

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

**EXPLORING TEACHER LEARNING THROUGH MEMORY WORK IN A TEACHER  
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME: A NARRATIVE  
INQUIRY**

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**2014**

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DEVELOPMENT STUDIES POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME: A NARRATIVE  
INQUIRY**

**BY**

**VIDANTHA RAMADEEN**

**SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
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**OF**

**MASTER OF EDUCATION – TEACHER DEVELOPMENT STUDIES (TDS)**

**IN THE**

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**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

**EDGEWOOD CAMPUS**

**DURBAN**

**DATE: FEBRUARY 2014**

**SUPERVISOR: DR. DAISY PILLAY**

## DECLARATION

I, Vidantha Ramadeen declare that

- i) The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated is my original work.
- ii) This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
- iii) This dissertation does not contain other person's data, pictures, graphs, or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
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- v) This dissertation does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the dissertation and in the References section.

Signed .....

# ETHICAL CLEARANCE



15 August 2012

Miss Vidantha Ramadeen 211558976  
School of Education

Dear Miss Ramadeen

Protocol reference number: HSS/0716/012M  
Project title: Exploring teacher learning through memory work in the teacher development studies postgraduate programme: A narrative inquiry

## EXPEDITED APPROVAL

I wish to inform you that your application has been granted Full Approval through an expedited review process.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

  
.....  
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/pm

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## **SUPERVISORS' AUTHORIZATION**

This dissertation is submitted with my approval.

.....

Dr. G. Pillay

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my greatest teacher of all, my spiritual Guru

His Holiness Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To those most dear\*

When my mind was in a state of despair

And my dampened spirit needed nourishment

When failure almost clutched me with its claws

Your voice of wisdom, reason and compassion came to my rescue

Liberating me from the tsunami of fear.

To you, I am forever indebted

For you have showered me with love and blessings.

Your divine presence in my life

Is God's gift to me

He who carefully selected the souls

To comprehend my trials and tribulations.

Nothing of material worth can repay my gratitude to you

My love for you will forever be etched deep within my heart

Thank You

\*My parents, Roopsan and Sashimala Ramadeen, my mother-in-law, Shanthie Jagunandan and my husband Rajive Jagunandan

\*Dr. Daisy Pillay, Dr. Kathleen Pithouse-Morgan and Dr. Betty Govinden

\*My participants

\*My family and friends

## ABSTRACT

*The South African education system prior to democracy in 1994 was influenced by the apartheid ideology. Since 1994, various educational reforms were introduced by the new democratic Government. In order to democratise education and eliminate the inequalities of the past, teachers are negotiating their learning and unlearning through a variety of self-driven initiatives. South African teachers' lives are a rich storehouse of information and tapping into this treasure trove of teachers' memories through memory work has rewarding effects for teaching and learning.*

*This study explores teacher learning through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies (TDS) postgraduate programme at a university in South Africa. The main purpose was to gain a deeper understanding of what and how memory work has enabled teacher learning on a personal, professional and social level and whether this elicited change in the teachers' lives - how they feel, what they think and how they act in the position they inhabit in South African schools.*

*This qualitative research study was located within an interpretivist paradigm using narrative inquiry as a methodology. Four postgraduate teacher participants teaching in various schools were purposively selected for this study. All participants had completed the Bachelor of Education Honours programme at a university in KwaZulu-Natal. Drawing on multiple methods and strategies that included open-ended, unstructured interviews, portfolio inquiry and collage inquiry, data was generated to reconstruct four storied narratives of teachers' lived lives and their learning.*

*The analysis revealed that in the postgraduate programme that the participants completed, the module employed memory work as a pedagogical tool, and this afforded them certain opportunities that engaged them in the active process of remembering and revising their memories in the process of creating a new image of themselves as South African teachers.*

*In getting to understand their personal and professional self through memory work, learning became more meaningful and the participants responded to change. Teacher learning through*



*story-telling, we conclude is an important pedagogical tool to link the past to the present for the future. The module enabled the participants to tell their stories and learn about themselves, and healing became part of their learning. In healing, they learnt to recreate themselves as people and as teachers. Teachers' personal, professional and social learning worked in entangled, non-linear ways because of the processes and conditions that were set up and that evolved spontaneously through the process of memory work. It is these conditions in which teacher learning through memory work happens, that makes the potential for reinvention possible.*

*The relationships that were built between the teacher learners extended to different spaces. Teacher learning happens collectively and individually in physical and virtual ways. Teacher learning for development and change is a non-linear, complex and mediated process.*

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

- CPD - Continuing Professional Development
- CPTD - Continuing Professional Teacher Development
- NGO - Non-governmental Organisation
- OVC - Orphaned and Vulnerable Care Programme
- PPI - Personal and Professional Identities
- TDS - Teacher Development Studies
- TRC - Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- UKZN - University of KwaZulu-Natal

## CONTENT

<b>Declaration</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>Ethical clearance</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>Supervisors' authorization</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>Dedication</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>vii</b>
<b>List of abbreviations</b> .....	<b>ix</b>
<b>List of tables</b> .....	<b>xv</b>
<b>List of appendices</b> .....	<b>xvi</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Setting the scene</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Focus and purpose of the study</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Rationale for the study: Personal context</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Professional context</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Policy context</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Research context</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Key research questions</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>The methodological approach</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Organisation of the dissertation: Overview of the chapters</b> .....	<b>10</b>

<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Section A: What constitutes teacher learning? .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>How do teachers learn? .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Teacher learning through formal and informal initiatives .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Synthesis of section A .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Section B: .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Origins of memory work .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Memory work as a method .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Memory work as a pedagogical tool for teacher learning .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Memory work as a methodology .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Memory work and narrative inquiry .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Synthesis of Section B .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Synthesis of the literature review .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Section C: Theoretical framing .....</b>	<b>28</b>
 <b>CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY .....</b>	 <b>31</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Section A: Research design .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Research methodology: Narrative inquiry .....</b>	<b>34</b>

<b>Data production and collection plan .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Selection of research participants .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Research setting .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Section B: Data production and generation .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Open-ended, unstructured interviews .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Portfolio inquiry .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Collage inquiry .....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Relationship to teacher participants .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Section C: Analysing the data .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Ethical issues .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Trustworthiness .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Rigour .....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Possible limitations of the study .....</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: THE STORIED NARRATIVES: A JOURNEY THROUGH MEMORY.....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Sizwe’s story - Understanding myself better.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Sipho’s story - Remembering my calling .....</b>	<b>59</b>

<b>Anne’s story - Piecing together .....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Rani’s story - Becoming enlightened .....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>77</b>

**CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS OF STORIED NARRATIVES: GOING BACK IN ORDER TO MOVE FORWARD .....**

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Section A: The analysis for critical question one .....</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>Findings and discussion .....</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>Part 1: Personal learning .....</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>Part 2: Professional learning .....</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>Part 3: Social learning .....</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>Section B: The analysis for critical question two.....</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>Part 1: Probing, prompting, reading, writing, reflecting, understanding and questioning as memory work processes .....</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>Part 2: Discussions, story-telling and collaboration as memory work processes .....</b>	<b>108</b>

Conclusion .....	119
Overall synthesis of chapter .....	120
<b>CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS: WHERE TO FROM HERE? .....</b>	<b>122</b>
Introduction .....	123
A review of the dissertation .....	123
Synthesis of the findings in response to the two research questions .....	124
Theoretical reflections .....	129
Policy imperatives .....	129
Practice imperatives .....	131
Contribution to educational research .....	131
How further research could build on this study .....	132
Final reflections .....	132
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>134</b>

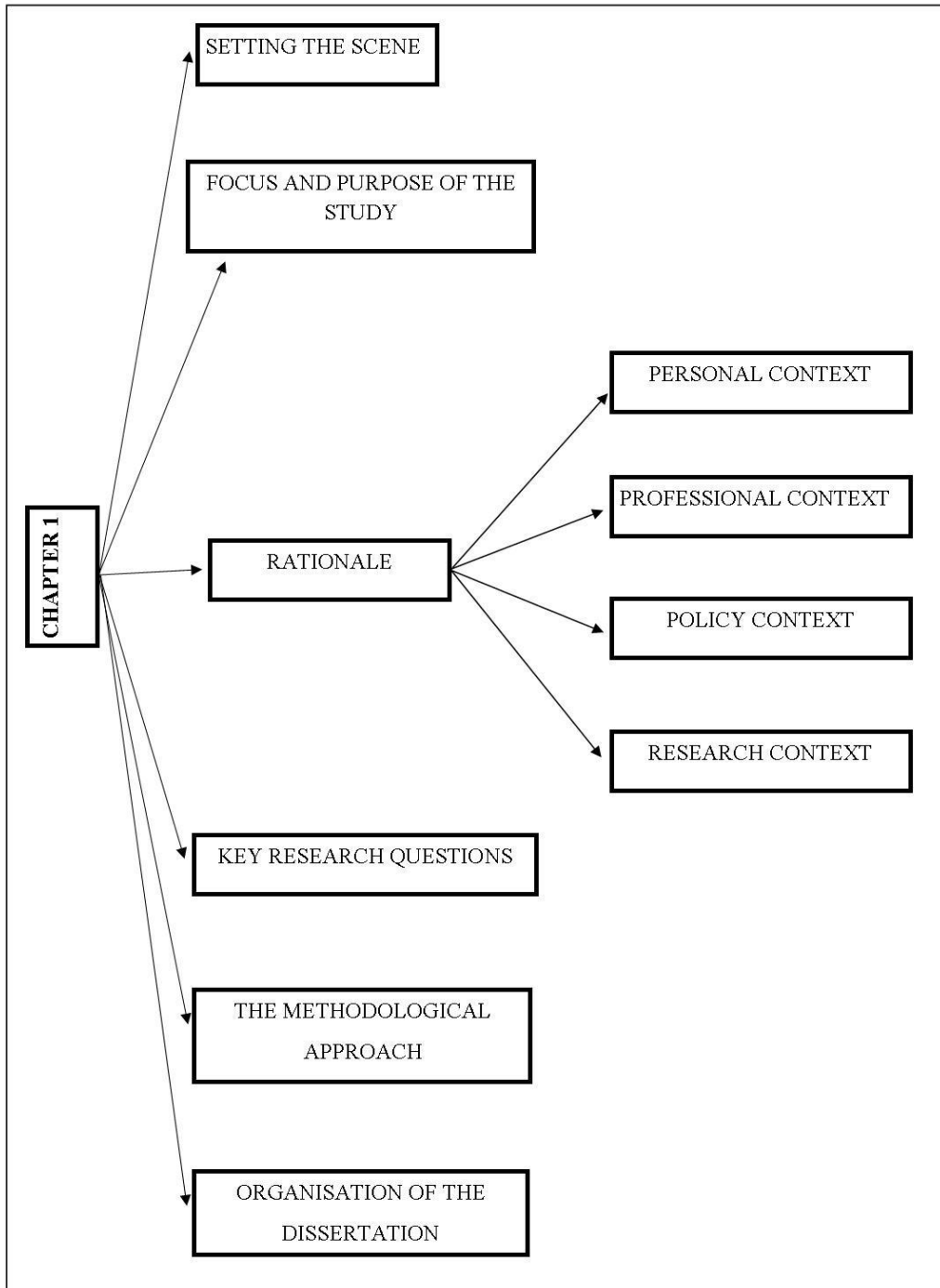
## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 1 - Data production and collection plan .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Table 2 - Profile of participants .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Table 3 - Mapping rigour .....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Table 4 - Notes from my journal .....</b>	<b>50</b>



## LIST OF APPENDICES

<b>Appendix 1: Interview schedule .....</b>	<b>141</b>
<b>Appendix 2: Questions for analysing the documents in the portfolio .....</b>	<b>142</b>
<b>Appendix 3: Request for consent to participate in a research study .....</b>	<b>143</b>
<b>Appendix 4: Informed consent document for the participants .....</b>	<b>146</b>
<b>Appendix 5: Request for permission from the Dean to conduct research .....</b>	<b>147</b>
<b>Appendix 6: Ethical clearance number for the Memory and Teacher Development Studies project .....</b>	<b>150</b>



## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **SETTING THE SCENE**

The South African education system prior to democracy in 1994 was influenced by the apartheid ideology. Since 1994, various educational reforms were introduced by the new democratic Government. In order to democratise education and eliminate the inequalities of the past, it is imperative that teachers learn, unlearn and relearn through a variety of learning experiences.

However, there are many signs that indicate that the state of education in South Africa is a cause for concern. Some of these include violent attacks on teachers and learners, high drop-out rate of learners from school, failure to deliver books on time, and poor academic achievement. Teachers in South Africa are on the front lines of changing curriculum brought about by transformation and reform that the country is currently experiencing. They are faced with diverse student populations and are challenged to respond to various demands such as preparing students to engage in critical thinking, dealing with HIV/AIDS, safety and security, and support structures, to mention a few.

With this comes a need to enhance learning. Teachers need intensive and extensive professional development to prepare them for the challenges that they face at schools. Yet teacher professional development is reduced to one-day workshops, seminars or conferences organised by the Department of Education, sometimes extending over a few days. These workshops are usually brief and rarely sustained. Instead of teachers feeling empowered and involved in active and participatory learning, they are left feeling uninspired and demotivated. The Department of Education imposes these workshops on teachers in the belief that teaching and learning will be enhanced over that short period of time. This is far from adequate.

In order to move forward, teachers need to understand the nature of the challenges they face; one of these challenges is that of teacher learning. Teacher learning is an international phenomenon and not unique to South Africa. In the Report on the Annual National Assessments of 2011(DBE, 2011/12), the Minister of Basic Education, A.M. Motshekga, stated that the Annual National Assessment results for 2011 were an indication that the education sector needed to concentrate more on its core functions of quality learning and teaching.

Many teachers are therefore seeking a space where learning is different from the one-shot workshops that they are subjected to, a space where the top-down approach does not dominate and a space where their voices can be heard. In other words, teachers are seeking a space where they can engage in “professional autonomy and transformative practice” (Kennedy, 2005, p. 235). This study proposes that memory work as a pedagogical approach is a possible learning space for teachers to learn in more personally meaningful ways. Mitchell and Weber (1998, 1999) have researched memory work as pedagogy with Canadian school teachers. They describe memory work as “a pedagogy of reinvention” – “a process of going back over something in different ways and with new perspectives, of studying one’s own experience with insight and awareness of the present for purpose of acting on the future” (Mitchell & Weber, 1999, p. 8).

Memory work in a South African context is very critical because South African teachers currently in the system have gone through many apartheid and post-apartheid experiences. Their experiences are “living archives” (Govinden, 2008, p. 10) of memories. Teachers have experiences of their own schooling, their teachers, their own teaching and learning, and how this has shaped them. Therefore, I see teacher learning through memory work in a South African context as important because in the process of learning, teachers also need to remember their apartheid and post-apartheid educational experiences. Memory work may evoke a different understanding of how teacher learning is generally perceived.

In recalling the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) that was set up in South Africa after the abolition of apartheid, we remember the healing of those identified victims of gross human rights violations. During the TRC, the victims of apartheid authorities were invited to give statements about their experiences through their own recalled memory and in so doing, began to almost heal. People were given a chance to share their memories about apartheid that they had locked up for years. What was important was that the TRC was not only about remembering the memories but talking about them and sharing them with others. However, hearings began in 1996 and ended two years thereafter in 1998. This process was not sustained and of significance is the fact that teachers were not catered for in that transition from apartheid to post-apartheid.

An inquiry into teacher learning through memory work may supplement greater understanding and could be used as one way to address twenty-first century learning in South Africa, as well as a way to sustain lifelong learning, assist South African practicing teachers to deal with their challenges and perhaps even allow for healing. There are many learning sites where practicing teachers who already have qualifications can engage in continuing professional development (CPD). The university is one such learning site that offers formal CPD to practicing teachers who choose to engage in this type of development. I would like, in this research, to inquire whether faculties of education at universities of higher learning offer memory work as part of their postgraduate programmes for teacher development and if so, what and how does teacher learning through memory work happen?

### **Focus and purpose of the study**

The faculty of education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal is one site that offers memory work as part of a Teacher Development Studies Programme. The purpose of this study is to explore teacher learning through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies (TDS) postgraduate programme. Teacher learning is a complex issue and different scholars offer a variety of explanations for the phenomenon. For the purpose of this research, I will refer to “teachers’ professional learning” according to Fraser, Kennedy, Reid, & Mckinney (2007, p. 157) to represent “the processes that, whether intuitive or deliberate, individual or social, result in specific changes in the professional knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs or actions of teachers” (Fraser, *et al.*, 2007, p.157).

More specifically, I would like to understand teacher learning and how it is enhanced or promoted through a particular pedagogical approach, that is, through memory work. Memory work is often used as a research method to produce data but it is also used as a teaching methodology. Mitchell and Weber (1998, 1999) have researched memory work as pedagogy with Canadian school teachers. They examined how novice and experienced teachers’ memories of their childhood and schooling influenced their teaching and how they can use this to reinterpret their working lives and bring about change.

In South Africa, Samuel (2003) explored how teachers' memories of learning and teaching English had an influence on their future development as English teachers. Pithouse (2007), who worked with practicing teachers in Honours and Masters Courses, looked at how memory work facilitated their intellectual and emotional engagement with the learning process. Tobias (2012) used memory work to enquire into his past learning experiences in order to better understand his present teaching practice. Hobden (2012) explored the pedagogic value of memory work with regard to teaching Mathematics. According to Pithouse-Morgan, Mitchell and Pillay (2012, p. 2) "memory-work is also emerging as a significant pedagogic and research method in the South African Education field". They argue that this can increase understanding of how memory work can be used as a process to teach for learning to happen. In South Africa, while research in the area of teacher learning through memory work is developing, it is still limited.

In a TDS postgraduate programme (2011), memory work was used to teach a module called <sup>1</sup>"Personal and Professional Identities of Teachers in the Context of Change" in the Bachelor of Education Honours programme at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). This module was offered by the School of Education and Development in the Faculty of Education. The purpose of the module was to explore the concept of teacher identity within a context of changing education policy and practice, as well as a range of social realities. It also provided opportunities for exploring interconnections between teacher identity, teachers' self-inquiry and teacher development.

The PPI module was designed to enable students to think in self-reflexive ways about their own learning, as well as the development of their own personal and professional teacher identities. In addition, students had to consider various authors' views on teachers' self-inquiry, teacher development and teacher identity, and engage critically with the concept of teacher identity.

In a study on women teachers' lives, Kirk (2005. p. 233) explains her understanding of reflexivity, on what it means to be self-reflexive and how this plays an important role in teacher learning through memory work:

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<sup>1</sup> For convenience, I refer to this module as the PPI module.

In my own experience, the praxis of reflexivity 'in the field' includes a sustained attention to the positions in which I place myself and am placed by others, a listening to and acknowledging of inner voices, doubts and concerns as well as pleasures and pride, and a sensing of what my body is feeling. It implies a constant questioning of what I am doing and why. I start to probe each of these experiences and sensations to ask: Why? From where? Founded on what? I start to theorize based on my own experiences.

Teacher learning through memory work and more especially memory work as a pedagogy, has not been written about widely. My interest is in exploring the personal and professional memories of the participants in the PPI module and its relevance to teacher learning. I want to know whether and how this kind of inquiry into teachers' personal and professional lives contributes to teacher learning. In this module, students had to engage in structured memory work activities, which involved inquiry into their personal and professional selves. I would like to understand what and how teachers learn in the process of inquiry into themselves through memory work.

## **Rationale**

### **Personal context**

My personal interest in this area of study is keen: I have acquired much new information concerning teacher learning and memory work since I registered to study towards a Master of Education Degree. I completed my Bachelor of Education Honours degree at a different university and was not familiar with memory work since this was not included in the course. Memory work activities often take on creative or arts-based form such as collage, drawings and artefact retrieval. This subject intrigued me and seemed to keep coming into focus in my reading from time to time. I wished to learn more about this and saw it as an opportunity to familiarise myself with teacher learning through memory work by engaging in this particular study as part of my personal and professional development. As a Masters student, this approach appealed to me because I was curious about learning new research skills and processes. I found memory work an unusual approach to use when studying because of the new meanings that one acquires by studying one's memories. Memory work offers a type of scholarship where one is able to

think differently and which creates a place for voice. As a teacher in South Africa trying to adjust to the transition from apartheid to democracy, I was interested in understanding whether memory work would offer a better understanding of how to deal with the daily challenges that we face at school. I wanted to develop a new knowledge base to manage these challenges as part of my own professional development.

### **Professional context**

The rationale for undertaking this study from a professional perspective as a teacher, made me examine the problems encountered in society which are generally mirrored in schools. Some of the acts through which these problems of society manifest are bullying, drug abuse, vandalism, crime and violence. The teachers' environment is continuously plagued by an ever-increasing workload and a working environment dominated by particular social realities. The teaching profession therefore becomes even more stressful and less satisfying.

Teachers in South Africa come from diverse backgrounds. Many have been socialised into a particular understanding of who they are. Teachers have a baggage of good and bad experiences and South African classrooms are still troubled by issues of apartheid. Considering the context in which professional development has occurred since democracy, I want to understand whether this has helped to instill knowledge, skills and values in teachers that would enable them to work in the various contexts to which they are exposed. I ponder over the deep feelings and emotions that teachers need to come to terms with in order to value who they are and what they do. I am curious about whether memory work is an effective way of trying to unearth a person's deep valuing and examination of themselves, as a way to look at their memories with new perspectives and make learning more meaningful. I would also like to gain a better understanding of how this pedagogical approach provides the impetus for learning in order for one to change.

### **Policy context**

Post-apartheid saw many policies that have impacted on education in South Africa. One such policy is the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa (The Departments of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training,



2011). The outcome of this policy is to “improve the quality of teacher education and development in order to improve the quality of teachers and teaching” (The Department of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training, 2011, p. 2). A second policy is the Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (2011). This policy provides a foundation for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes.

Teachers in South Africa are faced with a number of teacher development initiatives as well as continuous curriculum change. South Africa is currently (2014), in the transitional phase of curriculum implementation moving from the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) to the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). In order to democratise education and eliminate the inequalities of apartheid, teachers underwent and are still undergoing training to implement these policies. Within the context of transformation and reform, teachers need to engage in ongoing learning. This calls for teacher learning within the process of continuing professional development. It includes the acquisition of new knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. I would like to understand where and how teachers acquire the aforementioned, and how learning is taking place. Teachers are learning through a plethora of learning experiences to which memory work is critical, because teachers need to recall and change old practices and methods of teaching and learning in order to suit the needs of the new curriculum, diverse learners and their own needs.

### **Research context**

From a research perspective, teacher learning through memory work is not commonly researched within continuing professional development. Furthermore, the literature on teacher learning using narrative inquiry as a methodology is still gaining popularity. Cohen, Manion & Morrison, (2011, p. 454) assert that “a comparatively neglected area in educational research is the field of stories and storytelling”. Narrative inquiry is based on the participants recalling their own experiences. The researcher then writes a narrative of the experience (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990). I contemplate whether memory work will give a different dimension to teacher learning when the participants recall their memories and tell their stories, as well as whether this will produce a particular kind of understanding about teacher learning.

Engaging in this study I believe will also enhance my own professional learning and development. My study falls within “The Memory and Teacher Development Studies Project”. Being a part of this cohort requires engagement with memory work in order to understand our own research better and develop our research skills. Moreover, we are exposed to other researchers, scholars or lecturers who present to us their experiences of working with memory work and this enlightens us further.

I therefore consider it a worthwhile exercise to explore teacher learning through memory work in a TDS postgraduate programme. I hope that enhancing understanding of teacher learning through memory work will provide the first steps towards change and transformation in this particularly important area. My vision for education and teacher learning corresponds with the Department of Basic Education’s Annual Report (2011/12, p. 9) which clearly states:

Our vision is of a South Africa in which all our people will have access to lifelong learning, education and training opportunities, which will, in turn, contribute towards improving the quality of life and building a peaceful, prosperous and democratic South Africa.

### **Key research questions**

Taking into consideration the personal, professional, policy and research context for this study, I explore two research questions to understand whether teachers have access to “lifelong learning, education and training opportunities” (Department of Basic Education’s Annual Report, 2011/12, p. 9).

The first key research question that I address in this dissertation is:

*What teacher learning happens through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme?* Exploring this question allows me to gain insight into what teacher learning happens through memory work in a TDS postgraduate programme. To respond to this question, my research participants were interviewed; I also examined the documents from their portfolios to generate data, and I acquired further data through collage inquiry.

The second key research question that underpins this study is:

*How does teacher learning happen through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme?* Exploring this question allows me to evaluate how teacher learning happens through memory work in a TDS postgraduate programme. To respond to this question, my participants were interviewed, as noted. They also created a collage of their critical moments in the PPI module, and documents from their portfolios were examined.

### **The methodological approach**

This study is located in the interpretivist paradigm. The approach that I selected for this study is the qualitative research approach because qualitative inquiry focuses on understanding the meaning people attach to their lived experiences. The methodology used for this research is narrative inquiry. I used purposive sampling to select the participants. My study involved four teachers who completed a TDS programme in the Bachelor of Education Honours degree. The university offering a TDS programme was also purposively selected based on one geographic area, namely, KwaZulu-Natal. Chapter three offers a detailed description of the methodological approach.

### **Organisation of the dissertation: Overview of the chapters**

The function of this first chapter is to provide a description of the format of the thesis. I use this chapter to clarify the focus and purpose of the study as well as the rationale behind it. In addition, the key research questions informing this research study are presented, and a brief synopsis of the methodological approach is provided.

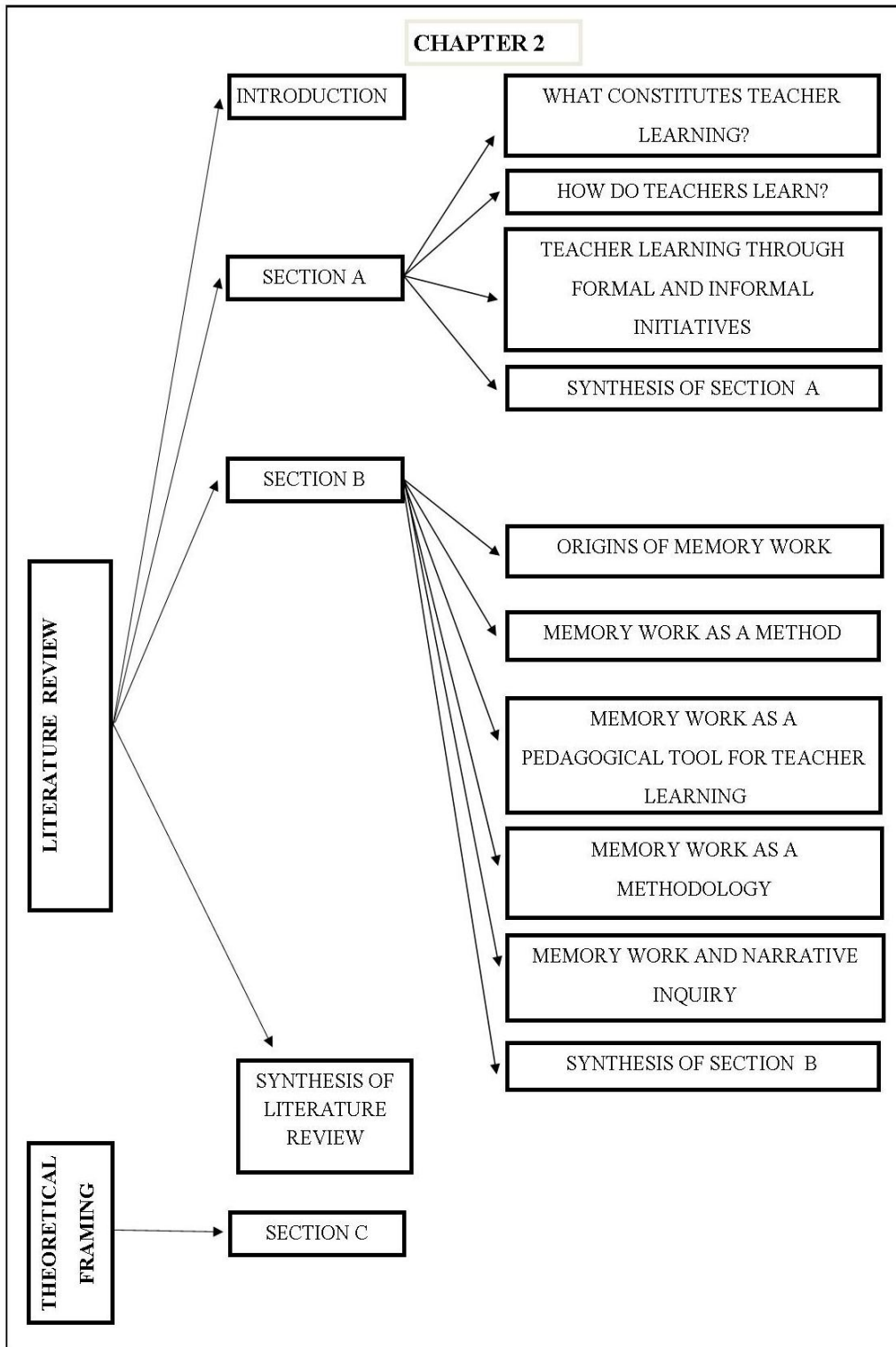
The second chapter of the dissertation focuses on the literature review, highlighting the “scholarly conversations” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 136) that inform and influence my study. It also incorporates the theoretical framing for this study. This includes the concept of “a pedagogy of reinvention” expounded by Mitchell and Weber (1999, p. 8), as well as theories on teacher development expounded by Kennedy (2005).

