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AN ANALYSIS OF STAGE THEORY RELATED TO BEGINNING
SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS: RESEARCH ON
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

LI-HUNG CHANG

Norman, Oklahoma

1998

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AN ANALYSIS OF STAGE THEORY RELATED TO BEGINNING
SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS: RESEARCH ON
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A DISSERTATION

APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ACADEMIC CURRICULUM

BY

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the many people who provided me with the assistance and encouragement needed to accomplish this study. I gratefully acknowledge:

Dr. John J. Chiodo, chairperson of my doctoral committee, for his confidence in me, his invaluable guidance, and friendship, all of which helped make the completion of this dissertation a reality.

Dr. Charles Butler, for his belief in my ability, being supportive from the beginning, and his thoughtful advice in my research.

Dr. Edmund Marek, for his helpful and inspiring suggestions, criticisms, and opinions toward the development and improvement of this dissertation.

Dr. Frank McQuarrie, for his vital direct assistance in teacher acculturation, and for his heartfelt understanding of my efforts.

Dr. Peter Pierro, for his constant support, words of wisdom, enthusiastic mentoring, friendship, and his talent and expertise in educational research.

Mr. Shou-kun Chang and Mrs. Yun-hsiao Chang, my parents, for their support, patience, and unconditional love.

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Abstract

AN ANALYSIS OF STAGE THEORY RELATED TO BEGINNING SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS: RESEARCH ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A significant body of research has been developed that indicates beginning teachers experience a variety of problems related to discipline and management; work relationships with administrators, colleagues, and parents; instruction and evaluation; and student concerns. One of the well known and frequently cited sources of teacher change and development is the stage theory reported by Frances Fuller (1969, 1975) and her associates in the late 1960s and 1970s. This theory was further elaborated on by Burden (1980, 1982, 1990), Ryan (1986), Berliner (1988), and Barnes (1992). According to this theory, teachers will normally go through three major stages in their career (Fuller, 1969; Fuller & Bown, 1975; Fuller & Case, 1970). Fuller and Bown (1975) also pointed out that before they become teachers, education students are in a phase where they tend to identify realistically with pupils, but unrealistically with teachers. Each stage in Fuller's model represents feelings, worries, concerns, as well as intricately emotional and developmental issues of teachers during that particular period of time, with characteristics and phenomena that seldom happen in other stages.

According to their studies, the first phase mainly involves survival concerns, e.g., class control, being observed, being liked by students, and supervisor's opinions. The second phase is task concerns, which usually involve concerns about having to work with too many students, the lack of materials, teaching tools, and concern about the lack of time to finish what they want to teach. The third and last stage involves the concern of impact on students. Teachers at this stage tend to care about the suitability of materials for certain students, about student academic success, about being fair to their students, and designing content for their individual needs of students.

Based on the interviews with school teachers, classroom observations with both teachers and their pupils, as well as on the previous literature, this study attempted to explore the extent to which the various stage theories were an accurate representation of the first three years of beginning teachers' career in the classroom. It also explored to what extent the social studies teachers represented the research previously completed regarding beginning teachers. More specifically, it investigated: a) Do teachers go through a series of stages in a set sequence or are they at multiple stages at any given time period? b) Are the patterns of stages a teacher exhibits during the first three years of teaching the same for all teachers? c) What are the concerns of social studies teachers during their first three years of teaching? and d) Do these concerns change or are they transformed over the course of the first three years of teaching?

With the consideration of the purpose and goals of this study, a qualitative research paradigm, with emphasis on using constant comparative analysis, was applied in this investigation. Data that were gathered in this investigation involved taped interviews, personal vitae, documents gathered from the school administration, observations of classroom instruction, informal interviews with the subjects, and dialogs with the subjects and their students. All data were first compared in order to identify possible themes, which were later sorted and categorized. In analyzing the data, the four major steps suggested by Glaser and Strauss (1967) were followed. The first step compared incidents applicable to each category. The second step integrated categories and their properties. The third delimited the theory, and finally, the last step was writing the theory. The main focus was to see at what level these concerns were present and if they changed over the course of three years. The results showed that while concerns for discipline and management were quite evident as part of the early concerns of the teachers, they were also worried about instruction, student well-being, and peer relationships. Teacher concerns varied at any given time. Each hour, day, week, month, and year, the teachers in the study were concerned with a multitude of issues. The teachers continually moved back and forth between the stages depending on the problems and issues they faced. The teachers did not progress through a series of stages related to these concerns as reported in previous research.

AN ANALYSIS OF STAGE THEORY RELATED TO BEGINNING SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS: RESEARCH ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Teaching is a profession embedded with a considerable amount of work and stress. Much of teacher stress is associated with problems related to management, discipline, and instruction (Charnock & Kiley, 1995; Veenman, 1984; Kyriakon & Sutcliffe, 1977; Gaide, 1978; Landsmann, 1978). In addition, the concerns of teachers are closely related to their performance as assessed by school administrators (Caccia, 1996; Adams & Sandefur, 1976; Adams & Martray, 1981). Cruickshank (1980) provided three reasons why we should identify teacher problems, namely, teacher education programs need to be improved in a way that could relate more closely to the everyday needs of practitioners; the concerns of teachers do not disappear with accretion of teaching experiences alone; and simply that teacher satisfaction is important. Research has shown that the more problems beginning teachers encounter the more likely they will leave the teaching profession (Manthei, Gilmore, & Tuck, 1996; Charnock & Kiley, 1995; Taylor & Dale, 1971). In a study by Thomas and Kiley (1994), it was revealed that 15% of beginning teachers leave the profession after the first

year, and over 50% of them leave the teaching profession within six years of their initial employment. Bullough (1989) asserted that the beginning months of a school teacher are the most important for teacher socialization. In another study conducted by Schlechty and Vance (1983), it was estimated that 40% of all beginning teachers will leave the profession. Rosenholtz (1989) also reported that over 30% of the new entrants do not make it to their second year.

The problems and concerns that new teachers face each day are too numerous to list here. However, some typical concerns that are often heard of are as follows: What do all these attendance forms mean? Am I lecturing too much? How could I control Mike and Greg who always seem to be bothering their fellow students in my class? How can I motivate these kids who seem uninterested in the subject? What am I going to do if I can't cover all the materials that I planned to teach today? What is the best way for me to respond to unhappy parents? How am I going to get along with the principal and my colleagues?

Given the fact that beginning teachers are often in an unfamiliar school environment with a group of energetic young students who come from different families, cultures, and backgrounds, the list of worries and concerns could indeed be endless. Therefore, an analysis and categorization of these concerns would be an important step in understanding and helping beginning teachers.

After extensively reviewing 83 studies from different countries concerning the perceived problems of beginning teachers, Veenman (1984) concluded that

the concerns and worries that the teachers have are basically quite universal. This conclusion is basically supported by other researchers such as Odell (1989) and Cole (1991). In his study, Veenman (1984) further provided the top eight problems perceived most by beginning teachers. These concerns are classroom discipline, motivating students, dealing with individual differences, assessing students' work, relationships with parents, organization of class work, insufficient and/or inadequate teaching materials and supplies, and dealing with problems of individual students. The results of a survey conducted by Charnock and Kiley (1995) also indicated that the top concerns of beginning teachers were preparation time, evaluation, classroom control, discipline and management, and students with special learning problems. Based on a similar study, Valli (1992) categorized beginning teachers' classroom problems into four major groups which she referred to as imitation, isolation, transfer, and technique.

No matter what categories or names are given to the concerns and problems of the novice teachers, it should be clear that beginning teachers experience more classroom problems than do experienced teachers and that the process of teacher acculturation is a difficult and complex one. In order to explain this phenomenon and further develop strategies to counter it, some scholars have tried to develop theories that explain the kinds of concerns and shifts in concerns that occur in the early years of teaching. Fuller and her associates (Fuller, 1969; Fuller & Bown, 1975), for instance, pointed out that

there are actually three distinguishable stages of concerns that are characteristic of teachers, and that teachers would normally go through these stages in a predictable sequence. The teacher developmental stage theories by Fuller and Bown, and other theorists will be further explored in detail in the later chapters of this dissertation.

Questions of the Study

Despite their completion of teacher education programs, it is not uncommon for beginning teachers to experience various kinds of reality shock as soon as they actually start teaching. Working in a school setting does not always only mean a new employment, but it could be a completely different world. The atmosphere and surroundings all keep reminding the beginning teachers that they are now in a remarkably different “discourse community,” as James Gee (1990) would probably call it.

Based on the interviews with school teachers, classroom observations with both teachers and their pupils, as well as on previous literature concerning discussions with the topics of teacher socialization, teacher education, mentorship, beginning teachers, and related various stages theories, this study attempted to explore the extent to which the various stage theories are an accurate representation of the first three years of a beginning teacher’s career in the classroom. It also explored to what extent the social studies teachers represent the

research previously completed regarding beginning teachers. More specifically, it investigates: a) Do teachers go through a series of stages in a set sequence or are they at multiple stages at any given time period? b) Are the patterns of stages a teacher exhibits during the first three years of teaching the same for all teachers? c) What are the concerns of social studies teachers during their first three years of teaching? and d) Do these concerns change or are they transformed over the course of the first three years of teaching?

Purpose of the Study

Although Fuller's (Fuller, 1969; Fuller & Bown, 1975) stage theory may seem somewhat simplistic, it has at least four major contributions. First, new teachers may realize what they could expect and have more peace in their mind because it is not unusual to have problems teaching. They understand they are not alone when they experience difficulties. Second, the stages of teacher concerns could be taken into consideration and incorporated into programs of teacher education. Third, the stages can remind people of the importance of teachers' psychological development, which directly influences the quality of our children's education at school. Finally, the administrators, parents, and pupils may have a more accurate base on which to assess the performance of a beginning teacher. In fact, Fuller and Bown's developmental model of teacher concerns has become a classic view of the progression of changes in novice teachers (Mager, 1992;

Kagan, 1992).

For individuals beginning their careers as school teachers, it is important to understand their concerns as they enter the teaching profession. Realizing what can be expected, beginning teachers stand a better chance creating a more pleasant milieu for the remainder of their careers. A good start also means a better foundation for developing educationally sound approaches for stimulating student learning, as well as for locating a pathway leading to further professional growth. The strong interest in finding out the experiences of the novice teachers in relation to the different stage theories for teacher career development and the curiosity about whether beginning social studies teachers are any different from teachers of other academic subjects have been the main foci behind this research study.

Significance of the Study

By utilizing the findings of this study, educators will have a better idea as to what might happen to and what affects new teachers. The results of the study will help new teachers answer an important question—Who am I? It is believed that the teachers' conception of self-as-teacher, as well as their perception of their students could not be overemphasized (Bullough & Baughman, 1993; Bullough, Knowles, & Crow, 1989). Colleges and universities can then try to explore ways to improve the curriculum of the education programs, and better prepare their

students, which will also attract more quality people to the teaching profession. After all, it is much more important to recruit more capable prospective teachers than to correct their mistakes later.

Beginning teachers as well as future teachers will realize that the obstacles in this profession can be removed; and their dreams and goals to become an excellent teacher can be achieved. Schools and universities can work together in helping new teachers feel more comfortable, become more successful, and more willing to continue to stay in this profession. Not only do we need to make an effort to motivate students at school, there is also a dire need to motivate teachers to make meaningful contributions, for it plays an intrinsic part in a school's success. Research has shown that problems and difficulties of beginning teachers have serious consequences for their pupils (Chesley, 1995; Ryan, 1986). As the quality of school teachers increases, the children, as well as the society, will benefit.

Overview of the Study

The writer of the study has had several very important teachers and mentors in his life. These significant individuals have all guided, helped, and strongly influenced the writer in their own unique ways. The dream of becoming a teacher has been inspired and supported by these people. Their encouragement, friendship, dedication, and career success all intrigued the writer in wanting to know more about how and what they had gone through before they became successful teachers. Therefore, a plan to investigate the beginning teachers and the possible stages they might pass through has been formed very quickly and naturally.

This study was predominantly based on the observations and interviews of two beginning social studies teachers, Nora and Ken, both of which are pseudonyms. These two individuals were part of a group of six teachers who expressed an interest in participating in this research. Both of the participants were beginning junior high school teachers who completed their teacher education program in the spring of 1995 at the University of Oklahoma. They were employed as beginning teachers starting from the fall semester in 1995.

The two schools in which Nora and Ken started teaching have certain characteristics in common. Although the schools were located in two different school districts, these districts are both in middle class, suburban communities. The student populations in both schools were predominantly white, with around

20% of the students representing African American, Asian, Hispanic, and Native American minority groups. Both teachers worked in self contained classrooms. Each teacher had five course preparations during the school day, with one planning period. Nora was assigned to teach four sections of ninth grade world history and one eighth grade class in geography. Ken instructed three eighth grade classes in United States history and two seventh grade classes in geography.

The experiences the researcher had with the school administrations, participating teachers and their pupils were extremely informative and pleasant. With the permission and assistance of the school administrators from both schools, the participants and the researcher were able to find appropriate times and places for the required audio recording. Through multiple classroom observations and interviews with the participants both in a formal and an informal fashion, the writer was able to systematically obtain valuable information from the two participants, their classes, and their teaching. In addition, the writer also had the chance to talk to the junior high students as a class and by doing so, gained more insights as to what the students were thinking regarding the teacher and their instruction. All interviews were first audio-taped and later transcribed and then carefully re-checked. All data were then categorized and analyzed by the researcher.

During the whole study, qualitative research methods were utilized with the emphasis on using constant comparative methods. Open-ended questions

were prepared before each interview, although the questions asked were not limited only to the ones prepared. Each interview was approximately forty-five minutes to an hour long.

Limitations of the Study

This study has been designed to investigate the possible changes in beginning social studies teachers in relation to the various teacher developmental stage theories during their first three years of employment. It was the researcher's intent to explore this issue, with the goal of providing beginning social studies teachers with more insight into this situation. In order to achieve this goal, the researcher interviewed two participants, observed their class sessions, and talked with their students and principals over the past three years. Like many studies, although this project has been scrupulously designed and conducted, possible limitations still exist.

First of all, both participants in this study came from a similar educational background, and graduated from the same university in the same year, 1995. Both were teaching in suburban districts in a southwestern state. These two teachers came from rural communities with comparable income levels and racial composition. Future studies, therefore, may need to explore and compare new social studies teachers from more different backgrounds, as well as those who teach in a variety of school districts. The atmosphere and expectations may be

different in a variety of school settings. In addition, the attitudes of administrators, the relationships with faculty members, and the interactions with students, as well as parents, may also vary.

Second, the participants both enjoyed and felt fortunate about the assistance and guidance they had received from colleagues, mentors, administrators, and university faculty members. It is, therefore, possible that concerns may differ for novice teachers in less supportive environments. The writer understands that it would be impracticable to expect all novice teachers to experience such an ideal beginning.

Third, Nora and Ken are young teachers, both being 25 years old. Novice teachers from other age groups were not included in this study. It is not impossible that participants from other age groups may reveal different results.

Fourth, what was investigated in this study was beginning teachers graduated from a traditional education program. The alternatively certified beginning teachers were not included in this research. Generally speaking, the alternatively certified teachers tend to be older than traditionally certified ones, usually with prior work experiences, and are more interested in teaching their subject areas in high schools. It has been suggested by researchers that these people are more likely to be minorities, male, bilingual, and prefer to teach in urban schools (Chesley, 1995; Dial & Stevens, 1993; Stoddart, 1993). Many alternatively certified teachers begin teaching without any training or classroom

experience. In recent years, there is still debate over the effectiveness and problems of alternatively certified teachers in comparison with the traditionally certified teachers (Chesley, 1995). Therefore, more future studies on alternatively certified teachers would give us a broader perspective on the issues of beginning teachers.

Fifth, although these participants represent what could happen to typical beginning teachers during their first several years of teaching, we need to confirm it. Similar studies by other researchers are also encouraged and needed.

Sixth, participants' personalities and characteristics may also play a part in their perception of problems and concerns; therefore, future studies could also incorporate the study of the more personal side of the participants, such as their diaries, notebooks, and/or interviewing with their friends, relatives, and administrators.

Seventh, the researcher has chosen to employ a qualitative design as the major approach in research on this theme. However, it is recognized that what was found out may not always have rich generalizability. Hence, quantitative methods should also be encouraged to pursue the essence of this topic. A more pervasive quantitative survey research, for instance, may also contribute to the understanding of this issue. Qualitative and quantitative methods could work hand in hand to further search and unveil the concerns and development of beginning social studies teachers.

Definition of Terms

Authoritarian: A leadership model used by some administrators and teachers that allow pupils little or no input in what is happening in the school or classroom (Pierro & Manaugh, 1995).

Classroom Climate: The general learning environment in the classroom, positive or negative, developed by the teacher (Pierro & Manaugh, 1995).

Constant Comparative Analysis: This is the fundamental method of data analysis in grounded theory. A researcher first distinguishes similarities and differences and then looks for patterns while coding and analyzing data. The researcher compares incident with incident, incident with category, and finally category with category, or structure with structure. After in-depth examinations of incidents, categories, structures, and participants groups, a theory is generated (Glasèr & Strauss, 1967).

Discipline: This term often carries a negative and a positive view. The negative one usually possesses a connotation equated with punishment administered by teachers in response to misbehavior. There are teacher workshops on discipline that focus on the types of punishment that could be administered to students. The more positive one, on the other hand, views discipline as more than merely a response to misbehavior. It involves the development of character, self-control, and the development of orderly and productive ways of living. These outcomes result in a

satisfying and productive life instead of conformity to arbitrary classroom rules. When viewed in this more positive light, discipline for self-control becomes an important goal of education (Savage, 1991).

Grounded Theory Methodology: Grounded theory is a general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed. As a researcher gathers and analyzes data, theory evolves. Constant comparative analysis is a central feature of this methodology. Besides creating original theory, this methodology can also be used to elaborate or modify existing theory. In grounded theory, a researcher tries to discover the world as seen through the eyes of the participants and then the basic social processes and structures that organized the world, i.e., pattern finding. Grounded theory can initiate new theories, re-formulate, re-focus, and clarify existing theories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Qualitative Research: Qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the study's use and collection of a variety of empirical materials—case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional,

and visual texts—that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals’ lives (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

Quantitative Research: The assumptions of quantitative research are that social facts have an objective reality and that variables can be identified and relationships measured. The purpose of this research paradigm is to search for generalizability, prediction, as well as causal explanations. Researchers try to reduce data to numerical indices in explaining results in a deductive manner.

