27) of normative understandings of the aims and benefits of ECT mentorship. Or, as Foucault expresses it, the aim of discourse

analysis is to produce a “stirring under our feet” (Foucault, 2002, p. xxvi) that demonstrates the “instability” and “flaws” (p. xxvi) of common-sense knowledge circulated in public education organizations. How does a concept such as mentorship become thinkable in an education setting? How might an extraction of discursive forms of mentorship generate understandings about the political and ethical implications of well-intentioned actions on the part of teacher mentors in the present?

Drawing attention to mentorship as discourse problematizes truths about early career teacher mentorship that have the effect of marginalizing some mentoring mandates and practices and privileging others. Foucauldian discourse analysis theories and strategies ask how the constitutive function of language relates to the social practices of mentorship and the subjectification of mentors. Within a Foucauldian perspective, subjects produce, re-enact and legitimize certain power relationships and dominant discourses function to legitimize and serve existing systems or practices, such as the positioning of mentors as purveyors of teaching resources or strategies or as carriers of sanctioned understandings of professional conduct. Such dominant discourses become viewed as ‘common sense’ unless they are resisted through other counter practices and strategies of ambivalence.

3.3 Governmentality

When Foucault coined the neologism ‘governmentality’ (*gouvernementalité*) during his 1978-9 lectures at the *College de France*, he extended the term to encompass a broader understanding of government as all of the “rationalities and technologies of governing human beings” (Lemke, 2019, p. x) that connect state formation with subjectivation. These fields included medical, legal and educational institutions and the mechanisms by which they produce subjects. Studies of governmentality, Lemke asserts, tend to analyse “a restructuring of

governmental techniques and the re-articulation of identities and subjectivities” (p. xi) produced by neoliberalism.

Foucault elaborated how “governmentality mediates between power and subjectivity...and how forms of political government are articulated with practices of self-government” (Lemke, 2019, p. xiv-v). Governmentality, or government rationality, is “a form of activity aiming to shape, guide or affect the conduct of some person or persons” (Gordon, 1991, p. 2). Government, for Foucault, is not synonymous with the state but also involves interpersonal relations and relations within communities and social institutions. Government, rather than an existing as an entity, is conceptualized as an activity or practice through which certain activities come to be ‘thinkable’ to both its practitioners and to those upon whom it is practiced (Gordon, 1991, pp. 2-3). In neoliberal discourse, the education sector is positioned as essential to the continued economic stability of the state. Neoliberal governance discourse situates education ministries and local school districts as mediators between teachers and the public with policy documents such as student achievement reports, budgets, and teacher certification and professional standards, thereby positioning them as sites of accountability and management of teacher competence and conduct. Various institutional apparatuses situate school and school district administrators as exercising authority over students and teachers, charged with assuring “the welfare of the population” (Foucault, 1991, p. 100) and “the improvement of its condition” (p. 100). Increasing state intervention into the regulation of professions in the past two decades signals a shift in power relations between the state and the teaching profession where policy mandates are carried out in a “capillary” (Brinkmann, 2017, p. 125) fashion “diffused and distributed in heterogeneous practices” (p. 125) across many sites and in an infinite number of micropolitical interactions. The continuing legitimacy of the state’s authority to shape new

teachers' 'beginnings' and the implications of that objectivizing process are central to the potential (or negation) of mentorship as a strategy of teacher regulation.

Lemke (2019) points to how Foucault's conceptual work opened up an 'epistemological-political field' (p. xi) concerned with investigating "the discursive operations and institutional mechanisms through which truth claims are generated and distributed" (p. xi). Applied to ECT mentorship, a governmental lens considers the "mechanisms of the conduct of individuals and collective bodies" (p. xii) such as teachers, teacher-mentors, school district managers, schools, unions, school district committees and school boards within a mentorship program.

An assumption of new professionalism discourse, Furlong (2000) argues, is that increased intervention into teachers' initial education and early career mentorship "will, in the long run, serve to construct a new generation of teachers with different forms of knowledge, different skills and different professional values" (p. 6) necessary for effective governance, and provide "quality assurance or accountability" in public education (Grimmett, 2018, p. 347). Governmentality is concerned with how mechanisms of power legitimize authority over mentorship (e.g., through a local administrative body such as an advisory committee). Governance mechanisms circulate and reproduce certain forms of mentorship knowledge and conduct as acceptable or desirable while other truths are suppressed or rendered undesirable (Marshall, 1990). Thus, the mentor "becomes classified as an object in various ways for others and is tied to the 'true' self as a subjected or politically dominated being" (Marshall, 1990, p. 16).

Still under the banner of new professionalism, Bourke, Lidstone and Ryan (2015) describe how "disciplinary technologies in the twenty-first century apply equally to teachers and their students, with the surveilling gaze emanating from above (regulatory authorities), beside

(individuals and collectives) and below (students)” (p. 85). Viewing mentorship as a mechanism of disciplinary power (Foucault, 1995), techniques could include hierarchical observation (as new teachers work ‘under’ administrators and mentors to meet teaching standards); normalization (e.g., in the promotion of particular competencies regarding teaching knowledge and professional conduct); and examination (e.g., through classroom observations).

The invocation of governmentality produces various investigative considerations. What are the intended and unintended consequences or effects of mentorship policy and practice? What critical and moral implications do mentorship practices produce (i.e., how do “good” and “bad” practices become normalized?) Which practices are permitted, constrained or prohibited? What surveillance or monitoring practices are enacted to prevent harmful practices and generating desirable ones? How is mentorship enacted at a micro-level within a mentoring program? How does power circulate within the mundane activities of mentorship practice such as planning and reporting? How are particular policies resisted or subverted? Who exercises authority over teacher mentorship and what technologies produce their authority and power? How is ‘effective’ mentorship produced, represented and rewarded?

Rather than serving as an ahistorical and politically innocuous form of professional and personal support, teacher mentorship entangles individuals in a complex matrix of historically situated institutional power relations. Governmentality theory provided a means of thinking differently about how ECT mentorship ends up variously serving as a strategy of teacher regulation, of professional and social enculturation, of professionalism, and as a “practice of freedom” (Fornet-Betancourt et al., 1987, p. 112) where beginning teachers and mentors might exercise “an independence from clinging to certainty” (Britzman & Dippo, 2000, p. 34) as codified in such technologies as provincial and school district policies, programs and protocols.

3.4 Power

Mentoring policies and programs are constituted within a discursive field of knowledge and power. The discourses of mentorship, made actionable through various institutional documents, structure power relations that both enable and limit the ways mentors and mentees work and think about the mentoring relationship and the aims of their mentorship activities. Foucault theorizes power as “something which is performed, something more like a strategy than a possession” (Mills, 1997, p. 35) and individuals are “vehicles of power, not its point of application” (Foucault, 1980, p. 80). Rather than being conceptualized as the capability of powerful agents, such as a provincial government, to exercise control or will over the ‘oppressed,’ power by its nature elicits resistance in order to exist in social relations (Mills, 1997, p. 40). Power only exists “when addressed to individuals who are free to act in one way or other” (Gordon, 1991, p. 5). Ball (1990) suggests that the discourse of managerial professionalism allows particular individuals or organizations to enact power when they possess “certain forms of expertise...and procedures that cast others, subordinates, as objects of that discourse...whether they wish to be or not” (Ball, 1990, pp. 156-157). Individuals or institutional entities come to power, then, when they are seen to possess the authority to generate and reproduce truths within a network:

Power applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him. It is a form of power which makes individuals subjects. (Foucault, 1982, p. 781)

Power is implicated in the enactment of teacher mentorship because it structures the relationships between institutions and individuals who engage in mentoring initiatives. A persistent ‘truth’ in

mentorship research literature is the mentor as expert teacher. Power, when exercised in a mentor-mentee relationship informed by this ‘expert’ claim hierarchically situates the mentor as possessing (and, hence, authorizing) more experience, expertise and knowledge of the culture and protocols of teaching or a school community. New teachers are constituted as unfinished, incomplete and, consequently, in need of expert guidance and possessing less claim to power by virtue of their inexperience and lack of expertise.

Mentors are frequently summoned to serve as a “role model, facilitator, coach and advisor” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 18). Within the power relations of the ‘mentor as expert’ discourse, a new teacher who resists the authority or expertise of a mentor figure might be characterized as ‘unprofessional,’ ‘uncollaborative’ or ‘overly confident.’ Disruption of the circulation of power at a micro-level may be enacted in a mentee’s selection of a different mentor than one assigned or matched by a program, by specification of a different focus for a classroom observation, shifting a mentoring discussion away from prescribed areas for growth, or the decision to bring a formal mentoring relationship to a close if and when the mentee believes it is no longer required or desirable. In formal mentorship programs, such acts of resistance are perhaps more difficult to ‘think’ when a mentoring relationship between expert and novice teacher is pre-arranged, validated or funded by administrative arrangement. The ECT may be left in a position of powerlessness over their own professional self-formation.

Power is also evident where certain policy actors are better positioned to determine the content, form and duration of a school district’s mentorship program aims and methods. In the absence of formalized program commitments or evaluative oversight, teachers might exercise power by resisting an administrative imperative; meanwhile, mentorship coordinators must fulfil institutionally mandated requirements with evidence that teachers are complying. Technologies

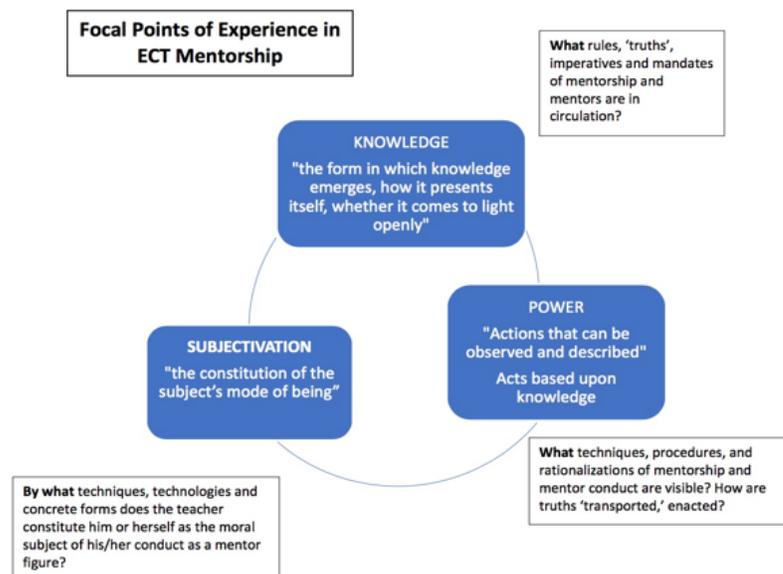
such as feedback forms, meeting agendas and email communications function as strategies for ensuring compliance but may also serve as sites of potential resistance. Mentorship programs serve as the “localized circuit” (Hall, 1997, p. 50) within which various strategies of power are exercised “written in” (Mills, 2004, p. 40) to relationships between ECTs and their mentors, and between mentors and those charged with overseeing mentorship policies, programs and budgets at the district level, such as senior managers and coordinators.

A further consideration of mentor figures formation as subject is how the technology of mentorship might act as a disciplinary practice within public education settings. Foucault’s conception of the knowledge/power inherent in discourse offered an approach for examining that aspect of mentorship as an institutional discipline. As outlined earlier, power to Foucault is potentially a productive force and not necessarily an oppressive one (Foucault, 1977). For Foucault, Gordon (1991) argues, power is “an endless and open strategic game” (p. 5). Within an educational organization such as a school district “there is no power that is exercised without a series of aims and objectives” (Foucault, 1990, p. 95). Also, power “brings into play relations between individuals (or between groups)” (Foucault, 1982, p. 786). To identify relations of power within mentorship program activities and mentoring relationships requires understanding how discipline is exercised. Mentorship discourses work as a system of representation that constructs participants’ sense of what effective mentorship looks like, and how effective mentors conduct and ‘speak’ themselves within mentoring conversations.

3.5 Subject

Foucault's theories of the formation of the subject offered promising tools for examining practices through which teacher mentors constitute themselves as subjects within prevailing knowledges of mentorship. Foucault (2010) described his intention to develop a "history of thought" (p. 3) as "an analysis of what could be called focal points of experience in which forms of a possible knowledge (*savoir*), normative frameworks of behavior for individuals, and potential modes of existence for possible subjects are linked together" (p. 3). Using his study of madness as an example, Foucault explained analysis should not treat its object as "unchanging" (p. 3) or serve as "a way of studying attitudes towards madness that may have existed...at a given point in time" (p. 3). Instead, an analysis of any object of study involved "grasping" the object as a "focal point of experience" (p. 3) represented in this graphic:²

Figure 1 Focal Points of Experience



² Adapted from: Jäger (2011). *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, pp. 28-32; Foucault (2010), *Government of Self and Others*, pp. 3-5.

Foucault (2010) suggested that subjects are formed through three axes of experience: *the axis of knowledge*, or the rules that govern discursive practices that determine what is true or false; *the axis of power*, or the rationalities by which one governs the conduct of others; and *the axis of ethics*, or the practices through which an individual constitutes itself as a subject (Arribas Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2017, p. 2). This three-fold framing of mentorship as a discursive object prompted thinking about connections between what discourses speakers draw from when describing the purposes of mentorship and the roles of mentors (knowledge), how knowledge is circulated and reproduced within a mentorship program (power), and how mentors enact prevailing notions of mentorship within the context of a mentorship program (subjectivity). By shifting a concern for “knowledge” to the study of “forms of veridiction” (Foucault, 2010, p. 5), replacing the assumption of “domination” (p. 4) with that of “procedures of governmentality” (p. 5) and moving from a “theory of the subject” to “the historical analysis of the pragmatics of the self” (p. 5), Foucault pointed to a means of analyzing ‘experiences’ of mentorship by policy actors and mentors.

Foucault’s *axis of knowledge* consists of the rules and truths that govern discursive practices which determine what is true or false:

To study experience as the matrix for the formation of forms of knowledge...one should identify the discursive practices which were able to constitute the matrices of possible bodies, and study the rules, the game of true and false, and more generally, the forms of veridiction in these discursive practices. (p. 4)

This orientation moves past documenting educators’ characterizations or program descriptions of the aims of ECT mentorship or the roles of effective mentors towards consideration of the formation of knowledge of mentorship and "the discursive practices that organize and

constitute...these forms of knowledge” (p. 4). This supports consideration of why some mentorship program mandates or notions of mentor efficacy prevail as ‘true’ through various organizational “rules of veridiction” (p. 4).

The *axis of power* consists of what Foucault described as “the techniques and procedures by which one sets about conducting the conduct of others” (Foucault, 2010, p. 4). Within the context of a mentorship program such techniques might include mentor training sessions which promote sanctioned mentorship activities such as facilitating learning conversations or the development of mentees’ professional goals. Program procedures for ensuring mentors attend such sessions might include filling in an application form that informs prospective mentors of the commitment level expected once they sign on. Foucault was less concerned with analyzing “general or institutional forms of domination” and more with procedures of “governmentality” which produce a “matrix of normative behaviours” (p. 4) within an institution.

What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn’t only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression. (Foucault, 1980, pp. 118-119)

This conception of power offered an approach for examining mentorship as an institutional discipline. What might be characterized as a disciplinary mechanism produced desirable knowledge and skills for certain teachers, reinforcing the validity of mentor training as a feature of an effective mentorship program.

Finally, *the axis of ethics* focusses on “the constitution of the subject’s mode of being” (Foucault, 1980, p. 4) and prompts examination of “the different forms by which the individual is led to constitute him or herself as subject” (p. 4-5). The aim of this analytical link is “to see how and through what concrete forms of the relation to self” teachers are called upon to constitute and conduct themselves as mentor figures (p. 5). Foucault describes the “techniques and technologies” of subjectivation as “the pragmatics of self” (p. 5), as subjects negotiate “potential modes of existence” (p. 5) that are made possible through prevailing forms of knowledge and power relations. This conceptualization of teachers’ subjectivation invites consideration of how teacher-mentors conduct and ‘speak’ themselves within mentoring conversations, and within the normalizing organizational structures governing the mentorship program. Another helpful, and at the same time problematic, element of this axial orientation is, given Foucault’s notion of power, the mentor figure “is neither a ‘role’ nor an ‘individual’ but a multiplicity of positions which are contradictory and discontinuous” (Arribas & Walkerdine, 2017, p. 4). Foucault (1997) proposes four questions (pp. 137-138) for examining the discursive formation and function of the mentor/subject:

1. Under what conditions and through what forms can an entity like the subject appear in the order of discourse?
2. What position does it occupy?
3. What functions does it exhibit?
4. What rules does it follow in each type of discourse?

As power relations are at once unstable, fluid and constitutive, for subjects “there is always the possibility of acting ‘otherwise’” (p. 5)—Foucault’s ethical dimension of freedom. Analysis of mentors’ reflections and feedback on District Mentorship Program (DMP) activities in

Chapter 6 pointed to possible instances of mentors thinking ‘otherwise’ in relation to prevailing truths about how and why mentorship may be enacted, taking me to the heart of inquiry into the ontological formation of the mentor as subject/object within discourse.

3.6 Summary

This chapter outlined the Foucauldian theoretical concepts used to frame ECT mentorship as discourse—as a body of knowledge and as a set of disciplinary practices. Foucault’s theoretical matrix of knowledge, power and subjectivity offered a means of considering the ways conceptualization and conduct of mentorship and mentors are produced and constrained through language, institutional structures and practice. I discussed how considering teacher mentorship as a discourse generates understandings of how concepts of mentorship are produced and constrained through language. Next, I outlined how engaging Foucault’s theory of governmentality might be engaged to inform analysis of mentorship as a disciplinary technology within education systems. Finally, I outlined how Foucault’s axes of knowledge, power and subjectivity might be applied in the examination of ECT mentorship and how mentors become subjects of and to particular mentorship discourses.

Chapter 4: Genealogical and Discourse Analysis of Mentorship in Policy and Program Texts

4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter outlines the study's methodological framework. First, I describe two methodological approaches used to critique prevailing understandings of mentoring programs and their purposes: genealogical and discourse analysis. Second, I describe the generation, functions and limitations of three types of texts (data) used in this study: government policy documents, policy actor interviews and mentorship program documents. Finally, I foreground the techniques used to identify and analyse discursive formations, strategies and effects in policy and program texts and policy actor interviews gathered in provincial and school district levels explored in this study.

4.2 Framing a Genealogical Analysis of Education Policy Texts

4.2.1 Genealogy

Foucault's genealogical theory brought a needed historical dimension to this study of ECT mentorship discourses by tracing how discursive resources come into circulation and make present constructions and utterances of mentorship possible while denaturalizing normative conceptions, values and practices of ECT mentorship extracted from contemporary data. Genealogy is concerned with "describing the procedures, practices, apparatuses and institutions involved in the production of discourses and knowledges, and their power effects" (Carabine, 2001, p. 276). Further, genealogical inquiry is concerned with tracing the history of the development of such knowledges and their power effects "to reveal something about the nature of power in modern society" (p. 277). Foucault's genealogical approach takes into consideration

how ideas become “regimes of truth” (Foucault, 1980, p. 131), or discourses which are accepted and function as true and how systems and strategies of power are used to keep truth regimes in place over time.

Genealogical analysis is further concerned about noticing discursive discontinuities and how such breaks in dominant discourses reveal truths as social constructions. A genealogical inquiry begins with an issue of contemporary concern—ECT mentorship, in this case—and traces it back through its various constructions over time (Smythe, 2006, p. 25). Drawing out the various ways teacher knowledge, professional learning and conduct were described and enforced in selected policy documents between 1960 to 2019 (see Chapter 5), I foregrounded discursive conditions to stir ground beneath normalized truths within a contemporary mentorship program (see Chapter 6). My genealogical analysis of mentorship discourses was less interested, then, in *when* the idea and practice of mentorship appeared in the writing and utterances of political actors in BC, and more about what conditions made the appearance of ‘mentorship’ and ‘mentor’ possible. I was curious about what broader historical, political and economic conditions contributed to the appearance of the particular discourse practices of mentorship in particular times, places and forms. I engaged genealogy as a means of theorizing the history of the present mentorship moment, as a tool for uncovering the pathways by which previously articulated ideas about teacher mentorship travel to be recognized and taken up in both familiar and unexpected ways.

Foucault inquires how particular signifiers and not others, come to be made visible in a particular situation given a historical and political context: “[t]he conditions necessary for the appearance of an object of discourse, the historical conditions required if one is to ‘say anything’ about it, and if several people are to say different things about it...are many and imposing”

(Foucault, 1972, p. 49). A genealogical study is not concerned with the production of a clean, causal record that lays out how current mentorship truths came to be—“the attempt to trace how the current beliefs and practices came to be evident” (Brinkmann, 2017, p. 130). Rather, genealogical analysis endeavours to give “meticulous, and patiently documentary” (Foucault, 1977, p. 139) consideration of “the accidents, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations that give birth to those things that continue to exist and have value” (p. 146). Foucault (1977) described the true objective of genealogy as the examination of the events through which concepts are formed—i.e., the “complex course of descent” (p. 81) of mentorship truths with all “its jolts” (p. 80). Foucault’s genealogical approaches provided an opportunity to produce different questions and understandings of mentorship moving beyond ahistorical assumptions of the aims of mentorship practices and phenomenological descriptions of educators’ experiences. Genealogical analysis requires attentiveness to a text’s location within a historical moment and makes “small, local truths” (Brinkmann, 2017, p. 129) about teacher mentorship “visible through the collection and use of a variety of empirical materials” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 3). Foucault’s genealogical techniques provided a means of examining the social forces shaping mentorship practices and disentangling discourses and power relations at work in policy documents and interviews.

