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Resocialisation of Experienced Employees: Challenges in a Context of Change

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Abstract

Management research in the field of organisational socialisation has largely focused on the incorporation of new recruits into stable organisations. This research study looks instead at the resocialisation of employees facing planned changes in their role expectations. Conducted with the assistance of a leading European railway company that had undergone a transformation process, the study is a qualitative piece of research mobilising 35 cases of employee resocialisation. The main findings are threefold: they reveal four typical forms of resocialisation (conviction, resourcefulness, resignation and transgression) spanning the continuum from success to failure; indicators of successful and failed resocialisation need to be revisited; cognitions or emotions (adherence) and behaviours (role orientation) are clearly aligned with conviction and transgression, as are those socialisation dimensions that can serve as either resources or barriers. Conversely, resourcefulness and resignation reveal ambivalent forms of resocialisation. Finally, experienced employees tend to face three kinds of resocialisation resources and barriers (relational networks, biographical continuities or discontinuities and organisational roles), each of which is specific in nature. Lessons can be drawn from these discoveries with regard to the resocialisation of experienced employees.

Keywords: *Change; Socialisation; Resocialisation; Adjustment; Experienced employees; Roles*

Handling Editor: Jérémy Morales; Received: 25 July 2018; Accepted: 7 July 2020; Published: 1 June 2021

One of the major challenges in modern organisations is habituating employees to change. Significant efforts are often made in this area without necessarily achieving the desired results. The problem is a longstanding one but remains as topical as ever, encapsulated nowadays, for instance, in the massive strikes that erupt in Europe every time a public transportation system reform is attempted.[1]

Widespread changes in the way jobs, career paths and professional status are defined have not only altered the rules of the game for experienced employees but also created doubts as to the extent to which their experience receives recognition, the future plans being made for them and, more broadly, the paths available to them for creating some kind of identity at work (Dubar, 2010[1991]). In France, for instance, successive waves of modernisation may have offered new paths to social integration and recognition (Osty & Uhalde, 2007) but they also caused many individuals who had previously felt fully 'integrated' into their organisations to suffer a sense of 'de-adjustment'. This raises questions on how organisational socialisation (OS) – intra-organisational processes of adjustment – applies to experienced employees in a context of change.

Commonly defined as a dual process of learning and internalisation (Perrot, 2009) by means of which individuals acquire social knowledge and skills they need to assume a particular role within an organisation (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979), OS occurs throughout a person's career but tends to be felt more intensely whenever a role transition takes place (e.g., Schein, 1971a; Van Maanen, 1978; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979).

[1.] Examples: 'SNCF loses 2.4 million workdays to strikes over 10 years', https://www.lefigaro.fr/economie/le-scan-eco/dessous-chiffres/2018/04/03/29006-20180403ARTFIG00001-les-greves-ont-fait-perdre-24-millions-de-journees-a-la-sncf-en-dix-ans.php
'Start of a long strike on London commuter trains' https://www.lesoir.be/264183/article/2019-12-02/debut-dune-longue-greve-dans-des-trains-de-banlieue-londonienne
'Belgium partly paralysed by a train strike', https://france3-regions.francetvinfo.fr/hauts-de-france/belgique-partie-paralysee-greve-trains-1704544.html
'Spain: train strike shuts down national system', https://fr.euronews.com/2019/08/01/espagne-journee-de-greve-ferroviaire-nationale.

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Notwithstanding its broad definition, as a management topic, OS has been broached from two angles only: during the organisational entry period, comprising the main focus of contemporary literature (Bauer et al., 2007; Chao et al., 1994; Saks & Ashforth, 1997a), or whenever a person changes his or her position within an organisation (Wanberg, 2012). While there has been a great deal of sociological research exploring the diverse nature of the 'social worlds' that are subject to the socialisation issues that organisational change causes (e.g., Dubar, 2010[1991]; Francfort et al., 1995; Osty et al., 2007; Sainsaulieu, 2014[1977]), there has been little if any OS management research on the resocialisation of experienced employees in the context of change.

A number of management researchers (e.g., Baker & Feldman, 1991; Perrot et al., 2005; Saks & Ashforth, 1997a) have stressed the value of studying the resocialisation of experienced employees in a change situation. As early as 1991, Baker and Feldman even considered this to be 'a major avenue of research as well as a significant concern for practitioners' (p. 201). There are many reasons for considering periods of change as conducive to the OS process: change as an 'individual experience' (Choi, 2011) involves changing roles (Jaujard, 2011; Louis, 1980a, 1980b), and therefore, necessitates the abandonment of certain individual routines to make way for new ones. Changes in the three recognised areas of socialisation – work, working groups and the organisational level itself (Haueter et al., 2003) – therefore, creates a contrast between old and new roles (Louis, 1980a, 1980b; Nicholson, 1984). Hence, there is a need for experienced employees to try to both learn and internalise the expectations of a new role being formulated for them (Perrot et al., 2005). Similar to the period of organisational entry that Feldman (1981) described as the 'shock of reality', change creates a climate of stress and uncertainty (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999), which may cause even more anxiety than the organisational entry itself, insofar as it forces people to disengage from their previous role (Jones et al., 2008; Saks & Ashforth, 1997a, 1997b). Experienced employees also benefit from resources that newcomers do not possess, including knowledge of the organisation's history and members, inclusion in its networks and competency in their former roles (Louis, 1980a, 1980b). Hence, the idea that resocialisation is key to any organisational change (Hart et al., 2003), and that its 'success' is not guaranteed.

This research study suggests characterising both the successful and the failed resocialisation of experienced employees facing role changes, while also analysing the resocialisation resources and barriers that apply to them when compared with new recruits. It uses a multi-case qualitative methodology to analyse 35 cases of resocialisation in a large French railway company that had undergone a transformation process.

To this end, this study focuses on the three main contributions in the field of OS. By role change analysis, this study demonstrates the pluralistic nature of the forms of resocialisation. It determines what resocialisation actually means to experienced employees. The article identifies resocialisation resources and barriers, and analyses them in light of certain favourable and unfavourable factors that are already quite well known in the OS literature.

Literature review

A state of the art on the OS literature, developed mainly for the study of organisational entry, sheds light on existing characterisations of both successful and failed processes and socialisation resources and barriers. It is, therefore, useful to review the related literature in order to elucidate the resocialisation of experienced employees.

Socialisation: Indicators of success and failure, resources and barriers

Successful and failed socialisation

Role orientation was the first prism used to analyse the topic of new recruits' successful or failed socialisation, with the literature identifying three forms thereof (Jones, 1986; Nicholson, 1984; Schein, 1968, 1971, 1988; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Conformity occurs when an individual absorbs a newly prescribed role by acquiring new competencies and points of reference. Conversely, role innovation or determination applies when employees try to modify the role expectations they perceive in a way that suits them. One mixed form of role orientation – called exploration or mutual adjustment – refers to the changes that occur simultaneously in a person and in his or her role within a professional setting (Dufour & Lacaze, 2010; Fisher, 1986; Nicholson, 1984). A co-construction logic is at play here (Jaujard, 2011).

Several studies (e.g., Feldman, 1976; Lacaze & Chandon, 2003; Perrot, 2008) have also highlighted the need for analysing successful and failed socialisation in light of the levels of learning and internalisation associated with a new role. Note that these two states are not necessarily correlated. Learning can be viewed as a function of the way a role is being managed or how clear it is and is denoted by the ability to understand what is expected of a particular kind of work (Bauer et al., 2007). Internalising a new role means the extent to which an individual accepts and adheres (through standards, values, purposes, etc.) to it (Perrot, 2009).

Socialisation resources and barriers

Beyond these indicators of successful and failed socialisation, literature has tried to identify socialisation resources and barriers, primarily at the organisational and interactional levels.

An organisation influences an individual's socialisation to a new role (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). This reflects the OS tactics that have been deployed to provide people with sources of information, training systems and so on. The research study has suggested that structured programmes (e.g., training, formal rites of passage, induction days, etc.) promote socialisation success as they are associated with individuals achieving – with regard to a new role – high levels of learning (Bauer et al., 2007; Saks & Ashforth, 1997b), internalisation (Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Ashforth et al., 1998) and absorption (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Jones, 1986; Nicholson, 1984). Conversely, the absence of dedicated programmes of this kind leads to innovation, referred to here as a 'determination' (Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Jones, 1986; Mignery et al., 1995; Saks & Ashforth, 1997b) and exploration (Nicholson, 1984) of the new role.

Anyone in a socialisation situation also finds him- or herself at the heart of an interactional zone over which she or he only has partial influence (Fisher, 1986; Kram & Isabella, 1985; Miller & Jablin, 1991; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). A priori, exchanges with colleagues constitute socialisation resources for new recruits (Anakwe & Greenhaus, 1999), although the ambivalent role that peers – most notably, experienced employees – play in new recruits' socialisation should also be considered (Fisher, 1986; Jablin, 2001; Miller & Jablin, 1991; Schein, 1988). Messages from the interactional sphere have a major effect on employees' attitudes towards their work and organisation (Salancik, 1977). Experienced employees can just as easily help newcomers to interpret their new roles accurately as misrepresent the realities of a situation and lead the newcomers astray (Schein, 1988; Van Maanen, 1978). Seminal research in this area (Schein, 1988, p. 55) has viewed peer-group interactions as barriers to socialisation where they 'sow the seeds of sabotage, rebellion or revolution'.

Experienced employees' resocialisation in a context of change

There has been a relatively little analysis of experienced employees' resocialisation vis-à-vis their organisations' newly prescribed role expectations. The topic has, at best, been addressed indirectly, with discussions in this area tending to be scattered across different corpuses, including OS organisational tactics literature, change studies, role transition research or sociological and identitarian approaches to socialisation.

Successful and failed resocialisation

A review of socialisation literature might start by identifying new recruits' successful and failed socialisation indicators; however, few questions have ever been asked about the point of view of experienced employees facing planned changes to their roles.

Change in a work situation is first and foremost an 'individual experience' (Choi, 2011), one whose success inevitably depends on how the person to whom the change is happening will react (Choi, 2011; Greenhalgh et al., 2004; Caldwell et al., 2004; Fugate et al., 2008; Oreg, 2006; Rafferty & Griffin, 2006). Many studies focus on this reactive aspect alone (Oreg, 2006) and/or adopt a dichotomous approach to the way in which people respond to change. Analysis distinguishes between behaviours (or intentions), such as acceptance, openness (Madsen et al., 2005), involvement and commitment to change (e.g., Cunningham et al., 2002; Herold et al., 2007; Hornung & Rousseau, 2007; Stanley et al., 2005), eagerness ('readiness' and 'willingness') (e.g., Cunningham et al., 2002; Eby et al., 2000), or conversely, resistance and protest (Oreg, 2006; Stanley et al., 2005). Some research studies have also tried to identify change-related reactional typologies (e.g. Bourantas & Nicandrou, 1998; Chreim, 2006; Mishra & Spreitzer, 1998; Stensaker et al., 2002). Based on seminal studies by Hirshman (1970) (e.g., exit, voice and loyalty) and Farrell (1983) (e.g., exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect), archetypes within this corpus are essentially distinguished by the active or passive nature of the reaction and by the constructive or engagement or resistance or opposition stance taken by the person facing the change. The ambivalence identified by Chreim (2006) or Piderit (2000) results in both negative and positive assessments of cognitive or emotional and/or behavioural change. Where change theory's founding authors (e.g., Beckhard, 1969; Kanter et al., 1992) had envisioned 'transgression' or 'resistance' to change as an 'organisational pathology', further constructs, such as a 'defect requiring correction' (Babeau & Chanlat, 2008), alongside other work done by Crozier and Frieberg (1977), Alter (1991, 2000, 2001), Reynaud (1989, 1995), Reynaud and Terssac (1992), and Babeau and Chanlat (2008) have rehabilitated 'irregular acts' or 'transgressions' by repositioning these mechanisms as the essential foundations of organised collective action. Even if companies struggle not to stigmatise the people they hope will participate in the change, it seems important that any 'deviance' be perceived as a mechanism for engendering the innovation, which can then be deployed in a way that benefits the organisation (Alter, 2000). When construed thusly, the 'conversation' associated with resistance to change may reflect an even higher level of engagement at work than blind acceptance of change does (Kim & Mauborgne, 2003).