In Section A of Chapter Three, I outline the research design that I adopt in this particular research. This section also explains the research methodology used in this study, namely, narrative inquiry. I give a description of narrative inquiry and provide justification for using this methodology. Through narrative inquiry, a researcher can examine the past memories of the participants in order to retrieve information that sheds light on the topic being explored. A table that clearly shows my data collection and production plan is presented. I then provide reasons for the selection of my participants and the research setting. This is followed by Section B, where I offer an explanation of the data production methods that I have employed in this study. Issues relating to analysis of the data, ethics, trustworthiness, rigour and possible limitations of the study, are presented in Section C.

Chapter Four contains the narratives of the four participants which were built from the interviews, the documents in their portfolios and the collage inquiry. The narratives of the participants provide insight into their lived experiences and how they perceived themselves as teachers, learners and individuals. From their narratives, we get a glimpse of their personal, professional and social lives as well as the changes that took place within themselves as a result of learning through memory work.

Thereafter, in Chapter Five I present the analysis of the narratives in response to the two critical questions. I identify various themes from the storied narratives which are then used in the analysis of the narratives. This chapter is divided into two sections. Section A attempts to respond to the first critical question, what teacher learning happens through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme. Section B addresses the second research question, on how teacher learning happens through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme.

The sixth and final chapter concludes the dissertation by presenting a review of the dissertation, the context of the study, methodological reflections and a synthesis of the findings in response to the two research questions. It also includes: theoretical reflections, policy and practice imperatives, contributions to educational research and how further research could build on this study. I conclude the chapter with what I have learnt from this study about teacher learning through memory work, learning and reflections for future studies and my final reflections.



## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **Introduction**

In the previous chapter, I explained the focus and purpose of the study, provided my reasons for undertaking this research journey, highlighted the key research questions and provided a guide to this dissertation. This chapter comprises three sections. Section A includes a brief description of what constitutes teacher learning. This is followed by a discussion of key studies about how teacher learning occurs. I then survey the literature on teacher learning through formalised and non-formalised programmes. In section B, I highlight the origins of memory work and explain memory work as a method, a pedagogical tool for teacher learning and a methodology. To end this section, I present the literature on memory work and narrative inquiry. I conclude this chapter with section C, by presenting the theoretical framing that will be used to analyse the data.

#### **Section A**

##### **What constitutes teacher learning?**

Teachers' continuing professional development (CPD) has become a significant focus of interest in countries throughout the world. Teacher learning is one aspect of CPD that fits into the larger education reform context, as South Africa is reviewing its education system. Gaining more insight into teacher learning will enable one to comprehend what constitutes teacher learning, as teachers move from apartheid to post-apartheid education.

Day and Sachs (2004, p. 3) describe CPD as "all the activities in which teachers engage during the course of a career which are designed to enhance their work". The Department of Education's Design of the Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) System (2008, p. 9), states that "good teachers learn from many sources, including their life experience, their own professional practice, their peers and seniors in their schools, the teaching profession at large, their professional reading and formal courses".

Different scholars have put forward their idea of what teacher learning entails. Kelly (2006, p. 505) claims that "cognitivism currently dominates considerations of teacher learning, but there

are a number of limitations to this theoretical position which renders it inadequate for understanding the complexity of teacher learning”.

According to Ball (1996), factors that need to be considered to be part of teacher learning include prior experience, knowledge and beliefs. Teachers own personal and professional histories also play a role in determining what they learn. The process whereby teachers learn varies. Coolahan (2002) points out that learning is a process of self-development where one is able to personally grow and develop knowledge and skills that will help educate younger people. Kelly (2006) refers to teacher learning as “the process by which teachers move towards expertise” (p. 506). Likewise, Wilson and Demetriou (2007, p. 214) refer to teacher learning as a process of reflection and action and clarify that, during this process, teachers develop “skills, acquire knowledge and expertise”. Fraser *et al.* (2007, p. 157), who explore teacher learning within the context of CPD explain that teachers’ professional learning represents “the processes that, whether intuitive or deliberate, individual or social, result in specific changes in the professional knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs or actions of teachers”. Thus, I see teacher learning as a process that facilitates acquisition and specific changes in the professional knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs or actions of teachers, which lead towards expertise.

Moreover, Day and Gu (2007, p. 425) maintain that in an ideal situation:

teachers’ professional learning will be self-motivated and self-regulated and involve both intellectual and emotional processes. It will enrich teachers’ knowledge base, improve their teaching practices, enhance their self-efficacy and commitment to quality of service and it will contribute to their sense of self as a person and a professional.

Based on the literature, teacher learning is constituted by processes such as life experiences, professional practices, professional reading, reflection and action, intellectual and emotional processes. These processes are both personal and professional and enable teachers to move towards learning and development of their expertise, as well as self-development. These processes can happen in an “intuitive or deliberate, individual or social” way (Fraser *et al.*, 2007, p. 157).

While there has been a great deal of research on teacher learning and the multiple processes that constitute teacher learning, there is a lack of research on teacher learning through memory work. I argue that memory work may involve other processes that constitute teacher learning. My study looks at teachers who engaged in a professional development course and completed a module on personal and professional identities in a TDS postgraduate programme. Therefore, in my understanding, teacher learning through memory work in this module can be examined using the various processes as explicated by the scholars mentioned above. My study would examine these multiple processes to determine what constitutes teacher learning through memory work.

### **How do teachers learn?**

Evans (2002) asserts that the process of how teachers learn remains unclear. She maintains that a teacher may learn when he/she recognises a weakness in his/her practice and may by chance discover an approach that is better than previous approaches used. Evans (2002) further believes that teacher development incorporates change that would generally be classified as learning. She refers to Hoyle (1975) with regard to how learning happens in relation to two broad categories, namely, “professionalism and professionalism” (Evans, 2002, p. 130). Hoyle (1975) explains that professionalism is the status-related elements of a teachers’ work and professionalism refers to aspects such as knowledge, skills and procedures used by teachers in their work.

Furthermore, Evans (2002) describes how change takes place on an attitudinal and functional level. She defines attitudinal development as “the process whereby teachers’ attitudes to their work are modified” and functional development as “the process whereby teachers’ professional performance may be improved” (p. 131).

Bell and Gilbert (1994, p. 493) provide further elucidation when they state that “teacher development can be viewed as teachers learning, rather than as others getting teachers to change”. In learning, teachers develop their beliefs, ideas and their classroom practice, and attend to their feelings associated with changing.

Furthermore, Bell and Gilbert (1996) explored teacher development as professional, personal and social development. In their study, the adult learning process as it relates to teachers’ learning or



teacher development was analysed. These three domains will be used to examine how teachers learn professionally, personally and socially.

Thus, in my understanding, teachers learn when they recognise and acknowledge weaknesses in their practice or discover new approaches for their practice. They become conscious of the change that happens with regard to how they teach as well as the methods, approaches or procedures that they use to teach. They also become more aware of changes in their knowledge, skills, beliefs, ideas and attitudes and attend to their feelings associated with changing. This then assists teachers to improve their professional performance.

This study attempts to unpack teacher learning through memory work in a TDS postgraduate programme. It is therefore important to consider how teachers learn through memory work in this programme and whether this is similar or different from the perspectives of the scholars highlighted above. Moreover, if teacher learning through memory work is different, then it is important to consider how learning through memory work may enable the transformation and reform that South African teachers are seeking in the post-apartheid context.

### **Teacher learning through formal and informal initiatives**

Learning takes place formally or informally; it can be structured or unstructured and planned or incidental (Wilson & Berne, 1999; Reid in Fraser *et al.*, 2007). Wilson and Berne (1999) indicate that in order to enhance their learning, teachers attend professional development workshops which are mandatory or register for workshops in an individual capacity. Teachers register for Master's courses or join professional organisations to pursue individual learning opportunities. Furthermore, Wilson and Berne (1999) indicate that learning takes place through collaboration or conversations with colleagues as well as through classroom experience.

This concurs with Reid's understanding (in Fraser *et al.*, 2007) of the two dimensions (formal-informal and planned-incidental) of professional development learning opportunities. Opportunities for learning that are established by an outside source besides the teacher, are called formal. These can be taught courses. Informal opportunities are those that are acquired by the teacher, for example, networking. Planned opportunities may be formal or informal and pre-arranged, while incidental opportunities are spontaneous and unpredictable, for example, where a

teacher strikes up a conversation about teaching methods over coffee (Reid in Fraser *et al.*, 2007). These descriptions take into account the vast number of learning opportunities that teachers experience.

According to the authors mentioned above, opportunities exist for teachers to learn in a formal-informal, structured-unstructured or planned-incidental way. This includes attending professional development workshops, registering for formal professional development courses, joining professional organisations, collaborating, networking or having conversations with other teachers. Teachers also learn through their own classroom experiences.

My study explores teacher learning in a TDS postgraduate programme and examines whether through this formal programme, opportunities arise for teachers to learn through memory work in a formal-informal, structured-unstructured or planned-incidental manner, and how this contributes to the professional development of South African teachers.

Even though there are opportunities for teachers to learn in formal or planned ways, teacher learning has attracted the attention of some scholars who believe that there has been a shift in the way teacher learning should be viewed. According to Fraser *et al.* (2007), there is an emerging paradigm where the emphasis in professional development is on the concept of lifelong learning or continuing learning, rather than attending courses and training. Likewise, Day and Sachs (2004) assert that there has been a move away from one-shot workshops and lectures to lifelong learning. Thus opportunities to learn that enable lifelong learning are emphasised. The focus of my study is on a postgraduate programme where students attend lectures; it thus seeks to examine whether opportunities to engage in lifelong learning in this formal, planned programme are promoted together with opportunities to learn informally. My study considers whether a TDS programme that advocates memory work enables a shift in the way teacher learning can be viewed.

Various scholars have written about teacher learning within specific programmes. For the purpose of this review, I have selected Ball (2009) and Fraser *et al.* (2007) as examples of formal/informal programmes to exemplify and illuminate teacher learning. Ball (2009, p. 45) focused on “long-term social and institutional effects of professional development”. Data were

collected from United States and South African teachers. Fraser *et al.* (2007) paid attention to three CPD initiatives in Scotland.

Ball's (2009) study documents processes that assist with teachers' continued learning. It involved a "longitudinal study of a teacher education course designed to instill theoretical knowledge, pedagogical skills, metacognitive awareness and positive attitudes in teachers-including a sense of agency, advocacy and efficacy- concerning their work with diverse student populations" (p. 47). The aim of Ball's research was to get a better understanding of how teachers make use of professional development opportunities and apply what they learn in these teacher education programmes to become more effective teachers in their culturally and linguistically complex classrooms. This study therefore has relevance, firstly because South African teachers are often faced with culturally and linguistically complex classrooms, and secondly, because it allows for the examination of how opportunities are designed for teachers to learn in a formal TDS programme and to determine the effectiveness of these opportunities for teacher learning.

Fraser *et al.* (2007) address teacher learning within formal programmes. They refer to examples of CPD initiatives that were carried out in England which addressed teacher learning and change. One such programme was "The National Literacy Strategy" (p. 162), which was established in order to raise standards in literacy in primary schools. This transmissive model of CPD depended on formal, planned learning opportunities.

Fraser *et al.* (2007) also refer to "Cognitive Acceleration in Science Education (CASE)" (p.163), a second example of a formal, planned initiative and finally, to "CPD related to formative assessment" (p. 164). The latter was an intervention which began with formal, planned learning opportunities but allowed for informal learning. It would be interesting to see in my study, whether teacher learning in a formal programme also leads to informal learning opportunities. Furthermore, Fraser *et al.* (2007) claim that "the nature, extent and role of informal incidental opportunities in teacher' professional learning are currently under-researched and therefore remain unclear" (p. 166). My study will thus add to the literature on teacher learning through formal and informal initiatives.

Ball (2009) and Fraser *et al.* (2007) were examined as examples of formal-informal initiatives to exemplify and illuminate teacher learning. I use this to examine the opportunities designed for teachers to learn through memory work in a formal TDS programme and whether memory work enables formal-informal learning.

### **Synthesis of section A**

In summary, this section included a brief description of what constitutes teacher learning followed by a discussion on how teachers learn. Teacher learning involves multiple personal and professional processes that lead to development of their expertise as well as self-development. These processes can be “intuitive or deliberate, individual or social” (Fraser *et al.*, 2007, p. 157).

There are also processes that teachers have to become aware of with regard to how they learn, in order to improve their professional performance. Teachers learn when they recognise and acknowledge weaknesses in their practice or discover new approaches for their practice. They also become more aware of changes in their knowledge, skills, beliefs, ideas and attitudes and attend to their feelings associated with changing.

In this section, I also examined the opportunities that exist for teachers to learn in formal-informal, structured-unstructured or planned-incidental ways. I then surveyed the literature on teacher learning through formalised and non-formalised programmes.

For this study, I argue that teacher learning through memory work has not been extensively researched. I want to review teacher learning through memory work as a different field where teacher learning happens through reworking old meanings of learning. This may bring about a new understanding of what and how teachers learn. What needs to be addressed is how memory work can be used as a process to understand what and how teachers learn in a formal TDS postgraduate programme and whether that learning can happen in formal-informal, structured-unstructured or planned-incidental ways.

The next section highlights the origins of memory work. I explain memory work as a method, a pedagogical tool for teacher learning and a methodology. I then present the literature on memory work and narrative inquiry.

## **Section B**

### **Origins of memory work**

Memory has become a significant concept within research in the humanities as well as in various branches of the social sciences (Radstone, 2000). An area of focus within the field of memory studies is “memory work” (Haug, 1987). I am presenting this section in order to unpack memory work as this will enable me to grasp how this occurs when understanding teacher learning. I would like to understand how teacher learning is enhanced through memory work.

Memory work was originally a social constructionist and feminist research method that was developed in Germany by Frigga Haug (1987) and a group of other feminist socialists. It entails a collective examination and theorization of individuals’ experiences. Memory work was a way of exploring the process whereby a woman became a part of society. Haug (1987, p. 33) states that this process of becoming a part of society is usually defined as “female socialization” and it focuses primarily “on the process whereby individuals construct themselves into existing social relations”. Women’s socialization was analysed by having women write stories from their personal memories, “stories within which socialization comes to appear as a process of sexualization of the female body” (Haug, 1987, p. 13).

Memory work has gained popularity in diverse disciplines and fields of study. According to Radstone (2000, p. 1), “memory research is currently being pursued in philosophy, history, cultural studies, literature, film, media studies and psychology, not to mention archeology and architecture”. Additionally, Onyx and Small (2001, p. 778) state that memory work is being used in “sociology, psychology, education, nursing, tourism studies, leisure studies, management, and marketing”. Mitchell, Strong-Wilson, Pithouse, and Allnut (2011) point out that memory work has been explored in cognitive psychology and literary studies. According to Pithouse-Morgan, Mitchell and Pillay (2012, p. 2), “memory-work is also emerging as a significant pedagogic and research method in the South African Education field”. This is relevant to South Africa and South African teachers since they are still grappling with educational transformation. Exploring memory work as a pedagogic and research method will contribute to better understanding of transformation and reform in South Africa and perhaps can

be used as a way to address problems regarding educational transformation. If memory work is being used in a range of fields, it can be considered a helpful pedagogic and research method to acquire a new perspective on what and how teacher learning happens in South Africa.

In summary, this sub-section examined Haug's (1987) original use of memory work as a social constructionist and feminist research method and how memory work is now being used in diverse disciplines and fields of study as a pedagogic and research method.

### **Memory work as a method**

Memory work has evolved as a research method. Researchers including Crawford, Kippax, Onyx, Gault, and Benton (1992) and Onyx & Small (2001), have formalized certain aspects of Haug's (1987) original method. Onyx and Small (2001, p. 773) maintain that memory work "is a group method, involving always the collective analysis of individual written memories". The collective analysis entails group discussions where they can gain new understandings and meanings of the individuals' experiences (Small, 2007). Crawford *et al.* (1992) state that there are three phases of the method. They have stipulated guidelines and steps within each of the three phases, which Onyx and Small (2001) have further refined. First, the individual writes a memory of a particular experience. The next step involves collectively examining the memories in which the memories are theorized and this then results in new meanings. The material from the written memories and the collective discussions is then further theorized (Crawford *et al.*, 1992; Onyx & Small, 2001). This is relevant to my study since I can examine how or whether the three phases of this method are being employed in aTDS postgraduate programme for teacher learning to happen.

Presently, memory work is used as a qualitative research method to challenge conventional mainstream research practices (Onyx & Small, 2001). There is a broad range of subject areas in which memory work is being used (see Onyx & Small, 2001, for a list of subject areas). However, this method is not without problems. It "brings with it many fascinating dilemmas and issues of both a theoretical and methodological nature" (Onyx & Small, 2001, p. 773). One such point expressed by Onyx and Small (2001), is that memory work relies on memories and memories are known to be unreliable. Another point of concern is the danger in using memory-

work with sensitive material or with individuals who have been traumatized. In addition, the participants involved in the research may try to please the researcher and the quality of the data may be affected (Onyx & Small, 2001). However, those using this method focus on what Crawford *et al.* (1992, p. 51) affirm:

The memories are true memories, that is, they are memories and not inventions or fantasies. Whether the memories accurately represent past events or not, however, is irrelevant; the process of construction of the meanings of those events is the focus on memory-work.

In my study, I will look at how the participants construct meaning of their lived experiences, and what problems emerge with regard to using memory work as a method.

My study differs from Haug's (1987, p. 33) original use of memory work as a method to explore "female socialization"; it will rather be used as a basis to understand the memory work methods used by teachers in a TDS programme to learn. This method may differ from the traditional guidelines for conducting a memory work study as advocated by Crawford *et al.* (1992) and Onyx and Small (2001). I would like to understand how, through engaging in memory work as a method, teachers are able to learn. The educational landscape presently in South Africa is different from that of apartheid. I would like to understand how, through memory work, existing teachers who taught during apartheid re-socialize themselves in a changing social and educational landscape and make meaning of what they learn. The post-apartheid landscape differs from apartheid so one needs to know how to deal with post-apartheid issues in education. Using memory work is one way of creating an awareness of this. With regard to memory work, the method, Onyx and Small (2001, p. 781) argue that "a critical reflection of its strengths and limitations is needed". Therefore, my study can contribute to this body of knowledge by examining the strengths and limitations of this method.

In summary, this sub-section examined Crawford *et al.*(1992) and Onyx & Small's (2001) guidelines and steps within each of the three phases of memory work as a method. It also looked at some of the dilemmas and issues of using memory work as a method. I explain how my study differs from Haug's (1987, p. 33) original use of memory work as a method and how I will use to

understand the memory work methods used by teachers in a TDS programme to learn. Apart from memory work being used as a method, it is also used as a pedagogy for teacher learning.

### **Memory work as a pedagogical tool for teacher learning**

Barth (1990, p. 49) declares that passionate teachers “want to find ways of looking at the learning experience from different perspectives, engaging in the messy, frustrating and rewarding clay of learning”.

Recent studies have shown that memory work as a pedagogical tool is being given increased recognition when working with children. Students are given an opportunity to remember and study their selves as individuals and as communities. This enables them to see their future as something that belongs to them as well as something that they can enhance (Mitchell *et al.*, 2011).

Mitchell and Weber (1998, 1999) have also explored memory work in relation to pedagogy. They conducted research with Canadian school teachers and examined “how their memories of childhood and schooling had influenced their own teaching and how they might engage critically and creatively with these memories as [tools] for change” (Mitchell *et al.*, 2011, p. 2). In a study that Pithouse (2007) conducted for her doctoral dissertation, she explored “the use of memory and story as pedagogic tools to facilitate intellectual and emotional engagement and self-reflexivity in teacher education in South Africa” (Mitchell *et al.*, 2011, p. 2).

Like Pithouse (2007), I also explore how memory work is used as a pedagogical tool with practicing teachers from a postgraduate programme in South Africa, to determine what and how teacher learning happens for them. Furthermore, I employ memory work as a method to determine what and how teacher learning happens in the PPI module of a TDS programme. South Africa is fertile for this kind of study because South African teachers currently in the system have undergone many apartheid and post-apartheid experiences and are still struggling with post-apartheid educational transformation. Memory work in a South African context is very critical because of the rich memories of the teachers. The transition from apartheid to post-apartheid has resulted in a change in what and how teachers teach as well as learn. Memory work is a way of “bringing forward the past, as painful as it might be” (Pithouse-Morgan *et al.*,



2012, p. 4), in order to understand teacher learning and teacher development. An intervention into this nascent pedagogy will give an indication of some of the potential challenges and strengths of using this pedagogy in teacher learning and change the field of teacher development studies. Therefore, this perspective can contribute to the significance of memory work as a pedagogical tool for teacher learning. Mitchell *et al.* (2011) provide support for this when they declare “enter the pedagogy of memory and the idea of how memory and the past can be a productive learning space for the present and the future” (p. 1).

Furthermore, Pithouse (2011) explains that one of the challenges that teacher educators in post-apartheid South Africa face is to work with teachers to recall and re-examine experiences from their past. This is necessary so that current social and educational challenges can be updated. In Pithouse’s study (2011), scholar-teachers were given an opportunity to re-assess their understanding of themselves as teachers by remembering their experiences when they were learners at school as well as their existing teaching practice. As a result, the teachers began to “engage critically and reflexively with the complex issue of teacher authority in South Africa” (p. 176). This is significant since memory work enabled the scholar-teachers to understand themselves and learn through their own memories. Hence, Pithouse’s (2011) study can be used to understand a TDS postgraduate programme concerning the use of memory work as a pedagogical tool for teacher learning. It will also augment the literature on the social and educational challenges that emerge or not, when using this pedagogy.

In the works by Mitchell *et al.* (2011, p. 2) on memory and pedagogy, a central question is addressed: “How can we bring the past and memory forward so as to inform the future?” Considering South Africa’s historical past, my concern is exploring how memory work informs teacher learning and whether or not this influences teachers’ present and future practice.

In summary, this sub-section examined memory work as a pedagogical tool that is being used with children or adults. The scholars mentioned above highlight how these children or adults were given opportunities to remember and study their selves as individuals and as communities, how their memories influence their teaching and can be used to change how they teach, how memory work enables intellectual and emotional engagement and self-reflexivity in teacher development and how, by remembering their past, teachers were able to engage with the issue of

teacher authority. This sub-section also looked at the challenges and strengths of using memory work as a pedagogical tool and how this is relevant to my study. Having discussed memory work as a method and a pedagogical tool, I now examine memory work as a methodology.

### **Memory work as a methodology**

There is a substantive body of research (reviewed in Mitchell *et al.*, 2011) suggesting that memory has been explored as both phenomenon and method. This was carried out in studies of childhood and in educational practice and research. Apart from memory work being explored as phenomenon and method, it is also used as a methodology. In an international workshop on memory entitled “Back to the Future: Productive Remembering in Changing Times” (Mitchell *et al.*, 2011, p. 2), that took place at McGill University in Canada in 2008, the methodological issues in engaging with memory and the past were addressed.

With regard to memory work as a methodology, I will draw on Hacking’s (1995) notion of “memoro-politics” which, according to Southgate (2003), relies on “the idea of memory as narrative – memory as a story to tell” (p. 9). Southgate (2003) further states that memory narratives “focus on specific moments, details or incidents” (p. 13). Hacking (1995) describes how people come to an understanding of their lives through their own memories. This perspective is relevant to my study since it will allow me to understand teacher learning through memory work by exploring the lived experiences of the participants: their memories of their learning; their stories of how memory work activities work and the kinds of retrospection and introspection it enables or disables, and how professional knowledge, skills and values are taught and learnt by practicing teachers for their development. I also hope to get a better understanding of what transformation or change is possible for teachers engaging with different memory work activities and what are some of the enabling and constraining forces that block teacher change through memory work.

This sub-section highlighted Hacking’s (1995) notion of “memoro-politics”. By drawing on specific moments, details or incidents in one’s life and telling a story, one will be able to understand life through their own memories. I will use this concept to understand teacher learning through memory work by examining the stories of the participants.

## **Memory work and narrative inquiry**

Fraser *et al.* (2007) and Ball's (2009) studies address teacher learning directly using case studies. In contrast, Pithouse (2011, p. 177) gives an account of a "Teacher Self-Study Project" that she facilitated at a university in South Africa where narrative inquiry and self-study informed the project. Pithouse (2011) made use of memory and story in her project so that the participants could make sense of their learning and teaching experiences. In my study, I attempt to understand how teacher learning happens through memory work and narrative inquiry. The memories and stories of the participants will help me provide a different perspective on teacher learning for development and change. This particular methodology will also help me to determine whether memory work as a pedagogy enhances teacher learning and teacher change or not.

Kuhn (1995) maintains that those who engage in memory work "may be conscientised simply through learning that they do indeed have stories to tell, and that their stories have value and significance in the wider world" (p. 8). In the South African context, this is relevant since South Africans' experiences are "living archives" (Govinden, 2008, p. 10) of memories, and narrative inquiry will allow the participants to tell their stories.

When examining the context in South Africa, teachers have gone through two different systems, apartheid and post-apartheid. My concern is that the transition for teachers was not supported in ways that were "intellectual and emotional" (Day and Gu, 2007, p. 425). During the TRC, victims of apartheid authorities were invited to give statements about their experiences through their own recalled memory. However, teachers were left out in that transition from apartheid to post-apartheid eras. Memory work will allow the participants to draw on their memories and tell their stories, as done in the TRC. Given that South Africa is undergoing transformation, this is important for South Africa and the teachers who teach in South African schools, because their stories may reveal the value and significance of teacher learning through memory work.

In summary, this sub-section focused on narrative inquiry as a methodology that uses memories and stories to understand teaching and learning experiences. In my study, I will also use narrative inquiry as a methodology to acquire a different perspective on teacher learning for development and change.

## **Synthesis of section B**

This section examined Haug's (1987) original use of memory work as a social constructionist and feminist research method and how memory work is now being used in diverse disciplines and fields of study as a pedagogic and research method. It also looked at Crawford *et al.* (1992) and Onyx & Small's (2001) guidelines and steps within each of the three phases of memory work as a method. In addition, I examine some of the problems that one faces when using memory work as a method.

I then examined memory work as a pedagogical tool that is being used with children or adults and the challenges and strengths of using memory work as a pedagogical tool. This is followed by an explanation of how I will use narrative inquiry as a methodology to understand teacher learning through memory work, by exploring the lived experiences of the participants.

## **Synthesis of the literature review**

In summary, there is already an established body of literature on teacher learning and memory work. Teacher learning is occurring in different ways through formalised and non-formalised programmes but I argue that teacher learning specifically through memory work needs further research.

Memory work was originally used as a social constructionist and feminist research method but has gained popularity in other disciplines and is used for other purposes. Certain issues have emerged since its transposition to different contexts. Studies such as "sociology, psychology, education, nursing, tourism studies, leisure studies, management and marketing" (Onyx & Small, 2001, p. 778) have shown that memory work has been applied in a variety of research projects, and brings about better understanding of various issues as well as transformation. Hence it seems that memory work has gained credibility and has had a powerful impact on a variety of studies since it has brought about greater understanding and change. I therefore propose that to address teacher learning, we must increase understanding of memory work. From the perspective of South African teachers in a changing educational landscape, understanding teacher learning through memory work will be interesting because teachers need to understand themselves and their memories with new perspectives in a post-apartheid context.

In addition, memory work as a pedagogical tool is still in its developing stages. As Mitchell *et al.* (2011, p. 10) explain, “we are not aware of a whole programme of study in teaching or teacher education that draws heavily on memory as curriculum and pedagogy”. My study is concerned with teacher learning through memory work in a formal postgraduate programme. The module entitled “Personal and Professional Identities of Teachers in the Context of Change”, was included in this programme where memory work was employed as a pedagogical tool. My study will therefore contribute to the literature on memory work as a pedagogical tool for teacher learning.

Memory work is also used as a research methodology. Southgate (2003) describes “memoropolitics” (Hacking, 1995) as “the idea of memory as narrative – memory as a story to tell” (Southgate, 2003, p. 9). For this study, I use narrative inquiry as a research methodology, as my participants will draw on their memories to tell their stories. An attempt to document and analyse teacher learning through memory work using narrative inquiry, can therefore be seen as a way to address the intricate nature of teacher learning and contribute to the literature on memory work as a methodological tool for teacher learning.

The next section will provide the theoretical framing for this study.

## **Section C**

### **Theoretical Framing**

This study explores teacher learning through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme. It aims to examine what and how teacher learning happens through memory work in this formal postgraduate programme. The argument that I am developing in this research is that teacher learning through memory work is different from existing studies of how teacher learning should happen. Mitchell and Weber’s (1999, p. 8) concept of “a pedagogy of reinvention” and Kennedy’s (2005) models of CPD will inform this research.

To reinforce and support my understanding of teacher learning through memory work, I will draw on Mitchell and Weber’s (1999, p. 8) concept of “a pedagogy of reinvention”, which they describe as “a process of going back over something in different ways and with new perspectives, of studying one’s own experience with insight and awareness of the present for

purpose of acting on the future”. Mitchell and Weber (1998, 1999) used memory work in relation to pedagogy in their research on teacher development. They examined how the memories of school teachers influenced these teachers own teaching and how, by engaging with these memories, they can be used as a tool for change.

