CAN’T BUY ME LOVE (FOR TEACHING)?
AN ANALYSIS OF THE TEACHING CAREER IN THE CITY OF BUENOS AIRES

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By

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ABSTRACT

Teachers are considered one of the most important factors to improve educational quality (Odden, 1992; Alexander and Salmon, 1995; Ferguson and Ladd, 1996; Morduchowicz and Marcón, 1996; Darling-Hammond, 1999 and 2003; Santiago, 2002; Unesco’s Bureau of Education for Latin America (OREALC) / United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2005; Vaillant, 2008; Vegas and Petrow, 2008; Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 2009; Hanushek, 2010). In different countries, teacher salaries represent the bulk of education spending: staff compensation adds up to between 70% and 90% of the sector’s resources (Alexander and Salmon, 1995; Swanson and King, 1997; Morduchowicz, 2004). It is not surprising that a considerable amount of the economics of education literature focuses on the regulations and characteristics of the teaching career which consists of the norms that regulate recruiting, hiring, professional development, and firing (Santiago, 2002). Can the design of the teachers’ career structure influence the quality of teachers and therefore improve educational quality?

This study analyzes the teachers’ career structure in the City of Buenos Aires with a focus on economic and political studies in order the shed light on the current state of the academic and policy discussion. After describing a) the state of the art of the teachers’ career structure academic and policy-oriented literature, and b) analyzing the design of the teaching career in the City of Buenos Aires; it shows that the current framework has positive aspects and negative aspects. Although the rules of the game are clear, a) the incentives are such that teachers must occupy school management positions in order to obtain a higher salary; and b) the teachers’ evaluation only matters for promotion.
The thesis is dedicated to Silvia Montoya and Alejandro Morduchowicz who inspired this research; to Douglas Reed who guided this work; and to Ana María Ravaglia, Nancy Sorfo, and Sergio Siciliano who oriented me with specific questions.

Many thanks,
Víctor Volman
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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COREAP</td>
<td>Comisión de Registro y Evaluación de Antecedentes Profesionales (Registration and Evaluation of Professional Background Commission)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTERA</td>
<td>Confederación de Trabajadores de la Educación de la República Argentina (Confederation of Education Workers of Argentina)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DGPDyND</td>
<td>Dirección General de Personal Docente y No Docente (General Office of Teaching and Non Teaching Staff)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DGPLED</td>
<td>Dirección General de Planeamiento Educativo (General Office of Educational Planning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DiNIECE</td>
<td>Dirección Nacional de Información y Evaluación de la Calidad Educativa (National Directorate of Educational Information, Evaluation and Educational Quality)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FONID</td>
<td>Fondo Nacional de Incentivo Docente (Teachers Incentive National Fund)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDEC</td>
<td>Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censo (National Institute of Statistics and Censuses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTASC</td>
<td>Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBE</td>
<td>Marco para la Buena enseñanza (Good teaching Framework)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBPTS</td>
<td>National Board for Professional Teaching Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OREALC</td>
<td>Oficina Regional de Educación de la UNESCO para América Latina y el Caribe (Unesco’s Bureau of Education for Latin America)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POF</td>
<td>Planta Orgánico Funcional (Organic Functional Staff)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SASS</td>
<td>Schools and Staffing Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>Scholastic Aptitude Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMP</td>
<td>Unión de Maestros Primarios (Elementary School Teachers’ Union)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTD</td>
<td>University of Texas at Dallas</td>
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UTE  Unión de Trabajadores de la Educación (Education Workers’ Union)

WLS  Wisconsin Longitudinal Study

ZEP  Zones d’éducation prioritaire (Priority Education Zones)
I. INTRODUCTION

The quality of education depends on multiple factors such as teachers, infrastructure, curriculum, characteristics of the students and their families, among others. Teachers are considered one of the most important inputs to improve the quality of this service (Odden, 1992; Alexander and Salmon, 1995; Ferguson and Ladd, 1996; Morduchowicz and Marcón, 1996; Darling-Hammond, 1999 and 2003; Santiago, 2002; Unesco’s Bureau of Education for Latin America (OREALC) / United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2005; Vaillant, 2008; Vegas and Petrow, 2008; Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 2009; Hanushek, 2010). Moreover, research based on value-added student achievement data, which measures the evolution of the results of a group of students in standardized tests over a period of time, shows that teachers are more influential in student achievement than other factors such as class size or class composition (Sanders and Rivers, 1996; Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain, 2001).

Staff compensation represents most of the sector’s resources (Alexander and Salmon, 1995; Swanson and King, 1997; Morduchowicz, 2004). This is another reason why a considerable amount of the research on the economics of education studies the characteristics of the teaching career (Santiago, 2002).

Yet, even though research provides a key role to teachers, there are many hypotheses and few answers regarding which characteristics or behaviors of teachers matter or should be enhanced in order to improve educational quality. Hanushek (2010) presents the case of two students who begin the school year with the same level of knowledge measured by standardized tests, but who have different teachers. At the end of the school year standardized tests showed that they reached different achievement levels. There might be differences in the quality of teachers in the case of each student. In fact, several bad teachers on a group of students could have negative effects that would be difficult to reverse (Cooper and Alvarado, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 1999; Hanushek, 2010).
During the last decades there has been concern regarding school performance and teacher quality. Scholars have studied different teacher compensation schemes and collective bargaining. The goal is clear: designing the overall compensation package to recruit, retain and motivate high quality professionals in order to improve the school system (Santiago, 2002). But compensation systems in education are usually the result of different economic and political pressures that create a puzzle of pieces with little coordination where each stakeholder has a different position (Podgursky, 2009). In other words, it appears that there is an agreement on what to do but not on how to do it (Santiago, 2002; Morduchowicz, 2009).

This study will focus on the teachers’ career structure from an institutional approach. In particular, I will analyze this subject with a focus on economic and political studies in order the shed light on the current state of the academic and policy discussion. The aim is: a) to describe the state of the art of the teachers’ career structure academic and policy-oriented literature, and b) to analyze the design of the teaching career in the City of Buenos Aires. I do not intend to evaluate the impact of these policies.

In the first chapter I present a review of the state of the art on this subject. Based on the human resources cycle in teaching I focus the analysis on three aspects: recruitment, promotion and the salary structure. Some countries have a single salary schedule, which compensates equally all teachers with the same education and teaching experience. Other education systems implement outcome-based pay, which ties compensation to the evaluation of different tasks or student achievement or behavior-based pay, which is based on what teachers know and can do. What are the positive and negative aspects of these alternatives? In the second chapter I focus the analysis on the teaching career in the City of Buenos Aires. I present the main aspects of the recruitment and promotion processes and describe aspects of the salary structure. I observe that some characteristics of this teachers’ career might not offer incentives to retain the best teachers. When possible, I contrast these points with some of the concepts discussed in the first chapter. Finally, I conclude.
II. THE TEACHING CAREER: AN INTERNATIONAL DISCUSSION

II.1. Characteristics of the Teachers’ Labor Market

II.1.i. Similarities to and Differences with the Classical Labor Market Model

In order to describe the teachers’ career and understand the general aspects of the teaching labor market, it is important to present its differences with the general labor market framework. Standard economic models suggest that in a competitive market the individual’s salary is linked to the worker’s productivity. This means that a worker, whose output per unit of time is higher, earns more. In a free and competitive market:

- firms are numerous and aim to maximize benefits
- human resources are homogeneous (and therefore interchangeable)
- compensation reflects productivity
- the price in the labor market (salary) is outside of each agent’s control (Varian, 2003).

In this framework, compensation results from the interaction between supply and demand. If there is higher demand for labor but supply stays at the same level, then compensation will increase. Firms also must pay its employees according to productivity. If they pay more, the firms loose money and face bankruptcy; if they pay less, the workers move to another firm where they are paid better (Morduchowicz, 2009; Hanushek, 2011).

As other labor markets, the teachers’ labor market has a supply and a demand. The supply of school teachers is the number of eligible individuals who are willing to supply their workforce under the existent characteristics (salaries, benefits, working conditions, teaching career structure, alternative career opportunities). The demand for teachers is the total number of teaching positions available in a given year (Santiago, 2002).
In a given year the teachers who already work in a certain education system compose most of the supply (Santiago, 2002). This gives momentum to the system and certain predictability for educational finance and planning. Supply of teachers also depends on the number of students who graduate from teaching preparation programs, the proportion of these graduates who enter into teaching, the teachers who enter into the profession through alternative programs, returning teachers, difficulty of licensure standards, incentives to attract teachers and public perception of teaching as a profession (Santiago, 2002). In general, most governments are responsible for the supply of the trained teachers.

However, the teachers’ labor market is different than the standard model. First, the public sector plays a main role. It determines spending in education, it is the main supplier and employer of teachers, and its degree of intervention and autonomy can be seen at several levels (central, regional, local) and differs from country to country. The main role of the government reduces market competition, as there is only one main employer (Santiago, 2004).

Second, there are norms that regulate recruiting, hiring, professional development and firing that set clear rules, but also reduce flexibility (Santiago, 2002). Moreover, there are situations of asymmetric information that will be explained in depth later in this study, which make the market imperfect (Santiago, 2004).

Third, there are political forces that determine budget constraints and decisions regarding goals on educational quality (Hanushek, 2010). For example, in many countries salaries are the product of collective bargaining between teachers’ unions and the government (Santiago, 2002). Even though there are attempts to link salaries to results, as it will be presented later on, productivity is difficult to measure (Mizala and Romaguera, 2005).

Last, schools do not go out of business if they retain ineffective teachers and pay them as much as effective ones (Hanushek, 2011). All these features make that the teachers’ labor market is not perfectly competitive (Santiago, 2004).
The main determinant of the demand for teachers is the school-age population (the demand for education). Other factors that affect the demand for teachers are average class size, teaching load, enrollment ratios, student-teacher ratios and turnover (Santiago, 2002; Cooper and Alvarado, 2006). Education systems generally use guidelines based on class-teacher or student-teacher ratios or momentum to determine the demand for teachers (Morducowhicz, 2009).

II.1.ii. The role of teachers’ unions

As said, the teachers’ labor market also differs from the classical labor market model because salaries are usually determined through a political process that involves the government and the teachers’ unions. The literature on these unions has produced mixed results and there is no consensus on the effects of them on this labor market and educational quality (Santiago, 2002).

For the period 1972-1982, Kleiner and Petree (1988) find that in states of the United States where a greatest proportion of teachers are unionized there are more resources and students perform better. Register and Grimes (1991) also find that in more unionized states students perform better than in non-unionized states, measured by college entrance exams. Eberts and Stone (1987) work with the Sustaining Effects Survey and the High School and Beyond Survey in the United States. They find that in those states that have unions, teachers are 7% more productive for average students compared to non-union districts.

Hoxby (1996) studies three channels through which teachers’ unions affect education when it is considered as other production processes where inputs are transformed into outputs (education production function approach). First, unions are expected to increase the educational budget. Second, unions are expected to reallocate this budget among different inputs. This reallocation could reduce efficiency if the union is rent-seeking or enhance it if the union’s goal is based on accurate information on which variables would improve efficiency (Hoxby, 1996). Last, teachers interact with inputs to produce education so
unions could affect the productivity of each input. For instance, resources could be used to raise teachers’ salaries but preventing new teachers to compete for better-paid jobs. The author conducts a study based on panel data on United States schools districts and state laws that regulate teacher’s unionization. She finds that in the United States teachers’ unions are rent-seeking because when they obtain a raise, student achievement lowers. Thus, input productivity decreases. Kurth’s research (1987) indicates that the growth of teachers’ unions between 1972 and 1983 was the most significant factor to explain the decline in Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores.

According to Santiago (2002), these mixed results could be due to methodological issues such as different ways of measuring unionization, choice of the variables studied, and units of analysis.

Regarding compensation, teachers’ unions have traditionally supported same compensation for equal job. Nevertheless, there are certain positions (math, physics, and chemistry teachers) that are more difficult to fill and a higher salary might be an incentive to find the right candidate for the position. In this case, a posture that is apparently equitable for workers could harm the right of students to be taught by teachers with the appropriate knowledge and abilities (Morduchowicz, 2009).

Another point that relates to the institutional framework and for which unions stand for is tenure, which is achieved after two to five years in the United States. Once a teacher is tenured it is very difficult to dismiss her for poor performance (Bridges, 1992; Hess and West, 2006).

Scholars analyzed the effect of teachers’ unions on the earnings structure. For example, Ballou and Podgursky (2001) find that in unionized districts in the United States teacher pay schedules are more back loaded (the ratio peak to starting pay is high) and more compressed (reaching the peak takes fewer years) that in non-unionized districts.

Goldhaber, DeArmond, Player and Hyung-Jai (2008) examine the relation between teachers’ unions and a merit pay system in Denver, Colorado. The Professional Compensation System for Teachers started in 2005 and rewards teachers for satisfactory evaluation by their principals, additional training,
and performance measured by student achievement gains. The scholars test two competing hypothesis that explain why so few districts use merit pay. The first one, the “nature of teaching” thesis, is associated with Murnane and Cohen (1986) and states that merit pay is unsuited to K-12 education because of measurement problems and perverse incentives (e.g., demoralizing effects, reducing teacher collegiality, teaching to the test). On the other hand, the “political cost” thesis is associated to Ballou (2001). He suggests that there is nothing inherent that makes performance pay inappropriate for teaching and that the main impediment for merit pay is political opposition from teachers’ unions. He illustrates his position by showing that merit pay is proportionally higher in non-sectarian private schools (i.e., non religious schools) than in public schools. According to his study, in 1993, 12.3% of public school districts used merit pay while in non-sectarian private schools the number was 35.4%. This rationale is supported by the union wage determination theory, which suggests that unionized workers defend the preferences of the average worker and not the position of the workers with extra skills (Freeman and Medoff, 1984).

Goldhaber et al. (2008) use data from the United States Department of Education’s Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), a nationally representative survey of a sample of schools and teachers in the United States, from the 1999-2000 School District and Teacher Questionnaires. They develop a model that predicts that districts would be more likely to use merit pay when they had more information on teachers’ performance and when the power of teachers’ unions was weaker. They find that evidence supports both hypotheses. When there are state policies that focus on accountability the nature of teaching changes (e.g., it relates more to standards and best practices) and it is more likely to put in place a merit pay system. Also, the collective bargaining agreements have a negative effect on the probability of using merit pay.
II.2. Recruitment

II.2.i. Academic requirements

How can the education system be sure that it hires a good quality teacher? The first step in the human resources cycle is recruitment and selection of employees. In general, teacher policies regulate who enters teaching through a certification process and entrance requirements. Certification ensures that nobody gets a bad teacher. In other words, they set a floor on quality. More requirements could be set in order to raise the floor but: a) the research does not identify which aspects ensure high-quality teachers and b) this would reduce the supply of teachers if salary was not increased (Hanushek, 2010).