Social Studies: The term was first introduced around 1916 and was intended to impart a particular meaning in curriculum thinking. Today, however, it is used mostly as a generic term referring to a set of subject matters or a segment of the school curriculum—comparable, for instance, to language arts or science. It often indicates the study of geography, history, government, economics, civics, sociology, and related subject matters (Jenness, 1990). From the standpoint of learning, the National Council for the Social Studies defines it as: “the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence. Within the school program, social studies provides coordinated, systematic study drawing upon such disciplines as anthropology, archeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion, and sociology, as well as appropriate content from the humanities,

mathematics, and natural sciences. The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world” (Haas & Laughlin, 1997, p. 7).

Summary of Chapter I

In chapter one, general information has been presented to provide an introduction to the study. Questions and problems that guided this study were given. The purpose and significance of this study were also provided and explained. An overview was included for the purpose of clarifying the procedures of the study. The limitation of the study was also a part of chapter one that discussed the confinements of the research. A list of selected terms that will appear in this and the following chapters of the study were defined to assist in the understanding of this particular investigation.

Chapter two reviews the literature with themes related to this study. Chapter three consists of the design of the study, and the methods applied therein. Chapter four is composed of data analysis together with the findings thereof. Finally, chapter five examines the implications of the study with recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER II

Introduction

It is not surprising that new teachers often carry with them a certain degree of fear, uncertainty, and an extra burden of stress during their initial stages of employment. Just as with other professionals, beginning teachers are no exception. In fact, they frequently encounter problems of all kinds and of all levels of seriousness when they first begin teaching and these problems may last different lengths of time for different people.

A beginning teacher's job is indeed a complex task and the personal learning process involves a great deal of emotional as well as intellectual change (Featherstone, 1992). During this period of time, there is much to be learned besides curriculum and instruction. For instance, the lifestyle change for most new teachers, who may still be young adults, often involves experiencing a different social setting, living independently for the first time, raising a family, new friends, new colleagues, new boss, new responsibilities, and being away from their hometown (Veenman, 1984; McDonald & Elias, 1983; Ryan et al., 1980). At the beginning of their teaching career, many describe their life as a roller coaster ride in which they would often experience positive surprises as well as discouragement. For some, the burden of this occupation even forced new teachers to forget what they learned in college, and simply go back to the more traditional ways of teaching, which they know to be less effective (Fox, 1995).

Some found themselves becoming meaner and more authoritarian to children, while others felt like drill sergeants during their first year of teaching (Featherstone, 1992). Although it is possible that the problems and worries anticipated are greater than those actually experienced (Campbell & Williamson, 1974), these problems should never be overlooked, in light of the fact that many teachers become frustrated with their profession and resign every year.

General Concerns of Beginning Teachers

In the studies of beginning teacher problems, many researchers have provided clues for us to further understand this issue at hand. In a research study designed to identify causes of the high rates of attrition of beginning teachers, Charnock and Kiley (1995) contended that the novice teachers were most concerned with preparation time, evaluation, classroom control, management and discipline, and students with special learning problems. In the same study, a list of concerns, such as physical and emotional stress; learning how things are done in school; finding out about resources; understanding union issues; and knowing when to use special services, were listed as top ranking out-of-class concerns of the beginning teachers. In recent research on beginning teachers and their perceptions of the effectiveness of their pre-service program in relation to their concerns, Adams and Krockover (1997) pointed out that the major concerns of novice teachers included curriculum development, class assignments, time and

classroom management, and presentation of content. According to Johnston and Ryan (1983), pupil evaluation, planning, and organization were the most common weaknesses of beginning teachers. Veenman (1984) also found similar results. In fact, these three concerns were part of his top eight concerns of beginning teachers. Further, after analyzing and comparing fifteen previous studies of the concerns of beginning teachers, Coates and Thoresen (1976) developed a list of beginning teachers' sources of anxiety, which consisted of five major categories: (1) discipline; (2) students' liking them; (3) knowledge of subject matter; (4) what to do if mistakes occur or I run out of material; and (5) how to relate personally to faculty, the school system, and parents.

On researching the needs of the new teachers, Peterson (1990) suggested that there are three areas that ought to be reinforced; namely, professional growth, sociological development, and evaluation. Based on the survey conducted by Charnock and Kiley (1995), it was revealed that what helps new teachers most are the opportunities to observe the teaching of other colleagues; having a teacher serve as mentor; and increased resources, as well as workshops zeroing in on concerns of beginning teachers.

Psychological Growth and Concerns

Many of the new teachers have problems with the school in which they teach mainly because they are relatively immature and inexperienced. In many

cases, they are young college graduates still in their mid-twenties. Veenman (1984) maintained that teachers, whether new or veteran, all face similar problems, but the difference between the two groups is that new teachers tend to pay more attention to the problems. They tend to care too much about how they are viewed by parents, principals, and even colleagues. This phenomenon coincides with Fuller and Bown's (1975) theory of survival concerns at the earliest stage of a beginning teacher's employment.

Psychological research has shown that there is a close relationship between human development of teachers and the quality of teaching they perform (Kohlberg, 1969; Harvey, Hunt, & Schroeder, 1961; Loevinger, 1976; Piaget, 1963; Perry, 1970; Ryan & Phillips, 1982; Fuller & Bown, 1975). For instance, research studies in the field of teacher efficacy have indicated that when teachers believe they can influence student learning, they can usually do so (Weber & Omotani, 1994). The correlation regarding this seems to be somewhat significant. Sprinthall and Ties-Sprinthall (1983) also pointed out that almost all new teachers have developmental stages to go through. This development predicts qualitatively different levels of human behavior in complex tasks. The higher the stage a teacher is in cognitive development, the more capable he/she would be in dealing with more complicated things and issues. What comes together as young teachers develop are more sympathy and empathy, which often means that one becomes more tolerant and more flexible to students. Studies also showed that as they

reach higher developmental levels, beginning teachers become not only more stress tolerant and adaptive, but also better able to assume multiple perspectives and to apply a greater variety of teaching strategies and coping behaviors (Glassberg, 1979; Hunt & Joyce, 1981; Sprinthall & Thies-Sprinthall, 1983).

These studies not only provided us insights on the cognitive differences and difficulties among beginning teachers, but they reminded us of the important role of psychological factors in the forming process of a successful teacher. Teacher education in colleges, as well as induction programs of schools, therefore, should never neglect guiding beginning teachers through the stage of fear and uncertainty, and should always seek ways to facilitate the teachers' psychological growth.

Concerns about Discipline and Classroom Management

Discipline and management problems are probably the number one concern of the beginning teachers in the United States and around the world. Despite the fact that it should be emphasized that all teachers do not experience the same problems, more systematic studies rank discipline at the top of the list of perceived problems among beginning teachers (Chesley, 1995; Rosenholtz, 1989). In a survey that examined more than 80 research articles from around the world, Veenman (1984) synthesized the data into the eight most troublesome concerns of beginning teachers. Among these concerns, classroom discipline was

ranked number one. Because of pressure coming from all directions, there is the possibility for a new teacher to either become more authoritarian or allow disorder in class to go unnoticed during the initial stage of teaching. For many, however, the problem will not go away until the teacher has learned from reflecting on experiences. Veenman's report was confirmed by researchers such as Rust (1994), and by Featherstone (1992), where she concluded that "beginning teachers complain more about management and discipline than about any other category of difficulty" (p. 18). Greenlee and Ogletree (1993) also supported the idea that the discipline problem was ranked high on the list of concerns of novice teachers. According to their survey, 82% of the elementary and secondary school teachers indicated that teachers needed more skills and training in handling disruptive classroom problems; and 78% indicated that stress related to classroom management is the most influential factor in failure among beginning teachers.

Concerns about Curriculum and Instruction

Besides the worries novice teachers have about issues of student discipline, study after study have shown that beginning teachers often worry about arranging class time, materials, instruction, appropriate content, assignments to students, and individual student differences, as well as their achievements. As suggested by Peterson (1990), new teachers often have a hard time determining whether their students have learned what should be learned, and often wonder if

more should be added to or what parts should be taken out of the curricula. Most school principals concur with this view. They see curriculum and instruction matters as being second to discipline in the concerns of novice teachers (Grantham, 1961). According to the developmental theory constructed by Fuller and her associates (Fuller, 1969; Fuller & Bown, 1975; Fuller & Case, 1970), the concerns of curriculum and instruction are categorized as the task concerns in a teacher's development. "These are concerns about having to work with too many students or having too many non-instructional duties, about time pressures, about inflexible situations, lack of instructional materials, and so on. These frustrations seem to be evoked by the teaching situation" (Fuller & Bown, 1975, p. 37). On commenting this stage, Veenman (1984) also noted that "these are concerns about limitations and frustrations in the teaching situation, methods and materials, and mastery of skills within the teaching learning situation" (p. 161).

Concerns with Students

Another common group of concerns for new teachers is their concerns with students' development, which usually includes motivating students, dealing with students' individual differences, and helping students with their individual problems (Veenman, 1984). Novice teachers, especially the ones in the 1990s, have also expressed concerns about the issues related to juvenile delinquency and violence in today's schools (Gibbons & Jones, 1994). New teachers who express

these concerns often pay a good deal of attention to what is affecting students' lives.

For decades, pioneer researchers such as Tate (1943), Smith (1950), and Wey (1951) had identified the problems and concerns of beginning teachers. Summing up the above mentioned studies, the concerns with students, discipline, curriculum and instruction, and classroom management probably constitute the big picture of beginning teacher concerns.

Attitude Changes and Stage Theories

One of the well known and frequently quoted sources of teacher change and development is the stage theory reported by Frances Fuller (1969, 1975) and her associates in the late 1960s and 1970s.

According to this theory, teachers will normally go through three major stages in their career (Fuller, 1969; Fuller & Bown, 1975; Fuller & Case, 1970). Fuller and Bown (1975) also pointed out that before they become teachers, education students are in a phase where they tend to identify realistically with pupils, but unrealistically with teachers. Each stage in Fuller's model represents feelings, worries, concerns, as well as intricately emotional and developmental issues of teachers during that particular period of time with characteristics and phenomena that seldom happen in other stages. According to their studies, the first phase mainly involves survival concerns, e.g., class control, being observed,

being liked by students, and supervisor's opinions. The second phase is task concerns, which usually involve concerns about having to work with too many students, the lack of materials, teaching tools, and concern about the lack of time to finish what they want to teach. The third and last stage involves the concern of impact on students. Teachers at this stage tend to care about the suitability of materials for certain students, about student academic success, about being fair to their students, and about designing content for individual needs of students.

It was also postulated by the previously mentioned researchers that the stages always occur in sequence, i.e., later concerns cannot emerge until earlier concerns are resolved. In other words, the sequence of these stages occurs as teachers move from caring mostly about themselves—their own feelings, emotions, sense of security, benefits, and what they can get out of teaching; to the next phase of caring mainly about what goes on in their classroom—curriculum arrangement and instructional concerns; and finally, to the most mature stage, where the critiques and evaluations from other individuals (e.g., principals, supervisors, and/or colleagues) do not seem to bother them any more, and where school routines and control of classroom atmosphere are no longer problems. The issues they really care about at this last stage are the academic success, and the social and emotional needs of their students; for example, they would try to help students deal with their friendship problems, evaluate consequences, and make their own final decisions. This stage is also the one in which the students receive

from teachers the assistance and impact that may have lasting influences for the rest of their lives.

Fuller and Bown (1975) also indicated that teachers who have achieved this stage are normally reluctant to change anymore. It is not difficult to identify that the shift of behaviors happens from a self-oriented to a more student-oriented mode and that the road to maturity of a teacher requires experiencing all three of the stages. In a study of teacher development, Sitter and Lanier (1982) also found similar teacher concerns which supported Fuller's theory.

Based on Fuller's model, Adams, Hutchinson, and Martray (1980), Adams, and Martray (1981), and Adams (1982a) conducted studies concerning new teachers' developmental changes over time. The results partially supported Fuller's theory in that student teachers and beginning teachers were more concerned about other people's perceptions of themselves than were the experienced teachers. As teachers become more experienced, their concerns about self decrease, while the level of task concerns increases. The point at which they did not agree with Fuller was the third stage, which is the final stage in a teacher's career development, according to Fuller. Adams et al. (1980) revealed that teachers with teaching experiences ranging from zero to five years all hold impact concerns as highest of all concerns, and this does not change across experience level. However, as Adams pointed out, it might have been due to the nature of the questions, which asked the teachers if they were concerned with

students' success and well being, a survey question all teachers responded to as a high concern. It would have been obviously unteacher like and politically incorrect not to answer yes. In their studies, pre-service teachers and teachers with teaching experiences of one, three, and five years were evaluated. That is to say that they incorporated student teachers, beginning teachers, and more experienced teachers in their research.

With reference to Fuller's model, several other important researchers also have discussed stages that were experienced by typical school teachers. Ryan (1986) distinguished four stages typical to a school teacher, namely, a fantasy stage (which is the experience preceding school teaching), a survival stage, a mastery stage, and an impact stage. The fantasy stage of teaching begins when a person starts to ponder seriously about becoming a teacher. During this stage, the beginning teachers imagine themselves just like or often better than the best teachers they have had in their lives, and totally different from their worst teachers. This stage plays a significant role in the transition from a student to a teacher. The survival stage occurs most often between October and Christmas break although it might come at any point during the first year at work. The time span of this stage may be a short while or may continue until the end of the year. However, it usually ends midway through the first year. The school routines, regulations, basic teaching techniques, and approaches are of constant concerns during this period. Ryan contends that first year teachers frequently ponder over

quitting their profession or leaving the current school. Teachers who have reached the mastery stage are confident about the benefit of what they are doing for their pupils. They become better able to judge pupils' progress and could take pleasure in pupils' achievements. This is a phase when teachers feel they have the genuine control of the class, they no longer need to worry about the instructional routines, they are confident enough to alter planned class activities, and they can be creative. The impact stage is where the gestalt growth of the pupils is of major concern to the teachers. Teachers begin to consider ways to assist and motivate pupils not only in scholastic achievements but also the success of their lives. It is also the last stage of a teacher's career development according to Ryan (1986).

After studying both novice and expert teaching performances of different school teachers, Berliner (1988) pointed out that there were five stages of a teacher's development: the novice stage, advanced beginner stage, competent teacher stage, proficient teacher stage, and finally the expert teacher stage. The novice stage is a period of time where a teacher is concentrating on learning and becoming accustomed to the school routines. The management of classroom and the techniques of teaching activities are seen as a set of skills that could be learned by continuous practice and concentration. The advanced beginner stage is a phase that is experienced by many second- and third-year teachers. With the experiences from work and from having been students themselves, the teachers

become more knowledgeable in basic strategies and teaching techniques. They could even develop an understanding of when to alter or ignore rules. During the competent stage, teachers tend to have a better grasp of timing, and a better control of the design of class activities. However, it could be observed that the teaching performance is not yet flexible and flowing. The stage of a proficient teacher could be achieved by many fifth year teachers. Teaching experience, intuition, and knowledge begin to guide performances of a teacher at this point. The teacher could now readily pick up information from the classroom and could predict what is coming with some precision. Finally, Berliner (1988) argued that the fifth stage is one which not every teacher can reach. Teaching performances in the classroom could be described as fluid and effortless. Appropriate behavior with excellent timing has become natural characteristics to the expert teachers, whose classes always benefit tremendously.

Burden (1990, 1982a, 1982b, 1980) claimed that there were three important stages that the beginning teachers would usually experience. The first stage is the survival stage. The major concerns of the beginning teachers at this stage are meeting professional responsibilities, and adjusting to routines and the school environment. With limited teaching experience, beginning teachers are often unable to see themselves objectively and tend to become wrapped up in their own activities. Lacking confidence and practical experiences, rookie teachers are frequently unwilling to try new methods and approaches. Subject-

centered curricular approaches and limited contact with pupils are a norm at this time. The survival stage tends to happen during the first year of teaching. The second stage is the adjustment stage, which is predicted to include the teacher's second, third, and fourth years of school experiences. As the classroom techniques are growing and maturing, teacher confidence is also strengthened during this phase. This could be a transitional period with more concern for children's self-concept. The teachers not only become more genuine with their students and are more capable of meeting student needs, they are also more able to accurately assess their own needs and to seek assistance. Teachers begin to feel more comfortable with subject matter and techniques and more relaxed. They also see the need to use more methods in order to meet pupils' needs. The mature stage is the last stage in a teacher's career development; it happens normally from the fifth year on. At this phase many teachers are beginning to feel more professionally secure. They have reached a professional maturity and are skilled in an array of techniques. They are, therefore, also better able to deal with the stress associated with the work. With good command of the teaching activities and environment, they are willing to continually experiment with new methods and techniques.

Barnes (1992) claims that a teacher usually goes through four stages, or waves, as they were discussed in her study. Wave one, the discovery stage, as she contends in her study, is a phase when teachers are most self-centered and

directed. Wave two and wave three are the invention stage and the integration stage, respectively. It is during these two stages that teachers become more and more accustomed to, more comfortable with, and more creative with their work and environment. Wave four, the reflection stage, is when teachers are confident enough and perceive themselves as co-learners and facilitators to their students. The progression of these waves result in a shift from teacher-centered to student-centered instruction.

After reviewing 40 related, learning-to-teach studies, Kagan (1992) suggested that the related studies validated Fuller's model. Despite the variance and disunity in the naming of and in the number of stages identified by different theorists, there is important consistency in the way they look at the prevalent process of teacher professional development.

Although it is not always easy to determine a teacher's precise stages of development, an understanding of what a teacher may undergo at work is always helpful in providing a conceptual framework for the benefit of not only the teachers, but the schools, and the teacher education programs as well. Despite the fact that Fuller's model serves as the main stream developmental theory thus far, she did not provide details for predicting what stage a teacher may be in based on their years of teaching experience. Therefore, it should be clear that the lengths of experience do not always guarantee the level of teacher maturity.

Even though there are other research studies concerning the developmental stages, those mentioned above are the most significant and influential. While the stage theories are widely recognized, Bullough and Baughman (1993), and Nimmo, Smith, Grove, Courtney, and Eland (1994) cautioned us about the limitations of stage theories. It was maintained and warned by them that one's life is not always neatly segmented as the themes suggested in stage theories. We need, therefore, to consider mindfully the applicability of the different stage theories when trying to explain the phenomena of beginning teachers.

