

Chapter 7

Ecological Cycle of the Novice Teachers in the Induction Process

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter, the condition of the novice teachers is scrutinized within Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (EST). The theory was originated in the psychology concerning human development. The nests in EST are dealt with concerning the novice teachers. "Microsystem" is considered as a professional "family" for them to make them acquire the ecological environment of the school. The parents of the students and the school administrators and the residents of the school environment are included in "mesosystem." The educational system is totally defined as "exosystem" and all other systems such as economic and political systems are involved in "macrosystem." "Chronosystem" focuses on development and transformation of the novice teachers to become real teachers in time. Among these nests, the novice teachers have face-to-face contact with the first two nests and they have secondary contact with other though they sometimes get affected more. Moreover, this theory contributes to the professional development of these within the educational socio-cultural context.

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INTRODUCTION

It is highly believed that the development of novice instructors in the context of the schools is crucial for understanding the ecological context of the education system and the schools. The novice teachers are defined as the ones who are recent graduates of the related departments at the universities but have little experience in the real educational context. They are obliged to comprehend the current context for themselves to establish a professional identity in that specific context, i.e. ecology. This can sometimes turn into a struggle for them (Fantili & McDoughall, 2009). This makes the ecological side worth to be researched and scrutinized.

Teacher induction programs are significant for the novice teachers to adapt into the school climate and “engage in discourse and mediate behaviors” (Scherff, 2008, p. 1318). Barnes (2016) examined the sociocultural challenges of the pre-service teachers and their reactions towards these responds and one of the novice teachers in this study (p.249) described her experience: “I do feel unprepared, but it’s the kind of unpreparedness where I know it can only be addressed through experience.” This is such a naive and sincere way that he or she feels worried and wobbled. The mission of the teacher induction programs, different from the preservice education, is to facilitate the novice teachers to set their own values, to comprehend context and to describe their experience. This chapter is believed to provide a more detailed look into comprehending and evaluating the ecological cycle of the novice teachers in Turkey. Even though it is limited to Turkish context, it is still thought that this theory would contribute into the professional development of the novice teachers within the socio-cultural context in the global world.

Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory: Summary

This theory was originated in the field of the human development psychology. Bronfenbrenner (2009, p.21) defined ecology as below:

The ecology of human development involves the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation between an active, growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives, as this process is affected by relations between these settings, and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded.

It conceptualizes the context for the human development in a set of five nested structures within the next, like ‘a *matryoshka* doll’. The first one, microsystem, is defined as a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given setting with particular physical and material

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