

## Organizational Socialization of Novice TEFL Teachers

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### ***Abstract***

This study aims to investigate the organizational socialization of novice EFL teachers. It is during this transition (i.e. organizational socialization) that the teachers begins to develop the skills and habits that form the foundation for their future teaching success. A sample of 25 EFL novice teachers that teach at state high school and 25 EFL novice teachers that teach English at non-profit high schools in Tehran, Iran, were selected from graduates of a two year initial teacher education program at Tarbiyat Moallem University. There were 28 women and 22 men, ranging from 22 to 29 years of age. A mixed method approach was used in which both qualitative and quantitative analyses were utilized to get the personal views and thoughts of new teachers considering the challenges encountered in their workplace to obtain the similarities and differences between the two groups. In general, it could be argued that the process of organizational socialization is an integral condition which should be pursued longitudinally. The passage of time may better show the challenges of state and non-profit school teachers considering the impact of contexts as well as the settings of teaching.

***Keywords:*** organizational socialization, context, new EFL teachers.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Novice teachers are not always aware of different procedures and the roles of individuals and groups in the organization. Recognizing these aspects can sometimes take place haphazardly. Some scholars believe that micro-political literacy is an integral point missing from the preparation of novice teachers (Blase, 1991; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002). Blase (1991) points out ‘to fully understand the realities of teaching and schools generally, knowledge of politics is required’ (p. XI). Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002) state that novice teachers have to become micro-politically literate in order to understand the nature of the contexts that they face. They continue to say novice teachers need strategies that could be applied efficiently in order to maintain their own ideal working situations. Schempp *et al.* (1993) and Hebert & Worthy (2001) both mention the need for novice teachers to be equipped to recognize and maneuver the pressures and tensions encountered through the induction phase as they try to become part of the organization in which they work.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Organizational Socialization

Upon entering the workforce, new teachers are inducted into in-service teaching during the stage of organizational socialization, which rotates around the teacher’s initial exposure to the culture of a school. Van Maanen and Schein (1979) refer to this stage as “the process by which one is taught and learns the ropes of a particular organizational role” (p. 211). Unfortunately, knowledge and pedagogies learned from teacher education programs may directly contrast with the values, norms, and expectations of the school culture, and thus may not be transferred to the induction phase of teaching (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Smagorinsky, 2010; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998). As a result, background knowledge of teaching may end up being “washed out” (Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981, p. 7) as beginning teachers begin their educational occupations. Three stages have been related to an individual’s induction into teaching: *a survival stage* based on self concerns, *a mastery stage* based on task concerns, and *an impact stage* based on student concerns (Fuller & Brown, 1975). However, it should be said that novices will move through these phases at various speeds and with varying degrees of success. The addition of multiple roles (e.g., athletic coaching) may also have a deep effect on the amount of time it takes a new teacher to reach the impact stage. In addition, gaining this stage may also depend upon the field and strength of an individual’s teaching orientation.

Hargreaves (1995) insists that relations with coworkers are essential factors in the socialization and improvements of teachers. These relations are commonly called “cultures of teaching.” According to Hargreaves:

The form of teacher cultures consists of the patterns of relationship among members of these cultures. It is through the forms of the teacher culture that the contents of these cultures are realized, reproduced, and redefined. (p. 85)

### *B. Teaching Procedures*

Teachers in educational system are often said to enter the occupation with a “career contingency” (Lawson, 1983, p. 7), which causes them to prefer either teaching or coaching. In fact, many candidates are said to enter teacher education programs with a teaching orientation (Curtner-Smith, 2001). Wilson *et al.* (2010) investigated that the majority of high school English teachers in their study had coaching orientations despite being hired as teachers first and foremost. Of course, there was once a time when recruits with coaching orientations felt that physical education was their only viable option for pursuing a career in education (Sage, 1989; Schempp & Graber, 1992; Stroot & Williamson, 1993).

During organizational socialization, workplace situations and school culture can increasingly impact the morale and commitment of new teachers (Weiss, 1999), particularly if these circumstances lack what Lortie (1975) calls a “shared technical culture” (p. 67). For a school to involve in a shared technical culture, a universal language and a good command of knowledge must be forged throughout the professional conversations of educators (Lawson, 1983). Without this language and understanding, beginning teachers may revert back to what Lortie (1975) has depicted as an “apprenticeship of observation” (p. 61) whereby novice teachers rebuild teaching styles based upon past educational experiences, many of which may force them towards the status quo of authoritarian institutions (Smagorinsky, 2010). This apprenticeship of observation might be just as prevalent to coaching as it is to teaching as novices withdraw to more comfortable models (i.e., orientations based on acculturative experiences) and become visible “with a strongly biographical orientation” (Lortie, 1975, p. 81) that can hinder the improvement of professional identities and cause confusion in terms of prioritizing teaching roles.