Genealogical inquiry looks past the ‘present’ to consider continuities and discontinuities in discursive formations. Further, Carabine (2001) emphasizes the need to listen for “silences” (p. 285) to pay attention to formations one might expect to be present in a text but are noticeable by their absence. Has ECT mentorship ‘always’ been spoken in BC public education policy? If not, what contextual influences constrained or permitted its appearance. As Foucault (1972) asks: “[h]ow is it that one particular statement appeared rather than another?” (p. 30). To understand

the conditions for the appearance or absence of particular mentorship formations “[w]e must grasp the statement in the exact specificity of its occurrence; determine its conditions of existence...establish its correlations with other statements that may be connected with it, and show what other forms of statement it excludes” (pp. 30-31). A genealogy, Foucault (1977) writes, “does not pretend to go back in time to restore an unbroken continuity” (p. 146) between past educational policy and conceptualizations of mentorship and present conditions. It does, however, aim to unravel and “denaturalize” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 27) texts to examine their descriptive features as well as why and how they are produced.

4.2.2 Policy Documents

To construct a genealogical record that would allow analysis of continuities and breakages in mentorship discourses and institutional practices over time, I gathered a corpus of texts documenting organizational and logistical aspects of discourse production (Karikari, 2016) at the macrolevel. I accessed provincial government publications addressing initial teacher education, teacher standards, labour recruitment and retention, mentorship and induction policies between 1960-2019 to investigate how historically situated policy documents make discursive resources available to actors within educational systems.

All policy documents accessed for the study but one were available in the public domain using university library search tools or general public internet search engines. The exception, *Profiles of Induction/Mentoring Activities in Some Public School Districts* (1994), was obtained through the member library of the British Columbia Teachers’ Federation (BCTF) in Vancouver, Canada, which was accessible to me as both a BCTF employee and member.

Table 1 Policy Documents

Year	Document Title
1960	Report of the Royal Commission of Education
1988	A Legacy for Learners: The Report of the Royal Commission on Education 1988
1994	Profiles of Induction/Mentoring Activities in Some Public School Districts: A report prepared for the Teacher Supply and Demand Committee
2017	The Minister’s Task Force on Immediate Recruitment and Retention Challenges
2003-2019	Standards for BC Educators: 1 st edition (2003); 2 nd edition (2004); 3 rd edition (2008); 4 th edition (2012); 5 th edition (2019)

4.2.3 Analysis Methods

Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine (2017) advise “there are no set rules or procedures for conducting Foucauldian-inspired analysis” (p. 2) for though he produced a well-developed theory of discourse, Foucault left “no consistent programme of work from which to extract a methodology” (p. 2). Foucault described his various theoretical projects as “still open dossiers...tracks which I have just come across and followed for a while, and then left to one side, poorly marked out” (p. 6). I consulted various interlocutors (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008; Carabine, 2001; Cherryholmes, 1988; Fairclough 1981, 1995; Kendall & Wickham, 2011; Willig, 2013) before and during analysis of specific statements and performed iterative readings of relevant theoretical and secondary literature as discursive patterns emerged. With methodological tools in hand, I charted an analytical pathway that would enable me to explore how particular discourses of teacher mentorship became thinkable across the particular political and cultural context of British Columbia’s public education system between 1960-2019. Drawing on Carabine (2001) and Foucault (1972), I reviewed each policy document in three steps to identify 1) discursive formations 2) discursive strategies and 3) their discursive effects in

constituting mentorship, as well as consider the relationship of mentorship discourses to other educational discourses in play such as professionalism and teacher regulation.

The first step in genealogical analysis of ‘mentorship’ and ‘mentors’ was to “map the first *surfaces of their emergence*” (Foucault, 1972, p. 45) in texts. As I completed an initial textual analysis of each policy document’s mentions of mentorship, I pondered “what it is talking about...giving it the status of an object—and therefore of making it manifest, nameable and describable” (p. 46). Carbine (2001) describes this process as identifying “themes, categories and objects of discourse” (p. 281) within a text while Willig (2013) refers to this step as identifying “discourse constructions” (p. 394). The appearance of a ‘regularity’ between seemingly unconnected groups of statements, ‘dispersed’ historically and spatially across disparate texts, Foucault (1972) defined as a *discursive formation*:

Whenever one can describe, between a number of statements...a regularity (an order, correlations, positions and functionings, transformations), we will say...that we are dealing with a *discursive formation*. (p. 41)

For example, the *Report of the Royal Commission of Education* (Chant, Liersch & Walrod, 1960) made no mention of the signifier ‘mentorship’ or of teacher induction in its 464 pages while the *A Legacy for Learners: The Report of the Royal Commission on Education* (Sullivan, 1988) included some mentions of the term and several sections on the induction of beginning teachers. In the first version of the province’s teaching standards published in 2003, and in every iteration since, mentorship has been embedded as a professional obligation. Tracing appearances of teacher mentorship across textual surfaces showed the appearance and persistence of mentorship as a discursive formation but also subtle shifts in its invocations. Historical discontinuities and tensions in the use of teachers’ professional learning as a strategy of

accountability and professionalism served to variously constitute mentorship as a professional obligation and aspirational endeavour.

Next, *discursive strategies* are the means by which certain versions of mentorship come to be known or accepted as ‘true’ or promoted over others. While there may be “no hard and fast rules” for genealogical analysis (Carabine, 2001, p. 268), one commitment is to analyze the effects of power that are produced by what is said and then aim to destabilize accepted meanings and reveal the ways in which dominant discourses exclude equally valid claims to the question of how power could and should be exercised (Adams, 2017). Examination of discursive strategies considers how a discourse is deployed within a text—the means by which a discourse is given “meaning and force” (Carabine, 2001, p. 288) or given an “action orientation” (Willig, 2013, p. 396). For example, the inclusion of mentorship as “a responsibility to the profession” (BC College of Teachers, 2004, p. 18) normalized mentorship as a desirable professional activity. When a teacher serves as a mentor, they are written by and speaking to a discursive strategy that positions them as a responsible professional in contrast to teachers who do not “support the profession by providing mentorship or encouragement to other educators” (p. 18). Other normalizing strategies include hierarchizing, classifying, and dividing (Foucault, 1972, p. 47)—enacted, for example, by prioritizing certain mentorship aims over others, differentiating mentors by certain ‘skills’ that non-mentors lack, and differentiating between the formal activities carried out within a program and the informal collegial interactions occurring beyond the organizational boundaries of a program structure. A discursive strategy also appeals to “the institutional *sites*” (Foucault, 1972, p. 56) from which authorities make their discourse and justify discursive formations with a “legitimate source” (p. 56)—such as how Royal Commission consultations,

task force inquiries and government committee reports function and achieve authority as socially-sanctioned sources of mentorship discourses.

A final step in genealogical excavation of mentorship objects is assessing their *discursive effects* within the text and on the mentor-subject (subjectification). Discursive formations and strategies position ECT mentorship and mentors in particular ways in relation to beginning teachers, to the teaching profession, and within other educational discourses (e.g., student success and achievement). What are the “possibilities for action” (Willig, 2013, p. 399) charted by discursive constructions of mentorship? What can be said and done by the teacher-subjects positioned within them? Are teachers who serve as mentors more professionally committed than those who do not volunteer to do so? What are the potential consequences of resisting commonly accepted goals or accountability requirements within a mentorship program?

I worked to identify and trace the appearances of discourses that create and constrain the conditions of possibility for mentors as they articulated understandings and enacted mentorship. By making visible the chain of knowledge that orders the relational spaces and subjectivities teachers occupy, genealogical approaches provided an adaptable frame for inquiring into the figuring of mentors based on its provocation of the normalizing power of discourses—and their potential disruption. Engaging genealogical approaches enabled the consideration of the plasticity of discourses that are commonly represented as ‘fixed’ in contemporary mentoring contexts. What is circulated as a fixed attribute or ‘code of conduct’ for teachers serves to normalize certain types of thinking and doing is, in fact, the unfinished and ever-shifting product of complex historical, social and ideological processes. Former institutional and cultural contexts influence “the development, maintenance and circulation of discourses” (Mills, 1997, p. 11) in the present and effect how certain conceptions of mentorship stay in circulation.

4.3 Discourse Analysis of School District Interviews and Program Documents

4.3.1 Policy Actor Interviews

Within my data collection timeline, I secured four interviews which occurred between June and August 2018. I engaged individuals who would provide a range of historical perspectives and subject positions in relation to the District Mentorship Program but pragmatically I was reliant mostly on interviewees’ availability and willingness to participate as the 2018 school year drew to a close. Within those constraints, I recruited four “policy actors” (Ball et al., 2011) who offered a potentially broad range of subject positionings in relation to the DMP: a program coordinator, a mentorship consultant, a union representative and a district management staff member (see Table 2).

Table 2 District Mentorship Program (DMP) Policy Actors

Interviewee Pseudonym	Interview	Interviewee Description
Coordinator	June 15, 2018 75 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • program coordinator of the DMP for two years • implemented the DMP Advisory Committee’s vision into program events and resources • distributed, gathered and reviewed DMP planning and feedback forms; ordered and distributed resources; managed DMP budget • coordinated mentor training and celebratory events acknowledging program successes and DMP mentors’ voluntary contributions
Union Representative	June 15, 2018 78 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as one of the longest serving DMP advisors, held the policy “field of memory” (Foucault, 1972) of the DMP in its various iterations • represented the local teacher union on the Mentorship Advisory Committee and other professional development committees in the District
Director	June 22, 2018 65 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involved for one year as the management staff person with oversight for the DMP; member of the Mentorship Advisory Committee

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for reporting on DMP activities and outcomes to the District’s senior management team and school board
Consultant	<p>August 1, 2018</p> <p>110 minutes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> had worked for the District for two years was hired to facilitate DMP advisory committee meetings and dialogue about mentorship program aims and practices was not a regular staff member in the DMP but was called in on several occasions to advise on program design and provide mentorship training

Semi-structured interviews (see Appendix for interview questions) with the four policy actors ranged between 1-2 hours and were digitally recorded then transferred to a transcription service’s secure server. Completed transcript files were transferred from the provider’s server to a password protected hard drive for analysis for the duration of the study.

The analysis of policy actors’ spoken accounts allowed for “a close-up shot of interactions and decision-making” (Ball et al., 2011, p. 85) enabling me to examine how organizational hierarchies and relations of power influence discourse production (Fairclough, 1995; Van Dijk, 1993). Ball et al. (2011) argue that “‘policy work’ is made up of a set of complex and differentiated activities which involve both creative and disciplinary relations that are infused with power” (p. 625). Further, “actors in schools are positioned differently and take up different positions in relation to policy” (p. 625). My analysis pointed to how individuals can inhabit multiple, sometimes contradictory, positionings within the discourse-practices of ECT mentorship. Ball et al. clarify that “these ‘actors’ or positions are not necessarily specific individuals nor fixed, unified and mutually exclusive ‘types’ ...people may move between these roles” (p. 626).

Collectively, the four policy actors constructed an institutional narrative about key policy objects within the teacher mentorship program and the mentors constituted by them. Narratives can serve various functions within an organization including the creation of a retrospective record ('where we have come from', 'how we got here') and prospective vision ('where we hope to go from here with this mentorship program and practices in the future') that can provoke both "continuities or dramatic breaks" (Ball, 2011, p. 627) with past policies.

One of the explicit intentions of Foucauldian analysis is the treatment of power in that it "endeavours to make explicit power relationships which are frequently hidden, and thereby to derive results which are of practical relevance" (Meyer, 2011, p. 3). Educators are "positioned differently in relation to policy...at different points in their careers, with different amounts of accumulated experience. They have different amounts and kinds of responsibility, different aspirations and competences" (Ball, 2011, p. 638). The four interviewees possessed varying degrees of knowledge and experience with teacher mentorship in general and with the DMP in particular. Following from their various experiences, beliefs and aspirations in relation to ECT mentorship, the four DMP policy actors were positioned in different ways within the power relations of their school district and derived their subject authority from those disparate positionings. Interview analysis provided an opportunity to examine how speakers' authority (when speech is taken seriously) is an effect of their organizational history or mentorship expertise, which are in turn an effect of educational discourses that privilege localized knowledge and professional expertise. The subject positionality of policy actors was delimited by their role identity as defined by their organizational and mentorship program experiences—a localized view of the subject's position through a job or position within the DMP. Therefore, analysis of policy actor interviews enabled both an exploration of how truths about mentorship

and mentors come into circulation in a school district setting through speakers' statements as well as how actors' authority to make truth claims is established and taken up by others.

4.3.2 Institutional Program Documents

A third set of texts consisted of institutional documents generated about and for use within the mentorship program. Espeland (2011) argues that “the significance of official documents as a form of power is a neglected source of political analysis” (p. 301), stating that “formal documents produced by an organization are revealing sources for understanding how power is exerted, legitimated and reproduced” (p. 301). Program documents can serve various functions within bureaucratic organizations. The DMP experienced considerable turnover in staffing and in the composition of its mentorship program committee with key personnel and teachers moving on to other district positions or other school districts. Unstable staffing environments raise the question of where historical, conceptual and practical knowledges of teacher mentorship ‘live’ when actors leave, and newcomers become part of an unfamiliar program apparatus. In this context, institutional documents serve as “repositories of interests”—or “a vehicle for preserving and sustaining an idea over time” (Espeland, 2011, p. 317). Further, “documents help to sustain, re-create and repackage” a mentorship program, “preserving its viability, despite political setbacks” (p. 317) such as budgetary shortfalls or changes to a district’s organizational priorities.

When I first took up a position as a district mentorship coordinator, binders of program documents collated by former staff provided an essential historical record of past program activities, structures and communications. Being able to cite a longstanding district commitment to teacher mentorship through archived copies of budgets, documentation of management/union collaboration initiatives, and teacher feedback of mentorship experiences provided justification

to district officials for continued funding of the program despite cutbacks to professional development initiatives. At the same time, this ‘repository’ was a product of discourses of mentorship in circulation at the time of its creation and served as a material manifestation of mentorship knowledge that shaped my thinking and activities as I proceeded to create program mandates, structures and activities.

Documents can also provide disclosures about the nature of power within an organization. For example, program documents may serve an ‘accountability’ function or, as Espeland (2011) characterizes them, as “political weapons” (p. 317) which provide mechanisms for surveillance and controlling and constraining what can be done and thought. Feedback and evaluation forms are a ubiquitous feature of educational programs and events. I obtained copies of feedback forms from a variety of DMP events which invited teachers’ commentary on what worked well and what could be improved as well as suggestions for future activities. DMP mentors were required to submit outlines of their cohort meetings, providing descriptions of meeting objectives, activities and post-event reflections. Analysis of the form and content of such documents allowed me posit what ‘truths’ mentor teachers thought were important to communicate about mentorship aims and what they wished to know about how mentors were enacting those aims. For example, one document, entitled an “Aha Chart” was completed by 55 mentors at the end of the 2018 school year after two years of engagement in the program. Mentors were asked to fill in sections of the form according to the prompts “I am glad I knew,” “I wish I had known” and “I am still wondering.” This document provided the opportunity to analyze mentors’ retrospective expressions of their learning as mentors over the course of the two years. What appeared were contesting formations of mentors’ professional growth—a topic discussed further in Chapter 6.

Some texts can function as *decision documents* “where information contained in them becomes the basis for someone or some group deciding to do something” (Espeland, 2011, p. 317), such as a program principles statement which informs mentor selection processes and training workshops. Documents can also be significant for what they do not contain or require, as “silences and lapses...are themselves a useful window into the habits and assumptions of their creators” (Espeland, 2011, p. 318). For example, some sections of DMP forms analyzed were not completely filled in by mentors, perhaps indicating a “tentativeness and selectivity of the information that is assembled” and raised questions about what conditions might produce gaps or silences. “It is important,” Espeland concludes, “to understand what these documents do and how they do it,” (p. 303) in order to trace how power within bureaucracies is “enacted and mediated textually” (p. 303).

My access to program documents generated between 2016-2018 was constrained by the number and duration of visits where I was granted access to the DMP’s digital and print records as well as attending staff-persons’ availability and familiarity with the creation and location of the stored program documents. School district staff with recent involvement in the mentorship program assisted me with locating and retrieving institutional documents. Through email communications, three on-site visits and a review of the district’s digital program archive, I compiled a corpus of documents for potential analysis. I gathered print and digital copies over three visits to school district and teachers’ union offices between April-June 2018.

As “discourse analysis is a very labour-intensive method, decisions about sample size are often strongly influenced by pragmatic considerations” (Willig, 2013, p. 350). My selection of certain DMP documents and interview excerpts was influenced by the potential they presented for considering how mentorship discourses are constructed and rationalized within particular

educational settings—as per Foucault’s axes of *knowledge* and *power*—and their effects on the mentor subject. Willig further maintains Foucauldian discourse analysis (FDA) does not require an exhaustive analysis of what “participants’ responses tell us about their attitudes, beliefs or thoughts” (p. 350). Rather, the aim of FDA is “to interrogate the internal organization of the discourse itself and ask, ‘What is this discourse doing?’” (p. 351). I moved between types of text situated and produced in various discursive contexts. Semi-structured interviews with key policy actors (i.e., samples of expert discourse) provided examples of “forms of veridiction” (Foucault, 2014)—the rules that govern discursive practices—which in turn produce localized knowledge or ‘truths’ of mentorship. Program documents representing various institutional moments offered discursive strategies that constitute mentorship:

Table 3 Institutional Program Documents

Document	Description
Program Brochure	Annual colour pamphlet produced to advertise the DMP through school district communication channels; trifold brochure with photographs and graphics (DMP, District and Union logos); approximately 300 words of written text.
Meeting Planning Forms	16 forms completed by mentors to document objectives, activities, participants, date and location of each mentorship cohort meeting.
A-Ha Charts	55 year-end forms completed by mentors to share reflections on their professional learning using the prompts “I am glad I knew,” “I wish I had known” and “I am still wondering.”
Challenges and Solutions Cards	48 3x5 recipe cards gathered during mentor learning sessions where mentors described challenges experienced during their mentoring assignment, and potential solutions to address them.

4.3.3 Analysis Methods

4.3.3.1 Axis of Knowledge: Grasping Understandings of Mentorship

The first stage of analysis was concerned with *description* of “what is 'there' in the text (Fairclough, 1989, p. 110), namely aspects of vocabulary and textual structures “which tend to be most significant for critical analysis” (p. 110). When first selecting a body of statements for analysis from within a set of texts, Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine (2017) suggest “criteria for selecting discourse samples depends on whether they constitute or problematize an object” and “how the construction of objects varies over time” (p. 9). By ‘constitution’ I refer to how mentorship is described or explained and, thereby, discursively constructed by various speakers and within program documents. Such knowledge statements illustrated the ‘what’ of ECT mentorship. They showed how utterances extracted from a broad but limited corpus of data made the object of mentorship ‘visible’ or ‘discernable’ from other forms of professional learning and constituted certain truths about what mentorship is and what it might accomplish for teachers and for public education.

The ways speakers or documents state or explain the aims of mentorship (e.g., connecting teachers through professional relationships) may justify certain practices (such as organizing participants into cohort groups or providing district-wide workshops). I selected speaker or documents statements that revealed how “different ways of describing a problem demand different solutions” (p. 9). For example, a mentorship program document that promotes improvement of instructional techniques might produce different mentor-mentee conversations or workshop content than one that focusses on building a sense of community and connection. Different truths justify different rationalities by which a mentorship program might govern the conduct of ECTs and mentor teachers. Following Ayllon and Walkerdine (2017) and Fairclough

(1989), I analyzed data to build an archive of how and what knowledge of mentorship was constituted. What is ECT mentorship? What is spoken in the selected statements about what mentorship is, what it should accomplish and what it cannot do? What, if any, dilemmas emerge from divergent statements of understandings of ECT mentorship in DMP documents?

Beyond their initial visibility, However, Foucault (1972) was also concerned with how some truths come to be normalized or accepted as ‘true’ while others are silenced or constrained. In other words, how is truth accomplished? How do discourses about mentorship come to be formed and accepted as truth? Who are “the authorities of delimitation” (p. 46) that are “accorded the right to use this sort of language” (p. 55)? For example, the slogan “Support, Challenge, Vision” appeared across several DMP documents including the *Program Brochure* and *Meeting Planning Sheets*. How this slogan, drawn from Daloz (1999) and Lipton and Wellman (2003), became a conceptual touchstone for influencing both mentor learning and practice within the DMP involved consideration of the second of Foucault’s axes: the exercise of power through forms of veridiction.

4.3.3.2 Axis of Power: Forms of Veridiction

Examining statements scattered across policy actors’ accounts and program documents, I discerned how particular forms of mentorship knowledge were rationalized over others. In 1981, Foucault (2014) described a conception of “veridiction” or “truth-telling” to describe the various means by which individuals assert the truth of their statements. What is said, Foucault argued, must be distinguished from how it is presented or justified. Foucault was interested in truth-telling as a social practice “to study it as a weapon in relationships between individuals, to study it as a means of modifying relations of power among those who speak, and finally as an element

within an institutional structure” (p. 28). I looked for forms of veridiction employed by those who governed, coordinated and participated in the DMP.