Evolution in the Profession

After we have gained a basic understanding of the teacher developmental theories, we need to take a further look at some of the common overt and covert changes and variations of behavior and attitude of beginning teachers. In a year-long study done to investigate the differences between beginning and experienced teachers, Moskowitz and Hayman (1974, 1976) compared two groups of high school teachers. The first group was made up of first year teachers who were employed by urban high schools. The second group was made up of experienced "best" teachers, who were nominated by their students who came from the inner-city neighborhood. What Moskowitz and Hayman found between these two groups were mainly differences that occurred in the areas of control, discipline,

and feedback behaviors. It should not be very surprising that the group with more experience did better in all three areas. The beginner teacher group had a tendency to let disorder and disturbances go unnoticed while the more experienced group quickly found effective ways to improve the situation. The study also found that the best teacher group was better able to involve students in activities, and by so doing, classroom discipline and disorder problems were tremendously reduced. The experienced teachers put emphasis on setting expectations and establishing appropriate behavior at the beginning of the year, while the inexperienced teachers did not. It is suggested that early establishment of mutual expectations, communicating rules and procedures between teachers and students was crucial for successful classroom management (Emmer & Evertson, 1981).

In the study of management style and classroom control, Fogarty, Wang, and Creek (1982) pointed out that the common differences between beginning teachers and veteran teachers usually lay in the different patterns of thinking, reacting in the classroom, and decision processes. They revealed that beginning teachers were less able to grasp the rhythm and flow of the class than were the experienced teachers; therefore, they had a tendency to lose their students and failed to respond to them promptly and appropriately. Failure of early identification of various kinds of signals in the classroom may indeed hurt the neophytes in a silent but damaging way. Experienced teachers, on the other hand,

were usually much more capable of catching the cue from the class as a whole and of identifying the nuances of reactions from individual students. Fogarty et al. (1982) suggested that these differences might provide one important explanation as to why classroom discipline had been a real problem for beginning teachers.

Teaching experience and process are important to teachers in that not only can they realize the meaning of this profession, but they can also better understand themselves. Teachers with knowledge of formal training of pedagogy are never complete without the practical knowledge of teaching students. By actually experiencing teaching, they assimilate the true meaning of the pedagogical content knowledge, which to a great extent is grounded in more formal discipline and formulations, and they translate the knowledge from a more theoretical form to a more procedural form. The interdependency between these two fields clearly exists. In a study of twelve secondary teachers, Pinnegar (1989) compared teacher viewpoints in terms of how they thought about their students. The participants of this study consisted of four student teachers, four first year teachers, and four veteran teachers with at least seven years of teaching experience. What Pinnegar found was that the knowledge and thinking about students varied to a large extent according to different levels of experience. All three groups of teachers recognized the importance of cooperating with students. However, the more experienced teachers appeared to be better able to identify

resisters to cooperation, and to find ways to engage them in class work. The veteran teachers were not only capable of differentiating the ones who “could not” and those who “would not” do the work; they also had a repertoire of strategies to engage students and to obtain new knowledge from students that could be used to keep their interests up. Therefore, they often tried very hard to build a close relationship with their students. Teachers with less teaching experience were obviously not as prepared in all areas.

Adams (1982a, 1982b) conducted a longitudinal study of teacher education graduates, starting from their student teaching and continuing through five years of teaching. During these six years, beginning teachers showed significant increases in many ways, ranging from more affective teaching behavior, increased stimulating behavior, to better organized and systematic behavior and skills. It is a maturational process in which a great deal of changes occur. The changes were most obvious between the first and the third year of teaching. Adams argued that teachers with three to five years of experience would encounter more problems with administrators and parents; and these problems would increase and last for the following ten to twelve years.

In a five-year longitudinal research, Ayers (1980) concluded that the majority of beginning teacher changes happened in the third year of teaching. The changes consist of, first, cognitive dimensions, which subsume systematic, responsible, and businesslike behavior; and second, affective dimensions, which

embrace friendly, kindly, and understanding behavior. The same study also showed that beginning teachers settle into a stable teaching pattern after three or four years of experience.

Thomas and Kiley (1994) compared 68 middle and high school teachers with three different lengths of teaching experiences. They were first year teachers, second year teachers, and experienced but non-tenured teachers. An important finding of this study was that the concerns of the first year teachers were focused more on dealing with individual student needs, and on classroom management and discipline than were the second year as well as more experienced teachers.

Olsen and Heyse (1990) studied the development and concerns of first year and reentry teachers with and without mentors. They found that all four groups of participants had considerable concerns about student discipline issues at the initial stage of teaching. However, these concerns and worries declined and became less troublesome to them as the year went by.

Ryan (1970, 1980) contends that first year teachers frequently ponder over quitting their profession or leaving their current schools. Chances are, ironically, most of these new teachers embarked upon this profession with a substantial amount of enthusiasm and positive expectation only a year or so earlier. The drive to teach was so strong, that many a pre-service teacher would even express impatience with some requirements, which were deemed by them to be delaying

their entry into the teaching profession (Goodlad, 1990). In a study completed in Great Britain to investigate elementary and secondary first year teachers, Taylor and Dale (1971) claimed that although first year teachers, especially male, with more discipline problems, might have considered leaving the job due to the stress and frustration that came with it, the majority (84%) of them became more comfortable and confident with their profession by the end of the first year. Veenman (1984) suggested that the economic environment and supply of teachers also played an important role for new teachers in deciding whether they wanted to stay put or leave their current school or even this profession. He argued that the beginning teachers of the sixties and seventies had been more prone to consider leaving the teaching profession than did the beginning teachers of the eighties; this might have been caused by the oversupply of school teachers during the eighties, which meant fewer job opportunities for teachers to choose from. The supply and demand issue always seems to play a part in a teacher's decision about career options.

Fox (1995) conducted a qualitative study in which two beginning secondary teachers were closely followed and studied. This study showed that these first year teachers, one taught in a rural school, while the other taught in a suburban neighborhood, both underwent a great deal of reality shocks which they had never expected. They realized the difficulties and differences between student teaching and real teaching. Although these teachers had high hopes and

dreams about school and teaching, they tended to forget their ideals and became more like an authority figure, and more like their own school teachers when they were in school. But toward the end of the year one of the two beginning teachers became more relaxed and made the classroom much more interesting, and therefore, not only did she improve the teacher/student relations but she also became more comfortable and confident in continuing this career. It was revealed in this study that it was of great importance that beginning teachers had a support group to help, guide, and comfort them both professionally and emotionally; and that they were provided with a decent environment, quality professional publications, and on-going support to combat work-related isolation.

In a five-year longitudinal study of eleven beginning high school teachers, Gehrke (1981) outlined several of their shifts of focus during the initial five years on the job. These teachers began their first year attaching a great amount of importance to parents' comments and remarks. Gradually, however, they expressed more interest and concern with the cooperation of their peer teachers and their students. By the end of the third year, most of these participants became most concerned with students' benefits. The student-centered focus remained stable through the last year of the study. Again, it can easily be seen that there was a clear shift from the self-oriented emphasis of these beginning teachers to more of a student-oriented one.

Iannaccone (1963) stated that student teaching was an important, transitional period in a teacher's life. Changes in their concerns about classroom management, in their levels of expectations of student, and in distance and philosophies between student teachers and the cooperating teachers were identified. Very soon after they start student teaching, student teachers realize that what the cooperating teacher is doing contradicts what their training had taught them was good teaching. But since they are afraid to criticize the cooperating teacher, they decide to keep silent. Iannaccone further pointed out that 24 out of the 25 participating student teachers studied (or 96% of all participants in this study) became just like their cooperating teachers in terms of controlling in the classroom by the end of the semester. Their becoming more conservative in classroom management has to do with the philosophies, pressure and influence from their cooperating teachers as well as from the principal. The desire and definition of becoming a successful teacher is mixed with much nervous anticipation, and a few worries and uncertainties. They abandoned many ideals they once had before student teaching. Not only did they become stricter and less flexible in discipline, they also had a tendency to lower their expectations toward students and to simplify class content. To make the situation worse, they tended to simply label as slow and not belonging in the room those pupils who did not respond in a precise and predetermined way. These changes in attitude may have provided these novice teachers a quick fix, but as Iannaccone warned "what

works in the short run is sometimes the worst thing a teacher can do with pupils in the long run” (Iannaccone, 1963, p. 80). It also shows again the vulnerability of beginning teachers’ beliefs at this time.

Featherstone (1992) also revealed shifts that she had found after studying six novice teachers. What was clear in the study was that the beginning teachers experienced a series of major attitude changes. Because of the lack of enough experience, confidence, and self-efficacy, beginning teachers were prone to become more intolerant, easily irritable, and often quite insecure in front of their pupils, especially during the first year of employment. Teachers in this phase are seen as quite conservative, and constantly in search of their own teaching style. It is a period of time when they learn about the environment, the requirements and nature of this job in the process of learning about themselves. Changes occur as they feel more confident and sophisticated in the field of teaching. With more experience, skills, and strategies, the new teachers become better prepared, and as a result become more flexible and relaxed. They then start to look at their students and their education from a humanistic and progressive point of view.

In studies that focus on the growth during practica and student teaching, many researchers have revealed findings that show little change in students before and after student teaching. Student teaching does not seem to cause significant impact or influence on the future teachers. Pre-service teachers have a tendency of entering teacher education programs with a number of personal beliefs, such as

images of good teachers, images of themselves as teachers, and memories of themselves as pupils that have been derived from their own experiences. The personal beliefs, images, and attitudes generally remain unchanged and follow them into classroom practice and student teaching. For instance, 26 secondary teachers were followed during student teaching by McLaughlin (1991), where classroom observations, interviews, audio-tapes of teaching conferences, journals, and written self-evaluations were analyzed. What was found from the data was the fact that these pre-service teachers' conceptions of success in teaching and of teacher/student relations remained rather consistent with prior beliefs, even after the baptism of student teaching. In another research project conducted by Pigge and Marso (1989) on concerns and attitude changes of 75 elementary and 58 secondary pre-service teachers, findings also indicated that these pre-service teachers remained optimistic and unchanged during and after student teaching. These two aforementioned studies are examples of research which points out the strong influence of prior personal experiences and comparatively insubstantial impact of student teaching on attitudes of pre-service teachers.

With minimum preparation provided by the teacher education experiences, many beginning teachers are bound to encounter a more powerful reality shock once they start teaching in the real world. Grossman (1989) examined three secondary teachers who completed a brief alternative orientation to teaching rather than a traditional teacher program during their first year of teaching. The

participants in this study all spent their first year at school learning by trial and error. The experience was so frustrating that two of them decided to leave the teaching profession. Pupils involved in the scenario are undoubtedly also affected by the frustration, intensity, and unrealistic expectation from the novice teachers. What this study shows may not have much to do with the lack of preparation in a traditional teacher education program, but it points out the vivid fact that beginning teachers face various problems and frustrations each day and need to learn gradually, together with their pupils, about the system, their work, and themselves. Teachers' initial time on the job could indeed be very disillusioning and frustrating.

A number of researchers believe that pre-service teachers generally become more humanistic, idealistic, liberal, and progressive in their attitudes toward education and toward their future pupils, while they are still in college. As they start teaching, however, many of them begin to change their attitudes and ideals. They tended to become more custodial, traditional, and conservative in dealing with their students as they move into student teaching and the first several years on the job. Hoy (1968, 1969), for instance, compared teachers' attitudes to their pupils before and after student teaching, and then again the first and second years of teaching. The results of the comparison indicate that the new teachers become more custodial and stricter with their pupils as they become more experienced.

In an Australian longitudinal study in which a large number of secondary teachers participated for as long as six years (from the last year of teacher training through the fifth year of school teaching experience), McArthur (1981) maintained that these new teachers became more custodial with their pupils during the first year of teaching. The subsequent four years, however, remained stable in that no obvious changes were observed in terms of teachers' attitudes toward education or toward their pupils. A number of longitudinal studies in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, e.g., Callis (1950), Steele (1958), Day (1959), Rabinowitz and Rosenbaum (1960), Morrison and McIntyre (1967), Hoy (1968), and McArthur (1978), using various instruments to measure attitude changes support the notion that there is usually a sudden, sometimes traumatic, realization of the disparity between the way a job is envisioned before beginning work, and the actual work situation. Common to these studies is a substantial shift during initial experiences: idealistic, humanistic, and progressive attitudes to schools and education are replaced by realism, conservatism, tough-mindedness, and custodialism.

Lacefield and Mahan (1980) followed 123 elementary teachers from their final year of teacher training through the first three years of teaching. They found that a teacher's professional education was a more critical variable that affected teacher attitudes than other variables. In this study, a general tendency was also identified that these teachers experienced a shift of attitudes from more liberal to

more conservative. In another research study, Weinstein (1990) examined 38 pre-service elementary school teachers about their beliefs in teaching. Findings of the study also indicated that these participants were extremely optimistic about their future teaching assignments, and that the conceptions of their future profession centered on affective and progressive traits.

Many other short-term, longitudinal, and cross-sectional studies suggest gradual shifts of attitudes of beginning teachers from conservatism, realism, and custodialism before they receive teacher training, to progressivism, humanism and idealism while receiving teacher training, and again, to conservatism, realism, and custodialism during the first few years of teaching (Goldman, 1987; Blase, 1986; McArthur, 1978; Lacey, 1977; Lagana, 1970; Morrison & MacIntyre, 1967). Veenman (1984) also summarized several European studies which identified similar patterns of changing.

Lacefield and Mahan (1980) maintained that the attitude changes of teachers resulted from a quite natural acculturation process, which began with professional training from previous teacher preparation, followed by self-selection of job opportunities. This was followed by the social interaction in work environment which led to acceptance of local norms and values.

Teacher Enculturation

It can be a very devastating period of time when beginning teachers first step into a teaching position right after four to five years of teacher education program in which they were taught and prepared to meet the circumstances they might encounter in their future workplace.

The atmosphere and surroundings all keep reminding the beginning teachers that they are now in a remarkably different “discourse community,” as James Gee (1990) would call it. According to Gee:

A Discourse is a socially accepted association among ways of using language, of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and of acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or ‘social network’, or to signal (that one is playing) a socially meaningful ‘role’ (Gee. 1990, p. 143).

It is indeed almost unavoidable that we often need to be situated in totally different places, occasions, and environments that call for us to show different sets of behaviors. Based on the diverse discourse communities, we often are expected not only to modify our choice of vocabulary, volume and intonation, speed of talking, and the syntactical structure. Yet, we are often supposed to make use of a number of dissimilar contexts, expression and gestures, and even

the whole pattern of thinking and logic. This kind of ability is mainly cultivated by the familiar environment around us and the culture that we are in. It is not surprising, consequently, that when we are away from the familiar discourses and into a new one, we tend to feel overwhelmed, lost, and oftentimes helpless. Therefore, learning to prepare and adjust oneself to cope with the unaccustomed challenges, changes, and requirements of a new life, or simply put, the work socialization process, has become critical.

The term “teacher socialization” that is being used here could be simplistically defined as: a process whereby the individual becomes a participating member of the society of teachers. For many beginning teachers the process could very well be looked at as a habit-forming experience, in which a beginner learns little by little as the times goes on. It is also like learning how to play an instrument or to master a sport; one learns a little bit at a time, and hopes to become more proficient than the last time. Before mastering it, one frequently goes through a series of changes or ups and downs which may actually be composed of divergent degrees of observing, imitating, becoming more interested, practicing, thinking, understanding, absorbing, questioning, rethinking, analyzing, appreciating, digesting, rejecting, and accepting. The premise of our being capable of learning what we did not previously learn is what we are familiar with at present. In a sense, it is what we do know that provides the environment for any new learning. Our former experiences, knowledge, and culture decide the

future angle and span of our internalization. For example, take learning to play golf or the violin, an incorrect posture or misplaced fingers may result in a lasting aftermath and disappointing consequences, which in many cases may even be irreversible. Although later correctional efforts could be made to compensate for whatever should have been taken care of, it is almost always not only much more time and energy consuming, but the results will not be as satisfactory. Therefore, a good foundation ought to be built and well maintained from the very initial stages. Efforts need to be made to stay cautious and conscious of what is being learned. One should also be reflective of oneself, whether it be regarding the learning of an instrument, the mastering of a sport, or the process of teacher socialization.

Not only is teacher socialization a critical process to individuals who wish to become successful teachers, it is also an important factor to the collective benefit of the whole society. Teachers, pupils, parents, together with other members of the society, all help determine what our society looks like. This is to say that educators as well as other members in this society must be considered as both creators and the products of the social situations in which they live. The success or failure of the teacher socialization process, therefore, directly impacts the quality of our lives.

Being a school teacher often means more than just gaining information and teaching it to pupils. It also means functioning in a complex human

interactive environment. A teacher must learn to operate with the roles, relationships, rewards, and expectations of a variety of perspectives. The school context factors often affect teachers in a prominent way (Wildman, Niles, Magliaro, & McLaughlin, 1989; Chesley, 1995). Given the complexity involved in this profession, a closer look at the teacher socialization has become not only necessary but important.

When talking about teacher socialization, many may assume that the process starts when a person begins his or her first day of student teaching, or the first day of their teacher education program, and ends several years later when he or she has become a tenured school teacher and is considerably comfortable with what the profession requires. However, more and more studies have shown that the process may actually have already started long before the teacher had even entered college. For that reason, the writer divides the whole process of teacher socialization into three developmental phases, which include: the pre-teacher education phase; the teacher education phase; and the post teacher education phase. Together the three phases complete the whole span of a teacher socialization process, and each of the three phases mentioned above plays an indispensably vital role in the wholeness of the process.

Pre-teacher Education Phase (Phase I):

This phase incorporates the period of time in a teacher's life and experiences before he or she receives any formal teacher education from a university or college programs. During this phase, parents, teachers, principals, classmates, friends, siblings, uncles, aunts, as well as other important people and various learning experiences may have impacted the person who later chooses to become a teacher. It is a crucial period of time when many important ideas, viewpoints, and values are formed. Some of these values and habits that are formed in this stage will be very difficult to unlearn or get rid of later in life.

In trying to investigate the nature of the teacher socialization process and the effectiveness mentors have on beginning teachers, Kennedy (1991) tracked 700 beginning teachers and teacher candidates. One of the surprising findings that was revealed in this study was that many of the novices observed became very traditional teachers in terms of not being able to improve the content they taught, nor how to examine their own practices, even though they had access to mentors and other resources. What was even worse was that some of them even came to believe that certain children just could not learn certain content. One reason Kennedy (1991) concluded for this frightful phenomenon was that the role models that novice teachers observed while they were children continued to hold enormous prestige. Kennedy noted:

Often, despite their intentions to do otherwise, new teachers teach as they were taught. The power of their ‘apprentice of observation,’ and of the conventional images of teaching that derive from childhood experiences, makes it very difficult to alter teaching practices and explains in part why teaching has remained so constant over so many decades of reform efforts (Kennedy, 1991, p. 16).