While not directly related to resocialisation, these elements suggest a need to revise general understanding of what constitutes successful or unsuccessful adjustments in situations where a role change is being planned. While the OS literature suggests that socialisation might be considered a success if an employee ultimately masters, internalises and absorbs a prescribed new role, the change literature has seemingly rehabilitated individuals' role innovation or

determination actions, viewing them as potentially functional forms of socialisation. Having said that, the construct of ambivalent adjustment has yet to be fully developed in OS literature. Yet, it is very possible that individuals facing new prescribed role expectations may react ambivalently, whether in terms of their role orientation (behavioural) and/or internalisation (adherence to and partial acceptance of the norms and values associated with a role's purpose).

Resocialisation resources and barriers

The current literature features a number of organisational, interactional and personal resocialisation resources and barriers.

At an organisational level, OS tactics and discourse can constitute resocialisation resources or barriers, as can change agents' attitudes and the way in which experienced employees are seen by their hierarchical superiors.

Organisational tactics literature has paid scant attention to the issue of experienced employees' resocialisation and tended to focus instead on the period surrounding an individual's entry into an organisation. Because current employees have a greater experience than new recruits, the authors writing on this topic have implicitly assumed that organisations will find it easier to help them cope with any uncertainties associated with a planned role change. The implementation of OS tactics (e.g., induction, in series, formal, fixed and sequential) declines after someone has been with a company for 4 months (Hart et al., 2003), although it remains very important (Hart et al., 2003), as it helps people to manage their strong emotional responses to big changes (Mossholder et al., 1989). It also seems that socialisation tactics do not have the same impact on the engagement of experienced employees facing change: 'collective' socialisation tactics (group training) sharpen this emotion (Hart et al., 2003; Zeynep, 2013), whereas social activities lessen it (Zeynep, 2013). Further research is needed to understand how the socialisation tactics that organisations deploy can become a resocialisation resource or barrier for this group (Hart et al., 2003).

It is also recognised that change recipients' resistance behaviours can reflect change agents' own discourse and attitudes. Miscommunication, a betrayal of trust and failing to call for concrete change action, can lead to the wider rejection of a planned change (Ford et al., 2008). Change recipients' interactions with senior managers, on one hand, and with middle managers, on the other hand, endow change with certain emergence characteristics (Rouleau & Balogun, 2011). There has been no real research in this area; however, other studies suggest that change agents' discourse and attitudes may become a resocialisation resource or barrier as far as experienced employees are concerned.

Senior managements' view of people's work also seems to play a non-insignificant role in their resocialisation. Role transition situations can create a gap between the identities that people claim to possess and the ones recognised in their social spheres (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010). In a sociological view of workplace socialisation, people's feeling whether the meaning they attribute to their work has received recognition can easily convert over time into a resocialisation resource or barrier (e.g., Dubar, 2010; Osty & Uhalde, 2007; Sainsaulieu, 2014 [1977]).

On an interactional level, the fact of having relational connections would also appear to constitute a resocialisation resource or barrier for experienced employees. Whereas new recruits to an organisation may not have any relational networks there, employees with an in-house experience will be able to develop workplace relationships. Strong ties like this facilitate political mobilisation and solidarity among members of a given organisation (Granovetter, 1973). They can also lead to excessive intimacy, conformity of opinion and rejection of other groups (Nelson, 1989). Studies in this area suggest that the strong links that experienced employees develop can just as easily foster solidarity with change as a rejection thereof (if the person's main goal is to fit in with a group ensconced in its own working habits).

The research study by Louis (1980a, 1980b) revealed experienced employees as possessing *de facto* personal resources that foster greater socialisation. Indeed, having past experience in an organisation helps people to make sense of the events they have encountered (Louis, 1980a, 1980b). Having full mastery of one's former role(s) and a broader knowledge of an organisation and its operations can be turned over time into a personal resocialisation resource. Sociological research that approaches socialization at work an identity point of view as well as management researchers interested in role transition (e.g., Ashforth, 2001; Fournier, 1996; Fournier & Payne, 1994; Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010), consider that the accumulation of experience does not necessarily promote resocialisation. Rather it is the perception that one's biographical trajectory has been either interrupted or allowed to continue that constitutes the resocialisation barrier or resource. In other words, it is an individual's ability over time to find coherence between his or her different kinds of socialisation that determines whether resocialisation will be successful (Ashforth, 2001; Fournier, 1996; Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010). It remains that research into change role expectations has yet to study this particular insight.

In sum, despite recognition that OS is a continuous phenomenon arising throughout a person's career, researchers have tended to focus on the organisational entry period and in so doing obviated phenomena relating to resocialisation in a context of change. This static conception of organisations – and purely biographical vision of human beings – means that the

OS management literature currently suffers from an enchanted vision of socialisation, one in which people are deemed to possess personal and interactional resources (experience, competency in a former role, knowledge of an organisation and relational networks), allowing them to socialise more or less seamlessly into new roles. Thus, all the organisations have to implement a structured socialisation programme in order to ensure compliance with (i.e., absorption, mastery and internalisation of) the newly prescribed role.

Yet, the related literature (covering change phenomena, role transitions, social networks, and sociological and identitarian visions of socialisation at work) suggests that non-compliance with newly planned roles is not necessarily dysfunctional, given the possibility of ambivalent adjustment to new planned role expectations because socialisation tactics and discourses (together with management attitudes) can generate either support for change or resistance to it, because relational spheres can either bolster resocialisation or else undermine it, and because an individual's experience can just as easily become a resocialisation resource as a barrier.

Moreover, there is little understanding, at present, of the way in which these organisational, interactional, and personal resources and barriers interlink with and contribute to the success or failure of experienced employee's resocialisation in a new role, justifying, in turn, that questions be asked in this domain, including as regards the way these elements combine to affect the outcome of this process.

Research methodology

This research study seeks to understand the barriers and resources affecting the resocialisation of experienced employees facing a planned role change, and how these elements interlink to condition the outcome of this process. With its aspiration of being both comprehensive (Dumez, 2013) and interpretive (Sandberg, 2005), the study analyses 35 cases involving the resocialisation of experienced employees facing role changes. The cases are derived from a dataset mainly comprising 30 interviews. The following paragraphs discuss this research framework in further detail.

Choosing the field of study

This case study assumes deep immersion in the kind of real context (Crowe et al., 2011) that manifests the phenomenon under study. Since the mid-1990s, FERR – a major European railway company – has had to contend with new EU institutional competition and general performance requirements (Codo, 2013). In response and like many if not most public organisations, FERR decided to pursue a new management public approach (Pichault & Schoenaers, 2012) that would lead to major strategic, structural, technological and cultural

organisational reforms. At a strategic level, the customer orientation introduced in the late 1990s signified a gradual transition from an integrated management focus to one geared towards company 'products'. Structurally, these strategic changes would have the effect of radically rearranging local production structures, that is, this was an activity-oriented reorganisation that would include, inter alia, a merger of various entities. As a state monopoly and having been tasked with opening rail transport up to competition, among other things, the company was supposed to separate its transportation and infrastructure management activities. Technological changes, including the installation of new computerised switching centres separate from the network's existing train stations, led to significant site-to-site staff movements and a restructuring of numerous facilities. Finally, the previous technical culture was gradually replaced by a 'service delivery' culture focused on external and internal customers. All these changes gave rise to new operating rules and have profoundly changed the organisation's 'cultural framework' (Franfort et al., 1995, pp. 417–418). FERR's status as a state-owned enterprise also meant that senior managers needed to develop a new set of skills for their staff members, many of whom could never be fired given their civil servant status. The numerous changes that FERR undertook – together with employees' traditionally strong identification with the organisation and the many different occupations it encompassed – would create a large pool of experienced employees who needed to be socialised into their new roles. It is of no surprise, therefore, that the issue became a priority.

At an employee level, these changes led to new expectations of the newly prescribed roles, whether in terms of the way group work was supposed to be performed or at the level of each separate occupation.

Data compilation and case selection

Several data sources were compiled, with interviews being the main collection method. This is because interviews made it possible to obtain accurate retrospective narratives about cases of resocialisation. The interviews carried out in 2013 covered a targeted sample (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of 30 experienced FERR employees from 12 different work locations, each of whom was interviewed twice (at intervals of 8–13 months). Within a given worksite, interviewing several members of the same team (11 in total) – one manager and two agents – helped to elucidate resocialisation processes by accessing people's intersubjective experiences (Suddaby, 2006). Experienced employees would indicate which members of their organisation were not new recruits. Organisational entry usually covers a period limited to the first year following an employee's recruitment (e.g., Haueter et al., 2003; Perrot, 2008). Hence, the decision was taken to choose employees who had

worked for more than a year at FERR and occupied positions interfacing with different activities or hierarchical levels. This is because these kinds of employees are particularly exposed to organisational upheavals that redefine their job's boundaries. The professionals involved here included unit and local team leaders who coordinate the work of the following professions: railway switching operators (traffic control), schedule planners (whose job included finding time slots to carry out maintenance work), shunting operative (ensuring traffic flows) and platform hosts (responsible for train departure procedures and customer service functions). The separation of FERR's activities notably forced unit and local managers to change the way they fulfilled their roles by no longer undertaking certain responsibilities that had once been attributed to them. Some had previous assignments removed despite outperforming their productivity, regularity and reporting expectations. Traffic controllers, who used to work out of network train stations, were now being moved to computerised switching centres, and therefore, had to learn new technological tools, where in the past they had simply pushed buttons or pulled levers. They were also asked to no longer be directly involved with certain FERR activities (because of the new expectation that all railway companies be treated impartially) but still ensure that a higher percentage of trains ran on time. Shunting operatives had to apply new safety rules, and have fewer accidents and incidents. Schedule planners were moved to a site that they now shared with their network manager, with whom they would be expected to collaborate on a daily basis. Platform hosts' missions were re-focused on customer service, meaning that they lost their previous safety responsibilities. Everyone basically found themselves having to follow new occupational rules in line with the executive's implementation of so-called New Public Management protocols – some ancillary effects of which included fewer staff socials being held and the loss of previously accepted group practices, such as being allowed to read during down times on the switching table, and smoking on the platforms.

For the sake of consistency, all interviews were conducted by this article's lead author. They were designed to be semi-directive, yet assume the form of a natural conversation (Sandberg, 2005). Once respondents mentioned some change in their prescribed role, questions would then be asked on how they had felt when this took place, whether they thought they had been given enough support and if they had ultimately adjusted to the change. The main goal of the second interview was to confirm or reassess the person's adjustment to the change in the specified role. Maintaining a flexible interview format protected the process against circularity risk (Dumez, 2013) by enabling the emergence of previously ignored themes. Cross-checking both interviewees and researchers was crucial to ensuring that the resocialisation stories were being reproduced as

accurately as possible. The sample was limited to 30 people because of a sense that beyond this number a risk existed of thematic saturation. To limit response bias, several precautions were taken: (1) respondents were chosen from different organisational levels and entities to avoid the context bias, (2) open-ended questions were asked about the recent events to avoid bias stemming from an imprecise memory of distant past events, (3) factual examples were systematically requested to ensure good understanding of the events that interviewees were evoking, (4) anonymisation increased respondents' confidence so they would speak more openly, and (5) framing change as something strategic at an individual level incentivised participants to answer with accuracy and precision. All interviews were fully recorded and transcribed. Each lasted for 40–120 min, with an average of 90 min.