Santiago (2004) also points out that hiring skilled teachers is complex and costly. Ballou (1996) and Ballou and Podgursky (1998a) compare hiring in private and public schools in the United States. They say that as public school face little competition for students they do not have incentives to put effort into finding the best teachers. Therefore education systems usually use inexpensive and standardized criteria in the recruitment process such as the verification of certification, years of experience and degrees (Santiago, 2004).

In 1966, the Coleman report suggested that traditional measures of teacher and school quality such as facilities and teacher training seemed to have less effect on student achievement than family background (Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, McPartland, Mood, Weinfeld and York, 1966). Since then, several studies started to estimate the relation between characteristics of teachers and schools and student achievement. As said before, one of the aspects that is generally taken into account in the recruitment process is academic degrees. Some scholars find that a master’s degree has no strong relation with student achievement (Hanushek, 1986; Hanushek, Rivkin and Kain, 2000; Hanushek and Rivkin, 2004 and 2007).

On the other hand, Barber and Moursheed (2007) point out that Finland and South Korea attract top graduates into teaching and are very successful in international tests. Moursheed, Chijioke and Barber (2010) also emphasize that this type of recruitment might be a substantial improvement for school
systems. Hanushek and Pace (1995), based on the High School and Beyond Survey in the United States that tracked high-school seniors from 1980 to 1986, find that in those states where recruitment is more demanding college students are less likely to earn education majors. Their explanation is that this requirement raises the cost of obtaining the education degree, in particular for those individuals who plan to teach for some years before moving to another sector or who obtain the teaching license as guarantee of a job in case other opportunities are unattractive.

Regarding subject matter knowledge, the studies show a positive relation between teachers’ subject matter preparation and student’s higher academic achievement (Monk, 1994; Darling-Hammond, 1999). According to Ferguson (1991) the results of teacher’s or college selectivity tests are also positively related to student achievement.

II.2.ii. Teacher shortages

As in other markets, the interaction between supply and demand determines situations of scarcity and abundance. In education, the first situation (teacher shortages) is usually a major concern in certain subjects and in hard-to-staff schools such as socioeconomically disadvantaged or rural areas. In many education systems there are bonuses for teaching in these zones. For example, in France, schools that serve socioeconomically disadvantaged students are considered Priority Education Zones (Zones d’éducation prioritaire (ZEP)). Teachers who work in ZEP schools are paid a salary bonus (Cros and Obin, 2003). In Bolivia there is an extra pay for teaching in rural schools. A problem that arises is that sometimes, with the growth of urban areas some rural schools are absorbed by the urban area while the government still considers it a rural school (Urquiola and Vegas, 2005).

In education there are also hidden shortages (Santiago, 2002). This happens when schools cannot fill positions with the adequate profiles of workers (for example mathematics teachers). According to Cooper and Alvarado (2006) there is a difference between qualified teachers and quality teachers. While
teachers who meet specific licensure and certification requirements are part of the first group, the second one includes those teachers who positively influence student learning.

In the recruitment process the employer lacks information regarding the potential quality of the candidates who apply to a position. It is difficult to predict who among the qualified teachers is going to be a quality teacher by only observing certain characteristics such as education, experience or academic ability (Santiago, 2002). In fact, teachers with similar observable characteristics can differ in their teaching quality (Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain, 2000).

From a principal-agent approach, this situation where the teacher (the agent) has hidden characteristics that cannot be observed by the employer (the principal) can lead to an adverse selection problem (Campbell, 2006). To illustrate this problem we can imagine that there are two candidates for the same job. Candidate A is an unproductive worker and candidate B is a productive worker. If the employer could identify this difference she could offer different salaries based on the candidates characteristics (higher for B than for A). But because she cannot do this, the only solution to the problem for the employer that minimizes her risks is to offer to both workers the salary corresponding to the less productive worker (Morduchowicz, 2009). In other words, the adverse selection problem makes that the incentives are such that the compensation is based on the least qualified agents (Campbell, 2006). If salaries were the only relevant variable in the decision of taking the job the most productive workers would refuse working for the offered salaries (Morduchowicz, 2009). As shown later, compensation is not the only relevant variable to choose teaching as a profession.

The apparent solutions to the problem of teacher shortages could be divided in those that can be implemented in the short run and those that are long-run policies. In the short run the employer can relax the requirements needed for teaching. Some scholars argue that certification requirements could be eliminated and that in-service control and accountability should be enhanced (and not pre-service
controls) (Ballou and Podgursky, 1998b). Although this would help to balance supply and demand it translates into hiring candidates with less preparation or expertise than ideally needed (Santiago, 2002).

The National Commission on Teaching for America’s Future (1996) and Darling-Hammond (1997) support another vision that postulates that it is necessary to improve pre-service teacher education programs and to increase entrance standards and requirements. Stoel and Thant (2002) study the teachers’ professional careers in Australia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, Portugal, United Kingdom and United States. They find that strict requirements regarding years of study, knowledge and certification and the recruitment step are more important than accountability and evaluation systems related to teacher performance.

Other apparent solutions in the short run, but on the demand-side, are increasing class sizes or assigning more classes to each teacher. Both might harm quality. Regarding the first policy it has been argued that students in smaller classes receive more attention and that teachers keep track of students (Glass and Smith, 1979; Glass, Cahen, Smith and Filby 1982; Mitchell, Carson and Badarak, 1989; Krueger, 2000). Smaller classes are considered friendlier environments as they have less distractions and teachers might have time to develop out-of-class activities (Santiago, 2002). Nevertheless, other scholars argue that the most important factor for raising student achievement is not class size but teacher quality (Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain, 2000). After reviewing the studies on this topic Hanushek (1986 and 1998) and Odden (1990) found that reducing class size does not systematically lead to better results and that when it does, the effect is modest (not statistically significant).

In the long run, one solution in order to attract and recruit more talented individuals might be offering internships and mentoring programs that provided valuable training and experience to new teachers (Liu, Kardos, Kauffman, Peske, and Moore Johnson, 2000). Induction programs appear to be important in the international comparative analysis conducted by Stoel and Thant (2002). In Japan, for example, the mentoring program lasts a year and is mandatory. In Hong Kong, each school organizes its
own induction program. In France each new teacher is paired for two years with a senior teacher who is her mentor (Stoel and Thant, 2002). In the United Kingdom there is an individualized induction program for each new teacher. Moreover, in this country, the Teacher Training Agency helps novice teachers to use Information and Communications Technologies in class (Santiago, 2002).

In most of the countries that were surveyed by Stoel and Thant (2002) teachers have a probationary period of one to three years. After this period they are generally tenured. Moreover, in these countries, in general there is also differentiation of teachers into ranks based on education degrees, years of study and teaching experience. In some of the countries it is merit based. For example in France the rank is determined by the results in a national exam for teachers. The United Kingdom has established leadership ranks: Advanced Skills Teachers are in charge of sharing best practices with their colleagues (Stoel and Thant, 2002).

Also in the long run, another alternative could be redesigning the compensation scheme, increasing salaries and improving working conditions in order to make teaching a more competitive profession (Santiago, 2002; Ballou and Podgursky, 1997; Murnane, Singer, Willet, Kemple, and Olsen, 1991). Although these options are discussed later in this study, the United Kingdom provides an example. There are bonuses for students who study to teach in specific subjects such as mathematics or sciences. In the United States the Student Loan Cancellation/Deferment Options allow teachers who commit to serve in low-income schools or subject matter shortage to cancel or defer federal student loans (Santiago, 2002). Some education systems decided to offer a competitive starting salary in order to attract good teachers (Stoel and Thant, 2002; Barber and Mourshed, 2007).

Recruitment problems and teacher shortages could also be linked to the low status and the lack of appeal of teaching. Dobb (1973) states that in a class society there is a tendency to consider unpleasant those jobs that are bad compensated and to consider respectable or honorable those professions that are better paid. Although salaries might play a role, the lack of in-service training, peer instruction, evaluation
and rewards for more productive workers could also make teaching a low status occupation (Santiago, 2002; Cooper and Alvarado, 2006).

Besides the aforementioned policies that intend to deal with teacher shortages in the long run there are alternative certification programs that also aim at solving this problem (Santiago, 2002). These pathways are shorter and less costly than the traditional college route. They usually require having earned a bachelor’s degree, participating in a special training program and passing a state licensing exam (Kane, Rockoff, and Staiger, 2006).

One example is Teach for America, a program that recruits young college graduates who commit to teaching for two years in understaffed urban or rural schools in low-income school districts (Santiago, 2002; Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb and Wyckoff, 2005). Another alternative pathway is the New York City Teaching Fellows program. It was launched in 2000 and consists of a two-year coursework that prepares teachers for working hard-to-staff or for teaching specific subjects, such as mathematics, science and special education (Boyd et al., 2005).

The studies show that the effects of alternative pathways into teaching are unclear. Boyd et al. (2005) and Kane, Rockoff, and Staiger (2006) compare the impact on students’ test score gains of alternative routes into teaching such as New York City Teaching Fellows and Teach for America and conventional teacher training in New York. In the model run by Boyd et al. (2005) the authors find that traditional teachers and Teach for America teachers show similar test score gains in mathematics, while those taught by New York City Teaching Fellows teachers show weaker gains. The students’ test score gains for English Language Arts were greater for traditional teachers than for the alternative routes’ teachers. Even though differences in test scores were found, they were not statistically significant.

The authors control by teaching experience, and by characteristics of the student population and of the schools and parents’ support. This technique intends to isolate the effect of one independent variable on the dependent variable from the effects of the other independent variables on the dependent
variable. The experience factor appears to have an interesting effect. By the third year, in mathematics, teachers from the New York City Teaching Fellows program outperformed traditional teachers. Yet, the authors also point out that experience did not have an impact on teacher’s performance after the third year. The study also shows that New York City Teaching Fellows teachers and traditional teachers showed similar teacher retention rates, higher than Teach for America teachers (Boyd et al., 2005; Kane, Rockoff, and Staiger, 2006).

Raymond, Fletcher, and Luque (2001) find that those students who were taught by Teach for America teachers in Houston between 1995 and 2002 obtained higher test score gains in mathematics than those who were taught traditionally by certified teachers. Nevertheless, Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin, and Vasquez Heilig (2005) use the same data to run a regression analysis that shows that certified teachers have better effects on student achievement than non-certified teachers. When they control for other variables such as education degrees, teacher experience and student characteristics, uncertified Teach for America teachers were less effective than certified teachers as well. In fact, Teach for America teachers’ performance was similar to uncertified non-Teach for America teachers. Another interesting result is that Teach for America recruits who become certified teachers after two or three years perform as well as certified teachers. The results also show, as in Boyd et al. (2005) and Kane, Rockoff, and Staiger (2006) that attrition is higher for Teach for America teachers than for the rest: most of them leave within a three-year period (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005).

Alternative certification programs have been growing during the last decades and not only in the United States. In Latin America, Teach for America expanded and has its versions in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru. Even though they appear to be a solution to shortages, they still focus on ex ante qualifications as the traditional way of recruiting teachers. In order to improve teacher effectiveness education systems could put more effort on on-the-job training certification programs rather than into initial certification policies (Kane, Rockoff, and Staiger, 2006).
II.3. Promotion

II.3.i. Seniority pay and the problem of attrition

Seniority and academic degrees have been traditionally the variables that allow for promotion and affect compensation. Education systems usually consider seniority as an indicator of experience and, eventually, of better performance. Empirical studies show that in general teachers with few years into this profession (less than five years of experience) are not as effective in raising student achievement as more senior teachers (Kain and Singleton, 1996; Darling-Hammond, 1999; Boyd et al., 2005; Kane, Rockoff, and Staiger, 2006). Nevertheless, researchers have shown that experience in the classroom has an effect during the first years, but then it does not have any statistically significant relation to academic achievement (Rosenholtz, 1986; Darling-Hammond, 1999; Rivkin, Hanushek, and Kain, 2000; Hanushek, 2010).

During the first years in her position, the teacher learns how to manage a class and to help students to learn, and develops her own working method (Staiger and Rockoff, 2010). Linking compensation to seniority is based on the assumption that the more experienced a teacher is, the better she performs. This has been widely criticized because it compensates a better productivity that is not verified (Hanushek and Rivkin, 2007; Morduchowicz, 2009; Hanushek, 2010). Thus, the relation between experience and teacher effectiveness is not linear but curvilinear: teachers do not always perform better as time goes by (Darling-Hammond, 1999).

Seniority pay might not reflect productivity, but could diminish the risk of attrition (Darling-Hammond, 2003). As said, research shows that teachers’ effectiveness increases during the first years in the profession (Kain and Singleton, 1996; Darling-Hammond, 1999; Boyd et al., 2005; Kane, Rockoff, and Staiger, 2006). If teachers left during this period of time, when they improve substantially in performing their tasks, the education system would not benefit from the investment in novice teachers – they would leave just after they reached their full potential. In other words, if seniority pay was
concentrated only during the first years of the career and teachers left the system within a five-year period, there would be a drain of financial and human resources.

In fact, it appears that there is a U-shaped relation between years of experience and teacher retention. In the first years in the profession, teacher attrition could be high due to false expectations regarding the profession, adverse experiences and alternative and more attractive opportunities. Then attrition diminishes because the worker builds her professional career around a specific job or sector and thus the change is costly. According to Murnane and Olsen (1989a) the opportunity costs, which are “associated with opportunities that are forgone by not putting one’s resources to their highest value use” (Pindyck and Rubinfeld, 1995) are one of the key elements that determine permanence in the teacher’s profession. In other words, preparation and tasks are so specific that once the teacher worked for more than five or ten years it is very difficult for her to change to another profession.

When the age of retirement approaches the U-shape curve goes up again (Santiago, 2002). Waterreus (2007) says that seniority pay could compensate a non-attractive career path. Without it there would not be any monetary recognition along the years to stay in the profession and the risk of attrition would be higher.

According to Darling-Hammond (2003) there are four major factors that affect teachers to leave the school or the education system:

- **Salaries.** In the US teachers’ salaries are 20% below the salaries of other professions with similar education and training.