My analysis generated five forms of veridiction that served to legitimize certain truths about mentorship: evidence/data, stakeholder consensus, outside/expert authority, memory/witnessing, collective mythologizing. These forms of truth-telling fell into two, at times competing, types—what Valverde (2018) distinguishes as *scientific/empirical* and *in-person* truth claims. In some moments, policy actors or documents refer to research literature, and external mentorship organizations and programs a form of *empirical* evidence to support claims about mentorship principles. In other instances, *in-person* truth claims were generated from policy actors’ memories and narratives of historical accounts authorized through their historical and role positioning within the DMP and educational community. The utterances of a new member of the DMP’s Advisory Committee, for example, might hold less authority than one who had “witnessed” (Foucault, 1996, p. 328) DMP developments over many years. A witness to events, Foucault suggests, “because he carries around in his discourse the account of what he saw” (p. 328), may challenge others’ truth claims with just a “small fragment of memory” (p. 328).

In person veridiction, in particular, “exposes the speaker to risks, since the truths being told are often unpleasant or unflattering” (Valverde, 2018, p. 98). For example, the Union Representative described expressing in a meeting about how teacher recruitment to the mentor role remain voluntary (Union Representative Interview, June 2018). By voicing a divergent opinion that a more formal mentor selection process might ensure better “quality control around the mentorship” (Director Interview, June 2018), the Director was aware of risking a collaborative relationship with the local union which had a long-established practice of inviting

voluntary mentor service. Similarly, the Union Representative acknowledged that questioning a proposed district policy might be perceived as ‘resistance’ to a managerial imperative.

Another form of in-person truth-telling is what I term ‘collective mythologizing,’ or the repetition of certain claims that promotes some mentorship principles as more sacrosanct or immutable than others. For example, all four policy actors stated during their interviews that new teacher participation in the DMP must remain “non-evaluative” and “voluntary.” As I identified truth claims about mentorship and mentors generated by the data, I analyzed the forms of veridiction that, to varying degrees, rationalized or normalized them.

4.3.3.3 Axis of Ethics: Positioning the Mentor Subject

An ontological inquiry running through this study was the extent to which teacher mentors are constrained by or, in some cases, exceed the power arrangements produced by discourses of mentorship at work in policy texts. I queried the extent to which mentors are produced by discourse and how and when they speak back to it. Discourse analysis assesses the extent “to which people are caught up in, constrained by, and indeed derive their individual identities” (Fairclough, 1989 p. 9) from the social conventions and power arrangements within which they are situated. A variety of DMP program documents provided moments for assessing when teachers routinely consent to and reproduce the aims of mentorship put into circulation by program managers, consultants, coordinators and colleagues. However, some texts illuminated subversions and work arounds of expected program goals and activities. “Being socially constrained,” Fairclough (1989) maintains, “does not preclude being creative” (p. 28) and I generated instances within my documents data where teachers worked ‘creatively’ to subvert intended aims of program activities.

Discourse, Fairclough maintains, is affected by social structures just as it has effects upon them. As such, discourse is marked by tensions produced by diversity and power struggles (p. 22). Following Fairclough, I aimed to make connections between 'microstructures' of mentor work and the 'macro' structures' of the DMP and broader mentorship policy by examining not just the 'what' of mentorship program documents and policy actor speech but also 'how' and 'why' these written and spoken texts were produce. How is a mentorship policy text positioned, or positioning, in relation to teachers? Which educational stakeholder groups' interests are served by this positioning? Whose interests are negated and by what discursive processes? The analysis outlined in Chapter 6 aimed to reconsider 'common-sense' assumptions about ECT mentorship which educators regularly circulate— notions so absorbed “into their thoughts, their language, into their lives” (Morrison, 1973, p. 15) as to appear unremarkable. Normalized understandings of ECT mentorship and mentor functions work to legitimize existing social relations and differences of power through daily and ordinary recurrences. Accepted practices such as mentoring conversations situated in classroom observations and mentor learning sessions hosted by program coordinators provide the structures for the reproduction of power relations within a school district and among mentorship program participants. Power is exercised through the manufacture and acquiescence of consent to particular imperatives and means of conducting ECT mentorship. A discursive reading of DMP documents provided an opportunity to examine how certain conceptions and desirable effects of mentorship were produced and maintained and who benefitted (or were potentially disadvantaged) by their maintenance.

4.4 Ethical Considerations

As research participants could be known via their district mentorship program roles or through their program participation as teacher mentors and classroom teachers, I ensured

confidentiality at all stages of the recruitment, informed consent, interview, field recordings, data collection and writing stages. I communicated with prospective interviewees via confidential email or telephone conversations. Interviews took place at the interviewee's preferred time and location and time such a private office. On account of the small cohort of educators involved in teacher mentorship within this particular school district and in professional mentorship networks across BC, it was essential both as a matter of research and professional ethics that confidentiality be secured by following the various data collection protocols described, including the use of pseudonyms and anonymizing any potential identifying data related, for example, to program document titles.

4.5 Summary

This chapter laid out this study's methodological orientation to construct a Foucauldian analysis and critique of ECT mentorship and the formation of the mentor subject using two key approaches: genealogical and discourse analysis. To create an interplay of mentorship discourses, institutional practices and mentor subjectivities, I drew on these methods in relation to three types of texts—provincial policy documents, policy actor interviews and local program documents—in order to analyse discourse production. I engaged this analytical framework to generate understandings of how mentorship truths are discursively formulated and normalized across a corpus of historical and institutional texts, how they rationalize particular organizational structures and activities, and act upon and through mentors.

Foucauldian analysis is concerned with “the relationship between discourse and power” (Willig, 2003, p. 173) as discourses “are strongly implicated in the exercise of power” (Willig, 2008, p. 113). Through analyzing discourses of mentorship, I hoped to better understand the ways in which discourses shape and sustain power relations within educational systems and

organizations (Fairclough, Muldering & Wodak, 2011). Discourse analysis methods enabled me to look “beyond the words used in written statements and utterances about [mentorship] knowledge” to “focus on ‘how’ and ‘why’ particular words, phrases, statements, claims, and questions arise” (Springer and Clinton, 2015, p. 88) within historical policy texts, and how particular understandings of mentorship stayed in circulation to reach their contemporary manifestation in one mentorship program’s design, governance and day-to-day management and enactments (p. 87). The following chapter presents the first of two stages of analysis: a macrolevel genealogical excavation of provincial policy documents created between 1960-2019.

Chapter 5: “The long history of things:” Mentorship in British Columbia

Education Policy

One cannot speak of anything at any time, it is not easy to say something new; it is not enough for us to open our eyes, to pay attention, or to be aware, for new objects suddenly to light up and emerge out of the ground.

—Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*

5.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents a genealogical investigation of selected education policy documents produced between 1960-2019 to foreground contemporary early career teacher mentorship discourses in British Columbia. This analysis responds to the first of this project’s central queries: how a Foucauldian reading might expose shifting formations of teacher mentorship as a discursive object in policy texts. I examine the contextual conditions which produced ECT mentorship as a possible, necessary and desirable form of teacher regulation and professional support and the teacher-mentor as a subject marked with particular responsibilities, aptitudes and risk. After tracking discourses of ECT mentorship across several key policy texts, I conclude by considering how certain truths about mentorship persisted over time to reach their contemporary manifestation and become available to social actors within a localized setting.

Drawing on Foucault’s theory of governmentality, I argue that teacher regulation in British Columbia—enacted at various moments by colonial administrations, ministries and departments of education, provincial inspectors, superintendents, school board officials, school administrators, union representatives and teacher mentors—became an increasingly

decentralized governance technique that subjectified early career teachers and experienced teachers in varied ways.

5.2 Background

Under colonial governance between 1849-1872, BC's first public school teachers worked remotely in a handful of small schools under the authority of the Hudson's Bay Company and early administrators (Johnson, 1964). Teacher regulation consisted of in-person inspections of school sites and student performance. With the growth of a settler population and resource industries, the public education system expanded rapidly between 1925 and the post WWII period, producing an increasingly complex and decentralized governance system. Where school inspections were once the responsibility of a handful of government-appointed inspectors visiting isolated one-room schoolhouses, teacher regulation became the responsibility of local superintendents and, in larger districts, school principals. As the provincial teacher certification shifted away from the government's Department of Education to new Normal Schools in Vancouver, BC in 1901 and Victoria, BC in 1915 (Johnson, 1964, p. 86). With the creation of the University of British Columbia's Faculty of Education in 1956, teacher training and certification via a sanctioned institutional body became a more desirable indicator of professional knowledge and practical skills. With initial certification in place as a well-established and ubiquitous regulatory mechanism by the 1980s, the normalizing of in-service teachers' conduct became further dispersed through the development of provincial teaching standards and ongoing professional learning opportunities. These decentralized technologies facilitated the dispersion of regulatory discourses, including mentorship, onto individual teacher-subjects.

5.3 BC Royal Commission Reports (1960, 1988)

As Johnson (1964) wryly remarks, “when faced with a complicated problem of public concern which cuts across political lines, the common reaction of Canadian governments is to appoint a Royal Commission” (p. 255). As rare policy events, O’Brien (2019) argues, Royal Commissions “retain symbolic and actual power” (p. 141) for marking “the beginning not the end of a process” of policy development (p. 142). As a governmental strategy, Royal Commission texts are where “the politics of display intervene to shape discourse” (p. 146) by providing a comprehensive assessment of BC’s public education system including teacher education, regulation and professionalization. Beyond their descriptive content, however, such texts also provide “a useful window into the...assumptions of their creators” (Espeland, 2011, p. 318).

Two government-initiated Royal Commission reports have been produced about BC’s public education system since its origins in the late nineteenth century. British Columbia was one of five provinces that called for Royal Commissions on education in the 1950s as North American public education systems came under greater public scrutiny following World War II. The resulting *Report of the Royal Commission of Education* (Chant, Liersch & Walrod, 1960)—commonly referred to as the *Chant Report* after Commission Chairman, Sperrin Chant—presents a post-war portrait of an expanding provincial economy, settler population and education system and shortage of qualified teachers:

The unprecedented post-war industrial development of the Province, with its ever-increasing variety of occupations calling for higher levels of educational and technical training, led to a competitive demand for persons who might otherwise have entered the

teaching profession...In brief, the teacher shortage is an inseparable part of a widespread shortage of highly educated persons. (Chant, Liersch & Walrod, 1960, p. 168)

Among the comprehensive terms of reference, the Chant Commission was charged with examining “teacher supply and the academic, professional and in-service training of teachers” (p. 1). The *Chant Report* estimated over 6000 additional teachers would be required to address increasing student enrolment in BC’s public schools by 1975 (p. 170). Report sections explicitly addressed ‘beginning teacher’ issues such as labour supply and demand (Sec. XIII); qualifications (Sec. XIV), salaries (Sec. XV) and training (Sec XVI).

Almost 30 years later, the publication of *A Legacy for Learners: The Report of the Royal Commission on Education* (Sullivan, 1988)—to be referred to hereafter as the *Sullivan Report*, after Commissioner Barry Sullivan—occurred as globalisation and neoliberal policy exerted “increasing dominance of a political-economic imperative in the formation of provincial educational policy” (Chan, Fisher & Rubenson, 2007, p. 11). Sullivan (1988) noted that British Columbians’ attitudes towards public education had changed considerably since the Chant inquiry, observing public schooling no longer “enjoyed unqualified public support” (p. 4) of the 1950s and 1960s. Sullivan attributed this, in part, to disagreements over various aspects of provincial educational policy that negatively influencing the morale of school professionals in the wake of conflicts between the Provincial Government and British Columbia Teachers’ Federation (BCTF), the union representing the province’s public school teachers. Sullivan presented the Royal Commission as a “neutral forum” (p. 5) that might foster “a new educational accord” (p. 5) between educational professionals and the public. The report specifically addressed “the professional responsibilities, activities, and preparation of teachers” (p. 13) in a chapter entitled “The Teaching Profession” (pp. 113-148). Sullivan noted “a Royal Commission

on Education should suggest what is good about the kind of educational world we have, as well as point the way to the kind of an educational world we wish to create in the years ahead” (p. 3).

Together the 1960 and 1988 Commission processes illuminate how “a complex system rationalizes an escalating programme of intervention (O’Brien, 2019, p. 149) into teachers’ conduct, as the resulting reports provided evidence to rationalize expansion of teacher regulation mechanisms, including ECT induction and mentorship, as the education system expanded in size, complexity and population.

5.3.1 From Initial Qualification to Life-Long Learning

According to the *Chant Report* (1960), fewer than 30% of practicing teachers in BC had completed “teacher-training school” (p. 173) by 1960 with “young people teaching in the schools of British Columbia whose sole qualification is high school graduation” (p. 175). Regarding those with formal teacher training, the *Chant Report* stated:

If more of the best young teachers can be brought into...districts, they can do much to improve the quality of the instruction that is provided, as well as to ease the concern of a number of school principals in these districts who, in order to complete their staffs, too often have to accept whom they can get. (p. 178)

Rather than possessing limited knowledge or capability, Chant portrays graduates of BC’s first Normal Schools (and, after 1956, the University of British Columbia’s newly established Faculty of Education) as holding more professional capital than experienced but uncertified teachers already employed in school districts. Distinguishing between trained and untrained teachers functioned as a “dividing practice” (Foucault, 1982, p. 777) marking formally-credentialled teachers more desirable than uncertified ones, rationalizing the expansion of teacher education provisions. The *Chant Report* prioritized formal qualification processes as the key to ensuring

quality public education. To address increasing teacher supply pressures, the *Chant Report* contrasted two possible systemic responses:

One is to state only the number of persons needed to fill the vacancies in existing classrooms; the other is to state the number of competent and qualified teachers required to provide each elementary and secondary school pupil with a good educational opportunity. The latter stresses quality as well as numbers and is the one that should be adopted. (p. 169)

In this context, the *Chant Report* rendered the mentorship of newer teachers less ‘thinkable’ or ‘necessary’ by tying the development of expertise to institutional training rather than the unruly domain of real-world experience. The report contained mention of neither ‘induction’ nor ‘mentorship’ in its 464 pages.

By 1988, the *Sullivan Commission* noted, “approximately 97% of public-school teachers hold either of the two permanent certificates approved by the province—the Professional and Standard³—and better than 80% have attained a university degree” (Sullivan, 1988, p. 116). Lack of formal qualifications was no longer the significant concern Chant had noted as BC’s teacher education programs expanded in size and geographic availability. However, Sullivan described how the increasing “complexity of the modern classroom” (p. 118) made teaching “more complex and demanding work than in earlier decades” (p. 118). Teachers, Sullivan

³ At the time of the Sullivan Commission, two types of teaching certificates were awarded: “either a Standard Certificate, based on three years of teacher education, or a Professional Certificate, based on four or more years. Both certificates recognize the undertaking of a professional year, which must include practical experience in schools” (Sullivan, 1988, p. 136). The Commission recommended the phasing out of the Standard Certificate and “that current holders of that credential be urged to complete degree requirements” (p. 133). The Commission further recommended “initial certification be based upon a minimal five-year program which includes an undergraduate degree” (p. 133).

outlined, “need to possess a blend of academic substance, professional knowledge, cultural perceptiveness, human sensitivity, organizational ability, instructional capability, confidence, and self-awareness” (p. 137). As a result, maintaining “‘high standards,’ ‘quality performance,’ ‘efficiency,’ and ‘excellence’ in teaching” (p. 117) would require teachers to engage in ongoing professional development throughout their careers (p. 125). As the *Sullivan Commission* stated:

It would be impossible for any institution to provide prospective teachers with all the areas of content or competencies called for in the submissions. Initial teacher education, we feel, should be limited to those elements considered basic to classroom teaching. Specialization...should occur subsequently as the young teacher grows from novice to practitioner. (p. 133)

Moreover, the *Sullivan Commission* noted, “some distinction should be made between what a novice teacher must know and be able to do and what an experienced teacher might be expected to demonstrate” (p. 133). “Quality teaching,” the *Sullivan Commission* concluded, “can be ensured only when teachers see themselves as lifelong learners” (p. 137). The report included the following recommendation: “that district-based induction programs be established cooperatively by school districts and teachers, and that they be characterized by special support services and carefully designed teaching assignments during the first year of induction” (p. 137). Initial teacher preparation was no longer sufficient; if beginning teachers were to attain “full professional maturity” they would “require assistance” (p. 136).

By framing public education against a backdrop of “political fractiousness” (Sullivan, 1988, p. 121) and waning public support and confidence in schooling, the *Sullivan Commission* positioned engagement in lifelong learning as an urgent and beneficial undertaking that could bolster both the status of public education and the teaching profession through the maintenance

of high teaching standards and “quality performance” (p. 117). Coupled with further claims about the increasing complexity of teaching given “the pluralistic and diverse society that is British Columbia today,” (p. 13) the double “reward” (Foucault, 1995, p. 180) of complying with a call to continuing professional development was the maintenance of both individual “skills and aptitudes” (p. 181) and the collective elevation of the teaching profession. “School boards and the teaching profession,” the report stated, “have strong and mutual interests in the matter of teacher competence” (p. 145).

The *Sullivan Commission* text constituted local ECT induction programs as bridging a gap between completion of initial teacher education and arrival at “full professional maturity” (Sullivan, 1988, p. 136). This discursive formation operates as a “positive” (Foucault, 1995, p. 180) disciplinary mechanism (i.e., not a punitive measure) which positioned newly certified teachers as unfinished subjects requiring the support of more experienced educators to address inadequate initial teacher education (ITE) preparation. Further, the text bound public confidence in the BC teaching profession to visible engagement in lifelong learning as a means of protecting teaching standards. The effect of this particular discursive formation of induction was to mark new teachers with a dual ‘not-yet-ness’ both in their capabilities as teachers and their readiness to assume full status as professionals.

5.3.2 From Supervision to Induction

Together, the Royal Commission texts illuminate discursive continuities and departures regarding the regulation of beginning teachers. In outlining the roles and activities of school principals, the *Chant Report* (1960) noted that in a survey of 500 school principals, 97% of respondents ranked “visiting classes and follow-up conferences with teachers” (p. 161) as their duty of highest importance, with 85% indicating they did it often. When asked how often they

visited beginning teachers, “[f]ifty-five per cent of all the principals surveyed reported that they visited the classrooms of beginning teachers at least ten times per year, with ten to fourteen visits per year being the most common practice” (p. 160). Elementary school principals, for example, “appeared to have more time for such visits, as indicated by 57 per cent of them who reported visiting the classrooms of beginning teachers at least once a month or ten or more times per year” (p. 160). Along with “improving instructional programmes” (p. 161) and “helping teachers deal with personal and professional problems” (p. 161), school principals prioritized and valued visiting beginning teachers and engaging in instructional and professional interactions. The *Chant Report* points, however, to the encroachment of paperwork and accountability requirements on principals’ time, stating in one recommendation that “every effort be made to reduce and to keep to a minimum the amount of time principals and vice-principals must devote to office routines and the compilation of reports” (p. 166) in order to preserve time for staff “supervision” (p. 166).

In addition to the absence of any ‘mentor’ cognates, the phrase “beginning teachers” receives only five page mentions in the *Chant Report* index. One indirect reference to mentorship appears within an anonymous quotation in a local brief submitted as part of the Commission’s province-wide consultation process, where the anonymous author suggests: “I propose that we implement the highest recruitment techniques [and] a good local in-service training program” (p. 178). While the *Chant Report* contained mention of neither the signifiers ‘induction’ nor ‘mentorship,’ three decades later the *Sullivan Commission* report (1988) included an entire section on beginning teacher induction. The term ‘induction’ signified institutional strategies associated with retaining beginning teachers in their first years of professional work, through a combination of both administrative planning (such as construction of reasonable

teaching assignments) and the provision of both individual and collective teacher support (with mentor teachers providing advice and assistance with some of the more difficult aspects of classroom work). Induction combined both attention to the construction of the ECT's teaching assignment and the provision of "human resources" (p. 136), including "mentors" (p. 136). Interactions with new teachers discursively shifted from a managerial responsibility of supervision (in the *Chant Commission*) to an act of collective support with more "mature professionals" (p. 136) taking the weight of harder assignments for the sake of their beginning colleagues. Induction was not constituted as the responsibility of individual administrators to provide direct supervision or assistance but shifted to collective responsibility for teaching conditions and support provisions to ease the passage of beginning teachers through a challenging period where occupational attrition and ineffective practice may result in harm to both teacher and students.

The *Sullivan Commission* report stated that beginning teachers' difficulties in their early teaching years may be attributed to organizational impediments such as ill-constructed assignments, difficult student behaviours, large class sizes, and "political problems" (p. 136). Induction was cast as a collective endeavour placing less onus on the beginning teacher to identify areas for improvement, and instead how both administrators and teachers can inform and lighten the weight of beginning teachers' work. The *Sullivan Commission* report framed alleviation of those conditions as a shared task of both administrators and experienced teachers, who should work to create teaching conditions that acknowledge the limits of novice teachers' capabilities and distribute the weight of professional obligations amongst teachers who possess more expertise. The text constructed induction as providing advice on teaching practice,

acquiring resources and orienting ECTs to the organizational and political landscape of schools and the profession.