The terminology “apprentice of observation” first appeared in an article written by Lortie (1975). He explained that the thousands of hours spent as pupils have caused sufficient internalization of teaching models. This theory is also supported by other researchers, although sometimes it would be named otherwise. Krasnow (1993), for instance, explains what he calls the “familiarity factor” after conducting a similar study. What was suggested in this research was that a great number of teachers and potential teachers were still swayed by the image of teachers and teaching when they were pupils at school. Feiman-Nemser and Buchman (1985) also pointed out that the teaching model and style that many teachers and pre-service teachers remember as pupils are often the model and style they practice as teachers, despite the fact that it may contradict what was taught and supported by the teacher education programs. While analyzing the reasons why the on-job teacher socialization was not as successful as we would

like it to be, one of the major reasons that many researchers concluded was again that learning to teach was largely a self-directed exercise which was strongly influenced by childhood memories of schooling (Blase, 1986; Holborn, Wideen, & Andrews, 1988; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1985; Boyer, 1983; Pataniczek & Isaacson, 1981; Pruitt & Lee, 1978).

Goodson (1992), and Zeichner (1986), for instance, both identified and recommended that studies of teacher socialization focus more on the teacher as a person, in place of focusing too heavily on the teacher's practice. The growing-up and life experiences of each teacher are idiosyncratic and unique. The quality of relationship teachers had as youths with important adults also affects the quality of teacher socialization, which would be considered a process of one's trying to become like the significant adult figure in one's childhood (Wright & Tuska, 1967, 1968). Generally speaking, the attitude for these future teachers toward teaching and pupils tends to be more conservative at this phase (Veenman, 1884; Hoy & Rees, 1977; Lacey, 1977; Lagana, 1970; MacIntyre & Morrison, 1967).

Teacher Education Phase (Phase II):

This phase takes place when a person enters the university (college) teacher education program. It is also when most of the theoretical knowledge bases are formed. During their four to five years of education, these majors are

prepared to become teachers by receiving different courses of academic majors and as well as pedagogical knowledge. The teacher education phase usually ends upon the completion of student teaching, which lasts from several months up to a year, just before one graduates from the program.

In spite of the fact that a number of studies have indicated that the influence of one's pre-teacher education experience may even be stronger than what could be learned during this phase, or that student teaching does not result in substantial changes in teaching perspectives (Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1985); we nevertheless need to try to understand this phase as much as we could so that we could stand a better chance of figuring out more effective ways in improving teacher education programs.

Students in the programs should feel appreciative of the fact that they now have a more comfortable and freer zone of thinking, more time and facilities to ponder the methods and search for the strategies and possible consequences of an ideal model of teaching. They could also spend time reviewing their own previous school life experiences, and comparing and then making sense of what they believe in, and planning on how they are going to make it happen. It also could be a good time for them to evaluate their own abilities, aptitudes, personality, patience as well as other criteria in dealing with school children.

Also starting from this phase, students of teacher education programs ought to be encouraged to not only become familiar with the academic subject

that they are going to teach, but also the impact that their teaching and the academic subject matter will have on the students and on the society. Findings revealed that the formation of educational values depended heavily on the programs themselves (Goodlad, 1990).

The college teacher education program is an integral part of the entire teacher acculturation. It is in this phase that the students brainstorm, simulate, discuss, debate, search in order to learn, explore, understand, and prepare. Contents of the teacher education curriculum should therefore be constantly modified in order to correspond to the changing needs of the schools and the society.

Post Teacher Education Phase (Phase III):

This phase involves the period of time when a person shifts from being a student at a university to being a teacher at a school teaching his or her own classes of children. It may involve mentoring, induction, self help, a large number of reality shocks, and adjusting in the profession. Mentoring from the school authorities, as well as that from the mentors and activities, plays a significant role in a teacher's survival and growth (Crowe, 1995). Though some may disagree, Cole (1991) has pointed out that "central to each aspect of [teacher] development is the role of workplace relationships." Not only will these teachers be going through the shift of occupation (from a student to a teacher), but it is also

often a major transition for them in terms of social and psychological changes in life.

This is a phase where traces and influences of what had happened in the teachers' lives during the past two phases may all be identified. Those past anecdotes frequently contain a mixture of positive as well as negative influences. A teacher's age and prior work experiences, which could have happened during any phase, also influence how well he or she adjusts to this work (Boccia, 1989). Thus, it has become even more obvious that one's biography should never be neglected or ignored when discussing the related matters of the acculturation of teachers.

Once the beginning teachers start working in the field of education, they evidently are most affected and influenced by the teachers in that school, pupils, administrators, and other evaluators. "The professional growth of teachers is closely related to relationships within schools, between teacher and principal, and between teacher and teacher.... Great untapped opportunities for the professional development of teachers reside within the school" (Barth, 1990, p. 50).

As far as the expectations and characteristics of a person, it was pointed out that more progressive teachers perceived more problems than conservative teachers, and new teachers with lower levels of idealism felt more capable of handling classroom problems than those with higher levels of idealism (Griffin, 1983).

The entire environment also plays a crucial part in casting what the life of a beginning teacher is going to be like. Zeichner and Gore (1990) found that among the factors that influence the teacher socialization process, the most significant factor is the pupils, ecology of classroom, colleagues, and institutional characteristics of schools. Nevertheless, it would be inaccurate to presume that all school environments are all alike, although many articles seem to have neglected this issue. As Tabachnick and Zeichner (1985) pointed out, both the new teachers and the school atmosphere have their own unique idiosyncrasies that could not be disregarded.

In short, the continuing development during the transition from student to teacher is recurrently much more varied and context-specific than is typically portrayed in some of the teacher socialization literature. Teacher socialization is a process in which any problem could happen any time, and therefore all conditions need to be evaluated and pondered.

Summary of Chapter II

A sizable and representative number of studies of and about teachers that incorporate data from different angles related to the beginning years of teaching have been reviewed in this chapter. Both American studies and studies conducted outside the United States were included. Participants who played substantial roles in these studies were from elementary, middle, and high schools representing

diverse experience levels. Whether it was a longitudinal, short-term, or cross-sectional studies concluded during the 1950s through the 1990s; and whether it was done by observation, journal study, interview, questionnaire, or self-evaluation by the teachers, all these former studies have provided substantial information in helping further understand the nature of novice teachers and their teaching.

Despite some inconsistencies, major changes of beginning teachers' attitudes can be identified. Fuller's theory of teacher development seems to play an important role in helping people gain access to a more gestalt understanding of what an individual beginning teacher may undergo. What Fuller suggested has won recognition from researchers, despite some acceptable variations in different degrees.

There are a number of possible reasons that may provide an explanation to the phenomena of a teacher's attitudinal changes. Pre-service teachers are usually very liberal before they actually start teaching and dealing with pupils on a daily basis. In general, inexperienced teachers come to classrooms with idealized views of pupils and an optimistic, oversimplified picture of classroom practice. Possible explanation may relate to the fact that initial socialization to professional norms and values occurs during college preparation where teaching and learning are likely to focus on ideal images and practices. Although they have contact with pupils and school environment during student teaching, more findings show

that attitudes are progressive and liberal and do not change much at this moment, but occurs mostly during the first year of teaching. In other words, new teachers had gained professional and pedagogical knowledge from teacher education programs in colleges where they were taught to be flexible and innovative. However, the reality of the world is often a rather different story as soon as they start in the profession. It is also quite possible that new teachers will find themselves caught between the innovative/conforming dilemma. The administrators may ask them to only follow the set, rigid course outlines, and make use of the standardized tests and materials. It is not unusual, for instance, for school boards to expect that children at a certain grade level will learn approximately the same things, and that teachers will not take sides on controversial issues. In addition, they are usually unprepared to deal with classroom management and discipline problems. Consequently, it is easy, and very possible, for these novice teachers to become obsessed with class control once they step into the real world where discipline as it is actually practiced in the public schools seems to them to emphasize the need for more authoritarian controls. For many, the prevention and discouragement of disruptive behavior in the classroom has become job one, while considerations of how and what pupils learn receives less attention. As a result, many beginning teachers tend to grow less optimistic and more controlling in their attitudes about their pupils and teaching. More often than not, it is a challenge for beginning teachers to have to

deal with the reality that their pupils often come from different backgrounds where their religion, language, customs, expectation, parents' level of knowledge, former learning experiences, mental and physical maturity may be different.

Beginning teachers are not likely to be given the perfect classes. It is common practice that they are assigned classes that the experienced teachers do not want, such as problem classes, "difficult" children, and/or extracurricular activities, such as student newspaper. Generally speaking, new teachers should not be surprised if they were furnished poorer working conditions (Fox, 1995; Fuller & Bown, (1975); Krasnow, 1993; Peterson, 1990; Rust, 1994). In fact, many may even end up in teaching subjects that have little or nothing to do with their expertise. It has been observed that some fundamental gaps exist between what new teachers need and what administrators who supervise them can actually provide (McKerrow, 1996). Philosophical differences and political tensions in school can also make the life of a teacher more uneasy (Graham & Krippner, 1995). A non-supportive administration and poorly motivated students may also be reasons beginning teachers lose enthusiasm in teaching. In addition, new teachers, often because of their young age, may have much personal business to take care of; for example, they might want to get married, or they may be planning to purchase a house of their own for the first time in their lives.

Under these circumstances, many become more impersonal, more negative, rigid and authoritarian, and change from a humanistic to a custodial

approach, stressing bureaucratic order and control. The shift may be accounted for by the cognitive dissonance theory. The theory, formulated by Festinger (1957), provides an ideal conceptual framework from which to examine these studies. The core of the theory holds that if a person experiences prolonged cognitive dissonance, he or she will very likely change his or her attitudes so as to reduce that dissonance. The influence of the prevailing ethos of the public school makes the beginning teachers want to conform in order to minimize the disparity.

The length of time at work is generally recognized as a determinant of both the number and kinds of concerns one has about one's job. Teachers are thought to move through a series of concerns beginning with survival issues, and eventually focusing on mastery of teaching and impact on students. The precise time at which these shifts in kinds of concerns occur, however, is not clearly documented. A teacher's backgrounds, experiences, and biography all play important roles. It varies for different people as to when teachers move to the next stage, some may still remain at the survival stage while others may have reached higher stages. However, Ryan (1986) suggests that the survival stage usually ends midway through the first year, while Berliner (1986) posits that it is at least five years before one develops expertise in teaching. A table illustrating various stage theories mentioned in this chapter will also be included in the appendix of this dissertation for quick reference (see Appendices A, B, C, D, & E).

In light of Fuller's theory of teacher development, many changes observed of beginning teachers are predictable, logical, and not surprising. Whether it be elementary or secondary level, teachers of all different subjects report similar stories. Therefore, there are reasons to believe that teachers generally experience similar patterns: liberal, humanistic, open-minded, more permissive attitudes toward pupils and education during teacher preparation; followed by conservative, authoritarian, intolerant, more controlling attitudes shortly after they start teaching in public schools.

The teacher enculturation process, which plays an eminently consequential factor in the endeavor to succeed as a professional teacher, was deemed by the writer as three interweaving phases that deserved to have been discussed in this chapter. The pre-teacher education, teacher education, and post-teacher education phases jointly encompass the entire span of the making of a teacher.

Chapter three will furnish an explanation of the design of this study. A description of backgrounds of the participants, their schools, and their students will be covered. The types of data to be collected, and the methodologies to be utilized in analyzing the data will also be presented.

CHAPTER III

Introduction

The interest to pursue this investigation developed from curiosity and concerns about the high attrition rate of beginning school teachers, and of the issues in relation to the developmental phases that are normally experienced by novice teachers. In addition, this researcher has had several teachers and mentors whose encouragement, friendship, dedication, professional abilities, and career successes have influenced him in many ways, one of which was to instill a curiosity to ascertain what experiences these individuals might have had while becoming teachers.

Based primarily on the observations and interviews of two beginning social studies teachers, this investigation probed the applicability of existing developmental theories with regard to the development of a new teacher. Are the patterns suggested in those theories suitable for describing all beginning teachers? Do teachers go through a series of stages in a set sequence or are they at multiple stages at any given time period? To what extent do the social studies teachers represent the research previously completed regarding beginning teachers? Do the concerns and worries of the teachers change or transform? If any, how? All these questions helped guide this writer in the direction, design and methodology employed in this study.

Chapter three states the purpose and methodology of this research. The design describes in detail through an explanation of the experimental parameters, the participants who took part in the study, the school sites, research instruments used in the study, and data analysis.

Experimental Parameters

The purpose of this research study was to discover themes and concepts which emerged from comparing the data as building blocks of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) in the exploration of the professional development of beginning social studies teachers. The data were collected through recorded interviews (both audio cassettes and transcribed versions), notes taken from multiple conversations with the participants and their students, materials and comments from the administration, and multiple classroom observations.

Participants and Site

The two individuals who participated in this research study were among a total of six beginning teachers who had expressed an interest in participating in this project. These individuals had graduated from the same teacher education program and had served in teaching positions in the surrounding area. All teachers were employed at either the junior high or high school levels, and were

teaching in one or more of the social science content areas. They were young teachers who were just starting their careers in the fall semester of 1995.

The two participants selected in this study were 25-year-old Caucasians. Nora and Ken were pseudonyms representing them in this study. They graduated in the same semester (spring semester, 1995) with a GPA of 3.76 for Nora, and a 3.00 for Ken. Their professional education consisted of 33 semester hours of course work. This included a separate course for social studies methods (3 credits), one hundred hours of early field experiences in the public schools, and a 16 week, full-time student teaching experience. In addition to the education course work, each participant had to complete the equivalent of a major in one social science discipline.

Both teachers had completed a secondary social studies methods class with the same professor. In this methods class, they were taught at least six methods of effective instruction, ranging from direct to indirect instructional techniques. As an important segment of the requirements for this class, Nora and Ken had a field experience where they were given the opportunity to practice all the techniques learned.

During their student teaching, they were asked to audio- and video-tape their own instruction, and then critique it as to its effectiveness. The participants had background in social studies curriculum where they examined the scope and sequence of the curriculum within various school districts and the state

department of education requirements for social studies education. They received knowledge and training on issues concerning discipline and classroom management during their student teaching seminar. Ken had also completed a coaching certificate.

Both participants were state residents, and were generally familiar with the school districts in which they were employed. Although neither of the subjects graduated from the school districts in which they were teaching, each commented that the schools they had attended were smaller in size and were not as culturally or racially diverse.

Both subjects were employed to teach in their major content area. Each had five course preparations during the school day, with one planning period. Nora was assigned to teach ninth grade classes in world history and eighth grade classes in geography. Ken instructed eighth grade classes in United States history and seventh grade classes in geography. For both teachers, the class sizes ranged from 20 to 27 students.

The schools in which the participants taught were located in two different school districts. These districts could be considered part of two middle class, suburban communities. The community which Nora taught in was labeled as a bedroom community for the adjacent city. It had no major industries in the community and most people worked in the adjacent city. The community that Ken worked in was also adjacent to the same major city. However, it had several

major industries and smaller ones where the majority of the people in the community were employed.

These schools were well equipped with modern facilities for both the pupils and the faculty members. Both teachers worked in self-contained classrooms. All students in both schools had easy access to a variety of instructional materials, such as personal computers, audio and video equipment and laboratories; as well as recreational facilities, such as a multipurpose gymnasium. Students in both schools were predominantly white, with 15% to 20% minority students in Nora's school and 25% to 30% minority students in Ken's school representing African American, Asian, Hispanic, and Native American minority groups.

Instruction and Instrumentation

Participants were informed before the investigation that pseudonymous identities would be used in this study to preserve their privacy, and that all information obtained from them, e.g., their personal vitae, school background information, and audio tapes, would not be shared with individuals not associated with this study without their consent. In addition, an approval was granted for the use of human subjects in this investigation by the university. Both Ken and Nora were also informed that they could choose to discontinue taking part in the study any time without any obligation. With a complete understanding of this research

study in terms of its purpose and procedures, the participants signed a written consent form. Each participant was promised a copy of the final results of the study.

Each participant was interviewed at the beginning and at the end of each school year. Interviews were conducted at the participants' school sites and lasted approximately one hour. During the interviews, the interviewees were asked to respond to a series of questions related to how they were adapting to the teaching profession. Each interview provided the researcher with valuable data as well as inspiring insights so as to grant the researcher further understanding of this topic. The meetings with the teachers would not have been so successful and rewarding, but for the support from the school administration as well as the cooperation from the participants and their students.

All formal interviews were first audio-taped, later transcribed, and then scrupulously re-checked. Open-ended questions were designed before each interview, although the actual questions raised during the interviews were not limited to the ones that had been prepared earlier. The questions were designed to explore as much as possible the insight of a beginning teacher's world. They usually provided a starting point for the teachers to express their feelings.

In addition to taped interviews, the researcher also conducted informal observations of the instruction of the participants by sitting in the back of their classrooms, and by speaking to the class as a guest speaker.

Data Analysis

During the whole study, the paradigm of qualitative research was utilized, with the emphasis on using constant comparative analysis. The main value of this research paradigm “lies not in the verification and generalization of universal truths, but in the rich description and thoughtful explanation of complex processes, relationships, and environmental influences” (Houser, 1995, p. 149). Qualitative research is multi-method in focus, often involving an interpretive approach to its subject matter. In other words, qualitative researchers attempt to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). The particular case one studies in qualitative research is likely to contribute to an understanding of similar cases. As Rawlings (1942) stated more than a half century ago: “A man may learn a great deal of the general from studying the specific, whereas it is impossible to know the specific by studying the general” (p. 359). The constant comparative analysis is a central feature of the grounded theory methodology, which is a general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed. As a writer gathers and analyzes data, theory evolves (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). With the consideration of the purpose and goals of this study, the qualitative research paradigm is deemed to be suitable, and hence applied in the investigation.

Data that were gathered over a three year period of time in this investigation involved taped interviews, personal vitae, documents gathered from the school administration, observations of classroom instructions, informal interviews with the subjects, and dialogs with the subjects and their students. All data were first compared in order to identify possible themes, which were later sorted and categorized. In analyzing the data, the four major steps suggested by Glaser and Strauss (1967) were followed in the order of first comparing incidents applicable to each category. The second step was integrating categories and their properties. The third was delimiting the theory, followed by the last step, writing the theory.

