



PERGAMON

Teaching and Teacher Education 19 (2003) 95–111

TEACHING  
AND TEACHER  
EDUCATION

www.elsevier.com/locate/tate

# Learning to teach English language during the first year: personal influences and challenges

Thomas S. C. Farrell

*English Language and Literature, National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore 637616, Singapore*

Received 15 November 2001; received in revised form 13 June 2002; accepted 23 July 2002

## Abstract

The transition from the teacher training institution to the secondary school classroom is characterized by a type of reality shock in which the ideals that were formed during teacher training are replaced by the reality of school life. This being so, beginning teachers have special needs and interests that are different from their more experienced colleagues. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the challenges and forms of personal influences, specifically the influence of colleagues, one beginning teacher experienced as he was socialized through different stages of development during his first year as an English language teacher in Singapore.

© 2002 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

*Keywords:* English language teacher education; First-year teacher socialization; Teacher reflections

## 1. Introduction

It has now been established that learning to teach is a complex process (Solomon, Worthy, & Carter, 1993; Featherstone, 1993; Bruckerhoff & Carlson, 1995) and that the first year of teaching has a very important impact on the future careers of beginning teachers (Solomon et al., 1993; Fox, 1995). In fact, some educational researchers (e.g., Varah, Theune, & Parker, 1986) have called the first year for a teacher a “sink-or-swim experience”. The transition from the teacher training institution to the secondary school classroom is characterized by a type of reality shock in which the ideals that were formed during teacher training are replaced by the reality of school life.

This being the case, teachers in their first years have special needs and interests that are different from their more experienced colleagues (Calderhead, 1992). Calderhead (1992) has remarked that: “The novice becomes socialized into a professional culture with certain goals, shared values and standards of conduct (p. 6).” New teachers have to deal with many influences during the first year, two of which include structural influences and personal influences. Structural influences occur at the classroom level, the school level and the societal level. Personal influences, on the other hand, come from other persons the teacher interacts with, such as students, colleagues, administrative people in the school and parents. This is an important issue in first-year teacher development, for it may be the case that several different “teacher cultures” exist in one school and that

*E-mail address:* tscfarre@nie.edu.sg (T.S.C. Farrell).

novice teachers are faced with a dilemma of which one to join (Carew & Lightfoot, 1979).

The purpose of this paper is to identify the challenges that threaten mentorship and socialization opportunities and to describe how a beginning teacher deals with these challenges. Specifically, the study investigates the role that support (from the school and colleagues) played as the teacher developed during his first year in the school.

## 2. First-year teacher socialization and development

Bliss and Reck (1991) define teacher socialization as “the process by which an individual becomes a participating member of the society of teachers” (p. 6). Teacher socialization, they say, is a “learning process which requires developmental growth on the part of the novice teacher” (Bliss & Reck, 1991, p. 6). Fuller and Bown (1975) talk about a developing sequence of concerns for novice teachers. They describe two general stages of development for beginning teachers. The first stage is characterized by survival and mastery while the second stage presents an either/or dichotomy of development: either settling into a state of resistance to change or staying open to adaptation and change of their practice. In the early stage, there are early concerns about survival. Teachers’ idealized concerns (the ideal of teaching before experiencing the reality of teaching) are replaced by concerns about their own survival as teachers. They are also concerned about control of the class and the content of their instruction. In the later stage, teachers become concerned about their teaching performance, including the limitations and frustrations of the teaching situation. Much later, Fuller and Bown (1975) argue that teachers become more concerned about their students’ learning and the impact of their teaching on this learning. Kagan (1992), in her review of 40 “learning-to-teach” studies, affirmed the models of teacher development presented by Fuller and Bown (1975).

More recently, Maynard and Furlong (1995, pp. 12–13) have presented a more complex picture of beginning teacher development and suggest that novice teachers go through five stages: (1) early

idealism, (2) survival, (3) recognizing difficulties, (4) reaching a plateau, and (5) moving on. Early idealism, the first stage, is where the beginning teacher strongly identifies with the students while he/she rejects the image of the older cynical teacher. The survival stage sees the beginning teacher reacting to the reality shock of the classroom and feeling overwhelmed by the complexity of the classroom. The beginning teacher wants to survive with quick fix methods. The next stage of development, according to Maynard and Furlong (1995), is where the beginning teacher gains an awareness of the difficulties of teaching and begins to recognize that teachers are limited in terms of what they can achieve. Now the teacher enters a self-doubt stage and wonders if he/she can make it as a teacher. Beginning teachers then enter a stage known as reaching a plateau where they start coping successfully with the routines of teaching. However, they also develop a resistance to trying new approaches and methods so as not to upset the newly developed routines. They are focused on successful classroom management and not so much on student learning. This later changes, however, to more of a focus on the quality of student learning as the beginning teacher moves into a “moving on” stage of development. Maynard and Furlong (1995) suggest that the beginning teacher needs a lot of support at this stage or he/she will not be able to develop further as a result of possible burnout.

Not all researchers, however, agree that beginning teachers move cleanly through phases or stages as they learn how to teach. Bullough and Baughman (1993), for example, have cautioned against the idea that teachers move through stages as they develop. They suggest that when “learning to teach, one encounters problems in clusters not rows...stages inevitably introduce distortion, an old criticism of stage theories that ought to be kept in mind” (p. 94).

Most studies on first-year teacher development agree on one issue: that beginning teachers need assistance in the form of support during their first year of teaching as they pass through different phases of development. Support may be crucial because beginning teachers have found their first year a period of great anxiety (Johnson, 1996;

Veenman, 1984). This support, especially in the skills of teaching and of the emotional kind, can come from the school authorities and from colleagues within the school (Odell & Ferraro, 1992). However, the importance of these interactions and the influence of these partners for the socialization of beginning teachers are not well understood (Jordell, 1987). For instance, are colleagues to be considered of major importance for the development of new teachers and thus referring to them as “guides and guardians” (Zeichner, 1983, p. 9)? If so, the guardian role means that colleagues have a crucial part to play in the development of first year teachers. Or are colleagues to be considered as a “confirming source of influence” (Jordell, 1987, p. 171), where they do not impact first year teacher development directly? In this latter role, teachers are considered more like peers rather than influential mentors; “teachers have peers but no colleagues” (Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986, p. 508).

Nonetheless, recent research (e.g., Williams, Prestage, & Bedward, 2001) indicates that one of the single most influential factors in teacher socialization and development for beginning teachers is their relationships with their colleagues during their first years as teachers. Williams et al. (2001) caution that if a beginning teacher’s colleagues pursue a culture of individualism (as opposed to collaboration), this will result in “at worst, potentially damaging to the NQT [newly qualified teacher] development and at best, damaging to the longer term interests of the school” (pp. 256–257).