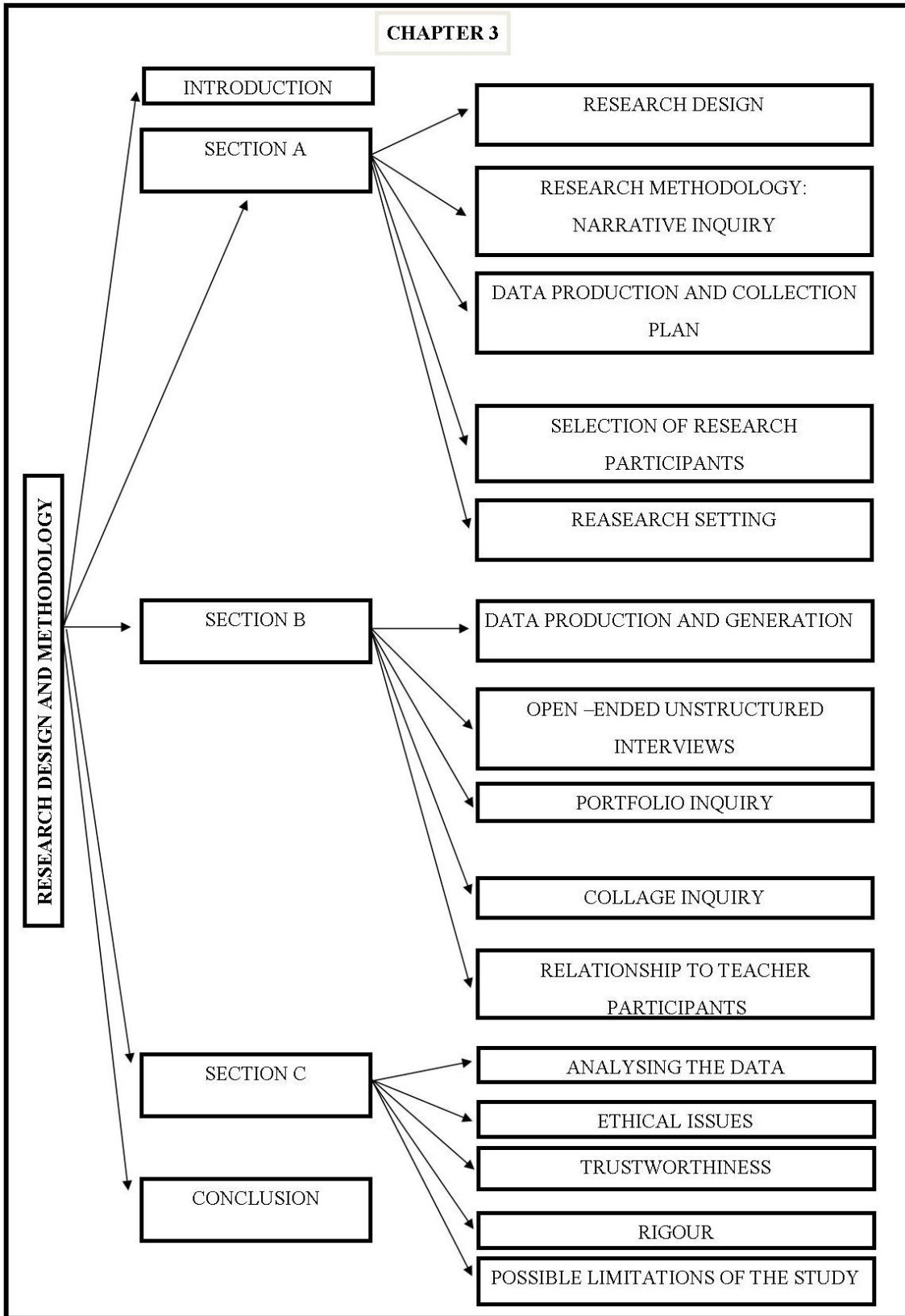
I use this process - “a pedagogy of reinvention” (Mitchell & Weber, 1999, p. 8) - to understand how memory work as a process brings about reinvention. I draw on Kennedy’s (2005) models of CPD which are categorised as transmissive, transitional and transformative, to understand this process.

Fraser *et al.* (2007), highlight that the transmissive model focuses on the technical aspects of teaching rather than on values, beliefs and attitudes. This is attained through expert tuition. The teacher depends on information gained from professional tutors and is not able to make decisions which support personal growth. According to Kennedy (2005), coaching/mentoring and communities of practice fit under the transitional category of CPD models. The coaching/mentoring model places importance on one-to-one relationships, usually between two teachers, and on “sharing dialogue with colleagues” (Kennedy, 2005. p. 242), while the community of practice model usually involves more than two people. Kennedy (2005, p. 246) states that the transformative models of CPD “involves the combination of a number of processes and conditions” and Fraser *et al.*, (2007) argue that transformative learning encourages the construction of new knowledge as well as the application of this knowledge in different teaching situations. They further state that there are strong links between theory and practice, internalization of concepts, reflection and an awareness of the professional and political context.

By synthesising Mitchell and Weber’s (1999, p. 8) concept of “a pedagogy of reinvention” and Kennedy’s (2005) models of CPD, I will be able to interrogate teacher learning through memory work in a TDS postgraduate programme. This framework will allow me to gain insight into why teacher learning through memory work should be done in a South African context if teachers are to move from apartheid learning to post-apartheid learning. A process needs to be in place for this reinvention to happen. The process is important for the reinvention in order to understand teacher learning for change within a particular module. This theoretical framing will therefore

allow me to gain insight into what and how teacher learning happens through memory work in a TDS postgraduate programme with more relevance, significance and importance.

The next chapter outlines the research design and research methodology, namely, narrative inquiry, that is employed to answer the research questions. As noted, this study is located in the interpretivist paradigm. Issues relating to analysis of the data, ethics, trustworthiness, rigour and possible limitations of the study are also presented in the next chapter.





## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

In the previous chapter, I provided a literature review and introduced the theoretical approach underpinning this study. The purpose of this chapter is to present the research design and methodology that was used to generate data. When deciding which research path would be followed during the course of this study, the following questions were asked: What will the research approach be and how will the data be generated for the research?

The aim of this study was to work with South African teachers who completed a module on the Personal and Professional Identities of Teachers in the Context of Change in a TDS postgraduate programme, in order to explore their learning through memory work. Memory work was used in this module as a pedagogical tool to enable teachers to understand their selves as individuals and as teachers through their own memories, using different memory work activities. The purpose of this was to determine whether in getting to know their personal and professional self, they would or would not respond to change.

The methodology that I selected for this study had to ensure that it was appropriate and relevant in responding to the research questions: what teacher learning happens through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme and how does teacher learning happen through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme? This was done through exploring the lived experiences of postgraduate teacher-scholars. Hacking's (1995) notion of "memoro-politics" which, according to Southgate (2003), relies on "the idea of memory as narrative – memory as a story to tell" (p. 9), assisted in understanding the lived experiences of these teachers. I used open-ended, unstructured interviews, portfolio inquiry and collage inquiry to generate stories of lived experiences.

In Section A of this chapter, I outline the paradigmatic perspective adopted in this particular research. This is followed by a description of what narrative inquiry is and its justification for use in this methodology. A table that clearly shows my data collection and production plan is

presented. I explain how the participants were selected and the research setting. In Section B, I pay attention to data production and generation. I explain the research methods that I employed to elicit data. Section C highlights ethical issues and focuses on trustworthiness and rigour, followed by the possible limitations of the study.

This study is located within the interpretivist paradigm. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2003, p. 33), “all research is interpretive; it is guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied”. The central concern of the interpretivist paradigm surrounds understanding human experiences (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). This paradigm allows a novice researcher in a Master’s programme (such as myself), to interpret the complexities embedded in the teachers’ lived experiences with regard to what and how they learn through memory work.

## **Section A**

### **Research design**

Klenke (2008, p. 24) affirms that “interpretive researchers contextualize their studies by setting them into their social and historical context so that the reader can see how the current situation under investigation shapes the research process”. I adopted an interpretive approach in order to understand the social world of South African postgraduate teacher-scholars from a TDS postgraduate programme in their effort to learn through memory work, and how they interpret their own world in that process. What was clear at the outset, was that the history of South Africa influences the way one understands people’s experiences.

The approach that I selected for this study is the qualitative research approach because qualitative inquiry focuses on understanding the meanings people attach to their lived experiences (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 1999). Denzin and Lincoln (1994, p. 2) provide support for this reasoning:

Qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in

their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them.

By utilising a qualitative approach, an attempt was made to understand what teacher learning happens through memory work and how teacher learning happens through memory work in a TDS postgraduate programme within a particular locale. This was done using the subjective experiences of the participants. I was thus able to attain an in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences. Furthermore, I used the qualitative approach since the phenomena can be studied in their complexity. It is also possible to interact with the participants in their natural settings. One of the benefits of using the qualitative approach is to be able to obtain rich data. Both verbal and non-verbal data may be collected. Because of the nature of qualitative research, investigations related to this methodology are often connected with methods such as in-depth interviewing, and the collection of relevant documents, drawings and photographs, which in turn generate qualitative data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). In my study, I conducted interviews to generate verbal data and analysed documents from the participants' portfolios; I also used collage inquiry to generate non-verbal data about teacher learning and memory work.

### **Research methodology: Narrative inquiry**

The methodology that I used for this research is narrative inquiry. According to Schwandt (2007, p. 204), narrative inquiry is “the interdisciplinary study of the activities involved in generating and analysing stories of life experiences (e.g. life histories, narrative interviews, journals, dairies, memoirs, autobiographies) and reporting that kind of research”. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) reiterate that stories, autobiography, journals, field notes, letters, conversations, interviews, family stories, photos (and other artifacts) and life experience, are methods of narrative inquiry. This corresponds with the qualitative approach that I employ in this study.

The reason for selecting this methodology is because “a comparatively neglected area in educational research is the field of stories and storytelling” (Cohen *et al.*, 2011, p. 454). Thody (1997) suggests that stories are rich in authentic, live data. Cohen *et al.* (2011, p. 454) concur with this when they state that “stories, being rich in the subjective involvement of the storyteller, offer an opportunity for the researcher to gather authentic, rich and respectable data”.

Govinden (2008, p. 9) points out that “South Africa at the present moment is living through a time of memory. It is a time when we are considering the past histories of individuals, families, institutions, events and periods”. In order to develop professionally and construct democratic schools, teachers face trials and tribulations on a daily basis. Their experiences are “living archives” (Govinden, 2008, p. 10) of memories, conveyed in the stories they tell. Using this methodology allowed the participants to tell the stories of who they are, how they interpret themselves and what they learnt, as well as how they learnt through memory work in terms of these stories.

Clandinin and Huber (in press) state that narrative inquiry “is the study of experience understood narratively. It is a way of thinking about, and studying, experience. Narrative inquirers think narratively about experience throughout inquiry” (p. 1). In addition, Clandinin (2007) explains that narrative inquiry is a research methodology that is gaining acceptance and is being practised in disciplines such as nursing, medicine, law, social work and counseling, as well as teaching. I therefore consider narrative inquiry a worthwhile methodology to explore teaching learning through memory work, since memory work was used as a pedagogy in the PPI module.

Narrative inquiry is based on the participants recalling their own experiences. The researcher then writes a narrative of the experience (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990). Connelly and Clandinin (1990, p. 2) argue that “humans are storytelling organisms who, individually and socially, lead storied lives. Thus, the study of narrative is the study of the ways humans experience the world”. Narrative inquiry centers on using narrative as a way of making sense of the lived experiences of teachers, learners and researchers in educational settings. Clandinin and Connelly (2004, p. 576) provide further support for this when they state that narrative inquiry is “a multi-dimensional exploration of experience involving temporality (past, present and future), interaction (personal and social), and location (place)”.

In my study, I reconstructed the lived experiences of my participants into storied narratives. From this I was able to grasp how, through engaging in memory work activities, the participants delved into their memories in order to describe what they learnt about their personal and professional self in different social spaces. Moreover, I was able to comprehend how, through considering the past, the participants were able to change how they think and act presently.

A further reason for choosing this methodology is because narrative inquiry is a very naturalistic approach which allows one to talk easily about one's life (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I hoped that the participants would be able to bring meaning to their words, descriptions, ideas, feelings and thoughts when they spoke about their experiences. In this way, I would be able to understand and explain what memory work activities are being adopted and practised in a TDS postgraduate programme in order for teachers to learn, as well as how memory work activities work – that is, how professional knowledge, skills and values are taught and learnt by practicing teachers for their development.

I also hoped to get a better understanding of what transformation or change (whether methodological, ethical, pedagogic) is possible for teachers engaging with different memory work activities, as well as for me as a researcher developing an understanding of memory work. In addition, I hoped to understand what some of the enabling and constraining forces are that block teacher learning through memory work. Narrative inquiry can therefore allow one to theorise about the personal, professional and social dimensions and help to improve the quality of our own learning. Johnson and Golombek (2002, p. 7) provide support for this view:

We believe that narrative inquiry enables teachers to organize, articulate, and communicate what they know and believe about teaching and who they have become as teachers. Their stories reveal the knowledge, ideas, perspectives, understandings and experiences that guide their work. Their stories describe the complexities of their practice, trace professional development over time and reveal the ways in which they make sense of and reconfigure their work. Their stories reflect the struggles, tensions, triumphs, and rewards of their lives as teachers. We believe that ultimately, narrative inquiry enables teachers not only to make sense of their professional worlds but also to make significant and worthwhile change within themselves and in the teaching practices.

Utilising this methodology therefore assisted in providing information on what teacher learning happens through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme and how does teacher learning happen through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme.

**TABLE 1: Data production and collection plan**

<b>QUESTIONS</b>	<b>CRITICAL QUESTION 1</b>	<b>CRITICAL QUESTION 2</b>
	What teacher learning happens through memory work in a TDS postgraduate programme?	How does teacher learning happen through memory work in a TDS postgraduate programme?
<b>WHY is the data being collected?</b>	To understand and explain what teacher learning happens through memory work in a TDS postgraduate programme.	To understand and explain how teacher learning happens through memory work in a TDS postgraduate programme.
<b>WHAT is the research strategy?</b>	Open-ended, unstructured interviews will be conducted to collect the required data. Documents from the participants' portfolios and collage inquiry will also be used to elicit different kinds of data that will complement the interviews.	Open-ended, unstructured interviews will be conducted to collect the required data. Documents from the participants' portfolios and collage inquiry will also be used to elicit different kinds of data that will complement the interviews.
<b>WHO (or what) will be the sources of the data?</b>	Four teachers who have completed a TDS Honours in Education programme at a university in KwaZulu-Natal.	Four teachers who have completed a TDS Honours in Education programme at a university in KwaZulu-Natal.
<b>WHERE is the data to be collected?</b>	Four teachers will be interviewed at the library or Research Commons at a university in KwaZulu-Natal.	Four teachers will be interviewed at the library or Research Commons at a university in KwaZulu-Natal.
<b>HOW MANY of the data sources will be accessed?</b>	Four teachers who completed different modules in a TDS Honours programme will be interviewed.	Four teachers who completed different modules in a TDS Honours programme will be interviewed.
<b>HOW OFTEN will data be collected?</b>	The teachers will be interviewed once and if the data are not appropriate to	The teachers will be interviewed once and if the data are not appropriate to

	answer the research questions, more interviews will be conducted. The collage will be created and discussed on a separate day.	answer the research questions, more interviews will be conducted. The collage will be created and discussed on a separate day.
<b>HOW will the data be collected?</b>	Data will be collected through an open-ended, unstructured interview which will be digitally recorded. In addition, I will use portfolio inquiry and collage inquiry.	Data will be collected through an open-ended, unstructured interview which will be digitally recorded. In addition, I will use portfolio inquiry and collage inquiry.
<b>JUSTIFY this plan for data collection</b>	The interview will provide information on what teacher learning happens through memory work in a TDS postgraduate programme. The four teachers who completed a TDS Honours programme represent all teachers who have agreed to participate in the research. These particular teachers will be chosen since they have experienced the phenomena and have first-hand information relevant to the study.	The interview will provide information on how does teacher learning happen through memory work in a TDS postgraduate programme. The four teachers who completed a TDS Honours programme represent all teachers who have agreed to participate in the research. These particular teachers will be chosen since they have experienced the phenomena and have first-hand information relevant to the study.

### **Selection of research participants**

I used purposive sampling to select the participants. In purposive sampling, people are chosen for a particular purpose (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Rather than selecting a large number of teachers with the intent of making generalizations and in order not to complicate the issue, I chose a few participants who could best shed light on the phenomenon under investigation. Age,

race and gender were not considerations for this study. However, I include a brief profile of the participants in the table below, which indicates the diversity of participants chosen.

**TABLE 2: PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS**

<b>NAME OF PARTICIPANT</b>	<b>GENDER</b>	<b>RACE</b>	<b>AGE</b>	<b>NUMBER OF YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE</b>	<b>TYPE</b>	<b>POST LEVEL</b>	<b>PHASE TEACHING</b>
<b>Sizwe</b>	Male	African	Between 30&40	10	Middle aged	Level 1 Educator	Intermediate
<b>Sipho</b>	Male	African	Between 30&40	10	Middle aged	Level 1 Educator	FET
<b>Anne</b>	Female	Indian	Between 20&30	5	Novice	Level 1 Educator	Intermediate
<b>Rani</b>	Female	Indian	Between 40&50	26	Veteran	Level 1 Educator	Foundation

My study involved four teachers who completed a TDS Honours in Education programme. They represent all teachers who have agreed to participate in the research. These particular teachers were chosen since they had engaged with the memory work activities in the PPI module and had first-hand information relevant to the study. The teachers were purposively selected based on their willingness and availability to be part of this research process. They did not feel threatened but were comfortable about participating in this process. Participants differed in teaching experience from five years to over twenty years.

In order to safeguard anonymity, I changed the names of the participants. I used the pseudonyms Sizwe, Sipho, Anne and Rani after consulting with the participants, who preferred that I select the names. I used pseudonyms since there is a possibility that the participants would be recognised if their real names were used. I ensured that in this dissertation and any other work



published from this research, the anonymity of the participants would be maintained by not using any identifying information.

Purposive sampling was suitable for this study because the intention of the study was to explore the lived experiences of teachers and to obtain an understanding of teacher learning through memory work. The advantage of purposive sampling is that the researcher selects the participant based on the purpose of the study; however, “it does not pretend to represent the wider population; it is deliberately and unashamedly selective and biased” (Cohen *et al.*, 2011, p. 157). According to Creswell (1998), it is important to find participants “who are accessible and willing to provide information as well as those who can shed light on issues being explored” (p. 111). Therefore, it is important to carefully think about who is going to be chosen for the study.

I chose qualified teachers who completed the Honours in Education programme and decided that it would be easier to choose someone from my own study environment. I approached the participants with whom I had a good relationship, who I respected and who are always interested in improving themselves. I anticipated that they would give me their full cooperation and not show resistance since they were mature and willing to learn through my experiences. All the participants were passionate and confident about teaching and learning. I was aware that my participants would be investing their time in my study; it was thus important that as a researcher, I respected their time and did not impose my demands on them. I have shown appreciation and reciprocated when they needed my assistance. Marshall and Rossman (2006, p. 81) explain that reciprocity involves “giving time to help out, providing informal feedback, making coffee or being a good listener”. Moreover, as a researcher I had an ethical responsibility to the participants and respected their stories in all their complexity. I tried to show their lived experiences by creating a story that they could recognise so that their storied narratives were not merely reduced for the purpose of research.

### **Research setting**

KwaZulu-Natal is classified as an urban setting. There are universities in South Africa that fall into rural areas. Since I am a novice researcher, I will focus only on this urban area for this study. In order to establish whether teachers in different geographic areas experience teacher

learning through memory work differently, and whether their learning is shaped by their geographical location and what influence the geographical area has on learning, further research can be undertaken at a later stage. The university was purposively selected based on one geographic area.

## **Section B**

### **Data production and generation**

In this study, the data were generated from the interviews, documents from the participant's portfolios and collage inquiry. The data helped me to examine both critical questions that I set out to explore. After conducting the interview, I then transcribed the interview.

### **Open-ended, unstructured interviews**

Open-ended, unstructured interviews were used to yield useful information about teacher learning through memory work. The interviews were long interviews, revolving around one central question and a few sub-questions that were identified in advance (see Appendix 1). It was a medium through which these teachers could make personal statements about their own experiences and their lives. Although I intended to proceed with an unstructured interview, the interviews leaned more towards a semi-structured interview. However, the participants were encouraged to talk about a topic without hinting that they give a particular answer (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The participants were therefore allowed to tell stories of their experiences. I gave the participants enough time to provide prolonged answers, which is in keeping with narrative inquiry. They were also able to make sense of their learning experiences, which assisted me in determining what learning took place through memory work.

For future research, I may consider getting the participants to write as well as speak. In this way, the participants will not be hindered by the researcher and will be able to tell their stories more freely. This may yield richer data.

I conducted an individual interview with each participant for approximately an hour. I suggested home as the venue, since sufficient time is needed without disruption and the home environment generally offers a warm and comfortable space where the participant can feel at ease to share their stories over a cup of coffee and refreshments. However, the participants preferred that the

interviews be conducted at the library or Research Commons since this was more convenient for them. The atmosphere that prevailed in these areas was conducive and the interviews were undertaken without disruption.

*The environment is conducive to an academic atmosphere. The library was quiet and it was easy to record the interview. In addition, there were no interruptions (My journal entry, 15 September, 2012). It is nice to work at the library or Research Commons because everyone is so engrossed in their work and it is motivating (My journal entry, 5 October, 2012).*

The participants were also asked to choose a date and time that was convenient for them for the interviews. The interviews were digitally recorded in the audio format and then transcribed. Attention was given to the participant's description of their experiences related to the phenomena and I took heed of meaningful cues. Through the interviews, I was able to relate to what others said and formed my own generalizations. In this way I was able to acquire interesting and stimulating data that added value to the study and answered the research questions.

I used other methods such as the portfolio method and collage inquiry to generate further data and answer the research questions. This complemented the interview by permitting the participants to elaborate on what was said in the interviews as well as provide additional information that was not mentioned in the interviews.

### **Portfolio inquiry**

The documents from the participants' portfolios were analysed to answer the research questions. In order not to be intrusive, the participants selected what they wanted to share from their portfolios. According to Samaras and Freese (2006), the portfolio can include "reflective journals, lessons, projects, [and] papers" (p. 68). The participants offered me the course outline, assignments and notes with regard to the artefact retrieval activity. This storehouse of data was used to document and analyse what the participants learn through memory work in a TDS Postgraduate programme. I used a set of questions identified in advance to analyse the documents in the participant's portfolios (see Appendix 2).

Some of the memory work activities mentioned in the portfolio included two free-writing tasks. Participants had to keep a learning journal where they were expected to record interesting experiences, observations and ideas. They also had to trace the development of their learning process, make connections between their personal and professional experiences and their learning, write about their thoughts and feelings with regard to their learning experience and think in a self-reflexive way about their learning. Unfortunately, only one participant offered me a few pages of her journal which I used to generate some data from this source. However, from the interviews that were conducted and the collage inquiry activity, I could gauge that the participants were conscious of their learning experiences, and how they developed personally and professionally. The participants also struggled with the methodology and experienced negative moments such as frustration and exhaustion while working with this methodology. Perhaps writing in their journals during the Honours course allowed them to reflect on their critical moments and inquire within themselves the reasons for such developments.

### **Collage inquiry**

In addition to the interviews, collage was used as a tool to help the participants reminisce about their learning experiences. Butler-Kisber (2008, p. 265) define collage as “the process of cutting and sticking found images and image fragments from popular print/magazines onto cardstock”. I chose a variety of South African magazines that included an array of colour and black and white pictures and words.

The participants were asked to create a collage on the topic “My critical moments in the PPI module”. Each participant was requested to create an individual collage. They then did a short write up on the collage followed by a discussion based on the collage. Raht *et al.* (2009) state that the use of pictures, symbols and metaphors in a collage help to convey a message, and that collage is a way to engage with a topic. It also helps one to discuss and tell one’s story. I found that this is what makes this method of data generation different and hence used this method of visual inquiry to generate information on teachers’ experiences and perspectives on teacher learning through memory work. The pictures, symbols and discussions enabled me to determine what the significance and challenges of using memory work in a TDS programme are and how learning takes place.

The collage activity was a new experience for the participants and for me. Our understanding of collage inquiry was based on our own readings. Rani enthusiastically brought along a collage that she was working on for her Master's study to show me. I requested her to use her ready-made example to enlighten us further on what collage inquiry entails and she humbly obliged.

I recorded in my journal information what I considered important as well as comments that the participants made while engaged in this activity. I envisaged that this would add value to my study.

*I assume that the comments that everyone is making is part of their own learning process (My journal entry, 4 October, 2012).*

The collage activity together with the writing session and discussions thereafter, took approximately two-and-a-half hours to complete. Once the collages were completed, I set out to examine meanings that emerged from the collages. This, together with the interviews and portfolio inquiry, aided in answering the research questions.

### **Relationship to teacher participants**

I was amazed at the ambience that prevailed during the creation of the collage. All participants were deeply engrossed in this activity. They were enthusiastic, happy and willing to undertake this task. They saw it as an opportunity to experience and learn more about collage inquiry. I understood that they wanted to give their best because as current Master's students, they were considering using this method to generate data for their studies. Siphso said, "I am excited about doing this because I have no experience of doing a collage. It's a learning experience for me as well because I am going to be using it in my dissertation as well" (My journal entry, 4 October, 2012).

Even though the participants were absorbed in what they were doing, every now and then they would joke and laugh about the pictures that they were using which reminded them of their experiences during their studies in that particular module. When I offered them some snacks Siphso said, "We all want to get good marks so we don't want to be disturbed", at which everyone laughed (My journal entry, 4 October, 2012). Meeting in the boardroom allowed for this kind of

privacy where the participants could freely express their thoughts and feelings. In addition, the room had a board where the completed collages were displayed for all the participants to look at during the discussion.

As I watched the participants, I felt inspired to create my own collage but had to be a silent observer eagerly awaiting the discussion to follow. The participants also glanced at one another's work and seemed to be interested in what each collage had to say.

The participants carefully chose their pictures and words, sometimes replacing what they had with something new. At one point, Sipho remarked, "Now I know when I'm doing this activity with my learners, I have to be patient because this requires a lot of time. Looking for the right picture or words is time-consuming" (My journal entry, 4 October, 2012). It suggests that even though he was required to think about his memories, he was still learning during this activity. He became conscious of developing an important value like patience for his own professional practice, while being mindful of time frames. Anne jokingly suggested that we should give the learners smaller pages. Although this was said in a jovial tone, this discussion offered suggestions to negotiate time constraints.

Once the data were collected, the following steps were considered in order to make sense of the data: scanning and cleaning the data, organizing the data and re-presenting the data (Vithal & Jansen, 2010).

## **Section C**

### **Analysing the data**

My thinking about teacher learning is informed by the insights of international scholars (Bell & Gilbert, 1996), who explore teacher development as professional, personal and social development. In a study conducted by Bell and Gilbert (1996), the adult learning process as it relates to teachers' learning or teacher development was analysed. They put forward a model for achieving teacher development which has three central features, namely, professional, personal and social development.

The professional development of a teacher includes the use of various teaching activities. The development of beliefs and conceptions with regard to these activities is important for the success of these teaching activities. Acquiring a good grasp of the subject matter is also considered necessary.

Personal development involves teachers constructing and evaluating new knowledge about what it means to be a teacher of a particular subject. It is also important for the teacher to come to terms with his or her feelings related to changing their activities and beliefs about the subjects that they teach, especially if they go against “current or proposed socially constructed and accepted knowledge” (Bell & Gilbert, 1996, p. 258). With regard to social development, a teacher is expected to renegotiate and reconstruct what it means to be a teacher. This requires developing ways of working with others which will enable renegotiation and reconstruction of what it means to be a teacher of a particular subject. Bell and Gilbert (1996) state that professional, personal and social development is interactive and interdependent. They explain that “...development in one aspect cannot proceed unless the other aspects develop also” (p. 274). I use these three domains of teacher development to interpret and understand what teacher learning happens through memory work on a professional, personal and social level in my study.

Bell and Gilbert’s (1996) model will allow me to understand what teacher learning happens from a personal, professional and social viewpoint, while Kennedy’s (2005) models of CPD and Mitchell and Weber’s (1999, p. 8) concept of “a pedagogy of reinvention” will be used to analyse how does teacher learning happen through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme.

### **Ethical issues**

According to Creswell (1998, p. 132), a qualitative researcher “faces many ethical issues that surface during data collection in the field and in analysis”. Therefore, the following ethical issues were considered when undertaking the research: protection from harm, informed consent, right to privacy and honesty with professional colleagues (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The participants were also not exposed to undue harm.

It is important for the participant to know about the purpose of the study; therefore, the participants were presented with an informed consent form describing the nature of the research as well as the nature of their participation in it. Participation was strictly voluntary and the participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Participants were also given the narratives to read and were allowed to make changes. This ensured their right to privacy. In order to safeguard the identity of the participants, I used pseudonyms.

Approval was sought from the university to conduct the research. The necessary steps were taken to seek professional counselling from the university counsellor should a traumatic or distressing situation arise.