Summary of Chapter III

In chapter three, explanations for the design and methodology employed in this investigation were described. The experimental parameters, participants and site of the study, instruction and instrumentation utilized in searching data, and procedures of the data analysis were discussed as major themes of this chapter.

In the following chapter, examination and interpretation of data gathered during this study will be presented. Concerns and feelings of beginning teachers will be reported and analyzed. The development of the two participants, both psychologically and professionally, will also be identified.

CHAPTER IV

Introduction

This chapter involves the analysis of Ken's and Nora's first three years of teaching. During this time period, a substantial amount of time was spent on interviews, and observations of the participants as well as conversations with their colleagues, administrators, and students. These data will be presented and discussed in the order of years in which they occurred.

The First Year

Nora was very nervous when she first entered the teaching profession. She was not hired by the school until after the school year had started. She felt very frightened, because she had never been given the sole responsibility for teaching as many as 140 students. She mentioned to the researcher during one of the interviews that

I remember the first few weeks...I came in October, so it was a little late. I remember being extremely frightened. I felt lost. I felt like I was kind of thrown in. I mean, I came in on a Monday and then all of a sudden I am responsible for 140 students and their education, and...definitely afraid. It was hard

learning my way around the school, learning where things were.

Where did I get my attendance slips? Where did I get all of the different paper...the forms that I needed?

In other words, Nora found that she was spending almost all her time worrying about things that could be categorized as daily routines and procedures. She found that she had little time or energy to spend on actual teaching. There were too many distractions from the basic routines. She further explained:

During our fourth hour, we have like fifteen bells that ring. I was trying to figure out which bell my kids went to lunch on, and which bell we came back on. And different policies and procedures. That was a real problem, trying to learn all of those, and in the same time trying to be a teacher. And I know that I focused more on getting those procedures and routines down at the beginning, and I don't feel like that I was teaching as well as I should have been.

In addition to getting the school procedures and daily routines under control, she worried about other aspects related to her teaching. These included student discipline problems, general classroom management skills, whether or not

students have learned anything, and student performance and grades. This was a stage where almost everything was a “concern” for her.

My major concern at the beginning of the year, like I said, was trying to learn the routines and the procedures...and also discipline. I was real worried about having the classroom management skills...if I was going to be able to manage all of these kids. It's so strange, but the little things just drove me crazy. Like... if they are tardy, why were you tardy? Well, my locker was broken. Well, do I count them tardy or do I not count them tardy? Just trying to keep up. The grades... if they didn't do all of an assignment or, if they had a zero. How do I handle that? Do I go ahead and let them have a zero or, do I make them do the paper over?

Ken is the second participant who took part in the study. The researcher observed his classes, talked with him and his classes during his first year at school, and interviewed him at the beginning and the end of his first year of teaching. Like Nora, he was not at ease when he first became a teacher. He was hired only several days before school began. He described his initial feelings as “pretty nervous.” On the one hand, he wondered how he could keep his students’

concentration and get them interested in the subject matter; on the other hand, he was not exactly sure as to how to get the school procedures done correctly.

I was just wondering how I could keep the kids busy without losing interest, and making sure that I could get through the class period without just totally losing them for the entire time. My first concerns when I received my faculty handbook was, would I know everything that's required of me? I mean there's no way that you're ever going to know everything. Am I doing attendance right? I always was a little conscious of making sure I did those things right, and if I didn't do it right the first time, I wanted to make sure I did it right the second time. So I always, I think, asked a little too much of myself in wanting to know everything that I needed to do instead of just taking a little bit at a time.

Another major concern of his was the students' discipline, which, as suggested by previous studies, is not an uncommon problem for beginning teachers. He explained the situation, and speculated on the reasons.

As far as major problems, I mean discipline was tough because you have different kids and different personalities.... I know at the beginning they probably thought that I might be kind of easier to trick or do something like that, because I was new and I'm kind of soft hearted and might let them get by with a little more than what normal teachers or veteran teachers might have.

Both Nora's and Ken's comments revealed their apprehensions about their new career and their concerns for the aspects of management and discipline related to their teaching. The comments of these two social studies teachers are similar to many teachers in previous studies. Management and discipline seem to be a major concern of beginning teachers, no matter what their subject matter or at what grade level they teach.

What is different about these two social studies teachers is that although management and discipline was something they worried about, they did not forget about instruction and their goal of becoming good teachers. From the beginning of the first year, both individuals were concerned about the quality of their teaching. This concern remained with them throughout the school year.

Classroom observations revealed that although the two teachers openly expressed their concern about management and discipline, they quickly began to involve their students in a variety of well planned interactive lessons. Like most teachers, they tended to focus on the problems in their conversations with the researcher and forgot about many of the successes that had occurred. As Campbell and Williamson (1974) concluded, problems and worries are many times greater than those actually experienced. It is also important to note that concern for discipline and management is very much dependent on the situation that new teachers find themselves in. New teachers in schools with well developed mentoring systems, with supportive colleagues, and relatively well behaved students will worry less about discipline and management than those in situations that lack the aforementioned factors (Bullough & Baughman, 1997).

Nora believed that she had learned much from experiences and became more mature insofar as her attitudes toward both her students and toward her job. "I have become more relaxed," she said. "At the beginning of the year, I felt sorry for my kids. I was very uptight. Very nervous, very scared. I was afraid that if they weren't in their seats working when the principal walked in, I was in trouble." Indeed, according to the writer's observations and discussions with her students,

she has become more relaxed and more experienced, which has helped her a great deal in her teaching. Classroom observations revealed that this nervousness did not last beyond the first month of teaching.

I am different now in that... I am more relaxed... more prepared. I feel like there are more things that have happened that I have experienced, so now I know how to handle them. The lesson plans... trying these new lessons and new activities and if they work, you write them down, and you remember them; and if they don't, you write down what didn't work, and what you are going to try differently. So that gives you a whole new bag of tricks to work with. I am teaching now, and not just trying to control the kids.

Ken believed that he had grown and accumulated many valuable experiences. He had changed. Like Nora, he had become more and more relaxed and comfortable dealing with students in a teaching and learning environment. This also was confirmed by his students and fellow teachers. Although discipline concerns still existed, he, like Nora, did not worry as much as he did in the first month of his teaching. What had not changed, however, were the concerns of how he could perfect his

teaching, and how to make lessons more beneficial and meaningful for his students. In other words, some things had changed, but some had not.

At the end of the second block, it got a little bit easier as far as discipline. I got some different kids, and they were a little more structured. The feeling of being organized a little more. I think my organization got better as the year went along. I was always still a little bit nervous about teaching, because I wanted the kids to enjoy my class and get the most out of it, so I always thought in respect to them, if I was to put myself in their shoes and say, you know, do I like this class or what would I do to change it so it would be more interesting?

Classroom observations and discussions with his students, indeed, supported Ken's comments that his teaching had become generally well organized in a short period of time. Comments from his colleagues also supported this. They were impressed with his ideas to improve instruction and openly shared their materials with him.

Since the initial days, Ken has been worrying about how to make his American History and geography classes more interesting and

meaningful to students. He wanted to have more activities and student interaction, instead of just the same old book work and watching films. He wanted to have an “impact” (Fuller and Bown’s stage #4; Barnes’ stage #4) right from the beginning. Although he struggled in his first month of teaching, his desire to be a successful teacher was always there. He slowly overcame his fears and learned how to manage the classroom. More importantly, he continually worked on improving his instruction. He stated, “I want to help my kids, help them learn. I have been working hard at this ever since the day I signed my contract.”

Ken, like Nora, had a tendency in the taped interviews to focus on his problems rather than his accomplishments in the first month of teaching. However, as in Nora’s case, classroom observations revealed that those problems were minor, and he had established an excellent learning environment.

Like all teachers, Nora and Ken had their initial problems with management and discipline. However, that did not deter them from wanting to be good teachers and focusing on the educational needs of students. They worked hard at this and were proud of their accomplishments, large and small. Classroom observations and informal discussions revealed that their concerns were not solely in the area of management and discipline. Curriculum and instructional concerns, as

well as student concerns, were always present. From the beginning, no one concern seemed to be more important than another.

For both teachers, the support of the administrators and other teachers in their building was critical to their success. Nora and Ken both realized how much it meant to have the support of their co-workers if they were to succeed as beginning teachers. Much has been written about the mentoring process for new teachers, and in both cases the researcher observed, this process was valuable in helping the individuals adjust to their new careers.

Nora's first year could be called fairly smooth in that she not only received much assistance from her mentor and colleagues, but she also had the full support and encouragement from her administrator.

Probably the most positive event I had was having another teacher immediately take me under her wing and start helping me. She definitely gave me a lot of guidance. [Another] really good experience, too, is the relationship with co-workers. When other teachers take an interest in what is going on in your classroom and they compliment you or congratulate you on it, that makes me feel good ... and to have an administrator tell you that you are doing a

good job. I had an administrator tell me that I was setting a new trend, and that I wouldn't accept failure in my classroom. And I think that is really important, and it's an important message to send to the kids that you are not going to fail, because I'm not going to let you fail.

Ken did not know what to expect regarding support from his colleagues and administrators. Since his classroom was a portable building at the back of the school, he had limited interaction with the other social studies teachers during the school day. He was surprised that they make such a big effort before and after school to check on how he was progressing, and their openness in sharing their teaching materials. He commented, "They are always willing to help me... sometimes I would worry that they thought I couldn't teach, but, I realized they just wanted to help me... I mean they're really great!"

Ken had an excellent professional relationship with his principal. He just could not say enough about how much she helped him.

When I needed to talk, I would always stop in to see her. She never turned me away, I mean she was busy, but she would never not talk to me. She always listened and

seemed to know how to help me work through the problems. After the kids, she is the main reason why I like this school so much.

Not only did the two social studies teachers enjoy the help and support from the administrator and colleagues, they also felt happy that they had a good relationship with their students. They believed this positive relationship had a great influence on the students, not only in their school performance, but also their behavior and thinking as members of the society. Nora stated,

I think that gradually we built a relationship. And now at the end of the year, I feel that I have a very good relationship with my kids. I believe that they think... they know that I care. I care about their grades, but even more, I care that they learned something. And not just that they learned about Martin Luther's indulgences, but they have learned something about society and being a citizen and social skills—social studies. That kind of thing.

Like Nora, Ken had a very good relationship with his students. This positive relationship with them, he believed, had much to do with the fact that he was also a young person who could usually relate to what his students thought and liked. In other words, the small difference in age has prevented a possible communication gap.

I think my relationship with the kids was positive, I mean I could get them to respond to me because I'm not that much older than they are. And that we could laugh, and joke, and have fun. We go along pretty well even though sometimes I had to really kind of come down on them because of the way they behaved. But I think that my age really kind of helped me, I tend to kind of get on their good side in the sense that they can relate to me a little easier...

Here again, classroom observations throughout the year confirmed that the two teachers had an excellent rapport with the students. During students interviews, it was mentioned several times that "he/she cares about us" or "he/she wants to help us learn." These two teachers were concerned about their students' well being right from the beginning and throughout the first year. This behavior, as applied to teacher stage

theory, is typically found in later stages of development, such as mastery stage (Ryan, 1986) or reflection stage (Barnes, 1992).

Both participants were active individuals who did not seem to be afraid of trying new things, even at the beginning of their teaching careers. Although she did not think she did well, Nora tried new methods and activities in her social studies classes to motivate the kids. She described to the researcher one of the early activities she conducted in class within the first few weeks after being employed.

It was like the second week of school or so that I was here, and we were talking about Greece, and I decided to video-tape the kids. I was... very concerned about trying to make history fun and interesting and not the same old thing. So... I took them to the library (library had a room for video taping) and we did the video taping, and I look back now and I think that I cannot believe I attempted something like that within the second week of school. But I did, and it was pretty hectic, and it was pretty chaotic, but it worked, and the kids loved it. And they got really excited about it.

Ken was also not afraid to take some professional risks early on in the school year. He explained,

I wanted my students to really like my world geography class, so when we were studying about the Mediterranean area, I made up an activity they really liked. I modified this inquiry lesson we learned in my social studies methods class... I worked my butt off. I mean it really was hard putting all the stuff together. But it worked! You don't know how good I felt when I saw how excited the kids were and how much they learned....

When the researcher asked her if she noticed any changes during her first year of teaching, Nora indicated that she could see herself turning into a more mature and relaxed person as the days went on. In other words, while the kinds of concerns from the beginning of teaching may still exist, her priorities have shifted. Toward the end of the first semester, she cared more about students' learning and grades than getting the school routines down, and she was much more relaxed in dealing with her problems.

These feelings... the feelings of being scared to death and not knowing what I'm doing or where I'm going... that definitely changed. As I became more accustomed to the system and how things worked, it got much easier. My focus changed from getting the routine and procedures down, to actually teaching the kids important themes in world history.

She also realized that once she felt more relaxed, more things became much more natural, and therefore, she felt more confident in developing new activities to teach world history to her students. Since then, she began to have much more fun doing it. She said, "[I] have a lot more fun. And I noticed that as I planned the lessons more, and focused more on what I was teaching, all of the other things kind of fell into place."

During the whole year, she constantly asked herself more and more questions that were related to instruction than any other kinds of concerns. It has always been her wish to become a more balanced teacher.

As I look back on the year ... it's definitely more the instructional type concerns. Did I meet the needs of all the

different learners? Did I really teach them what they need to know for World History? And I look at those career teachers, and they seem to have everything balanced. It's like they have the content down, and they have the classroom management down, so everything... comes together. So, I really am hoping that this first year has just been a period of getting these procedures down, learning the routines, learning what works in classroom management so that I can focus on the instructional part, and then pull it all together at some point.

As she became more experienced during this year, she became more confident in what she was doing, and what she will do. The little thank-you cards she received from her students, her students' sharing stories and findings with her after class, and students' interest in social studies, all have made her proud and have encouraged her to want to become a better teacher next year.

Ken also felt he has changed significantly during his first year of teaching. At the end of the year, he considered his accomplishments to be having built up a good relationship with his students and having developed some good teaching units. Besides his relationship with his students, he

believed he also had a good relationship with his colleagues. He appreciated the instant and warmhearted help from his colleagues, from which he has benefited tremendously.

Well, ... I felt really good about myself in the sense that I got hired a few days before school started, and I was able to survive the whole process without losing too much. too much sleep. But at the end, one of the major accomplishments, I think that I was able to... establish a good rapport with the kids, and... getting to know all the faculty and letting them know that I'm a friend of theirs too, and trying to be the best teacher I could at the time, and then hopefully developing on this. But I think that... the kids and their relationships with me was, I think, the biggest accomplishment, and if you can win them over, you're in good shape....

As Ken progressed through the school year, he felt more comfortable doing his job. Encouragement also came from his students' parents. There was no question in his mind that he loved his job, and

therefore, he has decided to continue doing it for many more years to come. He knew that he had overcome the fear he once had.

I'm a lot more relaxed than I was in the beginning, and I come to class every day knowing that I feel confident and comfortable being in there with the kids teaching history... and I don't have any problems as far as thinking to myself when I get up... well, do I really want to go to school today? I mean there's no question that this is the place I want to be.

In the future, he hoped that he could improve his teaching methods, and could have a greater depth of knowledge in his content area so as to help his students. He has already begun to think about taking some graduate course work in education, as well as in history. He felt that although he used a variety of instructional strategies in his teaching, he was still not sure which method to use at a particular time or which strategies work with the different types of learners.

I know my instruction has improved from my first week in the classroom, but I'm still not where I want to be.... I

know it will take time, that's ok. The great thing is I am getting paid for doing this! I'm really lucky.

The Second Year

With new ideas, plans, enthusiasm, positive opinions, and valuable experiences gained from the first year of teaching, both participants felt confident and ready to begin the second year of their career. Both Nora and Ken had a comparatively much smoother start for the second year than the previous one in terms of interactions with the students, colleagues and administrators.

Although life in general was less complicated at the start of school than what it was the previous year, neither Ken nor Nora had decided to stop learning, growing, or improving any aspect of their teaching. Instead, both participants were trying all they could to fulfill their "wish lists" from the preceding year.

For these two participants, the previous year was filled with a variety of surprises from all corners of the school. However, it was also a year that was full of support and encouragement from their colleagues and administrators that guided them through the process of becoming a more capable teacher.

While analyzing the data gathered from the various sources during the second year of the investigation, it was not difficult to identify many signs and clues which suggested that the two subjects had more common than different experiences. For instance, classroom observations revealed that both of them enjoyed their new students from the very beginning of the second year. They felt much more prepared and relaxed with them in the classroom. They had prepared plans and materials during the summer, and therefore, had ideas as to what they had to do in order to achieve their goals in helping their students succeed. They did not hesitate to take the first few weeks communicating and discussing their expectations and goals with their students. Both Ken and Nora believed it was crucial to get acquainted with the students, and thereby gain a mutual understanding before any serious learning could occur. In the initial second year interview, Nora discussed the first several weeks of teaching.

I think that it went very well. Because in the beginning, instead of just starting right into the subject area, I wanted to get to know the students and I wanted to know where they were. So, we did a personal goal statement to start out. I also had a little form that I had typed up, and I wanted to know what they (the students) expected this year.

I included on this form what you had to do in order to achieve an A in my class. In order to achieve a B and a C. Then, I had on there if you expect to receive a D or an F, then you need to speak with me now and we need to talk about your goals.

Another thing that Nora did at the beginning of the semester was to ask her students to write a personal resume. She believed that it was something with which she could shorten the distance between her and her students.

That was really effective for me, because I got to read it and know the kids, and I think that is really important to know who you are dealing with so that you know where to put those expectations and there's always some student in the class that's carrying a lot more with them than what they are ever going to tell you face to face. That works really well.

Conversations with the students revealed that they were glad that they had Nora and Ken for a social studies teacher rather than other

faculty members. Each of these individuals was developing a reputation as an excellent teacher; an individual who cared about their students and who made learning an enjoyable experience.

It was obvious from the very beginning that neither Ken nor Nora adopted the don't-smile-until-Christmas approach. Instead, they successfully conveyed the message that they were there to help the students achieve their best. They both believed that they should try and set high expectations and have a low anxiety level for their students.

After discussing with the students the expectations and general routines of his class, Ken began to feel that the second year was going to be a more relaxed and enjoyable year.

I think the orientation for the kids went well. I think I made them feel that this is going to be a fun class and I tried to make them just feel comfortable.... And my class is structured to help them. I am not going to pick on them. And basically, I think, just the 7th graders especially, they were nervous when they came in. And after I talked to them, towards the end of the class, you could tell, maybe they felt a little bit like, hey, this is going to be fun.

Nora also expressed her disbelief of some of the suggestions given to her by her colleagues.

