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TOWARD A THEORY OF CONTINUOUS SOCIALIZATION FOR ORGANIZATIONAL RENEWAL

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CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is focused on the developmental study of an alternative theory of organizational socialization. This introductory chapter consists of four parts. First, a broad overview and critique of literature surrounding organizational socialization is presented to set the stage for this study. Second, the problem and the need for this study are made explicit. Third, the research question for the study is stated. Finally, an overview of the chapters to follow is presented.

An Introductory Consideration of the Phenomenon of Organizational Socialization

Historically there has been an understanding that there are mechanisms by which each individual learns the appropriate "modifications of behaviour and the values necessary for the stability of the social group of which he is a member" (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989, p. 910). The process by which such behaviors are learned was called *socialization.* Terminology associated with the process of *socialization* dates back to the 14th century. Regarding the movement of the individual through various stages of life, Brim (1966) stated that society demands, "the individual meet these changed expectations, and demands that he alter his personality and behavior to make room in his life for newly significant persons such as his family members, his teachers, his employers, and his colleagues at work" (p. 18). The primary indicator of success of such socialization was the transfer or perpetuation of the culture:

> The individual acquires the culture of his group(s) through socialization, which includes for our purposes two main divisions. One, acquires an understanding of the recognized statuses—the traditional positions—in his society, learning the names so that he is able to locate other individuals in the social structure, as well as identify himself...Secondly one learns, of course, role prescriptions and role behavior with the associated modes of feeling. (Brim, 1966, p. 4)

This understanding of socialization throughout the lifecycle from childhood to adulthood was applied to the work setting in the early 1900s. In light of learning from other socialization settings, the intended outcomes of socialization to the workplace looked very similar: learning, adjustment, and culture acquisition (Louis, 1990; Tuttle, 2003). In combination with other tactics affecting the entry process of individuals, socialization was thought of as a process to increase job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and tenure (Wanous, 1980). One of the largest expected outcomes of employing socialization tactics was to lessen the tremendous costs associated with "premature turnover" (Wanous, 1980).

Theory development efforts concerning organizational socialization have generally focused on one of three perspectives: (1) that of the *individual,* (2) that of the *organization,* and (3) an *interactionist* perspective of them both. The first perspective is characterized by a concern for the individual's experience of socialization; it seeks to understand the individual process of adjustment during socialization. The second, or organization, perspective is characterized by an examination of the organization's role in the socialization process and the organizational setting and tactics used. The third perspective attempts to balance the individual and organizational perspectives. This interactionist perspective explores the ways in which actions of the organization and actions of individuals influence the socialization process and outcomes.

The research from each theoretical perspective has provided knowledge about different aspects of socialization. Individual perspective research has provided insight into the individual experience of socialization, coping strategies, and the effects of individual differences. Research on organizational influence has provided insight into organizational contexts, various organizational strategies and tactics of socialization, and the development of instruments for measuring strategies and outcomes. Finally, the interactionist perspective has provided insight into the combination of organizational and individual factors and introduced the influence of intercultural factors, as well as the possibility of industry-specific factors.

Apart from the organizational socialization literature examined for this study, research concerning the emerging needs of businesses was reviewed. Extensive scholarly and popular business literature began referencing the magnitude and rate of change in business and the need for organizations to develop the ability to continuously adapt, to learn, and to evolve with such change (Allee, 1997; Amidon, 1997; Collins, 2001; Goss, Pascale & Athos, 1993; Hurst, 2002; Kotter, 1995; Marsick & Watkins, 1999; Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, Roth, & Smith, 1999; Shaffer & Thomson, 1992; Waterman, 1987). This literature argued that, while organizational values could stay the same, organizational systems, processes, products, services, and even beliefs and behaviors would have to change. In essence, both tangible and intangible elements of the organization must be considered for change in order to sustain success. The business literature focusing on developing organizational renewal capacity appeared contradictory to the socialization research literature that essentially focused on organizational culture perpetuation.

Several conclusions derived from this literature helped to shape the need for this study:

1. The origins of *socialization* are in the understanding of how individuals are taught the appropriate behaviors, values, and norms to adjust and function within their local and national cultures.
2. *Organizational socialization*, then, was originally conceptualized from the understanding of how socialization to local and national cultures occurred.
3. Some organizations seek to perpetuate systems, processes, and organizational cultures that have facilitated success by way of several methods, one of which is organizational socialization.
4. Some organizations are continually evolving, adapting, and reinventing themselves, leaving behind old systems, processes, and organizational cultures. To date, organizational socialization has not been explicitly conceptualized to meet this need for continuous organizational renewal.
5. One major differentiating factor between organizations seeking stability or maintenance of their current methods and those seeking agility and continuous renewal appears to be that some organizations rely heavily on the needs of a continually shifting market, which in turn requires these organizations to quickly shift their direction and practices as well. These types of organizations are often for-profit.
6. The application of currently conceptualized organizational socialization theory promotes stability and maintenance and is believed to hinder agility and continuous renewal.

The Problem and the Need

While every age of business has had defining features, the current age at the onset of the 21st century is often defined by pluralism or diversity of many forms. Some recent examples are the explosion of technological innovations, dramatic shifts in workforce demographics towards increased heterogeneity, and more concurrent and larger-scale organizational changes and restructurings; many have noted an increased pace of change altogether. Both the scholarly and the popular press express the need for companies to be agile in the face of change as a key competitive advantage. Pivotal work on organizational change highlights the view that organizations, "are trying to respond quickly to external changes and think more imaginatively about the future...through all of this, they are trying to shape their destiny, and thereby achieve long-term financial success" (Senge et al., 1999, p. 5). The fact that it is critical for any social, biological, or ecological system to interact with its changing surroundings and adapt with agility to those surroundings has been well noted (Capra, 1996; Marsick & Watkins, 1999; Senge et al., 1999; Wheatley, 1999).

Organizational systems and processes, then, must be in place to facilitate such agility (Allee, 1997; Amidon, 1997; Goss et al., 1993; Marsick & Watkins, 1999; Shaffer & Thomson, 1992). Marsick and Watkins (1999) argued that organizational adaptation and change are facilitated through the development of an organizational structure and culture that focus on learning. The authors liken the process of developing such an organization to sculpting:

> We conclude that the sculptor of the learning organization has to see in her mind's eye, and shape structures towards, that which nurtures

> learning. She then creates, sustains, or alters existing approaches to foster this capacity. She will chip away at all of the existing systems, attitudes and practices that thwart learning. (p. 17)

Therefore, those organizational attributes that do not facilitate agility should be under scrutiny.

The literature suggests that organizations, seeking to be agile in the face of change, too often focus only on changing tangible elements of the company, such as products, services, processes, and training programs (Goss et al., 1993; Shaffer & Thomson, 1992). Attention to the organization context, or culture, can at times be missing from organizational practices to facilitate renewal. (Goss et al., 1993; Kotter, 1995; Schein, 1985). Martin (1993) described one interpretation of how such an oversight can occur. He stated that an organization is formed with a founder's vision of both the product or service delivered and the operational manner in which that should be done. Steering mechanisms are formed to enact that vision, defined as the "processes, assumptions, rules, and behaviors that are woven into systematic choice at all levels of the organization in every discipline" (Martin, 1993, p. 119). According to Martin, organizations go astray when those inside them work to keep the steering mechanisms aligned with the vision and lose sight of keeping them aligned with the external environment. Mechanisms that were once successful soon become obsolete given changes in the market. Martin and others (Collins, 2001; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Schein, 1985) noted that organizations often rely on what has made them successful in the past, hindering thoughts of pursuing new directions. Martin (1993) argued, "steering mechanisms disrupt good feedback precisely because they are what *provided* good

feedback when the company's earlier strategy was on target. They obscure new evidence with reaches for the older truth" (p. 121).

Throughout the literature, there are examples of organizations seeking change and renewal by merely rearranging existing practices (Collins, 2001; Goss et al., 1993; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Shaffer & Thomson 1992; Strebel, 1996). It takes little effort to comprehend that, in these organizations, organizational culture and socialization could be holding back real change. Those organizations willing to question the very foundation upon which they were built, and every reconstructed foundation built since, are the ones which many say will be the agile organizations, able to respond to and even dictate the market (Gibbons, Limoges, Nowotny, Schwartzman, Scott, & Trow, 1994; Senge et al, 1999; Wheatley, 1999).

What at first appeared to be conflicting research—organizations seeking maintenance and stability of past success versus the idea that all must be in flux for success—has been reconciled as presenting a gap in the organizational socialization theory knowledge base. There has been significant development of organizational socialization theory that seeks to maintain an organization's way of life, its values, attitudes, beliefs, and practices. However, there appears to be little or no significant theory development on organizational socialization to aid organizations in their task of continuous renewal.

Given the recognized gap in organizational socialization theory, the focus on for-profit organizations seeking continuous organization renewal has been established for this theory-building effort (see Figure 1.1.). It may be possible that all organizations need to seek continuous organization renewal for success and survival, but this cannot be stated

with certainty. It can be posited with a high degree of certainty, however, that at least some for-profit organizations seek this renewal and are searching for systems and processes to support such efforts. It is to meet this need, then, that an alternative theory of socialization for organization renewal is important.

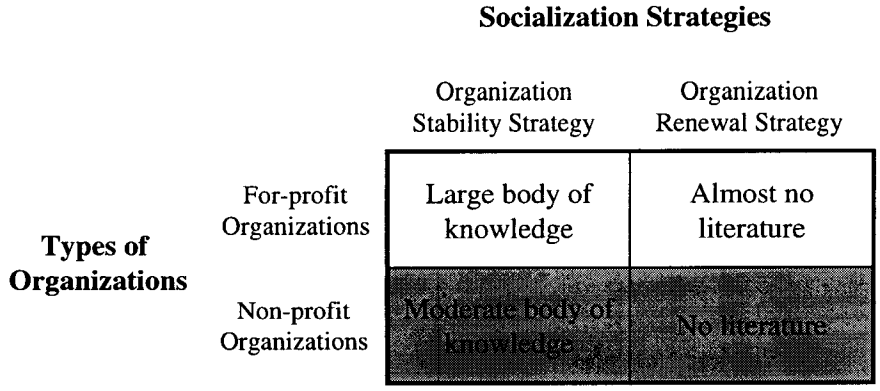


Figure 1.1. The Gap in Current Organizational Socialization Theoretical Knowledge Addressed in this Study

The Problem Statement and Purpose

Organizational literature suggests that, in order to survive and thrive in the business environment of today, organizations need to have processes and systems in place for continuous learning and adaptation; they need not only quick reflexes for change but skills for the thoughtful forward positioning that will influence and drive the business environment (Allee, 1997; Amidon, 1997; Hurst, 2002; Wheatley, 1999). Any process or system that appears to hinder agility should come under scrutiny. The problem being addressed by this study is as follows:

> *An examination of the process of organizational socialization, as it is currently conceptualized, reveals its inability to facilitate agility within the organization;*

instead, its purposes, desired outcomes, and characteristics appear to perpetuate a stable and unmoving organization.

Given this problem statement, the purposes of the study are:

> (1) to further explore the validity of the argument that the current framework for *organizational socialization* hinders organizational agility by perpetuating an existing organizational culture and the potential benefits that reworking the argument may have for organizations, and (2) to develop an alternative theory for *organizational socialization* that meets the agility needs of organizations given this more dynamic business environment.

To achieve this purpose, this study will examine and build from relevant scholarly and popular literature and will begin to build the new theory for organizational socialization using sound theory-building research methodology.

Guiding Research Questions

The following research question and associated sub-questions serve to guide this research:

Can an alternative theory of *organizational socialization* be developed to aid in the continuous facilitation of organizational agility and renewal?

a. Can the alternative theory of *organizational socialization* be conceptualized to incorporate necessary elements for continuous organizational agility and renewal?
b. Can the alternative theory of *organizational socialization* be validated as playing a part in facilitating continuous organizational agility and renewal?

The Structure of this Study

Chapter One provides a brief introduction to the phenomenon of organizational socialization and outlines the need for this study. A general overview of the purpose, or goals, of this study is also offered, along with the guiding research questions that frame this study.

Chapter Two presents a review of previous theory and research contributions to the knowledge base of organizational socialization. Three classifications of theoretical focus are used to differentiate theory contributions on the topic: individual, organizational, and interactionist. Additionally, research efforts that followed are classified using these categories and their contributions to the overall understanding of the phenomenon are stated. Based on this literature research and on a search of foundational definitions and an etymological search of terminology, the purpose and intended outcomes of organizational socialization are described. The conceptualization of the phenomenon and the organizational needs it meets are contrasted with the emerging needs of some organizations to show the gap in the theory base.

Chapter Three describes the methodological considerations for this study, including the guiding research questions and the resulting choices of methodology and methods. Theory building was chosen as the primary methodology for developing knowledge around this study's research questions. Dubin's eight-stage theory building research methodology was chosen as the theory-building strategy. It is there that the main steps in developing this theory of organizational socialization are presented.

Chapter Four represents the major contribution of this study: namely, the completion of the first several stages of Dubin's theory-building research methodology,

resulting in a clear conceptualization and description of the phenomenon. Presented in detail in this chapter are the units of the theory, the laws of interaction, the boundaries of the theory, and its system states.

Chapter Five begins to orient this conceptualized theory of organizational socialization towards testing in the natural world by outlining propositions for the theory, pinpointing empirical indicators of the model components, and delineating testable hypotheses for the theory. The final steps of testing some portions of the theory and reiterating the cycle are outside of the scope of this study. However, the deliverables from this study are immediately accessible and applicable in a research agenda. One such research agenda is presented as a direction for future research.

Finally, Chapter Six explores the many implications of this study. Implications are presented for both socialization theory and socialization in practice. Additionally, consequences and opportunities for the field of HRD are discussed.

CHAPTER TWO:

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is twofold. The first is providing a foundation for an understanding of organizational socialization. The knowledge base of organizational socialization is presented, including both theory and research contributions. Understanding of the phenomenon is expanded by outlining several conceptual areas that are intertwined with the process of organizational socialization in its business context. These areas were synthesized from broad literature research. Case study examples are presented in support of these conceptual areas. The second purpose is showing the gap in the knowledge base by comparing what is currently known about organizational socialization with what needs to be developed in view of the contemporary reality of organizations, ultimately establishing the need for this study.

Origins of Organizational Socialization

A fact of business, regardless of the economic conditions, is that organizations will always need to bring new members into their systems. Some of those members will become active, participating, performing members of a system; others will not, and still others will depart from the system. While it is beneficial for some individuals to leave, some strong contributors will inevitably leave as well. For well over a century, there has been an effort to scientifically detail the factors that affect the *entry* process, for better or for worse. Organizational practices designed to ensure some measure of *fit* between the individual and the organization have become commonplace and are often still used today.

Examples of such practices are: job and task analysis; recruitment; selection and job placement; measurement for aptitudes, skills, and abilities; personality assessment; vocational preferences, and training (Wanous, 1980). From the perspective of the organization, part of the rationale for focusing so heavily on an appropriate fit was the immense cost incurred from 'premature turnover.' Replacement costs were determined to be astronomical, because the organization had invested significant time and money in recruitment, selection procedures, salary, benefits, and likely training (Wanous, 1980). The desired outcomes of an effective entry process were performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and tenure (Wanous, 1980).

Such efforts to curb premature turnover by assessing for some measure of compatibility were mostly clustered at the beginning of the entry process, before the individual crossed the organizational boundary to become a member. However, what became clear over time was that each major role change "involves socialization into the new role and setting. And, considering the variety and number of roles that the typical adult holds between high school and retirement, we can see that organizational socialization is a pervasive process throughout the life cycle" (Louis, 1980, p. 230). In other words, there was a connection made between the way in which children and adults were socialized throughout their lifecycle to feel adjusted and function effectively in new roles and the way in which individuals must become accustomed to their organizational roles (Brim, 1966; Louis, 1980; Van Maanen, 1976; Wheeler, 1966). Hence, significant attention was focused on understanding how an effective process of socialization to the organization, during entry and beyond, could be constructed to diminish the problem of premature turnover.

Definitions of organizational socialization are almost as numerous as articles written about it (Feldman, 1981). In general, organizational socialization was conceptualized in the 1950s as a process for ensuring that individuals would come to appreciate the values, ability, expected behaviors, and social knowledge essential for assuming their new organizational roles and for participating as organizational members (Louis, 1980). While this raised awareness of the formal and informal processes organizations were already using to induct new members, it also illumined the reality that even unconscious messages and actions on the part of an organization can affect the socialization process (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Research began to show promise for organizational socialization to become another method of strengthening the compatibility between the individual and the organization, this time by adjusting the attitudes and beliefs of individuals already inside the organization (Wanous, 1980).

Knowledge Base Development of Organizational Socialization Theory

"Theories have a domain over which they are expected to mirror the empirical world. Beyond that domain it may be problematic as to whether the theory holds. What separates the domain of a theory from the 'beyond' is a boundary" (Dubin, 1983, p. 27). The foundational boundary questions for this theory have been the possible influences of the individual or the larger cultural context of the environment on the outcomes of the socialization process. Foundations of organizational socialization theory take three different perspectives on this question.

The first perspective is characterized by a concern for the individual's experience of socialization; it seeks to understand the individual process of adjustment during socialization. The second distinct perspective is characterized by an examination of the organization's role in the socialization process. These authors view the organizational setting and tactics used as the most critical area to understand. The final area perspective in foundational organizational socialization theory is attempts to balance and integrate the previous two perspectives; it is referred to as the interactionist perspective. This perspective explores the ways in which actions of the organization and actions of individuals influence the socialization process and outcomes.

The majority of theoretical work concerning organizational socialization attends to the individual experience of adjustment. A search of literature was conducted, searching *ABI Inform, Expanded Academic Index,* and *Psych Info.* The search was conducted using *organizational socialization, occupational socialization,* and *socialization* as keywords, and resulted in 81 articles on organizational socialization, revealing 22 concentrating primarily on theory development, the majority falling into the category of conceptualizing the individual experience (see Table 2.1.). The empirical work that followed built on these theoretical developments, utilizing the same terminology, definitions, and theoretical conceptualizations.

Individual Focus

The research interest in socialization to the workplace came after the realization that socialization occurs beyond childhood. In fact, that it occurs in several different occasions and places throughout adulthood. As the individual encounters new expectations for his or her behavior, society demands that "the individual meet these

changed expectations, and demands that he alter his personality and behavior to make room in his life for newly significant persons such as his family members, his teachers, his employers, and his colleagues at work" (Brim, 1966, p. 18). Therefore, the primary source of information about how socialization to the work setting occurred was drawn from previous research on socialization in childhood and other adult socialization settings. The primary indicator of success of socialization was the transfer or perpetuation of the culture:

> The individual acquires the culture of his group(s) through socialization, which includes for our purposes two main divisions. One, acquires an understanding of the recognized statuses—the traditional positions—in his society, learning the names so that he is able to locate other individuals in the social structure, as well as identify himself...Secondly one learns, of course, role prescriptions and role behavior with the associated modes of feeling. (Brim, 1966, p.4)

Table 2.1.

Major Theoretical Contributions to Organizational Socialization Categorized by Focus

Focus of Theory Development	*Example of Authors' Work*
Individual Focus: Viewing the individual experience of adjustment as instrumental in determining the success or failure of a socialization process, due to the amount of variation in each individual; theory building effort focused only on the individual process of adjustment	Feldman (1976a, 1981) Brim (1966) Louis (1980, 1990) Manning (1970) Miller & Jablin (1991) Nelson (1987) Van Maanen (1976, 1977) Wanous (1980)
Organization Focus: Viewing the individual experience of adjustment as invariant enough to focus only on organizational tactics and processes of socialization	Van Maanen (1978) Van Maanen & Schein (1979) Wanous (1980) Wheeler (1966)
Interactionist Focus: Viewing each perspective as playing a large role in understanding the phenomenon, working to develop theory that incorporates the interaction between individual adjustment processes and organizational tactics processes. (Not all authors explicitly identify their work as 'interactionist'.)	Jones (1983) Katz (1980) Nicholson (1984) Reichers (1987) Schein (1968, 1971) Wanous, Reichers & Malik (1984)

Much of the theory-building research at the time was focused on outlining the individual experience associated with socialization: "The inquiry at all times is concerned with how society changes the natural man, and not how man changes his society" (Brim, 1966, p.4). Theory efforts included a primary focus on the creation of stage models of adjustment or socialization (Feldman 1976a, 1976b, 1981; Van Maanen, 1976; Wanous, 1980), a focus on proposing the influence of internal attitude, perception, or attribution variables (Brim, 1966; Louis, 1980; Van Maanen 1975), or a focus on exploring the influence of language and conversation on socialization (Manning, 1970).

Stage and process models attempting to describe the individual experience of socialization have elements in common. Most begin with some form of pre-entry stage (Wanous, 1980). Feldman (1976a, 1976b, 1981) and Van Maanen (1976) described this first stage as *anticipatory socialization;* Van Maanen identified this stage as "the degree to which an individual is prepared—prior to entry—to occupy organizational positions" (1976, p. 81). Differentiating elements during this stage relate to the level of congruence between the individual's expectations and values with those of the organization. The next common element of the stage models is some form of confrontation and experience with the internal organization, including physical and psychological confrontations. These stages typically describe the forms of interactions experienced by the individual and the types of psychological responses (Feldman, 1976a, 1976b, 1981; Van Maanen, 1976; Wanous, 1980). In essence, this second stage is the engagement between the transitioning individual and the incumbent members to negotiate the individual's acceptance within the setting. Finally, the models often include a stage of internal change for the individual, where he or she makes internal adjustments psychologically and external adjustments in

terms of behavior to reconcile the experiences in the new role (Feldman, 1976a, 1976b, 1981; Van Maanen, 1976; Wanous, 1980). This final stage determines the level or degree to which the individual complies with, identifies with, or internalizes the psychological and behavioral attributes of the new role (Van Maanen, 1976).

Other organizational socialization theory delves deeper into the psychological processes of adjustment experienced at these stages. Several works address socialization as an adjustment to personality, or an adjustment of an individual's learned self-other systems and attributions (Brim, 1966; Hogg & Terry, 2000; Jones, 1983; Van Maanen, 1976). Brim's (1966) propositions about the adjustment to an individual's self-other systems were derived from two theoretical foundations, that of personality and that of sociology. To summarize, the development of self-other systems occurs within the individual in childhood with reference to those key individuals in the immediate surroundings, by learning to anticipate others' responses to behavior; "personality thus is constituted in large measure by learned interpersonal relationships" (p. 8).

Though continued interaction with others, the individual experiences change in expectations, demands, and settings. Thus, the individual is required to learn how to behave in such new settings. Brim has argued that new demands require the individual to alter previously understood self-other systems or attributions. Brim has proposed that, in order for the individual to fully make a change or extension to his or her self-other systems, several elements must be in place. With respect to both values and behavior, an individual must have or acquire the *knowledge* of what is required in the new role; the individual must have or acquire the *ability* to meet the role requirements, and the

individual must have or acquire the *motivation* or desire to practice the behaviors or outward reflection of the values communicated.

Louis (1980) has argued that, "change, contrast, and surprise constitute major features of the entry experience" (p.235). Change refers to those external or physical elements of the new role that are different from elements of past roles. Contrast refers to person-specific perceptual differences between the old and the new setting. Surprise refers to the affective response to the differences between the settings. Louis stated that all of these elements will influence the individual's experience of transitioning roles and will require the individual to cope with such changes. Louis argued that transitions involving little change, contrast, or surprise allow the individual to deal with them by using, in effect, internal autopilot or preprogrammed cognitive scripts. Minimal internal adaptation is required due to the similarity of the new setting to previous experiences. However, transitions having significant change, contrast, or surprise require the individual to consciously navigate the experience and to look for explanations to interpret the new situation; consequently, the individual updates cognitive scripts regarding the predictions of future event sequences and outcomes.

In summary, there is significant similarity in organizational socialization theory described from the individual experience perspective. The knowledge base is explicitly linked to research on socialization throughout the lifecycle at several stages from childhood to adulthood. Authors who advocate this approach fundamentally agree that internal psychological adjustments must occur when an individual is faced with a transition. And, regardless of the stage in the lifecycle, it seems that these changes affect the internal scripts of previous experience. Such scripts, outwardly manifested in

individual behavior, must be adjusted if an individual is to fit in to the different demands of the new setting.

Organization Focus

Theory built with an organization focus has aimed to identify the attributes of organizations "that are likely to lead to different socialization outcomes for persons who pass through them. The focus is on the organizational context of socialization and on the way in which differently organized settings may produce different socialization experiences" (Wheeler, 1966, p.53). The works of Wheeler (1966) and Van Maanen and Schein (1979) attend to the organizational context or setting an organization consciously or unconsciously creates to facilitate socialization. Authors using this approach have not denied the possibility that individual differences may influence socialization. However, they have sought to develop theories that transcended individual differences:

> Certainly, individuals vary in their backgrounds, value systems, and predispositions to calmly accept things as they are or to vigorously strive to alter them. It is true too that changes in the larger environment within which organizationally defined roles are played out may force certain changes upon role occupants despite perhaps vehement resistance or whatever particular backgrounds, values or predispositions define those who presently perform a given role. But, these factors go well beyond our interests here, for they essentially lie outside an organizational analysis. *The causal mechanism we seek to examine here is the organizational* socialization process itself. (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979, p.230)

In addition, one of Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) assumptions underlying the theory development explains their rationale for using purely an organization focus. Based on existing research, the authors concluded that, when individuals are in the midst of transition, they are sure to feel anxiety; consequently, they are motivated to reduce this anxiety by learning the "functional and social" aspects of their new role expeditiously. In essence, the authors argue that all individuals will respond to transition with relatively

similar responses of anxiety and the motivation to reduce that anxiety, thus virtually eliminating the effects of other individual differences and previous experiences.

Wheeler's (1966) work attempted to bridge the gap in understanding between socialization processes that occur "within the intimate environs of the family or other closely knit networks" and those that occur within "large-scale bureaucratic organizations" (p.53). The author did not focus on corporate establishments. Rather, he built the case for why and how socialization occurs in many different types of organization establishments, from prisons to mental institutions, making the argument that the processes of socialization are similar. This broad view of socialization rounds out the understanding of possible socializing agencies following the early childhood socialization with family, school, and community. Wheeler further explained that such establishments can be for two socialization purposes: *developmental socialization,* such as with schools, and *resocialization*, such as with prisons seeking to "correct some deficiency in earlier socialization" (p. 68). The major contribution of his work to the theory development journey of organizational socialization is the linking socialization to local and national cultures throughout adolescence with socialization to more bureaucratic organizations.

The main contribution of Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) work to organizational socialization theory is the more detailed description of the various tactics used for socialization by the host organizations. In sum, the authors argue that the tactics organizations use during the socialization process can relate to what interactions the targets will experience and what messages those individuals will retain about their roles, the culture of the organization, and how they fit in.

Van Maanen and Schein (1979) presented a conceptualization of the different tactics that organizations use in the form of six different continuums: (1) *collective vs. individual*, referring to the way in which transitioning employees are either grouped together for a common socialization experience or are isolated from one another to be paired up with a more seasoned member for their socialization experience; (2) *formal vs. informal*, referring to whether or not an organization has designed formal activities for the transitioning individual, thus distinguishing the individual from incumbent members, or whether the socialization experience thrusts the transitioning individual onto the job, forgoing a distinguishing experience as "newcomer," (3) *sequential vs. random*, referring to the degree to which there are sequential steps to increased socialization or whether the sequence of steps leading to the target role is unknown, ambiguous, or constantly changing, (4) *fixed vs. variable*, referring to the degree to which the socialization timetable has clear expectations or whether the timetable is unique for each individual, (5) *serial vs. disjunctive*, referring to whether or not the transitioning individual has a role model or incumbent to be groomed by during the process, and (6) *investiture vs. divestiture*, referring to the degree to which the organization either supports and invests in an individual's previous socialization to work settings or attempts to break down old assumptions and patterns and rebuild the individual's self-image based on new assumptions.

The authors speculate about outcomes of socialization based on their descriptions of tactics. The level of socialization, if it were to be measured, would be the proximal outcome of the socialization process. An individual's level of socialization might be

conceptualized by looking at individual perceptions (Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein, & Gardner, 1994), or at behavioral changes seen as effective or ineffective for the individual's role (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). More remote outcomes, on the other hand, could be conceptualized as organizational commitment, turnover intent, job satisfaction, or job performance.

Van Maanen and Schein (1979) presented one proximal outcome of the process as individual role responses. Individual responses to the socialization process are either compliant or innovative. If the individual accepts the socialization process and its tactics without question, the role response is determined to be compliant or *custodial.* However, if the individual feels that some of the new values, norms, or practices do not agree with the individual's previous ideas, the individual is likely to question some of the process and to want to make changes. If the individual's response is to seek out and make substantive improvements or changes to the "knowledge base or strategic practices of a particular role" (p. 227) then the response is termed *content innovation.* Finally, the authors suggested that an individual may almost completely reject the organization's status quo, feel it necessary to reject also the socialization process and the practices of the new role, and seek to make changes to the actual "mission" of the role. The authors label this response *role innovation.* The authors argue that organizations benefit from the response of content innovation. Conversely, organizations are vulnerable if they are able to see only custodial responses, which limit the possibility of positive progress, or role innovation responses, which eat away at the very core the organization wishes to preserve. The authors present propositions about the influence of organization tactics and individual role response (see Table 2.2.).

In essence, Van Maanen and Schein (1979) have used their theory to provide an understanding of the organization as an active player in the socialization of employees. More specifically, they developed propositions regarding when socialization occurs within the organization, what tactics an organization can utilize, and what behavioral response will come from an employee who has been through the socialization process. Theory development that has occurred with the organization focus, such as that of Wanous (1980), Wheeler (1966), and Van Maanen and Schein (1979), has helped to further the conception of organizational setting variables that could facilitate different socialization outcomes.

Table 2.2.

Van Maanen & Schein's (1979) Propositions Concerning the Interactions between the Socialization Tactics and Resulting Role Responses

Interaction of Tactics	• "A custodial response will be most likely to result from a socialization process which is (1) sequential, (2) variable, (3) serial, and (4) involves divestiture processes" (p. 253).
	• "Content innovation is most likely to occur through a socialization process which is (1) collective, (2) formal, (3) random, (4) fixed, and (5) disjunctive" (p. 253).
	• "Role innovation [...] is most likely to occur through a socialization process which is (1) individual, (2) informal, (3) random, (4) disjunctive, and (5) involves investiture processes" (p. 254).

Interactionist Focus

When a society is plagued with shades of gray in each life situation, some members will squint to make out the black and white, while others embrace and mull over each shade of cloudy gray. Those who are determined to distinguish the thin line that divides black from white inevitably end up falling victim to a dualistic argument, such as nature versus nurture or upholding corporate values versus pursuing profit. When

a dualistic argument is exposed, individuals feeling strongly mass on either side. It has been stated that one who sees only the dualistic nature of circumstances falls victim to the "tyranny of the OR". Conversely, one who is able to discard the dualistic argument and pursue knowledge along both avenues achieves the "genius of the AND" (Collins & Porras, 1994). Collins and Porras state that organizations that have been successful and profitable and have shown longevity achieve the "genius of the AND."

The initial conceptual development of organizational socialization from only the organization's perspective was criticized as failing to include the individual's participation in the process. A black and white argument arose as to whether an individual's prior socialization experiences, or personal differences, are relevant to the socialization of the individual within the organization. Those who argue that they are not relevant look for the most invariant components of the phenomena and seek to construct the theory around those components, hoping that the propositions will transcend individual differences (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Moreover, incorporating individual variables reduces the efficacy and precision of the theory by creating a situation of relativism. This means that, if one believes all individuals have their own experiences and differences, no conclusions or patterns can be derived about human phenomena, thus making it very difficult to create a theory about anything. Those who believe individual differences are relevant matter argue that one cannot make conclusions about an individual's responses to socialization efforts without first understanding that individual's previous socialization experiences. This view is called an interactionist perspective (Jones, 1983; Louis, 1980; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). Interactionist theorists would

argue that such a perspective provides a more inclusive lens through which to analyze the resulting responses to organizational socialization tactics.

Researchers such as Jones (1983) argued that an individual's "subsequent orientation towards the organization cannot be adequately explained until the socialization process is analyzed from an interactionist perspective in which newcomers are accorded an active role in mediating personal and role outcomes" (p. 464). This perspective argues that analysis of the socialization process cannot be complete unless three things are taken into consideration, "(1) the effects of individual differences and (2) the effect of the attributional process involved in organizational learning" (p. 464), and (3) individuals as active participants in their own socialization experience. In essence, "characteristics of the insiders as well as the interactions themselves need to be investigated if research from an interactionist perspective is to proceed" (Reichers, 1987, p. 279).

Theory development with an interactionist focus utilizes knowledge about the organizational context and strategies and pairs that knowledge with an understanding of individual adjustment to create propositions about their interaction and effect on the socialization process. While not occurring chronologically after the work considered in the above two sections, the major contributions of theorists with an interactionist perspective are the synthesis of the knowledge gained from organization-focus and individual focus-work.

Schein (1971) detailed some elements of the organizational context that would influence the types of interactions seen between transitioning individuals and incumbents; he described these elements as *boundary transitions*. Boundary transitions may occur

vertically in the organization, where the individual's transition is either increasing or decreasing his or her rank in the organization, meaning movement through a *hierarchical boundary*; radially, where the individual's transition is increasing or decreasing his or her integration with the social fabric of the organization, meaning movement through an *inclusion boundary*; or circumferentially, where the individual's transition is to a new division or function within the organization, meaning movement through a *functional or developmental boundary*. Schein argued that the characteristics of the boundary (i.e., its permeability or its filtering properties) can be seen through the interactions between the transitioning individual and the incumbent individuals, affecting the overall socialization process.

Jones (1983) argued that the way in which the definition of the situation is negotiated between the transitioning individual and existing individuals in the organization is key to understanding the process of organizational socialization. In essence, as an active participant in the socialization process, the individual experiences constant interaction with other organizational members, influencing the success or failure of the socialization process. Jones (1983) described some elements of this interaction. To begin, the individual learns patterns of behavior and develops values through experiences with work and through interactions with others in life. Then, faced with a boundary transition either by entering a new organization or changing roles within the organization, the individual calls upon past knowledge and patterns to deal with the new surroundings. The individual first monitors the surroundings and the existing members, looking for clues about norms and values, then makes a first move based on attributions he or she perceives in the surroundings. This initial interaction is a negotiation between the

transitioning individual and the incumbent individuals to define the situation, resulting in a shared understanding of the transitioning individual's position as *naïve, competent,* or *dominant*, which influences interactions to come (Jones, 1983).

The interaction continues as existing members reward or punish the behavior of the individual. Existing members do not always have the same perception of organizational reality; therefore, there is often a conflict of meaning between intended behavior and perceived behavior. The individual attempts to make sense of this, analyzing first his or her own behavior, then how others perceive the behavior. The individual makes a second move based on the perception of acceptance or non-acceptance of the first move. Often the discrepancies in behavior and organizational norms are worked out through these interactions (Jones, 1983).

Reichers (1987) proposed that successful organizational socialization processes should promote as much interaction as possible between transitioning individuals and incumbent individuals. Therefore, important organizational context variables are those that facilitate interaction, and important individual variables are those that facilitate proactivity within the transitioning individual to interact with other organizational members. Reichers argued that an emphasis on facilitating interaction between these two groups would increase the rate of socialization of transitioning individuals.

In sum, theory development with an interactionist focus has established the individual as an active participant in the socialization process, engaging in negotiated constructions of the situation with other incumbent members to define both the situation and characteristics of interactions down the line. This perspective values the influence of the organization on the individual as well as that of the individual on the organization.

Research Contributions to the Organizational Socialization Knowledge Base

All of the work mentioned above has been theory development, looking at the phenomenon from the individual, organizational, or interactionist perspective. Another substantial portion of the knowledge base on organizational socialization comes from research studies that build on the theoretical work. The remaining 59 of the 81 articles sourced for this paper have primarily a research focus, falling in a fairly equal distribution between the individual, organizational, and interactionist categories (Table 2.3.). Some of the key contributions to the knowledge base of organizational socialization are described here.

Individual Focus: Research Contributions

A large portion of what has come out of a focus on the individual during socialization is research concerning individual coping strategies (Feldman & Brett, 1983; Graen, Orris & Johnson, 1973; Hogg & Terry, 2000; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992; Morrison, 1993). Like a few of the other authors, Ostroff and Kozlowski (1992) liken organizational socialization to a learning process and examine the role of individual information seeking. The authors take the perspective that "over time, different contextual features or different sources of information may become more or less salient as individuals adapt to their new organizational environment" (p.849). Using a longitudinal research design, the study measured methods of information gathered (interpersonal and noninterpersonal methods), focus of the information gathered (task, role, group, organizational) and perception of amount learned. The authors hypothesized

Table 2.3.

Major Research Contributions to Organizational Socialization Categorized by Focus

Research Focus	*Major Contributions*	*Authors*	
INDIVIDUAL FOCUS	*Describing the Experience*	▪ Feldman (1976b) ▪ Polach (2001)	▪ Stumpf & Hartman (1984)
	Coping Strategies	▪ Ashford (1986) ▪ Feldman & Brett (1983) ▪ Graen, Orris & Johnson (1973)	▪ Hogg & Terry (2000) ▪ Ostroff & Kozlowski (1992) ▪ Morrison (1993, 2002)
	Individual Differences	▪ Adkins (1995) ▪ Buchanan (1974) ▪ Gomez-Mejia (1983) ▪ Jackson, Brett, Sessa, Cooper, Julin &Peyronnin (1991)	▪ Lee & Larwood (1983) ▪ Mason & Mudrack (1996) ▪ Miller & Wager (1971) ▪ Mortimer & Lorence (1979)
ORGANIZATION FOCUS	*Org. Context*	▪ Baker (1992) ▪ Hebden (1986)	▪ Meyer & Rowan (1979)
	Org. Tactics & Strategies	▪ Allen & Meyer (1990) ▪ Anakwe & Greenhaus (1999) ▪ Ashforth & Saks (1996) ▪ Berlew & Hall (1966) ▪ Black (1992) ▪ Fogarty (2000) ▪ Fullagar, Clark, Gallagher & Gordon (1994) ▪ George (1996)	▪ Jones (1986) ▪ King & Sethi (1998) ▪ Larsson & Lubatkin (2001) ▪ Louis, Posner & Powell (1983) ▪ Manz & Sims (1983) ▪ Paulson & Baker (1999) ▪ Schein (1990) ▪ Van Maanen (1975)
	Outcome Instrumentation	▪ Chao et al. (1994) ▪ Klein & Weaver (2000)	▪ Jones (1986)
INTERACTIONIST FOCUS	*Influence of both Individual & Org. Variables*	▪ Ashforth (1985) ▪ Denhardt (1968) ▪ Downey & Hellriegel (1975) ▪ Evan (1963) ▪ Fine (1984) ▪ Fisher (1985) ▪ Fritz, Arnett & Conkel (1999)	▪ Gabarro (1979) ▪ Hegstad (1999) ▪ Louis (1990) ▪ Mills & Morris (1986) ▪ Schaubroeck, Ganster & Jones (1998) ▪ Zahrly & Tosi (1989)
	Intercultural Context	▪ Bauer & Taylor (2001) ▪ Lueke & Svyantek (2000)	▪ Taormina (1998)
	Industry Specific	▪ Bender, DeVogel & Blomberg (1999)	▪ Kennedy & Berger (1994) ▪ Tierney (1997)

that some sources of information would provide better learning for newcomers and also that a focus on pursuing information from sources would be linked with positive socialization outcomes (e.g., satisfaction, commitment, adjustment, reduced stress, and reduced turnover intentions). The major findings of the study indicated that newcomers rely primarily on observation for learning information, with the supervisor as the richest source, and that acquisition is more often first directed at learning task and role-related information. This implies that individuals, upon encountering transition, are less consciously aware of needing to acquire messages about larger organizational issues or values; rather, task and role issues are most salient in the early stages.

The second significant learning from research focusing on the individual has been in stage and process models of the individual experience of socialization (Feldman, 1976; Stumpf & Hartman, 1984). Both authors sought to validate their own models describing the individual process of adjustment. Both authors stated the need to include variables to address individual expectations and congruence with organizational reality, individual proactivity to engage with insiders and seek information, individual perceptions of socialization progress, and individual outcomes such as commitment, satisfaction, and turnover intention. Path analyses were used as the data analysis model for each study, revealing moderate support for both of the authors' models of individual adjustment.

Finally, theory and research with a focus on the individual has meant identifying differences between individuals which may or may not influence the socialization process, such as gender differences (Gomez-Mejia, 1983; Mason & Mudrack, 1996), previous work experience and values (Adkins, 1995; Mortimer & Lorence, 1979), tenure (Buchanan, 1974), attitudes (Lee & Larwood, 1983), and the effects of group

heterogeneity (Jackson, Brett, Sessa, Cooper, Julin & Peyronnin, 1991). All of these showed promise but have had limited ability to conclusively provide the variables and their measurements to definitively show their influence.