In Singapore, the context of the study presented in this paper, one recent study (two surveys) on teacher socialization and development reported on the needs of local beginning teachers and the professional assistance they thought would be useful during their first years as teachers (Ngoh & Tan, 2000). Ngoh and Tan (2000) surveyed 160 beginning teachers, 102 of whom were primary teachers and 58 secondary teachers (each with less than 3 years teaching experience) by questionnaire concerning their perceived needs during their first years of teaching. They also asked 90 beginning primary school teachers to indicate what kinds of professional assistance they would like during their

first years. Results of both surveys indicate that the majority of teachers wanted help primarily in the area of teaching resources and materials. The second, more comprehensive, survey indicated that the beginning teachers regarded support and cooperation from their experienced colleagues (in the form of a mentor) to be very important during the first year.

Mentoring, defined in this study as a situation in which “a knowledgeable person aids a less knowledgeable person” (Eisenman & Thornton, 1999, p. 81), is well established as a support system for new teachers in many western educational settings. Since the mid-1980s, induction programs in the US, for example, have increasingly provided assistance to new teachers by assigning them to mentors. These mentor teachers have usually been drawn from veteran teachers within a school who help beginners learn the philosophy, cultural values and established sets of behaviors expected by the schools employing them (Little, 1990). Concerned about the rate of attrition during the first 3 years of teaching and aware of the problems faced by beginning teachers, educators saw the logic of providing on-site support and assistance to novices during their first year of teaching. Research indicated that beginning teachers who are mentored are more effective teachers in their early years, since they learn from guided practice rather than depending upon trial-and-error efforts alone. It was found that mentored novice teachers tend to leave the teaching profession at a rate lower than non-mentored novices.

Within English language teaching, Malderez and Bodoczky (1999, p. 4) describe five different roles that mentors can play: (1) they can be models who inspire and demonstrate; (2) they can be acculturators who show mentees the ropes; (3) they can be sponsors who introduce the mentees to the “right people”; (4) they can be supporters who are there to act as sounding boards purposes, should mentees need to let off steam; and (5) they can be educators who act as sounding boards for the articulation of ideas to help new teachers achieve professional learning objectives. Malderez and Bodoczky (1999, p. 4) suggest that most mentors will be involved “to a greater or lesser degree in all five roles.”

However, the mere appointment of a mentor to a beginning teacher in a school is no guarantee the teacher will be successfully socialized into the school. Mentoring relationships may sometimes be unpredictable. Tomlinson (1995), for example, has suggested that some mentors may feel unclear about their roles and responsibilities. He suggests that as experienced teachers “they may have become so intuitive they find it difficult to articulate what in fact they are doing” (Tomlinson, 1995, p. 18) and communicate it to other teachers. Additionally, Maynard and Furlong (1995) observed that the mentors they studied were able to talk about the content of their knowledge, but they found discussing how they applied this knowledge in the classroom more problematic.

In Southeast Asia mentoring has also been incorporated in many teacher induction programs. In Singapore, according to Ngoh (2000), formal mentoring roles are usually assigned to two categories of teachers: senior teachers and co-operating teachers. Senior teachers are expected to serve as mentors to new teachers and to student teachers during the practicum. What follows is an account of the challenges one beginning English language teacher in Singapore encountered as he negotiated his first year in the profession.

### 3. The study

#### 3.1. Context

Singapore has a heterogeneous multi-ethnic population of more than three million people (Singapore Department of Statistics, 1999). It is not easy to classify the position of the English language in Singapore because there are Singaporeans who use English as a first, second or foreign language (Gupta, 1998). Even though English has been spoken on the island of Singapore since 1891, it was not the language of daily life for the majority until recently. English has been the medium of instruction in the school system of Singapore since 1987 (Xu & Tan, 1997). Today, Singapore has four official languages: English, Mandarin, Malay, and Tamil; other languages and dialects abound on the island.

#### 3.2. Background to the Singapore education system

The Singaporean school system is divided into 6 years of primary and 4 years of secondary education (Ho, 1998). These schools are divided into neighborhood schools (government funded) and privately funded schools (although they also receive limited state funds). The context of this study was a neighborhood secondary school. According to the Ministry of Education (MOE) in Singapore, each neighborhood secondary school offers two courses, Special and Express, or Express and Normal, the latter to include both the Normal Academic and Normal Technical course. The Special course is a 4-year course leading to the Singapore-Cambridge General Certificate of Education (GCE) ‘O’ level examination. In this course, pupils study English and Higher Chinese, Higher Malay or Higher Tamil, in addition to the usual humanities, mathematics and science subjects. The Express course is also a 4-year course leading to the GCE ‘O’ level examination. In this course, pupils study English and Chinese, Malay or Tamil and are offered a curriculum similar to that in the Special course.

Regarding the teaching of the English language in the schools in Singapore, Foley (1998, p. 248) has observed that recently methodologies have been moving slowly from teaching English as a foreign language to “methodologies of English as the dominant language of education—using a first-language approach to teaching.” He points out that the model of English in the classroom will often show “indigenization.”

#### 3.3. Teacher’s background

The teacher, Wee Jin (a pseudonym) enrolled at the National Institute of Education (NIE), Singapore for a 1-year program, the Post-Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE), to certify him as secondary school teacher in Singapore. Wee Jin came to the NIE with a BA (English language and Mathematics) degree (all PGDE students enter with a degree). The students in the PGDE program take a 10-month program in which they are exposed to teaching practice and theory classes. The NIE is the sole teacher training institution in

Singapore for teachers teaching in the MOF schools, and is responsible for the supervision of the teaching practice component of all Singaporean trainee teachers. Teaching practice usually occurs towards the end of the PDGE program where the teachers are placed in the schools for 9 weeks of practice teaching. This researcher was assigned to be Wee Jin's supervisor for the period of teaching practice.

### 3.4. *Researcher's background*

At the time of the study I had been a language teacher educator at the NIE, Singapore for 4 years. I first met Wee Jin when he was my student during his PGDE course. I was then appointed his supervisor for teaching practice. During Wee Jin's practicum period I took note of how he was socialized into the school and the profession. It is beyond the scope of this paper to outline his socialization in detail. In another paper I have discussed two main, and related, issues concerning Wee Jin's socialization and development that took place during the practicum, the issues being communication with and support from school authorities and colleagues (Farrell, 2001).