A variety of documents were also used to understand the changes that took place at FERR. This included internal institutional documentation (activity reports and human resource files), as well as external (union tracts, press clippings, etc.) and operational (technical files, team meeting minutes, etc.) papers. A work group composed of HR department and trade union representatives was also involved. This article's lead author was responsible for helping the co-authors apprehend occupational change within each of the different interviewee groups. This allowed her not only to meet key informants who were experts in organisational change but also to legitimise her presence on-site, thereby, gaining easier access to local teams. Respondent narratives were cross-checked against the changes described in relevant documents and meeting minutes. This data triangulation helped us to differentiate between role changes resulting from organisational change and other variants involving other factors (personal requests, staff turnover and work process improvements).

Case selection

The case-study method is particularly suited to taking a comprehensive approach to a phenomenon (Hlady Rispal, 2002; Yin, 2009). A case can be defined as 'a singularity likely to be isolated' and 'a structure' delimited by 'a more or less blurred boundary' (Dumez, 2013, pp. 13–14), determined empirically or in an abstract way (category provided by a theory, an observation situation, etc.). The resocialisation cases we studied were empirically delineated based on two elements: we only retained those situations where a new role expectation for an experienced employee had been prescribed no longer than a year earlier and which required some form of adjustment (role orientation, level of learning and internalisation) on the part of the same employee. Role modifications not related to organisational change (e.g., new supervisor or location transfer at the

employee's request) were thus ruled out. Where role changes were not described in sufficient detail to identify the resources and barriers to socialisation, they were also excluded from the material.

We selected 35 cases of socialisation from all the material compiled because they corresponded to the criteria set out by Stake (2006), that is, they were indicative of the phenomenon being studied; were embedded in a range of local contexts; and were accessible to the researcher conducting the empirical research. We only selected situations that involved a new role expectation prescribed for an experienced employee, which dated back no longer than a year and required some form of adjustment from the person involved (orientation, level of learning and internalisation). Role changes unrelated to organisational role changes (e.g., the arrival of a new line manager or where the person had simply moved location) were, therefore, excluded. Where role change descriptions were too imprecise to identify socialisation resources and barriers, they were also rejected. A total of 35 cases of change-related socialisation were identified using these criteria. Twenty-five respondents had had one role change to deal with and five respondents had had two. Table A in the annex details the nature of these 35 resocialisation cases.

Data analysis

We conducted our data analysis from a comprehensive perspective (Dumez, 2011; Hlady Rispal, 2002) to help us see the process of organisational re-socialisation 'in a new way' (Dumez, 2011, p. 195). This involves focusing on the phenomenon in its context, rather than seeking some form of universality (Hlady Rispal, 2002).

This interpretive approach (Avenier & Gavard-Perret, 2012) views the world as a lived experience related to a conscious subject (Sandberg, 2005), 'a reality interpreted by humans and subjectively meaningful to them' (Berger & Luckmann, 2018[1966], p. 70). In order to answer the research questions, we therefore first analysed, based on the individuals' narratives of their experience, how the interviewees felt they had experienced the prescribed role change. The aim was to code the material based on the theoretical frameworks identified in the OS literature and to complete or modify or clarify these categories when we came across unexpected facts, that is, facts not predicted by the OS literature and which stemmed from the respondents' interpretations.

Thus, based on the respondents' interpretations, while the main categories (success or failure of resocialisation or organisational, personal and interactional resources/brakes) were identified in this case study, the way in which several of these dimensions were broken down in each case was largely enriched by the individuals' interpretations of the phenomenon. The categories identified in the literature were thus enriched

by their points of view. As an illustration, we thought, *a priori*, that individuals might or might not adhere to their new role. However, some individuals emphasised both the positive and negative aspects of their new role, suggesting an 'ambivalent' level of adherence to it. Similarly, we found that individuals faced with a role change sometimes felt that they were recognised and valued in their new role or, on the contrary, sometimes felt a lack of recognition and value in their new role. As another example, while the socialisation literature considers that institutionalised socialisation tactics promote successful socialisation, the results of this study showed something different. We found that when individuals 'feel accompanied and informed' or, on the contrary, feel 'that things are being hidden from them, that they are being threatened' or that 'they are being forced to change roles', then this contributes to, or creates barriers to, resocialisation.

The researchers then interpreted respondent narratives to ascertain how different resocialisation resources and barriers combine to condition typical forms of resocialisation. We identified four typical forms: individuals who relate to conviction show strong adherence and absorption of a new role, those who relate to resourcefulness show moderate adherence and engage in exploratory behaviour, those who related to resignation absorb their new role despite their weak adherence, and those who relate to transgression pretend to absorb their new role or determine it themselves.

The choice of the four typical forms of resocialisation was guided by a comparison of inter- and intra-case variances aimed at minimising variations within each type and maximising differences between types (Robette, 2011). They are part of an 'intersubjective reality' (Sandberg, 2005), in that they present certain temporarily stable regularities (Yanow, 2006) on which we have focused.

Interpretation of the data and all the coding stages were carried out by the two researchers of this study. This double coding involved a systematic reformulation of divergent interpretations until a consensus was reached. Data analysis was not a linear process but one that would be redesigned as researchers clarified their understanding of the phenomenon. Out of the 1,200 pages that were transcribed, only the most evocative data were chosen to illustrate the themes, concepts and dimensions that had been uncovered.

Figure 1. Data structure representing in graphic form how the categories derived from the OS literature were enriched via this qualitative study. Data shown in bold font derives directly from the interview material.

Findings

In order to help understand the resocialisation resources and barriers affecting experienced employees facing planned role changes, the findings are presented in four
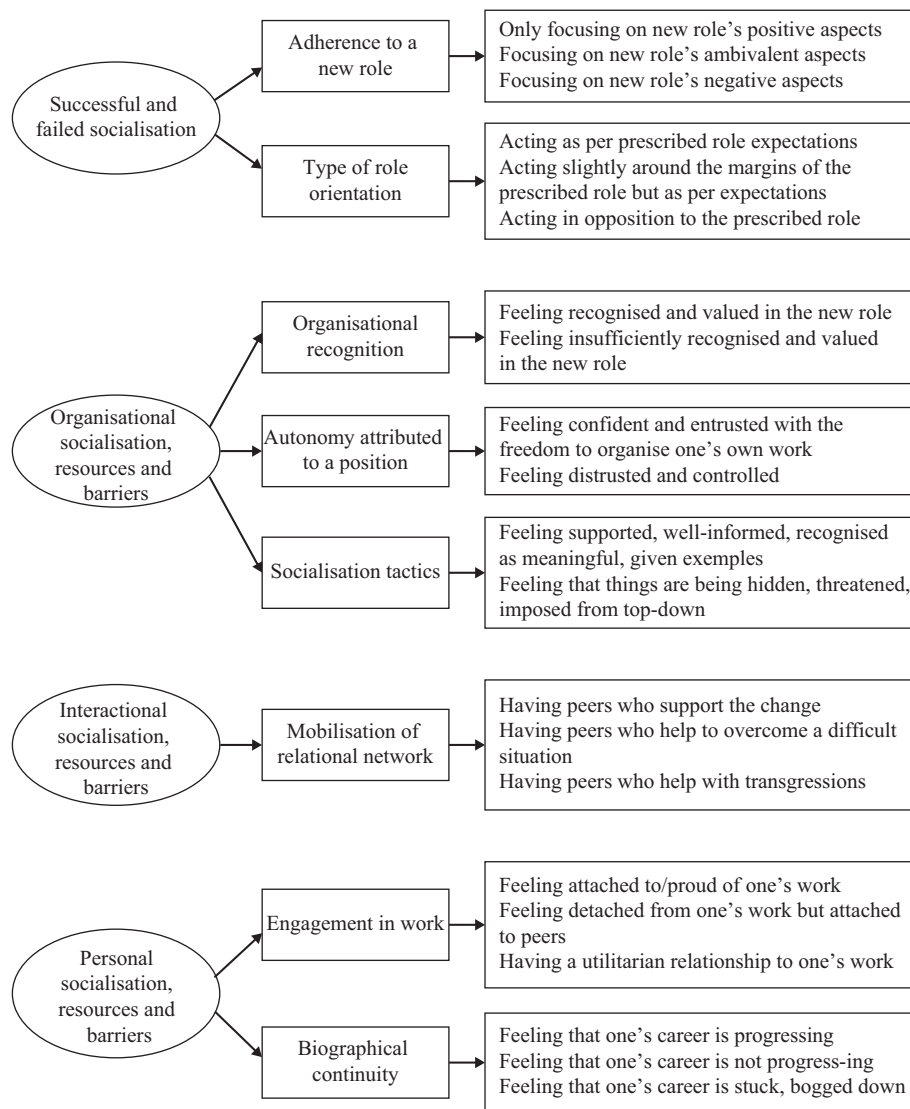
Figure 1. Data structure: Resocialisation of experienced employees facing a planned role change

stages. The first stage analyses the new expectations of experienced employees. The second details the four typical forms of resocialisation that have been identified. The third stage shows how each form of resocialisation translates into success or failure, and introduces each resource and barrier identified. The fourth illustrates how resources and barriers combine to explain a given case's successful or failed resocialisation.

Delineating the role changes

For FERR staff, the changes were translated by senior managers prescribing new role expectations relating to group operations and/or to occupational practice. Six new role expectations were identified in respondent narratives.

Interactions limited to one's own business unit (as opposed to the whole of the company).