I don't want to come in here and scare them so much at the beginning of the year that they are going to immediately close off. There are so many career teachers around here who will say you have to be mean those first few days of school to get your point across. I don't think that's true. I think you just have to set your expectations. They need to know what the classroom rules are and they need to know what the consequences are.

The progress these two beginning teachers made was observed in classroom observations and informal discussions on teaching. Both of them confirmed that they, too, felt that they were very different the second year than they had been the first year. All in all they had gained more confidence and were much more mature in terms of overall teaching capability. As Nora stated at an informal meeting:

I was much more organized at the beginning of the year this year. I had already had that experience of what it was

like. I had down how the schedules worked. I knew where everything was in the building. I had taught world history for a year. That gave me the summer to organize things and to learn more about classroom management skills. Figure out what I wanted to do, more of a definite plan, so when I came in here on the first day I was ready to go. I knew what I wanted to do, I knew what I wanted to achieve and everything was set up.

Ken also expressed his feeling about his improvement during the initial period in his second year in comparison with what happened to him during the first year on the job.

The first few weeks from last year, most of my stuff was not on the computer... as far as vocabulary, things like that. This year, basically everything is on my computer. All my assignments, my projects, instructions, everything. Anything that is kind of seen as a unit or for a chapter, I finally was able to put everything together instead of going from piece to piece and having written out instructions. I think it was more organized than it was in the first year. I

think my discipline plan was a little bit more organized and structured Because I really wasn't sure what I was going to do that first year as far as discipline until something happened.

“After the first two weeks, everything is pretty much set. Everything works out really, really well.” Nora believed that she and her students had a satisfactory level of mutual understanding at the beginning of the second year. Very quickly she was able to realize the potential of her students and was able to win their trust. It was clear that her positive opinions toward her students provided a significant power in continually developing faith in herself, her teaching skills, and her instructional strategies. As she pointed out, “Kids are incredible. They are so resilient and they will pick up anything. Anything that you try, they get into that pattern very, very quickly and very easily.”

Like Nora, Ken had a nice relationship with his students during the second year as well. “I enjoy the kids. Junior high kids are so interesting to listen to and get their opinions,” he revealed in one of the conversations with the researcher. He realized that he had modified his attitude when associating with the students. He compared what he felt about them then and now.

I think my personality toward the students has changed. Last year, I was friendly toward them, but I wasn't really sure about them. I think that I feel more relaxed around them, not so uptight as far as I don't mind them coming around and being real close to me and things like that. I was always a little leery of that. I don't feel as apprehensive about being close to them than I was in the first year.

The constructive relationship between Ken and his students comes from not only his experiences gained from the previous year, but also the growth in his EQ (Emotional Quotient), and the discernible advancement of his teaching competence. As Ken admitted, "I think sometimes last year I would get a little moody with them. You know, quicker than I would this year." The support and recognition coming from the students and their parents made Ken a very confident teacher, and encouraged him to do even better. Ken disclosed some examples to the researcher.

I had the parents of a former 7th grader ask for special permission to get him into my 8th grade class, so that

makes me feel pretty good. And also, students who hadn't had me in 7th grade, but had heard about me from other students, had their parents ask if I would teach them in history. So that makes me feel really good as a teacher. Especially after my first year, that things seemed to be going well in the classroom.

Nora also had great confidence in the fact that her students liked her and that what she was doing in her classroom was contributing to her students' intellectual growth. She explained,

That's a wonderful feeling, because you do a lot of activities in here and it's just a constant thing. The kids just want more and more and more of that. ...we just finished up with World War II, and they are bringing stuff in. Kids who typically showed no interest in social studies are now talking about it with their parents. I even get calls from their parents.

In talking to both Nora's and Ken's principals and colleagues, it was revealed that these two teachers had gained a great deal of respect

from their fellow teachers. They were valued as being an important part of the school teaching staff. In both cases they were no longer viewed as inexperienced beginning teachers but as proven professionals.

Despite the fact that Ken's second year began much easier than his first, he still had many professional concerns. His concerns related to discipline and classroom management, for instance, have never really vanished, although his degree of concern has clearly varied. In other words, having made much progress, he still believed that his concern for discipline will not completely disappear. He talked about the changes in his concerns.

I think from the start to the finish that I thought about discipline... and it will always be like a concern for me. I don't think I will ever feel totally confident about my discipline plan. That's ok.

Like Ken, Nora held similar opinions about the nature of her concerns related to this profession. She mentioned her changes to the researcher during an interview at the end of the second year. "I think that the focus has changed. My focus is now more on the learning side of it

and having a good time while teaching them, rather than trying to control their every little move....”

In fact, the designing and planning for instruction and curriculum have taken a large portion of their time during the second year. Both teachers worked hard to prepare interesting and informative classes for their students. Extra materials and inquiry-based activities were constantly introduced in their classrooms throughout the second year. One of the activities tried out by Ken could serve as an example.

I think the learning activities I developed the second year were much better. One I tried was with an Indian removal treaty in which the students had to write their own treaty between the Native Americans and the Indian agent. And I think that went well for them, because they kind of got to see both sides of the process. The government’s needs, and the Indians’ needs. And we watched a video, which gave the Native American perspective instead of just the book’s perspective, which is primarily written to kind of soften what actually happened. I think that the Indian removal teaching experience helped them understand that not everything that they have read is just exactly what

happened. So I think that was a good experience for them and for me....

Although the responses from students might not always be as good as what had been expected, neither teacher was so discouraged as to quit trying new things that might benefit the students. Ken experienced a situation where he brought in some articles from National Geographic that failed to interest the students. “The kids just didn’t grab onto it,” he said, “I don’t know why.” Although frustrated somewhat, Ken decided to further enrich his teaching materials by bringing in other valuable data from a variety of sources. Another example that happened in Nora’s classroom also illustrates this point.

We’ve done a lot of Interact Simulations, and the first one that we tried I probably am assuming was the most complicated. It was one over Islam. We went into that full force. There’s a whole thing in the yearbook on that, which is pretty exciting. If they only knew—I would go home and just wanted to cry, because I didn’t feel like, it wasn’t coming together for me. The kids were having a good time, but I didn’t feel like I was getting across what I had to

get across. It was also good—that it's history in a totally non-traditional way. My room was a total disaster everyday. That was a bad and a good experience. What I learned from that was that I am going to do it again next year, but I am going to change some things. A little more structure where they have a few more details that they can put down in their interactive notebooks and this kind of thing. Now that I look back, I kept a journal, this is what I am going to do different. Now, I can actually turn to that journal and read it without having a panic attack. I know that I am going to change some things there.

By constantly trying new methods, these two beginning teachers had become more mature in this field. Because of their perseverance and boldness, the students have benefited. During interviews with both Ken's and Nora's students, comments were made about how they enjoyed working in the class. Several students said they "liked social studies" where in the past they didn't. They also said they felt that their teachers were working hard to help them "learn social studies."

It is hypothesized that the participants of this research would probably not have been so successful during their second year of teaching

without the support of their fellow faculty members and administrators.

By having this relationship with other teachers, Ken and Nora felt respect as equals to their peers, and because of this, more confident as teachers.

Nora described her relationship with her co-workers as follows.

I found that they were very, very supportive. I always had somebody there to help me, somebody always would say what can I do for you. Do you need this? Do you need that? Very, very supportive. I think that you still have to prove yourself. To do that, they have to know what's going on in your classroom. So, this year I have really made a point to share my ideas and my students' work.... By going to the other teachers, talking about integrating curriculum.... I think I've developed a better relationship with them. When you first come in they are there to help you. I think some of them keep their eye on you—kind of what's happening. Then, as you go along, like now I feel like I have more respect. Instead of just help this little teacher along, now they come to me with, do you have an idea on what I can do with this? It's building more of an even relationship rather than kind of a submissive what do I

do about this. I think my opinions are a little more valued.

All around it's a lot better than the first year.

Ken continued to mention his gratefulness for the support he received from his colleagues and administrator. Their caring, understanding, and advice have insured not only Ken's, but his students' success in the classroom. They began to befriend him from the first day he was on the job. In fact, the assistance never ceased during the second year. He further stated that

With the faculty here, they are extremely supportive. They are not negative towards you and they are always there to give you advice and to share ideas for teaching that they have had success with.... I think the principal thought that it is just going to take time for me to adapt and become a teacher. But she is always supportive.

There is no doubt that the two participants in this study have paid a good deal of attention to classroom climate. Ken created a classroom where meaningful learning occurred while the atmosphere was very relaxed. In talking to his students, the researcher found that they felt very secure and positive about

his classroom. Because of his effort, Ken has developed a reputation that he was able to make social studies a class that students would look forward to taking.

I think I have developed a reputation that my classroom atmosphere is pretty laid back. It is not just a strict, rigid structure. Students can be themselves and learn in a variety of ways. I think I have developed a reputation with the students and other teachers that maybe I can explain it a little bit better than maybe some of the other teachers.

Some of the other teachers say that I am able to break it down better for the students.

Nora also wanted to alter the stereotypical notion that history classes were all boring and full of tedious questions and answers. She worked very hard during the second year in order to make her classes both challenging and interesting for her students.

I want them to love history. I think that was one of my major concerns, because they automatically come in here, at the beginning of the year and say, history, yuck, history. It's because of the way they've been taught history. If you

tell them to open the book and do the section reviews, they are going to hate history. Trying to break away that stereotype when they came in was one of my major challenges. That was a big thing that we talked about at the beginning—you are going to love this class. We are going to do things. We are going to do activities. We are going to have fun. It's whatever you put into it is what you're going to get out of it. That was one of my major concerns was that I made it fun. As the year went on, I became more and more concerned—am I covering this objective, am I hitting this? I have to be sure that they are learning what I am teaching them.... Am I pushing them enough? Are my expectations high enough that it's still fun but they are still challenged and they are enjoying what they are doing. My concerns now are that I hope that I've left them with a lasting effect. I hope that they remember what we've talked about.

The concerns for their students' long-term interests and benefits were worth mentioning. Making the classroom ambience more congenial, and social studies more enjoyable were not the only goals for the two participants. Nora

integrated her history class with geography and English classes, because she also cared about students' learning in other classes, and did not believe in "separate little learning," she said, "everything is connected." She decided not to accept zero as a grade for her students, although she realized that there would be some students who just did not care. Gradually, she has helped her students become more responsible individuals. Nora explained her view.

You're going to have some kids that don't care. If they don't turn in a paper, generally, there is a good reason for it. You can reason with them, you can talk to them and then they are going to turn the paper in the next day. I take off 10 percent or whatever and it's a done deal. They know that I'm not out to get them. I want them to succeed....

Much of Ken's effort and energy were dedicated to building students' sense of responsibility, independent judgement, and critical thinking perspective. One could readily tell that Ken was much more flexible and capable of grabbing the valid opportunity to make his point at the appropriate time.

I encourage them to give me their own interpretation. They can develop their own thoughts. And everything they read

in a book, they don't have to just say, "This is the way it happened, because this book says it was this way." I mean, they can say, "Well, maybe it happened because of this reason as well." I kind of let them use their own mind more than maybe most teachers have in the past.

Neither participant was afraid of taking on new challenges and responsibilities. During the second year of teaching, both Nora and Ken showed risk-taking quality and capability. In addition to taking the effort to integrate social studies with other curricula, Nora decided to take an honors class, and to team another class in which there were 11 learning disability students. Like Nora, Ken also took the responsibility in planning special units for his grade-level team as well as accepted the position as the head wrestling coach in his school. These tasks were new assignments where a good deal of adjustment and revision were called for.

A temporary failure of a certain activity that they introduced to the class would not drive them into returning to the more traditional ways of teaching. Although the unexpected responses from the students were sometimes "scary," as Nora put it, the obstacles did not really scare them away. By frequently experimenting new materials, approaches and activities for the students, both Ken and Nora began to win recognition from their students, colleagues, and

administrators. When asked if they would continue trying out new things next year, Nora answered, "I want to even go further and try to integrate more things....," and Ken's response was "Definitely, no doubt about it."

In terms of personal development, both Ken and Nora have taken a giant step forward. Both have accepted new missions, and as a result more responsibilities. Much of their transformation was not only evident to the researcher, but could also be felt by the two teachers themselves. Obviously, their concerns from the first year of teaching did not vanish during the second, but the priorities continued to shift on a daily/weekly basis, just as they did during the first year.

During the second year, modification of her teaching techniques, materials, and attitudes toward the students was a constant practice for Nora. She learned that different groups of students required different kinds of approaches. She managed quite successfully to stay balanced in the ways she has treated her students; she was not too suppressive or too permissive. An instance may serve to illustrate her consideration.

I had honors for the first time this year. That's been a challenge for me, adjusting to those honors classes, because these students have been together now since elementary school and they have been in the same classes. In the

beginning they talked all the time. It didn't matter where I moved their seats, they were talking. Then, I finally figured out that the reason it doesn't matter where I move their seats is because they are all friends and they have been forever. It's been a real learning experience to back off and that's part of how they learn—is by talking to each other.

Ken was experiencing a certain degree of self-imposed stress partly resulting from taking over the position as head wrestling coach at the very beginning of the second year. However, he also found balance between his work in a social studies classroom, and his work in a wrestling arena. His flexibility in the classroom could easily be identified. Being capable of taking care of both duties, Ken demonstrated once again his turning into a more mature professional in terms of his overall teaching proficiency. In retrospect, he talked about his general feelings of his second year.

I think I have been able to see the big picture, instead of just kind of having a set goal as far as wanting to get from A to B in this amount of time. If I want to take a little bit more time, I can stretch this one out and then shorten this

one.... I felt better about my classes. I felt better about my teaching. I think I improved in the areas.... Add a few more different, outside projects. Another big accomplishment, I think my discipline file goes down every year.... Another accomplishment, I think was I accepted some other responsibilities, and that went real well, which made me feel good about being able to do both education and then the outside curricular activities. So I think in all areas, I improved as far as the overall teaching responsibilities for the second year.

Nora and Ken have been trying all they could to fulfill their wish lists brought forth from the previous year. Inevitably, there were moments during the second year where the participants felt somewhat scared, frustrated, and disappointed with what they have designed for the students and the results they received for their effort. Nevertheless, deep down in their hearts, they knew they could achieve better and do more for their students, if they just continued trying. This year, both of them spent relatively more time thinking about curriculum and instruction than issues related to other areas. Despite the fact that not all the experiences during the second year were wonderful for them, neither of the participants ever thought of quitting their job. In fact, they were getting more

mature and more interested in their career. As Ken mentioned one time, "I don't know if I would enjoy doing anything else right now. This seems to be what I want to do and I'm having a really good time doing it." Nora even had high hopes for the next school year. "I'm already planning for next year. I am already getting stuff laminated, figuring out how I want to do the room next year.... I am looking forward to next year.... I'm not as scared and I am very, very ready for the third year."

The Third Year

During the third year, both Ken and Nora were employed at the same schools as they had been during the previous years. They were still responsible for the same subjects and were teaching at the same grade. Ken was still teaching in his self-contained portable classroom. Aside from classroom teaching, he had remained the head coach of the wrestling team for his junior high school. As for Nora, she was assigned to team teach two more classes of learning disabled students, in addition to classes of honor students. The principals and most of the staff members from both schools remained unchanged.

Although most of the working conditions and environment remained the same, both Ken and Nora had a very different year. It was apparent from the writer's observation and evaluation on them that they were both more mature than

before in terms of their professional abilities; and had enjoyed teaching most of the time during their third year on the job. They seemed to take great pleasure in working with their colleagues as well as their students. The resources that they had developed for their classes were much richer and more varied. The approaches and techniques utilized in class were more natural, appropriate and timely. Classroom and student activities seemed more organized. The atmosphere was relaxed even from the first few days of the semester. They smiled more often, and so did their students. What the writer observed agreed with what Nora recalled during an early interview:

I was much more comfortable starting out the year. I knew more how it was all going to fit together. So I had my course syllabus all ready and I knew exactly, we went through that. My expectations were more clear. I knew more of what my expectations were so that I could relay those to the students so everything was more clear. I was more in control than the first couple of years I guess.

Ken described what he felt at the beginning of the third year.

I was a lot more comfortable coming back. Each time that you start with kids, I think, I feel more comfortable in front of them. I'm more organized as to what I want to do with them as far as discipline or the objectives that I want to meet. I'm trying to make them feel welcome ... and let them know that junior high's an okay place.... Every year that I come back I feel a little bit better about what I want to do and what I want to get accomplished, and it's a lot easier this year.

A very important reason why Ken and Nora were experiencing a smoother third year was that they knew much more about themselves as well as their students than they did in the previous years. In other words, they realized not only what they should expect of their students, but they also realized what their students expected of them. In turn, therefore, they were able to make the most of their class time without too much interference caused by discipline or other management problems. In fact, Nora had not had any referrals during the entire year, while Ken had only two. As Ken described:

I've basically had really good students. I haven't had any major discipline problems or anything. Basically, it was just trying to get the seventh graders to learn—kind of like the process of my

system. You know, where we put papers, and make sure we have our headings right and basically following directions, what kind of atlas work, where to get it. And just learning where I keep my stuff for my classroom. But no real events really stood out. It's been pretty smooth for this third year.

Although it was by and large a much smoother year for Nora, she did have her anxious moments right before the school started. She explained how she overcame her anxiety at the beginning of the semester.

I guess, there is some anxiety when you first start out the year no matter. I mean I've only been teaching for three years, but the night before school starts, you've just got a big knot in your stomach and real uptight as to, I have nightmares of students just getting up and leaving and I can't do anything about it. But that tends to, the anxiety kind of goes away. It's amazing because whenever you're up and you get in front of the kids, something just kind of turns on and you know what you're doing. So the anxiety left, you become more comfortable.... And now this year, I'm much more comfortable. Whenever they come in here and sit down the first couple of days of

school, they don't know. I mean, they may not know a lot about you, how you're going to do your classroom. As you build a relationship with each other, they begin to understand what your expectations are. And that's what solves my classroom management problems.

Classroom observations revealed that both Nora's and Ken's comments were correct. Although neither had any major discipline problems in their first two years, their third year had even fewer incidents of behavior problems.

Despite the fact that the two participants were comparatively more comfortable with the classroom management and discipline issues, they still experienced some minor frustrations and hoped to continually improve their skills in this area. They also believed that they needed different strategies and options when working with different children. In fact, both teachers have developed some of their own policies for their classroom management. For example, Nora insisted that her students turn in their homework and so the "no zero" policy still existed but was refined this year; and she had been spending more time building a closer relationship with her students, too. This relationship, she believed, had created a much better mutual understanding between her and her students. This understanding, in turn, helped solve a number of discipline problems that would have occurred. In short, both Ken and Nora had accomplished much during the

third year in terms of developing their own ways of managing their classroom. but have not forgotten to keep trying to make it work even better.