Organization Focus: Research Contributions

The major contributions of research with an organization focus have been to differentiate between organizational strategies and tactics for socialization and to begin to measure outcomes (Table 2.3). From the variations both in approaches of research design and measurement and in results leading to sometimes conflicting conclusions, it is clear that organizational socialization is a phenomenon not entirely understood. Researchers focusing on only organizational variables often conclude, after noting the conflicting nature of their results to other authors' results, that variables beyond their control are affecting their results (Fogarty, 2000). Despite that realization, much research been addressed to organizational tactics of socialization.

Several researchers have utilized Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) six tactic continuums, or Jones's (1986) variation on those continuums, to describe current organizational practices and have then measured different socialization outcomes based on those different treatments (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Anakwe & Greenhaus, 1999; Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Black, 1992; Fogarty, 2000; Jones, 1986; King & Sethi, 1998). Some of the studies showed conflicting results as to which combination of tactics produced the most desirable socialization outcomes (Anakwe & Greenhaus, 1999; Fogarty, 2000). Two studies incorporated a longitudinal design into their replication research to look for the effects of time on the socialization process (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Anakwe & Greenhaus, 1999). Their research determined that the effects of

organizational tactics are weakened over time, while other socialization elements possibly become more influential than the tactics themselves (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Anakwe & Greenhaus, 1999).

Other research has found that the mere presence of socialization-like activities increases individual satisfaction (Louis, Posner & Powell, 1983) and other positive organization measures (Larsson & Lubatkin, 2001). During a large-scale meta-analysis of 50 merger and acquisition case studies, Larsson and Lubatkin (2001) found that, with socialization activities such as introduction programs, training, cross-visits, retreats, celebrations, and similar socialization rituals, higher levels of positive socialization were seen. The dependent variable of acculturation was defined as "the level of development of jointly shared meanings fostering cooperation between joining firms" (p.1584).

As mentioned previously, the dependent variable of socialization and its measurement has been somewhat illusive. A group of researchers sought to define the construct of socialization through a measurement tool developed for its study (Chao, et al., 1994). The group defined the general dependent variable of socialization as learning. Chao et al. (1994) developed a 34-item content-area questionnaire over six domains: (1) *performance proficiency*, relating to the tasks of the job, (2) *people*, relating to the work relationships, (3) *politics*, concerning the power structures within the organization, (4) *language*, understanding the technical jargon of the role and the organization as a whole, (5) understanding the *organizational goals and values*, both explicit and implicit, and (6) the *history* of the organization, its traditions, customs, and myths. Statistical analysis supported the measurement tool fairly strongly, making it one of the best tools for measuring a proximal outcome of the socialization process. A separate research study

indicated that those attending socialization activities did indeed score higher on many of Chao et al.'s (1994) socialization instruments (Klein & Weaver, 2000). Most other studies have also included more distal outcomes of socialization such as turnover intent, job satisfaction, job performance, and organizational commitment (Adkins, 1995; Allen & Meyer, 1990; Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Feldman, 1981; Klein & Weaver, 2000).

Measurement of the phenomenon has always been linked to what researchers believe are important or desired outcomes of organizations. One desired outcome previously described is *learning;* Chao et al.'s (1994) study, which measures socialization, is measuring items related to learning about organizational issues, group relationships, language, history, and the role. High ratings of socialization on such a scale may or may not be linked to strong performance. Another desired outcome is *reduction of turnover*; most other studies link satisfaction and commitment to reduction in turnover intent. Very few studies sought to measure anything beyond task performance. Additionally, most of the measurements are self-reported, with minimal objective or triangulated data.

Interactionist Focus: Research Contributions

Research studies with an interactionist focus primarily have argued for the interaction of both organizational and individual variables in the outcomes of socialization, building on learning from the two previous research areas (Table 2.3). All the articles in this category of previous research are looking for the organizational and individual variables that affect the socialization process, such as organizational climate and individual personality (Downey, Hellriegel & Slocum, 1975), necessity of interpersonal interactions between organizational incumbents and transitioning

individuals (Evan, 1963), organizational social support and individual expectations (Fisher, 1985), organizational encounter and negotiation experiences and role readiness (Mills & Morris, 1986), the interaction of organizational occupational attributes and turnover intention as a predictor of personality traits (Schaubroeck, Ganster & Jones, 1998), socialization of ethical standards through organizational reinforcement, modeling, individual interaction, and conversation (Fritz, Arnett & Conkel, 1999), variations in organizational agents and individual information seeking as "lay ethnographers" (Louis, 1990), and organizational tactics and individual differences of previous work experiences and personality (Zahrly & Tosi, 1989).

Zahrly and Tosi's (1989) work proposed a model of socialization that incorporates both individual variables and organizational variables. The model includes individual variables of *personality* (locus of control, self-monitoring) and *previous work experience* (similar work experience, skill level) and organizational variables of *early organizational experience* (socialization mode, job variety). The dependent variables, or outcomes of socialization, also used an interactionist perspective by looking at both organizational and personal outcomes (job satisfaction, role conflict, role ambiguity, cohesion, influence, work/family conflict). The largest contribution of this research was the increased understanding of the complexity of socialization as a phenomenon. The results indicated that socialization mode, or the way in which individuals were subjected to specific organizational socialization tactics, had different effects on outcomes. For example, "when organizationally desired outcomes are job satisfaction and work/family resolution, formal collective induction had more positive effects. However, the

organizationally desired outcomes of higher worker involvement and strong team cohesion were unaffected in early tenure by the particular mode imposed" (p. 71).

Due to a broadened acceptance of the possibility that socialization can be understood only with a joint understanding of organizational as well as individual variables, increased attention has been paid to understanding socialization in broader cultural contexts. Some examples are seeking to understand socialization of individuals in foreign settings such as expatriates (Lueke & Svyantek, 2000), and conducting research with new cultural populations such as individuals in the People's Republic of China (Taormina, 1998). Additionally, there has been an effort to extend current socialization theory to include a more global perspective (Bauer & Taylor, 2001).

Lueke and Svyantek (2000) argued that socialization has been a missing component in understanding the important transition for expatriates. The authors point to the fact that these individuals are role changers and not newcomers to the organization. At times, this can contribute to a lack of attention paid to formal socialization efforts, leading to an immediate expectation for transitioning expatriates to adjust and function effectively. The study offers several propositions that build on previous knowledge of expatriate adjustment. Two are most notable: first, the argument of the need for formalized socialization activities to be a part of the expatriate's experience, and second, the argument for the individual to be an active participant in the socialization process and to seek feedback in several socialization domains.

Lastly, some studies have looked at the interaction of organizational and individual variables as applied to specific work settings or industries, such as health care (Bender, DeVogel & Blomberg, 1999), the hospitality industry (Kennedy & Berger,

1994), and higher education (Tierney, 1997). In one study of the Mayo Foundation, the largest integrated, multi-specialty medical group practice in the world, it was determined that,as the group integrated new physicians into its midst, the transition from self-employment to employment under the Mayo model created many alignment concerns. "Clearly, it is in the interest of the patient, the individual physician, and the institution to reduce the time needed for this acculturation" (Bender et al., 1999, p. 97). Like other studies looking for the most influential component of socialization, this study found that the Department Chair, the supervisor of the individuals, was one of the most powerful determinants of effective socialization. Through incumbent modeling and newcomer observation and information seeking from this influential person, more successful socialization has been noted.

The research efforts concerning organizational socialization have clearly pointed to the complexity of the phenomenon, both in conceptualizing important variables and in arriving at some agreement on both proximal and distal dependent variables to allow for instrumentation. While the contradictions and differences between the studies are many, a few commonalities and key learnings emerge from this existing literature:

- Organizational socialization is an individual and an organizational *process*
- *Individual differences* do affect socialization
- *Individual proactivity,* seeking interaction and information, does affect socialization
- *Organization differences*, culture and desired outcomes, do affect socialization
- *Organization formal and informal tactics* do affect socialization
- Measurement concerns *learning* for *satisfaction* and *adjustment* to *remain* in the role.

Deriving Common Purpose & Intended Outcomes of Organizational Socialization

Organizational socialization became a significant area of study in the 1950s. Organizations began to understand the significance of corporate culture in operating effectiveness or ineffectiveness. It became apparent that, just as individuals could experience socialization to their local or national cultures through familial and social interactions, media, and historical icons, they could experience socialization to new occupational settings as well, possibly at the discretion of the organization itself. Much of the research focused on merely describing the individual experience of organizational socialization without seeking to alter the organization's intent and practices. However, significant attention was paid as well to defining organizational tactics that would, in effect, socialize individuals to the organization's culture. Due to what appeared to be a close link between socialization to local or national culture and socialization to organizations, the purposes and intended outcomes were very similar. Through an etymological search of terminology and a synthesis of definitions of organizational socialization, it can be shown that these processes were conceptualized as very similar, for language can be seen as the "verbal blueprint of our experience" (Allee, 1997, p.88).

Terminology around Socialization

A search of the literature on socialization and culture, not restricted to the workplace, revealed several additional terms used interchangeably with socialization and/or to further describe the phenomenon of socialization. Other terms revealed were: *enculturation*, *acculturation*, *assimilation*, *indoctrination*, *inculcation*, *institutionalization*, *incorporation*, and *induction*. Since these terms are used to describe

the phenomenon of socialization, then it could be argued that they, along with *socialization* itself, would contain some insight into our knowledge about the phenomenon, as "knowledge rides language" (Allee, 1997, p.218).

Table 2.4.

The Current Conceptualization of Organizational Socialization as seen through an Etymological Search of Terminology

Term	***Historical Roots***	***Definition of Term (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989)***	***Key Outcome***
Socialization	SOCIAL 14th c. *sociālis* friend, companion, associate	The process whereby an individual acquires the modifications of behavior and the values necessary for the stability of the social group.	**- Stability**
Enculturation	CULT 1483 L. *cultūra* cultivation, tending	A process of conscious or unconscious conditioning, exercised within the limits sanctioned by a given body of custom.	**- Conditioning**
Acculturation		The adoption or assimilation of an alien culture	**- Adoption**
Assimilation	ASSIMILATE 16th c. L. *assimilāre* to liken	The action of making or becoming like; similarity; resemblance; likeness	**- Becoming Like**
Indoctrination	DOCTRINATE 12th c. L. *doctrīna* to teach or instruct	To imbue with a doctrine, idea or opinion.	**- Instruct** **- Existing Ideology**
Inculcation	INCULCATE 16th c. L. *inculcāre* to stamp in with the heel	The action of impressing on the mind by forcible admonition or frequent repetition; the emphatic or persistent teaching of something.	**- Impressing on** **- Teaching**
Institutionalization	INSTITUTE 12th c. L. *instituĕre* purpose, design, plan, ordinance, instruction	To convert or treat as an institution. The giving of form or order to a thing; orderly arrangement, regulation; the established order by which anything is regulated; system; constitution.	**- Order, Form** **- Regulation**
Incorporation	INCORPORATE 15th c. L *incorporāre* to embody	To combine or unite into one body	**- Uniform**
Induction	INDUCT 14th c. L. *indūcĕr* to lead into, to introduce	The action of introducing to, or initiating in, the knowledge of something.	**- Introducing to**

An etymological search of the above words illuminated some interesting themes around the way socialization was conceptualized (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989). Table 2.4. shows the origins of the aforementioned words, their definitions, as well as the key outcomes intuited from the definitions. Analysis indicates that all the definitions have similar intended outcomes: stability of the existing system, creating uniformity or order, conditioning of the incoming member, adoption of that which exists, or becoming like that which already exists. The only search that revealed a fairly neutral definition was *induction*, with the key outcome being only to *introduce* one to the knowledge of something.

Definitions of Socialization

A search of some foundational pieces of organizational socialization literature revealed that the way the sources use the terminology described above fits the historical definitions of that terminology (Table 2.5.). In addition, research into more current literature on organizational socialization shows that sources continue to conceptualize the phenomenon in the same manner, using the same terminology (for some examples of solid research using older definitions see Allen & Meyer, 1990; Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Chao et al., 1994; Klein & Weaver, 2000; Louis, 1980; Morrison, 1993; Wanous, 1980). In other words, the child and adult socialization language with roots back to the 13th and 14th centuries is still potent today. Table 2.5. shows how foundational literature sources point to learning and adjustment to function of an organizational member as the desired focus of organizational socialization processes. These definitions point to the ability to *fit in* as a member as a key outcome. In fact, Schein's (1990) work on organizational socialization stated unequivocally, "the goal of socialization is to perpetuate culture"

(p.116). In summary, the etymological and definitional searches reveal that the organizational socialization literature likens the induction of employees to the workplace to experiences of enculturation to the family, society, or nation.

Table 2.5.

The Current Conceptualization of Organizational Socialization as seen through a Literature Search of Key Theorists' Definitions

Key Contributors	*Definitions of Organizational Socialization*	*Key Outcomes*
Van Maanen & Schein, 1979, p.211	"In its most general sense, organizational socialization is the process by which an individual acquires the social knowledge and skills necessary to assume an organizational role"	**- Organizational learning to assume a role**
Louis, 1980, p.229	"Organizational Socialization is the process by which an individual comes to appreciate the values, abilities, expected behaviors, and social knowledge essential for assuming an organizational role and for participating as an organizational member"	**- Organizational learning to assume a role**
Van Maanen, 1976, p.67	"Organizational Socialization refers to the process by which a person learns the values, norms, and required behaviors which permit him to participate as a member of the organization"	**- Organizational learning for membership**
Schein, 1968, p.1	"The process by which a new member learns and adapts to the value system, the norms, and the required behavior patterns of an organization, a society, or group"	**- Organizational learning and adaptation for membership**
Brim, 1966, p.3	"Socialization refers to the process by which persons acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that make then more or less able members of their society.	**- Organizational learning to be an able member**
Manning, 1970, p.239	"Organizational socialization is the process by which an individual, from both the individual and the organizational perspective, becomes part of the organization.	**- Membership**
Jones, 1983, p.464 Jones, 1986, p.262	"Adjustment to the organization"	**- Adjustment**
Louis, 1990, p.24	"Organizational socialization is the process through which organizational culture is perpetuated, by which newcomers learn the appropriate roles and behaviors to become effective and participating members"	**- Perpetuation of organizational culture** **- Become an effective member**
Feldman, 1976, p.64	"The study of the ways by which employees are transformed from total company outsiders to participating and effective corporate members"	**- Effectiveness as a member**

Situating the Phenomenon of Organizational Socialization within its Context

Organizational socialization is a *process*. However, it is not a process independent of other factors and forces within the organization system. Many of the theory-building efforts and research presented above, however, analyze the phenomenon somewhat in isolation from other possible factors and forces. For example, Van Maanen and Schein (1979) developed their theory of organizational socialization independent of any individual variables to influence their theoretical model. Similarly, Jones (1983) developed his theory of organizational socialization and individual adjustment without explicitly integrating the force of organizational variables such as culture on the role negotiation that takes place upon newcomer entry. What is lacking is a meta-picture, inclusive of the intertwined forces affecting the process, showing both the *'what'* affecting the socialization process as well as the *'how'*. Providing such a meta-picture is part of the scope of this study and will be presented in the major output of this study in Chapter Four.

A broad view of some of the possible factors and forces intertwined with the process of organizational socialization may be helpful at this point. A synthesis of the existing theory and research has allowed some insight into these conceptual areas and shaped the focus of this study. What is presented below is not the complete meta-picture showing the forces and how they affect the process of organizational socialization; rather it is an initial positing of the other phenomena intertwined with organizational socialization. In other words, it is a description of the possible *'what'* affecting the

process, not the *'how'* (Figure 2.1.). A brief description is provided of each conceptual area, and a case study example is provided to further clarify the concept.

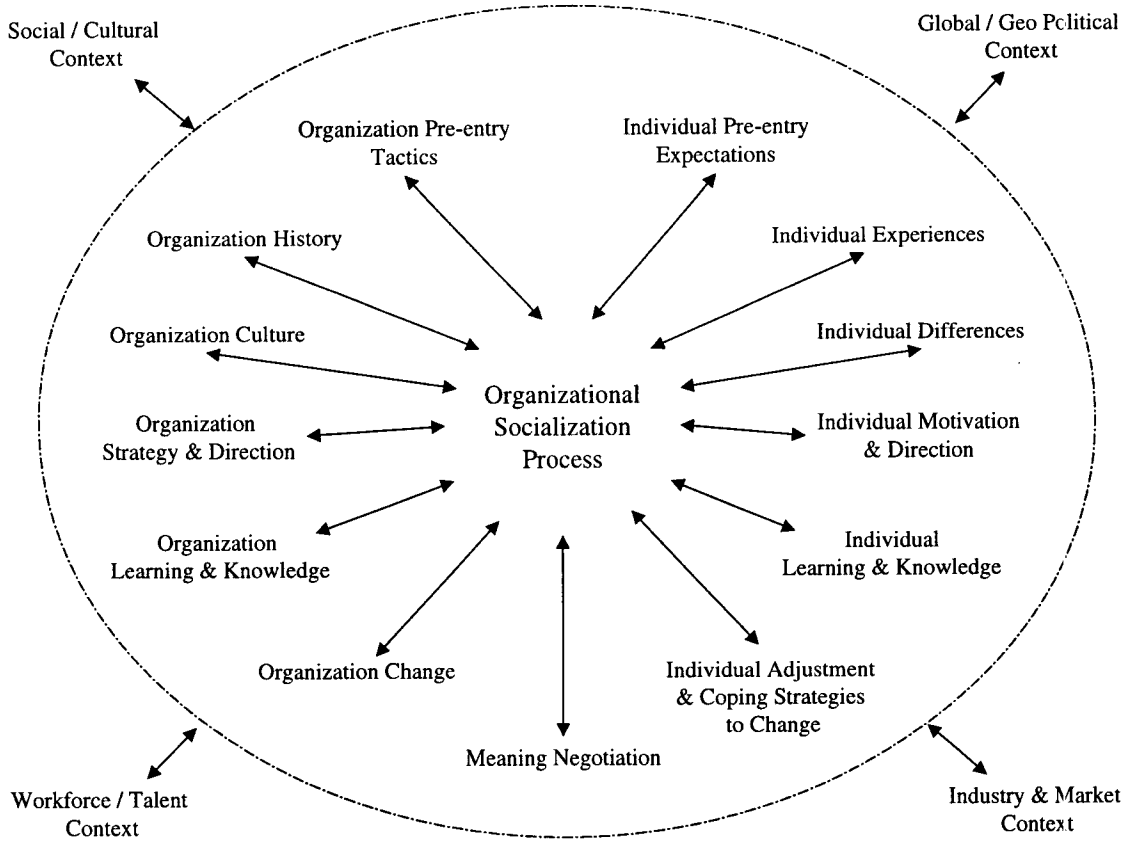


Figure 2.1.Organizational Socialization Context: Possible Factors or Forces Linked to the Process

Individual and Organizational Pre-entry Contexts

While processes of organizational socialization occur beyond when an individual first joins an organization (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979), newcomer socialization is a large part of the phenomenon. When an individual joins an organization, a context is of course already in motion at the organization, just as the individual has had a life context prior to joining that organization. For the individual, this includes socialization experiences in childhood and adolescence, and possibly socialization to other

organizations at previous work experiences (Brim, 1966; Wheeler, 1966). Other possible influences on the pre-entry context for the individual are individual differences; research has focused on personality, self-efficacy, and other variables (Adkins, 1995; Buchanan, 1974; Gomez-Mejia, 1983; Jackson et al., 1991; Lee & Larwood, 1983; Mason & Mudrack, 1996; Mortimer & Lorence, 1979). Other research has argued that, because of these prior socialization experiences and specific individual differences, the individual will have expectations of what this new experience will be like; the degree of congruence or lack of congruence can have an influence on the socialization process (Louis, 1980).

The organization, similarly, has a pre-existing context in motion prior to the arrival of the newcomer. Individuals are socialized to the context even in the pre-entry stages of their joining the organization. An example of such socialization in the pre-entry stages of the relationship is seen in the organization Häagen-Dazs. The organization decided to shift its strategy from one of beating the customer to one of being the best. With this shift in strategy came a shift in the entry process for new individuals joining the company (Goss et al., 1993):

> This new future generated an important shift in the company's recruitment policy. Interviews with job candidates are treated much like theatrical auditions. "We aren't just looking for people to clear tables and dispense ice cream," Riccitiello says. "So when a group of prospects come in, we give them impromptu situations and see what they do. Do they ad-lib? Do they freeze and look to others for the right answer? We ask them to juggle four ice-cream cones. We want our shops to be an event, a place where customers and staff celebrate the experience of something that tastes great and gives you—even if just for a moment—a sense that it's worth being alive. It became our mission to provide that feeling." (p. 98)

The importance of this observation is that both individuals and organizations have a pre-existing context that could shape the form and outcome of the process of organizational socialization.

Context of Individual and Organization Histories

Intertwined with the pre-entry context of organizational socialization is the influence of the history of the organization, as well as an individual's history. As mentioned above, an individual experiences socialization in early childhood, adolescence, and throughout different areas of life in adulthood (Brim, 1966; Wheeler, 1966). It has been argued that this prior socialization, in part, makes the individual unique in the expectations and context brought to the new experience within the organization (Louis, 1980).

Similarly, the history of an organization has been shown to play a strong role in the context that is presented to individuals during socialization. More specifically, the history that is linked to the founder of the organization, or that which has been linked to organizational success, often the same elements (Collins, 2001; Martin, 1993; Schein, 1985, 1990). An example of the historical context of the organization at work in the continuous socialization of employees is that of A&P (Collins, 2001). In the 1950's the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company, known as the A&P, was one of the largest corporations in the United States:

> A&P had a perfect model for the first half of the twentieth century, when two world wars and a depression imposed frugality upon Americans: cheap, plentiful groceries sold in utilitarian stores. But in the affluent second half of the twentieth century, Americans changed. They wanted nicer stores, bigger stores, more choices in stores. They wanted fresh-baked bread, flowers, health foods, cold medicines, fresh produce, forty-five choices of cereal and ten types of milk ...
>
> Ralph Burger, the successor to the Hartford brothers who had built the

> A&P dynasty sought to preserve two things above all else: cash dividends for the family foundation and the past glory of the Hartford brothers. According to one A&P director, Burger "considered himself the reincarnation of old John Hartford, even to the point of wearing a flower in his lapel every day from Hartford's greenhouse. He tried to carry out, against all opposition, what he thought Mr. John [Hartford] would have liked. Burger instilled a "what would Hartford do?" approach to decisions, living by the motto "You can't argue with a hundred years of success." (p. 68)

But socializing an organization's employees to the historical context of the organization is not necessarily always a formula for success. The A&P could not move out of its historical context to see what it needed to do for the future. It continued on a long, slow decline of trying to hold on to its success of the past, while its competition adjusted to the market demands and soared to be the number one grocery chain in America (Collins, 2001). Nevertheless, socialization to an historical organizational context could be a force at work in the process.

Context of Individual and Organizational Cultures

Just like the other forces, the influence of culture appears to exist both for the individual and for the organization. For the individual, cultural context has been researched to the point of a theoretical model of globalized organizational socialization being developed (Bauer & Taylor, 2001). One of the primary assumptions of this theoretical model is that, "socialization goals and processes must be acceptable to the newcomers involved in order to be effective, and that one of the key influences on acceptability is the culture in which the newcomer was raised" (Bauer & Taylor, 2001, p. 412).

For the organization, the context of culture refers to what is often termed *organizational* or *corporate culture* (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Schein, 1985, 1990).

Schein (1985) defined culture as, "a pattern of basic assumptions...that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems" (p. 9). An example of the culture of a company influencing the messages of socialization passed on to employees is that of Philips Electronics (Strebel, 1996). Philips Electronics, an organization based in the Netherlands, pioneered the development of the audiocassette, the video recorder, and the compact disc. Despite growing competition, the organization continued to function in the same manner that had produced its past successes, both in terms of organizational culture and in terms of its operations (Strebel, 1996):

> During Philip's prosperous years, a tradition of lifelong employment was part of the company culture. Job security came in exchange for loyalty to the company and to individual managers. Informal rules and personal relationships dominated formal systems for performance evaluations and career advancement. Managers' job descriptions and position in the hierarchy set limits on their responsibilities, and operating outside those boundaries was discouraged. Subordinates weren't encouraged any differently ... Although the competitive landscape around Philips had changed, the company and its employees had not. (Strebel, 1996, p. 146-148)

The culture of Philips Electronics was perpetuated through the reinforcement of behaviors consistent with it and the clear discouragement of behaviors not consistent with it (Strebel, 1996). Employees were continuously socialized to the organizational culture in operation. Clearly, theory and research support the influence of culture on socialization, both in terms of culture created within a nation as well as the culture created within an organization.

Context of Individual & Organizational Direction

This category of forces termed *direction* proposes that both individuals and organizations act with *purpose* and *direction* in such ways as to affect socialization

processes. For individuals, the research has shown that they are active, even proactive, in their socialization processes. Individuals model their superiors and co-workers and seek out corporate information as well as informal political information, obtaining any and all pertinent information to expedite their process of adjusting to the organization and improving their performance (Jones, 1986; Louis, 1990; Morrison, 1993; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992).

At the organizational level, indirect evidence suggests that the organization's *strategy* or *direction* influences the socialization messages received by employees. This means that most research does not explicitly study or report the influence of organizational strategy; yet, many indicators from research and related literature suggest that socialization messages and tactics are affected by organizational direction (Collins, 2001; Goss et al., 1993; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). One example of an organization that links its socialization tactics and messages with its organizational strategy is Nordstrom (Goss et al., 1993):

> While other chains can copy some of what Nordstrom is doing, they don't seem to realize that Nordstrom is living its motto, "Respond to Unreasonable Customer Requests." This way of being leads employees to relish the challenges that customers toss at them ... occasionally it means hand delivering items purchased by phone to the airport for a customer with a last-minute business trip, changing a customer's flat tire, or paying a customer's parking ticket when in-store gift wrapping has taken longer than expected.
>
> Nordstrom encourages these acts by promoting its best employees, keeping scrapbooks of "heroic" acts, and paying its salespeople entirely on commission, through which they usually earn about twice what they would at a rival's store. For go-getters who really love to sell, Nordstrom is Nirvana. But the system weeds out those who can't meet such demanding standards and selects those prepared to be what Nordstrom stands for.
>
> ... there is built-in tension between providing excellent customer service and taking the idea to such extremes that it threatens economic viability. And since what takes place between staff and customers is the most important piece of Nordstrom's strategy, there are tensions between department heads and buyers, the traditional stars of retailing. Not surprisingly, Nordstrom

> employees report high tension levels at work. One executive says, "It's wrong to think of Nordstrom as a happy place. But the tensions yield higher performance." (Goss et al., 1993, p. 93, 109)

Nordstrom's encouragement and reinforcement of behaviors consistent with its organizational direction could be an example of one of its socialization tactics. This discussion has shown that an individual's motivation, proactivity, and *direction* can influence socialization, as can an organization's strategy and *direction.*

Context of Individual and Organizational Learning and Knowledge

Organizational socialization is presented in much of the theory and research as a learning process that exists in two ways. First, individuals learn elements about the organization and integrate them with what they already have experienced to change their behavior in the future. Significant research shows that the learning process of individuals incorporates elements of the organization, whether goals, values, beliefs, culture, practices, or systems (Chao et al., 1994; Feldman, 1976a, 1976b, 1981; Louis, 1980, 1990; Van Maanen, 1976).

The second way is rarely researched. Some reciprocal influence is known to exist between individuals in transition and incumbents, causing shifts inside the organization as well as inside the individual in transition (Jones, 1983; Wanous, 1980). Some literature suggests that organizations operate with the understanding that they could not exist without acquiring and utilizing the knowledge of the employees (Allee, 1997; Amidon, 1997; Gibbons, et al., 1994; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995, Wheatley, 1999). "We can begin to see that organizational intelligence is not something that resides in a few experts, specialists, or leaders. Instead, it is a system-wide capacity directly related to how open the organization is to new and disconfirming information, and how effectively that

information can be interpreted by anyone in the organization" (Wheatley, 1999, p. 99). An example of an organization that has socialized its employees to value the aspects of individual and organizational learning and knowledge is 3M; the culture is continually shaped by the reinforcement of behaviors consistent with perpetuating individual and organizational learning and knowledge (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995):

> Individuals are set free to pursue their dream while management bites its tongue and grits its teeth to foster the development of new product ideas. There is even a commandment that serves as a behavioral guide. Known as the "eleventh commandment" within 3M, it says, "Thou shalt not kill ideas for new products." (p. 139)

Therefore, not only do individuals learn important elements about the organization and its operation during socialization, but organizations also learn and begin to utilize important elements from individuals.

An organizational understanding and socialization to the value of individual and organizational learning and knowledge are intertwined with the concept presented above of *organizational culture*, as organizational cultures are related to what is valued in the organization (Schein, 1985). All of the concepts presented in this section are related to each other in more ways than merely influencing the socialization process.

Context of Individual and Organization Change

Intertwined with the concept of learning for individuals and organizations is the concept of change. As discussed previously, as individuals learn about different elements of the organization, whether through their own socialization efforts or those of the organization, they adjust their beliefs and behaviors as they see fit to function within that organization (Van Maanen, 1976). Some research suggests that aspects of the change between the previous context and the context of the new situation can affect the

socialization process and outcome for individuals (Louis, 1980). Louis (1980) has stated that there can be severe incongruence between both tangible and intangible aspects of the change that can influence the socialization process and outcomes. Tangible aspects can be the space or location differences in a physical move. Intangible aspects of change can include what is valued within the organization for performance; this can be congruent or incongruent with what has been experienced in the past. Thus, socialization processes may be hindered (i.e., individuals may be reluctant to change), if aspects of the new situation are severely incongruent with previous situations (Louis, 1980).

With respect to organizational change, a similar situation exists, as organizations are merely made up of individuals. Socialization processes can occur at any and all boundary changes within an organization (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Therefore, as the organization drives internal changes and individuals are required to shift to new functional, hierarchical, or inclusionary boundaries within the organization, continuous socialization efforts will be in motion. What this implies, then, is that organizational change will influence socialization efforts, as organizational change will immediately force boundary transitions and resocialization for individuals. An example of an organization driving its own change effort that prompted resocialization of individuals is Eisai, a family-owned Japanese pharmaceutical company seeking immediate transformation to broadened products or else facing inevitable decline (Strebel, 1996):

> In the tradition of Japanese family companies, Eisai had few formal rules of employment. Among the 4,000 employees, lifelong employment was the norm and career advancement and authority were based on seniority. Groups made decisions because of failure by an individual would mean a loss of face ... Individuals were loyal both to their managers and to group norms, so they did not seek personal recognition or accomplishment. And because other Japanese companies operated in similar ways, there was no external competitive pressure to be different. To accomplish strategic transformation,

> Naito [the CEO] would have to create a compelling context for change and an inducement for employees to try something new—without disrupting the entire organization.
>
> ... In 1989, Naito announced his strategic vision and initiated a training program for 103 "innovation managers" who were to become the agents for change in the company. The training program consisted of seminars on trends in health care and concepts of organizational change [...] At the end of the program, Naito charged the innovation managers with turning the insights of their experiences into proposals for new products and services. Each proposal was brought before Naito and Eisai's executive management to gain high-level corporate support and, as important to Naito, to secure individual managers' public commitment to the achievement of their HHC projects' goals. (p.153-154)

Facilitating organizational change and the resulting individual change are two concepts linked to processes of continuous socialization in organizations. Most research discusses individual change as integral to the socialization process and its outcomes. Rarely does research explicitly link the changes within organizations to the subsequent resocialization needs of employees, even though socialization theory does say that any boundary transitions within the organization will set in motion the need for socialization (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979).

Context of Negotiating Meaning

Organizational socialization is conceptualized as a process that incorporates interaction between the individuals in transition and incumbent individuals (Evan, 1963; Fisher, 1985; Fritz, Arnett & Conkel, 1999; Jones, 1983; Louis, 1990; Mills & Morris, 1986; Reichers, 1987; Zahrly & Tosi, 1989). Roles and meaning are negotiated in this interaction, and the negotiation can either help or hinder the desired outcomes of the process: "the organization's ability to influence newcomer behavior during the socialization process is affected by a variety of interpersonal processes that may prevent the newcomer and established organizational members from negotiating a joint definition

of the situation" (Jones, 1983, p. 467). In essence, Jones's theory stated that individuals in transition apply interpretive schemes that have worked in the past to understand and act within their current situations; the resulting behaviors may receive a positive or negative response from incumbent members, either reinforcing the used interpretive schemes or creating the need to shift them to incorporate new meaning.

Jones's theory of organizational socialization highlighted negotiating meaning as critical to the desired outcomes of the socialization process. There are two critical components for achieving desired outcomes of socialization: first, adequate understanding of the joint interpretive schemes that are defining the situation and driving behavior, and second, reward and punishment contingencies delivered in such a way as to support or refute the meaning created about the current situation during the interaction and to shape the behaviors that are desired in the future. Other literature also supports the idea that reward and punishment contingencies are critical to the joint negotiation of meaning, pinpointing the influence of management in the socialization process: "management is the message. Everything managers say—or don't say—delivers a message" (Duck, 1993, p. 61).

Below is an example of a situation involving a conscious plan to both develop joint interpretive schemes to define situations and to consistently utilize reward and punishment behaviors to align negotiated meaning of the situation. The organization had decided to dramatically shift its management style to a completely contrary style. Without full commitment of those required to transition, the mixed messages to other individuals within the company would undermine the desired change (Duck, 1993):

> He told them, "If you believe you cannot manage in this new way, and you come and tell me, I will find a useful job for you somewhere in the company.

> But if I discover that you aren't managing within this new plan, there's no such guarantee."
>
> When he started the program, one or two people came forward to say they couldn't manage in the new style, and he found them new jobs. Several others didn't come forward but were identified as nonperformers. As promised, he got rid of them. Then, one year later, the division head spoke to the group again. This time he said, "We've been at it for a year. Now everyone knows what we're talking about, and we're starting to gain momentum. Because we have some responsibility for your being the kind of manager you are, and we have changed the rules in the middle of your career, I'm going to reissue my invitation. If you don't think you can manage in this new way, come in and see me." (p. 71)

During that year, individual managers needed to reshape their interpretive schemes to make decisions. Through a clear understanding of the type of decision-making schemes desired by leadership, and a consistent application of reward and punishment contingencies for adequate application of these, socialization to new desired behaviors occurred.

Context of the External Environment

All of the above conceptual areas were easily distilled from literature research on organizational socialization. However, other tangential readings revealed what seemed to be a contradiction between the socialization literature and other current literature on business and organizations. The organizational socialization literature focused heavily on the inner workings of organizations and left forces outside organizations almost completely out of the picture. However, the other literature, focusing on one type of organizations—for-profit organizations—pointed to the criticality of the shifting forces in the market and throughout the globe.

The business literature, both scholarly and popular, was filled with journal and magazine articles and books professing the wild rate of change hitting organizations

today (to only name a few, Allee, 1997; Amidon, 1997; Collins, 2001; Goss et al., 1993; Hurst, 2002; Kotter, 1995; Marsick & Watkins, 1999; Senge et al., 1999; Shaffer & Thomson, 1992). Each offered various cautions or solutions to deal with the turbulence in the business environment. The overarching theme seemed to be the need for organizations to develop a quick adaptability to change to meet the needs of their markets. Organizational socialization literature, however, was heavily concerned with theory and research that placed significant emphasis on perpetuating existing organizational culture and practices, teaching newcomers to become 'like' that which already existed. Perpetuating the existing state, perhaps rich with latent values and methods, ran counter to what was appearing as needs of current businesses.

This apparent contradiction between organizational socialization literature and other literature on organizations was ultimately revealed as a gap in organizational socialization theory concerning for-profit organizations. There is significant organizational socialization theory development at a broad organizational level, but it ignores the external forces of change that some types of organizations depend on. Therefore, these external forces have been included in this picture of factors and forces, because they heavily influence some types of organizations. It is proposed that these external shifts drive changes within the organization, thereby affecting socialization processes. In fact, every case study example used in this section outlined a significant element of socialization resulting from organizational changes driven by external changes.

Another example of an organization that was forced to change its organizational strategy or direction, its organizational culture, and its continuous socialization practices due to shifts in the external market was Pitney Bowes (Collins, 2001):

> For nearly forty years, Pitney Bowes lived inside the warm and protective cocoon of a monopoly. With its close relationship to the U.S. Postal Service and its patents on postal meter machines, Pitney attained 100 percent of the metered mail market. By the end of the 1950's, nearly half of *all* U.S. mail passed through Pitney Bowes machines. With gross profit margins in excess of 80 percent, no competition, a huge market, and a recession-proof business, Pitney Bowes wasn't so much a great company as it was a company with a great monopoly.
>
> Then, as almost always happens to monopolies when the protective cocoon is ripped away, Pitney Bowes began a long slide. First came a consent decree that required Pitney Bowes to license its patents to competitors, royalty free. Within six years, Pitney Bowes had sixteen competitors. (p. 133)

Pitney Bowes changed its organizational strategy from merely postage meters to a concept of "messaging," allowing expansion into other backoffice products. The company worked to transform its culture from one of complacency to one able to confront facts. Collins quotes a Pitney Bowes executive, "When you turn over rocks and look at all of the squiggly things underneath, you can either put the rock down, or you can say 'My job is to turn over rocks and look at the squiggly things,' even if what you see scares the hell out of you" (p. 72). Individuals within the organization were socialized to understand the value of confronting other individuals, even executives, with information that rocked the boat, "the company created a long-standing tradition of forums where people could stand up and tell senior executives what the company was doing wrong, shoving rocks with squiggly things in their faces" (p. 72).

External forces were the impetus for changes at all levels of the organization, thereby causing changes in the type of culture and practices to which individuals had

been socialized. The extensive literature on the importance of the external environment to for-profit organizations was too significant to ignore in the literature review of this study; even though it pertained only to one type of organization. The conditions of the current external landscape are further developed in the next section. The final section of this chapter explains the implications of this information, applied particularly to for-profit organizations, on the scope of this study.

Changing Business Landscape

Initial conceptualization of the phenomenon of socializing individuals to their workplace culture occurred in the 1950s; useful tactics and criteria for successful socialization were developed in light of the business needs for success at the time. However, much has changed in business since then. As stated above, businesses are significantly affected by shifts in forces in the external environment. Some of the recent shifting forces in the external business environment are described here, followed by implications for the conceptualization of organizational socialization.

The economy continues to move through new phases of development as physical and social technologies drive changes in how humans live and work (Allee, 1997; Amidon, 1997; Boudreau & Ramstad, 1997; Gibbons et al., 1994). Boudreau and Ramstad (1997) stated that the changing economic stages reflect changes in constrained resources. In other words, as constrained resources are pinpointed, various methods for channeling efforts to produce those resources are developed. For most of the twentieth century, businesses operated as though capital was the most constrained resource. In the *capital economy* performance, stakes hinged on recouping capital returns for

organizations' investments in tangible goods (see Table 2.6.). A more familiar name for this general timeframe is the industrial age, the term which is more frequently in this paper.

Table 2.6.

Emerging Economic Stage of Intellectual Capital as a Constrained Resource

Economic Stage		*Constrained Resource*	*Critical Asset*
Agricultural Age	Agricultural Economy	Food	Crop Land
	Trade Economy	Distribution	Transportation Systems
Industrial Age	Capital Economy	Tangible Goods	Capital
Knowledge Age	**Knowledge Economy**	**Intellectual Capital**	**People**

- Adapted from Boudreau & Ramstad (1997)

In order to recoup capital investments in the industrial age, data were gathered and synthesized into context specific pieces of information to make decisions about that capital. However, these systems for gathering and storing data were mostly manual and were not useful or accessible to large groups of people at one time. Consequently, processes and technologies were developed to gather, aggregate, and store large quantities of data; these bits of data, when aggregated or stored with some context, become pieces of information (Amidon, 1997). Yet, large quantities of information, whether stored with context or not, can overwhelming rather than aid decision-making. Therefore, today's new major constrained resource is knowledge, or information with meaning (Allee, 1997; Amidon, 1997).

"Businesses are realizing that value creation is intertwined more closely with what an organization knows rather than what an organization has" (Manderfeld, Gesuale,

& Parizek, 2001, p. 20). While the physical output of human labor is always incremental in production, the creative output of the human mind can grow exponentially. The knowledge economy is typified by an absolute admission that achieving a competitive advantage now relies on the creativity of the human mind. In the latter twentieth century, this focus has allowed an exponential rate of change in technologies, organizational structures, and organizational boundaries. In essence, the very language, definitions, and theories concerning change have evolved to match the whirlwind of fluctuating forces in the business environment (Allee, 1997; Henderson, 2002; Boudreau & Ramstad, 1997). The business landscape looks nothing like it has in the past. Three major categories of changes are described below: the changing face of the workforce, the changing mentality of the workforce, and the changing nature of performance.