- **Working conditions.** High-poverty schools have poorer facilities, less access to textbooks and supplies, fewer administrative support and larger class sizes than more affluent schools. In some school systems more experienced teachers have also the right to choose the schools where they teach. Most prefer working in schools with higher-achieving students. Therefore, easier-to-teach children attract experienced teachers (Hanushek and Rivkin, 2007).
• **Teacher preparation.** Those teachers who have followed a longer preparation tend to stay in the profession. The author also finds that those who lack adequate initial preparation have a greater tendency to leave.

• **Mentoring support.** Well-designed programs raise retention (Darling-Hammond, 2003).

Salaries might be the reason why individuals are attracted to teaching and this is discussed later in this study, but research indicates that good working conditions are also important in the decision to stay in the profession (Santiago, 2002; Darling Hammond, 2003; Cooper and Alvarado, 2006; Hanushek and Rivkin, 2007). Non-pecuniary benefits such as longer holidays relative to other professions, flexibility to take temporary leave, short and predictable working hours and higher-stability should also be taken into account when analyzing the teachers’ labor market (Hernani Limarino, 2005; Podgursky, 2010).

**II.3.ii. Continuous Teacher Training**

The first information problem discussed before was related to hiring and adverse selection. Once a person is hired, the second problem with information arises: how to be sure that the worker is performing well? In theory, her supervisor could always observe the results of the task. In practice, she could be incapable of doing so, and even if she could observe the action there could be information that the employee hides (Campbell, 2006). When it is difficult to supervise the action or the employee can hide information there is a moral hazard situation.

The origin of this expression can be found in the insurance industry. It refers to the behavior that can follow individuals who have insurance coverage. Because they are covered, they have an incentive to take fewer precautions and thus increase the probability of the accident covered by the insurance. Therefore, this concerns the insurer because it can result in more accidents and more claims. A solution put into practice by car insurance and health insurance companies is sorting the individuals by risk. For
example, drivers with bad record pay higher premiums. If they improve their driving the premium lowers which in an incentive to take preventive care (Campbell, 2006).

In the case of education, schools do not go into bankruptcy and ineffective teachers cannot be easily fired if the students do not achieve high results. Moreover, an ineffective teacher and an effective one (measured by student’s academic improvement in standardized tests, for example) earn the same. Teachers could choose not to make the effort to enhance students' performance and they would not be penalized (Morduchowicz, 2009).

In order to deal with these problems and because teachers have different professional needs along their professional careers one solution is introducing the option of continuous professional development programs (Terigi, 2010). This author says that we are moving from a professional development scheme that consists of two parts (initial training and in-service training) to a continuous and integral training, which includes initial training, mentoring programs and professional development training. In general, this training is also necessary for promotion and achieving hierarchical positions. Teacher training can also determine promotion. Terigi (2010) warns that when teacher training is linked to compensation the goal of training could be misunderstood as it could only be seen as a salary increase strategy. According to Avalos (2001) and Vaillant (2005) in-service training has a remedial function that compensates the failures of recruiting or initial training.

The effects of on-the-job or in-service training are mixed because there is a diverse range of programs and circumstances under which they take place. They usually consist of workshops or seminars (Santiago, 2002). Cohen and Hill (1997) analyze a survey administered to a random sample of Californian mathematics teachers and their students in elementary schools. They find that students of those teachers who had participated in workshops performed significantly better in mathematics assessments.

Angrist and Lavy (2001) focus on a specific teachers training program in Jerusalem, Israel. The program was designed for elementary school teachers and aimed at improving teaching language skills
and mathematics. Both religious and non-religious schools participated. In order to study the effect of the program the authors matched groups of students from schools that participated in the program with those in schools that did not. This technique allowed having control groups and compare results. They find that the program had a positive effect in the students’ test scores in the non-religious schools. In the religious schools the results were not clear but it could be due to the fact that in these schools the implementation had begun later and at a smaller scale.

II.4. Teachers compensation

II.4.i. The single salary schedule

The single or uniform salary structure is the most widespread teacher pay scheme. Under this scheme all teachers with the same years of experience and educational credentials earn equal (Odden and Kelley, 1997; Santiago, 2002; Harris, 2007; Morduchowicz, 2009; Podgursky, 2010).

On the one hand, according to Harris (2007) there are a number of advantages of the single salary schedule:

• **Pedagogical freedom.** Teachers can try different pedagogical approaches without incurring into financial risks. When a teacher starts teaching with a new method the results might not be as expected until she masters the new approach or realizes that it does not work. If pay was linked to results, this would be risky.

• **Collegiality.** Teachers can help each other and this does not benefit or diminish anyone’s compensation.

• **Objectivity.** The single salary schedule is clear and impartial.

• **Minimal monitoring.** Years of experience and degrees are relatively easy to control and the cost of obtaining this information is low.
• **Predictability.** Employers and employees are able to anticipate the resources involved. This is useful for planning educational and personal finances.

On the other hand, Harris (2007) compiles certain challenges or disadvantages of the single salary schedule:

• **Lack of incentive for hard work.** Because there is no link between performance and pay, teachers are not pushed to put effort in order to excel.

• **Recruitment.** Employers cannot differentiate good from bad-performing teachers. As said before, adverse selection problems arise.

• **Inappropriate rewards.** Research shows that experience and education do not guarantee quality teachers. Therefore the single salary schedule rewards aspects that might be necessary but not sufficient in order to improve education quality.

The single salary schedule does not allow paying more to those teachers who put more effort, have more skills or competencies and whose students reach better results. This could have a negative effect on attracting and retaining the more effective teachers and jeopardize education quality and equity (Odden and Kelley, 1997; Liu et al. 2000; Harris, 2007; Morduchowicz, 2011).

Rewarding experience and educational credentials as the single salary schedule does would be rational if those two variables were strong predictors of teacher productivity. Unfortunately, research does not support this hypothesis. As it was noted before, studies show that teaching experience can have an effect on productivity during the first years, but then it does not have any impact (Rosenholtz, 1986; Darling-Hammond, 1999; Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain, 2000; Hanushek, 2010).

Regarding teacher education Hanushek (2003) reviews econometric studies of the production function in education in the United States. The standard hypothesis of this approach is that there is a
group of inputs that positively affect the results of education. In other words, these studies estimate the relation between different resources such as facilities, teachers, salaries, administrative staff, and student performance (measured by test scores). In particular, Hanushek (2003) shows that there are 41 production function analysis out of 376 that estimate the impact of teacher education on value-added models of student achievement. Focusing on achievement gains allows controlling for initial differences among the groups of students. None of the reviewed studies show a statistically significant positive effect of teacher education on student achievement and ten of them find a negative effect (Hanushek, 2003).

Moreover, the single salary schedule may hold down teacher salaries (Hanushek, 2010). This author appeals to a simple political economy model to support his hypothesis. Teacher salaries are not the product of market forces, but the result of political negotiations between teachers’ unions and the government. They can be seen as the product of pressures from constituencies, legislative mandates, past collective bargaining agreements and other political and institutional factors with little consideration for efficiency (Podgursky, 2010). In this negotiation process, politicians must defend the idea that salary increases are linked to better student results. But because there is a single salary schedule, a pay increase would affect all teachers regardless of their performance. Therefore, large salary increases are difficult because the factors that determine pay are not related to teacher effectiveness and effective teachers receive the same increase as ineffective ones (Hanushek 2010 and 2011).

Another issue regarding the single salary schedule is its relation with equity because it does not contemplate differences between fields, teachers’ effectiveness, and schools. First, the single salary schedule eliminates pay differentials by field, although scholars argue that there are major differences in human capital between, say, a second grade teacher and a high school chemistry teacher. Therefore, their opportunity cost of teaching differs. Based on the 2003-2004 SASS, Podgursky (2010) shows that most school administrators manifest that it is easy to fill vacancies in elementary education and that is very difficult to find mathematics, science and special education teachers. If the market determined teachers’
salaries, elementary teachers’ salaries would fall relative to science, mathematics and special education teachers’ compensation. This also differentiates teaching from other professions. For example, medical doctors earn different salaries according to their specialty (Santiago, 2002).

Second, value-added literature found that there is variation in teacher effectiveness (Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain, 2005; Aaronson, Barrow and Sander 2007). However, single salary schedules compensate equally teachers with different effectiveness. If teachers were rewarded according to performance there could be two consequences. On the one hand, teachers would have an incentive to raise student results (if that was the performance measure). Also, it would attract people to teaching who could meet certain results (Podgursky and Springer, 2007; Podgursky, 2010). This is why, under the current scheme, raising all teacher salaries would not only be expensive but also inefficient. In other words, with a general raise, new groups of effective teachers could enter into the profession and it would help to retain high-quality teachers who could otherwise leave. Nevertheless, this would also retain the lower quality teachers and also let other ineffective teachers entering into teaching (Hanushek and Rivkin, 2007). Moreover, paying effective teachers more than the ineffective ones and identifying and replacing ineffective teachers are challenges in highly unionized environments as education (Hanushek, 2011). In conclusion, if working conditions vary across schools, equalizing teacher pay alters teacher quality. In order to equalize the latter one answer could be to vary teacher pay as shown in the next section (Podgursky, 2010).

Third, under a single salary schedule teachers earn the same whether they work in affluent or high-poverty schools. Yet, in the latter, they face fewer pedagogical resources and work with students and families who are socioeconomically disadvantaged (Darling-Hammond, 2003). Moreover, as said before, seniority often gives the teachers the right to transfer to schools with better working conditions. This is an incentive for more experienced and more educated teachers to move away from the schools where they are most needed (Podgursky, 2010).
There is another paradox regarding seniority: because of the design of the teacher career structure usually there are incentives for experienced teachers to leave the classrooms in order to develop their careers outside of them in school management positions (Terigi, 2010). Scholars have found that students who are taught by novice or inexperienced teachers have lower achievement gains than those who are taught by more experienced teachers. One of the policies aiming at preventing this to happen are career ladders, discussed later, in which teachers advance in their professional careers while continue with teaching tasks (Hanushek, Kain, O’Brien and Rivkin 2005; Boyd et al., 2005; Aaronson, Barrow and Sander, 2007).

II.4.ii. Compensation level and relative pay

According to Murnane, Singer and Willett (1991) pay is one of the key components in education policy in order to attract and retain talented teachers. The classical model of the labor market states that paying teachers a determined salary level would attract individuals with certain abilities and knowledge who would otherwise choose another professional path with a higher pay. In other words the opportunity cost of becoming a teacher is high for an individual who could earn more in another profession. Starting salaries might play an important role attracting talented individuals. Unfortunately, there is evidence that corroborates the hypothesis that higher salaries are related to higher-quality teacher and better student achievement and also evidence that rejects it.

On the one hand, Loeb and Page (2000) find that data partially corroborates the classical model’s hypothesis. They use state-level data from the 1960-1990 Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS) from the United States to measure the effect of teachers' salaries on student performance. They control the analysis by the alternative labor market opportunities, state unemployment rate, state median income, the percentage of individuals below the poverty line and the percentage of individuals who are immigrants. When they run their regression they find a statistically significant effect of teacher wages on student
performance (measured by high-school dropout rates and college attendance rates). Figlio (1997) finds more conclusive results. Using data from the United States’ SASS from 19 metropolitan areas, he finds a statistically significant positive relation between secondary schools teacher salaries and secondary school teachers’ quality. He measures the latter variable by undergraduate college selectivity (whether the teacher graduates from a college rated as highly difficult or more competitive by Lovejoy’s guide to colleges) and subject matter expertise (whether the teacher majored in mathematics, science, computer science or engineering).

On the other hand, other studies do not find any significant impact of the salary level on learning or teacher quality (Ballou and Podgursky, 1997; Hanushek, Kain and Rivkin, 1999). In the literature review on this topic conducted by Hanushek and Rivkin (2004) they find that out of 118 studies, 73% conclude that the effect of teacher pay on student achievement was statistically insignificant; 20% that it was positive and significant and the rest find that it was negative and insignificant. When analyzing a subset of 17 studies that use the valued-added approach, 82% find that is statistically insignificant and the rest that it is positive and significant.

According to Hanushek (2010) the relation between pay and teaching quality is not as straightforward as some scholars argue: identifying effective teachers is complex due to the structure of the education systems and labor markets for teachers. Increasing salaries is not necessarily going to improve academic achievement because there is not an explicit link between teacher pay and students’ outcomes (Hanushek, Kain and Rivkin, 1999). Ballou and Podgursky (1997) use data from the United States National Center for Education Statistics. They measure quality of teachers using the teachers’ academic performance in college and whether they had earned a degree in the subject they taught. They find that there is little evidence that better salaries improve the quality of teachers. Hanushek, Kain and Rivkin (1999) use panel data from the University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) Texas School Project, which contains data from this state’s school system to inquire how changes in the teachers’ salary schedules affect
teacher quality. In order to study the effects of teacher pay, first they focus on the relation between teacher certification test results and starting salaries for four cohorts of new teachers. Then they estimate the relation between student academic achievement and salary levels. After controlling for demographics effects they find that there is not a statistically significant effect of teacher pay in teachers’ quality and student performance.

Darling-Hammond (1999) conducts a comparative study on student achievement and trajectories for states in the United States that are geographically close but that implemented different teacher policies, such as Connecticut and New Jersey. At the moment when she conducted her research New Jersey’s teacher salaries were the highest in the country. This compensation level was not linked to additional requirements in the hiring process or to the possibility to pay more to the most qualified teachers. New Jersey did not have rigorous licensing examinations. Moreover, it did not require a major or a master’s degree in the field that the teacher was going to teach and it did not provide a mentoring program as Connecticut has been implementing since 1986. In New Jersey there was a lower proportion of teachers in mentoring programs, in professional development programs and holding full certification plus a major in the field they were teaching than in Connecticut. Darling-Hammond (1999) says that those states that coupled higher teacher salaries with other policies such as higher requirements to entering the profession, mentoring programs or in-service training improved teacher quality. She finds similar results when she compares North Carolina to Georgia and West Virginia to Virginia.

Using a more qualitative methodology Liu et al. (2000) interview 50 teachers from Massachusetts’ public and charter schools (publicly funded and privately run schools) who were in the first or second year of teaching and worked in elementary-, middle- and high-schools both in urban or suburban areas. The goal was to inquire the meaning that money has for new teachers and the role it plays in their decisions to enter or leave the profession. The authors find that the primary incentive to enter into teaching is not money but intrinsic rewards such as the enjoyment of working with pedagogy, performing
a meaningful work (for instance, contributing to society) and working with children. According to the researchers who performed the study and to Ballou and Podgursky (1997) the secondary role the teachers give to the starting salary could be explained by the fact that the teachers’ labor market has other factors such as seniority-based pay, tenure, and certification requirements linked to compensation that reduce the effects of the starting salary as an incentive for entering into the profession.