With fewer distractions coming from disciplinary problems, the two participants were therefore able to concentrate more on their instruction, curriculum, and other issues. From the very beginning of the third year, they both implemented activities that were very intriguing and important. Ken once talked about the effects on his students:

I think some of the best ones were being able to show kids that even though, in a historical aspect, they say it really doesn't matter and they look at it as, well that happened hundreds of years ago, it doesn't have any relationship to today, and I think that being able to show the kids the relationship or maybe significant advance on how they're tied together, it kind of surprises them that actually things that happened several hundred years ago still go on today. And also that that's kind of the way I want to teach is that it does have a relationship to the kids today and our same actions are still sometimes seen several years ago, because we're all human by nature. We kind of do the same things sometimes.

In Nora's classroom, the students also benefited from the many interesting and educational activities that she designed. An example would be a warm-up activity offered during the first few days after school began:

We did a penny archeology. I gave them a penny but they couldn't call it a penny. It was an object. And we had gone through this whole thing about archeology and how we learned about our past. So I gave them this object and they got to name it themselves or in groups, and they had to sketch this artifact and look at it and try to make inferences as to what this was. So they developed their own theories. And they worked in pairs so then they got up in front of the class and read their stories so it was like, almost an ice-breaking kind of a thing for them. To feel comfortable in the classroom, that they could stand up and tell their stories. That was probably a neat beginning activity to get everybody comfortable with each other.

It was clear that the lessons presented in Nora's classes were much more than fun activities. She even made efforts to get acquainted with all her new students shortly after school started. "My credibility comes with my relationship

with them,” she commented. “They’ll understand that I’ll do everything I can to help them. I’m not going to humiliate them in any way. So my biggest concern [at this time] is finding out who they are, how they work, those kinds of things.” She had brought in numerous new materials, resources, and ideas to make her classes more appealing. Different methods were utilized to help different children learn. Most of her students felt a great sense of caring and attention from her, and they obviously appreciated her doing so. Some students were doing their work just because they had become so close to her and did not want to disappoint her. Nora’s dedication and hard work paid off when she saw her students learn and grow. In fact, she sees the students’ achievements as her own.

Probably the greatest thing is to see those students with learning disabilities understand something. Especially because they’re used to traditional kinds of teaching where you read and you answer the questions. And they don’t learn that way. That’s part of their problem. So by giving them other options to learning, things that are hands on, interactive. To watch them understand something and get so excited about having success, that is a major accomplishment. It makes me feel really good to see that, because they don’t have a lot of success and that’s one of the reasons they hate to come here. Then on the other end,

with the honors, they're just unbelievable. You know, you give them an assignment, and the things that you get back are just incredible. They can take something little and make it into something just incredible. So I get to see both, I have both sides, and that's very positive.

Much like Nora, Ken also implemented new materials and tried out different methods to enrich his classes. He was always willing to go a step further to make sure his students learned. He often asked questions such as "Did I do a good job teaching?" and "Did I really break it down to their level so they could understand it?" In fact, it had become a habit for him to constantly review what he had done in his previous class and then modify his lesson plans for the next. By continuously doing this, he had gradually become more experienced, relaxed and confident in himself. His classes, therefore, were arranged in a way so that students could enjoy and learn.

Ken also cared about his students' well being in today's society. He seemed to always have time for his students whenever they needed him. Ken did not progress through set stages in this year, just like his previous years. He was always concerned with curriculum, student needs, and management. When asked what he thought he had accomplished at the end of the third year, he replied

I still enjoy doing what I'm doing and I still like the kids a lot....

I do like the interaction with the kids. So I think I'm definitely a better teacher. I think my kids overall enjoy my classes.... I think some of the kids just kind of nail me as, you know, pretty cool, kind of not much older than the kids and I can relate to them pretty good, as a pretty good overall class and easy to get along with, basically just a good guy, I guess.

Judging from Ken's professional performance during the third year, he is definitely much more than "just a good guy." In fact, his achievements and commitment had not only won recognition and trust from his students and their parents, but also from his colleagues. The recognition and support from his fellow teachers had positively encouraged him to continue working to become an even better teacher, and further convinced him that he was successful. Conversations with his colleagues always seemed to reveal how positive they viewed him. He responded "I had a colleague tell me that he put his daughter in my class because he had heard I was the best history teacher here. I haven't been teaching very long and so that made me feel good that a teacher would do that."

Similarly, Nora's work and devotion were highly recognized and valued by her colleagues, who voted her "Teacher of the Year." As a matter of fact, she cared so much about the impact her teaching had on her students—scholastically,

socially, and emotionally—that she was not content with doing only a good job teaching social studies. Like Ken, her progress did not follow a series of stages. Her concerns changed as the classroom needs changed. She became actively involved in cooperating with teachers of other subjects in making a more integral curriculum for the students.

I'm always working with the other departments to try to integrate their curriculum into my curriculum. So I think that's established more respect and more on the level as a colleague rather than an understudy that they're trying to help along and now they feel that they can come to me and ask me for ideas and that kind of things.

Nora's efforts and success won her praises from coworkers which had really encouraged her and made her feel different and special. She believed that her reassuring peers contributed to her growth in this profession.

My first year I was really happy with how supportive this staff was. I was a traveling teacher which is very difficult. But they were always offering me help. "You can do this. Can you do this? Do you need this?" And they would

even sit in and watch and give me some advice on what I was doing. So I think they were very supportive....

Like Nora, Ken was a more experienced teacher with much support from his cohorts during the third year of teaching.

...and getting advice or asking the colleagues and stuff has really helped a lot because this is a pretty helpful place around here. Everybody seems to be willing to help you out if you have a problem. We've got some real veteran teachers here who have been around and can give you different avenues to use in case one's not working.

Ken felt fortunate that he had developed some very good professional as well as personal relationships with his colleagues, who would not hesitate to share their opinions and suggestions with each other. Ken seemed to be always willing to take criticism; and he was appreciative of what they had to say. When Ken made his share of mistakes, whether it was something that happened in the classroom or other things with the schedule, for example, his colleagues would honestly advice him in congenial ways. "They've never been negative about it. They've all kind of joked and made it into more of a little bit of a comical

situation.... And I've got a pretty good sense of humor, so I'm not going to take it the wrong way."

Nora has also built up a very close relationship with teachers in her school by working together with other departments as well as her own. Since she felt more comfortable and relaxed teaching now, she was able to spend more time associating with other teachers the third year. She believed that she had a good reputation among the teachers and that her opinions were taken much more seriously by her colleagues now than when she first began teaching. As a result of that, she became very confident in herself as a teacher. Her relationship with her students, in turn, became even better; she has obviously become more patient and flexible in working with them. An anecdote that happened between her and one of her students the second half of the third year could perhaps serve as an example of her changes in attitude:

I had an incident today where at the beginning of the hour, I wanted the students to sit down, complete their assignment or I'm going to deduct points from participation. And I had a student just sitting there. And this has been brewing for a week or so. He's just continually not doing what he's supposed to. I tell him to go out in the hall. He gets mad, slams the door. I go out there and rather than be confrontational like a little bit of my

first year, it's like "You know, I don't deserve that. I work really hard for you. My goal is to make sure that you learn, this, that, and the other. I don't deserve that behavior." And it changes the whole scheme of things because then he's like "Well, I'm really sorry. I know you don't and this is why I've been acting this way." So it kind of opens up.

There is no doubt that the third year is the most important year for both of the participants in their career so far. The experience, planning and preparation, hard work, and support from colleagues and administrators have paid off. Their students enjoyed not only a better relationship with them, but a quality education as well. The two participants, Nora and Ken, and their students warmed up more quickly than they did before. This also meant that these two beginning teachers did not spend as much time and energy on issues of student discipline or classroom management, although neither has ever slipped their mind. In fact, both of them revealed that they were still searching the most ideal strategies for their classroom management and discipline related problems. Small routines, such as bookkeeping and late homework, still sometimes bother them.

The third year was also a time where new materials, teaching methods and activities were added to their classes. Although both Ken and Nora were much less nervous and much more confident about their teaching than before, they still

talked about obligation and solutions to improve their instruction and activities on a regular basis. The fact that they were so popular among students proves that they were on the right track.

The closeness and trust between the two participants and their students were based largely upon Nora's and Ken's caring for the students' development and the individual student needs. The kind of impact that schooling can impose on their students had always been one of the major concerns.

Summary of Chapter IV

In chapter four, the data gathered mainly through observations of and interviews with two beginning social studies teachers, Ken and Nora, over a period of three years were explored. The professional development and growth of the two participants were the foci of the discussion. Notwithstanding some dissimilarities, the fact that both teachers were experiencing analogous concerns was evident.

Chapter five will present the analysis of the patterns emerged from the data gathered, and implications derived from this research. Possible avenues for further study will be proposed.

CHAPTER V

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore in depth the concerns and involvement that could be experienced by social studies teachers during their first three years of employment. To accomplish this, two junior high school social studies teachers, Nora and Ken, were chosen as the major participants of this study. During the entire investigation, qualitative methods were utilized as the research paradigm. The writer has been fortunate to have the full support and cooperation of the participants, their students, and the principals in attaining these data. These people provided valuable information, interesting ideas, precious insights, true feelings, and much more than what the writer had imagined.

Each of the participants was interviewed at the beginning and end of every school year. Interviews were conducted at the participant's school site and generally lasted approximately one hour. During the interviews, the teachers were asked to respond to a series of questions relating to how they were adapting to their teaching position. Questions usually provided a starting point for the teachers to express their feelings.

All formal interviews were first audio-taped and subsequently transcribed. Data acquired from classroom observations, informal interviews, and student interviews were recorded in a journal. Data from the taped interviews, students'

comments, observations of classroom instruction, and informal interviews were then categorized and carefully analyzed. By using a process of triangulation of data, meaningful categories of information emerged related to the research on the professional development of new teachers. Although future studies on this topic should be encouraged to obtain a clearer and more complete understanding of the novice teachers, the researcher feels confident, even at this stage, in pointing out the fact that the work of a beginning teacher is neither unsophisticated nor lacking in complexity.

Approximately three years ago, Nora and Ken were both employed shortly before school started. Since then, the writer began studying these two new teachers with the hope that a more profound insight would eventually emerge, so that the socialization process and development of a beginning teacher could be better realized, and so that the specific questions that were raised in this study, namely, (a) Do teachers go through a series of stages in a set sequence or are they at multiple stages at any given time period? (b) Are the patterns of stages a teacher exhibits during the first three years of teaching the same for all teachers? (c) What are the concerns of social studies teachers during their first three years of teaching? (d) Do these concerns change or are they transformed over the course of the first three years of teaching? could be answered. Since the three years have been a critical constituent in Nora's and Ken's development as professionals,

chapter five is dedicated to the discussion of these and related issues in a more detailed manner.

There are many dilemmas that a beginning teacher faces every day. As Veenman (1984) concluded, there were eight most perceived problems or concerns that often bother new teachers. These concerns ranged from classroom discipline, motivating students, dealing with individual differences, assessing students' work, relationships with parents, organization of class work, insufficient and/or inadequate teaching materials and supplies, to dealing with problems of individual students. Other significant problems, such as the feelings of isolation, anxiety, fear, and burnout rate at work, could also affect the quality of a teacher's performance at school (McDonald & Elias, 1983; Valli, 1992; Veenman, 1984).

With the social reconstructionist ideas in mind, there is a dire need for us to highlight the fact that while conformity may be highly treasured as a cherished virtue in a school district, it is oftentimes also a medium for perpetuating the mainstream biased ideology. In a research of work tasks and interaction in five elementary schools in contrasting social class communities, Anyon (1979) warned that teachers were often not even aware of the fact that there was a "hidden curriculum." And because of this innocence, teachers themselves are becoming supporters of the "hidden curriculum" without even realizing it. A quick review of the several aforementioned paragraphs informs us at least three vital things. First of all, we need to keep in mind the complexity of teaching. Reforms and

changes in teacher socialization have to be created and evaluated in an extensive manner. Second, school teachers ought to continue working closely with the college faculty, and making the most of the university resources. Finally, it is realized that there is a dire need for improvement of the school environment in terms of teacher socialization.

Implications

Over the past three years, Nora and Ken have both gained much precious experience and knowledge in terms of teaching and growing together with their students. Their professional progress was actually comprehensive, and could be felt and appreciated not only by the students, but by the principals, the students' parents, and the writer as well. The smoothness and success in teaching that they now enjoy is something they could not imagine when they first began teaching, even though they both previously had strong positive influences from their teachers and relatives. They are very confident that they have achieved a very constructive connection with their students in general, and really enjoyed being social studies teachers. Their confidence comes from the fact that they have obviously developed a strong and close relationship with their students. Although they were more like a friend rather than an authority to their students, these two beginners were able to develop quality teaching strategies, which received much

recognition from the administrators, the parents, the students, as well as other teachers. The many thank-you cards from the students, the encouragement from the mentors, and the overall friendly environment have all been important reasons attributing to Ken's and Nora's success stories. Neither ever regretted for the choice of this profession.

Nora and Ken were idealistic about education when they first began teaching. Minor problems such as Ken being assigned a portable classroom and Nora not having a classroom of her own at the beginning of the first year, did not bother either of them. Both of them wanted to become "great teachers" and be able to help their students in every possible way. Their immediate concern at school, however, had been how to familiarize themselves with the school environment. Obviously, their student teaching experiences did not adequately provide them with an awareness of how schools work. As a result, they spent some time learning how and when school routines and procedures should be handled correctly. They were understandably quite nervous during the first few weeks.

From classroom observations, conversations with both of these social studies teachers and their students, and recorded interviews, the writer believes that a pattern has emerged. During their first year of teaching, both participants went through a period of initial fear. Their fear came from all directions and in many forms, among which the school routines and procedures were probably the

most noticeable. Both Ken and Nora experienced a period of uncertainty where they did not know if what they had done was correct. From the very beginning, they were concerned with discipline issues. Both of them saw discipline as a teaching responsibility that was difficult to handle and in need of immediate attention.

For Nora and Ken, their initial concern for classroom management and discipline was characteristic of the responses recorded in previous research studies relating to beginning teachers (Veenman, 1984; Featherstone, 1992; Greenlee & Ogletree, 1993). The fact that they were teaching social studies did not seem to affect their concerns in this area. It seemed that no matter what subject area or grade level teachers were assigned to, they all expressed high levels of concern and experienced varying levels of stress related to the management and discipline aspects of teaching. So far, it would seem that the above mentioned phenomena describe what Fuller and Bown (1975), Burden (1982), and Ryan (1986) called the survival stage of their theory, and Berliner (1988) called the novice stage, and Barnes (1992) called the discovery stage.

In addition, the writer also observed early on from both of the participants what these theorists would label as the “impact,” “mature,” “expert,” or “reflective” stage of a teacher’s development. Both participants realized that there was also a need to improve their methods of teaching. They were constantly seeking new approaches, modern equipment, endlessly revising their

methodology, and always probing possibilities on how they could provide their students with more quality materials, interesting information, and meaningful knowledge. They were both willing to spend extra time and energy on organization, lesson planning, time management, and curriculum enhancement; all because these two new teachers really cared about if and what their students were learning. Although they might worry about how other veteran teachers or administrators might judge them, they were almost always bold enough to try out novel and exciting activities as long as they might be beneficial to the students. They both enjoyed being around the students in class and in extracurricular activities. They both cared very much about their students and their feelings.

By trying out different methods of teaching and discipline strategies, together with the personal growth and the accumulation of teaching experiences, both of them began to feel more comfortable in dealing with their students. Although they recognized the significance of their former education at the university, both of them pointed out the importance of hands-on experiences they gained while actually teaching their students.

At this point it starts to become evident that the stage theory put forth by Fuller and Bown (1975) as well as those developed by Burden (1982), Ryan (1986), Berliner (1988), and Barnes (1992) do not fit these two social studies teachers. These stage theories present a fixed sequence, where later concerns such as instruction do not emerge until the earlier concerns are resolved or they

view stages as representing the main concern at a particular point in time. For my two social studies teachers, the concern for developing sound instructional strategies was just as evident and important during the first few weeks of their career as their concerns for management and discipline. In the initial interviews with Nora and Ken, it was quite evident that they were both concerned about developing sound teaching strategies right from their first few days in the classroom. Yes, they were nervous, a little frightened, and concerned about all the rules, procedures, and maintaining discipline. But they still wanted to develop interesting and educational activities for their students. They valued the support their colleagues gave them, but would not always agree to their suggestions wholesale. The boldness, perseverance, self-examination, and creativity have all been factors of their achievement in this field. To the credit of both these teachers, they were willing to take some big risks early to establish a solid foundation for their teaching.

During her second week on the job, Nora developed a teaching activity where she had her students create a newscast about Ancient Greece. She video-taped the students' presentations and later in the year presented them at the school open house. The activity not only captured the interest of her students, but it helped solidify her belief that as she put it, "teach these kids to really like social studies."

Although Ken did not take a big risk as soon as Nora, by the beginning of his second month of teaching, he was willing “to put it all on the line to teach these kids social studies.” Ken designed and implemented a week-long inquiry lesson that motivated his students and received accolades from his fellow teachers.

With the directions and guidance offered by their school mentors and colleagues, Nora and Ken successfully learned how to get their routines done correctly. Both felt fortunate to have had these teachers and administrators. The writer also believes that they were both very fortunate; not every beginning teacher is guaranteed a supportive staff (Rust, 1994).

Both social studies teachers in this study have built up nice relationships, not only with their co-workers and administrators, but also with the students and their parents. Obviously, they feel much more comfortable and secure teaching in an environment with such a warm and peaceful relationship. What has been found supports the previous work of Rust (1994) as well as other researchers who have concluded that a mentoring program for beginning teachers helps to insure a less traumatic transition from student teaching into a full-time classroom teaching position. As has been seen with these two social studies teachers, it is impossible to eliminate all the problems and apprehensions that go along with beginning teaching, but good mentoring does help to ease the pain for many beginning teachers.