Most agents noted a greater compartmentalisation of work relations than had been the case in the past. During the initial data compilation phase, the persons involved in the change process were clearly informed that they should stop interacting with colleagues in other entities and limit their interactions to their own business units. Contacts with other entities now meant going through intermediaries (e.g., consultation officers) and engaging in an inter-entity 'service provision' based on mutual assistance protocols. With the railway market opening up

to competition, traffic controllers were specifically required to treat all railway companies with impartiality. This meant that they had to go through a 'regulations manager' instead of contacting people directly:

> You used to be able to call anyone you wanted but that was no longer the case. We had to be completely impartial. Relationships were much less transparent than before. On the phone, you could still get a few people. But normally you weren't supposed to do that anymore. […] Instead you were supposed to ring the consultation officers they had at NETWORK now. We were told to contact them and then they would call the railway companies to get information to then send back to us. (Case no. 23)

> Staff working in other departments were told not to contact us. (Case no. 26)

Working with network manager on the same location

Local staff and managers in FERR's regulations department also reported changes in the profile of the people who would now be giving them orders. Guidance and supervision would come henceforth from network managers, who had a different profile than those who used to run FERR. The new bosses were all graduates of elite universities, full of theoretical knowledge but lacking in frontline experience. Local staff were now being asked to collaborate on a daily basis with network staff operating out of the same location:

> [In an ironic tone] We were going to set up a cell inside NETWORK that would prepare us for working with [name of new software]. We were supposed to study it and once that was finished, once it was really understood, there were these people hired who had gone a lot further with their education than we had, they all had Bachelor' degrees, some even a Masters. So even if they hadn't been working in railways for long, they now knew how to timetable. The idea was that these people would then share their notes with us so we could copy them into [name of old software]. (Case No. 16)

> Assistant managers, who all came from big universities, showed up and quickly got a grip on things. But it stuck in our craw when they had no technical knowledge. (Case No. 25)

Implementing new work processes or operational rules

Several staff members mentioned a tightening of rules and procedures for each occupational gesture, with the idea being to achieve a better allocation of work and/or improve safety (after many reported incidents in the past). Procedures mentioned during the initial data compilation sessions included making train reversals safer by having the trains pulled backwards instead of being pushed. The second group of sessions saw references to the newly mandated use of a 'Stobbly' remote braking device. Staff were also being explicitly asked to cease certain widely accepted occupational practices, such as smoking on the tracks, walking across the tracks and reading during off-peak assignments at the switching table:

> Trains could only be reversed now by pulling them, not pushing. (Case No. 10)

> We were asked to work more safely… because there had been a few docking problems when we moved the trains around, people would forget things. (Case No. 7)

> Now we had to use the Stobbly because there had been an accident. (Case No. 10)

Using new technology (computerised switching centres)

Technological changes had reconfigured a number of occupational gestures, as well as identity and culture of certain work groups. This was particularly true for traffic controllers who used to work out-of-network train stations but had now been moved to computerised switching centres whose staff members also perceived a big change in the way they were now being asked to perform their role. Where they had once tracked routes and itineraries themselves, they were now using software in which this role had already been accomplished:

> More than anything, it was a totally different job. All we ended up doing was supervising the timetables. The trains were already fully scheduled and we were just monitoring them. We used to actually run the trains…. decide ourselves which tracks and itineraries they'd take. (Case No. 28)

> Now you had all these new technologies. Before we'd had the PRS flexible transit switching system where we could push some buttons. But now everything was done with a computer and you'd simply click a mouse. (Case No. 26)

Performance improvement

Many staff members felt that performance requirements had increased significantly given all the tracking, regularity, safety and passenger information objectives they were now being assigned. These new expectations translated the organisation's new customer orientation. The regulatory requirement would become particularly important given the rise in traffic ever since inter-train intervals had been shortened:

> I wouldn't say that anything had gone wrong. Everything I looked at got tracked every day. But it was a lot of work. (Case No. 12)

We were being asked to do more and more . . . We were given so many targets. I think they wanted us to do it American style. Targets became the be all and end all. (Case No. 4)

We became much more customer-oriented, especially in giving information. (Case No. 30)

Regulatory requirements put us under the cosh. […] It was really hard. You had to analyse any time wasted and tell off staff members for doing a bad job. […] That was the biggest new pressure that we faced. (Case No. 27)

Every week had charts showing delay percentages. We had to be within a range, in the green, stay below a certain percentage. There was a big pressure on regularity now. (Case No. 1)

Discontinuing previous assignments; allocation of new 'ancillary missions'

Separating FERR's branches and activities also narrowed down the range of activities performed by certain operatives who were now confined to passenger missions. This compartmentalisation was particularly difficult for staff members whose initial training had been for polyvalent work. In order to fill up the free time, some now had been working in network train stations that were quieter than before, operatives who had originally been trained in train-switching maneuvers were given a number of other missions, including track supervision, mail dispatch and loudspeaker announcements:

Before we had done a lot of freight here, we'd go to the switching centre and see everything. Back-ups would also get an overview, one day they might work on freight, another time passengers, then maybe infrastructure. One day they'd be working at the station, another at the depot, another at the switching centre. We'd move around. Afterwards it got very narrow. A freight train might break down at the station, but we couldn't do anything about it. They wouldn't even let us help. We could let people use the phone but nothing more. Which made no sense since I'd been trained in switching and to work with freight and passengers. (Case No. 3)

The different forms of resocialisation

By combining the levels of adherence and orientation to the role (Figure 1), we were able to identify four typical forms of *resocialisation* in the material. They combine a type of cognitive or affective adjustment and a behavioural adjustment. We were able to easily categorise our case studies into one or other forms without any exceptions. The vignettes each illustrate at least one of these forms of *resocialisation* and show along with the *verbatim* how the different dimensions of *socialisation* work together.

As we will see later, the four typical forms characterise what constitutes the success or failure of *socialisation* for the experienced employees.

Conviction

Nine cases (Case Nos. 1; 5; 9; 17; 18; 24; 26; 30; 35) revealed a resocialisation process, involving the absorption of a new role expectation with a high level of adherence. Case No. 9 offers an illustrative vignette.

Vignette 1. Example of resocialisation based on conviction (Case No. 9)

Situation studied: Performance improvement (trackability and safety)

After joining FERR in 2011, Maxime found himself leading a 23-person strong team on the site where he worked. After earning a vocational degree, he had had difficulties finding a job before joining FERR. Following a few odd jobs in the private sector that he did not like at all – working as a security guard, mechanic and carpenter – he was very pleased to find a stable and responsible position with FERR. He went through the entire recruitment process without any problems, and after undergoing several training programmes, he was happy to be appointed as a team manager.

Parachuted into a location that had suffered a number of accidents (including derailments), Maxime was asked to improve general safety levels on-site by intensifying staff supervision. He absorbed this new role expectation behaviourally, cognitively and emotionally, culminating in his increasing the frequency of staff controls, adding new rules and telling staff that he would always be watching them – something several team members found a little oppressive. Maxime very much adhered to his new role expectations and viewed them as normal requirements seeing as FERR works for customers who have their own demands, making this an opportunity for FERR to improve the overall performance while turning a profit. He also viewed staff mistakes and errors as factors justifying the new safety rules and intensified controls, that is, as being a situation where it was normal that people be forced to do something. More generally, Maxime saw safety as an important value. Security had been his first job, and he sincerely thought it abnormal that people ignore this factor. Finally, his new role expectation was quite comfortable for him, given the way his career had gone until that point. Applying new safety rules corresponded fully to what he saw as the job of a manager, the role for which he had been trained. Hence, his sense that a certain biographic continuity existed between the different socialisation experiences he had had over time.

Maxime was content with his work situation at FERR, which recognised his capabilities and the value he brought to certain missions (team leadership and exercising responsibility). He appreciated not only the good pay but also the autonomy he was given as a local manager to run his own business.

Maxime took personal pride in doing a good job, explaining, in turn, his strong professional commitment. In order to fulfil the role expected of him, Maxime had no compunction about bringing senior managers in to shake things up and even threatened to sanction any employees still resisting the new safety protocols. He felt that some staff members viewed safety as a constraint and made it a matter of principle to oppose what the bosses wanted. He also did not like union opposition preventing his own managers from implementing the changes they wanted.

Resourcefulness

Eight cases (Case Nos. 2; 6; 13; 16; 22; 29; 33; 34) reflected a resocialisation process, culminating in exploration of the new

role expectation with an average level of adherence. Case No. 16 offers an illustrative vignette.

Vignette 2. Example of resocialisation based on resourcefulness (Case No. 16)

Situation studied: Working with network managers on a shared location

Laure, who had risen to become a manager, described herself as an old-fashioned schedule planner. She joined FERR in 1990, meaning that she knew it as an integrated group before the transport and network activities were separated. For a number of years, she and her teams would suffer because of her strained relationship with senior management at NETWORK, whose arrival on the scene (in 2003) had changed everything about her way of working. […] 'Overnight, we were forced to stop talking to the different activity groups and couldn't understand why. Nor did we get any real support. We felt that many people at NETWORK knew nothing yet still bossed us around. They had us doing just about anything and everything and we had to obey. All of which had a really negative effect on quality'.

Following this experience, Laure unsurprisingly developed an ambivalent attitude towards the new expectations of the role she was now asked to perform, working together with the network manager on their shared location. What bothered her most was the lack of respect either for her team's ergonomic expectations or for the fear they felt at the prospect of their unit being absorbed by NETWORK. 'It was not so much that they had moved us since we got to stay in the same city meaning most people didn't find this too much of a problem. But psychologically the idea of working more closely with NETWORK was very negative […] For good reason, seeing as NETWORK tried to gobble up our scheduling unit. Something that, ergonomically, they weren't really able to do – but they shouldn't have even tried it'. At the same time, Laure did have some understanding of the ideological and philosophical motives driving this rapprochement. Hence, her decision, as manager, to try and lead by example to the extent of developing over time a positive vision of her new role expectations and even seeing some benefits in them. 'From the moment you had two different entities operating out of the same site, it did simplify things to have us work side-by-side. If only because it became easier for us to talk'. At an emotional level, Laure was somewhat taken aback by the symbolic questioning of FERR's autonomy but felt obliged to acknowledge the improvement in NETWORK staff's performance.

In behavioural terms, the orientation that Laure adopted was exploratory in nature. '[I] had lots of good ideas about things we could do […] to make staff members' life easier' and get the two entities to work more closely together. She ended up not only complying with the new requirements but also becoming an advocate for them, working hard on changing workspace configurations and freely sharing her thoughts with the senior management to try and influence the framing of relations with NETWORK staff. 'I ran individual interviews, also group consultations […] We used to try to boycott them and work under different conditions than the ones they were forcing on us. But no longer'.

In terms of the resources that the organisation gave her, Laure felt that it showed she had earned people's trust, and that her line manager acknowledged her devotion and capabilities. 'At my annual appraisal, he was really complimentary, something everyone likes hearing. He knew that things were going to work out but felt it had gone even better than he predicted, that I was doing a great job'. Laure was also able to maintain the same level of autonomy, a sign that her boss trusted her and was happy with how her team was performing.

Laure was satisfied with the way her career was going. She had been promoted several times, accumulated a few qualifications and had been given group management responsibilities. After a brief stint in Human Resources, she was allowed to return to the scheduling department, which she viewed as her family home. The move was also lucrative. 'Basically I like working in that office. […] The building is beautiful, I love it. NETWORK made a huge effort to spruce up the canteen!' Gradually, Laure was able to make sense of the different socialisation experiences she had had over time at FERR, and remained aware that the story was ongoing. She had worked hard at getting used to the idea of collaborating with NETWORK staff who she now encountered on a more or less daily basis , and appreciated the fact that they were changing their attitude towards FERR.

Laure had cultivated personal resources that helped her adjust to the new role expectations. She remained very engaged in her work, and indeed, very attached to FERR, calling herself a railway worker at heart and someone with strong connections to the big family of schedule planners.

In short, she had forged a relational network that she could mobilise to adapt more easily to the changes she was experiencing with other frontline staff members. She continued to converse regularly with a NETWORK and appreciated the relationship, being discussions that helped her to provide the team with extra information facilitating on-site collaboration.

Resignation

Fifteen of the cases (case Nos. 3; 4; 7; 8; 11; 12; 14; 15; 19; 20; 21; 23; 25; 27; 31) embodied a resocialisation process, culminating in people absorbing their new role expectation with minimum adherence. Case No. 4 offers an illustrative vignette.

Vignette 3. Example of resocialisation based on resignation (Case No. 4)

Situation studied: improving sustainability performance

Sandrine joined FERR in 1999, working as a regularity assistant and then as a building works assistant before ultimately being appointed as a team manager. Having assumed platform responsibilities in a small rural station, Sandrine experienced great changes in her management role following the installation of a computerised employee control variance analytics system. With this new tool, local managers were now having to carry out more supervisory missions instead of spending as much time out in the field.