Notably, in 1987 as the *Sullivan Commission* gathered public input, the province's school administrators became part of an autonomous professional organization, the BC Principals' and Vice Principals' Association (BCPVPA), removing administrators from the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF). The political separation of administrative and teaching staff in BC public schools marked a significant disruptive moment in the governance structures and culture within BC public schools and may provide some contextual explanation for shifting usages of terms such as 'induction' and 'mentoring' between the *Chant* and *Sullivan* reports. *Induction* has since been increasingly construed as a managerial element of ECT orientation to the school district organization, whereas *mentorship* has emerged as a distinctive and contested element of induction as stakeholders actively negotiate who is responsible for the aims and practices of mentorship programs.

The terms "mentor," "mentoring" and "mentorship" appeared briefly in three sections of the *Sullivan Commission* report. The only use of the mentorship signifier directly aimed at teachers appeared in explication of the initiation of newly-certified teachers in a sub-section entitled "Induction of First-Year Teachers" stating: "the induction of beginning teachers necessitates the involvement of more experienced teachers—as *mentors* [emphasis added], counsellors, and formative evaluators" (p. 136).

Besides this one instance, the *Sullivan Commission* described mentorship of students, not teachers, with a recommendation to adopt a "mentoring system" (p. 102) assigning "a teacher advisor or mentor" (p. 102) to all learners between Grades 1 to 10 with special emphasis on the early adolescent grades 8 to 10. Teacher mentors were to "work for and in the interests of the

students they supervise, they should come to know each of the students in their group as an individual. Students might be assigned to mentors or they might choose them” (p. 102). The aim of the advisory system, the report suggested, was to build “a strong sense of identification with their school community and especially with the adults as a way to “survive” (p. 102) and “profit” (p. 102) from the difficult transition from elementary to secondary school and early adulthood.

The third use of the mentor signifier appears in “Chapter 6” as part of the Commission’s findings and recommendations for teacher education, regulation and certification, and professional development. Again, however, the term is used in relation to the mentorship of students, describing pre-service teachers’ practicum experience as including “working as mentors and tutors with small groups of children” (p. 129), before moving on to full teaching responsibilities. Collectively, while not explicitly associated with new teachers in each case, these statements indicate particular conceptions in circulation at the time of the conditions and functions of mentorship as an educational practice. They reveal a concept of mentorship marked by a degree of voluntariness, advocacy for learners’ particular needs and the suggestion of an unequal relation of knowledge and power between the mentor and mentee.

5.3.3 Induction and Mentorship as Technologies of Retention

A common theme in both Royal Commission reports was concern over recruitment of a sufficient number of qualified teachers to meet employment sector needs. The *Chant Report* (1960) recommended a broad range of recruitment incentives: reimbursement of loans or debts associated with teacher training; the maintenance of school-district funded “teacherages” (p. 177) as living accommodations; and, the provision of financial incentives for “good candidates to complete teacher-training” (p. 177). The *Chant Report* does not include mention of mentorship as a recruitment incentive or retention strategy to address a projected teacher shortage. The

Sullivan Report expressed similar concerns about a teacher shortage noting “early signs of such recruitment problems are already manifest in several districts” (Sullivan, 1980, p. 124) and warned that “unless British Columbia takes immediate initiatives to recruit and retain teachers, the quality of provincial schooling and the educational experiences of those who attend them will be adversely affected during the next decade” (p. 124). A beginning teacher survey conducted for the Sullivan Commission indicated “a startling 51% of the respondents” (p. 124) expressed uncertainty about remaining in the teaching profession while 12% indicated they “would leave the minute that something better became available” (p. 124). While the 1988 Commission survey found new teachers emerging from teacher education programs felt confident and “prepared for classroom life” (p. 124), Sullivan suggested those hopes would “prove inadequate if novice teachers are placed in difficult teaching situations” (p. 124). Echoing Kelchtermans and Ballet’s (2002) notion of “praxis shock” (p. 105), the report suggested that when faced with intensive workloads, challenging student behaviour and assignments for which they lacked adequate preparation, beginning teachers might default to “inappropriate coping mechanisms” (Sullivan, 1988, p. 136) and “easy, manageable routines” (p. 136).

Sullivan implied both teachers and teaching quality would be lost through a combination of untenable teaching assignments and lack of “ready access to instant and expert advice” (p. 136). Induction programs were presented as a means of providing novices with additional support “to ease the beginning teacher’s entry into the rigours of classroom life” (p. 136). The *Sullivan Report* restated, however, that programs must consist of more than “welcoming speeches by the superintendent of schools and the local teachers’ association president” (p. 136). Only 43% of new teachers surveyed by the Sullivan Commission in 1987 agreed they had received adequate teacher orientation and induction (p. 136). School administrators, Sullivan

noted, had a “special” responsibility to prevent “misassignment...during the first few critical years” (p. 136) and beginning teachers from becoming disillusioned with the teaching profession before having “a reasonable chance to evaluate it fairly” (p. 136).

5.3.4 Sighting Continuity and Change

A genealogical reading enables the sighting of persistent patterns and shifting trajectories across texts over time. While resisting the construction of a linear arc from ‘then’ to ‘now,’ genealogical analysis produces a mapping of emergent, persistent and silenced ECT discourses within a select historical, contextual and textual frame. Both the *Chant* and *Sullivan* reports deployed a discourse of urgency and risk to public education and to the teaching profession regarding the shortage of qualified, supported and capable teachers. Both reports positioned teacher retention as a central strategy for the preservation of a well-functioning public education system. Unlike the *Chant Report*, however, the Sullivan text explicitly tied new teacher induction to teacher retention as a policy imperative, ‘investing’ and ‘marking’ (Foucault, 1995, p. 25) induction with a mandate beyond basic orientation of teachers and towards the broader maintenance of high-quality public education. The *Sullivan Report* included an entire section outlining the content and applications of induction as a strategy for retaining and sustaining beginning teachers (pp. 136-137), describing attrition as “a massive waste of human and financial resources” (p. 136). Sullivan’s statements constructed induction as serving economic imperatives of efficient fiscal management of public education by alluding to expenditures on post-secondary teacher training going to “waste” due to attrition. Attrition was a ‘problem’ and rationalized a need for enhanced induction as a solution. In contrast, Chant did not appeal to the same economic efficiency rationale, as attrition was not the ‘problem.’ The *Chant Report* constructed the teacher shortage problem as one of recruitment and as the loss of potential

teacher candidates to other professions due general post-war labour shortages—not through attrition after the fact. The quality of public education rested on ensuring individuals had proper initial training and credentialing upon entry. Chant does not articulate concern with what happens to new teachers once ‘in the door.’ As long as the problem remained initial qualification, induction and mentorship could not yet fit as a possible solution.

Analysis of the 1960 and 1988 Royal Commission reports exposes how teacher regulation discourses morphed as demographic and political conditions in BC shifted. From inspection to supervision to induction to ongoing professional learning, teacher regulation technologies became increasingly dispersed and decentralized. Dent et al. (2016) attribute erosion of a long-standing discourse of ‘trust’ in relation to traditional professions in the public sector with an audit culture that demanded professionals earn trust through demonstration of competencies and data-driven evidence. As unaudited figures in a data-governed environment, new teachers introduced an element of risk into BC’s public education system, schools, and classrooms. The normalization of teacher certification and subsequent imperatives for lifelong learning served as disciplinary responses to mitigate the risk that early career teachers might not provide quality education as expected by a public which had “a right to hold its institutions accountable for the quality of services they render and the decisions they make” (Sullivan, 1998, p. 12). The imperative to provide ECT mentorship emerged from persistent articulations of both public and pedagogical risk and marked mentorship with an obligation to promote new teachers’ professional growth—an imperative taken up in detail in the next chapter.

5.4 Profiles of Induction/Mentoring Activities in Some Public School Districts in British Columbia (1994)

5.4.1 Background

Following on the *Sullivan Commission*, the BC Provincial Teacher Supply & Demand Committee funded eight pilot induction and mentoring programs in districts across British Columbia between 1991-1993. A 78-page report, *Profiles of Induction/Mentoring Activities in Some Public School Districts in British Columbia* (McPhie & Jackson, 1994) was commissioned to “document and analyze the effects of these pilot programs and to examine the status of teacher induction” (p. 2). After providing an overview of the report’s content, mandate and methodology in Sections I and II (pp. 1-6; pp. 7-18), the remaining sections outlined research findings based on school district report submissions, and survey and interview data about: induction/mentoring activities (Section III); beginning teachers (Section IV); mentors (Section V); and principals (Section VI). Eleven guiding questions framed the findings including the following which relate specifically to induction and mentorship (p. 3):

- What concepts of induction and mentoring guide the Districts’ activities?
- What are the long-term benefits of induction and mentoring activities?
- What are the characteristics associated with good mentors?

Fifty-two of BC’s 75 public school districts and local teachers’ associations submitted data for the Committee report with 26 indicating they offered some form of induction or mentoring for beginning teachers (p. 8).

5.4.2 Untangling Induction and Mentorship

The *Profiles* report contains a ‘problem’ that persists in contemporary discourse: how induction and mentorship conceptually and practically relate to one another. Drawing on

definitions from research literature, the authors began by explicitly distinguishing “induction” and “mentoring” (pp. 2-3):

a) Induction Program: “[A] planned program intended to provide some systematic and sustained assistance, specifically to beginning teachers for at least one school year”

(Huling-Austin, 1990b, p. 536).

b) Mentoring: [A] comprehensive effort directed towards helping a protégé develop the attitudes and behaviours (skills) of self-reliance and accountability within a defined environment (Kay, 1990, p. 26-27).

Mentorship was described as one component of a broader induction program framework.

Induction was presented as “organized assistance” (p. 13) in a beginning teacher’s first year of practice, while mentoring was described as a more comprehensive and less systematic “effort” (p. 13) carried out over an unspecified time. Further, the document refers to instances of “spontaneous” (p. 15) mentorship suggesting that not all mentoring activities took place within the formalized context of an induction program. The *Profiles* report further differentiated how induction and mentorship were administered at different sites, stating “whereas induction programs were orchestrated at the District level, mentoring was largely attended to at the school level” (p. 13).

The report also marked ECT induction and mentorship activities with a visible “timetable” and “duration” (Foucault, 1995, p. 152)—an “anatomy-chronological schema” (p. 152) during which ‘new’ teachers were demarcated to receive information and cultivate aptitudes in order to perform effectively and responsibly as professionals. Two survey responses recommended mentoring program length should be governed by ECTs’ needs or the school calendar cycle, stating involvement “depends on needs of individual teachers” and could last

“one or two years depending on the beginning teacher & their confidence and ability” (p. 58).

Both survey responses referenced the individual needs of the new teacher as a consideration when setting the boundaries of mentorship.

In a survey conducted as part of the *Profiles* investigation, respondents rated mentorship as “the most consistently available and most highly rated induction activity” (p. 31) over other induction activities such as workshops, orientations, meetings, and release time for consultation and observation. The authors concluded, “given the strong support for mentoring, and the benefits for beginning teachers associated with this relationship, the emphasis on induction programs should be on the establishment of mentor-beginning teacher partnerships” (p. 42).

While induction positioned the beginning teacher as a passive recipient of assistance coordinated by a school district, mentorship entailed an active response from the new teacher to cultivate dispositions and abilities such as eventual self-sufficiency as a practitioner and awareness of professional accountability to students, colleagues, parents and the profession at large. Further, the *Profiles* text situated mentorship within the context of a “relationship” (p. 42). The mentoring concept, the *Profiles* authors wrote, “is a very civilized and human way of supporting new teachers...new people can be easily lost in the daily struggle to maintain sanity” (p. 59). While induction was constituted as an external application of knowledge through the provision of information and advice, mentorship worked its way to “the depth of the heart, the thoughts, the will, the inclinations” (Foucault, 1995 p. 16) of the new teacher to achieve its mandate: shaping their pedagogical and professional relationships and commitments.

5.4.3 The Persistence of Voluntariness

The ambiguous positioning of mentorship as entangled yet not completely subsumed within managerial discourses permitted the objectification of teacher mentorship as a voluntary professional undertaking. The *Profiles* report stated “a successful mentoring relationship is characterized by mutual participation of beginning teacher and mentor” and that “neither the beginning teacher nor the mentor should feel coerced into participating” (p. 35). McPhie and Jackson (1994) stated “an overwhelming majority” (p. 35) of their survey respondents indicated teachers should volunteer to participate in mentorship schemes, with comments such as “[Mentorship] is important for some teachers, but not for all!” and “[S]ome teachers prefer to work on their own and their desire to do so should be respected” (p. 58). *Profiles* cited research literature supporting voluntary participation as a key to the efficacy of mentorship efforts, noting: “emphasis on voluntary participation is echoed in the research literature...one quality that must exist in order for the mentor to be perceived as effective...is the mentor’s willingness and desire to be a mentor” (p. 35). Beginning teachers also “spoke strongly about the need for a voice in the selection of mentors with whom they would work” (p. 48). McPhie and Jackson affirmed “in order to facilitate the growth of the beginning teacher-mentor relationship, the beginning teacher needed to perceive that the mentor was acting voluntarily and that the beginning teacher had the opportunity to choose his/her mentor” (p. 42).

However, *Profiles* also noted that voluntary mentors found it “an onerous task to perform these duties in addition to their regular workload” (p. 60) and recommended “more consideration for their schedules” (p. 60) through provision of release time from classroom obligations. Despite the apparent worthwhile effects of mentorship, McPhie and Jackson did not propose mandatory participation. Voluntariness persisted as a discursive feature of mentorship within

Profiles but, as explored in the next chapter, has become increasingly contested in contemporary mentorship policy conversations.

5.4.4 The Emergence of the Mentor Figure

By differentiating between induction and mentorship, one effect of the *Profiles* text was to classify the mentor as a discrete figure in the new teacher governance apparatus. The appearance of the mentor as a locus for mentorship activities rationalized several institutional responses including the provision of formalized mentor preparation. Mentors involved in the *Profiles* study commented on the inadequacy of their preparation for the mentoring role, expressing concerns about their inabilities related to “identification of the needs of the beginning teachers, and appropriate strategies to meet those needs” (McPhie & Jackson, 1994, p. 50). The mentor attributes rated as most important among *Profiles* survey respondents were “communication skills”, “ability to communicate professional knowledge,” “ability to work with adults” and “commitment to professional development” (p. 49). New teachers who responded to a survey included the qualities of “flexibility,” “empathy,” and “willing[ness] to spend time with you” (p. 36) as desirable mentor attributes. Collectively such statements produced the mentor-subject as one requiring a discrete body of skills, processes and attributes.

Teachers who volunteer or who are selected to work with ECTs attain status as ‘mentor’ which “involves criteria of competence and knowledge” (Foucault, 1995, p. 55). No sooner does the mentor ‘appear’ but they are already subject to a myriad of discourses which mark how and why they engage in mentoring. When asked why they became mentors, teachers’ most common responses in the *Profiles* report were “contribution to the profession” [discourse of voluntary service], “personal professional development” [discourse of lifelong learning] and “a request from a beginning teacher or administrator” [discourse of obligation] (McPhie & Jackson, 1994,

p. 28). The need to mark mentors rationalizes the establishment of mentor preparation schemes, setting governance rules regarding the definition or delineation of the limits of the mentor's authority to judge where, when and how mentorship will be conducted. This construction rationalizes the conduct of mentorship within regulated "institutional sites" (p. 56) such as programs where the efficacy and propriety of mentorship can be monitored and assessed. While remaining a 'voluntary' activity, disciplinary mechanisms such as training and induction program schemes act on the mentor figure to constrain their conduct in particular ways (Foucault, 1995, p. 60). Once discursively objectified, the mentor requires 'discipline'—such as participation in mentor training sessions and monitoring through accountability structures such as report writing.

Teachers who engage in mentorship outside of these regulatory mechanisms present another potential risk—the delivery of ineffective or even harmful influence on beginning teachers. Informal mentoring interactions between teachers might be construed as less 'effective' or desirable than institutionally sanctioned mentorship that involves trained mentors and other accountability mechanisms such as explicit mentorship objectives and meeting sites. Delivering mentorship through a structured program potentially diminishes the legitimacy of informal encounters which occur outside of the sanctioned program, as well as opportunities for those unsanctioned encounters to occur by, for example, channeling mentorship funding and resources exclusively through approved programs. This strategy closes off spaces where teachers might engage with one another in opportunities for spontaneous encounters that might lead to more diverse forms of mentorship relationships.

A critical genealogical reading of the 1994 *Profiles* report revealed three discursive effects of the text: differentiation between induction and mentorship; normalization of the

voluntariness of mentorship; and, identification and subjectification of the mentor figure. While documenting the pilot project of BC school district mentorship initiatives, the *Profiles* also put knowledge into circulation about bringing early career teachers into teaching, professional relationships and administrative systems at work in British Columbia school districts in the 1990s—knowledge formations that still persist.

5.5 BC Teaching Standards (2003-2019)

Another set of policy texts that put discourses of teacher mentorship and the obligations of mentors into circulation are British Columbia’s provincial teaching standards documents which have undergone five official iterations since their introduction in 2003. While the teaching standards movement can be traced as an element of school renewal emerging in the 1980s (Beck, Hart & Kosnik, 2002, p. 178), the first official edition of BC’s teaching standards was released in 2003 after an amendment to the *Teaching Profession Act*, marking “a significant juncture” (Higgins, 2010, p. 3) in teacher education policy in the province. The British Columbia College of Teachers’ (BCCT) *Standards for the Education, Competence and Professional Conduct of Educators in British Columbia* (2003) addressed the preparation of new teachers as well as competencies, professional development and ethical conduct of in-service teachers. The most recent edition released in 2019 was developed by BC Teachers’ Council which, under the *Teachers Act* “sets standards for the competence and conduct for applicants and for certificate holders (Centre of Study for Policies, 2013, p. 3).

Engagement in teacher mentorship has featured as an element in each edition of the *Standards*. The table below shows where and how the signifier and cognates of ‘mentorship’ appear in the five versions of the BC Standards between 2003-2019:

Table 4 British Columbia Teaching Standards 2003-2019

Year (Edition)	Document title	Standard number and statement related to mentorship
2003 (First Edition)	<i>Standards for the Education and Competence of Educators in British Columbia</i>	Standard 3: “support other professional educators by providing mentorship and encouragement, especially to those who have been recently admitted to the profession” (p. 2).
2004 (Second Edition)	<i>Standards for the Education and Competence of Educators in British Columbia</i>	Standard 10: “share their professional knowledge and expertise with the profession and others” (p. 18) Standard 13: “support the profession by providing mentorship or encouragement to other educators and those preparing to enter the profession” (p. 18)
2008 (Third Edition)	<i>Standards for the education, competence & professional conduct of educators in British Columbia</i>	Standard 8: “Educators support, mentor or encourage other educators and those preparing to enter the profession” (p. 4).
2012 (Fourth Edition)	<i>Standards for the education, competence & professional conduct of educators in British Columbia</i>	Standard 8: “Educators honour the profession by supporting, mentoring or encouraging other educators and those preparing to enter the profession” (p. 4).
2019 (Fifth Edition)	<i>Professional Standards for BC Educators</i>	Standard 8: “Educators honour the profession by supporting, mentoring or encouraging other educators and those preparing to enter the profession” (p. 5).

The *Standards* texts constituted mentorship as a means of demonstrating life-long learning and commitment to the teaching profession, and as a marker of ethical professional conduct. The Standards constitute the teacher who mentors as a supportive professional who possesses and shares knowledge and expertise. The 2019 edition describes mentoring as a way to “honour the profession” (p. 4).

Examining the emergence of the BC teaching standards within the context of outcomes-based education, the OECD describes teaching standards as a means of guiding “capacity

building activities” (Centre of Study for Policies, 2013, p. 6) as well as “ensuring the accountability of those in charge of securing these learning opportunities for students” (p. 6). The OECD characterizes jurisdictions including British Columbia as “frontrunners” in embedding this policy orientation (p. 7) and the creation of teaching standards associated with “best performing countries” (p. 6) as standards provide “clear definition of the performance expected from teachers and school leaders” for the maintenance of “a coherent and focused system” (p. 6) in which all students have the opportunity to meet learning outcomes.

The OECD acknowledged varied definitions and applications of teaching standards in public education. Teaching standards were variously invoked as “goals,” as “measures or benchmarks” of levels of professional competence, and as “criteria” for judging “appropriate” conduct (Centre of Study for Policies, 2013, p. 14). The 2004 version of BC College of Teachers’ *Standards* (BC College of Teachers, 2004 in Higgins, 2010) queried whether standards were “absolute requirements or aspirations for which an individual professional may strive” (p. 5) and concluded “the answer is not simply one or the other” (p. 5). The BCCT document suggested teachers use the *Standards* as a reflexive tool to “contemplate” (p. 5) their practice and professional development. The most recent edition (BC Teachers’ Council, 2019) positions the standards to “guide and advance the work of educators” (p. 2) for through “the educators’ commitment to these standards, a high quality education system is maintained, contributing to a democratic society” (p. 3).

The tension between governmental regulation and professional aspiration in relation to teaching standards and mentorship is evident. The 2004 *Standards* outlined “what someone should know and be able to do to be considered competent in a particular (professional or educational) domain” while also communicating “what is most worthy or desirable to achieve”

(p. 14), what is valued and how well it might be done to be considered competent (p. 14).

Including mentorship within teaching standards obligates BC teachers to provide mentorship to beginning teachers as a demonstration of professionalism. Further, their mentorship efforts work in alignment with teaching standards governing classroom practice and professional ethics. Embedding mentorship within policy discourses of school improvement, reform and teacher professionalism potentially becomes a governmental technique for further disciplining the conduct of teachers.