The classroom experiences, the familiarity with the school procedures and routines have made both Nora and Ken more relaxed during their first three years of teaching. As they began to experience the process of changing toward a more comfortable and secure position at work, they both slowly but steadily readjusted the foci of their attention from a more self-oriented emphasis to a more content-oriented and student-oriented emphasis. From the beginning, both of the social studies teachers expressed concerns about their students. It was important for both of them to establish a good rapport with their students. They wanted their students to like them and have them realize they cared about them as individuals. As Nora put it, "they know I care. I care about their grades, but even more, I care that they have learned something. I care that they have learned something about society and being citizens...." Here again, the previous ideas presented regarding stage theory do not apply to these two teachers. It has been suggested that concerns for students, such as those expressed by Nora and Ken, do not occur until previous concerns of discipline and instruction are resolved. Yet, the writer has found that the student concerns were present at the beginning of the first year and continued throughout. The classroom observations verified that at any given time during the day, week, or month, these two teachers were concerned about their students' well-being. This was just as important as instructional and management concerns.

There was one area of the study that did not seem to be a concern for

either of the social studies teachers. That area was content preparation. Neither of the teachers was at all apprehensive about teaching in the content area of social studies they were assigned. As Ken put it, “that’s the least of my worries! I had so many history courses that I know the stuff. The problem is figuring out how to teach it and get the kids to like it.”

Classroom observations throughout the years, as well as informal discussions with both teachers validated this. Other than the first few weeks of the first school year where both teachers were teaching one day at a time, it did not take long for each teacher to become familiar with the course structures and the related content. Colleagues of both teachers expressed the view that my participants “knew his/her subject matter.” Discussions with veteran teachers revealed that they saw both Nora and Ken needing support in the area of instructional decision making and not in the area of knowledge of content. Both Nora’s and Ken’s principals were questioned as to their views regarding the content preparation of these new teachers. The principals revealed that they were pleased with the content background of their particular teacher. They both went on to say that in their initial interview, they were impressed with the teacher’s knowledge of the subject matter. They also revealed that in their classroom observations, there was no problem in Nora’s or Ken’s being knowledgeable about the topic they were teaching.

Since the program both Nora and Ken graduated from required a

substantial amount of course work in the social science content areas (68 semester credit hours), this may have had a direct relationship on their lack of concern for content preparation. It should be noted that previous research conducted by Coates and Thoresen (1976) pointed out that content knowledge was one of the five major concerns of beginning teachers.

Based on the analysis of Nora's and Ken's first three years of teaching, it could be concluded that the stage theories presented by some previous educational researchers (Fuller & Bown, 1975; Ryan, 1986; Berliner, 1988; Barnes, 1992) did not exist in this study. These theoretical models generally view beginning teachers as proceeding from one stage to the next, but only when overcoming the obstacles in the previous stage. However, one must be wary of models. Models tend to frame problems, and in framing them, offer preferred solutions that exclude other, perhaps more promising, possibilities for understanding (Bullough & Baughman, 1997).

It should also be noted at this time that this research study utilized qualitative research techniques while previous studies relied predominantly on quantitative procedures—mainly surveys of teachers. The differences in methodology may lead to different results. When teachers respond only to questionnaires, it is difficult to really know what they think. The use of questionnaires eliminates the rich dialog found in qualitative studies. It is easier to generalize and find groups of information (stages) using a questionnaire; yet

the question must be asked: Do these stages really exist or are they a product of the research methodology?

Nora's and Ken's experiences have shown that all the concerns co-existed on a daily and even an hourly basis during their first three years of teaching. Fessler and Christensen (1992) made the observation that the career cycle of teachers may not be unidirectional. Instead, it represents an ebb and flow with teachers moving in and out of positions in the cycle in response to professional experiences, as well as personal, and organizational influences (Sprinthall, Reiman, & Thies-Sprinthall, 1997). The writer would further extend this viewpoint by indicating that whether or not the concerns are related to management, discipline, instruction, curriculum, or student emotional growth, they are all present in various degrees throughout the first three years of teaching. It was not uncommon for either teacher in this study to start the day being concerned with an instructional strategy, worry about discipline when a disruption arose, and also care about student needs as they progressed through the day. Yet, throughout the day, they never forgot about their concern for instruction. Each day, each week, each month, each year, all the elements found in all stages were present in various degrees in Nora's and Ken's teaching. Other than the first few weeks of teaching where management and discipline were a major concern, no one concern dominated the teaching/learning environment of these two participants.

One thing is clear during the first three years of teaching. These two social studies teachers always seemed to be concerned in various degrees about one or more aspects of their instruction. They, like all good teachers, cared about being the best possible professional. In talking with these two teachers and observing their classroom teaching, the researcher has come to view teacher development as complex, context dependent, and somewhat idiosyncratic, even though most teachers deal with the same issues. To try to describe all beginning teachers progressing through stages, even if those stages are only general categories, seems somewhat simplistic. If there is a theory that can be developed from this type of research, it would be that the uniqueness of each classroom situation with diverse groups of students, coupled with new teachers with varying personalities and teaching skills, cannot be categorized even in the most general model of stages. The large number of exceptions outweighs the usefulness of the model.

Having analyzed the data for this study, the researcher could never overemphasize the complexity and difficulty of the employment of a novice teacher. The success of a beginning teacher relies not only on the teacher him/herself, but also on the cooperation and support from the mentors, students, administrator, teacher education programs, and many others. Future studies, therefore, are not only necessary, but extremely crucial in providing further

insight on the essence of this and related issues, which in turn will be important underpinnings of a quality education.

Suggestions for Further Research

As a results of this investigation, possibilities for additional studies were considered. Although it is believed by this researcher that the experiences of these participants depicted in this study represent what could happen to quintessential beginning teachers during their first several years of teaching, additional research is needed to add to or refute the conclusions of this study.

The fact that the two participants come from similar educational backgrounds, and teach in comparable communities with respect to their sizes, income levels, populations, and racial compositions, could be a potential deficiency. Future studies, therefore, need to explore and compare new social studies teachers from more varied backgrounds, as well as those who teach in a variety of school districts. The atmosphere, expectations, as well as other conditions and standards, may not be the same from different school settings. The attitudes of administrators, the relationships with colleagues, and the interactions with students, as well as parents may all vary. There is no doubt that both of the participants in this study enjoyed and felt very fortunate about the aid and guidance they received from their colleagues, mentors, administrators, and

university faculty. However, it is very possible that the perceived concerns may differ for new teachers in less supportive situations. Indeed, these two teachers may be the exceptions and not the rule (outliers).

One attribute of this study lies in the fact that both participants were young adults, for whom teaching was their first official full-time job, and graduated from traditional teacher education programs. Their relatively young age (25 years old) and inexperience may have affected the data that could have been gathered from other new teachers from a variety of age groups. Hence, further research on older, more socially experienced, and/or alternatively certified beginning teachers is also necessary and ought to be encouraged.

Both of the participants came out of the same university teacher education program which is NCATE approved. Their first year of teaching was supported by a year-long mentoring program, consisting of a master teacher, an administrator, and a university teacher education professor. It is possible that the university teacher preparation program and the state mentoring program are effective in meeting their goals—they are developing quality teachers. Thus, new teachers from different education programs, with and without mentoring, need to be researched.

Another attribute of the participants in this study that could be considered for future research is their personalities and characteristics, which may have played a part in their perception of problems and concerns. Accordingly, future

studies could also incorporate the study of teachers' diaries, journals, and interviews with their friends, relatives and administrators. Huberman (1989) observed that when launching a career, teachers generally fall into two categories—easy or painful beginnings. Easy beginnings involve a prospective teacher who is able to develop positive relationships with pupils, manageable pupils, the sense of pedagogical mastery, and enthusiasm.

Since this research study was designed and conducted by utilizing a series of qualitative research methods, quantitative methods should also be encouraged to pursue the essence of the motif. Although the writer is confident and comfortable with the fact that the findings are applicable to the sampled situations and similar ones, the limitations of qualitative studies are recognized. A more pervasive quantitative survey research, for instance, may further contribute to the understanding of the issue. It would be interesting to compare the data of such a study with the data of this study to see the effects of the choice of research paradigms. Qualitative and quantitative methods could work hand in hand to further search and unveil the concerns of a beginning social studies teacher.

If further research could be prolonged beyond the three year time period used in this study, more new information might be revealed, and a more complete picture may emerge. After more than three years of working with Ken and Nora, it is fitting to end by restating a comment made by Ken explaining how he felt about teaching, "I don't have any problems as far as thinking to myself when I get

up...well, do I really want to go to school today? I mean there's no question that this is the place I want to be." Both Ken and Nora have helped me learn what it is like to start a career in teaching and I appreciate all their assistance and value their friendship.

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CHART A
A Comparison of Five Stage Theories

Stage Theory: A Comparison of Five Researchers' Views

Fuller & Bown
(1975)

Survival	Task	Impact
Concerns	Concerns	Concerns

Burden
(1982)

Survival	Adjustment	Mature
Stage	Stage	Stage

Ryan
(1986)

Fantasy	Survival	Mastery	Impact
Stage	Stage	Stage	Stage

Berliner
(1988)

Novice	Advanced	Competent	Proficient	Expert
	Beginner	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher

Barnes
(1992)

Discovery	Invention	Integration	Reflection
Stage	Stage	Stage	Stage

Note: See appendixes for detailed description of the five stage theories presented

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

Fuller (1969); Fuller and Bown (1975):

They postulated that there were three distinguishable kinds of stages that are characteristic of teachers. The stages always happen in sequence, i.e. later stages do not usually happen until concerns at earlier stages are resolved. A transformation from a more self-oriented attitude to a more pupil-oriented one could be identified during an individual's progress through the stages.

First stage:

Survival stage is where beginning teachers are concerned about their adequacy and survival in the school context, e.g., school routines, classroom management and control, being liked by students, and being evaluated by parents and principals.

Second stage:

Teaching task concerns. Teachers at this stage are focused on materials for pupils, methods used in the classroom, and all the related teaching skills.

Third stage:

Impact concerns. This is the last stage of a teacher's development. They concern with the impact their teaching has on their pupils. Pupils' social and emotional needs and growth are the most important to them at this stage.

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

Burden (1980, 1982, 1990):

According to Burden's theory, teachers will normally go through three stages; viz., survival stage, adjustment stage, and finally mature stage. Burden's stage theory is in essence similar to Fuller and Bown's stage theory.

First Stage:

Survival stage, which usually occurs during the first year of teaching. The major concerns of the beginning teacher are meeting professional responsibilities, adjusting to the routines and to the school environment. With limited teaching experience, beginning teachers are often unable to see themselves objectively, and tend to become wrapped up in their own activities. Subject-centered curricular approach, and limited personal contact with pupils are the norm.

Second Stage:

The adjustment stage is predicted to include the teacher's second, third, and fourth years of school experiences. As classroom techniques are growing and maturing, teacher confidence is also strengthened during this phase. This could be a transitional period with more concern for children's self-concept. Teachers begin

to feel more comfortable and relaxed with subject matter and teaching techniques. They also see the need to use a variety of methods in order to meet pupils' needs.

Third Stage:

The mature stage is the last stage in a teacher's career development that happens normally from the fifth year on. At this phase many teachers begin to feel more professionally secure. They have reached a professional maturity, and are skilled in a variety of teaching techniques. They are, therefore, better able to deal with the stress associated with the work. With good command of the teaching activities and environment, they are willing to continually experiment with new approaches.

APPENDIX C

APPENDIX C

Ryan (1986):

Drawing on the work of Fuller, Ryan distinguishes four stages typical to a school teacher; viz., a fantasy stage, which is the experience preceding school teaching; a survival stage; a mastery stage; and an impact stage.

First stage:

The fantasy stage of teaching begins when a person starts to ponder seriously about becoming a teacher. During this stage, they imagine themselves just like or often better than the best teachers they have had in their lives, and totally different from their worst teachers. This stage plays a significant role in the transition from a student to a teacher.

Second stage:

The survival stage occurs most often between October and Christmas break although it might come at any point during the first year at work. The time span of this stage may last a short while or continue until the end of the year.

However, it usually ends midway through the first year. The school routines, regulations as well as basic teaching techniques and approaches are of constant

concerns during this period. Ryan contends that first year teachers frequently ponder quitting their profession or leaving their current school.

Third stage:

Mastery stage, where teachers are confident about the benefit of what they are doing for their pupils. They become better able to judge pupil progress, and can take pleasure in pupil achievements. This is a phase when teachers feel that they have control of the class; they need no longer to worry about the instructional routines; and they are confident enough to alter planned class activities, and be creative.

Fourth stage:

Impact stage, where the gestalt growth of the pupils is of major concern to teachers. Teachers begin to consider ways to assist and motivate their pupils not only in their scholastic achievements but also the success of their lives. It is also the last stage of a teacher's career development.

APPENDIX D

APPENDIX D

Berliner (1988):

After studying both the novice and the expert teaching performances of different school teachers, Berliner pointed out that there were altogether five stages of a teacher's development: Novice stage; Advanced beginner stage. Competent teacher stage. Proficient teacher stage, and Expert teacher stage.

First stage:

Novice stage is where a teacher is concentrating on learning and becoming accustomed to the school routines. The management of classroom, and the techniques of teaching activities are seen as a set of skills that could be learned by continuous practice and concentration.

Second stage:

The advanced beginner stage is a phase that is experienced by many second- and third-year teachers. With the experiences from work and from being a student before, the teachers become more knowledgeable in basic strategies and teaching techniques. They could even develop an understanding of when to alter or ignore rules.

Third stage:

Competent stage. Teachers now have a better grasp of timing, and a better control of the design of class activities. However, it can be observed that the teaching performance is not yet flexible and flowing.

Fourth stage:

The stage of a proficient teacher can be achieved by many fifth year teachers. Teaching experience, intuition, and knowledge begin to guide performances of a teacher. The teacher now readily picks up information from the classroom and can predict the outcome.

Fifth stage:

Expert teacher. Berliner argued that this is a stage which not every teacher can reach. Teaching performances in the classroom can be described as fluid and effortless. Appropriate behavior with excellent timing has become natural characteristics to the expert teachers.

APPENDIX E

APPENDIX E

Barnes (1992):

The growth of teachers, from novice to master teachers, is mapped by Barnes as the following four stages, or waves, as they were named in her study.

First stage:

Wave one is the discovery stage. This is a phase when teachers are most self-centered and directed. Teachers at this stage are especially concerned about covering the materials; as a result, they have little energy left for effective classroom instruction.

Second stage:

The second wave is named the invention stage. Although the teacher has gained more *real-world experiences*, the *self* continues to remain the major focus. Gradually, the teacher is probing and becoming more accustomed to the challenges in the classroom.

Third stage:

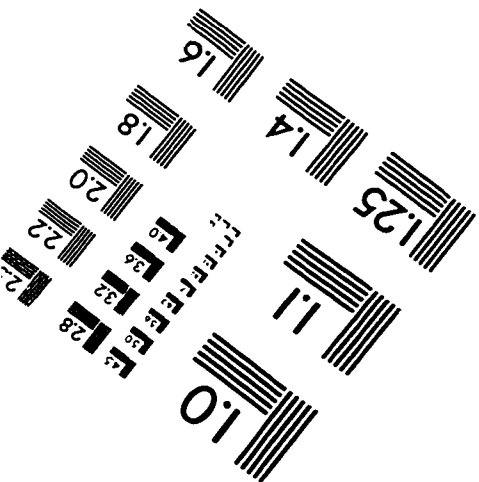
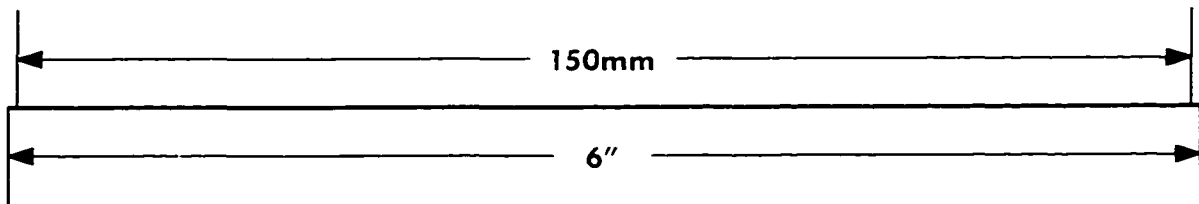
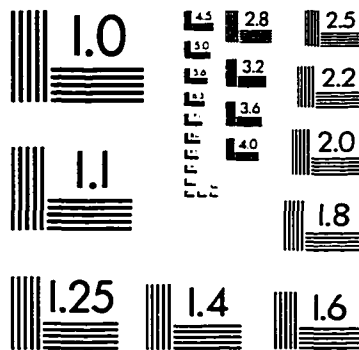
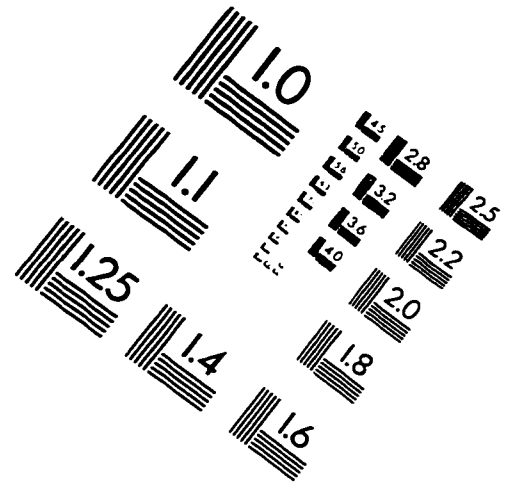
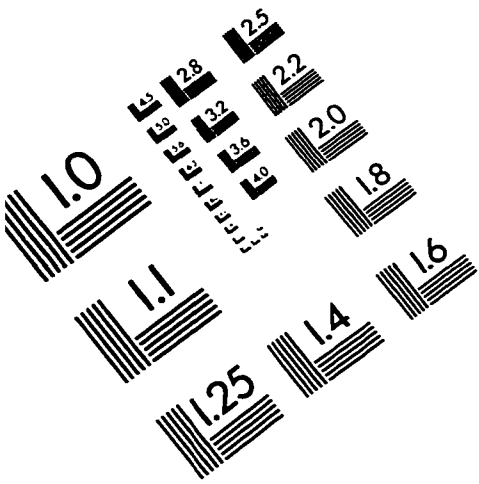
The third wave is the integration stage. Teachers begin to adjust their focus. New

instructional methods are adopted. Friendship and relationships are built with colleagues as well as with pupils. It is during the second and the third stages that teachers become more and more accustomed, comfortable, and creative with their work and environment.

Fourth stage:

Wave four is the reflection stage. This is a phase when teachers are confident enough and perceive themselves as co-learners and facilitators to their students. The progression of these waves (stages) result in a shift from a teacher-centered to a student-centered instruction.

IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



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