The Changing Face of the Workforce

The workforce looks much different than it did half a century ago. The roughly 76 million individuals in the "baby boomer" generation impacted overall U.S. economic growth and labor market composition like no other labor segment; they are often credited with the prosperity of the latter decades of the 20th century (Manderfeld et al., 2001). As that balloon in the labor pool ages, so does the median age of the entire workforce. By 2008, it is expected that nearly 50% of the U.S. workforce will be nearing retirement age, leaving a tremendous replacement need for organizations in all industries (Manderfeld et al., 2001).

Whereas the U.S. workforce of the past was predominantly white and male, recent demographic shifts have diversified it. In terms of gender, more women have entered the workforce (Laabs, 1996; SRC, 2000). In fact, the rate of growth of the female workforce

has clearly outpaced that of the male workforce; it has experienced between 15-30% growth since the 1970's (Manderfeld et al., 2001). With regard to race and ethnicity, immigration is a major factor contributing to the increasing complexity and diversification of the workforce. The foreign-born percentage of the U.S. population doubled between 1970 and 1997 (Hattiangadi, 2002). While the greatest increase for one race between the1980 and 1990 census was Asian/Pacific Islander, the two largest existing racial and ethnic groups for both the 1990 and 2000 census were the African American/Black and Hispanic/Latino, each of which represented approximately 12% of the U.S. population (SRC, 2000).

The education level of the potential workforce has also shifted. In 1940 only 4.6 percent of the population had completed four or more years of college, but in 1996 almost 24 percent of the population had (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1998). Additionally, several racial and ethnic minority groups have made up a good proportion of those attaining higher levels of education (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1998). Therefore, just as the workforce is becoming more complex with respect to age, gender, race, and ethnicity, it is also becoming more highly educated.

Additionally, increasing numbers of corporations are choosing to become multinational, expanding their reach to compete in global markets, opening up a vast array of new challenges. "Once companies make the determination to compete globally, the complexity of building and maintaining a heterogeneous global work force increases exponentially as does competition for talent globally" (Manderfeld et al., 2001, p. 18). Finally, labor statistics and economic forecasts indicate the unemployment rate for the U.S. remains and will remain at historically low levels for some time; unemployment for

2001 capped at under 5%. That percentage dives for those populations with a college education, for whom unemployment is currently below 2.5%. With unemployment levels low, new populations are sought out to supplement the needed talent pool, further increasing the diversity of the workforce.

As more women enter the workforce, as the population ages, as more individuals immigrate, and as organizations utilize more human resources from international locations, the workforce pulsates with increased complexity and diversity. Some companies are "building an internal web of knowledge that includes a rich, dynamic mix of cultures, philosophies, and values...expanding the creative possibilities of their *inner* environment to be more responsive to the *external* environment" (Allee, 1997, p. 94). Some refer to the increased attention paid to an organization's level of heterogeneity as the *requisite variety*, or the ability to match internal diversity and complexity to that of the organization's external environment (Allee, 1997, p. 104). "Indeed, a new consciousness is emerging, one that is based on trust, mutual respect, and the value of diversity in every dimension" (Amidon, 1997, p. 14). Diversity used to be, and often still is, viewed as a narrow concept, limited to racial and ethnic differences, limited to event training or awareness exercises, and limited in the sense that it was treated as a moral obligation of organizations (Swanson, 1992).

These data indicate that business now requires a broader view of diversity to encompass all levels of heterogeneity within the workforce, from racial and ethnic diversity to diversity of sex, gender, philosophical orientation, background experience, cultural influence, and the gamut of elements that could possibly generate different ideas and perspectives. Creative and unique generation and reconfiguration of knowledge is

touted as the new constrained resource in organizations, because heterogeneity of thought allows for greater creativity.

The Changing Psychological Contract of the Workforce

Individual employees join organizations in a mutual exchange relationship where the individual performs work duties for the organization and the organization provides in return some compensation that may vary in form and substance. Such an exchange relationship has been termed the *psychological contract* between the employee and the organization (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 1994). Several factors were seen as significant to the individual's side of the psychological contract at the time of its conceptualization in the mid 1900s: job security, pay levels based on fair comparisons, pay increases to maintain living standards, and career opportunities founded on clear and stable paths (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 1994). Individuals' attitudes and behaviors are more closely directed at organizational commitment and organizational citizenship if the individuals perceive that the organization is meeting these expectations (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 1994).

"Not long ago, the keys to climbing the corporate ladder were no big secret: following the chain of command, conforming with centralized bureaucracy, putting in years of service and sacrificing family life for the corporate logo," O'Connell (1999) continued, "In today's economy, however, a new self-determination is emerging, driven by powerful trends that are transforming the employer-employee relationship and dooming the command-control hierarchies of the past" (p.7). O'Connell discussed several trends: continuous restructuring in organizations, the empowerment of employees with new technologies, and the dominance of intellectual capital. Many in the field have

echoed this discussion (Greengard, 2001; Manderfeld et al., 2001; McLagan, 1999; McMorrow, 1999). O'Connell called the changing mentality of the workforce a new developing individualism, one that decreases employees' reliance on the organization and increases their expectations of what they can demand from the organization.

Continuous Large-Scale Organizational Change

Along with the megamergers and the struggle for organizations to keep afloat in a trying global economy, there has been immense employee fallout through downsizing and restucturing efforts (Laabs, 1996; McMorrow, 1999; O'Connell, 1999); and there does not appear to be a slowdown in the near future (Laabs, 1996). "Business process reengineering, ongoing restructuring, forward positioning and mergers and acquisitions translate into constant uncertainty about jobs, pensions, healthcare and children's education. For millions of employees fearing the perils of restructuring, self-reliance means security" (O'Connell, 1999, p.7).

Intellectual Capital as the Constrained Resource

With the turn of the century, the number of knowledge based services and whole industries has exploded (Manderfeld et al., 2001). The new knowledge economy has two general types of industries: those that have knowledge as their major product, such as software or pharmaceuticals, and those that manage or convey information, such as banking or insurance (Manderfeld et al., 2001). Different types of knowledge are leveraged in these industries, such as knowledge that resides within individuals, teams, and whole organizations. O'Connell (1999) stated, "personal knowledge will not be collectivized or indentured. Minds and hearts may be inspired, but they will not be commanded" (p. 8). Leveraging such tacit knowledge at the individual level is now a key

organizational focus, leaving the individual employee in a better position, "The bargaining power of the workforce is rising. This is an inevitable consequence of the shift to knowledge work. When knowledge becomes an important business resource, people become more valuable. The tools of production reside inside people" (McLagan, 1999, p. 23).

Increased Technology and Employee Power

Increased technology in communication platforms, such as the Internet, has changed "the way people communicate, share ideas, gain knowledge, gather intelligence, and received insightful feedback" (Manderfeld et al., 2001, p. 23). The advent of employee self-service, the Intranet, personalized

> 'narrowcast' networks and direct consumer interfaces will transfer decision-making power to the desktop. Employee self-service, in particular, empowers individualists by giving them control of their own personal information that, in the past, was beyond their control, decreasing reliance on the company even more. (O'Connell, 1999, p. 8)

The result of all of the above is a changed psychological contract. A contract that used to mean stability, ensured tenure, and structured work settings and hours (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000), now shows pointed signs of movement. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2000) indicated a marked difference in the tenure associated with various age groups. Tenure for younger age groups is significantly lower than that over older age groups; the category 'Tenure of 10 or more years' for males between 1983 and 2000 fell in nearly every age group. Commitment has decreased on both sides of the current psychological contract (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000). Transactional and relational obligations on the part of the organization have changed to accommodate the new psychological contract (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000).

The Changing Nature of Performance

Boudreau and Ramstad (1997) argue that constrained resources determine economic stages because constrained resources make certain assets critical; these in turn determine the types of measurement systems and performance metrics created and utilized. The authors eloquently state that, while today it is difficult to imagine a world without time zones, such a measurement system was not developed in America until the economic stage in which transportation assets were first considered a constrained resource. Performance, or competitive advantage, in each age means utilizing critical assets to produce the constrained resource in a more effective way than the competition. In the agricultural age, competitive advantage resulted from utilizing cropland to produce food either in greater volume or with greater efficiency. In the industrial age, competitive advantage resulted from utilizing capital to invest in distribution systems and tangible goods to generate a higher return.

The constrained resource has shifted to intellectual capital; measurement systems and performance metrics must shift to capture the creation of that constrained resource. "Increasingly there is less and less return on the traditional resources: land, labour and (money) capital. The main producers of wealth have become information and knowledge" (Gibbons et al., 1994, p. 57). The nature of performance has changed. Stated in another manner, in knowledge industries value is added "by the reiterated use of knowledge; reconfiguring it with other forms of knowledge to solve a problem or meet a need. Firms in knowledge industries compete with one another in terms of the ingenuity with which they reconfigure knowledge" (Gibbons et al., 1994, p. 85).

In summary, much has changed in the business environment since the mid 1900s when the topic of organizational socialization was initially conceptualized. Such shifts in the business environment have been the impetus for change at many levels of organizational functioning and management (Table 2.7.). These data clearly show that many for-profit organizations no longer have a stable or relatively homogenous workforce, these organizations and their employees no longer enjoy the same level of stability and security in the psychological work contract, and the key to performance for these organizations no longer rests solely in the returns generated from efficiency and

Table 2.7.

Contrast Between Industrial & Knowledge Age Characteristics in For-profit Organizations

Business Environment	*Industrial Age*	*Knowledge Age*
	Homogeneous	**Heterogeneous**
Organization Talent Pool	In 1940, the median age was 29, over 90% of the population was Native or Foreign born White, with only 4.6% of the population with more education than high school (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2002)	Age, ethnic, racial, geographic, gender, and educational composition of the workforce is increasing in complexity (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1998)
	Security	**Individualism**
Workforce Psychological Contract	Job security, pay levels based on fair comparisons, pay increases maintaining living standards, career opportunities founded on clear and stable paths (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 1994)	Decreasing reliance of the employee on the organization and increasing expectations of what they feel they can demand from the organization (O'Connell, 1999)
	Tangible Goods	**Knowledge Renewal**
Desired Performance	Efficient and effective production and distribution of tangible goods in order to generate a strong return on capital (Boudreau & Ramstad, 1997)	Added value through reiterated use of knowledge that is uniquely reconfigured with other forms of knowledge to solve a problem or meet a need (Gibbons et al., 1994)

control efforts. Organizational agility and continuous renewal appear to be a competitive necessity for organizations in a knowledge-based economy. This raises a question: does a process whose primary desired outcomes are perpetuating an existing corporate culture and creating stability in employment really mesh with the business reality of today?

Socialization Strategies for Organizations Seeking Renewal

The question posed above was: does a process whose primary desired outcomes are perpetuating an existing corporate culture and creating stability in employment really mesh with the business reality of today? The perspective of this study is that some types of organizations that will continue to need such a process. For example, some literature suggests that military, religious, and educational organizations may have low desire to rapidly change and adjust their cultures and practices (Collins, 2001; CSIS, 2000; Harkins, 1998; Murray, 1999; Stein, 2000; Waterman, 1987). Obviously, these organizations do change over time and are driven to change by external forces (CSIS, 2000; Harkins, 1998; Murray, 1999; Stein, 2000; Waterman, 1987), but organizational agility and continuous renewal at a pace equal to that of market-dependent businesses may not be their ideal strategy. Therefore, what initially appeared to be a contradiction in the two bodies of literature, business and organizational socialization, upon further examination appears to be a gap in organizational socialization theory. There is no explicit development of organizational socialization theory for the purpose of promoting and facilitating organizational agility, and the business literature suggests that the need for systems and processes to promote such renewal is critical.

Alleviating such a gap in organizational socialization theory could significantly benefit organizations and individuals. Comparing two hypothetical scenarios shows the potential benefits from the development of an alternative theory. The first scenario is a business striving to operate in the knowledge age, working to leverage the increasing plurality of the workforce, the less stable nature of the working talent, and the new definitions and measurements of competitive success in the marketplace (Table 2.7.). This organization applies organizational socialization theory to its socialization practices. The outcome of such a scenario would likely be a hindered ability to quickly adapt to continually shifting business needs because socialization practices would only perpetuate the organization's current value system, norms and behavior patterns. While individual learning and role clarity might lead to initial performance success, socialization processes would block continued performance success given the continuously shifting needs and requirements of the organization.

The second scenario is a similar business, also striving to operate in the knowledge age, also seeking to leverage the elements of this age. This organization, in contrast, implements a newly conceptualized theory of organizational socialization, a theory designed to facilitate both the individual's and the organization's ability not only to continuously adapt to shifting business needs but also to continuously generate and apply new knowledge to shape the business environment. If such a theory could be developed, validated, and applied, significant benefits are possible.

Currently, there are organizations that appear not only to shift and adapt well to changing market trends but also to mold the competitive environment through their actions. Thus, some significant learning and validation of conceptualized theory is

possible through research of these organizations. This is an intended research avenue following the initial conceptualization phase of this study.

Chapter Three will outline the methodological approach to building this new theory of organizational socialization. The goal of this research study is a reframing of the phenomenon for those for-profit organizations seeking continuous renewal. Such a reframing could help shape future knowledge around the phenomenon and move organizations out of using socialization process designed for previous eras, because "The way we organize *existing* knowledge also shapes *future* knowledge" (Allee, 1997, p.141).

CHAPTER THREE:

METHODOLOGY

The objectives of this chapter are to present the rationale for the methodology chosen to address the research questions and to describe that methodology in detail. This chapter will: (1) reiterate the research questions of this study and describe how theory building research was chosen as the preferred approach to address those questions; (2) present the essential working definitions and core concepts for the study; (3) discuss the methodological considerations involved in choosing Dubin's (1978) theory building research methodology used in this study, and (4) overview, at a broad level, the specific steps used in the development of this theory of continuous socialization for organizational renewal.

Research Questions and Methodological Considerations

The cited deficiency in existing organizational socialization theory led to the choice of a theory-building research methodology. Similarly, the desire for the results to be utilized in the applied context of business led to the choice for this study of a specific theory-building research approach that is more quantitative in nature and uses a theory-then-research strategy.

Research Direction

The dramatic shifts in the business environment have put new demands on for-profit organizations to adapt with increased rapidity. As a result, management

philosophies and practices have had to evolve. One practice that has yet to be reconceptualized to fit the new needs of business is organizational socialization. It is proposed that, while some organizations consciously utilize socialization as a tactic to perpetuate their distinctive organizational culture, other organizations desire socialization practices that facilitate evolutionary change. The research direction for this study is to ensure that a theoretical framework exists to understand socialization for organizational agility and renewal and to test a portion of that framework for validation and application for use by organizations through their Human Resource Development function.

Methodological Considerations

Since the body of literature on organizational socialization has many theory contributions, one option for greater understanding of organizational socialization would be to ground a perspective in one of those theories and test the components of that theory. But the present theories of organizational socialization in the literature have a primary intended outcome of transmitting an existing organizational culture to which new members can successfully adjust (Tuttle, 2003). This intended outcome does not allow for the type of rapid adjustments and paradigm shifts required of many contemporary organizations. Therefore, despite the abundance of existing theory contributions to organizational socialization, the literature did not show the existence of a conceptual framework that would allow for such agility. The conceptualization and validation of a new perspective concerning organizational socialization using a theory-building research methodology appears to be warranted. Thus, the guiding research question and subquestions for this study are:

Can an alternative theory of *organizational socialization* be developed to aid in the continuous facilitation of organizational agility and renewal?

c. Can the alternative theory of *organizational socialization* be conceptualized to incorporate necessary elements for continuous organizational agility and renewal?

d. Can the alternative theory of *organizational socialization* be validated as playing a part in facilitating continuous organizational agility and renewal?

Core Methodological Terms and Concepts

The purpose of this section is to provide a common understanding of several core methodological terms and concepts used within this study. To situate this study within the context of theory building, certain core terms and concepts must be presented and discussed. Because these do not have a uniform use or understanding throughout the field of social science, explicit working definitions for this study are presented. The terms and concepts defined are: theory, theory building, outcomes of theory building, knowledge base, research, paradigm, multiparadigm research, and multilevel research. A summary of working definitions for these terms and concepts follows their presentation in Table 3.1.

Theory

As humans, we are curious about our own behavior; the apparent chaos drives us to attempt to make sense of our experiences. One way we do this is by creating theories to impose order where there naturally is little (Dubin, 1978). In essence, the development of theory is merely an attempt to explain what we experience (Dubin, 1978; Gall, Borg &

Gall, 1996; Reynolds, 1971; Stinchcombe, 1968; Torraco, 1997; Weick, 1989). Dubin (1979) explained that, as our curiosity rises about a certain experience or set of experiences, our attention becomes focused and other experiences fade into the background. Asking questions about an experience allows us to put its elements into different buckets or classifications, in order to describe them. Once they have been described, we look for the relationships between them. We search for order in the most mundane of experiences, such as the explanation for a stalled car (Torraco, 1997), and we also search for order in the most complex of experiences, such as the conception of personality (Reynolds, 1971).

One definition of theory is "any coherent description or explanation of observed or experienced phenomena" (Gioia & Pitre, 1990, p. 587). However, two individuals experiencing similar life situations may find order in their experiences in very different ways, even though each individual has a coherent description or explanation of the phenomenon (Dubin, 1979). The preferred definition of theory, and the one that will be used for this discussion, is "A theory is an explanation of a certain set of observed phenomena in terms of a system of constructs and laws that relate these constructs together" (Gall et al., 1996, p.8). This definition helps illuminate the need for theory to not only describe the phenomenon in a coherent manner, but to explain its elements and how they interact. This definition does not eliminate the possibility that varying theories can be created for the same phenomenon; however, it does assume some level of logical rigor. Reynolds (1971) argued that one of three desirable characteristics of scientific knowledge is that it has intersubjective agreement around what the logical rigor should be, independent of the phenomenon under scrutiny.

Gall, Borg and Gall's (1996) definition of theory and Reynolds's desirable characteristics of scientific knowledge are a few indicators that the process through which a theory was created may largely influence the quality of the end product. Just as there are many definitions of theory (Lynham, 2000b), so are there several approaches to building theory.

Theory-Building Research

In the social sciences there is a consistent call for better-developed theories, yet there is little agreement on the processes and standards for developing them. (Blalock, 1969; Weick, 1989). Weick (1989) argued that, consequently, our theories will not improve until the processes for developing them improve. Several points of contention among theorists lead to theories of varying levels of descriptive or predictive ability. Those points include: (1) one's definition of theory; (2) the paradigm or approach used to develop the theory; (3) the standards or levels of logical rigor required in the theory building process used, and (4) the desired outcome criteria of the developed theory. Each will be briefly explored prior to presenting the theory-building methodology for this study.

Definitions. The first article of contention may be the theorist's definitions of theory and theory building, which are bound to influence the theory building process. Some definitions are very broad to encompass several forms of theory building (Gioia & Pitre, 1990); others are very specific to make explicit the level of exactitude and precision to be found within the process (Reynolds, 1971). Residing somewhere in the middle is the preferred definition of *theory building research* for this discussion, "the process or recurring cycle by which coherent descriptions, explanations and representations of

observed or experienced phenomena are generated, verified and refined" (Lynham, 2000b, p. 161). Implied in this definition of theory building is the idea that eventually a theory needs to move through a phase of testing. This is supported by Patterson's criteria for theory, which stated, "eventually, however, a theory must be supported by experience and experiments that confirm it" (cited by Gradous, 1989, p. 37). In this definition "experiments" refers to *research* "a scholarly or scientific investigation or inquiry; close and careful study" (Swanson, 1997, p.10). In addition to a testing phase, Lynham (2000b) and others argued that the theory-building process should not be merely a linear event of moving from conception to testing. Rather, it should be an iterative cycle that requires continuous refinement of original ideas (Gioia & Pitre, 1990). Additionally, theories can be directed at single or multiple levels within the phenomenon. *Multilevel theory building* spans "the levels of organizational behavior and performance, typically describing some combination of individuals, dyads, teams, businesses, corporations, and industries (Klein, Tosi & Cannella, 1999, p. 243).

Conceptual Paradigm. The second element that can bring disagreement is the influence of a theorist's *paradigm*, a way of thinking that reflects fundamental beliefs and assumptions or, more specifically, limits the view of other forms of theory development (Gioia & Pitre, 1990; Lynham, 2000b, 2002a; Torraco, 1997). Gioia and Pitre (1990) argued that organizational study, like all other forms of inquiry, is anchored in the researcher's conceptual paradigm. This anchor consists of fundamental beliefs about ontology, the nature of reality and existence of phenomena, about epistemology, or how we come to know about reality and human phenomena, and about methodology, or how we study human phenomena.

Debate is sparked as researchers argue over whether work anchored in paradigms other than the dominant functionalist paradigm adds to the knowledge base. However, there has been a growing effort to end paradigmatic confinement and bridge the gap between the various conceptual paradigms with multi-paradigm research (Gioia & Pitre, 1990; Lynham, 2000b, 2002a; Van de Ven, 1989). Gioia and Pitre (1990) stated:

> It would be useful for theory building to be viewed not as a search for *the* truth, but as more of a search for comprehensiveness stemming from different worldviews. This stance implies that the provincialism that comes with paradigm confinement might instead be turned toward the production of more complete views of organizational phenomena via multiparadigm consideration. (p. 587)

Such an approach of *paradigm-based theory building* would be considered as "using theory building approaches that are grounded in appropriate paradigmatic assumptions to study those organizational phenomena that are consistent with such assumptions" (Gioia & Pitre, 1990, p.587).

Process Characteristics. A third element of contention in theory-building research concerns the characteristics of the theory building processes used and their inherent levels of logical rigor. This contention occurs both between theorists of different conceptual paradigms and between theorists within one paradigm. The question is, what should be the process for developing robust theory? One familiar description in the field is the *research-then-theory* approach, in which current data guides the theory development process, versus the *theory-then-research* approach, in which theory is conceptualized and then tested (Dubin, 1978; Lynham, 2002a; Reynolds, 1971). While most authors agree that each has a place in the development of the knowledge base, some lean more heavily to one approach. For example, Stinchcombe (1968) states clearly that in developing

fields, "his job ... is primarily to invent theories, and only secondarily to test them" (p. 3).

The dialogue around strategies of theory first or research first is highly abstract. Most often the discussion centers around more specific process issues, such as whether the theory-building process should focus more on precision of understanding about the phenomenon or precision of prediction for the phenomenon (Dubin, 1978). Alternatively, theorists discuss whether they should be overly concerned with mirroring the real world in the initial conceptualization, versus allowing imagination in the beginning to guide thinking and using the testing process at the end to help the theory to reflect actual experience (Dubin, 1978; Weick, 1989). For example, Whetten (1989) stated that one should "err in favor of including too many factors, recognizing that over time their ideas will be refined" (p. 490). Another discussion centers on when a phenomenon is truly understood. Some would argue that true understanding comes only with a vision of causal processes, or causal laws. (Reynolds, 1971). Reynolds (1971) clarified, however, that theories can make other valuable contributions to scientific knowledge; however, true understanding will not be reached unless the statements within the theory are able to reveal causal processes.

There truly has been effort to posit several forms or processes for theory building in the social sciences (Blalock, 1969; Dubin, 1978; Eisenhardt, 1995; Lynham, 2002a; Reynolds, 1971; Stinchcombe, 1968; Weick, 1989, to only name a few). Van de Ven (1989) emphasized the value of having rival theories in a field to promote thought, discussion, and progress; by extension, perhaps rival theory-building approaches are just as useful.

Outcome Measures. Given the multiple process approaches to theory building, one can imagine multiple views as to what is a successful outcome of theory building. Regardless of the approach used, some fundamental themes about the successful outcomes of theory are common. Good theory is often seen as that which can be used in a manner to aid us in understanding the world around us (Dubin, 1978; Torraco, 1997; Van de Ven, 1989). Dubin (1978) elaborated on the types of understanding we can gain from theory: "understanding is an intellectual and/or aesthetic product of a theoretical model (knowledge of process). Accurate prediction is the practical product of the theory (knowledge of outcomes)" (Adapted from p. 32).

Both process knowledge and outcome knowledge have a practical or applied use in our everyday lives. There is also some agreement that the theory should be both comprehensive and parsimonious, meaning that it includes only the factors necessary for the theory to model the phenomenon (Whetten, 1989). All these authors allude to good theory as making a substantial contribution to the knowledge base of a field. In this case, a *knowledge base* is defined as "the collection and integrated system of intellectual and practical concepts, components, principles, theories, and practices that underlie and form the foundations of a discipline or field of study and practice" (Lynham, 2000b, p. 161). Van den Ven (1989) explained the practicality of good theory as advancing the discipline, guiding research towards important questions, and enlightening the profession.

Table 3.1.

Summary of Working Definitions of Core Theory Building Research Methodological Terms & Concepts

Core Methodological Terms & Concepts	Working Definitions
Theory	▪ A theory is an explanation of a certain set of observed phenomena in terms of a system of constructs and laws that relate these constructs together (Gall et al., 1996, p.8)
Theory Building Research	▪ The process or recurring cycle by which coherent descriptions, explanations and representations of observed or experienced phenomena are generated, verified and refined (Lynham, 2000b, p. 161)
Outcomes of Theory Building	▪ Understanding is an intellectual and/or aesthetic product of a theoretical model (knowledge of process). Accurate prediction is the practical product of the theory (knowledge of outcomes) (Adapted from Dubin, 1978, p. 32)
Knowledge Base	▪ The collection and integrated system of intellectual and practical concepts, components, principles, theories, and practices that underlie and form the foundations of a discipline or field of study and practice (Lynham, 2000b, p. 161)
Research	▪ A scholarly or scientific investigation or inquiry; close and careful study (Swanson, 1997, p.10)
Paradigm	▪ A general perspective or way of thinking that reflects fundamental beliefs and assumptions about the nature of organizations (Gioia & Pitre, 1990, p.585)
Multiparadigm Research	▪ Paradigm-based theory building...using theory building approaches that are grounded in appropriate paradigmatic assumptions to study those organizational phenomena that are consistent with such assumptions (adapted from Gioia & Pitre, 1990, p. 587)
Multilevel Research	▪ Multilevel theories span the levels of organizational behavior and performance, typically describing some combination of individuals, dyads, teams, businesses, corporations, and industries (Klein, Tosi & Cannella, 1999, p. 243)

Theory Building Research as the Methodology for this Study

In essence, the development of theory is merely an attempt to explain what we experience (Dubin, 1978; Gall et al., 1996; Reynolds, 1971; Stinchcombe, 1968; Torraco, 1997; Weick, 1989). The preferred definition of *theory building research* for this discussion is "the process or recurring cycle by which coherent descriptions, explanations and representations of observed or experienced phenomena are generated, verified and refined" (Lynham, 2000b, p. 161).

Opposing avenues to pursuing theory are the strategies of theory-then-research and research-then-theory, different approaches of inductive and deductive theorizing (Dubin, 1978, 1983; Lynham, 2002a; Reynolds, 1971). Dubin (1978) explained, "Coming from theory to research, attention is focused on ... the nature of reality, the process of knowing, and logic of meaning statements. Starting from research ... attention turns to such issues as measurement in all its phases" (p. 17). Each approach reflects different assumptions about the relationship between the experienced world and scientific knowledge (Reynolds, 1971). In essence, the research-then-theory approach reflects an assumption that patterns in nature that are discoverable if measurement and observation methods are rigorous enough. In contrast, the theory-then-research approach does not assume that there is one truth or one reality; it leans on the logic of the conceptual nature of the theory until research can show that the theory reflects the nature of what is observed. Therefore, in this approach, one theoretical configuration may stand as acceptable until a better one is found (Reynolds, 1971).

Regardless of the varying fundamental underlying assumptions, each strategy is viewed as having an important role to play in the description of human phenomena (Dubin, 1983; Lynham, 2002a; Reynolds, 1971). What Lynham (2002a) emphasized is that there should be a "continuous and iterative conversation" that occurs for the theorist between the knowledge of the phenomenon and experience of the phenomenon. More specifically, the theory building process should be a recursive system of the following five phases: (1) conceptual development, (2) operationalization, (3) application, (4) confirmation and disconfirmation, and (5) continuous refinement and development of the theory (Lynham, 2002a). Breaking down the phases of theory building in this manner, Lynham's general method allows for the utilization of any theory building method to help develop one of the phases. She stated that, regardless of the theory building method used, the process will involve, in one form of progression or another, the five phases (Figure 3.1.). An overview of each stage is presented below.

Conceptual Development

The purpose of the Conceptual Development phase is to "develop an informed conceptual framework that provides an initial understanding and explanation of the nature and dynamics of the issue, problem, or phenomenon that is the focus of the theory" (Lynham, 2002a, p.231). An eventual mirroring of the real world is the desirable result of the theory building process. However, the development of the initial understanding should not be overly constricted by the desire to ensure close correspondence between concepts and operations. Rather, this phase should consist more of "disciplined imagination" (Weick, 1989). The discipline should be in the logical rigor

of the concept development, and the imagination should be in the diversity of thought in its development (Weick, 1989).

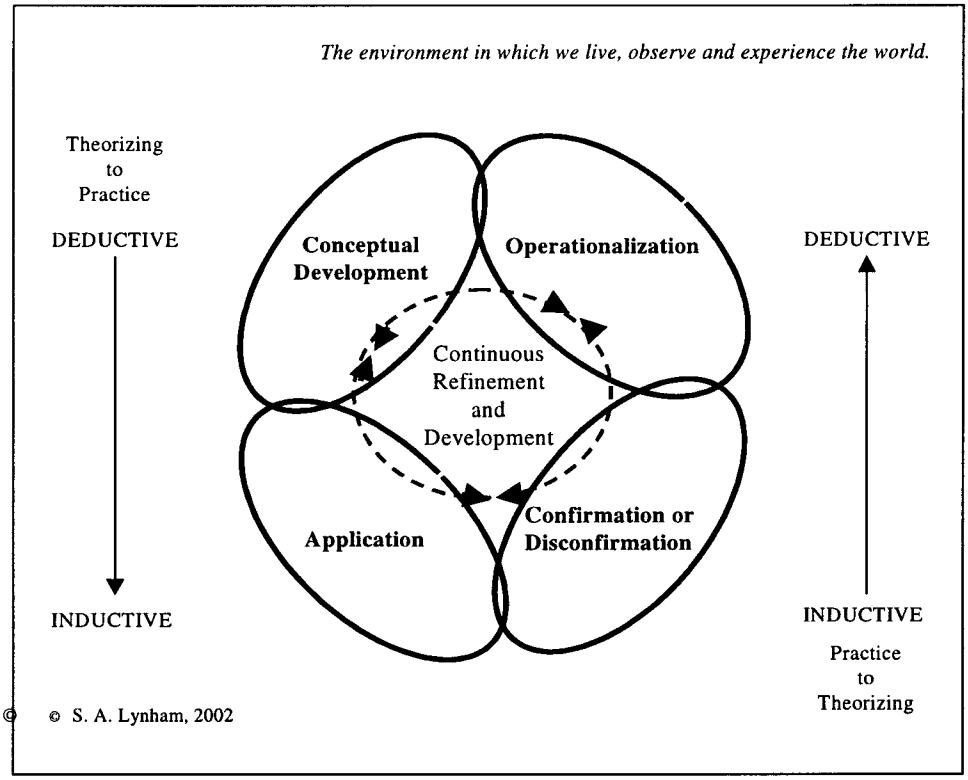


Figure 3.1. Lynham's General Method of Theory Building Research in Applied Disciplines.

In this initial phase, logic is the basis for the theory's evaluation (Whetten, 1989). Later in the process, research will determine whether changes need to take place to better mirror the world. In other words, the conceptual model is considered true until shown otherwise (Dubin, 1978; Lynham, 2002a; Reynolds, 1971). "If our theory is then refuted, we change the theory, which means among other things that we change our concepts or formulate new ones which more exactly correspond to the forces apparently operating" (Stinchcombe, 1968, p. 38) and "concepts are in a constant state of flux as long as the causal theories are still in the process of development" (Stinchcombe, 1968, p.40).

Operationalization

The purpose of the Operationalization stage of theory-building is to prepare the theoretical model for testing in its real world context, thus creating a bridge between the theorizing and practice components of the process (Lynham, 2002a). In this stage, the author describes that ways in which the theoretical model will be put to use in the world (Dubin, 1978). The outcome of this phase is the development of an operationalized framework that can allow for the research and testing of the author's core arguments (Lynham, 2002a; Whetten, 1989).

Confirmation / Disconfirmation of the Theory

"As the science advances, it progressively redefines its concepts until they accurately represent the phenomena in the world" (Stinchcombe, 1968, p. 40). The need to redefine concepts is found through the testing of the theory in practice, which is the purpose of the Confirmation/ Disconfirmation phase of theory building. "This theory building phase involves the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of an appropriate research agenda and studies to purposefully inform and intentionally confirm or disconfirm the theoretical framework central to the theory" (Lynham, 2002a, p. 233). Dubin (1978) summarized this phase as answering the question, "can my model make any sense out of the real world?" (p. 182). Thus, it is clear that the research component of the theory-then-research strategy is integral to moving the theoretical model closer to mirroring the world, because "measurement is not only a device for testing theory. It is part of the theory" (Stinchcombe, 1968, p. 43).

Application / Continuous Refinement and Development

It is generally agreed that the theory-then-research process should be a continuous cycle that not only puts the theoretical model to the test, but also works to refine the model with each application (Dubin, 1978, 1983; Lynham, 2002a; Reynolds, 1971; Weick, 1989; Whetten; 1989). Lynham (2002a) made this explicit in her general theory-building method with the stages of Application and Continuous Refinement and Development.

Dubin's Quantitative Theory-Building Research Steps as the Preferred Strategy for this Study

Once a theory-building need was determined from the gaps in existing literature and research, it was necessary to review possible theory-building research methods to choose the one most appropriate to address the above research questions. Two major considerations drove this choice. First, this research is intended to primarily contribute to the knowledge base existing for the field of HRD, which is applied in nature. Second, the new knowledge developed must be accessible and immediately applicable to scholars and practitioners of Human Resource Development alike.

If the theory is to contribute to the HRD knowledge base, the theory-building strategy employed must contribute to the eventual application of the new knowledge generated (Lynham, 2002a). Several theory building research methodologies could be feasible at this level, entering and exiting at different points in the stage model of conceptualization, operationalization, confirmation /disconfirmation, application, and continuous refinement. Each is able to contribute different knowledge about the phenomenon

(Lynham, 2002a, 2002b; Eagan, 2002; Dooley, 2002; Torraco, 2002; Turnbull, 2002; Yang, 2002):

- *Quantitative Research* – is able to encompass all five phases of theory building research, typically beginning with Conceptualization (Lynham, 2002b)
- *Grounded theory* – by beginning with applied research and moving to derive a theoretical conceptualization, this methodology is able to encompass Application, Conceptual Development and Operationalization (Eagan, 2002)
- *Meta-analysis* – as a methodology for integrating and synthesizing previous research, is able to encompass four of the five stages, not encompassing Application (Yang, 2002)
- *Social Construction* – as a qualitative research methodology for understanding the construction of meaning through interactions in an applied setting, is able to encompass Application, feed into Conceptual Development and some Operationalization, but does not itself seek confirmation or disconfirmation through statistical validation (Turnbull, 2002)
- *Case Study* – is a methodology that does not progress in a linear manner through the stages; however, is able to play a role in every stage if necessary. For example, a case study methodology could be used in the Confirmation/ Disconfirmation of an already conceptualized and operationalized theory (Dooley, 2002)

Not all of the research strategies described above are designed to encompass the five stages of theory building research. In other words, theory contributions to understanding of a particular phenomenon may or may not be in the form of a complete

theory (i.e., having already progressed through all five phases). In fact, it is more likely that the contribution will not be able to provide a completed theory, as a theory is always "in progress," waiting for additional research efforts to increase or decrease confidence in that particular research contribution (Lynham, 2002a).

The second major consideration for choosing a theory building approach for this study was the desire for the new knowledge developed to be accessible and immediately applicable to both scholars and practitioners of HRD. Thus, some consideration was given to the utility of the end product resulting from each theory building approach. While less mainstream strategies are gaining support in both practitioner and scholar communities, traditional quantitative/empirical methods remain dominant in the field of HRD and business (Holton & Burnett, 1997).

One theory-building strategy that met both of the considerations for this study was the quantitative theory-building research method of Robert Dubin (1978). His method utilizes the theory-then-research process and contains eight steps for developing a full theory that progresses through each of the five phases outlined by Lynham's (2002a) General Method. The first four of Dubin's eight research steps are as follows: (1) the *units* of the theory, meaning the elements that interact to create the phenomenon observed, must be presented and defined; (2) the *laws of interaction* that state the relationship and effects each unit has upon the others must be determined; (3) the *boundaries* of the theory must be defined to help focus attention on forces that could affect the interplay of the units; (4) the *system states* of the theory must be defined because the units, influenced by the forces around them, will interact differently in different situations. These four steps represent the theoretical model. Now the researcher

can move to step (5), defining specific *propositions* about the theoretical model that are to be considered logical and true.

The last three steps comprise the testing phase. The researcher must convert each unit or term into (6) an *empirical indicator,* which can be measured, or, in other words, operationalize each key point of the theory to be tested. The researcher then generates testable (7) *hypotheses*, or creates research questions to direct the focus of research. Finally, the theory is at stage (8), *testing*. Once tested, the researcher is able to determine whether or not the results approximate the propositions set out in the fifth stage of development. Lynham (2002b) further details the quantitative approach to theory building as a process encompassing two major agendas. The first part is the theory development side; the second part is the research operation side (Figure 3.2.).

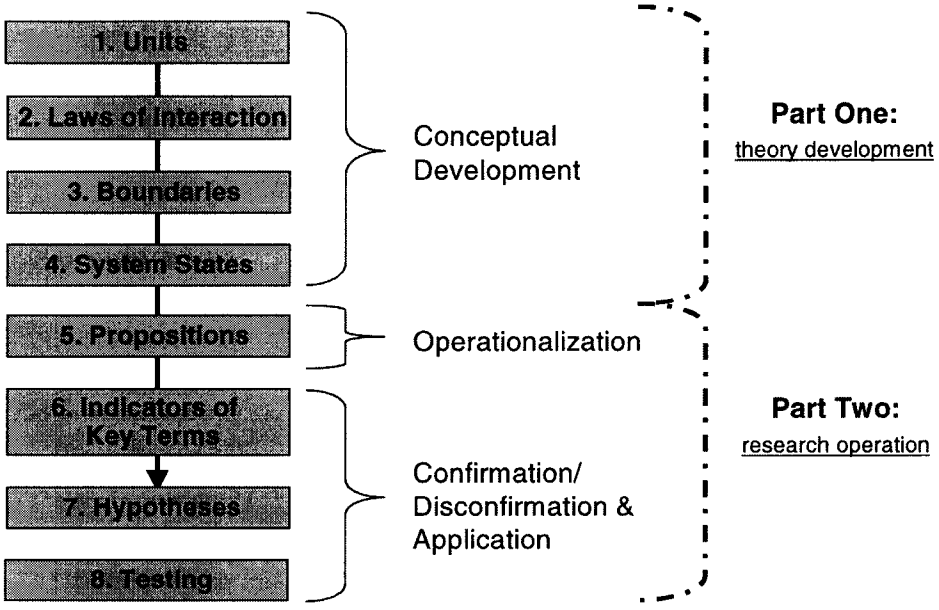


Figure 3.2. Lynham's (2002a) General Method Integrating Dubin's Eight Steps of Theory Building Research

Theory Building Research Steps Followed for this Study

A theory-then-research strategy, incorporating Dubin's eight-step theory building research approach, will be utilized in this study. The boundaries and scope of this theory, as well as the steps followed, are described below.

Boundaries of this Theory

The topic of this dissertation is *organizational socialization.* The term 'organization' can mean "an association or society of people working together to some end" (New Webster's Dictionary and Thesaurus, 1992, p. 885). This use of the word leaves the interpretation quite broad. Thus, without further specification, this theory could apply to educational organizations, religious organizations, government organizations, military organizations, corporate organizations and the like. Previous theory building efforts have distinguished between socialization during the life cycle not limited to the workplace (Brim, 1966; Wheeler, 1966), and socialization within the workplace, without limiting the theory-building scope to any one form of organization (Jones, 1983; Feldman, 1976; Van Maanen, 1976). Those theory-building efforts limited to the workplace may perhaps speak to some elements of socialization that are universal across organization types. However, during the literature research process, some distinctions among the different forms of organizations became clear, decreasing the likelihood of one overarching theory of organizational socialization that would encompass all forms of organizations. Several conclusions derived from the literature search established the boundary delineations for this theory research building effort (Figure 3.3.):

1. The origins of socialization are in the understanding of how individuals are taught the appropriate behaviors, values, and norms to adjust and function within their local and national cultures.
2. Organizational socialization, then, was originally conceptualized from the understanding of how socialization to local and national cultures occurred.
3. Some organizations seek to perpetuate those systems, processes, and organizational cultures that have delivered success through several methods, one of which is organizational socialization.
4. Some organizations seek to continually evolve, adapt, and reinvent themselves, leaving behind old systems, processes, and organizational cultures; to date, organizational socialization has not been explicitly conceptualized to serve this need for continuous organizational renewal.
5. One major differentiating factor between organizations seeking stability or maintenance of their current methods and those seeking agility and continuous renewal appears to be that for-profit organizations that rely heavily on the needs of a continually shifting market must be able to quickly shift their direction and practices.
6. The application of currently conceptualized organizational socialization theory promotes stability and maintenance and is believed to hinder agility and continuous renewal.