What do standards achieve in terms of governing or disciplining teacher conduct? What effects does situating mentorship within the discourses of teacher regulation and professionalism have on teachers and the enactment of mentorship? Situating mentorship as part of the teaching standards necessitates the creation of mentorship imperatives and accountability measures to ensure it is done ‘right.’ Including mentorship as a component of a provincial teaching standards framework necessitated its regulation and conduct. Phelan et al. (2008) suggest “the push for standards is driven by technical and economic concerns rather than a view of education as a social and cultural relationship. Teachers are objectified and controlled rather than recognized as knowing subjects” (p. 228). By positioning ECT mentorship within a technicized discourse of teachers’ professional standards, mentorship becomes a regulated expression of teachers’ professionalism, creating an expectation that teachers exemplify professionalism through engagement as mentors. Applied too prescriptively, teaching standards become part of a system of regulation that forecloses interpretation and dialogue about teacher conduct. Mentorship becomes a form of professional obligation and overt state regulation. Through its inclusion in teaching standards policy, ECT mentorship became situated within a discourse of accountability and governance in BC’s public school system, thereby creating the conditions for contested

power relations about how mentorship functions between state and teacher organizations on a macrolevel and policy actors engaged in mentorship at the local level.

Despite its inclusion in the *Standards*, however, engaging in teacher mentorship remains a ‘voluntary’ activity in BC. Sullivan (1988) recognized this when discussing mentorship of teacher education program candidates: “The *School Act* stipulates that teachers must help with the education of new teachers; however, they receive virtually no recognition or credit for this role, even though responsibility for supervising a student teacher from day to day places an additional burden on the classroom teacher” (p. 131). Positioning mentorship as a voluntary activity obligates teachers to engage in mentorship activities on their own time as a demonstration of professional conduct and service rather than as a paid component of their teaching roles. The construction of mentoring as a voluntary but laudable professional activity compels teachers/subjects to engage as a visible sign of their professional commitment. An effect of this ‘voluntary professionalism,’ or service discourse, is currently evident in how few BC school districts incorporate mentorship as part of teachers everyday teaching schedules, but instead rely on heavily regulated ‘release time’ to enable them to engage in mentoring activities in addition to their regular teaching responsibilities. However, the discourse of voluntariness has had the effect of preserving space for a less regulated form of teacher mentorship to be enacted: informal mentorship between teachers operating outside of formal school district program structures. Such unregulated spaces for interaction between mentors and mentees is often marked as less desirable for cultivating effective teaching practice.

A genealogical reading of the construction of mentorship within teaching standards statements surfaced the construction of the mentor figure as one who contributes to the BC teaching profession through (largely) voluntary service engagement with newly certified teacher

as well as the construction of mentorship as knowledge sharing and affective support. It is in this tension between regulation and aspiration that the call to teacher mentorship as an element of professional conduct is embedded within BC education policy. Over two decades, the BC *Standards* documents have functioned to normalize mentorship as a necessary and ethical professional activity—one that encompasses both the cultivation of teaching knowledge and the provision of support for beginning teachers. Standards govern the teacher-subject through codification of “disciplinary knowledge,” “pedagogic practice” and “values and professional teaching practice” (Centre of Study for Policies, 2013, p. 35). In Foucauldian terms, teacher mentorship becomes a contested site for the ontological formation of the mentor figure through the promotion of certain professional knowledges, relations and ethical imperatives.

5.6 Minister’s Task Force on Teacher Recruitment and Retention (2017)

British Columbia’s public school system faced an intensified teacher shortage beginning in 2016 due to a convergence of several demographic, political and economic developments (Correia, 2017; “Union files grievance,” 2018). After declining for over a decade, total K-12 student enrolment increased, albeit unevenly, across many school districts (BC Ministry of Education, 2017a). In addition, a ruling by the Supreme Court of Canada (SCOC) in November 2016 resulted in the restoration of class size limits absent from union collective agreements since 2002. To comply with the SCOC ruling, a subsequent Memorandum of Agreement (BCPSEA et al., 2017) between the Provincial government and the British Columbia Teachers’ Federation (BCTF), which represents BC’s 41,000 unionized public-school teachers, prompted intensified recruitment of additional teachers. Economic factors such as housing unaffordability, high cost-of-living and lagging public sector salaries in comparison to other Canadian provinces (see Statistics Canada, 2020) further exacerbated province-wide teacher recruitment challenges.

The “Minister’s Expert Panel on Immediate Recruitment and Retention Challenges” was struck and charged with two objectives: “to verify the extent of the current educator workforce challenges and quantify those challenges” and “make recommendations for immediate actions to address those specific challenges” (Province of British Columbia, n.d., para. 1). The *Minister’s Task Force on Immediate Recruitment and Retention Challenges Report* (BC Ministry of Education, 2017) outlined various recruitment pressures and made several recommendations including enhancing post-secondary teacher education funding and employee financial incentives, as well as expanding professional learning and mentorship provisions. The *Minister’s Report* indicated:

3,700 public school teaching positions funded by the Ministry were a result of the class size and composition limits set out in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). When combined with student enrolment increases in 2017/18, they represented a workforce challenge for the provincial education system. (p. 5)

In order to respond effectively to a period of “unprecedented hiring” (p. 5), the *Minister’s Report* concluded “the province’s education system would benefit from a comprehensive examination and development of a training and employment strategy” (p. 6). The report included six immediate recommendations, including one that specifically addressed teacher mentorship.

The *Task Force Report* identified mentorship as a “key element to improve the retention of teachers, both new to teaching or new to a district” (p. 20). In an appendix end table (p. 21), “[m]entorship programs for retention” was listed as an “immediate” action to be undertaken in the 2016-17 school year. Another recommendation was for continued funding of the province’s New Teacher Mentorship Program (NTMP) pilot initiative as “a practical list of actions where implementation can begin promptly” (p. 17). In citing the activities of the NTMP, the *Minister’s*

Report noted it “offered a coherent, research-based, and sustainable system of support for teachers to refine their skills” (p. 16). The report contained a recommendation for renewed funding for the NTMP “to establish sustainable mentorship programs...that provide comprehensive professional learning and support for teachers” (p. 20). The *Minister’s Report* formalized mentorship as an institutional structure through the recommendation of funding for provincial and local mentorship programs.

Meanwhile, the report included a graphic (see Figure 2) developed for the BC Ministry of Education by an Australian education research and consulting group described as “a global organization of researchers, consultants, policy advisors and teachers committed to education reform” (p. 9). The firm was engaged “to provide insights into the components of workforce strategy that builds the capacity of educators to provide the highest quality instruction and continually improve their practice” (p. 9):

Figure 2 BC Ministry of Education (2017)

The Teacher Development Pathway:



The ‘pathway’ situates teachers within a “workforce policy framework that begins at identification (recruitment and selection into teacher training) and progresses across the duration of a teacher’s career” (p. 9). Mentorship is located in the “professional development” stage of the pathway in relation to “performance management.” The report states “teaching quality is one of the most significant drivers of student outcomes” (p. 9). The *Minister’s Report*, therefore,

positioned teacher mentorship as having two main functions: the cultivation of effective teaching and the retention of BC teachers in a tight labour market. The report acknowledged but did not detail “a number of means to support new teacher onboarding and retention” (p. 20). However, “further evaluation and examination” were recommended (p. 20). Locating the object of mentorship within a discourse of attrition is a persistent discourse formation that marks mentorship as an economic imperative—ensuring a stable and quality teacher labour supply within BC’s public education system.

5.7 Summary

Policy-as-discourse analysis exposes the “non-innocence” (Bacchi, 2000, p. 50) of how ECT mentorship has been framed and brings “silences in problematization out into the open for discussion” (p. 50). Genealogical policy analysis enabled the sighting of persistent patterns and shifting trajectories in BC policy texts over time. While resisting the construction of a linear arc from ‘then’ to ‘now,’ genealogical analysis produced a mapping of emergent, persistent and silenced ECT discourses within a select historical, contextual and textual frame.

Royal commissions, Sullivan (1988) wrote, “occur about once every generation and are generally regarded to be important educational milestones, events that signal a point of departure in our thinking about education and its importance in our lives” (p. 3). Due to their comprehensive consultation and data gathering processes, their function as a democratic “civic duty” (p. 3) and their mandate of political neutrality, BC’s Royal Commissions on education function as a governmental strategy of state-sanctioned policy formation which shape “the values and priorities we place on learning” (p. 3). Chan, Fisher and Rubenson (2007) contend the *Sullivan Report* is “the document that set the stage for education through to the end of the 20th Century” (p. 12) by putting into circulation “terminology [that] gained currency” within BC

public education discourse in the years following its publication. The discourse of lifelong learning “became fundamental to the professional development of teachers” (p. 13) while emphasis was placed on “maintaining and improving teacher quality” (Sullivan, 1988, p. 125). The imperatives of the complex needs of public schools and classrooms provided necessary discursive ground for the development of teaching standards and the expansion of induction programs documented in the *Profiles* study.

ECT mentorship emerged as an extension and variation of induction discourses articulated in the 1980s. Implicating beginning teacher induction and mentorship in discourses of teacher professionalism served to normalize participation in those professional initiation activities as desirable forms of conduct for supporting individual teachers and contributing to the teaching profession. As shown in the *Profiles* and *Minister’s Task Force* reports, the discourse of mentorship as a labour retention technology has also been a consistent discursive formation since the 1980s.

However, as Foucault insists, the function of genealogical analysis is not the production of causal lineage tracing a direct line of descent from past policy moments into current discursive formations and practices (Brinkmann, 2017). Ministries do not uniformly or completely implement Royal Commission or other report recommendations, nor are all actors universally aware of their existence or familiar with their content. Ideas about teacher mentorship are dispersed via twisting discursive pipelines laid down and forgotten but which contain publicly sanctioned truths that reappear in unpredictable and uneven ways. As one policy actor interviewed for this study noted: “Some ideas are just in the air” (Coordinator Interview, June 2018).

By uncovering buried discursive resources, genealogical analysis makes possible new thoughts about how mentorship functions as a governmental strategy for initiating and socializing early career teachers into public education settings, while providing a means to question how individuals and organizations are involved in the shaping of mentorship ‘curricula’ (Springer & Clinton, 2015). A genealogical excavation of ECT mentorship’s discursive resources highlighted how the “most potent form of ideology is the one that disappears altogether” (Austin, 2004, p. 6). Or, as the Consultant stated during their interview for this project: “Human beings are always interpreting. People will always come in with what they bring. How do you then open that up so they can understand the long history of things and also understand the larger purpose of things?” (Consultant Interview, August 2018).

This chapter’s genealogical excavation of BC education policy documents generated between 1960 and 2019 foregrounded the next stage of inquiry by analyzing texts embedded in historical and social context from which current discourses of teacher mentorship descend. How policy actors and teacher mentors who design, administer, deliver and participate in ECT mentorship in a contemporary setting grasp, reproduce, contest and rearticulate available truths is where my analysis moved next.

Chapter 6: The Mentor as Subject in a BC School District Program

What, then, is so perilous in the fact that people speak, and that their discourse proliferates to infinity? Where is the danger in that?

—Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*

6.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter continues the excavation begun in Chapter 5, moving the site of inquiry from macrolevel government policy documents to local program documents and spoken accounts of policy actors situated in one public school district setting. Descending from macro-level discourses of early career teacher (ECT) mentorship, this stage of analysis focused on tracing power at work “in its ultimate destinations...in its more regional and local forms and institutions” (Foucault, 1980, p. 96). Using Foucault’s three domains of ontological formation—knowledge, power and ethics—I address the second central concern of this research study: how the mentor is discursively constituted as a subject who exercises and/or submits to power/knowledge within a mentoring program and associated relationships. I do so by investigating the ‘work’ of one key mentorship discourse—the discourse of professional growth—towards the constitution of ECT mentorship and the mentor subject.

First, I foreground conceptualizations of growth available from economic and education discourses. Next, I consider how notions of professional growth were constituted, circulated and normalized within the District Mentorship Program (DMP) in terms of: knowledge (the ‘curriculum’ and understandings of professional growth; power relations (mentors’ situatedness within school district structures and collegial relationships, and the domain of ethics (teachers’

potential understanding of and relationship to themselves as mentors). Finally, I consider the effects of competing discursive constructions of professional growth on understandings of the practice of mentorship as a pedagogical undertaking and on what mentors should know, do and be to be considered ‘effective.’

Drawing on DMP program documents and policy actor interviews, I suggest competing discourses of professional growth, circulating within the DMP, produced contradictory constructions of the ‘effective’ mentor figure. At the same time as mentors needed to exercise judgment, creativity and autonomy as agents of mentorship, they were expected to comply with and exercise accountability towards certain program structures such as engaging in mentor training and reporting out on mentoring activities, respectively.

6.2 Mentoring for Growth: Between Improvement and Potentiality

From what broader economic and educational discourses did common constructions of teachers’ professional growth within the DMP descend? Within a neoliberal policy environment, growth requires perpetual improvement through expanded production, greater labour efficiency and efficacy and systems innovation. Teachers’ professional learning, when situated within neoliberal improvement discourse, positions teachers as subjects in need of lifelong learning in order to consistently produce better quality teaching and learning outcomes. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) suggests teaching is “more dynamic, challenging and demanding than ever before” (OECD, 2019, p. 3) and teachers “need to be supported in this process of change” (p. 3). Jones (2021) argues the continuous development of teaching practice underwrites an imperative for perpetual expansion and unending growth of teaching innovation and student success. Whereas, Biesta (2006) contends, ‘lifelong learning’ was formerly treated as “a personal good and as an inherent aspect of democratic life” (p. 169),

within a neoliberal policy environment it is constructed more “as an investment in economic development” (p, 169) where professional learning is no longer considered a personal and communal aspiration but a duty to the system that regulates teacher improvement in the name of the public and economic good. Biesta further contends the “redefinition of what counts as legitimate or ‘useful’” (Biesta, 2006, p. 169) within a learning economy can limit what types of professional opportunities are made available to adult learners such as teachers. Teachers’ engagement in continuous professional development (CPD) becomes a means to a systemic end: to “continuously innovate, adapt, and develop their teaching practices to equip all students with the skills and knowledge they will need to succeed in life” (OECD, 2019, p. 3).

This instrumental discourse of growth as perpetual improvement was reflected in the BC Ministry of Education's *Teacher Development Pathway* (see Figure 2, p. 99)—a continuum that begins in initial teacher education programs, progresses to early career onboarding and mentorship and maintains an infinite loop of professional development and performance management for later-career teachers. Serving as a mentor provides teachers a means of remaining in a growth state while cultivating growth in others. As a form of professional learning, ECT mentorship is often invoked to marshal new teachers’ growth towards the development of teaching practices that serve systemic imperatives. The sooner new teachers can be mentored into “classroom-ready” (TEMAG, 2014) efficacy the less risk their newness and ‘not quite ready-ness’ poses to the learning economy and its outcomes. Auletto (2021) describes the risks posed by ‘ineffective’ novices: “In addition to being less effective, early career teachers create additional challenges because they are more mobile. Lower rates of persistence among early career teachers shift school climates and harm student learning” (p. 2). Within an instrumental discourse of growth, the mentor figure is positioned as one who both models

lifelong learning and brokers opportunities for ECTs to acquire the knowledge, skills and dispositions of a quality teacher and mature professional.

6.2.1 Growth as Improvement

Professional growth was codified and given legitimacy by DMP documents and circulated through organizational communication channels to filter into schools and influence teachers. For example, the *2016-17 Program Brochure* provided an overview of the DMP's goals. The *Brochure* was produced by DMP staff in consultation with the Mentorship Advisory Committee at the district level. As the official program brochure produced and approved by program staff, the artefact constructed the DMP as a sanctioned professional learning initiative.

The *Brochure* contained several explicit and implicit references to 'growth.' Following Willig (2013), discourse analysis documents both actual appearances of a specific signifier as well as its diverse constructions in the forms of metaphors and synonyms. The *Brochure* used testimonial quotes—an in-person form of veridiction—to describe both what engagement in ECT mentorship promised. Phrases such as “I look to mentorship as a place for growth,” and “I’ve never been...more sure of what I have been doing” suggest the voices of DMP participants describing desirable effects participation might produce. Meanwhile, the statement “Extend your professional growth...by joining our exciting and rewarding mentorship community” suggests an invitation to join others already engaged in a positive mentorship experience. Within the *Brochure* text, growth was portrayed as “extending” oneself, “joining” others, and looking beyond one’s own classroom to develop greater certainty about the quality of one’s practice. Besides in-person veridiction, the *Brochure* conveyed the assurance of professional growth through mentorship with the evidence-based statement “Research confirms that beginning teachers...greatly improv[e] their classroom practice.” The effects of veridictory claims were a

normalization towards engagement in collaborative professional learning as well as the construction of the early career teacher as an unfinished teaching subject, requiring invitation to improvement and professional connection.

The *Brochure* also placed the discourses of growth and support in relation to one another (Andersson, 2013, p. 65) with the effect of imbuing mentor ‘support’ with an imperative to foster a particular orientation towards growth in mentees. The words “support,” “vision” and “challenge” appeared in capital letters on the centre page of the *Brochure*, visually emphasizing these three signifiers as similes for mentorship:

Mentorship as SUPPORT

Mentorship as CHALLENGE

Mentorship as VISION

These terms were also uttered during an interview with the Coordinator as they described a DMP mentor training session:

Yeah, so we spent the morning developing like you know like the... the idea of what is mentorship, unteasing that, unpacking that piece out, um... uh playing with you know the, the vision, support, challenge piece, um you know Lipton stuff, um I think I, I think I, yeah, I moved into learning focused conversations a little bit. (Coordinator Interview, June 2018).

The “support, vision, challenge” framework, drawn from Daloz (1999) and Lipton and Wellman (2003), is commonly invoked in BC school district mentorship programs. Zachary’s *The Mentor’s Guide* (2000), another frequently used professional resource for whom Daloz wrote the foreword, similarly highlights “support, challenge, vision” as components of an “effective mentoring relationship” (p. 26). A “learning-focused” (Lipton & Wellman, 2003, p. x) mentoring

program assumes “continual growth” (p. x) for the mentee as well as “reciprocal growth” (p. xi) which fosters “renewal for experienced teachers” (p. xi). Further, the main goal of learning-focused mentoring programs is “improved student learning” (p. xi). A further benefit of mentoring is “transfer of district policy, procedures and educational philosophy” (p. xii), through mentors who “embody and transmit both their own and the school district’s professional values” (p. xii). These ‘outside experts’ and their publications served as both discursive repositories and veridictory resources for the rationalization of professional growth and the cultivation of the “learning-focused mentoring relationship” (p. 1) as central aims of mentorship programs.

While the *Brochure* served to promote a discourse of professional growth from ‘above’ as a document carrying the authority of the DMP Advisory Committee, *Meeting Planning Sheets* gathered from 22 mentorship meetings held between 2016-18 provided a corpus of texts illustrating how particular constructions of professional growth were normalized and reproduced by participants within the program. Mentors were expected to complete a planning form for each meeting, including details such as new teacher attendees, date, location, meeting objectives, agenda and activities. Through the technology of an administrative form, the mentoring meeting became a structure by which ideas about professional growth were further codified and circulated and, in some cases, contested.

The Consultant described how senior school district administrators on the DMP Advisory Committee pressed for the DMP to be “growth-focused in terms of personal practice” and “a little more rigorous in its educational purposefulness” (Consultant Interview, August 2018). As a key purpose of the program was “moving practice forward,” district staff were concerned professional learning “wasn’t happening as quickly as it could,” and expressed the desire for more rigour in mentorship program undertakings. As the Consultant recalled, the DMP Advisory

Committee discussed the need for “mentor training...focused on the development of mentors” and developing “an intentional understanding of how those leadership skills are being developed” (Consultant Interview, August 2018). A bureaucratic strategy for assessing how and what types of ECT professional learning occurred during mentoring meetings was the use of planning and reporting forms.

The *Meeting Planning Sheets* reinforced a particular ‘curriculum’ of professional growth within the program—a largely instrumental focus on the ‘nuts and bolts’ of instruction, assessment, and classroom management, positioning mentors as purveyors and facilitators of technique and resources. Mentors self-reported responsibilities included managerial tasks such as “developing action plans” with mentees and “identifying resources for achieving goals.” In terms of the types of growth mentors identified as foci for mentorship meetings, the planning sheets contained reference to “maintaining focus on student learning,” “analyzing student performance info,” “looking at cross-curricular teaching to increase efficiency” and “setting goals for the future.” Writing on the meeting forms, mentors described ‘growth’ in a section titled “actions that create challenge”—following Lipton and Wellman (2003)—inscribing specific types of teaching knowledge and practice as areas for growth that would be targeted in and between meetings throughout the year. Areas identified as foci for growth by the mentors included: exploring “alternate/different non-traditional forms of assessment,” “classroom management,” reviewing classroom “year plans,” “unit planning” and “lesson planning,” personal skills such as “time management,” “writing IEPs” [Individualized Education Plans] and examining “cross-curricular teaching” and “inquiry-based lessons.” Most areas of growth inscribed within the corpus of *Meeting Planning Sheets* related to specific aspects of instructional design, teaching

and assessment strategies, and developing personal habits that support effective classroom management and teacher-student relationships.