In terms of her behaviour, as a manager Sandrine felt obliged to carry out her new mission: 'Even if we do not always agree with the new goals, we are part of the leadership team. We still have to get the team to accept the objectives'. Cognitively and emotionally, however, she struggled. 'I do what I can'. She greatly appreciated her relationship with frontline staff and felt that having a local presence was key to her work.

Sandrine was very disappointed, however, by the resources the organisation had given her. She suffered from a lack of recognition and follow-up. The computerised variance analytics seem to have replaced the human controls she used to enjoy, leaving her with a feeling of being alone with the questions she wanted to ask.

The work organisation autonomy she had once enjoyed was no longer possible because of the new objectives she had been given. She blamed FERR for being 'too top-down' and imposing procedures that added to local managers' workload.

At a personal level, Sandrine felt an ambivalent level of engagement in her work. She remained very devoted to her staff, in part because of her sense of professionalism (and also because she was being paid for that) but started to disengage and dissociate herself from her lines of command. 'It was for my team that I would show up in the morning'.

In order to satisfy the new role expectations assigned to her and the team, she would leverage her relational network to manage different situations and compensate for the lack of resources made available to her. With staff 'we would always muddle through, find some trick, piece things together'. Sandrine could also count on her assistant when she needed help. More generally, Sandrine would realise over time that her socialisation experience had suffered a biological discontinuity. She thought her career was treading water and did not support the 'American style' management approach that she felt was contaminating her function. Hence, she made the plans to leave FERR in the near future and eventually join one of its subsidiaries.

Transgression

Three cases (case Nos: 10; 28; 32) manifested a resocialisation process, culminating in tacit or latent role determination marked by a low level of adherence. Case No. 10 offers an illustrative vignette.

Vignette 4. Example of resocialisation based on transgression (Case No. 10)

Situation studied: following a new safety procedure

Having joined FERR in 2001 after first working in the private sector, Pierre was attracted by the prospect of job security. 'I was fed up with what I'd been doing and applied to a lot of public sector jobs, but it was FERR who answered first […] I went there for job security and because it's stable'. After more or less always performing the same kind of work (shunting carriages), he felt a big difference in terms of what would now be expected of him. Henceforth, management was asking him to follow new safety procedures affecting the occupational gestures that he and his working group had been doing for years.

In terms of his behaviour, Peter would do what he was asked to but confessed that he rarely followed the new procedures when the bosses were not around. 'Only every now and again'. [And if they checked on you without warning?] 'We only did it nights and weekends'. [What if there was an incident and you hadn't been using the Stobbly in-station train braking system?] 'We'd put a hole in the pipe to say it wasn't working. We'd improvise!'

Cognitively and emotionally, Pierre did not adhere to the new procedures, which he only considered useful to 'give the bosses some cover' if something went wrong. They hampered his work and made it hard to meet his prescribed regularity targets. 'If we had followed them, all the trains would have been late, and some wouldn't be able to depart at all'. He thought that the unofficial aim of the new procedures was 'to get rid of people's jobs' and kill off any team spirit by forcing staff to work alone. 'Before we had always been part of a team. Now more often than not we would be alone'.

In terms of the resources, he was given by the organisation, Pierre felt strongly that the change had been imposed on him and was saddened to lose his bosses' recognition, especially given the gap he perceived between what he had given to the organisation and what he got in return. '[They'd ask me] to be punctual, motivated, follow safety rules. […] But I didn't always get paid fairly for that, that's for sure'. [Why do you say that?] 'Compared to the career progression I could have had. Normally, everyone was working at C level. I was the only one at B level. They'd been promising me a promotion for two years'.[…]

Pierre also lost some professional autonomy after a few incidents on-site. 'They [senior managers] would come every day to interrogate me. Like the police. They were trying to get me to crack. Bosses would come and go all the time'.

At a personal level, Pierre manifested a relatively low level of engagement in his work, which he considered as possessing no more than an extrinsic value, namely, remuneration and job safety, enabling him to qualify more easily for loans.

Otherwise, he viewed his peers as a resource for transgressing at work. Colleagues would cover one other so that each could do what they believe would make them more productive whenever the 'bosses' were not around. 'It was a safety matter. We didn't do it because it was quicker'. [And in front of the boss?] 'If they scheduled a time, we'd make sure to check the book 15 minutes before'.

Pierre would ultimately feel 'stuck' in terms of his career progression. 'I was stuck. I had nowhere to go'. He would have like a promotion but felt that he and his colleagues had no upside in the department, and no real prospects for the future.

Five employees, in this study, had to deal with two role changes and adopted different forms of resocialisation: one was a manager (Case No. 1 [conviction] and Case No. 2 [resourcefulness]; then a second manager (Case No. 12 [resignation] and Case No. 13 [resourcefulness]); then a third manager (Case No. 26 [conviction] and Case No. 27 [resignation]); then a traffic controller (Case No. 28 [transgression] and Case No. 29 [resourcefulness]); and finally, a platform host (Case No. 31 [resignation] and Case No. 32 [transgression]). These cases show that, as discussed below, individuals do not necessarily have an unequivocal response to organisational change.

Successful and failed resocialisation

Resocialisation in a new role refers to the way individuals and their roles are reconfigured at a given moment in time. The results of this study first show that resocialisation is a unique combination of behavioural and cognitive/emotional adjustments; these adjustments are specific to each of the four forms of resocialisation identified in our data and reflect the different modalities of success or failure of resocialisation.

The first form of resocialisation is called conviction and attests to a strong absorption of and adherence to the newly prescribed role. In behavioural terms, absorption causes

conduct compliant with new role expectations. Strong adherence reflects the expectations' internalisation once they have been legitimised and shared by the individual(s) facing a new role. Examples in this study include the way staff would view the new regularity, punctuality and travel information expectations they were supposed to meet:

> [I was expected] to do my job, make sure the trains left on time, follow safety rules and represent the company all at once. I was an intermediary between the public and the company. They really just wanted me to hit my regularity and punctuality targets. (Case No. 30)

> [Who formalised these expectations?] It was me. I saw it as my duty. What mattered to me was doing my job right, being punctual. The company's image mattered to me too. That's what you were communicating on the platforms with your outfit and smile. When you were giving passengers information and being pleasant to them. (Case No. 4)

The second form of resocialisation, namely, resourcefulness results in an exploration-type behaviour, which is when someone partially complies with the prescribed role by choosing singular ways of responding, including improvisation. This form of resocialisation reflects an ambivalent adherence to the new role expectation, one of whose aspects makes sense, while the other makes a person feel uncomfortable in a given situation. An example is the way staff in the present case study chose to respond to the new separation between activities or the new regulatory requirements. Resourcefulness would translate people's agency and desire to develop 'do-it-yourself' solutions in response to new role expectations that they did not consider entirely justified (one of the examples being Case 29 when the switching operative found it inappropriate to prioritise a train that was on-time by stopping a shunting locomotive [used to move trains around], hence, decided to slow down several network trains to enable 'everyone' to advance). Resourcefulness also refers to the improvisational abilities of experienced employees who, having learned the ins and outs of their jobs over time, would deploy these skills because that is what they believed meant 'doing a good job', a vision that did not correspond to senior managers who, in the aforementioned case, would have wanted, in the name of the separation of activities, the operative to prioritise the passenger train over the shunting locomotive:

> There were tricks you could use to avoid stopping a shunting train – like slowing another one down. The problem was that sidetracked trains struggle to re-start because they're so long. Anything taking five minutes or more had to be explained. But not if it only took two or three minutes. They were always telling us that passenger trains had priority but freight trains also have work to do, adding or removing carriages. So, there were little things you could do to keep everyone moving. (Case No. 29)

There were things I didn't necessarily agree with. I'm not saying I sabotaged the system or even sat on the fence. I knew that someone would hassle me whatever I did. At some point or the other, they always ended up telling me to do things in a specific way. I'd obey the orders but tweak them in my own way to get the outcome I wanted. (Case No. 34)

The third form of resocialisation, called resignation (15 Case Nos. 3; 4; 7; 8; 11; 12; 14; 15; 19; 20; 2 1; 23; 25; 27; 31), also correlates with compliance with the newly prescribed roles based on a mechanism whereby the new role expectation is absorbed behaviourally but not cognitively or emotionally. Here, people adhere weakly to the new role expectations but comply because they feel they have no choice, that is, it is a coerced kind of compliance. This sort of resocialisation was adopted in this case study under situations where assignments were withdrawn from staff or where new safety procedures encumbering their day-to-day jobs were forced on them:

> You adapted because you didn't have a choice. (Case No. 8)

> Using the Stobbly device meant you had to test the brakes, one test for every movement. It was unnecessary. […] but seeing as I'd been fingered and they were pressuring me now, I had to do it. (Case No. 15)

The fourth form of resocialisation, called transgression, largely emphasises role determination behaviours, while occasionally revealing superficial compliance (absorption) with a new role. In cases 10 and 32, for instance, staff officers would comply when their line managers was con-trolling or observing them; however, they had no compunction about not complying with what was expected of them (even where this meant adding an extra role) when their line managers were absent. This applied, in particular, to staff members who only followed certain safety procedures when the 'boss' was present. In Case no. 28, to make the line manager aware of his dissatisfaction, the employee committed an open transgression right in front of him, continuing to read while staffing the computerised switching table, much like he used to do when he worked at the network train station. Cognitively and emotionally, this resocialisation revealed little adherence to the new path:

> They said trains always had to be pulled, never pushed, but as soon as the delays mounted up, we'd push. Even if the boss was standing right there. Of course… After all, we were their little angels. (Case No. 10)

> We would still smoke at night. (Case No. 32)

> I never got used to it. They kinda forced me. Usually I didn't give a damn if I felt useful anymore. […] So I read a lot. But we weren't allowed to read. That's what he would tell me – until one day I kicked him out. Otherwise, we'd become vegetables. I remember once, he treated me like a dog just because I was reading. (Case No. 28)

While these four forms of resocialisation differ by the degree of cognitive and emotional adherence to a new role – and by the adjustment behaviour involved – they all translate advanced learning of a new role. Apart from situations requiring significant changes in occupational gestures (major technological shifts, inability to master a new software or sector of activity), they all see employees ultimately achieving a high level of learning.

Two main findings derive from this case study. Firstly, it seems that the success or failure of resocialisation depends on the level of cognitive and emotional adherence to a new role, and on the coherent deployment of certain forms of behavioural adjustment. Unlike the socialisation of new recruits, when experienced employees' resocialisation fails, this does not necessarily manifest itself in a low level of learning, especially when the role transitions and gaps between the old and new roles are technically or technologically insignificant.

In addition, resocialisation can only be construed as a success or failure from senior managers' perspective (for reasons discussed below). Indeed, resourcefulness-related improvisation demonstrates an employee's willingness to arbitrate conflicting expectations and/or do what all of an organisation's stakeholders consider a good job. The purpose is not to cause any nuisance or deliberately disobey professional requirements or rules. A better way to view transgression is as a failure of resocialisation, in the sense that it translates a deliberate violation of senior management's newly prescribed role expectations. Having said that, it will be demonstrated that responsibility for failures of this kind requires nuanced analysis and cannot be solely attributed to the individual being targeted for change.

Experienced employees' resocialisation resources and barriers

As revealed in the vignettes, the four forms of resocialisation specifically combine organisational, personal, and interactional resources and barriers.

Resocialisation resources and barriers within an organisation

Experienced employees tend to explain their approach to resocialisation (behaviour and adherence) in terms of the recognition and autonomy-related resources they get from the organisation, and also the organisational resocialisation tactics that they enjoy.