As is common in the education system in Singapore, Wee Jin was posted to a different school (but with a similar student body as the practicum school) for his first year as a teacher. This school, a neighborhood school (government funded), was similar in many ways to his practicum school in terms of school size and student backgrounds (according to Wee Jin students were mainly from the middle to lower middle classes). Because of problems (such as lack of support from both administrators and colleagues) Wee Jin experienced during his practicum, he was less than enthusiastic about starting his teaching career. I asked him if I could examine his socialization and development during his first year as a teacher by talking with him frequently and observing some of his classes, and he agreed to this.

### 3.5. *Research methodology*

This study utilized an interpretative approach (e.g., Lacey, 1977) to Wee Jin's socialization and

development as a teacher during his first year. Such an approach seeks to understand a teacher's development from the perspective of the individual teacher (rather than the observer) and attempts to show the influence of the unique elements of each individual teacher's passage through his/her first years. For this we focused on his specific context, the school, and how he interpreted his own process of becoming a teacher during his first year (Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1985; Kuzmic, 1993; Solomon et al., 1993). Consequently, qualitative (Bogan & Biklen, 1982) rather than quantitative methodologies were used. As Kuzmic (1993) has observed:

Quantitative research designs have tended to focus on groups of teachers, which has two harmful consequences for understanding the socialization process: (1) perspectives of individual beginning teachers have not been explored as they formed, developed and changed in the process. (2) With a focus on groups individuals have come to be viewed as powerless to resist the biographical or institutional forces which shape their views of teaching so as to conform with traditional norms and values which operate within schools (p. 16).

### 3.6. *Data collection and analysis*

Data were collected from the following sources: the researcher's field notes and written-up log, 6 h of classroom observations, transcriptions of classroom data and post-observation conferences, semi-structured interviews with the teacher and the school principal (transcribed and coded), and regular journal writing on the part of the beginning teacher.

For me, the log was, as Ely (1991) has suggested, "the place where each qualitative researcher faces the self as instrument through a personal dialogue about moments of victory and disheartenment, hunches, feelings, insights, assumptions, biases, and ongoing ideas about method" (p. 69). I wrote up my field notes more formally, including my hunches, questions, and future actions.

Additionally, Wee Jin wrote journal entries about his adjustments during his first year. I did

not specify what he could write about; we agreed just that he would write as often as he wanted and that I would respond if he requested me to do so. He wrote many of these journal entries in the form of electronic mail (e-mail) messages and others on paper which he also passed on to me.

I observed Wee Jin teaching English language classes for a total of 6 h (10 classes) during the second semester of his first year of teaching: at the beginning of the semester, in the middle of the semester and toward the end of the semester. I had one major interview with Wee Jin after the first semester of his first year and another major interview at the end of his first year. Each interview with Wee Jin focused on what had occurred concerning his socialization and development during his time in the school. I started each interview with general questions such as asking him how things were going in his classroom with his students and how he was getting on with his colleagues and the authority structure within the school. Then, I encouraged him to talk about whatever topic he thought was important to him concerning his adjustment to his first year as a teacher. Additionally, I interviewed the principal of the school about Wee Jin's induction into the school. Specifically, I asked the principal to explain the school's induction program for new teachers and asked him to comment on Wee Jin's adjustment to life as a teacher in the school. This interview took place at the end of Wee Jin's first year. I wrote notes during the interview and wrote up the interview more formally and detailed in my researcher's log later the same day.

The data were analyzed using a procedure of data reduction, and confirmation of findings. During data analysis, the interviews were transcribed for accurate interpretation of emergent patterns and themes. The data were placed in categories through analytic induction (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). This technique involved scanning the data for categories of phenomena and for relationships among these categories. The categories that emerged from analysis of the interview data were compared to the categories derived from the analysis of the classroom observation and the field notes.

#### 4. Data reduction

The interviews, discussions, journal entries and classroom observations were coded by inductive analysis procedures (Johnson, 1992). Analysis commenced with a very tentative start list of codes (Miles & Huberman, 1986) that were to guide the process. For help with this phase I followed Jorgensen's (1989) ideas for consulting prior studies on similar topics. Jorgensen (1989, p. 110) observed, "As different ways of arranging materials are explored, you may find it useful to consult or revisit existing literature and theories related to your problem" (p. 110). Costas (1992, p. 258) also provided support for the use of a priori framework in qualitative data analysis. In discussing the coding of data he remarked:

Researchers who attempt to build on the discoveries of research conducted in situations and on topics similar to the ones they are investigating may refer to research or published works in the relevant area. Categories are then derived from statements or conclusions found in the literature of other researchers who investigated a similar phenomenon.

Pennington and Urmston's (1998) general categories were used as an initial a priori heuristic for the analysis of the data generated by the interviews, classroom observations and journal entries. Pennington and Urmston's (1998) categories consist of instructional planning, teaching approaches, and professional relationships and responsibilities. These are briefly explained as follows: planning encompassed any and all planning Wee Jin was responsible for which included lesson planning, unit and semester planning, and planning for examinations. Teaching approach concerned his theory, philosophy and beliefs about teaching English language and his actual method of teaching English language. Professional relationships included all Wee Jin's interactions, and communications with his colleagues and principal and his perceptions of these interactions and communications. However, I did not restrict data analysis to these categories and remained open to establish further categories as the data accumulated. As data were analyzed, instances of the

phenomenon under study were labeled; labels, or concepts, were compared one against another and those sharing the same characteristics were entered under a category; categories were then developed further until they were saturated by comparing incidents with incidents. When all of the incidents were readily classified and sufficient regularities emerged, the coding and recoding process ended.

Thus, the following categories emerged from the data: reality (of the first year), support (from others) and (Wee Jin's) stages of development.

### 5. Confirmation of findings

In order to establish the trustworthiness (a qualitative measurement alternative to reliability and validity) of my findings, I assessed the quality of the data by checking for “credibility, transferability, and dependability” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 300). They suggest that several activities can be engaged in to increase “the probability that credible findings will be produced” (p. 301). The first of these activities is prolonged engagement. They define this as “the investment of sufficient time to achieve certain purposes: learning the ‘culture,’ testing for misinformation introduced by distortions either of the self or the respondents, and building trust” (p. 301). As the present study took place over a two-semester (12-months) period, this constitutes prolonged engagement.

Another activity that Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest to improve the probability that the findings and interpretations will be credible is the technique of triangulation. Stake (1995) argues that triangulation can be achieved with “multiple approaches within a single study” (p. 114). Thus, I collected data by audio recordings (later transcribed) of each meeting with Wee Jin, and I also wrote extensive field notes (later written up in a more detailed log) during each event. After each event, such as an interview, I consulted my notes of the event before writing up a detailed log. The teacher also wrote regular journal entries. During data triangulation, a piece of evidence was compared and crosschecked with other kinds of evidence (e.g., comparing researcher's log with

interview notes and audio tape transcripts). Additionally, the teacher read and authenticated this author's interpretations of the findings. This form of member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) occurred twice in this study; first, after all the data had been analyzed and a draft written up; second, when the “final” version of this paper had been written up.