The boundary delineation of for-profit organizations working to build renewal capacity has been developed for this theory-building effort. While organizations may need to seek continuous organization renewal for success and survival in this knowledge

age and beyond, this cannot be concluded with certainty. Therefore, due to the volume of literature and research indicating the need for companies to move in the direction of renewal, it is posited that companies are searching for systems and processes to support that effort. It is towards this need, then, that this alternative and dynamic theory of organizational socialization for continuous organization renewal is developed.

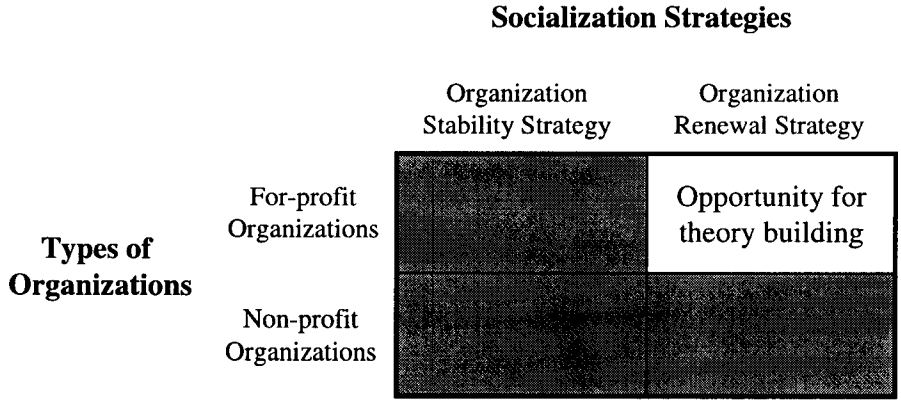


Figure 3.3. Boundary Delineation for a Theory of For-profit Organizations Seeking Organizational Renewal through Continuous Socialization

Scope of this Theory Building Research Process

Theories that are considered valid and robust have been subjected to numerous iterations of the theory-building process of conceptual development through application and have had continuous refinements and developments to allow them to mirror more closely the properties of the world (Dubin, 1978). Such journeys can take years; in essence, theory building can be a career-long endeavor (Dubin, 1978). Therefore, while eventual completion of both part one and part two of the theory-building research process is important for the strength of the theory, each part plays a distinct but interdependent

role in the process; this allows for different entry and exit points based on the current understanding and knowledge base of the phenomenon. "Although it is important for researcher-theorists to consider the entire scope of Dubin's model for effective theory building, the theoretical and the research operation side of the methodology are often separated in the theory building process" (Lynham, 2000b, 36). Such is the case for this study.

The entry point for the study will be at the Conceptual Development phase, beginning with the development of the units of the theory, the laws of interaction, the boundaries of the theory, and its system states. This would be the end of part one of the theory building research cycle, the *theory development* part (Figure 3.4.). The output of

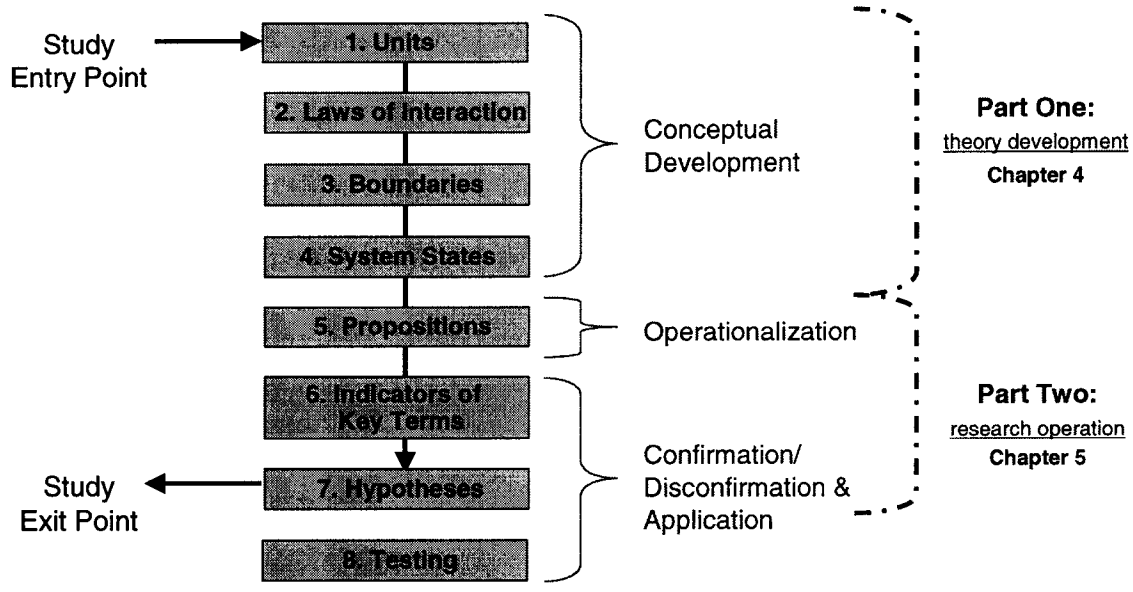


Figure 3.4. Entry & Exit Points for this Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal Theory Research Study

step one is an "explicit output of a conceptual or theoretical framework of the theory" (Lynham, 2002b, p.245), in other words a theoretical model (Dubin, 1978). While the first and second parts of the process are often separated, with some contributions ending after the first, this study will also begin to move the theory of organizational socialization into the second part, the *research operation* part. Specifically, this study will develop both propositions for the theoretical model and a clear research agenda, preparing this theory for testing in the world (Figure 3.4).

Steps in this Theory Building Research Process

Referring to Figure 3.4., the following is a description of the approach used to complete each of Dubin's steps within the scope of this study. A more detailed description of each of Dubin's eight steps can be found at each point in the theory development process in chapters Four and Five.

Defining the Units of this Theory. The units of a theory are often categorizations of concepts (Dubin, 1978). The units "represent the things about which the researcher is trying to make sense and are informed by literature and experience" (Lynham, 2002b, p.247). This study will ground the development of the units of a theory of organizational socialization in several areas of literature. It will tap into both the prior knowledge base on organizational socialization and additional material from areas lacking in prior theory development on the topic (see Chapter Four for a categorization of the specific bodies of literature utilized in the development of the units). To determine which elements will result in actual units for the theory, Dubin's unit classifications, unit properties, and rules for including and excluding units will be applied. One example of units of a theory is developed by Lyhnam (2000a, 2002b) in her *Theory of Responsible Leadership for*

Performance. The units identified for that theory were (1) considerations of constituency, (2) a framework of responsibleness, and (3) domains of performance; each contains several conceptual dimensions.

Defining the Laws of Interaction. Once the units themselves have been established, the next piece is to examine the ways in which the units are linked with one another (Dubin, 1978). Again, the literature used to develop the units for the theory of organizational socialization will be consulted. Laws of interaction will be intuited based on conclusions of relationships made in the literature. Again, Dubin's work has outlined the significant processes for establishing laws and defining features of laws. The importance of this phase of theory development is that one has only a taxonomic model of the units until the laws of interaction are included. Once associations among the units have been ascribed, values can be plugged into the model for operation. An example of a *categoric* law of interaction developed in Lynham's theory of leadership was that "each unit of the theory, namely, considerations of constituency, a framework of responsibleness, and domains of performance, interrelates with each other unit of the theory" (2002b, p. 259).

Defining the Boundaries of this Theory. "The boundaries of a theory are established to determine and clarify the domains within which the theory is expected to hold up and apply" (Lynham, 2002b, p.253). As mentioned previously, the focus or boundary of this study will be on the corporate organization. While some of the literature used for the unit development draws on broad psychological and sociological theory, another portion draws on the theory of corporate organizations. Future studies may seek to apply what is developed here to variations beyond the corporate organization

boundaries. Additional boundaries will be applied as necessary based on the development of the previous two steps. In Lynham's theory of leadership, the boundary that defined the domain had two dimensions, the legal boundary and the socially, politically, technically, economically, technologically and culturally defined context for her human-populated performance system (2002b).

Defining the System States of this Theory. Over time, the whole system described in theory development may transition into different states of functioning; these states must be identified and explained (Dubin, 1978). Another reason for placing the boundary of the corporate organization on this study is that the system states and the resulting properties for corporate systems would likely look quite different from those for other types of organizations. The system states for the theory of organizational socialization will be drawn both from relevant scholarly literature and from more popular management and business literature, showing that current system states might illuminate possible system states for the model proposed here. The two system states of Lynham's theory of leadership are *balance* and *unbalance* (2002b). Dubin elaborates that many models of social life incorporate system states of stability and change (1978).

Developing Propositions for this Theory. A proposition is defined as a truth statement about the theoretical model in operation made after the theoretical model has been ascribed units, laws of interaction, boundaries and system states (Dubin, 1978). Propositions are said to be developed "logically and intellectually by the theorist" (Dubin, 1978, p.164). Initial truth statements of this alternative theory of organizational socialization will be developed. These will not be exhaustive, as truth statements can be limitless (Dubin, 1978). Therefore, those viewed as most critical for immediate

progression to the Confirmation/Disconfirmation phase of theory development will be proposed. Other propositions developed by Van Maanen and Schein (1979) in their theory of organizational socialization have been presented in Chapter Two. An additional example of a proposition from Lynham's theory of leadership is "the units of the theory—considerations of constituency, a framework of responsibleness, and domains of performance—are interdependent. If there is change in one unit, then it can be expected that there will be changes in the other two units" (2002b, p.264).

Proposing a Research Agenda to Test this Theory. The next three steps in the theory-building research cycle complete its *research operation* component. These include the development of key indicators to measure the one or more of the propositions, the development of hypotheses to test one or more of the propositions, and finally the carrying out of the research agenda. While the boundaries of this study are not set to include empirical testing of the propositions presented, the final chapters will provide recommendations for immediate research based on the conceptual development of this theory of organizational socialization. In other words, a definitive research agenda will be developed and presented. This will include key empirical indicators derived from the propositions, specific hypotheses, and a possible research design to carry out the testing of the hypotheses.

Chapter Three overviewed the research direction of this study, the resulting research questions, the methodological considerations in choosing the research methodology and strategy, and has outlined the boundary, scope and steps to be carried out in this theory building research study. Chapter Four completes Part One of the theory building research process, the conceptual development of the theory.

CHAPTER FOUR:

THEORY BUILDING RESEARCH PART ONE – CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF A THEORY OF CONTINUOUS SOCIALIZATION FOR ORGANIZATIONAL RENEWAL

The purpose of Chapter Four is to begin the theory-building research process by conceptualizing a theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal. This includes its units, laws of interaction, system states, and boundaries. These first four steps of Dubin's methodology comprise Part One of the theory-building research process (see Table 3.2.). The successful completion of Part One of the theory-building research process produces an informed, conceptual model of the theory (Dubin, 1978). Specifically, this chapter addresses the first of the two research sub-questions: *Can the alternative theory of organizational socialization be conceptualized to incorporate necessary elements for continuous organizational agility and renewal?*

The chapter begins with making explicit (1) the foundational premises of the theory, followed by the major outputs of the theoretical model: (2) its units, (3) its laws of interaction among the units, (4) its system states, and (5) its boundaries. Each section describing an aspect of the theoretical model will follow the same general format. The format consists of a brief overview of the purpose of the theory-building step and the process of developing the output for the step, followed by a presentation of the actual output (namely, the units, the laws of interaction, the system states, and the boundaries), and a discussion of the output as compared with criteria for quality stated by Dubin (1978). The chapter concludes with a final visually integrated presentation of all of the

outputs of Part One, indicating the conceptual model for the theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal.

Foundational Premises of the Theory

The development of this theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal is based on several premises that are core to its purpose and meaning. Four premises of the theory: (1) organizations as open systems, (2) the changing business environment, (3) for-profit organizations seeking renewal, and (4) socialization as a continuous and renewing process within the organizational system.

Organizations as Open Systems

Much has been learned about how organizations function by making connections between organizations and other living and non-living systems. Such a connection has been established through the development and utilization of systems theories and general systems thinking (Capra, 1996; Wheatley, 1999). However, prior to this thinking, due to several scientific advances, the world and other systems within it were often likened to machines (Capra, 1996; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Wheatley, 1999). "These impressive successes made scientists of the early nineteenth century believe that the universe was indeed a large mechanical system running according to the Newtonian laws of motion" (Capra, 1996, p. 120). Utilizing Newtonian mechanics, much was thought to be understood about systems. Two examples are the assumption that the more we knew about the functioning of each separate piece, the more we would know about the whole, and the idea that systems operated in a causal and deterministic manner, allowing for absolute prediction (Capra, 1996; Wheatley, 1999). But this perspective lacked a way to

describe evolution, growth, and change within a system; consequently, the development of classical thermodynamics was the reaction, including its second law (Capra, 1996).

The second law of thermodynamics states that systems trend forward in time towards a stable state; any system that is isolated will inevitably continue to utilize energy until the system has exhausted its ability to change and reaches a stable state, or equilibrium (Capra, 1996; Wheatley, 1999). This implied, however, that "the entire world machine is running down and will eventually grind to a halt" (Capra, 1996, p. 48), a grim picture of the future of the universe. In fact, inputs from the environment or elements of change for the system were seen as troubling for the system, because change would only speed up the process of inevitable decline (Wheatley, 1999). However, biological advances indicated quite the opposite about living systems, stating that living systems evolved towards states of ever-increasing complexity, rather than evolving towards ever-increasing disorder through loss of energy (Capra, 1996). In attempts to resolve this dispute, a new concept of "open systems" was developed to capture the ability of living systems to utilize the flux from the environment to change and survive (Capra, 1996). Thus, like closed systems, which trended towards a state of stability or equilibrium, open systems were able to reach a steady state as well. However, the state open systems reached was far from equilibrium: instead, it was characterized by the system's ability to maintain a constant flow of interaction with influences from its environment (Capra, 1996; Wheatley, 1999).

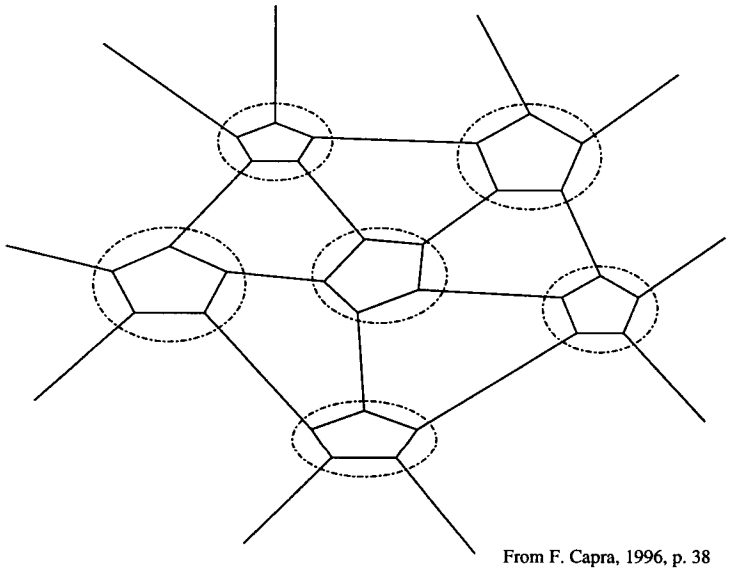
Even though by the mid 1900s it was clear that living systems relied on the constant flux of inputs from the environment, the understanding of how organizations operated had still not adjusted. Theories of change implied that organizations should

desire to rest in a stable state. Lewin's theory of change began with unfreezing from a stable state, making a change, and then refreezing into another stable state (Lewin, 1951). This conceptualization of change did not mirror what was known about how systems need to operate for survival. Without continual adequate input from the environment, a system would soon reach a state of equilibrium and give off energy until it ran out. Systems that embrace the very environmental inputs that put them into a state of disequilibrium, leaving them somewhat unstable and somewhat vulnerable, obtain the very elements necessary for growth, change, and survival (Capra, 1996; Wheatley, 1999). In fact, many believe organizations have not made the shift in thinking today, even as we have entered the twenty-first century:

> Our ideas and sensibilities about change come from the world of Newton. We treat a problematic organization as if it was a machine that had broken down. We use reductionism to diagnose the problem; we expect to find a simple, singular cause for our woes. We sift through all the possible causes of failure, searching for that one broken part—a bad manager, a dysfunctional team, a poor business unit. To repair the organization, all we need to do is replace the faulty part and gear back up to operate at predetermined performance levels. This is the standard approach to organizational change. It is derived from the best engineering thinking. I believe this approach explains why the majority of organizational change efforts fail. Senior corporate leaders report that up to 75% of their change projects do not yield the promised results. This is a shocking failure rate, but how can we expect anything better until we stop treating organizations as machines? (Wheatley, 1999, p. 138)

Wheatley points to the need to begin seeing the similarity between our organizations and other open systems in this universe. At a minimum, this means using systems thinking to guide how decisions and changes are made within the organization. Ideally, it means realizing the strengths of the ways in which other open systems are constructed in this universe and learning from their functioning.

Systems thinking has several characteristics (summarized from Capra, 1996). First, the functioning of the whole system cannot be understood by breaking it down into its constituent parts and studying those parts separately, because properties emerge from the relationships among the parts that cannot be seen merely by looking at the parts themselves. Second, it is beneficial to be able to see systems for their many levels. In the universe systems are nested within other more complex systems (Figure 4.1.). Being able to differentiate between levels enables one to see properties that emerge only at certain levels of complexity. One example might be the layers that emerge when one views the organism, city, and economy.



From F. Capra, 1996, p. 38

Figure 4.1. Systems as Embedded Networks of Relationships

Third, because of the emergent properties of systems from the interrelationships of the parts and of the system layers, systems thinking is contextual or networked thinking. An understanding of the system is also an understanding of its context, its

network, and its environment. Fourth, a non-systems thinking perspective would argue that a system can be analyzed in terms of the properties of its parts. In contrast, systems thinking would argue that, because there are emergent properties that cannot be seen when only looking at the parts, true systems thinking means seeing relationships more than just objects. Finally, systems thinking means process thinking. Capra (1996) elaborated, "In systems science every structure is seen as the manifestation of underlying processes" (p.42). In other words, the system's structure cannot be analyzed in and of itself; rather, it is truly only a manifestation of its underlying processes, which then must be the focus of the analysis.

The first premise of this theory, viewing organizations as open systems, allows the utilization of systems thinking to derive principles and connections specific to this theory of organizational socialization. Learnings derived from open systems thinking are utilized throughout the development of the theoretical units, laws of interaction, boundaries, and system states.

Environment of Change

A second premise is that the environment in which these organizations must function is currently in a rapid state of fluctuation; movement exists in all of its facets, making it a turbulent environment in which to operate. Chapter Two described in detail several areas of movement in the latter 20th century: innovations in technology, shifts in organizational structures and boundaries, and changes in workforce demographics, resulting in a changed composition of the workforce, a changing mentality of the workforce, and changing definitions of performance. Additionally, the very language, definitions, and theories concerning change have evolved to match the fluctuating forces

in the business environment (Allee, 1997; Boudreau & Ramstad, 1997; Henderson, 2002).

Theories of change from the earlier portion of the last century are the manifestation of what was believed about change at that time. The most notable theory is that of Kurt Lewin (Henderson, 2002; Swanson & Holton, 2001). He argued that there were three stages to change: *unfreezing* from a stable state, *moving* or making changes, and finally returning or *refreezing* to a new stable state (Lewin, 1951). Others have made the assumptions underlying Lewin's model of change more explicit (Marshak, 1993). Marshak (1993) argued that Lewin assumed: (1) change is linear, meaning that states of change occur one at a time over time, (2) change is progressive, meaning that movement from change is always towards a better state, (3) change is destination or goal oriented, meaning that movement from change is a sequential process in the direction of a goal, (4) change is based on creating disequilibrium, meaning that the organization must shake up its traditional equilibrium by creating disequilibrium in order to change, (5) change is planned and managed by people who are separate from and who act on things to achieve their goals, so that those making the changes are not affected by the change itself, and (6) change is unusual, i.e., the organization is typically in a stable state and change is a break from normal functioning. In essence, Lewin's model suggests that organizations exist in a relatively static system and a stable environment (Henderson, 2002; Marshak, 1993). The construction of a theory of change that describes the internal and external business environment as fairly stable was quite consistent with the characteristics and mentality of the workforce at the time.

It has been argued that the Lewinian model is no longer descriptive of change in the new economy. In essence, "reflection on these assumptions about change leads to the realization that they neither fit our current experiences nor our sense of what change involves" (Henderson, 2002, p. 3). Henderson (2002) effectively laid out the assumptions of Lewin's model and explained how each fails to reflect the current experience in organizations today. Where Lewin's model described change as linear, Henderson, among others, provided support for the idea that change is more complex and unfolds in a continuous, cyclical manner. This is based on research showing that planned change efforts led to unplanned events. Similarly, where an assumption of Lewin's was that change is goal or destination oriented, Henderson sited several scholars who now believe that change "like improvisation, and unlike scripted performance, is emergent, continuous, and affected by what people pay attention to" (Henderson, 2002, p. 4). Current thinking acknowledges that management cannot accurately predict the optimal configuration of elements within the organization, a priori. Thus, as change efforts unfold, emergent properties of the system must be capitalized on and not set aside if they do not fit the change plan. In effect, current thinking concerning change cannot resonate with Lewin's assumptions of organizations operating as static systems in stable environments (Allee, 1997; Henderson, 2002; Wheatley, 1999).

More current theories of change have one belief in common, that the current business environment is in a constant state of flux and therefore change is a disturbance rather than a necessity (Allee, 1997; Boudreau & Ramstad, 1997; Henderson, 2002). To describe how organizations change effectively in such a different environment a few theories have arisen. Henderson (2002) concisely summarized some of the more recent

theories of change. One of the newer theories of change is *discontinuous change*, or a utilization of changes that are above and beyond the turbulent changes already existing for the organization to shatter existing organizational frameworks and scramble internal patterns of relationships. An opposing viewpoint is that of *continuous change*, or planned, incremental change that does not challenge the organization's core values; rather, it builds on them. Third, is the theory of *punctuated equilibrium*, or the process of change where there are periods of incremental continuous change that seeks to create greater alignment within the organization, but is punctuated with periods of compacted radical change. Finally, there is a perspective termed *situated change*, which is characterized by the belief that organizations are moving to forms of flexibility, self-organizing, and learning, and therefore, need a model of change that fits with that more free-flowing model; one that views the micro-level changes that organizational participants create over time as they live within the organization critical to allowing emergent change to unfold.

In sum, the very language, definitions, and theories concerning change have evolved to mirror what is experienced in the business environment. In the midst of this turbulent business environment for-profit organizations are working to stay ahead of the changes.

For-profit Organizations Seeking Renewal

This theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal is built on the premise that companies, experiencing this turbulent business environment, would benefit from practices that increase the organization's ability to adapt to such change. This capacity will be referred to as *renewal capacity.*

"Renewal requires a constant interplay between stability and change" (Waterman, 1987, p. 10). Much has been learned from how physical and ecological open systems manage this interplay (Capra, 1996). "To stay viable, open systems maintain a state of non-equilibrium, keeping themselves *off balance* so that the system can change and grow...every organism in nature, including us, behaves in this way" (Wheatley, 1999, p. 78). Both the physical and social sciences have incorporated the terms of *dynamic imbalance,* or *dynamic balance* to reflect what is required for renewal (Capra, 1996; Waterman, 1987).

The idea of an organizational system operating "off balance" differs from traditional management thinking, which explicitly touts "balance", "stability", or "homogenization" as the ideal state and which is reflected in practices of institutionalizing systems, processes, cultures, and norms (Goodman, Bazerman & Conlon, 1980; Tsoukas, 1996). While operating off balance could appear to be chaos, it is argued that chaos lacks not order but predictability (Capra, 1996; Wheatley, 1999). The continual influx and reconfiguration of information from the environment allows a system to evolve to higher levels of complexity and order: "natural selection may favor and sustain living systems 'at the edge of chaos,' because these may be best able to coordinate complex and flexible behavior, best able to adapt and evolve" (Capra, 1996, p. 204). Wheatley (1999), pointing to the destruction of many ecological systems, argued that attempts to impose processes and practices that promote stability and unnatural equilibrium on a naturally open system will lead to destruction. Thus, other open systems teach us to embrace the need for continual utilization of information from the environment to enable adaptation and change.

This theory is built on the premise that, in the midst of continuous change in the business environment, corporations are trying to find practices that increase their capacity to match that continuous change. Therefore, this socialization theory is developed not for the purpose of perpetuating organizational habits but rather for the purpose of facilitating organizational renewal capacity. "Organizations, like people, are creatures of habit. For organizations, the habits are existing norms, systems, procedures, written and unwritten rules—'the way we do things around here.' Over time these habits become embedded like rocks in a glacial moraine" (Waterman, 1987, p. 16). "Renewing companies know how to keep things moving. If they share a habit pattern, it's the habit of habit breaking" (Waterman, 1987, p. 9).

Socialization as a Continuous & Renewing Process within the System

A final premise is that organizational socialization can be designed as a continuous and renewing process within the organizational system. This is based on three underlying assumptions. The first is that both conscious and unconscious socialization processes occur within organizations, regardless of whether their intent or outcomes are made explicit. The existing theory and research support this assumption for both individual and collective socialization (Feldman, 1976a; Jones, 1983; Nelson, 1987; Van Maanen, 1978; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Wanous, 1980). Therefore, regardless of whether effort is expended on tailoring socialization processes within an organization, those processes will continue to occur.

The second underlying assumption is that some form of socialization occurs at every boundary transition, or context change, for an individual or a collective. As an individual makes a functional, hierarchical, or inclusionary shift into or within the

organization, a socialization cycle will be catalyzed (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Similarly, an entire organization may experience a boundary shift, such as a change in strategy to expand geographically into other countries. This strategy requires immense changes throughout the organization; therefore, socialization cycles would be in motion here as well. If socialization occurs at every boundary transition for an individual or for a collective, then it is possible to assume that socialization is *continuous* and should be planned for as such. Table 4.1. outlines examples of several possible situations in which socialization cycles would be in motion for individuals or collectives.

Table 4.1.

Examples of Boundary Transitions in which Socialization would Occur in Organizations

Transitioning Party	***Situation***	*Incumbent Parties*
Senior management	**Organization Strategy Shift**	All organization members
All organization members	**Merger or Acquisition**	Core leadership from both orgs.
Incoming CEO	**External CEO Selection**	All organization members
Sales Team	**Sales Reorganization**	All other organization members
Individual employee	**Promotion to HR VP**	HR members; other org members
Individual employee	**Expatriate Assignment**	Members from both locations
Individual employee	**Increased Social Acceptance**	Social referent group

The final underlying assumption is that the conscious application of socializing strategies, while perhaps not totally understood at this point, can influence the behaviors of the targets. Again, the research indicates that, with varying socializing strategies, varying outcomes in perceptions and behaviors will result (Allen & Meyer, 1990;

Anakwe & Greenhaus, 1999; Jones, 1986; Klein & Weaver, 2000). Thus, there is some indication that formal adjustments in socializing strategies can alter outcomes. In sum, if socialization will always occur and can, to some extent, be molded to alter perceptions and behaviors, then crafting strategies to favor renewal rather than stability should be possible.

It is on these four major premises that the theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal is developed.

- Organizations are open systems that interact with their external environments.
- The business environment is in a continual state of flux and change.
- For-profit organizations search for systems and processes that facilitate their ability to respond to changes and sustain their success.
- Continuous socialization can be designed as one such renewing process.

The rest of Chapter Four is dedicated to the conceptualization of the theory.

Theory Building Research Step One:

Developing the Units of the Theory

This section of Chapter Four contains the major outputs of the theoretical model: its units, its laws of interaction among the units, its system states, and its boundaries. It will begin with a description of Dubin's methodology for developing theoretical units, followed by a presentation of the five theoretical units for this study. The presentation of each unit will follow a similar format, influenced by theory building work of Dubin (1978) and Lynham (2000a). The unit will be named, defined, described in detail, aligned

with the literature for validity, and compared to criteria of excellence for developing theoretical units.

Five units of the theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal were developed: (1) *Socializing Strategies*, (2) *Negotiated Meaning*, (3) *Mobilized Knowledge*, (4) *Internalized Learning*, and (5) *Externalized Performance*. Each unit of the theory has several conceptual dimensions, bringing further clarity to the units of the theory. A visual representation of the units of the theory and their supporting conceptual dimensions are shown in Figure 4.2. Each unit is described in detail below.

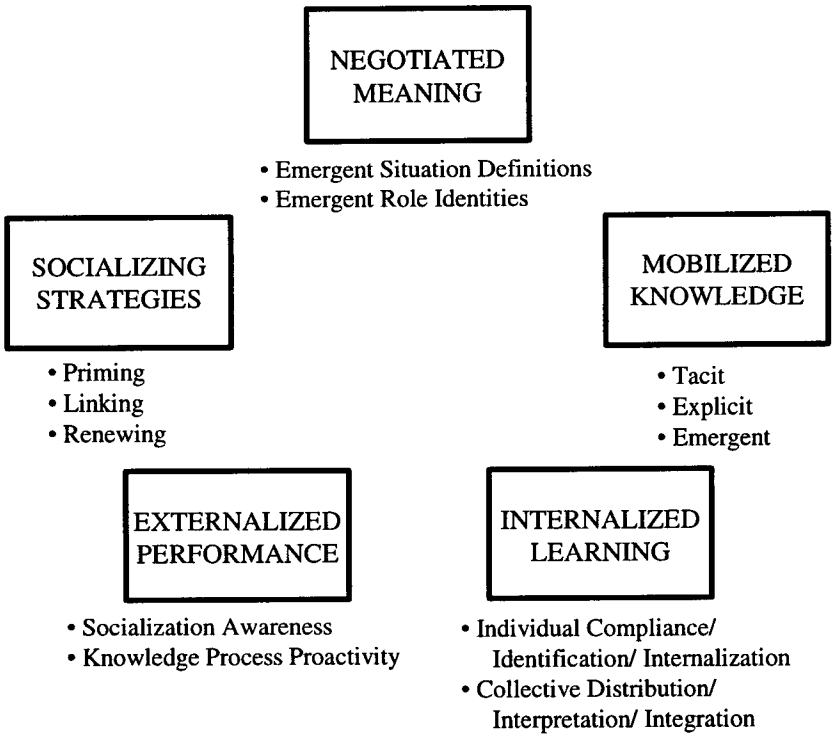


Figure 4.2. Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal: The Units of the Theory and Supporting Conceptual Dimensions

Dubin's Methodology for Developing Theoretical Units

The descriptions of Dubin's methodology in this section and sections to come cannot encompass all of the nuances and details of his theory building research process; rather, it is presented here for the purpose of providing the reader with a deeper understanding of the process used for this study. Those seeking the full treatment of Dubin's research method are referred to his book on theory building (Dubin, 1978). Other descriptions of Dubin's process are also available to readers (Lynham, 2002b).

Just as human curiosity catalyzes the process of theory formation, so the human mind also limits our ability to conceptualize things in their entirety. Instead, we break things down into their characteristics or properties in order to see relationships and understand the whole (Dubin, 1978). The number of relationships to test for an understanding of the whole depends completely on the number of properties or characteristics ascribed to the thing by the researcher. Dubin highlighted this as an important creative element in theory building research, stating that the reality of any one property is for determination at a later point; he argues that having the unfettered imagination as a foundation is critical. In determining the units of the theory, Dubin's methodology pointed to four properties of units that must be distinguished: (1) attribute or variable, (2) real or nominal, (3) primitive or sophisticated, and (4) collective or member. In addition, five unit classifications were posited by Dubin; each is described below.

First, a unit may be either an attribute or a variable. The unit is an *attribute* if it is always present, so a thing is identified by containing this attribute and all other things in that set are distinguished by their lack of that attribute. In contrast, the unit is a *variable* if

it is present only in degree. The issue becomes not whether the unit is present but to what degree it is present. Second, a unit may be real or nominal. The unit is *real* if there is high probability that some metrics of measurement, empirical indicators, are already developed or can be developed for the unit. Where empirical indicators are not present and are not likely to be able to be developed, the unit is considered a *nominal* unit. Third, a unit may be primitive or sophisticated. The unit is considered *primitive* if its logical structure and terms are not yet defined. A *sophisticated* unit, on the other hand, is well defined. Both types of units are used regularly in the development of theory, regardless of the difficulties a primitive unit may seen to impose. Dubin clarified the approach to dealing with primitive units:

> The scientist often starts with empirical observations from which he generalizes a primitive unit. The philosopher of science starts in his mind with a primitive unit. Both proceed beyond this point in identical manners to build a theory by incorporating the primitive unit or converting it to a sophisticated one. The difference, then, is whether one starts with the empirical world to generate a primitive unit or within the mind with an imagined primitive unit. (p. 55)

The fourth property of units is that they may be collective or member, that is, describe either a set of things that shares one common characteristic or one individual within that set. The unit is considered *collective* if it describes the whole set of things and *member* if it describes only one individual.

Dubin also described five classifications of units: (1) enumerative, (2) associative, (3) relational, (4) statistical, and (5) summative. An *enumerative* unit is always present within the theory, regardless of the theory's condition or state; an enumerative unit's value is never zero. An *associative* unit, on the other hand, is present during only some of the theory's conditions or states; it can have a zero or negative value. The theory must

then incorporate predictions about when the system will have those zero or negative values. A *relational* unit is one that is defined only by its relationship to other properties, or units. The relational nature of the unit may be based on an interaction among properties or a combination of properties. For example, a unit may be termed 'subordination': this property is derivable from the interaction of a superior and a subordinate. A *statistical* unit is one that summarizes its distribution with relationship to the theory. Terminology has been developed to describe different forms of distribution, such as central tendency, dispersion, and relative position. Thus, a statistical unit describing relative position may be 'middle class' or 'underachiever.' Finally, a *summative* unit is "a global unit that stands for an entire complex thing" (p. 66). While it can pull many qualities or properties of the thing together in one term, that term is likely to be ill defined or misinterpreted. An example of a summative unit could be 'mass society.'

Units employed in a theory may in fact fit the descriptions of more than one of the classifications shown above; such complex units are common. For example, a unit may be called an *experience ratio* (ratio of individuals without previous work experience to those with previous work experience in a group). This ratio belongs in the classification of relational units, as it is based on its interaction between two properties of experience and non-experience. However, this same unit may also fit within another classification of associative units if it is possible that all of the members of the group have had previous work experience (i.e., where the *experience ratio* = 0).

Table 4.2.

Dubin's Unit Properties and Classifications

Unit Classification				
Enumerative	Associative	Relational	Statistical	Summative
Unit Properties • Attribute vs. Variable • Real vs. Nominal • Primitive vs. Sophisticated • Collective vs. Member				

Dubin pointed to some considerations in choosing the units for the theory. Lynham (2002b) summarized two of these considerations. First, the inclusion of associative units (the ability of the unit to reach a zero value) allows for a level of completeness in the theory: it can be tested when the unit is present, is not present, or has even a negative value. Second, while a theory may be logically consistent with the use of only one type of unit, a single unit classification within a theory also limits the results of the theory. Dubin used the Cartesian co-ordinate system to explain that utilizing only one type of unit classification also limits the results to only one quadrant of the co-ordinate system. Therefore, combining unit classifications allows for a greater spread of possible results across the Cartesian co-ordinate system. "What units the researcher-theorist decides to use in the theory therefore influences the kinds of studies that can later be used to gather and study data on the theory and, ultimately, be used to verify and refine the theory" (Lynham, 2002b, p. 248).

Dubin's (1978) theory-building research method also provided insight into which units fit with other units. Dubin clearly pointed to three rules limiting the combination of some unit classifications with others:

- "A relational unit is not combined in the same theory with enumerative or associative units that are themselves properties of that relational unit" (p. 73)
- "Where a statistical unit is employed, it is by definition a property of a collective. In the same theory do not combine such a statistical unit with any kind of unit (enumerative, associative, or relational) describing a property of members of the same collective" (p.73)
- "Summative units have utility in education of and communication with those who are naïve in the field. Summative units are not employed in scientific models" (p. 78)

In choosing the units for the theory, an eventual mirroring of the real world is the desirable end-state of the theory-building process. However, the development of the initial understanding should not be overly constricted by the desire to ensure close correspondence between concepts and operations; rather, this phase should consist more of "disciplined imagination" (Weick, 1989). The discipline should be in the logical rigor of the concept development, and the imagination should be in the diversity of thought in its development (Weick, 1989). In this initial phase, the logic is the basis for its evaluation (Whetten, 1989). Later in the process, research will determine whether changes need to take place to better mirror the world. In sum, in addition to Dubin's limitations for choosing the units of the theory, a bit of artistry is involved in this phase of conceptual development.

Unit One: Socializing Strategies

Definition

Boundary changes due to changing contexts are catalysts for the next iteration of the socialization cycle. Once a boundary change has occurred, transitioning and incumbent parties can employ strategies to promote interactivity between themselves. These activities can take place before, during, and after a boundary transition; these are respectively called *priming, linking,* and *renewing* stages. Interactivity between transitioning and incumbent parties facilitates the progression of the rest of the socialization cycle.

Conceptual Dimensions

The literature makes clear that socialization within the workplace will occur to some degree, for better or worse, whether or not transitioning or incumbent parties utilize any conscious tactics (Van Maanen, 1978; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Van Maanen (1978) clarified that the occurrence of such unconscious activities may "simply represent taken-for-granted precedents established in the dim past of an organization's history" (p. 20). It is posited here, that in order for socialization to facilitate renewal and not merely perpetuate old practices, the process must be, for the most part, conscious. In other words, both the transitioning party and the incumbent party must employ conscious *strategies* of socialization. The New Webster's Dictionary and Thesaurus (1992) defined a *strategy* as "a plan or method for achieving a specific goal" (p. 1274). The two elements contained in this definition are: (1) a conscious plan, method or process, and (2) its goal-directed or intent-driven nature.

Socialization literature often does not make explicit the change that may occur in the content and form of socialization strategies given the catalyzing change in context. For example, an organization may become aware of conditions in its market that make being a first mover with a new product very desirable. Being a first mover may be an entirely new strategy for the organization, requiring shifts in expectations or demands for many roles within the company, as well as significant cultural and decision-making shifts throughout the ranks. The awareness of context conditions catalyzes the introduction of management-led socialization strategies. The content and form of such strategies will likely look different from existing strategies. Similarly, an individual sales representative may experience changes in her personal context that impel her to alter her career within the organization. She realizes she would like to move into a sales management role within the company. Therefore, she observes the actions of current sales management, informally measures herself against this standard, and makes small adjustments to behavior in light of her observed reality of that role. In effect, a changing individual context can catalyze a socialization process as well.

One goal of this theory is to make such a subtlety explicit. In other words, it is posited here that real or perceived changes in context catalyze the use of socializing strategies. Given all of the above, the conceptual dimensions of the unit *socializing strategies* must incorporate (1) the need for continuous application of activities, prior to, during, and following a particular transition, (2) an understanding that transitioning parties can be either individuals or collectives and that strategies must be conceptualized for both levels, and (3) the idea that, given the continuous nature of socialization processes, individuals can be simultaneously both in transition and incumbent for a

concurrent process of another individual or collective (refer back to Table 4.1.). Table 4.3. makes explicit the conceptual dimensions of the unit.

Validity

A significant portion of the literature on organizational socialization tactics only makes explicit the *organization's* employment of strategies (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Anakwe & Greenhaus, 1999; Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Baker, 1992; Black, 1992; Fogarty, 2000; George, 1996; Jones, 1986; King & Sethi, 1998; Klein & Weaver, 2000; Larsson & Lubatkin, 2001; Louis, Posner & Powell, 1983; Van Maanen, 1978; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Wanous, 1980). Increasingly, however, literature points to the proactivity of transitioning parties in their own socialization processes (Ashford, 1986; Feldman & Brett, 1983; Fisher, 1985; Gabarro, 1979; Hegstad, 1999; Jones, 1983; Louis, 1980, 1990; Manz & Sims, 1981; Miller & Jablin, 1991; Morrison, 2002; Reichers, 1987; Wanous, Reichers, & Malik, 1984; Zahrly & Tosi, 1989). Additionally, this literature is beginning to take note of the reciprocal influence a transitioning party can have on the incumbent parties and specifically that a transitioning individual can influence the organization of which he or she is a part (Ashforth, 1985; Jones, 1983).