A discursive reading of the *Program Brochure* and *Mentor Planning Sheets* pointed to a formation of professional growth as a desirable undertaking made visible through identification and improvement of particular aspects of instructional practice. Within an improvement-oriented discourse, increased teacher efficacy becomes a means to an institutional end. Improvements to teaching practice and increasing teachers' competency and confidence are not ends in themselves but a means of enhancing student learning outcomes. The mentor is positioned as a key figure in bringing the new teacher towards professional maturity, increased efficacy and student success.

6.2.2 Disrupting Improvement Discourse: Growth as Potentiality

While program documents constructed a formation of ECT professional growth as a predominantly instrumental process of improvement guided by mentors, policy actor interviews signaled other discourses of growth beyond increased teaching efficacy. Describing what an effective mentorship program is “intended to do,” the Director stated: “If I narrowed it down to one thing it’s helping new teachers find their voice and their power within themselves” (Director Interview, June 2018). This articulation points to an understanding of growth as a means of cultivating a sense of agency as a teacher/subject. In another statement, the Director expressed concern about mentors’ possible imposition of particular ways of teaching and suggested mentor training as a means of “strengthening mentors to be able to resist the urge to tell” and “resist the tug of being directive” when discussing matters of practice. Preventing ECTs from finding their “voice” was a recurring pattern of concern in the Director’s statements, appearing at another point in the interview: “I would be wildly excited if new teachers came out of the program feeling like ‘I’ve got this, I can do this.’ I’ve been coached or mentor coached to that point where

I've found myself, I found my voice." This latter statement, however, also points to a tension between discourses of professional growth with an instrumental end (i.e., enhanced competence) and a potentially agentic one ("I've found myself"). In another statement by the Director, three ends of professional growth are entangled: "My hope is that all of the teachers...who touch that program feel supported, feel like they are getting what they need to be able to be the best at their job so they don't decide to quit the profession." In one phrase the provision of support, promotion of enhanced competence and prevention of attrition are all articulated. After describing multiple effects of ECT growth, the Director confessed doubt about the efficacy and, perhaps, unintentional consequences of the DMP: "Is it hurting, is it helping, is it effective, is it doing what it's intended to do?"

How do multiple discourses of growth coexist within one mentorship program and what are the implications for the mentor figure entangled within them? In relation to the Director's utterance about the dual function of the mentor as purveyor of competence and empowerment, Dewey's (1916) conception of *plasticity* is helpful. Plasticity entails the ability to learn from experience and retain or distill something which will help one cope with later difficulties. However, plasticity is not only the capacity to change form due to some "external pressure" (p. 44) such as mentor's directives or counsel but rather to "take on the color" (p. 43) of one's surroundings while still retaining one's own sense of self. The function of the mentor can be implied, then, as assisting the ECT to accommodate to their teaching context to a certain degree and "modify actions" based on "prior experiences" (p. 43) while still retaining their uniqueness as a subject.

Further, the Consultant remarked "there are so many varied ways of conceptualizing mentorship" and described it as foremost "a really deep wonderful learning process" (Consultant

Interview, August 2018). Echoing Dewey (1916), the Consultant's statement suggested growth requires an awareness that one did not arrive to teaching "readymade" (p. 45). Within Dewey's frame, the mentor provides assurance that not knowing everything upon arrival from a teacher education program is a necessary condition for acquiring the "habit of learning" (p. 45) as a practitioner and for retaining the possibility and potential of making "continuous progress" (p. 45) in one's growth. Dewey posits that the "increasing complexity of social life requires a longer period of learning to acquire the needed powers" (p.45). As teaching is a complex undertaking, the mentor can foster acceptance that learning to teach takes time, and a prolonged period of adjustment to one's teaching context and development of one's identity does not precede the accomplishment of a static end to growth, but that growth *is* that process of adjustment and development.

Dewey (1916) counters the notion of growth as merely "something which fills the gap between the immature and mature" (p. 42). Desirable growth is a continuous end in itself, not a means to an extrinsic end. Following Dewey, the comparable unreadiness of new teachers relative to experienced ones is not a deficit, but a potential power that new teachers carry with them into the profession. The immaturity of the new teacher, then, is not the absence of capabilities which may arise later, but rather the presence of the "ability to develop" (p. 42). Rather than being seen as a problem to be alleviated, the new teacher's power lies in their very ability *to* develop. Dewey further critiques notions of growth having a "static end" (p. 42) and insists the "fulfillment" of growing is something finally "accomplished" (p. 42). While, growth is "the cumulative movement of action towards a later result" (p. 41), immaturity is not a deficit in Dewey's view but something "positive" and not a "mere void or lack" (p. 41). Further, Dewey

clarifies that ‘potentiality’ is actually about the "potency" and "force" (p. 41) of the immature subject who is capable of growth.

What is left unproblematic in Dewey’s representation of growth? Dewey's conception of growth does not let teachers 'off the hook' for committing themselves to continuous progress. Adopting an end-in-itself conception of growth still embeds an orientation towards lifelong learning. A teacher in a state of "Ungrowth" (p. 42) is someone who is no longer growing. As "the primary condition of growth is immaturity," (p. 41), it is important for teachers to maintain a ‘beginner’s mind’ in order to remain open to the new. However, within a neoliberal context the adoption of growth as a state of professional being situates teachers in a perpetual state of "immaturity" which has been reconstituted in a neoliberal context as a deficit in teachers' development and professionalism, rationalizing teachers' professional responsibility to participate in continual development schemes throughout their careers.

When has the new teacher grown ‘enough’ to not require a mentor alongside to advise them? Drawing on Evans (2015), ‘readiness’ for teaching is a "complex process of emergence" (p. 32) rather than a pre-defined attainment of a certain set on knowledge and skills. ‘Readiness’ is commonly defined in relation to a specific series of fixed goals and outcomes, positioning teachers on a “predefined spectrum of ‘un/readiness’” (p. 34). Reimagining professional growth as open to “unpredictable and non-linear elements” (p. 34) opens the function of the mentor to more creative possibilities. Because what new teachers become matters, mentorship becomes an "ethical and political endeavour" (p. 32) as professional growth becomes an open-ended process of becoming rather than progress towards a pre-defined set of knowledge and skills. Following Evans, ‘becoming’ a teacher does not get measured through the imposition or “development of forms” but emerges through movement with “no *fixed* beginning or end point” (p. 37). Focus

shifts away from a “stable, rational individual, experiencing changes but remaining, principally, the same person” (Stagoll, 2010, p. 22), towards a ‘self’ “conceived as a constantly changing assemblage of forces” (p. 22). In this sense, the ‘self’ does not exist in isolation, but as part of a *multiplicity*, ‘becoming’ through its connections with present conditions, what is already going on and not some “endless repetition of homogenized subjectivity” (p. 22) which demands compliance with imposed versions of the ‘effective’ teacher.

6.3 Growth and Mentoring Relationships: Navigating Support and Challenge

Power relations within the DMP situated within school district structures and collegial relationships were characterized by particular tensions. Just as tensions appeared about what types and effects of teaching knowledge mentors should endeavour to promote, competing imperatives inhabited the structure and function of mentoring relationships within the DMP. The mentor was positioned as both a provider of support and a provocateur, following and Lipton and Wellman (2013) in calling to create “challenge” through examination of practice and setting learning goals within the mentoring relationship. In keeping with this central evidence-based resource for conceiving of mentorship and consistent with the idea of professional growth as a continuous, sustained trajectory toward expertise, mentors faced tensions when seeking the right balance of “support, challenge and professional vision” (p. 1) to “increase their colleagues’ effectiveness as professional problem-solvers and decision-makers” (p. 1). Daloz likens the professional growth of new teachers to that of trees planted in an “old forest” (Zachary, 2000, p. xiii) where the roots of the new trees might “follow the intricate pathways created by former trees and thus embed themselves more deeply” (p. xiii). The metaphor points to the essential role of the mentor in the socialization of the new teacher into teaching practices that are already deeply rooted within the current system. Zachary (2000) suggests that one of the principal

reasons that mentoring relationships “fail” (p. 1) is that “the learning process is not tended to and the focus on learning goals is not maintained” (p. 1). To maintain maximum efficacy, Zachary advises learning-focussed mentoring relationships “span a shorter time period” to maintain attachment to the “accomplishment of specific learning goals rather than broad diffuse goals” (p. 2). Within the DMP, mentors created goals and planned activities to occur in the time between meetings. The role of the mentor in a ‘support, challenge, vision’ framework emphasizes the achievement of specific learning-focussed goals for mentees clarified through challenging and supportive conversations.

‘Support’ can be embodied in emotional, physical, instructional or institutional forms: a spoken affirmation, advising on arranging a classroom space, providing teaching resources or lesson ideas, or clarifying school procedures or learning outcomes (Lipton & Wellman, 2003, p. 2). Lipton and Wellman suggest that mentors focus too often on supporting, and not enough on challenging novice teachers, which they argue is the key to creating an “opportunity to grow” (p. 3). Similarly, Dewey (1916) suggests that “being merely sheltered by others” (p. 43) does not promote growth. By implication, the mentor must do more than simply protect the mentee from or help them get through challenges or difficulties (p. 43) encountered within a school setting. Skillful mentors challenge mentees to “promote continual attention to improvement in practice” (Lipton & Wellman, 2003, p. 3) through goal setting and “goal-driven conversations” (p. 3), “rigorous examination” of practice (p. 3) and “discussing both positive and negative results of instructional practice” (p. 3). By engaging in challenging conversations and reflective practices, the authors assert, mentoring “establishes the norm of on-going learning” in a “growth-oriented” school culture (p. x), and mentors “serve to ... transfer the district policy, procedures and educational philosophy...and promote norms of learning and collaboration” (p. xii). Mentoring is

described as a critical means of “supporting continual improvement in practice” (p. ix) and developing new teachers’ “capacity to make effective instructional choices” (p. ix).

The imperatives and effects of professional growth were visible in the Consultant’s recollection of a meeting between management and union representatives who expressed conflicting views as to whether moving to a cohort delivery model of mentorship might be more effective than continuing with the one-to-one dyad model that had been in place for many years. One of the reasons offered for establishing a cohort model was its potential to more effectively improve beginning teachers’ practice while reaching a greater number of ECTs with fewer mentors. Recalling the conversation, the Consultant stated management representatives wished to move away from “the buddy system” where mentorship was “held only between the mentor and the mentee” (Consultant Interview, August 2018). According to the Consultant, District officials expressed concerns that “deeper levels of educational conversation around inquiry work...wasn't happening as richly as it could be” in a way that could “move practice forward.” While union representatives suggested the District should “just trust teachers are going to do their best work,” management staff expressed the “need to have a little more feedback on what is actually going on” so as to “support it in a more robust way.”

The Consultant’s recollection constituted professional growth as occurring within “deeper levels of educational conversation” with the aim of “moving practice forward” (Consultant Interview, August 2018), echoing a persistent discursive formation of a mentoring relationship that is made visible and accountable to others beyond the mentor/mentee pairing. This formation rationalizes such organizational requirements as the need for gathering feedback on mentoring activities and providing mentor training in how to facilitate ‘learning-focused’ conversations. The Consultant’s description showed a tension between generating professional

growth within a culture of professional “trust” and “best work” and one where accountability mechanisms more rigorously document if and how professional growth is occurring such as evidentiary paperwork gathered on mentorship activities.

Returning to the DMP *Brochure*, a series of that document’s statements referred to mentoring relationships in various explicit and implicit ways. Mentorship was rendered as a distinctive form of professional relationship. The importance of professional relationships as a component of mentorship was emphasized in the program motto on the front page in the slogan “Relationships that Inspire.” Other statements provided additional descriptors:

- Developing relationships through mentorship can be exciting and inspiring.
- Research confirms that beginning teachers thrive when they are in mentoring relationships with established teachers, greatly improving their classroom practice, sense of efficacy and joy in their work.
- I look to mentorship as a place for growth, connecting with others and listening to different perspectives.

The statements in this widely circulated *Brochure* made the production of professional relationships a discernible imperative of mentorship. Further, mentoring relationships were constituted as having specific characteristics, actions and desirable effects that, in turn, rationalized DMP structures and practices that produced mentorship relationships.

Additionally, the *Brochure* text highlighted the tension between relationships that position the mentor in agentic (thinking, creative, hospitable) and governable (focused on external demands for effects) terms. The *Brochure*’s statements constituted mentoring relationships as affective (“exciting,” “inspiring” and producing “joy”); action-oriented (“listening to different perspectives” and “connecting with others”); producing desirable effects

(such as improvements in ECTs' classroom practice and sense of efficacy about practice); and, possessing discernible qualities or characteristics (“non-evaluative,” “non-judgmental,” “reciprocal” and “responsive”).

The *Brochure* included personal testimonials signaled by quotation marks to validate certain purposes and effects of professional relationship, such as the statement “I look to mentorship as...connecting with others and listening to different perspective.” The beneficial affective impact of mentoring relationships was claimed through the testimonial of a mentor describing mentoring as “extremely rewarding” as it let them “show new teachers my passion” and “reflect on my own practice and who I am and what my values are.” Meanwhile, the *Brochure* included an appeal to empirical authority in the statement “research confirms that beginning teachers thrive when they are in mentorship relationships with established teachers.”

The use of both research evidence (scientific-empirical) and teacher testimonials (witnessing) as forms of veridiction to strengthen the mandate of constructing professional relationships as a key feature of the mentorship program juxtaposes two distinctive epistemological frameworks for educational practice. On the one hand, the invocation of ‘research’ as a rationalization for putting teachers into relational situations potentially frames ECT mentorship as a “causal technology” (Biesta, 2007, p. 8), or instrumental practice which gives primacy to effective “interventions” (p. 7) into teaching. This ‘technological’ framing of evidence-based professional action “seems to limit severely the opportunities for educational practitioners to make such judgments in a way that is sensitive to and relevant for their own contextualized settings” (p. 5). The focus on ‘what works’ in a mentorship program “makes it difficult if not impossible to ask the questions of what it should work for and who should have a say” (p. 5) in determining if and how mentorship relationships might be constituted. The

evidence-based justification of certain qualities and functions of mentoring relationships constrains “who is and who should be allowed to participate in decisions about what is educationally desirable” (p. 6), and “restricts the scope of decision making to questions about effectivity and effectiveness” (p. 6). Within an evidence-based educational context, teachers who possess knowledge of research-informed mentorship practices and have received formal mentorship training in the qualities and cultivation of ‘effective’ mentoring relationships are more authoritatively positioned to direct those relationships than teachers engaged in more informal professional relationships. Evidence-based characteristics present in the *Brochure* distinguish the mentoring relationship from other types of professional relationships such as those limited to shared teaching interests/areas.

In contrast to such “rational forms of proof and demonstration” (Foucault, 1996, p. 328), Foucault juxtaposes “knowledge through witnessing”—or veridiction which comes through making a public avowal based on “memory” and “inquiry” (p. 328) of a certain event. Embodied forms of veridiction, such as teacher testimonials “operate at another scale and use different criteria of what counts as truth” (Valverde, 2018, p. 102) than research-based claims. Through teacher testimonials, “important truth claims” about mentoring relationships “emerge at the personal, not the factual, level as the characters in question avow who they really are, in their own words” (p. 108). The use of participant quotations to describe the effects of mentoring relationships as rewarding and providing an opportunity for professional reflection serves to “bind the subjectivity” (p. 108) of the speaker to the object under construction. By making public avowals about certain truths about mentorship (p. 108), the speaker exposes themselves to potential risks depending on what truths they choose to bear witness to. Their authority for

making truth claims comes from both the embodied constraints by which they are bound to their statements, and their potential exposure to public observation and judgment.

The invocation of both scientific and embodied forms of truth-telling in the *Brochure* established the production of mentoring relationships as a key element of the DMP. Excerpts from policy actor interviews surfaced several discursive patterns in the way mentoring relationships are constituted and rationalized across spoken and written documents. For example, the Coordinator described the relationship in a way that privileged personal connection over other rationales for matching mentors and mentees. The Coordinator described a district mentor meeting where the mentorship cohorts were being determined at the beginning of the school year. The Coordinator recalled giving advice to teacher-mentors when deciding how to determine cohort membership: while “research” about mentoring relationships suggested they should be based on “similarity of teaching assignment” or geographic “proximity,” the Coordinator stated the belief that relationship “trumps everything” (Coordinator Interview, June 2018). According to the Coordinator, mentors were encouraged to base their decision-making on “anybody you would specifically want to work with, either another new teacher or someone in a mentor role.”

In the Coordinator’s statements, primacy for determining mentoring relationships was justified by an embodied claim (“they’re saying they want to connect with somebody”) rather than evidence-based decision-making criteria (assigning by teaching area or geographic proximity). The Coordinator’s statements surfaced tensions between evidence-based and embodied justifications for how and why mentoring relationships might be constructed within the boundaries of a mentorship program. Research imperatives were dismissed by stating “blah, blah...relationships trump everything in my opinion” (Coordinator Interview, June 2018).

Further, the consultation process positioned DMP mentors to determine how the mentoring relationships would be structured in the various cohorts, appealing to stakeholder consensus as a rationalization for how mentoring relationships would be determined.

6.3.1 Support as Deprivatizing Practice

Following Foucault's governmental framing, the mentoring relationship also acts as a mechanism for what Campbell, Lieberman and Yashkina (2018) conceptualize as "de-privatizing" of teacher practice. Mentoring relationships become a technology for "de-privatization" where teachers "are encouraged to make their knowledge explicit, to share their knowledge and practices more widely, and to metaphorically and literally open up their classroom doors" (p. 24). In describing the process of designing the mentorship cohorts, the Coordinator pointed to the deprivatizing mechanisms located in mentoring relationships as teachers were called upon to "work with," "share" and "connect" with others and expose their "emerging needs" (Coordinator Interview, June 2018). Similarly, as the Director stated, teachers who participated in the DMP "have a vested interest in what happens to each other" (Director Interview, June 2018).

Campbell, Lieberman and Yashkina (2018) point to potential danger for teachers exposing their teaching practice to others, but ultimately echo the *Brochure's* claims about collaborative professional relationships: "[w]hile making one's practice public might be perceived as risky, it is ultimately rewarding and powerful professional learning" (p. 24). However, the Director pointed to possible risks associated with entry into a "reciprocal relationship" such as the mentor feeling "they're supposed to help this person who's struggling and to feel like they're failing at that" or wondering "am I doing the right thing?" (Director Interview, June 2018). Harm might come to the mentee if the mentor interacted in such a way as

to make the new teacher feel “they don’t wanna be a teacher any longer” instead of “maybe helping them...find their voice or find their passion or find their way.”

The Director stated there were “a whole series of things” that could constitute a harmful mentoring relationship particularly where contact between mentor and mentees was “informal.” The Administrator expressed concern that “mentors were not as equipped as they could be to really guide the mentoring relationship.” To address the potential for ineffective mentorship, the Administrator described how the DMP was “always trying to work to empower the mentor to formalize the relationship” and providing training in such approaches as “questioning techniques.”

Wellman and Lipton (2003) argue that the risks associated with ‘de-privatization’ of practice and succumbing to a “reluctance to ask for help, fearing the perception of incompetence” (p. x) are outweighed by the fulfillment generated for the mentor and “the teaching profession at large” (p. x). An effective “learning-focused” mentoring relationship is described as “collaborative” and “growth-oriented” (p. x) and based on the assumptions that mentorship both an “investment...in continual growth” and has “improved student learning” as a central aim. Further, resisting solo teaching “accelerates growth from novice to expert teaching” and offers opportunities for “reciprocal growth and learning” (pp. x-xi).

The Union Representative had been involved in the program for several years and was one of the longest serving members of the Mentorship Committee. They were able to recall and compare how mentoring relationships were formed prior to the program’s move to the cohort model which was “always to be responsive to what the interest and needs are of the mentee first” and “to establish that relationship with the mentee so that the mentee knows that they can come to them to, you know, get help...for whatever they need around their professional practice”

(Union Representative Interview, June 2018). The new DMP program model also served to connect ECTs with experienced teachers beyond their immediate school setting. The Union Representative characterized mentoring relationships within the current program model as more “formal” than in the past and described efforts to “formalize the relationship” by providing mentors with training. However, efforts to formalize mentor/mentee relationships were constrained by lack of funding for extensive mentor training which left mentors “not as equipped as they could be” to “guide the mentoring relationship.” The Consultant also indicated there had been challenges “getting teachers into each other’s [classrooms]...looking at practice, being able to see what is going on, to collectively identify goals and then look at how those are being worked towards and how those are being manifested” (Consultant Interview, August 2018). For that to happen more effectively, the Consultant described a desire of the DMP Advisory Committee for “really focused development of the mentors” to ensure productive mentoring relationships and conversations.

The Union Representative stressed that mentoring interactions be “non-evaluative,” echoing characterizations of a mentoring relationship stated in the *Brochure*: “non-evaluative,” “responsive,” and “supportive. “We talk to the mentors at length about this,” the Union Representative explained, “...to engage in conversation with your mentee in a way that feels non-evaluative.” The mandate given to mentors to avoid doing harm through prescriptive practice rationalized the provision of mentor training in how to conduct effective mentoring conversations.

The Consultant described a desire by some DMP Committee members to move away from a program model based largely on informal and undocumented mentor/mentee activities to more planned and coordinated activities with purposeful goals and feedback. Following Daloz

(1999), moving mentorship from high support and low challenge (resulting in stasis or confirmation of existing practice) to high support and high challenge was intended to result in growth in practice (p. 210). The DMP became a site where professional growth was to be effectively produced and made visible. Within mentoring relationships, support for its own sake was not sufficient; collegial support must be balanced with challenge that produced growth. Lifelong learning moved from an emphasis on the 'social' and the formation of collective belonging to an emphasis on being part of a knowledge society which positioned the mentorship program as the site where necessary growth occurred (Popkewitz, 2017).