Recognition or non-recognition is expressed by the presence or absence of remuneration that can be symbolic (e.g., the 'you do a good job' discourse; signs of trust, attributions of responsibility, promotions), material (e.g., personal or impersonal resources) or financial (e.g., wages, bonus) in

nature. Conviction and resourcefulness arise from situations where experienced employees all feel that their work has been recognised, with this perceived recognition remaining high even during periods of change:

[Activity-based management] showed that the company really wanted to evolve towards a greater service orientation. Because it had been suffering from a bad image. On the other hand, if you worked on a day when everyone was going on strike, they called you lazy. I'd always try to explain that if I was working it meant I wasn't on strike. But they think I embodied everything happening at the company. (Case No. 1: showing conviction).

Of course, I had put myself in a position to do this but on top of that the company also recognised my ability to assume greater responsibility. I first qualified as a B level employee and within 12 years made it all the way up to F. That's pretty good. (Case No. 1)

To be recognised when you do a good job meant someone told you that but also recognised you financially. I've never been a careerist or money-hungry. I joined FERR at the bottom of the scale and made it up to management. I worked hard, it's normal I got rewarded. [And were you?] Frankly, I couldn't complain. If I achieved the targets they gave me, I'd get an individual bonus. It was for executives, calculated on your annual remuneration, at a fixed rate. If you did a very good job, you could hope for 6%. I think my boss appreciated me because I got 5.80%. I was pretty happy with that. (Case No. 1)

I realised that for certain decisions, my line manager would tell me first. He trusted me because he knew I'm a straight guy, I'd give it my all at work, the team was super important, things ran smoothly. I got better results than he expected and would do even better in the future since we all got along great. (Case No. 16)

Conversely, resignation and transgression arise whenever employees feel the organisation gives them less recognition than before, especially when this comes from their line of command or senior management. Some feel that the efforts they make to absorb a new role are not recognised by line managers, making them less motivated to adhere to newly prescribed role expectations:

What mattered to me is that my work was recognised by my line of command. I didn't feel like senior management was really interested in [the region]. If they had been interested, I think we would have got a lot more resources... I think they wanted to do it American style, where the target was to be all and even. Yet they didn't always give us the resources we needed …We didn't have enough staff. Plus, our structure was so rigid that when a crisis erupted and things got hard, we couldn't cope. (Case No. 4)

Even if our head of department himself had started assessing us, that wouldn't have changed anything since the big boss would never read the report. There were so many senior and middle managers that the people at the top never got around to us. (Case No. 15)

Autonomy also seems to play a role in the success or failure of resocialisation. Where conviction and resourcefulness are in play, employees feel autonomous in their work situations and will not view change as a threat. The freedom to act even helps to bolster adherence to new role expectations. In this case study, following company guidelines became an integral part of the responsibilities attributed to the team leader or to someone tasked with direct customer relations. The more a position entailed increased responsibility and autonomy (e.g., responsibility vis-à-vis the colleagues the person was managing or else vis-a-vis customers), the more that person felt responsible for following company guidelines and leading by example. Autonomy also allowed employees who were resocialising through conviction and resourcefulness to adjust, each in their own way, to the newly prescribed role expectations, while respecting the company's general guidelines. 'A leadership position … was kinda like having your own company'. (Case No. 9).

Conversely, in instances of resignation and transgression, employees associated change with less autonomy because their role was now exercised in a more controlled manner, and/or because the new indicators and procedures restricted their scope of action. A lack of autonomy reinforces non-adherence to change but forces some to adapt behaviourally, at least in appearance:

> What was wrong with FERR was too much hierarchy. They'd come every day and interrogate you, just like the police. (Case No. 10)

> From one day to the next the whole picture changed. It was pretty bad. All of a sudden, we felt like we were being policed. We were suddenly given drawings full of colors and numbers. And loads of files. Then we'd get the safety meetings, once a month. Which made the files even thicker. Before we used to read half as many pages. There were a lot of statistics that we hadn't had before. (Case No. 12)

Above and beyond tactics identified by Van Maanen and Schein (1979), the way individuals are supported in their role transitions also helps to make a success or failure of resocialisation. In this case, conviction and resourcefulness would be adopted by employees who felt that the new role expectations had been sufficiently explained to them, that they had been given examples of what to do, and that they had received sufficient support or had the necessary skills to self-manage. In the latter case, their expertise and willingness to self-train helped them to compensate for the lack of support they had received:

> We were told about it. Got a good briefing and had lots of meetings. Each unit had its own project and started there, with every level giving input. Ultimately it became a team project run by each unit. It worked well for both safety and production activities. (Case No. 30)

> I got the instructions and started reading and learning a few things. Don't mean to criticise but we didn't get much support on a national level. They started to look at it and tried to help the newcomers, which was a good thing. We were first up but it worked. (Case No. 26)

Where resignation and transgression were involved, employees would see things the other way around and feel that change had been either hidden from them or forced on them. They would also claim that they had been threatened with various punishments in case of non-compliance, and that this was part of the reason to either reject the change or become resigned to it:

> You couldn't really say we got any support for customer relations. They sent us documents with protocols but it was too much to read, much less implement. (Case No. 4)

> Never really saw a boss who would take the time to explain things to u […] Team leaders would have meetings with other supervisors but not tell us anything. When they'd change the rules, we were told to read them and sign that we'd done so. Nothing else. (Case No. 14)

Interactional resocialisation resources and barriers

Experienced employees also leverage their relational networks to cope with role changes. Where conviction is involved, employees call on their peers and/or managers to help them drive change within their teams or work groups. This can result in penalties being levied on the staff advocating the change, explicit pro-change discourse, resources being provided to facilitate the change and so on:

> No one wanted to take responsibility. Yet it was my staff, my colleagues whose working conditions were unsafe. Take the cranes. If a staff member had been run over by someone, I always thought I'd be responsible, maybe not directly but... I'd call for meetings, shutdown work sites. In meetings, I'd gee up people I knew from my time in the traffic and equipment infrastructure unit. But it was all about networks. If I had parachuted in and didn't know anyone, I could have gone back to my home unit, no problem. But some manager working out of Reims or Paris would have had to take charge and there would have been less responsiveness than with a manager working right there. (Case No. 1)

> [A manager called in a staff member found during a control to be ignoring safety measures]. I got the ball rolling, but it had already gone up the ladder […] We had a three-way discussion following which the supervisor asked if I wanted to apply further sanctions. (Case No. 9)

Resourcefulness consists of mobilising a relational network to facilitate frontline operatives adopting the prescribed change via an exploration logic. Peers and members of other

units can then ask to smooth things over and apply the changes with a few local accommodations:

> We got to know each other better [with a NETWORK manager]. He saw how I worked, that I would talk openly. Our discussions were informative, and I appreciated our relationship because I think we contributed a lot. He had a lot to tell me about NETWORK and I had a lot to say to him about FERR. (Case No. 16)

Where resignation is involved, colleagues can manifest solidarity with one another, the purpose being to meet and comply with the newly prescribed role expectations:

> [With the agents] We always found a way to get things done, figure it out. I could count on the sales teams since we were all part of the same operating unit. Plus, the deputy team leader often lent me a hand. (Case nr. 4)

Transgression can go as far as sparking collective action where group members cover one other in certain working situations so that they can perform each of their assignments in their own way, or even engage in a kind of collective transgression that is visible to everyone:

> There were no real youngsters here anymore, we were all about the same age, all 'normal' guys. No one had a diploma, but we understood and helped each other. Everybody pulled their weight. The first thing you learnt in training...to hook them together, using a par ticular kind of bar, then attaching the cables in a certain way, etc. Normally you'd start with the tensioner because that's the safety protocol but we didn't do it that way because it was quicker to hook it up last so why not make things easier?'. [And if the managers could see what you were doing?] Well in that case we behaved like little angels, of course!'' (Case No. 10).

Personal resocialisation resources and barriers

The compiled materials featured two types of personal resocialisation resources and barriers: people's engagement in their work and the degree of biographical continuity.

Conviction and resourcefulness are observed in situations where employees generally consider themselves highly involved in their areas of socialisation – be it their occupation, work group or organisation. In turn, this helps make resocialisation a success. 'I took pride in my work. Didn't shout it from the rooftops but it's what I felt'. (Case No. 9)

Resignation reflects a strong commitment to one of the areas of socialisation, usually a self-directed team or peer group, culminating in staff members doing what is expected of them to satisfy their professional conscience. In actual work situations, however, there is a great deal of disengagement vis-a-vis the organisation and especially the senior managers who represent it:

> Fortunately, I wasn't jaded yet. I think that's what saved me. The staff is what got me out of bed in the morning. Being a local supervisor made me feel if I showed up at work, it was to do something good and useful. I wouldn't want to betray my teammates, coming to work without really doing anything, clocking in without giving it all I could. I worked because they paid me to lead the local team, not to clock watch. You end up feeling a great deal of solidarity with your teammates – but none at all with the department as a whole. (Case No. 4)

Finally, where transgression is involved, employees generally show low commitment to the three areas of socialisation, which accentuates their transgressive behaviour in an actual work situation. The interviews revealed not only a utilitarian relationship to the organisation (receiving wages) but also an overall sense of distance from it:

> Working at FERR was something that my bank liked to hear, for instance, when thinking about giving me a loan. It made things easier. But that's it. Whether I was actually driving trains or not didn't matter … If they had told me that I'll get my monthly €4000 working as a sweeper, I'd tell them to give me a broom! I couldn't care less. (Case No. 10)

The final personal resource that experienced employees use to adapt to the newly prescribed role is a sense of biographical continuity. This refers to people's perception that some coherence exists between their past, present and future socialisation experiences, that is, they can tell themselves a coherent and rewarding story about their career in an organisation.

The study also found that perceiving a strong biographical continuity between the old and new roles helped to facilitate resocialisation at both a behavioural (absorption) and a cognitive/emotional (adherence) level. Perceiving a new role as a chance to deepen knowledge and skills and/or to get promoted to a higher level of responsibility enhances perceptions of biographical continuity. This form of resocialisation was particularly prevalent in situations where young local unit leaders received an opportunity for career advancement, which may have been unexpected given their initial training. Their application of the new role expectations tended to be accompanied by interesting professional developments:

> I'd passed all the tests to become a shunting manager. I took the job and continued several training courses, including rail safety. It was a four-day course covering lots of management issues, including human resources. (Case nr. 9)

Resourcefulness is often seen observed in situations marked by an average level of biographical continuity. Employees can suffer identitarian crises during previous socialisation experiences but gradually reconstruct the history they could tell themselves to create a certain sense of coherence. This was

particularly widespread among experienced employees restoring relations with NETWORK staff:

> I found them in the workshops, and we ended up rubbing shoulders almost every day. I had to admit that [the NETWORK staff] had really taken the bull by the horns, which was a good thing. They'd learnt things. I think they liked what they were doing. Plus, they had a different approach. It wasn't 'we're going to teach you how to work' but 'we're going to work together'. And even 'I need you'. (Case No. 16)

In terms of resignation and transgression, employees may find themselves in situations where they cannot make sense of the story they have experienced and are still experiencing in their organisation. Combined with loss, disillusionment and a sense of being stuck, change no longer allows employees to relax in the organisation or adjust cognitively and/or emotionally to their newly prescribed role:

> I would tell myself that I was stuck until 2020, until the TGV fast train arrived. As long as there was no TGV, they would keep as many of us as possible. (Case nr. 10)

> I was disappointed because the job changed. I'd been hired as a switching operative and even headed up the unit. I was supposed to do nothing else, using sophisticated equipment. Now they were asking me to be a salesman. Even those of us who had nothing to do on the platforms aside from overseeing departures or making sure everything was safe, now we were told to make ourselves accessible to customers. [...] It was all about the numbers, the big bucks. They didn't relate to us as people anymore. Helping a little old lady, they couldn't care less. Someone who spends their time sorting the mail is no longer qualified to be in charge of safety.