I attempted to confirm my findings by “transferability”. Creswell (1994) points out that the purpose of a qualitative research is “not to generalize findings, but to form a unique interpretations of events” (p.159). Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that a qualitative researcher “cannot specify the external validity of an enquiry; he or she can provide only thick description necessary to enable someone interested in making a transfer to reach a conclusion about whether transfer can be contemplated as a possibility” (p. 316). I have attempted to provide such a description with the details presented in this paper. I have attempted to live up to my responsibility to “provide the data base that makes transferability judgments possible on the part of potential appliers” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316).

Finally, the concept of reliability must be addressed. The reliability of a study depends on whether the findings would be repeated if the study were replicated in similar conditions (with similar subjects and context). Like the problem of external validity, the specificity of a qualitative study makes it difficult to replicate. Following Creswell (1994), I have stated “the researcher's position, the central assumptions, the selection of informants, and the biases and values of the researcher” (p.159) in order to increase the chances of replicating the study in another setting.

I have outlined the reasons that have guided my choice of methods of data collection and analysis. Additionally, I have attempted to guard against threats to internal reliability by again following the advice of LeCompte and Goetz (1982). They suggest having mechanically recorded data in the form of audio recordings; thus, my primary data is preserved. So, I attempted to confirm the trustworthiness of my findings by checking my data for credibility, transferability, and dependability.

## 6. Findings

Wee Jin's experiences during his first year are summarized under the following sub-headings: the reality of his first year, the role of support from colleagues and the administration, and the levels or phases he went through during the year.

### 6.1. Reality

Wee Jin's first "reality shock" (Veenman, 1984) was that his teaching load greatly increased from what he had experienced in his practicum. During his practicum he was only expected to teach 16 periods of 35-min classes per week. Now he was teaching 35 periods of 35-min classes each week. He was also given many other tasks to accomplish outside of his teaching. For example, some of the extra load he had during his first year included counseling some students under his care and organizing some extra curricular activities (ECA, now called CCA [co-curricular activities]). However, when he expressed his worry about this increased load to other long-term teachers, his senior colleagues said it was, in fact, a light load (a point later confirmed by the principal). Nevertheless, the teacher remarked that he was feeling tired right after the start of his first semester. Wee Jin wrote about this in his journal:

School work has been piling up like an avalanche [such] that I can hardly breathe with all the invigilation, extra-curricular activity (ECA), lesson observations by Heads of Department, and remedial sessions on top of normal teaching load. The worst part is that everyone claims they have already given me "breathing space" as a new teacher...what's going to happen when they really "load" me? (Wee Jin's journal, July 20th)

Although the more experienced teachers had remarked (to Wee Jin) that his teaching and administrative load was much lighter in comparison to theirs, Wee Jin felt overwhelmed during the first few weeks. Additionally, he had to face some dilemmas right after starting his first year as a teacher.

Two major dilemmas he encountered during the first year were the setting and marking of examination papers and his relationship with the lower proficiency (English language) students. Regarding the examination system in the school, he said that his basic dilemma was writing exam papers for levels he was not teaching, since he did not know what they had covered. This, apparently, was standard practice for the school. He wrote:

Some teachers are being asked to set exam papers (English) for levels which they are not teaching at all? What about being asked to mark such exam scripts (and the paper was not set by you either)? Would such arrangements cause teachers who have been teaching Express [higher level] classes to "under-value" scripts of Normal [lower level] students and vice-versa? (Wee Jin's journal, September 5th)

However, his experiences with marking got worse when teachers were required to mark subjects they had not even taught. He was becoming disheartened. He wrote: "I had to 're-mark' some of my Math papers because the poor teacher who had to take on my load (so that I could take on someone else's English load) is not a 'real' Math teacher" (Wee Jin's journal, September 20th). He felt overwhelmed by the sheer number of exam papers that he had to read and grade. He commented:

My English language HOD [Head of Department] has given me the following: 196+152 scripts of Summary Writing (whole of Sec 1+2 Express) & 196+89 scripts of Report Writing (whole of Sec 2 Express & Normal Academic). Please note that I do not even teach these classes and I did not set the paper either. Based on 5 min per script for Summary Writing and 10 min per script for Report Writing, I need something like 80 solid hours to complete the marking (and all marks have to be handed in by Friday, 16th Oct). That works out to at least 9 solid hours of marking per day (on top of teaching load & invigilation) (Wee Jin's journal, September 5th)

When Wee Jin mentioned that he had to spend a lot of time grading the scripts (at 5 min a script),



the HOD said “so-and-so can mark in 2 minutes.” However, Wee Jin found this unfair because he did not teach that class and so it was all too new for him.

Another dilemma he faced during the first year was how to relate better with the lower proficiency (English language) students he was teaching. He noticed that these students had discipline problems but he did not want to punish them. He had his own method of dealing with discipline problems: “I feel that lower proficiency students who exhibit discipline problems respond better to teachers who rationalize with them” (Wee Jin’s journal, September 5th). However, he said that the older teachers were looking at his enthusiasm for helping the lower level students in a sarcastic way. He wrote:

Some older teachers have indeed made remarks about ‘new brooms that clean better’—new teachers. They find it amusing (not amazing) that we have such enthusiasm (especially for Normal Tech students). I guess most of such teachers are skeptical of our sustained enthusiasm. (Wee Jin’s journal, September 5th)

Nevertheless, he came up with a unique way of dealing with the problem of disciplining his students; he developed a “Pupils’ Promise Form” that he said was successful for him with the lower proficiency pupils. He wrote: “For discipline I use a ‘Pupil’s Promise Form’ in which they promise not to do whatever again” (Wee Jin’s journal, September 20th).

## 6.2. Support

Williams et al. (2001) suggest that the culture of any school in which a beginning teacher works exists on a continuum from a highly individualistic school culture to a collaborative culture where all the teachers are willing to help one another. Wee Jin found himself in a school that exhibited a culture of individualism. This culture of individualism was manifested in the school by Wee Jin’s not being allowed to observe any colleagues classes. The situation was not helped by situational constraints such as Wee Jin’s physical isolation from the main staff room as he was placed in a

separate office on the opposite side of the block. There were limited opportunities of sharing because colleagues were not easily visible or accessible since they were not all sharing the same staff room. Wee Jin’s physical location denied him access to opportunities for support.