Does the teacher ever grow 'enough' to not require a mentor alongside to support them or others to look in on their practice? As Zachary (2000) comments, "closure" (p. 145) of a mentoring relationship is a messy process, as some "conclude on time but without having achieved learning goals" (p. 145). Within the DMP, ECTs were encouraged to participate for two years but, as interviewees noted, that aim was not always attained due to program constraints such as limited availability of mentor teachers. Within a regulatory discourse, mentorship might end when an ECT demonstrates sufficient competence in their personal practice as evaluated by school administrators in their initial teaching assignments (Government of Ontario, 2019). Dewey's conception of growth, however, encourages a degree of ongoing interdependence, investing the mentor/mentee relationship with the function of saving both from the burden of individualism as one cannot grow without interacting with others. It is the role of the mentor to remind the new teacher of the interdependence of teachers within a community—to prevent the "illusion of being really able to stand and act alone" (p. 43) which Dewey calls a form of insanity that produces suffering for those who believe the aim of growth is to be able to carry on alone. In this context, deprivatization of practice becomes desirable not as a strategy for regulatory

accountability or self-responsibilization but as a form of lateral accountability and interdependence with other teachers.

6.4 Subjectivization of the Mentor Figure

An ontological inquiry running through this study regarded the extent to which mentor figures are produced by discourse, and if and how they speak back to it. A third stage of document analysis focused on how teacher mentors were constrained by or, in some cases, exceeded the power arrangements produced by discourses of mentorship at work in the DMP. An examination of two sets of mentor feedback forms—*A-Ha Charts* and *Challenge/Solution Cards* (see Table 3, p. 63)—illustrated how discourses ‘naturalize’ (Fairclough, 1995) mentor positioning within program structures. However, they also illustrated moments where expectations of mentors were contested, negotiated and disrupted, and mentors’ judgements were not yet fully subsumed. Within these two sets of mentor feedback forms, DMP mentors could be seen actively negotiating institutional discourses of accountability, governability and responsibility. Varied subject positionings produced tensions and compromises in their ethical conduct within the program and their relations with mentees.

6.4.1 Accountability

DMP mentor feedback forms provided an opportunity to consider how program documents reflected conflicting discourses of accountability and, as a result, produced contested positionings of mentor subjectivity. When accountability is cast as a strategy of “good governance” (Bovens, 2007, p. 450), planning notes, meeting reports and reflective feedback comments become a means of monitoring how well a program is fulfilling its objectives, as well as how directly mentors align themselves with program aims and practices. Embedding paperwork completion as a DMP mentor task compelled mentors to report on the aims and

processes of mentorship they engaged with, and to expose their ethical positioning in relation to program structures. Within managerial discourse, “an accountable organization is one that has the duty to present auditable accounts of *all* of its activities” (Biesta, 2004, p. 235). In other words, mentor feedback forms represented “an obligation to explain and justify conduct” (Bovens, 2007, p. 449) regularly throughout the year.

Some mentors inhabited accountability as improving their knowledge of DMP practices and assessing their suitability as mentors. Mentors’ written comments indicated the presence of normative understandings of mentor dispositions and the mentor role within the DMP. When asked to comment on what they still wondered about after working as mentors for a year, some responded with questions such as “Am I on the right track?”, “Are we doing it right?” and “What is my role as a mentor—what was I expected to do?” One expressed doubt as to whether they were “going to be appropriate for this role.” Some statements focused on more managerial forms of accountability such as “how to use the budget” and whether there was an “expected amount of meetings to have” during the school year. Such statements suggest a sense of obligation to ‘do the right thing’ in relation to the DMP delivery model.

Besides supporting program aims, accountability also took the form of reporting on their performance as mentors and on how to improve if particular aims had not been met. Reflecting at the end of the school year, one mentor stated they “should have done more” while another wondered “What and how could I have been better?” One mentor described falling behind on paperwork and email communications, admitting difficulty with “[h]ow to find time to read everything!” Another listed an area for further growth as “being more proactive with my communication via planning and organizing (this is my responsibility in my mentor team).” Mentors expressed concerns about inconsistencies in mentee participation in DMP meetings and

events. One commenter addressed “[h]ow difficult it is to get mentees to engage even though they signed up” and another expressed frustration with “having mentees respond to emails, cancelling meeting times, [and] not showing up.” Mentors wondered how “to get the mentees to commit” and “to get/encourage mentees to participate more.” One mentor considered if ECTs who “won’t even answer emails let alone meet...should be cut from the team?” Mentors were not only subject to accountability, but also instruments of accountability in some moments where they considered how to model and elicit commitment to program activities.

While in some cases mentor feedback forms served as a monitoring mechanism, completing the forms also provided an opportunity for some mentors to bend the discourse of accountability away from alignment with DMP aims and towards consideration of broader contextual factors. In some moments, filling in a form was not only about “being ‘called to give an account’ to some external authority” (Brady, 2021, p. 26) but became an opportunity to call upon the school district to be accountable for less than ideal conditions under which mentors conducted their duties. Mentors’ trustworthiness, therefore, did not always depend on mentoring in the ‘right way,’ but also by expressing critique of the conditions that might prevent mentors and mentees from exhibiting the professional conduct and growth desired of them.

Some mentors exceeded the constraints of program aims and structures and moved towards expressions of critique and creative ‘work arounds.’ For example, when asked to comment on what they learned during their year in the DMP, one mentor wrote “there are no rules and it is okay to make mistakes—we are not all there yet.” After stating that one “challenge” was poor turnout by newer teachers to scheduled meetings, one mentor suggested a “solution” was not to improve their individual communication strategies but rather to acknowledge “how difficult it is to get people who are stressed to take time out and breathe!”

This mentor's statement contained recognition that beginning teachers often bear disproportionate workloads early in their careers (Kutsyruba, Godden & Tregunna, 2014) that might prevent them from participating in mentorship program activities. One mentor wrote about "the importance of giving mentees a reasonable amount of info so as not to overwhelm them" as one way to work around ECTs' reluctance to attend DMP events. Another queried if additional release time might be provided in order to allow more time "to get past the nuts and bolts of early teaching issues and get into some deeper philosophical issues around teaching." In these instances, staying accountable to mentees' particular needs meant critiquing or acting otherwise in relation to DMP guidelines. Such expressions of critique occasionally reversed the flow of accountability between mentors and the DMP, with mentors exercising ethical authority to respond to imperatives other than those of the program.

6.4.2 Governability

Mentors' feedback included comments about DMP priorities and procedures via utterances that exposed "the location of power at the extreme points of its exercise" (Foucault, 1980, p. 97). Power became "embodied in techniques" (p. 96) including bureaucratic accountability mechanisms such as planned meetings, mentor training sessions and email communications with program managers to report on mentorship activities into compliance with institutional mandates. While some DMP mentors' remarks illustrated an acceptance of normalized arrangements, with mentor growth entailing knowing more and improving practice within the constraints of program structures, others used feedback forms to voice critique about certain features of the DMP and ponder alternative structures and practices. Some mentors' statements did not question DMP 'asks' but only the DMPs' mechanisms for doing so. However, while others managed what some described as an overwhelming number of emails and reporting

protocols to secure official sanction and budgetary coverage for their activities, an additional effect occurred. Some mentors used program feedback forms to communicate ideas for altering or streamlining communications as part of the feedback process. At the same time as they complied, some DMP mentors inserted critique about the DMP's accountability demands, offering suggestions for how that could be made less time-consuming and more convenient. One mentor acknowledged they were "still not comfortable with all the paperwork procedures, playing catch up" while another spoke of "wanting to develop my own paperwork checklist." Another suggested "[t]here could be less mentor learning sessions, more quality time (days) to use in cohort groups," countering DMP mentor training priorities. Queries were also made about how mentor-mentee groupings were assigned, inquiring "if there is a better way to split up mentees to reduce geographical space so meetings can be easier to organize." One mentor described the mentor/mentee assignment process as "very chaotic." Still another questioned the prioritizing of planned mentor/mentee meetings, querying "whether more 'formal' planned meetings or more 'informal' group/chat bonding are more helpful." Others noted "A LOT of time spent on practical pieces of the job" rather than "finding time to explore other learning around pedagogy, reflection."

Through such statements, the mentor/subject became "a site of ambivalence in which the subject emerged as both the effect of a prior power and as the condition of possibility for a radically conditioned form of agency" (Butler, 1997, pp. 14-15). By simultaneously critiquing particular requirements some mentors exceeded being constituted as non-agentive figures. Such moments illustrated the "double directionality" (Davies, 2006, p. 428) of subjection where teacher mentor both is "acted upon" (p. 428) and yet acts in a way that "eclipses the original conditions" (p. 428) of governing processes and creates a possibility for critique, making the role

of the mentor slightly less ‘governable.’ Mentors’ agency was visible in the statements of creativity, questioning and a recognition of certain external constraints. Examining mentors’ ethical negotiation with bureaucratic requirements and delivery of mentorship within the DMP model invited consideration of how discourse and power relations both act *upon* teachers as mentors and how teachers constitute themselves as mentors in relation *to* dominant truths and strategies at work in a mentorship context.

6.4.3 Responsibility

When DMP mentors enacted a positionality of ungovernability, it was sometimes produced by ethical tensions created by a dual obligation of demonstrating accountability towards the DMP and a moral obligation of responsibility towards the mentees with whom they engaged. As Biesta (2004) puts it, “[F]ollowing the rules, however scrupulously, does not and will never save us from responsibility” (p. 243). Through their statements, mentors positioned themselves as responsible for creating supportive mentoring relationships, asking “How can I continue to build a comfortable and safe environment?,” “Have I supported my mentees enough?,” and “How can I be of more help?” As one mentor stated, it was sufficient that “mentees felt supported and I was able to help them in some way, shape, form”—not that they demonstrated growth. An expression of acting sufficiently responsible was to “listen deeply and encourage, support and help.” In some cases, mentors’ provision of ECT support was constituted as a commitment to “encourage them to decide for themselves,” “to make this as useful a process as possible” and to ensure “they are getting the support they want/need.” As one mentor wrote: “We are going to support some gains for mentees but it may not be what we all initially thought.”

A mentor's ethical stance could take the form of responsibility to other teachers not accountability to fulfilling program requirements. Biesta (2004) characterizes this expression of responsibility as echoing a discourse of accountability that was "strongly focused on a professional interpretation of accountability" (p. 235) evident in the 1970s and 1980s. With the DMP, some mentors appeared more concerned with showing accountability "to themselves as professionals, to their colleagues and professional associates" (p. 235) than to the program. As one mentor asked, "What is my responsibility to my mentees and to the profession?" Within the DMP, some mentor statements suggested a shift from "professional and democratic notions... to the technical-managerial approach" (p. 236), where accountability now meant attentiveness to "processes and procedures" (p. 248) while responsibility involved commitment to mentees' needs (p. 248). "Real responsibility," Biesta argues, "is one-sided, nonreciprocal, and irreversible" (p. 244). In other words, whereas accountability in relation to the program was expressed as "are we doing it right?", responsibility was more about the moral obligation of 'are we doing right by our mentees?'

6.4.4 In Search of the Good Mentor

To be a 'good' mentor, then, might not mean subordinating oneself and mentees to normalized truths about professional growth but to position oneself ethically in the games of truth at play within a mentorship program. "Being socially constrained," Fairclough (1989) maintains, "does not preclude being creative" (p. 28) and DMP mentor feedback forms generated instances where mentors worked creatively to critique DMP practices. DMP mentor feedback forms documented how mentors conceived of themselves as subjects within the context of a mentoring program. The forms provided an opportunity to consider mentors' varied ethical orientations towards conceptions and enactment of accountability, governability and

responsibility in the pursuit of ECTs' professional growth. Mentors' written reflections contained agentive moments such as glimpsing broader issues that kept program participants from engaging in more meaningful interactions.

Freedom, echoing Brady (2021), is not necessarily about the ability to achieve desired ends, but "merely the capacity to conceive of those ends in the first place" (p. 33). DMP mentors' occasional critical expressions demonstrated the contestability of discourses and power relations that potentially construct mentorship as a practice of freedom (Foucault, 1994) where mentors thought otherwise about desired ends in relation to program mandates, early career teachers' aspirations, and their own moral commitments.

6.5 Summary

Descending from macro-level discourses of ECT mentorship examined in the previous chapter, this stage of analysis took up one commonly invoked mandate of ECT mentorship: effective mentors cultivate the professional growth of early career teachers within school district mentorship programs. I considered how the mentor figure becomes subject to particular discourses of professional growth as good and desirable, as the improvement of instructional competency, and as a regulatory strategy committing both mentors and mentees to a trajectory of lifelong learning. This chapter provided evidence of relations of power at work within the DMP as to how professional growth was conceptualized, cultivated and contested by illuminating how discourses are at once "plural and contradictory" (Bacchi, 2000, p. 50) and subject to reformulation by policy actors including district personnel and mentors.

Analysis of mentorship program documents, policy actor interviews and mentor feedback show "the real work of actors in revising and amending and using discourses" (Bacchi, 2000, p. 50) and the continuing political "contest" (p. 50) over professionalizing discourses in BC's

education context. These relational tensions included: constructing an instrumental relationship between mentors and ECTs within the rhetoric of ‘support, challenge, and vision’ (Daloz, 1999; Lipton & Wellman, 2003); promoting a notion of collaboration which simultaneously deprivatizes ECT practice and risks exposure for the mentor and mentee subject; and maintaining hierarchical relations that reinforce systems and strategies of accountability, governability and responsibility while upholding a discourse of non-evaluative mentorship and voluntary service of mentors.

Finally, I considered how institutional discourses of professional growth effect the subjectivity and ethical self-formation of the mentor figure. I considered how mentors constitute themselves as moral subjects, how they learn to monitor themselves, and how they come to think about and question their mentor roles. Particular constructions of mentorship normalized within DMP documents produced competing formations of the ‘effective mentor’ as a Self who is 1) positioned as trustworthy yet required to comply with accountability measures, 2) positioned as autonomous but required to engage in mentor training and processes in alignment with program protocols and 3) positioned as volunteers yet responsible for cultivating mentees’ professional growth in the interest of the school district, the teaching profession and students’ success as learners. The discourse of professional growth produced a Janus-like positioning of the mentor-subject affecting their conduct in relation to program mandates and mentees.

Invoking a hermeneutics of suspicion, the aim of this analysis was to denaturalize normalized institutional imperatives that policy actors may only be “dimly aware of” (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. xix) when creating program policies and documents, and engaging in mentorship activities. The analysis also highlighted how power relations within a social institution discipline teacher-subjects by dispersing strategies as mundane as paperwork and

training sessions to produce and promote particular discursive formations of professional growth and mentor efficacy.

When given a suspicious rendering, ‘business as usual’ practices and relations within a mentorship program appear less innocuous. Mentorship processes manifest as biopower—the increased ordering of teachers’ professional lives under the guise of improvement and the mentor-subject as the embodied site where “minute and local social practices are linked up with...large scale organization of power” (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. xxii). ECT mentorship can be employed as a regulatory strategy, positioning the ‘effective’ mentor as a purveyor of a particular version of growth signalled by the continuous visible development of the new teacher into a competent professional and collaborative life-long learner. What the ‘effective’ mentor knows, does and becomes in relation to mentees and themselves is as a subject bound to particular constructions of the teacher and teaching.

A ‘second thought’ arising from this analysis was how discourses constrain pedagogical possibilities that might emerge otherwise. In the concluding chapter, I consider how a critical ‘unmaking’ of persistent and common-place truths of effective mentors might produce a more robust generative potential for ECT mentorship.

Chapter 7: Towards Ethical Freedom in Teacher Mentoring

The function of an author is to characterize the existence, circulation, and operation of certain discourses within a society.

—Foucault, *Language, Counter-memory, Practice*

7.1 Chapter Overview

In this concluding chapter, I restate the two central questions guiding this study and present a summation of my research journey including personal learnings gleaned from thinking and working with Foucault's theoretical and methodological tools. Next, I provide a brief discussion of the potential contributions of this project to the conceptualization of early career teacher mentorship and its implications for future research, policy and practice. I conclude with a statement of my aspirational hopes for the potentiality of ECT mentorship to act as a space for generative critique not just within the context of new teachers' beginnings, but within public education as a whole.

7.2 Research Questions Revisited

In his introduction to the *Essential Works of Foucault*, Rabinow (1994) cites Foucault's "splendid definition" of a 'work':

That which is susceptible of introducing a significant difference in the field of knowledge, at the cost of a certain difficulty for the author and the reader, with, however, the eventual recompense of a certain pleasure, that is to say of access to another figure of truth. (p. vii)

This work set out to accomplish two main investigative tasks—the process of which produced certain difficulty for the author but hopefully less so for the reader. First, I attempted to denaturalize normalized understandings of early career teacher mentorship through genealogical

analysis of mentorship discourses present in policy documents that served to construct notions of the new teacher, teacher induction and mentorship in British Columbia between 1960-2019. Using Foucauldian-inspired discourse analysis approaches, I traced how mentorship became thinkable as a professional activity and assigned purposes within shifting historical and political circumstances in British Columbia's public education system. I considered how policy documents do the 'work' of constituting, circulating and assigning authority to particular discourses and functions of ECT mentorship, setting the context for the enactment of mentorship within one school district between 2016-18. In doing so, I endeavoured to shake up the predictable grammar that often structures the composition of ECT mentorship and mentor figures and the rules by which mentorship discourse is organized and its subjects constituted.

Second, I traced how the discourse of professional growth, one of the key imperatives of teacher mentorship, discursively constituted the mentor figure as one who both exercises and submits to particular understandings and enactments of mentorship with the context of one mentorship program's structures and power relations. What I hoped to accomplish through a Foucauldian invocation of 'discourse' was to make some theoretical movement towards creating a history of present mentorship policies and practices in British Columbia, and to generate speculation as to why and how certain mentorship mandates become prevalent while others diminish. By doing so, I hoped to hold out the possibility of ECT mentorship remaining a contested domain of teacher regulation, professional learning and teachers' relationality and subjectivity.

7.3 Thinking with Foucault

Once imagined and spoken, discourse lays down pathways subsequent policy actors discern and are compelled to tread or critique. The more often a certain pathway is travelled, the

easier to define and recognize its routing, until users assume the path as having always been there. An aim of this project was to view ECT mentorship mandates as both products and vehicles of discourse, and to situate policy actors in BC's public education system—teachers, union representatives, administrators, consultants—both subjects of and to historically situated yet fluid mentorship discourse practices. I have endeavoured to address the gap identified by Watts which is provide “evidence of the real work of actors in revising and amending and using discourses” (Watts, 1993/1994, p. 123 in Bacchi, 2000, p. 50) and the resulting “contest” over mentorship discourses, identifying how they are “plural and contradictory” (p. 50).

Endeavouring to generate analysis within one Canadian teacher mentorship program, I encountered an unstable assemblage of teacher mentorship rather than a “stable, unchanging reality that can be studied with the empirical methods of objective social science” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 2). The emergence of ECT mentorship as a professional learning practice in BC was produced and interrupted by such accidents of demographic change (e.g., increase of new teachers arriving in school districts), political positioning of public education as necessary to economic stability, and shifting appraisals of the nature of teaching and the purposes of mentorship (e.g., the complexity of teaching, combatting employee attrition). Genealogical inquiry acknowledges both the highly localized and fluid contexts within which mentorship imperatives descend and looks past the present to consider continuities and discontinuities in discursive formations.

I worked to identify and trace the appearances of discourses that create and constrain the conditions of possibility for mentors as they negotiated and enacted mentorship. By making visible the chain of knowledge that orders the relational spaces and subjectivities teachers occupy, genealogical approaches provided an adaptable frame for inquiring into the figuring of

mentors through provocation of normalizing discourses. Engaging genealogical approaches enabled the consideration of the plasticity of discourses that are commonly represented as ‘fixed’ in contemporary teacher mentoring contexts. What is circulated as a fixed attribute or ‘code of conduct’ for teachers serves to normalize certain types of thinking and doing is, in fact, the unfinished and ever-shifting product of complex historical, social and ideological processes. Former institutional and cultural contexts echo in “the development, maintenance and circulation of discourses” (Mills, 1997, p. 11) in the present and effect how certain conceptions of ‘mentorship’ stay in circulation.

7.4 My Learnings

Earnestly wrestling with the implications and choices presented by the “ineluctable condition” (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 88) of the discourse analyst at once sharing in and suspending the everyday context of the discourse she studies generated other important learnings besides those directly related to my central research questions.