Additionally, most of the literature is limited to a snapshot in time during a particular socialization experience. Rarely does theory or research focus on the continuous nature of socialization. While some literature mentions the fact that socialization occurs at every boundary transition (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979), research or theory rarely explain the how the iterations evolve or influence each other. A few exceptions have proposed that an evolution from newcomer to veteran changes the nature

Table 4.3.

Socializing Strategies at Priming, Linking, and Renewing Stages in Individual/Collective Cycles

	Individual Transition Strategies	*Collective Transition Strategies*
Priming		
Goal	Negotiate realistic expectations of the job, role, surroundings, and org; determine level of congruence	Negotiate and convey a realistic picture of the job, role, surroundings, or org
Strategies	▪ Career planning ▪ Networking ▪ Information seeking ▪ Observation	▪ Visioning / strategic planning ▪ Internal/ external recruitment & selection ▪ Internal/ external communications (slogans, stories, myths, news)
Linking		
Goal	Seek knowledge & skills to effectively handle task, role, and interpersonal demands	Quickly negotiate and shape task, role, and interpersonal expectations based on current intent
Strategies	▪ Observation ▪ Information seeking ▪ Feedback seeking ▪ Attending training ▪ Relationship building ▪ Decision making	▪ Goal setting & performance feedback ▪ Psychological contracting ▪ Orientations & training ▪ Modeling & mentoring ▪ Internal/ external communications (slogans, stories, myths, news) ▪ Internal/ external information seeking (benchmarking, open space, future search) ▪ Leadership ▪ Ceremonies / rites of passage ▪ Physical setting ▪ Policy visibility
Renewing		
Goal	Develop new knowledge & skills to effectively handle evolving and ambiguous task, role, and interpersonal demands	Quickly renegotiate and reshape task, role, and interpersonal demands based on shifted collective/ organizational intent
Strategies	▪ Observation ▪ Info seeking ▪ Feedback seeking ▪ Attending training ▪ Relationship building ▪ Decision making	▪ Goal setting & performance feedback ▪ Recontracting ▪ Modeling & Mentoring ▪ Training ▪ Internal/ external communications (slogans, stories, myths, news) ▪ Internal/ external information seeking (benchmarking, open space, future search) ▪ Leadership ▪ Ceremonies / Rites of passage ▪ Physical setting ▪ Policy adjustment

of the socialization experience (Ashford, 1986; Jones, 1983; Katz, 1980; Van Maanen, 1978).

Finally, the socialization literature focuses almost exclusively on the individual as the transitioning party. Rarely is there mention of a team, department, or whole organization experiencing socialization. As stated above, the majority of the literature places the collective only as the "incumbent" party. Although the management literature contains numerous articles concerning teams, departments, and whole organizations in transition, it fails to make explicit the possibility that transitioning collective parties can experience socialization processes similar to those individuals experience. Collectives are, after all, made up of individuals.

For example, organization leadership may direct the formation of an ad hoc team to explore the consequences and implications of a market expansion strategy. This theory asserts that the ad hoc team, never having worked together in the past, will experience a cycle of socialization similar to what an individual would experience moving into a new role. In essence, the team will utilize socializing strategies to quickly shape its understanding of the role, task and interpersonal demands (Table 4.2.). It is asserted here that the utilization of such strategies prior to (if possible), during, and after, will be facilitating factors in the progression of the rest of the socialization cycle. Socialization and group development theories have even been linked in the literature (Wanous, Reichers & Malik, 1984).

In sum, the literature lacks a consistent focus on the transitioning party as proactive and influential, a consistent consideration of socialization as continuous and iterative, and a consideration of collectives as transitioning parties. This theory proposes

that, without those elements, socialization cannot facilitate renewal capacity within the organization. Rather, it will likely perpetuate "taken-for-granted precedents established in the dim past of an organization's history" (Van Maanen, 1978, p. 20). Therefore, this theory of socialization for renewal attempts to remedy these deficiencies in the existing theory and research on organizational socialization. Further, this unit of the theory must then incorporate several of those elements.

This unit of *socializing strategies* incorporates the possibility that both individuals and collectives can be in transition and that both can utilize conscious strategies. For an individual in transition, the literature is heavily populated with activities that now can be explicitly labeled as having socializing capability (see Appendix A for literature support for the *Individual Transition Strategies*). This unit also identifies collectives as transitioning parties and labels the activities that have socializing capability (see Appendix A for literature support for the *Collective Transitioning Strategies*).

Among the most important distinctions of this unit is seeing collectives as possible transitioning parties. It is tempting to view every collective activity as merely an effort to socialize the "others" in the organization rather than a use of strategies to both aid the collective in transition and guide incumbents in that adjustment process. However, this theory asserts that collectives are constantly in transition and, if renewal is a desirable capability, then collectives will use socializing strategies to aid themselves in the shift.

All the strategies have a common ability to facilitate interaction between transitioning and incumbent parties, or facilitate the opportunity for symbolic exchange.

This interactivity between the parties is the foundation for the next unit of *negotiated meaning*.

Methodological Logic of the Unit

Dubin (1978) related the importance of characterizing and classifying the nature of the units used in a theory; units must be differentiated "in order to draw out their consequences" (p. 37). Units can be differentiated by their characteristics as well as their class. *Socializing strategies* is a variable unit of the enumerative class. Dubin described the characteristic of a "variable" as:

> A variable is a property of a thing that may be present in degree. There may be some of the property present or a lot of it. We may express the degree of presence of the variable property of a thing by either a cardinal or an ordinal scale. (Dubin, 1978, p.44)

The *thing* being described in this theory is Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal. S*ocializing strategies* are the first *property of the thing,* which is always present in the thing to some degree. The definition of *socializing strategies* indicates that, for the most part, efforts must be conscious to adequately contribute to renewal capacity. However, strategies may be formal or informal, enacted by a collective or an individual. Additionally, strategies are continuously enacted throughout transition phases of priming, linking, and renewing. The strategies employed may vary in number, resulting in the "variable" characterization of the unit.

Second, the unit *socializing strategies* is enumerative in its class. Dubin (1978) described enumerative units as "a property characteristic of a thing in all its conditions. That is, regardless of the condition of the thing that can be observed or imagined, it will always have that property" (p. 58). With the measurement of enumerative units, there cannot be any zero values. The classification of the unit *socializing strategies* as

enumerative means that some strategies are always in action, regardless of when measurement occurs. However, the unit's variable characteristic means that the strategies in action can vary in number from organization to organization, or from time to time.

In addition, Dubin's (1978) methodology requires that units also be characterized by whether they are real or nominal, sophisticated or primitive, and measurable as individual or collective. The implications of these characterizations for each unit will be further developed in Chapter Five with the specification of empirical indicators for the units. However, the unit of *socializing strategies* is real, sophisticated, and measurable at the individual and collective levels.

Unit Two: Negotiated Meaning

Definition

Continuous socialization that facilitates organizational renewal creates opportunities for interactivity between transitioning individuals and organizational incumbents where symbols can be exchanged. These interactions do not have to be interpersonal, but they often are. During these interactions, both parties actively manage symbols to negotiate an understanding of the situation. Transitioning and incumbent parties experiment with communicative acts to negotiate emergent situational role identities.

Conceptual Dimensions

One foundational premise of this theory is that organizations operate as open systems. Because open systems continuously interact with their environment, they not only react to their environment but also *enact,* or create, their environment (Capra, 1996; Weick, 1969; Wheatley, 1999). More specifically, humans in organizational systems

create their environments through social interaction and negotiated meaning (Ashforth, 1985; Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Biddle, 1979; Goffman, 1959; Katz, 1980; Weick, 1969). Meaning negotiation is a process of "reciprocal influence—participants gradually shape one another's understanding of the situation under discussion" (Ashforth, 1985, p. 843).

Reciprocal influence during interactions fosters two beliefs: first, the organizational collective can influence how an individual ascribes meaning to a situation, and second, an individual can influence the collective (Ashforth, 1985; Biddle, 1979, Jones, 1983; Wanous, 1980). Because reciprocal influence is so difficult to study and measure, it is often left out of theory and research (Jones, 1983; Wanous, 1980). However, the level of sophistication in research and theory in the area of meaning negotiation, or symbolic interactionism, should lend credence to the ability of individuals to influence meaning within the larger organizational collective noted by other organizational theorists.

This discussion will define the process of meaning construction as *the purposeful exchange of managed symbols between transitioning and incumbent parties during communicative acts to negotiate expectations for future behavior* (Ashforth, 1985; Biddle, 1979, Goffman, 1959; Weick, 1969). Several pieces of the definition need to be clarified. First, Weick (1969) outlined detailed rules and steps for how organizing processes such as meaning construction occur and observed that its ultimate purpose is to reduce the amount of equivocality in possible responses to a situation. For an individual, the reduction of equivocality means some reassurance that behavioral responses are acceptable. For an organizational collective, the reduction of equivocality means some reassurance that organizational messages are accepted and enacted.

Second, the mechanism for communication is the utilization of symbols during interactions (Ashforth, 1985; Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Katz, 1980). Symbols can be conveyed in both verbal and nonverbal fashions and do not have to be transmitted in interpersonal interactions (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Goffman, 1959). Symbolic management during communicative acts can take the many forms of verbal, nonverbal, or written symbols during interpersonal, virtual, or written correspondence interactions.

Third, symbol utilization can be purposeful, meaning that symbols can be actively managed throughout the interaction (Ashforth, 1985; Goffman, 1959). In this discussion, both transitioning and incumbent parties can be purposeful in their use of symbols. The term *purposeful* in this discussion highlights the *conscious* nature of the use of symbols rather than a manipulative or scheming attempt to impose certain symbols or messages upon the other party.

Fourth, the process of meaning negotiation consists of double interaction, "the person performs some action, which is accepted or modified by a second person, after which the first person makes some response to what the second person did" (Weick, 1969, p. 74). An individual's initial action can be guided by some intent. However, reactions from other individuals can reshape intent and future actions (Ashforth, 1985; Katz, 1980; Weick, 1969).

The initial intent of a transitioning individual, or the purpose that guides symbol experimentation, is negotiating an understanding of the new situation and the individual's role in it (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Katz, 1980). In building a situational definition, the individual orients him- or herself to both social time and social space (Katz, 1980). Subsequent behaviors are reflective of that situational definition. Reactions by others

continue to mold the situational definition and the individual's concept of role identity (Katz, 1980):

> The foremost issue facing an individual in a new situation is the problem of developing a role identity which will be viable and suitable both from the standpoint of the individual person as well as from the standpoint of other persons within the relevant organizational area. (Katz, 1980, p. 94)

In a similar vein, when an organization collective is facing its own transition, such as during a strategic shift, the intent guiding symbolic management can be experimenting with new strategic messages, ascertaining their level of acceptance from other employees, and negotiating changes, or even having incumbent employees help to determine the nature of that organization shift (Emery & Purser, 1996; Jacobs, 1994; Owen & Stadler, 1999; Wiesbord, 1992; Wiesbord & Janoff, 2000). The action-and-reaction meaning negotiation process of collectives mirrors what was described above for individuals.

Finally, as alluded to earlier, the outcome of the process is an emergent definition of the situation and role identities for both parties (Ashforth, 1985; Biddle, 1979; Goffman, 1959; Katz, 1980). Jointly negotiated during the interaction, such emergent outcomes are not immovable definitions of reality; rather, they are a "working consensus" between the parties as to the definition of the situation and roles that will carry forward for the time being (Goffman, 1959). The emergent *situational definition* and *role identities* that emerge can be characterized by shared *expectations* for the behaviors of both parties (Biddle, 1979; Goffman, 1959). Therefore, symmetrical interactions between the parties allow for each to influence the understanding of what it perceives as the role of the other and what future behavior it expects from the other.

This unit encompasses the process of meaning negotiation between transitioning and incumbent parties within an organization. This theory seeks to explain the

interactionist nature of socialization, meaning that each unit is described from the perspective of transitioning as well as incumbent parties. The joint participation in purposeful symbolic management results in reciprocal influence during the remainder of the socialization process. The intent of both parties, whether transitioning or incumbent, should be to experiment to allow for the emergence of situational definitions and role identities. During these interactions, the incumbent party neither imposes a situational definition nor actively seeks to impose a role identity on the transitioning party. Thus, the outcome of the negotiated meaning process is an emergent one. Through the interactions, definitions of the situation emerge, as well as role identities for both parties. Figure 4.3. makes the conceptual elements of this unit explicit.

Validity

As stated in previous sections, many describe and account for socialization as merely acquiring the requisite behaviors to function in a given role within an organization (Louis, 1980; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). This description of socialization simplifies the nature of the organizations in which it occurs. Such descriptions imply that the organizational role structure can be packaged and transmitted. However, significant opposition states that the requisite behaviors for successful functioning within an organizational setting continually evolve through social negotiation (Ashforth, 1985; Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Jones, 1983; Katz, 1980; Manning, 1970; Weick, 1969). Manning (1970) described the emergent nature of organizational elements: "features of organized settings...can never be fully exhausted, because they have a reflexive quality. They are described by competent actors with language terms, nonverbal cues, and behaviors that themselves constitute part of the setting" (p. 249).

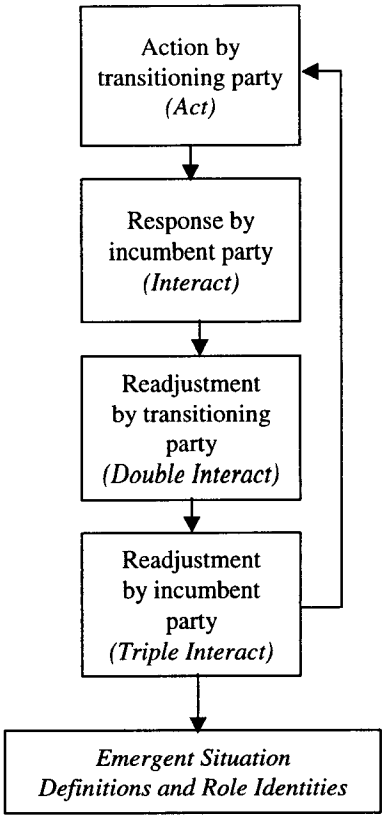


Figure 4.3. Emergent Negotiated Meaning: Reciprocal Influence between Transitioning & Incumbent Parties through Symbolic Management

If characteristics of the organization emerge through interaction (Manning, 1970), and meaning is socially constructed and negotiated (Biddle, 1979; Goffman, 1959; Weick, 1979), then such interactions could take the organization in two distinct directions. First, they could perpetuate the existing structure, characteristics, and existing meaning ascribed to elements of the organization. Organizationally directed socialization programs can be designed to legitimize the status quo (Ashforth, 1985). In such a cases, organizational incumbents overpower the construction of meaning during interactions (Ashforth, 1985; Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Goffman, 1959; Jones, 1983; Katz, 1980; Van

Maanen & Schein, 1979). In the second direction, both parties have the potential to contribute equally to each other's situational definition and alteration of role identity if the inherent quality of *reciprocal influence* in the negotiation of meaning is respected. Thus, influence from both sides of the socialization equation could increase organizational renewal capability by avoiding perpetuation of the status quo.

The development of socialization processes that facilitate renewal would need to overcome a point made in traditional socialization literature, i.e., that individuals in transition are often so affected by the shock of the transition that they immediately attempt to incorporate the "norm" of the new surroundings to reduce their anxiety (Jones, 1983; Louis, 1980; Van Maanen, 1976; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). This indicates the likelihood of asymmetrical interactions between transitioning and incumbent parties, where the incumbents have tremendous influence. If anxiety from transition makes individuals more likely to accept the status quo of the organization, then contributing to the situational definition and desired roles during interactions is much less likely. The results of such interactions favor perpetuation of the status quo and not renewal.

It is impossible to reduce all anxiety prior to and during a boundary transition. Yet, attempts by both parties in the *priming* stage of the transition to ascertain the congruence of expected realities have been shown to reduce anxiety (Feldman, 1976, 1981; Louis, 1980; Van Maanen, 1976; Wanous, 1980). Thus, socialization processes in a renewing organization would need to emphasize the importance of *priming* strategies used by both parties in the hope of lessening the anxiety at the actual point of transition. Additionally, socialization consists of continuous cycles. Thus, multiple interactions between transitioning and incumbent parties are bound to occur at different points in the

cycle's iterations. Weick (1969) has pointed to the fact that reflection upon earlier action often guides future action. If that is the case, then an initial asymmetrical interaction might easily be eclipsed with a more symmetrical one following critical reflection.

Methodological Logic of the Unit

The nature of the unit *negotiated meaning* is twofold. The unit is an attribute unit of relational class. Dubin described the characteristic of an 'attribute':

> An attribute is a property of a thing distinguished by the quality of being present. The thing has this quality if the attribute is a property of the thing. All things having a given property constitute a set of identities on that attribute property. All other things are in a set identified by the lack of the given attribute property. (Dubin, 1978, p. 44)

The *thing* being described in this theory is Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal. The second *property of the thing* is *negotiated meaning* and its conceptual elements. It is characteristic of an attribute unit because, without the existence of joint meaning negotiation between those in transition and incumbents, socialization does not have the possibility of facilitating organizational renewal.

Second, the unit *negotiated meaning* is relational in class:

> A relational unit is a property characteristic of a thing that can be determined only by the relation among properties. These relations may of two general sorts. The first is the relation based on *interaction* among properties...the second form of relation is based on the *combination* of properties. (Dubin, 1978, p. 62)

The classification of the unit *negotiated meaning* as relational means that an interaction or combination between other properties of the thing results in such a unit. This unit is a result of the interaction of its domain properties. Individuals transitioning into and within the organization both utilize and are presented with strategies of socialization. Similarly, collectives in transition, due to strategic shifts or otherwise, utilize and are presented with

socializing strategies. In this exchange of socializing activity, concurrently transitioning individuals and collectives experience concurrent processes of meaning negotiation. In some cycles, an individual is the transitioning party; in others, an individual is the incumbent party for another transitioning individual or a collective.

Therefore, *negotiated meaning* in the process of continuous socialization is attributable and relational to the presence and interaction of transitioning and incumbent parties engaged in purposeful symbolic management. Without the presence and interaction of each of this unit's conceptual elements, the socialization process cannot contribute to organizational renewal. Finally, the unit of *negotiated meaning* is real, sophisticated, and measurable at the individual or collective level.

Unit Three: Mobilized Knowledge

Definition

Continuous socialization that facilitates organizational renewal mobilizes the existing and newly generated knowledge that occurs between transitioning and incumbent parties into additional domains of the organization. Such processes of mobilization need to occur for all types of knowledge on the tacit-to-explicit continuum and as a two-way exchange between transitioning and incumbent parties.

Conceptual Dimensions

The concept of *knowledge* is widely written about, with varying degrees of uniformity in definitions. There is sufficient agreement that knowledge can be differentiated from data and information. *Data* are elements of analysis; *information* consists of data strung together due to their similar contexts; *knowledge* is information with meaning (Allee, 1997; Amidon, 1997). Additionally, it is agreed that knowledge is

perishable and must be continuously renewed at the individual, team, and organizational levels and beyond (Allee, 1997; Amidon, 1997; Gibbons et al., 1994; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). The definition of knowledge that wil guide this discussion is that of Verna Allee (1997), *"Knowledge is experience, concepts, beliefs, or information that can be communicated and shared"* (p. 27).

Explicit knowledge is most easily shared through language, while tacit knowledge is more easily shared through action or application (Grant, 1996; Narisimba, 2000). Knowledge that is *explicit* can be transmitted in more formal, systematic language (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995); in other words it is codifiable (Allee, 1997). Clear examples of explicit knowledge are organizational patents, copyrights, trademarks, and documents (Allee, 1997), knowledge that has been codified and made easily visible and available to others. In contrast, *tacit* knowledge is more informal and abstract; it is the foundation for much explicit knowledge (Tsoukas, 1996).

> Tacit knowledge centers around 'mental models' that we carry internally. These mental models are concepts, images, beliefs, viewpoints, value sets, and guiding principles that help people define their world. Tacit knowledge also includes a technical element that includes concrete skills and expertise, the hands-on experience that comes from practice. (Allee, 1997, p. 45)

Adapting Spender's (1996) dynamic knowledge-based theory of the firm, the unit of *mobilized knowledge* includes dimensions of present and emergent, explicit and tacit knowledge. Knowledge that occurs between transitioning individuals/collectives and organizational incumbents can exist anywhere on the continuums of *tacit* to *explicit* knowledge, and *present* to *emergent* knowledge (Figure 4.4.).

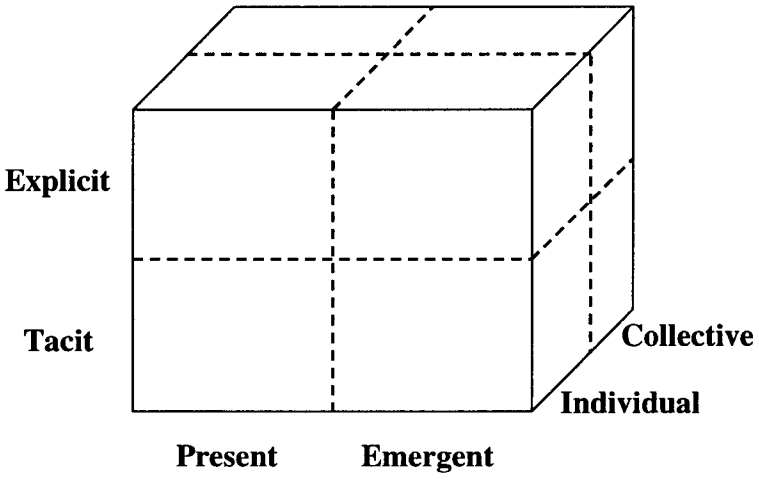


Figure 4.4. Mobilizing Different Types of Organizational Knowledge in Continuous Socialization

For continuous socialization to facilitate organizational renewal, knowledge must be mobilized between transitioning individuals/collectives and organizational incumbents in the different knowledge domains. These are necessary conditions and conceptual dimensions of mobilized knowledge. It is not enough for incumbents to merely share explicit, or codified organizational knowledge with transitioning individuals if socialization is to facilitate organizational renewal, nor is it enough for only present information to be continually shared. Rather, it is necessary that organizational members generate new knowledge amongst themselves to add to the core knowledge technology of the organization.

Validity

Much of the management literature has argued that, for organizations to survive and thrive in the knowledge economy, knowledge generation and reconfiguration must be seen as the valuable output of work (Alee, 1997; Amidon, 1997; Drucker, 1994; Grant,

1996, Spender, 1996, Stata, 1989; Tsoukas, 1996). In the traditional industrial or information economies of the past, traditional performance stakes were appropriate: efficient and effective production of goods or services and for some organizations—profit (Boudreau & Ramstad, 1997; Topp, 2000). However, with the transition to a knowledge-based economy, traditional stakes for organizations no longer suffice; performance stakes need to change to new knowledge production, reconfiguration and application (Gibbons et al., 1994; Topp, 2000; Spender, 1996; Tsoukas, 1996). "Peak performance requires a clear understanding of processes for creating, sustaining, sharing, and renewing knowledge" (Allee, 1997, p.71).

> We do much more than simply accumulate knowledge. As we progress through life or grow in expertise we also develop a flair for integrating, processing, and applying new knowledge. Our knowledge is a constantly shifting configuration of memory, context, patterns, associations, and relationships. It continuously evolves through constant exchange with our environment. In that, knowledge has far more in common with a living breathing organic being than it does with some static artifact that you can conveniently package up and tie a ribbon around. (Allee, 1997, p. 44)

An organization's ability to harness distributed knowledge within the firm is linked to the crafting of successful strategy and strategic intent (Hamel & Prahalad, 1989; Mitzberg, 1987), effective strategic decision-making (Lessard & Zaheer, 1996), innovation (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995), broader utilization of best practices (Szulanski, 1996), awakening the hearts and minds of employees (Hurst, 2002), and even to protecting the organization's core knowledge technologies from expropriation (Liebeskind, 1996). In sum, it facilitates an organization's overall ability to react and adapt to the shifting environment (Allee, 1997; Amidon, 1997; Garvin, 1993).

Consequently, knowledge is a critical component to designing socialization for organizational renewal.

An interaction between two individuals does not necessarily result in a viable knowledge exchange or new knowledge generation. The characteristics of the context and the parties can be either barriers or aids to the knowledge transfer (Szulanski, 1996). Szulanski's (1996) research described several elements that can act as barriers. First, the nature of the knowledge, such as whether it is unproven or has an element of causal ambiguity, can be a barrier. Second, the source can be a barrier if it is not perceived as reliable or if there is a lack of motivation to attempt to communicate knowledge. The recipient can be a barrier if there is a lack of motivation to receive the knowledge or if the recipient has some reduced capacity to absorb or retain certain types of knowledge. Finally, the context of the exchange, such as an arduous relationship between the parties or the failure of the organizational context to place a value on knowledge exchange, can be a barrier.

First and foremost, however, Szulanski (1996) asserted that transfer-specific social ties are important to the event. Thus, the emphasis on socializing strategies that promote interactions where meaning negotiation can occur should increase such social-specific ties. Additional research suggests that heterogeneity within the dyad, team, or collective increases the potential for new knowledge generation (Allee, 1997; Gibbons et al., 1994; Leonard & Strauss, 1997). Szulanski (1996) also pointed out through research that many elements acting as barriers to knowledge exchanges are not related to motivation. Consequently, incentives alone cannot ensure that such knowledge mobilization will occur.

This literature imparts an understanding that several elements of knowledge exchange and generation can be influenced to reduce *stickiness*, the difficulty of knowledge mobilization (Szulanski, 1996). These include promoting interaction among transitioning and incumbent parties, promoting an organizational context that nurtures and values knowledge and knowledge exchanges, and developing incentives to motivate knowledge processes and alleviate the risk associated with the utilization of ambiguous knowledge.

Organizations facile with knowledge mobilization are thought to possess five primary abilities (adapted from Garvin, 1993). These organizations possess skill in knowledge acquisition, relating to (1) learning from others and (2) learning from past experience. They are skilled in sharing knowledge, meaning (3) transferring existing knowledge within the organization, and in generating new knowledge, specifically (4) systematic problem solving, and (5) utilization of experimentation.

In sum, much can be learned about this element of the socialization process from the broader literature on individual and collective knowledge generation, transfer, and application. As knowledge mobilization is a key element of renewal and change capacity in organizations, it is a critical component in the socialization cycle.

Methodological Logic of the Unit

The unit of *mobilized knowledge* is an attribute unit of the enumerative class. Giving this unit the characteristic of an attribute makes explicit the need for continuous sharing of explicit and tacit knowledge between transitioning and incumbent parties and for generating emergent knowledge if the socialization process is to contribute to organization renewal.

Second, the unit of *mobilized knowledge* is enumerative in class. Again, Dubin (1978) defined enumerative unit class as "a property characteristic of a thing in all its conditions. That is, regardless of the condition of the thing that can be observed or imagined, it will always have that property" (p. 58). Additionally, measurement of such a unit must obtain positive values in all cases. Thus, knowledge sharing is a necessary condition for socialization to support renewal capacity. Without it, socialization cannot facilitate renewal. Finally, the unit of *mobilized knowledge* is real, sophisticated, and measurable at the individual and collective levels.

Unit Four: Internalized Learning

Definition

Knowledge exchanges between transitioning parties and incumbent parties may result in various levels of incorporation into individual schemas or collective memory. During transitions, the critical learning for individuals/collectives is the awareness of the socialization process as well as knowledge process proactivity in the form of unique generation, reconfiguration and utilization of new knowledge.

Conceptual Dimensions

A logical chain of events during socialization can contribute to renewal. As individuals or collectives utilize socializing strategies, interactions are facilitated between transitioning and incumbent parties. During such interactions, each party attempts to find an appropriate meaning definition for the new situation, at which point both tacit and explicit knowledge begin to be mobilized and new tacit and explicit knowledge can be generated. It is clearly not feasible for recipients to be altered measurably with each exchange. Incorporation of new knowledge can take several forms, with varying

alteration to the core identity or functioning of the individual or collective. Regardless of the level of acceptance, certain pieces of data, information, and knowledge must be incorporated in such a way as to alter future behavior in a desired direction for socialization processes to facilitate organization renewal (Figure 4.5.).

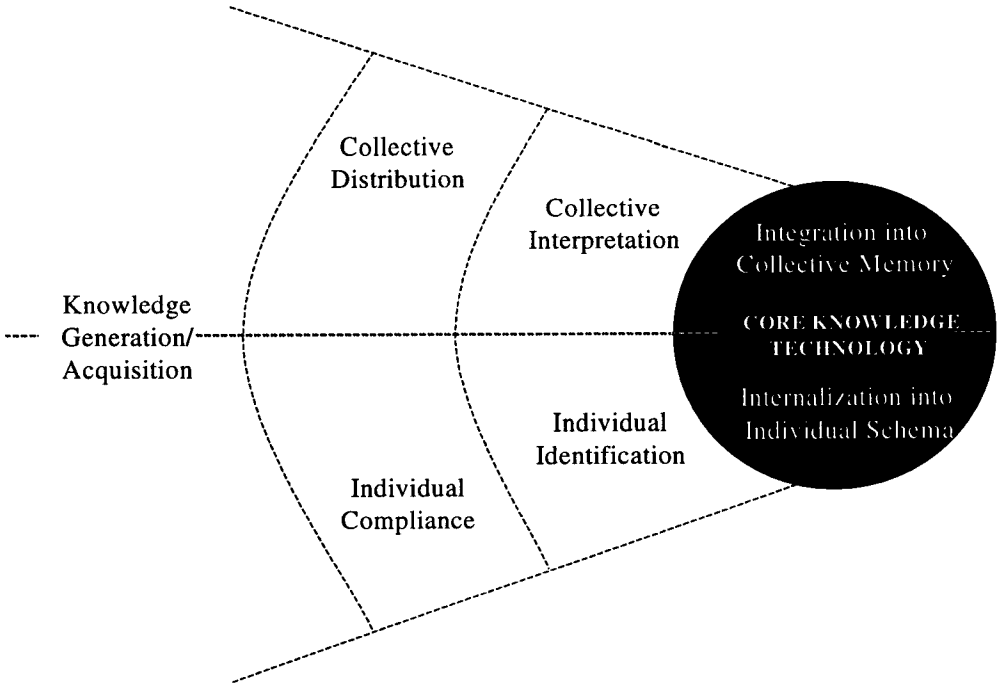


Figure 4.5. Internalizing Knowledge at Multiple Levels for Individuals & Collectives During Continuous Socialization

Individual recipients can accept new knowledge at the level of *compliance*, using such knowledge to guide their behavior so as to receive rewards and avoid punishments (Van Maanen, 1976). At the next level, individuals begin to *identify* with the other individual or collective (team or organization), based on the acceptance of the new knowledge. In other words, the individual develops a "satisfying, self-defining

relationship" with the other person or group (Van Maanen, 1976, p. 99). Finally, individuals may choose to *internalize* certain pieces of new knowledge that are currently aligned with the individual's identity and mental schemes or that have "intrinsically rewarding" implications (Van Maanen, 1976, p. 99). Regardless, the mere acceptance of new knowledge enables some alteration in behavior.

Like individuals, collectives also have levels of incorporation. Knowledge sharing interactions are "dyadic exchanges of organizational knowledge between a source and a recipient unit" (Szulanski, 1996, p. 28). In other words, knowledge sharing occurs between two individuals, or two sources, at a time. However, at some point the initial recipient makes a choice to utilize and or share the new knowledge in which further *distribution* throughout the collective takes place (Huber, 1991; Szulanski, 1996).

Additionally, new knowledge generation can both occur between two or more individuals and be distributed. However, merely distributing data, information, or knowledge will not necessarily significantly alter the core identity or functioning of the collective. A deeper level of incorporation into a collective occurs when significant efforts of *interpretation* take place. Interpretations across groups may vary about the new knowledge. Concerted efforts to uniformly frame the new knowledge in the context of the collective provide some shared interpretation of how the new knowledge should guide action (Huber, 1991). Finally, just as an individual can incorporate new knowledge into his or her core identity, a collective can incorporate new knowledge into its core *collective memory* (Huber, 1991; Walsh & Ungson, 1991).

The unit of internalized learning does not define critical learning as all bits of data, information, or knowledge exchanged during interactions. This theory seeks to

define those elements of socialization processes that will facilitate agility and renewal capability within the organization. Therefore, critical learning to be internalized into individual schemas and integrated into the collective memory is both *awareness or consciousness of socializing strategies* as well as *purposeful proactivity in knowledge mobilization processes* to add to the organization's core knowledge technology.

Validity

Organizational socialization theory has considered the socialization of groups. (Van Maanen, 1978; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Yet the typical focus is only on having individuals in transition lumped together in a "new recruit" bunch and experiencing the same socialization tactics. Despite the lack of focus on collective socialization in the theoretical literature, there is a growing focus on it in the research base (Larsson & Lubatkin, 2000; Mills & Morris, 1986; Schneider et al., 1998; Schweiger & DeNisi, 1991; Weiner, 1988). The field reflects an increasing understanding that socialization efforts cannot realistically be focused only on incoming individuals, one at a time or in a new recruit cohort. Consequently, socialization research has broadened to include collective socialization prior to and following mergers (Larsson & Lubatkin, 2000; Schweiger & DeNisi, 1991), role development of clients (Mills & Morris, 1986), and maintaining or changing organizational values systems and culture throughout the whole organization (Schneider et al., 1998; Weiner, 1988).

This theory has hypothesized that socialization cycles for individuals closely mirror socialization cycles for collectives in transition. Each unit has made explicit how the individual experience either mirrors or diverges from the collective experience. For example, while individuals and collectives utilize socializing strategies, those strategies

look different. In contrast, meaning negotiation is a dyadic exchange between individuals that looks the same for one individual in transition as it does for the individuals in a transitioning collective that interact with other incumbents. Finally, types of knowledge are not unique based on an individual or collective host. Therefore, interactions that promote exchange are the same for individuals or collectives in transition. This unit extends the knowledge mobilization unit to explain how knowledge can be integrated at a broader level within a collective or integrated at a closer level to an individual's core identity. In sum, the first three units of this theory, *socializing strategies, negotiated meaning,* and *mobilized knowledge,* made explicit what elements the transitioning party should seek out, engage and internalize to have the potential of increasing renewal capacity.

Towards Individual Internalization. A significant amount of socialization research implies that, the more an individual learns and internalizes about an organization, the more successful the individual will be within the organization (Chao et al., 1994; Graen, Orris & Johnson, 1973; Klein & Weaver, 2000; Morrison, 1993; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). Chao et al.'s (1994) research indicated construct validity for six domains asserted as the construct of socialization and that, the more an individual learns about those six domains, the greater the career effectiveness of that individual. The six content areas were (1) people, (2) politics, (3) language, (4) organizational goals and values, (5) history, and (6) performance proficiency, meaning the extent to which the individual has learned the identified tasks for the job. The study defined career effectiveness as (1) performance in the role, measured by personal income, (2) job satisfaction, as measured

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by attitudes, (3) integration of personal identity, as measured by individual perception, and (4) adjustment, as measured by an adaptability index.

The authors conclude, "people who are well socialized in their organizational roles have greater personal incomes, are more satisfied, more involved with their careers, more adaptable, and have a better sense of their personal identity than people who are less well socialized" (Chao et al., 1994, p. 741). Again, "well socialized" according to the authors means higher scores of learning on the six domains of socialization they identified. While the outcome measures of career effectiveness are not linked well with organizational renewal and change capacity and could easily be changed and tested, the domains of socialization appear to be a solid place to start with respect to what content is important in socialization.

It may be beneficial to consider that pieces of data, information, and knowledge are not internalized to the same degree within individuals (Van Maanen, 1976; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). To illustrate the point, consider two different scenarios. In the first, an individual experiences and learns the components of an organization's politics (i.e., formal and informal work relationships and power structures within the organization). This individual *internalizes* the existing relationship and power structure; the individual identifies with the structures and begins to define and possibly alter a personal identity in relation to those relationship and power structures. In the second scenario, an individual learns of the same organizational politics and merely utilizes and *complies* with those relationship and power structures in order to get work done. The logical conclusion is that a variation in *level of internalization* influences the level of innovation possible to that learned data, information, and knowledge. More specifically,

the individual who integrated the power structure into his or her core operating schema may be less likely to challenge or innovate against the existing structure.

Several authors speak of the desirable phenomenon of individuals operating within an organization guided by strong core energies of organizational goals and values (Collins, 2001; Collins & Porras, 1994; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995), or an invisible force field bounded by leadership vision and values (Wheatley, 1999). The metaphors pinpoint the idea of a level of core acceptance that either contains the peripheral action to some degree. In practicality, this suggests that some organizational elements, when internalized, will guide behavior in a desired direction while allowing significant variability in behavior in other areas.

This unit proposes that certain pieces of data, information, and knowledge should be internalized at different levels within individuals and collectives (Table 4.4.). Basic elements of the organization's history, people, politics, language, systems and processes, and components necessary for task performance, should be accepted at a basic level. Further, individuals should identify positively with the organizational goals and values to be successful. Finally, the concepts of awareness and proactivity in the areas of socializing strategies and knowledge mobilization need to be fully internalized to guide behavior from the individual's operating schema. The hypothesis set forth here is that internalized learning in socialization for renewal means: *the meaning of work is fully internalized as utilizing continual socializing strategies to ensure readiness for renewal, and utilizing continual knowledge mobilization processes to ensure renewal.* This theory asserts that these two concepts are critical for socialization to contribute to renewal within the organization.

Towards Collective Integration. A collective learns if "any of its units acquires knowledge that it recognizes as potentially useful to the organization" (Huber, 1991, p. 89), and that "more [collective] learning occurs when more of the [collective's] components obtain this knowledge and recognize it as potentially useful" (Huber, 1991, p. 90). Because of the distributed nature of knowledge within a collective, the collective does not always know what it knows (Huber, 1991; Tsoukas, 1996; Weick, 1991). Thus, at least some mechanisms must exist to store, retrieve, and diffuse useful knowledge within the organization (Brown, 1991; Huber, 1991; Kleiner & Roth, 1997; Marsick & Watkins, 1990; Quinn, Anderson & Finkelstein, 1996; Stata, 1989; Tsoukas, 1996; Walsh & Ungson, 1991; Weick, 1991). All pieces of data, information, and knowledge are not critical or even relevant for the collective. However, as certain elements become relevant or critical, they need to be integrated to some degree within the collective.

As is the case with individual internalized learning, socialization for renewal requires some organizational elements to merely be *distributed* at a basic level within the transitioning collective and other elements to be more widely *interpreted* and even *integrated* into the core knowledge technology of that collective (Table 4.4.). While this division of organizational elements may be artificial in terms of empirical measurement, there is conceptual logic in differentiating the ways in which some organizational elements are internalized in an individual or collective.

To illustrate the point, consider a retail products company that is reorganizing from product lines to strategic accounts. Prior to the transition, team members from various departments utilize *priming socializing strategies* to acquire data, information, and knowledge about those strategic accounts from the incumbent members currently

handling them. For example, organizational leadership engages various departments to understand potential issues with the reorganization and to negotiate organizational expectations with the new roles. Taking the example to a more specific level, sales members directly affected by the reorganization ask one another questions, observe oen another with the clients, and ask other internal employees who influence the customer experience (e.g., Shipping or Supply Chain Distribution) about additional knowledge that may be useful in the transition. During these conversations, the sales members begin to share their methods of operating and their rules for making decisions about products with certain client.

In discussions, it becomes clear that the reorganization will mean changes in these rules and in the role of the salesperson with these client accounts. As a result, the meaning and operation of the organization's vision for the reorganization is *negotiated* between the sales members. Knowledge about best practices, client relationships, product marketing, and product distribution changes hands, or is *mobilized*, between those previously incumbent as product sales leads and those now managing the strategic accounts.

In this example, knowledge concerning language, politics, history, people, systems and processes, and best practices for performance of sales tasks should be *distributed* within the collective working with the client account. Awareness of these practices allows for *individual compliance*. The retail products organization's goals and values around delighting the client or developing strategic accounts should be continually discussed for more widespread *interpretation* within groups to allow for *individual identification* with those goals and values. Finally, sales members should internalize and

the sales collective should integrate into its core operating technology an awareness of the *value* placed on the socializing and knowledge mobilization strategies just used (Table 4.4.).

Table 4.4.