Lack of communication with his other colleagues was in fact the main dilemma Wee Jin said he faced during his first year. He remarked,

I didn’t talk much with the other teachers because they were always busy and into cliques...only two new teachers [from the same teacher training institution] are here. (Interview, December 15th)

Wee Jin continued to talk about the different types of teachers he noted at his school and that these “cliques” made it hard for him and the other new teachers to adjust during their first year. He explained the different types of teachers in the school:

I see three types of teachers: the group that came together three years before [from the teacher training institution]...I think there are seven of them. The older teachers transferred from other schools all stick together. Also, we have the old teachers who have been here a long time and keep to themselves. (Interview, December 15th)

Wee Jin noted, however, that he did receive positive support from the principal of the school. Wee Jin suggested that his major achievement during his first year as a teacher was that two lower proficiency students were promoted to a higher proficiency level and that this was not easy because of school constraints on this possibility. This is very true for the Singapore context, where once a student is placed at a particular level of proficiency, it is very difficult to have that placement changed. This was a remarkable achievement for this first-year teacher. It also assumes that the school principal was open to new teachers’ ideas. Wee Jin noted that another positive aspect of this school, especially during his first semester, was that the principal was receptive to his new ideas. For example, he was willing to listen and accepted his idea (originally

discussed with other staff at an informal gathering) of abolishing the mid-term exams.

However, this top level of support was the only example of mentorship that Wee Jin experienced during his first year as a teacher. Although the teacher-training institute said that he would have a mentor, Wee Jin noted that after one introduction, he had no more communication with his “mentor.” As [Ngoh and Tan \(2000, p. 7\)](#) have observed, although schools in Singapore may have mentor systems, these “support arrangements are often on an ad hoc basis. What is needed in each school [in Singapore] is a systematic and structured program of induction that has teacher mentoring as its key element.” This type of “structure” was lacking in Wee Jin’s socialization process since his mentor was appointed (one more “job” for this particular teacher according to Wee Jin). I am not sure why this teacher was appointed mentor, but he had not been trained for such an assignment. Wee Jin only met his mentor one time during his first year and this during his first week in the school. In fact, Wee Jin stated that he thinks that senior teachers will not have any influence in his future as a teacher. He is so taken aback with this experience that he hopes “to work with some teachers in the future; I need to share some materials so as not to seem selfish, but not all materials so as not to seem a show-off. I do not want to seem as dictating how lessons should be carried out” (Interview, December 15th). He said that he really worries about forming good professional relationships with his colleagues. In Wee Jin’s case, a properly trained mentor could have provided a more sheltered experience during his first semester/year and he could have acted as a bridge between the new and the more established teachers at the school

### 6.3. *Stages of development*

Wee Jin seems to have gone through several stages during his first year as a teacher. First, he entered the school with some early idealism characterized by a strong identification with the students, as he really wanted to make a difference in their lives. He also rejected older cynical teachers at the school. He then suffered some

shock from the reality of the classroom as he moved through his first semester as a teacher. In his quest to survive this phase, Wee Jin sought quick fixes for the discipline problems he was experiencing with one of his classes, but he still encountered some difficulties with the class and his communication with his colleagues. He next entered a phase of beginning to recognize these difficulties and their causes, but he also wondered if he would make it as a teacher. He wrote about this when he was bewildered with all the reading and marking of the exam scripts: “I thought I was the ‘misfit’ in the department; everyone else seems to agree with the HODs [that he should speed up with the marking of exam papers]” (Wee Jin’s journal April, 12th). These reflections began toward the end of the first semester and the beginning of the second semester.

As the first year progressed, Wee Jin began to cope better with his classes (his teaching methods and classroom management). He had established certain routines for himself both inside and outside the classroom and was trying to fit into the culture of the school. [Maynard and Furlong \(1995\)](#) call this phase “reaching a plateau.” Wee Jin had also started to enter [Maynard and Furlong’s \(1995\)](#) final phase called the “moving on” phase as he was beginning to pay more attention to the quality of his pupils’ learning. However, I cannot say that he followed each phase in a sequential manner and he may have been experiencing more than one phase at any one time, while lapsing back into a previous phase. I would say that he was continually moving back and forth between [Maynard and Furlong’s \(1995\)](#) final three phases: recognizing difficulties, reaching a plateau, and moving on.

Toward the end of the first year Wee Jin began to focus on the quality of his student’s learning. He wrote in his journal that he realized his real reason for being a teacher was to meet his students’ needs. He began also to reflect on what has influenced this philosophy. He wrote:

I have a definite philosophy of teaching: I think that all students always come first. If a

particular program of course of action will benefit them, I will endeavour to carry it out. If it's not going to benefit the students, I will scrap it or play it down. (Wee Jin's journal, April 12th)

He said he developed this philosophy when he was a student in secondary school in Singapore and he liked Math in school and admired the way it was taught. He wrote,

Pupils can learn well if they start liking the subject (like I did with math in school). To make the students like the subject: first, inject fun and humor. Second, relate it to real-life situations. Third, give students a chance to pass [in order] to build-up self-esteem. And fourth, acknowledge effort and any improvement. (Wee Jin's journal, April 12th)

Wee Jin said that he developed empathy with his students during his first year as a teacher; as he remarked in the final interview: "I put myself in their shoes." Moreover, he developed the following attributes during his first year as a teacher: good communication skills, he became innovative in terms of teaching ideas, and he learned to plan more carefully. However, he said he still did not know how to become an effective disciplinarian.

Even though Wee Jin suffered from a reality shock during his first year, he also made an impact. For example, acting on his feedback, the principal has agreed to look into the idea of abandoning the mid-term examinations. Also, even though other teachers believed that the lower proficiency students at the school had little hope of progressing beyond their current levels, Wee Jin said that he would not give up on them. However, his early ideas about how and when to discipline his students had changed during his first year. During his second semester his English class became more difficult to handle. As a result, Wee Jin lost some of his idealism about teaching and became uneasy about what he perceived his limitations to be. For example, toward the end of the second semester he wrote me:

Today, I had to make the whole class stand in the quadrangle just to make them learn how to keep quiet and line up after recess. Prior to

these two incidents, I had been using my "test-proven" style of rationalizing with individual recalcitrants which obviously does not work for this class (Wee Jin's journal, March 20th)

Wee Jin also became pragmatic and realistic about the demands of the situation. He said that he judged a lesson successful on the following criteria (and in the following order): (1) what the pupils have learnt as a result of the lesson; (2) relevance of lesson to pupils' development in the subject; (3) discipline during lesson; and (4) if the pupils enjoy the lesson or understand the topic/lesson better. Shulman (1986) says that novice teachers usually measure a successful lesson in terms of students' positive responses in class and levels of participation and motivation and not on teacher preparation, planning and teaching methods, as they should. Wee Jin measures a successful lesson in terms of students' enjoyment but he also includes students' learning. However, he did not include his teaching methods, preparation or planning as contributing to a successful lesson. Wee Jin considered a lesson a failure if: "(1) Students' do not find the lesson relevant to them. (2) Lesson was not well prepared. (3) Teacher had no rapport with students. (4) Lesson was pitched way above pupils' standards. Unrealistic expectations by the teacher." So, at the end of his first year as a teacher Wee Jin suggested that the teacher and his/her preparation and presentation of materials are most influential in success or failure of a lesson.