During initial stages of data gathering and analysis, I was not yet listening for echoes of how interviewees might be influenced and constituted against a context of historical discourses. I listened closely through the filters of my two research central questions guided by a prepared script noting what speakers stated about their conceptions of ECT mentorship and the role and coordination of mentor activities and training. I positioned the four policy actors (Ball et al., 2011) who participated in this study as repositories of knowledge and memory of the development and inner workings of one school district’s mentorship program. These actors responded to my questions about the negotiation of mentorship program values and priorities and recent institutional history with descriptions of their roles in the program, narrative accounts of key meetings and events that generated rationales for program intentions and day-to-day

activities, as well as the ongoing debates and conflicts about how the program should be envisioned, managed and conducted. I did not anticipate how quickly the interviews would turn to describing competing visions of what mentorship should do and how the speakers positioned themselves differently across their varying roles in the program. Genealogical excavation destabilized my perceptions of conventional mentorship imperatives as ahistorical, revealing instead “they are not quite original,” (Foucault, 1982, p. 779) but “used and extended mechanisms already present” (p. 779) in educational discourses of teacher education, professionalism and regulation. The analysis of policy actors’ spoken accounts allowed for “a close-up shot of interactions and decision-making,” (Ball et al., 2011, p. 85) enabling me to examine how organizational hierarchies and relations of power influence discourse production (Fairclough, 1995; Van Dijk, 1993). Having grasped the theoretical possibility of fluidity in power relations, I will never be able to un-see the potential of disrupting discourses at work in the education spaces I inhabit. That ‘seeing’ has generated a newfound optimism for me that there is always room for those working in public education spaces to speak back to seemingly daunting political challenges.

Another key learning for me arising from this work is that, following Bacchi (2000), concepts “are not descriptive of anything” but a “proposal” whose purpose is “to influence the evolution of ongoing practices” (p. 45). I have come to see the concept of teacher mentorship, at times presented as a scalable and reproducible regime of early career teacher support, more as fragile settlement continually reshaped and reformed by localized historical and political forces, and by the educator-subjects rooted in those places and circumstances. Therefore, it is important to consider context when conceptualizing ECT mentorship and why this study examined the ‘situated usage’ (p. 45) of ECT mentorship with this province’s policies and one school district’s

program. I attempted to draw a conceptualization of ECT mentorship that moved beyond generic cataloguing of efficacy and outcomes. Immersing myself in the intricacies of one program made me consider with renewed suspicion proposals for standardizing mentorship mandates and mentor practices within a provincial delivery model out of concern such an overarching structure might erase possibilities for thinking otherwise about mentorship across diverse communities of practice.

Finally, this project documented the ‘serious speech acts’—or, “what experts say when they are speaking as experts” (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. xx)—of educators engaged in designing, coordinating and participating in an ECT mentorship program. They described their roles, intentions and aspirations, and professional concerns and experiences of political tensions. Moving between close readings of spoken and written texts, and theoretical literature, my methodological schema developed as an emergent construction with the aim of avoiding “becoming involved in arguments about whether what [subjects] say is true, or even whether their statements make sense” (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. xx). Invoking Foucauldian approaches isolated the ‘objects’ of mentorship and mentors in an attempt to “distance and defamiliarize” (p. xxi) myself from my previous professional positionings and ethical commitments. My previous acceptance of the “apparent naturalness” (Janks, 1997, p. 331) of ECT mentorship as an effective strategy for professional learning, for example, revealed a form of engagement with and submission to a particular discursive practice. Foucault’s three-fold ontological framework required me to identify these ‘preferred’ readings of mentorship, then make a “deliberate move” towards “reading against” (p. 331) my memory to counterbalance my former submission to commonly-circulated truths. Like Tamboukou (1999), who writes that Foucault's work “came as an inspiration...when all political theory seemed dry” (p. 201), I used

discourse analysis to re-read my memories from an “engaged-estranged location” (Janks, 1997, p. 331) in order to “denaturalize” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 27) and make visible my taken for granted conceptual and subject positionings of mentorship and mentors.

7.5 Contributions of this Research Study

One contribution of this project was to present an original reading of key policy texts to discursively constitute ECT mentorship as a persistent response to an assortment of new teacher ‘problems’ in British Columbia. The policy texts examined in this study created, codified and addressed the problem of teacher regulation by proposing various professional controls and supports—within which ECT mentorship discourses became entangled. I argued that two Royal Commissions, a Ministry of Education research report, provincial teacher standards documents, and a task force publication not only documented and proposed responses to new teacher ‘problems’ but acted as technologies by which new teacher certification, professional standards, and lifelong learning mandates were constituted. Teacher mentorship—and the necessity of a mentor figure to provide it—became thinkable due to particular set of historical conditions and implicated within situated discourses of teacher regulation and professionalization. Viewed in this light, conceptualization of ECT mentorship through genealogical analysis moves beyond descriptive cataloguing of aims and outcomes, to consideration of how policy texts constitute particular formations of mentorship. The use of genealogical analysis invited a revisiting of “the battle of ideas” (Andersson, 2013, p. 67) over ECT mentorship’s ideological and material aims—a contest which persists over who should participate in it, in what ways and to what ends.

Using Foucauldian analysis approaches, I identified several discourses of mentorship and mentor figures in circulation within BC education policy. While identifying these discourses (the ‘what’) was part of my study, another was to consider the processes (the ‘how’) by which such

discourses come to act on teachers who act as mentors, as teachers are both formed by these discourses while positioning themselves in varied ways within them. This study generated new understandings about what discourses policy actors draw upon to speak about mentorship and the role of mentors, and how they justify their actions as subjects with the authority to influence program content and organization. I brought into conversation how power relations at work within a mentorship program rationalize what happens to and through teacher-mentors.

Through genealogical and discourse analysis, I hoped to illuminate and query ‘commonsense’ understandings related to mentorship mandates and mentor knowledge, relations and agency embedded in historical and contemporary teacher mentorship policy. To examine an interplay of mentorship discourses, institutional practices and mentor subjectivities, I generated a range of texts to analyse “the organizational and logistical aspects of discourse production” (Karikari, 2016), and address the structure and order of the production process (Fairclough, 2010). The analytical process generated understandings of how the discourses of teacher regulation, professionalism and mentorship are formulated across a corpus of historical and institutional texts which articulate mentorship program aims, produce organizational structures and activities, and act upon and with teachers as subjects.

Lastly, Ball’s policy actor heuristic provided an entry point for considering how educators played various roles in the “discursive articulation of policy” (p. 626)—or “‘explaining’ policy, deciding and then announcing what must be done, what can be done, and what cannot” (p. 626). The interviewees of this study, I suggest, troubled and extended some of Ball et al.’s (2011) policy actor typologies. For example, limiting union representatives to the work of “critics” (p. 631) in this context might establish a management/union binary that flattens the complexity of institutional relations with regards to mentorship programs where, like the

DMP, management and union shared governance. For example, while the Union Representative critiqued certain management activities that were perceived as undermining teachers' control over their professional learning (thus, drawing on Ball et al.'s characterization of the 'critic' as maintaining a counter-discourse of 'teacher-led' mentorship), the same speaker also articulated a desire for collaboration and compromise in resolving conflicting program policy stances.

Another gap in the schema that appeared was incomplete characterization of the role of the "outsider" (p. 628). Ball et al. (2011) note that "many existing accounts of policy in schools omit these [outsider] players from the policy process" (p. 629). In this study, the external Consultant's positioning was mostly one of *facilitation*—i.e., providing discursive resources for institutional actors negotiating conflicting perspectives on program aims and management. An examination of this outsider's positioning provides an opportunity to consider the effects of hired consultants as something other than 'edu-business' figures, as well as querying the discourses of "monitoring" and "partnership" (p. 626) embedded in Ball's schema. Is facilitating dialogue as an 'outsider' a form of 'monitoring'? If so, whose interests are served through such monitoring by an outside policy actor?

7.6 Implications for Research, Policy and Practice

7.6.1 Suggestions for Further Research

One of the limitations of this study was the exclusion of informal mentorship (i.e., mentoring relationships occurring outside the boundaries of district programs) from consideration. Some of the most meaningful mentoring encounters happen not within mentorship program structures but with the 'teacher across the hall' (Manchanda, 2021, p. 32). Further study of such 'unprogrammed' mentorship encounters could extend conceptualizations of ECT mentorship as a generative space for professional discourse—a collection of diverse

microsystems existing alongside the monocultural spaces of more regulated professional learning environments. In focusing on discourses of *mentorship* embedded within mentorship policy and institutionalized programs, I paid less careful consideration to diverse forms of *mentoring* that occur outside of formalized settings, where mentor-mentee relations perhaps have more of a chance of emerging by invitation than imposition. While ECT mentorship may be robustly initiated, expanded and governed by systems-driven imperatives, mentoring relations invited by teachers retain promise that mentoring might remain generative and educative endeavor serving the particular places and people engaged in it (Davies & Hales, 2017).

Another absence of this study were the voices of new teachers themselves. Clandinin et al. (2015) and Manchanda (2021) provide examples of narrative and phenomenological studies foregrounding new teachers' experiences of induction, support and mentorship in both formal and informal mentorship settings. Bringing discourse analysis to ECTs' written and spoken expressions about engagement with teacher mentors could generate additional understandings about the effects of mentorship on beginning teacher subjectivities. Future research might centre stories and statements of new teachers more prominently in considering what ECT mentorship should do and achieve—again raising the question of who has authority to determine mentorship program aims and assess the meanings of 'efficacy' and 'success' when it comes to new teachers' beginnings.

A final limitation of this study was its focus on one Canadian school district mentorship site. The field of early career mentorship research would benefit from the development of a broader corpus of case studies investigating how teacher mentorship is envisioned, enacted and lived. Following Archibald (2008), when collective stories are pieced together and put alongside

each other we might gain a richer sense of the “whole story” (p. 80) of mentorship as discourse, experience and practice.

7.6.2 Policy Considerations

For those involved in crafting ECT mentorship policies and programs in British Columbia at both the provincial and local level, this inquiry points to the importance of submitting normalized imperatives of ECT mentorship to regular critical interrogation. This study traced the persistent uses of ECT mentorship as a panacea for teacher attrition and retention, as a means of inducting ECTs into desirable social, curricular and teaching orientations and as a means of rationalizing particular ends for professional learning. Governance of BC’s public education system has intersected with student and teacher population expansion and contraction, government/union conflicts, periods of fiscal austerity, perpetual waves of curriculum reform and, currently, a public health emergency in the form of a pandemic that will likely have long term consequences for the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of public education. Induction persists as a managerial responsibility and activity, while ECT mentorship continues straddle both managerial and collegial spheres of influence. Within a perpetually fluid context, one overarching function of teacher mentorship has persisted: its role in promoting stability and, therefore, subjectifying the mentor figure as a purveyor of stability. Teachers mentors are compelled to promote certain types and flows of 'growth', brokering sustaining relations between colleagues, filling material gaps and assisting with sense-making in the face of change.

Mentorship policy actors, while responding to the urgencies of a moment, might simultaneously ask: why this urgency and is this the urgent matter we *should* be preoccupying ourselves with on behalf of our newest teachers? Who benefits from harnessing teacher mentorship to address urgent educational demands, and what necessary thoughts and critique are

we potentially silencing or diminishing when we focus on growing, socializing and professionalizing the new teacher in response to those demands? Following Biesta (2013), policy actors might consider how mentorship needs “both the logic of *poiesis* as well as that of *phronesis*” (p. 140). When ECT mentorship becomes not just about cultivating competencies for surviving immediate pressures, but also about the cultivation of practical judgment and knowledges, mentors potentially position themselves to invite new teachers “to make wise situated judgments about what is educationally desirable” (p. 140) and make mentoring conversations sites for generative dialogue. Revisiting mentorship program aims invites critical discussion about program governance and delivery models, mentor recruitment considerations, mentor learning curricula and the criteria by which mentor efficacy is assessed.

7.6.3 Shifting the Mentor Stance

I have suggested that a persistent effect of prevailing discourses of mentorship has been to position teacher mentors as ‘systems stabilizers.’ As an aim of this project has been to create conceptual space for thinking otherwise about commonly assigned subjectivities, I invite consideration of denaturalizing the idea of the mentor figure as purveyor of particular forms of knowledge and practice and towards the imagining of the mentor as disruptive agent. Within this study, some mentors acted as *creative resisters* of education policy. The mundane act of completing paperwork presented an opportunity to negotiate the purpose and effects of accountability measures within a school district apparatus. Some also acted as *critical practitioners*—proposing alternate ways of enacting mentoring activities and conversations so as to render the work of mentors ‘slightly less governable.’ Some mentors expressed a desire to move beyond providing ‘just in time and just enough’ support to act as *reflective facilitators*—inviting mentees to constitute themselves as teachers in addition to providing support to survive

within less than ideal conditions. I invite consideration of the mentor figure as one whose creative, critical and reflective stance might remake mentorship as a “radically open and undetermined process” (Biesta, 2013, p. 139) where teachers might engage with and contest the discourses that implicate them.

7.7 Limitations

I began my analysis in Fall 2018 questioning whether I had a sufficient amount of data to obtain a ‘complete’ mapping of mentorship program imperatives or if the collection of documents would support a comprehensive mapping of the ways program aims are circulated and rationalized. Qualitative research data collection relies on “what is available in the context, and what the researcher can do in that setting” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 4). After receiving ethics approval from the University of British Columbia Research Ethics Board in early January 2018, I applied to the proposed school district to obtain local approval to conduct my research. After a delay due to staffing changes within the department that processes research approval requests, I obtained school district clearance to commence data collection in mid-February 2018 leaving less than five months to complete data collection before the end of the school year, after which district staff and teachers moved into summer holidays. Further, given the fluid nature of public school staffing and mentorship program participation from year to year, I weighed the options of delaying data collection until the autumn, when I might capture a full yearly cycle of mentorship program activities, versus obtaining interviews and field recordings from current program staff and participants, and accessing archived program documents with the assistance of staff familiar with their origins, scope and storage locations. Additionally, compelled by doctoral program completion timelines, I commenced recruitment of interviewees and mentorship

program participants, and inquiries about accessing program-related documentation in Spring 2018 within the five-month period available.

Willig (2013) provides the assurance that “discourse analysts do not need to work with vast amounts of text in order to produce meaningful analyses” (p. 350). Similarly, Smythe (2006) contends the focus of genealogical and discourse analysis is “how power/knowledge link up to produce discourses, rather than providing an exhaustive account of the progress of history as a plan unfolding, or an account of what really happened” (p. 25). While a more exhaustive data set may have offered additional analytical possibilities, my corpus of data was sufficient “to allow for the identification of a range of strategies and their use within different discursive contexts” (Willig, 2013, p. 350).

7.8 The Emergence of an Author

Looking out from my position as a mentorship coordinator between 2006-2012, I viewed ECT mentorship as a rare blind spot within the field of provincial education policy, where BC’s localized mentorship programs largely escaped managerial oversight and outcomes-driven rhetoric characteristic of other provinces and countries. However, after working fresh theoretical and methodological ground in this study, I argue truths in current circulation within mentorship policy and practice in British Columbia’s school system, even as they appear politically neutral and benign, act upon teachers to produce particular professional and systemic outcomes. If technologies of governance close discursive spaces for negotiating the terms of new teachers’ arrival into their profession, mentorship will not function as a practice of freedom, but be limited to an inductive practice that disciplines (Foucault, 1977) early career teachers (and their mentors) in ways that reaffirm potentially harmful relations of power within educational organizations and between educators themselves—neither of which ultimately serve to strengthen public

education—which is already subject to undermining influences from broader policy and economic forces. I found moments in this study where, as Burman et al. (2017) hold, “even though policy may speak through us as subjects, sometimes we also speak back to it” (p. 4). I encountered instances where educators questioned and offered alternative framings of ECT mentorship, mentor work and programs—those moments where subjects “are not merely *spoken by* discourse but they also demonstrate the capacity to *speak of it*” (p. 17). By documenting particular moments and conditions that produced that ‘back talk’ in one localized setting, perhaps this study can point towards possibilities for critique on other policy grounds where de-professionalizing discourses speak us more loudly than they should.

The aspirational commitment of this project lies in contending that ECT mentorship, and those engaged in it, need not be trapped in an “impoverishing instrumentalism” (Clarke & Phelan, 2017, p. 3) where critique becomes “limited to varying views as to the best means by which instrumental goals can be achieved” (p. 3). Through analysis of interviews, and policy and institutional documents, I identified how dominant discourses ‘naturalize’ (Fairclough, 1995) certain mentorship practices, as well as moments where the discourse-practices of ECT mentorship might be vigorously contested, negotiated, disrupted and re-formed, and where educators’ diverging judgements were not yet fully subsumed to the pursuit of urgent educational aims (p. 4). Rather than submitting to an ethos of “comforting consensualism” (Clarke & Phelan, 2017, p. 3), I encountered educators actively negotiating conflicting institutional discourses and fluid subject positionings that produced uncomfortable tensions, frequent disagreement, occasional consensus and fragile compromises. Within the context of one mentorship program, I found evidence that an ‘agonistic politics’ (Mouffe, 2013, as cited in Clarke & Phelan, 2017, pp. 13-14) here maintaining a public space for contesting what constitutes a ‘good’ mentorship

program, what it might achieve, who participates within it, and who is permitted a stake in its governance and enactment—is actually possible. And if it is possible in this particular field of educational policy and practice, perhaps the same ethos might pervade other areas of governance in public education.

I have not centred my gaze on individual actors' perceptions of mentorship or their perspectives about participating in a mentorship program, but rather on the connection between subjects' utterances and the discursive and systemic relations in which they are embedded. Teacher-mentors encounter organizational mandates and program structures that influence how they engage with beginning teachers within mentoring relationships. How they choose to position themselves within these institutional structures and conditions affects how mentors enact and engage in mentorship activities as subjects. While material and discursive relations “always offer the possibility of transformation” (St. Pierre, 2004, p. 326), they can also limit and regulate how and why mentorship occurs, who it serves, and who determines the rules of the game. This study aimed to contribute knowledge of the power relations at work within public education sites that offer ECT mentorship programs, and how truth claims about teacher mentorship and mentors come into institutional circulation and produce particular visible effects. More specifically, I considered how ECT mentorship generates, and is generated by, discourse that elevates or silences certain conceptions of mentorship and mentor functions—and more broadly, teacher professionalism and regulation.

While working on this project, I delivered a workshop for a group of teachers on resolving challenging educational issues in a local school district. The attendees were unionized teachers who volunteer time in their schools to coordinate and advocate for teacher-led professional learning opportunities. Teachers described instances of being ‘encouraged’ by

school administrators and district education officers to engage in professional learning more closely aligned with mandated priorities. They spoke of managerial strategies that influenced how they used their professional development time—time sheets documenting their whereabouts and pursuits, application forms to request self-directed studies. Teachers recounted moments of discomfort and frustration as administrative rules and paperwork constrained their ability to make choices about their own professional learning interests. New teachers seemed especially reluctant to counter administrative directives, and acquiescence was accepted as ‘the order of things.’

I left that workshop reflecting on the enactment of power relations in educational organizations—who has the authority to decide how, when and why teachers learn, and what bureaucratic ‘technologies’ shape and constrain teachers’ professional choices. How are teachers formed as subjects who accept “that we do not have the right to say everything” (Foucault, 1981, p. 52)? Policy-as-discourse theorists, Bacchi (2000) contends, usually have “an agenda for change” (p. 46) and leverage the fluidity of discourse “to maintain space for a kind of activism” (p. 46). Foucault described this space through his conceptualization of power: where discourse is perpetually in a state of formation and re-formation, there is always the possibility for subjects to exercise freedom.

Through a careful examination of the ‘history of the present’ in which ECT mentorship discourses are produced, I hope to have shifted away from characterizing ECT mentorship and mentor figures as essentialized or ahistorical features of an educational policy landscape, and towards analysing the production of ECT mentorship and mentor figures as unstable objects of historically-situated discursive-practices, conditions and processes. I hope to have grasped just enough to make possible a ‘stirring under our feet’ (Foucault, 1970, p. xxvi) that registers how

contingent, unstable and ever contestable epistemological and ontological claims on ECT
mentorship and mentors, and the authors who write of them, actually are.

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Appendix: Interview Script and Prompts

Interview Script

The following script and prompts framed interviews with district staff persons associated with the district mentorship program who have assisted in the collection of institutional documents:

“Thank you for agreeing to this interview. Our interview should last between 60-120 minutes and is being recorded, as you have agreed to in the consent form you signed. Just a reminder that the recording will be transcribed and responses you provide in this interview may be quoted or paraphrased later, ensuring your confidentiality is protected—as outlined in the consent form. In this interview, I’d like to focus on discussing the district’s teacher mentorship program and the various documents that you have assisted in gathering for this research project. I am hoping to gain some background knowledge and context about the program, from your perspective as the (interviewee job/role title), and when and how these various documents were created and are used. This information will provide valuable background and context to the documents that will be analysed as part of this study. You’ll have the option of choosing how you want to be identified in any future references to this interview (e.g. use of pseudonym, description of your work). The consent form you have signed outlines the privacy and confidentiality protocols.”

Interview Prompts

1. What’s your current position in [the district]?
2. How long have you been in this position?

3. Can you give me a brief overview of what it is you do in your work in relation to the mentorship program? How long have you been associated with the program and in what capacity (ies)?
4. What are your perspectives on the current activities and coordination of the program?
5. What are your perspectives on the role/purpose of mentorship? Of mentors?
6. Is there anything else you feel is important for me to know about the creation, development, content, or function of the mentorship program?

Document Related Questions

1. When was this document created?
2. Who is/are the author(s) of this document?
3. Why was this document created? (e.g. school board requirement, union initiative, mentorship program coordinator initiative)
4. Who is the intended audience for this document?
5. How widely has this document been used in the program?
6. Where and with whom has this document been used?
7. What is the purpose of this document? What does it “do” in relation to the program?
8. Is there anything else you feel is important for me to know about the creation, content, use or function of this document in relation to the mentorship program?