The respondents pointed out that among the costs of choosing to teach they identified the opportunity costs. According to them, when they chose teaching they knew that they opted for a profession that pays less than other professions with similar training. Also there are tuition and preparation costs (Liu et al., 2000). Thus, the authors named teaching the profession of low salaries and high costs. Although most of the interviewees answered that money is not an important issue related to entering the profession, they named low salaries as a factor that worries them regarding whether they will stay in teaching (Liu et al., 2000).

Yet, teachers do not face the aforementioned opportunity costs everywhere. Stoel and Thant (2002) show that in Japan and in Germany teachers’ salaries are comparable to university professors’. In Australia the starting salary for teachers is similar to that of accountants, economists and business graduates. Nevertheless, the increase along the years is different: after five years teachers’ salaries rose by 55% and the rest, 100%. A similar trend happens in the United Kingdom and in Hong Kong (Stoel and Thant, 2002).

Podgursky (2010) focuses on relative teacher pay which is the comparison of teacher wages with other professions’. This analysis is important because salary increases in the teaching activity relative to other professions could attract and retain talented teachers (Santiago, 2002). Dolton (1990) studies the decisions of entering the teaching profession and finds that when relative wages diminish for teaching, the less likely for graduates to choose that career. On the other hand, Hanushek and Pace (1995), based on the High School and Beyond longitudinal data set, follow American high-school seniors from 1980 to 1986.
They conclude that relative earning does not have a large or statistically significant impact on who decides to become a teacher.

Nevertheless, Morduchowicz (2009) warns that this relation is not as direct as it sounds. Each worker has a minimum compensation level for which she would accept to take a job (called reservation wage). Under this salary she would reject a job offer or, if she was employed, abandon her position. The reservation wage of the high-quality human resources that the education system would like to attract might be higher that the teachers’ compensation the education system is willing to pay.

It is not clear whether teachers are relatively well paid. This differs not only for every country, but also there are methodological discussions regarding which are the comparable professions and how to measure teacher pay. When comparing wages from different professions, Podgursky (2010) warns that there are pecuniary and non-pecuniary elements that need to be considered and these might change over time. For instance, one of the problems when doing these comparisons is the number of annual work hours in teaching relative to other activities because annual work hours on site are lower for teachers (Podgursky and Tongrut, 2006). Liang (2000) studied teacher relative pay in 12 Latin American countries and Hernani Limarino (2005) expanded and updated Liang’s data. Both find that when comparing the hourly salary teachers have higher incomes than other workers. Nevertheless, when contrasting the total income the conclusions might differ and this could be important because the reservation wage of teachers could be related to the total compensation instead of the hourly salary (Vegas and Umansky, 2005; Morduchowicz, 2009).

Ballou and Podgursky (1997) say that teachers are generally well paid in relation to other comparable professions. Morduchowicz (2002) argues the contrary for seven countries of Latin America. According to Hanushek and Rivkin (2007) and Hanushek (2010) the wages of teachers in relation to other college graduates have fallen since 1940 in the United States, but there are differences by gender. In the case of men, teacher salaries relative to other college-educated non-teacher salaries fell between 1940 and
1960; then they remained roughly constant. For women they were high at first and then fell continuously. The rationale, called the crowding thesis, is that as long as there were barriers to enter to other professions, well educated and talented women became teachers because it was one of the few options they had (Podgursky, 2010). When these obstacles were eliminated through different legislation women could choose other professions that also paid relatively more than teaching. Therefore, women teachers’ compensation started to compete with other professions’ salaries (Corcoran, Evans and Schwab, 2002; Santiago, 2002; Morduchowicz, 2009).

Different scholars tried to study the crowding thesis with data. Corcoran, Evans and Schwab (2002) use four longitudinal surveys on high school’s graduation cohorts from 1957 to 1992 (the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study (WLS) for the class of 1957 conducted in 1964, the Project Talent for the classes from 1960 to 1964 conducted between 1971 and 1974, the National Longitudinal Study of High School Class of 1972 conducted in 1979 and the sophomore cohort High School and Beyond for the class of 1982 conducted in 1992). The authors find a slight decline in the academic ability of the average new female teacher (measured by high-school test scores) during this period. They also find an important drop in the share of women in the highest academic quintile who become teachers when they compare 1992 to 1964. In the case of men, they find the opposite trend. Hoxby and Leigh (2004) replicate the study for the period 1963-2000 and also find a lower percentage of women in the highest academic quintile who opt for teaching in recent years. This research shows a “nuanced” version of Podgursky’s crowding thesis: teacher quality at the median has not declined sharply; the big loss is in the upper academic population (Podgursky, 2010).

Stinebrickner (1998) and Ingersoll and Smith (2003) based on the SASS and the Teacher Follow-up Survey in the United States find that higher relative salaries reduce the number of teachers leaving the profession. However, this might not be the case for all teachers. Podgursky, Monroe and Watson (2004) use panel data from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education administrative files
and observe that paying higher salaries would not have the same effect in the case of mathematics and science teachers that in elementary school teachers because of the higher opportunity cost of the first group.

Evidence shows that teachers who are paid more relative to other activities stay longer in the profession and that those teachers with higher opportunity costs stay less time in teaching (Murnane and Olsen, 1989b and 1990; Dolton and van der Klaauw, 1999). In other words, the individuals with higher academic ability teach for fewer years than the rest of the teachers (Murnane and Olsen, 1990; Stinebrickner, 2001). Stinebrickner (2001) measures this using the National Longitudinal Study of High School Class of 1972 from the United States which includes 22,652 interviews to students who were expected to graduate from high-school that year and data of the results in the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), a standardized high-school exit exam in the United States. He also uses follow-up surveys that were taken in 1973, 1974, 1976, 1979 and 1986 and supplemental questionnaires administered to 832 individuals who became teachers. According to the researcher it is reasonable to suppose that results in the SAT are correlated to teaching effectiveness. A more flexible wage structure that allowed increasing wages to those teachers with better options in non-teaching jobs could be more effective in retaining high quality teachers than traditional teacher career structures (Stinebrickner, 2001; Santiago, 2002).

These debates, criticisms, and challenges regarding the single salary schedule and the concerns regarding equality of pay for different effort, skills, competencies or academic results derived into the exploration of a group of alternative pay schemes that are the focus of the following section.

**II.4.iii. Merit pay**

Merit pay refers to the compensation that is based either on what students achieve (outcome-based pay) or on what teachers do (behavior-based pay). Here I follow the theoretical framework developed by Harris (2007). The idea behind merit pay is that a teacher should be totally or partially paid
according to the quality of her performance (Educational Research Service, 1979). Merit pay introduces incentives that reward teachers according to performance.

The first experience of merit pay took place in England in 1862. The program known as “payment by results” compensated teachers based on student attendance and the number of students passing the exams. It lasted for 35 years. Nevertheless, there were criticisms such as the impossibility of the tests to capture all the effort put into teaching, the lack of reliability on tests due to random variations that were not linked to teacher’s efforts or the incentives that this scheme created for teachers to focus on the best students and to teach only contents contemplated in the exams (Harris, 2007).

In the United States merit pay started in 1908 in Newton, Massachusetts (English, 1992). By 1918 half of the school districts had a merit pay system but lasted only for a few years (Harris, 2007). In 1957, when the launch of the Soviet Union’s satellite Sputnik I raised concerns regarding the education in the United States, there was a comeback of merit pay and approximately 10% of the school districts implemented merit pay systems, although again they lasted for few years. Of all the school districts that had implemented this scheme in 1959 only one still had it a decade later (Harris, 2007). In 1983 the report *A Nation at Risk* described a portrait of the education in the United States. It argued that in order to improve education quality teacher salaries had to be “professionally competitive, market-sensitive, and performance-based” (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 30). This report put again the focus of scholars and policy makers on teachers pay. The following sections examine the two approaches of merit pay: outcome-based pay and behavior-based pay.

**II.4.iii.a. Outcome-based pay**

Some policy-makers suggest changing the single salary schedule for a compensation scheme that takes into account gains in student test scores, linking pay to what students achieve (Santiago, 2002; Harris, 2007). Outcome-based pay was introduced in the United States education system in the 1980s.
Because it is based on results, the scheme relies on the assumption that high-achieving students have teachers a) who possess certain capacities and b) that those capacities are the necessary ones in order to obtain good performing students (Morduchowicz, 2009). In other words, the assumption is that coupling a definition of clear goals to rewards attached to the achievement of those goals will motivate employees and promote accountability in the public sector. Moreover it allows workers to increase their earnings without having to wait for promotion (Montoya and Graham, 2007).

Among the advantages, Harris (2007) points out the following:

- **Pedagogical freedom.** Putting the focus on results make teachers free to teach in the manner they find more effective.

- **Objectivity.** Teachers whose students obtain greater gains and better results (measured by standardized tests, for example) receive a higher pay.

- **Assistance.** Because the goal of the teachers is clearly set, teachers who are not likely to reach their goals in certain areas have an incentive to seek for assistance to improve.

- **Political support.** The focus on accountability might have public opinion the support.

Lazear (2000) compares different K-12 education payment schemes in the United States and finds that outcome-based pay in education raises more the overall productivity than paying for teacher certification, seniority, etc. His explanation is that outcome-based schemes attract and retain only those individuals who are good at performing a given task and who know that can work in a way that allows them to earn more than those who do not achieve certain goals.

Nevertheless, in practice outcome-based pay schemes face criticisms. These make that teaching might not be considered a profession where these schemes can be easily applied:

- **Measurement problems.**
Education is not a homogeneous output that can be measured in a straightforward way. At first, outcome-based compensation schemes focused only in absolute test scores. But because external factors such as parental support or socioeconomic characteristics affect academic achievement, the measurement started to focus on the improvement in test scores using value-added achievement techniques. These intend to isolate individual teacher contributions. Although in the last decades outcome-based pay started using value-added systems, there are factors outside of the teacher’s control that might penalize her good work. According to English (1992), the problem is tackling a multidimensional problem with only one tool.

Standardized tests are useful, but they do not cover all the goals or subjects of the education system such as solidarity or music, respectively (Santiago, 2002; Harris, 2007; Podgursky and Springer, 2007; Montoya and Graham; 2007).

It focuses on the role of the teacher and its group of students while the students’ performance is not only based on what teachers do. The output in education is a joint product of different contributions (Murnane and Cohen, 1986; Vaillant, 2008).

- *Opportunistic behaviors.* Rewarding teachers based only on students’ standardized tests could lead to opportunistic, perverse and non-cooperative behaviors such as teaching to the test and concentrating on a narrowed curriculum, excluding students who need more attention or with disabilities, and lowering teamwork (Santiago, 2002; Harris, 2007; Podgursky and Springer, 2007; Montoya and Graham; 2007).

- *Discouragement effects.*

Having the information of the performance of a students' group along the years could also be discouraging for teachers: if they see that they did not improve much during several years, teachers could give up and diminish their effort (Harris, 2007).
• It is difficult to explain why one teacher is more effective than another one. Administrators cannot always clearly explain to the teachers who did not receive the bonus, which actions should follow. Thus, outcome-based pay schemes do not raise the overall quality of education but only reward certain good teachers (Murnane and Cohen, 1986).

• Harris (2007) says that, on the one hand, establishing clear goals linked to pay is an advantage. But on the other hand, if many teachers reach the goal it can be expensive for the education system; also, it can be discouraging if very few teachers reach it. Moreover, teachers could even work in order not to reach the goal so the threshold is lowered and then perform better in order for most teachers to achieve it. An alternative he proposes is a relative ranking system. Instead of setting a standard, teachers who obtain the bonus are determined by a ranking ordered by performance. This would protect teachers from external shocks that affect the education system and some students’ outcomes.

On top of these limitations, and possibly because of them, teachers’ unions generally obstruct outcome-based pay (Santiago, 2002). Nevertheless, these schemes have been growing in the United States (Podgursky and Springer, 2007).

There are two complementary systems that reward outcomes. The first one is an individual scheme and the second one a group scheme. According to Harris (2007) an individual rewards system has the advantage of being a strong incentive for low performers to improve because each person is accountable on her own. However, the agency theory warns that these schemes can have unintended consequences such as undermining cooperation between the workers (Montoya and Graham, 2007). In the case of education, this could be particularly harmful for novice teachers who tend to need help from more
experienced teachers. Also, what one teacher does has an effect on what other teachers can do, thus cooperation counts (Harris, 2007).

Group reward systems recognize that education is a collaborative activity and need a collective effort. But it also presents disadvantages. There could be appropriation, recognition and blame situations that could lead to free riding: in a group of high-quality teachers there could be one or a few teachers who put minimal effort but receive the additional pay. In an extreme situation, if all teachers expect their colleagues to be free riders, then nobody would have the incentive to improve. Another challenge is that it could encourage the best teachers in low performing schools to leave and move to better schools. This would drag the best resources from the places where they are most needed (Harris, 2007).

II.4.iii.b. Behavior-based pay

This alternative assumes that if teachers have certain knowledge or abilities then quality of education will improve. Odden and Kelley (1997) call this approach the competency-based pay. This alternative does not reward either the position as in the single salary schedule or the outcomes. Teachers are paid based on what they know and can do (Odden and Kelley, 1997; Harris, 2007). It links compensation to the evaluation and certification of certain teaching aptitudes.

Harris (2007) identifies the following advantages of this system:

• It motivates teachers to improve their teaching skills.

• There is no need to develop measurement methods to take into account control variables such as students’ socioeconomic background.

• It can be used for all the staff. Even the teachers whose areas are not evaluated by standardized tests (music, arts) can be part of this scheme.

Among the challenges, Harris (2007) points out two:
• **Reward of necessary but not sufficient conditions.** Abilities and knowledge can be a necessary condition to improve education quality, but they do not guarantee better results. The necessary and effective teaching abilities and knowledge might differ depending on the group of students and context.

• **Perverse behaviors.** Principals and supervisors could evaluate abilities and knowledge in the class. But this could lead to perverse behaviors. If teachers knew about the evaluation beforehand they could prepare and show to the evaluator a different way of teaching, compared to what they usually do. Also, teachers could concentrate on the measured behaviors and put less effort into non-measured behaviors. If the evaluation was done in the class teachers could encourage harder-to-teach students to leave their classes in order to give a more pleasant lecture.