## 7. Discussion

Zeichner and Tabachnick (1985) have suggested that beginning teachers may be vulnerable and unformed and that they may be made to conform to institutional norms for teacher behavior. They continue: "Willingly or unwillingly, beginning teachers are seen to be cajoled and molded into shapes acceptable within their schools" (Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1985, p. 1). However, Wee Jin seems to have adopted a variety of social strategies to help him cope during his first year as a teacher. Lacey (1977) developed a framework for social strategy that determines conformity to

institutional norms. This consists of three levels of conformity. The first is ‘internalized adjustment,’ whereby the novice teacher complies with authority. The second level is ‘strategic compliance,’ whereby the teacher complies with the constraints of situation, but retains his/her private reservations. The third is ‘strategic redefinition’; here the novice teacher successfully changes and develops acceptable behaviors in a situation. Wee Jin used strategic compliance strategy when trying to set standards for discipline in his classroom and when he was trying out different modes of classroom management. He used the third level strategy, ‘strategic redefinition,’ to introduce alternative methods for teaching reading comprehension and summary writing skills to his students, without revealing this to the HOD of English language. In fact, he abandoned the traditional approach of teaching reading, which usually consists of asking the students to read a passage and answer the comprehension questions. Wee Jin said that this was not “teaching” as “it consists only of testing the students.” He incorporated more of a reading strategies approach where he explained, showed (modeled), and evaluated the use of effective reading strategies (e.g., prediction, skimming, and scanning) for his students.

Even though Wee Jin seems to have coped admirably during his first year as a teacher, he did so largely on his own as he did not have any real support from the school or his colleagues. This latter form of collaborative collegiality (Hargreaves, 1994) seems to have been missing from Wee Jin’s school. By way of an overall comment, Wee Jin said that he had been surviving better than he had expected when his initial impressions crystallized on the first day. Yes, he did survive during his first year, but was this survival at the expense of his professional development? Williams et al. (2001) suggest that survival, as opposed to professional development, is the description of a new teacher working in a highly individualistic culture within a school.

The following recommendations, although based on the strongest evidence from Wee Jin’s development as a beginning teacher of English language in Singapore during his first year, may have implications for English language (and other)

teachers in other contexts. Successful teacher socialization is of great importance because, as Veenman (1984) has remarked, the more problems beginning teachers perceive themselves to have experienced, the more likely they are to leave teaching. It is vitally important for Singapore too, where the MOE statistics show that the attrition rate for new teachers is approximately 25% (Ngoh and Tan, 1999).

Two key players (there are of course more) have a crucial role to play for the successful induction of language teachers into the profession of teachers: the *school* in which the teacher starts teaching in, and the *teacher* himself/herself. These two players working together may ensure that teachers have the necessary support to survive and develop as teachers during their first years.

### 7.1. *The school*

More than likely, most schools have an “official” induction program in place (as has Wee Jin’s school). The purpose of an induction program according to Schlechty (1990, p. 37) is “to develop in new members of an occupation those skills, forms of knowledge, attitudes and values that are necessary to effectively carry out their occupational roles.” In fact, Singapore schools are required to conduct induction programs for new teachers (Ngoh & Tan, 2000), but there is no uniformity as to how these programs should be implemented. The standard induction program includes the following: pamphlets that outline the school rules and regulations, and other school documents that explain the school system to the new teacher. Wee Jin’s principal showed me the pamphlets that he gave Wee Jin when he first entered the school. These included the rules of the school and various papers outlining teaching excellence. Wee Jin did not mention or comment on these pamphlets, however. Although these documents may be helpful for new teachers, less formal explanations (over coffee with senior colleagues) of the contents of the pamphlets might be a more effective way of introducing the school to each new teacher.

Additionally, the mentorship system could be supplemented with a more informal system of

collegial working relationships. The formal mentorship program can continue but it could well be supplemented by a buddy system to help familiarize new teachers with the school routines. A buddy can be a critical friend who coaches and guides the new teacher while acting as a protector by shielding his/her protégé from potentially damaging contact with others in the school. This buddy could act as a mentor (but in a non-judgmental manner) while observing the new teacher teach. As Wee Jin commented at the end of his first year: “New teachers need a lot of affirmation and support to pull through the first year. Obtaining feedback from a volunteer buddy without worrying about any negative implications would also go a long way in helping teachers to grow.” As a volunteer, the buddy, while acting as a willing participant in the new teacher’s induction, ought to be given recognition for this important role by the school and the principal. This recognition could be in the form of a reduced teaching load (as the increased work load is a major complaint of many “officially” appointed mentors) during the first semester of the beginning teacher’s tenure so that the buddy actually has free disposable time to ease the new teacher into the culture of the school.

Moreover, arrangements could be made whereby beginning teachers themselves have fewer teaching hours than their more experienced colleagues in order to give them time to adjust to the realities of the job. It could be that in some schools new teachers’ skills are taken for granted and thus they are given full responsibilities from the very first day of work. Wee Jin’s sudden jump from 16 periods to 35 periods was a real shock for him. This “shock” could destabilize already anxious new teachers and have adverse effects well beyond their first year of teaching. These new teachers can end up in such stressed out states that they abandon the profession after only a short period of time (Varah et al., 1986). Not only did Wee Jin experience this increase of an already heavy teaching load, he also had other duties that included a lot of marking of exam papers, and getting involved in EAC after school hours with the students. It is interesting that the principal did not find this a problem and remarked that new teachers have to “learn how to work smart.”

Nevertheless, Wee Jin felt that sometimes he did not have time to understand what he was doing. So, special timetable arrangements (at least during the first semester) could be made for new teachers in order to give them the space they need to adjust to school life.

Connected to the teaching load is the type of classes a new teacher is assigned to teach. Wee Jin was given too many lower proficiency classes in English language to teach. This responsibility placed a heavy burden on Wee Jin, considering that he had to deal not only with their under-achieving in English, but also with their behavioral problems. It may be that these extra problems for new teachers could overload their psychological adjustment to the school. The so-called “difficult” classes, if given to beginning teachers, can be instructional if they are supervised under the guidance of a mentor.