Learning Domains for Individual/Collective Socialization Cycles: From Acceptance to Internalization

	Socialization Learning Domains	
Individual Compliance	▪ Language ▪ Politics ▪ History ▪ People ▪ Systems & processes ▪ Task performance	*Distribution within Collective*
Individual Identification	▪ Organization goals & values	*Interpretation within Collective*
Individual Internalization	▪ Socialization awareness ▪ Knowledge mobilization	*Integration within Collective*

Many have argued that learning which alters core strategies, goals, or values is truly painful and difficult; it requires critical reflection and a willingness to challenge deeply held assumptions (Argyris, 1991; Collins, 2001; Coutu, 2002). Despite the difficulty, without challenging each and every component of the learning domains, including that which has been placed at the level of internalization, continuous change will not occur. Data, information, or knowledge can come from anywhere within or outside of the organization, through many different organizational systems or processes (Brown, 1991; Garvin, 1993). This unit in the theory focuses on knowledge exchanged or generated between transitioning and incumbent parties during socialization. Subsequent to knowledge exchange or generation, some level of integration or learning within an

individual or collective occurs that *can* alter future behavior (Garvin, 1993; Huber, 1991; Weick, 1991).

Not all knowledge generated or exchanged can or will result in "good learning" (Marsick & Watkins, 1990). Conscious socialization cycles that do not assume all aspects of organizational operation to be internalized will open the door for challenging the status quo. Additionally, it is important that this theory advocates *awareness* in the utilization of socialization activities and *engagement* in knowledge mobilization processes. However, it does not disregard the influences of unconscious socialization and incidental knowledge exchange and learning (Marsick, 1987; Marsick & Watkins, 1990; Van Maanen, 1976; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). The theory merely emphasizes that an organization's increased awareness of the form and content of its processes will increase the likelihood that these processes can be modified to support desired outcomes--in this case, renewal.

Methodological Logic of the Unit

The unit of *internalized learning* is an attribute unit of enumerative class. As with previous units, the property of *internalized learning* is a necessary condition for socialization to facilitate renewal capability within the organization. While not all bits of shared or created data, information, and knowledge need to be internalized, the internalizing of the elements of socialization awareness and knowledge process proactivity is critical. As an attribute, it is present in all conditions in which the theoretical model mirrors the empirical world.

This unit is also enumerative in its class. Again, Dubin (1978) has defined the enumerative class of units as unconditionally presenting their characteristic property to

some degree. Upon measuring this unit, the resulting values must be positive. Finally, the unit of *internalized learning* is real, sophisticated, and can be measured at both individual and collective levels.

Unit Five: Externalized Performance

Definition

The capacity of purposeful renewal for transitioning parties is the performance outcome of continuous socialization. Performance drivers for transitioning parties are (1) purposeful and proactive utilization of socializing strategies, and (2) purposeful and proactive participation in knowledge mobilization processes. The performance outcome of increased renewal capacity from the socialization cycle acts as one contributor to organization-level renewal performance.

Conceptual Dimensions

This theory rests on the premise that shifting forces in the business environment are compelling swift and large-scale changes within organizations that want to remain competitive. A priority in the development of this theory has been incorporating elements that are logically linked with renewal capacity in literature. Consequently, the performance outcome of continuous socialization can no longer be merely learning, adjustment, or culture transmission.

At the broadest level, continuous socialization is hypothesized to influence organization-level outcomes of renewal to some degree. In other words, continuous socialization can be viewed as a *performance driver* (Swanson, 2001) for organization-level renewal performance. *Renewal* as an organization-level performance outcome can be viewed as: the continuous utilization of organizational innovations (i.e., innovations of

products and services, systems and processes, technologies, and management and leadership practices) to facilitate sustained competitive success (Allee, 1997; Gibbons et al., 1994; Hurst, 2002; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Waterman, 1987). Admittedly, there are other systems and processes that influence organization-level renewal performance. Thus, performance outcomes of continuous socialization should be conceptualized and measured as *one* performance driver of organization-level renewal performance.

The unit of *externalized performance*, then, consists of performance drivers and performance outcomes for transitioning individuals and collectives. Elements that have traditionally been viewed as performance outcomes of socialization (i.e., learning about the organization's language, politics, history, people, systems and processes, task requirements, and organizational goals and values) are truly only performance drivers, and are not sufficient performance outcomes of socialization for renewal.

Performance drivers of continuous socialization for organizational renewal are related to each of the units previously expressed in the theory. They include: (1) purposeful and proactive utilization of socializing strategies, and (2) purposeful and proactive participation in knowledge mobilization processes. Each can be viewed as a continuum for the transitioning party (Figure 4.6.). For example, an individual may be highly purposeful and proactive in the utilization of socializing strategies, but may not engage in knowledge mobilization processes within the organization. The *performance outcome* (Swanson, 2001) for the theory is labeled *purposeful renewal*, characterized by the ability to contribute to the overall renewal capacity of the organization. An organization with a substantial percentage of individuals with successful continuous

socialization performance outcomes (i.e., purposeful renewal capacity) will have increased organization-level renewal performance.

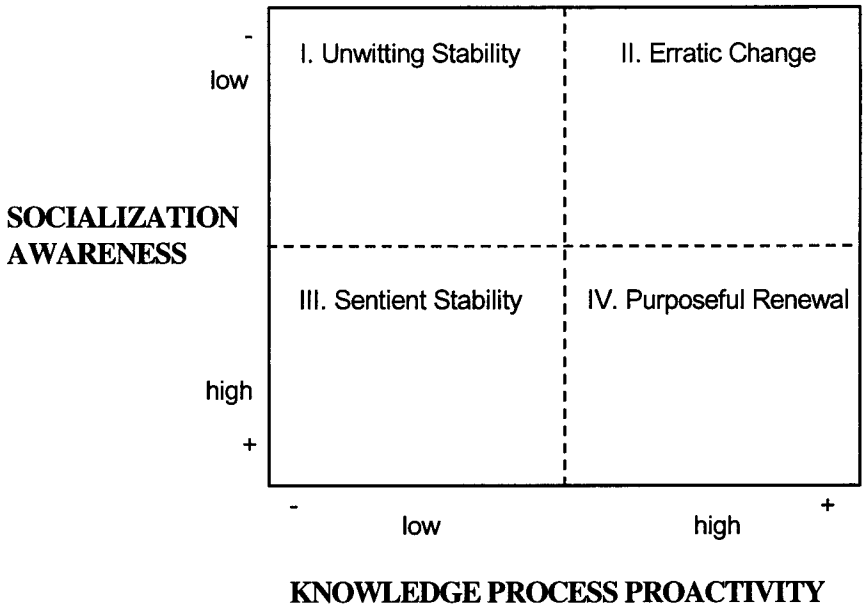

Figure 4.6. Purposeful Renewal Capacity at the Individual/Group/Organization Levels as the Performance Outcome of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal

Validity

This unit of the theory focuses on outcomes of individual and collective performance that contribute to the success of the organization. This focus is a result of an affiliation of this researcher-theorist with the performance paradigm of Human Resource Development (see Appendix B). The performance-paradigm states, in part, that the ultimate purpose of HRD is to improve the performance of the system in which it is embedded (Holton, 2000). Thus, the performance outcomes of this theory are those that influence an increase in organization-level renewal performance.

Typically, the literature has reported learning about organizational elements, reduction of conflict and anxiety, and role clarity as proximal outcomes (Chao et al., 1994; Feldman, 1976; Klein & Weaver, 2000). While those are desirable outcomes of any boundary transition, they are insufficient outcomes of socialization success if the organization seeks to increase renewal capacity.

More distal outcomes reported in the literature focus mainly on components of individual satisfaction, performance in a specific role, and intent to remain with the organization (Adkins, 1995; Allen & Meyer, 1990; Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Feldman, 1981; Klein & Weaver, 2000; Nelson, 1987; Wanous, 1980). Again, while such outcomes as performance of specific role tasks are desirable in any boundary transition, they are not sufficient performance outcomes.

Renewal capacity within the organization is about "creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights" (Garvin, 1993, p. 51). Socialization cannot contribute to those types of organization-level outcomes without changing the intended outcomes of the process. Consequently, this unit of *externalized performance* consists of performance drivers related to purposeful socialization and purposeful knowledge mobilization by transitioning and incumbent parties, and the resulting renewal capacity of those parties contributes to the organization-level renewal capacity.

Methodological Logic of the Unit

The unit of *externalized performance* is a variable unit of associative class. Dubin (1978) described the characteristic of a "variable" unit as:

> A variable is a property of a thing that may be present in degree. There may be some of the property present or a lot of it. We may express the

> degree of presence of the variable property of a thing by either a cardinal or an ordinal scale. (Dubin, 1978, p.44)

The *thing* being described in this theory is Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal. The last *property of the thing* is *externalized performance,* which is present in the thing to some degree. Behaviors reflecting the internalization of socialization awareness and knowledge process proactivity can be measured in degree. As a unit of associative class, measurement values could appear as positive, zero, or negative. Finally, the unit of *externalized performance* is real, sophisticated, and measurable at the individual and collective levels.

The Feedback Loop

With the passage of time, a shared history and memory come to exist within the organization. "These shared meanings and behaviors facilitate coordination of activities, making behaviors understandable and predictable and stable...and they progressively lose their novelty and become part of the objective, taken-for-granted reality of the organization" (Szulanski, 1996, p. 29). What was once new becomes institutionalized. Therefore, this theory of socialization is *continuous* not only because boundary context changes continually occur, but also because,without continuous iterations, renewing and altering what has become institutionalized are less likely.

Subsequent iterations of the socialization process are influenced by (1) the changing organizational context that creates the boundary shift catalyst and (2) the performance outcome of the previous cycle. Therefore, while not a unit in itself, there is a feedback component of the socialization process that influences future iterations.

Comparison to Criteria of Excellence for the Development of Units

Dubin (1978) implied several criteria against which developed units could be compared to determine their level of rigor and excellence. The categorization of these five criteria was influenced by Lynham's (2000a) theory building research. The five criteria are (1) rigor and exactness, (2) parsimony, (3) completeness, (4) logical consistency, and (5) conformity to criteria for unit development. The units developed for this theory are examined using these criteria of excellence.

Rigor and Exactness

The criterion relates to the level of exactness present in the unit definition and classification. Exactness is increased when the units are variable rather than attribute (Dubin, 1978). While variable units are preferred for more exact prediction and measurement, the presence of attribute variables is typical in emerging theories (Dubin, 1978; Lynham, 2000a). This theory contains both attribute and variable units. Further verification and refinement of the theory may allow for the transition of the current attribute units to variable units at some point.

Parsimony

"Parsimony in a theory relates to the degree to which the theory contains a minimum of complexity and assumptions" (Lynham, 2000a, p. 62). In the development of the units for this theory, an attempt was made to balance the need for parsimony with the need to be cognizant of the many influential forces and factors within the system. The use of assumptions will naturally be greater for an emerging theory prior to testing and refinement; however, the assumptions for this theory were consistently checked and reported along with existing literature to support their use. Finally, in reporting the

theoretical units, an attempt was made to reduce complexity by following a structure for defining and outlining the components of each unit. Dubin's (1978) methodology for the development of units was made explicit, and the development of each unit followed the same format: listing the definition, conceptual dimensions, and literature support.

Completeness

The criterion of completeness is linked to whether measurement of the theory allows for a complete range of measurements from negative, to zero, to positive values. Including associative elements in the theory provides an element of completeness (Dubin, 1978). "This issue becomes important for the eventual testing of the completeness of the theory, that is, of the completeness of the predictions generated by the theory" (Lynham, 2000a, p. 62). As the theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal includes an associative unit in the unit of *externalized performance*, it is possible to assess states of the system in which the values are negative, zero, or positive. Thus, with the inclusion of this unit, the theory meets the criterion of completeness.

Logical Consistency

Logical consistency in the development of theory units is achieved when the units themselves are not in conflict with one another (Dubin, 1978). For example, there is undeniable logical consistency if a theory contains only one classification of unit. Similarly, if the theory contains both enumerative and associative units, there is consistency as well as the completeness described above. Finally, the theory remains logically consistent if relational units are used appropriately with other enumerative or associative units. The theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal

contains these classes of units and is logically consistent in their application. The ways in which such units cannot be combined are described below.

Conformity to Criteria for Development of Units

Dubin (1978) asserted three limiting rules concerning the combination of unit classes in the same theory. The first states "a relational unit is not combined in the same theory with enumerative or associative units that are themselves properties of that relational unit" (p. 73). The second rule states that, when "a statistical unit is employed, it is by definition a property of a collective. In the same theory do not combine such a statistical unit with any kind of unit (enumerative, associative, or relational) describing a property of members of the same collective" (p.73). Finally, the third rule states that "summative units have utility in [the] education of and communication with those who are naïve in the field. Summative units are not employed in scientific models" (p. 78). The theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal contains discrete units that are not properties of one another and does not include statistical or summative units.

This concludes the first step of the theory-building research process, the development of the units of the theory. Five units were proposed: *socializing strategies, negotiated meaning, mobilized knowledge, internalized learning,* and *externalized performance*. The conceptual dimensions for each unit were outlined as well (Figure 4.2.). The *continuous* nature of socialization for renewal was also made explicit, highlighting the feedback component of the theory. This discussion now turns to the second step in the theory-building research process, determining how the units of the theory interact.

Theory Building Research Step Two:

Developing the Laws of Interaction for the Theory

This section of Chapter Four contains the laws of interaction among the units, or the explicit relationship among the five units of the Theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal. This section will begin with a description of Dubin's methodology for developing the laws of interaction, followed by a presentation of the three laws of interaction for this theory. The discussion of each law will follow a similar format, which is influenced by the theory-building work of Dubin (1978) and Lynham (2000a). The law will be named, defined, described in detail, and compared to criteria of excellence for developing laws of interaction.

Dubin's Methodology for Developing the Laws of Interaction

Once the units themselves have been established, the next step is to examine the ways in which they are linked with one another (Dubin, 1978). Reynolds (1971) made this distinction as well, highlighting the need for both existence statements and relational statements (propositions) about a theory. Thus, when propositions about a theory are presented, the presentation will include descriptions not only of the existence of the units but also of their relationships to one another. The definition of 'law of interaction' used for this discussion will be, "the linkages among the units of a model" (Dubin, 1978, p. 90). This linkage does not necessarily imply a causal relationship; other relationships are possible. Additionally, Dubin made an important note that the forms of interactions are limited to the human mind's ability to se and name the relationships; they are a product of the human mind. Dubin laid out three different forms of interaction: (1) categoric, (2)

sequential, and (3) determinant. He also describes the possible levels of efficiency an interaction may have.

A *categoric law* states "the values of a unit are associated with values of another unit" (p. 98). There is an implied probability in the statement that two units are associated, namely, a greater-then-chance probability that the two have a relationship. A *sequential law* employs a time dimension to relate the two units. Such a relationship is not a causal one; the units are only temporally related. A *determinant law* "associates determinant values of one unit with determinant values of another unit" (p. 106). In other words, for every determinant value of one unit, for example X, there is a determinant value of the unit related to it, the corresponding Y value. The most common feature of a determinant law is that is can be drawn as "a line, curve, plane, surface, a structure of linked points, or matrices of fixed-position values" (p. 107). Determinant laws are most common in the physical sciences where exact values can be pinpointed and predicted for units (Dubin, 1978).

A law may have four levels of efficiency, and the greater the efficiency of the law, the greater its predictive power and its ability to increase understanding. The lowest level of efficiency is a law that can state only that, for a value of unit 1, there will exist a corresponding positive or negative value of unit 2. This presence-absence form of a law provides little precision beyond concurrent presence. The next level of efficiency is a law that describes the directionality of the relationship between values of unit 1 and values of unit 2. Such directionality may be phrased 'as X increases, Y also increases.' Both the first and second levels of efficiency are common in social science theories (Dubin, 1978). The third level of efficiency is a law that identifies covariation between

the two units. The highest level of efficiency is a law able to express the rate of change in the values of unit 1 and the associated rate of change in the values of unit 2. These higher levels of efficiency are often seen in theories of the physical sciences where exact measurements and values are easily determined (Dubin, 1978). Dubin also described in some detail the logical relationships between laws, the minimum and maximum numbers of laws for a given system, and the parsimony of laws. These considerations form the criteria of excellence for developing laws of interaction (Dubin, 1978; Lynham, 2000a).

Categoric Laws of Interaction for the Theory

There is one categoric law of interaction in the Theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal. This law makes explicit the associated nature of the units of the theory. The literature indicates that strategies of socialization involve interaction between transitioning individuals and organizational incumbents (Ashforth, 1985; Feldman, 1976; Jones, 1983; Katz, 1980; Reichers, 1987). In these interactions definitions of the situation, the self, and the other are created (Ashforth, 1985; Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Katz, 1980; Weick, 1969). Additionally, during interactions to derive meaning, both tacit and explicit knowledge can be shared or generated, consciously or unconsciously (Allee, 1997; Amidon, 1997; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Spender, 1996; Tsoukas, 1996; Walsh & Ungson, 1991). Such knowledge can be integrated into the self or into the larger organizational system as individual, team, or organizational learning (Allee, 1997; Amidon, 1997; Katz, 1980; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Senge, 1990; Spender, 1996; Tsoukas, 1996; Walsh & Ungson, 1991). Some learning can be externalized through behaviors of role/task/interpersonal performance (Allee, 1997; Feldman, 1976; Garvin, 1993; Louis, 1980; Van Maanen, 1976; Van Maanen & Schein,

1979). Externalized behaviors can themselves be the next actions of socialization or can influence the actions and reactions of others (Ashforth, 1985; Katz, 1980; Weick, 1969) in the continuation of the socialization cycle.

The one categoric law of the theory states, in essence, that each has a greater-than-chance possibility of being associated with the other (Dubin, 1978). Thus, the categoric law of the theory consists of five sub-statements concerning the units: (1) there is a greater-than-chance possibility that *socializing strategies* are associated with *negotiated meaning*, (2) there is a greater-than-chance possibility that *negotiated meaning* is associated with *mobilized knowledge*, (3) there is a greater-than-chance possibility that *mobilized knowledge* is associated with *internalized learning*, (4) there is a greater-than-chance possibility that *internalized learning* is associated with *externalized performance*, and (5) there is a greater than chance possibility that *socializing strategies* are associated with *externalized performance* through feedback. In sum, each unit of the theory is associated with the next, resulting in the first categoric law of the theory:

> ***Law 1:*** All five units of the theory, namely, *socializing strategies, negotiated meaning, mobilized knowledge, internalized learning,* and *externalized performance,* are associated with and required for continuous socialization for organization renewal.

It is important to note here that categoric laws of interaction imply neither causality nor a timeline. In fact, categoric laws are symmetrical in nature: it does not matter whether one unit or the other comes first in the statement of the law.

Sequential Laws of Interaction for the Theory

There are two sequential laws of interaction in the Theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal. All sequential laws indicate a time-dimension relationship between the units of the theory. For this theory, changes in the organizational context and the external environment context act as the catalyst for the unit of *socializing strategies* and thus the rest of the units. Dubin elaborated on the meaning and purpose of a catalyst through the statement, "given two units, U_A and U_B, U_A and U_B interact by law L if, and only if, the catalyst U_C has nonzero values (this is the only sufficient condition)" (Dubin, 1978). Using this theory's units to explain, transitioning individuals and organizational incumbents will not employ *socializing strategies* (U_A) and consequently interact to *negotiate meaning* (U_B) if *boundary shifts* ($U_{Catalyst}$) are not on the horizon.

The first sequential law of interaction, employing a time dimension, has four implied sub-statements: (1) with the catalyst of a boundary-context change *socializing strategies* precede *negotiated meaning*, (2) *negotiated meaning* precedes *mobilized knowledge*, (3) *shared knowledge* precedes *internalized learning,* and (4) *internalized learning* precedes *externalized performance*. In sum, there is a time dimension related to the interaction of the units, resulting in the first sequential law of the theory:

> ***Law 2:*** Due to boundary context changes, *socializing strategies* precede the unfolding of the other units of the theory, namely, *negotiated meaning, mobilized knowledge, internalized learning,* and *externalized performance.*

Again, it is important to note that a time dimension employed in the interaction of the units does not imply causality between those units. "The sequential ordering of the values

of the units employed is the only meaning we can attach to the law of interaction, however tempting it may be to view this temporal sequence as a causal one" (Dubin, 1978, p. 101). The categoric law and time-directional sequential law are reflected in Figure 4.7. with one-way arrows to designate the cycle.

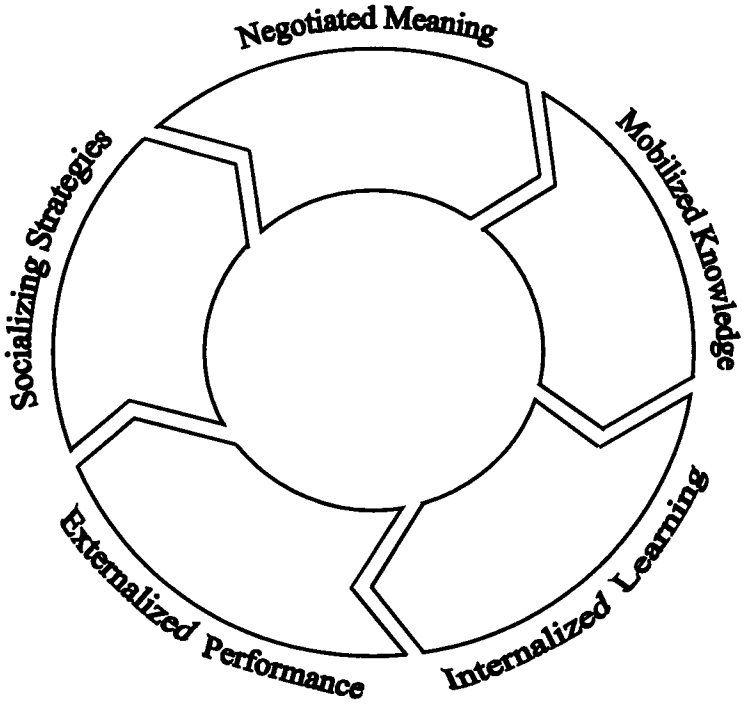

Figure 4.7. The Theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal: A Diagram of the Categoric & Time-directional Laws of the Theory

The second sequential law of interaction relates to the interaction of the units in the form of a system. At a broad level, an organization as a renewing system has *inputs* driving renewal, *processes* facilitating renewal, and *outputs* indicating renewal. Some of the inputs compelling the need for agility and renewal have been described as forces coming from the external context, i.e. the geo/political context, the social/cultural

context, the industry/market context, and the workforce/talent context (Allee, 1997; Amidon, 1997; Collins, 2001; Gibbons et al., 1994; Goss, Pascale & Athos, 1993; Kotter, 1995; Marsick & Watkins, 1999; Senge et al., 1999; Shaffer & Thomson, 1992). In the literature, a trickle of articles focused on different organizational cultures, systems, and processes that are argued to facilitate agility and renewal for the organization has become a flow (Allee, 1997; Amidon, 1997; Collins, 2001; Gibbons et al., 1994; Hurst, 2002; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Walsh & Ungson, 1991; Waterman, 1987). Here, socialization is proposed as one of those organizational processes. Finally, the quality of renewal has its own measurements as an outcome of the organizational system, such as knowledge generation, innovation, sustained organizational success, and others (Allee, 1997; Amidon, 1997; Gibbons et al., 1994; Hurst, 2002; Walsh & Ungson, 1991; Waterman, 1987).

Socialization, as one of the processes arguably linked to organizational renewal, can be viewed as a system in and of itself, embedded within the larger organization system seeking renewal. The inputs of this system are the *socializing strategies* employed by transitioning individuals as well as by organizational incumbents because of boundary context changes. The units of *negotiated meaning, mobilized knowledge,* and *internalized learning* form the process of the system; it is a process of knowledge generation and diffusion. The output of the system is *externalized performance*. Through decision-making and behaviors, transitioning parties outwardly reflect what they have internalized throughout the process. Through decision making and modeling, organizational incumbents outwardly reflect what they have integrated throughout the process. In sum,

the units of the theory interact in the form of a system, resulting in the second sequential law of interaction:

> ***Law 3:*** The units of the Theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal can be thought of in terms of inputs, process, and outputs: along with its catalyst, the unit of *socializing strategies* forms the input; the units of *negotiated meaning, mobilized knowledge,* and *internalized learning* form the knowledge generation and diffusion process; and the unit of *externalized performance* forms the output.

The systems relationship among the five units of the theory as input, process, and output are reflected in Figure 4.8.

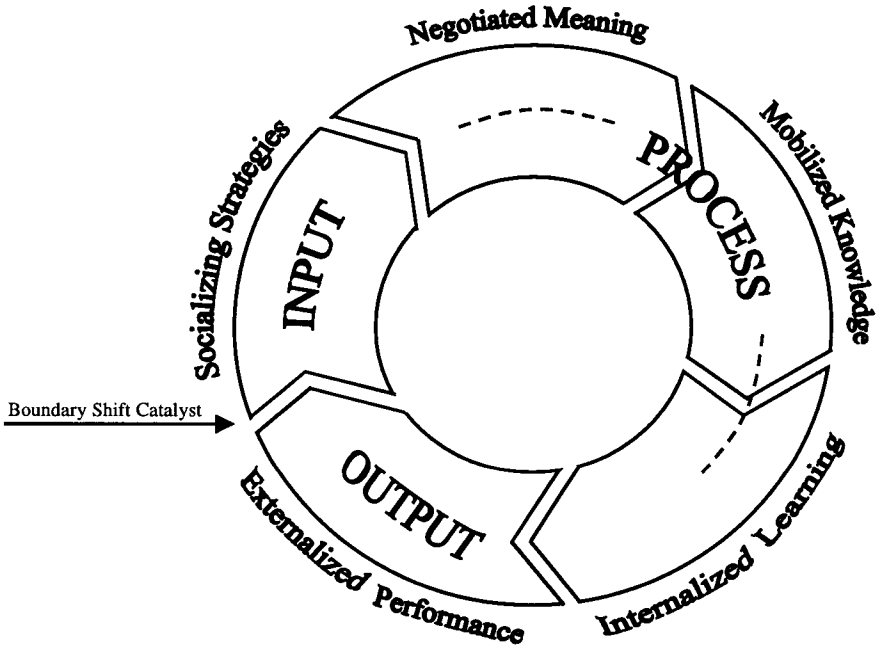

Figure 4.8. The Theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal: A Diagram of the Systems Relationship Between the Five Units of the Theory

The three laws presented in this section of Chapter Four describe the nature of the interrelationship among the five units of the theory. A summary of the three laws of interaction along with their respective levels of efficiency is described below.

Laws of Interaction & Levels of Efficiency

Three laws of interaction have been developed to describe the interrelationship between the five units of the theory. The first law was categoric in nature, indicating an association between the units. Categoric laws are always at the lowest level of efficiency (presence-absence) in a theory (Dubin, 1978). The second and third laws of the theory were sequential in nature, indicating a time-dimension relationship between the units. The first laws pointed to the unit of *socializing strategies,* influenced by the catalyst of changed boundaries, preceding all the other units. The second of the sequential laws described the interrelationship of the units in the theory as a system of input, process, and output. Both sequential laws of interaction are at the second level of efficiency (directionality).

As the theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal is in the initial stages of development and at its first iteration of the theory-building research process, the laws of interaction were intentionally kept at lower levels of efficiency. As the theory progresses through future iterations of the theory-building research process, the laws of interaction can be verified through the results, and increased in efficiency.

Comparison with Criteria of Excellence for Laws of Interaction

The criteria of excellence for the development of laws of interaction are logical coherence and parsimony (Dubin, 1978). Laws are said to be *logically coherent* if they do not conflict with each other. Thus, if two laws are employed in a system with inconsistent

results, one of the laws must be discarded (Dubin, 1978). The three laws employed in the system of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal do not conflict with one another, consequently meeting the logical coherence criterion of excellence.

The second criterion of excellence is parsimony. Dubin (1978) used the criterion of *parsimony* in this instance to refer to both the complexity and the number of the laws employed. Laws are said to be more complex if they meet higher standards of efficiency, that is, presence-absence, directionality, covariation, and rate of change. In this theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal, the categoric law is at the lowest level of efficiency (presence-absence), and the two sequential laws are at the second level of efficiency (directionality).

In addition to complexity of the laws, parsimony refers to the number of laws employed in the theory. A system must have a minimum of one law of interaction (Dubin, 1978). The maximum number of laws of interaction is "the number of laws necessary to relate the units two at a time each once with all the other units" (Dubin, 1978, p. 113). In this theory, a minimum number of laws makes explicit the nature of the interrelationship among the five units of the theory.

This section of Chapter Four concludes the second step in Dubin's theory building research methodology towards completing the conceptual model for the theory. The outcome of this section is the development of three laws of interaction, indicated in Figures 4.7 and 4.8. Having developed the three laws of interaction for the theory, the next and third step in Dubin's theory building methodology is the development of the boundaries of the theory.

Theory-Building Research Step Three:

Developing the Boundaries of the Theory

This section of Chapter Four contains the boundaries of the theory; in essence, the criteria determining the domain over which "A Theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal" will apply. This section will begin with a description of Dubin's methodology for developing the boundaries of the theory, followed by a presentation of the external and internal boundary criteria for this theory. The discussion of each boundary criteria will follow a similar format, which is influenced by theory-building work of Dubin (1978) and Lynham (2000a). The boundary will be named, defined, described in detail, and compared to criteria of excellence for developing boundaries of a theory. The internal and external boundary determining criteria for the theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal are presented below.

Dubin's Methodology for Developing the Boundaries of the Theory

Dubin stated, "in order that a model may represent an empirical system, it has to have boundaries corresponding to the empirical system" (p. 125). The boundaries of the theory can be defined either by interior boundary criteria, stemming directly from the units or laws employed in the theory, or by external boundary criteria, arising due to conditions outside the model, such as a realized need to introduce a new unit or law to a previous model. The boundaries imposed on the theoretical model determine the domain of the theory, or "the territory over which we can make truth statements about the model and, therefore, about the values of the units composing the model" (Dubin, 1978, p. 135).

When a researcher attempts to hold values constant during research, he or she is applying boundary criteria, narrowing the domain of the model being studied. Generally,

theories in the behavioral sciences will contain models that sit somewhere in the middle range, having neither too few nor too many boundary-determining criteria. This alleviates some concerns over theoretical extremes, of universal theories and of theories too narrow to add much to the knowledge base (Dubin, 1978; Whetten, 1989). A balance must be struck in the number of boundary-determining criteria employed. Increasing the boundary restrictions typically increases the purity of the units and laws of the model; however, it also means that the units and laws of the model will be relatively homogeneous (Dubin, 1978). This balance means trade-offs in the level of homogeneity or purity of the theoretical model and the level of generalization of the findings related to testing the theoretical model.

During the theory-building process, boundaries can be built into the model through logic or by the existence of data. Boundaries can exist as external criteria or internal criteria. If the theoretical model is being constructed without any existing data, the boundaries must be added through the use of logic. An empirical test of the boundaries inevitably follows at some point within the theory-building process of conceptualization through testing: "Any need for modification of boundaries in the light of empirical evidence not only shifts the boundary of the model but also requires the modification of its units, its laws of interaction, or both" (Dubin, 1978, p. 142).

Exterior Boundary Criteria of the Theory

An external boundary criterion can be employed to establish a boundary for the theoretical model and then play no further role (Dubin, 1978). Dubin (1978) explained that, if one seeks to examine interactions in a heterosexual married couple, the external boundary criteria would have to limit the domain to two individuals, one male and one

female, formally bound by marriage. These boundaries do not enter into the model in any other way after their definition. Establishing boundary criteria is important when future studies seek to replicate the domain of an initial study. Without overlapping domains, the studies are not likely to be sufficiently comparable to make meaningful conclusions. Three external boundary criteria are employed for the theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal. Two boundaries are permeable, or open; the third is impermeable, or closed.

The first external boundary criterion for this theory is the physical location of the *organization*. Organizational socialization occurs in the work-place setting (Jones, 1983; Van Maanen, 1976; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Therefore, one would not look for organizational socialization processes, as defined in this theory, to take place within the home, for example. Because there is significant exchange between an organizational system and its environment (Allee, 1997; Amidon, 1997; Collins, 2001; Senge, 1990; Wheatley, 1999), it is considered an open system with an open boundary.

The second external boundary criterion distinguishes the type of organizational setting, *for-profit organizations,* within which this theory will apply. Socialization to the workplace will occur in every workplace setting, whether or not it is on a conscious level for the organizational incumbents or individuals in transition (Van Maanen, 1978; Van Maanen & Shein, 1979). Therefore, it would not be correct to say that prior theories of organizational socialization were mistaken in applying their theories to all organizations. This theory is distinct from other theories of socialization in resting on the premise that certain types of organizations are now required to shift and change at a pace never equaled before and that internal systems and processes must be developed to help

facilitate that agility. This theory posits that the organizations primarily burdened with this demand are those dependent on a market of suppliers, buyers, customers, and other competitors to make a profit to continue in operation. These for-profit organizations are the focus of this theory because they need to continuously renew themselves to remain successful (Allee, 1997; Wheatley, 1999).

The literature implies that, although other types of organizations shift, change, and evolve with time, they do so to a lesser degree than business organizations. Future extensions of this theory may apply the theoretical model to other organizations, for example educational, governmental, or religious organizations, if there is reason to believe that they would benefit from its application. Some initial literature suggests that, in time, these organizations will also need to evolve at a rapid pace to survive. The primary literature uncovered centered around educational organizations (Gibbons et al., 1994; Harkins, 1998).

As for-profit organizations are merely a smaller subset of organizations in general, the same permeability of the boundary also applies. The first and second external boundary criteria are shown in Figure 4.9. by using a dotted line to indicate that they are open, or permeable, boundaries.

The final external boundary criterion is the outermost boundary encapsulating this theory's operation. Chapter Two explained that businesses are in continuous exchange with elements and forces from the external environment. These general forces were presented as the global and geopolitical context, the social and cultural context, the industry and market context, and the workforce and talent context; each organization has elements of these external contexts that affect the business and other elements that do not.

As there is a continuous exchange between the external environment and the organization, a closed and impermeable boundary cannot be merely placed around the organization itself. Rather, the outermost boundary must be placed around the *external context* that affects the organization. This final external boundary criterion is shown in Figure 4.9. by using a solid line to indicate the closed, or impermeable, boundary determining the domain of this theoretical model.

Internal Boundary Criteria of the Theory

Internal boundary criteria are those "derived from characteristics of the units and laws employed in the model" (Dubin, 1978, p. 128). Dubin described three different methods for determining model boundaries; two of them are used here to develop internal boundaries for the theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal. When certain propositions or angles of the theory are tested in the future, additional internal boundary criteria specific to those angles of testing could arise.

Internal boundaries for a theoretical model can be viewed through a truth table. A truth table fills in the statement, "if p is true and q is true, then $p \wedge q$ is true, otherwise $p \wedge q$ is false" (Dubin, 1978, p. 130). In essence, a truth table is a way of expressing a syllogism, such as "All men think; Plato is a man; therefore, Plato thinks" (Dubin, 1978, p. 127). Dubin's (1978) example of a truth table can be seen in Table 4.5. In the case of Dubin's example, p and q are two of the units of a theory, and the law of their interaction is $p \wedge q$. Only one combination of the units that will place them inside the boundary of $p \wedge q$: that is, if and only if both p and q are true.

Table 4.5.

Sample Truth Table

p	*q*	*p* ^*q*
true	true	true
true	false	false
false	true	false
false	false	false

For the theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal, one internal boundary criterion was established using this truth-table method. Expressed as a syllogism, the internal boundary criterion for this theory is, "For-profit organizations need to modify internal systems and processes to respond and adapt to changing competitive demands; organizational socialization is a process utilized in for-profit organizations; therefore, processes of organizational socialization in for-profit organizations should be modified and adapted to meet changing competitive demands" (see Table 4.6.).

Again, there is only one combination of the units that will place them inside the boundary of *p* ^*q* and that is if and only if both *p* and *q* are true. If a for-profit organization did not consider itself to be burdened with being responsive to the market, it would fall outside the boundary of the theory because it renders *p* untrue. Similarly, if absolutely no conscious processes of organizational socialization occured in a for-profit organization, it would fall outside the boundary of the theory because it renders *q* untrue. Unconscious processes of organizational socialization would still be in motion; thus, technically, *q* is always true. However, for this theory, conscious awareness and attention to socialization strategy at the organizational and individual levels are an important component.

Table 4.6.

Truth Table Internal Boundary Criteria for the Theory of Continuous Socialization

p	*q*	*p ^q*
For-profit organizations need to modify internal systems and processes to respond and adapt to changing competitive demands	Organizational socialization is a process utilized in for-profit organizations	Processes of organizational socialization in for-profit organizations should be modified and adapted to meet changing competitive demands

A second method for determining internal boundary criteria is what Dubin referred to as *subsetting the property space*. Dubin explained

> A subsetting operation for determining a model boundary may be best understood by remembering that it takes a positive set of criteria to determine the characteristics of a category and that all other or residual categories may simply be designated by the term *not*_____. Thus, if we can define category *A*, then all other categories can be defined as *not-A*. (p. 131)

Dubin used studying rebellion as an example of the need to subse the property space in defining the boundary. He stated that deviant forms of individual adaptations can be defined as rebellion, ritualism, innovation and so on, but one would not know what rebellion was by simply defining all the other forms of deviant individual adaptation. Consequently, one would have to define rebellion itself (*A*), thereby also creating a category of not-rebellion into which all other forms of individual adaptation would fall (*not-A*).

This method was used to determine the second internal boundary criterion for the theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal. The category (*A*) is *organizational socialization*, with the affirmative description of *an individual transitioning through a hierarchical, functional, or inclusionary organizational*

boundary, or a collective transitioning through strategic, structural, operational, or membership/ role boundaries, as a result of a boundary context change in which interactions of socializing strategies take place with organizational incumbents through communicative acts. Falling outside of the property space (*not-A*) is an occurrence that does not fit the affirmative criterion (Table 4.7.).

Table 4.7.

The Property Space of Organizational Socialization

	Category	*Description*
A	*Organizational Socialization*	An individual transitioning through a hierarchical, functional, or inclusionary organizational boundary, or a collective transitioning through strategic, structural, operational, or membership/ role boundaries, as a result of a boundary context change in which interactions of socializing strategies take place with organizational incumbents through communicative acts.
not-A	--	--

In other words to facilitate renewal for the organization, socialization processes require interaction between the transitioning party and the organizational incumbents around socializing strategies. Such an interaction could be interpersonal or through other modes of communication. In contrast, organizational socialization would not occur when a non-member of an organization who experienced psychological processes of identification with the organization did not join it by some manner of employment or partnership.

Five boundaries have been developed for the Theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal. Three of those boundaries were external and two were

internal. All boundaries developed for the theory are reflected in Figure 4.9. In summary, the outermost boundary constraining the domain of this theory is drawn at the point where certain external context forces do and do not affect the system; its impermeability is reflected using a solid line. The second and third external boundaries are permeable boundaries around the system itself, designating the system as a for-profit organization. Those boundaries are reflected using dotted lines. The first internal boundary illustrates that organizational socialization processes reside in the same boundary space as the for-profit organization hosts. This internal boundary is reflected in units and their interactions. Finally, the second internal boundary sets the property space of organizational socialization into a definable category, creating the possibility of excluding circumstances that do not fit the category. This internal boundary is reflected in the interactions between the units in the form of co-existing cycles of socialization for transitioning and incumbent parties.