### **Trustworthiness**

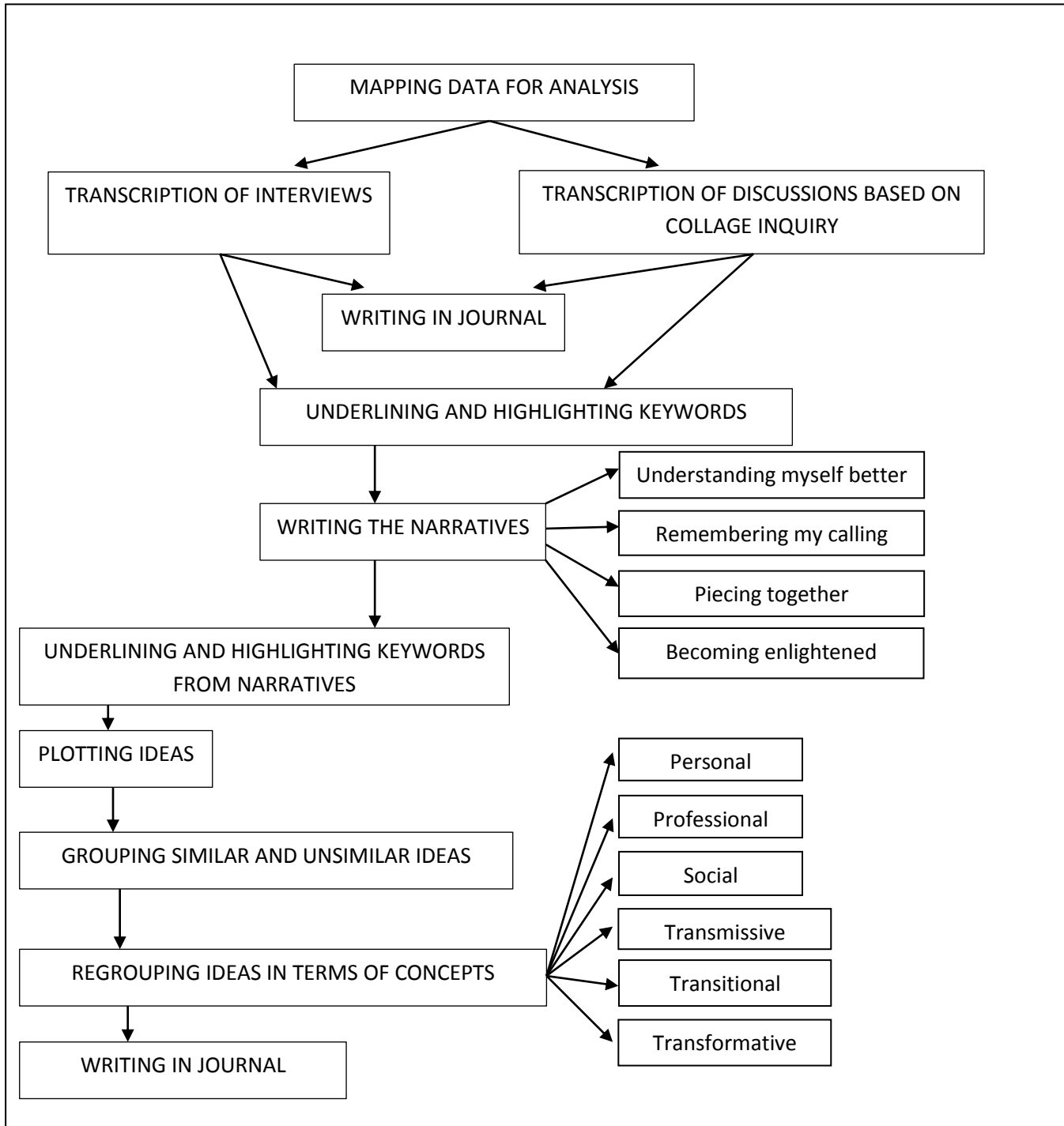
As a novice researcher, I was filled with fears about meeting my participants for the first time or about whether my interpretation of the data was trustworthy. In order to support the validity of my findings, I sought feedback from my participants, friends and academics in the field to determine whether appropriate interpretations had been made and valid conclusions drawn from the data.

I kept in contact with my participants regularly by communicating telephonically or via email, SMS or Whatsapp. At other times, I met my participants at the university where we were all studying. These various forms of communication helped me to clarify my interpretations, and obtain more information when my analysis was too vague or we chatted informally. I was constantly aware that the participants were busy with their own research, mindful of the time that we spent together.



**Rigour**

**TABLE 3: MAPPING RIGOUR**



Data analysis is a long, slow, messy, but nevertheless interesting process. I have learnt that there are no short-cuts or recipe for this process. I first transcribed the interviews and the discussion on the collage inquiry. While transcribing, I stopped every now and then and documented thoughts that came to my mind in my journal. I then read and underlined or highlighted words that were repeated or what I considered to be important. The transcriptions, the write-up based on the collage and documents from the participants' portfolios were used to write the narratives.

I read the narratives a few times and underlined or highlighted keywords. I then plotted all the ideas that came to my mind from each story, whether they were significant or not. Next I grouped similar and un-similar ideas. I then regrouped these ideas in terms of concepts. I read the narratives again and recorded whatever popped up in my mind in my journal.

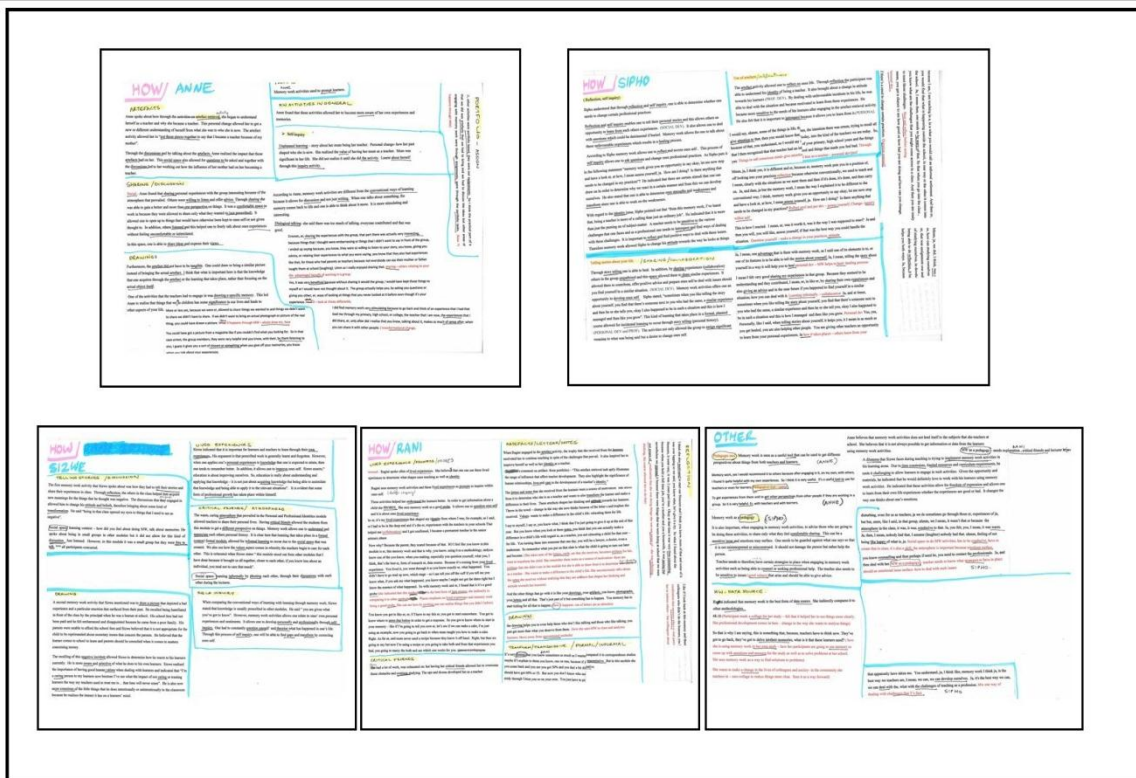
The next step involved drawing a concept map for each critical question. I attempted to slot in possible themes to answer each question. I then tabulated each critical question and filled in the different memory work activities that each participant had spoken about. I grouped similar and unique ideas that emerged from the four narratives into another table. This assisted in developing the themes that I used in the data analysis. I also drew a third table which I named "Other". I used this table to capture information that I considered important but was unsure as to where it belonged.

Once the toil of this was over, I thought that I was prepared to write the data analysis chapter. I read the notes that I had made in my journal and felt an overwhelming sense of despair. My journal contained notes that I made throughout the research process – while transcribing the interview, during the collage activity, while reading the participants' portfolios or articles and books. But where would I start? Which participant should I start with? Why was it so difficult to begin writing this chapter?

I scrolled up and down the different documents on my computer, trying to make sense of the data. I felt overwhelmed by all the data and could not make sense of it. At this point I used A3 pages and wrote each participant's name on four separate pages with the first critical question. I used another four pages for the second critical question. I kept one page for "Other". I decided to print the notes from my journal and I literally cut and pasted these onto the A3 pages for each

participant according to the keywords that I captured in the tables that I had drawn. In addition, I listened to the audio recordings of my supervision sessions with my supervisor and made notes which I pasted onto the A3 pages. Listening to these sessions and transcribing important aspects added to my understanding. My fears slowly began to dissipate as I worked through this complicated process.

### TABLE 4: NOTES FROM MY JOURNAL



Data analysis was a back and forth process since I had to go back to the transcripts and edit the narratives, adding significant information and deleting insignificant data. There were bits of information that I did not include when writing the narratives, but once I had established the themes for the data analysis, I realised the importance of what the participants had said and made the connections. Moreover, while engaged in the analysis, there were things that one participant said which suddenly made me realise that another participant had said something similar:

therefore the narratives had to be edited. While writing Chapter Two, I mapped my literature review, which was also a beneficial aid when writing the data analysis chapter (See page 12).

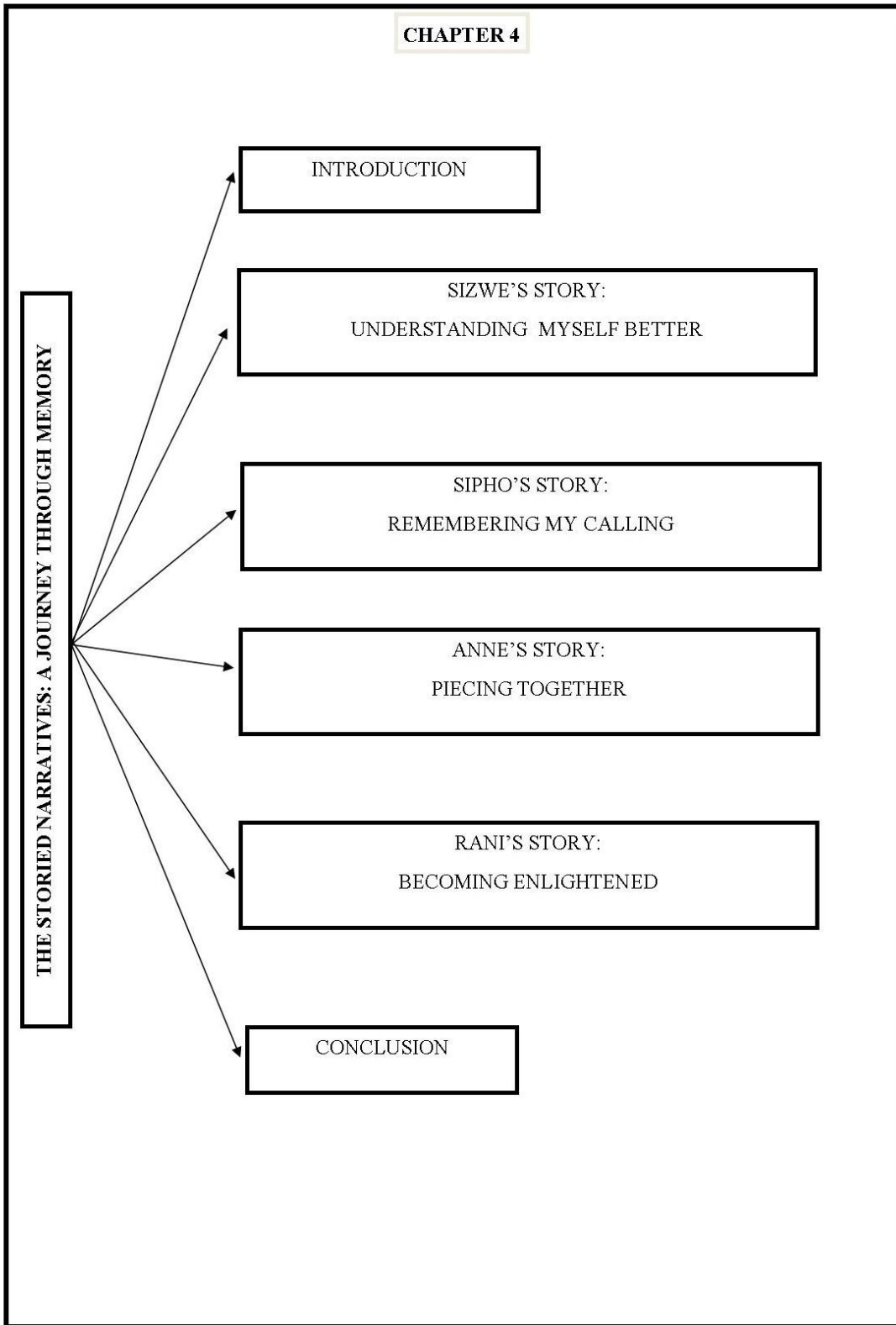
### **Possible limitations of the study**

This is a small scale narrative inquiry study. The data generation was limited to four participants from one module in a TDS postgraduate programme at a university in KwaZulu-Natal. The findings from this study therefore cannot be generalised to all the modules in a TDS postgraduate programme. However, the study can be a useful exemplar for those interested in teacher learning through memory work.

My biggest challenge in writing this dissertation was combining all the data sets to write the narratives - trying to understand the participant's story in its complexity and within a broader context, endeavoring to capture the essence of what was said, and keeping it alive and as lived as possible, without distorting their words. To capture this entanglement, I would read other scholars' work, and pay attention to what was being discussed at individual and group supervision sessions with my supervisor and critical friends. This helped me gain the confidence to continue.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I indicated that this study is located in the interpretivist paradigm and used the qualitative approach. The methodology that was used for this research is narrative inquiry, which is gaining popularity and credibility in qualitative research. I described how my participants through open-ended, unstructured interviews, communicated their experiences of what teacher learning happens through memory work and how teacher learning happens through memory work. I also provided a brief overview of the other methods that I used, namely, the portfolio method and collage inquiry, to elicit data. The following chapter will focus on the storied narratives of the participants.



## CHAPTER 4

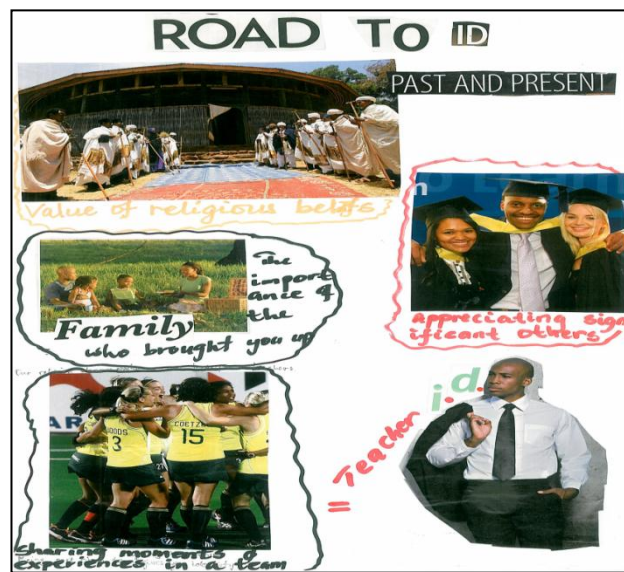
### THE STORIED NARRATIVES - A JOURNEY THROUGH MEMORY

#### Introduction

In the previous chapter, I highlighted the research design and methodology that was used to generate data. To address the research questions, data were collected using portfolio inquiry, open-ended, unstructured interviews and collage inquiry. A literature review was undertaken to locate the phenomenon of teacher learning through memory work. Collage inquiry is a memory work method that was used to elicit data. This chapter represents the reconstructed stories of the four participants and their learning experiences through memory work in a TDS postgraduate programme.

Once the narratives were written, they were presented to the participants to check the accuracy of the content. No changes were made by the participants and my version of the story was accepted. I interpreted this as a power dynamic since the participants may have viewed me as a senior Masters student and trusted my version of their narrative. In order to safeguard anonymity, I used the pseudonyms Sizwe, Sipho, Anne and Rani for the narratives.

#### Sizwe's story – “Understanding myself better”



Title: Road to identity

It was a warm day in March 2012 when I was approached by one of my colleagues at a workshop held at the university. The room was noisy with everyone engaging in their own conversations with their peers. While we ate our lunch, my colleague asked me whether I would like to be one of the participants in her study. I would have to reminisce about my life as an Honours student. I stopped to think for a while. I was uncertain and could not make a decision right away. She patiently told me that I did not have to give her an answer immediately. The next time we met, I asked her about her studies and when were we going to meet. She smiled, knowing that this meant that I had accepted to be her participant and she agreed to give me more details as she progressed. My name is Sizwe (pseudonym) and what follows is the story of my life.

### **Potatoes, potatoes and more potatoes!**

My mother was a housewife and she kept a vegetable garden. My family was very poor. We had to eat the same vegetables all the time. It was terrible and I don't even eat potatoes now. My colleagues think that I was lucky because I ate fresh vegetables every day and that I should have been happy because we had something to eat unlike others who had nothing. At university, I listened to their shocking stories and it made me realise that I should have appreciated what I had rather than feeling sorry for myself. Being in that class opened my eyes to things that I used to see as negative.

As a child I thought that I was expected to bring about change with regard to my family circumstances. I knew that we were poor and I wanted to become a teacher. I was reluctant to ask my parents to pay for my studies because I wondered where they would get the money from. I am not sure whether I was angry or disappointed with my life. But miracles do happen and I got a bursary when I matriculated. I became a teacher and I was the survivor. I became the bread winner at home.

### **Pay your school fees**

During the course of our studies, we had to draw a picture from our past. We had to draw about a bad experience that we had and then discuss it. I drew about an experience that I had when I was a child at school. One day our Principal told us at assembly that he was going to meet all the

learners who had not paid their school fees. He was going to go into each class and remove every learner who had not paid from the class. He came into my class and I was the only one whose school fees had not been paid. I was so embarrassed especially when he shouted at me in front of the entire class. He did not understand that it was the responsibility of my parents to pay and not me. He sent me home to fetch the money. We were poor and my parents could not afford to pay the fees. I was very embarrassed and disappointed once again.

So now at school, I am selective about what I do. When it comes to monetary matters, I consult the parents of the learners. Learners come to school to learn and I don't want to embarrass them. I am a caring person and don't want them to be treated the way my teachers treated me. It is not appropriate for me as a teacher to ask the learners for school fees. Whatever I do, whether it is intentionally or unintentionally, I am now conscious of the way that I react. I do not want to be responsible for something that will have a negative effect on the learner's mind because these memories can never be erased.

### **Why am I the teacher that I am today**

There are so many things that happened in my life to make me the teacher that I am today. We engaged in a lot of memory work activities during my studies and it is through this that I understand myself better. I have become more aware of the things that have happened in my life and how these things have shaped me to be the teacher that I am now. I really enjoyed this module because I did not realise that I could learn so much about my life. I look at things in a different way now.

I teach Technology and Social Science and would like to use memory work activities during my lessons but unfortunately I cannot always use it. During my studies, we were allowed to choose and share any moment, be it good or bad. However, learners are not always given the opportunity to express themselves freely at school because the work schedule has to be strictly followed.

I would like to tell other teachers about memory work activities because it is important for the learners to learn through their own lived experiences. I have learnt through my own experiences. When we learn through our own experiences then it stays in our mind and is not forgotten, unlike



learning something that is prescribed. But when we apply the knowledge that we got from our own experiences then it cannot be forgotten so easily and we can use it in our lives. We can improve ourselves because education is about improving ourselves. It is about understanding and applying that knowledge that we have acquired. It is not just about acquiring knowledge but being able to assimilate that knowledge and being able to apply it to the relevant situations.

### **Wake up, policy-makers!**

As teachers we do not have enough power to change the policies and the curriculum which has gaps. The policy-makers should be involved in learning the methods that we are taught as teachers or in-service teachers. Memory work activities can be used in certain learning areas. It is of no benefit to have the knowledge and not be able to implement it. In order to fill those gaps, the policy-makers need to be aware of the new methods of acquiring knowledge as we have learnt, whilst furthering our studies.

### **Admitting my weakness**

What stood out for me during the course of my studies at university was an assignment that we had to do where we had to engage in self- inquiry. We had to look at our lived experiences and talk about them. We had to constantly question ourselves and by doing this, we gave new meaning to what has happened in our lives. There may have been certain events that happened during our childhood but we did not understand what happened since we did not give meaning and emotion to this at that particular time. Sometimes the meaning or feelings that we had previously are totally different to the meanings we formulate after self-inquiry. I have become more aware of how the past has influenced me to act the way that I do in the present.

By questioning myself, I found gaps in my teaching and I saw that I may not be doing things the right way. I then began to change the way I do things. I recalled the comments made by my lecturer in my assignments as well as the comments made by other students in the PPI module and this prompted me to change the way I mark my learners' work. I now comment on the learners' work and encourage them both verbally and by writing comments. I appreciate what they do and recognise the little things that they do. Previously, I commented on their work, like a test, but now I look for something good in every piece of work that they submit and comment

on that. I must admit that this was one of my weaknesses. I allow my learners to express themselves through writing. Even when they make a mistake I comment on it and allow them to correct it and mark it again. Through self-inquiry I have become more competent. My teaching skills as well as other skills have improved. I have improved a lot.

So, self-inquiry can contribute positively to teacher development. Professionally, teachers can improve their standards of practice. Teachers can change the bad habits that they may have picked up from their own teachers and become better teachers.

Self-inquiry into our personal and professional selves can also restore hope to those who have lost hope due to past or current experiences or events in their lives. If we have hope, we do not dwell in the past. I think hope is very crucial if we want to develop ourselves as teachers because it motivates us to change and take action for the future.

### **My road to identity**

At university I learnt from the assignment tasks that there are many internal and external factors that influence our identity. Our identity is dynamic - it is constantly changing. Our families influence our identities. Our family can be made up of parents, children, uncles, aunts, grandparents - and not necessarily living together. The way that we have been brought up affects our lives as well as the kind of teachers we are.

I believe that religion has also had a major impact on my identity. As we shared our stories at university, I learnt about my colleagues' experiences at their schools where they have to follow a different religion from mine as well as different from their own religion and how religion influences their decisions. As teachers, we sometimes have to sacrifice our religious beliefs in order to meet the requirements of our schools and this can therefore alter our identity.

My friends or significant others also have some bearing on my identity. I appreciate their achievements and through these associations, my identity as a teacher is influenced. The importance of doing self-inquiry into teacher identity is that it helps you to give different meanings to your lived experiences or events.

### **Relationships inside and outside the lecture room**

The people in the group that I studied with were warm and we worked as a team. As we opened up and shared our personal lives, we became closer and it changed the way we were thinking. We once shared our stories about our upbringing. Sharing my personal experiences about my upbringing was very touchy but as they were shared, I got new meaning from my friends. Through this, I was able to change what I thought of as negative into something that is positive.

We understood each other and appreciated each other's personal lives. Sharing personal information with your friends makes you care more about them and understand them better. We learnt a lot from each other. This is what made my studies different from my previous studies. This module stood out from other modules that I have done because it brought us all together, closer to each other; if you know less about an individual, you tend not to care that much.

### **Strategies to tackle issues as a postgraduate student**

As postgraduate students we engaged in a lot of memory work activities. This is what made my studies different from the conventional ways of learning. It was more personal. In the past, information that we needed to learn was prescribed to us. Here we were given articles to read and we had to relate these readings to our personal experiences and to our sentiments.

I have also noticed changes in my personal life. The memory work activities helped me to tackle different issues using different strategies. I would not have known about these strategies if I were not involved in this module. It has taught me that every experience in life, whether it is good or bad, can teach me a lesson when I remember it and analyse these memories. For the bad memories, memory work acted as a therapy for healing wounds of the past, so now I think about my experiences in order to find peace and heal. I have become cautious of my actions in any situation as these experiences might have a different meaning in the future. I am now equipped with the knowledge of how to handle things. Through recalling the events that happened in my life, I am able to understand myself and my own life better.

## Sipho's story - Remembering my calling



**Title: Belonging**

While awaiting the workshop at university to begin, the room vibrantly echoed with talk about the hectic first term at school. My colleague sat down with me and we began our own conversation. She spoke about the research proposal that she had just submitted and briefed me about her topic. My colleague then requested me to participate in her study. I asked a few questions and readily agreed. My name is Sipho (pseudonym), and this is my story.

### **I am not alone**

During the Honours course, we had to share our experiences as teachers. I felt very good sharing my experiences. If I remember correctly, we had some emotional moments. Sometimes when telling the story about yourself, you find that there is someone next to you who had a similar experience and then he or she tells you. I also happened to be in such a situation and this is how I managed. Some of those experiences were very touching and therefore we felt emotional. But

the group was very understanding and they provided positive feedback. They shared their own stories and gave me advice. They actually contributed in such a way that if I had to face a similar situation, I would know how to deal with this in the future. This was empowering and it helped me to grow.

When my colleagues shared their thoughts about my experiences and offered suggestions, I would suddenly feel that I am not alone. This made me feel as if we were a team because we were working together. Being part of the team meant that we all knew that we had to work together and work for each other. Through sharing our experiences and coming up with suggestions, I felt a strong connection with the team and this gave me a sense of belonging. Previously, those experiences were only mine. I did not know what other people thought about what I had been through. But we were united because others had experienced what I had experienced.

### **Having the right tools**

We were like a chain, all joined together, and this made me feel like I had a friend who is with me all the time. If I ever got stuck, I knew that I could just pick up the phone and call one of my team members who would help me out. So I felt that there was hope and I have what it takes to succeed. When others in the group contributed, I felt that I had the right tools to deal with the situation should it ever happen again. When we have the right tools, then we feel confident and victorious. This module equipped me with the tools that I needed to succeed.

### **I got to know myself better**

I think that it is very important that we all acquire the skills of how we can make use of this method called memory work. It is very helpful in many ways. It equips us for the different experiences that we come across in the field of teaching. One very important skill is reflection. I got to know myself better and as I got to know myself, it became easier to deal with all the challenges in the teaching profession. As we continue teaching, we need to make the time to look into our teaching practices and see if there is anything that we need to change. Memory work encourages us to keep developing ourselves, because we are able to rate ourselves through it. We are able to rate ourselves and say that this is where I am and if we understand ourselves

like that and know where we are, it becomes easy for us to know our weaknesses and our strengths and be able to then work on our weaknesses. That would make us develop.

We did an assignment where we looked at the significance of studying ourselves in order to develop personally and professionally. One of the tools we can use in search of our identity is reflection. By being able to reflect and look at our personal practices, we get a chance to see how good or how bad we are doing and how we can change, if there is a need to change certain practices.

### **Therapeutic story-telling**

The other skill is being able to tell the story about ourselves. Studying ourselves as teachers requires us to tell stories about ourselves. Telling or writing a story about ourselves allows us to become more aware of the contribution of our experiences in shaping our personality and, in the case of teachers, provides the input towards their level of professionalism. And personally, when telling stories about ourselves, we get healed.

Sometimes we go through uncomfortable experiences, whether at the work place or outside the work place, and in my experience we normally resort to keeping those experiences to ourselves and choose not to talk about them. Some of these experiences are unfavourable and we may want to bury them and forget about them but through memory work, if we understand it properly, we can talk about those experiences. If these memories are buried, then at some point or the other they will manifest and who knows what will happen? In my view, the negative effect of that is, we then live our lives carrying those experiences within us and they often manifest in different ways and we normally fail to control them. One of the advantages of telling our stories, especially if it was a negative experience, is that it will help us to heal and we do not deny our colleagues a chance of interacting with our personal experiences and learning from them.

I think everyone in the group felt comfortable sharing their stories because they were mature enough to understand each other. The atmosphere was also very conducive for everyone to share their experiences. I learnt from doing memory work activities that telling the stories about ourselves can sometimes be emotionally disturbing. But the atmosphere was warm and nobody had the feeling of not being happy to share their stories.

As a teacher you need to have that skill of creating a conducive atmosphere in the class when you are teaching. If you do expose your learners to an activity that involves sharing stories, then they will feel confident. Many of the learners are still young and it is difficult for a teacher to ensure that everybody understands what the purpose of the exercise is. You have to be clear about your intentions and advise them to share what they would not mind sharing. They need to be made aware of sharing sensitive issues because if it is misconstrued by other learners in the class, then it can have devastating results. A teacher therefore needs to be careful about this.

Sometimes a learner may choose to share something that he or she is unhappy about. For example, we teach in different contexts and learners come from various backgrounds. Some of them are sick and are infected with HIV. They may want to bring that up and tell the class about it. If it is misconstrued, then I will first speak to the learner about this and counsel the child. If need be I can also contact the professionals to deal with this issue. The whole class may not create stories about that particular child. It may be just a few learners. I will have to speak to those individuals concerned and advise them about the importance of what had happened and how they need to be sensitive to such issues.

### **Looking at my journey**

One of the activities that we did was artefact retrieval. My artefacts were a photograph of me in my primary school uniform and the other was my soccer boots. The intention was to recall all the things that shape us into the kind of teachers we are today. This activity gave us an opportunity to think about our primary school and high school years and the things that made us feel good or bad. I was reminded about an unfavourable event that happened when I was in primary school. But I found a way of dealing with it. Rather than being de-motivated, I learnt from it and this made me become more sensitive to the needs of my learners. Now I know what would make a learner feel bad and what would make a learner feel good.

From that artefact activity, I learnt that it is so important that at a certain point, you need to take a look at your journey. So there are implications into our progress at school. Memory work activities put me in a position of looking into my practices. It gave me an opportunity to allow myself to stop and assess myself. How am I doing? Is there anything that needs to be changed

in my professional practices? It allowed me to grow and develop. Nobody is perfect. When I am in a class teaching, different situations provoke me but because I know what memory work is, I would say, this is how I reacted to this stimuli. I ask myself whether the way I reacted was worth it and whether this was the way I was supposed to react. Was that the best way to handle that situation?

I have improved professionally after doing the memory work activities. Previously I would ignore certain things. One would call this a lack of professionalism. But now I know that it is important for things to be done professionally. I have learnt to be more sensitive to the needs of my learners, to the needs of teachers and my colleagues. I've also learnt to be more observant. In the past, I simply went into the classroom when it was my period and taught and then went back to the staffroom and did my marking. I was not aware of the other things that were happening in the school environment which in one way or the other has an impact on what was happening in the classroom.