## 7.2. *The teacher*

Lortie (1975) has best characterized the relationships that Wee Jin seems to have experienced with his colleagues during his first year: “live and let live, and help when asked” (p. 195). An important question is, did Wee Jin ask for guidance or was he waiting to be told what to do? Wee Jin may have given up too early, or easily, on his senior colleagues since they may have been burdened with their own heavy teaching loads. It may have been wiser for Wee Jin to become more assertive and ask for advice and assistance from his senior colleagues rather than waiting for them to intervene.

The beginning teacher himself/herself plays a vital role (some may say the beginning teacher has more responsibility than the other four major players) in recognizing the reality of life in a school and as such should remain open to advice from the school personnel (the principal, mentor, senior teachers). For example, beginning teachers like him could become more proactive by drawing up a list of questions about the school and requirements for beginning teachers before they enter the school. Teacher education courses could help out here by providing examples of various different contexts that beginning teachers may find

themselves. These examples could cover the school culture, the administrative procedures and practices of the school and a description of the community (parental involvement, and community support). The beginning teachers could be encouraged to seek answers to the following questions concerning the context:

- **School:** What is the organization of the school? Do I have a copy of the staff handbook, school rules, and any other school brochures? Who is the non-teaching staff (clerical, computer and science technicians, librarians and photocopy helpers) whom I can ask for assistance?
- **Organization:** Whom do I report directly to? Does the school have an induction program for beginning or new teachers? Who is my mentor? How often should I meet my mentor? What are my duties during recess, lunch, and after school? Do I have ECAs? Do I have to teach remedial classes? What is my timetable? Where are my classrooms?
- **Subject:** What classes will I be teaching and is there a written syllabus for each class? What are the required textbooks? What are the schemes of work I need to follow? How do I do assessment and record keeping?
- **Pupils:** What proficiency levels are the students and what English language skills have they attained? Who taught them previously and can I talk to that person? How should I counsel and/or discipline my pupils?

Some of these questions may seem obvious, but by posing and attempting to get answers to them, beginning teachers can develop greater awareness for their own professional socialization and take more explicit responsibility for their own professional development.

There are other important players in the induction of new teachers, such as the teacher training program/institution that the teacher has just graduated from and, especially in the case of Singapore, other agencies (the MOE; other countries may of course have different organizations controlling the selection and placement of teachers). Just because teachers have graduated from an institution, it does not mean that teacher

educators can relinquish their responsibilities for ensuring a successful transition for the first-year teacher. Houston, Piper, Hollis, and Selder (1979, p.19), for example, have suggested that teacher training institutions provide an “opportunity [for preservice teachers] to experience fully the responsibilities of teaching.” To achieve this they suggest that teacher preparation programs provide a 1-year supervised internship experience for the preservice teachers. However, the reality of the Singaporean education system (and many others too, I assume) would not allow for such an internship because of the number of trainee teachers and the lack of available resources for such supervision. However, teacher training institutions can prepare beginning teachers by having them read and analyze case studies of beginning teachers as they navigate through their first year of teaching.

In addition to the school, the first-year teacher, the teacher training institution, and government institutions such as the MOE (or other such government agencies involved in selection and posting of teachers) have a role to play in insuring the successful socialization of beginning teachers. To this end the MOE in Singapore, for instance, has started a Teachers’ Network for all its teachers at all levels. Within this Network, beginning teachers have a special program to cater to their needs. For example, according to the MOE’s web page beginning teachers who participate in this group can obtain support and counseling from their more experienced colleagues.

Not many such case study examples of English language teachers during their first year exist in the literature at present. This is surprising for in order to establish an effective knowledge base for English language teacher education, teacher educators must have an adequate understanding of schools and schooling and the social and cultural contexts in which learning how to teach takes place (Freeman & Johnson, 1998). Freeman and Johnson (1998) continue:

Studying, understanding, and learning how to negotiate the dynamics of these powerful environments, in which some actions and ways of being are valued and encouraged whereas

others are downplayed, ignored, and even silenced, is critical to constructing effective teacher education (p. 409).

Therefore, in order to build up a corpus of case studies of how English language teachers are socialized and developed during their first year, studies similar to the present one need to be carried out in different contexts. Researchers may choose to replicate this case study's methodology (a qualitative study approach) or establish a different research design. Additionally, larger-scale studies of how English language teachers are socialized and developed into the profession need to be conducted in the context of this study (Singapore) and in other contexts to see if there are mismatches between the teacher preparation programs and the realities of teaching. The results of these studies can be incorporated into the teacher training and education courses so that preservice teachers can become more aware of the realities of the teaching contexts they are about to enter.

## 8. Conclusion

The case study outlined in this paper has shown that the school has enormous responsibility in making the teacher feel welcome within a supportive environment. Within the school context, Wee Jin found that collegial support was most important for him in his transitional first year as a teacher. In order to facilitate the new teacher through his/her first year, this paper argues an additional support system ought to be included in the formal school induction process. This could consist of a critical friend, a buddy teacher from the school who volunteers to help guide the new teacher through his/her first year. The teacher himself/herself can also do a lot to make sure he/she has prepared adequately to have as smooth an induction as possible.

Although generalizations from this type of qualitative study may be difficult, much of what is described and discussed in this case study may nevertheless have relevance for any English language teacher's practice and context. Be that as it may, we may never really understand fully

how beginning teachers are socialized into the language teaching profession and this may not be at all bad. Lortie (1975) has said that the socialization of teachers is a riddle and difficult to examine, and as Bullough and Baughman (1993, p. 93) have suggested, "wonderfully mysterious." It may be that teacher socialization and development is idiosyncratic and as such remains at the level of the individual (Ball & Goodson, 1985), but that is as yet undecided and it is certainly not to say that it defies thick description.

## Acknowledgements

The author wishes to express his appreciation to Wee Jin for allowing him to enter his teaching life, and to John Farrell for his insightful comments on this study, as well as the reviewers and editor of *Teaching and Teacher Education* for their suggestions.

## References

- Ball, S. J., & Goodson, I. F. (1985). *Teachers' lives and careers*. London: Falmer Press.
- Bliss, L.B., & Reck, U. M. (1991). *PROFILE: An instrument for gathering data in teacher socialization studies* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 330 662).
- Bogan, R., & Biklen, S. K. (1982). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon Inc.
- Bruckerhoff, C. E., & Carlson, J. L. (1995). Loneliness, fear and disrepute: The haphazard socialization of a student teacher. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 24, 431–444.
- Bullough, R. V., & Baughman, K. (1993). Continuity and change in teacher development: A first year teacher after five years. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 44, 86–95.
- Calderhead, J. (1992). Induction: A research perspective on the professional growth of the newly qualified teacher. In *The induction of newly appointed teachers, general teaching for England and Wales* (5–21).
- Carew, J., & Lightfoot, S. L. (1979). *Beyond bias: Perspectives on classrooms*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Costas, M. (1992). Qualitative analysis as a public event: The documentation of the category development process. *American Educational Research Journal*, 29, 253–266.
- Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research design: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. California: Sage Publications.