Despite the advantages and challenges of merit pay in its two alternatives, Morduchowicz (2009) says that the effect of incentives depends on the following elements: the amount of money of the bonus; the design of the program; the other working conditions; and subjective perceptions and values of each individual and potential beneficiary. According to the expectancy theory, employees will respond to the incentive when the following virtuous circle exists: the employees value the incentive (validity), they believe that good performance is the way to receive the reward (instrumentality) and they expect that their effort will make them attain the required performance level (expectancy) (Vroom, 1964; Porter and Lawler, 1968).

**II.4.iv. Career ladders**

Career ladders take into account behavior-based pay. They consist on a series of positions, each of increasing difficulty and responsibility but not necessarily different activities. For instance, some
career ladders make it possible for an outstanding teacher to stay in the classroom instead of offering her a hierarchical or administrative position (as it happens in the traditional career structure). They usually include curriculum development or teacher training for those teachers who are willing to advance in their careers (Odden and Kelley, 1997). Nevertheless, under this scheme, if the teacher does not want to be promoted, there is no monetary and immediate incentive to improve (Morduchowicz, 2009).

In lieu of having an automatic promotion as in a single salary schedule, employees can be promoted to the following higher step of the ladder when they demonstrate that their performance is acceptable and that they are ready to move to the next challenge (Montoya and Graham, 2007). This alternative seeks to identify teachers whose performance meets or exceeds certain standards (Odden and Kelley, 1997). In general, career ladders allow the best performers to achieve a better pay in a shorter period of time than single salary schemes (Montoya and Graham, 2007).

This career structure needs the development of sets of knowledge and competencies that allow the educational administrators to consider what the teachers know and can do. Odden and Kelley (1997) propose three sets of knowledge and competencies:

- **Classroom instructional competencies.** They relate to teaching and learning. They require the assessment of skills and knowledge in subject matter, curriculum and instruction. In the United States, the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), the PRAXIS project and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) developed standards that certify what teachers know for each educational level.

- **School management and leadership competencies.** Running meetings, budgeting, evaluating programs, developing school improvement plans, team management are some of the tasks of an effective school leader.
• *Other education functional tasks competencies.* Besides instructional skills, counseling students or being an expert in curriculum development could be an important skill for teachers.

Because of the focus on knowledge and skills acquisition, it is expected that this scheme encourages training and career development within the organization. Teachers could first focus on classroom instructional competencies. Over time, they could master the second set of skills. Then, they could move to the last group of competencies. This type of structure could link the career stages to financial rewards (Odden and Kelley, 1997).

Unlike outcome-based pay, this alternative does not create competition among teachers. It identifies which competencies the staff should acquire in order to achieve the school goals. It is important to point out that the design of structures might differ among educational systems. They should take into account the organizational and instructional characteristics. Moreover, the competencies might also be different (Odden and Kelley, 1997).

Even though they seem to be an attractive alternative to the single salary schedule the education system would again compensate necessary conditions and not sufficient ones (Mizala and Romaguera, 2005; Morduchowicz, 2011).
III. THE TEACHING CAREER STRUCTURE IN THE CITY OF BUENOS AIRES

In this chapter the goal is to describe the main characteristics of the teaching career in the City of Buenos Aires based on the Teachers’ Statute and its mechanisms regarding hiring, promotion and evaluation. I narrow the analysis to the elementary education in the public sector.

III.1. Characteristics of the City of Buenos Aires education system

Argentina is a federal republic of 40.1 million people located in South America. Its capital, the City of Buenos Aires, has a population of almost 2.9 million people (National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos (INDEC), 2010)). As shown in the following table, it is the jurisdiction with the highest human development index in the country, the lowest illiteracy rate, and all its inhabitants live in urban areas.
Table 1/ Socioeconomic indicators. City of Buenos Aires and Argentina. Year 2010.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>City of Buenos Aires</th>
<th>Argentina</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population. In millions.</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>40.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-age population. In thousands</td>
<td>399.4</td>
<td>8,996.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-age population. As a percentage of total population.</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant population. In thousands</td>
<td>381.8</td>
<td>1,806.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant population. As a percentage of total population.</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiteracy rate</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child mortality rate (per thousand live births)</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Development Index</td>
<td>0.876</td>
<td>0.830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban population. As a percentage of total population.</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>89.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population density (per km$^2$)</td>
<td>14,450.8</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: School age population is between 5 and 17 years old.


The education system is divided into the following education levels:

- **Pre-primary level.** It comprises the education of children since they are 45 days old until they are five years old. The education is compulsory for five-year old children.

- **Elementary level education.** The theoretical entry age is six years old. In the City of Buenos Aires consists of seven grades.

- **Secondary level education.** In the City of Buenos Aires consists of five of six years (depending on the orientation). It is compulsory.
• **Higher level education.** It comprises universities and other post-secondary education institutions such as teacher-training institutes (*Institutos de formación docente*) (Law No. 26,206).

As this study focuses on elementary level education it is important to take a look at the main indicators of this level in the City of Buenos Aires in the following table:

• The government directly manages roughly half of the education system (public schools). The other half is privately managed (private schools), although most of these schools receive funds from the government in order to subsidize the fee that families pay. There is a subtle majority of the public schools sub-system. This situation is different from the national distribution where the percentages are 83% for public schools and 17% for private schools (National Directorate of Information and Assessment of Educational Quality (*Dirección Nacional de Información y Evaluación de la Calidad Educativa*) (DiNIECE)), 2010).

• Most children (55%) in public elementary education go to school only single shift (General Office of the Assessment of Educational Quality of the City of Buenos Aires, 2014). This means that they attend classes either in the morning (from 8:00 a.m. until 12:15 pm) or in the afternoon (from 1:00 p.m. until 5:15 p.m.) (Ministry of Education of the City of Buenos Aires, 2006).

• Despite the similar proportion of students and educational units between public and private schools, there are more grade teachers in the public sector. Thus, the students/teacher ratio is smaller (21.1) than in the private sector (25.3).
Table 2/ Teachers, students and educational units by type. Elementary school level. City of Buenos Aires. Year 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Public schools</th>
<th></th>
<th>Private schools</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade teachers</td>
<td>6,783</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>5,152</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>11,935</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>142,820</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>130,596</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>273,416</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students per grade teacher ratio</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational units</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>880</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Grade teacher are an estimate base on the number of grades.

Source: author’s elaboration based on data from General Office of the Assessment of Educational Quality of the City of Buenos Aires.

In this city, according to the latest publicly available teacher census at the national level (2004) in the analyzed subsector most teachers work in front of students exclusively, they are classroom teachers. One out of ten teachers works exclusively in leading and management positions (inspectors, principals or deputy principals).
III.2. The Teachers’ Statute

In Argentina the public sector guarantees the right to education and is the largest employer in the education system. The Teachers’ Statute (Estatuto del Docente) is the legal framework for the teaching profession and regulates the job, the rights and responsibilities of teachers.

Morduchowicz and Marcón (1996) consider the Law No. 1,420, the Common Education Act (Ley de Educación Común) enacted in 1884, as a landmark that structured the educational system and the teaching career in Argentina. This law followed the Province of Buenos Aires’ Common Education Act (Ley de Educación’ Común de la Provincia de Buenos Aires) from 1875, the General Regulation on Schools (Reglamento General de Escuelas) from 1876 and the Pedagogical Congress (Congreso...
Pedagógico) from 1884. The latter also outlined certain aspects related to the organization, supply of and demand for teachers.

The Law No. 1,420 from 1884 defined the conditions for exercising the profession: required training, obligations, rights and retirement. From then onwards, teachers have started to become a social category and defined a particular profession. Teachers focused on obtaining autonomy from the influence of other political actors. This process has not been linear; it has been marked by conflicts between stakeholders: the state, teachers’ unions, the church and the private sector (Morduchowicz and Marcón, 1996).

Obtaining a Teachers’ Statute that set the conditions for hiring, promotion and retirement was a key step for teachers to gain autonomy. A first approach in this direction was the Argentine Teachers’ Statute (Estatuto del Docente Argentino) in 1954 during Perón’s second presidential term. In 1956, the Decree-Law No. 16,767 of Teachers’ Statute (Decreto-Ley n° 16.767 del Estatuto Docente) was issued, but teachers considered that essential articles were missing. Finally, in 1958 the National Law No. 14,473 enacted the National Teachers’ Statute (Ley Nacional n° 14.473 del Estatuto del Docente Nacional). This last piece of legislation established rights such as job stability, the possibility for promotion, the right to unionize and to paid holidays, among others. It also set the hierarchy scale (escalafón docente) and created the Teachers’ Classification Boards (Juntas de Clasificación Docente) in charge of selection and promotion of teachers, which will be described later in more detail (Morduchowicz and Marcón, 1996; Gindín, 2008).

Primary School Teachers’ Union (Unión de Maestros Primarios (UMP)) was created in 1957. Then it became part of the Union of Education Workers (Unión de Trabajadores de la Educación (UTE)) and of the Confederation of Education Workers of Argentina (Confederación de Trabajadores de la Educación de la República Argentina, (CTERA)), one of the most powerful unions in the country (Vásquez Gamboa, Mario, De Acha, and Fernández, 2007; Gindín, 2008). During this process, teachers
became not only public servants but also unionized workers and strong political actors (Birgin, 1999; Tedesco and Tenti Fanfani, 2002).

In 1978, under the ruling of the military dictatorship, the federal government transferred the responsibility for elementary school education to the provinces and to the City of Buenos Aires. Each province and the City of Buenos Aires started to be in charge of organizing and financing the education services. Hence, they had to design and implement its own legal framework regarding the teaching career.

The provincial frameworks were inspired by the National Teachers’ Statute (Estatuto del Docente Nacional) and therefore, although each province has its own version, they have common aspects. In the City of Buenos Aires the first piece of legislation was the Municipal Teachers’ Statute in 1979 (Estatuto del Docente Municipal, Ordinance No. 32,534). Transferring schools to the provinces segmented the teachers’ labor market since wages began to be constrained by each provincial budget (Llach, Montoya, and Roldán, 1999; OREALC / UNESCO, 2005). For example, when one compares the take home pay (salario de bolsillo) for a teacher with ten years of seniority in the provinces of Neuquén and Río Negro in 2008 the difference was 44% in favor of the former province (Rivas, Vera, and Bezem, 2010).

Democracy returned in 1983. In 1984, the government and the teachers discussed a new draft of the Municipal Teachers’ Statute (Anteproyecto del Estatuto del Docente Municipal). The previous legal framework was derogated and a new body of law was enacted in 1985 (Ordinance No. 40,593). Since then there were specific changes, but overall rules regarding selection, promotion, and retirement of the profession have not changed.

The Teachers’ Statute of the City of Buenos Aires is organized in three parts. The first one presents the general aspects of the teaching career (recruitment, selection and promotion). The second one concentrates on the specific rules of each education level (elementary schools, secondary schools, etc.) or orientation (core studies, technical and vocational education, etc.). The last section presents transitional articles and compensation aspects.
III.3. The Teaching Career

III.3.i. Recruitment

The education to become a teacher is done at a teacher-training institute, which takes approximately four years. There are no entrance evaluations for those who want to study to become teachers and no exit exams for those who complete their initial training before starting to teach (Schulmeyer, 2002).

Each year the school enrollment and administrative guidelines determine the number of teachers to be hired according to the decree 1,990/1997. The rules for the Organic Functional Staff (Planta Orgánico Funcional (POF)) indicate the number and type of teachers and management staff to be hired for each school based on enrollment. For example, in elementary schools the creation of a classroom requires 18 students; the minimum to maintain it open is 15; and the maximum, 35.

Article 65 of the Teachers’ Statute establishes that there are three categories of teachers (situación de revista):

- Tenured teachers (docentes titulares): they have been appointed definitively and enjoy job stability and all the rights of the teaching career such as promotion, relocation, increase in the teaching load, etc. This study focuses on this type of teachers.
- Interim teachers (docentes interinos): they have been appointed for performing a specific task until the position is eliminated.
- Substitute teachers (docentes suplentes): they occupy a position temporarily while the tenured or interim teacher is absent.

The latest publicly available teacher census at the national level (2004) shows that in the subsector of elementary public schools more than half of the teachers are tenured, and approximately one out of four is exclusively a substitute teacher.
Figure 2/ Teachers by category. Elementary school level. Public schools. City of Buenos Aires. In %.


Source: author’s elaboration based on data from DiNIECE (2006)

Teachers usually start working as interim or substitute grade teachers, which is the lowest position in the teachers’ hierarchy scale.
In order to obtain her first position, after completing a four-year program at a teacher-training institute, the applicant chooses one school district where she would like to work. Then she goes through selection process at the inspection of the chosen school district (supervisión de distrito escolar) based only on background evaluation (concurso de antecedentes).

The Classification and Tracking of Teachers’ Selection Processes Boards (Juntas de Clasificación) carry out the background evaluation, set scores and implement the selection processes for each school district. They have nine members. They also establish final scores and oversee the rankings. Scores are assigned to different aspects as indicated in the Teachers’ Statute (main degree, additional degrees, etc.) and the final score determines the position of each candidate in a ranking (Ordinance No. 40,593 and its amendments).
When a position is vacant in a school district, the Boards look at the merit order list. Each year the vacancies are filled following that list (Ordinance No. 40,593 and its amendments).

Morduchowicz (2009) points out that this selection process is limited to verifying certain formal aspects. It focuses on the necessary conditions for teaching and they are supposed to be sufficient. It is important to take into account that in this step of the cycle of human resources the teacher has the right to choose in which zone she wants to work. The schools do not participate in the selection process and therefore teachers might not match the needs and goals of the school they are assigned to (Narodowski and Andrada, 2002; Morduchowicz, 2009).

Another consideration is that given that all teachers who want to be tenured must start as grade teachers, a candidate who fulfills all the requirements and has the ability to become a school principal (for example a teacher who lived in a different province where she worked as school principal and moved to the City of Buenos Aires or worked at private schools) needs to complete the process and start over as a grade teacher. This might also discourage candidates who worked for years in management positions in the education sector without having worked directly in schools (or in a different economic sector) who could potentially become school principals. In fact, if there is a concurso that is supposed to select the best candidate for any given position, why could not she participate? (Morduchowicz and Marcón, 1996).