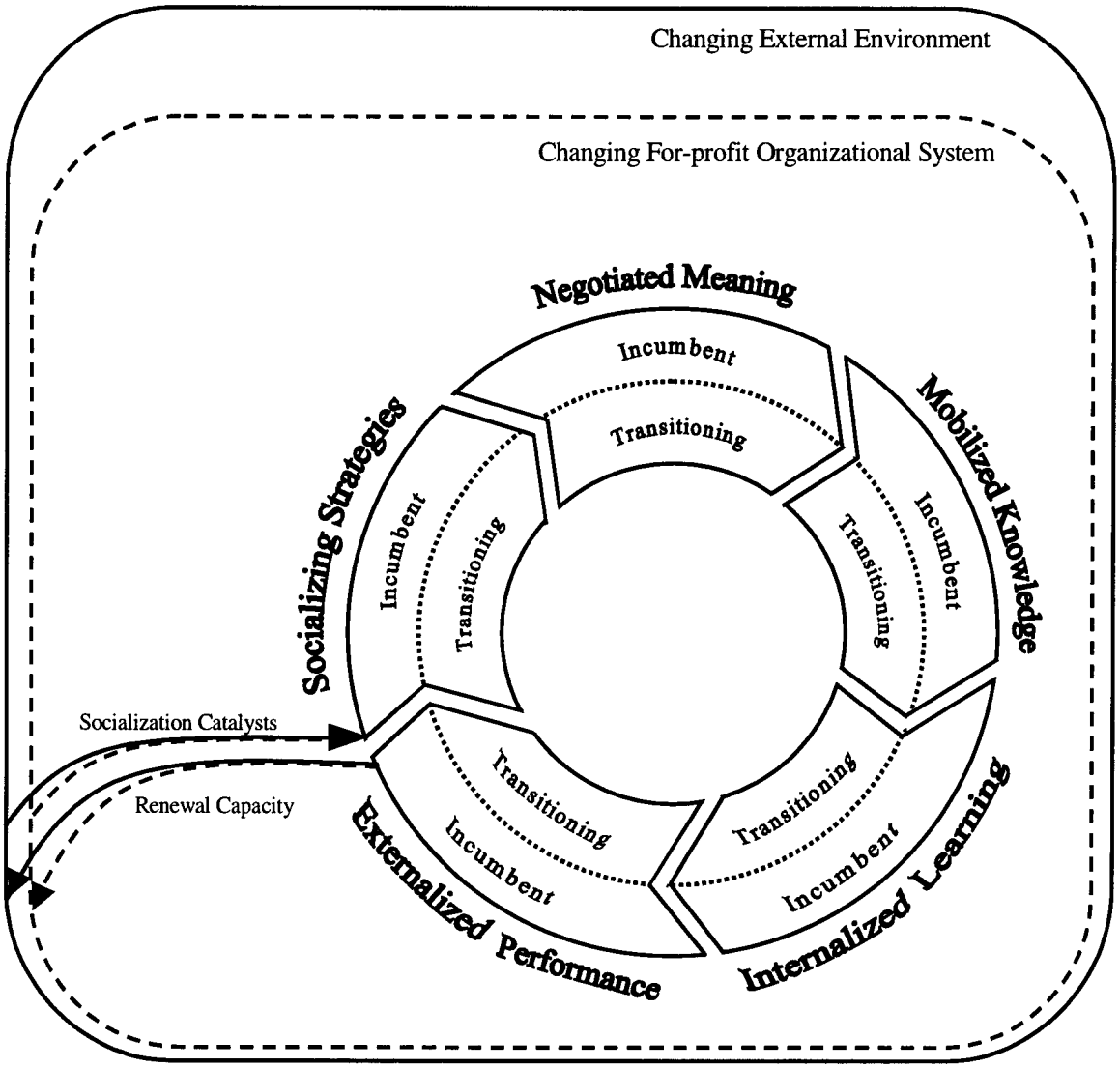

Figure 4.9. The Theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal: A Diagram of the Boundaries of the Theory

Comparison to the Criteria of Excellence for Boundaries

Dubin (1978) identified two criteria to meet in the development of boundaries of a theoretical model; they are *homogeneity* and *generalization*. A description of the criteria and the way in which this theory meets those criteria is provided below.

Homogeneity

As more internal and external criteria are added to a model, the level of homogeneity of its units and laws of interaction is increased. "Consequently, what is lost in the size of the domain of a model when additional boundary-determining criteria are used is compensated for in the increased purity of the units and laws of the model" (Dubin, 1978, p. 137). In the social sciences, theories will generally be of *middle-range*, having a moderate number of boundary-determining criteria.

> For the experimentally-minded behavioral scientist, this moderate degree of homogeneity in the units and law of the model is inadequate. Such criticism of inadequacy is valid only insofar as the critic recognizes that he is demanding more restrictive boundaries on the models. Criticism is invalid if the critic assumes that there may be no linkage to reality in models of the middle range. (Dubin, 1978, p. 137)

The criterion of homogeneity in the theoretical model is thus a balance in the level of restrictiveness of the boundary determining criteria. The internal and external boundary criteria for the Theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal were employed to provide an adequate level of homogeneity in the theoretical model to meet the standard of a middle range theory.

Generalization

The level of generalization available to the researcher depends directly on the size of the theoretical domain (Dubin, 1978). Therefore, reducing the number of boundaries applied to the theoretical model increases the domain of the theory and the researcher's

ability to generalize from it. The boundaries employed in this theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal limits the generalization possible to for-profit organizations in which conscious socialization strategies are in motion. Dubin explains that, in some theory-expanding methods, the level of generalization of a tested theory can be expanded into other domains.

This section concludes the third step of the theory-building research process, that of developing the boundaries of the theory. The internal and external boundaries established for the theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal make explicit the domain over which it can be applied. The next step in the process is to define the unique system states of the theory.

Theory Building Research Step Four:

Defining System States

This section of Chapter Four contains the system states of the theory, i.e., the states in which the all the theoretical units have altered values due to that state. This section will begin with a description of Dubin's methodology for developing the system states of the theory, followed by a presentation of the two different scenarios of system states. The discussion of each system state will follow a similar format, which is influenced by theory building work of Dubin (1978) and Lynham (2000a). The system states will be named, defined, described in detail, and compared to criteria of excellence for developing system states of a theory.

Dubin's Methodology for Defining the System States of the Theory

The system created so far, that of units, laws of interaction, and boundaries, is supposed to be able to predict the values of any units within it at any given point. However, not all regions within the system are homogenous at any given point; the system as a whole may transition over time into measurably distinct states. One example Dubin provided of such system states is that of social maturity and social immaturity. If observed and measured, distinctive values would differentiate the individual (system) during these two stages.

> Predictions may be made very accurately about human behavior by noting and describing the system state in which the human behavior occurs...it therefore becomes a matter of genuine analytical significance to specify for any model its system states and their reoccurrence, for this will provide the grounds upon which important predictions may be made about the system. (Dubin, 1978, p. 150)

System states have three defining features. First, the system state must describe the how each unit within the system is affected by the new state. If the change affects only a few of the units, then it is not a state of the system as a whole; rather, it is considered an outcome condition of the individual units. Second, the units must have determinant values, meaning that they must be measurable and unique to that state. Finally, a state must persist through some period of time. While some biological system states may occur for only a fraction of a second, most human social systems tend to have system states that persist for a longer time.

Dubin also emphasized that the analysis of several systems involving people makes it clear that systems can have a variety of patterns of system states. For example, some phenomena may have system states that are not repeated throughout the life cycle,

such as the progression of humans from infancy to adolescence to adulthood. Other phenomena may have cyclical or repetitive states, such as traffic flow in and out of a city.

The description of system states of a theoretical model is of critical importance. Once the theory is being tested, research can help to answer the questions regarding what conditions are required for the system to persist or cease to exist, regarding the patterning of the system states when a particular state makes a system permeable so that units may be deleted from or added to the system. Answering those questions is vital to a clearer understanding of the phenomenon. Four system states are described for this theory: *balance, unbalance, slight* and *might*. Each is described in more detail below.

System States of Balance & Unbalance

Two system states, *balance* and *unbalance*, exist because of the laws of interaction among the theoretical units. The system state of balance is reached when all the laws of interaction are upheld for the theoretical model. One law of interaction stated that the five units of the theory (socializing strategies, negotiated meaning, mobilized knowledge, internalized learning, and externalized performance) were all associated with one another and required for the theory. If one unit is not present, the socialization system will not be able to facilitate renewal in the organization. The second and third laws of interaction stated that the unit *socializing strategies* acts as the preceding input to a system containing the process of knowledge creation and diffusion *(negotiated meaning, mobilized, internalized learning)* and an output of *externalized performance*. The socializing strategies themselves precipitate interactions between transitioning individuals and organizational incumbents where meaning negotiation and knowledge sharing and learning can occur. If the input, process, and output are not present, the

system will not be able to effectively aid in organizational renewal. When any of these laws of interaction is not fulfilled, the system is in a state of *unbalance*.

Characteristic Values of the System in a State of Balance

When the system of continuous socialization is in motion and in balance, some distinct values for each unit can be described. For the unit of *socializing strategies*, transitioning individuals and organizational incumbents actively and consciously employ strategies to increase the rapidity and effectiveness of their transition process. These individuals could point to the use of those strategies. For the unit *negotiated meaning*, experimentation of roles and delivery of feedback could take place in interactions between organizational incumbents and transitioning individuals. Individuals on both sides of the interaction could describe active employment of roles, symbolic management, and interpretations of feedback on personal behavior. During continued interactions, various elements of tacit and explicit knowledge would be shared or created; measurable components of *mobilized knowledge* would exist on both sides of the interaction. In other words, either an explainable or a demonstraable knowledge gain from "the other" could, in principle, be extracted from individuals on both sides of the interaction.

Such knowledge is internalized to some degree when it is integrated into the existing knowledge framework of the individual or the collective. Learning can be internalized at multiple levels without altering the core schema of the individual or collective. However, for socialization to facilitate renewal, *internalized learning* must include an appreciation of knowledge sharing and generation as a primary meaning of work, an awareness of socializing strategies in use, and a proactivity for knowledge

processes. Such internalized learning is externalized in *performance*, the purposeful utilization of socializing strategies and knowledge mobilization processes described in this theory.

Characteristic Values of the System in a State of Unbalance

In a state of unbalance, the system describes an organization seeking renewal but seeking it ineffectively. Significantly, the system does not describe an organization not purposefully seeking continuous renewal, because an organization striving for maintenance or stability would not fit the boundary criteria described for this theory.

Socialization activities occurring within the organization precipitated by organizational incumbents or transitioning parties would be predominantly unconscious. As Van Maanen (1978) pointed out, these activities would not be driven by intent; rather, they would "simply represent taken-for-granted precedents established in the dim past of an organization's history" (p. 20). In a system of *unbalance,* a description of the socialization activities taking place would not meet the definition of *socializing strategies* employed above as (1) conscious, and (2) intent-driven towards negotiating the expectations and demands aligned with organization direction. Again, this system would not describe an organization that did not deliberately seek to continually evolve for the market. Such an organization could also have conscious, intent-driven socialization strategies, but the purpose of those strategies would be perpetuating the status quo rather than corresponding to a change in the organization's intent.

A system state of *unbalance* would have a propensity to let the incumbent define meaning rather than to allow for negotiation of roles and meaning. The literature supports the view that organizations exert more influence over individuals who are in transition

processes. Such internalized learning is externalized in *performance*, the purposeful utilization of socializing strategies and knowledge mobilization processes described in this theory.

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because the shock from the new situation leaves them less likely to assert their own direction and more likely to take direction from the organization (Van Maanen, 1976; Louis, 1980). Similarly, mobilized knowledge would be primarily unidirectional, from the incumbent to the transitioning party, rather than the two-way exchange of knowledge and creation of new knowledge found in a system in balance.

In a system state of *unbalance*, the internalized learning and externalized performance would not reflect a focus on renewal, (i.e., a deeply held understanding of and action towards the purposeful utilization of socializing practices and proactivity in knowledge processes); instead, the focus would be on continual compliance with and reproduction of emblematic organizational systems, practices, and norms.

System States of Slight or Might

The system states of *Slight* and *Might* exist because of the reciprocal influence between transitioning parties and incumbents during socialization cycles. A system state of *slight* occurs when the transitioning party has relatively less influence or impact during the socialization cycle. In contrast, a system state of *might* occurs when this party has significant influence during the cycle. In one socialization cycle, an individual may enact a system of *slight*, during which that individual will have somewhat less influence on knowledge processes within the organization. Yet, during another boundary transition, the individual may enact a system of *might*, in which the individual has significant influence on the renewal capacity of the organization.

Determining whether one system state exists rather than another is problematic. Possible factors may include whether the transitioning party is a newcomer or a veteran in the organization, whether the party is transitioning into or within the core leadership of

the organization, and whether the transitioning party has significant power and influence within the organization based on elements other than status or tenure. Regardless of why the system state occurs, subtle differences in unit values can be outlined within the system for each of the two states.

Characteristic Values of the System in a State of Slight or Might

Some individuals or collectives in transition will have significantly more influence in the knowledge mobilization processes during the socialization cycle. For example, an incoming CEO will be able to shape a larger percentage of the content of internalized learning and externalized performance with respect to knowledge. In contrast, an incoming shipping clerk will have less influence. However, each component of the system of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal stresses the importance of continuous partnership and negotiation of meaning, knowledge, and learning. Therefore, while the potential degree of influence is less for a new shipping clerk than for a new CEO, if the system is to be in balance, reciprocal influence is still a necessary condition. Because reciprocal influence is so essential, the unit values of the system in *might* or *slight* will be more subtle than the changes in unit values for system states of *balance* and *unbalance*.

System states of *slight* and *might* can both be characteristic during system states of *balance* or *unbalance*. In a system state of *balance,* the power of the transitioning party would not mirror the implications of a system state of *unbalance,* where the party was able to usurp all control in the meaning negotiation process, limit the knowledge sharing to a one-way process, and direct learning and performance with the end of replicating the status quo. Rather, a system of *might* in *balance* would merely accelerate

and improve the renewal capacity of the transitioning party and the organization. As this theory is a discussion of the system in balance, the two states of slight or might are described as if in a system state of balance.

A system state of *might* will involve a purposeful and conscious reduction in the number of *socializing strategies* enacted by the transitioning party. In other theories of socialization, this reduction of socializing activities is attributed to the movement from newcomer to veteran status (Ashford, 1986; Jones, 1983; Katz, 1980; Van Maanen, 1978). This theory, however, suggests that the new CEO with significant potential for influence will consciously determine that fewer strategies are necessary to ensure the CEO's own renewal capability and contribution to the organization. In contrast, the new shipping clerk will consciously utilize all strategies possible to ensure a contribution to the renewal capacity of the organization.

The values of the theory's units in a system state of *might* would reveal a higher level of influence attributable to the transitioning party than in a system state of *slight.* The partnership between the transitioning party and the incumbent party in the negotiation of meaning and the content of knowledge shared and generated would be more visible. Knowledge mobilized in partnership with transitioning party would have greater potential to be internalized to the core of the organization and externalized in the performance of other organizational incumbents.

Comparison to Criteria of Excellence for Developing System States

Dubin has identified three criteria for the development of system states of a theory: (1) inclusiveness, (2) persistence, and (3) distinctiveness (Dubin, 1978). The

system states proposed above meet these criteria. A description of each criterion and how this theory meets these criteria of excellence is provided below.

Inclusiveness

A system state is considered inclusive if all the units in the system have distinct or unique values in that state; if they do not, the outcome is more likely that of a particular unit (Dubin, 1978). Each of the five units of the theory was included in the discussion of the different system states proposed.

Distinctiveness

A system state must also meet the criterion of distinctiveness. The distinct or unique values seen in the individual units during the system state that may not be seen in other system states; these values must also be measurable, at least in principle (Dubin, 1978). For each system state proposed above, a description of the differences in potential values was outlined for each unit of the theory, and the measurement of unit values during system states of *balance* and *unbalance* was presented as much more obvious than unit measurements during system states of *slight* or *might*, where the measurement would be more subtle.

Persistence

Finally, a system state must persist through some period of time (Dubin, 1978). Dubin elaborated that, in contrast to many physical systems, the time period of persistence for social systems can be of considerable duration. The theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal describes a social phenomenon. Therefore, the persistence of each system state would be visible and measurable. More specifically,

each cycle of socialization requires action, interaction, and reaction, and all are elements of social phenomena requiring a considerable duration of time.

Conclusion to Part One

the Conceptual Development Phase of the Theory

The outcome of Part One of the theory-building research process is a fully conceptualized theoretical model (Dubin, 1978). The components of that model are: the units of the theory, the laws of their interaction, the boundaries of the system, and the system states of operation for the theoretical model. Each step has been completed here. Additionally, the development process for each step was compared with criteria of excellence in theory-building research methodology. Thus, the study has addressed the first of the two research sub-questions: *Can the alternative theory of organizational socialization be conceptualized to incorporate necessary elements for continuous organizational agility and renewal?* The question can be answered affirmatively. The conceptualized framework of a Theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal is presented in Figure 4.10.

This concludes Part One of the theory building research process. Part Two of the process consists of operationalizing the theoretical model for testing in the real world. Operationalization involves the development of propositions, or truth statements, concerning the theoretical model. Next, empirical indicators for key terms are identified. Finally, hypotheses for testing are developed and carried out. Discussing Part Two of the theory building research process is the task of the next and fifth chapter of this study.

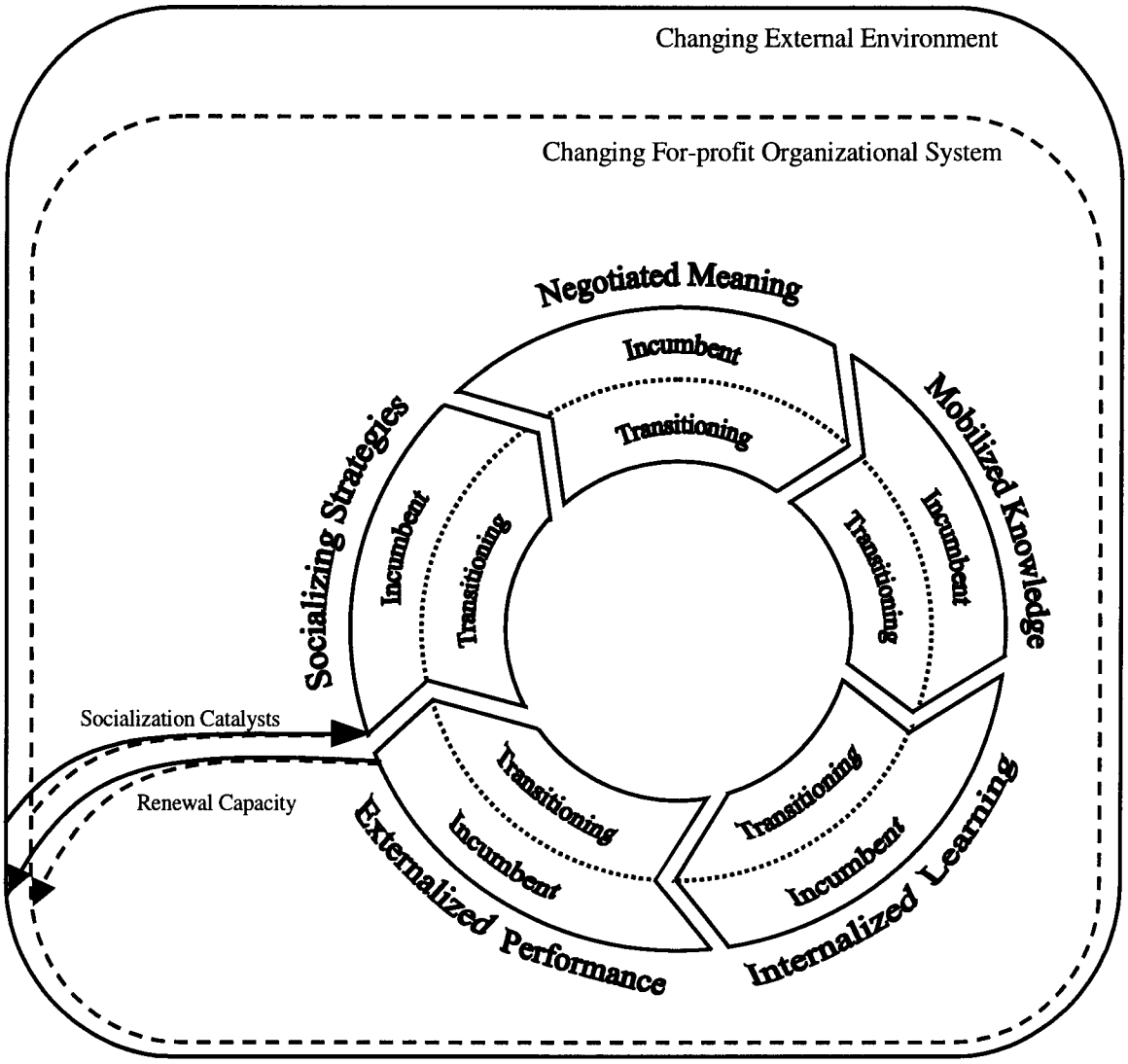

Figure 4.10. A Theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal: The Fully Conceptualized Model

CHAPTER FIVE:

THEORY BUILDING RESEARCH PART TWO – TOWARDS THE APPLICATION OF A THEORY OF CONTINUOUS SOCIALIZATION FOR ORGANIZATIONAL RENEWAL

Dubin has stated that the completion of the first four steps in the theory building research process is the formation of a theoretical model (Dubin, 1978). A theoretical model of continuous socialization that facilitates renewal in organizations was developed in Chapter Four. The units of that model, the interactions, the system boundaries, and the system states of operation were made explicit. The purpose of Chapter Five is to consider the second part of the theory building research process proposed by Dubin (1978) and Lynham (2000a). Part Two encompasses the development of propositions, empirical indicators, and hypotheses about the operation of the theoretical model, as well as the execution of a research agenda to test the theory. While the actual execution of a research agenda is beyond the scope of this study (Figure 5.1.), a testable research agenda will be proposed. This chapter addresses the second, and final, research sub-question of this study: *Can the alternative theory of organizational socialization be validated as playing a part in facilitating continuous organizational agility and renewal?*

This chapter will begin with a discussion of considerations for the research operation part of this theory-building research study. This discussion is then followed by the next steps in Dubin's methodology, which are the specification of propositions for the theory, the identification of empirical indicators for key terms, and the development of hypotheses for the theory. Finally, while this study does not complete Step Eight of the process by carrying out the testing of the theory, a research agenda is set forth that would be immediately accessible for testing.

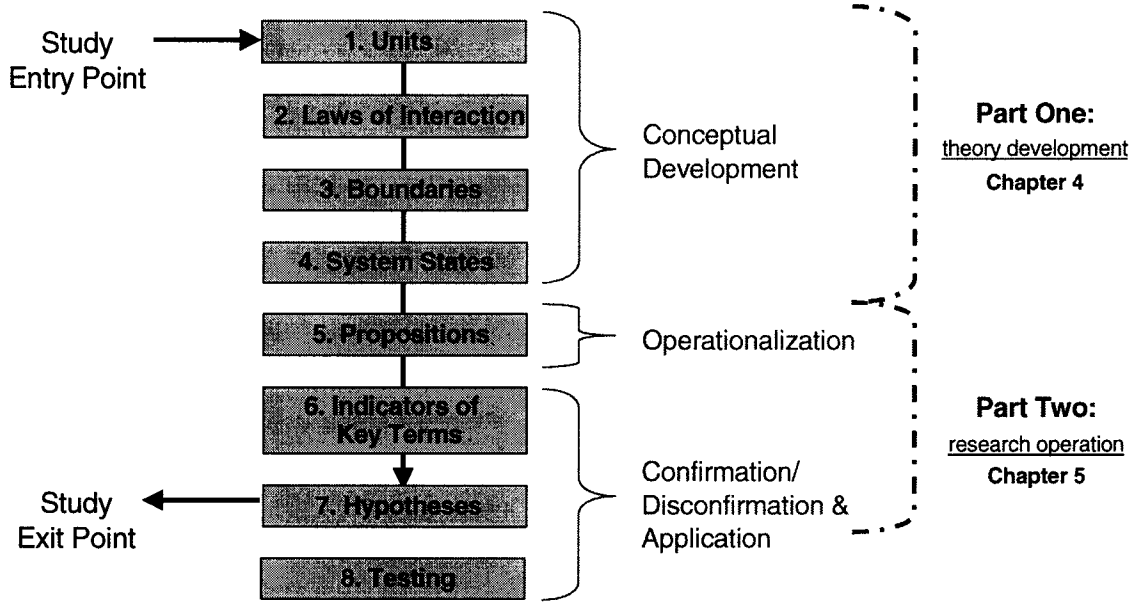

Figure 5.1. Entry & Exit Points for this Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal Theory Research Study

Considerations in the Research Operation Side of the Theory-Research Process Concerning Organizational Socialization

The concept of socialization makes intuitive sense: a cycle of simultaneous knowledge acquisition and sharing between transitioning parties and incumbent parties, each having reciprocal influence on the other. However, while the concept may be intuitive, its complexity defies precise measurement and assessment. Prior to identifying what may appear to be precise propositions, key indicators, and hypotheses, it is important to highlight the research considerations that direct the process. Four primary avenues of research that inform the validity of the proposed theoretical model are suggested: (1) confirming the structure of continuous socialization for organizational

renewal, (2) parsing the knowledge internalization and externalization processes into meaningful steps, (3) parsing the myriad of influential factors into some categorization of key forces, and (4) assessing the outcomes of continuous socialization designed for organizational renewal. Table 5.1. outlines the four research directions, their associated epistemological questions, and research method suggestions. The format of the research issues table was adapted from Walsh and Ungson's (1991) work on the equally abstract and complex topic of organizational memory.

Assessing the Structure of Continuous Socialization for Renewal

The key epistemological question related to this aspect of socialization is conceptual: Does the concept of continuous socialization for organizational renewal have construct validity? The development of this theory hypothesizes that the structure of the concurrent transitioning and incumbent cycle is composed of five units: socializing strategies, negotiated meaning, shared knowledge, internalized learning, and externalized performance. Underlying this hypothesis is a premise that socialization for renewal is *Continuous,* because socialization cycles are not limited to entry but rather continue as boundary contexts change, and *Interactionist,* because one individual cycle does not happen on its own outside the context of many other individual and collective cycles.

Given the continuous and interactionist nature of socialization, it may be prudent to examine the process by falsification rather than by verification or direct measurement. The nature of socialization as a phenomenon suggests that attempts to confirm the existence of each stage or conceptual dimension are bound to be incomplete. The attempt to disconfirm the existence of the stages in situations where renewal has occurred appears to be a better research strategy.

Parsing the Knowledge Internalization and Externalization Processes

Another research direction concerning socialization is to focus on the processes contained within it. Those processes are knowledge internalization and externalization, which have been referred to as *mobilized knowledge* and *internalized learning*. The key epistemological question for this aspect is empirical: Can reliable and valid measures of the constructs be obtained? Because of the continuous and interactionist nature of the socialization cycles, it is difficult to pinpoint exact boundaries of beginning and ending between the knowledge processes within the cycles. To borrow a phrase from Walsh and Ungson's wok on organizational memory (1991), "Even so, researchers must decide how to parse the process into ecologically meaningful stages that are subject to verification and measurement" (p. 82). The authors began at a place that also makes sense here—with individuals.

Individuals can be questioned in many different fashions about their own socialization cycles or their perceptions of collective socialization cycles. Direct and purposeful questioning about key events related to personal socialization or that of a collective could be used; observation techniques could reveal what is not directly explainable by the individual. Alternatively, emergent research techniques utilizing interpretive methods could inform the theory. For example, phenomenological interviews could provide thick description of socialization experiences (van Manen, 1997) that, with thematic analysis, may or may not look similar to the framework proposed. Additionally, collective querying techniques, such as focus groups and group observation, could elicit information about collective socialization cycles.

Table 5.1.

Research Considerations in the Study of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal

Aspects of Socialization	Conceptual Premises	Epistemological Questions	Suggested Research Strategies
1. Assessing the structure of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal	Continuous/ Interactionist: Reciprocal influence from continuous and concurrent individual and collective socialization cycles: socializing strategies, negotiated meaning, shared knowledge, internalized learning, and externalized performance	Conceptual: Does the concept of continuous socialization for organizational renewal have construct validity?	Test by falsification: Inference about organizational renewal capability based on delineated boundary conditions of two organizations
2. Parsing the knowledge internalization and externalization processes	A focus on the interaction of transitioning and incumbent parties on situational definitions and on knowledge sharing, generation, reconfiguration, and application	Empirical: Can reliable and valid measures of the constructs be obtained?	Test by process verification: Individual and collective perceptions of experiences, structured or phenomenological; supplement with observational or triangulated data
3. Parsing the mediating variables on Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal	A focus on extra- and intra-party variables that may also influence the process	Empirical: Can mediating variables or additional factors affecting the process be illuminated?	Test by comparative presence and absence: Inference about affects of mediating variables by delineated boundary situations
4. Assessing outcomes of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal	Contrasting contexts in which organizational socialization is used for renewal or for stability, or can be traced backward from results of renewal or stability	Analytical: What research measures will illuminate the hypothesized effects of continuous socialization for organizational renewal?	Test by statistical verification: counter position hypothesized affects of continuous socialization theory with predictions of rival socialization theories

Parsing the Meditating Factors of the Process

The content, progression, and outcomes of socialization cycles are influenced by many mediating variables. While it may not be helpful or even possible to pinpoint every influential variable, some variables undoubtedly affect the cycles in critical ways. This theory has proposed that, if the individual in transition either is a new member to core leadership of the organization or has considerable potential influence regardless of position, this variable will affect the system to the extent of altering its state.

Many other aspects or influential variables have been researched concerning socialization, but not in the framework of continuous socialization for renewal. However, the variables researched in previous studies can provide some initial direction (see research presented in Chapter Two). Concerning an individual's socialization cycle, internal factors could be as values, personal and social identification, or self-efficacy, while external factors could be previous work experience or level of proactivity in the cycle. Concerning a collective socialization cycle, internal mediating factors could be the culture, structure, or strategy, and external factors could be the geo-political context or industry and market position. If the collective were a team within the organization, external factors could be a combination of factors inside and outside the boundaries of the host organization.

Assessing the Outcomes of Continuous Socialization for Renewal

The key epistemological question related to the assessment of outcomes is analytic: What research methods and measures are appropriate for examining the hypothesized costs and benefits of facilitating continuous organizational socialization for renewal? As with other organizational phenomena that are difficult to measure at any one

point in time, seeking outcome measures for socialization for renewal could be difficult. Researchers of other abstract phenomena have suggested the strategy of comparing opposing theories. For example, Walsh and Ungson (1991) suggested that organizational memory is heightened when an organization has "a long and stable history of tenured individuals, a standing tradition of cohort groups, and low turnover" (p. 84). The authors suggested that consequences of organizational memory can and should be assessed by comparing one organizational system reflecting those characteristics to another that shows opposing characteristics; the result would be a contrast study of the organizational memory capacities of the two organizations.

Here, four elements activate, develop, and sustain continuous socialization: (1) the competitive reality of economic survival; (2) the continuous presence of change signals in the external environment; (3) a level of consciousness or self-awareness in the individuals of the organization concerning utilized socializing strategies and the knowledge internalization and externalization processes that result from the interactions, and (4) purposefulness and proactivity in how the knowledge processes are used to the end of unique knowledge generation, sharing, reconfiguration and application. Thus, research to assess the outcomes of continuous socialization could compare the outcomes of two organizations, with one organization presenting the above elements in a high degree in its operation and the other presenting then in a low degree.

Given the above research considerations, the next section of this chapter turns to the specification of propositions, key indicators, and hypotheses for the theory. Additionally, this chapter proposes one research agenda to begin the testing the theory.

Theory Building Research Step Five:

Specifying the Propositions of the Theory

This section of Chapter Five makes explicit the 11 proposition statements specified for the theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal. Dubin's methods for the development of such statements is overviewed; the statements identified for this theory are presented and the specified statements re compared to the criteria of excellence originally stated by Dubin (1978).

Dubin's Methodology for Specifying Propositions

A proposition is defined as a truth statement about the theoretical model in operation, once the theoretical model has been ascribed units, laws of interaction, boundaries and system states (Dubin, 1978). A proposition is phrased using concepts to explain how the system will operate, often appearing in an "if...then" format. Dubin provided the example, "if an individual is frustrated, then he may become aggressive" (p. 164). The difference between a proposition and a hypothesis is that a proposition is phrased using concepts, whereas a hypothesis is phrased using measurements (Whetten, 1989). Any statement of truth about the system in operation is considered a possible proposition, as long as the proposition is logically consistent with the theoretical model (Dubin, 1983; Whetten, 1989).

Dubin elaborated about some conditions of propositions. He argued that three classes of propositions exhaust the logical possibilities. Propositions may be made about (1) a single unit within the theoretical model; (2) the continuity of a system state, which is really about all of the units together, or (3) the oscillation of the system between different states of operation. Dubin also stated that extremely large numbers of truth

statements can be derived from theoretical models, especially from complex models. Therefore, it is important to move beyond trivial truth statements to those which are more strategic, meaning those that "state critical or limiting values" for the units involved (p. 168).

Propositions for this Theory

Dubin's three classes of propositions were used here. The 11 propositions outlined below are considered to be strategic in nature; several propositions were eliminated to present only those that were "state critical" (Table 5.2.). The propositions are targeted at describing the units as well as the system states of the theory.

Table 5.2.

Propositions of the Theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal

Propositions
1. Interactivity between transitioning and incumbent parties during the socialization cycle results in reciprocal influence.
2. The socialization cycle is catalyzed by individual or collective boundary changes.
3. The context of the particular boundary change influences the content of the socialization cycle but not its form; namely, the progression through the five units of the theory.
4. Transitioning and incumbent parties are proactive and purposeful in their use of socializing strategies.
5. As interactions from socializing strategies increase, opportunities for accelerated meaning negotiation between transitioning and incumbent parties is possible.
6. Negotiated meaning increases mobilization of existing tacit and explicit knowledge and the emergence of new knowledge.
7. The presence of internalized learning influences the degree of performance; namely, the degree of renewal capacity.
8. Degree of performance influences the next socialization cycle.
9. The outcome of increased renewal capacity from socialization practices are only made possible by the presence and interaction of all five units of the theory. Without them, there is not Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal.
10. Collective awareness of socialization cycles and a proactivity of the knowledge mobilization processes within those cycles increases the likelihood for purposeful renewal capacity.
11. The level of reciprocal influence between transitioning parties and incumbent parties can depend on characteristics of the transitioning party.

Comparison to Criteria of Excellence for Specifying Propositions

Dubin (1978) set out three criteria for specifying propositions for a theory: (1) the consistency of the propositions, (2) the accuracy of each proposition, and (3) the parsimony of the propositions considered as a whole. A description of each criterion and the critique of the propositions for this theory are outlined below.

Consistency

Propositions could also be called logical consequences, because "the sole test of accuracy of a proposition is whether or not it follows logically from the model to which it applies" (Dubin, 1978, p. 164). Propositions must be derived from only one system of logic (Dubin, 1978). If the system for defining truth changes, then the truth statements about the theoretical model are also likely to change. The propositions for the theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal were developed with the core premises reported in Chapter Four as logical foundations. Those premises incorporated systems thinking as a major foundation for development of the theory. Therefore, the derivations of propositions came directly out of systems thinking as well.

Accuracy

Determining the accuracy of proposition statements may initially seem to be related to their empirical accuracy, this is not the case. At the initial development stage, propositions are considered accurate if they derive logically from the theoretical model. "All propositions of a model satisfy logical rules and not empirical rules to establish their truth" (Dubin, 1978, p. 164). Further along in the theory-building research journey, propositions are tested and can be confirmed, disconfirmed or refined once their empirical accuracy has been established. Each proposition for this theory is informed by

and follows logically from each component of the theoretical model: the units, the laws of interaction, the boundaries, and the system states.

Parsimony

Propositions used to describe a theoretical model are considered parsimonious if they are strategic, indicating the critical and limiting values of the theoretical model (Dubin, 1978). The number of propositions can be almost limitless. A proposition statement can exist to describe every possible combination of values between the units of the theory. To be parsimonious, proposition statements should eliminate the trivial and present those that describe the extreme values and the critical points in the model (Dubin, 1978). Proposition statements should satisfy "our sense of what is important to test in determining whether or not the theory accurately models the empirical domain it purports to represent" (Dubin, 1978, p. 167). Using this criterion of excellence, the propositions of this theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal were narrowed to 11 strategic statements. These 11 statements fit into the categories of propositions outlined by Dubin (1978).

Having specified the 11 propositions for the Theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal, the next step in the theory-building research process is to identify the empirical indicators of the theory. The indicators for the theory and the method for their identification are presented below.

Theory Building Research Step Six:

Identifying the Empirical Indicators of the Theory

This section of Chapter Five outlines the methods for specifying the empirical indicators of a theory and presents the actual empirical indicators developed, which are then compared with criteria of excellence initially outlined by Dubin (1978).

Dubin's Methodology for Identifying Empirical Indicators

An empirical indicator is an operation created by the researcher to allow the securing of a value from the unit built into the model. The measurement process key to this phase of theory development involves both the operation of measuring and the results of that measurement, whether numerical or categorical in nature. The manner of stating empirical indicators is "The value of unit X as measured by..." (Dubin, 1978, p. 185). The *as measured by* should be followed with "a description of the operation of the particular indicator employed to generate the value on the unit" (p. 185).

Just as Dubin created a classification for the units of the theory, so he developed different classifications of empirical indicators. The first classification is *absolute indicators*, which measure absolutes such as 'age.' The second classification is *relative indicators*, which may apply generally to several of the units within the theory. An example offered by Dubin was 'worker absenteeism,' which could measure health status, morale, or community social practices.

Empirical Indicators for this Theory

In the previous section, 11 propositions concerning the theoretical model were developed. For the propositions to be tested, several of their components need further definition in the form of empirical indicators. The components identified for specification

by empirical indicators are: *socializing strategies, negotiated meaning, knowledge mobilization, internalized learning, externalized performance, transitioning party,* and *incumbent party* (Table 5.3.). Each empirical indicator must, when tested, produce only values consistent with the unit's classification. For example, the empirical indicator for an enumerative unit may produce only values that do not have zero or negative values. As the theory-building research process is verified and refined, the empirical indicators will provide greater specification. Additionally, while all components of the theory must, in principle, be able to produce values on empirical indicators, not all components of the theory must be measured (Dubin, 1978).

Comparison to Criteria of Excellence for the Specification of Indicators

Dubin (1978) described three criteria necessary for adequate empirical indicators: (1) specification of the operation of measurements, (2) reliability of the values resulting from the measurements, and (3) coherence of indicators with their respective unit classification. Each is described in more detail below. The indicators identified for the theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal are viewed in relation to these criteria of excellence.

Operationalism

The operations involved for measurement must be explicitly laid out so that they may be duplicated at another time by another researcher. This is the criterion of *operationalism.* At the first stage of development, key indicators arise as logical extensions of the pieces developed in prior stages. The empirical indicators outlined here are at this first stage of development. Only after testing the empirical world can more rigorous refinement and specification of the indicators occur.

Table 5.3.

Empirical Indicators for the Theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal

Unit or Term	*Empirical Indicators*
Socializing Strategies:	▪ The degree of utilization of socializing strategies by transitioning or incumbent parties, as measured by the presence/ absence and frequency/ intensity of their use during priming, linking and renewing stages, established through interviews/ questionnaires with transitioning and incumbent parties around a particular boundary transition (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Anakwe & Greenhaus, 1999; Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Jones, 1986; King & Sethi, 1998; Klein & Weaver, 2000; Ostroff & Koslowski, 1992).
Negotiated Meaning:	▪ The occurrence of interactivity between transitioning and incumbent parties where actions and reactions influence identity attributions, as measured by reciprocal influence meaning changes in attributions of "self-other" systems (e.g., "they-me", "I-them", "I-me") within both parties, established through interviews/ questionnaires with transitioning and incumbent parties around a particular boundary transition (Brim, 1966; Chao et al., 1994; Jones, 1983; Katz, 1980; Louis, 1980).
Mobilized Knowledge:	▪ The movement and generation of tacit and explicit knowledge between transitioning and incumbent parties, as measured by historical process mapping of knowledge sources from both parties following a particular boundary transition, established through multiple interviews (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Walsh & Ungson, 1991).
Internalized Learning:	▪ The presence of an ascribed value to continuous development of renewal capacity. For individuals, measured by a perceived harmony in personal values with the value of continuous development of renewal capacity, established through individual questioning (Van Maanen, 1976). For collectives, measured by the integration of mobilized knowledge into the core knowledge technology of the collective, established through questioning/ observation of the collective's utilization of that knowledge (Huber, 1991; Szulanski, 1996; Walsh & Ungson, 1991).
Externalized Performance:	▪ The degree of human system renewal capacity, as measured by purposeful and proactive utilization of socializing strategies and participation in knowledge processes, established through interviews/ questionnaires/ observation of transitioning and incumbent parties over one or many several boundary transitions. - Low socialization awareness, low knowledge proactivity = Unwitting Stability - Low socialization awareness, high knowledge proactivity = Erratic Change - High socialization awareness, low knowledge proactivity = Sentient Stability - High socialization awareness, high knowledge proactivity = Purposeful Renewal ▪ The degree of whole system renewal capacity, influenced in part by continuous socialization, as measured by the continuous harnessing and integrating knowledge from within the organization into complex, team-based productive activities, established through interviews with organization members, organizational audits and observation (Grant, 1996; Hurst, 2002; Nonaka & Takeuchi; Waterman, 1987).
Transitioning Party:	▪ During a snapshot in time, the party consists of an individual or collective experiencing a boundary transition; for an individual as measured by a perceived functional, hierarchical or inclusionary shift, established through individual questioning (Jones, 1983; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979); for a collective as measured by changes in collective strategy, structure, operation, membership/ role, established through collective questioning. ▪ Characteristics of the transitioning party may vary on several levels of tenure, previous socialization experience, level of potential influence (Adkins, 1995; Buchanan, 1974; Mortimer & Lorence, 1979).
Incumbent Party:	▪ During a specific snapshot in time, the party consists of individuals or collectives on the non-transitioning side of the chosen boundary shift, as measured by logical non-membership in the transitioning party (Jones, 1983; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979).