### *C. Novice Teachers Perceive Teaching as a Moral Endeavor*

According to the response rates (85% of items received an agree response) that is pertinent to the research aim of “To what extent do new teachers recognize teaching as a moral effort?”, it is true to say that novice teachers believe that teaching is a moral effort. Not only are novice teachers aware of their duties to work through curriculum, but also they are aware of the need to improve a sense of right and wrong in students. Novice teachers (96%, or 22 participants) consented that they wanted to have a lasting impact on the students they teach by forcing them to be better students and better people.

Novice teachers also think that they were held to a higher moral norm than other professionals due to the essence of their occupation (92%, 21 participants) and that they should show a high moral standard in the classroom (78%, 17 participants). This result is perhaps not restricted to the experience of only new teachers, but teachers in general. It was exciting that the *disagree* and *don't know* replies were high for the item that implied novice teachers should show a high moral standard in their personal lives (13% or 3 participants disagreed and 9% or 2 participants didn't know).

Some novice teachers made a clear distinction between professional life and personal life. Some researchers, including this article, would argue that the distinction should not be made; one's professional life is very much linked to one's personal life.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Participants

A sample of 25 EFL novice teachers that teach at state high schools and 25 EFL novice teachers that teach English at non-profit high schools in Tehran were *purposefully* drawn from graduates of a two year initial teacher education program at Tarbiyat Moallem University.

#### B. Instruments

In order to meet the criteria of the present research, two instruments were used.

##### 1. Quantitative Instrument

The quantitative instrument of the study (Likert-scale questions) included the Beginning Teacher's Views of Self Questionnaire known as BTVoS Questionnaire which was developed for the New York State Mentor Teacher-Internship Program Statewide Evaluation, by Dr. Gerald M. Mager, Syracuse University, in 1986. In October 2002, the questionnaire was revised by Thomas B. Nevelidine and Dr. Gerald M. Mager at Syracuse University. The original questionnaire consists of 60 items among which 18 questions were extracted that measure novice teachers' view toward managers and context of teaching.

##### 2. Qualitative Instruments

Qualitative techniques were applied to highpoint the heart of experiences, issues, and concerns of participants. *Direct observations* represent the qualitative portion in a sequential order.

### *C. Data Collection*

#### 1. Quantitative Data Collection

The process of distributing and collecting BTVoS questionnaire forms was carried on about three weeks. The elicited raw data were categorized in the data table for further analysis. To measure teachers' view toward context, responses were measured in a 5-point Likert scale. The scale included answers to closed-item questions including 1 = very little, 2 = low, 3 = moderate, 4 = a lot and 5 = very much and is scored from 1 to 5 for further analysis.

#### 2. Qualitative Data Collection

##### a. Observations

Due to the vast applications of observation techniques, one direct observation or shadowing (Curtner-Smith, 1997) was conducted for each teacher (50 participants). At least a 1.5-hour teaching was observed during the observations, and on many instances entire days were spent observing the participants' interactions within their roles of teaching. Through the study, hours were spent in the context of these two types of schools. Field notes were taken during observations. The field notes involved the following segments: description, reflection, and questions.

##### b. Treatment

25 EFL novice teachers of state high schools and 25 EFL novice teachers of non-profit schools in Tehran participated in this study. A mixed method approach was used in which both qualitative and quantitative analyses are employed to get the personal views and thoughts of novice teachers regarding 1) the challenges faced in their work place 2) the efficacy of supports in place to aid them; and then their views were compared to obtain the similarities and differences between the two groups. This study utilized a survey and observation to allow the voice of the novice teacher to inform the research.

### *D. Data analysis*

Having gathered the necessary data (responses to two sets of questionnaire), the researchers analyzed the data by SPSS 19.0 (SPSS Inc.(2010)). According to the type of data, both quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted to determine the common challenges that exist among the participants. The survey data were analyzed using correlation, factor analysis, and principal components analyses (PCA).

Direct observations were employed as a complementary approach. Direct observations assisted the researcher scrutinize the contextual factors for perfect balanced results.

#### IV. RESULTS

Regarding the nature of the research question "*Q: Do context have different effects on the organizational socialization of novice TESOL teachers of state schools and non-profit schools?*"

For the quantitative part of the analysis, the researcher suggested that the BTVoS questionnaire consist of one underlying dimension (or factor): context affect. To find context factors with the present participants, the items of the measure were subjected to principal components analysis (PCA). The researchers supposed that the questionnaire measures the impact of context (one component) on novice teachers in state and non-profit schools. Therefore, there should be just one component in the questionnaire where the items have larger loadings.