I teach in an informal settlement and one could say that my school is dysfunctional. Sometimes a learner may come late into a class and some teachers do not have a problem with that. They do not ask the learner why he or she came late. But after engaging in memory work activities I learnt that I need to be considerate of everything that is happening all the time - what is happening in school, after school, outside the school premises and in the community. This all has an impact on the child's learning. I find that what is happening outside the school, in one way or the other comes into the school. So I need to be aware of that because when I go into the class I know what challenges I may face, and I am then ready to meet those challenges. Being a teacher is not just an ordinary job. It is more of a calling and requires more than just giving subject matter to a learner.

### **Identity – it is not fixed!**

At university we did an assignment about the ever-changing identity of a teacher. The identity of a teacher is always changing due to internal and external factors. We are shaped by our own experiences and internal and external factors. I looked at my personal experiences and how they shaped and changed me. Some people are violent and if you look into their history, they are



violent because of what happened in their past. But I was looking at it particularly with regard to the kind of teacher I am today.

If I remember well, our artefacts were one of the exercises that we did. We also looked at the role that was played by our former teachers who taught us either in primary or high school. That is an external factor. I remember sharing my experiences about a History teacher who taught me in Standard Nine. It was because of him that I loved to be a teacher. His style of teaching was good and it made me fall in love with the profession. He was a caring, passionate, supportive teacher and always had a smile on his face. But he was firm. I told myself then that when I pass matric and go to college, I know the kind of teacher I would be because I was influenced by that teacher. But then experiences in the profession changed me in one way or the other. There are some things in our lives that stay in our minds. When we give attention to them, we realise that we are doing things in a certain manner because of what happened in the past. When we did that activity in the class, I then recognised that this teacher had an influence on me.

An example of an internal factor is the pastoral role of a teacher and this can influence his/her identity. This means that teachers are obliged to have that spiritual bond with their learners and this is a major characteristic of the teaching profession. Therefore many teachers identify themselves as good teachers when they have this element in their relationship with their learners.

I have learnt that the identity of a teacher is continually changing. It is not fixed. The experiences that we acquire in the process of teaching keep changing us. We need to be aware of this otherwise it may become a problem. We need to be able to look at our past and see whether we have ever been in a certain situation and if it ever happened again, how to deal with such a situation. We look for something positive that we can apply to the present situation in order to move forward.

### **Using memory work in my future studies**

I am currently engaged in a Masters study and my research phenomenon requires a lot of memory work. For this, I need to first understand myself and ask myself what am I doing as a teacher? I have to look at my own practice and find out if there is anything that I am doing wrong and change that. Memory work will allow me to do that.

## Anne's story- Piecing together



**Title: Accepting change**

### **Our lives are jigsaw puzzles**

Our lives and the experiences that we have are like jigsaw puzzles. There are some pieces in place and some lying around waiting to be placed. Each piece has a place depending on our past and our present, as well as who we are as individuals and as teachers. Our experiences could be good or bad, happy or sad, positive or negative. These experiences are there for us to learn from and grow. Each piece eventually fits into the puzzle very nicely, once you think about the experiences and make the connections. I am Anne (pseudonym), and this is my story.

### **Playing teacher**

When I was young I found a blue crayon and wrote on the cream walls. I wanted to be a teacher when I grew up, just so that I could write on the chalkboard. The first time I realised that I wanted to be a teacher was when we were asked to draw a picture of our earliest memory that we could remember about wanting to become a teacher. I drew a picture of myself writing on the wall.

## **Managing my time**

Twenty-five years - that's my age now. I have spent most of my early twenties studying to be a teacher. I was the youngest in the postgraduate class at university and I don't know which twenty-five year old still studies in their early twenties when they should be doing so many other things. I had no time to go out on Fridays for supper or to the movies or spend time with anybody.

I tried to manage my time but there was no weekend time or time after school. I had to learn to balance my school work, my family life and my studies. I did my work after school and then concentrated on my studies. Very often I had to decline family invitations. Reading books and articles also took up a lot of time. Trying to create that balance did not always work out. There was no time to sleep because I had to type my work for the assignments that were due. We were constantly tired with all the work. We were just exhausted. But I enjoyed it! It was all worth it!

## **From primary school to university – making the connections**

My mum was an Afrikaans teacher and she taught me for five years of my life in primary school. At that time I thought that it was the worst thing ever. I hated being in primary school with my mother. When I began my studies as a postgraduate Honours student, I had to relive some of those experiences. We did a lot of memory work activities. We had to find items relating to our personal lives and to our lives as teachers and discuss this. Everything that I chose linked to my mother in some way or another.

The memory of my mother as my teacher was a photograph that we had taken at school when I was in Grade Three. I hated that picture all along. It was embarrassing for me to be dragged to take those photographs. It was embarrassing when she told the other children about the things that I did at home. I dreaded it when the others came up to me and told me what my mother told them about me. I hated it!

Reflecting on this photograph as a postgraduate student, reminded me that my mother teaching me in primary school offered me some sort of protection that I never really thought about before. No-one could bully or tease me as mum made it quite clear to all that I was her daughter. I also could not get up to mischief because if I did, the other children knew that my mother was a

teacher and they would tell her. It was actually quite a good thing having my mother around. It was different in high school. My mother was not one of my teachers and I did not have this protection.

It was only when I did this activity that I was able to put those pieces together and became aware of the impact that my mother had on me to become a teacher. This helped me to work out where I am right now from the past, the influence that my mother had on me as a teacher and as a parent, to being a teacher now. My mum inspired me to become a teacher and I love it. We cannot take our experiences for granted or push our memories aside and forget about it. These memories can be quite valuable.

### **Teaching in a faith-based school**

I am a Hindu and chose to teach in a Catholic school. Teaching in that environment is different. There are certain aspects about my personal life that I keep to myself, including my religious beliefs, my values, the way that I was brought up and the influence that my mother, other teachers and my friends had on me. I am still firm in my beliefs when I teach but I follow the Catholic ethos because I am in that context. My professional context is what is different.

I would love to tell the other teachers whom I teach with about memory work because I enjoyed doing these activities. I did not really think about the experiences that were pushed away at back of my mind until it was brought up at university. After engaging with memory work on my own and with others, I found it quite helpful. I am more aware of my experiences and my memories. I also get children to talk about their experiences in the times that it can lend itself to the subject. I think that it is a very useful tool to use for teachers as well as for learners. I use the memory aspect to prompt learners to give certain answers or to prompt them to think about their childhood.

I am presently teaching Science and Technology. I do not use memory work in my teaching as such because it does not really lend itself to getting information or data from the children, but when I teach about certain aspects that children can relate to, then I do ask them whether they can remember certain things when they were younger.

## **A gift for Christmas**

Sometimes children tell us things or write letters to us and we say that it is so sweet and we leave it aside. A child at school once gave me a gift for Christmas. It was a snow ball with a little ornament inside. She told me that she felt happy to be in my class and she wanted to learn. She thanked me for being her teacher.

This artefact on reflection made me realise that it was so thoughtful that a child could actually go out, buy me something and express her gratitude. I am not a Catholic but many of my learners are. I would have thought that they would approach me in a different way, and not be able to relate to me. But they actually do. It did not matter that we are not the same religion. Even if it is just one child, it makes a big difference. It is not only about changing our selves but it is about the change that happens in others around us.

## **Friends for life**

During the course of my studies, having friends was very important for me. We laughed together and at times we cried. My friends were there to support me and were there for me to lean on and *vice-versa*.

There were times when I felt stressed and anxious and wanted to give up. I would pick up the phone and call my friends for help. We spent many hours on the phone. They would be experiencing similar problems and felt the same as I was.

We sat around the table and discussed articles or our experiences. We were quite a small group and we all knew each other from the previous year. We were very comfortable with sharing ideas. It was an open forum for us to give our views and we were not passive. This was very interesting. We shared experiences of hurt or joy, some were powerful or it was something horrible that happened while others were happy, exciting, funny or sad. Sometimes we felt like we were in a boxing match. We locked heads and had constructive debates and discussions.

We did not feel ashamed of what we said. I spoke about things that I thought would be embarrassing. In this group everyone accepted what was said and listened attentively. I found certain things that my mother did to me in primary school quite annoying. It hurt me. But my

friends gave me advice or related their experiences to what I was saying. There was humour in it. I guess when we talk about our experiences or memories of our experiences it gives us some sort of closure. It brought us closer together and I enjoyed sharing my experiences.

I found this very beneficial because I would have kept those experiences to myself or I would have not thought about them if I did not share them. The group actually helps you by asking you questions or giving you other ways of looking at things even though it is your experience. We felt comfortable sharing our experiences because we were allowed to share only what we wanted to. We could bring an actual photograph or picture of the real thing or we could have drawn a picture or used a picture from a magazine.

I found memory work very stimulating. I had to go back and think of experiences that I had that led me through my primary school, high school and college years to the teacher that I am now. Talking about the experiences made so much of sense only after I shared them with the others. Others give you different ways of looking at things - different perspectives.

That is how I got friends for life, critical friends. Through studying together for this course we went on to do the Masters course and our friendship continues to grow from there.

### **Identity is change – so accept it!**

Change is going to happen regardless of whether we are for it or against it. We have to learn to accept it. Identity is change. Change can be very scary as most of us are within comfort zones but change can also be beneficial to us and our learners. Reading books and articles helped me understand the concept of identity.

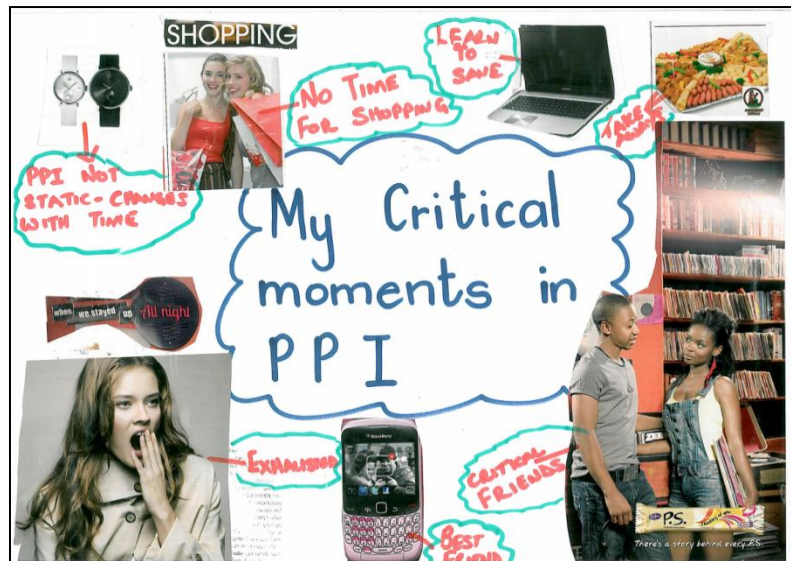
We engaged with memory work through the assignments. We had to read an article on personal and professional identities and the factors to take into consideration when looking at our identity as teachers and as individuals. We have experiences in certain contexts and this has either a negative or positive impact on our identity as individuals. It was only then that I realised that the issue of identity is very important. I was drawn to that aspect. This is how I became interested in identity. I was so intrigued by this that I decided to carry that aspect forward when doing my Masters study.

## **Bringing memories to life**

Learning through memory work activities is different from the usual ways of learning. We are asked to write about our primary school years or write about some critical moments. To talk about memories and to bring something from that memory makes us think about it more. We can relate it better to others because sometimes talking about it is different from writing it down on a piece of paper. It is different from giving a speech or writing a letter. I think that memory work activities are much more stimulating and interesting than other methods.

What I liked about it was that we had the freedom of choice to discuss what we wanted or did not want to discuss. If I felt like sharing something with the group, I would and if I did not want to, then I did not have to. What was interesting was how my colleagues would comment on these experiences, develop them, give their ideas, relate to my experiences and share their own experiences. It was a thrilling experience and I was excited to be a part of it.

## Rani's story – Becoming enlightened



**Title: Making sacrifices**

### **From a Diploma to Honours**

I have been teaching for over twenty years. I became a teacher because it was considered a secure job in my younger days. I first did a Teacher's Diploma at college followed by a higher Diploma in Education. Thereafter, I completed my Degree through correspondence. I went on to complete my Honours degree at a different university where I attended lectures.

When I look back, college was like a classroom situation where we had a lecturer throughout the day. My degree was distance learning and I had no contact with the lecturers. We were on our own and had to complete tutorials which we had to post to the university.

I would have liked to see my lecturer and explain myself to him/her especially with regard to the assignments. I wanted to see who my lecturer was because maybe if I explain to him/her, one-on-one, he/she would have understood. We just wrote our assignments and when they came back we would see that we got 50% and felt a bit disappointed because we thought that we should have got 60% or 55%. But we did not know who marked. I found that when we study through correspondence, we are on our own. We had to pick up from books, read up and write. We had to liaise with lecturers who we did not know. It was not personal and was very formal.



Before the Honours course, I did a mentoring course and that was when I was motivated by some of the lecturers to start the Honours course. It was a two-year part-time course. At that time it was very time-consuming because apart from having full time jobs, we are also mothers and housewives. It was taxing but nevertheless we enjoyed it because it made me realise that there were things that we were doing at school that we were not aware of. When I looked back at this memory, there were many things that I told my colleagues at school who did not do the Honours course. I told them that what we were doing was coming from our memory.

The PPI module had some positive and negative moments. We had to cram all the work over a period of six months. It was a lot of work and we gave up our free time. After all, we are full-time teachers and studying, so it was exhausting and I did become frustrated at times.

I had no time for shopping. I love shopping but I couldn't really enjoy that. I missed that a lot. We lived on takeaways most of the time because there was no time to cook. I prepared quick meals on weekdays and did justice on weekends! I could only start my university work after 8 or 9pm, staying up late, reading and completing assignments.

### **Sailing in the same boat with my family of critical friends**

The other students in the group were like a family to me. We could share our problems and relate to each other. We looked forward to being with each other. We sat and shared moments and even thought about one another at home. We supported each other. Our phones became our best friends. We would pick up the phone and say to our friends, I'm stuck, please help me out, tell me what I need to do. We realised that we were all sailing in the same boat. That was nice because we gained a lot of assistance from friends as well as the lecturer.

Our lecturer was excellent. She explained to us what we was needed to be done. Her warm approach and explanation of concepts allowed us to feel free to contribute to the discussions. We were not misled and I think that is why we stuck in there. There were times when we wanted to give up, but we just thought about the help that we were getting from our friends and from our lecturer and we hung in there. At times I felt exhausted, but I was motivated by my lecturer and friends not to give up. We had all these ups and downs but this developed me as a teacher.

## **Being shaped by my lived experiences**

In the Honours course, the concept of memory came in and we had to think back to our lived experiences in order to determine how our teaching has been shaped from where we started to where we are now. I trained to be a Foundation phase teacher but had to teach in the Intermediate phase for a few years. I had to throw some of the things that I learnt at college out of the window. I kept the didactics part of my training and had to adapt the curriculum to that. I was thrown in the deep end but what was a bad experience for me turned out to be good because now I can teach both phases. I can adapt and I am flexible. It is this lived experience that has shaped my identity as a teacher. That memory is so vivid and it was a prompt for me. This experience helped me to improve myself.

## **Motivation to move on – Don't stop**

During the course, we did an artefact retrieval activity. My artefact was a trophy that was given to me by learners simply because some of these children do not have people to coach them in sport. My keen and passionate friends and I coach children on skills in mini- cricket on a voluntary basis on Saturdays. Many children come from poor homes where children survive on a child support grant. They do not have money to buy equipment and if we ask them to bring a bat or a ball, they would not come to play cricket. We provide the equipment and they come to learn the skills required to play the game.

As a token of appreciation, I was presented with a trophy. Whenever I view this trophy, it reminds me of the joy and love that the disadvantaged children generate. This inspires me and motivates me to progress further to improve my identity as a professional. It is not about winning or losing, but it makes me think that these children do not have trophies yet they could still say thank you in some way.

## **Educating for life**

The learners are always giving me cards, notes, poems as well as birthday cards, sympathy cards, get well cards and letters. Some of them are not even cards. They write on scrap pieces of paper. These are tangible mementoes which explain a person's appreciation for a job or deed well done. They are words of inspiration whenever I am feeling down. When the work load is

too much at school and I want to throw in the towel, then I look at these notes and think to myself that I can make a difference in a child's life. As teachers we are not educating that child just for a year but for life.

### **Meting out punishment**

Human beings are complex people and I am working with learners who come from different backgrounds. Sometimes when I am faced with a situation I have to think back and ask myself if I was placed in that situation, what experience would I have and how would I come out of it. For example, when we were at school we got a hiding from teachers but we did not know why we were being punished. As a result, we did not like the teacher. The teacher should have told us why we were being detained or punished. It simply was to correct bad behavior. Now when I reprimand a child, I explain to that child why he/she is being reprimanded. When we mete out punishment, we must explain to the child the reason for the punishment.

In order to sort out problems, including personal problems, I always think back. I find solutions for the problems and can help the next person. If something worked for me, then it may work for the other person as well. Sometimes a child may just want a hug or for you to listen to them. We have to be good listeners because if we do not listen well, then a child may not believe in him/herself or in us.

### **Stamping my authority**

My teaching approach is different now. I used to be very conventional and dogmatic. I followed the curriculum strictly. But since I have been exposed to memory work, I can now adapt the activities designed for the curriculum.

Every now and then we have to change but change for the right reasons. Some teachers and even managers at school don't like change. They believe that they did it this way and this is the only way that it can be done. This stifles my thoughts. I want to say something but because of protocol and red tape, I sometimes keep quiet. Since being exposed to memory work, I actually stamp my authority.

## **Using drawings as a pedagogical tool**

At school I ask the children to draw how they feel, and I find that this works very well. They draw happy places, where they like to be and where they feel safe. Sometimes I ask them to draw a self-portrait or an expression or even their family. The little ones cannot write so I look at the details on the drawings. The bigger ones write a caption. I may find in the family drawing that there is no father so without having to ask the child, I know that that child does not have a father. I can pick up from there which child comes from a home where there is no dad or mum, whether they live in an extended family or who likes pets. Some of them draw their dogs. The drawing is another beam that explains what the family is like and how the child is feeling. It is a good prompt and it encourages discussion.

A child can now think out of the box. They like the drawing activity because with children we just have to give them one prompt to talk. The entire day can go on discussion. When one child speaks, we have to try and help and ask the others how they feel. The learners who we do not ask may feel a bit sad because they feel that we are not interested in them. I put up all the drawings and ask them to say something. Each one just gives a sentence and I can fathom out what the home situation is like.

There are some children who do not talk because they are reserved. I have a child in my class who barely spoke two words this year. Then there are the children who stammer. They do not talk because the other children tend to laugh. But these learners are the ones who will show you their drawings. The drawings help those who do not like to talk and those who do talk, you just get more from them.

## **Pressing the correct button**

I found that memory work is a good probe. The other things that go with it, like the drawings, artefacts, photographs and letters, are just part of memory work but something has to happen. Our memory has to start ticking for something to happen. When I want to find out whether a child is being abused if I notice marks on them, I probe. Through their discussion I can get answers. Children may not want to talk because they are afraid of the threats made by their parents.

I also feel that using memory work is the best method to generate research data especially when we question ourselves. It is coming from our lived experience. With memory work I found that it is a good probe. We have to start somewhere. We have to know where to press that button in order to get a response.

### **We sit with many hats**

I use memory work presently at school as prompts. I teach in a school where there are disadvantaged children. The community is poor and I want to help them. As teachers, we have to assume multiple roles. We do not only impart knowledge but we have to be doctors, nurses, counselors and drivers. Our identity is not static. It changes with time – moving from the past to the present and into the future. It changes all the time because we are interacting with people.

The Department has initiated a fund called the Orphaned and Vulnerable Care Programme (OVC) to give out food hampers and clothing. We also get sponsorships from NGOs and religious organisations. This helps us to provide breakfast and lunch for the learners. I see the joy in the children's faces when we hand out food hampers and clothing to them. Their parents personally thank us or write letters to thank us because we have provided them with the bare necessities. They say, God will bless you, and these words alone really make me feel like I have done my job. This motivation from others has led to my own self-motivation which has spurred me on to travel on this personal journey not alone, but with many people who appreciate my work. I feel motivated and passionate to teach my learners.

### **Creating my own collage**

I was motivated to register for the Master's degree after completing the Honours degree. I am also using memory work activities to collect data. I found memory work so inspiring that I decided to create my own collage as an example for my participants to see, and to show them what I think. I can relate to memory work because I'm involved with this project together with other people.

### **There is no right and wrong**

Memory work is something that is ongoing and we become more enlightened with regard to our thinking. I interact with my family, colleagues and learners so I need to be more outward in my thinking. It also sheds more light when we speak. There is no right and wrong. We must be able to respect others' decisions, values and opinions. I am now able to adapt and look at things from a different perspective. I hope that as my memories unfold they will enlighten me further and make me a better person.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter presented the storied narratives of the four participants. From their narratives, we get a glimpse of their personal, professional and social lives as well as the transformation that took place within themselves, as a result of learning through memory work.

In Chapter Five, the narratives of the participants will be analysed. Bell and Gilbert's (1996) three domains of teacher development, namely, personal, professional and social development; Kennedy's (2005) models of CPD which are categorised as transmissive, transitional and transformative, and Mitchell and Weber's (1999, p. 8) concept of "a pedagogy of reinvention", will support the write up of the data.

CHAPTER 5

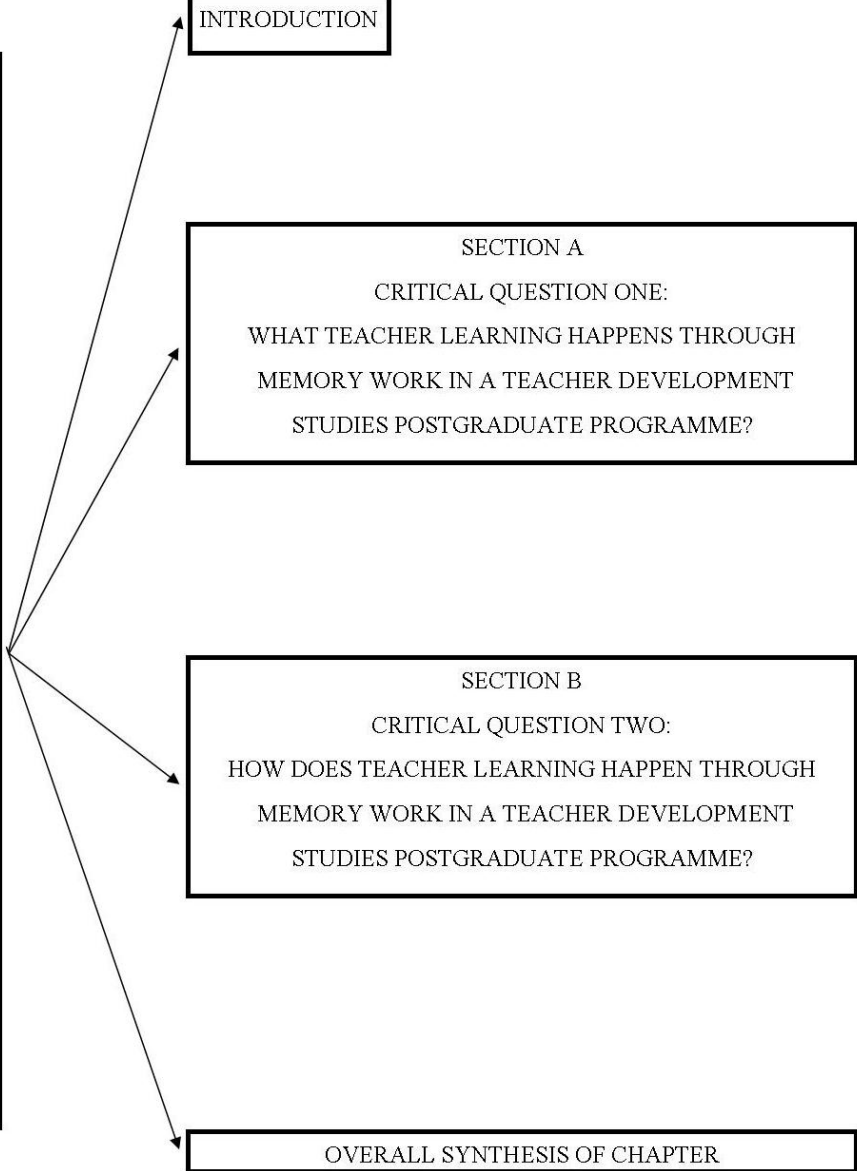
INTRODUCTION

SECTION A  
CRITICAL QUESTION ONE:  
WHAT TEACHER LEARNING HAPPENS THROUGH  
MEMORY WORK IN A TEACHER DEVELOPMENT  
STUDIES POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME?

SECTION B  
CRITICAL QUESTION TWO:  
HOW DOES TEACHER LEARNING HAPPEN THROUGH  
MEMORY WORK IN A TEACHER DEVELOPMENT  
STUDIES POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME?

OVERALL SYNTHESIS OF CHAPTER

ANALYSIS OF STORIED NARRATIVES: GOING BACK IN ORDER TO MOVE FORWARD



## CHAPTER 5

### ANALYSIS OF STORIED NARRATIVES – GOING BACK IN ORDER TO MOVE FORWARD

#### Introduction

In the previous chapter, Sizwe, Siphso, Anne and Rani's storied narratives are represented. This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the storied narratives in response to the two critical questions that frame this study.

Data analysis is a complex and time-consuming process. It is also a continuous process that takes place throughout the research process, as in my own experience. Interpretation for me involved noting a range of things that are significant.

To ensure greater clarity of my analysis, I first provide a summary of the PPI module. This module is a formal, planned and structured module that is offered in the Honours course in a TDS specialisation at a university in KwaZulu-Natal. Some of the memory work activities that the students had to engage with in this module include artefact retrieval, drawing, portfolio assignments and telling stories. The purpose of using various memory work activities in the PPI module was to determine whether, in getting to know their personal and professional selves, the students would or would not respond to change.

The theoretical framing as presented in Chapter Two influences the organisation and categorisation of the data and the analysis thereof.

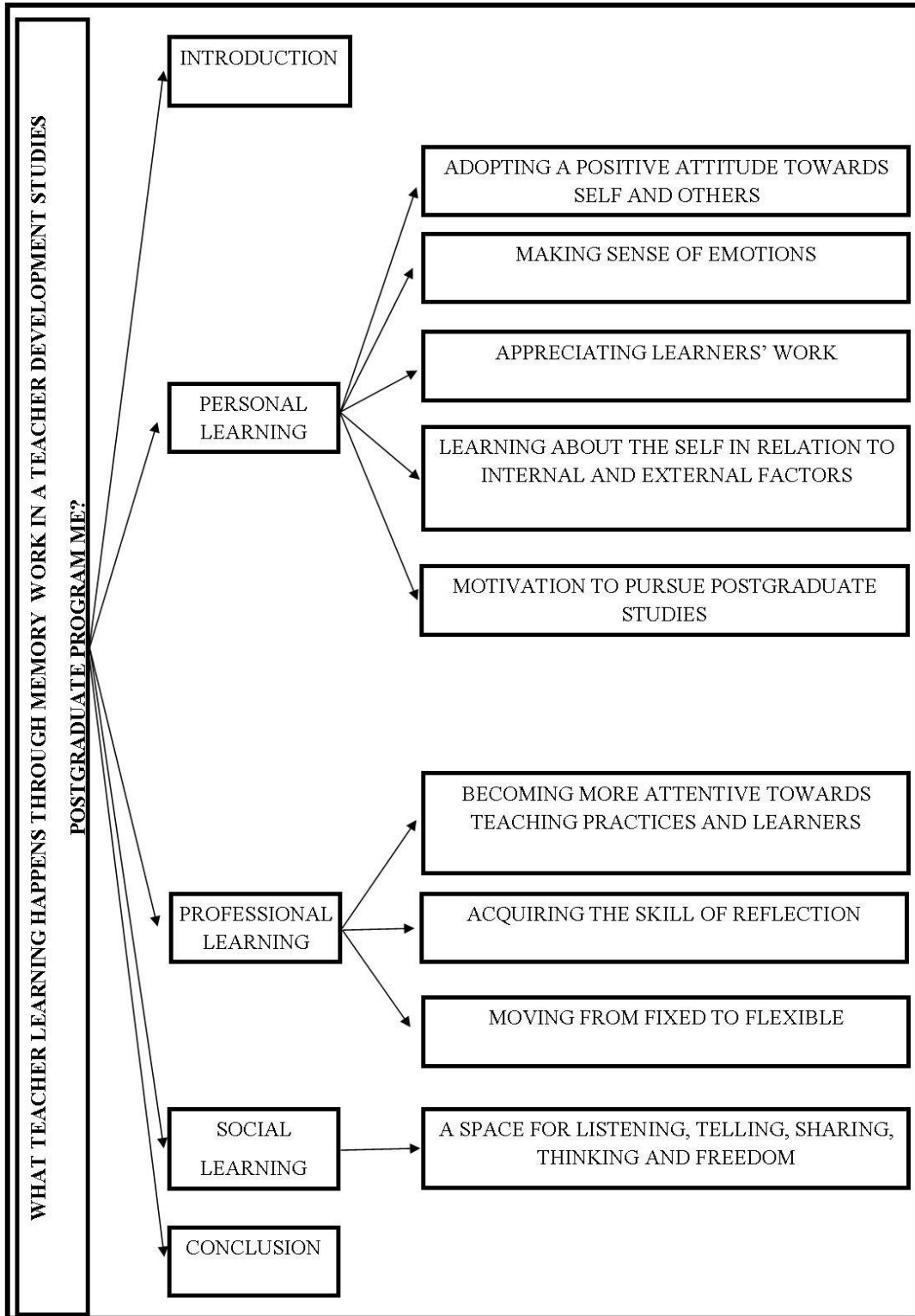
This chapter is presented in two sections. Section A responds to the first critical question: *What teacher learning happens through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme?* This question was analysed by drawing on Bell and Gilbert's (1996) three domains of teacher development, namely, personal, professional and social development.