- Eisenman, G., & Thornton, H. (1999). Telementoring: Helping new teachers through the first year. *T.H.E. Journal*, 26(9), 79–82.
- Ely, M. (1991). *Doing qualitative research: circles within circles*. London: Falmer Press.
- Farrell, T. S. C. (2001). Teacher socialization during the practicum. *Prospect*, 16(1), 49–62.
- Featherstone, H. (1993). Learning from the first years of classroom teaching: The journey in, the journey out. *Teacher's College Record*, 95, 93–112.
- Feiman-Nemser, S., & Floden, R. E. (1986). The cultures of teaching. In M. C. Wittrock (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teaching* (3rd ed., ) (pp. 505–526). New York: Macmillan.
- Foley, J. A. (1998). Language in the school. In J. Foley, T. Kandiah, Z. Bao, A. F. Gupta, L. Alsagoff, C. Ho, L. L. Wee, I. S. Talib, & W. Bokhorst-Heng (Eds.), *English in new cultural contexts: Reflections from Singapore* (pp. 244–269). Singapore: Oxford University Press.
- Fox, D. L. (1995). From English major to English teacher: Two case studies. *English Journal*, 84, 17–25.
- Freeman, D., & Johnson, K. E. (1998). Reconceptualizing the knowledge-base of language teacher education. *TESOL Quarterly*, 32, 397–417.
- Fuller, F. F., & Bown, O. H. (1975). Becoming a teacher. In K. Ryan (Ed.), *Teacher education: The seventy-fourth yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education* (pp. 25–51). Chicago: National Society for the Study of Education.
- Goetz, J., & LeCompte, M. (1984). *Ethnography and qualitative design in educational research*. San Diego: Academic Press.
- Gupta, A. F. (1998). The situation of English in Singapore. In J. Foley, T. Kandiah, Z. Bao, A. F. Gupta, L. Alsagoff, C. Ho, L. L. Wee, I. S. Talib, & W. Bokhorst-Heng (Eds.), *English in New Cultural Contexts: Reflections from Singapore* (pp. 106–126). Singapore: Oxford University Press.
- Hargreaves, A. (1994). *Changing teachers, changing times: Teachers' work and culture in a postmodern age*. Trowbridge: Cassell.
- Ho, W. K. (1998). English language teaching in southeast Asia: Continuity and change. *Asian Englishes*, 1, 5–30.
- Houston, R., Piper, M., Hollis, L., & Selder, B. (1979). *Problems and perspectives of beginning teachers: A follow-up study*. Houston, TX: University of Houston.
- Johnson, K. E. (1992). Learning to teach: Instructional actions and decisions of preservice ESL teachers. *TESOL Quarterly*, 26(3), 507–535.
- Johnson, K. E. (1996). The vision versus the reality: the tensions of the TESOL practicum. In D. Freeman, & J. Richards (Eds.), *Teacher learning in language teaching* (pp. 30–49). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Jordell, K. O. (1987). Structural and personal influences in the socialization of beginning teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 3, 165–176.
- Jorgenson, D. (1989). *Participant observation: a methodology for human studies*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Kagan, D. M. (1992). Professional growth among preservice and beginning teachers. *Review of Educational Research*, 62, 129–169.
- Kuzmic, J. (1993). A beginning teacher's search for meaning: Teacher socialization, organizational literacy, and empowerment. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 10, 15–27.
- Lacey, C. (1977). *The socialization of teachers*. London: Methuen.
- LeCompte, M., & Goetz, J. (1982). Problems in reliability and validity in ethnographic research. *Review of Educational Research Journal*, 52, 31–60.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Little, J. W. (1990). The mentor phenomenon and the social organization of teaching. In C. B. Courtney (Ed.), *Review of research in education*, vol. 16 (pp. 235–297). Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.
- Lortie, D. C. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A Sociological study*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Maynard, T., Furlong, J. (1995). Learning to teach and models of mentoring. In: Kelly, T., Mayes, A. (Eds.), *Issues in mentoring*. London: Routledge.
- Malderez, A., & Bodoczky, C. (1999). *Mentor courses: a resource book for teacher-trainers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1984). *Qualitative data analysis: a source book of new methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Ngoh, M. S., & Tan, I. (1999). Beginning teachers' needs and concerns, and the forms of assistance they require: As perceived by beginning teachers. *Paper presented at the annual educational research association of Malaysia conference Malacca, December 1-3, 1999*.
- Ngoh, M. S., & Tan, I. (2000). Support for beginning teachers in Singapore schools. *REACT*, 1, 1–9.
- Odell, S. J., & Ferraro, D. P. (1992). Teacher mentoring and teacher retention. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 43, 200–1999204.
- Pennington, M., & Urmston, A. (1998). The teaching orientation of graduating students on a BATESL Course in Hong Kong: A comparison with first-year students. *Hong Kong Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 3(2), 17–45.
- Schlechty, P. C. (1990). *Reform in teacher education: A sociological view*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 332981)
- Shulman, L. S. (1986). Those who understand: Knowledge growth in teaching. *Educational Researcher*, 1, 4–14.
- Singapore Department of Statistics (1999). Statistics Singapore <http://www.singstat.gov.sg/FACT/SIFsif3>.
- Solmon, M. A., Worthy, T., & Carter, J. A. (1993). The interaction of school context and role identity of first-year



- teachers. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 12, 313–328.
- Stake, R. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Tomlinson, P. (1995). *Understanding mentoring: Reflective strategies for school-based teacher preparation*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Varah, L. J., Theune, W. S., & Parker, L. (1986). Beginning teachers: Sink or swim? *Journal of Teacher Education*, 37, 30–33.
- Veenman, S. (1984). Perceived problems of beginning teachers. *Review of Educational Research*, 54, 143–178.
- Williams, A., Prestage, S., & Bedward, J. (2001). Individualism to collaboration: The significance of teacher culture to the induction of newly qualified teachers. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 27(3), 253–267.
- Xu, D., Tan, P. L. (1997). Trends of English use among Chinese Singaporeans. In: Brown, A. (Ed.), *English in Southeast Asia 96, Proceedings*. ELAL, NIE: Singapore.
- Zeichner, K. M., & Tabachnick, B. R. (1985). The development of teacher perspectives: Social strategies and institutional control in the socialization of beginning teachers. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 10, 1–25.