> And I was qualified, meaning there was no reason to have me sort mail. That's a job for people with drinking problems, or who get stoned, or can't hear or see very well, you know, someone with a big health problem. It wasn't a job for a fully active staff member. (Case No. 31)

While the form of resocialisation seems to be highly affected by the resources and barriers encountered in a role change situation, the type of change in question should not be ignored. Some changes, for instance, were viewed by employees in this case as being detrimental to service quality or train regularity [hence, their conception of what constitutes good work]. These could then be used to justify resignation and transgression. However, two other elements were also part of this equation: the misuse of arguments to justify non-compliance with the new guidelines and the fact that the characteristics attributed to a particular change appeared to be a personal construct inseparable from the person's own barriers and resources. It is likely that all these factors, such as personal representations of change, cognitive and emotional assessments thereof, adjustment behaviours associated with this, and an individual's personal barriers and resources, interact with one another without it being possible to determine precisely which one causes the other.

Synthesis of results

Table 1 illustrates how typical forms of resocialisation emerged from the compiled material after combining different process dimensions (either identified in the OS literature and confirmed by this study's field data or directly emerging from the fieldwork).

Table 1. Typical forms of resocialisation affecting experienced employees facing a planned role change

		Conviction	Resourcefulness	Resignation	Transgression
Resocialisation success/failure	Adherence to new role	Strong	Medium	Low	Low
	Form of role orientation	Absorption	Exploration	Absorption	Superficial absorption/ Determination
Organisational resources and barriers	Perceived recognition from the organisation	Strong	Strong	Declining	Declining
	Position's autonomy	Strong	Strong	Declining	Declining
	Resocialisation tactics	Sense of being supported and attributed meaning; examples have been provided; allowed to work autonomously	Sense of being supported and attributed meaning; examples have been provided; allowed to work autonomously	Certain change elements have been hidden; behaviour being dictated; sense of being threatened	Certain change elements have been hidden; behaviour being dictated; sense of being threatened
Personal resources or barriers	Work commitment	Strong	Strong	Ambivalent	Low
	Biographical continuity	Biographical continuity	Continuity and biographical discontinuity	Biographical discontinuity	Biographical discontinuity
Interactional resources or barriers	Network mobilisation	Change is support	Support given to overcome difficult situations	Support given to overcome difficult situations	Transgressions are support
Planned role changes: Case number		1; 5; 9; 17; 18; 24; 26; 30; 35	2; 6; 13; 16; 22; 29; 33; 34	3; 4; 7; 8; 11; 12; 14; 15; 19; 20; 21; 23; 25; 27; 31	10; 28; 32

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These four typical forms of resocialisation highlight how resources and barriers – whether organisational, interactional or personal – interlink and, thus, contribute to the resocialisation success or failure of experienced employees facing a role change. A number of reinforcement and compensation dynamics were identified at this level.

Conviction and transgression lie at the extremes of the resocialisation success or failure continuum. These forms have the particularity of only perceiving resocialisation resources in the first case and only barriers in the second one. Even when some employees felt a lack of support during a change – attesting to their sense of conviction – they did not view this as a resocialisation barrier but instead as an opportunity for self-management.

Resourcefulness and resignation constitute a more complex articulation of resocialisation resources and barriers. Resourcefulness appeared among employees who perceived strong organisational and interactional resocialisation resources but were unable to fully construct a coherent story between their socialisation experiences within the organisation (continuity and biographical discontinuity). This mainly justified their partial adherence to the change and exploration behaviours they had to implement in order to cope with situations they perceived as suboptimal (in terms of what they considered a job well done or their well-being at work). Cases of resignation reflect not only the presence of organisational barriers to resocialisation but also an ambivalent relationship with dimensions that might be interactional (where peers made it possible to cope with situations) or personal (ambivalent engagement and biographical discontinuity) in nature.

Discussion

These findings have raised a number of theoretical and managerial questions while also pointing to the limitations of this research project and the outlook for similar studies in the future.

Theoretical contributions

Having analysed resocialisation situations sparked by changes in organisational roles, this study offers three main contributions to the OS literature. Firstly, the results reveal multiple and ambivalent forms of resocialisation. Secondly, the indicators of success and failed resocialisation need to be put into perspective. Thirdly, the research uncovers the resources and barriers to resocialisation, three of which relate, in particular, to experienced employees in comparison with socialisation: relational networks, biographical continuity and the role of the organisation.

Identifying pluralistic and ambivalent forms of resocialisation

The forms of resocialisation adopted by experienced employees facing planned role changes can be pluralistic in nature, even for one and the same person.

Unlike certain sociological studies of socialisation at work (Osty & Uhalde, 2007) that found different forms or identities specific to different social worlds, this study observes that in one and the same social world (and for the same kind of occupation, that is, local managers of a public sector organisation undergoing transformation), various forms of socialisation arise. According to Dubar (2010) and Sainsaulieu (2014 [1977]), employees belong to a single-professional identity, which is characterised simultaneously by their work experience, relationship with power and training trajectory, and it is this that determines their action strategies. The same authors also found a strong link between a person's identity and status within a company. Conversely, this study shows that a given employee (albeit in possession of a single-professional identity and status) can adopt different forms of resocialisation. Moreover, these forms of resocialisation are not specific to a particular status or organisation. Local managers, for instance, can adopt forms of resocialisation as divergent as conviction and resignation. Compared with existing models (Dubar, 2010; Osty & Uhalde, 2007; Sainsaulieu, 2014[1977]), this study finds that socialisation pathways are neither collective nor monolithic but instead situational (relating to the type of role change in question) and pluralistic.

Combined with adherence to a newly prescribed role, the establishment of a linkage between behavioural and cognitive or emotional adjustments highlights four forms of resocialisation. These range from successful to failed resocialisation, with conviction and transgression existing at the polar extremes of this spectrum and resourcefulness operating in between. The two extreme forms are positioned relatively linearly; cognition or emotion (adherence) and behaviour (role orientation) are clearly consistent, as are the socialisation dimensions that can act either as resources or as barriers. Conversely, intermediate forms can have an ambivalent positioning insofar as certain resources or barriers are concerned. The ambivalent dimension for resourcefulness is a person's biography, which can combine elements of continuity and discontinuity. For resignation, it is engagement. These situations reflect a certain dissonance among individuals who have failed to construct a coherent story. Compared with other role transition studies (e.g., Kreiner & Ashforth, 2004), these findings show that situations of ambivalence are the result of not only people distancing themselves from the values associated with a role but also a combination of organisational, interactional and personal factors (engagement and biographical continuity) of the individuals facing an organisational change.

This demonstrates the ambivalence that is so central to resocialisation outcomes, a factor that the OS literature has heretofore only evoked in behavioural terms (Nicholson Exploration, 1984). It also corroborates the construct of ambivalence as portrayed by Chreim (2006) or Piderit (2000) when they observed both negative and positive apprehensions of change at the cognitive or emotional and/or behavioural levels. The forms constituted by the lack of alignment between these three levels offer an enriched vision of what resocialisation is. The ambivalence observed in the cases of resourcefulness and resignation is a natural and likely frequent response of agents to a change in their role; low or medium adherence and exploration can create a certain distancing from the former role. Ambivalence, rather than constituting a failure of resocialisation, can give rise to adjustments in a planned change that were initially unforeseen and that are beneficial to the organisation and its members.

Relativising indicators of successful and failed resocialisation

The findings reconsider the indicators of successful and failed resocialisation. While learning levels do constitute one measure of a successful socialisation process (Perrot, 2009), this does not always seem to be the case with resocialisation. Indeed, experienced employees tend to be largely familiar with their work, peers and organisation, often possessing sufficient resources to reduce the uncertainty caused by their role changes (self-training, information-seeking, improvisation, etc.).

Moreover, whereas the socialisation literature has focused on the adaptive and functional nature of adjustment – while implicitly maintaining idea that individuals increasingly absorb over time (asides from Feldman, 1976; Lacaze & Chandon, 2003; Perrot, 2008) – the findings here demonstrate that the accumulation of experience within an organisation does not guarantee a high level of socialisation. Adherence (cognitive and emotional) and role orientation (adjustment behavior) can regress once highly socialised individuals find themselves in situations characterised by de-socialisation or counter-socialisation.

The findings also relativise resocialisation dysfunctionalities, thereby helping to nuance OS literature's negative view of role determination. As noted by Piderit (2000) or Alter (2000), generally, it is not to ensure organisational effectiveness that the people targeted by a change decide not to comply with a prescribed role. They do this either because they see the failure to follow rules as creating efficiency (e.g., the example of FERR staff ignoring certain safety procedures to ensure trains' regularity) and/or because they have a negative view of the way the change is being implemented (e.g., where it is accompanied by threats or where management hides some of its aspects and in so doing betrays their trust). Here,

the findings corroborate those change resistance studies that counter the stigmatisation of so-called 'deviant' populations (Babeau & Chanlat, 2011) by pointing out the role change agents' discourse, attitudes and miscommunication play in change targets' resistance behaviour (Ford et al., 2008). Such behaviour should, therefore, not be treated as resistance that needs to be outlawed but instead incorporated into the continuous improvement goals and/or discourse accompanying the change being planned.

The analysis of change through resocialisation introduces a historical dimension by recognising the existence of successive phases of socialisation for the same employee. A deterioration in the level of socialisation can thus occur in the course of the organisation's history; past socialisations can be barriers to subsequent socialisations. In particular, we have shown that a break in biographical continuity is likely to slow down resocialisation. Resistance to change is, in some cases, linked to the success of past socialisations; this leads to the promotion of agile forms of socialisation, as suggested in the managerial implications.

Identifying resocialisation's specific resources and barriers

The findings also identify resocialisation resources and barriers that behave singularly in comparison with socialisation: relational networks, biographical continuity and the organisation's role. They also contribute to a better understanding of the resources and barriers already identified in the OS literature.

As regards relational networks, whereas this study confirms the influence of peers in structuring a socialisation process (Jablin, 2001; Louis, 1990; Reichers, 1987), it also shows that an experienced employee's relational network can be mobilised in favour of or in opposition to change. The fact that socialisation forces exercised by one's peers sometimes conflict with management expectations affirms the ambivalent role played by these socialising agents (Schein, 1988; Van Maanen, 1978). Relational networks can be leveraged to bring about change, to survive certain situations or to transgress prescribed rules. This study finds that the strong links forged through relational networks can have an ambivalent effect (Granovetter, 1973; Nelson, 1989). Research into newcomers has heretofore had little to say about this reliance on the wider group when constructing marginal adjustments. The main questions newcomers will ask their peers involve receiving information and tips about the ins and outs of their organisational role (Bauer et al., 2007). Experienced employees, on the other hand, will themselves be the parties formulating these behavioural rules and convincing their networks to follow them. In addition, and unlike newcomers who choose to join a particular organisation, experienced employees tend not to support organisational

change when this is being planned, if only because such a change can obliterate the relational rents that they have built up over time. The end result is that the grieving process described by Louis (1980a, 1980b) may be more difficult for experienced employees whose relational networks are being shredded than for first-time arrivals.