In section B, I evaluate the second research question: *How does teacher learning happen through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme?* Kennedy's (2005) models of CPD which is categorised as transmissive, transitional and transformative, as well as



Mitchell and Weber's (1999, p. 8) concept of "a pedagogy of reinvention" will frame the write up of the analysis for this question. Mitchell and Weber (1999, p. 8) refer to "a pedagogy of reinvention" as "a process of going back over something in different ways and with new perspectives, of studying one's own experience with insight and awareness of the present for purpose of acting on the future". I use this process to understand how, through memory work, teacher learning happens in a transmissive, transitional or transformative way.

By answering the two critical questions, I hope to get a better understanding of teacher learning through memory work in a TDS postgraduate programme.



## **Section A: The analysis for critical question one**

### **Critical question 1: WHAT TEACHER LEARNING HAPPENS THROUGH MEMORY WORK IN A TEACHER DEVELOPMENT STUDIES POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME?**

#### **Findings and discussion**

Based on the literature, teacher learning is constituted by processes such as life experiences, professional practices, professional reading, reflection and action, intellectual and emotional processes. These processes are both personal and professional and enable teachers to move towards learning and development of their expertise as well as self-development. This then brings about change. These processes can happen in an “intuitive or deliberate, individual or social” way (Fraser *et al.*, 2007, p. 157).

Nine themes were identified from the storied narratives to answer the first research question. Critical Question One is divided into three parts.

In Part One I discuss personal learning, which is made up of five themes:

- Adopting a positive attitude towards self and others
- Making sense of emotions
- Appreciating learners’ work
- Learning about the self in relation to internal and external factors
- Motivation to pursue studies

Part Two highlights teacher participants’ professional learning and includes three themes:

- Becoming more attentive towards teaching practices and learners
- Acquiring the skill of reflection
- Moving from fixed to flexible

Part Three focuses on social learning and includes the following theme:

- A space for listening, telling, sharing, thinking and freedom

## **Part 1: Personal learning**

Bell and Gilbert's (1996) model for achieving teacher development is based on three central features, namely, personal, professional and social development. Personal development involves teachers constructing and evaluating new knowledge about what it means to be a teacher of a particular subject. It is also important for the teacher to come to terms with his or her feelings related to changing activities and beliefs about the subjects that they teach, especially if it goes against "current or proposed socially constructed and accepted knowledge" (Bell & Gilbert, 1996, p. 258). With regard to the personal aspect of learning, Fraser *et al.* (2007) consider teachers' beliefs, values and attitudes as well as their interests and motivation important. I use this to understand what teacher learning happens through memory work on a personal level for the participants in my study.

### **Theme 1: Adopting a positive attitude towards self and others**

One of the tasks that the teachers had to engage in was to curate and present a collection of autobiographical artefacts or objects. According to Bullough and Gitlin (2001, p. 24), this can help to:

[compose] a story, a plot line, of how we have come to be who we are...The stories we compose are answers to the questions of who we are - Who is the self that teaches? - where we are going and how we got where we are.

The discussion that follows illustrates how through artefact retrieval, the participants were able to create their own story to help them understand what they do and why they think the way that they do.

Evans (2002, p. 131) defines attitudinal development as "the process whereby teachers' attitudes to their work are modified". A point of interest is change in the participants' attitude towards teaching and their learners after engaging in memory work activities. Some of the participants had an apathetic attitude prior to engaging in these activities. There was an apparent change on a personal and occupational level. Through engaging in the memory work activities, the participants realised that adopting a positive attitude enables one to deal with some of the challenges that they face, as illustrated below.

Rani convenes the Orphaned and Vulnerable Care Programme at her school. She referred to the letters that she received from the parents of the learners when she reflected on her life as a teacher in the school. Rani's attitude towards her learners and how she helps them has led her to believe that she is succeeding in her profession. Remembering the kindness expressed in the letters encourages her to continue teaching because her commitment is acknowledged. She asserts:

*Their parents personally thank us or write letters to thank us because we have provided them with the bare necessities. They say, God will bless you, and these words alone really make me feel like I have done my job. This motivation from others has led to my own self-motivation which has spurred me on to travel on this personal journey not alone, but with many people who appreciate my work. I feel motivated and passionate to teach my learners.*

Rani became aware of how others motivated her to motivate herself and her mindset towards teaching became more positive. Her self-efficacy improved and this provided her with the impetus to go on teaching. Evans (2002, p. 131) provides support for this development by asserting that attitudinal development incorporates change on an "intellectual and motivational" level. A teacher "who becomes more highly motivated in general or in relation to specific aspects of her/his work would be manifesting motivational development".

Anne's encounter with learners from a different religion led her to change her beliefs about teaching in a Catholic medium school and the learners' attitude towards her. She referred to an ornament that she received from a learner that made her change her beliefs:

*A child at school once gave me a gift for Christmas. It was a snow ball with a little ornament inside. She told me that she felt happy to be in my class and she wanted to learn. She thanked me for being her teacher. I am not a Catholic but many of my learners are. I would have thought that they would approach me in a different way, and not be able to relate to me. But they actually do. It did not matter that we are not the same religion.*

Anne began to learn about herself as a teacher and became more open-minded towards her learners. She realised that it is possible for a teacher to have a positive impact on the learner and for the learner to relate to a teacher. Anne became aware that the learner-teacher relationship works outside of religion and is not based on one's religious affiliation. Furthermore, when Anne engaged in this activity, the process enabled an "intuitive" (Fraser *et al.*, 2007, p. 157) response which brought about a change in her beliefs.

Memory work through artefact inquiry created an awareness of the self for Rani and Anne. Learning therefore became personal. They recognised the relation to learners in relation to others. The participants also adopted a positive attitude and felt motivated to teach, no matter what constraints or challenges they faced.

## **Theme 2: Making sense of emotions**

In a study conducted by Derry (2005, p. 44), she uses drawing as a methodology and "discovered that drawing can be used as a memory prompt, to elicit emotionally difficult information, to understand perceptions of self and to present data". In the PPI module, drawing was used as a pedagogical tool to assist students in understanding their identity. Mitchell (2008, p. 368) claims that "The use of drawings, for example, to study emotional and cognitive development, trauma and fears, and, more recently, issues of identity has a rich history".

The participants constructed and assigned significant meaning to what they considered important in their learning and development through these drawing exercises. Derry (2005, p. 35) declares: "Drawing was a tool that helped give my study that emotional aspect I was seeking".

Sizwe mentioned a picture that he had to draw which depicted a bad experience and a particular emotion that surfaced from his past. He recalled being humiliated in front of the class by the Principal when he was a learner at school. His school fees had not been paid and he felt embarrassed and disappointed because he came from a poor family. Sizwe believes that it is not appropriate for the child to be reprimanded about monetary issues that concern the parents. He believes that the learner comes to school to learn and parents should be consulted when it comes to matters concerning money:

*One day our Principal told us at assembly that he was going to meet all the learners who had not paid their school fees. He was going to go into each class and remove every learner who had not paid from the class. He came into my class and I was the only one whose school fees had not been paid. I was so embarrassed especially when he shouted at me in front of the entire class. He did not understand that it was the responsibility of my parents to pay and not me. He sent me home to fetch the money. We were poor and my parents could not afford to pay the fees.*

The recalling of this negative incident allowed Sizwe to determine how he currently reacts to his learners. He has become more aware and selective of what he does to his own learners. Sizwe realised the importance of being a caring and sensitive teacher when dealing with learners when he stated, *“Learners come to school to learn and I don’t want to embarrass them. I am a caring person and don’t want them to be treated the way my teachers treated me”*. This indicates the emotional learning that occurred for Sizwe. He said, *“I do not want to be responsible for something that will have a negative effect on the learner’s mind because these memories can never be erased”*. Sizwe maintains a positive spirit despite the negative incident that he had to endure.

Anne’s realisation that she wanted to pursue a career in teaching came when she was asked to draw a picture of her earliest memory about wanting to become a teacher. She drew a picture of herself writing on the wall. Anne realised that the things that we do as children have some significance in our lives. She began to learn about herself and through introspection she was able to make the connections about why she became a teacher:

*When I was young I found a blue crayon and wrote on the cream walls. I wanted to be a teacher when I grew up, just so that I could write on the chalkboard. The first time I realised that I wanted to be a teacher was when I had to draw a picture of this moment.*

On a personal level, Anne became aware of why she became a teacher by focusing on a specific moment in her life that she drew. She learnt through this memory that her passion for wanting to become a teacher began when she was young.

The drawing activity helped the participants to understand the emotions and meanings that inform one's daily choices. This concurs with Day and Gu (2007, p. 425), who assert that teachers' professional learning involves "emotional processes".

### **Theme 3: Appreciating learners' work**

Apart from the artefact retrieval and drawing activities that the module offered, students had to also engage with assignments based on memory work as part of their portfolio. Through the assignment tasks, the participants changed their attitude towards their learners and began to understand themselves differently.

There is a marked change in Sizwe's attitude towards his learners. He appreciates and reassures his learners. Sizwe looks for things that are positive in their work and does not focus on the negative aspects. Evans (2002) asserts that a teacher may learn when he/she recognises a weakness in his/her practice and may by chance discover an approach that is better than previous approaches used. Sizwe recalled the comments made by the lecturer in his assignments as well as the comments made by other students in the PPI module, and this prompted him to change the way he marks his learners' work. By talking about his lived experiences and questioning himself, he was able to acknowledge that he focused on the negative aspects of the learners' work. Sizwe finds that this realisation led to self-improvement. Through self-inquiry, he improved both personally and professionally:

*I now comment on the learners' work and encourage them both verbally and by writing comments. I appreciate what they do and recognise the little things that they do. Previously, I commented on their work, like a test, but now I look for something good in every piece of work that they submit and comment on that.*

On a personal level, Sizwe began to analyse himself and became aware that he needed to change his attitude towards his learners' work.

### **Theme 4: Learning about the self in relation to internal and external factors**

Beauchamp and Thomas (2009, p. 177) proclaim:



The literature on teaching and teacher education reveals a common notion that identity is dynamic, and that a teacher's identity shifts over time under the influence of a range of factors both internal to the individual, such as emotion... and external to the individual, such as job and life experiences in particular contexts...

The participants engaged with this excerpt for an assignment and pointed out that their identity is continuously changing due to internal and external factors, of which one needs to be conscious. Understanding one's personal and professional identity enables one to transform. The participants now have a better understanding of who they are. To illustrate, Rani said: "*Our identity is not static. It changes with time – moving from the past to the present and into the future. It changes all the time because we are interacting with people*".

Sipho echoes Rani's sentiments when he says:

*The identity of a teacher is always changing due to internal and external factors. We are shaped by our own experiences and internal and external factors. I looked at my personal experiences and how they shaped and changed me. Some people are violent and if you look into their history, they are violent because of what happened in their past. But I was looking at it particularly with regard to the kind of teacher I am today. I have learnt that the identity of a teacher is continually changing. It is not fixed. The experiences that we acquire in the process of teaching keep changing us. We need to be aware of this, otherwise it may become a problem.*

Sipho realised that teachers need to be aware of their experiences and how it shapes who they are and what they do.

Sizwe reaffirms what Sipho said:

*At university, I learnt from the assignment tasks that there are many internal and external factors that influence our identity. Our identity is dynamic - it is constantly changing. Our families influence our identities. The way that we have been brought up affects our lives as well as the kind of teachers we are.*

Sizwe believes that family plays a significant role with regard to his understanding of himself.

Anne found that the various experiences that we have affect our identity and change us:

*Change is going to happen regardless of whether we are for it or against it. So we have to learn to accept it. Identity is change. We have experiences in certain contexts and this has either a negative or positive impact on our identity as individuals. It was only then that I realised that the issue of identity is very important.*

Anne therefore became aware of how one's identity is continuously changing because of various experiences in different contexts. In addition, Anne became more aware of her experiences and memories and finds memory work a useful tool for both teachers and learners. She provides support for this:

*After engaging with memory work on my own and with others, I found it quite helpful. I am more aware of my experiences and my memories. I use it to get children to talk about their experience in the times that it can lend itself to the subject. So I think that it is a very useful tool to use for teachers as well as for learners.*

By becoming aware of her own experiences and memories, Anne found this a useful pedagogic tool to elicit information from learners in her classroom. This may help learners become aware of themselves and acquire new perspectives about themselves.

Hence, the memory work activities enabled the participants to study their own experiences with profound insight and awareness and acquire new perspectives about themselves on a personal level, and as teachers on a professional level.

Learning through assignment tasks enabled the participants to become more aware of themselves and the internal and external factors that affect their identity. They realised that their past and present experiences were critical, because remembering and understanding these experiences enable change. Learning about themselves therefore happened through this deeper awareness and realisation.

### **Theme 5: Motivation to pursue postgraduate studies**

Day and Gu (2007, p. 425) assert that in an ideal situation, "teachers' professional learning will be self-motivated and self-regulated and involve both intellectual and emotional processes". The

memory work activities in the PPI module inspired the teacher participants to further their studies and register for the Master of Education Degree. This impetus to acquire new knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and beliefs portrays their commitment to lifelong learning.

Anne said: *“I was drawn to that aspect. This is how I became interested in identity. I was so intrigued by this that I decided to carry that aspect forward when doing my Masters study”*. Anne wanted to understand her identity with greater insight.

Sipho indicated that his Masters study requires the use of memory work. His plan of action requires him to engage in reflection and self-inquiry and then make the necessary changes in his professional practice. He explains:

*I am currently engaged in a Masters study and my research phenomenon requires a lot of memory work. For this, I need to first understand myself and ask myself, what am I doing as a teacher? I have to look at my own practice and find out if there is anything that I am doing wrong and change that and memory work will allow me to do that.*

Sipho has realised that memory work as self-inquiry is an essential aspect of teacher change. Memory work prompted a greater need to understand the self.

The arts-based intervention, namely collage inquiry, created a high level of interest in Rani. Even though Rani had not engaged in this particular activity during the course of her studies, she acknowledges that using memory work activities is a good way to generate data for her Masters study:

*I also feel that using memory work is the best method to generate research data especially when we question ourselves. It is coming from our lived experience. I found memory work so inspiring that I decided to create my own collage as an example for my participants to see, and to show them what I think.*

Rani was inspired to create a collage for her Masters study since she felt that it would help her to understand the phenomenon that she is studying more clearly and generate data about the self.

Therefore, the memory work activities inspired the participants to such an extent that they were motivated on a personal level to pursue their studies and further develop themselves as teachers

as well as researchers. It also created a greater understanding of the self. All the participants realised the importance of knowing and understanding the self.

In summary, this section on personal learning concludes that memory work created a greater understanding of the “intellectual and emotional processes” (Day & Gu, 2007, p. 425), and this helped to understand the self. Through the memory work activities, the participants became aware of the importance of knowing and understanding the self. It developed a deeper sense of self; a deeper sense of self and others and a deeper sense of self and knowledge. The next part focuses on professional learning.

## **Part 2: Professional learning**

According to Bell and Gilbert (1996), the professional development of a teacher includes the use of various teaching activities. The development of beliefs and conceptions with regard to these activities is important for the success of teaching activities. Acquiring a good grasp of the subject matter is also considered essential.

Fraser *et al.* (2007, p. 157) write that teachers’ professional learning represents “the processes that, whether intuitive or deliberate, individual or social, result in specific changes in the professional knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs or actions of teachers”. Furthermore, Evans (2002) believes that teacher development incorporates change that would generally be classified as learning.

### **Theme 1: Becoming more attentive towards teaching practices and learners**

Day and Gu (2007, p. 425) assert that teachers’ professional learning “will enrich teachers’ knowledge base, improve their teaching practices, enhance their self-efficacy and commitment to quality of service and it will contribute to their sense of self as a person and a professional”.

Sipho’s shift in his attitude towards his learners and his teaching came when he participated in the artefact retrieval activities. There were certain things that he disregarded before engaging in these activities. Whilst working through them, he began to understand the importance of paying attention to little details that affect his teaching and what learners learn. Sipho explains:

*In the past, I simply went into the classroom when it was my period and taught and then went back to the staffroom and did my marking. I was not aware of the other things that were happening in the school environment which in one way or the other has an impact on what was happening in the classroom.*

Sipho began to challenge his pedantic and stereotypical image of himself as a teacher. He began to see his responsibility as a teacher as being more than just a technical exercise or being conditioned by the bell. Sipho believes that it is important to take into consideration all the contextual factors that affect a child because these influence a child's learning. He explains:

*But after engaging in memory work activities, I learnt that I need to be considerate of everything that is happening all the time - what is happening in school, after school, outside the school premises and in the community. So I need to be aware of that because when I go into the class I know what challenges I may, face and I am then ready to meet those challenges.*

Sipho realises that when he walks into a classroom he must be prepared to face the unexpected. He believes that being alert to contextual factors that affect a learner equips a teacher to deal with the trials and tribulations that he/she may confront at school.

## **Theme 2: Acquiring the skill of reflection**

Sipho realised the importance of making time to reflect and accept that there are certain things that we need to change in order to develop as teachers. He adds that through the skill of reflection he was able to appraise himself, and this then enabled him to deal with occupational challenges. Sipho states:

*I got to know myself better and as I got to know myself, it became easier to deal with all the challenges in the teaching profession. As we continue teaching, we need to make the time to look into our teaching practices and see if there is anything that we need to change.*

Furthermore, the memory work activities motivated Siphso to reflect on his strengths and weaknesses. He found that they allowed one to improve oneself by correcting one's faults. Siphso explicates:

*Memory work encourages us to keep developing ourselves, because we are able to rate ourselves through it. We are able to rate ourselves and say that this is where I am, and if we understand ourselves like that and know where we are, it becomes easy for us to know our weaknesses and our strengths and be able to then work on our weaknesses. That would make us develop.*

Memory work activities resulted in the development of the skill of reflection. The process of reflection was a "deliberate" process (Fraser *et al.*, 2007, p. 157) that enabled Siphso to understand himself better and do things differently. He was able to rate himself, question himself and judge himself, and this led to self-development. He became more aware of the importance of reflection in order to improve as a professional and how to deal with challenges at school.

Sizwe referred to the new strategies that he learnt through memory work. These strategies equipped him with knowledge to manage various issues in his life. By remembering his life, Sizwe was also able to understand himself better. He avers, "*The memory work activities helped me to tackle different issues using different strategies. Through recalling the events that happened in my life, I am able to understand myself and my own life better*".

The memory work activities designed for the PPI module led to the participants learning new skills and strategies. The participants realised that getting to know oneself better is critical for teacher change.

### **Theme 3: Moving from fixed to flexible**

Sizwe recognised through engaging in the assignment task that his teaching skills as well as other skills improved through self-inquiry. He realised that the bad habits that they may have picked up from observing their own teachers in the past, can be changed. Sizwe stated:

*By questioning myself, I found gaps in my teaching and I saw that I may not be doing things the right way. Professionally, teachers can improve their standards of practice. Teachers can change the bad habits that they may have picked up from their own teachers and become better teachers.*

Therefore, self-inquiry enables one to recognise these negative skills and it is possible to change them and improve as teachers.

Rani's teaching approach has altered since her involvement with the memory work activities. She explains how predictable and rigid she used to be, and how she worked according to the institutional script. Being exposed to memory work changed her: she has now become more flexible and unconventional. She can modify the activities that have been designed for the curriculum and still achieve the desired results. Rani states: "*My teaching approach is different now. I used to be very conventional and dogmatic. I followed the curriculum strictly. But since I have been exposed to memory work, I can now adapt the activities designed for the curriculum*".

Additionally, Rani indicated how she uses drawing as a pedagogical tool in her own classroom. She argued that the drawings encourage learners who are reserved or stutter to express themselves more freely. Her compassion towards her learners is revealed since she considers the feelings of the learners. Rani put it this way:

*There are some children who do not talk because they are reserved. I have a child in my class who barely spoke two words this year. Then there are the children who stammer. The drawings help those who do not like to talk and those who do talk, you just get more from them.*

As a result of engaging in postgraduate studies, on a professional level Rani became aware of using drawings as a pedagogical tool. Learning about drawing through memory work and using this strategy as a teacher, was helpful. She was able to cater for learners with different abilities and offer them opportunities to succeed. This assisted her with the challenges that she faced in the classroom. Coolahan (2002) points out that learning is a process of self- development where

one is able to personally grow and develop knowledge and skills that will help educate younger people.

Therefore teacher learning for teacher change was evident when the participants began to understand themselves and others. This enabled them to unlearn bad habits and become flexible.

The memory work activities enabled the participants to inquire into certain aspects of their teaching which they saw as problematic and wanted to change. The activities designed for the PPI module enabled the acquisition of new skills and strategies. This created a greater understanding of the self and others, and supported teacher change.

In summary, this section on professional learning concludes that teacher learning through memory work created a greater understanding of “intellectual and emotional processes” (Day & Gu, 2007, p. 425), as well as the professional processes which helped to understand the self. Teacher learning through memory work developed a deeper awareness of the professional self in terms of thinking and attending to what teachers do with regard to their teaching practices. On an intellectual level, there was a greater awareness of the importance of reflection and what and how to think. On an emotional level, memory work enabled the participants to become more flexible and open-minded in what they do. The next part focuses on social learning.

### **Part 3: Social learning**

Bell and Gilbert’s (1996) model for achieving teacher development proposes that for the social development of a teacher, he/she is expected to renegotiate and reconstruct what it means to be a teacher. This requires developing ways of working with others which will enable renegotiation and reconstruction of what it means to be a teacher of a particular subject.

#### **Theme 1: A space for listening, telling, sharing, thinking and freedom**

Anne found sharing personal experiences with other students in the module interesting and enjoyable because of the atmosphere that prevailed. It was a space that enabled listening, telling, sharing, open-ness and freedom. Others in the group were willing to listen and offer advice. In addition, they were able to share ideas and express their views. This helped her to talk freely about her experiences without feeling uncomfortable or intimidated. Through sharing, she was



able to gain a better understanding and more than one perspective on things. Anne said, “*It was an open forum for us to give our views and we were not passive. This was very interesting*”.

Rani also found memory work and working with others an enlightening experience which enabled her to acquire a different perspective on things. Through thinking and speaking, she began to understand that with memory work, there is no right or wrong but rather that working with diverse people requires respect for each other. She explained:

*Memory work is something that is ongoing and we become more enlightened with regard to our thinking. I interact with my family, colleagues and learners so I need to be more outward in my thinking. It also sheds more light when we speak. There is no right and wrong. We must be able to respect others’ decisions, values and opinions. I am now able to adapt and look at things from a different perspective.*

The PPI module offered the participants freedom of choice. They had the freedom to discuss and respond to what they wanted to. Anne explained, “*What I liked about it was that we had the freedom of choice to discuss what we wanted or did not want to discuss*”.

The PPI module offered a comfortable space to work in because what the participants wanted to share was not prescribed. They shared only what they felt comfortable sharing. This permitted Anne to open up to things that she would have otherwise kept to herself or ignored. Sitting around the table provided a space for the participants to discuss and share their experiences in a more comfortable manner in contrast to a lecturer standing in front of the room and disseminating subject matter. Anne explained this:

*We felt comfortable sharing our experiences because we were allowed to share only what we wanted to. We sat around the table and discussed articles or our experiences. We were quite a small group and we all knew each other from the previous year. We were very comfortable with sharing ideas. It was an open forum for us to give our views and we were not passive. We did not feel ashamed of what we said. I spoke about things that I thought would be embarrassing. In this group everyone accepted what was said and listened attentively.*

Sipho concurred with Anne:

*I think everyone in the group felt comfortable sharing their stories because they were mature enough to understand each other. The atmosphere was also very conducive for everyone to share their experiences. But the atmosphere was warm and nobody had the feeling of not being happy to share their stories.*

Furthermore, Anne indicated that thinking about her experiences stirred certain emotions and that talking about and sharing these with others in that space, enabled her to make sense of the experiences. She said:

*I found memory work very stimulating. I had to go back and think of experiences that I had that led me through my primary school, high school and college years to the teacher that I am now. Talking about the experiences made so much of sense only after I shared them with the others.*

Pithouse, Mitchell and Pillay (2012, p. 1) state that “memory-work is aimed at revealing and gaining insight into the social meanings of and influences on memory”. The PPI module offered the participants freedom to share what they wanted and this enabled them to speak freely and openly about personal matters. Furthermore, through this pedagogical approach, they felt a sense of warmth and comfort in this social space and listened attentively. The participants felt unashamed and happy to express their feelings in the formal space of this module because of the atmosphere that prevailed. According to Day and Gu (2007, p. 425), teachers’ professional learning involves “intellectual and emotional processes”. The warmth, care and comfort were emotional factors that brought the participants closer together, but at the same time, there was listening, telling, sharing, thinking and questioning taking place. This is generally absent from the one-shot workshops that teachers in South Africa currently attend.

## **Conclusion**

This section includes some important aspects of memory work for teachers that contribute positively to teacher learning. On a personal level, the participants learnt about themselves through engaging in the memory work activities. They developed an awareness of learners’ personal needs and the importance of relationships between teacher and learner. In learning about themselves, their attitude towards their learners and teaching became more positive. The

participants continue to sustain that passion for learning through engaging in memory work activities in their own Masters studies.

On a professional level, the memory work activities enabled the participants to become more attentive towards their teaching practices as well as their learners. By acquiring new skills and strategies, they became more flexible and were able to deal with various issues at school which they saw as problematic. The participants also realised that getting to know oneself better is critical for teacher change.

On a social level, the PPI module offered a space for the participants to interact in a particular way that is different from being in a lecture theatre. Teacher learning through memory work in this social space was therefore unique since it did not involve sitting in large groups and listening to one lecturer lecture to students with hardly any interaction.

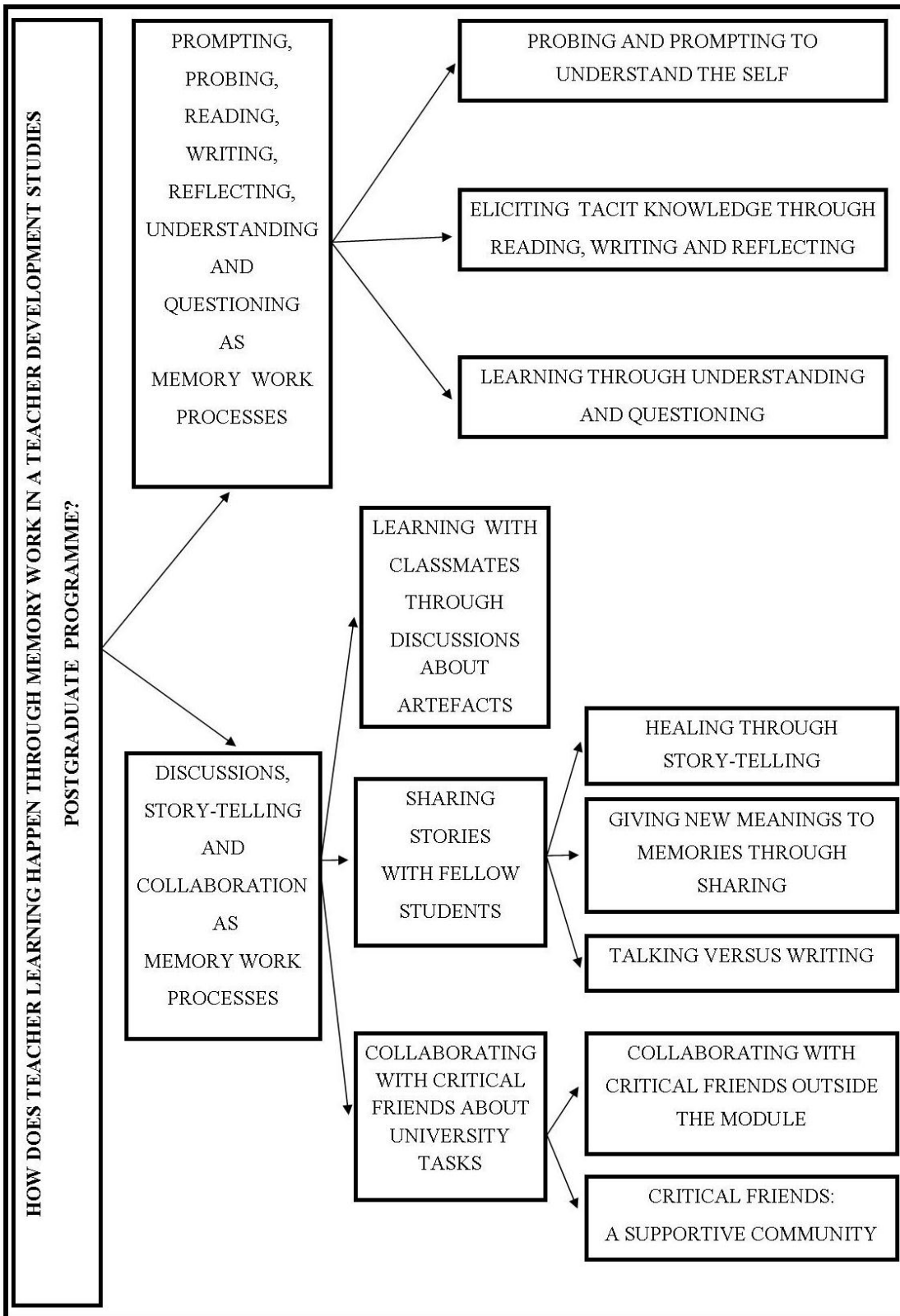
Memory work requires certain conditions for it to work. Hargreaves (1994, p. 186) refers to “collaboration and contrived collegiality” as a “cup of comfort or poisoned chalice”. Collaboration amongst the participants can be equated to a “cup of comfort” because of the conditions that prevailed. These conditions included sharing memories in small groups in a warm, conducive and comfortable atmosphere with peers who are familiar; this created comfortable “collegiality” (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 186). The participants had agency to choose what to say and to whom to say it. Being in a small group with peers who were familiar, also enabled the participants to listen to each other as well as be listened to. The participants began to open up, talk about themselves and see themselves differently because of the conditions that prevailed. This intimate space enabled the participants to support one another. This is opposed to “contrived collegiality” which is regarded as “poisonous” (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 186). They participants were not forced to work with the others or do things that they did not want to do.