Reliability

An adequate empirical indicator produces reliable values, so equivalent values would be obtained from the same sample if measured by a different researcher. This is the criterion of *reliability*. Reliability may be a function of an observer or an instrument; depending on what the researcher-theorist determines will be the operation of the indicator. As stated above, more rigorous refinement of the indicators for this theory will be necessary through testing in the empirical world. Such testing will further substantiate the operation and reliability of the indicators offered. However, at this stage the indicators proposed have literature to substantiate their conceptualization.

Coherence

The specification of key indicators for the theory must be logically coherent with the rules of its respective unit classification. Thus, key indicators for propositions containing an enumerative unit must allow for unit values to be generated that do not have zero values, such as 'sex' or 'chronological age' (Dubin, 1978). Similarly, indicators for a proposition containing an associative unit must at least allow for positive, negative, and zero values. The study may not seek to gather those values, but the indicator must allow for those values to be generated (Dubin, 1978). The other type of unit employed in the theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal is a relational unit. Key indicators for relational units must take into account whether they result from the interaction or from the combination of unit properties. Thus, the key indicator for a unit must consist either of the outcome resulting from the interaction or combination or of a value for each of the interacting or combining properties (Dubin,

1978). The components of the propositions defined above adhered to their respective units.

The completion of step six of the theory-building research has prepared the theoretical model for testing in the empirical world. Theory-building research step seven consists of the development of logical extensions of proposition statements, which are hypotheses.

Theory Building Research Step Seven: Developing Hypotheses for the Theory

The six preceding theory building research sections have facilitated the conceptual development of a theoretical model, the specification of proposition statements, and the identification of empirical indicators for the model. At this point, testing in the empirical world is possible. This section of Chapter Five outlines Dubin's strategies for the development of research hypotheses as well as the initial hypotheses proposed for this theory. These are compared with Dubin's criteria of excellence.

Dubin's Methodology for Developing the Hypotheses for the Theory

A hypothesis can be defined as "the researcher's prediction, derived from a theory or from speculation, about how two or more measured variables will be related to each other" (Gall et al., 1996, p. 760). In essence, this means that, each time the name of a unit appears in a proposition, it should be substituted with an empirical indicator that measures the unit's values (Dubin, 1978). For example, if a proposition was stated as "organizational adoption of innovations is directly related to the frequency of proposed innovations," then one hypothesis to test this proposition could be "organizational

adoption of innovations as measured by *Innovation Adoption Index* is directly proportional to the number of innovations brought to the attention of executive leadership."

Utilizing different empirical indicators or addressing different units allows for the development of additional hypotheses. Thus, numerous hypotheses can be created to test the theoretical model. Given the time and resources necessary to conduct research, there is a draw to achieving some degree of efficiency in the number of hypotheses utilized in research operations (Dubin, 1978, 1983; Reynolds, 1971).

Dubin argued that, during the research or testing step of theory-building research, researchers may work either to show the adequacy of the theoretical model mirroring the real world or to improve the adequacy of the theoretical model. He stated that each goal influences how the researcher operates. He believed that, if the goal is to prove the model, some limitations stem from what the researcher tends to do with the data. When searching to prove the model, data beyond the predicted range is often disregarded, so only those units expressed in the model will be researched. When the goal is to continuously improve the model, then data that does not fit is rigorously analyzed rather than disregarded.

Three primary strategies can be employed to develop hypotheses :(1), an *extensive* strategy in which every proposition is equated with an hypothesis to be tested; (2) an *intensive* strategy in which one or very few propositions are tested, possibly in several ways by altering the empirical indicators used to measure the values of the units, and (3) an *inductive* strategy in which the researcher-theorist begins with an ad hoc hypothesis and works back to identify the other components of the theoretical model.

Proposed Hypotheses for this Theory

The components for developing hypotheses for the theory, including propositions and empirical indicators, have been outlined in the previous sections. In this section, propositions and their associated empirical indicators are linked to create potentially testable hypotheses (Table 5.4.); many more potential derivations of hypotheses are possible. As mentioned previously, many empirical indicators require the development of instrumentation prior to testing. Consequently, the hypotheses listed below assume the development of such instrumentation in the research agenda to test them. One example is the need to develop instrumentation to measure externalized performance; in these hypotheses the instrument to be developed is referred to as *Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal Index.* Both extensive and intensive strategies of hypothesis testing should be pursued in the continuous refinement and development of this theory.

Table 5.4.

Hypotheses for the Theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal

Proposition	***Empirical Indicators***	***Hypothesis***
1. Interactivity between transitioning and incumbent parties during the socialization cycle results in reciprocal influence.	▪ Socializing strategies ▪ Negotiated meaning ▪ Mobilized knowledge ▪ Transitioning party ▪ Incumbent party	Interactivity between transitioning and incumbent parties during the socialization cycle (as measured by the presence of communicative acts during socializing strategies, meaning negotiation, and knowledge mobilization) results in reciprocal influence (as measured by an emergent situational definition and two-way exchange of knowledge).
2. The socialization cycle is catalyzed by individual or collective boundary changes.	▪ Socializing strategies ▪ Transitioning party ▪ Incumbent party	Impending or occurring context boundary changes (as measured by perceptions of the individual or collective boundary change) correlate with the introduction of socializing strategies by transitioning and incumbent parties (as measured by reported utilization of strategies).

Proposition	*Empirical Indicators*	*Hypothesis*
3. The context of the particular boundary change influences the content of the socialization cycle but not its form; namely, the progression through the five units of the theory.	▪ Transitioning party ▪ Incumbent party ▪ Socializing strategies/ negotiated meaning/ mobilized knowledge/ or externalized performance	In organizations seeking renewal, the context of a sales function reorganization and the context of a merger indicate different socializing strategies used, different meaning negotiated, different knowledge mobilized, and different forms of performance externalized; however, the progression of the five units will remain the same.
4. Transitioning and incumbent parties are proactive and purposeful in their use of socializing strategies.	▪ Socializing strategies ▪ Transitioning party ▪ Incumbent party	With an impending or occurring boundary change (as measured by perceptions and/or reports of such catalyzing changes), transitioning and incumbent parties can identify socializing strategies used and their implications.
5. As interactions from socializing strategies increase, opportunities for accelerated meaning negotiation between transitioning and incumbent parties is possible.	▪ Socializing strategies ▪ Negotiated meaning ▪ Transitioning party ▪ Incumbent party	Increased utilization of socializing strategies by transitioning and incumbent parties (as measured by the frequency of strategies used during the priming, linking, and renewing phases) will allow negotiated meaning interactions to occur more quickly.
6. Negotiated meaning increases mobilization of existing tacit and explicit knowledge and the emergence of new knowledge.	▪ Negotiated meaning ▪ Mobilized knowledge ▪ Transitioning party ▪ Incumbent party	Situations where meaning negotiation interactions have taken place (as measured by perceived changes to attributions) will increase the likelihood that existing and emerging tacit and explicit knowledge will be mobilized between transitioning and incumbent parties (as measured by process mapping of knowledge source).
7. The quality of internalized learning influences the degree of performance; namely, the degree of renewal capacity.	▪ Internalized learning ▪ Externalized performance ▪ Transitioning party	The presence of internalized learning of a transitioning individual (as measured by a perceived harmony in personal values with the value of continuous development of renewal capacity, established through individual questioning) increases the degree of purposeful renewal as externalized performance (as measured by the *Continuous Socialization for Renewal Index).*
8. Degree of performance influences the next socialization cycle.	▪ Socializing strategies ▪ Externalized performance ▪ Transitioning party ▪ Incumbent party	Where performance of a transitioning or incumbent party is low (low socialization awareness, low knowledge proactivity on the *Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal Index*), a new cycle begins again without the need for another boundary change (as measured by continued utilization of socializing strategies by the party to address the first boundary change).

Proposition	*Empirical Indicators*	*Hypothesis*
9. The outcome of increased renewal capacity from socialization practices are only made possible by the presence and interaction of all five units of the theory. Without them, there is not Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal.	▪ Socializing strategies ▪ Negotiated meaning ▪ Mobilized knowledge ▪ Internalized learning ▪ Externalized performance ▪ Transitioning party ▪ Incumbent party	In a comparison of organizations seeking renewal, the organizations with continuous socialization practices in place (socializing strategies, negotiated meaning, mobilized knowledge, internalized learning, externalized performance) will see increased renewal capacity attributable to those practices, over those that do not have continuous socialization practices in place.
10. Collective awareness of socialization cycles and a proactivity of the knowledge mobilization processes within those cycles increases the likelihood for purposeful renewal capacity.	▪ Externalized performance ▪ Transitioning party ▪ Incumbent party	Those organizations showing collective agreement of high socialization awareness and high knowledge proactivity (on the *Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal Index*), will show an increased capacity for organizational renewal (as measured by continuous harnessing and integrating knowledge from within the organization into complex, team-based productive activities) over those organizations that show a different configuration.
11. The level of reciprocal influence between transitioning parties and incumbent parties can depend on characteristics of the transitioning party.	▪ Negotiated meaning/ mobilized knowledge/ or internalized learning ▪ Transitioning party ▪ Incumbent party	A new incoming member of organizational leadership will have increased level of reciprocal influence during socialization (as measured by the collective internalization of mobilized knowledge of that party) than an incoming member at a lower level.

Comparison to Criteria of Excellence for Hypotheses Development

Dubin (1978) concentrated on two primary criteria to describe excellence in the development of hypotheses. The first is the homology between the hypothesis developed and its associated proposition statement. "Every hypothesis is homologous with the proposition for which it stands" (Dubin, 1978, p. 207). In other words, the best construction of an hypothesis is to take a proposition and insert empirical indicators into each unit descriptor. For this theory, the proposition from which each hypothesis was derived and empirical indicators used were identified.

The second criterion is related to the number of hypotheses used. As each proposition can be expanded into several hypotheses simply by using different empirical indicators, the number of possible hypotheses could again be almost limitless. Therefore, a strategy similar to that of propositions is used: only those hypotheses that derive from strategic propositions and hypotheses of interest to the researcher-theorist are used. "There is, therefore, a need for selecting a strategy in hypothesis construction that fits the particular goals of the scientist and maximizes his profit in performing empirical tests" (Dubin, 1978, p. 210). Propositions for this theory were given a possible hypothesis to test in that only one version of empirical indicators was listed. Following initial testing in the empirical world, additional indicators and hypotheses may be added.

Theory Building Research Step Eight:

Testing the Theory

The scope of this theory has been presented as the completion of steps one through seven in Dubin's theory-building research methodology. The eighth and final step in the methodology is carrying out the testing of various elements of the theory. While step eight is outside of the scope of this study, an explicit research agenda is presented below that is immediately accessible for testing.

Proposed Research Agenda to Test the Theory

The following is a brief overview of a possible research agenda to begin to test the proposed theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal. This description will highlight major elements of a research agenda, with the exception of the problem and the need, which has been the focus of the rest of this paper. The components

described here are: research question, hypotheses, research methodology and design, target and accessible sample, research methods including instrumentation, and intended analyses.

Proposed Agenda: Research Question

The larger research question guiding the testing of the theory is: *Can the alternative theory of organizational socialization be validated as playing a part in facilitating continuous organizational agility and renewal?* It will take many research studies to answer that question. Therefore, the research question guiding this particular research agenda is only one step in that direction. The research question is: *Does the concept of continuous socialization for organizational renewal have construct validity?*

Proposed Agenda: Hypotheses

It has been proposed in this theory that approaches to socialization that are highly conscious and contain high proactivity in implementing mobilized knowledge processes have increased capacity for renewal. The main outcome of this research agenda would be determining whether fundamental differences in renewal capacity exist in organizations in which this theory is highly descriptive of individual and collective socialization processes compared to organizations where it is non-descriptive. In this case, a questionnaire instrument with items mapped to the theoretical model would differentiate organizational approaches to socialization. Then an in-depth comparison of two organizations with dramatically different approaches would be studied.

Hypothesis 1: A collective's or an individual's approach to socialization, as measured by the *Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal Index*, can

be differentiated on the continuums of socialization awareness and knowledge proactivity.

Hypothesis 2: Those organizations showing collective agreement of high socialization awareness and high knowledge proactivity on the *Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal Index* will show a greater capacity for organizational renewal, as measured by continuous generating and integrating knowledge from within the organization into complex, team-based productive activities, that organizations not showing collective agreement of high socialization awareness and high knowledge proactivity.

Proposed Agenda: Research Design

The research design would begin with the development of an instrument that differentiates individual or collective approaches to socialization on one of two dimensions (Figure 5.2.). The first dimension is level of awareness of socializing activities occurring and the resulting knowledge mobilization processes. The second dimension is the level of proactivity in the execution of the knowledge mobilization processes.

The instrument would be given to four or five organizations identified through research as different in their histories of organizational stability and change. Through analysis of instrument data, aggregated organization results would be plotted within the quadrants of *Unwitting Stability, Sentient Stability, Erratic Change,* and *Purposeful Renewal* (Figure 5.2.). Two polarized organizations would then be examined in more depth using more qualitative research methods to study whether the elements proposed in

this theory are actually in place in the organization or whether the theoretical model needs to be adjusted.

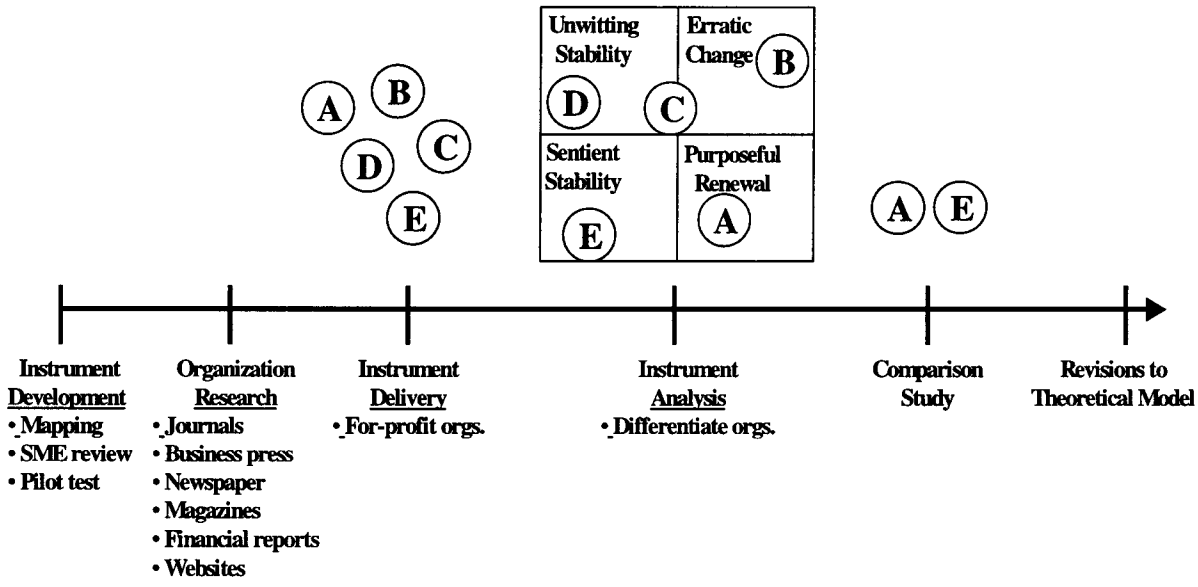

Figure 5.2. Proposed Research Design to Begin Confirmation/ Disconfirmation of the Theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal

Proposed Agenda: Instrumentation

Based on the theoretical model developed in this theory, questionnaire items would be mapped to relevant components (Figure 5.3.). Additionally, each set of items mapped would contain items related to the respondent's *awareness* of certain elements, as well as items related to the respondent's *proactivity* in the purposeful application of elements. The questionnaire items would consist of a descriptive statement to which respondents would indicate on a 5-point Likert scale whether or not the statement was (5) highly descriptive of their experience to (1) not descriptive at all.

The instrument development process would include a review by subject matter experts, both scholars and practitioners, on socialization, knowledge generation, or organizational renewal. Following a subject matter expert review, the instrument would be piloted for ease of use and understandability within one organization. Pilot data would be analyzed to work out any data analysis issues.

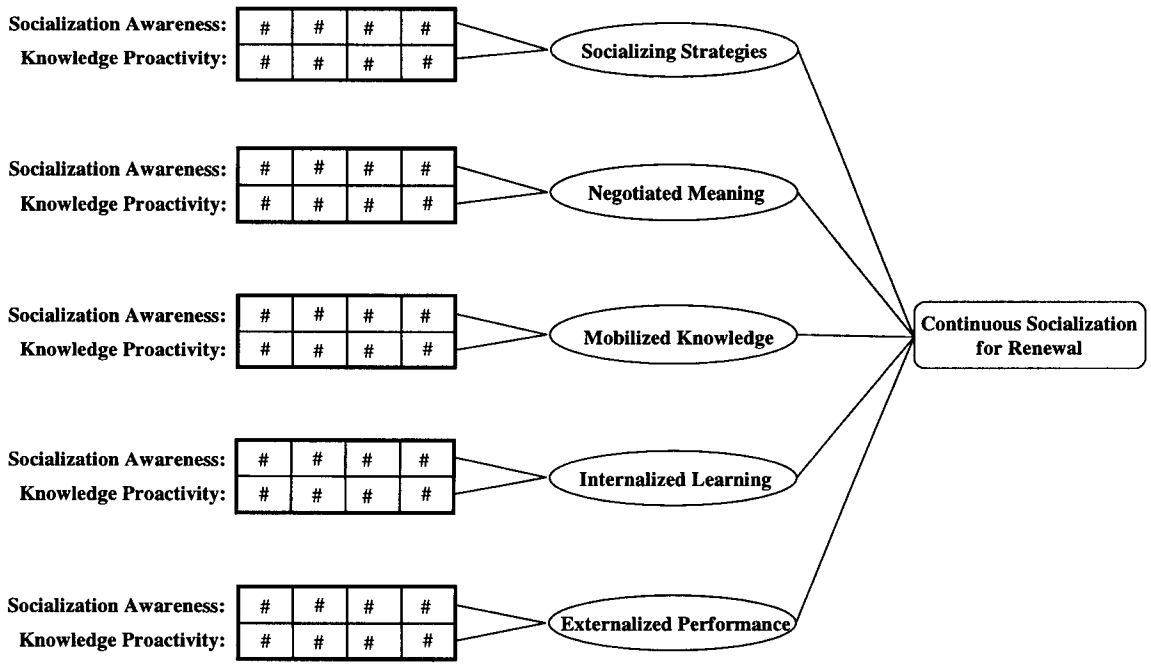

Figure 5.3. Proposed Instrument Mapping Framework in the Initial Testing of the Theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal

Proposed Agenda: Sampling

The target sample for generalization of this research would be all for-profit organizations. The accessible sample would be for-profit organizations headquartered in

the United States. While this raises some issues of cross-cultural applicability, this research could be replicated in various cultural settings in the future.

Some organizations would be chosen based on recent signs of renewal capacity; others would be chosen based on signs of a lack of renewal capacity or a lack of desired renewal. Organizations would be researched via a multitude of external resources such as journal articles, newspaper or magazine articles, Internet web sites, and financial reports. Four or five organizations representing those two categories would be chosen as possible participants.

Participant organizations would need to be willing to distribute the questionnaire to a wide sample of employees at all levels. Demographic questions related to the individual's tenure, employment level, any recent individual boundary transitions or any recent collective boundary transitions would be included.

Proposed Agenda: Data Analysis

This research agenda would contain four primary areas of data collection or analysis: (1) researching organization histories to pinpoint sample organizations, (2) analyzing instrument data to differentiate sample organizations on the chart, (3) conducting case study research to further understand socialization in operation, and (4)analyzing that data to determine whether elements of continuous socialization are present and whether they contribute to renewal capacity.

Research on organizational renewal capacity prior to entry would be limited to public record indicators. Literature on renewal in organizations points to continuous innovations in products, services, processes, technologies, or management practices (Hurst, 2002; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Waterman, 1987), as well as explicit

organizational missions or philosophies of renewal or innovation (Allee, 1997; Collins, 2001; Hurst, 2002; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Waterman, 1987).

Respondents' ratings would be aggregated for their respective organization into one of the five clusters defined in the mapping process; each cluster would be sub-divided into leadership or non-leadership role. An aggregate mean would be ascribed to each of the five clusters. Correlations would then be run to determine whether a strong positive relationship could be found between leadership roles and non-leadership roles within the organizations. If a strong positive correlation is found, agreement within the organization as to the socialization approach could be inferred. With some data to support agreement, the organization could be mapped onto the grid. Those organizations with very little agreement would not fit this study but would make an interesting follow-up study. Based on the organizational mapping, two apparently polarized organizations could then be chosen for more in-depth study.

A case study approach could be used to gather further data on the organizations. Eisenhardt (1995) has proposed critical steps to case study research including (1) getting started with defining the research questions, (2) selecting cases with theoretical, not random, sampling, (3) crafting instruments and protocols using multiple data collection methods and a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, (4) entering the field, (5) analyzing the data, (6) shaping hypotheses by looking at the "why" behind relationships found, (7) enfolding both conflicting and similar literature, and (8) reaching closure.

In this instance, the analysis of the case research would need to be guided by the theory proposed here as well as indicators of organizational renewal capacity. Such

indicators would stem from the broad base of literature and research on organizational renewal (Allee, 1997; Amidon, 1997; Collins, 2001; Dougherty & Hardy, 1996; Gibbons, et al., 1994; Hurst, 2002; Nohria & Gulati, 1996; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Senge, 1990; Waterman, 1987; Wheatley, 1999; Zahra, 1996), as renewal is a result of more than just socialization practices.

Again, the above research agenda takes one step in the testing of the theory in the real world. Additional research studies would be required to fully validate the construct of the theory, its component processes, mediating factors, and outcome measures.

Ongoing Testing& Refinement of the Theory

The development of a theory is but the first portion of the iterative process of theory building research (Dubin, 1978; Lynham, 2002a). Lynham (2002a) elaborated

> This recursive nature of theory-building research requires the ongoing study, adaptation, development, and improvement of the theory in action and ensures that the relevance and rigor of the theory are continuously attended to and improved on by theorists through further inquiry and application in the real world. (p. 234)

Thus, as outcomes of research refute elements of this proposed theory, adjustments will be necessary to ensure the "relevance and rigor" of the Theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal. Below are additional perspectives for future research related to the theory.

Perspective on Future Research

With a process as abstract and complex as socialization, precise measurement and validation are difficult. However, four primary avenues for research have been made explicit: (1) determining the construct validity of the theory, (2) parsing the knowledge

mobilization processes, (3) identifying influential factors, and (4) finding measures to illuminate the outcomes of the phenomenon.

More specifically within those four research directions, studies could approach the theory with the intent of describing its proposed system states. Splitting quantitative data by role status may illuminate different values for each of the units in the theoretical model. Similarly, contrasting qualitative data gathered from newcomers in low-potential influence roles with those of newcomers in high-potential influence roles may reveal similarities and differences in socialization experiences. In the same vein, a case study approach could examine the scenario of a newly hired CEO or executive leader in an organization with continuous socialization processes in operation.

This theory has delineated the boundary of for-profit organizations as a starting point for proposing socialization as a renewing process. Given the recent dialogue about the need for evolution in the often-lagging environment of education (Gibbons et al., 1994; Harkins, 1998; Waterman, 1987), additional studies may hypothesize the emergence of similar renewal processes in educational, governmental, or religious organizations. Studies may seek to show the existence of socialization as a renewing process in these organizations, or attempt to implement such a process and examine its effects.

Finally, although Dubin's quantitative theory building research methodology was used to conceptualize and operationalize this theory, it does not preclude verification research from being qualitative in nature. In fact, a multitude of research methodologies or paradigms could serve as vehicles to test even one aspect of the theory to, in essence,

increase the robustness of the results as confirming or disconfirming that aspect of the theory.

In summary, a myriad of possibilities exist for the continuous refinement of this theory. Regardless of the approach, each refinement will ensure that "the theory is kept current and relevant and that it continues to work and have utility in the practical world" (Lynham, 2002a, p. 234).

Chapter Five has taken the theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal beyond the conceptualization phase and into the operationalization phase. Using Part Two of Dubin's (1978) theory building research methodology, propositions, empirical indicators, hypotheses and one possible research agenda were developed. This chapter also highlighted the need for continuous refinement and development of the theory to increase its relevance and validity in modeling the real world.

The impetus for the development of this theory was a perceived gap in the knowledge base of organizational socialization to meet the current demands placed on businesses today. The development of this theory has many implications for the knowledge base of organizational socialization and the field of HRD research and practice. The implications of this theory are made explicit in Chapter Six.

CHAPTER SIX: IMPLICATIONS OF A THEORY OF CONTINUOUS SOCIALIZATION FOR ORGANIZATIONAL RENEWAL

Previous chapters have outlined the major shifting forces of business that affect human talent management and development in organizations. These include the increasing pace of change; the changing face of the workforce due to globalization, immigration, and demographic shifts; the changing mentality of the workforce, or the change in the psychological contract due in part to the explosion of technology and the level of power placed in the hands of employees; and the changing nature of performance, from efficiency of production of goods to effectiveness of production of knowledge (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1.

Summary of Changing Elements in the Business Landscape of the Knowledge Age

Industrial Age				**Knowledge Age**
Stable	←	**Markets**	→	Dynamic
Regional/National	←	**Competition**	→	Global
Bureaucratic	←	**Organization**	→	Networked
Financial/Fixed Capital	←	**Performance**	→	Knowledge/Innovation
Stand Alone	←	**Relationships**	→	Alliances
Specific Skills	←	**Skills**	→	Broad Skills Sets/Cross Training
HS/College Degree	←	**Education**	→	Lifelong Learning
Stable	←	**Employment**	→	Transient

- adapted from B.T. Manderfeld, B. Gesuale and G.M Parizek (2001)

Both the scholarly management literature and the popular business press have pinpointed the capacity for renewal as a major organizational challenge: "Somehow there are organizations that effectively manage change, continuously adapting their bureaucracies, strategies, systems, products, and cultures to survive the shocks and prosper from the forces that decimate their competition" (Waterman, 1987, p. xii). Waterman (1987) also stated, "Organizations, like people, are creatures of habit. For organizations, the habits are existing norms, systems, procedures, written and unwritten rules—'the way we do things around here.' Over time these habits become embedded like rocks in a glacial moraine" (p. 16). Practices that continue to embed the status quo within the organization hinder renewal capacity.

This study has proposed that socialization practices need to be reviewed to ensure that they facilitate organizational agility rather than obstruct it. Waterman (1987) has supported this process of examining organizational practices, "There is a kind of rhythm to the process: first, a constant search for standard ways of doing things...Then the deliberate breaking of old rules, familiar patterns, past practices; that is the only way to respond to change" (p. 214).

Chapter One outlined the need to critically examine organizational practices that impede change capacity and to focus on the practice of organizational socialization. Chapter One also made explicit the research questions for the study. Chapter Two delved into the knowledge base of socialization to determine whether socialization, as construed in the literature, was designed to facilitate change. The determination was based on an etymological search of terms, a synthesis of definitions from foundational literature, and immersion into the knowledge base of socialization. It was concluded that the literature

conceptualizes the phenomenon as merely transmitting the status quo and perpetuating existing success. Thus, Chapter Two made explicit the gap to be filled by a theory of organizational socialization that supported the new business need for constant change.

Chapter Three outlined the theory building research methodology used for this study, tying together the General Method of Lynham (2002a) and the eight step theory building research methodology of Dubin (1978). Chapter Four consisted of the major output of this study, as the theoretical units, laws of interaction, system states, and boundaries of the theoretical model. In essence, the outcome of the chapter was a fully conceptualized model of continuous socialization for renewal.

Chapter Five operationalized the theoretical model by adding propositions, key indicators, and hypotheses for testing the model. Additionally, a research agenda to begin testing the model was proposed. Implications for the development of the Theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal exist for: (1) socialization research, (2) socialization in practice, and (3) the field of HRD. Each is discussed in more detail below in this final chapter, Chapter Six.

Implications for Socialization Research

This study has attempted to model quality theory building. First, the well-regarded theory-building research approach of Dubin (1978) was followed. Second, the theory draws on the scholarly literature from multiple disciplines and takes note of emerging dynamics from the popular business press. Third, the study utilized thought leadership that recognized the complexity of the phenomenon by researching the interaction of both individual and collective variables. Fourth, the study welcomed

contributions of testing and refinement of the theory through multiple research paradigms and methods. Finally, the theory attempted to meet a call to action from the business literature regarding the need for organizational renewal capacity by addressing a gap in organizational socialization theory.

The introduction of this theory into the socialization literature presents a new line of research inquiry on the topic. Research efforts can attempt to show this theory does not model reality for organizations with renewal capacity. Other efforts may attempt to show that more traditional models of socialization, such as that of Van Maanen and Schein (1979), no longer mirror reality in for-profit organizations. Regardless of the line of research inquiry, the idea that both transitioning and incumbent approaches to socialization may help facilitate organizational change raises new possibilities for research.

Additionally, existing organizational socialization theory and research are not limited to for-profit entities. Therefore, opportunities are available for future research to extend this theory to other types of organizations. Dubin (1978) discussed methods for the generalization of theoretical models. One approach is to compare two theories that are relatively narrow in domain to determine which units and laws are similar. By combining those units and laws that are the same and redefining their common boundary criteria, generalization is possible. For example, future theory-building research concerning socialization for renewal in educational institutions may result in a model that appears somewhat similar to the one presented here. Through the process just described, a third model could be derived. The new boundaries would go beyond those of for-profit organizations in this theory and beyond educational organizations in the second theory, to

result in a theory for all organizations. This new theoretical model would need research to validate that the new boundary is viable.

In some instances, those purely in research have few chances to hear about and/or study effective organizational practices. Thus, it is important to note that, while this theory may open up a new line of inquiry for socialization research, some organizations may already have effective socialization practices in operation. These practices may or may not mirror this theory. As such, there is a clear opportunity for *grounded theory* (Eagan, 2002) to act as another avenue to support or refute this theory.

While this theory indeed must be subjected to rigorous testing in order to be reliably recommended and applied in practice, some elements are immediately applicable. The implications for socialization in practice are presented below.

Implications for Socialization in Practice

Even prior to thorough testing, some components of this theory can act as catalysts in companies to assess the alignment between their organizational intent and their current approach to socialization. Current popular business press calls for renewal capacity in organizations (Allee, 1997; Hurst, 2002) but does not explicitly link strategies for accomplishing that feat with practices of socialization. For activities that have socializing capability to do so, it is the position of this author that approaches should be conscious, as "people in a company always organize to support the *actual* values, not the *espoused* values" (Allee, 1997, p. 199).

Organizations strive to have alignment between different aspects of the system in operation: structures, people, processes, technologies and performance (Amidon, 1997).

However, often the dialogue about how to achieve such alignment remains with managers and leaders (Amidon, 1997; Hurst, 2002; Waterman, 1987). Hopefully, the new language of socialization for renewal used in this theory may prompt some critical examination of intent versus practice and place greater ownership with all individuals in the organization.

Following more rigorous testing and refinement, this theory may provide a framework to assist organizations in crafting and implementing new socialization practices. This theory proposes that socializing strategies go well beyond the orientation organizations design for their new members. It proposes that increasing interactions among transitioning parties and incumbent parties will open the doors to increased knowledge mobilization. The theory asserts that not all elements of the organization's norms, systems, processes, and practices must be completely internalized into each individual in order for continuous renewal to be possible. In fact, renewal may be more likely if each individual incorporates fewer non-relevant organizational habits. Research to support such assertions would provide clear avenues for practitioners to follow in changing the course of their current socialization practices.

Implications for HRD

The theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal is built using foundational elements of psychology, systems thinking, and economics, which are core elements of the field of Human Resource Development (Swanson, 1995). In brief, the theory's components of negotiated meaning and internalized learning come directly from research and theory in the area of psychology. The continuous and interconnected nature

of the transitioning and incumbent cycle was developed with core elements of systems thinking. The mobilization of organizationally relevant knowledge and the externalization of performance as the unique reconfiguration and application of knowledge is derived from viewing the organization as an economic entity seeking competitive advantage in an age where knowledge is the constrained resource. Therefore, the theory itself is relevant to the field of HRD.

The field of HRD is strongly positioned to lead the research and application of this theory. First, the field is concerned with strategic issues related to organizational change, learning, and knowledge. An examination of keywords in the Academy of Human Resource Development conference proceedings from the last three years (e.g., 2001, 2002, and 2003) showed a consistent effort to report on such issues. Each year showed several articles concerning organizational change and processes of knowledge within organizations. Additionally, one of the largest areas of focus for research in the Academy is issues related to learning, at the individual, team, and organizational levels.

Morever, individuals associated with the HRD field often have significant skill in researching and/or leading large-scale efforts (i.e., in organization development). The theory of socialization for renewal requires the organization have a clear understanding of its currently reality of operation and to view a broad base of activities as having a socializing quality. Therefore, conceptual ability must be extensive for those aiding in changing or implementing socialization for renewal.

A refined version of the theory of Continuous Socialization for Organizational Renewal may at some point be used in the development and application of practices in organizations. HRD practitioners may lead or assist in that process. Based on the current

conceptualization of the theory, three considerations are perceived as critical. First, knowledge must be valued throughout the organization as a way to achieve strategic advantage (Allee, 1997; Amidon, 1997; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Topp, 2000). It must be valued at the individual level, the group level, and the organizational level. In the traditional industrial or information economies of the past, traditional performance stakes were appropriate: efficient and effective production of goods or services and for some organizations, profit. However, with the transition to a knowledge-based economy, traditional stakes for organizations no longer suffice, performance stakes need to change to new knowledge production (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Topp, 2000). "Peak performance requires a clear understanding of processes for creating, sustaining, sharing, and renewing knowledge" (Allee, 1997, p.71).

Second, if the stakes of organizational performance must move to knowledge mobilization, similar expectations must be placed at the individual level of performance. At a simplistic level, rather than measuring performance by efficiency on predetermined role tasks, such as production of widgets, individual performance must be measured in part with the generation and application of new knowledge for value creation within the organization. While efficiency in production of widgets may remain as a measure of performance, generation of knowledge around new and more efficient processes for creating those widgets may be an additional measure of performance that will better position that particular widget-producing organization for success in the future.

Third, the knowledge mobilization must be supported throughout the organization, not merely with a few individuals or a few roles. This theory asserts that interactions between transitioning and incumbent parties are necessary for those

mobiliztion processes to occur. Many authors support the need for such interactions (Brim, 1966; Evan, 1963; Fisher, 1985; Katz, 1980; Reichers, 1987; Wanous, Reichers & Malik, 1984; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Additional research has indicated that the new knowledge economy requires the effort of multiple human resources to research and solve complex systems and organizational issues. It is the collective knowledge and unique configuration of that knowledge from these transient groups or teams that allow complex issues to be worked on and more large-scale knowledge generation to occur. Research indicates that such ad hoc configurations are already occurring and bringing about knowledge generation (Cooke, Salas, Cannon-Bowers, & Stout, 2000; Dysart, 2001; Floyd & Wooldridge, 1999; Gibbons et al., 1994; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). "The vision is one of *an integrated system of initiatives designed to create the optimal flow of knowledge within and throughout the organization resulting in stakeholder success*" (Amidon, 1997, p.92).

Conclusion

The theory-building research process can indeed be a long one. Initial conceptualization or operationalization of the theoretical model is by no means the end of that process (Dubin, 1978; Lynham, 2002). The definition of theory-building research used for this study has been "the process or recurring cycle by which coherent descriptions, explanations and representations of observed or experienced phenomena are generated, verified and refined" (Lynham, 2000, p. 161). This study is a stake in the ground at this particular moment. Testing, refinement, and continuous application of this theory are the next steps in the process. However, some immediate outcomes from this

study are possible. Chapter Five outlined a research agenda immediately accessible for execution and Chapter Six has outlined implications for socialization research, practice and the field of HRD.

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APPENDIX A:
LITERATURE SUPPORT FOR SELECTED ACTIVITIES AS SOCIALIZING STRATEGIES

Stage	*Strategy*	*Literature Support*
Individual Priming	Career planning	▪ (Feldman, 1976a; Stumpf & Hartman, 1984)
	Networking	▪ (Van Maanen, 1975)
	Information seeking	▪ (Stumpf & Hartman, 1984)
Individual Linking & Renewing	Observation	▪ (Ashforth, 1985; Fritz, Arnett & Conkel, 1999; Louis, 1980, 1990; Manz & Sims, 1981; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992)
	Information seeking	▪ (Ashforth, 1985; Bauer & Taylor, 2001; Feldman, 1976; Feldman & Brett, 1983; Louis, 1990; Miller & Jablin, 1991; Morrison 1993; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992; Stumpf & Hartman, 1984)
	Feedback seeking	▪ (Ashford, 1986; Katz, 1980; Louis, 1990; Polach, 2001)
	Training/ orientation	▪ (Evan, 1963)
	Relationships/ social support	▪ (Ashforth, 1985; Evan, 1963; Feldman & Brett, 1983; Fisher, 1985; Morrison, 2002; Schein, 1968; Taormina, 1998)
	Decision making	▪ (Ashforth, 1985; Feldman, 1976a; Schein, 1968)
Collective Priming	Strategic visioning / planning	▪ (Collins, 2001; Duck, 1993; Goss et al., 1993; Hurst, 2002; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Waterman, 1987)
	Internal / external recruitment & selection	▪ (Schaubroek et al., 1998; Schein, 1968; Schneider et al., 1998; Wanous, 1980; Weiner, 1988)
	Internal / external communications (slogans, stories, myths, news)	▪ (Ashforth, 1985; Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Miller & Jablin, 1991)
	Interaction	▪ (Ashforth, 1985; Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Evan, 1963; George, 1996; Katz, 1980; Louis, 1980, 1990; Louis, Posner & Powell, 1983; Morrison, 2002; Reichers, 1987; Van Maanen, 1977; Wanous, Reichers & Malik, 1984)
Collective Linking & Renewing	Strategic visioning/ planning	▪ (Collins, 2001; Duck, 1993; Goss et al., 1993; Hurst, 2002; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Waterman, 1987)
	Internal / external communications (slogans, stories, myths, news)	▪ (Ashforth, 1985; Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Miller & Jablin, 1991)
	Internal/ external information seeking (benchmarking, open space, future search)	▪ (Emery & Purser, 1996; Jacobs, 1994; Owen & Stadler, 1999; Wiesbord, 1992; Wiesbord & Janoff, 2000)
	Leadership	▪ (Collins, 2001; Duck, 1993; Goss et al., 1993; Hurst, 2002; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Schein, 1995; Strebel, 1996; Waterman, 1987)
	Goal setting & performance feedback	▪ (Ashford, 1986; Berlew & Hall, 1966; Feldman, 1976b; George, 1996; Katz, 1980)
	Psychological contracting	▪ (Gabaro, 1979; Katz, 1980; Strebel, 1996)

	Training / orientation	▪	(Allen & Meyer, 1990; Ashforth & Saks, 1996; George, 1996; Jones, 1986; Kennedy & Berger; King & Sethi, 1998; Klein & Weaver, 2000; Louis, Posner & Powell, 1983; Manz & Sims, 1981; Nicholson, 1984; Taormina, 1998; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Wanous, 1980)
	Modeling & mentoring	▪	(Ashforth, 1985; Fritz, Arnett & Conkel, 1999; Hegstad, 1999; Louis, Posner & Powell, 1983; Manz & Sims, 1981)
	Ceremonies / rites of passage	▪	(Ashforth, 1985; Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Larsson & Lubatkin, 2001; Weiner, 1988)
Collective	Physical setting	▪	(Ashforth, 1985)
Linking &	Policy	▪	(Katz, 1980)
Renewing	Interaction	▪	(Ashforth, 1985; Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Evan, 1963; George, 1996; Katz, 1980; Louis, 1980, 1990; Louis, Posner & Powell, 1983; Morrison, 2002; Reichers, 1987; Van Maanen, 1977; Wanous, Reichers & Malik, 1984)
cont...			

APPENDIX B:
AN OVERVIEW OF THE THEORY OF CONTINUOUS SOCIALIZATION FOR ORGANIZATIONAL RENEWAL

Core Assumptions of the Performance Paradigm of HRD

1. Organizations must perform to survive and prosper, and individuals who work within the organizations must perform if they wish to advance their careers and maintain employment.
2. The ultimate purpose of HRD is to improve performance of the system in which it is embedded and which provides the resources to support it.
3. The primary outcome of HRD is not just learning, but also performance.
4. Human potential in organizations must be nurtured, respected, and developed.
5. HRD must enhance current performance and build capacity for future performance effectiveness.
6. HRD professionals have an ethical and moral obligation to insure that attaining organizational performance goals is not abusive to individual employees.
7. Training/ learning activities cannot be separated from other parts of the performance system and are best bundled with other performance improvement interventions.
8. Effective performance and performance systems are rewarding to the individual and to the organization.
9. Whole systems performance improvement seeks to enhance the value of learning in an organization.
10. HRD must partner with functional departments to achieve performance goals.
11. The transfer of learning into job performance is of primary importance.

- from E.F. Holton III, 2000