As regards biographical continuity, the construct clearly differentiates between experienced employees and newcomers lacking any past in an organisation. This study finds that past experiences from socialisation play a role in resocialisation success. Biographical continuity is the joint result of people's *a posteriori* post-construction of the meaning that can be given to the career they have had in a company. Similar to role identification (Ashforth, 2001; Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010), these findings show that experienced employees interpret events that have affected them to form a more or less coherent story of their careers within an organisation. To establish biographical continuity, certain events will be selected because they are particularly meaningful (e.g., signs of trust in or opposition to senior management; presence or absence of gratification). At the same time, employees have some leeway to transform their role as they see fit (Bruning & Campion, 2018; Crozier & Friedberg, 1977). For experienced employees enjoying strong autonomy, this room to manoeuvre can be used to shape their role in a way that ensures biographical continuity (Atchley, 1989). Therefore, experienced employees can preserve structures that are either internal (values, skills and cognitions) or external (networks and recognition). Having said that, employees who are losing their autonomy may view change as a source of stagnation or as a disruption to their career paths. The role transition research study has shown that the stronger the identification with a past role (i.e., the greater the success of an initial socialisation), the harder it is to move on from that role (Ashforth, 2001). Complementing this, this study finds that it is the new role embedding in individuals' personal stories that will dictate their adherence to it. As long as the newly prescribed role can be considered as progress, resocialisation can be deemed a success. Conversely, when an employee views it as tantamount to stagnation or even regression, resocialisation becomes resignation or transgression.

Finally, and as regards the role of an organisation, how senior management communicates and supports a change will affect the form of resocialisation that is being adopted. While organisational entry research has revealed the strong effect that OS tactics have on role orientation (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Cable & Parsons, 2001; Jones, 1986; Nicholson, 1984; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979), this describes little about the content of managerial discourse in terms of the support given to employees undergoing socialisation or resocialisation processes (Hart et al., 2003). Where the discourse is transparent and gives meaning to experienced employees' engagement

and biography, it tends to generate compliance with a prescribed role. Conversely, where the change is hidden or imposed – implying less autonomy – it can lead to transgression. As noted in several change studies, the discourse held by agents of change has a critical effect on targets' behaviour (Ford et al., 2008). To the extent that the notion of organisational socialisation tactics refers to the way in which 'the experiences of an individual in role transition are structured for him or her by other members of the organization' (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979, p. 34), the way in which change agents accompany the resocialisation of experienced employees constitutes a specific socialisation tactic that can enrich the taxonomy identified by Van Maanen and Schein (1979).

Finally, our interpretative approach to resocialisation has enriched our understanding of the resources and barriers identified in the OS literature, which are more positivist in nature, and has led to the emergence of new ones. The sociological perspective on socialisation at work considers that the feeling of recognition or non-recognition of the meaning that individuals give to their work constitutes a resource or barrier to resocialisation over time (e.g., Dubar, 2010; Sainsaulieu, 2014[1977]; Osty & Uhalde, 2007). The results of this study reveal instead that the new role is accompanied by a feeling of recognition or a lack of appreciation that creates resources and barriers to its resocialisation (unrelated to the recognition or non-recognition of the meaning given to work). The same is true for the level of autonomy (which manifests itself in marks of trust) or, on the contrary, distrust or desire for control perceived by the individual

The two dimensions of perceived recognition and autonomy emerged from this study on the resocialisation of experienced employees. Individuals who already have a certain level of seniority in the organisation clearly have levels of recognition and autonomy that they do not wish to lose through a role change. These expectations may be less valued by new recruits, who may have more control or guidance (in relation to the autonomy dimension) and do not expect to be immediately valued in relation to their learning situation.

Managerial implications

When evaluated in terms of a prescribed role's modification, change offers management several lessons. Organisational change requires translation into the language used by an organisation's members as they are the ones who will be affected by the changes in their roles, and therefore, the ones who must enshrine them in biographical continuity. This affirms the importance of meaningfulness (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991), a crucial responsibility for local managers and change agents (Ford et al., 2008). These actors can influence people's interpretation of role changes by attributing greater importance to continuity than to discontinuity factors. In this respect, actions to provide

managerial communication tools will help these key players to adopt appropriate strategies and arguments with their teams.

They can also leverage the resources that an organisation makes available to its experienced employees. Recognising someone's efforts at work reinforces behavioural and cognitive or emotional adjustment to a new role as per an organisation's expectations. Employees' autonomy in a given position also offers opportunities for action consisting of innovative adjustments to role changes, thereby promoting greater adherence to the change in question. Transparent discourse that gives meaning to change helps to ensure its targets' receptiveness.

With this objective in mind, it seems to us that local managers play a crucial role in the management and regulation of local arrangements (Detchessahar, 2011, 2013), in particular, by setting up discussion forums in which they take part. Changing work practices is rarely discussed because the topic is uncomfortable for management. This leads us to admit that the definition of change prescribed is not 'perfect', and that management is not able to foresee everything, particularly because local situations and contexts are by nature singular. Discussing new role expectations within teams would make it possible to reduce the gap between the change defined *a priori* and what is really possible or desirable from the point of view of local actors. Encouraging discussion of how change and its conduct are interpreted would thus make it possible to reduce 'deviant' acts.

With regard to employees who adopt ambivalent forms of resocialisation, the use of certain managerial tools can strengthen their resources. For example, actions to support change can encourage listening and taking account of the concerns of experienced employees, as recommended by Bareil (2009). Also, training that results in certificates being given can lead managers to give them greater autonomy. The organisational recognition this provides, as well as the opportunity to rebuild a future and a sense of biographical continuity, is likely to strengthen the commitment to work of employees who are resocialised in an ambivalent way. This type of action requires the involvement of the HR department through its skills and career management policy.

Finally, we promote agile forms of socialisation in organisations that are regularly affected by change. Some practices can facilitate learning and adherence to the role without compromising subsequent resocialisations. As a hybrid form of individualised and institutionalised socialisation (Jones, 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979), 'agile' socialisation aims at preserving the newcomer's adaptability. The practices include providing a framework for action for new employees, while giving them a degree of freedom over how they carry out their tasks. When relevant, it is even possible to allow newcomers to freely interpret the essential tasks of their position, for example, by setting up a schedule of meetings with stakeholders for the

newcomers, by organising mentoring for a short period or by allowing them to undertake their own training with various resources at their disposal.

Research limitations and perspectives

The main limitation of this study is its choice of resocialisation cases. Unlike a new role associated with organisational entry, a new role resulting from organisational change only rarely triggers a particularly hard-hitting learning process (i.e., when an annual appraisal comes with new analytics). Having said that, resignation and transgression in the face of a new role actually translate an employee's inability to unlearn long-standing former work routines despite the company's new expectations. It may be interesting in future to analyse changes suggesting greater role alterations, thereby determining whether the new expectations actually reveal some kind of learning process. Moreover, as this study has found that several forms of resocialisation can coexist for one and the same employee facing several role changes, it would be useful to see how she or he generally copes with a succession of divergent evaluations.

The second limitation of this study is its potential for generalisation. Resocialisation research helps to shed light on social mechanisms that are both similar and complementary to new recruit integration studies. It would be useful for future research to deepen the scope of these findings' analytical generalisation by verifying their explanatory potential in organisational entry situations or where people are changing their position within an organisation. In particular, it seems likely that biographical continuity or discontinuity at an inter-organisational level also has a role to play in new recruits' socialisation. Along these lines, longitudinal methodology would make it possible to trace people's professional biographies more accurately than retrospective data does. This dimension was possibly evacuated because research samples tend to involve first-time arrivals lacking prior work experience. In addition, repeating this type of study in a different cultural organisational environment is likely to reinforce its explanatory character. Indeed, some of the changes advocated by FERR fit the New Public Management philosophy that runs counter to the honour or service logic and is more akin to a servility-based relationship (d'Iribarne, 1989). The influence of culture on socialisation processes and the associated methods of management could be a promising avenue of future research.

Finally, this study only investigated instances where change was planned by an organisation. The context in which FERR operates – subject as it is to dictate over which it has no control (European harmonisation requirements, imposed separation of activities, New Public Management) – along with its particularly hierarchical mode of operation, generates new role expectations planned by senior managers who then

delineate them at intermediate and operational levels. It would be instructive for future research to analyse experienced employees' resocialisation in situations characterised by more emergent types of change.

Conclusion

Given the high stakes of organisations' change programmes, this study set out to analyse how employees adapt to such actions through a prism of OS. Analysis of 35 cases of role change revealed four forms of resocialisation, resulting from a combination of cognitions and from experienced employees' responses to change, as well as a certain number of barriers and resources associated with them.

The findings reveal three main contributions: they reveal pluralistic forms of resocialisation (two of which – conviction and transgression – feature aligned resources and barriers, whereas the other two – resourcefulness and resignation – feature ambivalent resources and barriers); they repaint the indicators of successful and failed resocialisation; they highlight three resocialisation resources and barriers (relational networks, biographical continuity/discontinuity and organisational role), each of which acts in a specific way where experienced employees are involved.

The research study suggests a differentiated kind of support that can only be exercised by managers, working as closely as possible with the employees whose roles are being changed. It remains that it is the managers who are also in a position to adopt different forms of resocialisation. It is up to an organisation, via its hierarchy, to differentiate between forms of resocialisation that are useful for change and those that are detrimental to the realisation of organisational objectives. It will then be up to the organisation to reorient the latter or mitigate the impact through appropriate change implementation practices.

Acknowledgements

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Table A. Attributes of selected resocialisation cases

Position	Organisational entry		New role expectation: planned role change	Location
Manager	1999	**Case 1**	Improve performance (productivity)	
		Case 2	Limit interactions to one's own business unit	Location 1
Platform host	1981	**Case 3**	Discontinue previous assignments	
Manager	1998	**Case 4**	Improve performance (tracking, regularity, passenger information)	Location 2
Platform host	2000	**Case 5**		
Manager	2001	**Case 6**	Limit interactions to one's own business unit	
Shunting operative	1976	**Case 7**	Follow a new safety procedure	Location 3
Shunting operative	2001	**Case 8**		
Manager	2010	**Case 9**	Improve performance (tracking)	
Shunting operative	2005	**Case 10**	Follow a new safety procedure	Location 4
Shunting operative	1979	**Case 11**		
Manager	2005	**Case 12**	Improve performance (tracking)	
		Case 13	Limit interactions to one's own business unit	
Shunting operative	1975	**Case 14**	Follow a new safety procedure	Location 5
Shunting operative	2006	**Case 15**		
Manager	1991	**Case 16**		
Schedule planner	1996	**Case 17**	Work with network manager on a shared location	Location 6
Schedule planner	2009	**Case 18**		
Manager	2000	**Case 19**	Discontinue previous assignments	
Traffic controller	1980	**Case 20**	Limit interactions to one's own business unit	Location 7
Traffic controller	2009	**Case 21**		
Manager	1997	**Case 22**	Limit interactions to one's own business unit	Location 8
Traffic controller	1979	**Case 23**		
Unit manager	1975	**Case 24**	Work with a network manager on a shared location	Location 9
Manager	1981	**Case 25**		
Manager	1980	**Case 26**	Use a new technology (PAI)	
		Case 27	Perform better (regularity)	Location 10
Traffic controller	1998	**Case 28**	Apply new operational rules	
		Case 29	Perform better (regularity)	
Manager	1999	**Case 30**	Perform better (passenger info)	
Platform host	2009	**Case 31**	Discontinue previous assignments	Location 11
		Case 32	Apply new operational rules	
Platform host	1999	**Case 33**	Perform better (regularity)	
Manager	2001	**Case 34**	Perform better (regularity)	Location 12
Platform host	2010	**Case 35**	Perform better (regularity)	