Understanding the participants’ personal, professional and social learning assisted in analysing the research question: *What teacher learning happens through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme?* Through the process of memory work, the participants were able to acquire a new perspective on their personal and professional self in a

particular social space. This enabled them to understand that change is critical for teacher learning and in changing, they were able to re-invent themselves.

The literature that was surveyed on teacher learning pointed to broad categories of multiple processes such as life experiences, professional practices, professional reading, reflection and action and intellectual and emotional processes that make teacher learning meaningful. In this study on teacher learning through memory work, I was able to deepen my understanding of these processes by honing in on the nature of these processes.

The next section addresses Critical Question Two.



## **Section B: The analysis for critical question two**

### **Introduction**

This section of the analysis will be based on Mitchell and Weber's (1999, p. 8) concept of "a pedagogy of reinvention", where reinvention will be understood as a process. Kennedy's (2005) models of CPD which are categorised as transmissive, transitional and transformative, will assist me to understand that process.

Six themes were identified from the storied narratives to answer the second research question:

### **HOW DOES TEACHER LEARNING HAPPEN THROUGH MEMORY WORK IN A TEACHER DEVELOPMENT STUDIES POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME?**

The analysis for this question is divided into two parts. The themes developed for this discussion focus on the processes of learning through memory work. Part One focuses on probing, prompting, reading, writing, reflecting, understanding and questioning as memory work processes and include the following:

- Probing and prompting to understand the self
- Eliciting tacit knowledge through reading, writing and reflecting
- Learning through understanding and questioning

Part Two highlights discussions, story-telling and collaboration as memory work processes. Two of the themes are further broken up into sub-themes.

- Learning with classmates through discussions about artefacts
- Sharing stories with fellow students
  - Healing through story-telling
  - Giving new meaning to memories through sharing
  - Talking versus writing
- Collaborating with critical friends about university tasks
  - Collaborating with critical friends outside the module
  - Critical friends: A supportive community

## **Part 1: Probing, prompting, reading, writing, reflecting, understanding and questioning as memory work processes**

Kennedy (2005, p. 246) states that the transformative models of CPD “involves the combination of a number of processes and conditions”. In the PPI module, memory work was used as a pedagogy where the students were involved in a number of learning processes. Through the particular memory work activities and assignment tasks, the students had to engage in various processes which required certain conditions in order to understand their experiences in a new way, and create a new image of who they are.

### **Theme 1: Probing and prompting to understand the self**

Rani voiced her feelings about how memory work is a good probe and prompt. She exemplified this by saying, “*With memory work I found that it is a good probe. We have to start somewhere. We have to know where to press that button in order to get a response*”. In addition, she said, “*I can adapt and I am flexible. It is this lived experience that has shaped my identity as a teacher. That memory is so vivid and it was a prompt for me. This experience helped me to improve myself.*”

Rani realised that memory work can be used to generate data about oneself through probing or prompting. This enabled her to improve herself as a teacher because she has become more flexible. Remembering her lived experience enabled an identity shift. In addition to probing and prompting, teacher learning through memory work involved other processes such as reading, writing and reflecting.

### **Theme 2: Eliciting tacit knowledge through reading, writing and reflecting**

The students in the PPI module had to engage with assignments based on memory work. This involved reading articles, synthesizing and bringing into dialogue various authors’ views in response to certain questions that were set by the lecturer (Pithouse-Morgan, 2011). The memory work process involved completing these assignments which can be considered a “deliberate” process (Fraser *et al.*, 2007, p. 157). The assignment tasks were decided by the lecturer for the participants as a possible way to acquire new knowledge. The topics for the assignments were as follows:

Assignment 1: How can teachers' inquiry into their personal and professional selves contribute to teacher development?

Assignment 2: "The literature on teaching and teacher education reveals a common notion that identity is dynamic, and that a teacher's identity shifts over time under the influence of a range of factors both internal to the individual, such as emotion..., and external to the individual, such as job and life experiences in particular contexts..." (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 177). Write an essay in which you argue either for or against the above statement.

Even though the lecturer offered guidelines for the assignments, the participants had to remember incidents in their lives and apply them to their assignments. The tasks were inquiry-orientated, self-motivated and personal because the participants became active in their own learning. Reading, writing and reflecting all formed part of their learning processes. The participants spoke about their experiences in working through the assignments and how they altered their thinking.

Sizwe explained how working through the assignment tasks made learning more personal and different from the traditional ways of learning, where information was prescribed. The assignments required them to compare readings from that module to their own lives and write about their experiences. He said, "*Here we were given articles to read and we had to relate these readings to our personal experiences and to our sentiments*".

Learning through this process made Sizwe realise that the assignment tasks were a non-conventional way of learning. He had to take into consideration his own experiences and relate them to the readings. Hence learning became more personal because the knowledge did not come from a book, but from a negotiation between his own practical knowledge and codified knowledge.

Anne found that reading books and articles was time-consuming, exhausting and different from the routine task of writing up an assignment. In spite of this, this process evoked positive emotions in Anne. She enjoyed and found this exercise beneficial:

*Reading books and articles also took up a lot of time. Trying to create that balance did not always work out. There was no time to sleep because I had to type my work for the*



*assignments that were due. We were constantly tired with all the work. We were just exhausted. But I enjoyed it! It was all worth it!*

Reading and making sense of new ideas is time-consuming and plays a significant role in one's learning. It also indicates the fulfillment that one feels upon achieving one's goal.

Rani expressed similar sentiments as those described by Anne. She voiced her feelings regarding her assignments in this way:

*It was a lot of work and we gave up our free time. After all, we are full-time teachers and studying, so it was exhausting and I did become frustrated at times. I had no time for shopping. I could only start my university work after 8 or 9pm, staying up late, reading and completing assignments.*

One of the conditions that this pedagogical approach required was time. The memory work process created a number of personal constraints for the participants such as feeling exhausted, frustrated and sleep-deprived. The participants had to give up their free time to complete their assignment tasks. Memory work made them think more deeply. This implies that memory work activities are time-consuming and can lead to negative emotions arising. In order to understand the self, one needs time to engage with oneself and understand what knowledge one has. It also indicates that engaging in memory work is challenging and requires sacrifices to be made.

This assignment task that involved memory work was non-conventional, time-consuming and complex. However, despite the negative emotional experiences that the participants had to endure, it also induced positive emotional experiences, thus complementing them. This corresponds with Day and Gu (2007, p. 425), who maintain that teachers' professional learning involves "emotional processes". Teacher learning through memory work also involves understanding and questioning as processes.

### **Theme 3: Learning through understanding and questioning**

Hacking's (1995) notion of "memoro-politics", according to Southgate (2003, p. 9), relies on "the idea of memory as narrative – memory as a story to tell". Southgate (2003) states that memory narratives "focus on specific moments, details or incidents" (p. 13). Hackings (1995)

describes how people come to an understanding of their lives through their own memories. In the PPI module, the students focused on specific experiences in their lives and began to understand themselves through recalling these memories.

Anne's argument is that all the experiences that we have with different emotions help us to understand ourselves better. She learnt that by contemplating these experiences, they helped her make connections between the past and the present. According to Ball (1996), factors that need to be considered to be part of teacher learning include prior experience, knowledge and beliefs. Anne avers:

*Our lives and the experiences that we have are like jigsaw puzzles. Each piece has a place depending on our past and our present, as well as who we are as individuals and as teachers. Our experiences could be good or bad, happy or sad, positive or negative. These experiences are there for us to learn from and grow. Each piece eventually fits into the puzzle very nicely, once you think about the experiences and make the connections.*

On a personal level, Anne made the connections between her past and present and the complexity of life.

Sizwe emphasised how he was able to learn through his own experiences. His argument is that prescribed work is generally learnt and forgotten:

*I have learnt through my own experiences. When we learn through our own experiences then it stays in our mind and is not forgotten, unlike learning something that is prescribed.*

Learning through lived experiences therefore became personally meaningful for Sizwe.

At the level of self, the participants learnt that learning through lived experiences helps one to understand oneself better. Their lived experiences helped them make the connections between the past and the present, as well as understand the complexity of life. Learning occurred because the participants began to understand their memories and then question the meanings given to these memories. Learning through this approach therefore became personally meaningful.

What seemed consistent among the participants was the change that took place after inquiry into themselves. The participants gave new meanings to past memories by sharing, and began to see their experiences differently. They learnt about themselves through themselves and through others.

The assignment that Sizwe engaged in enabled him to question himself, understand himself better and give new meaning to incidents in his life. Sizwe explained:

*We had to constantly question ourselves and by doing this, we gave new meaning to what has happened in our lives. There may have been certain events that happened during our childhood but we did not understand what happened since we did not give meaning and emotion to this at that particular time. Sometimes the meaning or feelings that we had previously are totally different to the meanings we formulate after self-inquiry. I have become more aware of how the past has influenced me to act the way that I do in the present.*

By questioning the meanings given to memories, Sizwe began to gain more insight into certain incidents in his life and acquired a new perspective on them. He learnt through his lived experiences and is now aware of how his past has influenced his present behaviour as a teacher.

Sipho expressed similar sentiments when he engaged in an artefact retrieval activity. This activity allowed him to stop, assess and question himself. He explains how, through evaluating himself, he can make changes in his professional choices:

*From that artefact activity, I learnt that it is so important that at a certain point, you need to take a look at your journey. It gave me an opportunity to allow myself to stop and assess myself. How am I doing? Is there anything that needs to be changed in my professional practices?*

Sipho learnt through self-inquiry that it is important to introspect and examine himself as a teacher. Allender and Manke (2004) claim that when we choose artefacts to study, we reveal a lot about ourselves. They further contend that working with artefacts can help a teacher grow and change by reflecting on momentous incidents and sentiments related to those artefacts. In the PPI module, the participants' memories of learning through memory work activities took

them back to their memories of being children in primary school and high school as well as being adults and teachers. They began to question and assess themselves. Through retrospection and introspection, they were able to become more aware of themselves as teachers.

Closely linked to self-inquiry, is reflection. While engaging in the different memory work activities, Rani reflected that teachers who punished them as learners but they did not understand the reason for the punishment. She does not want to mimic her teachers and make her learners feel the way that she did. Through reflection, she remembered how she felt as a child and does not want to repeat what she thought of as negative with her learners. Rani therefore recognises the importance of explaining to her learners the reasons for punishment. She asserts:

*Sometimes when I am faced with a situation I have to think back and ask myself if I was placed in that situation, what experience would I have and how would I come out of it. For example, when we were at school we got a hiding from teachers but we did not know why we were being punished. As a result, we did not like the teacher. The teacher should have told us why we were being detained or punished. It simply was to correct bad behavior. Now when I reprimand a child, I explain to that child why he/she is being reprimanded.*

The message that Rani conveys is indicative of the transformation that is taking place within her on a professional level. Through reflection, she understands what happened in the past, how she was affected by it and why she must change. This shows a reinvention of the self because of the change in her thinking and doing.

Evans (2002, p. 131) asserts that attitudinal development incorporates change on an “intellectual and motivational” level. “A teacher who becomes more reflective and/or analytical, for example, would be manifesting intellectual development” (Evans, 2002, p. 131). The participants displayed intellectual development by reflecting on the past and were able to understand the influence that teachers who taught them had on them, and how this in turn, influences how they behave with their learners.

## **Conclusion**

Kennedy (2005, p. 246) states that the transformative models of CPD “involves the combination of a number of processes and conditions”. In the PPI module, certain processes and conditions prevailed while the participants engaged in memory work activities which enabled transformation, and thus reinvention of the self. The participants experienced memory work as non-conventional, time-consuming and complex. The conditions required for memory work included having sufficient time to engage in these activities, and the participants had to undergo processes such as probing, prompting, reading, writing, reflection, questioning and understanding in order for them to transform. These processes enabled them to acquire new perspectives and understandings of themselves on a personal and professional level, and involved a number of emotional experiences. By questioning the meanings given to memories, learning became personally meaningful.

The next part will focus on discussions, story-telling and collaboration as memory work processes.

### **Part 2: Discussions, story-telling and collaboration as memory work processes**

According to Kennedy (2005), coaching/mentoring and communities of practice fit in this category of CPD models. The coaching/mentoring model places importance on one-to-one relationships, usually between two teachers and “sharing dialogue with colleagues” (Kennedy, 2005, p. 242), while the community of practice model usually involves more than two people. Learning became transitional for the participants in the PPI module when they engaged in discussions about artefacts, shared stories and experiences, and collaborated with their critical friends about university tasks.

In the PPI module, the lecturer acts as a facilitator. The role of the lecturer becomes significant in understanding how teacher learning takes place through memory work because he/she is responsible for drawing up the course outline and assessment tasks which are requirements of the university. This refers to the conditions set up by the lecturer. The PPI module stood out from other modules for the participants because of the memory work activities that were designed for them to engage in. These activities allowed the lecturer to step aside and for the participants to

engage in peer learning. Through this pedagogy, they were able to engage in discussions, clarify, explain, elaborate or critique their experiences and tasks, and in the process, learn from this.

### **Theme 1: Learning with classmates through discussions about artefacts**

In the PPI module, the participants were required to present their collection of artefacts to the lecturer and other members of the class. Some of the artefacts that the participants used included photographs, mementoes, letters or notes and objects. The participants had to use their artefacts to discuss how certain experiences, events, environments or people have played or are playing a critical role in their lives. By explaining the significance of each artefact and the discussions that followed, the participants were able to understand their personal and professional selves as well as their selves with others.

Anne referred to a photograph that was taken at her school of herself as a learner with her mother, who was also her teacher when she was in Grade Three. Through the discussions with the other students in the formal setting of the module, she realised the impact that this artefact had on her. Anne explicated: *We had to find items relating to our personal lives and to our lives as teachers and discuss this. Everything that I chose linked to my mother in some way or another.*

Onyx and Small (2001) point out that memory work assists a person to tap into and better understand their past and determine how it may affect the present. Anne learnt about herself and the significance of her mother in her life through self-inquiry; this was unplanned. She realised the value of having her mother as her teacher and how her mother had had a positive influence on her becoming a teacher. This indicates reinvention of thinking; the inquiry revealed to her how her past shapes who she is now. She was able to make the connections between her mother as a teacher and her choice to become a teacher. Anne said:

*It was only when I did this activity that I was able to put those pieces together and became aware of the impact that my mother had on me to become a teacher. This helped me to work out where I am right now from the past, the influence that my mother had on*

*me as a teacher and as a parent, to being a teacher now. My mum inspired me to become a teacher and I love it.*

Through this pedagogical approach, Anne was able to put the pieces together which created a reinvention of self. This learning was incidental.

The next theme focuses on sharing stories with fellow students and is divided into three subthemes.

## **Theme 2: Sharing stories with fellow students**

The PPI module encouraged story-telling as a memory work method. The participants told stories about their lives and their experiences as learners when they were young, as teachers and as postgraduate students.

### **Healing through story-telling**

Kuhn (1995, p. 9) maintains that those who engage in memory work “may be conscientised simply through learning that they do indeed have stories to tell, and that their stories have value and significance in the wider world”. In addition, Vinz (1997, p. 140) postulates that “the telling itself brings the experience into existence again and offers an opportunity to un-know the known”.

The stories expressed by the participants are an indication of how the participants came up with meanings for the events that happened in their lives. Their experiences were positive and negative, good and bad. Some of their stories were shocking or emotionally disturbing, while others were promising. Sharing their stories allowed for collaboration and discussion which resulted in informal learning. The opportunities to share their stories with the others in the group were seen as positive and as helpful for change with regard to the self and others.

Sipho emphasised that through story-telling, one is able to talk about uncomfortable or unfavourable experiences and deal with these experiences. Talking about these memories allows one to heal and allows others to learn from them. Like the TRC, the module offered a space for the participants to open up and share their personal experiences - experiences that they thought that they would never share. Sipho put it this way:

*Sometimes we go through uncomfortable experiences, whether at the work place or outside the work place, and in my experience we normally resort to keeping those experiences to ourselves and choose not to talk about them. Some of these experiences are unfavourable and we may want to bury them and forget about them but through memory work, if we understand it properly, we can talk about those experiences. One of the advantages of telling our stories, especially if it was a negative experience, is that it will help us to heal and we do not deny our colleagues a chance of interacting with our personal experiences and learning from them.*

Sharing of stories brought about reinvention of thought. On a personal level, Siphso became aware that telling stories helps one to heal. On a social level, others can learn from your experiences.

Anne echoed Siphso's feelings and found that through story-telling she was able to see the humour in the things that she thought of as negative. By communicating her feelings to others in the group, she was able to come to terms with the things that upset her and she came out of that experience feeling better about herself. Anne explained:

*I found certain things that my mother did to me in primary school quite annoying. It hurt me. But my friends gave me advice or related their experiences to what I was saying. There was humour in it. I guess when we talk about our experiences or memories it gives us some sort of closure. It brought us closer together and I enjoyed sharing my experiences.*

This line of reasoning corresponds with Pithouse, Mitchell and Weber (2009) who confirm that opening up and sharing stories or experiences allows for engagement and healing, therefore improving the individual's development. Personally, through story-telling, Anne felt a sense of closure and was able to heal. On an individual level, this process enabled her to make sense of her experiences and brought about an understanding of self. Socially, Anne felt closer to others in the group with whom she could share her stories. Teacher learning through memory work thus involved "individual" and "social" processes (Fraser *et al.*, 2007, p. 157). This process enabled Anne to reinvent herself in terms of how she understands herself in relation to others.



Story-telling enabled the participants at an individual level to learn about themselves and others. On a social level, they learnt about what it means to work with others in the group in the formal setting of the module. This process allowed the participants to understand how they think and act in relation to others. Through story-telling, the participants realised that there is a difference between knowing oneself and understanding oneself. The stories helped them to know who they are but the interaction with the group enabled them to understand themselves better because of sharing their stories and others questioning their stories. This process permitted the participants to study their lives and not just reflect on them, which resulted in reinvention of the self.

### **Giving new meaning to memories through sharing**

Sipho argued that if memories are kept buried we may not know how to control these memories, and that this can have a negative effect on a person. However, if one understands memory work and engages in story-telling, then one will be able to acquire new meanings for these experiences. Sipho explicates:

*... and we may want to bury them and forget about them but through memory work, if we understand it properly, we can talk about those experiences. If these memories are buried, then at some point or the other they will manifest and who knows what will happen? In my view, the negative effect of that is, we then live our lives carrying those experiences within us and they often manifest in different ways and we normally fail to control them.*

Sipho therefore learnt that by telling stories, one can get a different understanding of those memories that were negative and this can prevent further negativity from transpiring.

Sizwe learnt about himself when he realised that he was able to share personal experiences about his upbringing with his critical friends. He considered these issues sensitive but as they were shared, he was able to change his thoughts from negative to positive and acquire new meanings for his memories. Sizwe stated:

*The people in the group that I studied with were warm and we worked as a team. As we opened up and shared our personal lives, we became closer and it changed the way we were thinking. We once shared our stories about our upbringing. Sharing my personal*

*experiences about my upbringing was very touchy but as they were shared, I got new meaning from my friends. Through this, I was able to change what I thought of as negative into something that is positive.*

This social space enabled Sizwe to reinvent his thinking and develop a close bond with the group, which on a personal level aided him to open up.

In addition, telling stories caused the participants to feel the emotions of the others in the group and relate to this. Siphso clarified:

*Sometimes when telling the story about yourself, you find that there is someone next to you who had a similar experience and then he or she tells you. I also happened to be in such a situation and this is how I managed. Some of those experiences were very touching and therefore we felt emotional.*

The participants realised that memory is also related to one's emotional life where one is thoughtful and sympathetic in relation to the feelings of others.

Telling stories also allowed Siphso on a personal level to feel a greater sense of confidence and self-esteem. He said: *"This was empowering and it helped me to grow"*. Through this process, he was able to reinvent his sense of self.

Sizwe concurred with Siphso's sentiments on the subject of being actively involved in telling their stories and sharing their experiences in class. He learnt about himself through sharing his experiences and revised his memories. It was at this point that he realised that his life was not as bad as he thought it was. This enabled him to change his attitude and beliefs, thereby bringing about transformation in the way that he thinks. He too was able to reinvent his sense of self. This kind of learning that took place in a formal, planned course allowed for incidental learning to occur through story-telling by delving into personal history. Sizwe said: *"At university, I listened to their shocking stories and it made me realise that I should have appreciated what I had rather than feeling sorry for myself"*.

On a social level, by sharing experiences and collaborating, members of the group empathized with one another. This brought about a closer working relationship and interaction with each

other. The participants were sympathetic and supportive towards each other and therefore they felt that this was a safe space to share their stories. It permitted them to contribute and offer positive advice. Siphso reinvented his sense of self when he realised that story-telling with others would prepare him to deal with issues should he find himself in a similar situation in the future. Siphso stated:

*But the group was very understanding and they provided positive feedback. They shared their own stories and gave me advice. They actually contributed in such a way that if I had to face a similar situation, I would know how to deal with this in the future.*

Moreover, through the discussions and reflection, the others in the group helped Sizwe acquire new meanings for the things that he thought were negative when he told his story. He said: “*Being in that class opened my eyes to things that I used to see as negative*”.

Sharing stories was used as a pedagogic tool in the PPI module and brought about learning at the level of the self, as well as reinvention of self in the following ways: the participants learnt to heal themselves and experience closure, they learnt to see something that was negative as positive and they learnt to see things differently. This type of learning empowered them and they began to appreciate one another.

### **Talking versus writing**

According to Anne, memory work activities are different from the conventional ways of learning because they allow for dialogical talking and not just writing. These activities allowed the participants to have conversations with one another and this awakened their memories. Anne found this beneficial and stimulating, as opposed to the experience of only writing about their memories. She declared:

*Learning through memory work activities is different from the usual ways of learning. We are asked to write about our primary school years or write about some critical moments. To talk about memories and to bring something from that memory makes us think about it more. We can relate it better to others because sometimes talking about it is different from writing it down on a piece of paper. It is different from giving a speech*

*or writing a letter. I think that memory work activities are much more stimulating and interesting than other methods.*

On a personal level, Anne learnt that because they spoke about their memories rather than only writing, they were able to bring those memories to life again. This pedagogical approach offered her a more interesting and different way to learn because talking is a human experience. It offered a new understanding of communication skills and how as teachers, they experience and think about talking.

The last theme in this section focuses on collaborating with critical friends about university tasks, and is divided into two sub-themes.

### **Theme 3: Collaborating with critical friends about university tasks**

A factor that deserves attention is how all the participants spoke unreservedly about their friends. These friends were referred to as critical friends, significant others, colleagues, a team, the group and family. A critical friend is someone who “understands the context of the work presented and the outcomes the person is working towards” (Costa & Kallick, 1993, p. 50). The participants stressed the importance of having critical friends and working together. It was not just about scholarship and knowledge production, but how they related to each other as human beings. It did not matter that they were from different age groups or of a different religion or gender. The participants began to see one another as friends who cared.

#### **Collaborating with critical friends outside the module**

Reid (in Fraser *et al.*, 2007) puts forward the idea that professional development learning opportunities are made up of two dimensions, namely, formal-informal and planned-incidental. Fraser *et al.* (2007) explain that informal opportunities are those that are gained by the teacher, for example, networking. Incidental opportunities are totally spontaneous, such as when a teacher may strike up a conversation about teaching methods over coffee.

Anne, Rani and Sipho indicated how through networking, they could pick up the phone and call their friends whenever they needed help. Through their conversations, they were able to support and learn from one another informally and succeed. Anne said: “*There were times when I felt*

*stressed and anxious and wanted to give up. I would pick up the phone and call my friends for help. They would be experiencing similar problems and felt the same as I was”.*

Rani concurred: *“We would pick up the phone and say to our friends, I'm stuck, please help me out, tell me what I need to do”.* Siphso expressed the same sentiments when he said, *“If I ever got stuck, I knew that I could just pick up the phone and call one of my team members who would help me out. So I felt that there was hope and I have what it takes to succeed”.*

The memory work activities created a space for the development of close bonds among the participants and the formation of relationships with critical friends. Through collaboration, the participants learnt that on a personal level, they were a team experiencing similar problems and on a social level they were able to support and help one another because of that. Coaching and mentoring (Kennedy, 2005) between peers became part of the process of learning. The telephone became an important tool for conversation, where the participants did not have to be physically sitting next to each other in order to share “dialogue with colleagues” (Kennedy, 2005, p. 242). This process of collaboration enabled relationship building that went beyond the module with critical friends. The “intuitive” response (Fraser *et al.*, 2007, p. 157) to call a friend outside of the formal lecture room indicates the nature of the relationship that the participants shared in the PPI module, which enabled learning on a social level.

### **Critical friends: A supportive community**

The participants spoke enthusiastically about how they were able to overcome their obstacles through collaborating with their critical friends. Through collaboration they acquired different perspectives on their experiences. Most often the so-called bad experiences transformed into something positive when the group offered support, advice, comments and optimistic feedback.

Rani likened the students in the PPI module to family with whom she could share her problems with and who supported her:

*The other students in the group were like a family to me. We could share our problems and relate to each other. We looked forward to being with each other. We supported each other. At times I felt exhausted, but I was motivated by my lecturer and friends not to give up.*

Rani found this supportive relationship with her critical friends significant because they encouraged her to continue with her studies. Studying in this social space where she felt like they were a family made her feel that she had more power and a voice.

Sipho expressed his feelings with regard to the importance of having this association of friends who help each other to learn. His image of being a postgraduate student moved from this being a cold, uncaring and lonely experience to one of learning from others, about others and with others. Sipho explains the advantages and benefits of working as a team:

*When my colleagues shared their thoughts about my experiences and offered suggestions, I would suddenly feel that I am not alone. This made me feel as if we were a team because we were working together. Being part of the team meant that we all knew that we had to work together and work for each other. Through sharing our experiences and coming up with suggestions, I felt a strong connection with the team and this gave me a sense of belonging. Previously, those experiences were only mine. I did not know what other people thought about what I had been through. But we were united because others had experienced what I had experienced.*

Sipho learnt on a personal level that he was not alone, and this social space made him realise that he belonged to a united team. The strong connection that he had with the team indicates the nature of the relationship that he had with the group.

Anne provides support for the benefits of working in a group when she declared how she had to think about her experiences when the group asked her questions. She learnt that even though these were her experiences, the group provided different viewpoints about these experiences. Memory work as a process enabled collaboration and relationships with others which allowed Anne to act, think and feel differently. She said:

*I found this very beneficial because I would have kept those experiences to myself or I would have not thought about them if I did not share them. The group actually helps you by asking you questions or giving you other ways of looking at things even though it is your experience.*

Anne's insight into this matter was that there are many perspectives to look at one's experiences if one collaborates with others. This concurs with Eraut (2004, p. 266), who states:

Working alongside others allows people to observe and listen to others at work and to participate in activities, and hence to learn some new practices and new perspectives, to become aware of different kinds of knowledge and expertise, and to gain some sense of other people's tacit knowledge.

Sipho likened the comments made by his critical friends to having the right tools. He compared his friends to a chain. Just as a chain is a series of connected links, serving a particular purpose and is usually strong, so too did Sipho feel that the members of that group were like a chain linked to one another because they had similar experiences as his; he felt strong because they were there to support him. Sipho explained:

*We were like a chain, all joined together, and this made me feel like I had a friend who is with me all the time. When others in the group contributed, I felt that I had the right tools to deal with the situation should it ever happen again. When we have the right tools, then we feel confident and victorious. This module equipped me with the tools that I needed to succeed.*

Therefore on a social level, Sipho learnt the importance of having this supportive community to achieve success.

Through this alliance where the participants valued and respected each other, Sizwe realised that learning is about caring and more than just acquiring book knowledge, as he had experienced in his past studies. Sizwe professed:

*We understood each other and appreciated each other's personal lives. Sharing personal information with your friends makes you care more about them and understand them better. We learnt a lot from each other. This is what made my studies different from my previous studies. This module stood out from other modules that I have done because it brought us all together, closer to each other; if you know less about an individual, you tend not to care that much.*

Sizwe realised that in this social space where they were allowed to interact with others, the participants learnt to appreciate one another, understand one another and learn from and about one another.

The PPI module where memory work was employed offered a space for liaison with the lecturer as well as other members in the module. This caring and supportive community allowed the participants to learn about themselves and others, and to develop a close bond with others which made them feel that they could succeed.

## **Conclusion**

It was interesting to note the enthusiasm with which all the participants spoke about their critical friends, and how on a personal level they enjoyed sharing their experiences, listening to one another and learning from one another. This indicates that memory work as a process is about having critical friends. Sharing their stories from the past, formally and informally, permitted the participants to open up to others who penetrated their personal experiences in a positive manner.

Having critical friends motivated the participants to pursue their goals and develop a close bond with each other. Thus the teamwork that was displayed when sharing critical moments of one's life with critical friends is indicative of how teachers learn through memory work in a professional space. The participants were able to reinvent themselves through the process of memory work, which involved collaboration with critical friends. We begin to understand what it means for the participants to learn through memory work as a method as well as a pedagogy.

Hogan (1988, p. 12) provides support for this kind of relationship when he states, "Empowering relationships develop over time...Empowering relationships involve feelings of connectedness that are developed in situations of equality, caring and mutual purpose and intention". This is particularly significant in the South African context, considering our apartheid past. On a social level, this body of critical friends was able to put aside their differences with regard to race, age or gender, and work together with respect and mutual understanding to achieve their goals. Moreover, it also suggests how through the pedagogy of memory work, informal and incidental



learning takes place inside and outside the lecture room of a formal, planned course, namely, the PPI module.