A third consideration is that because the process to obtain substitute or interim positions is held at the school district level, there could be different paths to enter to the teaching career according to the school district. For instance, there could be some schools districts with higher attrition rates and therefore vacant positions appear more frequently. Also, it could happen that in harder-to-staff school districts (because of socioeconomic characteristics of the population, for instance) there is less competition between teachers for a position. Thus, the same teacher could have more chances to obtain a position in a harder-to-staff school district than in other school districts. In the process to obtain a tenured position a teacher competes against colleagues from the entire city.
III.3.ii. The Teachers’ Classification Boards in elementary education

Teacher’s Classification Boards play an important role in different steps of the teaching career. In the elementary education level there are two Teachers’ Classification Boards, which are Zone I and Zone II. One is in charge of the northern part of the city and the other one of the southern area.

Each board in elementary education has currently nine members. The teachers elect six of them. In both Boards, these members represent teachers’ unions. Teachers vote for a list of candidates. In order to present a list, the members of the list have to present a document that shows that at least 100 voting teachers support them. Voting is compulsory for tenured teachers. Non-tenured teachers can vote when they have at least one year of experience. The six members elected by the teachers must be tenured teachers with at least ten years of teaching experience (five of them as tenured teachers). These members occupy their position for four years. They can be reelected two times. Half of them are renewed every two years. Because teachers elect the majority of the members, it is a relatively autonomous organ from the Executive branch of the government (Morduchowicz and Marcón, 1996).

The City of Buenos Aires’ Ministry of Education designates the other three members. They are also teachers who need to fulfill the same requirements as the rest of the members. The members designated by the Ministry of Education must stay for at least one year and can occupy their position indefinitely.

Currently, the Teachers’ Classification Boards have the following functions, among others:

- Grading the personnel and establishing merit orders.
- Defining personnel relocation.
- Assigning teachers’ vacancies (Article 12 of the Teachers’ Statute).
The boards take the decisions by simple majority. The boards assign points to the applicants who want to enter to the teaching career or to be promoted corresponding to the concepts of:

a) Degrees (Títulos)
b) Seniority (Antigüedad)
c) Other degrees (Otros títulos)
d) Courses (Cursos aprobados o dictados)
e) Cultural and pedagogical background (Antecedentes culturales y pedagógicos)
f) Other background (Otros antecedentes)
g) Appreciation (Concepto), in the case of promotion

The following section analyzes how these concepts are taken into account. In order to do this they elaborate and follow-up the teachers’ dossiers, which contain information on the aforementioned aspects for each teacher. The Ministry of Education provides the administrative information. In the case of promotion, the principal of the school where the teacher works adds another input: the Teachers’ Performance Evaluation Report, described later in more detail (Informe de Evaluación del Desempeño del Personal) established in the articles 23 and 24 of the Teachers’ Statute for the Appreciation concept.

Teachers can send information for completing their dossiers anytime during the year. Nevertheless, there are two times of the year when most of the job is done: between April 1st and April 30th, when the annual application for positions takes place, and in December when principals send their Teachers’ Performance Evaluation Report (Morduchowicz and Marcón, 1996).

While administrative information is the input for assigning points for seniority, the rest of the points are based on the resolutions made by the Degrees and Courses Commission (Comisión Permanente de Anexos de Títulos y de Cursos de Capacitación y Perfeccionamiento Docente). This Commission assigns points to each of the training courses that teachers can take. The boards also translate into points
the information they receive from the Teachers’ Performance Evaluation Report. The boards collect, add-up, and complete the teachers’ dossiers (Morduchowicz and Marcón, 1996).

Once the boards score all teachers, they send the information to the Ministry of Education, which elaborates two lists of teachers (one for each zone). Then the list is published and if there is any mistake (for example the seniority item is wrong for one teacher), the teacher can ask for revision. Then a final list is released by merit order. This is the list used for selection, promotion and relocation (Morduchowicz and Marcón, 1996).

A change in the legal framework introduced in 2011 modified this arrangement but has not yet been put into practice. Therefore it is out of scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning albeit briefly certain aspects of the future institutional arrangement. There were two alternative bills to modify the system: the ruling party's bill proposed the elimination of the Teachers’ Classification Boards, while the opposition party's bill presented by the Civic Coalition party aimed at reducing the number of the Teachers’ Classification Boards.

One of the reasons for this change was that the mechanism for inscription, selection and designation of teachers had collapsed and the system was arbitrary. Also, a goal was to incorporate technology according to the needs and possibilities of the XXIst century to reduce human mistakes in the teachers’ selection process and make the process more transparent. The new system would change the assignation of points to an online system (Legislature of the City of Buenos Aires, 2011).

After months of negotiation, in December 2011 the Legislature of the City of Buenos Aires voted for a bill that integrated both proposals. It reduced the number of Teachers’ Classification Boards from 14 to seven and also reduced the quantity of members in each Board. It was approved with 24 votes of the ruling party, plus six votes from opposition parties. Later, the Legislature created two new government structures and two legislators of the opposition parties who had voted in favor of the bill were designated heads of these institutions (La Nación 2011a and 2011b; Página/12, 2011).
Under the new framework, candidates who want to enter to the teaching career or be promoted will apply online to the web of the Registration and Evaluation of Professional Background Commission (Comisión de Registro y Evaluación de Antecedentes Profesionales (COREAP). COREAP will have three members designated by the Executive branch with approval of the Legislature (Ordinance No. 40,593 and its amendments). Therefore, teachers will not have voice in this Commission.

COREAP will evaluate background, set scores through an online system and implement the evaluation processes. Then, the Classification and Tracking of Teachers’ Selection Processes Boards will monitor the assignation of points, establish final scores and oversee the rankings. In elementary schools, the members of the Boards will change to a total of eight and the teachers will elect six of them. The City of Buenos Aires’ Ministry of Education will designate the other two members (Ordinance No. 40,593 and its amendments).

The 17 teachers’ unions in the City of Buenos Aires opposed the bill. The main criticism was that the ruling party was accused that it wanted to designate teachers in an arbitrary way because the office COREAP depends on the Ministry of Education. The opposition also considered that the ruling party’s goal was to reduce the teachers’ unions’ power, which before the bill had an important role in the designation of teachers (La Nación 2011a and 2011b).
Figure 4/ Current and future selection process for entering to or to be promoted in the teaching career.


Current scenario

Future scenario

Note: written and practice tests are only for promotion.

Source: Author’s elaboration based on Teachers’ Statute of the City of Buenos Aires and Morduchowicz and Marcón (1996).
II.3.iii. A closer look to scoring

The Boards assign points to the following concepts: a) Degrees; b) Seniority; c) Other degrees; d) Courses; e) Cultural and pedagogical background; f) Other background. This section studies in detail how they assign the score each of them. Appreciation is shown in the following section (Promotion) because it does not count for scoring.

III.3.iii.a. Degrees

The Teachers’ Statute establishes the requirements to enter into the teaching profession, such as having completed specific studies at teacher-training institutions. Yet, it could happen that the number of candidates with the required certification is not enough to fulfill the demand for teachers. In this case the system accepts candidates who are able to perform the task (with knowledge or experience in the subject they will teach, for example) but are non-licensed teachers. These are the candidates with entitled or substitute degrees (aspirantes con títulos habilitantes o supletorios). The Teachers’ Statute establishes the points corresponding to each of the three accepted types of degree according to the Degrees and Courses Annex of the Degrees and Courses Commission.

Table 3/ Degrees and points accepted by the Teachers’ Statute. Primary education. Public schools. City of Buenos Aires.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of degree</th>
<th>Issued by</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching degree</td>
<td>Teacher-training institutions</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entitled degree</td>
<td>Technical-professional institutions</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substitute degree</td>
<td>Technical-professional institutions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ elaboration based on Teachers’ Statute and Morduchowicz and Marcón (1996).
Even though according to key informants in the elementary school level it is not necessary to appeal to candidates with entitled or substitute degrees, Morduchowicz and Marcón (1996) consider that the fact of accepting teaching degrees as well as entitled and substitute degrees is a contradiction. On the one hand the framework establishes that the degree issued by teacher training institution is the one accepted in order to teach. On the other hand it is accepted that people with different degrees can also perform this task. In other words, in a situation when labor supply exceeds or equals labor demand teaching is considered a profession with a unique knowledge and preparation. However, when that equilibrium is altered fewer requirements are considered.

II.3.iii.b. Seniority

A teacher can have a maximum of nine points thanks to teaching experience. Although teaching experience in any type of school is taken into account, whether the school is located in the City of Buenos Aires or not is considered differently:

- For each year worked at schools that depend on any province 0.10 points are assigned. Includes experiences in both public and private schools.
- For each year worked at schools that depend on the City of Buenos Aires’ Ministry of Education 0.45 additional points are assigned. This includes experience in both public and private schools (Article 17 of the Teachers’ Statute).

According to Morduchowicz and Marcón (1996) there is a problem of incentives. While the teaching degree is recognized and valued equally disregarding the province where it was obtained, the experience acquired in a school that does not depend on the City of Buenos Aires is considered less valuable. As this points system is also used for obtaining promotion it appears that it privileges the teachers from the province where the selection process is being held on.
Additionally, the legal framework also establishes in the article 17 that those teachers who are not tenured, worked for two years in public schools from the City of Buenos Aires and want to participate in a selection process to become tenured as grade teacher will receive a two-point bonus if they have worked as interim or substitute teachers in the position they are willing to obtain with tenure. Those with three years of experience receive three bonus points and those with four years, five points. These points are not included in the maximum quantity of points that can be accumulated by seniority and are lost when teachers become tenured. This appears to favor interim or substitute teachers in the public school system and discriminates against other provinces teachers (Morduchowicz and Marcón, 1996).

III.3.iii.c. Other degrees

Teachers who besides their main teaching degree earned additional degrees can compute them as other degrees. The maximum amount of points for this concept is six. Degrees and points are assigned as shows the following table. They are organized in two groups: those included in the Degrees and Courses Annex elaborated by the Degrees and Courses Commission and those that are not. As said, the Boards play a key role in determining which Degrees are part of each group.
Table 4/ Points of degrees included and not included in the Degrees General Annex. Elementary school level. Public schools. City of Buenos Aires.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of degree</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Included in the Annex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching degree</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entitled degree</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substitute degree</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not included in the Annex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University degree (four or more years)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University degree (less than four years)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary degree</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ elaboration based on Teachers’ Statute.

Other post-graduate studies such as specialization diplomas not related to the education sector do not have a specific value and need to be analyzed in each case based on the affinity to the position (specific or non-specific) and the duration of the degree according to the following table. These decisions are taken by the Degrees and Courses Commission.
Table 5/ Points for post-graduate studies such as specialization diplomas according to affinity and duration. Elementary school level. Public schools. City of Buenos Aires.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affinity</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific</td>
<td>Up to 359 hours</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>360 to 539 hours</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>540 to 719 hours</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>720 hours and more</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-specific</td>
<td>Up to 359 hours</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>360 to 539 hours</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>540 to 719 hours</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>720 hours and more</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ elaboration based on Teachers’ Statute.

The table shows that specific degrees value twice as non-specific degrees, while the effort to complete one degree or the other might be similar. Therefore, an arbitrary decision might have a significant impact.

Also, there is an incentive to complete relatively short degrees. Completing a degree of 539 hours is rewarded as completing one of 360 hours despite the fact that the first one it implies approximately 50% extra time.

A recent change was approved but not yet put into practice for the case of Masters and PhDs in Education. The points will also vary depending on the duration as shows the following table. A teacher can accumulate a maximum of six points obtaining these degrees.
Table 6/ Points assigned to Masters and PhDs in Education. Elementary school level. Public schools. City of Buenos Aires.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of degree</th>
<th>Duration (in hours)</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>From 400 to 500</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>501 and more</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>From 400 to 700</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>701 and more</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ elaboration based on Teachers’ Statute.

III.3.iii.d. Courses

On-the-job training courses have different points depending on their affinity and duration. Specific courses are those related to the position of the teacher. In the concept of courses the maximum amount of points is six and 0.6 points per year. In order to accumulate points, the courses should last more than 30 pedagogical hours.

The design of the Teachers’ Statute does not offer any incentive to study when the teacher reaches the maximum. Moreover, besides individual motivation, the goal of following these courses is obtaining points that help her for promotion.

The following table shows the points per type of course. The specificity of the course implies double the points. In other words, for the same course, if it is considered specific, the teachers earn the same amount of points in half of the time. Nevertheless, the specificity of each course is not always clear. The points also very depending on who offers the course. If it is the Ministry of Education, the points are higher. However, in order to any course to be valid the Ministry of Education has to consider it pertinent and evaluate it.
The table also shows how many hours of courses a teacher needs to attend in a year if she wants to reach the maximum points allowed. Even though the number varies, with two real hours and a half per week in specific courses offered by the Ministry of Education in a year a teacher reaches this maximum.

Table 7/ Points earned for completing courses. Elementary school level. Public schools. City of Buenos Aires.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affinity</th>
<th>Points per pedagogical hour</th>
<th>Amount of real hours per year in order to reach the maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not offered by the Ministry of Education</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offered by the Ministry of Education</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-specific</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not offered by the Ministry of Education</td>
<td>0.0015</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offered by the Ministry of Education</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors' elaboration based on Teachers’ Statute.

Note: 1 pedagogical hours equals to 40 minutes.

**III.3.iii.e. Cultural and pedagogical background**

This component assigns points to books, articles, conferences, and other presentations where the teacher has participated after obtaining her teaching degree. The maximum amount of points is six points. The Classification Boards are responsible for assigning these points. The Teachers’ Statute sets the criteria shown in the following table.
Again, here it appears the territorial criteria. For example, if a congress was declared of national interest because it was held in a different province but did not have sponsorship from the province where the teacher works she does not get the points, although a federal sponsorship gives more relevance to the event than a provincial one.

