# Toward Articulating and Understanding the Development of Philosophies of Teaching
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## Introduction

When graduates of teacher preparation programs enter the education work force, they find other, often opposing, approaches and philosophies of teaching among their colleagues, school administrators, and the general public.

If college graduates are to be leaders in education, it is important for them to understand the incompatibilities of various theories and philosophies and for them to clearly and congruently articulate their own philosophy of teaching. This research project explores the origin and consistency of a teacher's individual philosophy of teaching.

## Subjects

56 respondents per country and a total of 112 subjects overall, including students majoring in education, teachers working in classrooms with children, and college professors in the education departments

## Resources

•Egan, K. (2001). Why education is so difficult and contentious. *Teachers College Record, 103* (November 6), 923 – 941.
•Madoc-Jones, G. and N. Gajdamaschko. (2005/6). Searching for theoretical incompatibilities in teachers self-understandings of educational practice. *Journal of the International Society for the Scientific Study of Subjectivity, 29*(1/2), 58 – 80.

## Research Questions

•Are pre-service teachers' philosophies clear and articulated at the beginning of their university studies?

•Are pre-service teachers' philosophies clear and articulated at the conclusion of their university studies?

•What is the difference between pre-service teachers' philosophies at the beginning of their university studies and at the end of their university studies?

•What is the difference between philosophies of pre-service teachers and of seasoned teachers?

•How do pre-service teachers' philosophies differ among students in southern Minnesota, USA and in the Far East of the Russian Federation?

## Methodology

The data will be generated through Q-sort methodology. Participants will sort and prioritize 36 statements that are related to various philosophies of teaching.

The Q-sorts will be subjected to factor analysis of the rankings that allow for the extraction of a few "typical" Q sorts (factors) that capture the common essence of several individual Q sorts. These Q sorts will be interpreted by the student investigators and reviewed by the primary investigator to give verbal explanation to the information uncovered by the statistical procedure.

## Philosophical Basis #1: Focus on Socialization

Educators and parents teach the children knowledge, skills, values, and commitment similar those of the adults in the society. Each person, as she/he grows and learns, becomes conformed to modern social norms. Learning, therefore, is the process of adjusting in order to "fit in" to society.

## Philosophical Basis #2: Focus on the Child's Intellect

There are many educators who believe in focusing on the development of the child's intellect. This philosophy of learning is based on the idea that educators and parents teach the children knowledge that is valued for its benefit to the student's mind, rather than its use to society.

## Philosophical Basis #3: Focus on the Natural Child

Educators and parents should follow the natural and spontaneous development of the child. Teachers must carefully observe and study children, so that they can encourage children to learn actively and appropriately for their current development. Learning is the process of adjusting mental models to accommodate new experiences.

## Philosophical Basis #4: Focus on Learning Cultural Tools

Educators and parents should teach children strategies and tools to use in order to learn. Teachers must carefully work alongside children, so that teachers can provide the tools and strategies for the children to learn the next step. Each person, as she/he grows and learns, incorporates society's "rules" and "mental models," which she/he uses to make sense of life experiences. Learning is the process of making sense of the world by using mediating intellectual processes available in society and learned through other persons. Using these processes actually influences the kind of sense that one makes of the world.