### **Overall synthesis of chapter**

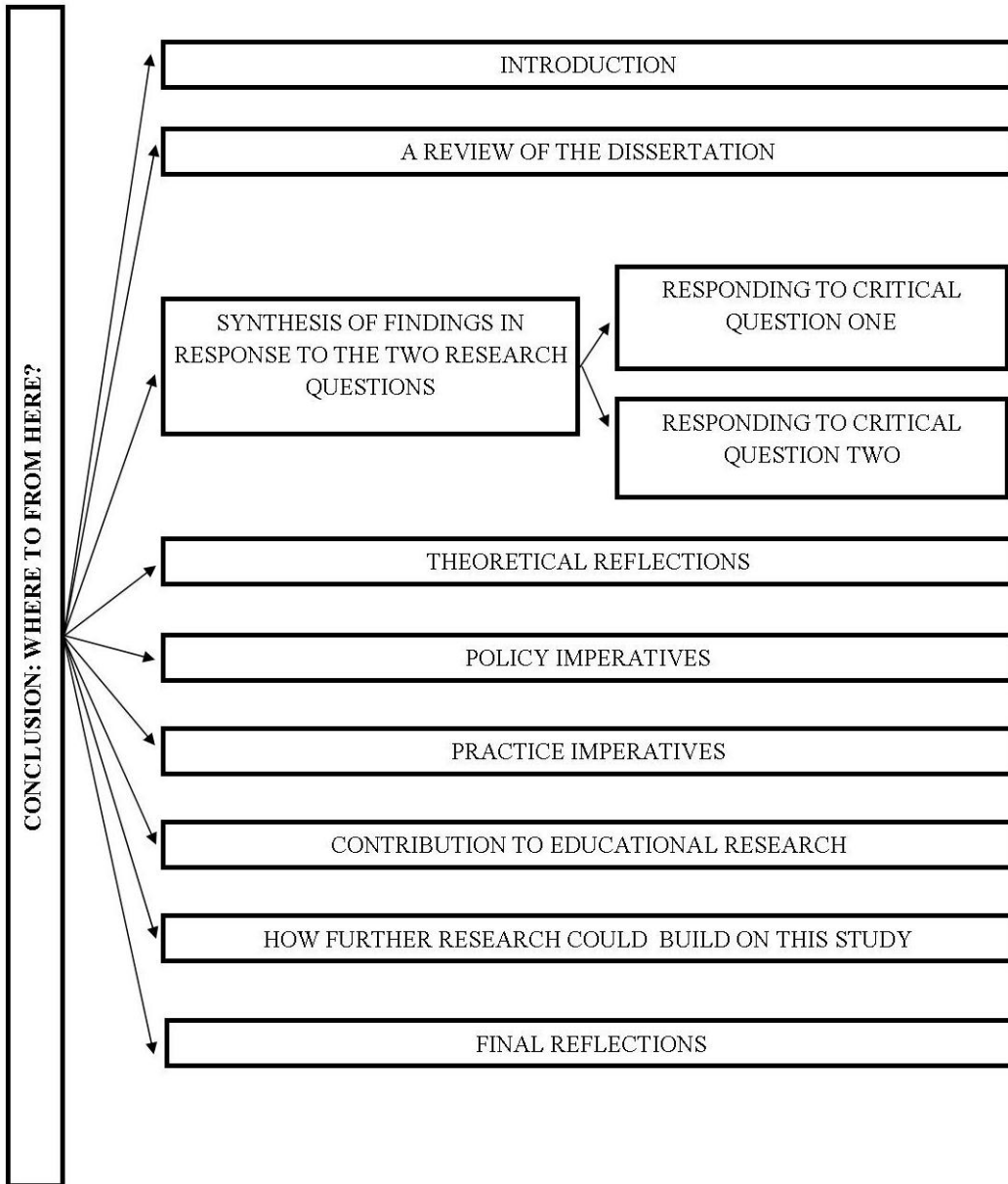
This data analysis corroborates to a certain extent what was found in the literature with regard to teacher learning and memory work. Teacher learning through memory work is made up of personal, professional and social aspects which are inter-related, and resulted in transformative and transitional learning. This was evident in the participants' responses, and supports my understanding of what learning the participants were articulating.

Emerging from the data is the view held by Fraser *et al.*, (2007), that teachers' professional learning represents "the processes that, whether intuitive or deliberate, individual or social, result in specific changes in the professional knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs or actions of teachers" (p. 157). It also corresponds with Mitchell and Weber's (1999, p. 8) concept of "a pedagogy of reinvention", which is defined as "a process of going back over something in different ways and with new perspectives, of studying one's own experience with insight and awareness of the present for purpose of acting on the future". Teachers reinvented themselves by engaging in various processes such as probing, prompting, reading, writing, reflecting, understanding, questioning, talking, discussing, sharing, collaborating, mentoring, and story-telling. This brought about "specific changes in the professional knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs or actions of teachers" (Fraser *et al.*, 2007, p. 157).

This study also corresponds with the expectations of the Department of Education's Design of the Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) System (2008. p. 9), where it is stated that "good teachers learn from many sources, including their life experience, their own professional practice, their peers and seniors in their schools, the teaching profession at large, their professional reading and formal courses". Therefore, this data analysis enabled me to answer the research questions: *What teacher learning happens through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme? How does teacher learning happen through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme?*

The next chapter concludes this dissertation by synthesising the findings in response to the two research questions. It also includes the methodological reflections, what I have learnt through this study about teacher learning through memory work, suggestions for future research based on this study, contributions to educational research, and final reflections.

CHAPTER 6



## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION: WHERE TO FROM HERE?

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to explore teacher learning through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme. The previous chapter presented an analysis and interpretation of the storied narratives in response to what and how teacher learning happens through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme.

This study reveals my deepened understanding of teacher learning through memory work with postgraduate students from UKZN. The Personal and Professional Identities module in a TDS programme used memory work as a method and pedagogical tool for teacher learning. The focus of the module was to explore teachers' personal and professional identity within a context of changing education policy and practice, as well as a range of social realities.

Through narrative inquiry, I have deepened my understanding of the lived experiences of four postgraduate students who are also currently teaching and completing their Masters study. By documenting the stories of my participants, I was able to understand how teachers construct and reconstruct themselves personally and professionally. This study enabled me to understand memory work as a process and how the participants were able to re-image themselves through understanding and critically reflecting on their personal-professional selves. The study revealed that in getting to know their personal-professional selves, teacher participants responded to change in more meaningful ways. Exploring their learning through memory work in a TDS postgraduate programme was an enriching experience because it was an alternate way to engage with teacher development which is usually externally driven using managerial models.

#### **A review of the dissertation**

In Chapter One, I clarify the focus and context of this study as well as the rationale that initiated this study. In addition, I highlight my key research questions informing this research. In Chapter Two, I draw on an established body of literature on teacher learning and argue for teacher learning through memory work to address a gap in the literature. This study extends on

the limited literature available on teacher learning specifically through memory work. In Chapter Three, I provide an understanding of narrative inquiry as my methodological approach. I used narrative inquiry and an arts-based method to explore and deepen my understanding of teacher learning. Narrative inquiry enabled me to draw on the lived experiences of the participants to understand teacher learning and the arts-based method allowed me to gain more clarity on their experiences as well as their emotions and feelings.

Narrative inquiry also helped me understand my role as a researcher and I became critically aware of my capacity to listen rather than talk. I wrote in my journal, “I must admit that very often I want to complete my participants’ sentences or say what’s on my mind. It’s a really difficult task to hold back” (My journal entry, 1 October, 2013). I wanted to offer words or complete the sentences of one of my participants who is not an English first language speaker. I nodded my head to reassure him that I was listening and interested in what was being said. This was an interesting learning experience for me because the arts-based method enabled me to acquire a better understanding of communication. The arts-based method helps to generate rich data and move beyond the discourse of language.

Chapter Four contains the storied narratives of the four participants and highlights the lived experiences of teachers lived lives. Reconstructing the data in the form of stories was a complex, time-consuming and challenging task. To keep the stories alive I used the words of the participants as far as possible and multiple data sources opened up the complexity of lived lives. The storied narratives were a platform for the voice of the participants to be heard when they spoke about what, why and how they learn. In Chapter Five, I address the two research questions by identifying themes that emerged from the storied narratives. My response to the critical questions is that teacher learning through memory work happens through particular processes and conditions that bring about personal, professional and social learning. Teacher learning through memory work brings about teacher development for meaningful change.

### **Synthesis of the findings in response to the two research questions**

Mitchell and Weber (1999, p. 8) describe the “pedagogy of reinvention” as “a process of going back over something in different ways and with new perspectives, of studying one’s own

experience with insight and awareness of the present for purpose of acting on the future”. They further state that “creating new images is an active process that transforms the creator”. The “creator” in my study is the teacher participants who completed a module on Personal and Professional Identities in a TDS postgraduate programme. The storied narratives in Chapter Four revealed how the participants construct themselves and their experiences. Chapter Five analysed what and how teacher learning happened through memory work in a TDS postgraduate programme. The students in the PPI module were afforded certain opportunities through the memory work activities to engage in an active process of creating a new image of themselves. In this final chapter, I pay attention to the four participants and how they reinvented themselves on a personal, professional and social level through the process of memory work.

### **Responding to critical Question One**

Based on critical Question One, I agree that memory work is “a pedagogy of reinvention” (Mitchell & Weber, 1999, p. 8). In a South African context, this framework was used to understand the reinvention of my participants from a personal, professional and social domain (Bell & Gilbert, 1996).

There are certain understandings of the personal, professional and social that is quite different when applying a methodology like narrative inquiry and using an arts-based method. My study has produced a particular understanding of the personal, professional and social development within each teacher. The participants realised how teacher learning through memory work in the PPI module brought about development which goes beyond just being a teacher.

### **Personal**

On a personal level there was a deeper understanding of self, a deeper understanding of self in relation to others and a deeper understanding of self in relation to learners.

Sizwe has a different attitude and way of thinking about his learners as well as himself. He was able to create a new self-image and moved from being a negative to a positive person. Like Sizwe, Anne also created a new self-image and became more positive. The PPI module enabled Anne to deepen her understanding of herself and why she became a teacher. Siphoshe sees himself as different by questioning himself and engaging in reflection. He was able to understand the

need to change his actions. Rani learnt more about herself and what it means to work with others and with learners.

### **Professional**

Professionally, Sizwe became aware of the assessment strategies that he uses and his relationship with learners. He acknowledged the need for teachers to employ more creative ways of teaching.

Sipho realised that he needs to see his role as a teacher in a more open, broader and complex way. He moved from being a traditional, pedantic teacher where he followed a routine according to the culture of the school, to now thinking and doing things differently. Sipho learnt that teachers need to have a more holistic understanding of the child within a broader context. Developing an understanding of who the learner is became an important issue for him.

Anne created a new image of herself in terms of her relationship with learners. The memory work activities made her aware that the relationship with learners is important and that the teacher-learner relationship is not a disengaged relationship.

Rani learnt to be a non-conventional teacher who does not conform but can be flexible. Her pedagogic knowledge and repertoire of teaching strategies increased. She realised that she has agency as a teacher in making choices about what and how she teaches.

### **Social**

On a social level, learning happened in a formal, informal and virtual space. The participants commented on the importance of learning in a formal space in the PPI module as well as outside the module in an informal space. They also learnt in a virtual space by using the telephone and not being with each other physically.

Teacher learning through memory work enabled teachers to see themselves and their responsibility beyond just being a teacher. The participants saw themselves as novice researchers. The PPI module shaped the participants' learning in a way that helped them to satisfy the role of teacher as researcher. They went on to study further and registered for the Master of Education Degree. The participants began to focus on the development of research

skills. This indicates that their role as “scholar, researcher and lifelong learner” (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2011), was being fulfilled.

The PPI module helped the participants to understand the multiple meanings for their memories. By sharing their memories, they gave new meanings to their past experiences. Teacher learning through memory work helped the participants to think about themselves and how they feel and think about what they do, in different ways. Memory work helped teachers to see the limitations of their meanings of personal memories. They stopped seeing themselves as victims but were able to rework their meanings and re-create a new image of themselves.

Learning through memory work, opens-up to new “beliefs and ideas” (Bell & Gilbert, 1994, p. 493), to new ways of thinking, to new ways of doing things: this is what enabled reinvention. By engaging in memory work activities, the participants remembered certain things about their learning and how it became a learning experience for them. These activities opened up the space for participant voice, and empowered each individual to come to a meaningful understanding of themselves through these activities. The participants engaged with these memories as tools for change. This changed the way they began to think “intellectually and emotionally” (Day & Gu, 2007, p. 425).

The participants used their memories as a knowledge-base to acquire new knowledge and they developed a deeper sense of awareness and realisation. The change in their knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs influenced their personal, social and professional lives in a positive way. I am reminded of Evan’s (2002, p. 131) definition of professionalism as “an ideologically-, attitudinally-, intellectually-, and epistemologically-based stance on the part of an individual, in relation to the practice of the profession to which s/he belongs, and which influences her/his professional practice”.

Teacher learning through memory work therefore allowed the participants to adopt a different stance by using their memories to create a new image of themselves as professionals and as people through an “active process” (Mitchell & Weber, 1999, p. 8). Scholars have written about teacher learning (as discussed in Chapter Two), but teacher learning through memory work as a pedagogical tool enables meaningful development for teacher reinvention



## **Responding to critical Question Two**

This study shows that memory work as pedagogy calls for particular processes and social and professional conditions to be in place for it to work. It is these processes and conditions that enable reinvention. The process of memory work requires one to draw on memories, and based on particular processes that teachers engage with individually or collectively, they are able to think deeply about themselves in more specific ways. The participants did not have to be lectured to in order to help them understand or acquire new knowledge; by thinking deeply, they were able to mediate new knowledge. When working in more self-directed ways; probing, prompting, reading, writing and reflecting provided deeper understanding of teachers' personal-professional self. When teachers work collectively within the formal setting of the module, they engaged in processes like questioning, talking, discussing, sharing, collaborating, mentoring, and story-telling. Memory work enabled the participants to engage in an "active process" (Mitchell & Weber, 1999, p. 8) of learning created through certain conditions that were set up in the PPI module. One of the conditions for how teacher learning happens through memory work is that small groups are preferable to carry out memory work activities and being with peers who are familiar enables a certain kind of relationship to develop, where one feels free to share personal memories with others.

In the PPI module, memory work put the participants in a powerful position to choose their artefacts and what they wanted to say. The freedom to choose what one wants to discuss or show to others made learning meaningful and engaging. The social space as a warm, comfortable and conducive atmosphere that permits one to care about, support and not feel ashamed to share feelings with others, and to listen to others and be listened to, affirms teachers agency as embodied beings with the capacity for risk-taking and adopting new ways of thinking and working as teachers. Memory work requires much time, and time has to be set aside for engaging in such activities in ways that will enable thinking and reflecting.

This study showed that in the formal space of the PPI module there were particular conditions that prevailed for certain processes to become available. Outside the lecture room, the participants learnt with their colleagues in an informal space when they contacted their friends telephonically.

## **Theoretical reflections**

Understanding what teacher learning happens through memory work on a personal, professional and social level, using the three domains proposed by Bell and Gilbert (1996), provides a complex understanding of teacher learning. While Bell and Gilbert's (1996) model points to a linear process of understanding teacher development, "...development in one aspect cannot proceed unless the other aspects develop also" (Bell & Gilbert, 1996, p. 274), in my study these three features worked in an entangled, non-linear way because of the processes and conditions that were in place. The participants highlighted that there are certain processes and conditions that are necessary for teacher learning to take place through memory work, and for the reinvention to happen on a personal, professional and social level. Memory work as a process guarantees change on a personal, professional and social level because of the conditions that are in place. Learning through memory work was effective at an individual level but also as a collective. Each participant in that collective grouping was able to rethink their "beliefs and ideas" (Bell & Gilbert, 1994, p. 493).

Personal and professional thinking happens individually and collectively. While Bell and Gilbert's model (1996), describe each teacher and their own sense-making of the socially constructed knowledge, the participants in the PPI module took negotiated and mediated socially constructed knowledge for personal learning and change. Learning happened collectively and individually inside the lecture room and continued outside the lecture room. My study shows how teacher learning brought about change collectively with critical friends but also individually. Teacher development is a non-linear, complex and mediated process.

## **Policy imperatives**

Post-apartheid saw many policies that have impacted on education in South Africa. With reference to the Policy on the minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2011, p. 49) teachers have various roles. These include "specialist in a phase, subject or practice; learning mediator; interpreter and designer of learning programmes and materials; leader, administrator and manager; scholar, researcher and lifelong learner; assessor; and a community, citizenship and pastoral role".

As a practicing teacher attending various policy related workshops, I have found these workshops to take on a top-down, implementation mode. I have learnt from my study about how to change to make a difference. Through memory work, teachers can change in deep, meaningful ways in how they think about what they do. Teachers should not be reduced to just being implementers but given the chance to understand change, they can change in a much more powerful and personally meaningful way. If the workshops conducted by the Department of Education enable teachers to first come to terms with how they feel about the new policies then this will enable them to change.

Memory work enables the participants to engage in an active process which is different from the workshops conducted by the Department of Education, which follows the top-down approach. My study shows that there are certain conditions in place for active learning to happen which are absent from the workshops that teachers currently attend. Teachers at these workshops do not experience the freedom of time to work with individuals with whom they have not worked with before. In addition, teachers work in big groups; this is very impersonal, so that what one shares is restricted. It does not allow for the open-ness that the smaller groups in the PPI module had. In the PPI module, everyone was equal and chose what they wanted to share and who they wanted to share it with. The relationships that were built also extended outside the module. It is these conditions in which teacher learning through memory work happens, that makes the potential for reinvention possible.

Teachers who attend workshops try to understand the changes that are required in a short space of time, implement the policy and assess the learners. It is product-orientated and the focus is on the end. With memory work the product depends on the process. The product of what one becomes depends on the process that one went through. Therefore, teacher learning through memory work can bring about new meaning for the personal and professional self.

The policies designed by the Department of Education should consider memory work as one of the pedagogies recommended, since this pedagogy enables learning that is meaningful and allows for many roles of a teacher to be fulfilled.

## **Practice imperatives**

Within the context of South Africa, there are many changes and new initiatives for teacher learning. Teachers are driven through the more technical, superficial, fixed understanding of how learning happens. If we look at how teacher learning generally happens, one wonders firstly, whether on a personal level one questions whether learning is happening. Secondly, is the Department of Education promoting the externally-driven professional development initiatives and are these initiatives geared towards the individual and also at the collective? Teachers do form cluster groups but these are rarely sustained and generally disband after a short period of time.

It should not be taken for granted that new information will be readily accepted and teachers will oblige. If the Department of Education wants teachers to engage in professional development, then my study shows how teachers learn if we engage with teacher learning through memory work-for more deep learning, that brings about meaningful change.

In the PPI module, time was critical. Time was set for the participants to meet and made important enough for them to engage in readings and other activities. This enabled the collective bonding of the group to happen in such a powerful way that it filtered out as well. The issue of critical friends becomes an important learning in this study, where the participants were able to help and support one another. The lecturer did not dictate but offered some structure and guidelines: within that formality there was some freedom.

## **Contribution to educational research**

This study contributes to educational research in the field of stories and storytelling. It helps to understand how memory work gave a different dimension to teacher learning and how research through memory work produced a unique understanding of teacher learning from the perspectives of teachers' lived experiences.

With regard to memory work, the method, Onyx and Small (2001, p. 781) argue that "a critical reflection of its strengths and limitations is needed". Therefore, this study contributes to this body of knowledge.

The findings from this research could be useful to teachers who are interested in teacher learning. It also contributes to scholarly conversations within and across the field of memory studies and the field of teacher development studies.

### **How further research could build on this study**

Questions that remain for further research include studies in either postgraduate or undergraduate programmes at the same or different universities, for example:

What teacher learning happens through memory work in other modules within a Teacher Development Studies programme, and how does teacher learning happen through memory work within other modules in a Teacher Development Studies programme?

What teacher learning happens through memory work in courses outside a Teacher Development Studies programme, and how does teacher learning happen through memory work in courses outside a Teacher Development Studies programmes?

In addition, this study can be extended by focusing on teacher learning through specific aspects of memory work activities such as artefact retrieval.

### **Final reflections**

The complexity of teacher learning through memory work was unraveled in my study when the participants offered their explanations of what they learnt through memory work and how learning happened for them. I began to understand how their “living archives” (Govinden, 2008, p. 10) of memories opened up as they told the stories of their experiences in the PPI module and how they enabled them to understand themselves as learners and as teachers. Learning for them took place spontaneously and consciously, as much of what was suppressed began to resurface.

In the PPI module, the participants engaged in story-telling. Looking at the South African context, if one has to recall the TRC, victims of apartheid were asked to tell their stories which were intended to offer a form of healing. The PPI module provided the space for participants not to just tell their stories but also draw on memory work methods to inquire into their personal and professional selves. The module enabled the participants to tell their stories and learn about themselves. They also learnt to heal as part of their learning. In healing, they learnt to create a

new image of themselves as people and as teachers. Teacher learning through story-telling thus became an important pedagogical tool in linking the past to the present. We therefore see the TRC sustained in an informal way.

One of the constraints that I anticipated for this research was that a participant may withdraw from the study during the research process due to emotional reasons. Memory work can lead to certain negative emotions surfacing and this may prevent the participant from wanting to continue. I did not have a problem with the participants becoming emotional in a negative way when they had to recall their moments in the PPI module. They smiled throughout and zealously shared their memories, even when some of the stories were sad. This indicates the positive impression that the memory work activities had on them.

The participants' understanding of the benefits of learning through a mosaic of memory work activities opened my eyes to the different possibilities that exist for us to learn. I have learnt that as teachers we have to be mindful our own stories and experiences, as well the stories and experiences of learners.

As teachers, we barely have time to stop and reflect. This study gave me an opportunity to reflect on what knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and beliefs I have and apply when teaching and learning. It has also helped me grow as a novice researcher and become far more observant of my own behaviour, expectations and actions.

In this study, Sizwe, Siphon, Anne and Rani have recalled their lived experiences to understand what and how they have learnt through memory work. All four participants have transformed into teachers who care, empathise, are compassionate, are helpful, considerate, willing to share and are dedicated to their jobs. As Siphon pointed out, "being a teacher is not just an ordinary job. It is more of a calling and requires more than just giving subject matter to a learner". I have learnt that our memories are not just memories but epitomise who we are and how we behave.

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## APPENDIX 1

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

INTERVIEWER: Before we begin the interview proper, I would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Basically what I want to hear is your story, your experiences of learning through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme. I will start by asking you a few questions about yourself and then we will go on to other aspects. Feel free to say anything that comes to your mind and you can take your time to answer. You do not have to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable.

1. Can you tell me about what you understand about yourself through the different memory work activities in the Personal and Professional Identities module (as a learner in primary school, high school, college and as a teacher)?

- How do you feel about working with memory work?
- What kind of memory work activities did this module allow you to engage in and why?
- What significance did these activities have for you?
- How is engaging in memory work activities different from the conventional ways of learning?
- Would you recommend using memory work activities to other teachers and if yes, why?
- Do you use memory work in your own teaching?
- Is there a change in the way that you teach? If yes, what is it?
- Did you find memory work stimulating?
- Can you describe the relationship that you shared with the group members during the memory work activities?

2. What new meanings have you acquired of yourself as a teacher learner?

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSING THE DOCUMENTS IN THE PORTFOLIO**

The following are questions that will be used to analyse the documents in the participant's portfolios:

1. What memory work activities are being mentioned in the documents?
2. What memory work tasks were carried out in the Personal and Professional Identities module?
3. How were the memory work activities carried out and for what purpose?
4. What aspects (such as personal or professional) did the memory work activities cover?
5. How did memory-work work for the teachers?

### APPENDIX 3

#### **REQUEST FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY**

Student's address and contact details

July 2012

Dear (name of teacher)

#### **REQUEST FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY**

I am currently studying towards a Master of Education degree at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and am required to complete a dissertation for the module EDPD820. The topic that I have chosen is as follows:

#### **Exploring teacher learning through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme: A Narrative Inquiry**

The purpose of this study is to explore teacher learning through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme. I would like to understand teacher learning and how it is enhanced or promoted through a particular pedagogical approach, that is, through memory work. Memory work is often used as a research method to produce data but it is also used as a teaching methodology. In a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme, memory work was used to teach Honours students in a module called Personal and Professional Identities. My interest is in exploring the lived experiences of teacher learning through memory work using a representative sample of teachers who completed this module.

The study is supervised by Dr. G. Pillay who is a senior lecturer at the School of Education, UKZN. Dr. G. Pillay can be contacted telephonically on 031- 260 7598.



Participation in this research is voluntary. In this study, I would like to interview you, do a document analysis of your portfolio and to have a conversation based on a collage created by you. The interview and collage inquiry conversation will be digitally recorded in the audio format and I would like to photograph the collage. Participation in this research will involve two meetings of approximately an hour each. These meetings will be held at a venue convenient to you.

I hereby request permission from you to use the interview, documents that you will select from your portfolio, your collage and the conversation concerning your collage as data for my research. I will only use this data if I receive written consent from you.

If I receive your consent, I will use this data in a way that respects your privacy and dignity. The data will be anonymous i.e., it will not be possible for it to be linked to your name since pseudonyms will be used. All data will be treated as confidential. The data will be used in my research report and also in a larger report on The Memory and Teacher Development Studies Project. The data will be securely stored and disposed of if no longer required for research purposes.

There may be no direct benefits to you from participating in this study. However, if you are pursuing your postgraduate studies, participation in this study can provide a valuable learning experience for you and enrich your studies. The findings from this research could be useful to teachers with an interest in personal and professional development. It could also contribute to scholarly conversations within and across the field of memory studies and the field of teacher development studies.

I wish to inform you that you have no binding commitment to the study and you are free to withdraw from the research at any stage without any negative or undesirable consequences. If you withdraw your consent, you will not be prejudiced in any way. Should you have any questions relating to the rights of research participants, you can contact Miss. Phume Ximba at

the University of KwaZulu-Natal Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics office on 031-2603587.

If you require any information about this study upon its completion, I will be most willing to provide you with this.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Yours in Education

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Vidantha Ramadeen

**APPENDIX 4**

**INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT FOR PARTICIPANTS**

**TITLE OF STUDY: Exploring teacher learning through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme: A Narrative Inquiry**

**AUTHORIZATION:**

I,..... (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I have read the above and understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project. I understand that I may refuse to participate or I may withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice. I also understand that if I have any concerns about my treatment during the study, I can contact the lecturer on the number provided. I consent to participating in the research project.

I consent to the following data collection activities (please tick):

	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Interviews		
Audio recording of interviews		
Viewing of documents from my portfolio that will be selected by me		
Creating a collage		
Audio recording of discussion on collage		
Photographing of collage		

.....  
SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

.....  
DATE

.....  
SIGNATURE OF RESEARCHER

.....  
DATE

## APPENDIX 5

Professor Kamwendo

The Dean: School of Education

University of KwaZulu- Natal

13 July 2012

### REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I am currently studying towards a Master of Education degree at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and am required to complete a dissertation for the module EDPD820. The topic that I have chosen is as follows: **Exploring teacher learning through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme: A Narrative Inquiry**

The purpose of this study is to explore teacher learning through memory work in a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme. I would like to understand teacher learning and how it is enhanced or promoted through a particular pedagogical approach, that is, through memory work. Memory work is often used as a research method to produce data but it is also used as a teaching methodology. In a Teacher Development Studies postgraduate programme, memory work was used to teach Honours students in a module called Personal and Professional Identities. My interest is in exploring the lived experiences of teacher learning through memory work using a representative sample of teachers who completed this module.

The study is supervised by Dr. G. Pillay who is a senior lecturer at the School of Education, UKZN. Dr. G. Pillay can be contacted telephonically on 031- 260 7598.

In this study, I will use the following methods to gather information from the participants: interviews, documents from the participant's portfolios that they will select and artefact retrieval. The interview and artefact retrieval discussion will be digitally recorded in the audio format and the artefact will be photographed. Participation in this research will involve two meetings of

approximately an hour each. These meetings will be held at a venue convenient to the participants.

I will request for permission from the participants to conduct interviews, use documents from their portfolio and artefacts as data for my research. I will only use this data if I receive written consent from them.

If I gain informed consent from the participants, I will use this data in a way that respects their privacy and dignity. The data will be anonymous i.e., it will not be possible for it to be linked to their names since pseudonyms will be used. All data will be treated as confidential. The data will be used in my research report and also in a larger report on The Memory and Teacher Development Studies Project. The data will be securely stored and disposed of if no longer required for research purposes.

There may be no direct benefits to participants from participating in this study. However, if they are pursuing their postgraduate studies, participation in this study can provide a valuable learning experience for them and enrich their studies. The findings from this research could be useful to teachers with an interest in personal and professional development. It could also contribute to scholarly conversations within and across the field of memory studies and the field of teacher development studies.

Participants will be informed that they have no binding commitment to the study and are free to withdraw from the research at any stage without any negative or undesirable consequences. If they withdraw their consent, they will not be prejudiced in any way. Participants can contact Miss. PhumeXimba at the University of KwaZulu-Natal Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics office on 031-2603587 should they have any questions relating to the rights of research participants.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Yours in Education

VidanthaRamadeen

(Masters in Education – Teacher Development Studies)

**PERMISSION**

I hereby grant the researcher permission to conduct research as outlined in the School of Education.

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Signature

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Date

**APPENDIX 6**

**ETHICAL CLEARANCE NUMBER FOR THE MEMORY AND TEACHER DEVELOPMENT STUDIES PROJECT**

My study falls within the Memory and Teacher Development Studies project. The project is led by Dr. K. J. Pithouse-Morgan who is a senior researcher in the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The project has already obtained ethical clearance and the number is: HSS/0037/012

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Dr. K.J. Pithouse-Morgan