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.725
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	501.706
	Df	120
	Sig.	.000

Table 2: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6.685	43.586	42.254	6.685	43.586	42.254
2	1.050	7.965	52.634	1.050	7.965	52.634
3	1.069	7.365	59.125	1.069	7.365	59.125
4	1.264	6.942	67.534	1.264	6.942	67.534
5	1.385	6.269	72.198	1.385	6.269	72.198
6	.810	4.526	76.996			
7	.590	4.261	81.862			
8	.631	4.065	84.425			

9	.493	3.987	90.261			
10	.364	2.549	91.025			
11	.368	1.993	92.962			
12	.385	1.452	94.846			
13	.287	1.129	96.015			
14	.261	1.051	97.452			
15	.301	.659	97.185			
16	.136	.325	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 3: Component Matrix

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Q6	.821				
Q12	.791				
Q5	.738				
Q13	.884				
Q16	.823				
Q15	.763				
Q14	.725				
Q11	.764				
Q2	.751				
Q4	.720		.363	.458	
Q3	.604			-.426	
Q1	-.497		-.496		
Q9		.714		-.401	
Q10			.825		
Q7		.494		.710	
Q8		-.578			.756

*Phase 1: Determining the appropriateness of factor analysis*

Results from the tables 1 and 2 showed that with Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) value of 0.725 which is larger than 0.6 and the significant Barlett’s Test of Sphericity value of 0.000, factor analysis is appropriate.

*Phase 2: Determining the number of components for extraction*

Table 3 indicates that five components have eigenvalues larger than 1. However since the difference between the first components and the other four is too much for an eigenvalue and the first component explain or capture 43.586 percent of the variance, just one component will be extracted that confirms the assumption of the researchers that one component should exist behind the items of the questionnaire.

Results: The 16 items of the BTVoS were subjected to principal components analysis (PCA) using SPSS Version 19 (SPSS Inc., 2010). Before performing PCA, the suitability of data for factor analysis was assessed. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed the presence of many coefficients of .3 and above. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was .725, exceeding the recommended value of .6 (Kaiser, 1970, 1974) and the Barlett's Test of Sphericity (Bartlett, 1954, as cited in Pallant,2005) reached statistical significance, supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix.

Principal components analysis showed the presence of five components with eigenvalues exceeding 1, explaining 43.53 per cent, 7.96 per cent, 7.36 per cent, 6.94 percent and 6.26 percent of the variance respectively. An inspection of the scree-plot revealed a clear break after the first component. Using Catell's (1966, as cited in Pallant,2005) scree test, it was decided to retain one component for further investigation.

Table 4: Correlation between BTVoS scores and non-profit/state school teachers

		School	BTVoS
School	Pearson Correlation	1	.772**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	50	50
BTVoS	Pearson Correlation	.772**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	50	50

The relationship between organizational socialization of beginner TESOL teachers of state schools and non-profit school (as measured by the BTVoS) was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure that there is no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. There was a strong, positive correlation between the two variables [ $r=.772$ ,  $n=50$ ,  $p<.0005$ ]. It was showed that there is a relationship between organizational socialization and the contexts where beginner

teachers are socialized; and it could be argued that "*Context has different effects on the organizational socialization of novice TESOL teachers of state schools and non-profit schools.*" In this way the first hypothesis is confirmed.

## V. DISCUSSION

### A. Organizational Socialization of State School Teachers

The organizational socialization was the main controversial part for the participants. Three major phenomena were investigated through direct observation which is as follows:

- 1- The organizational socialization takes a long time.
- 2- Socializing with the environment needs time and effort beyond ones abilities
- 3- Teaching as Emotional and individualized experience than academic one
- 4- Teaching as an challenging job
- 5- Low salaries and seeking moonlighting out of the context of teaching
- 6- Sensitivity of beginner state-school teachers toward organizational socialization

Although the above themes or phenomena are shortly listed, the process to logically classify them under the headings took a long time.

### B. Organizational Socialization of Non-Profit School Teachers

The organizational socialization of beginner teachers at non-profit schools was happening faster than that of state-school teachers. It was revealed that teachers of non-profit schools had fewer problems than their counterparts. They believed that the interactions between them and managers, students and parents help them overcome the stress of taking the responsibilities inside and outside the classroom. Most of them claimed that they are getting a balance between teaching skills and what students want. However this was not seen in their counterparts. The future goals of non-profit teachers were much closer to teaching than other non-teaching goals. They were not highly sensitive to the process of socialization; the observations also confirmed that socialization for these teachers had happened earlier. For instance two of the teachers had managed to initiate their own language institutes after just two years of teaching English. The common phenomena with respect to organizational socialization of novice non-profit teachers are listed below:

- 1- The organizational socialization does not takes a long time
- 2- Teaching as pedagogical, emotional and professional experience
- 3- Teaching as joyful job
- 4- non-sensitivity of novice state-school teachers toward organizational socialization

5- Balance

6- Improving social positions

## VI. CONCLUSION

The impact of context on the organizational socialization is a controversial issue. Teachers of state schools have problems with what they assume as *opportunity*. They need to revise what they expect from teaching profession. There exists a great gap between what is taught and what the reality of state schools is. To relieve the gap, managers should assume the responsibilities to initiate efforts toward practicing differently. They should provide novice teachers with supporting facilities in order to encourage a sense of attachment. Among the other phenomena, paying attention to empowerment of teacher education programs, enhancing and stretching the clinical experiences, revising the syllabi and curricula, trusting teachers' innovations, offering consulting opportunities and employing ex-teacher professors can be helpful to strike a balance between what novice teachers are taught and what they teach.

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