Table 8/ Points per cultural and pedagogical backgrounds concepts. City of Buenos Aires.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical background in the content area that the teacher is applying to after obtaining the enabling degree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbooks</td>
<td>Up to three points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special projects, research activities in higher education</td>
<td>Up to three points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation with a paper in congresses, symposiums, conferences, etc. with official support</td>
<td>Up to three points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher in courses recognized by the ministries of education or in university level classes recognized by the ministries of education</td>
<td>Up to one point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical background in general education after obtaining the enabling degree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbooks</td>
<td>Up to one point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special projects, research activities in higher education</td>
<td>Up to one point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation with a paper in congresses, symposiums, conferences, etc. with official support</td>
<td>Up to one point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prize for one of the aforementioned concepts</td>
<td>Up to one extra point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural background after obtaining the enabling degree Up to two points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities related to the teacher’s activity that contributed to the personal development (exhibitions, concerts, plays, etc.)</td>
<td>Up to one point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional activity as an official representative at the jurisdictional, provincial, national, or international level</td>
<td>Up to one point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation with a paper in congresses, symposiums, conferences, etc. with official support</td>
<td>Up to one point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General textbook</td>
<td>Up to one point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special projects or research activities</td>
<td>Up to one point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prize for one of the aforementioned concepts</td>
<td>Up to 0.5 extra point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in hospitals</td>
<td>Up to one point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scholarships</strong></td>
<td>Up to one point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to three-months long</td>
<td>Specific Up to 0.075 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-specific Up to 0.0375 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to six-months long</td>
<td>Specific Up to 0.15 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-specific Up to 0.075 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than six-months long</td>
<td>Specific Up to 0.3 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-specific Up to 0.15 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: More detail on each component can be consulted in the Teachers’ Statute (Article 17).

Source: Authors’ elaboration based on Teachers’ Statute and Morduchowicz and Marcón (1996).

III.3.iii.f. Other background

Teachers who worked in Teachers’ Classification Boards can add a maximum of three extra points (0.3 points per year).

III.3.iii.g. Total scoring

When we put together all the points that can be awarded for each concept we get the following table. Degree and Seniority are the concepts that weigh the most. Together, they add up almost to half of the total points. It is worth pointing out that the result of the teachers’ evaluation has zero weight in the total points.
Table 9/ Maximum amount and distribution of points according to each concept. City of Buenos Aires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Degrees</th>
<th>Seniority</th>
<th>Other degrees and courses</th>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Cultural and pedagogical background</th>
<th>Other background</th>
<th>Total points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maximum points possible</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight (in %)</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ elaboration based on Teachers’ Statute and Morduchowicz and Marcón (1996).

Note: This does not take into account bonus points such as having performed tasks at Teacher’s Classification Boards, or experience as substitute or interim teacher in the position a teacher wants to obtain as tenured.

Regarding seniority there is a paradox: when teachers gain years of experience they accumulate points. Therefore, they have better chances to obtain a promotion. Thus, the Teachers’ Statute promotes that the most experienced teachers are taken away from the classrooms in order to develop their careers (Terigi, 2010).

When one takes into account the time and effort that implies reaching the maximum points in each of the concepts, some contradictions appear. For instance, seniority has the same weight as the basic degree, while the effort (measured in time) required to obtain a degree at a teacher training institution
(approximately four years) is less than one fifth than the 22 years that are translated into the maximum points for the concept of seniority.

Another example is that in order to obtain six points in seniority a teacher needs nine years of practice. However, if she wants to earn those points by investing in human capital (following courses), she needs to follow 100 real hours of courses offered by the Ministry of Education for ten years.

According to Morduchowicz and Marcón (1996) there should be certain harmony between the different points, concept, and the requirements to obtain them. In other words these authors call for equilibrium between time, effort, and points.

**III.3.iv. Promotion**

Articles 23 and 24 of the Teachers’ Statute establish the annual teachers’ evaluation, which is a condition for promotion. It is called appreciation (*concepto anual*). The immediate superior in the hierarchical pyramid is responsible for this evaluation through an instrument called Teachers’ Performance Evaluation Report. Its result can be: "outstanding", "very good", "good", "regular", or "deficient". This report is part of the dossier that contains all the information of each teacher (degrees, certificates, background documents, etc.).

This evaluation has two parts. The first one is related to the work that the teacher performed along the year and has seven dimensions shown in the next table. Each dimension is divided into aspects (26 in total) that can be evaluated as: "always", "frequently", "infrequently", and "never/almost never". Then all the partial results are added. The result is called Sum A where one can see how many "always", "frequently", "infrequently", and "never/almost never" grades the teacher has obtained.
Table 10/ Dimensions and aspects in the teachers’ evaluation. Work along the year. City of Buenos Aires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Aspect. The teacher…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation in the school institutional project, use of resources and adjustments along the year</td>
<td>…intervenes and proposes ideas in the elaboration of the school institutional project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…articulates her pedagogical project to the school institutional project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…systematically evaluates her project and, if necessary, proposes how to reorient the action at the school or classroom level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and implementation of the curriculum</td>
<td>…defines her pedagogical project according to the goals of the education level, cycle, and content area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…articulates her classes with other teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…organizes her classes according to the didactical focus of the curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…shows that she masters the content she teaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accordance of the pedagogical proposal to the students</td>
<td>…contemplates the integration of the intellectual, body, and emotional dimension into teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…enriches the students’ cultural experience considering their experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…looks for different approaches in order to promote learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…proposes didactical strategies in order to stimulate learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…optimizes the use of resources in order to develop her class projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of democracy values</td>
<td>…bases her actions in values such as peace, mediation, and democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…considers the cultural traditions in the school community in a plural and respectful way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…generates a moment for reflection with her peers upon conflictive situations in the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…offers alternatives to her students and supports their decision processes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Work with diversity | …recognizes among her students differences in the physical, intellectual, social, cultural, gender, and emotional dimensions  
…works along the human resources team and specific material in order to deal with diversity  
…proposes pedagogical activities that make basic learning possible to all students  
…orientates the families regarding specific needs related to the students’ learning process |
| Communication with different actors in the school community | …promotes a dialogue that pays attention to the context  
…drives negotiation or mediation processes in the class, the school, or the community  
…uses various resources for a fluid communication  
…shares information, material, and experiences |
| Organization and participation in activities with the families and the community | …works with the families and the community in some of the pedagogical projects  
…collaborates in articulating the schools with community organizations supporting exchanges that strengthens pedagogical proposals |


The second aspect is teachers’ conditions and aptitudes. Again, the evaluator needs to choose the grade from the same scale for the following dimensions and aspects. There are 11 aspects. The partial grades of this second part of the evaluation are added and the result is called Sum B.
Table 11/ Dimensions and aspects in the teachers’ evaluation. Teachers’ conditions and aptitudes. City of Buenos Aires.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Aspect. The teacher...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consciousness of the social aspect of education and its importance on achieving educational equity</td>
<td>…contemplates in her work the social and educational reality of the school and the school district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…contributes to ensuring educational quality in her school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…contemplates in her practices that all students can learn in appropriate pedagogical conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…favors students’ retention taking into account family, economics, cultural factors, among others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disposition to auto-criticism and reflection upon the pedagogical tasks</td>
<td>…reflects upon her own practice and problems she faces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…worries for maintaining coherence between her pedagogical ideas and performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…accepts constructive criticism related to her performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility and compromise in the position</td>
<td>…contemplates the respect for others’ right when fulfilling her duties and exercises her rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…recognizes the value of administrative work at the service of the pedagogical work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…observes punctuality and assistance as necessaries for developing the pedagogical and institutional task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…takes care of herself and others in an integral way</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The final concept ("outstanding", "very good", "good", "regular", or "deficient") for each teacher is the result of adding Sum A and Sum B. For each concept, the Ministry of Education defined a minimum and maximum amount of results per category as shown in the following table. Therefore,
different combinations of the results can define the same final concept (the following chart shows the combinations).

For instance, a teacher who obtained four results in the category "always", 20 in "frequently", nine in "infrequently", and four in "never/almost never" receives the same concept (Very good) as a teacher who obtained 36 results in "always" and one in "never/almost never". However, this second teacher is closer to be considered and "outstanding" worker than the first one.

Table 12/ Maximum and minimum results per grade to establish the concept. City of Buenos Aires.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Infrequently</th>
<th>Never/Almost never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outstanding</strong></td>
<td>24 or more</td>
<td>undefined</td>
<td>4 or less</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24 or more</td>
<td>undefined</td>
<td>4 or less</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Very good</strong></td>
<td>4 or more</td>
<td>undefined</td>
<td>undefined</td>
<td>undefined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Good</strong></td>
<td>undefined</td>
<td>24 or more</td>
<td>8 or less</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>undefined</td>
<td>13 or more</td>
<td>undefined</td>
<td>undefined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regular</strong></td>
<td>undefined</td>
<td>undefined</td>
<td>24 or more</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>undefined</td>
<td>undefined</td>
<td>undefined</td>
<td>12 or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deficient</strong></td>
<td>undefined</td>
<td>undefined</td>
<td>24 or more</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>undefined</td>
<td>undefined</td>
<td>undefined</td>
<td>13 or more</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The teachers’ evaluation might have negative consequences for the worker. According to the regulation of the article 24, a teacher who obtained the result "deficient" or two consecutive times the
result "regular" might face a legal process (*sumario*). Then, the Discipline Board can remove her from the classroom, assign her to perform other tasks, and even impose sanctions. However, this happens rarely according to key informants.

This evaluation might also have positive effects on the teacher’s career. The importance of the concept resides in that it is taken into account when teachers apply for a promotion as will be shown later. Although the evaluation is performed every year, if a teacher stays in the same position the evaluation does not have any effect.

As seen, this evaluation is a formal process based on filling forms on two aspects of the teachers’ work. There are no definitions for each aspect. For instance, what is "Taking care of oneself" and how to measure it?

Morduchowicz and Marcón (1996) say that even though the instrument tries to make the evaluation objective, there are concepts such as taking care of oneself or recognizing administrative work that are difficult to rate. According to the interviews performed by these authors to teachers and principals, the teacher evaluation is a simulation: the superiors act “as if” they were evaluating. In fact principals appear to consider it another routine in their work (Morduchowicz and Marcón, 1996).

In the Articles 25 to 29 the Teachers’ Statute regulates promotion, which must follow the hierarchy scale. This means, for example, that a classroom teacher can be promoted to secretary teacher (or deputy school principal under certain conditions), but she cannot directly obtain a higher position independently of her capacities and performance.

In order to apply for a higher position the teacher needs to:

- be a tenured teacher in the City of Buenos Aires with at least three years of experience in the position she is leaving or seven years in the precedent position. This makes it possible to "jump over" one step in the hierarchy scale. For example, a classroom teacher with seven years of experience can become a deputy school director without having performed
as secretary teacher if there are no secretary teachers who apply for the position. Also, if there were not any tenured classroom teachers with seven years of experience, the required years of experience requisite does not apply.

- approve the promotion course offered once a year by the Ministry of Education. The approval of the course is only valid for the year when the course was taken and during the two following years
- have the required degrees
- have obtained a teachers’ evaluation at least equal to “very good” in the last three years
- have not any disciplinary sanctions in the last five years
- be unable to retire (article 27 of the Teachers’ Statute).

Regarding the first point mentioned above, the fact that the requirements related to experience in the previous position change over the years depending on other the characteristics of other candidates implies that one year a teacher could be considered capable for a given position and the next year she might not, despite her abilities and required responsibilities for the new position did not change (Morduchowicz and Marcón, 1996).

The promotion process is a concurso de oposición y antecedentes. The teacher needs to be accepted in order to participate in this concurso according to a selection follows the City of Buenos Aires’ merit order list based on the points described in the previous sections.

There are extra points that count for the application to the concurso that are awarded for specific cases. For example, there is 0.25 extra points per year that the teacher worked in tenured positions, except for a grade teacher position. There is also a 0.50 points bonus for those teachers who occupied hierarchical positions (as tenured, interim or substitute). Therefore, a tenured grade teacher who worked
for a year as substitute deputy school director has 0.5 extra points. For these bonuses, the maximum is six points.

The teachers’ evaluation described previously plays a key role for promotion. For each year that the teacher has been considered "outstanding" in the last three years she adds one point per evaluation. For each year that the teacher was qualified as "very good" she obtains 0.5 points that are taken into account in the scoring used for promotion (article 28 of the Teachers’ Statute).

The first part of the promotion process is the annual promotion course, which focuses mostly on normative aspects of the Teachers’ Statute. The amount of participants has a relationship with the quantity of available positions.

The teachers who approve the course pass to the second step of the process: the knowledge test (prueba de oposición), which is evaluated by a jury of three members. The applicants choose altogether two members from a list that has between six and eight members selected by the two Teachers’ Classification Boards. The Boards designate the third member.

The test has two parts. The first section is a two-hour-long written test. It consists of: a) a description of different aspects of the position that the teacher is applying to, and b) a report on the observation of a class. If this part of the exam is approved then the candidate can take the oral exam where the Jury evaluates the teacher’s capability to resolve specific situations of the position she is applying to. The Jury also interrogates about the position’s responsibilities, its relationship to the community, legislation, and administrative and organizational aspects.

Both exams are qualified on a 50 points basis and it is considered approved with 25 points. The final grade is the average of the two results.

Then the Teachers’ Classification Boards compile all the results and establish the merit order for a given position that is sent to the Ministry of Education who formally designates the teachers to the positions.
III.3.v. Teachers’ compensation

In Argentina, between 1975 and the early years of the 2000s the trend for teachers’ real wages was negative (Tedesco and Tenti Fanfani, 2001). This happened at the same time as other phenomena that affected the quality of service: teachers having more than one job, teacher absenteeism, increased workplace instability, and lack of motivation for professional development (Tenti Fanfani, 1992).

Between 2002 and 2008, teachers’ real wage doubled (Rivas, Vera, and Bezem, 2010). However, in Argentina there are not two provinces with the same salary structure. Thus, two teachers who perform the same work in neighboring provinces can get different compensation. Some factors influencing such differences include: changes in the cost of living in different provinces, the bargaining power of each union, the political agenda of each governor, and decisions on the allocation of local resources (OREALC / UNESCO, 2005).

As in other educational systems, in the City of Buenos Aires teachers’ salary levels respond to budget decisions and scales based on the position, seniority and level of training. Title III of the Teachers’ Statute regulates the salaries, which are composed by: a) the payment according to the position, b) the seniority bonus, and c) other payments according to the legal framework (family benefits, for example).

In order to determine the monthly salary for each position the government establishes a compensation index. In 2004 the government set an additional compensation index (Decree No. 1,567/2004). Therefore, the total index is the sum of the basic compensation index and the additional compensation index. Each year, the index is tied to an equivalent amount in argentine pesos. The product of this value and each position’s index sets the base compensation for each position. As said, in the City of Buenos Aires elementary public schools more than half of the children attend school either in the morning shift or in the afternoon shift (General Office of the Assessment of Educational Quality of the City of Buenos Aires, 2014). Therefore, there are grade teacher positions that are single shift (morning or afternoon) and double shift (morning and afternoon). The rest of the positions are double shift.
The comparison of the position’s indexes before and after the introduction of this additional compensation shows that the introduction of the latter flattened the whole compensation scheme. For instance, before 2004 a teacher who occupied the position of Elementary Education level Adjunct Director earned 3.2 times the salary of a Grade Teacher who worked single shift. Nowadays, it is three times. The following table shows that the higher positions in the hierarchy scale now offer a relative lower salary compared to the single shift grade teacher’s compared to the situation before 2004.

Figure 5/ Relative salaries before and after the introduction of additional compensation. Single shift Grade Teacher with no seniority = 100. Elementary school level. Public education. City of Buenos Aires.

Source: author’s elaboration based on the Teachers’ Statute and Decree No. 1,567/2004
Note: SS: single shift; DS: double shift; the rest of the position only exist as double shift. When only one mark is shown, the relative salaries are very close.
The following table indicates the relationship between the indexes. For example, a grade teacher who works double shift earns almost double as a grade teacher who only works single shift if they have the same years of seniority (1,715 and 940, respectively). It also shows that the economic incentives are such that promotion to school management positions is attractive.
Table 13/ Compensation index by position. Elementary school level. Public Education. City of Buenos Aires.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Shifts</th>
<th>Compensation index</th>
<th>Bonus Compensation Index</th>
<th>Total Compensation Index</th>
<th>Compensation. Grade teacher single shift=100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade Teacher</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>753</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DS</td>
<td>1,433</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>1,715</td>
<td>182.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary Teacher</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,533</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>1,972</td>
<td>209.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy School Principal</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,763</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>2,199</td>
<td>233.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Principal</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2,027</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>2,426</td>
<td>269.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School District Adjunct Supervisor</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2,169</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>2,596</td>
<td>276.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School District Supervisor</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2,311</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>2,766</td>
<td>294.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Education level Adjunct Director</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2,399</td>
<td>461</td>
<td>2,860</td>
<td>304.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: SS: single shift; DS: double shift; the rest of the position only exist as double shift. The indexes are those shown in the 2014 Teachers’ Statute.

Source: author’s elaboration based on the Teachers’ Statute.
The following comparison shows the effect of the index on the monthly salary in argentine pesos.

A double shift classroom teacher earns less than the double of a single shift classroom teacher. When contrasting the salaries of principals against classroom teachers, in the case of double shift, the first earns approximately 30% more than the second one.


Source: author’s elaboration based on data from DGPDyND (2013).

Note: the salary includes the additional income from the Teachers Incentive National Fund (Fondo Nacional de Incentivo Docente (FONID)) and does not include pedagogic material.

In the City of Buenos Aires there is a salary increase according the seniority. Teachers can obtain a better compensation just by staying in their position and by accumulating years of experience (Morduchowicz, 2004). As I presented before, there is controversy among the analysts regarding this subject. Some analysts hold that the effect of experience on productivity is only verified during the first years of the teaching career (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Staiger and Rockoff, 2010).
In Buenos Aires, after a year of experience the teacher obtains a 30% raise in her monthly compensation. Then her salary increases again in her fourth year (10 additional percentage points). In her seventh year the monthly salary is 50% more than the base compensation corresponding to the position she occupies. Then, from the tenth year onwards, she obtains salary increases every two years until she reaches 2.2 times the base salary when she has 22 years of experience.

Figure 7/ Evolution of the monthly salary according to the seniority bonus. Teacher with no seniority = 100. City of Buenos Aires.

Source: author’s elaboration based on the Teachers’ Statute.

Unlike other educational systems, in the City of Buenos Aires compensation is not linked to performance. The only mechanism of assessment required by the Teachers’ Statute is the annual teachers’ evaluation completed by the school director. As presented in the previous section, it does not have any direct effect on teachers’ salaries.

The latest available data from the General Office of Educational Planning at the Ministry of Education of the City of Buenos Aires (Dirección General de Planeamiento Educativo (DGPLED, 2011))
indicates that the net teachers’ salary for a grade teacher from primary school with 10 years of seniority was AR$ 4,502 in July 2013.


In 2010 this salary represented 25.1% of the Growth Geographical Product per capita (the equivalent to the Growth Domestic Product per capita, but for a given jurisdiction instead of a country) according to data from the General Office of Census and Statistics of the Ministry of Economy of the City of Buenos Aires.

Regarding the socioeconomic situation of a teacher compared to the socioeconomic structure in the City of Buenos Aires, a grade teacher with 10 years of experience in July 2012 earned less (AR$ 3,522) than the average monthly income (AR$ 5,455) and could be classified between the poorest second and third quintile's income.
Table 14/ Monthly average income per quintile and total. In current AR$. Year 2012 by trimester. City of Buenos Aires.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trimester</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Quintiles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>4,833</td>
<td>1,215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>4,541</td>
<td>1,197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>5,455</td>
<td>1,344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>5,183</td>
<td>1,437</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s elaboration based on General Office of Census and Statistics. Ministry of Economy of the City of Buenos Aires.

When analyzing the data for the third trimester of 2012 from INDEC, the single shift classroom teacher’s monthly salary with 10 years of experience (AR$ 3,522) was much lower than both the private and City of Buenos Aires’ government net monthly compensation (AR$ 6,652 and AR$ 7,423, respectively). The monthly compensation for the same teacher who worked double shift (AR$ 6,624) was still lower than, albeit closer to, those references. According to the General Office of Census and Statistics (2014a) a worker in the following sectors earned more on average per month than both a single and a double shift elementary school teacher with 10 years of experience: services; public administration, defense and social security; and finance (AR$ 8,152; AR$ 10,766; and AR$ 13,389). A double shift elementary school teacher with 10 years of experience monthly compensation was similar to the one of a worker in the real estate, business and renting sector (AR$ 6,624 and AR$ 6,632, respectively).

Data for the second trimester of 2013 shows that the monthly pay for a single shift grade teacher with 10 years of experience (AR$ 4,502) was lower than the monthly average income and also less than the monthly average income for a woman formal worker (AR$ 6,066 and AR$ 5,251, respectively).
However, a double shift grade teacher earned more (AR$ 8,395 per month) than the average and her salary was higher than the compensation for an average male formal worker (AR$ 7,036 per month).

Figure 9/ Classroom teachers’ net monthly salary with 10 years of experience of single and double shift compared to other workers' income. Elementary school level. Public schools. City of Buenos Aires. In current AR$. Year 2013.

Source: Author’s elaboration based on General Office of Census and Statistics (2014a) and DGPDyND (2013).
Note: SS: single shift; DS: double shift.

The average income in 2013 for workers with college degree was AR$ 9,427 per month (General Office of Censuses and Statistics, 2014b). This figure is higher than all the monthly salaries presented in the previous figure. Men earned in average more than women (AR$ 10,653 versus AR$ 8,396, respectively). When analyzing the information by age group, those between 20 and 29 years old earned AR$ 7,347. The group that earned more was the one between 50 and 64 years old (AR$ 10,446). The
workers who were "asalariados" (which means those who sell their labor force) earned on average AR$ 9,513.

The General Office of Census and Statistics of the Ministry of Economy of the City of Buenos Aires (2014c) publishes the consumer basket for different types of families: a) 35-year-old working couple, owner of a house, with two kids (type 1); b) 25-year-old working single person, owner of her house (type 2); c) 25 year-old working couple, owners of a house, without kids (type 3); d) 25-year-old working couple, renting a house, without kids (type 4); e) 35-year-old working couple, renting a house, with kids (type 5). The consumer basket includes the meals basket, the home services basket (rent, utilities, etc.) and other services basket (cost of education, health, leisure).

The following table shows that the monthly pay for a single shift grade teacher with 10 years of experience (AR$ 4,502) in 2013 was only enough to afford the total basket of the type 2 family. However, it would be impossible for a 25-year old person, who is the member of this type of family, to have 10 years of experience in teaching. In the case of a double shift grade teacher earned more (AR$ 8,395 per month), she could face the costs of four of these types of families. Again, a 25-year old person could not have 10 years of experience in teaching.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Quintiles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Type 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meals basket</td>
<td>3,091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total basket</td>
<td>6,806</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s elaboration based on General Office of Census and Statistics of the Ministry of Economy of the City of Buenos Aires (2014c).
IV. Final Comments

The goal of this thesis was to analyze the teachers’ career structure from an institutional approach, with a focus on economic and political science studies. The first chapter described the current state of the discussion regarding this topic. It presented the discussions within academic research about the mains steps of the human resources cycle in the teaching activity: recruitment, promotion, and compensation.

The second chapter presented the case of the teaching career in the City of Buenos Aires, Argentina. After a brief historical review of the development of its institutional framework, the study focused on how this Teachers’ Statute deals with the main steps of the teaching career. It described the mechanisms that define how a teacher enters to the career, is promoted and is paid.

The following comments intend to present the main ideas from the current academic discussion about the subject that are connected to the City of Buenos Aires’ teaching career and some questions for further analysis.

1. There are advantages and disadvantages of the current structure. Even though there are elements of the teaching career that could be redesigned, the institutional framework has positive and negative aspects according to Morduchowicz (2004).

   Among the advantages, the current structure (which is a traditional teaching career) is objective and thus reduces personal judgment. It also helps with predictability – a teacher can know the evolution of her salary from the beginning of her career. Traditional frameworks such as the City of Buenos Aires’ are relatively simple to understand. Lastly, compared to performance pay, they reduce competition among teachers.
On the other side, mediocre teachers receive the same compensation as the better and more engaged ones. Teachers with post-graduate degrees receive the same pay as those with basic degrees (the difference is taken into account for promotion). Additionally, teachers with more experience are often not in the classroom facing the most challenging students.

2. **There are no entrance exams for those who want to study to become a teacher and there are no exit exams for those who complete the degree.** Montoya and Montoya (2005) suggest the use of probationary periods before formally entering into the teaching career. This would allow the system to “test” the performance before hiring the teachers permanently. The selection process to enter to the teaching career is only based on background.

3. **In the teaching career of the City of Buenos Aires there are incentives to occupy school management positions, but not to excel at a given position.** The current career structure only promotes that the grade teacher moves upwards in the hierarchy scale to school management positions. Promotion implies performing different activities from those carried out in the classroom. In order to develop her career and earn more she needs to accumulate experience, earn points through courses or publications, and go through a selection process that includes a course and two exams.

   In other words, there are not any strong incentives (other than seniority pay) to remain in teaching positions for those who excel at this task. The design of the career does not intend to retain an excellent grade teacher in the classroom. The maximum reward she can expect is based on seniority and with a maximum when she has 22 years of service.

   Seniority, however, is a necessary condition for promotion. The Teachers’ Statute requires a minimum of three years in the immediately precedent position that the teacher is applying to or seven in the previous one. Seniority in substitute positions is only recognized when it corresponds to the position
that the teacher is applying to. The promotion process is not based on teachers’ performance and is a closed system as only tenured teachers have chances of obtaining the positions (Morduchowicz and Marcón, 1996; Llach, Montoya and, Roldán, 1999; Morduchowicz, 2004). Offering different contracts with better conditions to those teachers with more productivity could be an alternative (Montoya and Montoya, 2005).

4. The teachers’ evaluation does not have a direct impact on the teaching career. The subjective performance assessments in place in the City of Buenos Aires could be useful because they are not only focused and teachers’ outputs and because the evaluators are actors that should be able to identify high and low performers. Subjective evaluations can assess non-quantifiable aspects of teaching (Harris, 2007; Montoya and Graham, 2007). In other words, subjective assessments can take into account multiple dimensions such as the achievement of specific goals and whether the employee performed correctly (Montoya and Graham, 2007).

Nevertheless, Jacob and Lefgren (2005) compare subjective principal assessments of teachers to traditional determinants of teacher compensation (education and experience) and value-added measures of teacher effectiveness based on student achievement. They study a mid-size school district in the western United States. In 2003 the authors asked elementary school principals and to rate the teachers in their schools based on a set of performance dimensions. They work with a sample of 202 teachers in grades two to six. The authors find that subjective evaluations predict student achievement better than teacher experience and education, but not as well as value-added measures. Principals appear to be good at identifying good and bad teachers, but have difficulty to evaluate teachers whose performance is situated at the middle of the distribution (their performance is not deficient and not outstanding). Also, there are some disparities between principal ratings, student test scores and parental requests.

The teachers’ evaluation system in the City of Buenos Aires is not based on the outputs of
teaching. It only has an impact on professional development when a teacher applies for a new position. For instance, if a teacher stays in the same position until retirement, her evaluation will not have any effect unless is very poor.

A good framework for teacher evaluation should clearly establish the definition of educational quality. Some scholars suggest that educational quality could be measured by results such as standardized tests of value-added measures. Others consider that it is related to the teachers’ attitudes and behaviors.

The complex reality and heterogeneity of educational systems in general and of the City of Buenos Aires in particular, make that different attitudes and behaviors could have different results in different contexts. Some actions could be effective in some place and time while others could have no results in a different context. Thus, the policies regarding teacher evaluation should emerge from the local context, political processes, and policy orientation. Even though it is useful to take into account other educational systems’ experiences, there are important differences from country to country and what worked in one place might not be effective in a different one (Perazza and Terigi, 2008).

A teachers’ evaluation framework requires the definition of a model and methodology, which should be discussed among the different actors in the system in order to take into account the local characteristics while also narrowing the discussion and achieving consensus. It should be clear that the evaluation is not good per se; the goal is to orient decision-making to improve educational quality.

5. Analysts recognize the problem and look for an answer. As said at the beginning, this study focused on the design of the teachers’ career and described its principal aspects. It did not seek to evaluate its impact.

Future research could focus on specific points of this study such as initial training, compensation or evaluation. An eventual redesign of the teaching career could take elements from a horizontal career where the teacher can develop a professional career staying in the same position with more
responsibilities: for example being a grade teacher and also a mentor for new teachers without the obligation to leave the classroom if she wants to be promoted.

As Hassel (2002) says, it is possible that what can be designed is not “the” system but a system that is better than the present one. To achieve this, one should revise the coherence between instruments, procedures, and methods (Chiavenato, 1999). There is no consensus regarding which solutions have to be implemented in order to have a good teaching career structure. The good news is that scholars and the educational systems have identified that the mechanisms for recruiting, hiring and promoting teachers are key to cultivate a top-flight teaching corps and improve education quality.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


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